

American Celebration of Music in Poland

Standard Tour #2 (7 nights / 9 days)

Day 1

Departure via scheduled airline service to Warsaw, Poland

Day 2

Warsaw (D)

Arrive in Warsaw. Meet your MCI Tour Manager, who will assist the group to the awaiting motorcoach for a panoramic tour of Warsaw's highlights. Take a tour of the Royal Castle, seat of kings of Poland. It was here that the Third of May Constitution was promulgated in 1791, the second constitution in the world, next to the US Constitution. The interior (300 rooms!) was carefully restored to look as it did centuries ago. Continue on to the historic Rynek (Market Square) for time at leisure. A late afternoon hotel check-in followed by a Welcome Dinner.

Warsaw, the capital of recently-liberated Poland, was 75% destroyed by Hitler's armies in 1944, and it was rebuilt in the "functional" communist styles of the 1950s and 60s. The reconstructed areas of the city — the historic Old Town area, rebuilt brick by brick in the 1950s; the Royal Castle, the Ujazdowski Palace — are moving tributes to the Poles' ability to survive and preserve their history and traditions. Since liberation, Warsaw is quickly changing into a modern, cosmopolitan, major European capital.

Day 3

Warsaw (B,D)

Half-day sightseeing includes visits to the Cathedral of St. John, the Łazienki Park and Palace (the "Palace on the Water"), the Monument to the Heroes of the Ghetto (erected in 1948 when the city was still in ruins), and the Monument to the 1944 Warsaw Uprising.

Enjoy an afternoon at leisure.

Performance as part of the American Celebration of Music in Poland

Day 4

Czestochowa / Krakow (B,D)

Transfer to Krakow

Stop en route for a guided tour in Częstochowa that includes entrance to the Monastery of Jasna Góra. There, a monk will guide your visit to the Basilica of the Holy Cross and the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, which holds the Black Madonna, the monastery's most precious treasure. Also see the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin, Knight's Hall, Treasury, and Arsenal. Continue on to Krakow for dinner and overnight.

Krakow (Cracon), seat of Poland's oldest university and once the nation's capital (before relinquishing the honor to Warsaw in 1611) is one of the few Polish cities that escaped devastation during World War II. Today Krakow's fine towers, facades, and churches illustrating seven centuries of Polish architecture, make it a major attraction for visitors. Listed by UNESCO in 1978 as one of the 12 great historic cities of the world, Krakow represents a great repository of Polish history, art and architecture.

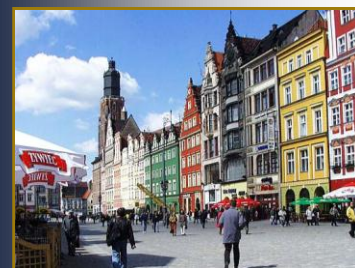


Day 5 **Krakow** **(B,D)**

A guided sightseeing tour of this ancient capital of Poland, a royal city on the Vistula, lying at the foot of Wawel, a limestone hill on whose peak rises a splendid royal palace and the Cathedral of Sts. Stanislaw and Waclaw. Start with the Royal Castle and Cathedral on the Wawel Hill, which was remodeled according to the new Renaissance taste in the beginning of the 16th century. It is the place where Polish kings were crowned and buried

Afterwards, drive to the Old Town with the Main Market Square and its magnificent houses and palaces. In the middle of the square is the Cloth Hall, built before 1349 but altered in the 16th century, with many shopping stalls inside. Also visit the Church of St. Mary, located on the Main Market Square

Performance as part of the American Celebration of Music in Poland



Day 6 **Krakow / Wieliczka** **(B,D)**

Excursion to Wieliczka to see the underground world of the oldest Salt Mine in Europe. Admire the gorgeous underground world of salt lakes, galleries and chapels created by many generations of Polish miners. See up to 20 excavated chambers on 3 levels, full of beautiful statues carved from salt as well as the Salt Works Museum

Return to Krakow for an afternoon at your leisure in the Old Market Square

For choirs only: sing a recital in the Saint Kinga Chapel



Day 7 **Auschwitz / Wroclaw** **(B,D)**

Transfer to Wroclaw by way of Auschwitz to take a tour of the famous Nazi camp. The death camp at Oswiecim was the largest Nazi death factory, where four million people, mostly Jews, perished. Auschwitz consisted of several units, including the largest one at Brzezinka [Birkenau]. Of the millions of people brought there in the period between 1940 and 1944, only 60 to 70 thousand utterly emaciated victims were alive at the time of liberation of the camp. At present, the National Museum of Oswiecim is situated on the site of the former camp

Continue on to Wroclaw for dinner and overnight

Wroclaw is Poland's fourth largest city. It is a city with a fascinating and complex history. It dates to the 10th century, when the Ostrow Tumski islet on the Odra became a fortified Slav settlement. There are now some 100 bridges spanning the city's 90-kilometer network of slow-moving canals and tributaries, giving Wroclaw its particular charm. Indeed, after Venice and St. Petersburg, Wroclaw is the city with the third-largest number of bridges in Europe. Wroclaw's greatest architectural attractions are its many brick Gothic churches



Day 8 **Wroclaw** **(B,D)**

Half-day sightseeing in Wroclaw includes the breathtaking Aula Leopoldina at Wroclaw University, Old Town Square, Piasek Island (with its Church of St. Mary on Piasek, the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, and the Church of the Holy Cross)

Performance as part of the American Celebration of Music in Poland

Farewell Dinner



Day 9 **Depart for home** **(B)**

Transfer to Wroclaw's International Airport for return flight

Arrive home in the evening of the same day

This is a very flexible itinerary. Except for confirmed appointments and performances, the places of interest and the sequence of sightseeing might be changed if necessary or desirable. In the event of an unavoidable conflict in the performance and the sightseeing schedule, the concert schedule will prevail, and it may be necessary to exclude some sightseeing activities.

