

# Personal guide to Warsaw

Welcome to Warsaw! Both, Joe and I, are very happy about your visit and we hope you're going to have a wonderful time here. To help with that, we've prepared a guide with some of the most popular attractions in the city, but also with our own personal favourites.

## Must see

### 1. Old town and Royal Castle

The Old Town was established in the 13th century. Streets feature medieval architecture such as the city walls, St. John's Cathedral and the Barbican which links the Old Town with Warsaw New Town (still old, 15th century). Royal Castle- royal residence from the 16th century until the final partition of Poland in 1795. Completely destroyed during World War II, especially after Warsaw Uprising in 1944. Meticulously rebuilt based on 18<sup>th</sup> century paintings and drawings. Placed on the UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites as "an outstanding example of a near-total reconstruction of a span of history covering the 13th to the 20th century".

### 2. Palace of Culture and Science

High rise building, until 2021 was the highest building in Poland 237 m. A gift from the Soviet Union to the people of Poland. Designed by Soviet Russian architect Lev Rudnev in popular in Soviet Russia "Seven Sisters" style. Constructed from 1952 to 1955, houses various public and cultural institutions such as cinemas, theatres, university faculties, museums.

### 3. Royal Route (Krakowskie Przedmieście and Nowy Świat)

The Royal Route begins at Warsaw's Castle Square and runs south down Krakowskie Przedmieście, Nowy Świat, Aleje Ujazdowskie, Belwederska street and Sobieskiego street, finally to arrive at Wilanów (King Jan III Sobieski's personal residence). Streets feature a number of historic landmarks such as President's Palace, Warsaw University, The Holy Cross Church (an urn containing the heart of Frédéric Chopin is immured in a pillar), Royal Baths Park.

## Museums

### 1. POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews

<https://www.polin.pl/en>

This is a historical museum which presents the 1000 years of Jewish life in the Poland placed in a modern building.

Tip! Thursdays - admission is for free. Book tickets online ahead of time. Museum is closed on Tuesdays.

## 2. Warsaw Rising Museum

<https://www.1944.pl/en>

The exhibition depicts fighting and everyday life during the Rising, keeping occupation terror in the background.

Tip! Mondays - admission is for free. Book tickets online ahead of time. Museum is closed on Tuesdays.

## 3. National Museum

<https://www.mnw.art.pl/en/>

National Museum in Warsaw boasts a collection of works of art from Poland and abroad, from ancient times to the present including paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, photographs, coins, as well as utilitarian objects and design.

Tip! Tuesdays- admission is for free. Museum is closed on Mondays.

## Parks

### 1. Łazienki Park/ Royal Baths Park

Historic park-and-palace complex is part of the Royal Route linking the Royal Castle with Wilanów Palace to the south, it is also the biggest park in Warsaw. Home to peacocks and red squirrels. In the summer (May to September) on Sundays at noon there are Chopin music concerts by the Chopin statue, great thing! Right next to the Park, there's Botanic Garden of Warsaw University, entrance 12 PLN.

### 2. Krasiński Garden

Historic park located behind the baroque Krasiński Palace (now part of National Library) near the Old Town. We like to come here as it's 15-20 min walk from our home.

### 3. Saxon Garden

The oldest public park in Warsaw and also in Poland. Located behind Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, what used to be Saxon Palace destroyed in World War II, on Piłsudski's square.

## Restaurants

### 1. Sofra

Mediterranean and Middle East inspired cuisine. We love their lunch deals with little baklava as a treat.

### 2. Stary Dom

Elegant restaurant with traditional Polish cuisine. If you dare, try beef tartare- chopped right in front of you. Huge pavlova.

### 3. Gruby Josek

Pre-war, working class Warsaw atmosphere with modern twist on local classics.

### 4. Zapiecek

Chain of pierogi (dumplings) restaurants, looks like a tourist trap but the food is actually tasty, mostly located in Old Town.

## 5. Trattoria Rucola

Small chain of Italian restaurants. Tasty food, variety of choices and big portions. Can't go wrong.

## 6. Milk bar – bar mleczny

Cafeteria type place which during the communist era provided government-subsidized traditional Polish cuisine at low cost. Nowadays, cheap eats of home like food and a bit of time travel. There are few original ones still around and some modern copies- personal recommendations: Bambino on Krucza street, Prasowy- Puławska street or Familijny- Nowy Świat.

