

EXPLORE!



Krakow to Budapest Adventure
8 days

Hungary, Poland, Slovakia - Trip code CZK

Krakow to Budapest Adventure

Discover the historical European cities of Krakow and Budapest on foot and whilst in Krakow have the opportunity to visit the emotive sight of Auschwitz or the Wieliczka Salt Mine. Explore the pretty medieval town of Banska Stiavnica, including a visit the Open Air Mining Museum - home to a network of tunnels dating back to the 17th century. Enjoy walks amidst the spectacular scenery of the Tatras Mountains in Slovakia and experience the thrill of rafting in the vast Dunajec River Gorge pass the limestone tree covered cliffs.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Krakow** - Explore the Medieval city's maze of streets and sample the coffee culture
- ★ **Dunajec Gorge** - Marvel at this impressive rock carved gorge whilst rafting along the river
- ★ **High Tatras** - Enjoy a scenic walk in the mountains up to the Green Lake
- ★ **Budapest** - Walking tour to see Castle Hill, the Old Town, Fisherman's Bastion and the Royal Palace

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:

Full on

Full on paced trips are for travellers who like their holidays packed with activities and experiences, moving on quickly from place to place with lots of early starts and long, busy days. Some may find them tiring, but others get a buzz from packing their precious holiday-time as chock-a-block full of new experiences as possible!

GROUP SIZE:

12 - 18

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Join the trip in Krakow, Poland

Our adventure begins in the beautiful Polish city of Krakow, where we spend the next two nights. It was Poland's former capital until 1596 and due to its very distinctive character it is on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Its historic architecture survived World War II unscathed, unlike most other Polish cities, and its rich culture has been preserved to the present day. It was the residence of Polish kings and has nearly one hundred churches, as well as the country's oldest university. Among its most important architectural treasures are Saint Mary's Church, which contains the world-famous altarpiece carved by Veit Stoss, the Medieval buildings of the Jagiellonian University and Wawel Castle and Cathedral.

In the city centre you will find numerous good Polish restaurants and the 'pierogi', Polish dumplings, are especially tasty. There are also many bars selling a range of local beers and of course a wide range of vodkas. Such as Chmiel, which is a basement bar beneath the forecourt of Wawel Castle, C.K. Browar, which is a popular micro-brewery or Starka Restaurant and Vodkas where you can try out an array of homemade flavoured vodkas.



Accommodation: Hotel Wyspianski (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Walk in the Old Quarter; option to visit Wieliczka Salt Mine

This morning our Explore Leader will take us on a short orientation walk around the city's stunning Old Quarter to help us get our bearings.

The rest of today is left free for you to explore Krakow and further afield if you wish. The Jewish Kazimierz district, the setting for the film Schindler's List, has many points of interest, including the Old Synagogue and the Museum of Jewish Life. You may like to

make an excursion to Oswiecim, the site of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp, which is a haunting reminder of the terrible atrocities that took place here during World War II.

Alternatively it's possible to visit the Royal Castle, perched high on Wawel Hill, which overlooks both the Old Quarter and the Vistula River. Constructed in Renaissance style, the castle houses exquisite treasures collected through the ages by Polish monarchs. Next to the castle is Wawel Cathedral, which is the final resting place of the Polish Kings.

Another option is to visit the fascinating Wieliczka Salt Mines, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. At up to 300 metres underground you'll see a 400 year old chapel, a subterranean salt lake and chambers large enough to hold the Eiffel Tower! The Chapel of Saint Kinga is the mine's most spectacular feature and you'll no doubt be amazed by what can be sculpted from salt. Please note that there are 350 steps down into the mine at the beginning of the tour and then a further 450 on the route through the various corridors and 20 chambers visited. The temperature underground can be much cooler than on the surface, so be sure to bring a jumper.



Accommodation: Hotel Wyspianski (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 3 - Rafting in Dunajec Gorge; arrive in the Tatras Mountains, Slovakia

This morning we depart for an inflatable rafting trip on the Dunajec River to a point close to the Polish border near Lesnica. It's a chance to get active and probably get wet as well as enjoying the picturesque surroundings. Bring a change of clothes and shoes that you don't mind getting wet and a towel with you today. This river has been a famous attraction since the middle of the 19th century, when tourists came here to cruise on log built rafts. We meander along the bottom of the spectacular canyon that bears the river's name, passing a landscape of towering limestone cliffs, blanketed in lush forests of fir, beech, larch and spruce. Part of the Pieniny National Park, the gorge is one of the most stunning in Europe and its verdant slopes attract a diverse collection of wildlife including lynx, wolf, stag and some 14 species of bats. Birdlife includes eagle and pygmy owls, three toed woodpeckers and rare black storks can sometimes be spotted along the river's edge.

