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Euro2012

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As most of you will be reading this we will be in 2012 – the year Poland has been waiting and working hard for since it was awarded the Euro 2012 football championships back in 2007. Take a look at how the stadium and the preparations in Gdansk, one of the host cities, is progressing on page 122.



The shopping options in the Tri-city have changed beyond recognition since the days in the late 1990s that Gdansk In Your Pocket first rode into town and now it is more a case of what you can get rather than what you can't. We take a look at what's on offer and try to suggest a few ideas for gifts from Poland for all the family on page 6.

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It would be fair to say that there is a feeling of anticipation in the air here in the Tri-city of Gdansk, Sopot and Gdynia. Liken it if you will to the lead up to a wedding with the Tri-city as the bride and a position on the list of desirable and well-known destinations, the groom. The Euro2012 football championships are the wedding ceremony and the reception and the bride stamped over a few competitors to ensure she snared her groom. Since then, like any bride-to-be, the Tri-city has been preparing in earnest. She has been working on every minute detail to ensure that this is the perfect day and sets the scene for a happy and lifelong marriage.

Forgive the poetic licence we've taken here but we can think of no better metaphor. This event is a massive moment in the life of these cities (note not just Gdansk the official host) although most brides don't undergo the massive plastic surgery before the ceremony as has Gdansk. The date was set back in the spring of 2007 and as we get closer to the date (June 10-22 for the record – like any Polish wedding one day is nowhere near enough time) the last minute preparations will kick into overdrive. While the centrepiece – the stadium – is built and ready, work continues furiously on the roads to and from the stadium to the city and airport and hotels continue to be built. As we sit in relatively balmy conditions here at the start of December it is possible to believe, as many Poles do, that Poland really is God's country as the work has managed to continue far longer, thanks to the non-arrival of winter, than most could have hoped for. Like any wedding we've been to, we're prepared to bet that despite the odd problem in the background, which none of the guests normally notice because they're having such a great time, this one will be a wonderful success and pass into the memory as a great time. And while the marriage promises happiness, prosperity and security as well as a host of photo opportunities that will show Gdansk as beautiful as she's ever been, let's just hope that, as in any successful marriage, the city keeps working at it and doesn't relax the moment the bridal clothes have been packed away. We appreciate all comments to editor_poland@inyourpocket.com

Europe In Your Pocket



It was a busy 2011 for *In Your Pocket*, with new guides published in **Bulgaria** (Veliko Turnovo), **Netherlands** (Tilburg, Utrecht, Amsterdam and Sittard-Geelen), in **Austria** (Vienna), in **Croatia** (Sibenik), in **Switzerland** (Zurich), **Slovenia** (Posavje) and in **Belarus** (Minsk); 2012 promises to deliver many more new *Pockets*.

The number of cities we cover has now climbed past **70**, and the number of *In Your Pocket* guides published each year is approaching an amazing **five million**. To keep up to date, like **In Your Pocket** on **Facebook** (facebook.com/inyourpocket) or follow us on **Twitter** (twitter.com/inyourpocket). You can also now follow our tips on **Foursquare** (foursquare.com/inyourpocket).

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Editor's note

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JOHANNES

*In 1611 in Gdansk was born one of
the most famous sons of this city.
We would like to remember the outstanding
astronomer but above all brewer
Johannes Hevelius*

Johannes beer appeared on the market in May 2011 and the official launch was held at the Town Hall during the opening of the exhibition 'Johannes Hevelius, Gdansk and his times'.

Johannes is a light, full-flavoured beer brewed using traditional methods and using only natural ingredients. The extract is exceptionally high at above 14.5% and long aging guarantees a rich taste. Johannes is a beer with a full and mature bouquet and a mild bitterness and strong malty notes make it unique. Johannes beer has been made to honour Johannes Hevelius, an eminent astronomer but above all a master brewer. 2011 saw the year of Hevelius commemorated in Poland. Johannes beer is a joint initiative of the Amber Brewery and the History of the City of Gdansk museum. Part of the proceeds from sales of Johannes beer will be used to purchase exhibits for the museum and once a year an exhibition will be organised to display them.

Poland has had a hell of a job in recent years in trying to combat the negative effect of television pictures from the 70s and 80s beamed around the world as the Polish people battled with and eventually demolished Communism. Among the gray, grainy, wintry images which portrayed the country as a miserable place permanently in the grip of revolution and icy winters, the other image which seems to have stuck is that of the Polish queue. Nowhere were the failings of the Communist system more evident and the lot of the Polish people so poor than in those pictures of long lines of people queuing outside shops with little or nothing inside of them. And yet despite the regular mention of Poland being the only EU nation not to have fallen into recession during the current economic downturn, the image of its shopping and those blasted queues is one that is proving particularly hard to shift.

So while the images of a grey populace living in grey buildings under grey skies (with the odd Polar bear in the background) have been addressed with building programs and marketing campaigns showing Poland in colour, we thought we'd highlight the shopping options now available as well as give you some local gift ideas and where you can pick them up.

The shopping options in the Tri-city have changed beyond recognition since the days in the late 1990s that Gdansk In Your Pocket first rode into town. International branded stores had only just appeared and while there was a western style mall in Gdynia (a much expanded and remodelled Klif is still there), Poles would more often visit to view than to buy – a reflection of the general lack of disposable income available at the time and the novelty value of huge shopping malls or superstores like IKEA or Carrefour.

That was then though. The early years of the 21st century saw huge development in the retail sector with state of the art malls appearing all along the coast and most noticeably at pretty much every major exit on the Tri-city ring road (Obwodnica). Now it is easier to count the international brand names who are not present than those that are. Where once we would list lots of individual shops providing particular goods and services things have now reached the stage where most places can be found under one roof. So if your ambition is to shop until you drop while you are here we suggest the first place you look is at the list of hypermarkets and malls listed in our shopping section. While this is not a list of all, it is a selection of what we view as the best ones from each of the 3 cities. With Madison the most central in Gdansk old town, Klif the most upmarket in the whole city and Galeria Bałtycka the most convenient and biggest in the 3 cities you can sate most shopping desires there. A tour around the Obwodnica (Tri-city Ring Road) will bring in the huge discount park which is Fashion House Outlet Centre as well as the huge hypermarkets of Carrefour, Auchan and Real. While you can find more information on them and how to get to them in our shopping section we have put together a list of gift and souvenir suggestions which might take a little more searching in order to find.

Amber



Baltic Gold, as it is often referred to, has been gathered and worked in the Gdansk area for over 6,000 years and is one of the major contributors to the city's wealth over the centuries. The sight of locals (both amateur and professional) combing the beaches looking for pieces which have been washed up, particularly after a heavy storm, is still common. There are countless workshops in the area which produce not just wonderful jewellery but all sorts of ornaments and souvenirs

from this ancient stone. The heart of the Gdansk amber market is the picturesque Mariacka Street in the shadow of St. Mary's Basilica in Gdansk which is lined with numerous stores and workshops. Keep an eye for the International Amber Association's certificate that guarantees the seller has been checked and deemed trustworthy. Another option is to take a tour of an amber workshop where you will see both how the stone is worked to turn it into the beautiful pieces you see mounted in finished jewellery and also learn how to spot a genuine and fake piece of amber. The S&A company offer tours of their workshop in Gdynia and you should contact them in advance to organise a place (+48 695 990 073, tour@s-a.ptel).

S&A Gallery C-4, ul. Mariacka 36, Gdańsk, tel. +48 58 305 22 80, www.s-a.pl.

W. Kruk N-6, al. Zwycięstwa 256 (Klif), Gdynia, tel. (+48) 66 198 05 53, www.wkruk.pl. Also at F-4, Al. Grunwaldzka 141 (Galeria Bałtycka), Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 66 198 07 27. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.

Local crafts



You are in the heart of the Kashubian region here, home to the Kashubian people one of the largest surviving ethnic minorities in Europe. Distinct from Poles in both language and culture the Kashubians are an integral part of modern Poland but also have a clear identity visible in their peculiar language, which sounds like a mix of Polish and German, and in their crafts. Kashubians particularly pride themselves on their embroidery which uses just five colours: green, red, yellow, black and blue, the latter of which comes in three distinct shades. Green represents the forests, red the fire and blood shed in defence of the homeland, yellow the sun, black the earth and blue the sky, lakes and sea. Designs are simple and are used on everything from clothes to ceramics. Other things to look out for are their wood carvings and basket woven items.

Galeria Sztuki Kaszubskiej (Kashubian Art Gallery) C-4, ul. Św. Duchy 48, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 503 00 59 78, www.gskart.pl. ▶ Open 12:00 - 17:00. Closed Sat, Sun. From March open 11:00 - 18:00. Closed Sat, Sun.
Salon z porcelaną Lubiana ul. Chrzanowskiego 10, Gdańsk (Wrzeszcz), tel. (+48) 533 66 59 33, www.lubiana.com.pl. ▶ Open 11:30 - 18:00, Sat 10:00 - 14:00. Closed Sun.

Euro 2012



Apparently there is a big football tournament being played here in the summer of 2012 and the marketing of products from t-shirts to footballs to whatever is in full-flow. The sports outfitters Intersport have the exclusive right to sell EURO2012 merchandise and you can pick up special Gdansk t-shirts and the like there. For those really into their football you might also think about picking up a Poland national side shirt from Nike (following an outcry from Poland football team fans the Polish eagle has been returned to the shirt having initially been left off). You'll find Intersport, Nike and two stands dedicated to the local club Lechia Gdansk and all things football at Galeria Bałtycka.



Host City Gdansk

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Books



Gdańsk and Poland have a tumultuous history and the city is much changed to the way it looked 100 years ago. A combination of huge WWII bombing, post-war Socialist planning and social and cultural change have changed the look completely of the people and the city. There are two series of photo album style books which capture this wonderfully with pictures of before, during and after the events of WWII. The first entitled 'Był sobie Gdańsk' (Gdańsk was itself)

is a series of books which were published by current Prime Minister Donald Tusk (a Gdańskian and Kashubian) in the years before he became a full-time politician. You'll recognise many of the old Gdańsk, Wrzeszcz and Sopot streets and see how once people lived. Contrasting dramatically is a series published by photographer Maciej Kosycarz entitled 'Niezwyczajnie Zwykłe Zdjęcia (Unusually Ordinary Photos)' which presents his work and that of his father during the period 1945-2007 and which demonstrate the destruction of the city in 1945 and both the painstaking rebuilding and life in the People's Republic in the years after. Also keep an eye out for albums showing the development of Gdynia from sleepy fishing village to major port after WWII published by Sławomir Kitowski.

Gdańsk is also the former home of Nobel prize winning author Gunter Grass. His stories are often set against the backdrop of inter-war Danzig and none capture the time better than 'The Tin Drum', the work for which he was awarded the Literature prize. While these books will generally be available in major Tri-city bookshops, you'll have to go online to pick up another recommended book – Sean Lester, Poland and the Nazi takeover of Danzig – which recounts the story of the Irishman and League of Nations High Commissioner Sean Lester who governed here between 1934 and 1937.

EMPIK B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 8, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 301 62 88, www.empik.com. Also at ul. Kołobrzeska 41c (Przymorze), ul. Grunwaldzka 141 (F-4), ul. Złota Karczma 26 (Matarnia); in Gdynia, ul. Świętojańska 68 (N-2); in Sopot, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 63 (M-4). From December 20-23 hours are extended to 7:00-22:00. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.

Alcohol



There are a number of local drinks which will make for excellent presents and souvenirs none more so than the Gdańsk signature drink – Goldwasser. Distilled in the city since the 17th century it is a sweet juniper based drink containing pieces of gold leaf making for a visually impressive gift. The original recipe was taken to Germany at the end of WWII and this 'Original

Der Lachs' version can still be bought in the Pod Lososiem restaurant while a German resident of the city has created excellent boxed sets of Goldwasser which can be bought through his restaurant on the waterfront.

Poland is also home to some of the world's best vodkas and while Chopin and Belvedere are regarded as the best Polish brands it is also worth keeping an eye for something called Zubrowka, a vodka flavoured with a type of grass from the primeval Białowieza Forest in eastern Poland. Remarkably cheap in comparison to the other drinks mentioned here, it is usually drunk with apple juice in what is known locally as a tatanka.

Finally you will also find in selected places bottles of Nalewka which are vodka or spirit based alcohols which have been mixed with various fruits and left to age. They are often tastier and easier to drink than simple vodka and often come in attractive bottles which make for an attractive gift.

Centrum Wina F-4, Al. Grunwaldzka 141 (Galeria Bałtycka), Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 552 43 30. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.

Goldwasser restaurant D-4, ul. Długie Pobrzeże 22, tel. (+48) 58 301 88 78, www.goldwasser.pl. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00.

Pod Lososiem restaurant C-4, ul. Szeroka 52-54, tel. (+48) 58 301 76 52, www.podlososiem.com.pl. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00.

Wine Express ul. Światowida 52, Gdynia (Orłowo), tel. (+48) 58 620 08 17, www.wine-express.pl. ▶ Open 10:00 - 19:00, Sat 10:00 - 17:00. Closed Sun.

Food

Poles love their food and in particular their pickles and their sweets. One company called Krakowski Kredens (Krakow Dresser) offers a range of pickles, sweets and the like in attractive packaging which you'll find in their points in most Alma supermarkets. A particular regional favourite though is gingerbread which famously is produced in Torun by the Kopernik company. You will find a whole range of beautifully presented sweets and biscuits in the small shop under Gdańsk's oldest house at C-4, ul. Mariacka 1.

Solidarity



There is nothing which says Gdańsk and Poland more than the iconic Solidarity (Solidarity) logo which has come to signify the movement of people across Communist Europe who together brought the system and the Berlin Wall crashing down. Those interested in the movement and the history will find a range of books dedicated to the subject as well as postcards, photo albums, souvenirs and even recreations of communist era items such as ration books are now available. Keep an eye out for a particular favourite of ours which is 'The Polish Revolution: Solidarity by Timothy Garton Ash, which tells the story from inside the shipyards during the momentous days of 1980.

Gdańsk Souvenir Centre C-4, ul. Długa 29, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 305 11 50. ▶ Open 09:00 - 18:00.

Roads to Freedom B-1, ul. Waly Piastowskie 24, tel. (+48) 58 308 44 28, www.ecs.gda.pl. ▶ Open 10:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon.

Solidarity Centre Foundation www.fcs.org.pl



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Arriving by plane

Port Lotniczy Gdańsk im. Lecha Wałęsy (aka Gdańsk Lech Wałęsa airport) is 8km west of Gdańsk centre in the Rebiechowo district. The airport has seen a dramatic increase in traffic in the last couple of years created mainly by low-cost airlines. At present domestic and international flights leave from the same terminal. On the ground floor, as you leave customs and baggage reclaim, are the currency exchange, car rental services and a Gdańsk Tourist Organisation information point where you'll find *In Your Pocket* guides and free *In Your Pocket* mini-guides. You'll find an ATM next to domestic arrivals. Upstairs is a newsagent and airport restaurant.

Getting to Gdańsk. You can reach the city by shelling around 50zł for a taxi from the rank in front of the terminal. Remember that taxis cost more at night and from Saturday at 22:00 until Monday at 06:00. **City Plus Neptun** is the official taxi firm and can be trusted. Look out for their cars with the **19686** logo on the side. Be suspicious if offered a lift by any car not bearing their logo. The cheapest option is to take bus **N°210** towards Orunia, ul. Gościnną to get to the main Gdańsk Główny train station or bus **N°110** to Gdańsk Wrzeszcz train station. Journey time is 30 to 40 minutes. The journey requires a one-ride ticket which costs **3,40zł** and is available from the driver. You can also buy tickets at the Gdańsk Tourist Organisation Information desk in the terminal building on the ground floor opposite the check-in desks.

Alternatively, take the **Airport Bus (www.airportbus.com.pl)**, where **9,90zł** tickets can be purchased direct from the driver (euros accepted). Catch it from the bus stop to the right of the terminal building, and find your journey terminating outside the Hevelius Hotel (return journeys back to the airport available). Times as follows: **From the airport** 00:15, 00:50, 01:30, 10:15, 11:50, 13:45, 15:00, 17:00, 19:20, 20:00, 23:30.

To the airport 04:00, 07:30, 09:00, 11:00, 12:30, 14:20, 16:15.

Note that to ensure the bus is running, you should book a ticket by 20:00 the day before. If there are no tickets sold the day before the bus does not run. If the bus is there you are able to buy a ticket from the driver.

Getting to Sopot. There are no buses directly to Sopot so the most direct option by public transport is to take the **110** bus to Gdańsk Wrzeszcz station. From there take the local yellow and blue SKM commuter train from platform 1. You'll need to get on a train running in the direction of Gdynia and boards on the platform show the time until the next train. Sopot (the train station in the middle of the town) is the sixth stop from Gdańsk Wrzeszcz. The most direct way to reach Sopot is by taking a **19686 City Plus taxi** from outside the terminal building which will cost you around **60zł** normally and more at weekends and at night.

Getting to Gdynia. By public transport you can take the bus **110** to Gdańsk Wrzeszcz railway station before boarding a local yellow and blue SKM train to Gdynia Główna. Alternatively there is bus **510** which runs to Gdynia 6 times a day (06:45, 08:40, 11:55, 15:00, 18:30 Mon-Sun, and 21:15 Mon-Sat) and costs **3,80zł**. You can buy tickets directly from the driver. The most direct way is by taxi and a **19686 taxi** will cost you around **120zł** to the centre of Gdynia with prices higher at night and at weekends.

Gdańsk Lech Wałęsa Airport (Port Lotniczy im. Lecha Wałęsy) ul. Słowackiego 200 (Rebiechowo), tel. (+48) 58 348 11 63, www.airport.gdansk.pl.

Arriving by train

Arriving by train in Gdańsk When you arrive at Gdańsk Główny you are a stone's throw away from Gdańsk Old Town. Left Luggage is next to the entrance to the main lobby and is open 24hrs although you'll need the security to open the door from 01:00 - 03:30. The currency exchange (open 24hrs) is in the hall leading off the main lobby and there are a couple of ATMs. Public phones are either end of this hall. To get to the town go down the steps opposite McDonald's and turn right. Then turn right again, and head up the steps leading to ul. Podwale Grodzkie. ▶ The main building of the station is closed 01:00-03:30, but if you need to use a locker or buy a ticket the security guard will let you in.

Arriving by train in Gdynia While the main railway station receives a well-needed facelift, rail services have been moved to the local railway station 100m along from the former station. Tickets for local, regional and national trains can all be purchased from here. The city centre lies right outside the station and the main street, ul. Świętojańska is a 10 minute walk away by turning right out of the station and following ul. 10-go Lutego.

Arriving by train in Sopot Sopot train station is a pretty basic and run-down affair with two platforms one of which has been renovated to its original appearance. If you are arriving from out of town you will be deposited on platform no. 2. To get to the main station building you should walk to the tunnel at the northern end of the platform which will bring you out next to the station building. Inside are left luggage lockers which are only available in summer ("money lockers" are available for smaller storage of your funds) and a fast food outlet as well as the ticket office. The beach, pier, cafes and restaurants are all within a 10 minute walk and the nearest tourist information office is at the entrance to the pier at Pl. Zdrojowy 2.

Gdańsk Główny Train Station A-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 1, tel. (+48) 58 721 54 15, www.pkp.pl. Note that tickets for international routes should be purchased from the International ticket office next to Rossman (Open 08:00 - 19:30). Outside of these hours the general ticket desks will be able to sell you tickets for trains running the same day. ▶ Ticket office open 24hrs although the station building is closed from 01:00-03:30. A security guard will let you in if you want to buy a ticket or access lockers during this time. Note that due to system maintenance seat reservations cannot be made between 00:00 - 01:30.

Gdynia Główna Train Station N-1, Pl. Konstytucji 1, www.pkp.pl. For information about the local commuter train (SKM), which run from platform 1 see public transport in this section. If you are looking to travel further on in Poland you will be travelling from platforms 2-7. Check the boards to see which platforms trains to Malbork, Warsaw, Kraków will be leaving from. Arrivals (Przyjazdy and white) and departure (Odjazdy and yellow) timetables are displayed on A1 size cards. To access the platforms head upstairs which will bring you to the local SKM platform. For regional and national train platforms you should proceed along this platform, go down the stairs into the tunnel and turn left. ▶ Ticket office Open 24hrs. Note that due to system maintenance seat reservations cannot be made between 00:00 - 01:30.

Sopot Główny Train Station L-3, ul. Dworcowa 1, tel. (+48) 58 721 37 32, www.pkp.pl. ▶ Ticket office open 24hrs. Note that due to system maintenance seat reservations cannot be made between 00:00 - 01:30.

Arriving by car

There are four main routes leading directly to the Tri-city: the E28 from the west via Gdynia; the E75 from the south via Gdańsk; the E77 from Warsaw which comes into the city via Gdańsk from the east and the A1 highway also from the south.

Arriving by car in Gdańsk Parking is available once you arrive in Gdańsk but remember that the old town area is permit parking only and you will be fined by the city police for driving into the old town without a pass. Watch out for the signs marking the start of the permit parking zone. You will have to use street parking which is paid for (3zł for the first hour) and you will need to buy a ticket at the street machine. Alternatively and recommended if you are planning on leaving the car unattended for some time, try one of the guarded parking areas listed.

Arriving by car in Gdynia If you are coming from the south you will need to negotiate the other two cities first. This is best done by use of the Obwodnica (ring road) which will get you to the centre of Gdynia in about 20 minutes. Gdynia itself is the best laid out of the 3 cities in terms of cars but even parking here is a challenge these days. Note that paid parking costing .50zł for the first half hour, and 2zł per hour after that is now in operation.

Arriving by car in Sopot Whether you are arriving from the south (Gdańsk) or the north (Gdynia) you are very likely to make the approach to Sopot via the main Al. Niepodległości road. This can be very busy during peak times. Sopot city centre is quite small and, particularly during the summer months, the centre is snarled up with traffic. There is street parking if you can find it with the area closest to the centre subject to parking tickets. There are guarded car parks which you should seriously consider if leaving your car for a prolonged period.

Arriving by bus

Arriving by bus in Gdańsk Most national and international buses arrive at Gdańsk bus station (Dworzec PKS) up on the hill just behind the train station (Dworzec PKP). Give the main building a miss and head downstairs to the bus station hall. The hall is grey and dirty and best shot through quickly by taking the escalator down to the underground passage; follow the signs Centrum or Dworzec PKP. Walk through the passage past all the kiosks selling slippers and mobile phones until you see the EMPIK bookshop in front of you. Turn right and go up the steps to ul. Podwale Grodzkie and the old town lies about a 5 minute walk from there.

Arriving by bus in Gdynia The building which houses the train and bus station is currently in the middle of a huge redevelopment meaning that there is in effect no bus station building. Buses stop outside of the development which is located just on the edge of the city centre. You can get to the main street, ul. Świętojańska by following ul.10-go Lutego, a walk that will take you about 10 minutes.

Arriving by bus in Sopot Sopot does not have its own international bus station so you will either be dis-embarking in Gdynia or Gdańsk bus stations and travelling to Sopot via the local SKM commuter train. See the Getting to Sopot section in Sopot In Your Pocket for details.

Gdańsk Główny Bus Station A-2, ul. 3 Maja 12, tel. (+48) 58 302 15 32, www.pks.gdansk.pl. Station information is at the window on the far left in the main hall, but they don't always speak English. ▶ Ticket office Open 08:30 - 17:00, Sat 08:30 - 16:30. Closed Sun. Note that on the first two and the last two working days of each month the ticket office is open 06:30 - 18:30.

Gdynia Główna Bus Station (Gdynia Główna Dworzec Autobusowy) N-1, Pl. Konstytucji 1, www.pks.w.pl. While the huge re-development goes on, there is in effect no actual bus station. Tickets should be bought from the drivers when boarding the buses which continue to stop outside the train/bus station.


Arriving by ferry

Arriving by ferry in Gdańsk Polferries from Nynashamn, 60km south of Stockholm, arrive in Gdańsk's Nowy Port, about 7km north of the centre. There's only one ferry in each direction daily, so the terminal is not very busy. You can buy a phone card at the kiosk nearby. The currency exchange at the gate does not offer good rates. Bus N°148 leaves from outside the main ferry terminal and takes you to Gdańsk Żabianka train station. From here take an SKM train to Gdańsk Główny. Alternatively, a taxi ride into the centre of Gdańsk costs about 25zł. If you have a car then you should follow signs to *centrum*, a journey that will take you about 15-30 minutes depending on the time of day.

Arriving by ferry in Gdynia Stena Line ferries from Karlskrona, 500km south of Stockholm, arrive at the Gdynia ferry terminal. There is a currency exchange in the terminal, and you can also change money on the boat. From the ferry terminal, take bus N° 150 to Gdynia Główna, the main train station in Gdynia (from where there are commuter trains to Gdańsk). A bus ticket costs 2,80zł, and a taxi to the centre should come to around 20zł. To return there's a special line going to terminal N° 570, and the 7 minute journey costs 3,80zł from the main railway station. If arriving by car you should follow the signs for *Centrum* which will bring you to the centre of Gdynia in about 10 minutes.



Gdańsk - Nowy Port Ferry Port H-1, ul. Przemysłowa 1, tel. (+48) 58 343 18 87, www.polferries.pl. ▶ Open 08:00-17:00, Sat 10:00-14:00, Sun 12:00-17:00.

Polferries 0-1, ul. Portowa 3, Gdynia, tel. (+48) 58 620 87 61, www.polferries.pl. ▶ Open 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Sat, Sun.
Stena Line Ferry Port ul. Kwiatkowskiego 60, Gdynia (Obluże), tel. (+48) 58 660 92 00, www.stenaline.pl. ▶ Open 08:00 - 21:00, Mon, Fri 08:00 - 20:00, Sat, Sun 07:00 - 09:00, 17:00 - 20:00. **TC**




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AVIS Avis ul. Słowackiego 210 (Airport), Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 348 12 89, www.avis.pl.

Also at Gdańsk, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 9. ▶ Open 08:00 - 20:00, Sat, Sun 09:00 - 17:00. **TC**

Europcar

Europcar ul. Słowackiego 206 (Airport), Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 665 30 16 24,

www.europcar.pl. Europcar is one of the biggest car rental companies offering many rental options (both short and long term) that will suit all needs (8 different categories of cars are available; Europcar is present at all Polish airports and many other convenient locations). Europcar creates flexible driving solutions to meet your individual mobility needs. In doing so we deliver excellence in services and benefits that are tailored to fulfil your specific requirements. ▶ Open 09:00 - 23:30.

JOKA rent a car

Joka B-2, ul. Wały Piastowskie 1/1502A, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 609 23 54 24,

www.joka.com.pl. A wide range of cars from the Ford Fiesta to the spacious Mercedes E220 CDi station wagon. All cars are equipped with power assisted steering. Satellite navigation systems are also available. Special rates offered to those who order through the Joka website. ▶ Open 09:00-17:00. Sat, Sun 09:00 - 12:00. Outside of these hours open by prior arrangement.

By car

Poland is one of Europe's leading nations in road fatalities, a statistic that will surprise few who have had the pleasure of using the roads here. A lethal combination of poor road surfaces, networks unsuited to the volume of different traffic and, most of all, drivers who have no consideration for anybody else result in the common sight of mangled wrecks of cars around the country. Yes, the crosses you see beside roadsides are there to mark fatal crashes. While we do not advise against driving in Poland, we do wish to make a number of points clear to the foreign driver.

For those brave enough to venture out the following information should be noted. Poland has strong drink-driving laws: 0.2‰ is the maximum blood/alcohol limit, so forget about having even a single beer - this did nothing to deter the prat who was arrested outside Warsaw a couple of years back with a blood/alcohol level of 9.5‰ (approximately 24 pints). EU citizens may use their home driving licenses as long as they are valid, however citizens of countries that didn't ratify the Vienna Convention (e.g. Australia and America) will find their licenses invalid (though that hasn't stopped anyone we know from driving their girlfriend's car). Carry your license and passport at all times when driving.

The speed limit is **50km/hr** in cities (**60km/hr** between 23:00 and 05:00), **90km/hr** outside urban areas, **120km/hr** on dual carriageways and **140km/hr** on motorways. All cars are required to carry a red warning triangle, first aid kit, replacement bulbs and a national identity sticker. A new law was introduced in April 2007 making it compulsory to have headlights switched on at all times.

Guarded Parking B-1, ul. Wałowa 28, Gdańsk.

Guarded Parking B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie, ul. Rajska, Gdańsk.

Guarded Parking N-1, ul. Podolska 1a, Gdynia.

Guarded Parking O-1, ul. Armii Krajowej 22 (Gdynia Hotel), Gdynia.

Public transport

Travelling between the three cities of Gdansk, Gdynia and Sopot is a cinch, and best done using the **SKM kolejka (commuter train)**. Trains run more or less every 10 minutes between 05:00-19:00 through the Tri-city and less frequently outside of these hours with trains also running occasionally between 00:00 and 04:00.

Tickets can be bought from modern ticket machines which can be found on most platforms and have instructions in English and a couple of other languages. Alternatively you can buy tickets in main stations where you see the sign for Kasa Biletowa or as a last resort from the conductor at the front of the train. If you buy tickets from the Kasa Biletowa make sure that you stamp them with the time in the bright yellow boxes on or close to the platform to validate them.

Ticket prices are dependent on the number of stops you are travelling but a journey from Gdynia to Gdańsk will cost **5zł** and take about 35 minutes (Sopot will cost **3.40zł** and take about 15 minutes from Gdynia). Children's buggies and bikes travel for free but bikes should be carried in a specially marked carriage usually at one end of the train. Children under 4 travel for free although you do have to buy a **0zł** ticket (we kid you not) and you are likely to be requested to provide proof of the child's age so basically keep passports on you at all times. ISIC cards will get you a student discount but only if you're a Polish student, and Euro 26 cards are not valid and you will have to pay a fine if caught travelling without a validated ticket.

Trolleybuses, trams and ordinary buses (ZKM/ZTM) can also zip you around the relevant cities. Tickets are issued by Gdańsk and Gdynia. Gdansk tickets allow you to travel in Gdansk (and Sopot) and Gdynia tickets allow you to travel in Gdynia (and Sopot). If buying a ticket in Sopot you will need to buy a ticket for the direction you are heading i.e. Gdansk or Gdynia.



Remember to stamp your ticket

Ticket prices.

Single - **2.80zł**

60 minute ticket - **3.40zł**

Single ticket for use on a 'fast' line - **3.80zł**

60 minute ticket for 'fast' lines - **4.40zł**

24-hour ticket - **11zł**

If you're planning on staying longer then there is the Metropolitan ticket and covers all 3 cities for 72 hours - the first type covers buses, trolleybuses and trams and costs **28zł** (**14zł** reduced) or a second version which also includes SKM trains with this one priced at **40/20zł**. Tickets can be bought from kiosks or an increasing number of ticket machines which have English and German language options.

A recommended way to avoid having to decide on which ticket and then having to negotiate how to get it with the woman in the kiosk is to pick up a **Gdansk - Sopot - Gdynia Plus tourist card**. As well as the discounts and free entry to many of the sights that the card brings, you will also be entitled to free travel on the whole Tri-city transport network. Pick that up at the tourist information points around the city.



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By bus

Gdańsk bus station (Dworzec PKS) can be found on the hill behind the main railway station (Gdańsk Główny Dworzec PKP). It can be reached by descending into the tunnel in front of the Scandic hotel and following it right to the end where you will find escalators leading up to the ticket hall. This is where both international buses, national buses and buses to places such as Frombork will run from. The ticket windows are in front of you as you enter and the timetables are displayed on the walls above the ticket windows. The platforms can be reached by going up the stairs to ground level.

Gdańsk Główny Bus Station A-2, ul. 3 Maja 12, tel. (+48) 58 302 15 32, www.pks.gdansk.pl. ▶ Ticket office open 08:30 - 17:00, Sat 08:30 - 16:30. Closed Sun. Note that on the first two and last two working days of each month the office is open 06:30-18:30.

Gdynia Główna Bus Station (Gdynia Główna Dworzec Autobusowy) N-1, Pl. Konstytucji 1, www.pks.w.pl. The building which houses the train and bus station is currently in the middle of a huge redevelopment meaning that there is in effect no bus station building. Buses stop outside of the development which is located just on the edge of the city centre. You can get to the main street, ul. Świętojańska by following ul.10-go Lutego, a walk that will take you about 10 minutes.

By train

For information about the local commuter train (SKM) which runs from platforms 3 - 6 see public transport in this section. If you are looking to travel further on in Poland you will be travelling from platforms 1 or 2 with trains to Malbork, Warsaw, Krakow etc. running from platform 1. Arrivals (Przyjazdy) and departure (Odjazdy) times are marked on the board in the main station building and the timetables are displayed on A1 size cards with departures on a yellow card and arrivals on a white card. The train station is not the most pleasant of places in the world and although there is a McDonald's in the building and a KFC just outside there really isn't anywhere pleasant to wait if you have time to kill.

Gdańsk Główny Train Station A-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 1, tel. (+48) 58 721 54 15, www.pkp.pl. Note that tickets for international routes should be purchased from the international ticket office next to Rossman (Open 08:00 - 19:30). Outside of these hours the general ticket desks will be able to sell you tickets for trains running the same day. ▶ Ticket office open 24hrs although the station building is closed from 01:00 - 03:30. During these times you will need a security guard to give you access. Note that due to system maintenance seat reservations cannot be made between 00:00 - 01:30.

Gdynia Główna Train Station N-1, Pl. Konstytucji 1, www.pkp.pl. For information about the local commuter train (SKM), which run from platform 1 see public transport in this section. If you are looking to travel further on in Poland you will be travelling from platforms 2-7. Check the boards to see which platforms trains to Malbork, Warsaw,



© MZKZG

Kraków will be leaving from. Arrivals (Przyjazdy and white) and departure (Odjazdy and yellow) timetables are displayed on A1 size cards. To access the platforms head upstairs which will bring you to the local SKM platform. For regional and national train platforms you should proceed along this platform, go down the stairs into the tunnel and turn left. ▶ Ticket office Open 24hrs. Note that due to system maintenance seat reservations cannot be made between 00:00 - 01:30.

Sopot Główny Train Station L-4, ul. Dworcowa 7, tel. (+48) 58 721 37 32, www.pkp.pl. ▶ Ticket office Open 24hrs. Note that due to system maintenance seat reservations cannot be made between 00:00 - 01:30.

Taxis



Although most taxis are now trustworthy with honest meters, there are still certain drivers who will quite happily take advantage of your ignorance and overcharge for journeys. To guard against this ensure that you use a

taxi which is clearly marked. The firms listed below are all reliable with **City Plus Neptun** being the only firm allowed to sit outside of the airport terminal building. Look out for **19686** on the sides of their cabs. Taxis are slightly cheaper if called in advance. If calling one of the abbreviated numbers such as **19686** please be aware that you may need to prefix it with **58** if calling from your mobile.

And now a warning. Because each of the cities are independent when it comes to taxis the driver is allowed to put the meter to the higher tariff when he leaves Gdańsk. That means if you are travelling from Gdańsk to Sopot or Gdynia the tariff increases at the Gdańsk/Sopot border. This can make a difference to the fare between Gdańsk and Gdynia because the Gdańsk taxi will spend more time in his own city and therefore at the lower tariff. A taxi from Gdańsk to Gdynia will cost around **80zł** whereas a taxi in the other direction will cost around **100zł** as the Gdynia taxi will be spend more of the journey outside of its own city.

City Plus Neptun tel. (+48) 58 196 86, www.cph.gda.pl. The only sanctioned firm at the airport with some English-speaking operators. Mini-vans are also available and if you are planning a journey outside of the city special rates are available for places such as Stutthof, Malbork and Frombork. ▶ **TC**

Hallo Taxi tel. (+48) 58 301 59 59, www.hallotaxi.gda.pl.

Super Hallo tel. (+48) 602 31 91 91, www.superhallo.pl.

Ad-mir Taxi tel. (+48) 58 624 18 18. ▶ TC

Euro School Taxi tel. (+48) 502 28 65 02, www.euroschooltaxi.pl.

Hallo Express Taxi tel. (+48) 58 624 16 24, www.halloexpress.com.

Hallo Taxi tel. (+48) 58 301 59 59, www.hallotaxi.gda.pl.

Non-Stop Taxi tel. (+48) 58 625 01 01, www.taxi-nonstopgdynia.pl.

Monte Taxi tel. (+48) 58 555 14 14, www.montetaxi.pl.

Service Taxi tel. (+48) 58 550 12 12, www.19194.com.pl.

Basic data

Territory

Poland covers an area of 312,685 square kilometers and is the ninth biggest country in Europe. It borders the Baltic Sea and seven countries, namely the Baltic Sea (528km), Belarus (416km), Czech Republic (790km), Germany (467km), Lithuania (103km), the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad (210km), Slovakia (539km) and, Ukraine (529km).

Longest River

The river Vistula (Wiśła) is Poland's longest river at 1,047km and flows through Kraków and Warsaw before reaching the Bay of Gdańsk (Zatoka Gdańska). Gdańsk sits on the Mottawa river which reaches the Baltic via the Martwa Wisła.

Highest Point

The highest peak in the country is Rysy (2,499m above sea level) which can be found in the Tatra mountains in the south of the country.

Population (2010)

Poland - 38,200,037
Warsaw - 1,720,398
Kraków - 756,183
Łódź - 737,098
Wrocław - 632,996
Poznań - 551,627
Gdańsk - 456,967
Katowice - 306,826
Sopot - 38,141

Local time

Poland is in the Central European (CET) time zone (GMT+1hr). When it's 12:00 in Warsaw it's 11:00 in London, 12:00 in Paris and Berlin and 19:00 in Tokyo. Polish summer time (GMT+2hrs) starts and ends on the last Sundays of March and October.

Twin Towns

Gdańsk: Astana, Barcelona, Bremen, Cleveland, Elsinore, Kaliningrad, Kalmar, Marseille, Nice, Odessa, Rotterdam, Rouen, Sefton, St. Petersburg, Turku, Vilnius
Sopot: Ashkelon, Frankenthal, Karlshamn, Næstved, Peterhof, Ratzburg, Southend on Sea, Zakopane
Gdynia: Aalborg, Baranovichi, Brooklyn, Kaliningrad, Karlskrona, Kiel, Klaipėda, Kotka, Kristiansand, Kunda, Liepāja, Plymouth, Seattle

National Holidays

December 25 First Day of Christmas

December 26 Second Day of Christmas

January 1 New Year's Day

January 6 Three Kings

April 8, 2012 Easter Sunday

April 9, 2012 Easter Monday

May 1 Labour Day

May 3 Constitution Day (May 3, 1791)

May 27, 2012 Pentecost Sunday

June 7, 2012 Corpus Christi

August 15 Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, also Polish Army Day

November 1 All Saints' Day

November 11 Independence Day (Nov 11, 1918)

Climate

Poland has a temperate climate with hot summers and cold winters. Seasons tend to be more pronounced than in the west and temperatures can get down as low as -20 C in winter and as high as +30 C in summer. The coldest weather tends to hit around February although the long winter of 2009/10 saw a record low temperature in Poland of -32 degrees. Below is a graphic showing average temperatures and rainfall.

Customs

If you are travelling within the EU those over 18 can now take 10 litres of spirits, 90 litres of wine and 110 litres of beer. Most countries will not allow more than 800 cigarettes from Poland. If purchasing art or books, you need to consider their age and value. In order to leave the country, art must be either less than 50 years old or under a certain value (varies depending by type; photos

Electricity

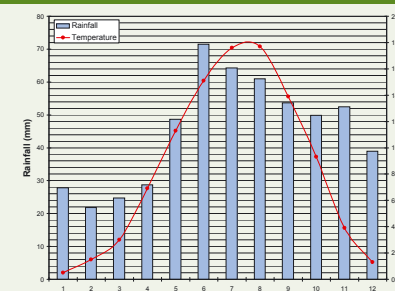
Electricity in Poland is 230V, 50Hz AC. Plug sockets are round with two round-pin sockets. Therefore if you are coming from the UK or Ireland you are definitely going to need a plug converter. The best place to pick these up is at home as our residents Brits will testify although if you do arrive without a convertor you can try your hotel concierge or reception. If they don't have one the best place to pick one up is at one of the big electrical outlets often situated on the edge of town. Our advice is save yourself the hassle and get one in the airport as you leave.

Health & Emergency

In case of an emergency those dialling from a land line or public payphone should use the following numbers: 999 for an ambulance, 998 for the fire brigade and 997 for the police. Mobile phone users should call 112 to be forwarded to the relevant department. English speaking assistance is not necessarily guaranteed, and rests on the linguistics capabilities of the call operator.

Between June 1st and September 30th however, English, German and Russian speakers have the option of using a separate line specifically designed for foreigners in distress: dial **800 200 300** from a land-line or **608 599 999** from a mobile phone for troubles during high-tourist season. Further help can be provided by embassies and consulates, of which a comprehensive list can be found in the directory

Climate



Institute of Meteorology and Water Management, www.imgw.pl

City Card



www.gdansk4u.pl/en/touristcard. Committed tourists should look no further than purchasing a **Gdansk - Sopot - Gdynia - Plus** tourist card, a nifty little number whose owner-

ship grants the user free entrance to museums, public transport (including trams, trolleybuses, buses and the SKM commuter train).

The card can be used across the tri-city area and grants a host of extra perks including hefty discounts in up to 220 venues. Now available for individuals and groups in 2 types - MAX and STANDARD with both being available for 24 or 72-hour periods. The MAX version allows free travel on the public transport. The STANDARD does not include this option. Cost as follows:

MAX is available for individual tourists as follows:
- 24hrs - 45zł (25zł concessions)
- 72hrs - 75zł (45zł concessions)

STANDARD is available for individual as follows:
- 24hrs - 22zł (15zł concessions)
- 72hrs - 35zł (22zł concessions)

Pick one up from any of the following venues:

- Lech Wałęsa Airport, ul. Słowackiego 200
- Gdansk Main Railway station (A-2, the tunnel), ul. Podwale Grodzkie
- Gdansk Tourist Information Centre, (C-5) ul. Długi Targ 28/29
- Sopot Tourist Information, (M-4) Pl. Dąbrowski 2
- Gdynia Tourist Information Centre, (N-1) ul. 10 Lutego 24

We have marked those places listed in this guide which accept the Tourist Card with the following symbol.

section. If you've run out of money, however, then silly you. No embassy will bail you out, and your hopes will rest on a Western Union money transfer. Most banks and many exchange bureaus (kantors) can now carry out such transactions, just keep an eye out for anywhere displaying the Western Union logo.

For a list of clinics and hospitals check the directory section at the back of this guide.

Money

Thinking of paying for your tram ticket with one of the 100zł notes in your pocket? Think again. Small shops, newsagents, public toilets, even the occasional fast food franchise and bar, will refuse to break a large note for you. As annoying as coins can be, do carry small change for such moments. Notes come in denominations of 200, 100, 50, 20 and 10 zlotys, and there are 1, 2 and 5 zloty coins. One zloty equals 100 groszy which come in 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 groszy coins.

Currency can be exchanged at airports, hotels, banks and anywhere with a sign proclaiming it to be a Kantor and you will also be able to withdraw currency at a bankomat using your ATM card. A Kantor will often provide better value than the banks in your home country or the ATM although for obvious reasons be very wary of Kantors in the airports,

Market values

Prices in Poland are still fairly competitive despite increases over the last couple of years particularly in the prices of cigarettes. Here are some typical everyday products and prices.

Market values as of 30th November 2011 based on €1 = 4.55zł

Product	Price (zł)	Price (€)
McDonald's Big Mac	8.60 zł	€ 1.89
Snickers	1.49 zł	€ 0.33
0.5ltr vodka (shop)	21.99 zł	€ 4.83
0.5ltr beer (shop)	2.89 zł	€ 0.64
0.5ltr beer (bar)	8.00 zł	€ 1.76
Loaf of white bread	1.99 zł	€ 0.44
20 Marlboros	11.80 zł	€ 2.59
1 ltr of unleaded petrol (98)	5.68 zł	€ 1.25
Local transport ticket (1 journey)	2.80 zł	€ 0.62

bus stations and close to tourist sights. Shopping around will reward you with the best rate. The Polish currency has been exceedingly strong in recent years and the value of the dollar has nearly halved while you will be getting 25-40% less zloty for your euros and sterling than a couple of years back. Having said that prices for food, drink, cultural venues and transport still remain comparatively cheap in contrast to Western Europe. A ticket to the theatre or cinema will rarely cost more than 20zł while admission to most museums costs around 5-10zł.

Queuing

Years of practice during the cold war era has meant that the Poles have truly mastered the art of the queue: more to the point, the art of queue bargaining. Whether you find yourself at a ticket counter, or your nearest KFC, do not make the mistake of being patient. 'I'm late for something, can I go first' is a common ploy used to fool foreigners into giving up their place in a line. Old people in particular seem to assume that they should by rights be able to take position at the head of a line. The only time when the common rules of etiquette seem to apply are in banks or outside ATMs, at which point the natives will assume a stance as far as possible from the next man, often leading to confusion who is and who isn't queuing in the first place. Note that some municipal offices and post offices employ a ticket system to help organize queues.

Religion

For over one thousand years has been a bulwark of Catholicism, fighting against the horrors of pagan invasions and looking to Catholicism for a sense of social and national unity. When Poland was partitioned in the 19th century, many turned to the church for solace and during the communist era, underground resistance meetings were surreptitiously held in churches. The deceased Polish-born Pope John Paul II remains a genuine source of pride for all Poles, and is beloved in a way more profound than cynics in the West can understand. Many Poles genuinely believe that John Paul II single-handedly started the overthrow of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe. Small wonder then, that your average Pole takes Catholicism very seriously. Those used to the more easy-going habits of the West may find the Polish enthusiasm a bit unnerving at first, particularly the solemn and opulent processions that occur from time to time and the droves that flock to mass.

Safety

In general Gdańsk is far safer than most Western cities, and visitors are unlikely to face any problems. Petty crime does exist, and travellers should be on guard against pickpockets working tram and bus routes by the train station. If you're in a bar or a restaurant keep your wallet inside your trouser pocket, not inside a jacket casually left lying around. The brevity and dexterity of Gdańsk's criminal community has led to a spate of thefts from unattended coats and jackets. Those travelling by car are advised to use a guarded car park. Avoid being ripped off by opportunistic taxi gits by using clearly marked cabs, something to bear in mind around the train station and airport. The vagrants and pondlife who gather around the train station are by and large harmless and easily ignored.

Toilets

Generally speaking toilets in come marked with a circle for women, and a triangle for men. Some restaurants and bars still charge a nominal fee for use of their facilities - no matter how much cash you've already spent in the establishment. This is a practice also used in train stations and most public conveniences. Keep small change handy.

Toilet A-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 1 (Gdańsk Główny Train Station), Gdańsk.

Toilet B-4, ul. Teatralna, Gdańsk.

Toilet L-4, ul. Dworcowa 11, Sopot.

Toilet O-1, Skwer Kościuszki, Gdynia.

Toilet N-1, ul. 10 Lutego 11 (Batory Department Store), Gdynia.

Water

Water in Poland is officially safe to drink although the quality of plumbing in many places can affect the quality of the water that is delivered to your tap. We therefore recommend that you use bottled water which is widely available and inexpensive. The best known bottled water brands are Żywiec, Cisowianka, Kropla Beskidu and Nałęczowianka.

Quick currency convertor

PLN	US\$	Euro	Pound
	3.42zł = \$1	4.55zł = €1	5.32zł = £1
1 zł	\$0.29	€0.22	£0.19
2 zł	\$0.58	€0.44	£0.38
3 zł	\$0.88	€0.66	£0.56
4 zł	\$1.17	€0.88	£0.75
5 zł	\$1.46	€1.10	£0.94
6 zł	\$1.75	€1.32	£1.13
7 zł	\$2.05	€1.54	£1.32
8 zł	\$2.34	€1.76	£1.50
9 zł	\$2.63	€1.98	£1.69
10 zł	\$2.92	€2.20	£1.88
20 zł	\$5.85	€4.40	£3.76
50 zł	\$14.62	€10.99	£9.40
100 zł	\$29.24	€21.98	£18.80
150 zł	\$43.86	€32.97	£28.20
200 zł	\$58.48	€43.96	£37.59
250 zł	\$73.10	€54.95	£46.99
1 000 zł	\$292.40	€219.78	£187.97

Language smarts

Many Poles, particularly younger people, have a fairly healthy command of the English language. Many will also be adept at other European languages with German being the most commonly spoken. Older Poles will fiercely contest that they have 'forgotten' the Russian taught to them at school but most will still have a reasonable understanding.

Mastering the Polish tongue can be a terrifying ordeal and will often result in personal degradation as shop assistants laugh at your flustered attempts. That aside, learning a few key phrases will smooth your time in Poland and may even win you friends and admirers. On the positive side Polish sounds as it appears. This is a great help once you know how to pronounce each letter/combination of letters. Many letters represent the same sounds as they do in English. Below we have listed those particular to Polish.

Basic pronunciation of Polish vowels
'a' sounds like 'on' in the French 'bon'
'e' sounds like 'en' as in the French 'bien'
'o' is an open 'o' sound like 'oo' in 'boot'

Basic pronunciation of consonants
'c' like the 'ts' in 'bits'
'j' like the 'y' in 'yeah'
'w' is pronounced like the English 'w'
'l' like the 'w' in 'win'
'n' like the 'ny' in 'canyon'
'cz' and 'c' like the 'ch' in 'beach'
'dz' like the 'ds' in 'beds'
'rz' and 'z' like the 'su' in 'treasure'
'sz' and 's' like the 'sh' in 'ship'
'drz' like the 'g' in 'George'
r is always rolled and stress is generally always on the last but one syllable.

Think you've got that? Here are some words and phrases to get you started.

Civilities		
cześć	(cheshch)	hi/bye
dzień dobry	(jen do-bri)	good morning/ afternoon
dobry wieczór	(do-bri vyezh-choor)	good evening
dobranoc	(dobrah-nots)	good night
tak	(tahk)	yes
nie	(nyeh)	no
proszę	(prosheh)	please
na zdrowie	(nah zdroyeh)	cheers
dziękuję	(jen-koo-yeh)	thank you
przepraszam	(psheh-prasham)	sorry
kocham cię	(koham tshe)	I love you
Mam na imię	(mam nah ee-myeh)	My name is
Jestem z Anglii	(yehstem zanglee)	I am from England

Necessities
Gdzie są toalety? (gdjeh song toalety) Where are the toilets?
Czy mówi pan/pani po angielsku? (che moovee pan/panee po angjelskoo?) Do you (male/female) speak English?

Nie mówię po polsku (nyeh mooyeh po polskoo) I don't speak Polish
Proszę to napisać (prosheh toh napeesatch) Please write it down

Czy można tu palić (che molzhnah too paleech?) Can I smoke here?

Jedno piwo poproszę (jedno peevo poh-prosheh) One beer please

Numbers
1 jeden yehden
2 dwa dva
3 trzy tshi
10 dziesięć jayshench

General
Airport lotnisko
Train station dworzec pkp
Bus station dworzec pks
Right/left prawo/lewo
One ticket to jeden bilet do
First/second class pierwsza/druga klasa



The beginnings of colonisation in the Gdańsk area date back to the 7th century when it was a small group of fishing hamlets. Because of its strategic position at the head of the Vistula River, Gdańsk developed as an important trade centre.

10th Century The first Christian mission comes to the small fishing village of Gdańsk. The

Bishop of Prague, Adalbert, christens the inhabitants with the year 997 commonly accepted as the year that Gdańsk was founded.

13th Century Gdańsk welcomes vessels from England, Sweden and the Walloon Lands. The Teutonic Knights penetrate Polish regions from the west in 1226.

14th Century The Teutonic Knights make a treacherous assault on Gdańsk in 1308. The Knights meanwhile crown Malbork 60km south, the capital of their Teutonic state. In 1361 Gdańsk joins the Hanseatic League, a mercantile organisation, and its sea port prospers.

15th Century Polish-Lithuanian forces defeat the Teutonic Knights at the Battle of Grunwald in 1410, thereby stopping German expansion eastward.

16th Century Gdańsk enjoys a golden era, prospering into a rich seaport and important centre of trade and culture. Besides Germans, Gdańsk's ethnic make-up is predominantly Polish, Dutch and Jewish, as well as a large number of Scotsmen.

18th Century Poland becomes a playground for Tsar Peter the Great, and in 1734 Gdańsk is besieged by the Russian army. Austria, Prussia and Russia impose the first partition of Poland in 1773. Gdańsk loses its trade routes and falls into decline. A Prussian-Russian agreement on the second partition of Poland is concluded in 1793. In 1795 Austria, Prussia and Russia impose a third partition of Poland, ending Polish independence for more than a century.

19th Century Gdańsk is established as a free city, with French troops stationed there. After Napoleon's defeat and the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Poland is partitioned anew: Danzig (Gdańsk) is given back to Prussia. In 1871 it is officially incorporated into the German Empire.

Early 20th century On 11th November 1918, Poland regains independence giving birth to what is regarded as the Second Polish Republic. With Germany defeated, the partition collapses leaving Gdańsk caught in a tug of war between Germany and Poland who turn to the League of Nations to decide on control. Since the majority of the city's inhabitants were German the city is not placed under Polish sovereignty, instead The Free City of Danzig is established in 1920 complete with its own parliament, currency and postal stamps. In 1939, WWII starts with Nazi Germany's September 1 attack on Poland's military posts at Westerplatte. From 1940-44 all Polish territory falls under Nazi occupation and becomes its primary killing ground. Six million Poles, including three million Jews, are killed. Although most of Gdańsk's pre-war Jewish population managed to escape in time to avoid the Holocaust, much of Gdańsk's Polish intelligentsia found itself rounded up and murdered in the nearby Stutthof death camp. On March 28, 1945, the Soviet Army seizes Gdańsk, now a smouldering mass of rubble. From 1945 Poland is Sovietised. Control of Gdańsk is given over to Poland, and most Germans exiled,

replaced by refugees from east Poland. In 1947 the Communists consolidate political monopoly after rigged elections. In 1955 the Warsaw Pact is created. The 50s and 60s mark a time of major urban rebuilding following the large-scale wartime destruction of the city.

By **1968** popular disenchantment begins and an opposition that will eventually overthrow the government is born.

1970 The events of 1970 in Gdańsk are the first to rock the system. In December shipyard workers in Gdańsk strike to protest poor living standards. The army intervenes to put an end to the protests, resulting in clashes in which 44 die. It is also in this year that West German chancellor Willy Brandt formally renounces German territorial claims to the city.

1980-1989 A general strike is called in August 1980 by the fledgling Solidarność (Solidarity) trade union, led by shipyard electrician Lech Wałęsa. Martial law is declared the following year. In 1982 Solidarność is outlawed by the government and its leadership imprisoned. Other union activists are driven underground. In protest, more than 20,000 Gdańsk citizens take sanctuary in St. Mary's Church in Gdańsk. In 1983 martial law is lifted. Wałęsa is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The late 1980s see a period of gradual liberalisation due in part to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika in the Soviet Union. Renewed strikes in 1988 and a failing economy convince General Jaruzelski to initiate talks with Solidarność. In 1989 Round Table talks produce a formula for power sharing between the Communists and Solidarność. Partly-free elections result in sweeping Solidarność victories and the communist regime crumbles.

Post 1989 Finance Minister, Leszek Balcerowicz, launches an ambitious shock-therapy economic reform programme. Lech Wałęsa becomes Poland's first democratically-elected, post-communist President. In 1995 reformed communist, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, defeats Wałęsa in presidential elections. The following year the Gdańsk shipyards are declared bankrupt. 2001 sees flash floods hit the Tri-City area. Three people die.

2004 May - Poland enters the European Union on May 1.

2005 Pope John Paul II loses his battle against illness and passes away.

2007 - Platforma (PO) defeat PiS, the party of the Kaczyński twins, which results in local boy Donald Tusk becoming Prime Minister.

2010 - April 10th sees 96 high-ranking Poles tragically killed in the air disaster at Smolensk in Russia. Among the dead are President Lech Kaczyński and his wife along with a number of well-known Gdańskians including Solidarity's Anna Walentynowicz, Senator Maciej Płaczynski and MP Arkadiusz Rybicki whose funerals take place in various old town churches.

Gdańsk through the Ages

997-1308: as part of Poland
1308-1466: as part of territory of Teutonic Order
1466-1793: as part of Poland
1793-1805: as part of Prussia
1807-1814: as a free city
1815-1871: as part of Prussia
1871-1918: German Reich
1920-1939: as a free city
1939-1945: German Reich
1945 onwards: part of Poland

Poland is an increasingly important centre of culture, and artisans, performers and musicians from all over the world now regularly arrive here to showcase their various talents. From art house sculptors to top-name bands, In Your Pocket is dedicated to bringing news of these events to as wide an audience as possible. Besides the listings on the print guide, we also regularly update our website with all the news and events as they reach us, sometimes after our print guide has gone to press. For the latest event information make www.inyourpocket.com the first place you visit.

Art galleries

Desa Gallery N-2, Gdynia, ul. Abrahama 54 (entrance from ul. Władysława IV), tel. (+48) 58 620 36 63.

► Open 10:00 - 18:00, Sat 10:00 - 14:00. Closed Sun. Admission free.

