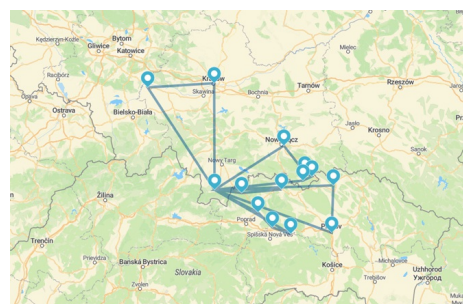




Poland, 11 Days · Tailor-made by car

Route of Southern Poland with the Tatras National Park

Explore these two neighbouring countries on a combined tour that sets out from the beautiful historical city of Krakow, stops off at picturesque towns in southern Poland and ends in the north of Slovakia. Two regions separated naturally by the spectacular Tatras mountains. Two regions majestically embraced by two national parks of high environmental value and picture-postcard landscapes. Rivers, gorges, lakes, hills, native flora and fauna, hiking trails and vantage points with unparalleled views. All from your base in the unique town of Zakopane, the highest in Poland, with its exclusive wooden houses and its revived folklore. Join us on this magical and very varied tour, dotted with fairytale castles, traditional architecture and historical remains, some of which have inspired films or been used as movie backdrops. Fantasy-laden places, where time seems to have stood still and which you can only visit by car. And don't forget your camera, although it'll be difficult for your memory to erase these scenarios, some for their immense beauty and others for their terrible past. Also savour the typical food of these mountainous lands, where soups and hearty meat dishes will make you appreciate this exceptional journey even more.



NATURE

Departure date: Departures from July 2026 till June 2027

From: London

Travel details

DAY 1 · CITY OF ORIGIN - KRAKOW

Flight departure from the city of origin to Krakow. Arrival, rental car pick-up and departure to Krakow, a fascinating city recognised as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Former capital of the country, Krakow is considered one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Stroll through its Old Town, divided into three areas each with amazing tourist attractions: Wawel Hill (with its castle and its cathedral); the medieval town of Krakow; and the medieval quarter of Kazimierz. (Note: If you plan to visit the Castle, keep in mind that it's closed on Mondays. From April to October, there are limits on admission. There are audio guides in different languages, but they're not included in the ticket. They cost 5 euros. Forbidden to enter with suitcases). Visit Market Square (Rynek Główny), which is the largest medieval square in Europe, flanked by old houses and churches, such as St. Mary's Basilica, with its two unequal towers, and the tenth-century Church of St. Wojciech. Also fascinating is the Sukiennice complex, home to a cloth hall and the National Museum of Art. A great place also for dinner at one of its many charming restaurants. ((Note: Park in the centre of Krakow. The Old Town is closed off to traffic (except for taxis, police cars and ambulances, and delivery trucks at certain times of the day). There are very few underground car parks. The park-and-display area is marked with a P, with the compulsory payment hours shown below. In Krakow, you have to pay from Monday to Friday between 10.00 am and 8.00 pm. It's free at all other times)). Overnight stay in Krakow.

DAY 2 · KRAKOW - AUSCHWITZ - WADOWICE/BIRTHPLACE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II - KALWARIA ZEBRZYDOWSKA MONASTERY - KRAKOW

Take advantage of the morning to visit Wawel Castle and the hill, which is the most important historical and cultural place in Poland. The castle is a Renaissance-style fort almost a thousand years old and was the seat of the Polish monarchy from the Middle Ages to the 17th century. It is currently a highly-renowned art gallery. (Note: If you plan to visit the Castle, keep in mind that it's closed on Mondays. From April to October, there are limits on admission. There are multilingual audio guides, but they're not included in the ticket. They cost 5 euros. Forbidden to enter with suitcases). Also worth a visit is the Cathedral, the traditional coronation site for Polish monarchs.