We will also pay a visit to the impressive Spis Castle. Sat on a hilltop above the town of Spiske it was once home to the Hungarian kings and it is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the ruins show both Romanesque and Gothic architecture.

We then board our bus and continue to Tatraska Lomnica in the High Tatras Mountains. This area of Slovakia can justly claim to be the Switzerland of the country. Snow-capped for most of the year, the compact High Tatras range is sliced by beautiful valleys and lakes. An ideal region for winter sports, in summer the network of well-marked trails is a hiker's delight.



Accommodation: Hotel Titris (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Hiking in the Tatras Mountains

Today we take a public bus to Biela Voda and from here we'll start our full day trek in the beautiful Tatras Mountains. We begin with an uphill walk to the picturesque Green Lake. We take in the view and have the option to have a picnic lunch here. For those that wish to walk further there is then the possibility to continue to the Great White Lake before returning to Biela Voda on foot. We return to Tatranska Lomnica by public bus for the evening.

The trek is graded moderate. The first section is 5 kilometres long and goes from 915 metres to an altitude of 1550 metres and should take approximately 2.5 hours. If you continue to the Great White Lake it's a further 2 kilometres and goes to an altitude of 1615 metres and should take an extra 35 minutes. We then need to walk the same distance back to the original starting point of the walk, so we will cover between 10-14 kilometres and walk for 5-6 hours in total today. Please make sure you bring comfortable walking shoes or boots and you may also find walking poles useful.

Alternatively if you'd prefer a shorter walk then you can take a local train to Lake Strbske and enjoy a gentle walk around the lakeshore. This large glacial lake offers great views over the surrounding pine covered Tatras Mountains with their jagged rock peaks.



Accommodation: Hotel Titris (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Train to Banska Bystrica with an orientation walk on arrival

This morning we travel by rail to Banska Bystrica (the journey will involve changes of train). On arrival our Explore Leader will take us on an orientation walk of the city. The pretty town is set on the Hron River and is surrounded by mountains. The main square is a hive of activity in summer and the City Castle, which is one of the main attractions, is located on the edge of the square. Back in 1944 it was in Banska Bystrica that the Slovak National Uprising began against the invading German forces and their own collaborationist government. Although most were defeated a few members managed to hold on until 1945 when the Soviet, Czechoslovak and Romanian armies arrived and liberated the country from under Nazi rule.

Whilst here you might like to try the traditional and delicious folded potato pancakes followed by the original 'Tatratea' liqueur, which a tea based strong herbal drink that originated in the High Tatras Mountains, as a way of keeping warm on cold winter evenings.



Accommodation: Pension Grand (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Single room available

DAY 6 - Excursion to Banska Stiavnica and visit to the Mining Museum

Today we depart on an excursion to Banska Stiavnica - a preserved Medieval town that is yet another UNESCO World Heritage Site. The town is unusually located in the centre of a huge caldera of an ancient collapsed volcano and is surrounded by dense forested hills. Whilst here we will visit the Open Air Mining Museum, which dates back to the 17th century and offers an interesting two kilometre long underground excursion. The museum not only explains the mining history of Slovakia but also the cultural heritage of the town itself.



Accommodation: Pension Grand (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Single room available

DAY 7 - Drive to Budapest, Hungary and take a guided walking tour

We start our day with a visit to the Hronsek Wooden Church and then stop in the small village of Sebechleby where you may choose to go wine tasting. From here we continue our journey to Budapest. Situated on a beautiful stretch of the Danube River, Hungary's capital consists of two parts: Buda and Pest. Buda is the older, more graceful part, with cobbled streets and Medieval buildings, whilst the latter is the modern business centre. Utilising local transport, this afternoon's guided walking tour takes in the major sites of this impressive city. We discover the Basilica of Saint Stephen and the Parliament buildings before crossing the Chain Bridge to the Castle District and Watertown. Here lie Buda's most ancient gems - Castle Hill with the Old Town, Fisherman's Bastion and the Royal Palace.



Accommodation: Hotel Jagello (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available

DAY 8 - Trip ends in Budapest

Trip ends at our hotel in Budapest after breakfast.

If you have chosen to join our 'Budapest to Prague' trip then today is free for you to further explore Budapest's many attractions. You may like to visit one of the city's famous thermal baths or take a boat cruise on the Danube River. Another recommended attraction is Szentendre; an artist's town with a Serb minority located on the bank of the river, which can be reached by train or bus.