Dworek Sierakowskich L-4, Sopot, ul. Czyżewskiego 12, tel. (+48) 58 551 07 56, www.dworek.art.pl.

► Open 12:00 - 19:00. Admission free.

Engel Gallery N-2, Gdynia, ul. Świętojańska 56, tel. (+48) 58 620 91 67, www.galeriaengel.pl.

► Open 11:00 - 19:00, Sat 11:00 - 15:00. Closed Sun. Admission free.


Gdańsk Photography Gallery (Gdańska Galeria Fotografii) C-4, Gdańsk, ul. Grobla I 8/11, tel. (+48) 58 301 71 47, www.muzeum.narodowe.gda.pl.

► Admission 2/1zł. Open 11:00-17:00, Thu 12:00-18:00, Sat Sun 11:00-16:00. Closed Mon.

Green Gate (Zielona Brama) C-5, Gdańsk, ul. Długi Targ 24, tel. (+48) 58 307 59 12, www.muzeum.narodowe.gda.pl.

► Open 09:00-16:00, Sat, Sun 10:00-17:00. Closed Mon. Last entrance 45 minutes before closing. Admission fee depends on the exhibition, check website for details.

Profile Art Gallery N-3, Gdynia, ul. Wojewódzka 7, tel. (+48) 58 622 33 11, www.artinfo.pl/profile.

► Open 12:00 - 18:00, Sat 12:00 - 16:00. Closed Sun. Admission free. 

Sopot Auction Home (Sopocki Dom aukcyjny) M-4, Sopot, ul. Monte Cassino 43, tel. (+48) 58 550 16 05, www.sda.pl.



► Open 11:00 - 19:00, Sat 11:00 - 15:00. Closed Sun. Admission free.

ZPAP Gallery C-4, Gdańsk, ul. Mariacka 46/47, tel. (+48) 58 301 69 14, www.zpap-gdansk.art.pl. Also at ul. Piwna 67/68, B-4 (Open 11:00 - 17:00. Closed Sat, Sun)

► Open 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Sat, Sun. Admission free.

Cinemas

Cinema City Krewetka B-2, Gdańsk, ul. Karmelicka 1, tel. (+48) 58 769 31 00, www.cinema-city.pl.

► Box office open 09:30 - 22:45. Tickets 15-28zł.  

Film Club (Klub Filmowy) O-1, Gdynia, ul. Waszyngtona 1, tel. (+48) 58 661 89 73, www.klubfilmowy.pl.

► Box office open depending on repertoire. Tickets 10zł.


Helios Gdańsk Gdańsk, Alfa Centrum, ul. Kołobrzaska 41c, tel. (+48) 58 767 99 88, www.heliosnet.pl.

► Box office open 09:00 - 22:00. Tickets 13-27zł.

Multikino H-3, Gdańsk, Al. Zwycięstwa 14, tel. (+48) 58 732 10 10, www.multikino.pl.

► Box office open 09:00 - 22:00. Tickets 15-27zł.

Multikino O-1, Gdynia, ul. Waszyngtona 21 (Gemini), tel. (+48) 58 731 39 10, www.multikino.pl/gdynia.

► Box office open 15 minutes before first showtime to 15 minutes after last showtime. Tickets 13-27zł. 

Multikino M-4, Sopot, Bohaterów Monte Cassino 63, tel. (+48) 58 741 75 10, www.multikino.pl.

► Box office open 15 minutes before the first showtime to 15 minutes after last showtime. Tickets 18-27zł.

State Art Gallery



State Art Gallery (Państwowa Galeria Sztuki) M-4, Sopot, Pl. Zdrowy 2, tel. (+48) 58 551 06 21, www.pgs.pl.

Individual exhibitions of major contemporary Polish artists. ► Open 11:00 - 19:00. Closed Mon. Admission 7/10zł.

11.11 Friday - 01.01 Sunday

Boredom Quotation

Painter Marek Okrassa sees boredom as something common to all of us living in the modern era, she should get out more. However, Okrassa doesn't see the boredom as something depressing but as a solid part of our lives that should be embraced.

26.11 Saturday - 22.01 Sunday

Legend of the Polish Poster

Poster art is a big deal in Poland and this is a presentation of 200 works of the Polish poster master Jan Młodożeniec. Besides posters there will be projects of covers, drawings, illustrations and photography from the National Museum in Poznań collection and the artist's archives.

26.11 Saturday - 08.01 Sunday

Topos

A chance to see selected paintings of Agata Bogacka created over the last 10 years since she graduated from the Fine Arts Academy in Warsaw. It's the first retrospective of Bogacka and the title Topos suggests that we will have to struggle with myth and history, of course it does.

05.01 Thursday - 19.02 Sunday

Adam Myjak

An exhibition of sculptures to mark this artist's 65th birthday and 40 years of the art scene. Adam Myjak was born in Sandomierz, but he studied at the Gdańsk Fine Arts Academy, where he stayed and now works as a teacher.

Trade Fairs

Gdańsk International Fair (Międzynarodowe Targi Gdańskie SA) ul. Beniowskiego 5, Gdańsk (Oliwa), tel. (+48) 58 554 92 00, www.mtgsa.com.pl.

Gdańsk International Fair is a major trade fair centre with grounds in the Gdańsk suburb of Oliwa, close to the main Gdańsk - Gdynia road and Gdańsk Oliwa Station. There's over 23,000 square metres of modern trade fair halls and parking with professional conference and service facilities. Organising trade events for a variety of economic sectors, including both in-house projects and external contracts changes are coming. Before the summer they should be moving to a new, modern location, just across the street from the PGE Arena stadium. When the road improvements are in place, the transport links will be second to none.

Artistic Director VICTOR SMIRNOV-GOLOVANOV

MOSCOW CITY BALLET



Swan Lake Nutcracker

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Cultural Centers

Arts and Culture Centre Zatoka Sztuki M-4, Al. Mamuszkii 14, tel. (+48) 785 88 04 02, www.mcka.pl.

Baltic Cultural Centre (Nadbałtyckie Centrum Kultury) B-3, Gdańsk, ul. Korzenna 33/35, tel. (+48) 58 301 10 51, www.nck.org.pl. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00.

Centre For Contemporary Art Łaźnia (CSW Łaźnia) K-4, Gdańsk, ul. Jaskółcza 1, tel. (+48) 58 305 40 50, www.laznia.pl. ▶ Open 12:00 - 18:00. Closed Mon. Admission 5/3zł. **TC**

Gdańsk Archipelago of Culture (Gdański Archipelag Kultury) Gdańsk, ul. Dworcowa 9 (Orunia), tel. (+48) 58 309 04 54, www.gak.gda.pl. ▶ Open 10:00 - 20:00, Closed Sat, Sun. Admission free.

Klub Żak E-4, Gdańsk, Al. Grunwaldzka 195/197, tel. (+48) 58 344 05 73, www.klubzak.com.pl. ▶ Open 08:00 - 01:00, Fri 08:00 - 03:00, Sat 16:00 - 03:00, Sun 16:00 - 01:00. **CB**

Wyspa Institute of Art I-3, ul. Doki 1/145 b, tel. (+48) 58 718 44 46, www.wyspa.art.pl. ▶ Admission and open hours depend on the event.

Opera Stages

State Baltic Opera (Opera Bałtycka) G-3, Gdańsk, Al. Zwycięstwa 15, tel. (+48) 58 763 49 13, www.operabałtycka.pl. ▶ Full schedule available at www.operabałtycka.pl. Box office open 12:00 - 19:00. Sat 14:00 - 19:00. Sun two hours before performance. Closed Mon. Tickets 20-70zł. **TC**

Philharmonics

Fryderyk Chopin's Baltic Philharmonic Hall D-3, Gdańsk, ul. Ołowianka 1, tel. (+48) 58 320 62 62, www.filharmonia.gda.pl. ▶ Tickets 10-40zł. Box office open 10:30 - 18:00, Tue 09:30 - 16:00. Mon, Sat, Sun four hours before performance.

Theatre Stages

City Theatre (Teatr Miejski im. Witolda Gombrowicza) N-2, Gdynia, ul. Bema 26, tel. (+48) 58 621 02 26, www.teatrgombrowicza.art.pl. ▶ Box office open 11:00 - 19:00, Sat, Sun 15:00 - 19:00. Closed Mon. Tickets 25-40zł.

Miniatura Theatre G-3, Gdańsk, Al. Grunwaldzka 16, tel. (+48) 58 341 94 83, www.teatrcminiatura.pl. ▶ Box office open 09:00 - 15:00, Sat, Sun two hours before performance. Closed Mon. Tickets 12-17zł.

Musical Theatre (Teatr Muzyczny) O-1, Gdynia, Pl. Grunwaldzki 1, tel. (+48) 58 620 95 21, www.muzyczny.org. ▶ Box office open 09:00 - 19:00, Mon 09:00 - 15:00, Sat, Sun two hours before performance. Tickets 26-100zł.

Off de Bicz Stage M-3, Al. Mamuszkii 2, tel. (+48) 58 555 22 34, www.offdebicz.sopot.pl. ▶ Box office open 30 minutes before performance. Tickets 15-30zł.

Wybrzeże Theatre C-4, Gdańsk, ul. Św. Ducha 2, tel. (+48) 58 301 13 28, www.teatrowybrzeze.pl. ▶ Tickets 20-40zł. Box office open 12:00 - 19:00, Sat, Sun 14:00-19:00. **TC**

Wybrzeże Theatre Chamber Stage (Scena Kameralna Teatru Wybrzeże) M-4, Sopot, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 30, tel. (+48) 58 551 50 40, www.teatrowybrzeze.pl. ▶ Tickets 25-45zł. Box office open 12:00 - 19:00, Sat, Sun 14:00-19:00.

Ballet

07.01 Saturday - 17.01 Tuesday

Cinderella

G-3, State Baltic Opera, Al. Zwycięstwa 15, tel. (+48) 58 763 49 13, www.opera-baltycka.pl. This three-act ballet has music composed by Sergei Prokofiev and choreography by Eugenio Scigliano. There are six performances in January: on 07.01(19:00), 08.01(17:00), 10.01, 11.01(11:00), 14.01(19:00), 15.01(17:00), 17.01(11:00). Tickets are going fast but we're sure there are still something left at the box office, so don't give up. ▶ Tickets 25-100zł. Available at State Baltic Opera's box office (open 12:00 - 19:00. Sat 14:00 - 19:00. Sun two hours before performance. Closed Mon).

Concerts

19.12 Monday

Harlem Gospel Choir

D-3, Baltic Philharmonic Hall, ul. Ołowianka 1, tel. (+48) 58 320 62 62, www.filharmonia.gda.pl. Featuring an array of 65 singers aged from 17 to 70, this is one of the biggest names among gospel choirs. Believe, these guys and gals are the real deal. Belting out religious songs, they were called the best black sound in America by Bono (no doubt he considers himself the best white sound in America). Sure to fill you with the Christmas spirit. ▶ Concert starts at 20:00. Tickets 120-150zł. Available at Baltic Philharmonic Hall's box office (Open 10:30 - 18:00, Tue 09:30 - 16:00. Mon, Sat, Sun four hours before performance).

20.12 Tuesday

Jazz Travel - Retro Funk Live

L-4, Versalka, ul. Bohaterów Monte Casino 63, tel. (+48) 602 63 66 37, www.versalka.pl. Versalka continues its support of jazz musicians with its Jazz Travel series, and tonight Retro Funk Live takes the stage. The band, which is made up of 8 young session musicians who work with the best of Poland's jazz scene, will fill the room with 70s-style funk. The group draws inspiration from musicians as varied as James Brown, Maceo Parker and Nils Landgren. They also add a solid portion of jazz improvisation to their funk lineup, making this a unique not-to-be-missed performance. ▶ Available at Versalka (Open 09:00 - 24:00) and before the concert.

29.01 Sunday

George Dorn Screams

M-4, Papryka, ul. Grunwaldzka 11, tel. (+48) 58 551 74 76, www.klubpapryka.pl. Papryka Bar hosts this popular Bydgoszcz quartet as they promote their latest effort, 'Go Cry On Somebody Else's Shoulder'. Even though this foursome has been playing together for six years (and this is their third album) they say this latest work feels like a debut since they've finally cemented their style. Find out if you agree by checking out their live performance. ▶ Concert starts at 21:00. Ticket prices were undecided at the moment. Please check our website for updates.

23.04 Monday

Michael Buble - Crazy Love Tour

Gdańsk/Sopot, Ergo Arena, Pl. Dwóch Miast (Zabianka), www.ergoarena.pl. The latest in a seemingly endless line of singers to be called the new Frank Sinatra, Michael Buble is undoubtedly talented. This will be his first visit to Poland so our one and only chance to see him live. Having started his career in 2003, he quickly stole the hearts of his audience singing mainly jazz music but also many covers. ▶ Event starts at 20:00. Tickets 195-699zł. Available at www.ticketpro.pl and EMPiK, Gdańsk, B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 8 (Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 11:00 - 20:00).

Space Fest!



09.12 Friday - 10.12 Saturday
Space Fest!

www.spacefest.pl. A fresh, new and very welcome addition to the cultural life of the Tricity comes in the form of the Space Fest! For its first edition we will have the chance to get to grips with new genres like shoegaze and space-rock. Space Fest! takes a detour from the traditional festival concert only formula by putting on 4 days of workshops, meetings with artists and recording a CD. The artists invited are from Poland and Great Britain fitting in with the aim of exposing the audience to the British classics of shoegaze and space-rock, as well as also promoting Polish bands experimenting with these genres. Over 2 days of concerts 10 bands will be performing. One highlight will be Pure Phase Ensemble, a band called up especially for the festival's needs. This collective of 15 musicians will perform pieces composed during the 4 days of workshops. The festival will also give a chance to two bands selected in competition and they will start the second day of the festival. The programme looks like this:

09.12 Friday

CSW Łaźnia, K-4, Jaskółcza 1 (Admission free)
18:00 - Simon Scott's multimedia presentation
19:00 - panel discussion with SpaceFest! participants
20:00 - concert (TBA)

Pub LOFT, B-3, Młyńska 15
22:00 - 01:00 Afterparty

10.12 Saturday

Fabryka Batycki, K-4, Kamienna Grobla 28/29
18:00 - 18:30 concert (TBA)
18:45 - 19:15 concert (TBA)
19:30 - 20:15 Simon Scott (UK)
20:35 - 21:15 Klimt (PL)
21:30 - 21:15 Jaime Harding (UK)
22:15 - 23:15 Pure Phase Ensemble (PL+UK)
23:45 - 24:45 White Noise Sound (UK)
01:10 - 02:15 Ścianka (PL)
02:15 - 04:00 DJ set

▶ Tickets 5-30zł. Available before the concerts.

ANIMATION NOW! FESTIVAL

3rd Contemporary Animation Festival



7-11.12.2011

Gdansk | Gdynia | Sopot | POLAND

Screenings: Chico & Rita,
Caroline, Wall-e, Ponyo

Workshops:
animation with puppets &
painting on glass

Interactive show

Animation Now!

Karaoke, Night with

animation

And more!

MAIN PARTNERS:



Animation Now!

07.12 Wednesday - 11.12 Sunday
Animation Now!

www.animationnow.pl. This will be the 3rd time out for the Animation Now! Festival. Over five days there will be reviews, workshops, meetings with artists and audio-visual shows in venues all over the Tricity. Projections will be taking place in Kino Kameralne, Gdańsk, J-4, ul. Długa 57 and Film Club, Gdynia, O-1, ul. Waszyngtona 1 and admission for most projections is free! The festival's programme is as varied as you could wish for and we will be able to find a wide range of ideas and techniques, the freshest films from all over world and interactive uses of animation. Animation Now! will show case a myriad of discoveries in the visual field as well as obviously telling some fascinating stories.

If you are a fan of the snappy sounds of Havana and New York, the organisers have prepared the animated Spanish romance 'Chico & Rita' in its original English language version. It will be first shown in the Film Club on 10th Dec at 16:30. The following day it's on at Kino Kameralne at 18:30. The offerings from the U.S. are always on the cutting edge of what technology has to offer. This year is no different and you can revisit a blockbuster story from the studios of Disney and Pixar: 'Wall-E'. Come along on 7th Dec, 19:30, to the Film Club and on 10th Dec, 15:30, to Kino Kameralne. Meanwhile the dark ironic 'Coroline' can be seen on 9th Dec, 18:00, at Kino Kameralne, 11th Dec, 17:00, at the Film Club. Dakota Fanning dubs the main character, who finds a door to parallel world where everyone has buttons instead of their eyes and her parents actually show an interest in her.

2010 was designated Chopin Year in Poland and the cultural calendar was filled with the great composer's music. This will be carried over in the hour-long international production 'The Flying Machine'. A joint Indian, Polish, Chinese, British, Norwegian production, the film, which has quite an educational character, encapsulates the life and work of Frederick Chopin in two stories. This sounds like a great idea for the kids and is on at Kino Kameralne on 10th Dec at 14:00 and 11th Dec at 15:30 in the Film Club.

The Sound & Vision section includes two events. First up is an audio-visual performance entitled Materidouska. On the experimental side of the European scene for a couple of years now, it is the brain child of Jiří Suchánek and Tereza Damcová who started out at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Brno. The event will take place in Gdańsk 2016, C-5, ul. Długi Targ 39/40. The second slice of Sound & Vision comes in the shape of an audiovisual installation 'Cast A Shadow' by Szymon Kabala and Mateusz Marchwicki. Check this out on the last day of the festival in the National Bank of Poland, Gdynia, on the corner of ul. 10 Lutego and ul. 3 Maja from 17:00 to 20:00. The installation comprises an interactive video mapping device, prepared especially for the space of this listed building. It gives the audience the chance to steer the animation and sound by casting a shadow on the field of the installation.

There's a wealth of events and excitement going on, something for everyone, young and old alike. Highly recommended. ▶ Admission free. Full schedule available at www.animationnow.pl.

Exhibitions

11.05 Wednesday - 29.01 Sunday

Johannes Hevelius and the Gdańsk of His Time
C-4, History of Gdańsk Museum, ul. Długa 46/47, tel. (+48) 58 767 91 00, www.mhmg.gda.pl.
A presentation of the life and work of the Gdańsk astronomer covering all the many various fields he was involved in scientific, political, even brewing. It shows Hevelius as a scientist of European renown who corresponded with the biggest intellects of the epoch. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00, Tue 10:00 - 15:00, Sun 11:00-16:00. Closed Mon. Admission 10/5zł, family ticket 20zł. Tue free.

06.11 Sunday - 01.01 Sunday
5xN

B-4, Gdańsk, Amber Museum, Targ Węglowy 26, tel. (+48) 58 301 47 33, www.mhmg.gda.pl. This presentation aims to show amber in forms alternative to gemstones. The five parts are: most valuable, most unusual, typical Polish and new jewellery. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00, Tue 10:00 - 15:00, Sun 11:00-16:00. Closed Mon. Admission 10/5zł, family ticket 20zł. Tue free.

06.11 Sunday - 01.01 Sunday

Crumbs Collected, Gdańsk Drawings And Graphics by Andrzej Taranek

B-4, Gdańsk, Uphagen's House, ul. Długa 12, tel. (+48) 58 301 23 71 ext.10, www.mhmg.gda.pl. This exhibition is made up of work by Andrzej Taranek, produced between 1980 and 2010, and shows Gdańsk buildings and how they have been rebuilt, demolished or transformed, these are the crumbs in the title, but 'remains' or 'traces' might be a better translation. It is something of a documentary of changes in Gdańsk's landscape and later it will move to Lithuania and Germany. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00, Tue 10:00 - 15:00, Sun 11:00-16:00. Closed Mon. Admission 10/5zł, family ticket 20zł. Tue free.

13.11 Sunday - 12.02 Sunday

Goya - Children's Games

B-6, National Museum, ul. Toruńska 1, tel. (+48) 58 301 70 61 ext. 233. One of the major art events on the cultural calendar this year. This is a presentation of the most precious artworks of Goya from over hundred pieces in the Santamarca family collection. It's a rare chance to see the paintings, all thanks to the Fusara Foundation from Madrid. ▶ Open 09:00-16:00, Sat, Sun 10:00-17:00. Closed Mon. Last entrance 45 minutes before closing. Admission 10/6zł, family ticket 18zł. Groups over 15 people 6zł per person.

15.11 Tuesday - 29.02 Wednesday

Matter of Light And Flesh

C-5, Green Gate, Długi Targ 24, tel. (+48) 58 307 59 12 ext. 102, www.muzeum.narodowe.gda.pl. Organized with the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the Royal Art & History Museum in Brussels, this is a show of art from the Low countries Prussia. There will be special presentations for the visually impaired people where they will have the chance to feel the sculptures. ▶ Open 09:00-16:00, Sat, Sun 10:00-17:00. Closed Mon. Last entrance 45 minutes before closing. Admission 5/10zł.

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01.12
JACASZEK & SILVA RERUM

02.12
NEMEZIS VS. PAWEŁ MYKIETYN
KAI SCHUMACHER
ZEITKRATZER

03.12
MORITZ EGGERT & SHRAENG
KWARTLUDIUM &
SEBASTIAN MEISSNER
HAUSCHKA

more info: www.c3festival.com
contact: gdansk@c3festival.com
tickets: www.ticketpro.pl
and St. John's Centre (before concerts)

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B Polska Filharmonia Bałtycka Im. Fryderyka Chopina w Gdańsku

66th season 2011/12

20th January, Fri 7.00 pm
"Symphony Masterpieces"
The Baltic Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra
Kai Baumann conductor

Ewa Marciniak alto

Roman Sadnik tenor

BEETHOVEN Symphony No.1
MAHLER Das Lied von der Erde

9th March, Fri 7.00 pm
Oratorio Concert
Marta Boberska soprano

Katarzyna Krzyżanowska alto

Tomasz Krzysica tenor

Jarosław Bręk bass

Sylwester Smulczyński Evangelist

Sławomir Jurczak Jesus

Kai Bumann conductor

Cappella Gedanensis
Academic Choir Of Gdańsk University
The Baltic Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra
JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH St Matthew
Passion, BWV 244
**26th March,
Mon 7.00 pm**
"The Pursuit Of Perfection"
MAXIM VENGEROV
Maxim Vengerov violin

Itamar Golan piano

GEORG FRIEDRICH HANDEL Sonata No.4 in D major, HWV 371
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN Violin sonata in A major "Kreutzer"
JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH Partita No.2 D minor BWV 1004
www.filharmonia.gda.pl


Festivals

12.01 Thursday - 15.01 Sunday
Days of New Music

E-4, Gdańsk, Klub Żak, Al. Grunwaldzka 195/197, tel. (+48) 58 344 05 73, www.klubzak.com.pl. The aim of this festival is to present how electronic music can be combined with traditional and more modern musical styles, as well as classical instruments, and the artists performing will certainly be able to show off their virtuosity. Inspiration comes from the Avant Art Festival in Wrocław which became a huge success. So far the only thing we know for sure is that the stars will be the Kronos Quartet. Founded in 1973 by David Harrington, the line up is largely unchanged as is their open attitude to their repertoire. For example they released the album 'Pieces of Africa' with world music. They're also respected for performing music to the films of Darren Aronofsky: 'Pi', 'Requiem For A Dream' and 'The Fountain'. ▶ Concerts start at 20:00. Tickets 10-100zł. Available at Żak box office (Open 15:00 - 21:00, Sat, Sun 16:00 - 21:00).

25.02 Saturday
Gdynia Rock Fest

Gdynia, Sports Hall, ul. Kazimierza Górskiego 8 (Redłowo), www.go-ahead.pl. This is Gdynia's answer to Poznań's Rock In Arena and Katowice's Odjazdy festivals. On February 25th the Sports Hall will host Polish top rock bands Coma, Hey, Happysad, Armia, Muchy and Trupa Trupa. ▶ Event starts at 15:30. Gates open from 15:00. Tickets 69/79zł. Available at Empik, Gdynia, N-2, ul. Świętojańska 68 (Open 09:00 - 20:00, Sat 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Sun).

Misc Events

10.01 Tuesday
The War of the Worlds

Gdańsk/Sopot, Ergo Arena, Pl. Dwóch Miast (Zabianka). The great Jeff Wayne show gets a new version 33 years since its original premiere in the late 70s when Science Fiction movies were enjoying a resurgence on the back of Star Wars. This show is being advertised with Liam Neeson on the posters. Neeson won't be narrating the story in person at the Ergo Arena, but he will be present as a 3D hologram on a huge screen in the background of the stage. 'The chances of anything coming from Mars...' ▶ Event starts at 18:00. Tickets 165-275zł. Available at EMPIK, Gdańsk, B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 8 (Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 11:00 - 20:00).

21.01 Saturday
The Art Hotpot in Sopot and Hong Kong

M-4, Arts and Culture Centre Zatoka Sztuki, Al. Mamuszkki 14, tel. (+48) 785 88 04 02, www.mcka.pl. This project is part of a cultural exchange between Zatoka Sztuki in Sopot and C&G Artpartment in Hong Kong. On January 12th, five artists from Hong Kong: Gum Cheng, Clara Cheung, Law-Man, Lock Lo and Cally Yu will come to Sopot and to prepare their art installations in the area around the Arts and Culture Centre Zatoka Sztuki, so from Jan 12th don't be surprised if you bump into them. The subject of these installations is heat and burning; how long the works will be available to view depends on the weather, better get a move on then. ▶ Time was undecided at the moment. Please check our website for updates. Admission free.

Special Events

31.12 Saturday
New Year's Eve

B-4, Targ Węglowy. Targ Węglowy is the traditional spot where the open air new year's eve concerts take place. For this year we already know that Czech vocalist Ewa Farna will perform and that there will also be a presentation of the top 20 hits of 2011 from the chart of Radio Eska. ▶ Event starts at 21:00. Admission free.

08.01 Sunday
XX Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity

B-4, Targ Węglowy, www.wosp.org.pl. It part of the 20th annual charity day with events nationwide to raise money for various children's charities. Highlights will include the 'light to heaven' fireworks display at 20:00. There will be hosts of household names performing but as yet the names are being kept secret. This year the focus will be on raising money to buy medical equipment necessary for saving the lives of preterm children and for insulin pumps for pregnant diabetic women. It's all for free but be prepared to put your hand in your pocket more than once, it's all in a very good cause. ▶ Admission free.

Sport

12.04 Thursday
The Raw Wrestlemania Revenge Tour 2012

Gdańsk/Sopot, Ergo Arena, Pl. Dwóch Miast (Zabianka), www.ergoarena.pl. The last visit of the wrestlers was a huge success, so in 2012 they will come again. Take the chance to see all the stars of WWE: John Cena, CM Punk, Kelly Kelly, R-Truth, Alberto Del Rio. If you want to see fight spectacle, then this is for you, but don't expect too much real pain. ▶ Event starts at 18:00. Tickets 55-385zł. Available at EMPIK, Gdańsk, B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 8 (Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 11:00 - 20:00).

Theatre

19.01 Thursday - 22.01 Sunday
Cirque du Soleil

Gdańsk/Sopot, Ergo Arena, Pl. Dwóch Miast (Zabianka). Cirque du Soleil is a dozen-odd groups performing all over the world under one name. Originally from Canada, they will perform in Poland for the first time with their best known show 'Saltimbanco'. Far from a regular circus, there's no sawdust on the ground or trained animals, just top quality acrobatics with elements of theatre, opera and interesting choreography thrown in. Shows start at 20:00 on Thu and Fri, at 16:00 and 20:00 on Sat, at 13:00 and 17:00 on Sun. ▶ Tickets 125-250zł. Available at EMPIK, Gdańsk, B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 8 (Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 11:00 - 20:00).

16.03 Friday
Forever King of Pop

Gdańsk/Sopot, Ergo Arena, Pl. Dwóch Miast (Zabianka). This is a two-hour musical tribute to Michael Jackson produced by Summum Music under the patronage of and in cooperation with the Jackson Family Foundation. The arena will ring out to the sounds of Billie Jean, Beat It, Bad, ABC, I Want You Back, Smooth Criminal, Human Nature and other hits in a show performed by 40 artists including a live band, vocalists and dancers. ▶ Event starts at 19:00. Tickets 90-150zł. Available at EMPIK, Gdańsk, B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 8 (Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 11:00 - 20:00).

Metropolis is OK

26.12 Monday - 29.12 Thursday
Metropolis is OK

Come and feel the united power of the Tricity's music, art and dance performers. There are parties, concerts and exhibitions in the best clubs in the Tricity. Beside the ever present venues like **Parlament, Gdańsk, B-4, ul. Św. Duchy 2, Sfinks700, Sopot, M-3, Al. Mamuszkki 1** and **Ucho, Gdynia, O-1, ul. Św. Piotra 2**, the 5th edition of Metropolis Is OK sees events in three new spots: **St. John's Centre, Gdańsk, D-3, ul. Świętojańska 50, Old Town Hall, Gdańsk, B-3, ul. Korzenna 33/35** and **Gdańsk 2016, Gdańsk, C-5, ul. Długi Targ 39/40**. Over 4 December days about 50 Tricity bands will perform, with most of the names familiar if you have been to previous editions of the festival. Traditionally the concerts will run along side performances from dance theatres and meetings with writers. However, the fun doesn't end there: every year the formula of the festival grows by adding new elements. This year it's in the form of a revue of Tricity club scene taking place in the SFINKS 700 on December 27th. If your tastes are more esoteric head for **Desdemona, Gdynia, N-1, ul. Abrahama 37**, where a flea market will be held. Come along and discover old recordings, music CDs, vinyl and so on. The festival's programme looks like this:

Music:
26.12 Monday
18:00, Parlament

Navigatorgong - Robert Usewicz, Detko Band, Enchanted Hunters, Absyntia, Babcia Do Orzechów, Lamia Reno, Zdrowia Szczęścia, Pomarańczy, Loco Star, Le Bâtard de la Raison/Rozumu Bękart, Bubble Chamber, Lovers In Uniforms, Olo Walicki Kaszëbë II, Kobiety, Tomek Lipiński

27.12 Tuesday
18:00, S.F.I.N.K.S. 700

Vreen, Marla Cinger, Mordy, Gówno, Po Prostu, Popsysze vs Pin&Zielony|Towary Zastępcze|Borys Kossakowski, Sunday Duo, Asia and Koty| Karol Schwarz All Stars, SAM-Sveerg, Bisclaveret, Mananasoko, Datadisk, Libret-to GSM & DwaZera, DJ Szymon Albrzykowski, Khad|Affi

28.12 Wednesday
19:00, Ucho

Blindeed, Czechoslovakia, Kiev Office, C4030, Wykołak Naked Brown, Wojciech Staroniewicz "Afreak-an project", Wikas, Chłopot Mózgu, Blue Jay Way, Dreadless Lions, Information, The Shipyard, Irek Wojtczak Kwartet, Gipsy Pill

29.12 Thursday
18:00, S.F.I.N.K.S. 700

Hatti Vatti, Quarrel, Reza, Tom Glass, Hacker, Emde, Warson aka, Wara, Rhythm Baboon, Mad Cannabeatz, Adam Faz

Theatre:
29.12 Thursday
20:00 St. John's Centre

Leon Dziemaskiewicz Theatre - Złota Rączka, Kwiat Północy, Dzieci Morza
Pusty Dom Theatre - Amarey
Dada von Bzdulów Theatre - Fruu

Additional event:
29.12 Thursday
18:00, Desdemona

Music flea market ▶ Tickets 5zł. Available before the events.


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Novotel Gdańsk Marina M-6, ul. Jelitkowska 20, tel. (+48) 58 558 91 00, www.accorhotels.com. This beachside monolith strikes a nice balance between business and pleasure and offers everything you'd expect from such a well-known brand. As a plus, each room has a sea view. ▶176 rooms (25 singles 190 - 275zł, 149 doubles 190 - 275zł, 12 suites 380 - 550zł, 2 apartments 465 - 540zł). Breakfast 42zł.  ★★

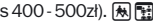
Parnas D-5, ul. Spichrzowa 27, tel. (+48) 58 320 12 75, www.hotelparnas.pl. The Granary Island area has emerged, surprisingly somewhat, as a bit of a boutique heaven, and the Parnas is the latest to join the ranks of some very decent lodgings. Set inside a half-timbered building the interiors here have an almost neo-classical feel, with hardwood floors and elegant fittings complementing a bulls-eye location minutes from the old town. ▶13 rooms (12 singles 180zł, 12 doubles 250zł, 1 apartment 500zł).  ★★

Pica Paca D-5, ul. Spichrzowa 20, tel. (+48) 58 320 20 70, www.picapaca.com. The third of a new wave of modern, boutique style efforts to have shot up recently on the Granary Island. There's eight rooms to choose from, and each comes decorated with a funky modernist look and a different theme. Pick from rooms dedicated in memory of Monroe, Newton or Einstein. Each comes with flatscreen TV, and little details include a welcome bowl of fruit. Downstairs there's the equally stylish Pica Paca cafe, a light bright space that's open to non-guests as well. ▶14 rooms (8 singles €60 - 70, 8 doubles €75 - 90, 6 apartments €90 - 160).  ★★

Qubus Hotel C-6, ul. Chmielna 47/52, tel. (+48) 58 752 21 00, www.qubushotel.com. If ever there was a sign of Gdańsk's regeneration it's the fate of her granary buildings. These abandoned relics have finally caught the eye of the investor, and in particular the hotel sector who've been busy turning these ghosts of the past into something fit for the future. Qubus are the latest brand to send the builders in, and the results are eye catching to say the least - particularly at night when the whole structure is floodlit and illuminated. Set just across from old town this place is the last word in chic, with air-conditioning throughout and all the modern elements required to make your stay faultless. Gym and sauna also available, as well as one of the better hotel breakfasts to be found. ▶110 rooms (36 singles €78 - 102, 72 doubles €95 - 124, 2 apartments €169 - 186).  ★★

Scandic Gdańsk B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 9, tel. (+48) 58 300 60 00, www.scandichotels.com. What was the Holiday Inn has re-branded and re-launched as the Scandic, a smart central hotel slipped discreetly into the city centre. Rooms are large bright and modern, and a favoured base of both conventions and tour groups. On top of a very good in-house restaurant - Senso - which is also open to non-guests, a spa service has also been added. ▶143 rooms (61 singles 269 - 695zł, 64 doubles 269 - 695zł, 18 suites 419 - 845zł). Breakfast 45zł.  ★★

Mid-range


Amber I-4, ul. Taborowa 1, tel. (+48) 58 718 71 87, www.amber-hotel.pl. A smart three star venture in a new, blockish building two clicks from the centre. Featuring a sharp, modern design rooms come with flatscreen TVs, wifi and a svelte looking style. ▶44 rooms (10 singles 160 - 200zł, 30 doubles 240 - 300zł, 2 triples 260 - 340zł, 2 suites 400 - 500zł).  ★★


Artus C-4, ul. Piwna 36/39, tel. (+48) 58 320 96 00, www.artushotel.com.pl. A wonderful addition to the accommodation scene in the old town. Found inside a renovated series of town houses, the Artus Hotel offer modern and comfortable rooms with all mod-cons (including satellite TV and internet), pristine bathrooms and classy touches such as exposed brickwork. The main pull here though, aside from some pretty reasonable pricing, is the location. Lying in the shadow of St Mary's church, a hop, skip and a jump from the Neptun Fountain and on top of the very good Cafe Mon Balzac Artus earns bonus points all round. ▶50 rooms (48 singles 241 - 281zł, 36 doubles 300 - 435zł, 2 apartments 444 - 544zł).  ★★

Biała Lilia D-5, ul. Spichrzowa 16, tel. (+48) 58 301 70 74, www.bialalilia.pl. A smart affair inside a fully converted townhouse. A chic, contemporary design reigns throughout, with attractive rooms coming decorated in clean, cream colours and featuring the expected range of 21st century extras: cable TV, internet points and sparkling bathrooms. ▶15 rooms (1 singles 180zł, 13 doubles 250zł, 1 suites 350zł).  ★★

Bonum C-2, ul. Sieroca 3, tel. (+48) 58 304 78 10, www.hotelbonum.pl. A comfortable, modern hotel occupying three restored tenement buildings. All rooms are brand spanking new and come equipped with plasma screens and internet connection. The exposed and restored brickwork throughout lends the place an aged feel which complements the modern finish beautifully. Of note are their apartments, one of which has a balcony overlooking the city skyline. ▶32 rooms (7 singles 244 - 384zł, 21 doubles 304 - 444zł, 2 triples 399 - 539zł, 2 apartments 424 - 659zł).  ★★

Dom Aktora D-3, ul. Straganiarska 55/56, tel. (+48) 58 301 61 93, www.domaktora.pl. Old town location and 100 metres from the river, Dom Aktora is ideal if you have children and require a bit of peace and quiet with your own cooking facilities. Effectively a guest house with kitchens, fixtures and fittings have been modernised over the past year and bathrooms now positively shine with newness. There is a choice of 4 rooms and 9 apartment style rooms which can accommodate 1-4 people and prices include a hearty breakfast served downstairs. ▶13 rooms (3 singles 190zł, 3 doubles 250zł, 9 apartments 280 - 450zł).  ★★

Dom Muzyka K-3, ul. Łąkowa 1/2, tel. (+48) 58 326 06 00, www.dommuzyka.pl. Run as a pet project by the local music academy, the hotel has expanded and being modernised over the years in response to what must be solid demand for comfortable lodgings close to the old town at reasonable prices. Included in the price are the soothing melodies which rouse you in the morning from the students practicing next door. ▶87 rooms (36 singles 200 - 250zł, 50 doubles 290 - 340zł, 1 apartments 440 - 500zł).  ★★

Dom Schumannów C-5, ul. Długa 45, tel. (+48) 58 301 52 72, www.domschumannow.pl. For a taste of Old Gdansk check into Dom Schumannów, a quirky hotel/guest house run by and set inside the building that houses the offices of the PTTK tourist service. Located next to the Neptun fountain guests have the chance to see what is must be like to live behind the grand gabled facades of Długa. Sure there's flatscreen TVs, wifi internet and kettles, but the emphasis here is on the past, and that's apparent in the furnishings: vintage switchhook telephones stand next to wood carved beds and other pre-war relics. ▶9 rooms (2 singles 195zł, 6 doubles 230 - 270zł, 1 apartments 440zł).  ★★




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fax +48 58 35 00 800
gdansk@hotelfocus.com.pl
www.hotelfocus.com.pl

Focus ul. Elblaska 85, tel. (+48) 58 350 08 01, www.hotelfocus.com.pl. The mid-range sector of the Gdansk hotel market gets another boost with the opening of the Focus. Located on the approach to the old town from Warsaw the Focus was poised to open as we went to print. Expect all the amenities of an international business standard hotel with everything brand spanking new including flat screen TVs, wifi throughout and sparkling bathrooms. There are also 3 conference rooms available for company meetings. ▶ 98 rooms (98 singles 269 - 329zł, 98 doubles 329 - 389zł, 3 triples 359 - 419zł). ★★

Kamienica Goldwasser D-4, ul. Długie Pobrzeże 22, tel. (+48) 58 301 88 78, www.goldwasser.pl. Top-class apartments in renovated townhouses overlooking the river. Each apartment comes with expensive wood furniture and rugs, and some with fireplaces and kitchenette. A very good deal. ▶ 7 rooms (7 apartments 240 - 760zł).

Kamienica Gotyk C-4, ul. Mariacka 1, tel. (+48) 58 301 85 67, www.gotykhouse.eu. Situated on Gdansk's most picturesque street Kamienica Gotyk is the oldest house in the city (1451) with an original Gothic portal featuring two religious stones either side of the entrance steps; if you want history, you're in the right place. Ring the buzzer for entry and find yourself ushered up the steep stairs into tidy rooms that include modern bathrooms and sketches of medieval Gdańsk. Church bells from the neighbouring St Mary's going on in the background add to the experience. ▶ 7 rooms (7 singles 190zł, 7 doubles 220zł, 2 triples 310zł).

Kobza Haus D-5, ul. Stagiwna 2/3, tel. (+48) 58 710 01 01, www.kobza.pl. Kobza, the Polish word for bagpipes, takes its name from a sculpture of a Scotsman hard at work playing the mournful instrument. Fortunately, the hotel itself is much cheerier than the Scot; the new four-story establishment features marble floors, a modern bar and airy lounge that will appeal to travelers looking for an air of class in their accommodations. The hotel's 22 rooms - which vary from full-blown apartments to singles - have sparkling ensuite bathrooms, flatscreen televisions and minibars worthy of business travelers and tourists with high expectations. Located just across the river from the noisier Old Town area, Kobza will easily be a hit with those who want to experience Gdansk but not be kept awake by its revelers. ▶ 22 rooms (20 singles 210 - 310zł, 18 doubles 230 - 380zł, 2 apartments 500 - 590zł).

Królewski D-3, ul. Ołowianka 1, tel. (+48) 58 326 11 11, www.hotelkrolewski.pl. You simply can't get any closer to the river. A converted granary is the stage for this hotel and warm colours, a location in the heart of all the action and swanky fixtures and fittings mean that the Królewski has no worries pulling tourist and business traffic alike. The suites are excellent value with wood floors and bathtubs, and sport fabulous views of Gdansk historic centre. Check out the picture of the smiling staff with no less than the Dalai Lama who stayed here on his visit to Gdańsk. ▶ 30 rooms (3 singles 200 - 320zł, 17 doubles 220 - 370zł, 6 triples 410zł, 4 apartments 540zł). ★★

Oliwski F-1, ul. Piastowska 1, tel. (+48) 58 761 66 10, www.oliewski.pl. A modern hotel with a glass and concrete frontage and a bright and clean, no-frills design. This is a super edition to the budget

bracket complete with fittings that look like they were unwrapped the day before. The rooms come with a simple design but your cash gets you all a modern traveller needs to get by: internet, TV and sparkling bathrooms. ▶ 52 rooms (8 singles 190 - 250zł, 39 doubles 220 - 280zł, 5 triples 300 - 360zł). ★★

Szydłowski F-4, ul. Grunwaldzka 114, tel. (+48) 58 345 70 40, www.szydowski.pl. Two things you won't expect to find in the lobby are the Barcelona football team and a Nobel-prize winning author. Think again. This served as HQ for the touring Catalan side once, and is also famous for its long standing association with novelist Gunter Grass, who stays here whenever he's in town. Found in the suburbs of Wrzeszcz, Szydłowski has all the perks you'd expect from an upmarket venue: sound-proofed rooms, immaculate staff and even an in-house confectionery. Your best choice if you want something close to the airport. ▶ 35 rooms (9 singles 255 - 390zł, 23 doubles 293 - 440zł, 3 apartments 450 - 800zł). ★★★

Villa Angela H-5, ul. Beethovena 12, tel. (+48) 58 302 23 15, www.villaangela.pl. With the addition of a new building and some extremely gregarious ladies staffing reception, Angela offers good value rooms in the style of a three-star business class hotel with powerful showers, free DSL internet in all rooms, satellite television and free coffee, tea and cold beverages 24 hours. The chambermaids can be a bit forgetful here, and the location could be better, but for the price and overall homeliness of the experience you could do a hell of a lot worse. ▶ 19 rooms (12 singles 171 - 190zł, 14 doubles 211 - 235zł, 1 apartments 350 - 400zł).

Villa Eva F-4, ul. Batorego 28b, tel. (+48) 58 341 67 85, www.villaeva.pl. From outside, a large Baroque looking villa, now featuring a newly added wing, spacious function rooms and a Mediterranean restaurant which attracts enough non-hotel guests to warrant your attention. The well-thought out rooms feature cable TV and bathrooms which appear to have been cleaned for five hours straight. Out back is a well-tended garden isolated by a screen of trees. ▶ 14 rooms (13 singles 250zł, 13 doubles 300zł, 1 apartments 366zł).

Willa Litarion D-5, ul. Spichrzowa 18, tel. (+48) 58 320 25 53, www.litarion.pl. This is one of a new breed of boutique hotels that are springing up on the opposite side of the river to the Green Gate. Rooms are spacious and decorated in varying styles that reflect the hip fashion sense of the owners. ▶ 13 rooms (6 singles 180 - 230zł, 7 doubles 240 - 300zł).

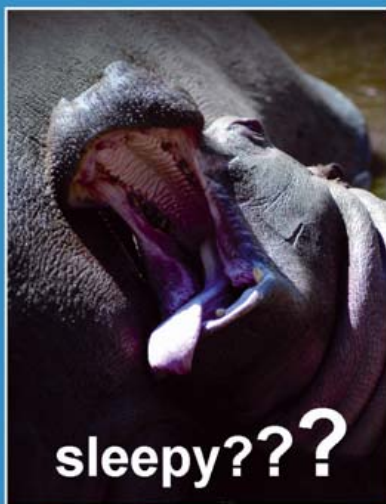
Wolne Miasto B-4, ul. Św. Ducha 2, tel. (+48) 58 305 22 55, www.hotelwm.pl. Situated behind a row of townhouse facades Wolne Miasto (Free City) offers great looking accommodation for a fraction of what you'd normally expect to pay. A swipe of the card key reveals rooms with soft, springy carpeting, plasma screens and a collection of greying photos that capture the spirit of old Danzig, while recent work has seen size practically double with the addition of a new wing. ▶ 62 rooms (16 singles 320 - 380zł, 31 doubles 370 - 450zł, 14 suites 450 - 550zł, 1 apartments 750zł). ★★★

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Piastowska 1

Budget

Abak i Mac-tur H-5, ul. Beethovena 8, tel. (+48) 58 322 04 40, www.abak.gda.pl. Super accommodation a 15zł taxi ride from the city centre. Rooms have satellite TV, gleaming showers and low-level pine beds. In summer guests can take advantage of the BBQ in the garden. ▶24 rooms (20 singles 120 - 180zł, 20 doubles 160 - 240zł, 4 triples 220 - 260zł).

Gryf I-3, ul. Jana z Kolna 22/26, tel. (+48) 58 300 01 30, www.owgryf.pl. Located next to the Monument to the Fallen Shipyard Workers, Gryf offers a good choice of budget rooms for one, two or three people. Facilities include in-room satellite television, surprisingly posh bathrooms and free wireless internet. ▶67 rooms (41 singles 140 - 160zł, 64 doubles 170 - 210zł, 24 triples 200 - 260zł). Breakfast 20zł.

Pensjonat Willa Albatros ul. Leszka Białego 12 (Oliwa), tel. (+48) 58 557 52 16, www.willaalbatros.pl. A family affair situated smack between Sopot and Gdańsk – so perfect if you plan mixing sightseeing with something a little more lively at night. Rooms are distinguished by differing colour combinations, with a double deluxe on offer, as well as accommodation inside a newly expanded wing. DVD players, kettles and hairdryers come as standard, while the downstairs dining room offers superb made-to-order breakfasts, as well as an ultra-friendly doe-eyed dog zipping between tables. There is also offer an airport shuttle service. ▶21 rooms (14 singles 160 - 280zł, 14 doubles 190 - 350zł, 2 triples 210 - 380zł, 1 suites 300 - 550zł, 4 apartments 250 - 400zł).

Villa Akme I-5, ul. Drwęcka 1, tel. (+48) 58 302 40 21, www.akme.gda.pl. Akme is a homey and comfortable mini-hotel owned by a friendly English-speaking couple and located not far from the city centre. Each room comes with new furniture, dataports, cable TV and shower. Take tram N° 6, 7 or 11 from the centre in the direction of Chelm and get off at the 4th stop. ▶17 rooms (5 singles 150 - 190zł, 7 doubles 180 - 230zł, 5 triples 210 - 260zł).

Willi Oliwia ul. Lęborska 10 (Przymorze), tel. (+48) 58 558 01 03, www.willaoliwia.pl. A nice little guesthouse with prim rooms equipped with all the basics, if not all the latest, necessities; TV, kitchen and spotless bathrooms. For the price it will most certainly do, and its location, convenient for everything but close to nothing except the trade fair grounds, means it'll do most for travelling businessmen or people with a car. ▶11 rooms (11 singles 100 - 120zł, 11 doubles 120 - 160zł, 11 triples 140 - 180zł, 11 quads 160 - 180zł). No breakfast served.

Apartments

An attractive alternative to staying in a hotel room is to book one of the apartments now available around the town. The ones we list are all modernised and centrally located so you can enjoy all that Gdańsk has to offer in a home from home.

Gdańsk Apartments B/C-4/5, , tel. (+48) 503 05 71 42, http://rent-apartments-in-gdansk.pl/. Choice apartments to suit the needs of every pocket. The flats are scattered around the old town, all of which have had the benefit of a full renovation. We've got two favourites; the one overlooking Długa, and another with riverside views and a bathroom set inside a brick tower. No doubt, the best choice of self-catering lodgings in the tri-city. ▶5 rooms (5 apartments €55 - 115). No breakfast served.

Hostels

NEW Grand Hostel B-4, ul. Kołodziejska 2, tel. (+48) 666 06 13 50, www.grandhostel.pl. A cosy, well equipped, modern (air-conditioned) hostel right in the heart of the old town with some of the city's most famous landmarks a stone's throw away. Set behind a Gdańsk townhouse facade, you'll find bunk bed dorms and private rooms all with access to the brand new kitchen and living area. The owners can also organise everything you'll need to get the most out of your stay including bikes, picnics and even kitesurfing and wakeboarding. ▶7 rooms (3 singles 100 - 150zł, 3 doubles 120 - 180zł, 3 triples 150 - 180zł, 26 Dorm beds 35 - 60zł).

Happy Seven D-3, ul. Grodzka 16, tel. (+48) 58 320 86 01, www.happysseven.com. Jammed between the Pepperland on one side, and Przy Targu Rybnym on the other, this newbie has a lot to live up to in an area that has emerged as something of a backpackers ghetto. It cuts the mustard with style to spare, with rooms following themes such as 'travel' (rucksacks and suitcases hanging from ceilings) and 'warehouse' (industrial tape and hard hats). The common room is a riot of retro, while further points are given for location – right above Degustatornia Dom Piwa, one of the finest pubs around. Be aware: this hostel only books adults over the age of 18. ▶5 rooms (1 doubles 150zł, 1 triples 225zł, 34 Dorm beds 35 - 60zł).

Hostel Universus B-4, ul. Podgarbary 10, tel. (+48) 58 301 81 14, www.hostel.universus.pl. The new Universus Hostel has two great things going for it: its location in an ancient brick building next to the Golden Gate is ideal, and it's also home to the Universus School of Languages – which means English is fluently spoken. The eight bedrooms (ranging from one bed up to six beds) are nothing short of charming. The high ceilings offer large windows that let in plenty of light, and each of the rooms is brightly painted and outfitted with colorful sheets and photographs from world travels. The stark hallway can feel a little institutional – hey, it's a school - - but the large lounge has board games, free Wi-Fi and DVDs for rainy days, and the still-in-progress kitchen has breakfast waiting each morning. A true find in Gdańsk's already impressive hostel scene. ▶8 rooms (1 singles 70 - 80zł, 3 doubles 110 - 130zł, 17 Dorm beds 30 - 55zł).

Hostel Zappio D-4, ul. Świętojańska 49, tel. (+48) 58 322 01 74, www.zappio.pl. Atmospheric, budget lodgings inside an attractive tenement building in the heart of old Gdańsk. Accommodation ranges from prim singles to bright, clean dorms holding up to fourteen guests. The cheapest dorm beds don't include breakfast, but guests can buy the privilege for 15zł. ▶18 rooms (2 singles 79 - 150zł, 3 doubles 69 - 85zł, 4 triples 65 - 80zł, 4 quads 59 - 75zł, 1 apartments 90 - 100zł, 32 Dorm beds 39 - 50zł).

Przy Targu Rybnym D-3, ul. Grodzka 21, tel. (+48) 58 301 56 27, www.gdanskhostel.com.pl. When this place opened it changed the whole dynamic of backpacking Gdańsk – no more curfews, lockouts or wicked gatekeepers ruining your fun. Well, it's been around for a while, but you know what this place still has that spark to set it from the rest. That's partly down to Waldemar, a high energy owner permanently engaged on improvements. Then there's the common room, one of the best in the industry, as well as accommodation which ranges from bunks squashed in at all angles, to well-fitted privates set on the higher floors. ▶17 rooms (2 singles 60 - 100zł, 9 doubles 70 - 150zł, 3 quads 180 - 240zł, 30 Dorm beds 35zł).

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Eating at a Glance

Dining in Gdańsk has still not reached the levels you'd expect from a tourist destination but things are improving. The figures in brackets denote the approximate price of the cheapest and dearest main course on the menu. The opening hours we list are flexible and are rough guidelines as to when you can expect the chef to be working. If business is slow people will have no qualms about shutting early. Service in general has improved considerably, although it can still be annoyingly slow. Also beware of using 'thank you' when paying for your bill. This is often taken to mean 'Keep the change'.

Here are some recommendations depending on what you are looking for.

Local

Check out the local Kashubian cuisine in **Velvetka**, the local Gdansk cuisine in **Gdanska** or the best pierogi for miles in **Pierogarnia U Dziką. Swójski Smak** is great for meaty moments, while **Goldwasser** perfect for times less rowdy - check out the collectable sets of Goldwasser vodka. For local fish, then try **Targ Rybny** or **Tawerna** or dine where Lech Walesa takes his official guests, at the historic **Pod Lososiem (Under the Salmon)**.

Cheap

If you think of 20zł as cheap then **Bar Pod Rybą** wins by a mile. Excellent jacket spuds served with an exhaustive choice of toppings. Alternatively take a step back in time and eat in one of the 'Milk Bars' where basic and very cheap food is served up in a pre-1989 atmosphere.

Lads

Head to **Browarnia**, a posh microbrewery complimented with a strong menu, or go to **Masala** for an Indian.

Couples

Czerwone Drzwi is perfect for candlelit whispered moments, or head to **Filharmonia** for good views and one of Poland's best meals. **Fellini** has also been earning positive reviews as a place to take your date.

Splurge

Nothing in Gdansk is going to make your credit card buckle but at the top end try **Verres en Vers** in the Radisson, a modern French/International that knocks the socks off everything that's been before.

American

Billy's American Restaurant B-2, ul. Rajska 10 (Madison Shopping Mall), tel. (+48) 661 43 33 65, www.billys.com.pl. Gdańsk gets the American treatment with Billy's, a diner-style venue with red check table cloths and pouting pics of Monroe and co. Found on the top floor of the Madison Mall, Billy's gets it right with decent burgers and some great steak specials - fatties and hard men take note to order their triple steak deal: finish it all and the cost is on the house. Fail and you'll be shelling out 189zł. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00. (15-189zł). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

NEW

Original Burger C-4, ul. Długa 47/49, tel. (+48) 58 306 77 63, www.originalburger.pl. Simple food is done very well here and breathes life into a premises next to the town hall that were in serious need of resuscitation. No prizes for guessing that the stars of the menu are the burgers and the freshly prepared patties are cooked to order and come served on fresh buns with a choice of toppings. Closer to an American style burger than anything you'll likely receive when ordering from a fast food window in Polska, the calorie hit is rounded off by crispy fries and onion rings. There are non-burger options too and while the salad and fish on the adjacent table looked appetising there was no way we'd have swapped it for our Classic with cheese which was very good indeed. Un-town hall prices also mean you leave with a smile. One tip. This being Poland expect gherkins to be included in your toppings unless you specify otherwise. ▶ Open 11:30 - 22:30. (16-19zł). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Chinese

Yang Guang D-5, ul. Stągiewna 1, tel. (+48) 58 301 58 45, www.chinska-gdansk.pl. A good choice for big, greasy helpings of Chinese comfort food. The interiors are an improbable mix of lanterns and fans juxtaposed against dark shadows and Ye Olde Danzig furnishings, and while it doesn't look particularly enthralling it's unlikely you'll come away feeling anything less than deeply satisfied - no small praise in a city still struggling to embrace the concept of ethnic food. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. (28-100zł). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Fish

Scampi D-3, ul. Targ Rybny 10c, tel. (+48) 58 301 53 42, www.scampi.com.pl. A completely enjoyable seafood experience with a fine fish soup and portions that will leave you needing to be carted home in a wheelbarrow. Tasteful, warm interiors hark back to Gdańsk's seafaring past, and a spiral staircase spirits diners to a mezzanine level from which one can peer at all the comings and goings downstairs. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. (25-59zł). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Targ Rybny D-3, ul. Targ Rybny 6c, tel. (+48) 58 320 90 11, www.targrybny.pl. Without doubt one of the better restaurants in the town. This place is a visual delight from the moment you enter, with warm light wood furnishings topped with check blue tablecloths and model fishing boats. The seafood is reputed as some of the best in town, and we've found no reason to dispute this. But fishy offerings be damned, we've discovered one more reason to visit and that's the Argentinean steak, nicely concluded with a nip of Danzig liquor made to ancient recipes. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:00. (29-59zł). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Tawerna C-5, ul. Powroźnicza 19/20, tel. (+48) 58 301 41 14, www.tawerna.pl. Entering Tawerna isn't unlike walking the gangplank and boarding an 18th century galleon. Fitted with heavy woods, nautical trinkets and paintings of naval engagements Tawerna is the spitting image of Nelson's cabin. The chefs, trained in France, have cooked for dignitaries like the President of Poland, and while the menu is primarily famed for its seafood there's also some highly rated Gallic dishes on show. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (34-99zł). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

French

Verres en Vers C-5, ul. Długi Targ 19 (Radisson Blu Hotel), tel. (+48) 58 325 44 49, www.radissonblu.com/hotel-gdansk. Featuring hardwood floors, bespoke chandeliers and an open kitchen this French inspired brasserie promises the freshest seasonal produce cooked by a star chef with a school report that includes stints in Poland's best restaurants. Pricy (80zł for steak), but the quality is unquestionable, and furthermore the terrace is one of the nicest places in town to eat Al Fresco once the weather allows. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00, Thu, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 23:30. (45-90zł). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Pancakes

Lokomotywa B-3, ul. Garncarska 30, tel. (+48) 58 305 51 10. An infinite choice of pancake combos offered up inside an interior that will have train spotters fumbling under their anoraks. Designed to replicate the inside of a steam train Lokomotywa has battered suitcases on overhead racks, compartment style seating and walls painted to depict the views you'd get from a train. ▶ Open 11:00 - 20:00. (10-25zł). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Naleśnikowo B-5, ul. Ogarna 125, tel. (+48) 52 682 30 82, www.nalesnikowo.com.pl. If our mother had let us open up a café at the age of eight, it would have looked exactly like Naleśnikowo: pink walls, fluffy pillows lining the plush yellow bench seats, pink polka-dotted tablecloths and vases of daisies on every table. It would probably have the same crepe-centric menu, too, though Naleśnikowo takes it a step further by offering options we couldn't conceive of. Sure there's 16 pillowy sweet crepes (banana and Nutella! Swoon!) and 20 savory choices like chorizo, bacon and pickles but why not spring for a cheese-stuffed baked crepe, or even the more exotic noodle-laden spaghetti crepe? The service is quick and attentive - they understand that waiting for a custard-filled crepe makes time drag - and the menu is in English (though we had to overlook the spelling of "becon"). Drag yourself away from busy Długa and you'll be in for a treat. We're pretty sure your inner eight-year-old will thank you. ▶ Open 10:00 - 20:00. (10-16zł). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗



Tawerna
THE BEST SEAFOOD
RESTAURANT IN GDAŃSK

The French-trained chefs display unique pedigree and though the menu is primarily famed for its seafood there's also French-style dishes as well.

