



BEST SELLER

Hiking in the Polish Carpathians

POLAND - TRIP CODE WPS

WALKING AND TREKKING

Why book this trip?

This Poland walking holiday visits both the Tatra Mountain range in the south and the outer Carpathian Mountains in Babia Gora National Park. Explore the dramatic peaks and valleys, turquoise lakes and highlander folk culture of this stunning country.

- **Krakow** - Home to Europe's largest medieval market square, explore on foot
- **Tatra Mountains** - Hike in the stunning Valley of the Five Polish Lakes
- **UNESCO Dunajec Gorge** - Walk the Pieniny Way, a spectacular cliff-cut path through the gorge



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 7



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)



TRANSPORT
Bus



ACCOMMODATION
1 nights comfortable chalet
6 nights comfortable hotel



WALKING GRADE:
Moderate



GROUP SIZE:
10 - 16

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in Krakow

Arrive in Krakow, is a beautiful city which dates back to the 13th Century; it has a wonderfully rich and varied architecture; a well preserved vast medieval square and a fascinating old Jewish quarter.

For those arriving on time our Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 6pm for the welcome meeting and for those that wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner. There are no activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Krakow at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive at Kraków John Paul II International Airport (KRK) which is around 30 minutes' drive from the hotel. Should you miss the meeting, your leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, perhaps you might choose to explore on your own, why not try some traditional Polish dumplings 'Pierogi'. Found throughout the city and filled with anything from sweet sauces to cottage cheese, mushrooms or meat they are delicious!



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Maximum (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE





MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Explore old Krakow on foot: head to the Carpathian Mountains

After breakfast we take a guided walking tour of Krakow beginning with Rynek Glowny, Europe's largest medieval square and the focal point of the city. We discover the distinctive character of the UNESCO World Heritage Old Town with its narrow cobbled streets and majestic architecture. Heading away from the centre we walk to Wawel Castle and Cathedral perched on a hill overlooking the old town. Our final stop today is the Kazimierz, the former Jewish Quarter, once the Ghetto area during World War II, now a busy neighborhood crammed with art galleries, traditional restaurants and atmospheric cafes.

In the afternoon we depart towards Babia Gora National Park in the Outer Carpathian Mountains, the drive to our hotel in Zawoja will take approximately one and a half hours. The Babia Gora massif lies within the Western Beskidy Mountains and is the second highest in range in Poland. Depending on travel time, for those who wish to stretch your legs this afternoon there is an optional walk in the Babia Gora range to be rewarded with your first view over the Carpathian Mountains.

Today's optional two kilometre walk is expected to take around one hour with an ascent and decent of 200 metres. The walk is graded Easy.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Jawor (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Hike across alpine meadows and through forest to 'Witches Mountain'

A short drive this morning brings us to the edge of Babia Gora National Park and the start of today's hike to the peak of Babia Gora (1,725 meters). Babia Gora which translates to Witches Mountain is named so after a folk legend describing the area as a meeting place for witches and black magicians. The path takes us through alpine meadows, ancient spruce and dwarf pine forests, we'll visit a local shepherds hut for tea along the route. From the peak stretches one of the best panoramas of several Carpathian ranges and across to the Tatra mountains. The Polish-Slovakian border runs over the top of Babia Gora and along the shoulders of the mountain from east to west. We descend via a different route back to our hotel in Zawoja.

Today's 14 kilometre walk is expected to take around six-and-a-half hours with 700 metres of ascent and 1,050 metres of descent.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Jawor (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Walk over the Tatra Mountains from Slovakia, drive to Zakopane

This morning we drive to Zverovka village, crossing the Slovakian border into the West Tatras. Accompanied by an English speaking mountain guide we walk along a wide path climbing gently through the forest Rakon peak (1,879m) and into Slovakia. From this ridge there are fantastic views across forested peaks of the western Tatra. We descend to Polana Chocholowska, a clearing with a number of mountain huts for livestock where we'll stop for lunch in a mountain chalet. Walking down the valley the bus will be waiting to take us to Zakopane, a town lying at the foothills of the Tatras Mountains. Zakopane is a popular Polish ski resort and an excellent base for hiking, the town is characterized by traditional 'Zakopane Style' of timber architecture inspired by the surrounding mountains.