## Cafes, bakeries and cake shops

### 1. Lubaszka

Chain of bakeries, Asia's favourite everyday bakery. Smaller and bigger ones located all over the city.

### 2. Miss mellow

Pastry shop with (among others) amazing donuts, lavishly filled with Creme Patissiere and its different versions.

### 3. Po drodze

Café near plac Unii Lubelskiej (almost on Royal Route, near Łazienki Park).

### 4. Croque Madame

French style café on Nowy Świat (Royal Route). Huge pavlovas and delicious cakes. I like to go there with my friends.

### 5. Wedel chocolate café- Pijalnia Czekolady Wedla

Warsaw origin chocolate company from 1851. Café on Szpitalna street is in its original location from 1894. Wide selection of Wedel's products in a classic, chic café.

## Other

### 1. Praga district, Koneser, Polish Vodka museum

For many years, the other side of the river was a separate city. Praga is one of few districts where you can experience the atmosphere of pre-war Warsaw. The architecture stands out from the rest of the city as it was mostly unharmed during the Second World War. Unfortunately a lot of building that survived war, are now in bad condition due to negligence and lack of funds. For decades it was considered a no-go zone in Warsaw. Today, things have changed. It has unique local vibe with the little courtyard shrines and street and alternative art.

Praga Koneser Center is a complex of residential, office, cultural and entertainment facilities located on the premises of the former Warsaw Vodka Factory "Koneser" that operated from 1897 to 2007 in this location.

Polish Vodka Museum <https://muzeumpolskiejwodki.pl/en/polish-vodka-museum/>

This kind of museum in this location only seems natural. The exhibition will take through the process of making vodka and its history in Poland. At the end of the tour there's tasting.

## 2. Walk along Vistula river, Elektrownia Powiśle, Warsaw University Library gardens

Along the river on the west bank there are Vistulan Boulevards, nice area to walk or ride a bike. There are many bars and food trucks located along, especially between Łazienkowski bridge and Śląsko- Dąbrowski bridge (near Old Town). In summer it's a very lively area.

Located by the river, near Copernicus Science Center, Elektrownia Powiśle is an old power plant that is now reconstructed into modern shopping center with some niche boutiques.

Located next to Elektrownia Powiśle is Warsaw University Library with its modern architecture building and rooftop gardens with great views to the river. If you like Belgian fries, there's a great place right across the street- OKIENKO.

## 3. Cocktail bar Max

Located on Nowy Świat near the Palm tree (yes, we have a palm tree in Warsaw), cocktail bar and whisky house. The cocktails look amazing, with big fruit decoration on the glass. Our personal favourite is malibu. So if you like coconut and pineapple, then definitely go for it!

In the neighbourhood, there are also some other bars. We also recommend Zamieszanie, it's located in the old Party House (communist party) and in 90's- Stock Exchange, near National Museum.

## 4. Dumpling class

<https://pierogiandmore.pl/>

If you want to learn some new skills, try making dumpling (pierogi). You can prepare your own dumplings with different fillings and take all that knowledge back home. They also offer some local fruit liquor (nalewki) workshops.

## Getting around and general tips

Google maps will take you everywhere. Its suggestions about public transport are correct so don't be afraid to follow them. The public system operates on one ticket- all buses, trams and metro require the same ticket. You can buy them on all of the metro stations, most buses and trams, newsstands. Remember to validate your ticket and be careful with 20 minutes one, the controllers are very exact, not a single minute longer is accepted. There's also an app, called SkyCash. To validate your online ticket you need to scan a QR code located in bus/tram or metro station. Quite frankly, my honest opinion- with metro station looking for the code can be quite annoying and tricky so stick to the paper ticket.

Uber or bolt is cheap and safe here so don't worry about using it. Joe is a big fan. Most drivers are not locals but they'll cheaply get you from one place to another. Uber is not recognized in Poland as a taxi so there are some restrictions to the roads they can take. If you want to use proper taxi, Freenow is a good option, they also operate on app and this way it's cheaper than just picking up taxi on the street, prices comparable to Uber. If you take taxi from the street, make sure it's a proper, legal taxi (has an ID number and mermaid symbol on the front door) and that the driver is using meter (usually starting amount is 8 PLN, 1 km- 3 PLN)

To ease your math, you can take that £1 is roughly 5 PLN (złoty).