The restaurant is decorated with fabulous nautical trinkets, shark heads and paintings of naval engagements.

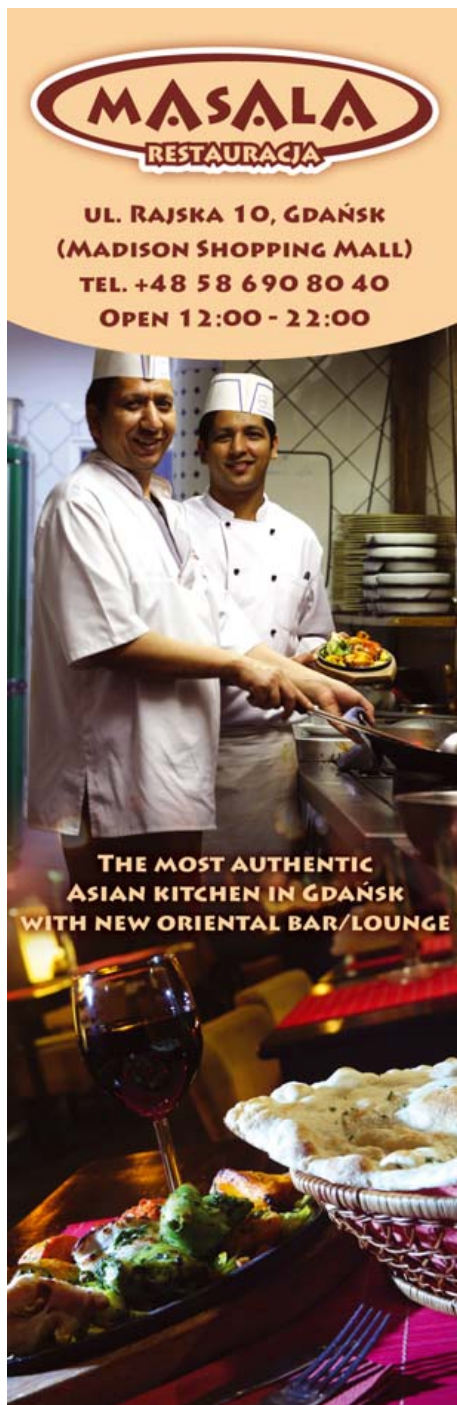
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Indian

Masala B-2, ul. Rajska 10 (Madison Shopping Mall), tel. (+48) 58 690 80 40, www.masala.gda.pl. Don't let the stained tablecloths put you off, they're just a sign that people come here and enjoy their food. Table manners go out of the window in Masala, a small Indian spot attached to the side of the Madison Mall, and you'll find locals and foreigners alike scooping up their curries with thick, fluffy portions of naan. The chefs are imported from Delhi, though clearly enjoy working in Gdańsk – watch them chucking the spices in from behind the glass screen. Consistency can be a problem, but boy, when these guys get it right do they get it right. Enjoy Indian, Thai and Chinese dishes from padded velvety sofas while Bollywood tunes keep the atmosphere authentic. ▶ Open 11:30 - 22:00. (18-46zl). 

International

Brovarnia D-4, ul. Szafarnia 9, tel. (+48) 58 320 19 70, www.brovarnia.pl. Words can't begin to do Brovarnia justice. If there's a better beer in Poland we'd like to know about it, but not before we've finished road testing the menu. Indeed, the microbrewery is just one reason to visit. The chow here is top drawer, with a beer bites menu that includes chicken strips and a selection of flavoured lards – from spicy pepper to plum. Head up the stairs for something a little more formal. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:30. (34-60zl). 

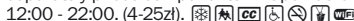
Cafe Bar Mon Balzac C-4, ul. Piwna 36/39, tel. (+48) 58 682 25 25, www.monbalzac.pl. You'll find most customers using Balzac as a drinkery, and a very good one at that, but don't for one moment think the menu is an afterthought here. Meals here include some fantastic fondue choices (chocolate, cheese, meat and Asian), a variety of breakfast options and a wide range of Mediterranean style dishes for the rest of the day. All this in a warm environment featuring lots of bare bricks and big, plump sofas. ▶ Open 09:00 - 24:00, Thu, Fri, Sat 09:00 - 01:00. (12-69zl). 


Cico C-4, ul. Piwna 28/30, tel. (+48) 58 305 04 55, www.cico.pl. The food is every good as bit as it smells in this chic looking restobar crossover. Visual diversions are limited to brick walls and chocolate colours; it's the menu that does the talking here, with a damn good selection of pasta, salad, meat and fish dishes to pick from. Streetside stools are one of their best features and allow you to sit back and marvel at the view across the street to the imposing St Mary's Cathedral. ▶ Open 08:00 - 24:00. (15-70zl). 

Czerwone Drzwi (The Red Door) C-4, ul. Piwna 52/53, tel. (+48) 58 301 57 64, www.reddoor.gd.pl. A beautiful scarlet room with melancholic jazz sounds and a collection of rattan furniture, flower arrangements and eccentric curios. Used as both a restaurant and café by Gdańsk high society the concise menu varies with the season but never disappoints. Try the roasted salmon served with Béarnaise sauce and pancakes. Guaranteed excellence, and the perfect place to take someone special. Recommended. ▶ Open 10:00 - 22:00. (22-72zl). 

NEW

Dwadzieścia Cztery Dania Bistro & Bar C-4, ul. Piwna 16, tel. (+48) 58 304 14 92. Piwna Street moves from strength to strength with the arrival of this new bistro and bar. Operating under the name Twenty-Four Courses, calls to the owners made us none the wiser as there are more than the prescribed number on the menu. Not that we

are complaining. If the others are anywhere near as good as our turkey liver starter and spicy spaghetti and shrimps main they'll have a lot of return visits until we've worked our way through the English language menu. Opened as we were going to press the locals still hadn't discovered it though once they see what kind of food you can get for the money this place is asking we predict the limited tables will be jammed. Of further note are the non-alcoholic cocktails and an option which allows you to compose your own plate from 22 separately priced components. ▶ Open 09:00 - 22:00, Sun 12:00 - 22:00. (4-25zl). 

Dwór Oliwski ul. Bytowska 4 (Oliwa), tel. (+48) 58 554 70 70, www.dworoliwski.pl. Englebert Humperdinck would adore this place. Decorated with marble and salmon pink combinations this restored manor house wouldn't look out of place in Malibu, and is the number one spot in the Tri-city for haute-cuisine. Superb food, wine and service every time. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:00. (47-105zl). 

Elephant Club Resto & Cafe & Music C-5, ul. Długi Targ 41/42, tel. (+48) 58 305 13 55, www.elephantclub.pl. The interior and exterior of the Elephant Club couldn't be more different: outside diners will find an extensive patio flush against busy Ul. Długi Targ, the perfect open-air spot to watch the heavy summer crowds. Inside the cavernous basement restaurant the atmosphere becomes darker and more intimate, with mood lighting, a modern bar and the ideal small space for local musicians to regularly perform. There is no excuse for not finding a dish to please on their extensive menu, which ranges from Polish classics like pierogis and lamb goulash to a list of 12 different pizzas. ▶ Open 13:00 - 24:00, Fri 13:00 - 01:00, Sat 12:00 - 01:00, Sun 11:00 - 23:00. (12-65zl). 

Daniel Fahrenheit

Forget that everyone normal deals in Celsius and give a moment to Daniel Fahrenheit, the local lad who gave his name to the temperature scale. Born on 24th May, 1686, Daniel Gabriel Fahrenheit grew up on ul. Ogarna 195, the eldest of the five Fahrenheit children to survive childhood. The son of a merchant, and a woman called Concordia, Fahrenheit had a nomadic upbringing, his family shifting round the Hanseatic cities of Europe as his father pursued riches. His parents died when he was sixteen years old, apparently after eating some poisonous mushrooms, so Fahrenheit abandoned his education and joined a firm of merchants trading in Amsterdam. Nevertheless his thirst for the sciences lingered, and he continued to hatch experiments in his spare time. His travels took him across Europe, and he became acquainted with leading academic figures like Gottfried Leibenz and Christian Wolff. By 1718 he had quit his work to lecture full time in Amsterdam, and in 1724 he travelled to England to be inaugurated into the Royal Society. However, his defining moment was yet to come. The same year his experiments with thermometers led to the development of the Fahrenheit scale, the first accurate way of measuring temperature in the world. Fahrenheit died in 1736 and is buried in The Hague, but his contribution to science has endured the centuries. Up until the 1970s the scale he devised was used across the world, and while most nations have since abandoned it in favour of Celsius it continues to be used in the USA and a handful of other nations.

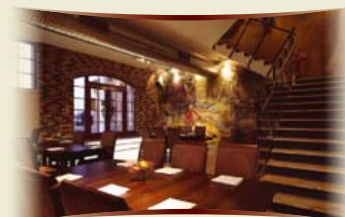
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Milk Bars

Don't expect a gastronomic experience. Do expect a rare insight into Eastern-Bloc Poland. Subsidised by the state, this was food for the masses back in the day. With the fall of communism many bar mleczny found themselves forced out of business although a few of these canteens have survived and, aside from offering an interesting diversion for amateur anthropologists, they make it possible to eat lots in return for a handful of coins.

Bar Mleczny Neptun (Milk Bar Neptune) C-4/5, ul. Długa 33/34, tel. (+48) 58 301 49 88, www.barneptun.pl. The most famous milk bar in town, and as such expect it to be rammed with pensioners, builders and weird backpackers queuing for pork chops and mashed cabbage. Get there early as variety diminishes quickly. ▶ Open 07:30 - 18:00, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 17:00. (6-17zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Bar Mleczny Syrena (Milk Bar Mermaid) F-3, Al. Grunwaldzka 71/73, tel. (+48) 58 341 01 53. Cleaner than average, fast and busy, with decent Polish standards. Grab a tray and choose from a menu of cutlets, bigos, pierogi and vegetable dishes. If you can't speak Polish, just take your chances with a pre-prepared plate from the counter. ▶ Open 07:30 - 19:00, Sun 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Sat. (4-9zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷

Bar Mleczny Turystyczny (Milk Bar Tourist) B-3/4, ul. Szeroka 8/10, tel. (+48) 58 301 60 13. A small cafeteria serving standard eats like fried cutlets, mashed potatoes, pierogi and stuffed cabbage leaves. Seedy and ugly, with hard little stools, it's strictly a bite-on-the-run place. But the food isn't too bad and it's certainly cheap. ▶ Open 07:30 - 18:00, Sat, Sun 09:00 - 16:00. (3-10zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷

Euro B-4, ul. Długa 79/80, tel. (+48) 58 305 23 83, www.starowka-gdanska.pl. A formal looking venue with a longstanding reputation as one of the best dinners in the city. There's a real 18th century flavour to the design with lots of rococo elements and delicate antiques, and you'll find these quietly posh surrounds complimented by a magnificent menu that includes local and seafood recipes. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00. (26-110zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Filharmonia D-3, ul. Ołowianka 1, tel. (+48) 58 323 83 58, www.restauracjafilharmonia.pl. 'One of the top three restaurants in Poland', claims one reader, and we're not arguing. What was once a municipal power plant has been given a reviving shot, and that's down to a fabulous menu created by Tomasz Kortus and Artur Wencel. Using the latest molecular techniques in food science choices here vary with the season, though the truth is there's simply no such thing as a bad meal here. Excellent, excellent, excellent, and that's each and every time. And with summer approaching why not dine on the rooftop terrace, home to knock-dead views of Gdańsk's steeped skyline. If the weather isn't co-operating, head indoors to a breathtaking interior of red brick walls and theatrical murals. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. (36-75zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Goldwasser D-4, ul. Długie Pobrzeże 22, tel. (+48) 58 301 88 78, www.goldwasser.pl. Never a bad time in this ivy-covered riverside restaurant. On the menu dishes like duck, fresh fish and delicious homemade pierogi along with locally produced beer served by multi-lingual service to an atmospheric backdrop of scarlet fabrics, bits-and-bobs made from wrought iron and paintings of maritime Gdańsk. The summer garden, in the shadow of the city's signature Crane (Zuraw or Krantor) is an excellent place to enjoy one of the best choices of properly prepared steak in the city, while the upstairs terrace has been renovated and serves as the perfect spot for a romantic meal overlooking the Motława river. Souvenir hunters should keep an eye out for the Goldwasser Vodka box sets. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:30. (32-98zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Kokieteria D-4, ul. Tokarska 6 (Hanza Hotel), tel. (+48) 661 51 18 11, www.restauracjakokieteria.pl. With a range of seating that somebody's actually put some intelligent thought into and a magnificent riverside setting to boot, the Polish and international dishes on offer here are visually delightful and include a host of crowd pleasers; sirloin steak, lemon sole and a choice of pleasingly sinful desserts. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (28-65zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

NEW

La Pampa Steakhouse C-4, ul. Szeroka 32/35, tel. (+48) 797 59 12 12, www.lapampa.pl. Steak is the order of the day in this new restaurant found on the street reached through the gate under the Crane (Zuraw). The friendly staff welcome you to the restaurant by explaining the concept of the menu - in a nutshell we're talking a choice of prime round, rump, rib-eye or fillet beef prepared to order on an open grill. There are other dishes to choose from including the 'La Pampa specialties' which feature skewers of meats, onions and peppers as well as pork, chicken and fish dishes and huge salads but the draw here is the steak. The Argentinian fillet was cooked to perfection and was complimented by the additional sides of fried vegetables and potatoes which came mixed with bacon and onions. There is a decent selection of wines to choose from and word has seemingly already got out to the local business community many of whom seemed to be entertaining clients on nearby tables. A word of warning though. The aforementioned open grill creates enough of an aroma that you may carry memories of your very good meal away with you on your clothing. ▶ Open 11:30 - 23:00. (26-80zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Latający Holender C-5, ul. Długi Targ 33/34, tel. (+48) 58 320 36 25, www.latajacyholender.pl. Adding the captain to the cook Latający Holender is a naval masterpiece, and packed with knotted ropes, bronze bells and swashbuckling features. Clad with wood panels and stained glass this place has all the glory of a galleon, and a menu that matches the upmarket maritime ambiance. ▶ Open 11:00 - 23:00. (20-80zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Malinowy Ogród K-3, ul. Łakowa 1-2, tel. (+48) 58 326 06 03, www.malinowyogrod.pl. No matter how many times you dine here it won't be enough. Malinowy Ogród are already famous enough for their Osowa location, now they've stretched into Gdańsk proper to treat you chaps to what it is you've been missing. Set to whitewashed vaulted surrounds, and with a cello attesting to the Dom Muzyka location, the Rasperry Garden counts lamb and boar amongst its finer offerings, and could well become the incontestable hit of the new year. ▶ Open 07:00-11:00 and 13:00-23:00. (26-72zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Mercato A-4, ul. Targ Rybny 1, tel. (+48) 58 778 71 00, www.hiltongdansk.pl. Pushing Gdańsk dining into truly international territory is Mercato, the flagship restaurant of the sparkling Hilton. Boasting a slick, cosmopolitan style the king pull here is the Kobe steak, a hand-massaged cow indulged with beer. At 180zł it's a bit of an extravagance, though it must be noted everything else really isn't out of reach: 55 złots for 'ordinary' steak, and around 40 złots for most other mains. And this being the Hilton, why not sign off your meal with moonlit drinks on the rooftop bar (see High 5, Gdańsk Nightlife). ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (44-199zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Restauracja Wolne Miasto B-4, ul. Św. Ducha 2, tel. (+48) 58 322 24 43, www.hotelwm.pl. On the ground floor of the Wolne Miasto (Free City) Hotel this was for many years the Zeppelin restaurant. The menu is a lot more inventive than the pastel interiors with International and local staples being the forte here. There's usually a couple of real surprises on the seasonal menu and an acquaintance insists this is one of his favoured places in town for a decent meal. ▶ Open 07:00 - 23:00. (24-65zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Restauracyjka Smaki Świata B-4, ul. Lekykarska 1/2/1, tel. (+48) 58 683 06 35, www.smakiswiata.gda.pl. You can't fault their ambition - naming a restaurant 'Tastes of the World' is quite a statement. While you will see pizza, chilli, and fried chicken on the menu it's a fairly disappointing collection of standard international fare, better suited to a snack during the day rather than a full main meal. ▶ Open 11:00 - 22:00. (17-38zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Sphinx C-5, ul. Długi Targ 31/32, tel. (+48) 58 346 37 11, www.sphinx.pl. The menu here is endless, though pretty much all the promised eastern dishes transpire to be endlessly tiring combinations of shredded meat, cabbage and carrots - every bit as appealing as it sounds. The Egyptian authenticity is confirmed by the presence of pizza, plastic trees and a menu designed by some random called Tom Maltom. Also at ul. Rajska 10 (B-2, Madison Shopping Centre). ▶ Open 11:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat 11:00 - 24:00. (10-40zł). 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

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Made in Gdańsk

Forget your Fahrenheits and ignore your Wałęsas, the tri-city has produced a factory line of famous faces, not least the incumbent prime minister Donald Tusk. However, there's so many more. Take for example Artur Schopenhauer, a philosopher who out-geeks Fahrenheit. By the age of 25 he had published a book called 'On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason', and his writings would go on to influence thinkers of the calibre of Freud and Einstein. Then there's Marek Kamiński, a polar explorer and world renowned traveller. Even more exciting is Georg Forster (born 1754-1794), a man who travelled the world with Captain Cook and is considered one of the fathers of travel writing. He died of natural causes at the age of forty, probably saving him from a nastier fate at the hands of the French revolutionaries who had denounced and outlawed him. Boxer Dariusz 'Tiger' Michalczewski, who comes from Brzeźno but defected to Germany in 1988, came within one defence of breaking Rocky Marciano's record of successive defences between 1994 and 2003. Former Miss World Aneta Kreglicka also hails from these parts, as do death metal band Behemoth, a controversial group accused of promoting murder and Satanism. But let the final word go to Paul Beneke, a naval chief who stole Hans Memling's triptych 'The Last Judgement' after boldly boarding Britain's St Thomas in 1473. The result of his deft act of robbery hangs to this day in the National Museum in Gdańsk.

Tawerna Ołowianka D-3, ul. Ołowianka 9/13, tel. (+48) 58 305 71 71, www.tawernaolowianka.pl. From the same stable as Filharmonia, so a good meal comes practically guaranteed. Set on the 'other' side of the river the Tawerna does a good job of proving an old town location is not the be all and end all, with a menu that changes often but features consistently delicious soups. ▶ Open 11:00 - 18:00. (18-28zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Tekstylika B-3, ul. Szeroka 121/122, tel. (+48) 58 304 77 63. By day, Tekstylika is the kind of unassuming coffee shop/lunch spot in which people feel comfortable slurping the rich żurek soup (laden with sausage) and hefty smoothies from behind laptop screens and newspapers. But as the hours tick by the patio becomes a popular happy hour spot and patrons begin to load up on Tekstylika's meat-centric menu (which comes in an easy to read English option) that clearly denotes which dishes are traditional Polish entrees. The Polish cabbage rolls are a particular favorite, and we couldn't help but order the fruity sangria to accompany it all. Of course the bar, which is illuminated by a large backlit sewing machine image, is happy to mix up coffee drinks along with cocktails well into the evening. ▶ Open 09:00 - 22:00. From March open 09:00 - 23:00. (21-34zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

NEW

The River D-4, ul. Szafarnia 2 (Podewils Hotel), tel. (+48) 58 300 95 60, www.podewils.pl. Expect meticulous attention to detail in the Rococo-style interior, discreet service and a dining experience that is quite like no other. Found in the five star Podewils hotel you can expect to pay premium prices, but the quality hits the spot each and every time. The menu fills all needs and covers everything from delicious fish entrees to desserts to die for. After being known as Podewils and Restauracja Courage, we're hoping the current name sticks around for a while. ▶ Open 08:00 - 10:30, 18:00 - 23:00, Sun 08:00 - 11:00. (35-85zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Żuraw D-4, ul. Długie Pobrzeże 32, tel. (+48) 58 301 25 38, www.restauracjazuraw.pl. A waterfront restaurant with a smattering of tables inside a pleasingly restrained light, modern interior, with furnishings seemingly acquired from a department store. Efficient waiters sally too-and-fro delivering standard European recipes to your table, including a pike perch in an orange/saffron sauce. ▶ Open 11:00-21:00. (22-48zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Italian

Fellini D-3, Targ Rybny 6, tel. (+48) 58 719 76 20, www.restauracjafellini.pl. A modern looking Italian whose late appearance on the scene hasn't harmed their prospects - this place was packed on our visit, no mean feat in such a seasonally fickle city. Plush violet touches and light wooden panels lend a chic, sexy swagger, and it looks just the solution for dinner dilemmas. Both menu and chef appear Italian guided rather than Italian focussed, and the result gives the menu a scope not enjoyed by the direct competition. The lamb is reputed to be the best in Gdańsk. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (26-74zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Napoli C-4, ul. Długa 62/63, tel. (+48) 58 301 41 46, www.starowka-gdanska.pl. It doesn't look particularly Italian, and it doesn't look particularly good, but as the tagline under their signature attests, this really is 'the best in town', when it comes to pizza anyhow. There's approximately forty to choose from, though its odds on you'll find something you like (ie, the first thing you ever order) and then stick with it thereafter. Highly addictive, and a takeaway king. Recommended is the Roma, a delicious salami pizza that's absolutely top-drawer in taste. ▶ Open 11:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat 11:00 - 24:00. (17-51zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷



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Pizzeria Margherita E-2, ul. Cystersów 11, tel. (+48) 58 552 37 16, www.margherita.com.pl. An encyclopedic list of Italian classics cooked before your eyes by a chef not averse to bursting into the occasional song. The pizza is conceived inside a traditional brick oven and this charming spot breathes an air of familiarity, making it popular with families fresh from the trials of a day spent observing the beasts of Oliwa Zoo. ▶ Open 11:00 - 22:00. From April open 11:00-23:00. (13-28zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

NEW

Ristorante Pomodoro B-2, ul. Korzenna 33/35, tel. (+48) 58 307 51 48. Where once was the previously successful Toscana restaurant you will now find Pomodoro. Again taking the Italian theme the menu is a collection of well-priced antipastis, pastas and pizzas. The food is freshly prepared and comes steaming to your table courtesy of a friendly waitress. Here's a well-priced restaurant serving well-prepared Italian food properly in the wonderful arched basement of the old Ratusz - formerly home to Johannes Hevelius' office. Although we'd rather not have to buy a carafe when we only want a glass of house red, we sincerely hope that this venture has more success than previous tenants. Search it out. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:00. (12-59zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Sempre Pizza e Vino D-3, ul. Targ Rybny 11, tel. (+48) 58 719 19 19, www.semprepizza.pl. A classy little venue with friendly staff on the quayside at the reawakened Fish Market end of town. Where once there was nothing, you'll now find a selection of the city's best restaurants in the shadow of one of the city's best hotels. Sempre have got the pizza covered and you'll find freshly made Italian style pizza prepared in proper pizza ovens in a jiffy. Although this is quick food, it is a galaxy away from the fast food Targ Rybny has been traditionally associated with and is a sign of the area's upward mobility. ▶ Open 12:00 - 21:45, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 22:45. (18-35zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Japanese

77 Sushi D-4, ul. Długie Pobrzeże 30, tel. (+48) 58 682 18 23, www.sushi77.com. Sushi 77 could well refer to the number of restaurants this mob have opened lately. We're losing count, in fact, and while some would be wary of any chain outfit these guys just keep getting it right. Set amid a row of ivy covered quayside dwellings it certainly looks the part, and better still they also deliver on the food front - not a bad word to report, and further evidence of the tri-city renaissance. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:30. (11-40zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Dom Sushi D-3, ul. Targ Rybny 11, tel. (+48) 58 302 81 81, www.domsushi.pl. Gdańsk's version of Sopot's popular Dom Sushi has come a long way. The floating sushi bar that dominates the space is impressive, but we're happy to see the menu goes beyond spicy tuna rolls and includes an array of Japanese cuisine like fish soup and a refreshing green tea ice cream. Though out of Polish beer on our visit, we were happily redirected to an outstanding plum wine. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. (25-60zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

Nigiri Sushi F-4, ul. Grunwaldzka 92/98, tel. (+48) 58 728 25 71, www.olimpkgdansk.pl. Now converted into a modern sushi restaurant, this venue was famous in the days of PRL (the People's Republic) as THE place to come for coffee, cake and ice cream. Many a local will tell you of happy hours spent up here. And by up we mean really up. Located on the 16th floor of that rather ugly tower block in downtown Wrzeszcz you'll need to search out the lift through the entrance close to MacDonald's. Once you reach the top you'll find a range of reasonably good sushi sets, Donburi and Udon dishes made using homemade noodles. Enjoy them while staring out over downtown Wrzeszcz and the huge golden bowl of the new PGE Baltic Arena built especially for the Euro 2012 championships. ▶ Open 12:00 - 21:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 22:00. (24-100zł). 🍷 🍴 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

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Quick Eats

NEW

Amsterdam Bar Beer & Bagel B-4, ul. Garbary 6/7, tel. (+48) 58 717 29 39, www.amsterdambar.pl. Yet another welcome addition to the food scene. Find a selection of bagels, salads, coffees and an excellent choice of Polish and foreign bottled beers just off the main street - Długa. ▶ Open 07:30 - 23:00, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 23:00. ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Bar Pod Ryba B-4, ul. Piwna 61/63, tel. (+48) 58 305 13 07, www.barpodryba.pl. They may be at a new location, but 'Under the Fish' continues to serve the best filled potato in town - and at an insanely cheap price. For between 18-24zł diners get a huge roasted potato split open and topped with one of seven sauces and then heaped with anything from salmon to sausage to beans or veggies; you will not walk away hungry. We sampled the gouda and bacon potato and consider ourselves forever changed for the better. The new space has a warm brass bar and plenty of Danzig-era signs and paintings on the wall. ▶ Open 10:00 - 22:00. (10-39zł). ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Burritos B-4, ul. Św. Ducha 13/15/17, tel. (+48) 531 80 68 06, www.burritos.pl. One of the places to aim for at all hours of the day or night for good value, quick and simple well-prepared grub. The burritos served here don't come drowned in cabbage as in many Mexican themed eateries and the sauces, prices and speed that they are prepared make this a place to head for. If it's the full Tex-Mex experience you're looking for then you have the Pueblo restaurant yards away for that. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00, Thu, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 03:00. (12-16zł). ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Galeria Bałtycka Food Court F-4, Al. Grunwaldzka 141, tel. (+48) 58 521 85 50, www.galeriabałtycka.pl. Find KFC, McDs, Burger King, North Fish, a vegetarian bar, a good Asian option in the food court as well as a Pizza Hut restaurant downstairs. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00. December 10 - 23 open 09:00 - 22:00, Sun 10:00 - 21:00. ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

KFC A-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 2c, tel. (+48) 71 386 15 20, www.kfc.pl. Also at Al. Grunwaldzka 141 (Galeria Bałtycka, F-4). ▶ Open 07:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 07:00 - 01:00. (12-16zł). ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Kung Food B-4, ul. Węglarska 1, www.kungfood.com.pl. Simple, quick and cheap Asian food consisting of noodles, chicken, vegetables and spices to which you can choose to add a choice of sauces, onions or sesame seeds. Great for a snack on the run or as a late night feed with late opening hours to serve the club crowd. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00, Thu 12:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 03:00. (6-15zł). ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

McDonald's A-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 1, tel. (+48) 694 49 59 10, www.mcdonalds.pl. Also at ul. Partyzantów 6, (F-4), Al. Grunwaldzka 527, (F-1) and Al. Grunwaldzka 141 (Galeria Bałtycka, F-4). ▶ Open 05:00 - 01:00. (10-19zł). ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Subway B-4, ul. Długa 56, tel. (+48) 58 305 46 22, www.subway.pl. Also at ul. Rajska 10 (B-2, Madison Shopping Centre), open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00. ▶ Open 08:30 - 23:00, Sun 09:30 - 22:30. (7-11zł). ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

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ul. Pod Blankami 27, Bydgoszcz phone: +48 601 636 253
Gallery Madison IIIpl., Rajska 10, Gdańsk phone: +48 58 690 80 66

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Mediterranean

Bonum C-2, ul. Sieroca 3 (Bonum Hotel), tel. (+48) 58 304 78 10, www.hotelbonum.pl/restauracja.html. Certainly one of the better hotels in town, so no surprises to find an equally good restaurant on-site. Chic, modern and with a bare brick wall there's not a huge amount to keep the eyes busy, which isn't a bad thing if you're going cross-eyed with all the stuffed animals and maritime extras found in so many of Gdańsk's eateries; it's a bit of a relief in fact to dine in a venue so tasteful. Thoughtful presentation extends to the food, with an ever rotating menu featuring plenty of surprises. ▶ Open 16:00 - 22:00. (26-55zł). ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Senso Restaurant & Bar B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 9 (Scandic Gdańsk Hotel), tel. (+48) 58 300 60 06, www.restauracja-senso.com. Having rebranded the Holiday Inn as the Scandic, the new owners then proceeded to rip down the walls that used to house TGI Friday's. The results are excellent. Now forming part of a bright, modern, open-plan ground floor area, Senso restaurant serves up excellent Mediterranean cuisine with a modern take as well as possessing a solid wine list and an award winning cocktail master in the adjacent bar. Play area also available for those with the little ones in tow. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. (25-73zł). ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Mexican

Pueblo B-4, ul. Kołodzijska 4, tel. (+48) 58 322 24 70, www.restauracjapueblo.com.pl. A great addition to the Gdansk dining scene, Pueblo is one of the few restaurants in the country (its sister restaurant in Gdynia being one of the others) where Tex-Mex cuisine doesn't get the

equivalent of the fire extinguisher treatment prevalent in so many ethnic diners. The burritos are the real deal (not a cabbage in sight), and while the house salsa is weak meals come accompanied by a selection of bottled sauces imported straight from Latin America - some of them could knock the spots off a cow. You can expect to see some additions to the menu in the coming months and a smart pricing policy means the cocktails are some of the best value you'll find in town. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 24:00. (25-50zł). ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Polish

Baryłka D-4, ul. Długie Pobrzeże 24, tel. (+48) 58 301 49 38, www.barylka.pl. A long-standing feature on the waterfront which offers a selection of the local cuisine, fish and some good Polish meat dishes. The restaurant itself boasts a very nice terrace upstairs which gives great views over the harbour although a quick sweep through the menu reveals that prices warrant the location. A waterfront garden is also available but the neighbouring Goldwasser's beats this for space and atmosphere. The similar plants chosen to decorate the two make the join of the two restaurants quite tricky to spot. ▶ Open 10:00 - 23:00. (25-55zł). ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Gospoda Chata Chłopska (The Farmer's Cottage) I-3, ul. Gielguda 4, tel. (+48) 58 524 00 95, www.gospodagdansk.pl. A thatched timber lodge with views overlooking the surrounding parkland. Your daily calorie count comes served up in one fell swoop here, with team-sized portions of Polish grill food served up on ceramic plates. This is feasting as done the local way, with absolutely no mercy shown to dieters. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 23:00. (15-43zł). ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺



The Tri-city's most authentic Tex-Mex restaurant



Come and see for yourself



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(entrance from ul. Władysława IV)
(+48) 58 621 60 07
Open: 12:00- 23:00**

**In Gdańsk: ul. Kołodziejska 4
(+48) 58 322 24 70
Open 12:00-23:00,
Fri, Sat 12:00-24:00
www.restauracjapueblo.com.pl**

Polish Food

Those wanting to take a quick foxtrot through the world of the Polish kitchen should consider putting the following to the test:

Smalec: Fried lard, often served complimentary before a meal with hunks of homemade bread. It sounds evil, but it works like a miracle any day, especially an arctic one. Ideally partnered with a mug of local beer. Any Polish restaurant worth its salt should give you lashings of this prior to your meal. You only need ask.

Soup: Keep your eyes peeled for Poland's two signature soups; zurek (sour rye soup with sausages and potatoes floating in it) and barszcz (beetroot, occasionally with dumplings thrown in). Table manners go out of the window when eating these two, so feel free to dunk bread rolls in them.

Bigos: You'll either love it or vomit. Bigos, a.k.a hunters stew, is made using meat, cabbage, onion and sauerkraut before being left to simmer for a few days. If you have second helpings then consider yourself a Pole by default.

Gołąbki: Boiled cabbage leaves stuffed with beef, onion and rice before being baked in a tomato sauce. Urban myth claims Poland's King Kazimierz fed his army gołąbki before his victory outside Malbork in a battle against the Teutonic Order. The unlikely victory was attributed to the hearty meal his troops had enjoyed before hand.

Kielbasa: Sausages, and in Poland you'll find several varieties made primarily with pork, but sometimes using turkey, horse, lamb and even bison. Few varieties to watch for including Krakowska, a Kraków specialty which uses pepper and garlic, kabanosy which is a thin, dry sausage flavoured with caraway seed and wiejska; a monster-looking u-shaped sausage. Kielbasa was also the nickname of one of Poland's most notorious gangland figures of the 90s.

Pierogi: Pockets of dough traditionally filled with meat, cabbage or cheese, though you will also occasionally find maverick fillings such as chocolate or strawberries.

Placki: Nothing more than potato pancakes, often paired with lashings of sour cream. Again, all your traditional folksy Polish restaurants will have these on the menu, if not you have every right to raise a few questions in the direction of the kitchen.


Zapiekanki: Also known as Polish pizza. Take a stale baguette, pour melted cheese on it and then cover it with mushrooms and ketchup from a squeeze bottle. Best eaten when absolutely plastered. Where to buy it: various fast food cabins dotted around the city centre.


Dessert: Few things in life get a Pole more animated than a good dessert. Sernik (a kind of cheesecake) being a must if you want to even attempt to convince a Pole you have visited their country.


Kaszanka: This is the Polish variation of blood sausage, in this case pig's blood mixed with groats, and is generally served fried with onions. Unlike in other countries it is not served in the form of a sausage. A variation on the blood dish is **Czernina**, a soup made of duck's blood mixed with poultry broth. An interesting tale is attached to this dish as it was the dish served by the parents of young women to her suitors as a sign that their proposal of marriage was not accepted.

La Cantina C-5, ul. Długa 37/39, tel. (+48) 58 301 60 71, www.starowka-gdanska.pl. You might expect a Mediterranean flavour in a place called La Cantina, but not so. Set with a light wood, country kitchen look, and staffed by rural maidens, this is very much a celebration of old Poland, with typical, traditional Staropolski dishes starring on the menu: wild boar, you know the score. Długa has stagnated for too long, places like this stand to carry it forward. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00. (24-99zł). 

Palowa C-4, ul. Długa 47, tel. (+48) 58 301 55 32, www.palowa.eu. If it's stunning 19th century decor you're after, then Palowa at the town hall on Długa is the place for you. The menu runs across all the Polish basics, but the quality is distinctly varied. The starters are standard, the Zurek acceptable. As for the main courses, they are all served with lashings of over-cooked school dinner vegetables so instead we'd recommend the dishes the chef's most familiar with like the pork in plums was very good. However, don't stray too far into the exotic - a friend got a very dodgy (and over-priced) eel. Perhaps it might be best to stick to the coffee and cake and enjoy the interiors. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (18-60zł). 

Panorama B-1, ul. Waly Piastowskie 1, tel. (+48) 58 307 42 51, www.panoramarestauracja.pl. While this is not exactly the height of dining in the conventional sense, it is the (maximum) height to dine at in the city. Negotiate the office building security to climb to 16th floor of that green office block overlooking the railway station to be rewarded with a choice of views. Subject of an episode of the Polish version of Hell's Kitchen, celebrity chef Magda Gessler's changes can be witnessed in the cushions, plastic flowers, pig alarms clocks and other kitschy touches while the kitchen now turns out a pretty decent set of Polish staples such as zurek, chicken de volaille and pierogi with early opening times reflecting the needs of the office slaves below. Worth a visit for the value of a sightseeing tour and grub in one place. Pop yourself in the right-hand room overlooking the shipyard (the left-hand room has old-town views), order up a couple of vodkas and salute what's left of the birthplace of Solidarity before it inevitably gets turned into apartment blocks. ▶ Open 09:00 - 22:00, Mon 09:00 - 20:00. (21-49zł). 

Pierogarnia U Dzika C-4, ul. Piwna 59/60, tel. (+48) 58 305 26 76, www.pierogarniaudzika.com. To the uninitiated a dzik is local lingo for boar. And not only has the owner included the noble dzik in the name, he's included these little guys in the design. Where do boars go when they die, to this place of course, where the proprietor has them skinned, stuffed and nailed to every surface available. Stranger still, the absence of anything resembling boar on the menu - work that one out. This place has dedicated itself to pierogi, and the ones here are quite simply the best in the biz. If you don't mind dead animals staring reproachfully at you, then knock yourself out on delicious pierogi stuffed with a variety of sweet and savoury fillings. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. (15-65zł). 

Pod Banderą D-4, ul. Długie Pobrzeże 23, tel. (+48) 58 305 11 12, www.podbandera.pl. You wouldn't guess from the outside, nor from the neon strip above the entrance, but Pod Banderą is well worth the visit. Set inside the guts of a medieval tower this little gem has been reinvented as a light, modern space, its narrow interiors filled with glistening surfaces and overhanging lamps. Most diners settle for fish, and that's certainly not a bad option, but why not instead go for their szaszлык; cubes of meat grilled on a skewer. ▶ Open 10:00-23:00 (12-69zł). 



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info@podlososiem.com.pl**

Pod Lososiem C-4, ul. Szeroka 52-54, tel. (+48) 58 301 76 52, www.podlososiem.com.pl. Gdańsk's most famous restaurant? Quite possibly. It's here that Goldwasser vodka was first distilled back in 1598, a factor which may have influenced the decision of Thatcher, Bush sr., and Princess Anne to dine here. Cutting edge this isn't, rather a homage to history, with imperious looking interiors complimented by a cracking menu comprised of high class dishes. A standout dining experience. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (55-80zl). ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Swojski Smak C-2, ul. Heweliusza 25/27, tel. (+48) 58 320 19 12. The kitchen here must be a total slaughter-fest, blood and bones everywhere. Out front find heaps of traditional mountain food making their way to you by way of a maze of benches and peasant diversions. You'll leave as stuffed as a Christmas goose, and no doubt congratulating yourself on discovering such a fine deal. ▶ Open 12:00 - 21:00, Sat, Sun 13:00 - 21:00. (15-35zl). ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Tawerna Dominikańska D-3, ul. Targ Rybny 9, tel. (+48) 519 16 62 70, www.tawernadominikanska.pl. Tourist food, tourist prices, tourist trap – so you'd think. The location marks this out as one of those places the travel savvy avoid, though from what we've seen considerable improvements have been made outback in the kitchen: nothing groundbreaking, but by no means a disaster. Remaining the same are the interiors, with a courtly theme manifesting itself with heraldic coats of arms and twisty fake trees; given the option, sit outside. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (25-60zl). ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Villa Uphagena G-3, ul. Uphagena 23, tel. (+48) 58 345 83 72, www.villauphagena.pl. If you're familiar with Warsaw, you're probably familiar with the Dom Polski restaurant. These guys are from the same stable and their location halfway between anywhere keeps counting against them. Those who have made it out here however have survived, and are seemingly full of praise for the nouvelle Polish dishes that appear from the kitchen. Expect a charming manor house interior inside a building that houses the Gdańsk Business Club. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00, Sun 12:00 - 21:00. (35-70zl). ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Regional

Gdańska B-4, ul. Św. Duchy 16/24, tel. (+48) 58 305 76 71, www.gdanska.pl. One of the city's longest standing restaurants has the feel of a museum with all the armour, statuettes, model ships and portraits of famous Gdanskians/Danzigers. This is one of former President Lech Walesa's favourite haunts and you can try his favourite dishes by ordering his set menu which includes a shot of strong, peppery Waleowska vodka. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (19-70zl). ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Tawerna Mestwin D-3, ul. Straganiarska 20/23, tel. (+48) 58 301 78 82, www.tawernamestwin.pl. For local cooking you won't find a more authentic venue than Mestwin, a shadowy eatery from which dolls and carvings peer spookily from the corners. Recipes here are Kashubian inspired, and the results arrive courtesy of wisp haired spinsters who creak carefully around the assembled handicrafts. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00, Mon 12:00-18:00. From March open 11:00 - 23:00, Mon 11:00 - 18:00. (26-51zl). ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗



Restauracja Gdańska
Maria i Henryk Lewandowscy
80-834 Gdańsk, ul. Św. Duchy 16/24, tel./fax +48 58 305 76 71
www.gdanska.pl, restauracja@gdanska.pl

Verpassen Sie bei Ihrem Aufenthalt in Gdańsk nicht dieses Restaurant mit seiner typischen Danziger Innenausstattung, lokaler Küche und einer freundlichen Bedienung.

When in Gdansk you cannot miss our restaurant decorated in a Gdanskian style with genuine Gdansk cuisine and the chance to be served by genuine Gdanskian people.

The speciality of the restaurant is Old Polish and Polish cuisine.

We organise banquets and special occasions.

Velevetka C-5, ul. Długa 45, tel. (+48) 58 305 61 06, www.velevetka.pl. A pleasant Kashubian themed basement set right next to the Neptune statue with brightly painted ceramics punctuating the white walls and cheery fabrics. Offering dishes exclusive to the region this restaurant, as well as Polish staples like pierogi and bigos, this really looks the part, and the chef is no slouch either with a mighty good goose to his name. But to really take advantage of this place either bring a partner or a rather large appetite. There's a pair of 'meals for two' called 'Pólmisek' to enjoy, and these include a lavish meat feast or the platter of fish named 'Fish from the Kashubian fishing boat'. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (24-57zl). ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Russian

Kuchnia Rosyjska C-5, ul. Długi Targ 11, tel. (+48) 58 301 27 35, www.kuchnia-rosyjska.aleks.pl. Pad out your stomach lining with a visit to Kuchnia Rosyjska, a cheap, cheerful venture presenting strange mashed dishes that defy efforts at identification. Still, the pielmieni are good, and the service rarely goes wrong. All this in an interior that looks like a really naff gift store – lots of dolls and unwanted craftwork. ▶ Open 11:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat 11:00 - 24:00. (19-42zl). ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Thai

Buddha Lounge B-4, ul. Długa 18/21, tel. (+48) 58 322 00 44, www.buddhalounge.pl. The limitations on the Gdańsk culinary scene are demonstrated in the serious lack of choice for ethnic food in the old town. Buddha is therefore up there as one of your best options and with authentic Asian chefs in the kitchen the results are pretty decent. Choose from a range of Asian dishes, not just limited to Thai while seated in a colourful and cosy room overlooking the main pedestrian street in the centre of the old town. A top summer garden, a professional and courteous staff and an adjacent late night cocktail bar keep this place constantly busy. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (16-49zl). ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Turkish

Sakarya D-4, ul. Warzywnicza 10a-e, tel. (+48) 58 320 18 18, www.sakaryarestaurant.pl. Over-eager waiters swoop like vultures on solo diners, though the enthusiasm of these frontline troops is clearly wasted on such a venture. Previously described as 'desperate and despondent', what was formerly the Kreta restaurant has re-emerged as the equally glum Sakarya. Find lonely chefs stalking between plastic pillars and the Greek detritus left by the previous occupants, only stirred by the accidental intrusion of curious tourists. Portions are huge, enough to have the tables creaking, though for the most part your grilled and skewered meats will need to be excavated from under a covering of cabbage; not unlike Sphinx, though with none of the atmosphere or happy meal price tags. ▶ Open 10:00 - 23:00. (20-59zl). ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗

Vegetarian

Green Way B-4, ul. Długa 11, tel. (+48) 58 301 82 28, www.greenway.pl. Poland's undisputed masters of vegetarian and wholefood cooking provide monster portions of always edible and sometimes sublime food with lashings of brown rice and salad in a restaurant the size of a hotel bathroom. Outside seating helps avoid a crush during the warmer months, plus there are other outlets around town. Also at (B-3), ul. Garncarska 4/6, Open 10:00-19:00, Sat, Sun 12:00-18:00, Żabianka train station, Open 11:00-20:00, Sat, 11:00-19:00, Sun 12:00-18:00. ▶ Open 10:00 - 20:00, Sun 10:00 - 19:00. (9-14zl). ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗



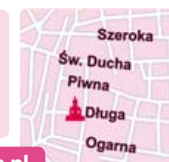
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Goldwasser

No visit to Gdańsk is complete without sampling the local fire water, Goldwasser vodka. Created by Ambrose Vermollen, a Dutch migrant living in Gdańsk, the first recorded mention of it dates to 1598, though it would be years later that Vermollen would open the first recorded distillery, Der Lachs (The Salmon) on ul. Szeroka. His recipe combined over 20 herbs and roots, including cardamom, coriander, juniper, cinnamon, wild orange, lavender, cloves and thyme. A clever marketing trick that was all about appearance and nothing to do with taste, 23 carat gold leaves were added for luck, and the recipe has since been passed down the generations, its current owner being the German Carl Graf von Hardenberg. The uniqueness of this idea shows that Vermollen was what would now be described as a marketing genius. Of course, local legend is far more interesting, and if you believe urban myth the gold flakes appeared after Neptune grew increasingly irritated that the natives were clogging up his fountain by repeatedly throwing coins into it. Driven to despair the irked God launched his trident into the fountain, shattering the coins into millions of pieces. This, according to some, is why you'll find gold pieces floating around in your bottle of Goldwasser. Story number two paints a different picture. Apparently Neptune was delighted by the natives' habit of throwing coins into his fountain, and decided to reward their generosity by turning the water into a tasty alcoholic beverage. Good man. Free-loading landlords carted the booze off by the barrel, all apart from the do-gooding owner of Pod Łososiem. In return for his honesty, Neptune transformed his stock of ordinary vodka into Goldwasser. Packing an alcohol content of 40%, Goldwasser's rich, syrupy taste saw it gain popularity, and it wasn't long before it assumed favoured status by the kingpins of Europe's courts. Louis XIV was said to have been a committed fan, and by 1767 cases of the liquor were regularly being dispatched to the court of Imperial Russia's Catherine the Great. Fans of this story and the drink will be delighted to know that the Salmon (Der Lachs) is still around and now trades as the exclusive Pod Łososiem restaurant where you can get the original von Hardenberg Goldwasser which is now imported from Germany. Also keep your eye out for the German owned Goldwasser restaurant on the waterfront which has specially produced gift sets available to buy. On a final note it is also said that the gold content of Goldwasser is useful in the treatment of back and joint conditions although it is unlikely that this was one of its goals 400 years ago.



Cafe Balsam B-4, ul. Piwna 66, tel. (+48) 58 322 04 01, www.balsamcafe.com. Riga Black Balsam is a Latvian liqueur which will make your guts gargle and your legs jelly – and you'll find it on sale here, both straight and mixed with various other drinks. If you're not for getting utterly trolled, then stick to their teas and beer served inside a homey space decorated with custom-made ceramics and other trinkets that will tempt your inner thief. A cracking cafe, and one of the first you should visit. ▶ Open 10:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Cafe Factotum B-4, ul. Św. Ducha 8/10, www.cafefactotum.pl. A stylish and cosy (read small), cafe/bar found at the top of Sw. Ducha street. The unique decor featuring black and white floors, old typewriters set in glass walls and tiny monitors set in the floor must have taken some thought and the nice touch of putting windows in the back save it from being the dark and dusty place it could easily have been. We thoroughly enjoyed sitting back in the black upholstered chairs to sample the cafe's famed mascarpone cheesecake, coffee and ice creams, which keeps business ticking during the day but it is as a quiet little bar that we like it most. The introduction of different guest beers each month are likely to endear it further. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 23:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Cafe Fikcja F-4, Al. Grunwaldzka 99/101, tel. (+48) 58 710 11 81, www.cafe-fikcja.pl. A cream coloured café decorated with cartoon cats and books, books and even more books. This is indeed the bookworms dream, with a pleasantly cute design consisting of tea candles and sofas, and a regular sideline in readings and signings. Now boasting an alcohol licence to boot. ▶ Open 11:00 - 21:00, Fri, Sat 11:00 - 22:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Cocktail Bar Capri C-4, ul. Długa 59/61, tel. (+48) 58 301 24 75, www.barcapri.dl.pl. A classic café and one regularly filled with tourists taking a break from strolling Długa to people watch in front of heaping desserts. Back in the times of the Peoples Republic, a cocktail bar was a cut price venue for sweets and cakes – rather than a dazzy bar full of hourglass figures sipping on Gay Bombay – and it's a function this place retains; find loads of desserts temptingly displayed behind a finger proof counter. A great rest stop on the main thoroughfare to fuel a sweet tooth. ▶ Open 11:00 - 21:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Costa Coffee B-4, ul. Długa 5, tel. (+48) 58 746 92 32, www.costacoffee.pl. In the space of a couple of months Costa Coffee have gone bananas and opened in practically every town in Poland. You'll find the tri-city representative lying on the top of Długa, the main benefit being the tides of eye candy that flow past. It might lack individuality but this is one of the best options for caffeine in the area. ▶ Open 08:00 - 21:00, Sat 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 21:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

NEW

Fajne Baby Cupcake Bar C-3, ul. Świętojańska 70/71/1 (corner of ul. Lawendowa), tel. (+48) 696 40 40 60, www.fajnebaby.pl. The cupcake has made quite an impact in Poland of late and you'll find lots of delicious types in this little cafe behind St Nicholas' church. And when we say tiny we mean it – as much space is taken up by the display of cupcakes as by seating. By the way 'baby' is both the Polish for cupcakes and slang for women so we like the play on words in the place's name (Fine Cupcakes). ▶ Open 09:00 - 17:00, Sat 09:00 - 14:00, Sun 10:00 - 15:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Goldwasser Coffee Shop C-5, ul. Długi Targ 28/29, tel. (+48) 58 320 90 12, www.goldwasser.pl. Gold it certainly is. Walk past the narrow room selling pralines and gift sets, and duck upstairs to find a posh cafe space primed for an afternoon sit-down - choose from great snack options, including a tasty

gulaszowa. Very nice indeed, though the primary reason for visiting is the small list of old local liqueurs, the recipes for which were painstakingly researched and recreated by the owner, as well as some great wine including the house fave: Grauer Burgunder Blanc. There's a real slant on the regional here, with the owners passion for old Gdańsk clearly seeping through in what is undeniably a personal labour of love. Also one of the places in town where you can enjoy locally made Złote Lwy beer. The cafe often closes for January and February, and if that's the case visitors can check out Goldwasser restaurant at ul. Długie Pobrzeże 22. ▶ Open 11:00 - 20:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Kawiarnia Filmowa "W Starym Kadrze" C-4, ul. Grobla 1 3/4, tel. (+48) 58 682 15 67, www.wstarymkadrze.com. A wonderful little cafe in a quiet street found in the shadow of St Marys next to the Four Quarters Fountain. While the menu offers a wide range of teas, a choice of generously sized cups of coffee (unlike most) and szarlotka (apple cake) with ice cream it's the place itself that gets our nod. For not only is it wonderfully atmospheric, with old family pictures on the walls adding to the feeling that this is a real old-time Gdanskian's living room, it also has a totally unique gimmick. Tucked away in the back is a 12-seater cinema which shows films three times daily (12:00, 16:00 and 19:00) with a different theme each day. The films are International rather than Polish meaning you, the foreign visitor, can watch most. Add to that the choice of locally produced beer and film-themed shots and this place gets our vote as the most original cafe to open in the city in 2011. Love it. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Mazel Tov B-5, ul. Ogarna 119, tel. (+48) 697 63 46 04. Ogarna street is only yards from the main street but there are a couple of well kept secrets, of which Mazel Tov has to be the best. This smashing little find takes visitors back in time, a time when Gdańsk had some semblance of a Jewish community. After so much exposure to high street café chains MT is an absolute treasure, drawing customers with stirring klezmer sounds and an antique atmosphere. Fresh from a remodelling, find olive walls featuring sepia coloured houses on them while decorative touches feature crochets and rugs. ▶ Open 14:00 - 24:00, Fri 14:00 - 02:00, Sat 12:00 - 02:00, Sun 12:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Pi Kawa C-4, ul. Piwna 14/15, tel. (+48) 58 304 14 88. The perfect café to wile away an afternoon sipping on a latte or discreetly downing a lavish dessert, Pi Kawa has the soft lighting and mismatched furniture that creates instant atmosphere. The perfect hideout from the throngs that crowd nearby Długa, especially when only szarlotka (traditional Polish apple dessert) will do. ▶ Open 10:00 - 23:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Red Spot Cafe A-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 2, tel. (+48) 58 721 50 48, www.redspotcafe.pl. A decent new cafe chain, though one with absolutely zero design sense. 'Welcome to anonymity' it seems to say; with a good computer and a fast link to a factory outlet this place could have been built in three minutes, and it's quite possible it was. Find a good selection of sandwiches sitting behind the glass, as well as a fine range in coffee and precisely the same smoothies you get in Coffeeheaven. ▶ Open 07:00 - 22:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Segafredo D-3, Targ Rybny 11, tel. (+48) 602 27 13 00, www.segafredo.pl. Mega brand coffee chains don't always float our boat, but in the case of Segafredo we're going to hold fire. Star points in this case go to a scattering of sofas which allow opportunity to fully enjoy the quayside views and bullet fast wifi. Add to that friendly staff and a sunny atmosphere and you forgive the boring red/black/white style. Already something of a strollers favourite, with its popularity set to grow with the appearance of summer. ▶ Open 09:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

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Drinking at a Glance

Local

Try the beers brewed on-site at **Brovornia**, while more local juice can be found at **Amsterdam Bar**. For a taste of local hedonism, and a cross-section of the weirdest characters in Gdansk, then fight through the crowds who gather at **Cafe Absinthe**.

Lads

Start in **Degustatornia Dom Piwa**, a lively pub featuring over 100 world beers. **Buddha** is a late hours favourite, and the staff well familiar with slurred proposals from smitten stags. Failing that head to **Kabaret Ewan** for a guaranteed rub with the local talent, or if you are feeling flush jump in a cab and head out to the upmarket **New Orleans**. For live sports, or at least live sports on Polish TV due to the lack of SKY, head to the **Republika**.

Couples

Indygo is a smooth environment that's part bar, part cafe, part chillout zone, while for something really picturesque take an evening stroll down ul. Mariacka and stop for a nightcap in **Cafe Kamienica**.

Splurge

Go five star and set up shop in the Hilton's rooftop **High 5** where you can slash out 260zł on an amber cocktail. While not particularly pricey, **Tekstylija** looks to be attracting a high end crowd, so mix with the local jet-set by heading there.