Another recommendation is to take a stroll through the Jewish quarter and visit the factory of Oskar Schindler, who inspired Steven Spielberg's famous movie. Another must-see is Ghetto Heroes Square, with its chair-statues (each representing a thousand deceased) in homage to the Jews deported and murdered by the Nazis during World War II. We recommend visiting one of the most impressive places in the country today. If you're interested in history and want to witness the terrible reality of the past, stop off at Oswiecim (Auschwitz) to visit the Nazi concentration camp and recall the disgrace of a genocide. Its sheer size is imposing, while the testimonies of this piece of 20th-century world history are truly poignant. Built in 1940, it was the largest Nazi extermination camp. The visit is extremely moving and will probably leave you speechless. (Note: Especially in high season, the visit to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum will take up most of the day. You can choose between a free visit or a guided tour. There are guided tours in Spanish, English, German, Italian, French and Polish. Only guided tours are allowed from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm. (Note: discounted admission for students under 26 years old). Admission is free before and after the guided tours ('visit without educator' ticket). It's best not to head to the Museum without a confirmed booking on the www.visit.auschwitz.org website with the specific date and time. Also make sure that you arrive with plenty of time, as security checks at the entrance often lead to big queues. (Bags over 30 x 20 x 10 cm cannot be brought into the Museum). As for the itinerary to follow, we suggest the Krakow-Auschwitz route on the A4 motorway. The museum is located outside the village of Oświęcim on road No. 933. Entrance to the museum is through the car park at the address: ul. Leszczyńskiej 16 (paid parking). There's a free bus between the two camps. One of the advantages of self-drive touring is that you can combine this visit with other nearby stops of interest. On the way back, and if you have time, you can take the DK 44 (it's not a motorway, but is quite picturesque) and visit the Kalwaria Zebrzydowska Monastery, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most frequented pilgrimage sites in Poland. The religious complex, which is part of one of the most interesting architectural projects in Europe, welcomes more than one million pilgrims each year. (Note: Guided tours take place from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm. Guided tours (in English, Italian, German, French and Spanish) can be booked four days in advance. A shorter visit of approximately 45 minutes is possible). Another alternative stop is Wadowice, a typical small town in the Lesser Poland region and birthplace of Pope John Paul II. Very close to the town square is the birthplace of Karol Wojtyła (there are usually queues to enter). Also in the square, make sure you try the millefeuille, which was the Pope's favourite dessert. Return to Krakow. A tasty beer in the city's oldest brewery, located in the basement of the Town Hall, is the best way to end off the day. Overnight stay in Krakow.

DAY 3 · KRAKOW - WIELICZKA - ZAKOPANE

Set off to Zakopane, but beforehand we recommend a fascinating stop. Twenty minutes from Krakow is the Wieliczka Salt Mine, which has been in use ever since the 13th century. Its rooms and sculptures carved directly out of salt are fascinating. It reaches a depth of 327 metres underground and there's a 3.5-kilometre tourist trail. Its interior is amazing, with chapels carved out of salt and an underground lake. (Note: It's an underground tour which can be booked up to the afternoon before your visit. The salt mine can be visited every day - except 1 January, Easter Sunday, 1 November, and 24/25 December - from 7.30 am to 7.00 pm in summer, and from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm in winter. It can only be visited at certain times and with guides. There are guided tours in Spanish, Italian, French, English, German, Polish and Russian. The price of a foreign-language visit is 21 euros. It's best to book tickets online so you can choose the date and time of the guided tour. The tour lasts around 3 hours. Wrap up well, as the temperature ranges between 14 and 16°C). Onward now to Zakopane, an hour and forty minutes away by car. This is one of the most enchanting and picturesque cities in the whole country. It's nestled in the foothills of the Tatra Mountains, the only Alpine mountains in Poland. The town's quaint wooden architecture is fascinating, with houses that seem to be plucked from a nativity scene. When the snow falls in winter, you can see true picture-postcard scenes. And even more so with the local highlanders (known as Gorals), dressed in traditional costumes and playing their special music. If you go in summer, the International Festival of Mountain Folklore takes place in the second half of August. The natural environment is majestic, with landscapes akin to a fairy tale. Don't miss the Jaszczurówka Chapel and the buildings designed by Stanislaw Witkiewicz (Villa Koliba and the Tatra Museum). Marvel at the quirky architectural style of this outstanding artist! If you have time, you can walk around the ski jumping complex (Duza i Mala Krokiew). Another option is to visit one of the four geothermal centres that you'll find within a twenty-kilometre radius of Zakopane. Here you can sit back and relax in thermal waters extracted from the subsoil. This is a highly appealing activity which can also be done in winter, as the outdoor pools are kept at a constant temperature of almost 36°C. All usually open from 8.00 am to 10.00 pm. ((Note: Terma Bukovina (20 km from Zakopane), Terma Bania (25 km from Zakopane), Chocholowskie Termy (17 km from Zakopane) and Termy Szaflary (14 km from Zakopane). Take advantage of your visit to see the rustic houses typical of the region, built from large wooden trunks). Parking in the Zakopane area is tricky in high season, so it's a good idea to choose a hotel with parking. If this isn't possible, you have use the pay-and-display machines in town (except at weekends). There's plenty of paid parking)). Overnight stay in Zakopane.