The Tatras region has its own home-grown culinary traditions, this evening tuck into a hearty meat or vegetable stew followed by a small glass of sliwowica lacka (plum brandy).

Today's 15 kilometre walk is expected to take around seven-and-a-half hours with 890 metres of ascent and 960 metres of descent. As we pass into Slovakia you will need to have your passport with you.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Czarny Potok (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE





MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Waterfalls and lakes of the Tatra Mountains

An early start (6:30 am) this morning to avoid the crowds on the trail in the afternoon, its a 40 minutes drive to Palenica Bialczanska the starting point for today's walk to Wielki Staw lake and refuge (1,665m). We walk through the beautiful valley of the Five Polish Lakes past the highest waterfall in the Tatras, Siklawa (a 70m drop). Wielki Staw (known as The Great Polish Lake) is a post-glacial natural lake; you can get a mug of tea in the Dolina Pieciu Stawow refuge and walk around the lake admiring the landscape.

Here you have the choice of either walking back to Palenica Bialczanska with your leader and taking a public bus to Zakopane or join your mountain guide to make the steep and challenging ascent of Kozi Wierch (2,291m) the highest peak lying entirely within Poland. Towards the top there is a small section of scrambling to reach the summit to be rewarded with magnificent views.

Today's 18 kilometer walk is expected to take around six hours with 900 metres of ascent and descent. The optional extension to Kozi Wierch is graded as Challenging and is an additional four kilometres taking approxiamtly three hours with an extra 300 metres of ascent and descent.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Czarny Potok (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Dunajec Gorge and The Pieniny Way

After a leisurely morning in Zakopane we drive to Dunajec Gorge, listed by UNESCO as a World Natural Heritage Site and one the most stunning gorges in Europe. We follow the Pieniny Way along the gorge with limestone cliffs blanketed in lush forests of fir, beech, larch and spruce rising high above us. The Way runs the entire length of the Dunajec Gorge snaking in and out of Poland through sections of Slovakia. The end point of today's walk and accommodation for the evening is in the spa town of Szczawnica, back on Polish side of the border.

For those who prefer to take a break from walking today it is possible to travel the same route down

Dunajec River by traditional wooded raft. This leisurely form of transportation has been used for centuries in this area to move both goods and people between villages.

Today's 14 kilometre walk is expected to take around three-and-a-half hours along a flat route. As we pass into Slovakia you will need to have your passport with you.



ACCOMMODATION:

Trzy Korony Chalet (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Chalet



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Hike up Trzy Korony peak with views of Dunajec Gorge

After a good night's rest we start our last ascent of the trip, the peak of Trzy Korony. Departing from the hotel we take a small wooden boat across the Dunajec River to reach the start of the today's walk. The traditional boats seat approximately eight people at one time and the ferrymen are dressed in local folk attire.

Once across the river we begin our gradual ascent starting at 500 meters through the forest to reach our first peak of the day, Sokolica (747m). After taking in the fabulous views we continue to a green meadow before the final ascent to the peak of Trzy Korony (982m), the summit of the Three Crowns massif. There is an observation deck on top of the peak with views of the Dunajec River, Gorge and Pieniny National Park. We take a different trail down from the peak looping the massif, enjoying the spectacular views of the limestone peaks, before descending to the bottom of the valley. Today's walk ends in Kroszcienko town where our driver will be waiting to take us on to Krakow (two hours).

Today's 15 kilometre walk is expected to take around five-and-a-half hours with 480 metres of ascent and 550 metres of descent.



ACCOMMODATION:

Hotel Maximum (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Trip ends in Krakow

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Krakow.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Krakow at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from Kraków John Paul II International Airport (KRK) which is around 30 minutes' drive from the hotel.

If you have booked a late afternoon or evening flight it is possible to take an optional morning excursion to Oswiecim, the site of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and country information

Poland

Climate

Poland has a temperate, changeable climate. September and October are cooler and gradually become damper until late November when temperatures fall below freezing with snowfall, particularly in mountainous areas. Cold temperatures last through to March, but are tolerable. Snow can lie for up to three months in the mountains.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
+1	2 Pin Round	Roman Catholic	Polish

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may

depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Excursion to Auschwitz Memorial Museum by bus including entrance and guiding in English PLN 155.00 (€38.00 per person)

Rafting in the Dunajec Gorge on day 6 costs €14 Euros per person.