Bars & Pubs

NEW

Amsterdam Bar Beer & Bagel B-4, ul. Garbary 6/7, tel. (+48) 58 717 29 39, www.amsterdambar.pl. Local bottled brews have made a huge leap forward in the last couple of years thanks in no small part to places like this which are prepared to snub the major brewers and stock independent brewers in depth. Themed nights which see different beers discounted as well as live music and televised sports make sure that this small cafe/bar is never empty. ▶ Open 07:30 - 23:00, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 23:00. ☎ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

Barbados B-2, ul. Karmielicka 1, tel. (+48) 58 769 32 70, www.barbados.com.pl. A large and basic affair that fills with after-work nine-to-fivers nattering into their mobile phones. There's a good chance they're planning the weekend ahead, which is when this place transforms from boring bar to cracking club. The DJ spares no eardrums with his rapid collection of 'best of' CDs, but that doesn't stop glorious lookers from squishing themselves in and wagging their private bits in the direction of bouncing cleavages. ▶ Open 10:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 04:00. ☎ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

Bedeker C-4, ul. Piwna 28/31 (entrance of ul. Kaletnicza), tel. (+48) 58 304 00 40, www.bedekerclub.pl. Schizophrenic might be the best way to describe Bedeker, the latest iteration to take over the former Live Sport Bar space. The front of the space features plush red booths and black and white prints (New York, San Francisco...London?) and a sparse, modern bar. But the larger rear space is comparatively disjointed, with fuzzy brown seats and a more muted color scheme, as if the money for a complete overhaul ran out. If it's nice sit outside to avoid the confusion (and the possible ding of a microwave, we think), and embrace a decent list of warm and cold starters, pancakes and "toasts" that make for a respectable mid-day snack. And in a country not known for good service, we found the staff here impressively attentive. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 02:00. ☎ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

Brovornia D-4, ul. Szafarnia 9, tel. (+48) 58 320 19 70, www.brovornia.pl. Quite possibly our favourite microbrewery in Poland, which is by no means the empty award you might think. The beers – brewed on-site – are faultless, while the smoking ban does its bit to really exaggerate the pungent smell of malt and hops. Found in a restored granary building, this pub features stout wooden fittings, black and white pics of dockside Danzig, and small little hatches that allow beams of sunlight to slant inside. Even better, if your head goes boom after eight of their lagers then just check into the excellent Hotel Gdańsk upstairs. ▶ Open 13:00 - 23:00. ☎ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

Buddha Lounge B-4, ul. Długa 18/21, tel. (+48) 58 322 00 44, www.buddhalounge.pl. One of the few decent pre-club spots in the old town with a midnight blue design and some velvety seats. Trumping the competition the design here features the best painting ever: some naked bloke with antlers on his head. If that doesn't sound your lookout then drink Peroni lager while checking out the best bar girls we've ever seen - yummy. They claim to have the latest opening hours in the old town and we've yet to prove that claim wrong. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

Café Absinthe B-4, ul. Św. Ducha 2 (Teatr Wyrzeże), tel. (+48) 58 320 37 84, www.cafeabsinthe.pl. Penetrate the greenish fog and find a basic space with tables and chairs squeezed in at all angles occupied by a collection of what can only be described as true pub legends including the occasional one-eared Absinthe drinker, a midget, after-work cabaret dancers and visiting sailors. By day a great place to eavesdrop on foreign language teachers involved in intense conversation, by night a choice place to cut loose the shackles of sobriety. ▶ Open 10:00 - 04:00, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 07:00. ☎ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

Café Bar Mon Balzac C-4, ul. Piwna 36/39, tel. (+48) 58 682 25 25, www.monbalzac.pl. Decorated with muted colours, big candles and even bigger sofas, Mon Balzac has a sophisticated edge and a popularity factor that's nearly too high to compute - you won't find a busier bar although attentive staff make frequent forays to ensure your Złoty Lwy never nears empty. Toilet access, meanwhile, is gained through a mirrored door, something which might present a problem once the beer goggles are lowered. ▶ Open 09:00 - 02:00, Thu, Fri, Sat 09:00 - 03:00. ☎ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

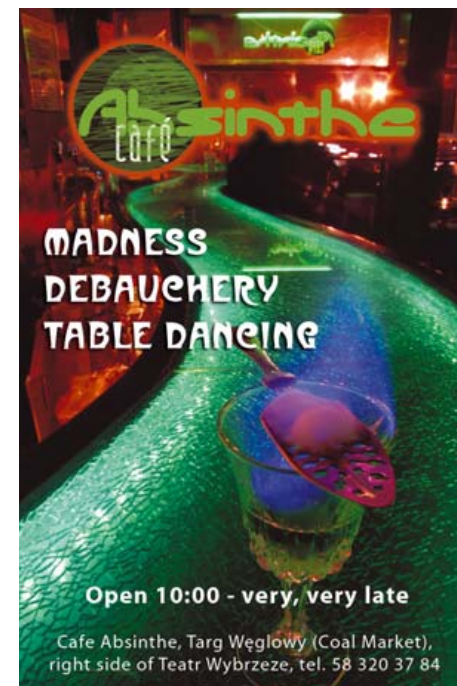
Cafe Ferber B-4, ul. Długa 77/78, tel. (+48) 58 301 55 66, www.ferber.pl. Decent separation of the smoking and non-smoking sections, space-age toilets and a fine selection of board games are what attract us to the very red Cafe Ferber, which is at once both a daytime ladies-who-lunch type cafe and a rather saucy late-night drinking den. The terrace is one of the best people-watching spots in Gdańsk - weather permitting - while the picture behind the bar one of the most startling. ▶ Open 09:30 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

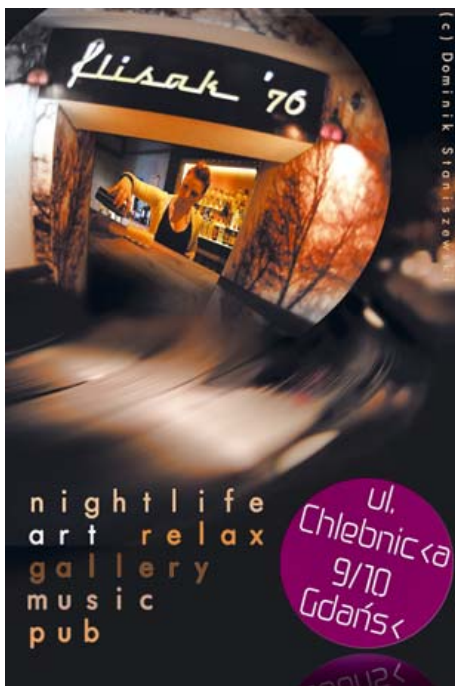
Cafe Kamienica C-4, ul. Mariacka 37/39. Drink under the gables and gargoyles of Mariacka in this standout café/bar, a boho space set on two levels. Consisting of strip-wood floors and arty loot this is a place not short on charm and, when the weather is warmer one of the biggest and best terraces in Gdańsk. Winter or summer, there are few more atmospheric places for a coffee or beer. ▶ Open 10:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

NEW

Cafe Lamus C-3, ul. Lawendowa 8 (entrance from ul. Straganiarska), tel. (+48) 500 13 28 97. Hipster alert - there's a new place in town. A cafe/bar set up in an old shop which screams 1970s down to the heavily patterned wallpaper that we're sure carries the same design as a dress our mother used to wear. The main reason for visiting, if not to admire the barman's impressive Freddie Mercury style moustache and sideburns, is the choice of bottled Polish beers which is excellent. Pop yourself into the corner during the day with a book and the hours will fly by while in the evening the place fills out to the early hours with people set on having a good time. One of our favourite newbies of 2011 - find it not at the address printed but around the corner on ul. Straganiarska. ▶ Open 10:00 - 01:00, Fri 10:00 - 02:00, Sat 12:00 - 02:00, Sun 12:00 - 01:00. ☎ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑

Cafe Szafa B-3, ul. Podmurze 2, tel. (+48) 693 11 62 27, www.cafeszafa.pl. The owners are obviously exercising a snip of black humour by calling this place a café. It's no such thing. It's Hades, it's hell, but most of all it's a force ten hangover. As the opening hours on the door demonstrate (open 15:00 until pain), you'll need serious drinking legs to survive this legend. Debauchery is part of the parcel here, with a sloshed skate fashion crowd necking shots until daybreak. Murky and a little bit shabby, this bar features weird artwork, cool tunes, half-wrecked furniture and all the other leftfield elements needed to make this one of the best bars of its genre. A brilliant place where memories are forged and forgotten in equal measure. ▶ Open 15:00 - 03:00, Fri, Sat 15:00 - 05:00. ☎ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑





Local Beer



Polish vodka, great, Polish beer, not so great. That's not a rare opinion, and one frequently espoused by the staff of In Your Pocket. With the big brands coming from Silesia and Poznan what about local beer? There is hope. First of all there are the in-house brews at **Brovarnia**, one of the country's best microbreweries. And then there is the discovery of a rather smashing local brewery called **Amber Browar**. Their track record should be proof enough with top prizes for both Poland's best pale beer (Żywe), best dark beer (Kozlak Amber), and best beer (Kozlak Amber again). The secret of their success? Aside from a master brewer who is clearly a genius they use only the best ingredients – hops from Lublin, fermentation yeast from Munich and absolutely no preservatives, additives or corn. That's why you'll still feel on top of the world following an absolute skinful. So what brands to watch for then? **Żywe** looks like it might well become the official brand of In Your Pocket, though do keep an eye open for **Złote Lwy**, **Kozlak** and **Amber Classic**, while the **Johannes** beer introduced to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Hevelius' birth proved so popular that they have decided to keep brewing it. Find the Amber Brewery represented in **Flisak**, **Cup of Tea** and the **Goldwasser** or **Targ Rybny** restaurants

Hot Beer?

There are a number of ways to survive the winter in Poland, and we've tried them all, from dressing up like an Eskimo to staying in bed and refusing to get dressed at all. Of all the methods known, however, none rewards as much as a pint of 'grzane piwo'. That's hot beer in layman's terms – essentially a frothing hot pint spiced with artificial ginger syrup, clove, cinnamon and other mulling spices. For some an acquired taste, for others an early Christmas present and others still an utter profanity, but an invention necessary for everyone to try at least once. There are a couple things to consider with regards to hot beer: Firstly, it takes a while (5-10 minutes) to properly heat the drink without exploding it, so prepare to wait and be patient. Secondly there is a tendency to immediately stab a straw into the glass to mix the syrup at the bottom throughout the drink. If the beverage is too hot this will result in it erupting all over you. This common rookie mistake is an event many twisted bartenders wait for with relish; you can avoid it by simply letting your drink cool slightly and gingerly testing its reaction to the straw. [We're telling you this to save you some face. Ours has had egg on it too many times.] Similarly popular is 'grzane wino' – or mulled wine – as you'll notice by the barrel-shaped stands selling cups of it on the market square. The popular regional brand is Grzaniec Galicyjski and if you enjoy drinking it in public so much, you'll be delighted to discover you can buy it in almost any alcohol shop and easily prepare it at home as well.

Cup of Tea Żywe Club C-4, ul. Szeroka 119/120, tel. (+48) 508 71 63 74. Don't be fooled by the club part in their name – this place is tiny, like cupboard tiny, and chances are you'll be fighting for seats. Seat stealing opposition comes in the form of super-fox girls; there's no machismo here, just a laid back vibe from people who don't dress up to drink. Aside from a permanent traffic jam at the bar, find some excellent local-brewed beers, as well as some hookah pipes standing amid colourful art. ▶ Open 14:00 - 24:00. ☺ ☑ ☒ ☓

Degustatornia Dom Piwa D-3, ul. Grodzka 16, tel. (+48) 888 72 82 72, www.degustatornia.pl. While we love Polish beer it doesn't half make you feel like you've been hit by an artillery barrage the morning after. Indeed, sometimes only a foreign beer will do. Step then, if you please, into Degustatornia Dom Piwa, a brilliant pub featuring one of the most expansive choices of beer in the north of Poland. Satan Red, Kozel and Old Speckled Hen are an example of the brews on offer, and if you don't mind feeling like a dead badger then secure yourself to the floor and order Delirium Tremens – it'll take four to floor you. ▶ Open 15:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 15:00 - 01:00, Sun 15:00 - 22:00. ☑ ☒ ☓ ☓

F°32 A-4, ul. Targ Rybny 1, tel. (+48) 58 778 71 00, www.hiltongdansk.pl. We wouldn't normally list a hotel bar, but when that hotel bar is F°32 we'll make the exception. Why? Well, how about ringside views of the river, Hoegaarden lager and a laid-back, smart casual atmosphere that smacks of anything but what is in fact a lobby bar. Interiors here are plush, but not overbearing, with hardwood floors set to pea green sofas and easy listening elevator sounds. Point of pride, however, goes to the cocktail list, specifically those that include chunks of amber floating around. At 260zł a pop though, you may want to pay with the family silver. ▶ Open 10:00 - 01:00. ☑ ☒ ☓ ☓ ☓ ☓



Flisak 76 C-4, ul. Chlebnicka 9/10, tel. (+48) 509 99 48 54. A popular bar frequented by a friendly crowd on a less touristy Gdańsk street. Not much to look at, the reason to head to this underground bar is the choice of decent bottled Polish beer featuring Ciecchan wheat, honey and superior options and the regular live music performances. We've long recommended Sopot as the place to spend evenings to experience bars like this, but this area of Chlebnicka is re-addressing the balance with this one of the leading exponents. ▶ Open 18:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 18:00 - 04:00. ☑ ☒ ☓ ☓ ☓ ☓

High 5 A-4, ul. Targ Rybny 1, tel. (+48) 58 778 71 00, www.hiltongdansk.pl. Hitting the fifth floor bar of the Hilton isn't unlike walking on-set of a Ralph Lauren ad. This place is sheer class, with a wood-deck terrace offering rooftop views of Gdańsk from white wicker loungers. Don't be surprised to find hotel guests shuffling around in snow coloured dressing gowns, they're fresh from dipping in the rooftop pool. Surprisingly, somewhat, prices are kept at an affordable level, and there's a small glass-encased bar for colder evenings. Be aware: hours are often extended or shortened based on the season. ▶ Open 16:00 - 01:00. ☑ ☒ ☓ ☓ ☓ ☓

Infinium G-3, ul. Wyspiańskiego 9, tel. (+48) 58 344 04 98, www.infinium.pl. Unlike the other clubs in the area, this place has no problems drawing regular crowds. Attached to a student dorm, so if you don't want to spring for a taxi do your best to finish your night with one of the students. Drinking sessions inside have been known to be messy, and the nautical interior is unlikely to help your sea-like-legs when you finally call it a night. ▶ Open 18:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 18:00 - 03:00. ☑ ☒ ☓ ☓ ☓ ☓ ☓

Irish Pub B-3, ul. Korzenna 33/35, tel. (+48) 58 320 24 74, www.irish.pl. The Irish Pub was once something of a byword for debauchery, with sweaty bodies and blocked toilets all doing their bit for a meat market atmosphere. Then along came new owners and out went the crowd. What was once a grotty dive bar has been reinvented as a half-smart cellar with vinyl seats and a puff of air freshener. It looks better, but it just doesn't feel better. What was once a guaranteed source of phone numbers and hangovers now stands often magnificently empty. As for the Irish bit, we're stuck to find a link. ▶ Open 17:00 - 01:00, Fri 17:00 - 03:00, Sat 17:00 - 04:00. Closed Mon, Sun. ☑ ☒ ☓ ☓ ☓ ☓

Irish Pub Piwnica B-4, ul. Garbary 1, tel. (+48) 58 305 91 39, www.pubirish.pl. A former public lavatory, so we're led to believe, is the setting for a decent locals bar with big screen football and an amiable bar keep. Long, dark and narrow this cellar pub doesn't do anything new and while Irish, it most certainly isn't, it's not the only place in town to naughtily use that description. ▶ Open 13:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 13:00 - 02:00. ☑ ☒ ☓ ☓ ☓ ☓

Irish Station C-4, ul. Św. Ducha 41/43-45/47. There is a tendency to name places after Ireland in this city when they have no apparent connection with the Emerald Isle. Here's another, but that doesn't make it necessarily bad. A pretty bare bones basement bar does feature amongst other things a well-stocked fridge of beers from Poland's smaller breweries, a couple of plasma screens to watch the satellite sports and a wall decorated with a huge picture of a British railway station. What sets it apart is the clientele – local, working-class, hard-drinking men (some with their other halves in tow) who to a man seem to be fans of local football team Lechia Gdansk. A world away from the tourist bars and cafes of nearby Długa and Mariacka it's worth a look for a sense of unpretentious Gdansk before heading off to the safety of aforementioned streets. ▶ Open 16:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 18:00 - 04:00. ☑ ☒ ☓ ☓ ☓ ☓

Polish Vodka

Proven masters of make-do with the potato as their primary resource, the Poles have been producing and drinking vodka since the early Middle Ages, distilling their skill into some of the best vodka blends available in the world, many of which date back centuries. The two most highly regarded clear Polish vodka brands must be Belvedere and Chopin, both of which you'll find in any alcohol shop. But you won't find many tipplers throwing them back at the bar. While clear vodkas are generally reserved for giving away at weddings and mixing in cocktails, the real fun of Polish vodka sampling is the flavoured vodkas. Unlike beer with juice (regarded as highly emasculating), flavoured vodkas are embraced by both sexes and imbibed copiously.

Wiśniówka

Undoubtedly the most common flavoured vodka, wiśniówka is a cheap, dangerously easy to drink, cherryflavoured variety. You'll see students and pensioners alike buying trays of it at the bar, as well as toothless tramps sharing a bottle in corners of tenement courtyards. A splash of grapefruit juice is often added to cut the sweetness of this bright red monogamy cure.

Żołądkowa Gorzka

Due to its very name, which translates to something like 'Bitter Stomach Vodka', Żołądkowa Gorzka gives even the most infirm of health an excuse to drink under the guise of its medicinal properties. An aged, amber-coloured vodka flavoured with herbs and spices, Żołądkowa has a unique aroma and sweet spiced taste unlike anything you're likely to have tried before. Incredibly palatable, it's best enjoyed when sipped on ice.

Krupnik

Popular in Poland and Lithuania, Krupnik is a sweet vodka made from honey and a multitude of herbs. Buy a bottle for Mum – drinking vodka doesn't get any easier than this. In winter, hot krupnik is a popular personal defroster with hot water, lemon and mulling spices added.

Żubrówka

One of Poland's most popular overseas vodka exports, Żubrówka has been produced in Eastern Poland since the 16th century. Flavoured with a type of grass specific to the primeval Białowieża Forest that straddles the border (a blade of which appears in each bottle), Żubrówka is faint yellow in colour, with a mild fragrance of mown hay and a subtle taste which has been described as 'floral' or having traces of almond or vanilla. Delightfully smooth as it is on its own, Żubrówka is most commonly combined with apple juice – a refreshing concoction called a 'tatanka.'

Goldwasser

A celebrated Gdańsk tradition since 1598, Goldwasser is a unique alchemic elixir characterised by the 22 karat gold flakes floating in it. One of the oldest liqueurs in the world, Goldwasser's secret recipe contains some 20 roots and herbs, combining to create a sweet, but spicy flavour with touches of anise, pepper and mint. While we thought turning the potato into vodka was an example of creative ingenuity, we're not sure what sort of statement the practice of turning gold into vodka makes about Polish culture...

LOFT B-3, ul. Młyńska 15, tel. (+48) 535 92 98 58, www.loftpub.pl. We're quick to endorse anywhere that offers a bottle of Specjal for just 6zł and the tequila-infused Desperados lager for 9zł, but fortunately that's not all this new pub has to recommend it. The small, square space is relatively raw, with only surreal paintings (phallic artwork of girls enjoying suckers, a weird mash-up of Bambi and a gnome) to break up the bare brick wall, but somehow it works. Bartenders write specials on the chalkboard wall behind the bar, and the crowd appears to be young folks who don't subscribe to the thumping club scene. Our only complaint: is toilet paper really so hard to come by in this city? ▶ Open 13:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Przystanek Piwna C-4, ul. Piwna 52/53/1, tel. (+48) 58 710 37 94. There's a real vintage feel to Przystanek, a neighbourhood bar festooned with padded alcoves, brass lamps and antique signs from the age of the bi-plane. But don't for one minute think this is one for the fogies, this place gets a cool crowd of people who prefer their bars to come with character, not plastic gizmos and shiny surfaces. A welcome break from New Look Gdańsk, and highly recommended for a piwo on Piwna. ▶ Open 11:00 - 22:00, Thu, Fri, Sat 11:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Pub Duszek C-4, ul. Św. Ducha 119/121, tel. (+48) 512 78 84 83, www.pubduszek.pl. If you like your bars to be slick, smooth and full of dressed up dingbats fiddling with iPhones then move on. Duszek is anything but, offering instead a scuffed down design that's been fogged and stained from decades of beer and smoke – honestly, a night here is enough to cut years off your life expectancy. But in a country that's gone bananas for new and neon, glitz and gits, this legendary local is something of a standard bearer for old days Gdańsk. Watching Polish barflies get trousered on vodka isn't everyone's cup of tea, but this place has atmosphere in spades, a friendly welcome, and often raucous nights – not least when some incompetent bashes out some notes on the cobwebbed piano, which happens often thanks to their daily live music schedule. ▶ Open 15:30 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Red Light Pub C-4, ul. Chlebnicka 9/12, tel. (+48) 505 78 50 95. A Gdansk bar with a Sopot feel and along with Flisak 76 a place that's worth staying in Gdańsk for if you want to enjoy a few decent beers with a young and relaxed crowd. You'll find bottled Polish beer rather than the big brand draughts and a series of sofas and poofs to sit back and enjoy them on. A great warm-up before heading into Gdańsk club land, make a beeline for the mezzanine to get some tips for where to head next from the student crowd who reside nearby. ▶ Open 19:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 19:00 - 04:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Restauracja Republika D-4, ul. Działa 5/7 (entrance from Długie Pobrzeże), tel. (+48) 796 09 13 92. Sitting in a great spot overlooking the river next to the Green Gate is this American styled sports bar which comes with padded bench seating, high stools at the bar and tables where you can enjoy the decent bar food. But the biggest draw is the sports coverage. Find a huge screen as well as large flatscreen televisions set up so everyone can watch the action – although with only one feed currently, you might need to get in first if there is a choice of matches to watch. ▶ Open 10:00 - 03:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Riviera Literacka Klub Pisarza C-4, ul. Mariacka 50/52, tel. (+48) 796 54 94 50. Festooned with blinking fairy lights this café/bar has literary leanings, and come nightfall it's an owlish crowd of whiskered academics who convene for beer and cigarettes (outside of course) in generous amounts. Filled with dark wood and local artwork this is a decent place alright, complete with a spiral staircase twisting its way to a minstrel's gallery. Not at all hip, and

certainly not trendy, but a calm place for decent conversation with an un-showy crowd. ▶ Open 17:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat, Sun 16:00 - 23:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Scruffy O'Brien F-3, Al. Grunwaldzka 76/78, tel. (+48) 58 341 67 08, www.scruffy.pl. Aesthetically this is the most convincing Irish pub of the lot, right down to the chessboard flooring and wood fashioned furniture. The suburban location means it's free from the 'just vomited in the toilet' crowd, and what you have is a pleasingly hassle free venue in which sup Guinness and enjoy the slow lane. ▶ Open 11:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Stacja De Luxe G-3, Al. Grunwaldzka 22, tel. (+48) 58 345 00 05, www.stacjadeluxe.pl. Poland is proliferated with pubs that were once public toilets, so finding a bar that formerly housed a petrol station really isn't as bizarre as it sounds. When the sun is out take shade under the petrol pumps, or retreat inside to drink amid bare concrete, Ferrari red car seats, wheels and pipes. Plenty of industrial chic on display here, and quite possibly a candidate for 'the best pub in Wrzeszcz'. ▶ Open 10:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

NEW

St. John's Pub & Cafe D-4, ul. Świętojańska 49 (Hostel Zappio), tel. (+48) 58 322 01 74, www.zappio.pl. It's rare that a hostel bar would warrant a mention to those who are bunking elsewhere, but St. John's is worth a look, especially in warm weather when the splendid summer terrace with views of the adjacent church is available to everyone. In winter things are kept to the vaulted brick cellars of this historic building, which have their own uniquely evocative atmosphere, though you can expect many of the patrons to have wandered down from the dorms of the Zappio Hostel. ▶ Open 16:00 - 24:00, Sat, Sun 12:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Tekstylija B-3, ul. Szeroka 121/122, tel. (+48) 58 304 77 63. Cutting edge? Maybe not. But while it'd be a short thumb in London or Paris this new bar has certainly got the locals talking – and drinking. Few if any places have been busier during Gdańsk's close season, and you'll find no shortage of good lookers both behind and in front of the bar. Big, large windows make it perfect for people spotting, while inside some industrial touches sit comfortably with whimsical touches such as wire-framed corsets and some design mag extras. Highly recommended for both pre-club drinks or afternoon chillout. ▶ Open 09:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

U Szkota C-4, ul. Chlebnicka 9/12, tel. (+48) 58 301 49 11. At the Scot's was a place that for many years sucked in unsuspecting foreigners with its Scottish flag to discover a British looking bar at the heart of a dimly lit restaurant featuring an eclectic (read English) mix of British paraphernalia from the ages. While nothing about the decor has changed, the running appears to have been handed to a bunch of students who have breathed life, if not a decorating budget, into the place. We wouldn't imagine the Guinness tap gets much of a work-out (it's 14zł you know, the young barman warned us) and things are apparently so tight the chill cabinet which stored our beer was turned off leaving us to sip a warm Perla and Merrydown Cider. There's better places and three of them are next door. ▶ Open 16:00-01:00, Fri, Sat 16:00-02:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Vinifera C-2, ul. Wodopój 7, tel. (+48) 58 320 16 79. Depicted as the little doll's house in Gunter Grass' Call of the Toad, Vinifera is one of the great disappointments of night time Gdańsk. From the outside, graffiti squiggles aside, this riverside lodge could play a part in Wind in the Willows. Inside, and in spite of regular closures and renovations, it transpires to be nothing more than a dusty, depressing bar clogged up with plastic flowers and mirrors whose reflections have been distorted over time. ▶ Open 14:00 - 24:00. ☎

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Clubs

Buffet Club B-1, ul. Doki 1/146b, tel. (+48) 516 84 61 38. One of the hardest to find but most rewarding venues in the city, this is the home to Gdańsk's hipster crowd. Found inside the derelict remains of the former Lenin Shipyards, you'll need to head through Gate #1 of the yard, next to where Lech Wałęsa climbed to speak to the masses gathered at the birth of the Solidarity movement. Head straight down past the red brick buildings on your right and follow the path around to the left where you'll find Buffet (pronounce "boo-fett" by the locals, not "buff-fay" like the smorgasbord) located in the Wyspa Institute of Art building. Once inside reward yourself with a drink from their bar, where you'll find English speaking super-friendly staff and a calendar of events featuring a whole host of exhibitions, concerts, workshops and the like. The major pull here though are the truly memorable nights which feature Polish and foreign DJs playing anything from indie to drum n' bass. Do expect a décor that reflects the post-communist fate of the shipyards and nights that finish in daylight. Do not expect Beyonce or bathtubs with toilet paper. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 03:00.

Elita B-4, ul. Lektykarska 3, tel. (+48) 503 11 57 62, www.elita-gdansk.pl. We'll be surprised if Elita makes it to the next issue of In Your Pocket. After descending into this foul-smelling (we're talking essence of sewage) club we spotted literally one patron, a trucker-hat wearing drunk, fist-pumping to the DJ's loud dance tunes. We weren't sure who we felt worse for: the guy who didn't realize trucker hats went out of style in 2002, or the DJ forced to entertain him. ▶ Open 17:00 - 03:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Wed, Sun.

Gazeta Rock Café B-4, ul. Tkacka 7/8, tel. (+48) 58 320 24 23, www.muzeumpolskiegorocka.pl. Everyone is welcome here and the lively atmosphere is a direct reflection. Classic Polish rock hits burst from the speakers, with the patrons enthusiastically shouting drunken choruses in the background. The threadbare sofas get taken fast, and the interiors are a direct homage to the stars of the Polish music scene; find numerous pieces of framed memorabilia and assorted junk nailed to the walls. ▶ Open 20:00 - 04:00.

Klub Dobry Dźwięk B-4, ul. Teatralna 1, tel. (+48) 510 48 14 16, www.klubdobrydzwiek.pl. A multi-level dance extravaganza, and already a claimant for Gdańsk's sweatiest dance floor. This place packs with hip thrusting talent, and you'll need to pull your best jiggles to stand a chance with the dynamite blondes who prowl like tigers. Tight t-shirts are favoured by the lads, and fake coloured claws for the ladies; this is clubbing Gdańsk style, with lots of flashing lasers and modern finishes jarring against the sort of sounds you'll hear on mainstream radio. Admission is free Thursdays, but on Fridays and Saturdays be prepared to hand over 5zł before 22:00 and 10zł after. ▶ Open 21:00 - 04:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Wed, Sun.

Miasto Aniolów D-5, ul. Chmielna 26, tel. (+48) 58 768 58 31, www.miastooiolow.com.pl. While the music tends to be mainstream this is a cool space with plenty of seats, and a minimal capital city vibe. A second bar and a spot for smokers have been added after recent renovations. Most clubs in Gdańsk attract a crowd of 'just left school' types, so to find a post-teen crowd doing their moves on the dancefloor is a welcome surprise, as is the boat moored quayside – a highlight in the summer if ever

there was. ▶ Open Fri 21:00 - 04:00 and Sat 21:00 - 05:00 only. From January open Thu, Fri 21:00 - 04:00 and Sat 21:00 - 05:00 only. Restaurant open 11:00 - 22:00.

Parlament B-4, ul. Św. Ducha 2, tel. (+48) 58 320 13 65, www.parlament.com.pl. A multi-level grief-hole with steel fittings, flashing lights and an overwhelming odour of booze and aftershave. Here's where the stag lads go to get pissed and cheer at tits, and it's a great place to observe staggering beer monsters pull Jackson dance steps. No points for the payment system: punters are obliged to exchange cash in return for a swipey card which then pays the drinks – a daft system which simply means you queue twice. ▶ Open Thu, Fri, Sat 20:00 - 04:00, and during the week for occasional events

Que Pasa D-5, ul. Chmielna 101, tel. (+48) 503 11 57 62, www.quepasa.com.pl. This used to be listed in our 'Gay' section and remnants of the old management are still visible in the old name and old 'Straight friendly' sign hanging over the door. That door now features a rather large chap who collects 10zł from you to enter what is basically a small bar, with a small dancefloor (with mandatory discoball) and a shocking toilet. Don't think, however, that it is therefore empty. It rocks and the shots get thrown back like there's no tomorrow by a mixed crowd of muscular men and some of the best looking women we've ever risked setting our eyes upon. Not particularly recommended, with overpriced small bottles of Tyskie and definitely not a place gay people should bother searching out. ▶ Open 17:00 - 04:00, Fri, Sat 17:00 - 08:00.

Trops ul. Czyżewskiego 29 (Oliwa), tel. (+48) 660 46 24 70, www.trops.biz. Should you be the sort who enjoys mixing with academics then Trops represents the higher end of Gdańsk's usually naff student clubs. Indeed, the design here is almost decadent in its extravagances, with alabaster statues and flock wallpaper flanking deep sofas reserved for the deep thinkers of town. We give it two years till the students smash it in, in the meantime enjoy a good looking club with a safe music policy offering up the usual house, r'n'b and 'black' sounds (their words not ours...). ▶ Open 21:00 - 04:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Wed, Sun.

Adult entertainment

Kabaret Ewan B-4, ul. Tkacka 27/28, tel. (+48) 58 301 14 41, www.kabaretewan.pl. If they're in Gdańsk, male and celebrating you'll find them in Ewan. Whether its big shots spraying champagne, or a touring rugby club on a break from home, this is the lads favourite, a red-lit cellar space filled with half-dressed nymphs. The other half comes off in exchange for a hundred zlot note, the donation of which sees guests lured into a VIP room for one of the raciest dances of their lives. There's a real air of Moulin Rouge decadence here, and it's not beyond reason to call this one of the finer strip clubs in Poland. ▶ Open 14:00 - 04:00, Sun 20:00 - 04:00.

New Orleans Gentlemen's Club F-2, ul. Kaprów 19d (entrance from ul. Obrońców Westerplatte), tel. (+48) 664 96 05 60, www.neworleans.pl. Having established themselves in the capital by combining a decent menu with beautiful women, New Orleans try to replicate their success in the rather quiet surroundings of the Gdańsk district of Oliwa. Expect a cab ride from the centre of Gdansk, the usual hip-grinding action when you get there and pay attention to what you are ordering. ▶ Open 20:00 - 04:00.

KABARET EWAN

Kabaret Ewan, Gdańsk ul. Tkacka 27/28, tel: 602 32 94 42
kabaretewan@poczta.onet.pl www.kabaretewan.pl

Essential Gdańsk

If you're pressed for time then do your best to squeeze in Gdańsk's tourist highlights.

It was in this city that the first fissures in the Iron Curtain appeared, forced open by Poles during the landmark August strikes of 1980. Following this first peaceful victory over the communist rulers, calls for greater freedoms were only nine years away from bringing down the Berlin Wall. The centre of these protests were **Gate #2 of the Gdańsk shipyard** and this can be found just outside of old town on ul. Doki (B-1). While there do not dare miss the **Roads to Freedom** exhibition (B-1, ul. Wąly Piastowskie 24) close to the shipyards - a moving tribute to the Solidarity movement. And Gdańsk was not only the city where the fall of communism can be traced but is also the first shots of WWII were fired. WWII buffs should not miss the ferry ride (in season) up to the **Westerplatte** peninsula and to the **Nowy Port lighthouse** where the scars from the first shots of the war can still be seen.

The old town is where you'll find a number of photo opportunities and the sensible start point is **The Upland Gate** (B-4, Brama Wyżynna), which marks the start of what was once known as the **Royal Road**. Following this route you'll pass by **Amber Museum** and the **Torture Tower** (B-4, Katowia), through the **Golden Gate** (B-4, Złota Brama) and onto **Long Street** (ul. Długa). On the left about half way down is the **Main Town Hall** (C-4 Ratusz) which serves as the home of the Gdańsk History Museum and a few metres further on is **Neptune's fountain** (C-5) (currently without Neptune) and **Artus Court** (C-5, Dwór Artusa). The Royal Way ends at the impressive **Green Gate** (C-5, Zielona Brama) now the home of Lech Walesa's office.

St. Mary's Street (C-4, ulica Mariacka) ranks as the city's most picturesque street and is dominated by the biggest brick church in the world **St. Mary's** (C-4, Bazylika Mariacka). Climb to the top for panoramic views of the city. Nearby the 15th century **Crane** (D-4 Żuraw) stands on the river's edge, a hulking reminder of Gdańsk's merchant past. Across the river the eery remains of **Granary Island** (D-4/5, Wyspa Spichrzów) serve as a somber reminder of the havoc wreaked here by **WWII**, while the **Maritime Museum** (including the ship **Soldek**) provides an interesting look at the history of Polish seafaring.

The old town's compact nature means that it is easy enough to hit major landmarks such as **St. John's Church** (C/D-3 Św. Jana), the **Great Mill** (B-3, Wielki Młyn) and **Great Armoury** (B-4, Wielka Zbrojownia) within a short walk.



The Royal Way

Upland Gate (Brama Wyżynna) B-4, ul. Wąly Jagiellońskie. This 16th century gate, the main entrance into the Old Town, was the original starting point for the Royal Way. It was here that the Polish king was welcomed and given the keys to the city. The gate was originally surrounded by a 50m moat and was named for its 'upland' location above the water level. The metal pulleys used for raising and lowering the drawbridges are still visible beneath the coats of arms of Poland, Prussia and Gdańsk.

Prison Tower and Torture Chamber (Wieża Więzienna i Katownia) B-4, Targ Węglowy 26. Originally built as part of the city's fortifications in the second half of the 14th century, the complex was rebuilt by Antoni van Obberghen between 1593 and 1604 with the smaller of the two buildings becoming a torture chamber and courthouse while the larger tower became the prison. It was here that executions were carried out until the middle of the 19th century. Damaged during WWII, it has been extensively renovated and now houses the Amber and Torture Museums.

Golden Gate (Złota Brama) B-4, ul. Długa. The virtues of Peace, Freedom, Wealth, Fame, Piety, Justice and Concord are depicted in allegorical statues adorning the balustrade of this gate overlooking ul. Długa. Built between 1642-44, it was destroyed during WWII and not restored until 1997. An inscription on the gate reads, 'Small states grow by concord, great ones fall by disagreement.'

Long Market & Neptune Fountain (Długi Targ i Fontanna Neptuna) C-5. The focal point of Długi Targ, the Long Market, is the Neptune Fountain, a bronze statue of the sea god erected in 1549 and converted to a fountain in 1633 (though as you've probably noticed the statue of Neptune has been removed for renovations and will return in April 2012). During WWII, this symbol of Gdańsk was dismantled and hidden with many of the city's other treasures. It was only returned to its rightful place in 1954. The square itself is surrounded by colourful and ornate houses which look magnificent when the sun is beating off their decorated walls. Długi Targ used to be home to Gdańsk's richest, most elite residents and was used for assemblies. Executions took place on the square in front of Artus Court.

Main Town Hall (Ratusz Głównego Miasta) C-4, ul. Długa 46/47, tel. (+48) 58 767 91 00, www.mhmg.gda.pl. The Town Hall spire, with a golden replica of King Zygmunt August on its pinnacle, dominates ul. Długa's skyline. Built in the late 14th century as the seat of city authorities, the Town Hall hosted many Polish kings. It was almost completely destroyed during WWII but rebuilt with extraordinary care. The tower contains a 37-bell clarion which was inaugurated on New Year's Eve 2000. The interior of the building, home to Gdańsk History Museum today, is lushly decorated with painted ceilings, colourful frescoes and elaborate furniture and carvings. Two solemn lions guard its 18th century portal, from where an elaborate staircase leads to the luxuriant Sala Czerwona, the Red Room. This room was used by the council in summer. Its ornamented ceiling is decorated with 25 paintings surrounding a central piece entitled *The Glorification of the*



Unity of Gdańsk.



Artus Court (Dwór Artusa) C-5, Długi Targ 43/44, tel. (+48) 58 767 91 80, www.mhmg.gda.pl. This impressive mansion, a symbol of the city's power in the 16th and 17th centuries, served as an exchange and as the seat of St. George and the brotherhoods of rich patricians. Founded as a meeting place for merchants and dignitaries, it was named after King Arthur, of round table fame, and hosted many a

noble guest. Following a fire in 1841, it was given a more Gothic form, complete with ostentatious sculptures and paintings illustrating man's merits and vices. Inside, the centrepiece of the main hall is a 10.64-metre renaissance tiled stove dating to 1546, made of more than 500 individual tiles and the tallest of its kind in Europe. Its adornments portray leaders, coats of arms and allegorical figures. Just to the left is a small pewter surface that claims to be the oldest table in Poland. Two stone lions protect the entrance to the cellars of the court. Try to pick up one of the different language cards that are lying around.

Long Street (Ulica Długa) B/C-4. Picturesque ul. Długa is one of the city's oldest thoroughfares. From the Golden Gate which protects it, the gently-curving street opens into an array of colourful burgher houses, roccoco portals, gothic mouldings and original porticoes. The house numbers run in opposite directions on either side, a feature typical of old Gdańsk streets. No 12 houses a Museum of Burgher Interiors. No 71 is one of the few structures on the street to survive World War II and still bears original mouldings from the second half of the 15th century. No 28 is Dom Ferberów (Ferber's House), dating to 1560, with magnificent sculptures and the three familiar coats of arms. No 29 has an interesting crew of Roman emperors peering from its baroque façade. King Władysław IV entertained local dignitaries at Lwi Zamek (The Lion's Castle) at No 35; two lions guard its portal. The house neighbouring it dates to 1563 and is a splendid example of the influence of the Dutch renaissance on Gdańsk architecture. The renaissance house at No 45 belonged to the Schumann family and is sometimes called the House of the Polish Kings (Dom Królów Polskich); figures of Greek gods stud its alcoves. The eastern end of the street is dominated by the tall, slim tower of the Town Hall.



Green Gate (Zielona Brama) C-5, Długi Targ 24, tel. (+48) 58 307 59 12 ext. 102, www.muzeum.narodowe.gda.pl. This magnificent four-arched gatehouse on the waterfront was built as a palace for Polish monarchs. No Polish king ever stayed in the building, but Lech Wałęsa has his office here: you'll see his nameplates on the walls of the gate. The gate leads to the Green Bridge, which spans the Mottawa River and which used to be raised to stop the riff-raff from getting into the Old Town. Following a good scrub and a careful renovation the gate now bears an uncanny resemblance to Amsterdam's central train station, and is frequently home to passing exhibitions.

Cemeteries

Cemetery of the Lost Cemeteries (Cmentarz Nieistniejących Cmentarzy) A-1, ul. 3 Maja. Designed by Jacek Krenz and Hanna Klementowska and featuring sculptures by Zygfryd Korpalski and Witold Gluchowski, this small memorial between the Church of Corpus Christi and the bus station was officially opened on May 24, 2002. Dedicated to the citizens of Gdańsk who were once buried in one of the city's 27 graveyards either destroyed during WWII or bulldozed on purpose after the end of the war, the new Cemetery of Lost Cemeteries was designed to resemble a temple. The main memorial is surrounded by broken gravestones representing all faiths, and includes a poem by the Jewish poetess Masha Kaleko (1912-1975), whose poetry was burnt on the direct orders of Hitler in May 1933.

Churches

Corpus Christi Church (Kościół Bożego Ciała) A-1, ul. 3 Maja 19a, tel. (+48) 58 302 52 38. Once part of a settlement called Grodzisko, a complex of fortifications outside of Gdańsk's main city walls, the Bożego Ciała (Corpus Christi) Church is one of the oldest remaining houses of worship in the city. Dating from the early part of the 14th century, the church was originally part of a larger complex that grew around it including a small chapel, old people's home, a leprosy hospital and a cemetery that was closed by the communists in 1956. The church is not a great looker, but is interesting on two levels. It was here that the city's poignant Cemetery of the Lost Cemeteries was built in 2002, and, along with St. Nicholas' Church, it was the only other church to escape any damage at all during WWII. ▶ Open for visitors 12:00-14:00 on Sun. All other times by prior arrangement.

Royal Chapel (Kaplica Królewska) C-4, ul. Św. Duchy 58, tel. (+48) 58 301 39 82. Often overlooked because of its gargantuan neighbour, St. Mary's Church, this little baroque beauty was built in accordance with the will of the Primate of Poland in 1681 for the city's Catholic minority. ▶ Open during Sunday mass only.

St. Bridget's Church (Kościół Św. Brygidy) C-2/3, ul. Profesorska 17, tel. (+48) 58 301 31 52, www.brygida.gdansk.pl. Best known as a sanctuary for the leaders of Solidarność under martial law, St. Bridget's Church was almost completely destroyed during WWII. It was reconstructed in 1973, based on an original plan dating from 1394-1420. The church was founded as a place of worship for members of St. Bridget's Order. Legend has it that the saint was laid out in the church for a few days after her death. Today it is an impressive and at the same time simple place of worship. Decorating the walls are numerous memorials to various conflicts including the Soviet massacre of Polish officers at Katyn as well as crosses used during the Solidarność strikes. Particularly poignant is the small shrine to Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, the chaplain of Solidarność who was murdered by secret police in 1984. There is also a small display of religious artifacts including an impressive amber sculpture called the 'Tree of Life'. Formerly the parish of controversial priest Father Henryk Jankowski (whose tomb can be found inside), the church was granted the title of Lesser Basilica by the Pope in 1991. Worth dropping by, not least to check on the progress of the new altar - work to add a two and half ton altar carved exclusively from amber had stalled at press time due to a lack of aforementioned material, though an amber Mary and an eagle and crown have come to fruition. ▶ Open 07:30 - 18:30.

Tour guides

Agnieszka Syroka tel. (+48) 502 55 45 84, www.tourguidegdansk.com. Tailor-made tours offered by an attractive, English-speaking, knowledgeable, certified tour guide. Contact Agnes in advance by phone and she will prepare a tour especially for you based on your interests and the time you have available. Prices are negotiable and depend on the length of the tour. In addition to tours in the city, tours can also be arranged with or without transport to some of the nearby sights such as Malbork or Frombork. ▶ Open 09:00 - 22:00. Prices are negotiable.

Audio Guides www.audioguide.com.pl. Easy-to-use audio guides with a total of 36 recordings to choose from, including 18 sights and two separate recordings focused on the history of the city. Available in three languages, some recordings have been made from the point of view of local greats such as, for example, Neptune, Hevelius, Ufagen and Fahrenheit. This is sightseeing with a unique twist, with complimentary map to help guide you on your independent tour. Pick an audio guide from Tourist Info on (C-5) Długi Targ 28/29 and (A-2) ul. Podwale Grodzkie 8.

Easy Gdańsk Tours tel. (+48) 790 78 00 32, www.easygdansk.com. Specially tailored tours both on foot and in a car of Gdansk and the neighbouring cities as well as Malbork and other popular places located around the Tri-city.

Ewa Heliosz tel. (+48) 691 77 55 47, www.stadt-fuehrungdanzig.com. Experienced local guide offering tours around the Tri-city or further afield to places such as Malbork and Kashubia in German or Polish.

JOYTRIP ul. Fieldorfa 11/3 (Orunia Górna), tel. (+48) 58 320 61 69, www.joytrip.eu. Tailor-made and pre-planned tours which include the 'Collapse of Communism' tour. ▶ Open 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Sat, Sun. **TC**

Stena Line Guided Tours tel. (+48) 502 74 35 14. Tours offered in Swedish by qualified guides. ▶ From 150zł.

Taking a taxi tour If there are a few of you and you are looking to head out of town to do some sightseeing, hiring a taxi for a few hours can be a cost-effective option. With the price of a taxi around €0.60 per kilometre in the city, a pre-booked 6-seater taxi can not only save you money but also save you the stress of having to deal with Polish public transport. Here are a few sample prices given to us by City Plus 19686 who are happy to organize one of their fleet of 6-seaters (100 cars) take you and your group to these places. The prices are all examples and prices should be agreed with the driver before setting off. Prices are based on a journey from Gdansk city centre. Malbork 200zł minimum (subject to waiting time) Frombork 400zł minimum (subject to waiting time) Oliwa 35zł one-way Stutthof 200zł minimum (subject to waiting time) Westerplatte 35zł one-way

Tricity Tours tel. (+48) 501 70 55 05, www.tricity-tours.pl. Tours in four languages: German, English and Russian, with pick-up available from hotels, airport, train station and port. Options include walking tours of old town, Oliwa, Sopot, Gdynia, Malbork Castle, Kashubia and Stutthof. Transport and entry fees included.

St. Catherine's Church (Kościół Św. Katarzyny) C-3, ul. Profesorska 3, tel. (+48) 58 301 15 95. This 14th century brick church, the former parish church of the Old Town, was one of Gdańsk's finest places of worship, that was until May 22, 2006 when a fire ripped through the church. Fire crews were on the scene within five minutes to tackle the blaze, apparently started on the roof by a workman's discarded cigarette, but couldn't prevent the ceiling from collapsing. No people were inside the church at the time of the fire, and most objects of historical value were saved in the nick of time. Work to restore the church has been swift and effective, with the highlight being a 76 metre baroque tower housing a 49-bell carillon, which has chimed on the hour - every hour - since the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of WWII in 1939. The church is best known as the resting place of Gdańsk astronomer Johannes Hevelius. A separate exhibit about the church's history, including some fascinating photos of the 2006 fire, is on display under the church tower, and open everyday from 7:00 to 18:00 (admission free).

St. John's Church (Kościół św. Jana) D-3, ul. Świętojańska 50, tel. (+48) 58 301 10 51, www.sw-jan.vn.pl. Near the Motława River between ul. Świętojańska and ul. Straganiarska you'll find this huge brick vault dating from the 1300s. Having had the misfortune to have been built on swampland, what remains of the edifice is slowly sinking on one side. Though it was burnt and completely abandoned after WWII, it's now the subject of a huge refit that might well see it return as one of the great landmarks of Gdańsk. Many of the interior fittings have been moved to St. Mary's but its famous 12 metre high renaissance altar remains. The remarkable phantom of a church is at last being saved and interior renovations won't affect visitors, so enjoy. ▶ Open 10:00-18:00. No visiting during mass please.

St. Mary's Church (Bazylika Mariacka) C-4, ul. Podkramarska 5, tel. (+48) 58 301 39 82, www.bazylikamariacka.pl. St. Mary's in the Old Town is believed to be the largest brick church in the world. The interior vault supports 37 windows, over 300 tombstones and 31 chapels. It can hold up to 25,000 people, which was useful during the period of martial law between 1981 and 1983 when members of the Solidarity movement sought refuge here. The church can be accessed through seven gates with intriguing names like the Purse Maker's Door. Interestingly, the sculptor who carved the crucifix of Christ nailed his errant son-in-law to a cross so as to add realism to his work. St. Mary's was seriously damaged during WWII and the original frescoes have since

Tourist information

Gdańsk Tourist Information A-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 8 (Gdańsk Główny Station, in the tunnel), tel. (+48) 58 721 32 77, www.gdansk4u.pl. ▶ Open 09:00 - 19:00.

Gdańsk Tourist Information Centre (Centrum Informacji Turystycznej) C-5, ul. Długi Targ 28/29, tel. (+48) 58 301 43 55, www.gdansk4u.pl. A brand new air-conditioned TI point on the main square set in one of only two examples of Rococo in the city. Find multi-lingual info and audio guides in 3 languages including English. Gdańsk Tourist cards also on sale. ▶ Open 09:00 - 17:00, Sun 09:00 - 16:00.

PTTK Gdańsk Tourist Information C-5, ul. Długa 45, tel. (+48) 58 301 91 51, www.pttk-gdansk.pl. ▶ Open 09:00 - 18:00. **TC**

been whitewashed, which far from leaving an impression of stark emptiness bring out the best in the relics throughout and creating a marvellous feeling. Of note is the enormous astronomical clock dating from 1464. Its complex dials show the time and date, phases of the moon, the position of the moon and sun in relation to the zodiac signs, and the calendar of saints. Adam and Eve ring the bell on the hour. According to legend, the clock's creator had his eyes gouged out so he'd never make a clock to better than this one. You'll hear this story about every astronomical clock in Europe, and it makes you wonder why medieval clock-makers ever accepted commissions. The 78 metre tower houses a viewing platform with cracking views of old Gdansk. The tower has been the subject of a recent 3.3 million euro renovation and you can view all its updated glory when it reopens for the season on April 1. ▶ Open 09:00 - 17:30, Sun 13:00 - 17:30. Admission to tower 5zł, though the price may increase when the tower reopens.

St. Nicholas' Church (Kościół Św. Mikołaja) C-3, ul. Świętojańska 72, tel. (+48) 58 301 35 77, www.gdansk.dominikanie.pl. The first Catholic church in the city and the only one to escape WWII without a scratch. Founded by the Dominican Order in 1348-90, be sure to check out the multi-level high altar and Baroque-panelled choir stalls. ▶ Open 09:00 - 11:30, 13:00 - 17:30, Fri 13:00 - 15:00, 16:00 - 17:30.

Monuments

Jan III Sobieski Monument (Pomnik Jana III Sobieskiego) B-3, Targ Drzewny. A large bronze statue built in 1897 in memory of the Polish king who reigned in the 17th century and famously defeated the Turks at the gates of Vienna; thereby saving Europe from the Ottoman hordes. Originally displayed in Lwow (now Ukrainian Lviv), the statue was moved to Warsaw in 1950 before finally being moved to Gdansk in 1965. During martial law the statue became the rallying point for demonstrations and marches.

Johannes Hevelius Monument (Pomnik Jana Heweliusza) B-3, ul. Korzenna. Johannes Hevelius or Jan Heweliusz (1611-1687) depending on whether you're talking to a German or a Pole was a 17th century astronomer, brewer and former mayor of Gdańsk. This statue was designed by Jan Szczypka and unveiled on January 28th 2006, the 395th anniversary of his birth. Hevelius is widely regarded as the last great astronomer to work without lenses and instead made many of his discoveries using a quadrant and alidade. Among discoveries credited to him are four comets and the Scutum Sobiescianum (Sobieski's shield) constellation, named in honour of the Polish king Jan III Sobieski's victory against the Ottoman empire at Vienna. Hevelius died on his 76th birthday and is buried in the nearby St Catherine's Church.

Józef Piłsudski Monument (Pomnik Józefa Piłsudskiego) E-4, Pl. Piłsudskiego. Standing outside the city centre on the main road between Gdańsk and Sopot is this imposing statue of the inter-war leader of Poland, Marshall Józef Piłsudski. Despite effectively being a dictator, Piłsudski remains a hero in this country and represents for many Poles a true national hero. Designed by Tomasz Radziejewicz, the statue was unveiled on November 11, 2006, Polish Independence Day.

Monument to the Evacuated Children (Pomnik Kindertransportu) B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie. Between 1938 and 1939 some 10,000 Jewish children were evacuated from Gdańsk to Britain in what became known as 'kindertransport'. Sculptor Frank Meisler was one of them, and on May 6, 2009 his memorial to this exodus was unveiled outside Gdańsk Główny train station.



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Danzig/Gdańsk



Anybody vaguely acquainted with history, or indeed heavy metal, will be familiar with the name of Danzig. What you may not know is that Danzig and Gdańsk are one and the same. The Polish name, Gdańsk is actually the real McCoy, meaning 'town located on the Gdania river'. The name Danzig came into usage during the 1300s

after the city fell under the influence of the Germanic Teutonic Knights. Danzig came firmly under German control in 1871 as part of the Prussian Empire and would remain so until the end of WWI.

After the war the majority of the towns inhabitants remained German, though the city fell under the jurisdiction of the League of Nations who baptized it 'The Free City of Danzig'. This quasi state functioned until Hitler decided to seize it in the name of the fatherland, thus triggering WWII. The aftermath of the war saw much of the German population exiled westwards, and the city repopulated with Poles, themselves shifted west following the expansion of the Soviet Union. The city was renamed Gdańsk, and a program of heavy propaganda in the 1950s and 60s all but eradicated what remained of the towns German heritage. Today Gdańsk is a popular holiday spot with Germans keen to trace their roots, and you can still spot signs with German lettering in areas like Biskupia Góra.

Free City Museum

Historical Zone Free City of Danzig (Strefa Historyczna Wolne Miasto Gdańsk) B-4, ul. Piwna 19/21, tel. (+48) 602 27 80 51, www.strefahistorycznawmg.pl.



Situated in a small room off ul. Piwna what looks like little more than a three minute diversion transpires to be one of the most fascinating surprises in the city. From 1920 till 1939 the city you stand in found life as a semi-independent state, better known as the Free City of Danzig. This exhibition aims to celebrate those times, and more specifically the positives that came about. And there were many; while the rise of fascism will always cast a pall over the city, it must also be remembered this was far from the nationalist hotbed that is always assumed. The campaign for long term Germanization had been reasonably effective, yet still over 80% of the population regarded themselves as Danzigers first and foremost – not Germans, and not Poles, but the citizens of a unique melting pot in which two nations co-existed. This heyday is remembered by way of dozens of everyday treasures rescued from the inter bellum: on show are reams of collectibles, from banknotes to beer bottles, from tourist guides to cig packets. Of course it would be impossible to end the story without mention of the war, and it's in the back room you'll find yellowing copies of newspapers announcing the first salvos, as well as a small collection of military helmets. As far as diversions go this is one for the enthusiasts, and soon to be markedly increased in size thanks to the attic-style donations from the local public and an expansion next door.

► Open 13:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon. Admission 5/3zł. **TC**

Four Quarters Fountain

Four Quarters Fountain (Fontanna Czterech Kwartalów) C-4, ul. Grobla I. Long ago you would have found old Gdańsk carved into four quarters, Szeroki, Wysoki, Rybacki and Kogi (Wide, High, Fish and Ship quarter) and today the geographic point where these historic areas met has been handily highlighted by a dazzling installation that makes use of lions, light and water. Better known as the



Jerzy Pinkas
www.gdansk.pl

Four Quarters Fountain (Fontanna Czterech Kwartalów), this smashing piece of street art was officially unveiled on September 7th, 2009 – more or less seven years after the initial idea was conceived. Delayed by the discovery of Gothic age foundations lying below street level, the 2.2 million zloty project was the brainchild of local graduates and sculptors Ewa Koprowska and Lucyna Kujawa, with their work funded by Saur Neptun Gdańsk, a Gdańsk based water and sanitation company. Featuring four life size lions (ancient symbols and protectors of Gdańsk) guarding each corner, and glass coloured blocks embedded into granite panels, what looks questionably naff during the day transforms at night during the warmer months when the blocks light up and twenty four jets of water shoot high into the sky.

Monument to those who kept Gdańsk Polish (Tym co za Polskość Gdańska) D-3, ul. Podwale Staromiejskie. Unveiled in 1969 and designed by Wawrzyniec Samp and Wiesław Pietron, this huge stone monument depicts an axe stuck in the ground and commemorates all those who gave their lives throughout the centuries (from the 1308 Gdańsk massacre to WWII) trying to maintain the Polish identity of Gdańsk.