## Glossary

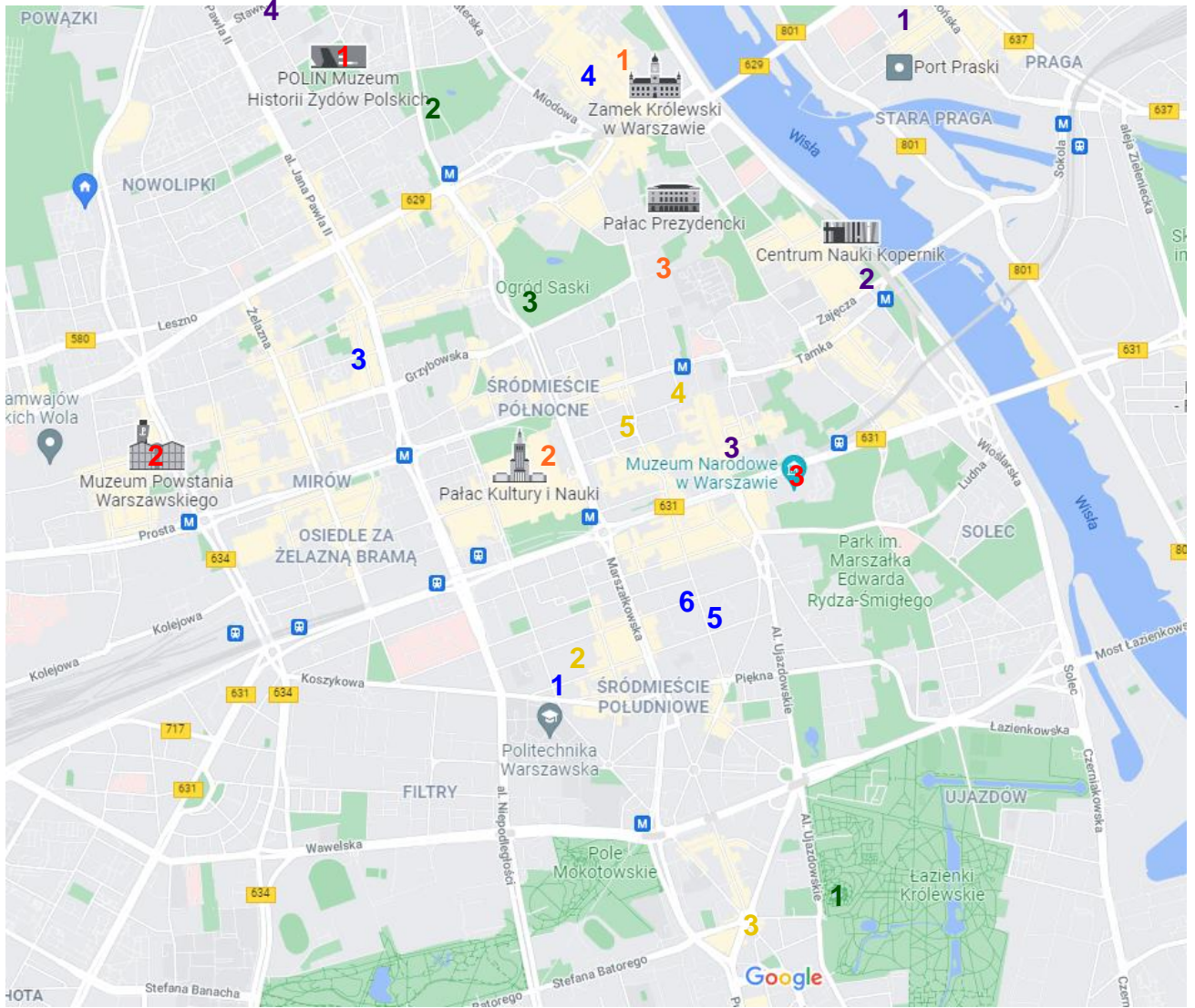
Dzień dobry [djzien dobrej]- good day

Do widzenia [doh vid-jzen-ja]- goodbye

Dziękuję [dziewn-kuh-jeh]- thank you

Przepraszam [pshi-prash-am]- I'm sorry/ excuse me

Nie mówię po polsku [nieh moviewh po pol-skuh]- I don't speak Polish



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