DAY 4 · ZAKOPANE - TATRA NATIONAL PARK - ZAKOPANE

Have a hearty breakfast to prepare yourself for a day of walking and excursions among dreamlike natural landscapes. Without a doubt, the most popular attraction in this town is the Tatras National Park, with Lake "Morskie Oko" (Eye of the Sea) taking centre stage. ((Note: There are several trails around the park, with some even beginning in town itself, although the most touristy thing is to head up to the Eye of the Sea lake. Bear in mind that although the Tatra National Park is open all year round, some trails may be closed due to weather conditions. You have to park your car at the entrance of the park. The price ranges between 25 and 30 PLN (between 6 and 7 euros/day) and you also have to pay an entrance fee to the park (1 euro according to 2017 rates). In high season, it's a good idea to arrive early (before 9.00 am) to avoid any parking issues. If the car parks and overflow zones are full, you'll be denied access to the park. We recommend wearing sensible footwear. You can request a guide, but in high season you'll have to do so in advance. You can either walk up to the Eye of the Sea or take a horse-drawn carriage)). Zakopane is the ideal starting point for day trips in the stunning natural landscapes of the Tatras, a natural border with Slovakia. There's a tourist information office in town where you can pick up a map. (Note: Opening hours 10.00 am to 5.00 pm). Within the National Park, declared a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO, there are 275 kilometres of trails of different levels where you can admire the fascinating peaks of these mountains, the highest in the Carpathians. You can admire a huge amount of tree species in the park, as well as hanging peaks and rocks, hollows from the glacial period, ravines, lakes, waterfalls, caves and valleys. If you're in luck, you'll even be able to spot marmots, bears and chamois. We recommend entering via Palenica Białczańska. After a day of mountain life, head back to Zakopane to recharge your batteries with a hearty dinner among picturesque facades backed by traditional music. Overnight stay in Zakopane.

● DAY 5 · ZAKOPANE - THE HIGH TATRAS (ZDIAR - LOMINCKY STIT - DUJAJEC GORGE - STARA LUBOVNA CASTLE) - ZAKOPANE

The Tatras Mountains have peaks that top 2,600 metres, divided between High and Low Tatras. We recommend a trip over to neighbouring Slovakia today to discover the High Tatras, the smallest mountain range in Europe and characterised by rocky ridges. Bear in mind that the drink driving limit in Slovakia is zero, with severe fines for any offenders. You need to have a vignette to use dual carriageways and motorways (a windscreen sticker for driving on fast roads, which can be bought online and costs 10 euros for 10 days). Start off by visiting the typical village of Zdiar, 35 kilometres from Zakopane, famous for its typical wooden houses with a central courtyard and decorated windows and doors. Art and folklore abound, with some villagers still wearing traditional costumes. Then take an intrepid cable car ride from Lomincky Stit up to the highest peak. You can also visit the Dunajec Gorge, accessible from Zakopane, with the option of rafting down the river. The most fascinating part is the gorge in the Pieniny Mountains. In the area near the Slovak Tatras just 40 minutes from Zdiar, an interesting sight is the Stara Lubovna Castle, built in 1833 and perched on a hill with wonderful views over the town of the same name. Take the opportunity to stroll through the Old Town, with attractions including St. Nicholas Square and the Gothic-style church dedicated to the saint, built in 1280. Another interesting temple is the Church of Perpetual Help, consecrated by Pope John Paul II in 1990. Back to Zakopane after an intense day to have dinner at a restaurant in the Old Town with typical music. Overnight stay in Zakopane.

● DAY 6 · ZAKOPANE - WOODEN ARCHITECTURE TRAIL (NOWY SACZ - KRYNICA-ZDRÓJ - TYLICZ - MUSZYNKA) - ZAKOPANE

Poland is well known for its traditional wooden architecture, with slender churches and magnificent villas scattered throughout the country. Just in the area of Małopolska (Lesser Poland) there are 250 buildings, so it's well worth spending at least one day here and visiting the most emblematic landmarks. (Note: On this so-called Wooden Architecture Trails, we suggest visiting at least one of the wooden churches included on the UNESCO list. There are eight in total, although the closest to Zakopane is in Debno, located about 35 kilometres away. The regional tourist board provides telephone numbers and you can visit at any time of day in high season, as long as it doesn't coincide with mass. The churches are closed in winter). Sacz Ethnographic Park, in Nowy Sacz, just over an hour and a half from Zakopane, is one of the most beautiful and emblematic in the whole country. It's a huge outdoor showcase of the lifestyle and traditions of the different ethnic groups that inhabited the Sacz region. A 30-minute drive away is the spa town of Krynica-Zdrój, famous both for its thermal waters and its charming wooden buildings. It's also worth visiting the Orthodox churches of Tylicz and Muszynka, where you'll also find relics of the medieval castle walls from which you can enjoy spectacular views. After a tour through the deep south of Poland, return journey to Zakopane. Take a walk along Krupowki Street, packed with restaurants and the ideal place for replenishing your strength. Make sure you try the local sausages and ham hock. Overnight stay in Zakopane.