Museums

Amber Museum (Muzeum Bursztynu) B-4, Targ Węglowy 26, tel. (+48) 58 301 47 33, www.mhmg.gda.pl. Housed in Gdańsk's medieval Fore-gate building (once home to the Prison Tower and Torture Chamber), this multi-story exhibit delves extensively into the history of Baltic amber. The impressive collection of "inclusions" (when bugs or plants are caught inside the amber) is intriguing to look at, and the many amber creations, from inkwells to spoons to a stunning Fender Stratocaster guitar, shows the material's diversity. A large open room at the top of the building houses an impressive array of modern amber jewelry that appears more artistic than wearable. Many find the separate exhibits on the building's past as a torture chamber uncomfortable – and considering the piped-in soundtrack of pained cries, we understand why – but they are a must-see, if for no other reason to find out what "thumb screwing" and a "heretic's fork" are. Many of the exhibit rooms throughout the ancient building are small and cramped, and if you happen to visit on the same day as a school group it's a nightmare. ► Open 10:00 - 16:00, Tue 10:00 - 15:00, Sun 11:00 - 16:00. Closed Mon. Admission 10/5zł, family ticket 20zł. Tue free. **TC**

Archaeological Museum (Muzeum Archeologiczne) D-4, ul. Mariacka 25/26, tel. (+48) 58 322 21 00, www.archeologia.pl. It might seem strange to find a large archaeological exhibit on the Sudan in the heart of Gdańsk, faux tribal huts and all, but go with it. The next floors cover the history of the area, complete with exhumed skeletons, an ancient canoe and plenty of interesting jewelry that has been liberated from the ground. More interesting than the Ice Age weaponry and Stone Age drawings are the models of the city in the past and the detritus collected after Gdańsk was shattered in World War II. An academic way to spend an hour of your afternoon. ► Open 08:00-16:00, Wed 09:00-17:00, Sat, Sun 10:00-16:00. Closed Mon. The tower is open to the public between 08:00-16:00. Admission 8/6zł. Tower 5zł. Family ticket (2 adults, 2 children) 15zł. Sat free for permanent exhibition. Guided tour 60zł. **TC**

Archaeology Education Centre - "Błękitny Lew" (Centrum Edukacji Archeologicznej "Błękitny lew") D-5, ul. Chmielna 53, tel. (+48) 58 320 31 88, www.archeologia.pl. Short of building a time machine this is the closet you'll ever get to seeing what local life was like hundreds of years back. Complete with background noises of peeling bells and animals braying, this museum presents a series of life-size dioramas designed to show what Gdańsk once must have been like. Among the recreations are a cobblers store, a bath house and an inn, and even the smells have been recreated and piped into the rooms. The mannequins aren't exactly Madame Tussaud's, but this is still loads of fun, and far removed from the standard museum experience in Poland. ► Open 09:00-17:00. Closed Mon. Admission 10/8zł. Family ticket (2 adults, 2 children) 26zł. Guided tour 80zł. **TC**

Artus Court (Dwór Artusa) C-5, Długi Targ 43/44, tel. (+48) 58 767 91 80, www.mhmg.gda.pl. This impressive mansion, a symbol of the city's power in the 16th and 17th centuries, served as an exchange and as the seat of St. George and the brotherhoods of rich patricians. Founded as a meeting place for merchants and dignitaries, it was named after King Arthur, of round table fame, and hosted many a noble guest. Following a fire in 1841, it was given a more Gothic form, complete with ostentatious sculptures and paintings illustrating man's merits and vices. Inside, the centrepiece of the main hall is a 10.64-metre renaissance tiled stove dating to 1546, made of more than 500 individual tiles and the tallest of its kind in Europe. Its adornments portray leaders, coats of arms and allegorical figures. Just to the left is a small pewter surface that claims to be the oldest table in Poland. Two stone lions protect the entrance to the cellars of the court. Try to pick up one of the different language cards that are lying around. ► Open 10:00 - 16:00, Tue 10:00 - 15:00, Sun 11:00 - 16:00. Closed Mon. Admission 10/5zł, family ticket 20zł. Tue free. **TC**

Gdansk History Museum (Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Gdańska) C-4, ul. Długa 46/47, tel. (+48) 58 767 91 00, www.mhmg.gda.pl. The History of Gdansk museum calls the impressive Main Town Hall home, a Gothic-Renaissance structure originally built in the 14th century and painstakingly repaired following World War II. Inside visitors immediately see the ornate Great Council Hall and Red Hall, the latter of which features an impressively-sized fireplace and lavish ceilings paintings, including The Glorification of the Unity of Gdansk. Subsequent rooms feature vintage 16th and 17th furniture and a sampling of the museum's 600 silver pieces, which highlight Gdansk's silversmithing era. A new exhibit, "Johannes Hevelius and the Gdansk of his time," delves deeply into Gdansk's most famous resident; records and paintings show the astronomer's life in Gdansk as a brewer, councilman and charter of the lunar surface. The top floor of the museum features a delightful exhibit showcasing what life was like in everyday Gdansk right before the war – visitors get a glimpse into the homes and businesses of residents and see a period in time that was about to come to an abrupt end. The stairwell back to the main floor shows what happened to that lifestyle via stunning photographs of the complete leveling of the city at the hands of the Red Army. A great introduction to this intriguing city. ► Open 10:00 - 16:00, Tue 10:00 - 15:00, Sun 11:00-16:00. Closed Mon. Admission 10/5zł, family ticket 20zł. Tue free. **TC**

Green Gate (Zielona Brama) C-5, Długi Targ 24, tel. (+48) 58 307 59 12 ext. 102, www.muzeum.narodowe.gda.pl. For more see The Royal Way. ► Open 09:00-16:00, Sat, Sun 10:00-17:00. Closed Mon. Last entrance 45 minutes before closing. **TC**

Günter Grass Gallery in Gdańsk C-4, ul. Szeroka 34/35-37, tel. (+48) 58 304 98 54, www.ggm.gda.pl. The Gunter Grass Gallery looks like a great place. Unfortunately, not a word of what appears to be an excellent exhibit is in English, so we couldn't tell for sure. Those with a firm grasp of Polish and German will have an easier time playing with the iPads loaded with Grass info, reading the framed manuscript pages and listening to Grass speeches being played on various different telephone receivers. Probably a worthy stop for Grass diehards who speak his native tongue. ► Open 11:00 - 19:00, Tue, Wed 11:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon. Admission free.



Tourist Information

The most up to date information about attractions in Gdańsk

Tourist Card
Gdansk-Sopot-Gdynia-Plus

Maps, tourist publication,
multimedia

Lotnisko im. Lecha Wałęsy (Rębiechowo)
ul. Słowackiego 200, Gdańsk
tel. + 48 58 348 13 68

Dworzec PKP (w tunelu)
ul. Podwale Grodzkie, Gdańsk
tel. + 48 58 721 32 77

Gdańskie Centrum
Informacji Turystycznej
ul. Długi Targ 28/29 Gdańsk
tel. + 48 58 301 43 55

www.gdansk4u.pl

Scottish Gdańsk

If you've been reading our reviews and using our maps you may have noticed that the Tri-City is the home of two suburbs named Nowe and Stare Szkoty (New and Old Scots). There's sound reasoning for this seemingly bizarre fixation with the home of tartan, as a scan through the history books reveals.

Since the late 14th century the Baltic region enjoyed strong trade links with Scotland, and recent evidence has confirmed that many of the timbers used in the building of Queen Mary's House in St Andrews were shipped from the Gdańsk region some 600 years ago. Religious tolerance, an escape from poverty and famine, and the promise of adventure and riches prompted many Scots to seek a future in Gdańsk.

Many arrived as traders, and the contribution of these men to both Polish and Scottish culture cannot be underestimated. Robert Gordon made a fortune through the Aberdeen-Danzig trade route, and donated some GBP 10,000 to the foundation of a hospital in his hometown. Four hundred years on the building still stands, now better known as the Robert Gordon University. William Forbes, also known under the colourful sobriquet of Danzig Willie, built the spectacular Craigievar Castle on the back of his trading profits. Sir Robert Skene's generous investments helped elevate Aberdeen to becoming the largest granite quarry on earth.

By the 17th century Gdańsk was home to an estimated 30,000 Scots. A legion of peddlers emigrated from Scotland, travelling around Poland selling everything from shotguns to furs. To this day, the local Kashubian word for a business traveller is 'szot'. Others joined military factions, and Gdańsk was the first town in Poland to have a regiment of Scottish mercenaries. Though this particular band of men were hired to fight against the Polish army in a dispute over duties to the King, many Scottish soldiers went on to distinguish themselves in the name of the Polish crown, namely in campaigns against the Turks, Swedes and Russians; the brave Colonel Kietling is an important character in author Henryk Sienkiewicz's famous *The Trilogy*. The 16th century King Stefan Batory exclusively used Scottish merchants to provide for the army and Royal Court, while in the 17th century Alexander Chalmers became one of Warsaw's best loved mayors.

Life was not always easy for the immigrants. A reputation for drunkenness led to numerous difficulties with the conservative local populace, and there were several vicious trade wars involving England, Scotland and Poland. Though the Scottish immigrants eventually became integrated into the Polish community, their legacy has been long lasting. In his History of Prussia Dr Schmidt noted that 'the peculiar compound of stubbornness and shrewdness which characterises the people of East Prussia has its root in the natural disposition of the Scot'. It would appear that the Scots not only transformed the economic fortunes of Gdańsk, but the very character of the people.

National Museum Old Art Department (Muzeum Narodowe Oddział Sztuki Dawnej) B-6, ul. Toruńska 1, tel. (+48) 58 301 70 61 ext. 233, www.muzeum.narodowe.gda.pl. Located in a former Franciscan monastery, the National Museum is a work of art itself with vaulted ceilings and a large staircase that houses an impressive collection of equally beautiful objects. The main draw is Hans Memling's highly detailed triptych *The Final Judgment*, which was returned to Gdańsk from the Russians in 1956 after a circuitous journey through the hands of Napoleonic troops and Nazis as well. Paintings show pre-destruction Gdańsk and its wealthy residents, and thankfully now have English translations (though we did chuckle at a painting of children sledding described as "sledding"). The room of China dishes is still entirely in Polish, but worth a wander along with the collections of ceramics, furniture and fabrics that dot the museum. ▶ Open 09:00-16:00, Sat, Sun 10:00-17:00. Closed Mon. Last entrance 45 minutes before closing. Admission 10/6zł, family ticket 18zł. Groups over 15 people 6zł per person. Fri free for permanent exhibitions. Audio guides are now available in German and English, though prices were unknown at press time. **TC**

NEW

Old Toys Gallery (Galeria Starych Zabawek) C-5, ul. Ogama 117/118, tel. (+48) 695 99 53 63, www.stare-zabawki.pl. The city's smallest museum is in essence a room in what was once a shop a block away from the main street in the heart of the old town. This, however, is a great example of quality over quantity particularly if you spent your childhood in the People's Republic or are interested in the playthings of children growing up in the years either side of WWII. It is fascinating to see both the quality and craftsmanship of hundreds of re-conditioned toys gathered from donations and house clearances with many having come from the heartland of Polish toy making - the region around Czestochowa in south-west Poland. As with many good collections part of the enjoyment is garnered from the owners' pure love of what they are doing and this is the case here with the friendly curator happy to give you some background info on the toys on view which adds to the handy English explanations available on a series of screens around the room. While we didn't grow up in PRL it has to be said we recognised many of the toys (we in the west just seem to have had them 10 years earlier) and even at an age where toys should no longer interest us we still felt a pang of envy looking at the motor bikes designed for children. So what that there was a lack of food in the shops - that lucky boy was riding around on a junior sized motorbike (we guiltily heard ourselves thinking). This exhibition could take you 5 minutes or an hour to view depending on your interest and we can heartily recommend it for a little look into how young Poles once entertained themselves. ▶ Open 11:00 - 18:00. Closed Mon. Admission 8/6zł. Groups over 5 people 5zł per person.

Polish Post Office (Poczta Polska) D-2, ul. Obrońców Poczty Polskiej 1-2, tel. (+48) 58 301 76 11, www.mhmg.gda.pl. Destroyed during WWII and reconstructed between 1949 and 1951, this still functioning post office also houses a small museum dedicated to the events of September 1, 1939 as well as an exhibition of local postal history from the 18th century to the outbreak of WWII. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00, Tue 10:00 - 15:00. Closed Sat, Sun, Mon. Admission 5/4zł. **TC**

Uphagen's House (Dom Uphagena) B-4, ul. Długa 12, tel. (+48) 58 301 23 71 ext. 10, www.mhmg.gda.pl. This impressive, rococo-style house was built in 1776 for a Gdańsk merchant family. Now part of the Gdańsk History Museum, it houses a rich collection of textiles and garments, displayed in rooms fitted out with mainly original furniture. English-language boards on the walls describe each room in detail. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00, Tue 10:00 - 15:00, Sun 11:00-16:00. Closed Mon. Admission 10/5zł, family ticket 20zł. Tue free. **TC**

Places of interest

Centrum Hewelianum A-3, ul. Grawoda 6, tel. (+48) 58 300 08 42 ext. 50, www.hewelianum.pl. Set inside the guts of the Napoleonic-era Fort Grodzisk the Centrum Hewelianum is a science park/museum built to honour Johannes Hevelius, a famed astronomer born in this city in 1611. Currently the exhibition consists of two parts, the first of which is called *Wehikul Czasu* - *Człowiek i Pocisk* (Time machine - the Human and the Bullet). Set inside the brick tunnels of this 19th century fortress, the exhibition recreates what the fort would have looked like when it was first built, its atmospheric corridors filled with cannons, weaponry and lifelike mannequins in period uniform. Scale models and pictures complete the immersion, and go a long way to illustrating what life must have been like defending such an outpost. The second part of the exhibition is titled *Energia, Niebo i Słońce* (Energy, Sky and Sun). Now this place really is quite something, and does a good job of making sense of science in a fun manner that's accessible to all ages. Featuring plenty of machines, computers and interactive gadgets this is one of those museums that encourages visitors to get hands on, with the laws of physics and astronomy explained in idiot-proof ways. As diversions go this place is priceless, and welcome news to an area that had previously been allowed to gently rot, only the scarcity of English explanations might frustrate. ▶ *Wehikul Czasu* exhibition. Open 09:00-16:00. Closed Mon. Admission free. *Energia, Niebo i Słońce* exhibition. Open 08:30-15:30, Sat, Sun 10:00-16:00. Closed Mon. Admission 7/5zł. **TC**

Great Armoury (Wielka Zbrojownia) B-4, Targ Węglowy 6. The Great Armoury was built in 1600-09 on the medieval line of the city walls. A working arsenal until the 1800s, the armoury remains the finest example of Renaissance architecture in the city. It was designed by Opperghen and is the most impressive of his works in Gdańsk. The well-like structure in front was used as an elevator to transport gunpowder and cannon balls from their storage place in the basement. The armoury was badly damaged in WWII and rebuilt. It is now closed to the public.

Great Mill (Wielki Młyn) B-3, ul. Wielkie Młyny 16. Built by the Teutonic Knights in 1350, this magnificent edifice with its rising tiled roof is the grandest civil construction in Gdańsk. Until 1356 when the Radunia Canal was built, the mill was powered by slaves turning 18 huge wheels. It was the largest industrial plant in Europe during the Middle Ages and functioned until the end of WWII. Unfortunately, this treasure has since been turned into a shopping centre. At least there's a small exhibition of old equipment from the mill. The surrounding grain and flour stores, dating to 1400, are home to a few small shops.

Old Town Hall (Ratusz Starego Miasta) B-3, ul. Korzenna 33/35, tel. (+48) 58 301 10 51, www.nck.org.pl. This marvellous 16th-century Renaissance building was once home to the office of the Polish astronomer and city councillor Johann Hevelius, whose statue can be found in the park in front of the building. The former headquarters of the Council of Gdansk, the Old Town Hall served as the headquarters of the Soviet Army during the dying days of WWII, probably because it was practically the only building left standing in the city at the time. Today the building is open to the public and has become the focus of much creativity. Concerts are held upstairs, and the superb Baltic Sea Cultural Centre (see Culture & Events) now have their offices there. There's also a cellar restaurant, and a good bookshop on the ground floor. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00. Admission free.

Maritime Museum

Gdańsk's Maritime Museum is made up of three individual museums (though the *Soldek* is unavailable until January 17 due to restoration work) that together create a complete history of the port. Straddling both banks of the Motława, tickets can be bought individually, or after January 17 they can be purchased together for a substantial discount. A ticket for all the three museums currently costs 18/10zł and includes a free ride on the ferry which sails the short distance between the Crane and the Museum opposite and now operates all year round (subject to weather). You can save yourself a 10-15 minute walk even if not visiting the museum. Tickets cost 1zł.

Central Maritime Museum (Centrale Muzeum Morskie) D-4, ul. Ołowianka 9-13, tel. (+48) 58 301 86 11, www.cmm.pl. The main part of the museum is located inside three Renaissance granaries and if you've only got time to visit one of the three museums this is by far the most comprehensive of the lot. A complete history of Poland's nautical history is represented on several floors and includes old cannons, huge oil paintings, harpoon guns, a hall dedicated to underwater archaeology, ship-builders' hard hats from the Lenin shipyard, a few pieces of modern art and an extensive collection of model ships. Information is available in English. ▶ Open 10:00 - 15:00. Closed Mon. From January 15 open 10:00 - 16:00. Last entrance 45 minutes before closing. Admission 8/5zł. Guide tours up to 30 people 35zł, over 30 people 55zł. **TC**

Soldek D-4, ul. Ołowianka 9-13, tel. (+48) 58 301 86 11 ext. 327, www.cmm.pl. The first steamship built in Polish Gdansk after 1945 at the Lenin Shipyards, the *Soldek* has been turned into a living museum. Just about every inch of the ship can be accessed from the cramped engine room to the bridge to the pokey little cabins the crews lived in. The ship was taken off the river for restoration work, but will be open for visitors again beginning January 17. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00. Closed Mon. Last entrance 30 minutes before closing. Admission 8/5zł. Guide tours up to 30 people 35zł, over 30 people 55zł. **TC**

The Crane (Żuraw) D-4, ul. Szeroka 67/68, tel. (+48) 58 301 69 38, www.cmm.pl. The Crane is one of the defining symbols of Gdansk and represents what little is left of the city's great trading age. First mentioned in 1367 the original structure burnt down in 1442 before its current design was created in 1442-1444. As a working crane it was used to transfer cargoes and to put up masts on ships. At one time this was the biggest working crane in the world but it also served a defence function and as one of the gates to the city. It had a lifting capacity of 4 tonnes to a height of 11 metres and this was achieved by two huge wooden wheels at its heart each with a diameter of 6 metres. These wheels were originally powered by men walking inside of them to turn the lifting mechanism. It remained a working crane until the middle of the 19th century and was 80% destroyed in 1945 in the battle for Gdansk. After the war it was rebuilt and donated to the Polish Maritime Museum of which it remains a part today. You will be able to view a collection of permanent and temporary exhibitions inside including an exhibition on port life between the 16th and 18th centuries. ▶ Open 10:00 - 15:00, Sat, Sun 10:30 - 15:30. Closed Mon. From January 15 open 10:00 - 16:00, Sat, Sun 10:30 - 16:30. Closed Mon. Last entrance 30 minutes before closing. Admission 8/5zł. Guide tours up to 30 people 35zł, over 30 people 55zł. **TC**



once again. In 1641 he constructed an observatory on the roof of his home where he worked on creating instruments for the study of astronomy that quickly outpaced anything seen in Europe - including a 150-foot telescope built on the shore of the Baltic Sea. Hand-grinding his own lenses and creating his own sextants was part of the everyday task of stargazing at the Hevelius home.

With these homemade tools Hevelius quickly became a master of his science, discovering numerous constellations and comets, extensively documenting the topography of the moon, and observing the phases of mercury and spots on the sun. These discoveries and observations led Hevelius to publish 20 works in Latin detailing his findings, many using his own well-crafted illustrations.

Unsurprisingly, Hevelius's work and stunning observatory caught the attention of his peers, and he was elected to the Royal Society of London in 1664 (the first Pole in the Society's history). He also received a visit from Edmund Halley, discoverer of Halley's Comet, who sought to compare Hevelius's use of a sextant with open sights to the use of a sextant with telescopic sights. The winner? Hevelius proved he could assess star positions without a telescope as easily (and accurately) as Halley could with.

Throughout his work in astronomy Hevelius was also heavily involved in municipal matters in Gdansk. In 1640 he became the church administrator at St. Catherine's Church, and served for a decade as a court juror. And from 1651 until his death, Hevelius was a councillor for the city of Gdansk.

Despite his many roles in the town and running a successful brewery, paying for his research required Hevelius to seek the patronage of Polish kings and queens in order to gain financial support. King Jan Kazimierz and Queen Maria Ludwika were the first royalty to visit the observatory, and King Jan III Sobieski the first to give Hevelius a permanent annual salary for his work - which might explain why Hevelius named a constellation "Scutum Sobiescianum" (Sobieski's shield). Hevelius also drew an annual salary from the French King Louis XIV.

Money wasn't the only hurdle for Hevelius. In 1662 he lost his longtime wife Katherine, who for many years had run the family brewing business so her husband could focus on astronomy. A year later the 52-year-old Hevelius married 16-year-old Elizabeth Koopman, who quickly became a partner and ally in Hevelius' work (many consider Koopman to be the first female astronomer and "the mother of moon charts"). In between giving birth to four children she managed the observatory and, following his death, completed their jointly created catalogue of 1,564 stars called Prodrum astronomiae. She is memorialised in astronomy by lending her name to a minor planet and, excitingly, a crater on Venus.

Tragedy struck the family again when a fire ravaged the observatory in 1679; all of Hevelius's instruments and tools were destroyed in the blaze. Though he quickly repaired the space in time to observe the great comet of 1680 (and named the constellation Sextans in honour of his destroyed instruments) his health was permanently damaged by the shock of the disaster and Hevelius died on his 76th birthday in 1687.

Today Hevelius's legacy can be seen throughout Poland and the world. Fellow astronomers have named a moon crater and an asteroid after the scientist, and his designation of IH Cassiopeiae is still in frequent use today. Both the Polish Navy and Polish Oceanliners have named ships in his honour

When talking about Gdansk's most famous resident, you not only have to decide which name to use - Johannes Hevelius if you're German or Jan Heweliusz in Polish - but how exactly to credit him first. As a popular brewer? A successful astronomer? A prolific inventor? The onetime mayor of Gdansk? The Da Vinci of Poland?

With a resume like that it makes sense that Gdansk is devoting 2011 - the 400th anniversary of Hevelius's birth - to honouring what one local publication called "The man of the millennium." Normally recognised with a week each year, Hevelius is getting upgraded to a full year's worth of activities, events and celebrations to honour all his achievements.

A life in Gdansk

Born in Gdansk in 1611 into a wealthy German-speaking family, Hevelius was one of three brothers and six sisters and the only male child to make it to adulthood. The German-Czech children of Abraham Howelcke and Kordula Hecker had a privileged upbringing, and Hevelius was sent to Gymnasium at the age of seven. There Hevelius was taught by Peter Cruger, who encouraged the boy's early fascination with mathematics and astronomy.

Though Hevelius chose to pursue law at Leiden University in Holland, his interest in astronomy was always at the forefront of his mind. After leaving school Hevelius travelled around Europe seeking out leading astronomers like Pierre Gassendi and Ismael Boulliau before his parents called him home - just short of his final destination, Galileo in Italy.

The summons to Gdansk meant Abraham and Kordula were ready for Hevelius to stop chasing astronomers and instead take over the family brewery. Hevelius did just that, marrying neighbour Katherine Rebeschke in 1635 and embracing the family tradition of brewing beer. Yet despite his devotion to beer (Hevelius helmed the local brewing guild), the pull of astronomy was one he could not ignore.

Astronomical achievements

The combination of an eclipse of the sun in 1639 and the pleas of his former teacher, Peter Cruger, to resume his interest in the stars inspired Hevelius to take up his former hobby

What to see

Despite the passing of over 300 years since his death and the destruction of WWII, it is still possible to find traces of Hevelius in the city, whether they be places where he lived, worked and now rests or monuments to the man. For more information on events related to the Hevelius 2011 celebration, visit www.janheweliusz.pl (though so far the site is only in Polish).

Gdansk History Museum (Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Gdańska) C-4, ul. Długa 46/47, tel. (+48) 58 767 91 00, www.mhmg.gda.pl. The best place to begin your Hevelius tour is the History of Gdansk Museum, which is home to the well-timed exhibit "Johannes Hevelius and the Gdansk of his time" until January 28. The exhibit offers plenty of details about Hevelius's life in Gdansk, ranging from the minute (records of his first marriage) to lofty (one of the few tools Hevelius used to study astronomy that was not lost in the fire at his observatory). All the placards have English translations, and the three-room exhibit features documents, paintings and artefacts sure to impress any Hevelius fan. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00, Tue 10:00 - 15:00, Sun 11:00-16:00. Closed Mon. Admission 10/5zł, family ticket 20zł. Tue free. **TC**

ul. Piwna (Piwna street) B/C-4. You can also wander along streets that were important in the life of Hevelius. Beers fans will enjoy a walk down Gdansk's ulica Piwna, which was once named Jopengasse after the popular Hevelius-made Jopenbier brand. For many years it was possible to buy Heveliusz beer as well (one of In Your Pocket's favourite Polish beers) which was brewed locally, but that unfortunately fell victim to the streamlining of the Polish brewing industry by the big multi-nationals a few years back. Instead keep an eye out for the Johannes brew which has been specially created by the local Amber Brewery to commemorate Hevelius Year.

Johannes Hevelius Monument (Pomnik Jana Heweliusza) B-3, ul. Korzenna. This statue was designed by Jan Szczypka and unveiled on January 28th 2006, the 395th anniversary of his birth in the gardens dedicated to him opposite the Old Town Hall. Hevelius is widely regarded as the last great astronomer to work without lenses and



instead made many of his discoveries using a quadrant and alidade, tools he is depicted with here as he stares up at a wonderful recreation of his work on an adjacent surviving pre-war building.



Hevelius's Home & Brewery (Kamienice Heweliusza) B-2, ul. Korzenna 2/4/6 (corner of ul. Heweliusza). Following Hevelius's marriage in 1635 to his neighbour Katherine Rebeschke, he took over a pair of tenement houses and a brewery which came to him as part of his new-wife's dowry. This property expanded in 1649 when Hevelius inherited his family's adjacent house and brewery following his father's death, the new property covering an area which filled most of the space between (B-2/3) Korzenna, Bednarska and Zawrotna. The property would have consisted of the living quarters at the front, brewery to the rear and ultimately Hevelius' observatory on the roof. The Hevelius family was to live and work here for many decades and the property is thought to have remained in the family until the start of the 19th century. Photographs taken over a hundred years later suggest parts of the structure from Hevelius' time still existed but these, like much of the surrounding city were destroyed in the fall of Danzig in 1945. Despite attempts to re-create the tenements in the 1950s, the ruins were finally pulled down and a new residential block built on the site, a building which today awaits renovation. While many sources quote the address of the Hevelius home and brewery as 53-55 Korzenna today you will find them allocated different numbers on the same street. A unkept plaque denotes the spot where the great man once worked and lived.

St. Catherine's Church (Kościół Św. Katarzyny) C-3, ul. Profesorska 3, tel. (+48) 58 301 15 95. This 14th century brick church, the former parish church of the Old Town and where Hevelius was once church administrator, is also his final resting place. You will find his tomb at the rear behind the altar along with an epitaph funded by his grandson nearly 100 years after the great man's death. Following a fire in 2006, which resulted in the ceiling collapsing, work to restore the church has been taking place. Currently a fairly spartan scene, the highlight is a 76 metre baroque tower housing a 49-bell carillon, which has chimed on the hour - every hour - since the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of WWII in 1939. Getting inside the church can be tricky business; ring the bell at the port of cloister to have the church unlocked, or visit during services (which are held in Polish at 07:00 and 18:00). A display about the fire and the history of the church can be found under the church tower. ▶ Open 07:00 - 19:00.

Old Town Hall (Ratusz Starego Miasta) B-3, ul. Korzenna 33/35, tel. (+48) 58 301 10 51, www.nck.org.pl. This marvellous 16th-century Renaissance building was once home to the office of Hevelius in his role as an Old Town Council Lord. The former headquarters of the Council of Gdansk, the Old Town Hall served as the headquarters of the Soviet Army during the dying days of WWII, probably because it was practically the only building left standing in the city at the time. Today the building is open to the public and has become the focus of much creativity. Concerts are held upstairs, and the superb Baltic Sea Cultural Centre (see Culture & Events) now have their offices there. There's also a cellar restaurant, and a good bookshop on the ground floor. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00. Admission free.

Some 5km northwest of city centre, the sleepy Gdańsk suburb of Oliwa began life as a small Slavic-Pomeranian settlement that grew around a Cistercian monastery established in the latter half of the 12th century. After a long period as a religious centre and a few catastrophes along the way including substantial devastation caused by the Swedes in 1626 and again in 1656, Oliwa settled down to a peaceful and prosperous life, becoming an independent city from 1874 until 1926. Escaping major damage during WWII, today's Oliwa is home to around 20,000 people as well as a number of beasts living in the city's superb zoo, is the proud owner of one of Gdańsk's best parks, boasts a couple of wonderful museums and offers visitors a charmingly bucolic and distinctively different excursion.

Getting There

The easiest way to get to Oliwa from Gdansk is to take tram 11 from the main train station. The Tri-City train (kolejka) runs from Gdańsk Główny station and stops at Gdańsk Oliwa. Oliwa can be reached by car in about 20 minutes from central Gdańsk.

What to See

Ethnographic Museum (Muzeum Etnograficzne) E-1, ul. Cystersów 19 (Oliwa Park), tel. (+48) 58 552 41 39 ext. 101, www.muzeum.narodowe.gda.pl. Located inside the 18th-century Abbatial Granary inside Oliwa Park, this delightful little diversion features three floors showcasing all manner of folk-related artifacts from Eastern Pomerania and is considered to be one of the best collections of its kind in Poland. Exhibits include a wide range of folk art from wood carvings to some really amazing paintings made between the 18th and the early 20th century as well as folk furniture, displays of traditional fishing implements and other oddities. Explanations are in Polish only and there are no guide books for sale, but the museum is such a treat that you hardly notice this at all. Highly recommended. ▶ Open 09:00-16:00, Sat, Sun 10:00-17:00. Closed Mon. Last entrance 45 minutes before closing. Admission 8/4zł, family ticket 15zł, groups over 15 people 4zł per person. Fri free for permanent exhibitions. **TC**

Kuźnia Wodna ul. Bytowska 1a (Oliwa), tel. (+48) 58 552 51 51, www.kuzniawodna.eu. A former water mill whose interiors now reveal the secrets of making metal. Also open for musical evenings and events. ▶ Open 09:00-16:00, Sat, Sun 11:00-16:00. Admission 6/3zł, party ticket 15zł. **TC**

Museum of Modern Art (Oddział Sztuki Nowoczesnej Muzeum Narodowego w Gdańsku) E-1, ul. Cystersów 18 (Oliwa Park), tel. (+48) 58 552 12 71 ext. 124, www.muzeum.narodowe.gda.pl. Inside the superb Pałac Opatów, of which the oldest parts date back to the 15th century but which owes its present look to a splendid Rococo overhaul in the mid-18th century, the Contemporary Art Museum houses works by more than 140 post-WWII Polish artists as well as putting on the occasional temporary show. ▶ Open 09:00-16:00, Sat, Sun 10:00-17:00. Closed Mon. Last entrance 45 minutes before closing. Admission 10/6zł, family ticket 18zł. Groups over 15 people 6zł per person. Fri free for permanent exhibitions. **TC**

Oliwa Cathedral (Katedra Oliwska) E-1, ul. Biskupa Edmunda Nowickiego 5, tel. (+48) 58 552 47 65, www.archikatedraoliwa.pl. Oliwa's towering Cathedral taking pride of place at the western end of Oliwa Park was originally built as a simple wooden structure in the 12th century, and it was only in 1224 that the brickwork was added. The year

1350 saw a half-wit kitchen boy accidentally start a fire that engulfed the whole building. Reconstruction began immediately, but in 1626 the building was again destroyed, this time by marauding Swedish soldiers. Not content with stealing its bells, altars and valuables, the Swedes kidnapped Oliwa's hapless monks for good measure and in a twist of irony, it was in this very building that Poland and Sweden finally put the past behind them and signed a peace treaty in 1660. Built along a classic three-aisle design with a vaulted basilica and shaped in the form of the Latin cross, today's interior is dominated by the extraordinary organ over the main entrance. Built between 1755 and 1780 by the organ master Johann Wulf, and at the time the largest organ of its type in Europe, it features moving cherubs, trumpet-playing angels and comes with a staggering 7,896 pipes and 110 registers allowing for an incredible range of pitch and sounds including rippling water, animal cries and human voices; hear it for yourself from Mon - Sat at 12:00 or Sun at 15:00 (From April: Mon - Sat at 11:00 and 12:00, Sun at 15:00 and 16:00). Also worth looking out for, at the other end of the church is the strange and beautiful canopy around the high altar, covered with stars and featuring 150 angels poking out of a mass of clouds. ▶ Open 09:00 - 17:00, Sat 09:00 - 13:30, Sun 14:00 - 17:00. Admission free unless visiting during a virtuoso organ performance (entry 4.50/2.50zł).

Oliwa Park (Park Oliwski) E-2, ul. Opacka 12, tel. (+48) 58 552 17 50. The exact origins of Oliwa's delightful 10-hectare park are lost to time, but what is known is that Oliwa's last Cistercian abbot, Jacek Rybiński (1701-1782) had the gardener Kazimierz Debiński originate the beginnings of its contemporary appearance by designing a French Rococo part of the garden, still in existence today in the south of the park. After Rybiński's death a family by the name of Hohenzollern-Hechingen took over the park, introducing even more grand designs, and over the years, and in the hands of several different people, Oliwa Park gradually took on its modern look, with the addition of a Chinese garden, English touches, a botanical gardens (closed in winter) and palm house. Today's park is a hugely popular place for people to come and relax, picnic and enjoy the many sights it has on offer. A fun attraction are the so-called Whispering Caves (aka. Dionysus' Ears) to the southeast of the Pałac Opatów. Assuming that nobody has relieved themselves here for a while, it's possible for two people to stand in each 'ear' and have a conversation in the quietest of whispers. The mad news though is that much of the park may soon be closed off to the public; Oliwa's monks are currently campaigning to be granted exclusive access to the grounds. Watch this space. ▶ Park. Open 05:00 - 20:00. Palm House and Botanical Gardens closed. Admission free.



Often cited as 'Germany's collective conscience', and commonly regarded as the country's greatest living poet, novelist and playwright, Gunter Grass was born in the Free City of Danzig on October 16, 1927 and was awarded the Nobel prize for Literature in 1999. Although based in Germany much of his work refers to the Danzig of his day, with the suburb of Wrzeszcz (Langfuhr) featuring heavily in his works.

Born the son of a German grocer, and a Kashubian mother, Grass was a member of the Hitler Youth before being drafted into the army at the age of the 17. Up until 2006 the subject of his involvement in the Third Reich was often brushed over though all that changed in 2006 following a frank interview granted to the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. It turns out that as 15-year-old he volunteered to join a submarine unit of the Kriegsmarine, primarily because of his unhappy homelife, though that application was turned down.

Now, the bit no-one knew. In 1944 his draft card finally landed and he found himself serving in the 10th SS tank division Frundsberg - not as an anti-aircraft auxiliary as he had previously claimed. Naturally his involvement in an organization infamous for its associations with deaths heads and murder caused a bit of a rumpus in Poland, a country regarded as the primary killing field of the Nazi machine. Local hero, Lech Wałęsa, called on Grass to surrender his honorary citizenship of Gdańsk, some accused him of trying to hype up the publication of his latest book, *Peeling Onions*, while other high-profile names, such as Archbishop Michalik and novelist John Irving, sprang to his defence. A complete mess, in other words, and headline news across the whole region. The matter appears to have been put to bed with an open letter Grass wrote to the people of Gdańsk. Speaking of the guilt he has carried all his life, Grass claimed to never have fired a shot throughout the war, adding that once he saw the brutality of war he even tried to infect himself with jaundice in an attempt to escape his military duty. The letter appears to have done the trick, and even the normally stubborn Wałęsa has been won round.

So, what of the post-war Gunter Grass. After the war he attended art school, before pursuing numerous colourful career turns. A stint as a black-marketeer was followed by joining a jazz band on drums, working as a tombstone cutter and then as a political speech writer. It was while scraping a living in Paris that he wrote *The Tin Drum* in 1957, a book that has come to be his defining work. His life

has always been inexorably linked with Gdańsk, and fans should be sure to explore his old neighbourhood. From the Wrzeszcz commuter train station, head out along (F-3) ul. Wajdeloty, a pretty cobbled lane running past dilapidated townhouses. At the small roundabout, turn left onto ul. Alodony and then onto ul. Lelewela. No.13 is the grocery store Grass always alludes to in his books, and where he spent the best part of his childhood. Further down Lelewela is Pl. Wybickiego, a small chunk of green providing respite from the gray dullness. Housed in the park is a monument to Oskar, the hero of *The Tin Drum* and another to Jenny Brunies, a character in *Dog Years*. Both are regular victims of local vandals and Oskar's drumsticks and Jenny's umbrella may or may not be visible depending on whoever last visited (the vandals or the local government). This is the principal grail for fans of Grass. There was also to be a statue of Grass himself sitting next to Oskar. However, despite its completion, Grass refused to allow it to be unveiled. He objected to the local government spending money on a statue of him when the houses overlooking the park were in such poor repair and often had shared and dilapidated bathrooms. The statue currently sits in the vaults of Gdansk City Hall.

For readers of the *The Tin Drum* a visit to the Church of the Sacred Heart is essential, and it can be found round the corner from his childhood home, while those who have read *Dog Years* can view the statue of Gutenberg lying just off ul. Jaśkowa Dolina.

With his repeated references to the tri-city there is of course more to see outside of Wrzeszcz, and a particularly rewarding place for fans is the bar Vinifera (see Gdańsk Bars, Pubs & Clubs). Serving as an inspiration for the doll's house in *Cal of the Toad* the interiors are disappointingly dull, though there's no faulting the picture book setting. And, if nothing else, you can at least order a mulled wine inside while leafing through one of his numerous works. One of Grass' latest works, *Crabwalk*, focuses on the sinking of the *Gustloff* - the largest maritime disaster in history. Setting sail from Gdynia the ship was sunk in the Bay of Gdańsk and, though rarely reported, remains the world's biggest nautical disaster. Those with a morbid interest in this kind of thing can take an excursion out to the maritime grave in calmer weather. Get in touch with Ticada (www.ticada.pl).

On a final note, those hoping to sneak a look at the great man should take into account that he always stays at the Szydłowski (see Gdańsk Hotels) and has a table in their restaurant on permanent standby.

Oskar's Bench (Ławeczka Oskara) F-3, Pl. Wybickiego.

A statue of the hero of local writer Gunter Grass' Nobel winning work *The Tin Drum*, an incredible work telling the story of a dwarf born in Langfuhr (Wrzeszcz) in the inter-war years who has a voice that can break glass and takes a view of the world from the beating of his small tin drum. With his Kashubian mother, German 'official' father and Polish 'supposed' father, it has been suggested that the dwarf, Oskar, represents Danzig/Gdansk itself and many of the details appear to have been taken directly from Grass' own life in the city. The statue depicts Oskar who grew up in the surrounding streets sitting on a bench playing his tiny drum. The drumsticks have a habit of disappearing though thanks to local vandals.



September 1, 1939, forever etched in the history books as the day the world went to war. The planet would never be the same again, and it started here, seventy years ago, with Gdansk as the opening gambit in Hitler's vile master plan.

Endlessly caught in a tug-of-war between Germany and Poland, the end of World War One saw the League of Nations come up with a hare-brained solution to the ceaseless bickering – it matched the city to neither suitor, instead assigning it the title of Free City of Danzig. Tensions rose with election of Hitler, and bitter rivalries soon came to the surface after his election in next door Germany. Anti-Polish sentiment spread rapidly, and by 1935 the local police force had started keeping tabs on any Pole seen as a threat to the German way. As the years went on, and Hitler's posturing became ever more threatening, the Poles continued to covertly strengthen their foothold on the Westerplatte Peninsula, smuggling in military hardware and secretly building fortifications in breach of League of Nations decrees. To all intents and purposes Westerplatte was guarded by a crack unit, whose unspoken remit was to be able to hold out for one day should the Germans attack, thereby giving other Polish units enough time to rescue Gdansk from Nazi claws.

On August 31, 1939, Nazi units dressed in Polish uniform infamously staged a mock attack on a radio tower in the German border town of Gleiwitz (now Gliwice). The following dawn, claiming the Poles had provoked them, Germany launched a strike on Westerplatte, an attack that would ultimately kick off World War II. Popular theory asserts the first shots were fired from the German warship the Schleswig Holsten, supposedly visiting Gdansk on a goodwill mission. Wrong. Logbooks recovered by the Nowy Port Lighthouse prove beyond doubt that the German battleship was preempted by a matter of three minutes by a gun emplacement nestled halfway up the lighthouse. The Poles, taken aback, missed this target entirely. Second time round they scored a direct hit, credited to a Pole called Eugeniusz Grabowski, thereby in all likelihood making the lighthouse gunners the first casualties in a war that would go on to claim 55 million lives. The German shelling of Westerplatte was simultaneously supported by infantry attacks on the Westerplatte gateway, with the Polish defenders repelling repeated attempts at advance by the navy storm troopers. At precisely the same time this assault had begun, another equally ferocious battle was being waged at the small post office in the city's then-called Hevelius Square. Detachments of German police and SS laid siege to the 50 Polish post workers inside, who put up a brave struggle for over 17 hours until casualties became intolerable, part of the building collapsed and the Germans began to attack with flamethrowers. Yet while the post office capitulated, the garrison at Westerplatte – numbering around 220 men – held on.

Britain and France declared war on Germany on September 3, but hopes of outside help being directed to Poland proved ill founded. Yet still the Westerplatte garrison fought on. By now water had begun to run short, and the terrain they defended had churned up into a pockmarked mass of craters. Intensive bombardment from land, sea and air continued night and day, before finally, at 10:15 on the morning of September 7, Major Henryk Sucharski took the decision to raise the white flag. The battle had cost just 15 Polish lives, and the bravery of the troops was recognized by the German general who allowed Sucharski to keep his sword with him in captivity, as well as by German soldiers who allegedly saluted their Polish counterparts as they were marched away. To this day German losses in the battle for Westerplatte remain an official secret. Gdynia surrendered two weeks later, and then Hel – the final Polish stronghold in Pomerania – fell on the 2nd of October by which time Poland had been invaded from the east by the Soviet Union. Ironically, Hel, the final stand for the Poles, would also be the last place the Nazis would relinquish in 1945.

What to See

Bunkers Several Nazi era bunkers, shelters and fortifications can still be found, and while the forests of Gdynia are particularly abundant with such concrete carbuncles one doesn't haven't to stray anywhere near that far. In central Gdansk, for instance, head to C-3, Olejarna 2 to find a hulking big air raid shelter dating from 1943. Used as a climbing wall in recent years, its entrance is currently bolted closed. In close proximity why not visit the U7 bowling alley (C-3 Plac Dominikański 7) . There's a particularly sordid story behind this one; after the war German prisoners seconded into rubble clearance noticed a horrific stench emanating from the ground. When they broke through the entrances, which had collapsed under bombardment, they found it literally flooded with gunk. The air raid shelter, built below the water table, had flooded during shelling, and those trapped inside had been slowly drowned in the most agonizing way imaginable. The putrid soup in front of them was decomposing remains mixed with stagnant flood water. Elsewhere, check out the Napoleonic hilltop forts on Gdansk's Grodzisko Hill (A-1/2, ul. Gadowa). Built 46 metres above sea level the views across the Gdansk are awesome, and their strategic importance wasn't lost on the Germans. Close up investigation is obstructed by fences and warning signs, though you can just about make up a concrete observation post installed at some stage during the war.

Dr. Spanner Operating from a small outhouse in the courtyard of the (H-3) Gdansk Medical Academy (ul. Marii Skłodowskiej - Curie 3a) Dr Rudolf Spanner perpetrated what is commonly regarded as one of the most heinous crimes of WWII. It was here that he produced soap using the fat of prisoners from the nearby Stutthof death camp. When Gdansk was liberated in 1945 over 400 bodies were discovered in the buildings' basement, their use only too apparent. Spanner was not prosecuted, and though details of his life are foggy, he was apparently allowed to continue with a career in medicine in the following years. Today the set of buildings where he conducted his grisly research have been renovated, with a plaque outside reading: 'In this building, during World War II, the Nazis used the bodies of victims of genocide. People executed in the prisons of Königsberg and Gdansk, the patients of the regional home for the mentally impaired in Kocborowo, and the inmates of the concentration camp in Stutthof as material to produce soap. People brought this fate upon people.'

Gestapo HQ B-5, ul. Okopowa 9. What's that sinister looking building on Okopowa 9? It's currently occupied by the Internal Security Services, though it's history is far more creepy. It's here the Gestapo had their Danzig HQ, and above the main entrance it's still possible to make out lettering feebly disguised with paint: 'Polizei Präsidium'.



Polish Internal Security formerly home to Danzig Gestapo



The Soviet Cemetery on 3-go Maja

Post Office Monument (Pomnik Poczty Polskiej) D-2, ul. Obrońców Poczty Polskiej. Commissioned in 1979 by the Polish Communications Ministry and the Council for the Protection of Monuments of Battle and Martyrdom, and unveiled on September 1 of the same year, the stainless steel Defenders of the Polish Post Monument was designed by the Kraków-based sculptor Wincenty Kućma. A wonderful example of Communist-era public art and a fitting tribute to the heroes who put up such a brave struggle across the road, the monument represents a dying Polish post employee who is being handed a rifle, unfortunately a little too late, by Nike.

Soviet Cemetery 1-3, ul. 3 Maja. Some 3,089 Soviet soldiers who fell during the siege of Danzig are buried in the cemetery on A-1, ul. 3-go Maja. The Soviets aren't remembered fondly by either Poles or Germans, so to find the graveyard in disarray comes as little surprise.

SS street 1-4, ul. Ojcowska. Search out ul. Ojcowska to find a street custom built for the SS. Amazingly, as a look on GoogleMaps reveals, seen from the air the two rows of terraced housing which flank the street gently curve in the style of the SS moniker. Ojcowska survived the war, with the communist state opting to house shipyard workers in the buildings.

The Tank (Czołg) H-3, Al. Zwycięstwa. As you head up Victory Avenue (Al. Zwycięstwa) towards Wrzeszcz from Gdansk old town, you may notice a small green tank sitting on a plinth to your right. This Russian made T-34 celebrates the 'liberation' of Gdansk in May 1945. According to local information, this is tank #121 which was under the command of Lieutenant Julian Miazga and was the first to enter Gdynia on March 27th 1945 as part of the Soviet/Polish offensive on the city. However alternative reports claim that Miazga's tank was destroyed in Redłowo just outside of Gdynia and the tank you see before you was in fact one of the other tanks which survived the battle and not the symbolic 121 belonging to Miazga. In a further twist, a local group protested in 2000, on the 55th anniversary of the liberation, that the tank was inappropriate and tabled a petition questioning the legitimacy of honouring an event which to them represented the passing of the city from one occupier to another. The petition appears to have fallen on deaf ears, particularly from the local government, and the tank still stands today. Regular paint jobs are required to cover up the frequent graffiti that it attracts.

Statue to the Defenders of Westerplatte (Pomnik Obrońców Wybrzeża) ul. Sucharskiego. In the southwest corner of the peninsula is a huge, 25-metre monument made of 236 granite blocks. The work of the architect Adam Haupt and sculptor Franciszek Duszenko and called Heroes of Westerplatte, the controversial grey beast was officially unveiled on October 9, 1966, and it's here memorial sermons are held on each anniversary of the war.

WWII Museum



The Museum of the Second World War (Muzeum II Wojny Światowej) ul. Długa 81-83, tel. (+48) 58 323 75 20, ekspozyty@muzeum1939.pl, www.muzeum1939.pl. While many people will be familiar with the name Gdansk because of its connections with Solidarity and Lech Wałęsa, it is also known under its German name Danzig as the place where the first shots of World War II were fired. It was under the pretext of incorporating Danzig into the Third Reich that Hitler attacked the Polish garrison at Westerplatte and the Polish Post Office within the Free City of Danzig, early on the morning of September 1, 1939. A conflict that would go on to claim 55 million lives therefore started here and now there are plans to commemorate this with the building of a new museum to be called The Museum of the Second World War. With the encouragement of the Gdansk-born Prime Minister Donald Tusk, a competition was opened to find a design for the new museum. With a judging panel which included the likes of Daniel Libeskind and the art historian and Director of the Museum of London Jack Lohman, the Kwadrat architectural studio from the nearby city of Gdynia was chosen to design the new museum. They have created a design which they claim will become a symbol of the city in much the same way that the Crane or St. Mary's church are today. To be built on land on (D-2) ul. Wałowa donated to the museum by the city of Gdansk, the museum will find itself next to the Radunia Canal and the symbolic Polish Post Office building on Pl. Obrońców Poczty Polskiej. With over 4,000 sq. metres of exhibition space the museum will be similar in size to that of the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C. and is planned to cost around 230 million zloty. Building should begin in 2012 and be completed in time for the 75th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War on September 1, 2014. The plans are to show the tragic fate of Poland in the years 1939-1945 set against the broader background of the global conflict. In addition the museum will be responsible for temporary outdoor exhibitions on the Westerplatte peninsula, which can be visited all year round and has a small museum open during warmer months. In preparation for the opening of the new museum, the organizers have appealed for personal belongings linked to the stories of individuals and families in order to show how the huge scale destruction, terror and suffering that the war brought, touched individuals. Of interest to them are photographs, letters, personal documents, press clippings, clothing, uniforms etc. as they try to show life on all the fronts and in the different camps. Conscious of how many of these items will form important memories for families, the museum is offering to pay for items to be copied and these copies to be placed in the new museum's collection. They ask that anyone interested in making a donation to the new museum contact them using the details here.



Kommandatur... SS staff building

Long before the outbreak of war Nazi officials in the Free City of Danzig had been conspiring to build a camp designed to detain and ultimately exterminate 'undesirable elements' of the local population. Indeed, as early as 1935 lists detailing the names of Polish politicians, intellectuals, economists, religious figures and patriots were compiled by the German Schutzpolizei. As covert preparations for war intensified Himmler himself visited Danzig twice in the summer of 1939, giving orders for the immediate strengthening of the local police force. Furthermore August saw Gdańsk jail emptied, the Victoriaschule (a girls school B-5 ul. Klądkki 1) adapted to hold large numbers of prisoners, and Stutthof identified as the site of a camp. All the components, so it would seem, were in place to wage a decisive strike against the sections of Polish society most likely to disrupt the Nazi vision of the future. September 1, 1939, not only signalled the invasion of Poland, but also the beginning of a Saubersungsaktion (cleaning action) by the police force. Waves of mass arrests followed, with the first batch of prisoners arriving in Stutthof the following day. Stutthof, penned in by sea and forest, but also serviced by rail lines, was seen as an ideal location for a camp, and by February, 1940, it had emerged as the principal holding area in Pomerania for enemies of the Nazi state. At this stage, however, it was still classified as a civilian camp, and it wasn't until an official visit from Himmler in November 1941 that it was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Concentration Camp Inspectorate. What had started off as a relatively small camp now welcomed transports from across conquered Europe; by the end of the war Stutthof had grown to include 26 sub-camps covering an area of 120 hectares, and holding an estimated 57,000 inmates. Conditions were brutal with hard labour, epidemics and starvation all culling prisoner numbers. Furthermore, those who fell sick could expect to be murdered with a phenol injection to the heart delivered by one of the camp doctors. The second half of 1944 saw the decision



Stutthof medical wing

to transport Jews to Stutthof, a move that led to the killing process being streamlined further with the addition of a gas chamber and crematorium; of the 50,000 Jews imprisoned in Stutthof only 3,000 are estimated to have survived. With the Red Army approaching, and liberation in sight, the Nazis played the final card in their heinous game. An earlier decree issued by Himmler had insisted no prisoners be liberated, and as such tens of thousands were forced on arduous 'death marches' to camps further west. Scores perished on the way, with those unable to continue summarily shot and killed on the roadside. Soviet troops finally entered the camp on May 9, 1945, greeted by little more than 100 emaciated inmates who had managed to hide during the evacuation process. Latest research indicates that of the 100,000 prisoners incarcerated throughout Stutthof's existence, only a third of that number survived. The search for justice began immediately with the first Stutthof trial concluding in June, 1946. Eleven death sentences were passed, and these were carried out a month later in front of a baying crowd of over 200,000 on J-4 ul. Pohulanka in the Biskupia Góra district of Gdansk. However, no commandant was ever brought to face a Polish court; Max Pauly was executed by the British for crimes in Neuengamme, while the second commandant, Paul Werner Hoppe, was only arrested years later in 1955. The man behind the Stutthof death marches was eventually tried in the west before receiving a sentence of nine years. Doctor Otto Heidl, involved in countless phenol injections, cheated justice by committing suicide in prison. The cases of over 1,900 SS men and women employed at Stutthof never came to court.

Getting There

The town of Sztutowo lies 55 kilometres east of Gdańsk and is easily accessed by both car and bus. Journey time by bus is about 80 minutes and cost 14.00 zloty at time of writing. From Gdansk bus station board the bus headed to Krynica Morska, then jump off once you pass the perimeter of the camp on your left hand side. By car there are three routes you can follow, the first of which is 40 kilometres. Take road number 501 until it reaches Świbno. From here take the ferry crossing (cars 14zł, foot passengers 4zł), and from there follow the signs. This scenic route is only possible from the end of April to October 20, and it's also closed in bad weather. Alternatively take road number 7 before going left just after crossing the Wisła (in the direction of Mikoszewo). Once in Mikoszewo follow signs to Krynica Morska. You'll find Sztutowo on the way. Total distance - - 55km. Finally, you could take road number 7 (Gdańsk-Warszawa), before switching to road number 502 at Nowy Dwór Gdański. Then follow signs to Stegna, then Sztutowo. Total distance - 65km. Entrance to the museum is free as is parking until May.

Muzeum Stutthof w Sztutowie ul. Muzealna 6, Sztutowo, tel. (+48) 55 247 83 53, www.stutthof.org. In the years after the war Stutthof was allowed to fall into disrepair, many of its buildings falling prey to both the elements and looters. The Kommandatur building at the front - once the administrative heart of the concentration camp - existed for over a decade as a tourist hotel, while the former DAW Armaments Factory passed into state hands. The decision to turn Stutthof into a museum was only reached in 1961, and what you see today is the result of years of research and restoration. Covering around 20% of the former camp area, Stutthof Museum has undergone a significant program of progress to allow non-Polish visitors the chance to understand what happened here: English language signs, walking trails and explanation boards - for so long mono-lingual - have been added, while in the car park a small booth sells books, guides and memorial candles - this might be getting knocked down



Crematorium

soon, so head instead to the year-round store inside the main museum building. To fully appreciate the history of Stutthof purchase Janina Grabowska-Chalka's excellent guide book for 25zł, or one of the new small printed guides available in Polish, English and German for 4zł. Walking from the car park visitors should follow the path to the main gates. Tour guides are available from the former SS guardhouse to the left, while sobering films detailing everyday life in the camp are shown in the Kommandatur further on. Screenings are shown every half hour (minimum of four people necessary, with the last screening at 14:30 weekdays, 13:45 on Saturday and no films on Sunday), and the films act as a fitting prelude to what you are about to see. It's also here, in corridors that once resounded to the thump of jackboots, you'll find temporary exhibitions of inmate art as well as the archive and book of remembrance (which is on display variously depending on exhibits). Having left the admin building the scale of atrocities hits home on entering the first proper exhibit: thousands of shoes confiscated from prisoners lie piled up in dusty stacks, presenting visitors with a stark, grim image that takes a long time to dispel. It's after this visitors pass through what was once referred to as 'the death gate' - the main entrance through which tens of thousands entered the camp. Directly to the right a hot and musty barracks tells the wartime history of both the camp and the regime. The outbreak of the war is covered in specific detail, with accompanying photos and mugshots of the first arrests and Nazi murders, while further on other sections deal with the camps construction and the SS crews employed within; Himmler's visit is given particular attention, as are the roles played out by his underlings in Stutthof - on show a commemorative goblet presented to the first commandant, Max Pauly, by his colleagues. Just how fast Stutthof swelled and increased in size is illustrated next, as well as individual stories of heroism and escape; only Włodzimierz Steyer is recognized as having successfully fled, testament enough to the camps reputation as being escape proof. A huge scale model, hidden behind glass, demonstrates the size of the challenge prisoners would have faced while planning such break-outs. From here visitors cross the grass to reach the barracks that formerly housed the women's block. English explanations decrease in frequency at this stage, though the maps showing prisoner transports, striped uniforms and photographs of gaunt looking prisoners prove self-explanatory enough. Most poignant of all, a host of personal items are also on display. These include rings crafted illegally by prisoners, dolls and pictures drawn by children - lollipop trees et al. It's powerful stuff, and the experience gains further significance as you shuffle across creaking wooden floors. One barrack is stacked solid with original triple tier bunks, while others are home to a brutal looking operating theatre as well as a slab on which prisoners would lie before being given a fatal injection of phenol.

