

HISTORY TOURS TO AUSCHWITZ AND KRAKOW



Cloth Hall - Krakow



Auschwitz

KRAKOW

Krakow has a mixed history. In medieval times it acted as a bulwark against invasions from the East. It became part of the Habsburg Empire and remained under Austrian control until 1918. Krakow is the city of Oskar Schindler (much of 'Schindler's List' was filmed here), and during the Second World War Krakow was the only major Polish city to escape widespread destruction. Even forty five years of Communist rule have left little trace on the old town's architecture.

Suggested visits could include:

- The Old Town – with its imposing Cloth Hall set in a large medieval piazza.
- Wawel Castle – the residence of the kings of Poland until 1609.
- Kazimierz – the Jewish quarter of Krakow, with its Jewish Museum and synagogues.
- Krakow Ghetto – this was established in 1941 in Podgorze.
- Plaszow Labour Camp Memorial – two memorials stand on the site of the former forced labour camp for Jews. It was from this camp that Oskar Schindler took more than a thousand Jews to his munitions factory.
- Wieliczka Salt Mine – a vast underground city with 2148 chambers connected by 200km of passages. It is the oldest working mine open for tourists in Europe.

AUSCHWITZ

Auschwitz is the symbol of terror, genocide and the Holocaust. Shortly after invading Poland, the Nazis set up Auschwitz-Birkenau as the central extermination and concentration camp of the Third Reich. The original camp, Auschwitz I, built for political prisoners, was expanded and two additional camps were built at Auschwitz II Birkenau and Monowitz (Auschwitz III), with Auschwitz I and II now open as museums.

Auschwitz I – this has well preserved blocks which contain exhibitions portraying the history of Auschwitz and the torments of the various nations whose people were murdered here.

Auschwitz II Birkenau – situated three kilometres from Auschwitz I, this was the largest of all camps of mass extermination, with its four gas chambers and crematoria.

NB Teacher's Guides on Auschwitz and Krakow are provided.



Top to Bottom:
St Mary's Church -
Krakow,
Auschwitz Camp,
The Barbican -
Krakow.