● DAY 7 · ZAKOPANE AND GUBALOWKA HILL

After a few days on the road, today is the chance for some relaxation. That's why we suggest a leisurely day in Zakopane. Take the funicular train to the viewing point at the top of Gubalowka Hill, where the views are simply breathtaking. You can also take a cable car to the top of Kasprowy Wierch and practically touch the clouds. Up here you can buy some typical handmade items or eat a traditional dish or dessert at one of the many restaurants. Nearby is the Peksowym Brzyzku cemetery, where you'll find tombstones of artists who fell in love with Zakopane alongside those of villagers, reflecting the predominant style in this part of Poland. If the weather is good (as in visibility), it's worth heading up to see the view of the Tatras from the top of Gubalowka. Once back down in Zakopane, head for the Targ Pod Gubalowka, a huge market where you'll find everything from traditional leather moccasins (known as Kierpce) and mountain walking sticks (known as Ciupagi) to delicious cheeses and other natural products. Overnight stay in Zakopane.

● DAY 8 · ZAKOPANE - MEDIEVAL CITIES OF SLOVAKIA (BARDEJOV - PRESOV) - ZAKOPANE

After a laid-back day enjoying the culture of the highest town in Poland, surrounded by magical landscapes and welcoming people, we suggest a trip back to the neighbouring country of Slovakia. Explore cities with a special charm such as Bardejov and Presov. Bardejov, two and a quarter hours from Zakopane, boasts an exquisite medieval quarter, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and dominated by the majestic St. Giles Church, with its eleven Gothic altars. Its fort is the best preserved in the country, with walls, three doors and ten bastions reminding the traveller of nobles and royalty. The cobbled town square is lined by well-preserved Gothic and Renaissance houses bursting with colour. This square, with the Town Hall and its museum, showcases the orderliness and precision of this part of Slovakia. This city is also an important spa resort thanks to the properties of its thermal waters, so it's a great place to enjoy a relaxing bathe. Napoleon's wife and Tsar Alexander I of Russia were some of the illustrious users of these facilities. If you have time, we recommend you follow the route. Presov is around 45 minutes away by car, with a historic quarter fusing samples of Baroque, Rococo and Gothic architecture. Soviet-style buildings abound in the suburbs, with government buildings also bearing the USSR footprint. Make sure you visit the 14th-century Cathedral of St. Nicholas, with its Gothic-style spire. Stroll through the old town and the lively pedestrian streets while enjoying its floral decorations, one of the most famous features of the city. Remember that your overnight stay is in Zakopane again, so work out your time well to avoid driving at night. Overnight stay in Zakopane.

● DAY 9 · ZAKOPANE - SPIS REGION (KEZMAROK - LEVOCA - ŽEHRA) - SLOVAK PARADISE NATIONAL PARK - ZAKOPANE

Today we suggest a visit to the region of Spis. Drive for an hour and 20 minutes from Zakopane to Kezmarok, where you'll come across a picturesque town with an impressive castle surrounded by spectacular scenery. The 14th-century Gothic-style castle is stunningly beautiful. (Note: It opens every day of the week, but there's a minimum number of people per visit. We also recommend visiting the wood-built church of Kezmarok, also declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Make sure you go inside, you won't be disappointed! It's usually open until 5.00 pm, although it sometimes closes without warning). Also interesting is the Renaissance-style Hrad (castle) within the town, which was a Gestapo headquarters during World War II. Onward to Levoca, half an hour away. The highlights of its historic quarter are St. Jacob's Church, with the tallest wooden altar in Europe, the Town Hall and the ancient bourgeois houses of the adjacent streets. Also fascinating is the 'Cage of Shame' (Klietka Hanby), used in the past for public punishments. Then on to the stunning Spis Castle. This fortification is the only one of its kind in Europe, featuring in the UNESCO World Heritage List as one of the 1,000 most important monuments in the world. It was built in the 12th century on the same site as a castle. In the mid-15th century, the King gifted it to the noble Zapolsky family, owners of more than 70 castles. His son Jan, later the King of Hungary, was born here. (Note: You'll have to walk around thirty minutes from the car park. It usually opens every day from 9.00 am to 7.00 pm, and the entrance costs around 5 euros). It's a truly fascinating sight. A fairy tale castle, if there was ever one. This is where 'Dragonheart', 'The Last Legion' and 'Avalon' were all filmed. To round the day off, don't miss the Slovak Paradise National Park, less than half an hour away and one of the largest national parks in Slovakia, where you can enjoy nature in its purest form. This place is spectacular, sheltering the area of the Slovak Paradise mountain range, to the north of the Ore Mountains. (Note: You can park at the information centre and pay the 1.50 euros to enter). The Sucha Bela Canyon, with its wooden bridges and steep metal stairs, is an out-and-out natural treasure. Also interesting are the ruins of a 13th-century Carthusian convent and the Letanovsky mill. You can spend as many hours as you like at this Park. It's simply stunning. Back on the road to Zakopane, an hour and a half away. Arrive back in time for dinner and prepare for tomorrow, the day before your return home. Overnight stay in Zakopane.