The sight of clunky looking syringes repulses the body. As the war lengthened the killing process was streamlined, and next on your tour is a brick gas chamber used to execute anything up to a hundred prisoners at a time. A Star of David and Catholic cross outside recognizes the beliefs of those who died, while to the right is a gloomy crematorium used to burn corpses. Three original ovens have been preserved, and these are flanked by memorial notices, candles and floral tributes. Walk through further chambers outlining the Nazis' murderous methods, as well as rooms dedicated to the death marches and the Nazi trials that followed after. An original gallows stands outside, as well as cattle trucks used to transport men and women from across occupied Europe. As you loop around to the area of the 'new camp' your route takes you past an epic memorial that dominates the skyline. Known as the Monument to Fight and Freedom, and designed by Wiktor Tolkin, it was unveiled on May 9, 1968, the 23rd anniversary of the camps liberation. Forming a part of this landmark obelisk is a horizontal shaped reliquary containing the human ashes and bone fragments recovered from the soil in the excavations that followed in the years after liberation. Remembrance services are held here on the first Saturday of September to mark the creation of the camp. Much of Stutthof was razed to the ground as the Nazis sought to hide traces of their crimes, and as such the area known as 'new camp' now has 21 concrete blocks placed in the area where the barracks once were, as well as a Star of David marking what was once the Jewish area of the camp. Walking across this wind blasted field allows plenty of opportunity for reflection, though don't think your visit has ended. Around 500 metres into the forest to the north of the perimeter is what is referred to as 'the Holocaust stake'. Prior to the construction of the gas chamber it's here that thousands of Jews were herded before being executed by firing squads, their bodies then burned on funeral pyres. A ring of symbolic stones marks the edge of the pit. ▶ Open 09:00 - 15:00. Admission free (contributions welcomed). Film exhibit 3zł. Guided tours 140zł. Audioguides 15zł. Children under 13 should not visit the museum.



Stutthof gas chamber

August Accords

1. Acceptance of free trade unions independent of the Communist Party and of enterprises, in accordance with convention No. 87 of the International Labor Organization concerning the right to form free trade unions, which was ratified by the Communist Government of Poland.
2. A guarantee of the right to strike and of the security of strikers and those aiding them.
3. Compliance with the constitutional guarantee of freedom of speech, the press and publication, including freedom for independent publishers, and the availability of the mass media to representatives of all faiths.
4. A return of former rights to: 1) People dismissed from work after the 1970 and 1976 strikes, and 2) Students expelled from school because of their views. The release of all political prisoners, among them Edward Zadrozynski, Jan Kozłowski, and Marek Kozłowski. A halt in repression of the individual because of personal conviction.
5. Availability to the mass media of information about the formation of the Inter-factory Strike Committee and publication of its demands.
6. The undertaking of actions aimed at bringing the country out of its crisis situation by the following means: a) making public complete information about the social-economic situation, and b) enabling all sectors and social classes to take part in discussion of the reform programme.
7. Compensation of all workers taking part in the strike for the period of the strike, with vacation pay from the Central Council of Trade Unions.
8. An increase in the base pay of each worker by 2,000 zloty a month as compensation for the recent raise in prices.
9. Guaranteed automatic increases in pay on the basis of increases in prices and the decline in real income.
10. A full supply of food products for the domestic market, with exports limited to surpluses.
11. The abolition of 'commercial' prices and of other sales for hard currency in special shops.
12. The selection of management personnel on the basis of qualifications, not party membership. Privileges of the secret police, regular police and party apparatus are to be eliminated by equalizing family subsidies, abolishing special stores, etc.
13. The introduction of food coupons for meat and meat products (during the period in which control of the market situation is regained).
14. Reduction in the age for retirement for women to 50 and for men to 55, or after 30 years' employment in Poland for women and 35 years for men, regardless of age.
15. Conformity of old-age pensions and annuities with what has actually been paid in.
16. Improvements in the working conditions of the health service to insure full medical care for workers.
17. Assurances of a reasonable number of places in day-care centers and kindergartens for the children of working mothers.
18. Paid maternity leave for three years.
19. A decrease in the waiting period for apartments.
20. An increase in the commuter's allowance to 100 zloty from 40, with a supplemental benefit on separation.
21. A day of rest on Saturday. Workers in the brigade system or round-the-clock jobs are to be compensated for the loss of free Saturdays with an increased leave or other paid time off.



Alojzy Tomaszewski

Although Solidarity was officially christened in 1980, its roots can be traced some ten years earlier. Protesting against plunging living standards workers at the Lenin Shipyards called a strike, with the army promptly called in to intervene. Bloody clashes led to the deaths of 45 people, and ultimately forced Władysław Gomułka out of power. Replaced by Edward Gierek, his half-mad economic policies served to create an illusion of prosperity, as well as generating a flush of jobs in Gdansk's Nowy Port area. But the memory of 1970 did not fade and Gdansk remained a ticking bomb for the authorities. With the seventies drawing to a close tensions started to rise again, with living standards falling and the economy in huge debt built on massive foreign loans.

In August, 1980 the dismissal of a female crane operator at Gdansk's Lenin Shipyards provided the spark for workers to go on strike. Workers already disillusioned with price increases and the falling value of their salaries were ready to take action. Lech Wałęsa and other activists were already planning strike action but it soon became clear that momentum within the yard was growing quickly and it was this that spurred Wałęsa to famously scale the gates of the Lenin shipyard to take control. Wałęsa with his trademark sharp trading managed to steer his colleagues away from mere wage demands towards the idea of creating a trade union movement to represent the workers and to fight injustice. This time the workers learned from the mistakes of 1970 and did not confront the authorities but instead locked themselves into the shipyards. Three days later leaders representing workers from over 150 industrial plants met in the shipyards to hammer out 21 demands, including the legalisation of independent trade unions. Days of tension followed, with tanks and armed units stationed menacingly outside the gates of the shipyards. On August 31 the government backed down, agreeing to meet the 21 demands - thereby marking the first peaceful victory over communism. A month later, on September 22, delegates from 36 regional unions met in Gdansk forming a coalition under the name of Solidarity. Lech Wałęsa, the unlikely hero of August, was elected as chairman. The next few months marked a golden period for the nation; some ten million people joined the Solidarity movement, and Poland enjoyed a freedom unknown for decades.

Riding the crest of a wave Solidarity continued to lobby for further reforms and free elections, infuriating the Kremlin. With Soviet invasion a looming threat the Polish President, General Jaruzelski, declared a state of martial law on December 13, 1981, and tanks once again rolled through the streets. Though Solidarity was officially dissolved, and its leaders imprisoned, it continued to operate underground. When Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, Solidarity's chaplain, was abducted and murdered by the secret police over a million people attended his funeral.

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Fot. Erazm Ciołek

Renewed labour strikes and a faltering economy forced Jaruzelski into initiating talks with opposition figures in 1988, and the following year Solidarity was once again granted legal status. Participating in Poland's first post-communist election the party swept to victory, with Wałęsa leading from the front. In spite of overseeing Poland's transition to a market economy, Solidarity gradually found their power being eroded by the emergence of fresher political parties.

The 2000 elections for the Sejm (lower parliament) sounded the death knell for the party. Failing to even make the minimum vote to qualify for representation in parliament, the party which changed history found itself essentially vanishing from the political map.



European Solidarity Centre (Europejskie Centrum Solidarność) B-1, ul. Doki 1, tel. (+48) 58 767 79 71, www.ecs.gda.pl. The boom in interest in the Solidarity years has been met with the news that a European Solidarity Centre is to be built in Gdańsk. To be completed by 2013, the project will incorporate conference rooms, a hotel and restaurant, a museum of modern Polish history (1944-1989), a library, archive material and a large number of educational activities. The idea is simple: to promote democracy and independence, as well as maintain contacts with human rights organisations. Situated in the BHP Hall and Gate Two of the Gdańsk Shipyard, it will also be the setting for Lech Wałęsa's and the Solidarity Foundation's new offices. ▶ Open 08:00 - 16:00. Closed Sat, Sun.

Monument of the Fallen Shipyard Workers (Pomnik Poległych Stoczniowców) B-1, Pl. Solidarność. Lying right outside famous gate no. 2 to the Gdańsk Shipyards (formally the Lenin Shipyards) the monument was unveiled in 1980 to commemorate the events of 1970 when 45 people died during street riots protesting against the communist regime. The right to erect this memorial was one of Solidarity's main demands during the 1980 lock-in. The 42-metre, 139-tonne steel sculpture stands on the spot where the first three victims of the 1970 riots were killed. There are three crosses to represent the three victims and the crosses themselves signify the suffering and sacrifice of all the protestors. Lech Wałęsa referred to this enormous steel structure as 'a harpoon driven through the body of a whale. No matter how hard the whale struggles, it can never get rid of it. The monument is marked by a poignant inscription by Czesław Miłosz: 'You who have harmed simple man, mocking him with your laughter, you kill him, someone else will be born, and your deeds and words will be written down'. Surrounding the monument are several memorials and plaques dedicated to victims of totalitarianism.

Other points of interest

The church played its part in the fall of communism, with many citing John Paul II's visit to Poland in 1978 as a key date in Polish patriotism. In the period of martial law Gdańsk's St Bridget's church was used as a sanctuary by leaders of the movement, as was the enormous St Mary's. Close to the train station the new town hall (next to Bastion Św. Elżbiety) was once home to the legendary student club, Zak - a hotbed of anti-establishment thinking. This was the site of pro-democracy rallies in 1981, and most recently it served as Lech Wałęsa's temporary office. Nowadays Wałęsa can be found holding court inside the Green Gate building.

Poles you should know - Lech Wałęsa

Credited as the driving force behind the Solidarity movement, as well as the man who revived a post-communist Poland, Lech Wałęsa remains, for many, the public face of Poland, as well as Gdansk's most famous resident.



© Stanisław Składanowski

Born on September 23, 1943 Wałęsa's early life was largely anonymous. Working in his early days as a mechanic it was only in 1967 when he began work at Gdansk's Lenin Shipyards that he began his rise to prominence. A keen trade unionist he frequently found himself in trouble with the authorities, and his political activities led to a stint in prison that ultimately cost him his job.

In 1980, with the shipyards on strike, an unemployed Wałęsa scaled a wall, gave an impromptu speech and found himself thrust in the spotlight as the accidental hero of the protests. Having successfully led negotiations for workers rights it was he who signed the August Accords of 1980. Ear-marked by the government as an undesirable influence he was immediately placed under house arrest when martial law was announced in 1981. Released a year later, Wałęsa's actions were recognized in 1983 when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

As the figurehead of the Solidarity movement, and with the communist state crumbling, Wałęsa led roundtable talks with the government to formulate a power-sharing scheme. Partly free elections in 1989 led to blanket wins for Solidarity, signalling the last days of communism.

In 1990 he became Poland's first democratically elected, post-communist president, a position he held until 1995. Although still active in politics, he has seen his influence wane - the 2000 presidential elections won him little over 1% of the public vote.

In recent years his outspoken style and maverick methods have seen him fall foul of Poland's intelligentsia; although an inspirational orator and soapbox politician, he is notorious for George W. Bush-style blunders, and his decision to appoint his chauffeur and table-tennis partner as an advisor in his latter years in power cost him further credibility.

Having turned down a million dollar offer from Gillette to shave off his moustache, Wałęsa did the deed himself a couple of years back in a bid to increase his public profile as a politician. It failed, and a once again mustached Wałęsa finds himself on the political sidelines, eclipsed by his son, Jarosław, one of his eight children, and currently a member of the European parliament. But while Wałęsa's political days are over the anniversary of the 1980 strikes have seen him catapult back into the limelight. Since his political retirement he now spends his days lecturing abroad, averaging some 15 international visits per year, speaking on subjects close to his heart: democracy, civil liberty and the free market. The recipient of over 30 honorary doctorates from international universities, Wałęsa most recently found himself in the headlines after a ruling confirmed that rumours he was a cold war spy for the state were no more than scurrilous gossip. In fact the courts revealed he was completely the opposite, and the subject of intense personal surveillance by the secret services.



Roads to Freedom (Drogi do Wolności) B-1, ul. Waly Piastowskie 24, tel. (+48) 58 308 44 28, www.ecs.gda.pl. 'Many generations to come will remember the extraordinary thing that happened in Poland, there appeared a social force able to control those in power.' Culture magazine, Paris, 1980. This is the second coming of the Roads to Freedom exhibition and it is a place that should feature highly on every visitor's itinerary. Charting the course of events from 1945 till 1989, this subterranean exhibition does an excellent job of explaining the meteoric rise and subsequent consequences of the Solidarity phenomena. The exhibition kicks off by launching the visitor into the world of the average Pole circa late 1970s - staring you in the eye is a diorama depicting a typical grocery store, it's shelves empty but for a thin spread of vinegar and mustard: practically the only goods which weren't in scant supply. The stark, cold reality of day-to-day life is brought home with a thud, the sepia shots of ration queues dispelling the myth of Utopian paradise. Following this primer visitors are given a historical background to post-war communism; not just in Poland, but across Europe. Themes explored include the rising discontent, and heavy emphasis is placed on the growing tides of unrest - starting with the first open rebellion in 1956, the picture builds to a crescendo by zooming in on December 1970, a time when 45 people - the majority from the tricity area - were killed during clashes with armed forces. Protesting sharp price increases events took a bloody twist when party chairman Władysław Gomułka ordered security forces to intervene, and the ensuing scenes are captured vividly in the exhibitions on show; among them, camera captures and video shots of the violence, much of it focused around the Gdańsk Party HQ (the white building which stands opposite the town hall on Waly Jagiellońskie). English translations accompany the footage, while a mock cell based on those in which protestors would have been



detained in provides grim confirmation of the headline reaction. The protests of 1970 were a landmark event, but these were just a precursor to what would follow in 1980. Up next, passing by the head of the omnipotent Lenin, the tour takes you deep into the time of the 18 day strike which paralysed the nation, and left the world on tenterhooks. To a background of rabble-rousing speeches and strike anthems, visitors can view the original sheets of plywood on which the demonstrators spelled out their 21 demands in what would go on to become known as the 'August Accords'. Reconstructed is a mock-up of the room in which negotiations were held, tables topped with huge transistor radios to tap into news from the outside world. The creation of the iconic Solidarity logo, as well as the unifying role of the Catholic church, is also given detailed mention, and by this stage visitors are left feeling hopelessly sucked into the heady atmosphere of the time. Following this, the prescribed tour takes you through the months of 'Solidarity and Hope', an unprecedented time during which cultural life and social freedom flourished like never before. The optimism during the 16 months which followed the events of August 1980 are neatly presented by way of audio recordings, artwork and photos, a brief respite from the horror that swiftly follows; accessed through some rubber curtains the visitor is propelled into the terrifying world that was Poland, 13 December, 1981. It



was on this watershed day that General Jaruzelski ordered Martial Law, ordering the army to effectively invade its own country. The brutality and tension of these times is illustrated by crackly film reels showing pitch battles with security forces - including one uncomfortable moment when an army vehicle smashes straight over a dissident - as well as extras such riot shields and weaponry used to enforce Martial Law. Jaruzelski's speech, the televised decree announcing his action, loops with gloomy regularity, as if to punch in the severity of his stance. And yet, in spite of the overwhelming odds, resistance to the regime continued to rage, and this is marked by dioramas depicting an underground printing press, as well assorted anti-establishment exhibits. The concluding sections include the nation's historical timeline from 1944 to 1989 and the final room is the base for temporary exhibitions which are held regularly. Truly, Roads to Freedom stands out as one of the finest museums in Poland - possibly only usurped by the newly opened Chopin Museum in Warsaw - however, it has not existed without problems. The exhibition has since moved from its original home in the historic shipyards, and while a return to the BHP building in which the August Accords were signed is imminent, for the time being Roads to Freedom remains in the basement of the Solidarity office. ▶ Open 10:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon. Admission 6/4zł, Wed 2zł, groups over 10 people 3zł per person, family ticket 10zł. **TC**

Further reading

The Polish Revolution: Solidarity

by Timothy Garton Ash

Winner of the Somerset Maugham Award 'The Polish Revolution: Solidarity' counts as the seminal work covering the Solidarity era, and ranks as one of the most important books written on post-war European history. As one of a handful of Western journalists based in Poland throughout the 1980s, Timothy Garton Ash offers an insider, eye-witness account, from his arrival to what was then the Lenin Shipyards, to a 1997 meeting with General Jaruzelski in post-communist, capitalist Poland. First penned in 1983, the book has been re-published three times, most recently in 2002. However revisions to the text have been kept to a minimum.

Although postscript chapters have been added, much of the original text remains the same, and his prose is a tense, bleak reflection on the times. Written at the height of the cold war, the author is left to reflect in one of the concluding chapters 'There is no historical law which says that empires must evolve peacefully, and the post-war history of Eastern Europe gives us little reason to believe this one will. It is therefore probable that those tensions will not be reduced, and we shall, sooner or later, face a nuclear war'. There is little cause for optimism in Ash's original work, and the author clearly holds the view that Poland is doomed to remain under the thumb of the Kremlin for decades to come.

Covering the meteoric rise of Solidarity - within months of its inception some ten million Poles were members, including some 30% of the ruling Communist elite - Ash documents the innocence and idealism of the early months, and of the imminent threat of Soviet invasion. The background to the strikes is covered in detail - including the protests in 1970 - and no stone is left unturned in this meticulous work.

The key players in the drama are examined in minute detail, and the author paints a vividly lifelike picture of Lech Wałęsa: 'Now he teases the crowd in Victory Square. His speech is impossible to reproduce, disjointed, full of slang, wildly ungrammatical, at times almost nonsensical... and then the masterly common touch... was he speaking off the top off his head? Either way, the crowd love it'.

However it is the chapter on the declaration of Martial Law that carries the most impact. Simply titled 'War', the shock and bewilderment of the governments actions is carried through to the reader. 'People could not have been more taken aback if martians had landed', comments one onlooker. Although expertly organized, leaders of Solidarity were completely caught on the hop by General Jaruzelski. Within hours communications had been cut, and the lions share of leaders apprehended. The tension of those days translates superbly into print.

As we know, Poland went on to buckle the communist system, and this book serves as a superb window into the past; an important reminder on a chapter of history that is still relatively unknown in the west. In his postscript the author examines the failings of Solidarity post 1989, as well its role in the collapse of Soviet Union. This is a weighty read, but the author succeeds in turning a serious subject into an addictive lesson in Poland's stormy past.

Sopot history

Human settlement can be traced here over 2,500 years and a fort existed here from the 7th to 11th centuries (see what to see).

13th century The first mention of the village of Sopot is recorded in a document outlining 16 settlements to be given to the Cistercian Monks in compensation for lands lost to the Knights of the Cross (Teutonic Knights). The Cistercians would remain owners of this land up until the abolition of monastic properties in the First Partition some 500 years later.

1466 As a result of the Second Peace of Torun, Sopot becomes part of the Polish state.

16th century Mid-way through the century a few rich Gdańsk businessmen start to build summer manor houses here starting the city's transformation into a leisure resort.

1733-34 Sopot is seriously damaged by the Russians who occupy Gdańsk. At the end of hostilities the summer manor houses were desolated and most remain empty for a number of years. In **1756-57** nine of the manor houses are purchased by General Jozef Przebendowski and a further two are later purchased by his widow giving the family 11 of the 15 manor houses in Sopot.

1772 As a result of the First Partition of Poland, Sopot becomes part of the Prussian state.

1804 The heirs of the Przebendowski fortune sell all of the Sopot manor houses to Gdańsk businessman Carl Christoph Wegner.

1819 Wegner makes the first attempt to turn Sopot into a seaside resort by building a bath-house and changing rooms but the venture fails. At this time there are 23 houses in Sopot and a population of 350.

1823 Jean Georges Haffner, a doctor in Napoleon's army, starts the building of a seaside resort by building the Sopot Therapeutic House, wooden baths and the beginnings of the pier.

1870 With the opening of a Gdańsk - Koszalin train line, which is then extended to Berlin, Sopot becomes more accessible to holidaymakers. The town quickly grows into an elegant resort and records visitor numbers of nearly 12,500 people in 1900.

1877 The local government purchase the bathing houses from Haffner's heirs and build a second bathing house and extend the pier to 85 metres.

1901 The Kaiser Wilhelm II grants Sopot city rights on the 8th of October.

1914 In the days before WWI, the city has a population of 17,400 people and visitor numbers have reached 20,000 annually.

1920 As a result of the Treaty of Versailles, Sopot is incorporated into the Free City of Danzig. Sopot's northern border becomes the border between the Free City and the newly-born Polish state. The Therapeutic House is converted into a casino.

1928 The pier is extended to its current length of 512 metres and becomes the longest pier in Europe.

1939 With the outbreak of war, Polish residents of Sopot are rounded up and many flee the city.

1945 On **March 23rd** the Red Army enters Sopot and the German population is driven out, in some cases literally into the sea. Around 10% of the city is destroyed with some of the most serious damage in the baths/casino area.

1961 The first Sopot International Song Festival is held, a festival which goes onto to become a huge televised event in the Soviet bloc countries and still attracts big names every year.

1990 The first free elections after the fall of communism are held for the city council.

2009 The Therapeutic House returns as part of the multi-million euro Centrum Haffnera development.

Sopot's reputation as Poland's premier seaside resort is justly deserved. Human settlement here dates back some 2,500 years.



A small fishing village owned by the Cistercians in Oliwa existed here from the 13th century and in the 17th and 18th centuries, the baths and spas of this increasingly-fashionable health resort lured a select, affluent and aristocratic set as much for the vibrant social life for the soothing waters.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Sopot, then part of the Prussian partition of Poland, became a playground for Europe's ruling classes. Kaiser Wilhelm II had a summer home here, (now the Maryla hotel) and a separate villa for his guests (formerly the Magnolia hotel). Sopot became part of the Free City of Gdańsk under the Treaty of Versailles and the Grand Hotel (now the Sofitel Grand Sopot Hotel) formed part of a huge casino and spa complex as Sopot enjoyed a golden age between the wars.

Avoiding much of the destruction experienced by its neighbour Gdańsk at the end of WWII, the city retained much of its pre-war charm and continued to be a place to see and be seen. Famous primarily for hosting the Sopot festival during the years of communism, a music festival broadcast to all corners of the Soviet empire, Sopot continued to be the summer resort of choice for those who could afford to come here.

Today, Sopot is once again a hip and happening place, with its trendy bars, restaurants and shops scattered around the main drag, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino. Reflecting its summertime popularity you'll find a strong choice of hotels as well as a nightlife that is considered one of the best in the country. An ambitious plan to return Sopot to its halcyon days has been completed with construction of a health and spa resort including the spanning new 5-star Sheraton Sopot Hotel, Conference Centre & Spa with spa and the best conference facilities in the region. In addition there is also a multi-million euro development of the famous pier to incorporate a yachting marina. A trip to the region would not be complete without a visit to Sopot.

Getting to Sopot

Sopot is the middle of the three cities and lies 14km north of Gdańsk and 10km south of Gdynia. To get here from Gdańsk you should take the local commuter train SKM from Gdańsk Główny (platforms 1-5) and get off at the 9th stop Sopot. From Gdynia you can either take the local commuter train from Gdynia Główna (platform 1), take trolley buses number 21 from Gdynia Główna Train Station, number 31 from Orłowo or bus 'S' from outside of Gdynia Wzgórze św. Maksymiliana Train Station and these will bring you to the stop at the junction of ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino and Al. Niepodległości in Sopot. From here you are a two minute walk from the central square by passing through the subway and then under the railway line. Alternatively you can travel by taxi which will cost you approximately 50zł from Gdańsk or 30zł from Gdynia.

As one of Poland's most popular seaside resorts Sopot is well used to catering to holidaymakers and visitors. This means you'll find a decent choice of hotels, pensions and hostels all within walking distance of the centre of town and the pier. With a very seasonal market it is often a case of famine or feast in terms of availability and off-season there are some very good deals to be had if you shop around. It is also worth bearing in mind that with Gdansk only 25 minutes away by car or local commuter train, Sopot can make for a very useful base for exploring all parts of the Tri-city as it is the middle of the 3 cities which straddle the coast.

Cream of the crop

Rezydent L-4, Pl. Konstytucji 3 Maja 3, tel. (+48) 58 555 58 00, www.hotelrezydent.com.pl. A grand art nouveau structure that could be mistaken for being as old as Sopot itself; so listen to this, ten years ago the Rezydent was just a patch of wasteland. Built to fit seamlessly with the surrounding landscape this award winning structure houses an equally impressive hotel. The lobby sets the tone with its chandeliers and bell-boys, while the spacey rooms come with a design that mixes elegance with modernity. Pick of the bunch is the Apartment Sopocki, one of the most impressive rooms in the region. ▶64 rooms (12 singles 270 - 480zł, 43 doubles 290 - 560zł, 8 suites 410 - 680zł, 1 apartments 1200 - 1900zł). [Icons: Wi-Fi, TV, Air Con, Parking, etc.] ★★★★★

Sheraton Sopot Hotel, Conference Center & Spa M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 10, tel. (+48) 58 767 10 00, www.sheraton.pl/sopot. A new kind of resort hotel, the pier-side Sheraton sets standards with

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an airy design that incorporates subtle maritime hints like ships' ropes and portholes. Rooms come with sea or park views, huge windows that can be opened to let the breeze in, gimmicks like a window to allow TV viewing from the bathtub, and safes with recharge plugs fitted inside, while the fifth-floor Club rooms have a private lounge with snacks and drinks - complimentary of course. ▶189 rooms (182 singles 600 - 1170zł, 182 doubles 640 - 1210zł, 7 apartments 1160 - 3600zł). Breakfast 90zł. Tax 8%. [Icons: Wi-Fi, TV, Air Con, Parking, etc.] ★★★★★

Sofitel Grand Sopot M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 12/14, tel. (+48) 58 520 60 22, www.sofitel-grand-sopot.com. Following a huge refit the Sofitel Grand Sopot has reclaimed its mantle as one of the best and most luxurious hotels in Poland. Individually designed rooms come with masses of space to roam around in and a breezy elegance that harks to the hotel's heyday. Flatscreen televisions stand in front of huge beds, and the rooms, many of which come complete with a glorious view of the pier, feature classy dark wood finishes. En suite bathrooms tout dressing gowns and cosmetics, and the hotel also has state-of-the-art fitness and wellness facilities. ▶127 rooms (95 singles 450 - 760zł, 95 doubles 450 - 760zł, 30 suites 1300zł, 2 apartments 2000 - 4100zł). Breakfast 90zł. [Icons: Wi-Fi, TV, Air Con, Parking, etc.] ★★★★★

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ul. Zamkowa Góra 35
tel. +48 58 522 44 00
www.villaaqua.pl

HOTEL VILLA SEDAN SOPOT
ul. Pułaskiego 18/20
tel. +48 58 551 06 17
www.sedan.pl

250m sandy beach

50m main promenade

Upmarket

Bayjonn Hotel M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 7, tel. (+48) 58 732 75 63, www.bayjonnhotel.pl. If you're familiar with Sopot then you'll be familiar with the bulldozers that have been ploughing up the lower end of Monte Cassino. Well they've finished, and the results are stunning: a super little piazza framed by bars and restaurants. Standing over them is the Bayjonn, a design hotel that's going to give stiff competition to the Sheraton's and Sofitel's. Equipped with crazy carpeting, rooms here feature white walls with pre-war maps superimposed, hi-tech finishes and air-con throughout. Highly recommended. ▶22 rooms (3 singles 415 - 499zł, 17 doubles 400 - 579zł, 2 suites 899 - 999zł). ★★

Dworek Admirał M-3, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 80, tel. (+48) 58 550 37 78, www.dworek-sopot.pl. You wouldn't know it but this stately-looking manor house was only completed a couple of years back and is not the historical residence it appears to be. Impressive at first sight this detached hotel is set in parkland not far from the glories of Monte Cassino and carries a distinctly boutique aesthetic. The rooms have been individually designed with themes including various countries and continents as well as colours. Indulge yourself by booking the African suite, complete with zulu masks and private balcony, or if you're on a less generous budget go for the Indian room - decorated with trinkets, cloths and pictures of the Maharaja. ▶11 rooms (10 singles 250 - 300zł, 10 doubles 250 - 350zł, 1 apartments 400 - 450zł). ★★

Haffner M-3, ul. Haffnera 59, tel. (+48) 58 550 99 99, www.hotelhaffner.pl. Impeccable rooms come with rich green colours and dark woods, as well as extras such as personally-controlled air-conditioning, dataports and bathtubs. Suites include cosmetics, dressing gowns and two telephone lines. Spa and swimming pool are also available, and the hotel can organize weekends in association with local golf courses. ▶106 rooms (100 singles 280 - 450zł, 92 doubles 310 - 500zł, 6 apartments 850 - 1250zł). Breakfast 70zł. ★★

Hotel Opera "Antiaging & SPA" L-3, ul. Moniuszki 10, tel. (+48) 58 555 56 00, www.hotelopera.pl. A luxurious hotel hidden away in a tree-lined valley a short walk from the centre. Rooms are individually designed, with the highlight being the suite that features wood-panelling and corner spa tub. ▶23 rooms (22 singles 300zł, 21 doubles 330zł, 1 apartments 500zł). ★★

Villa Baltica M-5, ul. Emili Plater 1, tel. (+48) 58 555 28 00, www.villabaltica.com. The rooms err on the small side, but come with the full compliment of 21st century fixtures, and pleasant cream and beige colours. Bathrooms sparkle, the restaurant gets a thumbs up and you find yourself approximately three minutes from the beach; if there's a detail they've overlooked we can't spot it. ▶33 rooms (6 singles 270 - 290zł, 24 doubles 320 - 410zł, 3 apartments 490 - 510zł). ★★

Villa Sedan M-4, ul. Pułaskiego 18/20, tel. (+48) 58 551 06 17, www.sedan.pl. Sedan provides super rooms and service at affordable prices. Wooden floorboards, floral patterns and net curtains create a warm, peaceful atmosphere. If you want to splash out a bit extra then the loft apartment represents remarkably good value. ▶21 rooms (3 singles 235 - 255zł, 12 doubles 295 - 315zł, 2 suites 335 - 355zł, 4 apartments 365 - 385zł). ★★

Zhong Hua M-4, Al. Wojska Polskiego 1, tel. (+48) 58 550 20 20, www.hotelchinski.pl. A little bit chintzy and a lot cheesy, Zhong Hua makes up for both with glorious sea views and even a stretch of private beach for guests. The Oriental design is beautiful on the outside and carries over to the rooms in a slightly more clichéd fashion, with Buddha lamps and shower curtains covered with Chinese characters. That said, many rooms have direct access to the sea - a major plus for those who are all about location. ▶49 rooms (37 singles 220 - 450zł, 37 doubles 250 - 500zł, 10 apartments 350 - 630zł, 2 Mandaryn suite 500 - 680zł). ★★

Mid-range

Europa L-4, Al. Niepodległości 766, tel. (+48) 58 551 44 90, www.hotel-europa.com.pl. A middle-of-the-road hotel that touts a design that could have been considered modern fifteen years back. While lacking cutting edge - and a lift - the Europa offers pleasant accommodation a short walk from the station. ▶32 rooms (30 singles 140 - 160zł, 27 doubles 190 - 250zł, 2 suites 260 - 490zł). Breakfast 40 zł. ★★

Irena M-4, ul. Chopina 36, tel. (+48) 58 551 20 73, www.pensjonat-irena.com. Neat, brownish furnishings inside a series of boxy rooms inside an early 20th century villa so characteristic of Sopot. Downstairs enjoy the atmospheric Karczma Irena restaurant and pub. ▶15 rooms (3 singles 110 - 230zł, 10 doubles 210 - 280zł, 1 triples 260 - 320zł, 1 quads 290 - 380zł). ★★

Lalala Art Hotel L-5, ul. Rzemieślnicza 42, tel. (+48) 792 84 02 93, www.lalala.lu. You don't get a mini-bar or TV, but you will find a glowing pink reindeer dancing in the garden. And if you think that sounds a little daft, then wait till you get in-room. There's eight to choose from, and each one has been individually designed by team of handpicked nutters. Take number 44 for instance, a nightmarish trip replete with red antlers, stuffed crows and nightmare monsters painted onto the walls. Then there's wacko 38, a turquoise effort equipped with a double bed salvaged from pre-war and a scary cat face positioned next to some tap dancing shoes. Fabulous. ▶8 rooms (8 singles 230zł, 8 doubles 260zł). ★★

Pokoje Monte Cassino De Luxe M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 50, tel. (+48) 58 555 77 77, www.sopothotel.pl. With only four rooms and an apartment De Luxe puts its energy into tricking out the spaces it has, and that means modern bathrooms, PlayStations, a DVD player in every room (and a library of DVDs), and flatscreen televisions in every room (including the largest TV we've ever seen, which sits inside the apartment). As an added bonus breakfast is served directly to your room. Visitors who plan on making the most of Sopot's nightlife will appreciate De Luxe's location right on the main thoroughfare, though stumbling back late at night and inebriated will make for a harrowing climb up the cavernous unlit stairs. ▶5 rooms (4 singles 180 - 290zł, 4 doubles 220 - 340zł, 1 apartments 350 - 450zł). ★★

Villa Aqua M-2, ul. Zamkowa Góra 35, tel. (+48) 58 522 44 00, www.villaaqua.pl. A newish looking hotel right next to the Aqua Park - so good news if that trip to the beach has been rained off. Rooms might well be small and boxy but all come with flatscreen TVs, wireless internet, modern bathrooms and absolutely no problems with noise. As far as good deals go, this one is better than most. ▶53 rooms (53 singles 205 - 255zł, 49 doubles 240 - 315zł). ★★

Villa Sentoza M-5, ul. Grunwaldzka 89, tel. (+48) 58 520 4868, www.sentoza.pl. Decorated with sea blue carpets, vanilla fittings and shiny plastics the lodgings look the part, and come with flatscreen TVs, low-level balconies and reception staff that could pass for models. The balconies are generous, with some offering sea views, though at these prices a mini-bar should come as standard. ▶28 rooms (20 singles 150 - 295zł, 20 doubles 180 - 320zł, 8 apartments 250 - 410zł). ★★

Willa Marea M-4, ul. Chrobrego 38 (entrance from ul. Parkowa 40), tel. (+48) 58 555 84 80, www.marea.sopot.pl. A small, friendly boutique hotel next to the sea with a good choice of modern oatmeal and dark wood rooms, jolly staff, free LAN internet connections and complimentary sweets in the lobby. On the plus side, the people who work here will bend over backwards to help you, but be warned that the rooms higher up in the building come with windows in the roof. If you want a view, be sure to choose your room carefully. ▶18 rooms (15 singles 200 - 300zł, 11 doubles 250 - 350zł, 2 apartments 460zł). ★★

Apartments

Apartamenty Sopot L-6, ul. Władysława Łokietka 51, tel. (+48) 608 50 23 33, www.seatowers24.pl. A selection of high quality apartments available for rent around the city. Choose from beach side apartments with a modern look to more traditionally furnished apartments on upmarket developments. ▶6 rooms (6 apartments 150 - 700zł). Tax 8%. No breakfast served. ★★

Mala Anglia M-5, ul. Grunwaldzka 94, tel. (+48) 512 43 43 61, www.malaanglia.pl. A series of high-quality apartments dotted around Sopot all with an 'English' theme. With accommodation available to suit up to eight people choose from apartments named 'The Lavender Wales Suite' and 'The Two Roses Suite' which come furnished with quality, classic furnishings as well as modern conveniences such as Wifi and even Playstations. As well as breakfast to order, they can arrange to take you to and from the airport or even arrange childcare or pet-sitting for you. ▶6 rooms (6 apartments 350 - 750zł). Breakfast 30-65zł. ★★

Hostels

Central Hostel L-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 15, tel. (+48) 530 85 87 17, www.hostelcentral.pl. A new hostel bang in the middle of the Tri-city's party central meaning you're only literally metres from all the key elements for a successful stay - 24 hour shop, bar, nightclub and MacDonalds. The hostel's not bad either with a series of dorms featuring bunks beds and lockers, free in-house wi-fi, an internet cafe and even a couple of private rooms for those looking for a little more privacy. ▶11 rooms (3 doubles 150zł, 63 Dorm beds 35 - 75zł). ★★

Lunatic Hostel L-5, Al. Niepodległości 739/2, tel. (+48) 58 718 42 64, www.lunatichostel.com. Don't let the strange name scare you off; this brand new hostel is bright, clean and decorated in one of the most unique manners we've ever seen. Each of the four rooms (which have from 4 to 10 beds in bunk formation) has a different theme, and we're torn between the Space Invaders room - complete with a working old-school Atari console! - and the Hunting room, which features the mounted heads of various stuffed animals. The bathrooms are impeccably clean, and the kitchen/lounge offers breakfast and a flatscreen TV for relaxing. The owner, who can often be found behind the decorative front desk, clearly takes pride in his new establishment and we're happy to say it's earned. ▶4 rooms (28 Dorm beds 45 - 75zł). ★★



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Eating at a Glance

Local: There is a choice between scenery and food. **Harnas** wins on for scenery (set as it is on the edge of the forest while **Karczma Zagroda** wins for the food (set as it is next to a petrol station). Alternatively try **Elita** which is refreshing in its attempts in not trying to attract the monied visitor and serves great Polish food at local prices.

Cheap: It's **Tesorio Express** for the best pizza in Sopot or **Greenway**'s popularity with the local student community should be all the reference you need there for vegetarian options that are easy on the purse.

Lads: The late night Polish eatery of **Bialy Wino i Owoco** serves up portions of pork in jelly, tripe and white sausage washed down with 4zl shots of vodka or regional beer. Sticking to food more familiar head for the wonderfully named **Kebabistan**, which continues to be one of Poland's best kebabs.

Couples: **Cyrano et Roxane** is good for low key trysts with an owner who will make you feel very important. **Monte Vino** is another which gets our vote for low lit surroundings where you can enjoy good food and wine at prices that won't have you arguing.

Splurge: **Art Deco** in the Sofitel has supreme sea views and a menu that will knock most wallets bandy. Book a private audience with star chef Jacek Fedde in the Rezydent's **Restauracja Autorska Pasjami**, or head to the Sheraton and feel you're **InAzia**.



Sopot may be recognised as the region's party capital but the development of the city in recent years has seen the number and quality of places to eat markedly improve as well. Home to some pretty decent choices at this stage, you can now comfortably eat, drink and be merry all in one place.

American

Pub Charlie M-3, ul. Haffnera 59 (Hotel Haffner), tel. (+48) 58 550 98 13, www.hotelhaffner.pl. A pub like no other. First off, there's a golf simulator, secondly, some top notch American eats which are good enough to see this place landing a mention in our restaurant section. A better burger you won't find in Sopot, and this being a hotel bar you can also expect it to arrive promptly and without incident. ▶ Open 15:00 - 01:00, Sat, Sun 14:00 - 01:00. (16-59zł).

Sioux L-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 17, tel. (+48) 58 555 33 36, www.sioux.com.pl. Sioux interprets the American Wild West as only a chain of themed restaurants can: cheesily. Grab a Conestoga wagon booth or a table under a framed photo of Chief Sitting Bull and peruse a menu that tries to recreate life around the campfire with unimpressive ribs, cold fries and a random selection of Mexican offerings like fajitas and burritos. You'll find a Sioux serving up cheap, completely average food in almost every city of size in Poland, and unless you're a diehard wagon wheel fanatic, trot your spurs on to a more interesting (and flavorful) option. ▶ Open 11:00 - 23:00. (18-90zł).

Asian

InAzia M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 10 (Sheraton Sopot Hotel), tel. (+48) 58 767 19 61, www.sheraton.pl/sopot. A drop dead gorgeous venue, and one which you'll find hard to leave. Japanese has been done to death in Sopot, but not like this. And don't think this place stops with sushi; Vietnamese, Thai, Chinese and Indian recipes all leave their mark, while the Teppanyaki grill adds plenty of snap, crackle to the atmosphere. Beachside views are complimented by a rich design that drips with voluptuous scarlet colours and edgy oriental flourishes, and this looks very much like our candidate for newcomer of the year. ▶ Open 16:00 - 23:00, Sat, Sun 13:00 - 23:00. (45-130zł).

Chinese

Zhong Hua M-4, Al. Wojska Polskiego 1, tel. (+48) 58 550 20 19, www.hotelchinski.pl. There's no half measures with this lot. For years this place bossed the Chinese scene then, inexplicably, it all went wrong. There's countless examples of good restaurants going bad, but few where restaurants recover their former glory. Zhong Hua have managed just that, and if the endless procession of drunk Chinese diners is anything to go by, this venue has a very happy future indeed. Highly decent food served in interiors that flourish with dragons and silk. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:30. (10-74zł).

Fish

Bar Przystań M-5, Al. Wojska Polskiego 11, tel. (+48) 58 555 06 61, www.barprzystan.pl. A legend for Poles visiting the coast, this place has built a reputation since its early days back in the nineties when it operated out of a converted beach-side toilet block. How times have changed and now you'll find a huge villa overlooking the fishermen's dock serving a long line of customers whatever the season. Certainly not as good or as cheap as it once was, this is still

the place many people come to enjoy freshly prepared fish and chips, Polski style, and while we tend to steer away from the cod, the fish soup never lets us down. ▶ Open 11:00 - 23:00. (15-50zł).

Tawerna Rybaki M-5, Al. Wojska Polskiego 26, tel. (+48) 58 551 47 74, www.tawernarybaki.pl. Despite claims to the contrary this remains one of the best of the permanent beachside fish restaurants in the town. Spread over 3 floors, try to book one of the tables up on the top of the building for great sea views while you enjoy the well prepared and wide selection of fish dishes. Our favourite is the potato soup with salmon followed by the halibut baked in Dijon mustard, but you can be pretty confident with whatever choice you make. A kids' menu that offers alternatives to fish also wins it points for those with children. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. (18-40zł).

French

Cyrano et Roxane L-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 11, tel. (+48) 660 75 95 94, www.cyrano-roxane.com. A small nugget of France finds itself in Sopot in this tiny rail side cottage. Owned and run by Marc, a real-live native of Bergerac, this tiny treasure has an authentic tavern atmosphere, and wines hand-picked to compliment the bites and nibbles on offer. Try, for instance, the French sausage platter, or for something more considerable peruse the concise list of mains whose number include a super duck which is slow-cooked over twelve hours. Amongst the regional specialities on offer the foie gras, reputedly made from the owner's grandfather's recipe, is a memorable pleasure. We eat it on payday, now you should on holiday. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:00. (37-59zł).

Petit Paris M-4, ul. Grunwaldzka 12/16, tel. (+48) 58 341 94 49, www.petitparis.pl. Now well-established on the Sopot dining scene, which is no mean feat considering this has been one of the less successful locations in the city despite its proximity to the action. It's an upmarket venue although you're paying for the food rather than the decor which we find a bit clinical. You'll forget that though after trying the beef sirloin, prepared exactly to order, which we thoroughly enjoyed finished off with crème brulee. A man named Philippe Abraham has his name above the door and we're judging that he's a Frenchman although that doesn't stop him turning his hand to a selection of Polish dishes, including a duck which comes highly recommended to us. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat 13:00 - 23:00. (25-52zł).

Villa Sedan M-4, ul. Pułaskiego 18/20, tel. (+48) 58 551 06 17, www.sedan.pl. This has long been one of the places to take the parents when they visit and despite the increased competition in the city, that is still true. Set inside a renovated Sopot villa which houses the recommended Villa Sedan hotel, the decor is wooden floorboards, framed pics and potted parlour palms, which give Sedan an upmarket feel without ever appearing intimidating. The changing menu is always reliable and offers a variety of French meat and fish options. Expect to see the addition of a 'Treasures of the Sea' menu during the summer when freshly caught seafood will be prepared in the kitchen. ▶ Open 07:00 - 22:00. (32-71zł).

Fusion

Avocado M-4, Pl. Zdrojowy 1, tel. (+48) 58 585 83 28, www.avocado-sopot.pl. Found upstairs over the Unique Club, Avocado is up there amongst our favourite new places of recent times which is somewhat surprising seeing as the



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Sunday Brunch

Haffner M-3, ul. Haffnera 59, tel. (+48) 58 550 98 13, www.hotelhaffner.pl. Sopot's original brunch experience runs each Sunday from 12:30 till 16:30, and is priced at a moderate 98zł (6-12 years old 50zł, under 6's free). That gets you unlimited access to a buffet style brunch, and as much wine, beer and soft drinks as you can handle. Expect live music tinkling in the background, and a supervised play area for kids that effects the look of a pirate ship. ▶

Sheraton Sopot M-4, ul. Powstancow Warszawy 10, tel. (+48) 58 767 10 61, www.sheraton.pl/sopot. Now expats and locals alike will be able to enjoy what those in Warsaw have been privileged to have for quite some time: the institution that is Sunday Brunch. The concept is simple, from 13:30 to 17:00 each Sunday the flagship restaurant of the Sheraton will open their doors to anyone willing to shell out the bargain sum of 130zł (4-11 year olds pay 50%, under 4s are free). In return guests are given a carte blanche to eat and drink until their insides pop, with the buffet style set-up offering everything from surf and turf to positively sinful desserts. Live bands are set to tinkle in the background, while adding a certain level of bawdiness to proceedings is the chance to drink a limitless amount of wine – don't worry, save on potential parent/child embarrassment by sticking the juniors in their own play area. ▶

sight of yet another new restaurant offering sushi had us sighing with resignation. The menu is more than that though and while the sushi and sashimi sets are excellent we keep coming back to the wide range of fusion dishes with the beef tenderloin wasabi one of our favourite meals of the year. The two young chefs holding court here look like they have learnt their trade in more exotic surroundings than Northern Poland and the flow of local and foreign voices seem to confirm they're getting it right. The balcony terrace is one of the places to head for when the weather permits. ▶ Open 13:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat 13:00 - 24:00. (20-209zł). ▶

Indian

NEW

Tandoor House M-4, ul. Grunwaldzka 8-10/2, tel. (+48) 508 57 57 56. An Indian restaurant, which regular visitors might remember used to be found in neighbouring Gdynia, is now plying its wares in downtown Sopot and we for one think this is an excellent move (and not just because our office is close by). The food is authentic and well-prepared and the menu covers all the familiar dishes while the spice level, unlike that in many ethnic cuisine restaurants in Poland, is not watered down to suit the local palate. We feel a chicken tikka masala has to be the yardstick for any Indian restaurant and while many Indians will tell you it is a ridiculously simple dish to prepare, it is one that if often done badly in other Indian eateries around the country. That is not the case here and the only thing that was more pleasing than wiping up every last bit of sauce was the size of the bill which saw a family of four fed for less than 100zł. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:30, Fri, Sat, Sun 13:00 - 23:00. (20-38zł). ▶

International

Art Deco M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 12/14 (Sofitel Grand Sopot Hotel), tel. (+48) 58 520 60 71, www.sofitel.com. One of the most revered dining spaces in the north, and justly so. With soups alone starting at 25zł a big meal out will without a doubt send your credit card on a bit of a helter skelter, but with the pain comes pleasure. The menu, tinkered to suit the season, is never anything less than a top notch experience involving modern, adventurous even, takes on Polish and more global cuisine. Wrapping it up nicely are the interiors themselves; impeccably elegant and with views of the pier, beach and bay. ▶ Open 13:00 - 23:00. (45-125zł). ▶

Bakłażan L-4, ul. Jagiello 6/1, tel. (+48) 58 717 13 56, www.baklazan-sopot.pl. A splash of aubergine furniture, tables made from old sewing machines and plenty of candlelight await inside Bakłażan, which replaces Dobra Kuchnia but offers similar Polish-Italian fare to choose from. The service is impressively attentive, though the diners we saw lingering over steaming plates of pasta with full wine glasses didn't seem too demanding. We easily cleaned our plate of meatballs in cream sauce with herb-dusted rice, and a neighbouring child did the same with his chicken nuggets. An affordable place for reliably good food. ▶ Open 11:00 - 21:00. Closed Mon. (15-30zł). ▶

Barocco L-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 15, tel. (+48) 58 710 27 71, www.barocco-restauracja.pl. An eye catching bar and restaurant sat at the top of Sopot's main street. The menu is one where it is hard to decide which dish to choose with them all looking delicious and the results from the kitchen do not disappoint. While the steaks are good and favourites of ours don't let that stop you from trying anything else on the well-balanced menu which includes children's options for those with the young ones in tow. As the day moves on Barocco morphs into a handsome

cocktail bar which see the window side bay seating fill up late into the morning. A good place to start your evening adventure of Sopot. ▶ Open 11:00 - 23:00, Sat 11:00 - 02:00. (19-95zł). ▶

Club & Lounge UNIQUE M-4, Pl. Zdrojowy 1, tel. (+48) 500 01 25 08, www.uniqueclub.pl. Featuring one of the city's most talked about clubs downstairs, this street level restaurant appears to aim at the well-healed and trendy. Decorated with chandeliers and lots of rich, dark colours, it comes as a pleasant surprise therefore to find the staff friendly and relaxed and the food well-prepared and not nearly as expensive as we feared it might be. Our mains of pork filets served in a mushroom sauce and the shrimps very definitely hit the spot taste wise while the well-stocked illuminated bar is the place for the night ahead, now that you've dodged the scary looking men on the club entrance. ▶ Open 08:23 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 08:23 - 03:00. (20-62zł). ▶

Monte VINO M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 63/9, tel. (+48) 506 07 02 21, www.montevino.pl. Good food, a great selection of wine and a prime location overlooking the square suggest that while this might be enjoyable it is also likely to be pricey. The truth is not so painful to swallow. While it is by no means cheap, the shrimp and salmon were excellent while the steak was cooked exactly as requested and tasted even better washed down with a recommended wine more than justifying the outlay. ▶ Open 12:00-23:00, Fri, Sat 12:00-01:00. (28-65zł). ▶

Pick & Roll M-2, ul. Zamkowa Góra 3-5, tel. (+48) 58 555 85 60, www.pickandroll.pl. An accomplished restaurant located in the Aqua Park complex a 15-minute walk from central Sopot. The modern look does just enough to hint at urban cool while the canopied outdoor garden plays host to some cracking concerts in the warmer months such as British violinist Nigel Kennedy. But it's the food that keeps us coming back and this is a very good place to bring the children after an afternoon splashing around thanks to an impressive kid's menu and an international seasonal adult menu that surprises on both quality and price. Keep an eye out for their themed nights where you can dance tango, salsa or the like and also take a moment to hunt out the Winarium wine store, brainchild of award winning Polish actor Marek Kondrat. ▶ Open 14:00 - 22:00, Sat, Sun 12:00 - 22:00. Closed Mon. (15-45zł). ▶

Pinokio M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 45, tel. (+48) 58 555 96 22, www.pinokio-restauracja.pl. In summer this Pinokio assumes the title of best al fresco option on Monte Cassino – a great courtyard with enough staff to ensure your glass is always full to the brim. In winter sit inside amid standard wood decorations and order from a Mediterranean-inspired menu: pizza, pancakes and fish. A little bit of everything. ▶ Open 11:00 - 24:00. (17-49zł). ▶

Restauracja Autorska "Pasjami" L-4, Pl. Konstytucji 3 Maja 3 (Hotel Rezydent), tel. (+48) 58 555 59 04, www.hotelrezydent.com.pl. This must be what royalty feels like. Set inside a Viennese style hall this classy spot has to be one of the most elegant dining rooms in town, complete with swooning palms and lamps designed by Patricia Urquiola. Everything here is five star, with a truly masterful menu. Aside from your a la carte options you'll find regular steak evenings held and, better still, the opportunity to enjoy the 'chef's table'; call a day in advance and you'll have the undivided attention of the chef himself, plus a nine course menu tailor-made to suit your palette. Star treatment indeed. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:00. (65-150zł). ▶

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rant and pizzeria, this also acts as an import business for high quality Italian produce including hams, wines and cheeses which make the results understandably pricey but hugely disappointing. The pizzas are hugely overpriced while our most recent reconnaissance found badly cooked pasta and bland Carpaccio. On the upside the charming Italian hosts have managed at least to improve on the service but that alone can't compensate for what is served up at prices that make the average Pole blanch. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:00. Closed Mon. (34-69zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

La Vita M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 63, tel. (+48) 58 341 80 25, www.restauracjalavita.pl. A hip looking eatery on the ground level of the glitzy new complex at the bottom of Monte Cassino. Looking more akin to a cocktail bar than a restaurant the black and red finishes here are interspersed with a compliment of weird backlit pictures which probably cost a fortune, and design store flower arrangements. Unfortunately the plaudits don't stretch past the decor. There are better Italian options in terms of quality, price and service in town these days. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (24-85zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

Tesoro M-5, ul. Polna 70, tel. (+48) 793 34 44 97, www.restauracjatesoro.pl. Italian owned and run Tesoro is a pasta/pizza restaurant which has split opinion right down the middle. Some think it's great, others say it's excellent. Popular with the region's growing Italian community, and a spread of local celebs, the weekly menu here has got the plaudits clapping till their hands hurt. This is the real deal, and highly recommended. ▶ Open 13:00 - 23:00, Fri 13:00 - 24:00, Sat 12:00 - 24:00, Sun 12:00 - 22:00. (30-85zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

Tivoli Due L-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 14/16, tel. (+48) 58 555 04 10, www.tivoli.sopot.pl. A very ornamental decor plays host to a long-standing and well-regarded restaurant at the square at the top of Monte Cassino. Under new ownership, the blingy look created by the chains of fairy lights has gone, while the word 'Due' has been added to the existing name. The Italian inspired menu was always well-prepared and the change in ownership seems to have revitalised both the kitchen and the restaurant. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat 23. (16-65zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

Toscana Restaurant M-4, ul. Grunwaldzka 27, tel. (+48) 58 341 86 65, www.mojatoscana.pl. Tucked away in a tiny cottage this place couldn't look sweeter if it was built from donuts and fudge. Many espouse this to be the best restaurant in the north, and they may have a point. The Polish/Italian chef is a master of pasta, while Anna and her staff have perfected the art of spoiling their guests. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat 13:00 - 23:00. (25-69zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

Trattoria Antica L-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 43, tel. (+48) 696 46 12 80, www.trattoriaantica.pl. Coiled close to Pinokio lies Trattoria, a subterranean venue whose identity has changed three times in as many years - don't be thrown by the cinq pictures on the walls, they're just a throwback to the previous Gallic occupants. Such schizophrenia surely isn't encouraging, but the menu is; short and sweet and with no undue complications. Antipasto proves divine, the ragu the best in Sopot, and your night topped classically with either tiramisu or panna cotta. ▶ Open 16:00 - 22:30, Fri, Sat 13 - 22:30. (12-60zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

Japanese

Dom Sushi M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 38, tel. (+48) 58 550 70 07, www.domsushi.pl. Sushi is sweeping Poland, and Sopot's proximity to the sea means the stuff you perch on your chopsticks is liable to be better than anywhere else. This place offers the whole caboodle of Jap classics, from sushi to sashimi, by way of substantial like maguro steak. The food bobs by on little wooden boats, and we've yet to hear a bad word said about this place. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. (25-60zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

Kansai Zone M-4, ul. Ogrodowa 2, tel. (+48) 505 79 27 92. A snappy image conscious interior makes Kansai the most hip of Sopot's Sushi Bars. 'Sushi is Life' you half expect their tattoos to read, and this is very much the place if you see food as fashion all served under the watchful eye of the California trained Polish owner. The addition of noodles or rice-based food on the run served from big pans allows you a decent snack for a handful of pennies. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:00. From January open 12:00 - 22:00, Sun 12:00 - 21:00. (10-100zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

Sushi 77 M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 53, tel. (+48) 58 555 53 85, www.sushi77.com. A very decent sushi stop located just off Sopot's main pedestrian street, though a quick visit determines that this is not the only reason for the custom this venue generates. Expect a huge range of fresh maki as well as a number of set menus to pick from. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (13-49zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

Mediterranean

Restauracja Hotelu Haffner M-3, ul. Haffnera 59, tel. (+48) 58 550 98 13, www.hotelhaffner.pl. The flagship restaurant of the Haffner Hotel is every inch the winner you'd expect, with a classy, intimate backdrop and a menu involving a mix of Polish and Mediterranean dishes. For something a little more casual check the American menu in their Chaplin inspired bar/eatery 'Charlie'. ▶ Open 13:00 - 22:00. (28-82zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

Mexican

The Mexican M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 54, tel. (+48) 58 341 33 15, www.mexican.pl. Known to some as The Menace, and that's on account of a kitchen responsible for foul offerings made of cabbage and ketchup - interiors look authentic enough, and there's no doubting it's a decent place for a drink, but the food here is apologetic at best. Weirdly, this place is a nationwide sensation, and clear evidence that Poland can still go wrong. ▶ Open 13:30 - 23:00, Fri, Sat, Sun 11:30 - 24:00. (18-49zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

Pancakes

Cuda Wianki N-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 9, tel. (+48) 58 555 12 12. The Pancake Shop (for that is literally the meaning of Naleśnikarnia) is a bright, modern space located between the two tunnels at the top of Monte Cassino, a small area fast becoming an oasis of good food where once there was little more than a bakers and a dingy pub. Choose from a menu of sweet and savoury fillings as well as some of the tastiest salads we've had the pleasure to try in the city, order at the counter and then sit back on the IKEA furniture for your tasty snack to appear. We have to admit to being fans of the Mexican pancake as well as the salads while we know children who are unable to pass without begging for a mixed fruit pancake with whipped cream. Delicious. ▶ Open 10:00 - 21:00. (9-16zł). [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] [F] [G] [H]

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Chocolate Lounges

If there's one universal truth about Poles it's that they love their dessert. What might be considered a special treat or indulgence in your country is a standard part of the meal, a staple not to be left out. A lap past any ice cream parlour or bakery typically reveals long lines and hefty purchases (yet still the Poles stay impressively skinny. Unfair). Evidence of this sugary fanaticism can be found in the long tradition of 'chocolate lounges,' cafes that are devoted to the cocoa-driven nectar in a way you thought only Hansel and Gretel could imagine.