Why book this trip

On our new 8 day trip you can experience three countries including historic cities and beautiful mountain scenery. We travel in true Explore style by using a range of different public transport as well as charter buses, go hiking in the High Tatras Mountains and raft in the Dunajec River Gorge. If you'd like to experience more, then you can combine this trip with our 'Budapest to Prague' (trip code: CZP) to make a two week adventure.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 7



Transport

Bus
Public Bus
Train



Trip staff

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



Accommodation

4 nights standard guesthouse
3 nights standard hotel

Trip information

Country information

Hungary

Climate

Summer days are generally quite hot and sunny with usually between 9-10 hours of sunshine daily. Winter days are usually quite windy and temperatures are regularly around or just below freezing. Night time temperatures can drop quite low in the hills whilst most rain falls in spring and early summer. Sudden rain showers can, however, occur at any time of the year.

Time difference to GMT

+1

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Christian

Language

Hungarian

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

+1

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Roman Catholic

Language

Polish

Slovakia

Climate

Summers are short in the mountains. July to August is the hottest period, when daytime temperatures average 20-22°C, though it may be much cooler in the early morning or late evening. During the winter, snow and ice is not uncommon, with snow generally starting in December and continuing to early February. Mountain weather is notoriously changeable and it can be cold at any time of year, so be prepared.. Early July is the best time for flowers.

Time difference to GMT

+1

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Roman Catholic

Language

Slovak

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.

Krakow - Wieliczka Salt Mine £20.00; Wawel Castle entrance fee £5.00; Visit to Auschwitz approximately £32.00. Please note a visit to Auschwitz will take up most of the day. It is subject to availability so we recommend booking a ticket before leaving the UK. You can do this online directly with any of the following companies; Discover Cracow <https://discovercracow.com/tours-and-trips/auschwitz-birkenau/>, See Krakow <http://www.seekrakow.com/auschwitz-birkenau/>, Info Tours <http://www.infotours.pl/tour/auschwitz-birkenau/>. Please ensure you book your ticket for the correct day.
Budapest - Thermal Baths £10.00; Danube River cruise £13.00; Tasting of four wines and lunch £15.00
Also allow about £10.00 for various museum and site entrance fees during the trip.

Clothing

Mountain weather is changeable. Summers can be hot so pack cottons and light weight clothing with warmer layers for the evenings

and a rain jacket, just in case. Medium weights in spring and autumn are recommended along with a windproof and waterproof jacket. If you are travelling in winter then wrap up warmly - layers work best. Warmer clothing is required for in the Tatras Mountains - a warm fleece, gloves and hat are essential throughout most of the season. You should also bring a swimming costume and towel.

Footwear

Walking boots for the Tatras Mountain trails are required. Comfortable trainers or sandals for city sightseeing and relaxing. If you're travelling in winter then bring good non-slip footwear as the cobbled streets can be slippery underfoot when they're wet or icy.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and a day pack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

This trip is at a full on pace, including a train journey with short walks and/or stairs between platforms, stations and accommodation, so for this reason please take care to make sure you can comfortably carry your own luggage throughout the trip.

Equipment

Bring a water bottle, insect repellent, a sunhat, sunscreen and sunglasses and a torch just in case of emergencies. You may also find walking poles useful for the hike in the Tatras Mountains. Don't forget your camera.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Explore Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely 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 £13.00 for tips. In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the trip.

Country Information

Hungary

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

£10

Dinner price

£18

Beer price

£1.5

Water price

£1.1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Hungarian Forint2

Recommended Currency For Exchange

British Pounds Sterling and US Dollars can be exchanged locally for Euros

Where To Exchange

GBP, USD and Euros cash are accepted at exchange offices

ATM Availability

All the main towns and cities have ATM's for cash withdrawal

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are widely accepted

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques can be exchanged in the main banks

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

£8

Dinner price

£18.00 - 22.00

Beer price

£1.50 - 3.00

Water price

£0.8

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Polish Zloty²

Recommended Currency For Exchange

British Pounds Sterling, US Dollars and Euros are all accepted at exchange offices and banks²

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

Slovakia

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

£7

Dinner price

£15

Beer price

£2

Water price

£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Euro

Recommended Currency For Exchange

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

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival

ATM Availability

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival, but please be aware that some ATMs will charge 5% commission and outside of the main cities ATM's can sometimes be difficult to find

Credit Card Acceptance

At most shops and restaurants

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques can be difficult to exchange

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Public Bus, Train

Essential Information

FCO 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 and Commonwealth 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 information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Poland: Visas are not required by UK, US, Canadian, Australia and New Zealand citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

Slovakia: Visas are not required by UK, US, Canadian, Australia and New Zealand citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

Hungary: Visas are not required by UK, US, Canadian, Australia and New Zealand citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying 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 now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. 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.

Included activities

This trip is designed to acquaint you with the highlights of three fascinating countries in 8 days. There's so much to enjoy and a lot of ground to cover, so please be prepared for the busy nature of this enthralling holiday.

Non refundable permits

Hungary

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.

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.

Slovakia

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, polio and hepatitis A. Tick-borne 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.