● DAY 10 · ZAKOPANE - KRAKOW

Set out first thing in the morning for Krakow, about 2 hours away. You already had the chance to see the highlights of this city, but make sure you delve even deeper into Krakow, which Feldman said is the soul of Poland. Stroll around the majestic Rynek Główny Square and its adjacent streets, full of amazing buskers. To round the day off, we suggest dinner at Europe's oldest restaurant, the Wierzynek, where royalty often dined. It dates back to 1364, when it hosted the wedding banquet of the granddaughter of King Casimir the Great. An amazing experience. Overnight stay in Krakow.

● DAY 11 · KRAKOW - CITY OF ORIGIN

Arrival at the airport with enough time to drop off your rental car and flight back to the city of origin.

Arrival. End of the trip and our services.

Your trip includes

Your trip includes

✓ Return flight.

✓ Stay in selected hotel in Krakow.

✓ Stay in selected hotel in Zakopane.

✓ Insolvency protection.

✓ Selected meal plan in Krakow.

✓ Selected meal plan in Zakopane.

✓ Rent-a-car.

Your trip doesn't include

✗ Possible toll charges.

Destinations Visited

Krakow



Zakopane



Ždiar



Stará Ľubovňa



Nowy Sacz



Krynica



Tylicz



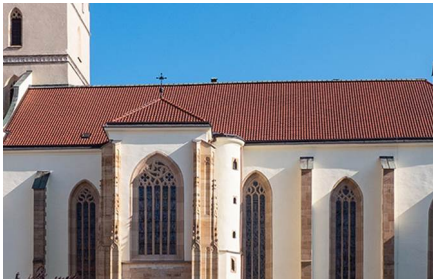
Muszyna



Bardejov



Prešov



Kežmarok



Levoča



Žehra



Oswiecim



Important remarks

- Driving through Poland: 1. When driving in Poland, you must keep your vehicle's lights switched on throughout the entire day. And take care in the cities, where the tram is still a widely-used means of public transport and always has the right of way. 2. The state of the roads has vastly improved in recent years. 3. Drink driving in Poland is severely punished. The permitted blood alcohol limit is 0.2 mg/l. 4. If you plan to visit the Tatra National Park or other mountainous area in winter, make sure you have the right tyres on your car. 5. Border

crossings between Poland and Slovakia are located in: Chochotów, Chyżne, Jurgów and Łysa Polana. 6. Speed limits: 6.1. Built-up areas 50 km/h (60 km/h after 11.00 pm). 6.2. Non-built-up areas 90 km/h. 6.3. Town/city centres 20 km/h. 6.4. Dual carriageway expressways 110 km/h. 6.5. Single carriageway expressways 100 km/h. 6.6 Dual carriageways with at least two lanes in each direction 100 km/h. 6.7. Motorways 130 km/h. 7. Drivers of motorhomes must register in the electronic toll system (Via Toll). 8. Parking in the centre of Krakow. The Old Town is closed off to traffic (except for taxis, police cars and ambulances, and delivery trucks at certain times of the day). There are very few underground car parks. The park-and-display area is marked with a P, with the compulsory payment hours shown underneath.

- Triple rooms in Europe are generally rooms with twin beds or a double, in which a folding bed is installed to accommodate the third person. Due to the inconvenience this causes, we advise against using this option as far the possible.
- Check-in time at the hotel on the day of arrival depends on each establishment, but in no case will it be before 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated.
- The proposed excursions and tours for each day are purely suggestions, as you can tailor the trip to suit your times, tastes and needs.
- A credit card is considered a guarantee, so sometimes you will need one for check-in at hotels.
- Hotels usually have cots available. Otherwise, babies will have to share a bed with an adult.
- To pick up your rental car, you'll need a credit (not debit) card in the name of the person who made the booking, who must also be the named driver of the vehicle.
- Consult the necessary documentation to enter the destinations visited and for transit in the countries where air stopovers are made.