Mount Blanc M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 63/5, tel. (+48) 508 42 02 96, www.mountblanc.pl. For those who know the best and won't accept anything less. Bringing the joys of Belgian chocolate to Sopot are Mount Blanc, and their choice of pralines, cakes and desserts are simply second to none. Enjoy them inside a chic looking space overlooking the plaza at the base end of Monciak. ▶ Open 09:00 - 22:30, Fri, Sat, Sun 09:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

Pijalnia Czekolady E. Wedel M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 36/4, tel. (+48) 58 550 03 35, www.wedelpijalnie.pl. Wedel is the oldest chocolate brand in the country, and as such has a special place in every Polish heart. The interiors are typical of an upmarket tearoom and feature a wood panelled bar and crimson walls, pralines sitting behind a glass front and a menu that wouldn't be out of place in Willie Wonka's Chocolate Factory. ▶ Open 09:00 - 22:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

'Monciak'

One may wonder why Sopot's main street, Bohaterów Monte Cassino (The Heroes of Monte Cassino), carries the name of an Italian town. The truth is that it commemorates one of the proudest achievements in modern Polish military history. In 1943 the Allies, after a successful invasion of Sicily, moved to the continent. It seemed nothing could stop them until they approached a mountain range on the way to Rome. The area was occupied by the Germans defending what was called the Gustav Line, at the heart of which lay Monte Cassino. The battle that followed was actually a series of four intense battles which took place between January 20 and May 18, 1944, culminating at a 1,300-year-old Benedictine monastery on the top of the 1,100 metre Monte Cassino. Involving British, US, French, North African, New Zealand, Gurkha and Polish troops, fierce fighting raged against the Germans on a slow and brutal advance towards the monastery. At a cost of over 25,000 lives the final battle ended on the morning of May 18 when a reconnaissance group of soldiers from the Polish 12th Podolian Uhlans Regiment finally fought their way through to the completely devastated monastery. The Battle of Monte Cassino was won, the Gustav Line broken and the Allied advance on Rome continued. Today it is one of Poland's most famous streets, frequently clogged in high season, and fondly known as Monciak to the locals.

Polish

Bar Elita L-4, ul. Podjazd 3, tel. (+48) 58 551 06 20. In a city that appears to move more upmarket each year, it is still possible to enjoy this legendary cheapie which comes recommended on account of chatterbox staff, home cooking and a lack of tourists. The zurek is excellent and while the setting is not one of its strengths, the opportunity to eat in an unpretentious and authentic Polish bar very definitely is. ▶ Open 11:00 - 02:00. (12-18zl). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

Harnaś L-4, ul. Moniuszki 9, tel. (+48) 58 555 14 37, www.harnas-sopot.pl. It's a sweaty uphill climb to get to Harnaś, but your endurance is rewarded by a picture book country cottage surrounded by forests and parkland. It's a big, big space, but atmosphere never seems a problem, a fact no doubt attributed to the mountain bands that feature regularly. The food – simple hunks of meat and veg – could be improved on, but you'll find yourself here as much for the ambiance as anything else. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. (14-65zl). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

Image M-4, ul. Grunwaldzka 8-10/3, tel. (+48) 58 550 75 76, www.image.sopot.pl. Menageries, mannequins and even a friendly live dog are just some of the oddities that will greet you upon entering this unique Sopot venue. The elaborate Victorianaesque décor is a contrast to the menu, which is filled with simple dishes that are reliably well executed. Maybe you could make pork cutlets with mashed potatoes or meaty pierogis at home, but we doubt they'd be done this well. Salads, a respectable range of seafood and a global wine list that boasts bottles from Australia to California round out the menu. If that doesn't get your loins stirring then sneak a look at the ceiling murals, where chubby naked couples are entwined in saucy embraces. ▶ Open 12:00 - 02:00. (18-69zl). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

Karczma Irena M-4, ul. Chopina 36, tel. (+48) 512 51 69 10, www.pensjonat-irena.com. An inn-style restaurant where tourists and locals consume big helpings of hearty Polish food at solid wooden tables surrounded by Halberds, paintings of trolls and even a winged Hussar. Loved by many, the only improvement would be the addition of silver goblets and obliging wenches. A very commendable local experience. ▶ Open 13:00 - 23:00. (22-45zl). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

NEW Karczma Polska Zagroda L-5, Al. Niepodległości 625, tel. (+48) 58 550 72 59, www.karczmozagroda.pl. They should rename this wooden, mountain hut style restaurant Phoenix from the Flames after a huge fire completely destroyed it during the spring of 2011 only for an identical building to reappear just four of months later. While the new place feels brighter and airier than the previous incarnation (must be all the new stripped pine) the menu and atmosphere are just as good as they were. Probably the best option in Sopot for that traditional country Polish dining experience so the 15zl cab fare out to it from the centre is well worth the investment. Expect friendly and competent service (some might say that was worth the cab fare alone) which brings very good and very filling portions of pork knuckle (Golonka), pork cutlets, bigos et al for you to enjoy at your wooden bench seating with its faux animal fur covers. Recommended. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (16-45zl). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

Sabat ul. Herberta 9 (just off ul. Abrahama), tel. (+48) 58 555 78 25, www.lysa-gora.pl. If you fancy a stroll out of the town (or a bit of skiing in winter), head up to this wooden hut at the foot of Sopot's ski slope on the edge of the forest. Every bit a hunters lodge with thick cut wood beams, heavy wooden

bench furnishings and a fireplace the menu is a collection of beer or hot wines. Keep an eye out for possibly the world's oldest parrot. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00. (15-28zl). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

Smakosz M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 41, tel. (+48) 58 717 12 45. A hearty local eatery which rewards customers with traditional Polish cooking inside a space painted with village scenes. Cheap, decent and a good way to fill yourself up without visiting the cash point. ▶ Open 11:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 23:00. (15-30zl). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

Spanish

NEW Tapas De Rucola M-4, ul. Pułaskiego 15, tel. (+48) 58 710 55 01, www.tapassopot.pl. Combining the trendiness of Poland's current 'przekaski zakaski' phenomenon with the exoticness of Spanish Andalusia, this casual tapas bar has quickly developed into one of Sopot's most fashionable destinations. Serving an array of Andalusia-inspired and authentic small tasting dishes, all for 9zl each, finely-dressed guests nibble away at chorizo sausages and Serrano ham while slugging down Spanish wines and the local Kozel beer on draft. With a colourful interior of imitation-Picasso mural art and a carefree atmosphere, Tapas really packs out after siesta, particularly on weekends when the party lasts long into the morning. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 04:00. (9-25zl). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

Thai

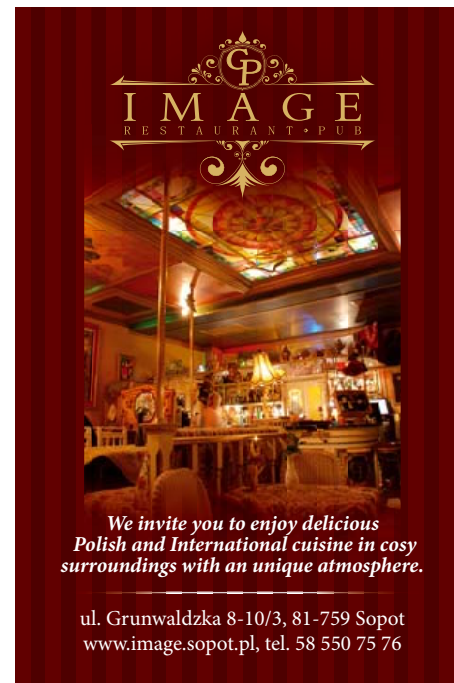
Oriental Thai Kitchen Chopstick L-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 31, tel. (+48) 58 717 48 24, www.thaisopot.pl. Despite Sopot being awash in Asian options, this new arrival is already plenty busy with customers. The menu offers an impressive selection of authentic dishes (and, helpfully, pictures accompanying each listing). The pad Thai is tasty but heat-free, which caters perfectly to the Polish aversion to anything spicy, and the curry had us cleaning our plates. Having an authentic Singha beer might not be worth the price, and the service is so far abominable even by Polish standards. Worth a visit if you can sit outside and you have a lot of time to wait for your dishes (which may or may not be what you ordered), your next beverage and your check. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. (28-65zl). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

Thai Thai M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 63, tel. (+48) 58 551 11 00, www.thaithai.pl. The third Thai restaurant to emerge in Sopot, and quite possibly the best. Set on the ground floor of a design hotel this venue has it all, from a sexy swagger to an award winning chef – that's Sanada Changpuen, and his CV is unquestionable. Plucked from the Warsaw Sheraton, his arrival in Sopot is further evidence of



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the towns renaissance. Dine on exotic noodle and wok dishes inside a fine interior embellished with Buddha's. Certainly not the cheapest meal around, but certainly one of the best, with the green chicken curry winning particular praise. ▶ Open 13:00 - 23:00. (39-70zl). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

Vegetarian

Green Way M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 47, tel. (+48) 58 340 47 23, www.greenway.pl. Greenway is truly one of Poland's great success stories of the past few years. Starting off as a cheap veggie bar in the Gdansk district of Zabianka, the winning formula of good-quality, tasty, vegetarian, affordable food has literally mushroomed into one of Poland's most successful restaurant chains. Expect a range of meat free dishes, with daily specials marked up on the board, a great choice of juices and a primarily young, studenty crowd. ▶ Open 11:00 - 20:00. (13-17zl). ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘

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Late Night Eats

Białe Wino i Owoce M-4, ul. Grunwaldzka 4-6, tel. (+48) 58 718 64 25, www.bialewinoowoce.pl. Late night eats Polish style. Drop by this great little bar/diner to fortify yourself with tastier than they sound dishes like 'cold legs (pork in jelly)', white sausage, hering or tripe washed down with 4zl vodkas or bottles of regional beer. The atmosphere is always jovial, seeing as most of the clientele have already 'fortified' themselves in the neighbouring bars and clubs and this is a perfect way to offset that inevitable hangover. ▶ Open 11:00 - 05:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Istanbul Kebab M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 42, tel. (+48) 58 551 44 57, www.istanbul.com.pl. Kebabs, but not nearly half as good as Kebabistan who have now moved in next door. If ten pints of lager have had anything to do with your night then you're not going to care either way though, are you? ▶ Open 11:00 - 05:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Kebabistan M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 36/1. The north's premier purveyors of Europe's top booze food have now moved downtown into the heart of the action on Monte Cassino. Offering both beef and chicken kebabs, this bright modern space is constantly busy no more so than when people start making their way home from one of the many surrounding clubs and bars. Our favourite kebab now without the walk/crawl to the train station. ▶ Open 11:00 - 24:00, Fri 11:00 - 03:00, Sat 11:00 - 05:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Sopot is the centre of Tri-city and summer Poland's nightlife. While there have been improvements in the options in neighbouring cities, the options here have gone through the roof. This is one huge party zone particularly at the weekends and throughout the summer. It doesn't matter if you're looking for peace or oblivion, Sopot has something to suit everyone. Most of the action is centred around the main drag, Monte Cassino.

Bars & Pubs

3 Siostry M-4, ul. Grunwaldzka 47/1, tel. (+48) 58 550 10 13, www.3siostry.pl. A weird little spot presided over by a team of sisters. There's three of them allegedly, but judging by the number of stilettos hanging from the walls there could just as easily be thirty. And these ladies (stunners, the lot of 'em) seem to be onto something. With a DJ at the weekends and live music and special events at other times of the week, this place is regularly packed into the very, very late hours of the morning with a noisy crowd of friends and strangers mixing and mingling long after legs, brains and mouths have stopped working properly. No dress codes or club queens here, just normal people having a glorious time. ▶ Open 14:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 14:00 - 04:00, Sun 16:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

512 M-4, ul. Powstancow Warszawy 10 (Sheraton Sopot Hotel), tel. (+48) 58 767 10 60, www.sheraton.pl/sopot. The flagship bar of the Sheraton looks and feels every bit as new as the mothership it was born to. Set around a big square bar 512 is a hip space where booze flows courtesy of expert staff not averse to mixing one of the better mojitos around. ▶ Open 08:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Błękitny Pudel (The Blue Poodle) M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 44, tel. (+48) 58 551 16 72, www.blekitnypudel.spacerem.pl. Possibly the most underrated bar in town especially considering it sits in the centre of the city's nightlife quietly minding its own business. The Blue Poodle is a bit like entering a dream, with cobbled flooring taken by springy armchairs and a gurgling fountain. Grandfather clocks sit next to dusty banjos, and the overall effect feels pleasingly eccentric. Visit at night and the place generates a sleazy decadence that's just ripe for beery whisperings. ▶ Open 10:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 02:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Cafe Ferber M-4, ul. Bema 1, tel. (+48) 784 04 00 05, www.ferber.pl. Long established in Gdańsk the Ferber brand hit Sopot a couple of years back, and if the crowds are anything to go by look for a long and prosperous stay. Dominated by a purple-lit square bar set centre stage, the Sopot version of Ferber features lots of plastic bits and bobs, transparent lamps and the sort of design now favoured by practically every club. No surprise therefore that it fills with prospective night-clubbers discussing their next move, so look suitably dazzling if you want to make an impression. ▶ Open 10:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat, Sun 09:00 - 04:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Cocktail Bar Max Sopot M-4, ul. Grunwaldzka 1-3, tel. (+48) 691 13 00 00, www.barmax.pl. Stock up on aspirin, you'll be needing it. Featuring a remarkable choice of booze this air-coned beach bar has spirits from everywhere stacked around a central display by the bar: the higher you look the more premium they are. The standout feature, however, is the fruit cocktail menu – tons of fresh fruit squashed and squeezed into rainbow coloured alcoholic and non-alcoholic bliss. The artistry involved does lead to wait-times, but the young, hip staff make it worth the while. A great place to kick off the night before heading into one of the neighbouring clubs. ▶ Open 09:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 09:00 - 05:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Galeria Kinsky (Sopocka Wytwórnia Filmowa) L-4, ul. Kościuszki 10, tel. (+48) 695 95 17 43. For those unfamiliar with Klaus Kinsky he's a deceased actor known as much for his odd sexual appetite as for his one hundred plus films. He was born upstairs, and today his childhood home has been transformed to house Sopot's most curious bar. Done out in lurid crimson, features include spooky pictures of the man himself, a jumble sale collection of cinematic tat and an eerie black toilet. Don't for a moment think you can get away with a soft drink; patrons here live every bit as hard as the man they emulate. ▶ Open 16:00 - 04:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Immersion Club M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 36/5, tel. (+48) 58 710 84 41. With American host Tom having moved onto new projects two years on from bringing Immersion to Sopot, the reins have passed to Ela and Natalia, two friendly young women determined to build on the foundations they have inherited. Expect a welcoming, relaxed atmosphere with everything from British expats, to Spanish students to amiable locals where you can enjoy a quiet drink (and at the weekend lively and late parties) in a covert den tucked away off the main drag in a courtyard between Wedel and Vanilla Cafe. While Sopot gets more and more glitzy, this is a place that holds onto the relaxed spirit and the awful toilets it was once famous for. ▶ Open 18:00 - 24:00, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun 18:00 - 04:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Józef K. L-4, ul. Kościuszki 4/1b (entrance from ul. Dworcowa), tel. (+48) 58 550 49 35, www.jozefk.pl. An editorial favourite, and a first rate venue if you've just missed your train. Set just a minute from the station Józef K is a boho haunt piled high with broken typewriters, empty birdcages and artwork hung at wonky angles. This is what Kraków used to be like, before the Brits took over, and the mezzanine level is a choice spot to spy on local intellectuals locked in whispered debate. ▶ Open 10:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 01:30, Sun 11:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Julka Cafe M-4, ul. Morska 4, tel. (+48) 58 550 72 43, www.julkacafe.pl. An engaging little spot, and we're not kidding when we say little, set not more than a hundred metres from Monte Cassino. Interiors are dark, moody and soothing, and given an extra oomph with some glittery chandelier-style lights and chequered flooring. Comfortable and classy, and with a small mezzanine allowing you the benefit of perching a few inches extra over the rest. Keep an eye for the range of Kormoran Brewery beers which are an excellent alternative to the mass-produced brands and hail from the Mazurian region of Poland. ▶ Open 16:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat, Sun 12:00 - 23:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Le Bar M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 12/14 (Sofitel Grand Sopot), tel. (+48) 58 520 60 00, www.sofitel.com. Sweep through the Grand Hotel's fearsome lobby to reach a drinking space seemingly built for deal clinching drinks. An extravagant chandelier hangs from a ceiling painted with a giant sun, while dark woods and art deco lamps fill any space not occupied by armchairs. The only bad news is the view here; to see the ocean you'll have to peer past tables of chewing, slobbering diners, which is every bit as lovely as it sounds. ▶ Open 09:00 - 01:00. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎



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Sopot Cafés

Brown Sugar M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 6, tel. (+48) 504 24 03 31, www.brownsugar.com.pl. A classier spot to sip your coffee than the typical café chains, Brown Sugar is the kind of place where slipping Baileys into your latte or rose flavouring into your rich hot chocolate seems second nature. The white leather chairs and open bar are complimented by a jazz-filled soundtrack, making it a grown-up spot to park with a drink in hand. ▶ Open 12:00 - 20:00, Mon 13:00 - 20:00, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 20:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Café Zaścianek M-4, ul. Haffnera 3/1a, tel. (+48) 58 550 05 43, www.cafezascianek.pl. Here's what cafes used to look like before everyone started copying Starbucks. Tight and intimate this place is packed with pre-war swag, with assorted loot numbering gramophones and chiming clocks. Lovely stuff, and absolutely free of Sopot's fashion mag twits. ▶ Open 11:00 - 22:00, Mon, Sun 11:00 - 21:00, Fri, Sat 11:00 - 23:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

NEW

Caffe Pralnia L-4, ul. Armii Krajowej 91, tel. (+48) 58 765 05 81. Feeling nostalgic for grandma's house? Caffe Pralnia is a worthy substitute, with doilies on every table and cabinets filled with mismatched teacups. What's that? You normally bring your laundry to grandma's house too? Well haul your detergent along because Caffe Pralnia has two washing machines and two dryers available to launder your britches while you linger over a latte. Pralnia (Polish for 'laundry') is a genius concept - combine the boredom of this hated household chore with free Wi-Fi and caffeine. ▶ Open 10:00 - 19:00, Fri 11:00 - 20:00, Sat 10:00 - 17:00. Closed Sun. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Coffeeheaven M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 53 (Crooked House), tel. (+48) 58 555 51 40, www.coffeeheaven.pl. Poland's largest coffee chain has now opened in the city's signature building - the Crooked House. Expect good coffee, with the western coffee-shop experience, served in warm surroundings by friendly staff. ▶ Open 08:00 - 21:00, Sat 09:00 - 22:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.

La Crema Cafe L-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 14, tel. (+48) 58 341 34 80. A Mediterranean-style café bar presented in muted white-brown colours and an understated modern style. This is a real departure from the glitz and spangle of modern Sopot, with a cool, elegant look that slot into St Tropez. Find newspapers laid out on the window-side table. On the menu; a selection of home-made snacks and some great coffee and cakes. ▶ Open 08:00 - 20:00, Sat 09:00 - 20:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Młody Byron M-4, ul. Czyżewskiego 12, tel. (+48) 58 551 07 56, www.tps-dworek.pl. Located inside the historic Dworek Sierakowskich, this small cafe and bar has an intimate, modern feel, as well as an arty resident crowd appreciative of both the adjacent gallery and the weekend cultural happenings: poetry evenings, concerts, the whole shebang - take it all in with a glass of Ciechan, one of Poland's proudest beers. ▶ Open 15:00 - 23:00, Fri 15:00 - 24:00, Sat 12:00 - 24:00, Sun 12:00 - 23:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

NEW

Male Piwko M-4, ul. Ogrodowa 8, tel. (+48) 502 70 05 07, www.sanatoriumsopot.pl. At Male Piwko ('small beer') the only reason to limit the size of your brew is to ensure you can sample as many as possible from the extensive beer list. Labels like Ciechan, Kasztelan and even the exotically girly Cornelius Grepfrut are on hand, and though the space is decorated with framed sports photos (you can sit across from Ali landed a punch squarely on Frazier's jaw) and a large-screen TV it eschews the typical sports bar vibe. Sitting, drinking and socialising is thankfully all that's required, and smokers will be pleased to find that the upper floor is set aside for their use. ▶ Open 17:00 - 02:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Papryka M-4, ul. Grunwaldzka 11, tel. (+48) 58 551 74 76, www.klubpapryka.pl. There most certainly is life beyond Monte Cassino, and Papryka is all the evidence you need. Set in a detached pre-war villa this place has more rooms than we have fingers, each offering up a new surprise. Set over a number of levels each room feels like a bar within a bar, with threadbare sofas snapped up by a party crowd who can't be bothered with dress codes and attitude. Head to the top floor of this scarlet labyrinth to find a dedicated mob making the wooden floors bounce as they jig to acid-jazz and quasisfunk. ▶ Open 15:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 15:00 - 04:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Pick & Roll M-2, ul. Zamkowa Góra 3-5, tel. (+48) 58 555 85 60, www.pickandroll.pl. Located next to the city's Aqua Park, this former sports venue has re-invented itself as a classy live music venue. The modern look does just enough to hint at urban cool while the canopied outdoor area plays host to some cracking concerts in the warmer months such as British violinist Nigel Kennedy. Great food also available and keep an eye out for their themed nights where you can dance tango, salsa or the like. Also find Winarium, brainchild of award winning Polish actor Marek Kondrat located in the grounds. ▶ Open 14:00 - 22:00, Fri 14:00 - 24:00, Sat 12:00 - 24:00, Sun 12:00 - 23:00. Closed Mon. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

NEW

RetroMANIAK Klubu Galeria L-4, Al. Niepodległości 771a, tel. (+48) 512 89 84 23, www.retromaniak.com.pl. Discreetly hidden somewhere behind the train station, seek this one out if you like your dive bars to ooze style. As eclectic as they come, Retromaniak's vintage furnishings range from twin beds to theatre seats, and the decor is an appealing push/pull of glamour and garbage, featuring dancing poles and disco balls against a ceiling covered in aluminum foil, and a shaven-headed barmaid serving drinks on a counter made of old VHS cassettes against a backdrop promotional photos of early film stars. There's no espresso machine, but there is a great selection of regional beers, old Polish films screening silently on the wall and a scattered playlist of forgotten pop hits and ethnic rock that seems as cobbled together as the DIY decor. Whether by carelessness or contrivance, it's one of the coolest venues we've discovered lately and we'll be back often. ▶ Open 19:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 19:00 - 04:00. Closed Mon, Sun. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Spółdzielnia Literacka L-5, ul. Króla Jana Kazimierza 2, tel. (+48) 58 550 06 50, www.spoldzielnialiteracka.pl. Sopot drinking doesn't get more leftfield than this. This place looks industrial and half-finished, but that's the look the owners want, and it's certainly worked in luring a weird crowd of media tarts, hipsters and other geek fashion types. Eclectic art displays, hundreds of crooked looking books and a rather nutty music policy make this one to track down, though not before you've dressed yourself in a tank top and silly looking hat. ▶ Open 08:30 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 08:30 - 04:00, Sun 10:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

PICK & ROLL CLUB

just be there with friends

Restaurant

Club

Live concerts
open air stage

Latino dance nights

Sports on big screen

Sopot Zamkowa Góra 3-5
www.pickandroll.pl



Stary Rower M-4, ul. Pułaskiego 15, tel. (+48) 884 10 50 46. Huge, though who they're hoping to attract is a million dollar mystery. We've not seen more than a handful of people, a blemish made all the more exaggerated by the choice of bright lighting. The live music sounds promising, but try finding anyone to confirm that. ▶ Open 18:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 18:00 - 05:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Tawerna Sopocka M-4, ul. Haffnera 6, tel. (+48) 58 555 52 22, www.tawernasopocka.pl. An unassuming little bar tucked away on the ground floor of the Crooked House. What is essentially a room full of heavy wooden tables and benches is a surprisingly convivial place to have a few drinks and with a menu of reasonably priced, straight forward Polish dishes (think soups, cutlets and veg that kind of thing) you need not up sticks if you're settled. A haven amongst the more 'in-your-face' bars and clubs that surround it, Tawerna is probably the most decent pub in Sopot now that the Language Pub has passed on. Oh. And keep an eye out for the Polish PM, Donald Tusk, who's been known to have a pint or two here. ▶ Open 13:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 13:00 - 03:00, Sun 13:00 - 23:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Zła Kobieta (The Bad Woman) M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 53, tel. (+48) 660 51 89 83, www.zlakobieta.com. A great looking pre-club spot found up the stairs in the Crooked House. Over the years the tenants of this building have failed to live up to the promise the design suggests, but the people at 'The Bad Woman' have bucked the trend with a fantastic looking two-story space. The cocktails come prepared by pleasant English-speaking staff, the hand dryers are the best in Poland and while they no longer serve food this doesn't seem to have done anything to hurt their popularity. A great place for pre-club drinks can also find you trapped as the crowd kick off on the small dancefloor. ▶ Open 19:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 19:00 - 04:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Clubs

Atelier M-3, Al. Mamuski 2, tel. (+48) 58 555 89 06, www.klubatelier.pl. Ever had the desire to swim naked in the Baltic after a night getting trolled to punk anthems, 80s remixes and Euroshit dance din? Then step into Atelier, a madhouse venue where good times are as certain as the hangover that follows. The toilets look like they've been hit by a typhoon, but that does nothing to stop the least preened up crowd in Sopot having a right messy knees-up and enjoying life to the max. They've actually had a recent refurb, but would you notice? ▶ Open 15:00 - 24:00, Fri 15:00 - 03:00, Sat 11:00 - 03:00, Sun 11:00 - 24:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Backstage M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 55/57, tel. (+48) 888 35 13 51, www.backstage-sopot.pl. Found in the building on the main drag that was one the city's cinema. The building was at one time subject to demolition but Backstage has taken over from Coco Bongo to keep the place going. Find a pretty basic decor with DJ booth and some appalling lavatories which nonetheless attracts a crowd due to its less stringent door-policy and great location. ▶ Open 14:00 - 24:00, Thu, Fri, Sat 14:00 - 05:00. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Club 70 M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 60, tel. (+48) 517 25 08 67, www.club70.pl. Don't let the name fool you. You'd expect the sounds of the 70s to get an airing here, in reality you'd struggle to find anyone born as early as the 70s. Instead it's a preeny, teeny crowd that squashes inside to enjoy an utterly annoying mash of Annie Lennox, Beyoncé and all the other noise you'd like to see deleted from existence. ▶ Open 21:00 - 05:00. Closed Tue, Wed, Sun. ☎ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕

Klaus Kinski



p373, Flickr

Technically German, but born in Sopot, **Klaus Kinski** is arguably the town's most famous son. Born into poverty, Kinski found himself flirting with adventure from an early age when he was forced to steal to feed his family. When war broke out, he originally fought for Poland before being conscripted into the German army and eventually finding himself held as an allied prisoner of war. Having discovered his gift for entertaining during his days in a British POW camp, Kinski turned to professional acting following the end of hostilities. Ravaged and spooky looking, Kinski combined the intensity of Gary Oldman with the libido of Warren Beatty both on and off screen. Despite his outspoken contempt for the acting profession he never turned down a job and appeared in some of the best and worst films of the post-war era: "So I've sold myself for another year. I have no idea what I've signed. I have to take on any shit. As I've said, it's all the same to me." The evidence couldn't be clearer; Kinski's list of credits spans everything from Dr Zhivago, For a Few Dollars More and Nosferatu to B-grade flops like Revenge of the Stolen Stars. Describing his head as "one big garbage can," Kinski's loopy life witnessed a spell in a lunatic asylum, grisly self-surgery on his throat and hundreds of sexual conquests. His biography, All I Need is Love was originally withdrawn from circulation on account of its pornographic content. Now re-released under the title of Kinski Uncut, the book delves into all corners of his life: from his love/hate relationship with director Werner Herzog to the birth of his daughter, actress Nastassja. But there's no escaping Kinski's insatiable sexual appetite, and the book veers from early fumbblings with his sister to goathic orgies with groupies, whores and actresses: "Our bodies. Our faces. Our genitals. Attack each other dangerously. Painfully." When Kinski suddenly passed away in 1991, a friend described the cause of death as "a little bit of everything." His childhood home is now a popular and suitably odd-looking bar which honours the man by playing his favourite bands in concert on the in-house screens and by staying open long into the night (see Sopot by night).

Club & Lounge UNIQUE M-4, Pl. Zdrojowy 1, tel. (+48) 500 01 25 08, www.uniqueclub.pl. Billed as Sopot's premier nightclub, the tough looking chaps on the door could do with some lessons in customer service as they snarl as you slide past. If and once you've negotiated that little obstacle, you'll find yourself heading down the stairs into a luxurious pit where the gorgeous and well off try to dance and spend their way out of the recession. The music is a mix of disco, funk and house, often spun by well-known DJs from both Poland and abroad and regular product promotions help to keep the mood upbeat. Probably home to the most beautiful crowd you'll find in Sopot, so make sure you look the part and loosen up that credit card. ▶ Open 08:23 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 08:23 - 05:00. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]

copacabana M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 55/57, tel. (+48) 888 35 13 51. The building with once housed the city's cinema and which has long been threatened with demolition, continues to survive. Following a fairly quick revamp and renaming (this was Hollywood), Copacabana has gone for a fairly half-hearted beach theme with sand in the entrance and some straw thatching thrown up over a couple of bars inside. Even though there are beach clubs close by, this hasn't deterred the young party crowd of holidaymakers in season and students in term time from filling the place up at weekends. With the quality and quantity of clubs in the vicinity this remains surprising no doubt helped by the attractive bar prices and lack of a cover charge. Stop by if for no other reason than to dance in a potentially great space that might have met the bulldozers by the time you read this. ▶ Open Fri, Sat only 21:00 - 05:00. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]

Cream Club Sopot M-4, Al. Mamuszki 2, tel. (+48) 601 2084 35, www.creamsopot.pl. Naming yourself after one of Britain's best clubs is brave, even more so in Poland, a country not well known for launching nightclubs of legend. So don't let the name fool you because while the look is good it is far from the cream of the Sopot nightlife crop. Find white leather seating set under curvy canopies, and plenty of neo-industrial touches so beloved by Polish promoters and the hits of the day pumping out of the massive sound system. The location, on the beach in the shadow of the Sofitel Grand Sopot hotel, does it no harm at all and probably explains why its popularity continues to hold despite the opening of new clubs targeting its student clientele in the centre of town. If you've finished studying you'll be happier elsewhere. ▶ Open Sat 17:00 - 05:00 only. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]

Czekolada M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 63/6, tel. (+48) 603 05 66 77, www.klubczekolada.pl. An impressive 2 floor venue featuring DJs and bars on both levels from a group we've come into contact with in other cities around the country. Downstairs, find a lounge area while upstairs expect full-on parties with a more upbeat selection of tunes coming from behind a stage located DJ deck. All the right ingredients to attract a blingy and attractive crowd, and it's the kind of club we could see a Premier League footballer coming to pick up his teammate's girlfriend. Dress up and head into the Multikino cinema complex (ground floor) to see for yourself. ▶ Club is open 22:00-05:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Sun. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]

Dream Club M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 53 (Crooked House), tel. (+48) 605 50 08 00, www.dreamclub.pl. There's wow factor galore inside Dream Club, but unless you take your fashion tips from Maxim and Vogue there's little chance of seeing it. Door selection is tough, and it's going to get even tougher once the tourists turn-up in droves; for lads a logo on the shirt and some sunglasses on your head work miracles, while for girls a pneumatic set of knockers is guaranteed to do the trick. The rewards are ample, with top DJs and an impressive interior consisting of high-back padded leather seating and great big crystal clad columns. ▶ Open Thu, Fri, Sat only 22:00 - 05:00. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]



Ego M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Casino 53 (Crooked House), tel. (+48) 508 50 45 09, www.egoclub.pl. Your classic modern club experience comes with lots of dazzling lights, smoke effects and a crowd glammed up to the nines. Set inside the landmark Crooked House, this and the adjacent clubs pack out at weekends to a mix of dancefloor classics and modern beats. ▶ Open 22:00 - 05:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Sun. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]

Organica L-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 17, tel. (+48) 506 55 66 22, www.organicaclub.pl. In a city full of glitzy new clubs, here is one that sidesteps the glam and image and goes headlong into party. Popular with the local student population who you can see literally falling out of here on weekends, Organica features beer in plastic glasses and a huge, sticky dancefloor where young bucks get to work out their pater in chat-up. It may not be home to those who fill the pages of Polish gossip mags, but the crowd is definitely up for getting the most value that they can out of both their wallets and their bodies. ▶ Open Fri, Sat only 21:00 - 05:00. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]

Soho M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 61, tel. (+48) 58 551 69 27, www.sohosopot.pl. Still as edgy as ever, a Warholesque atmosphere exists between the black walls, with lampshades and disco balls vying for space with thrift store antiques and old copies of Vogue. If you get in, you'll love it, especially now that they've upgraded to three new toilets (eliminating the need for one long, painful unisex line). ▶ Open 18:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 18:00 - 08:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Sun. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]

Spatif M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 54, tel. (+48) 58 550 26 83, www.spatif.sopot.pl. One of the enduring legends of Sopot, though utterly different from the Spatif of old. The design is still the same - eclectic art and an avant garde style - the only thing that's changed is the people who visit. What was once a den of beatniks and thespians has morphed into, dare we say it, the sort of place where plastic comes first; be it plastic boobs or the platinum card. The door policy reflects this, so look like an oligarch if you want to avoid the walk of shame having been shoed away. And, whether you make it in or not, watch for the stairs. ▶ Open 16:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 16:00 - 05:00. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]

Versalka M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 63, tel. (+48) 58 555 30 20, www.versalka.pl. An impressive space, and one that makes use of all the usual details found in your signature modern Polish club: exposed pipes, swivelly plastic bar stools and white leather seats. The crowd like a party but are far less pretentious, and not necessarily as good-looking as say the clientele in Unique, but that makes it all the better for us. The DJ mashes up some classics which keeps the place moving and the bar staff keep the drink flowing over the long bar. Now having had the chance

to settle into itself, Versalka has become one of our favourite late night spots. Beware that things become a lot more civilised on a Tuesday when they put on Jazz nights. ▶ Open 21:00 - 05:00, Tue 20:00 - 24:00, Sun 21:00 - 01:00. Closed Mon, Wed, Thu. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]

Gay Sopot

Club Sixty 9 L-5, ul. Kościuszki 68a, tel. (+48) 792 00 15 92, www.sixty9.pl. Door selection is ruthless, so dress to the nines for the opportunity to mince it up with off-duty stylists and wannabe models. This is one of the few spots around that's gay friendly, and the result is a crowd that to a tee looks like it's auditioning for a boy band. Head down the junction of Kościuszko and 3-go Maja and then round the back of the last house on the right. Presto, you're there. 10z1 after 23:00 on Saturday, otherwise free entry. ▶ Open 18:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 21:00 - 05:00. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]

Wine



Vinoteque Sopot M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 10 (Sheraton Sopot Hotel), tel. (+48) 58 767 19 63, www.sheraton.pl/sopot. We've seen wine bars open aplenty in recent years as the locals

have been bitten by the 'wino' bug. That said this is as original and interesting a place to have come out of that due to the choice of 24 wines available by the glass from a range of over 200 world wines which includes half bottles and magnums as well as rare, hard-to-find and award winning bottles. The fact that they can offer both such a wide and impressive range of wine in 25ml, 75ml or 125ml sizes is due to the Enomatic dispensers the New Zealand owner has pioneered in Poland which keep wines in perfect condition for three weeks allowing guests to sample wines where once the only option was to buy by the (sometimes expensive) bottle. Set in Sopot's underground rotunda, Vinoteque has high tables and lounge seating along with a menu of pastas, cold tapas, Joselito ham with crusty bread and a hot dish of the day - all paired with a glass of wine to match the dish. And if you like what you've discovered there is an adjacent shop where you can pick up the bottle at the same competitive price it sells for in the Wine Express shop in Gdynia. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00. [i] [a] [f] [m] [w]

Cemeteries

Jewish Cemetery L-3, ul. Malczewskiego. Boasting neither the grandiose monuments of the big Polish Jewish cemeteries that survived the war nor the poignant neglect as can be witnessed in the Tri-city's other significantly surviving Jewish cemetery in Chełm, Sopot's Jewish Cemetery is a strange site indeed, still retaining its original walls and entrance gate but having lost most of the monuments inside. Opened in 1913 in a peaceful 0.5 hectare site amidst linden and birch trees that survive to this day, the moss-covered cemetery was the final resting place of many illustrious local Jewish families. The surviving graves with inscriptions in Polish, German, Russian and Hebrew are dated between 1922 and 1936, the year the last person was buried here, and include a rare monument to Jewish soldiers. The sign over the entrance gate reads This is the Gate to God. Partially renovated by the Polish Nissenbaum Foundation, the cemetery is listed as a registered monument and is closed for burial. The cemetery hit the international news recently when some of the stones were vandalised by a Gdansk protest group claiming to be anti-facist and against Israeli policy in Palestine. A hastily prepared banner was placed by Sopot residents apologising for the attack. Find it on the left going up the hill, immediate after the large Catholic Cemetery.

Churches

Garrison Church of St Jerzy (Kościół Garnizonowy p.w. Św. Jerzego) L-4, Pl. Konstytucji 3 Maja, tel. (+48) 58 551 05 48, www.jerzy.sopot.pl. Designed by Louis von Tiedemann of Potsdam between 1899 and 1901 under the patronage of Empress Augusta Victoria (who chipped in 1,000 marks of her own money towards its construction), the Neo-Gothic Garrison Church of St Jerzy stands on the site of Sopot's former market square. Originally Evangelist, the church has been Roman Catholic since Sopot's reincorporation into Poland in 1945. The minimalist whitewashed interior comprises three unremarkable stone and brick naves, some charming modern stained glass and a wooden relief of the Virgin Mary by Zofia Kamińska-Trzczińska, which used to be on board the SS Batory as a token of luck during the war. A Neo-Gothic chapel complete with ceramic roof stands in the square outside. Once a well, the chapel now shelters a rather forlorn-looking statue of St. Adalbert. ▶ Open 07:30 - 19:00, Sun 07:30 - 20:00. No visiting during mass please.

St. Andrew Bobola Church L-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 15. Dating from 1870, this rather plain and austere-looking brick building is a bit of a mystery to say the least, and can usually be found under lock and key if no service is taking place. Sopot's oldest church is notable for its neo-Gothic Ascension of Our Lady chapel, which itself is the oldest chapel in the town.

Monuments

Haffner Monument (Pomnik Haffnera) M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy. A monument to the French doctor (1777 - 1830) who came to Sopot while serving in Napoleon's army. Once the fighting was over, Haffner returned and built a bathing complex, sanatorium and spa as well as the beginnings of Sopot's signature pier. He is widely regarded as the founder of modern Sopot and he died here in 1830.

Museums

Dworek Sierakowskich M-4, ul. Czyżewskiego 12, tel. (+48) 58 551 07 56, www.tps-dworek.pl. A beautifully restored 200-year-old dworek (Polish Manor House) which served as a summer residence for Polish aristocracy in the



18th century. Now serving as a versatile gallery and cultural centre exhibitions change on a regular basis and can cover anything from paintings, sculpture, photography and ceramics as well as playing host to workshops and festivals. The Polish composer Chopin once played here and musical events are held every Thursday evening. Also home to the Młody Byron cafe (see cafes). ▶ Open 12:00 - 19:00. Admission free.

Sopot Museum (Muzeum Sopotu) M-5, ul. Poniatowskiego 8, tel. (+48) 58 551 22 66, www.muzeumsopotu.pl. Occupying a building dating from 1903 this grand seaside villa once belonged to the influential Claaszen family. Now operating as the museum of Sopot this rambling mansion traces both the history of Sopot, and that of the Claaszen family, through a series of photographs, postcards and prints. Many rooms have been left as they were at the start of the century, filled with grandfather clocks, letters and glass cabinets hiding bone china sets and other family possessions. Unfortunately with much of the exhibition in Polish you will leave having gained little if any knowledge. The second floor houses changing art exhibits. Typical of Polish museums, if you arrive in wet weather expect to be given plastic bags to tie around your feet, and do expect to be trailed by over-eager curators. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00, Thu 12:00 - 18:00, Sat, Sun 11:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon. Admission 5/3zł. Thu free. **TC**

Places of interest

Crooked House (Krzywy Domek) M-4, ul. Haffnera 6. Opened in 2004, the award winning, exceedingly higgledy-piggledy building by Polish architects Szotyński Zaleski was inspired by the fairytale illustrations of Jan Marcin Szancer and the drawings of the Swedish artist and Sopot resident Per Dahlberg. Arguably the most photographed object in Sopot, Centrum Rezydent's 4,000m² of luscious curves are topped with a roof of blue-green enamelled shingles designed to give the impression of a dragon. Filled with shops, bars and cafes, the building promises more from the outside than it actually delivers once you've entered. Do as the tourists do and take a souvenir picture before moving onto one of the other choices on the strip.

Esplanade Stretching from the northern side of Sopot to the Gdańsk district of Brzeźno, this combined walking and cycle path runs for 10km alongside sandy beaches and a maze of trees and trails that form a nature reserve. The beach walk is a breath of fresh air after the city's fumes and makes for an enjoyable day.

Old Lighthouse (Stara Latarnia Morska) M-4, Pl. Zdrojowy. Built as part of a grand spa complex at the beginning of the 20th century, Sopot's (M-4) lighthouse was completed in 1904 and is located right next to the pier entrance. A stone spiral staircase takes you to the 25m viewing platform, with a welcoming sofa thoughtfully provided half way up. Of little interest in itself, the lighthouse does at least provide breathtaking views of the coast and the spires of Sopot. The crest over the doorway comprises a mermaid, triton, and the official crest of the city. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00. Admission 4/2zł, groups over 20 people 1.5zł.

Parasolnik L-4, ul. Bohaterow Monte Cassino 31. Officially unveiled in 2000, local artist Tadeusz Foltyn's quirky bronze statue commemorates one of Sopot's more colourful and controversial former inhabitants. Czesław Bulczyński was a circus clown before having a stab at conformity and opening an umbrella shop in Sopot (*parasolnik* means umbrella-maker in Polish), and was often seen about town 'wearing strange outfits' and 'doing extravagant things' before passing away on November 9, 1992.

Pier M-4, www.molo.sopot.pl. Sopot's pier provides stunning views of the sea by day and night. The pier was built in 1827 by a doctor in Napoleon's army and has been renovated several times. At 511m, it's the longest in the Baltic region and the longest wooden pier in Europe (Southend-on-Sea is the longest overall in case you were wondering). A spa garden with rounded pergolas and a fountain marks the entrance to the pier, from which a sandy beach stretches to either side. The pier was re-opened to its full length in July 2011 with the completion of a brand new marina at its tip as well as the construction of a restaurant and a raised viewing platform. ▶ Admission free. **TC**

Sopot Fort (Skansen Archeologiczny Grodzisko) M-3, ul. Haffnera 63, tel. (+48) 502 75 70 14, www.archeologia.pl. Traces of human settlement in the Sopot area date back to the Stone Age, and ancient graves, spearheads and ceramics have all been uncovered in recent years. The most important archeological find however was the unearthing of the remains of a fort, believed to have been used between the 8th and 14th century. Reconstructed in 2000 the current 'castle' is thought to be an exact replica of the one that once stood here. A new museum and didactic pavilion opened in December and offer visitors two exhibitions: "Treasures of medieval Wielkopolska" and "Funeral culture of modern Gdańsk in light of archaeological excavations." Future plans for the new museum include audiovisual descriptions of the ancient history of the Baltic Sea area, workshops for kids (think medieval crafts) and permanent exhibits about Sopot's archaeological monuments. ▶ Open 10:00-16:00. Closed Mon. Admission 8/6zł. **TC**

Tourist information

Tourist Information PTTK Sopot L-4, Al. Niepodległości 771, tel. (+48) 58 551 06 18, www.sopot.pl/pttk. ▶ Open 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Sat, Sun.
Tourist Information Sopot M-4, Pl. Zdrojowy 2, tel. (+48) 58 550 37 83, www.sts.sopot.pl. Brand new info point inside the revamped 'Health House'. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00.

Tour guides

Agnieszka Syroka tel. (+48) 502 55 45 84, www.tourguidegdansk.com. Tailored tours offered in English by a local, fully-qualified guide. ▶ Open 09:00 - 22:00. Prices are negotiable.

Forest Opera

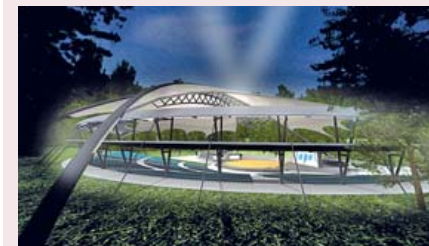


Courtesy of Sopot Museum

Located in a forest valley this open-air amphitheater is one of Poland's top concert venues, certainly it's most picturesque. Home to Poland's and Communist Europe's most famous music festival, host to some of the biggest names in world music and currently receiving a huge makeover it is a key element of the town of Sopot. So what's the story behind it then? Back in 1909 Paul Walther-Schaffer, bandmaster supreme at the music theatre in Gdansk's Coal Market, took a walk Sopot way and stumbled across a big clearing hemmed in by steep hills and old trees. "Wow, great place to hold a concert", he no doubt thought. Mayor of Sopot, Max Woldman, agreed and it wasn't long before a building permit was confirmed. Designed by the bandmaster, and supervised by Paul Püchmüller, construction proceeded at lightning speed, and the finished work was unveiled four months later. Opening night, August 11, 1909, saw 'The Night Camp in Granada' performed, though it was only in the interwar years that the opera finally gained a reputation for top entertainment. That was, thanks in part, to 150th Beethoven Anniversary, a sell-out event which won plaudits from all corners. Not even WWII stopped the show, and while the performances were poor the opera continued to thrive thanks to an appreciative audience made up of soldiers on leave.

The next big step for the Forest Opera came on July 1, 1964. It was then that a giant roof was transported from across Poland to cover the stage. Six days later normal service resumed, this time with Halka being the main draw. Yet more improvements lie around the corner, with a bigger roof and over 1,000 extra seats now being installed, although reports claim this project won't be completed until 2012.

Already considered one of the best acoustic venues in Europe the Forest Opera has seen everyone from Elton John to the Backstreet Boys, though it's during the Sopot Festival it really comes to the fore. Founded in 1961 by Władysław Szpilman – best known as the protagonist in Roman Polanski's Holocaust epic, *The Pianist* – this music festival sees countless names, both big and small, coming together to perform in what is considered one of Poland's finest musical fests.



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For most foreign visitors Gdańsk is the region's calling card but it's Sopot that has been the region's primary attraction for visitors and for the best part of 200 years it was one of Europe's premiere health and spa resorts. As with much of Poland, the city was hit heavily first by the war, then a chronic lack of capital after. But this has all changed with lower Monte Cassino receiving a complete facelift. Central to this multi-million euro development is the latest incarnation of the Resort House (Dom Zdrojowy) which you will find at the head of the pier.

The First Resort House

Although there has been recorded settlement here since 1283, the history of spa in the city can be traced back to the beginning of the 19th century. Attempts were made by the Carl Christoph Wegner, a Gdańsk patrician, to create a resort here right at the start of the 19th century. While his attempt hit a wall, the birth of Sopot (Zoppot, in German) as a spa resort was close to hand. But it took a Frenchman to make it work, namely Jean George Haffner. Having discovered Sopot while moving through Europe as a doctor in Napoleon's army, he returned here after the Russian campaign and became a permanent resident. In 1823, he opened the first Bath House which offered a range of treatments and baths. The first Resort House was opened in 1824, changing rooms added on the beach and a small pier built. This opening gambit was a small, single storied building built perpendicularly to the beach. The Bath House built the year previous offered treatments, while the new building served to become the social HQ for the area with a name for concerts and parties. Haffner died in 1830, but his legacy didn't. Stewardship passed into the hands of the Böttcher family who added another storey to the Resort House, featuring 12 modest hotel rooms, while Haffner himself entered folklore, today revered as the father of modern Sopot.

The Second Resort House

The year 1870 saw a new railway line connecting Sopot with Berlin, hence sparking a stampede for which the town was unable to cope with. The projects of Haffner and Böttcher were simply not able to meet the new demand, and the council stepped in to the rescue. The existing buildings were pulled down, and in their place rose the Second Resort House.

Opened in 1881, this was altogether a larger affair, built with half-timbered walls, filled with brick and ornamented with wooden elements. It moved slightly from its original location and could be found on what is now Powstańców Warszawy Street). A magnificent vestibule took centre



Postcard showing the terrace of the 3rd Health House circa 1915. Courtesy of Sopot Museum

stage, opening onto the restaurants and ballroom, forty hotel rooms were further added, as were spaces for reading, music and billiards. Spacious walking galleries were added in 1895, as were concert arenas, and a magnificent fountain unveiled in 1903.

The Third Resort House

Not content with what they had inherited a new set of civic authorities carried out further renovations to the resort. New complexes of baths were added in 1903 and 1907, and the pier extended by 160m in 1910. The Second Resort House, barely 30 years old, was no longer suitable for the demands placed upon it, and in 1909 it was levelled to the ground and replaced by a third.

Although a competition in 1908 had accepted two designs, these were rejected due to cost and instead Gdansk architect Carl Weber, was handed the task of designing a new Resort House. In tandem with Adolph Bielefeldt and Paul Puchmüller, Weber designed and built the new Resort House which was constructed in record time between September 30th 1909 and 15th June 1910. An impressive complex of buildings surrounding the Resort Square on all four sides, the Resort House was moved slightly to the north to allow the main thoroughfare, Seesstraße (now Monte Cassino) to reach the sea.

The new Resort House was like nothing that had come before, containing snazzy mod-cons like boilers, cold storage rooms and a telephone switchboard. In 1919, and with Sopot now a part of the Free City of Danzig, the famous casino came into being. This was to become the focal point of Sopot, and not too different from the bars and ballrooms immortalized by F. Scott Fitzgerald. And while the Resort House had developed throughout the 19th century so too had the town around it. Sopot was experiencing its golden age, and even during

wartime continued to thrive as the R&R destination of choice for combatants on leave. This was all soon to change.

The precise story as to what happened when the Red Army arrived in March '45 remains murky, though several eye witness accounts suggest both civilians and soldiers alike were chased into the sea by an artillery barrage directed from the hills. What is clear is that after the Soviets entered Sopot on March 23, 1945, the lower end of Seesstraße was levelled. The Resort House was not reconstructed after the war and the ruins were pulled down in 1945-1947. Only a couple of original elements remained - a single storied pavilion in the south-western corner the concert bowl, terraces, fountain and the semi-circular galleries next to the sea.

Damaged glories were knocked down, replaced instead by 60s and 70s monsters, whose horrid number included the avant-garde (it was at the time) Alga building which housed the biggest food outlet on the Baltic. Today you'll find Szyk and Monteka operating from within. Of the other nasty single storey pavilions that shot up, most were knocked down in 2006-2007 to make way for the new development, and are now fondly forgotten as a passing blur from the communist years.

The Fourth Resort House

The latest incarnation includes around it the Sheraton Sopot Hotel, a multiplex, conference centre and an impressive range of bars, cafes and terraces. The development was formally opened to the public on July 18th, 2009, and will leave anyone who remembers Sopot of yore doing a double take. Gone are the shabby pavilions and lego architecture of the 70s, replaced instead with a sparkling development that hasn't foregone the past - the rotunda is a faithful reproduction, while the fountain is a restored original.

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Gdynia history

1253 Gdynia is first mentioned under the name Gdina as a fishing village. The bishop's document which mentions it says that it belonged to Oksywie, the oldest settlement in the area dating from the first half of the 8th century. Today Oksywie is a part of Gdynia.

1362 Gdynia is shown as belonging to the Cistercian Order.

1382 The owner of Gdynia, at this point a man from Rusocin, gives the village to the Carthusian Monks from Kartuzy in Kashubia. The order would retain ownership of the village until the First Partition of Poland in 1772.

1734 The Russian siege sees the village burned to the ground and by the time it is rebuilt towards the end of the 18th century the records show 20 families here.

1904 The village develops as a seaside resort centred around what is today ul. Świętojańska, Pl. Kaszubski, ul. Portowa and ul. Starowiejska

1920 The re-emergence of the Polish state on the world map following the Treaty of Versailles changes Gdynia forever. Poland are awarded access to the sea via a narrow strip of land which is to become known as the Polish corridor. Gdynia sits at the top of this corridor and Gdynia is slated for major development.

1922 September 23rd. The Polish Parliament passes a bill about the building of a major port facility at Gdynia. The village expands rapidly as workers from all over Poland are brought in to help with the construction.

1923 April 29th. The first part of the port is opened by the Polish president Stanisław Wojciechowski. August 13th of that year sees the first ship, the French ship Kentucky, enter the port.

1926 February 10th. Gdynia is granted city rights. At this point the city has 12,000 residents.

1930 The first Polish training ship 'Dar Pomorza' enters the port as the training collage is relocated from Tczew.

1939 By the outbreak of war the city has rapidly grown to the 6th largest in Poland with the 12th largest population of over 120,000 people. **September 1st - 19th** sees a heroic defence of the city. Nazi Germany incorporates Gdynia to the Reich, expels the local population and renames the city Gotehafen.

1945 March 28th. Gdynia is liberated by the Poles fighting alongside the Red Army.

1953 Gdynia is connected to Gdańsk via the SKM light railway system.

1970 December 17th. Following protests against falling living standards, the army opens fire on protesting shipyard workers in order to suppress strikes. There are 18 fatalities. Events on this day will have profound effects on workers for many years to come.

1980 December 17th. A memorial to the Fallen Shipyard workers is unveiled following concessions gained at the neighbouring Gdańsk shipyards in August. The decision to avoid confrontation with the security services by locking themselves into the yards were directly influenced by events in Gdynia in 1970.

1981 Dar Pomorza returns to port for the final time. It is now a museum ship on the waterfront (see what to see)

Today Gdynia has grown to a population of over 248,000, the 12th biggest in Poland, with reputedly one of the highest incomes per head in the country.

In the early 1900s, the residents of Gdynia had no idea that their peaceful little fishing village was about to become a great industrial port.

After the Treaty of Versailles established the Free City of Gdańsk, incorporating Sopot and Gdańsk, Gdynia found itself on the other side of the border in the newly reformed Polish state. Now sitting at the top of the Polish corridor, the stretch of land awarded to Poland to allow it access to the sea, Gdynia was soon slated for major port status. Construction of modern port facilities began on May 21, 1921, and the city hasn't looked back since. After German occupation in WWII, when it was known as Gotehafen, Gdynia was reunited with Sopot and Gdańsk. Today it is a thriving port city with the highest reputed per capita income in Poland. Ignored by most travellers, as it lacks the historical buildings of its neighbours, Gdynia can boast the best restaurants in the Tri-city, an exciting nightlife, a thriving and bustling city centre some beautiful beaches and walks and a small but decent selection of hotels.



Getting to Gdynia

Gdynia is the most northern of the 3 cities and lies 24km north of Gdańsk and 10km north of Sopot. To get here from Gdańsk you should take the local commuter train SKM from Gdańsk Główny (platforms 1-5) and get off at the 15th stop Gdynia Główna. From Sopot you can either take the local commuter train from Sopot (platform 2) or take a trolley bus numbers 31 to Orłowo or 21 to Gdynia Główna from the stop at the junction of ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino and Al. Niepodległości. Alternatively you can travel by taxi which will cost you approximately 100zł from Gdańsk or 30zł from Sopot.

Where to Stay

The choice of hotels is limited but growing. Fortunately the smattering of hotels that Gdynia can boast cover a wide cross-section: from decadent to derelict. All will list their prices in US\$, zloty or Euros. Your bill will be calculated using the exchange rate of the day.