Clothing

Bring light and comfortable clothing that can be layered according to the temperature. The weather conditions in the mountains can be changeable, and it can become cool, especially at night, so bring warmer layers. Tops made from wicking materials which keep you drier and warmer are recommended as a base layer, and walking trousers are preferable to trousers of heavier material such as jeans. A waterproof jacket is essential at all times in case of rain and wind. If you choose the rafting option on day six, that day you'll need to take a change of clothes, shoes that you don't mind getting wet and a towel with you.

- Breathable wind and waterproof jacket (you may also wish to bring waterproof trousers)
- T-shirts
- Long sleeved tops
- Sunhat
- Long trousers
- Shorts (if you prefer to walk in them)
- Swimwear and towel
- Midlayer Fleece/pullover
- Socks (liner and thicker pair)
- Insulated jacket
- Hat
- Gloves

Footwear

We recommend you bring well-worn in walking boots - leather or fabric are both fine. In addition please take comfortable trainers/shoes or sandals for evenings and walking around Krakow. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them - should your luggage be lost or delayed, your own boots are the one thing that will be irreplaceable.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

Bring one main piece of luggage and a 20-30 litre day sack is recommended. You will need to carry what you need for the day which may include a raincoat, jumper, camera, sun-cream, picnic lunch etc. On hot days you will carry fewer clothes but more drinking water.

Equipment

- Sunglasses
- Sun cream
- Small Torch (with spare batteries and bulb)
- Camera
- Walking poles (if you usually use them)
- Personal toiletries
- Personal first aid kit - On each walk a first aid kit is carried but you should have your own blister kit, supply of plasters, aspirin and other essentials.
- Insect repellent
- Small waterproof dry bag (for items such as your mobile phone)
- Reusable water bottle (minimum 1 litre) - Get 15% discount on a Water-to-Go bottle www.explore.co.uk/about-us/responsible-travel/water-to-go-discount-with-explore
- Lunch bag/Tupperware (for packed lunches)

Please note that in many of the museums in Poland larger bags will need to be placed in a locker and there may be an additional charge for taking photographs whilst inside.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. You may however, want to recognise a leader that has done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It is a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we would recommend £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.

Local crew

Although voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow approximately £15 of local currency for tipping.

In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the trip.

Local fees

Picnic lunches 6-7 Euros

Poland

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£8	£18.00 - 22.00	£1.50 - 3.00	£0.8

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Polish Zloty

Recommended Currency For Exchange

British Pounds Sterling, US Dollars and Euros are all accepted at exchange offices and banks

Where To Exchange

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival

ATM Availability

Available in all major cities

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are widely accepted in all major cities

Travellers Cheques

Easily exchanged

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus

Accommodation notes

Our mid-range accommodation throughout this trip offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Please note that the majority of hotels in Poland don't have air-conditioning. In Zakopane and outside of Szczawnica we stay in a traditional wooden mountain chalet-style properties.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing

Visa and Passport Information

Poland: Visas not required by citizens of the UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your

responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them here.

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport. On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Maximum altitude (m)

2291

Poland

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, polio and hepatitis A. Tickborne encephalitis is recommended by some medical sources if travelling in certain areas of Europe, at specific times of the year. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Walking and Trekking information

DAILY DISTANCES

Day 2	2km	1hr
Day 3	14km	6.5hrs
Day 4	15km	7.5hrs
Day 5	18km 4km	6/3hrs
Day 6	14km	3.5hrs
Day 7	15km	5.5hrs

Optional Walks

Walking grade

Moderate

Trek details

Walks on 5 days for between 3.5 to 6 hours on well-marked and maintained mountain trails. The optional extended walk on day 5 to Kozi Wierch is graded as challenging; it is steep and rocky in places.

Max walking altitude (m)

2291

Additional Information



Why book this trip

This Poland walking holiday is extremely good value offering a week walking in the mountains of Poland. Visiting both the Tatra Mountain range in the south and the outer Carpathian Mountains in Babia Gora National Park. Explore the dramatic peaks and valleys, lakes and highlander folk culture of this stunning country.

Reviews



AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS



PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE



AIRPORT
TRANSFERS