

Republic of Poland

Rzeczpospolita Polska



Bieszczady is a paradise for romantics and nature lovers. Green mountains with many traditional wooden churches are one of the most secluded places in Europe. Due to its extraordinary natural environment and picturesque landscapes, Bieszczady is an ideal place for rest. These mountains look most beautiful in summer and autumn, in the winter they attract, first of all, skiers.



Częstochowa is a medium-sized city located in the heart of the Krakow-Częstochowa Plateau, a region characterized by the landscape of the Jurassic mountains. Częstochowa is usually associated with the monastery at Jasna Góra, which is the most important Marian shrine in Poland. For most Poles, this is the main place of pilgrimage and the most important place of worship for the Virgin Mary. The icon of the Black Madonna from Częstochowa - the Queen and Patroness of Poland, crowned in 1656, is famous for her numerous miracles.



The former capital of Poland is one of the most frequently visited places in Europe. Most of Krakow's guests are fascinated by its magical atmosphere and amazing architecture. Here you can see medieval cathedrals, the Renaissance castle, Baroque churches, the Art Nouveau theater (Ar Nouveau) and many other historic buildings. However, despite the beauty and historical originality of the city, do not think that the image of Krakow is limited to its buildings and museums. Due to the variety of bars, pubs, clubs and restaurants Krakow is full of life, which is especially noticeable in the summer.



The knights of the Teutonic Order, founded in 1190 in Palestine, participated in the Crusade against Muslims and Gentiles. In the XIV century, the Teutonic Knights defeated the pagan tribe of the Prussians and moved their headquarters from Venice to Malbork, located on the Nogat River. At present it is the northern part of Poland. The consequence of their stay in the city is a red brick castle, which was built on the riverbank in 1274 and is considered the largest Gothic fortress in Europe.



Marzanna is the Polish name of the Slavic goddess, who is associated with the winter and with death. Although paganism in Poland seems to have disappeared at the beginning of the eleventh century, this popular rite has survived to this day. Every year, on the first day of spring, people make a straw doll, set it on fire, and then drown in a river. The purpose of the ritual is to drive out the winter and accelerate the awakening of nature. The Scarecrow is usually made of straw and white linen and decorated with colored ribbons. There are a number of rules: you can not touch the Maganna, while she is in the water (the force disappears from the hands), you can not look back on the way back from the river (this is what you call illness on yourself and relatives). The Catholic church fought this rite until the beginning of the twentieth century, but it could not eradicate it. The tradition of burning Mazhanna is still popular in some regions of Poland, although few believe it will really accelerate the arrival of spring.



Christmas and Easter are very important holidays for Poles, and there are many related traditions and customs. In particular, for Christmas, a little straw is placed under the tablecloth, and an extra plate is placed on the table for an unexpected guest. What for? Earlier straw and grain adorned the whole table and put a sheaf in the corner (even in wealthy gentry houses). The reason is that Jesus Christ was born in a manger in Bethlehem, and the straw reminds of the circumstances of his birth. There is an old Polish proverb: "Guest in the house, God in the house," which means that any guest is God's blessing. Hospitality is in the blood of Poles, and they will not allow anyone to remain hungry and lonely at Christmas. That's why in Poland, according to tradition, an extra plate is put on the Christmas table. To tell you the truth, unexpected guests appear rarely, but if you find yourself in Poland and your friends find out that you have nobody to spend Christmas with, wait for invitations!





Of all the Easter traditions, Śmigus Dyngus is perhaps the most unusual. Today is a real mass water battle using water pistols, bottles, capitols, plastic bags and everything that is at hand. (Śmigus Dyngus - partly equivalent to our day of Ivan Kupala - Ed.) There are cases of participation in this lawlessness of fire trucks. The origins of this tradition are seen in Christianity, where watering is associated with baptism and blessing, and in the traditional folk entertainment of young men and women who celebrated the arrival of spring, the awakening of the forces of nature, and at the same time looked after themselves a couple for the future.

While most foreigners from Western Europe and America will never risk independently, at home to cook anything found in the forest for fear of poisoning, in Poland, on weekends, everything goes from mushroom to mushroom. Approximately 30% of the country's territory is covered with beautiful dense forests, that's why picking mushrooms is one of the most usual ways of spending time. Poles get up at dawn to catch the forest before the arrival of mushroom competitors. Sizable children are taught to distinguish between mushroom species, not to be confused with edible fungi. In the forest, mushrooms are used in Poland, and Polish dishes made from mushrooms are true delicacies.