Upmarket

Blick N-1, ul. Jana z Kolna 6, tel. (+48) 58 783 03 00, www.hotelblick.pl. Like something out of the 'Spy who Shagged Me' Hotel Blick comes with a mock 70s style, groovy orange duvets and the kind of plastic seats you'd have found Austin Powers smooching his Pussy Galore. Featuring flatscreen TVs, effective blackout curtains and apple smelling shampoo this is a smart and modern hotel, and your stay is nicely topped off by a team of patient girls happy to help whatever the hour. ▶ 47 rooms (8 singles 200 - 240zł, 35 doubles 280 - 310zł, 4 apartments 400 - 450zł). ★★★

Gdynia 0-1, ul. Armii Krajowej 22, tel. (+48) 58 666 30 40, www.accorhotels.com. An enormous hotel seemingly towering over the nearby Baltic Sea. Although some might say the rooms need extra life, all are clean, comfortable and functional. Ideal for business travellers living out of a suitcase. As befits their business hotel image, the hotel boasts top-mark

conference facilities as well as, rather surprisingly, the best swimming pool in town. Ask for a room with a view. ▶ 294 rooms (64 singles 140 - 250zł, 223 doubles 140 - 250zł, 5 suites 220 - 380zł, 2 apartments 320 - 400zł). Breakfast 35zł. ★★★

Hotel SPA Faltom ul. Grunwaldzka 7, Rumia, tel. (+48) 58 671 57 11, www.hotelfaltom.pl. A sparkling hotel with impressive glass towers attached to the main building, a marble lobby and rooms with peach colours and armchairs. The adjacent recreation centre offers a bowling alley, sauna and water slides in the swimming pool. ▶ 113 rooms (110 singles 310zł, 110 doubles 330zł, 3 apartments 550zł). ★★★

Hotton ul. Św. Piotra 8 (Śródmieście), tel. (+48) 58 760 58 00, www.hotton.pl. Located in and amongst industrial plants and warehouses Hotton has a modern look with stark bedrooms decorated with minimal fuss. Beds feature big, downy duvets, while the soundproofed rooms look onto the ocean outside. An attractive hotel with on-site bowling, two restaurants and bar just five minutes walk from the pier. ▶ 62 rooms (4 singles 199 - 290zł, 52 doubles 269 - 390zł, 3 suites 367 - 540zł, 3 apartments 415 - 610zł). ★★★

Kuracyjny 0-6, Al. Zwycięstwa 255, tel. (+48) 58 667 78 23, www.hotelkuracyjny.pl. A hyper-modern, upmarket venue with a clean and classic aesthetic. Rooms come furnished in rich chocolate and cream colour schemes, and feature the extras one expects from a hotel of this standard. The hotel can also boast a state-of-the-art spa and wellness beauty parlour. ▶ 27 rooms (6 singles 230 - 290zł, 20 doubles 300 - 510zł, 1 apartments 850 - 900zł). ★★★

Nadmorski 0-3, ul. Ejsmonda 2, tel. (+48) 58 667 77 77, www.nadmorski.pl. Perched between the sea and the forest the hillside Nadmorski has a curious alumni: Fatboy Slim, Lauryn Hill and Snoop Dogg have all lodged here, as have a catalogue of other stars performing at the annual Heineken Festival. Other times of the year content yourself to spotting the difference between the corporate crowd and the fitness fanatics. Nadmorski caters for both with equal élan - the conference facilities have a capacity of 350, while on the health side the hotel has a reputation for its spa treatments. Onto the rooms, and you'll find large, bright and modern accommodation that should tick all the right boxes. ▶ 90 rooms (82 singles 495zł, 82 doubles 585zł, 4 triples 675zł, 4 apartments 1199 - 1359zł). ★★★

Willa Lubicz 0-6, ul. Orłowska 43, tel. (+48) 58 668 47 40, www.willalubicz.pl. Built in 1936, Willa Lubicz encapsulates the style and the splendour of Poland's golden age, and you can almost picture the jetsetters of yesteryear arriving to party away their fortunes. Situated within range of the pier, the hotel combines the clean-lined '30s style with modern conveniences: all the spacious rooms come with satellite TV, dataports and minibar. ▶ 16 rooms (13 singles 290 - 390zł, 12 doubles 370 - 440zł, 2 suites 555 - 910zł, 1 apartments 590zł). ★★★

Mid-range

Antares ul. Komandorska 59 (Grabówek), tel. (+48) 58 623 36 39, www.hotelantares.pl. A tidy, spotless hotel featuring furniture that looks like it was unpacked yesterday, and TVs hoisted in the corners of each room. Accommodation comes decorated with easy, neutral colour schemes and if you're here for a conference, then feel free to spill into the cocktail bar after a day looking at flip charts. A few



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Gdynia train station

The Polish rail network is coming in for some much needed investment after years of neglect. While track improvements are on-going (and delay inducing), there is now a massive station modernization program underway which will see 40 stations either modernized or rebuilt at a cost of 980 million zloty over 5 years.




Courtesy of PKP

The original Gdynia Główna station was completed in 1926 as the small village of Gdynia was converted into one of Poland's major cities. Destroyed during World War II, the station you see today was built in the 1950s to a design by Waclaw Tomaszewski and in 2008 was added to the list of historical buildings due to its unique combination of Socialist Realist architecture with the Modernism of the pre-war period.

Projected to cost 41 mln zloty and with a completion date of May 2012, the plan includes removing all the ugly buildings that have sprung up around the once handsome original station. The antique mosaics inside the building will be bought back to their original standard, while the station will be made suitable for the needs of the 21st century traveler with new disabled friendly features including elevators and stairlifts, new electronic ticketing facilities, 24 hour waiting areas and cafes and restaurants. The former collection of burger bars and shops selling knickers have been consigned to history and the hope is that the new station will be one of the country's most modern while retaining its original, unique style.

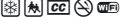
Blofeld


James Bond; roving womanizer, man of mystery and secret agent supreme. But what's he got to do with Gdynia? Absolutely nothing, to be precise. His nemesis does, however. Swivelling in his leather armchair, and never without his trademark Persian pussycat, the evil Blofeld will need no introduction to fans of classic Bond. Fictitious he might be, but don't let that ruin a good yarn. First appearing in Ian Fleming's 1964 novel 'Thunderball' it is revealed that Blofeld was born in Gdynia on May 28, 1908 – sharing the same birth date as his creator. The son of a Polish father and a Greek mother the young Blofeld attended the University of Warsaw, studying economics and political history, before enrolling in Warsaw Polytechnic to read engineering. He was later employed in the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs and dabbled in the Warsaw Stock Exchange. With WWII looming on the horizon he sold Polish military secrets to the Nazis, before destroying all records of his life and fleeing to Turkey. It was while working for Turkish radio that he set up his own intelligence service, and proved what a thoroughly nasty piece of work he was by selling classified information to the highest bidder. With Rommel vanquished on the plains of Africa Blofeld chose to back the Allies, and his sterling work was recognised in the form of several decorations. With the war over he founded SPECTRE, a criminal organization with designs on world domination. Blofeld failed to appear in Fleming's follow-up book, The Spy Who Loved Me, but made a return in 'On Her Majesty's Secret Service'. Here Bond discovers Blofeld living in Switzerland under the pseudonym of Comte de Bleuville. His wicked plan to destroy Britain's agricultural economy is foiled by Bond, but Blofeld has the last laugh by murdering the agent's wife at the end. 'You Only Live Twice' sees 007 reunited with his arch-enemy, this time in Japan where Blofeld is plotting a World War. Bond saves the day, and also takes the ultimate revenge for the death of his spouse by throttling Blofeld. On the silver screen Blofeld first materializes in 'From Russia With Love', and then in 'Thunderball'. His appearance is kept a mystery however, and viewers are only treated to a shot of his face in his third cinematic outing, the 1967 flick 'You Only Live Twice'. Memorably portrayed by Donald Pleasance the megalomaniac carries a facial scar attributed to a fencing injury, and boasts a piranha infested pond used to despatch his enemies. Unlike the book Blofeld survives the ending, and makes a return in the 1969 version of 'On Her Majesty's Secret Service'. Played by a sinister looking Telly Savalas Bond's arch-enemy mimics his literary exploits by killing Bond's missus at the end. He returns two years later, this time played by the rather benign looking Charles Gray in 'Diamonds are Forever', and then ten years later in the opening sequence of 'For Your Eyes Only'. Played by John Hollis, with a voice supplied by Robert Rietty, Bond finally finishes off his adversary by dropping the wheelchair-bound baddie down a factory chimney. But Blofeld returns, and Bond fans can see him played by a rather bland Max von Sydow in 'Never Say Never Again', a rather rubbish 1983 remake of 'Thunderball'. Since then Bond films have been a dime-a-dozen, with villain and rogues aplenty; none however come close to achieving the cult status of Gdynia's most sinister son.

minutes walk from Gdynia Grabówek train station - turn off on ul. Morska at McDonald's taking the second right. ▶55 rooms (15 singles 179 - 199zł, 40 doubles 215 - 239zł, 3 triples 269 - 299zł).  ★★

Biały Dworek ul. Sobieskiego 16, Rumia, tel. (+48) 58 671 08 95, www.bialy-dworek.pl. A remarkable looking neo Baroque villa is the setting for this hotel, and looking at the wedding cake exterior you'd be forgiven for thinking you were about to check into a five star boutique effort. You couldn't be more wrong. These are budget lodgings equipped with stark looking, basically furnished bedrooms that could have been fitted a decade ago. On the positive side each comes with TV and private bathrooms, while the restaurant features the sort of questionable courtly feel you'll find replicated in blocks of flats across Poland. ▶26 rooms (3 singles 120zł, 15 doubles 150zł, 6 triples 180zł, 2 quads 240zł).  ★★


Villa Admiral N-1, ul. 10-go Lutego 29A, tel. (+48) 58 661 20 38, www.admiralvilla.com.pl. A pleasant guesthouse situated in a courtyard just off the main drag. The name alludes to greatness, though in reality the lodgings are no bigger than a cabin boys quarters - leave your case in the centre of the room and you can expect to be show-jumping over it to get to the bathroom. Beds are big and springy - filling most of the room - and lodgings come with cable TV, a basket of toiletries and a big bottle of mineral water. ▶12 rooms (11 singles 190zł, 11 doubles 240zł, 1 suites 280 - 380zł).  ★★

Willa Gdynia 0-4, ul. Kopernika 57, tel. (+48) 58 718 93 76, www.villagdynia.pl. A bit of an off-centre location but a cracking choice for those who don't mind a five minute safari to get to the bars and restaurants. Situated inside a modern detached villa this upmarket residence comes decked out in soft vanilla shades and all the modern trappings required; wifi internet, flatscreen TVs and ultra-modern bathrooms, each which is individually designed. Some rooms come with balconies and all are spacious. The owners describe this as a pension, but we think they are being a little modest and would suggest that this is as close as Gdynia has to a boutique hotel. ▶16 rooms (16 singles 160 - 180zł, 13 doubles 220 - 380zł, 3 triples 350zł).  ★★


Willa Anna N-3, ul. Hetmańska 1, tel. (+48) 58 622 26 00, www.willa-anna.eu. A new-build pension with more than just a passing nod to the nautical art deco style seen in so much of Gdynia's architecture. However, calling this place a pension is nothing less than modesty on behalf of the proprietor; everything about Willa Anna looks and feels the part. The restaurant, replete with canvas sails and posh chinaware looks great, while upstairs rooms come with comfy armchairs, rugs and paintings illustrating Gdynia's seafaring heritage. Book the apartment to benefit from a great, big balcony and a lounge scattered with leather sofas and bookshelves. Guests also benefit from a 50% discount in the nearby Baltic Oasis Spa. ▶7 rooms (3 singles 190zł, 3 doubles 280 - 320zł, 2 triples 360 - 400zł, 1 apartments 600zł).  ★★


Apartments

Sea Towers 0-1, ul. Hryniewickiego 6, tel. (+48) 608 50 23 33, www.seatowers24.pl. A wide selection of top-quality apartments in Gdynia, many of which are located in the towering Sea Towers development overlooking the sea. With the building having been built as one of the most luxurious developments in the country and only completed in the last couple of years, you are certain to find a top apartment


whichever you choose. Our favourite is the 17th floor Nadmorski which comes with a modern look, brand new fittings and an excellent view. ▶30 rooms (30 apartments 299 - 1000zł). Tax 8%. No breakfast served. 

Budget

Baltica 0-1, ul. Dworcowa 11a, tel. (+48) 58 620 92 21. If the overwhelmingly bad scent that assaults your nose when you enter the lobby of Hotel Baltica (the caged birds can't help) isn't enough to keep you from booking a room, then maybe this will: a drunk from the 24-hour liquor-laden store adjoining the hotel made more of an effort to help us than the woman behind the front desk, who claimed she spoke no English and made no move to offer further assistance. You can do much, much better. ▶16 rooms (16 singles 140zł, 12 doubles 160zł). No breakfast served. 

Neptun N-1, ul. Jana z Kolna 8, tel. (+48) 58 712 13 12, www.hotelewam.pl. A two star jaunt with comfortable if plain rooms decorated in boring brown. The bathrooms at least have a little more panache, with mosaic patterns built around the fittings. Decent enough though the proximity of Bliźniak will draw a few green-eyed looks. ▶21 rooms (3 singles 172 - 265zł, 17 doubles 210 - 324zł, 1 apartments 340 - 486zł).  ★★

Hostels

Blues Rooms 0-1, ul. Portowa 9, tel. (+48) 600 92 85 46, www.bluesrooms.pl. An interesting concept: Gdynia's Blues Club has opened its own mini-hostel with four rooms, all outfitted with various numbers and sizes of bunk beds. Each room features a flatscreen TV, fridge, kettle, Wi-Fi and posters of famous blues legends (who doesn't want to wake up to Johnny Cash flipping them off?). Bathrooms are shared, and it's a straightforward no-frills environment in the center of the city. Our only complaint about this refreshingly intimate spot? Check-in begins at 14:00, but the Club - where check-in happens - doesn't open until 15:00, so you might end up tapping your foot on the street. ▶4 rooms (3 singles 70zł, 3 doubles 110zł, 2 triples 135zł, 1 quads 160zł, 1 suites 200zł, 1 Six-person room 240zł). No breakfast served. 

Happy Seven Gdynia N-1, ul. Wójta Radtkego 42, tel. (+48) 58 735 77 06, www.happygdynia.com. The Happy Seven folks successfully expand their Gdansk-based hostelling empire to Gdynia with a new location that will appeal to young travelers not averse to bunk beds and co-ed bathrooms with multiple showers. The space is still under construction - a lounge is in the midst of being created - but what exists so far (a small, serviceable kitchen, clean Ikea-esque rooms) gets the job done. Most importantly, the staff is friendly and eager to offer opinions on the best way to spend time in their city. ▶7 rooms (1 singles 100 - 110zł, 1 doubles 140 - 160zł, 3 quads 250zł, 38 Dorm beds 45 - 50zł). 

Och! Hostel N-2, ul. Świętojańska 85, tel. (+48) 500 31 47 37, www.ochhostel.pl. The receptionist at the new Och Hostel worked so hard to understand English that he broke into a sweat. This seems like a promising standard, and the two-to-six bed rooms all reflect such effort: clean and sparse, Och is perfect for travelers more interested in spending time at the beach than whiling away the hours on their free Wi-Fi (especially since you'd be relegated to your bed as Och has no community/lounge space). The bathrooms are similarly clean and modern, and the location promises easy access to Gdynia's charms. A perfectly satisfactory place to lay your budget-conscious head. ▶8 rooms (3 singles 80 - 100zł, 3 doubles 120zł, 2 apartments 250 - 450zł, 16 Dorm beds 45 - 90zł). 



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Quick Eats

Anker N-2, Al. Piłsudskiego 50, tel. (+48) 58 661 30 77, www.anker.com.pl. Hugely popular and always packed, with the line of locals sometimes reaching out the door. They flock here for 14 types of pizza at bargain prices, not to mention breakfast, soups, salads, goulash, steak and just about anything else you can think of. ▶ Open 07:30 - 22:00, Fri 07:30 - 22:30, Sat 10:00 - 22:30, Sun 11:00 - 22:00. (8-18zł).

KFC ul. Kcyńska 23 (Cisowa), tel. (+48) 71 386 15 30, www.kfc.pl. ▶ Open 09:00 - 23:00. (13-20zł).

Kwadrans 0-1, Skwer Kościuszki 20, tel. (+48) 58 620 15 92. Great toasties and huge cups of tea as well as the usual scrambled eggs and omelettes. ▶ Open 09:00 - 22:00, Sat 10:00 - 22:00, Sun 12:00 - 22:00. (10-20zł).

McDonald's N-6, Al. Zwycięstwa 256, tel. (+48) 58 664 91 05, www.mcdonalds.pl. ▶ Open 08:00 - 23:00. (14-17zł).

Pizza Hut N-1, ul. Świętojańska 36, tel. (+48) 58 661 44 44, www.pizzahut.pl. ▶ Open 10:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 23:00. (15-30zł).

Subway N-1, ul. Wójta Radtkiego 47a, tel. (+48) 58 662 30 40, www.swiezo.pl. ▶ Open 07:30 - 21:30, Sat, Sun 08:30 - 20:30.

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Tokyo Sushi N-1, ul. Mściwoja 9, tel. (+48) 58 669 60 80, www.tokyosushibar.pl. A fine-looking sushi house with a crisp design that includes weird prints, stark colours and toilet entrances covered in oyster shells. The sushi and sashimi choice is exhaustive, and the lunch sets are reasonably priced between 24 and 56 złots. ▶ Open 11:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 23:00, Sun 12:00 - 22:00. (24-65zł).

Mexican

Pueblo N-2, ul. Abrahama 56 (entrance from ul. Władysława IV), tel. (+48) 58 621 60 07, www.restauracjapueblo.com.pl. While most Polish attempts at anything ethnic, particularly Mexican, are rubbish Pueblo bucks the trend by serving top quality burritos, fajitas and nachos. The menu has some new dishes alongside the favourites and this is also one of the best places for a good cocktail that doesn't break the bank. The interior follows the standard formula of adobe walls, sombreros and assorted Mexicana, but is always guaranteed to be buzzing. Good service, even better food and very popular. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00. (26-55zł).

Middle-eastern

Sphinx N-1, ul. 10 Lutego 11, tel. (+48) 58 661 87 95, www.sphinx.pl. You know what you're getting with Sphinx. The Gdynia version is a repeat of the Gdańsk version, which is a repeat of Warsaw which is a repeat of Krakow which is a... You get the drift. Presented by an all-male staff the menu here offers infinite combinations of meat and cabbage, craftily disguised under a mock veneer of Eastern authenticity. ▶ Open 12:00 - 22:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 23:30. (10-50zł).

Pancakes

Cuda Wianki N-1, ul. Abrahama 10, tel. (+48) 505 45 65 21. An excellent little venue offering a range of freshly made pancakes with a range of fillings covering all bases from sweet to savoury. Perfect for a snack, a treat for the kids (they'll love the mixed fruit with whipped cream and chocolate sauce) or even a main meal thanks to the well-priced soups and pancakes with chilli or curry fillings. A bright and modern decor makes this place a popular choice with price conscious locals who know a good deal when they see one. ▶ Open 11:00 - 19:00, Sat 12:00 - 18:00, Sun 12:00 - 17:00. (9-16zł).

Fanaberia Crepes & Cafe N-1, ul. Świętojańska 33/35, tel. (+48) 785 78 17 81, www.nalesnikarnia-fanaberia.pl. A summery looking creperie with a breezy, blue design and windows that fall open to allow maximum sun. The fruit cocktails are great, even better when the asphalt is melting, though the real point of this place are the pancakes, fast being hailed as the best in the city. ▶ Open 10:00 - 21:00, Sun 11:00 - 20:00. (10-18zł).

Polish

Bar Mleczny Słoneczny N-2, ul. Abrahama 58-60 (entrance from ul. Władysława IV), tel. (+48) 58 620 53 16. Keep an eye out for the 'Sunshine Milk Bar' which has been dishing up extremely good value food for over 50 years. They've replaced the 1960's style sign with a new logo in the window but this is still the place to get your fill both of pretty decent food and any nostalgia you may have for the days of the Iron Curtain. ▶ Open 06:30 - 19:00, Sat 09:00 - 16:00. Closed Sun. (4-15zł).

Polonia N-2, ul. Świętojańska 92/94, tel. (+48) 58 620 58 48, www.polonia-gdynia.pl. What European restaurants used to be like: grand and rather formal but not at all stuffy. One of the oldest dining establishments in town, Polonia is very large and ideal for formal gatherings, but almost always empty. ▶ Open 10:00 - 22:00. (28-78zł).

Swojski Smak N-1, ul. Władysława IV 1-5, tel. (+48) 58 621 85 75, www.swojskismak.pl. So the menu isn't as comprehensive as their Gdańsk branch, that's still no reason to give this place a swerve. This peasant themed eatery has all the highlights of local cooking, and should you not fancy tackling the contents of an abattoir by yourself then cast your eyes on the section titled, 'for the not so hungry customer'. And order a fruit compote to go with your meal - they taste a bit yucky at first, so persevere. ▶ Open 12:00 - 20:00, Sat, Sun 13:00 - 19:00. (13-26zł).

W Ogrodach N-2, ul. Władysława IV 49a, tel. (+48) 58 781 53 77, www.wogrodach.pl. An intimate bistro and bar whose imaginative design incorporates murals of country estates with bas relief birds. In addition to the usual meats, soups and salads, the menu has some decent vegetarian meals plus fish and kids' specials. Note that while its kid-friendly, it's a bit small for very young, noisy children. ▶ Open 11:00 - 21:30, Sat, Sun 11:00 - 22:00. (28-49zł).

Vegetarian

Green Way N-1, ul. Abrahama 24, tel. (+48) 58 620 12 53, www.greenway.pl. An exact replica of their Sopot and Gdańsk branches. Healthy eating at budget prices inside a non-descript interior. The locals love it. Also at (N-2), ul. Piłsudskiego 56. ▶ Open 11:00 - 19:00, Sat 11:00 - 18:00, Sun 12:00 - 17:00. (11-15zł).

Vietnamese

A-Dong N-2, Al. Piłsudskiego 36/38, tel. (+48) 58 661 68 70. You'll find several local expat types choosing to take their dinner in A-Dong, which speaks volumes from the quality you can expect from the chef. This is top mark Vietnamese food, which unlike most Polish/Asian efforts actually delivers on the spice front. Regularly packed with lunching business types. ▶ Open 11:00 - 20:00, Sat, Sun 12:00 - 20:00. Closed Mon. (14-26zł).

Good Morning Vietnam N-1, ul. Świętojańska 83a, tel. (+48) 58 711 30 30, www.goodmorningvietnam.pl. Located halfway along Gdynia's main boulevard, ul. Świętojańska, this is one of the best options for ethnic eating in the city. The menu is reasonably concise but offers more than enough for you to something you'll like while prices are pitched in the 20-30zł bracket meaning that there is a constant flow of trade. The restaurant has an eastern feel without going overboard on the paraphernalia and the staff are friendly and prompt. The places biggest plus however is the quality of the ingredients with fresh vegetables while the duck and the chicken were both excellent making this well worth recommending for both quality and value. ▶ Open 12:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 23:30, Sun 12:00 - 22:00. (22-28zł).

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www.restauracjapueblo.com.pl

If you can't afford the cab fare to the more populous and popular Sopot nightspots then Gdynia is ready to step in with a variety of venues that offer a smaller but certainly more unique night out. The bulk of the nightlife is centered around Al. Jana Pawła and Skwer Kosciuszki, which helpfully keeps a variety of pubs and clubs within a short walk of each other.

Bars & Pubs

Barbados N-1, ul. 10-go Lutego 16, tel. (+48) 58 781 97 18, www.barbados.com.pl. If you've visited their Gdańsk location you'll know what to expect – late nights, unremarkable interiors and a safe music policy that favours chart hits. Visit at the weekend when this place quite literally bounces with curvy ladies practising their dance jiggles. ▶ Open 10:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 04:00.

Cafe Strych O-1, Pl. Kaszubski 7b (entrance from ul. Żeromskiego), tel. (+48) 58 620 30 38, www.cafes-trych.pl. This fisherman's cottage is a one in an unique experience and a soothing relief from the sepia blocks outside. Full of shambolic charm the interior presents a cavalcade of antique trinkets and oddities, including muskets, grandfather clocks and dolls with scary glass eyes. On the colder nights the cast-iron stove generates a warming glow which only serves to heighten the atmosphere. One of our favourite places in Gdynia. ▶ Open 14:00 - 01:30.

Coco O-1, ul. Waszyngtona 21, tel. (+48) 58 661 62 00, www.coco.net.pl. Way sexy, Coco lines drinkers up along a narrow bar, where the bartenders are deft in their mixology and the results can lead to clumsy conclusions. Fans include dressy pre-club characters, so do ponder a change of pants before stepping in. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00.

Contrast Cafe O-2, Bulwar Nadmorski, tel. (+48) 503 51 64 01, www.contrastcafe.pl. A seaside cabin decked out to resemble an old ship. It's been done before in Gdynia, but few venues carry it off like Contrast. Each evening this place runs to the clink of the glass and the raucous backing vocals of locals joining in with sea shanty sing-alongs. ▶ Open 10:00 - 02:00, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 03:00.

Cyganeria N-1, ul. 3 Maja 27, tel. (+48) 58 620 77 22. Gdynia's number one 'bar noir' has a heady reputation going back to the days when student revolutionaries would plot the overthrow of the government in here. Now it's the kino crowd who congregate, enjoying the warm ochre tones, sofas and art exhibits; think of this as a step above a university common room. ▶ Open 10:00 - 00:30, Mon 10:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 01:30, Sun 15:00 - 00:30.

Degustatoria Dom Piwa N-2, ul. Świętojańska 130, tel. (+48) 888 34 56 78, www.degustatoria.pl. Hard to find (side alley, down some stairs), but that just adds appeal to this cellar bar – if Aladdin was alcoholic he'd choose this as his cave. Stocking about four million beers, this place has the most comprehensive collection of lager in Poland, with bottles ranging from Spitfire to Satan. It's a laddish bar this, with decorations consisting of beer mats and benches, with our personal highlight being a hardcore Belgian lager called Delirium Tremens: you'll either puke or be nuked. ▶ Open 15:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 15:00 - 01:00, Sun 15:00 - 22:00.

Desdemona N-1, ul. Abrahama 37, tel. (+48) 888 72 54 80. Saddle up to the long copper-plated bar, or else take to one of the tables to drink under the green glow of a bankers light. Always humming with activity, Desdemona is a way of life for the failed playwrights and in-between-job actors who pounce around looking profound. We love it. ▶ Open 12:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 03:00, Sun 16:00 - 01:00.

Donegal N-1, ul. Zgodna 10, tel. (+48) 58 620 46 23. Yellowing photographs of Dublin scenes and vintage Guinness signs hang higgledy-piggledy on the walls, while dusty bottles perch perilously on wood beamed barrels. If ever someone was to open an Irish pub abroad they'd do well to learn from Donegal. But it's not just the face details that are right here, but also the brews – surely a true sign of how Irish an Irish pub really is. ▶ Open 16:00 - 01:00.

Kandelabry O-1, Al. Jana Pawła II 11, tel. (+48) 509 91 98 84, www.kandelabry.com. Kandelabry is not only a staff favourite, it's also the place hostel staff and Gdynians-in-the-know will send you. The chandelier made of a hodge-podge of bottles lights the way to a beery wonderland of impressive imports (the Belgian selection alone has 23 choices) and deeper pulls from Poland than the typical Zywiec and Tyskie options available elsewhere. Dig into a bowl of peanuts with a fresh lager at Kandelabry and you'll easily feel like a local. Bonus for trivia buffs: every Thursday the bar hosts a quiz in English. ▶ Open 16:00 - 23:00, Fri, Sat 11:00 - 02:00.

Klubokawiarnia N-2, ul. Bema 19. A bit of a hidden gem this. Head through the gate to the right of ul. Bema 19, down the steps at the back, give the bell a ring and hopefully you'll be ushered inside this cosy crimson bar replete with its array of peculiarities, many from the People's Republic of Poland. Get a drink from the bar before dropping into one of the mismatched bits of aged furniture to admire the sheer splendour of this cave-like drinking den. A classier crowd than found in most bars in Gdynia, late opening hours and some great music make this place hard to beat. If they let you in that is. ▶ Open 18:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 18:00 - 05:00.

Machina Pub N-1, ul. Władysława IV 11a, tel. (+48) 503 60 04 11, www.machinapub.pl. Well-hidden in the rear of a building across from the fire department, this small, unassuming, underground bar allows you to lounge out over several love seats while sampling the long list of Polish craft brews and smoking wherever you want to. Run by a collection of friendly young locals, Machina does a bit of a chameleon act throughout the week, meaning you never know what you might be stumbling into as the music ranges from chill-out to club anthems, and evening events include film screenings and concerts. It was 'speed dating' during our visit: with a timer that forces participants to rotate partners every five minutes, what initially seems embarrassing could actually be a boon for foreigners, with enough pretty girls in the room to make us regret already being on a date. ▶ Open 18:00 - 01:00, Fri, Sat 18:00 - 03:00.

The Docker's Inn O-1, ul. Waszyngtona 21, tel. (+48) 606 10 61 52. Pubs located in malls don't have to be tragic; unfortunately, The Dockers Inn does not support that statement. What is actually the most convincing Brit-like pub in the tri-city (Rover's Return interior, a red phone box, etc.) turns out to be a triumph of style over substance. The waitress/bartender seemed just as uninterested in serving us as we were in placing an order in this unhappy establishment. ▶ Open 11:30 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 11:30 - 01:00.

Clubs

Bollywood Lounge O-1, Al. Jana Pawła II 9-11, tel. (+48) 58 380 38 39, www.bollywoodlounge.pl. A bar and a club is what Bollywood is popular for, both here and in its sister club in Warsaw, and its collection of sheesha pipes must be the best if not the only in town. There is a pretty wide selection of Indian dishes on offer as well, but it is to party that the locals come in their numbers. A laid back atmosphere, Bollywood films projected onto the wall and a DJ determined to please mean the parties go on long into the night. The adjoining beach makes for an excellent summer chillout zone. ▶ Open 16:00 - 03:00, Fri, Sat 16:00 - 05:00, Sun 12:00 - 03:00.

BooVar Club & Restaurant O-1, ul. Waszyngtona 21, tel. (+48) 58 621 61 61, www.booVar.pl. Plastic and orange, and we're not just talking about the girls who drink here. Kitted out with a mock 70s look there's plenty of bright migraine colours and floral patterns to pre-empt your hangover, as well as the predictable mix of dance hits from the last three decades. A renovation that closes BooVar through December 25 may change this retro vibe. The locals love it, and at weekends you can't move for all the spiky mullets and hourglass figures. Expect to be charged an entry fee of 10-30zl on Fridays and Sundays depending on the kind of event being hosted. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 04:00.

Elypse O-1, ul. Waszyngtona 21, tel. (+48) 58 669 51 15, www.elypse-club.pl. A sexy design using lots of pink, purple and violet colours gives Elypse a real vibrancy, and this has fast assumed status as one of the places to be seen, while the bar glows like a beacon for Gdynia's post-teen set. Bar, club or even restaurant, Elypse has more than one string to its bow. ▶ Open 12:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 12:00 - 05:00.

Kotłownia N-1, ul. 3 Maja 27, tel. (+48) 509 77 21 67, www.kotlownia-klub.pl. Lots of red lighting, red leather upholstery and air-brushed flames on the walls characterise the design of this industrial club space, which has a great set-up with plenty of places to sit and relax or observe the large dance-floor - presided over by the towering DJ booth - a half level down. While the arrangement would be ideal for gladiator-style battles, Kotłownia is mostly full of young kids awkwardly finding their groove for the first time. If your student ID has expired, you'd be wise to head elsewhere; however if you're underage in your home country and looking for a teen dance party in Gdynia, well this is your jackpot. It was Thursday when we dropped in, so note that the opening hours vary to some degree with events. ▶ Open 21:00 - 04:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Sun.

Poklad O-1, Al. Jana Pawła II 11, tel. (+48) 512 12 35 77, www.poklad.pl. Lit with lanterns and candles this pier-side pirate haunt has been built to resemble a galleon, and the timber interiors include knotted ropes and navigational charts. It's nothing edgy, but does at least attract a more low-key crowd than the neighboring disco-din budget bars that line this strip. Now detached from its sister bar Tawerna, Poklad is open for parties or concerts and normally involves a cover charge (except on Thursdays) of 10 zł after 21:00 on Wednesdays and Fridays, and 20zl on Saturdays. ▶ Open 20:00 - 04:00. Closed Mon, Tue, Sun.

Janek Wiśniewski

The shipyard strikes of August 1980, the August Accords that were born out of them and the explosion of membership of Solidarity which subsequently followed have served to mark out Gdansk as the spiritual home of the movement that was to change the face of 20th century central and eastern Europe. And while it is true that it was in Gdansk that the shipyard workers, represented by Lech Walesa, lit the touch-paper that ignited this incredible movement, it is important to know that the events of 1980 were strongly linked to events from 10 years earlier which took place in Gdynia and from which a legend was born. That was the legend of Janek Wiśniewski, a man about whom a famous ballad was written and a film was later made.

It was not by accident that the strikers of 1980 confronted the authorities not face-on but instead by locking themselves into the Lenin Shipyards. Lessons from unrest in 1970 had been learnt and the leaders of the strikes realised that public demonstrations were likely to be met with the full-force of the State's security apparatus. This is exactly what had happened in Gdynia in December 1970 when shipyard workers from there (along with workers from Szczecin, Elbag and Gdansk) demonstrated against sudden price rises and food shortages. The authorities, conscious of the potential of a full-out workers' revolt reacted by sending in armed units of army and militia who opened fire on the protesting workers. Exact numbers of dead and wounded are unclear but it is thought that over 40 people were killed in the wave of protests including one young man who would become known as Janek Wiśniewski. Protestors carried Wiśniewski's body through the streets of Gdynia on a door and this image was to become one of the most striking of the decades of unrest in Poland. The young man had been shot 3 times and his blood-stained body was to become a symbol representing all of the victims of this unrest. The body was actually that of an 18-year old man named Zbigniew Godlewski from nearby Elblag who was employed in the shipyards in Gdynia. At the time the body was being carried through the streets people were still unclear as to his true identity and a local songwriter, Krzysztof Dowigałło, penned a ballad to this unknown victim whom he named with a common name - Janek Wiśniewski. The ballad became a popular protest song and the young man became a legend.

The body of the young man was originally buried in Gdansk Oliwa before his family managed to get it moved to his home-town of Elblag. After the fall of communism streets in both Gdynia and Gdansk were renamed after the fictional character of Janek Wiśniewski while streets in his hometown of Elblag and Zielona Gora, where he spent his childhood holidays, were renamed after the real person of Zbigniew Godlewski. The story of Wiśniewski was told in the 1981 film *Man of Iron* and the events are also retold in the 2011 film *Czarny czwartek* (*Black Thursday*).

The last verse of the *Ballad of Janek Wiśniewski* gives you an idea of the power of the ballad inspired by this young man from Elblag.

*Don't cry mothers, it wasn't for naught
There's a flag with black ribbon over the shipyard
For bread and freedom, and a new Poland
Janek Wiśniewski fell*



Gdynia 1925. Skwer Kosciuszki and the Southern Pier.
© Sławomir Kitowski

Poland as a defined nation had existed in various shapes and sizes from the year 966, its composition being altered over the centuries by wars and alliances before the Prussians, Russians and Austrians succeeded in removing it entirely from the map in 1795 with the 3rd partition. The doughty Poles were not to be defeated, and continued to fight for their own colour on the globe, succeeding finally in regaining independence in 1918 at the end of World War I when the state was recreated at the Treaty of Versailles. The new nation required access to the sea and, having failed to convince the powers to place the important city and port of Gdansk/Danzig under Polish control, the final borders of this new nation instead included a narrow strip of land for Poland along the Baltic Sea coast.

Located between the newly created Free City of Danzig (Gdańsk) and the German province of East Prussia to the east, and West Prussia to the west, this strip of coastline was reached by what was infamously to become known as the "Polish Corridor", an avenue of land connecting the bulk of the country with the sea. The biggest port in this part of the Baltic coast at the time was Danzig, a city with a 900 year history. However many citizens there, as well as the German government who continued to exercise huge influence over the decision making of the Free City rulers, were unsympathetic to the needs of the new Polish state. This was clearly demonstrated when the port of Danzig refused to unload French armaments for Polish forces engaged in the 1920 Polish-Soviet War.

The Polish Government were therefore determined to build a new seaport at the top of the 'corridor' and the place they settled on was the small fishing village, of Gdynia. The development of Gdynia into a major port was seen as critical for the economic independence of the new country and the story of this development was to reflect, not just one of the most incredible building projects of all time, but also the determination of a nation and its people to survive and to flourish in a new era of European history.

The development of Gdynia

Although Gdynia had first appeared in records in 1253 as a small Kashubian fishing village by 1789 it had only increased in size to a settlement of a mere 20 houses. About



ul. Świętojańska and St. Mary's church 1928.
© Sławomir Kitowski

80 years later, as the West Prussian village of Gdingen, it had developed slightly, with a recorded population of around 1200, some restaurants and accommodation for holidaymakers. But it was as part of the new Poland that a plan was put in train in 1920 to transform it utterly, a plan which was accelerated by the passing in the Polish parliament (Sejm) of the *Gdynia Seaport Construction Act* in 1923.

The new port to be carved out of the Baltic coast was to be located in this former fishing village: the Hel Peninsula provided protection from strong winds, the sea in the area was deep and usually free of ice in winter, and an existing railway was just 2 kilometres distant. Under chief port designer Tadeusz Wenda, building of the port began in 1921, but financial problems caused delays and, in 1922, the Polish Parliament decided to light a fire under proceedings. By 1923, Gdynia had a small harbour, a 550-meter long pier and a wooden breakwater, and the port was visited by its first major ocean-going vessel and its first foreign ship, the French *Kentucky*.

In late 1924, the Polish government engaged a French-Polish consortium to build a harbour with a depth of seven meters, and by the following year Gdynia had gained further piers, a railway and cargo-handling equipment. However, work continued at quite a slow pace until 1926 when Polish exports increased during a German-Polish trade war and as a result of a British miners' strike. By late 1930, docks and industrial facilities had been built, and the port was finally connected to the Upper Silesian industrial and coal-producing centres by the newly constructed Polish Coal Trunk Line railway. Poland's first passenger shipping line, from Gdynia to New York, also started up and over subsequent years famous ships like the *MS Batory* and *MS Chrobry* were to link Gdynia with transatlantic locations. The basic plan for port construction was ingenious, consisting of digging out large amounts of land from the coast inland to create a large section of the port, then dumping the spoil from this first stage into the sea at nearby locations. In this way, effectively twice as much port area was created. In a tremendous engineering feat huge concrete blocks were built on the shore and toppled into the water in order to support the new quays and breakwaters.



Building of the port 1926 - 1927. © Sławomir Kitowski

While the port was being constructed, so too was the city. City rights were granted in 1926, at which time Gdynia had around 6,000 inhabitants and the city started to expand quickly with the Polish government alone bringing about 50,000 citizens to the city. By 1939 the population had risen to over 120,000. While the port was built by the state, essentially the city was built by private investors. Small single-storey buildings were initially constructed, then these were demolished by the owners to make way for multi-storey buildings as the city grew and the inhabitants became more prosperous. The project attracted all parts of Polish society to the coast with engineers, construction workers and administrators all relocating from other Polish cities, in particular Warsaw, to take part in this vital national project.

The construction of the basic harbour was completed in 1935 and by 1938 the former fishing village had become the biggest and most modern port and shipyard on the Baltic with almost half of Poland's trade passing through it. Yet, disaster was soon to follow.

The war years

In 1939, at the start of war, German troops occupied Gdynia, the city was renamed *Gotenhafen* and (O-1) Skwer Kosciuszki was renamed *Adolf Hitler Platz*. The Poles brought by their government to the city of Gdynia were expelled and worse, around 12,000, especially the more educated, were executed. The port was turned into a German naval base and the city was also used as a sub-camp of the *Stutthof* concentration camp near Danzig.

When German troops eventually retreated from Gdynia near the end of the War, they succeeded in largely destroying the port, a job then completed by the advancing Red Army, who bombed the port and city, destroying many buildings and equipment, and sank several ships trying to escape through the Baltic Sea: among them the *Wilhelm Gustloff* (see box in Gdynia section), which had served as a floating barracks for naval personnel in Gdynia and whose demise, in which more than nine thousand civilians and personnel died, remains the largest loss of life in a single incident in maritime history.

Post-war history

Having built this port and city from scratch, the post-war Polish state renamed it Gdynia and started the process of making the port once again a major location for importing and exporting. The shipyard produced a large number of ships, many of them for the Soviet Union, but is perhaps best known internationally for the role the shipyard workers played in the formation of the Solidarity trade union. An earlier event, in 1970, which left much bitterness, had seen demonstrating Polish shipyard workers fired on by the police, leaving around 20 people dead. To this day this is one of the more tragic events of the fight against the communist authorities and its memory has been somewhat overlooked by the events of 1980 which saw Gdansk recognised as the spiritual home of the anti-communist fight. This is something which still rankles to this day with the local population who feel that the major contribution and the price paid in human life by the people of Gdynia has been forgotten.

What to see

The city centre is considered to be very well planned, with (N/O-1) ul. 10 Lutego/Skwer Kosciuszki and ul. Starowiejska forming the primary west-east axis and ul. Świętojańska and ul. Abrahama the north-south one. For obvious reasons, don't expect to find an old town here, though there are still some buildings from its days as a small resort. As good a place to start as any is at the City of Gdynia Museum (O-2, ul. Zawiszy Czarnego 1), which will give you a good grounding in the city's story, while the Naval Museum next door, featuring a garden full of weaponry including a rusting MiG fighter, is also worth a visit if you have children in tow.

While the port today is no longer the biggest in the Baltic it is, along with the neighbouring port of Gdańsk, still of vital economic importance to Poland. There are a few different ways to view it. Most picturesque is to take a walk up to one of the viewing points either at the top of Kamienna Góra (O-2, ul. Mickiewicza) or in the Pogórze Górne district (ul. Ksawerego Czernickiego). This is about 15 minutes bus ride from the centre. Take bus 194 from outside the Hala Targowa (N-1, ul. Jana z Kolna) to the last stop to enjoy majestic views over the entire city and the port. It is also recommended to take the local commuter train (SKM) to the Gdynia Stocznia stop to see the poignant memorial to workers murdered during the 1970 strikes. Finally on the port and Solidarity theme keep an eye out for another memorial to the victims of 1970 outside the City Hall building (N-2, Al. Piłsudskiego 52/54).



BGK bank building on ul. 10-go Lutego 1937-1938.
© Sławomir Kitowski

Do look a little deeper as well, for as much of the development of Gdynia took place during the heyday of the modernist architecture movement, there are numerous stylish buildings from that era. The short walk from the main train station to the sea along (N/O-1) ul. 10 Lutego and Skwer Kosciuszki will provide the visitor with several examples of modernist architecture which reflect the city's maritime role, including buildings with portholes, quarterdecks and curved facades to resemble ships.

For example, there is the Polish Ocean Lines building, which now houses the **Tourist Information** office on ul. 10 Lutego (at the junction with N-1, ul. 3 Maja), the Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego residential building around the corner on ul. 3 Maja or, a personal favourite, at the junction of (N-1) ul. Abrahama and ul. Starowiejska. Further on towards the sea there are a former cinema at no. 10-12 Skwer Kosciuszki, and the Gdynia Aquarium building and the Polish Yachtsman's House at numbers 1 and 3 Aleja Jana Pawła II.

If you want to go shopping then ul. Świętojańska is one good place to go, and you will see this architectural style at, for example, no. 68 (Empik bookshop) or no. 122. Alternatively, for something more earthy, the market complex near the train station also dates from this period. Even today, many of the new buildings constructed in or near the city centre – such as the Batory shopping centre (N-1, ul. 10-Lutego 11), pay homage to this era and the city's essential *raison d'être*, the sea.

And as you walk around enjoying this city of 250,000 souls, take a moment to remember that had it not been for the Treaty of Versailles and the Poles' determination to show the world, and in particular their bullying neighbours that they were worth their salt, this place might be something quite different altogether today.

Further reading



Local photographer and historian, Sławomir Kitowski, has published a number of beautiful albums recording various parts of Gdynia and her history. For those interested in seeing more wonderful photographs of the development of Gdynia from fishing village to international port should keep an eye out for these, pick of which is *Gdynia Miasto z Morza i Marzeń (Gdynia - City of the sea and dreams)*, which can be picked up from EMPIK on ul. Świętojańska 68.

Almost everything to see in Gdynia has a salty seaside theme. Lacking Gdańsk's historic sites and the charm of Sopot, the city does at least provide one or two quirky things to see, as well as an absolutely stonking new museum dedicated to the city.

Churches

Church of St. Michael the Archangel (Kościół Św. Michała Archanioła) ul. Arciszewskich 2 (Oksywie), tel. (+48) 58 665 00 63, www.parafia.oksy.net.pl. Originally built by nuns of the Norbertine Order in 1224, this church is now part of museum dedicated to Polish sailors and seafarers. On the northern wall is a plaque engraved with the names of Polish ships that sank during World War II. Also commemorated are Polish naval officers executed by the communists in 1952. The neighbouring graveyard is the resting place of Kashubian activist Antoni Abraham. Find it on the very northern tip of Gdynia, past the ferry harbour. ▶ Open by prior arrangement.

Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Kościół Najświętszego Serca Pana Jezusa) N-1, ul. Armii Krajowej 46, tel. (+48) 58 661 51 92, www.nspjgdynia.pl. Built between 1957 and 1966, this at first glance rather ugly-looking church on closer inspection reveals a story and a beauty that encapsulates so much of the modern Polish religious psyche. A drab concrete exterior betrays a marvel of treats inside, among them Gdańsk artist Bogusław Marszał's extraordinary and colourful mosaics from 1974, including astonishingly large renditions of The Last Supper, The Holy Spirit and The Ten Commandments. Also of interest is the organ, as big as the one in Oliwa Cathedral and the Shipyard Workers' Chapel, allegedly the only one in Poland, and dedicated to the events of December 1970 when the Militia opened fire and killed 18 of Gdynia's shipyard workers as they made their way to work. Of particular interest inside is a blood-stained flag, used to carry the body of the 18-year-old shipworker Janek Wiśniewski (real name Zbigniew Godlewski) through the city's streets. The name Janek Wiśniewski is the Polish equivalent of John Smith, and is the title of a famous ballad of the same name, whose author didn't know the young man's real name. ▶ Open 06:00 - 19:00. No visiting during mass please.

St. Mary's Church N-1, ul. Armii Krajowej 26 (entrance from ul. Świętojańska), tel. (+48) 58 620 05 52, www.nmp-gdynia.pl. Centrally located St. Mary's was completed in 1924, when local residents helped to furnish the new church via donations. The main altar, which was built by a local carpenter, features a large gold three-masted ship to reflect Gdynia's seafaring history. Today the small church is flanked by a bookstore (loaded with Pope John Paul II goods), a newer and more modern church and a primary school, which makes for a lively spot crawling with uniformed students and nuns. The bells at noon are especially vibrant and can be heard as far away as the beach. ▶ Open 06:00 - 18:00.

Tour guide

Agnieszka Syroka, tel. (+48) 502 55 45 84, www.tourguidegdansk.com. Tours offered in English by a certified local tour guide. Tours are prepared to suit the client and should be booked in advance. ▶ Open 09:00 - 22:00. Prices are negotiable.

Monuments

Joseph Conrad Monument O-1, Al. Jana Pawła II 1. The work of Danuta and Zdzisław Koseda and Wawrzyniec Samp, and unveiled in 1976, Gdynia's tribute to Poland's most famous sea-faring author (born Teodor Józef Konrad Korzeniowski, 1857 - 1924), who hailed from Białystok and who as far as anyone can tell had no connections with Gdynia, sits splendidly opposite the city's Oceanographic Museum adding a touch of class to the pleasant concrete spit of land on which it's placed. The delightfully stylised monument is allegedly the only one in the world dedicated to the great man.

Monument to the Victims of December 1970 (Pomnik Ofiar Grudnia 1970) Al. Solidarności. One more monument commemorating the death of 18 year old protestor Zbyszek Godlewski, this one unveiled on December 17, 1980 - the tenth anniversary of Godlewski's death.

Monument to the Victims of December 1970 (Pomnik Ofiar Grudnia 1970) N-2, Al. Piłsudskiego. Designed by Ryszard Semka and unveiled on December 17, 1993, the Monument to the Victims of December 1970 is an impressive 25 metre cross commemorating 18 year old Zbyszek Godlewski, killed during the anti-government shipyard protests which took place on the streets of Gdynia in that year.

Museums

City of Gdynia Museum (Muzeum Miasta Gdyni) O-2, ul. Zawiszy Czarnego 1, tel. (+48) 58 662 09 10, www.muzeumgdynia.pl. Impressively modern and well run, the City of Gdynia museum takes visitors through the chronological history of the town beginning with its origins as a fishing village through its evolution as an important international port during the inter-war years. Displays of fishing shanties and vintage diving suits bring these different periods to life, and photographs of the growing port and the ships that called it home emphasize the city's maritime history. Keepsakes from defunct hotels and old vessels mingle with faded documents and countless Navy uniforms, which can keep visitors wandering for ages. The revolving temporary exhibits are equally as intriguing, including a recent display that recounted the career of popular Polish filmmaker Krzysztof Kieślowski. Around the back of the museum you'll find retired vessels that will become part of the city's Naval Museum when it opens. ▶ Open 10:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon. Admission 7/4zł, Fri free.

Dar Pomorza O-1, Al. Jana Pawła II (Nabrże Pomorskie), tel. (+48) 58 620 23 71, www.cnmr.pl. Reopening on January 17, this three-masted Polish training ship has visited 383 ports and travelled more than 800,000km in her time at sea. Constructed in 1909 in Hamburg to train cadets for the German navy, she was after World War I given to the French who, in turn, gave her to an Englishman in French service. The ship was subsequently bought by the Pomeranian National Fleet. Since 1972 she has taken part in numerous sailing competitions, winning the Cutty Sark Trophy in 1980. A year later she was bestowed the highest Polish State decoration: the order of Polonia Restituta. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00. Closed Mon. Last entrance 30 minutes before closing. Admission 8/4zł. 

Domek Abrahama (Abraham's House) N-1, ul. Starowiejska 30, www.muzeumgdynia.pl. Possibly the smallest museum you'll have the chance to visit, your time spent here is liable to extend to all of fifteen minutes. One of the oldest cottages in Gdynia, this served as home for the Kashubian activist Antoni Abraham from 1920 up until his death in 1923. Fighting for the reincorporation of Pomerania

into the Polish state, a few details of his life have been left in this reasonably fascinating diorama. Among the curiosities are prosthetic limbs, a bed pan under the bed, sewing machines and clunky bits of farming equipment. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00. Closed Mon, Sun. Admission 2/1zł. Guided tours by prior arrangement 10zł.

Gdynia Aquarium (Akwarium Gdynskie) O-1, Al. Jana Pawła II 1, tel. (+48) 58 732 66 01, www.akwarium.gdynia.pl. A perfect post-sunburn hideout or rainy day escape, the Gdynia Aquarium is stuffed with over 1,500 animals spread over 68 different exhibits, and pint-sized guests will delight in seeing every one. New features like the dwarf crocodile - which often can't be bothered to look anything less than dead - keep the exhibits fresh, and children will beg to adopt a frisky Chinese softshell turtle of their own. Exhibits cover marine life from across the globe, like Australian spotted jellyfish and Amazon-dwelling giant arapaima, but also delve into the evolution of submersible technology through the decades. The third floor Baltic Room is devoted to understanding the sea literally right outside the Aquarium's windows, but a history of the sea will take a backseat to the giant 44 kg cod - the largest creature ever caught in the Baltic - dangling over your head. English placards are spotty at best, so parents be prepared to make up origins for the colorful tomato clownfish and the pancake-like moonfish. A large open-air deck offers the idea place to take in aquatic views and have a snack. ▶ Open 10:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon. From March open 10:00 - 17:00. From April open 09:00 - 19:00. Admission 24/16zł.

Motor Museum (Muzeum Motoryzacji) ul. Żwirowa 2c (Chylonia), tel. (+48) 58 663 87 40, www.gdynskie-muzeum-motoryzacji.pl. A real labour of love this place. The owner first started collecting old motor bikes when he was 8, saving the money he should have been spending on his school lunch to pay for them. Since then his passion has not waned and following his studies at mechanics school and with the help of the local government and some private sponsors he has now managed to put this collection together which he now displays to the public. On show a collection of vintage motor-bikes, sidecars, cars and a classic Mercedes-Benz. ▶ Open 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Sun. Admission 7/3zł.

Naval Museum (Muzeum Marynarki Wojennej) O-2, ul. Zawiszy Czarnego 1b, tel. (+48) 58 626 39 84, www.muzeummw.pl. The large front doors of the modern building on the seafront that promises a wealth of fascinating sights and sensations for visitors continues to remain locked and despite earlier assurances that it would open shortly, and the latest gossip suggests entrance will be no earlier than summer 2012. Even the jumbled collection of arms, cannons, medieval gun carriages, planes, helicopters and submarines from early Slavic times to WWII in the museum's back garden cannot be visited until April or May. Of note (when they reopen) are 18th century cannons, shells from the Schleswig-Holstein (the ship that kicked off WWII), and a canon recovered from a German U-boat sunk in Gdynia harbour in 1945. We'll be back to see how this long awaited addition to Gdynia's sight-seeing options stacks up before the summer issue. ▶ Open 10:00 - 17:00. Closed Mon. Last entrance 30 minutes before closing. Admission 4/2zł. Tue free.

Tourist information

Tourist Information Center N-1, ul. 10 Lutego 24, tel. (+48) 58 622 37 66, www.gdyniaturystyczna.pl. ▶ Open 09:00 - 17:00, Sat 09:00 - 15:00. Closed Sun.

Błyskawica

Błyskawica O-1, Skwer Kościuski 12, tel. (+48) 58 626 36 58, www.navy.mw.mil.pl. With the Treaty of Versailles a done deal Poland found itself a nation state once more, granted access to the sea via what was to become the infamous 'Polish Corridor'. For the first time in a century Poland had coastline and her own waters, the only thing



missing was a navy to guard it. Polish defensive bods designed a new fast attack class of destroyer, and the tender was won by the JS White firm based in Cowes on the Isle of Wight. Their s.p was to build two such destroyers, the Błyskawica (Lightning), and a sister ship, ORP Grom (Thunder). A fledgling navy it might have been, but this pair were no laughing matter. Measuring 114 metres in length, weighing 2,782 tonnes and powered by turbines rated at 54,000hp, these were to become the fastest destroyers in the world when launched in 1936. Armed to the teeth and boasting a top speed of 39 knots the two were to serve a dual purpose: both as fast surface attack craft and submarine chasers. Both boats were spirited to England on the eve of war as part of the Peking Plan, and from there on the Polish craft came under the command of the British Royal Navy. Based in Cowes the Błyskawica saw action several times, including in the Mediterranean, Normandy and as an Atlantic convoy escort. However, her finest moment was to come in Cowes. Captained by Wojciech Francki, it was on the night of the 4th May 1942 that the British town came under attack from up to 160 Luftwaffe bombers. Anticipating an attack Capt. Francki had sneakily ensured the Błyskawica was well-armed, despite a ruling stating the vessel should have been decommissioned while in port. In a further breach of regulations Francki ordered his crew to fight off the waves of bombers, and what followed was a ferocious battle between sea and air - such was the rate the boats guns were firing the crew were compelled to continually douse them with seawater in a bid to cool them. The heroic defence and the smokescreen that was lit was enough to thwart the Luftwaffe, and the captain and crew were hailed as the 'saviours of Cowes'. Less forthcoming in their recognition were the pedants in the British Admiralty; conscious of condoning a blatant violation of the rules they sent a tight-lipped dispatch commending the good work done by Francki. At the end of the war the Błyskawica returned to Poland, though without its captain and many of its crew. Francki chose a new life in Australia, away from the suspicions and hostility of the new communist government, and it was a lead followed by many of his ratings. In 2004 the actions of the Błyskawica were formally acknowledged, and a plaque unveiled in the port of Cowes by Francki's daughter. The ship itself was retired from service in 1969, and has since served as a museum ship held in the sort of regard the Brits reserve for the HMS Victory. It's the only boat to be awarded Poland's highest military decoration, the Gold Cross of the Virtuti Militari Order, and other points of interest include a three barrelled torpedo launcher, a torpedo cross section, scale models, weapons and uniforms. Currently Błyskawica is unavailable for viewing because it has been returned to the shipyard for renovation. It is expected to return in May 2012.

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Bowling

Aquapark Bowling M-2, ul. Zamkowa Góra 3-5, Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 555 85 46, www.aquaparksopot.pl. Part of the Aqua Park complex, available are six lanes as well as the adjacent pool and waterpark. Also of note is the Pick & Roll restaurant/bar which offers a good range of classic American style food in modern sports bar surroundings. ▶ Open 16:00 - 22:00, Fri 16:00 - 24:00, Sat 12:00 - 24:00, Sun 12:00 - 22:00. Closed Mon. Price for one hour game 40-55 zł.

Centrum U7 Gdańsk C-3, Pl. Dominikański 7, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 305 55 77, www.u7.pl. Bowling alley and pool hall. ▶ Open 10:00 - 24:00, Fri, Sat 10:00 - 01:00. **TC**

Fitness Clubs & Gyms

Baltic Oasis 0-4, ul. Kopernika 71, Gdynia, tel. (+48) 58 622 33 79, www.balticoasis.gd.pl. Baltic Oasis are tucked away in Gdynia but have a wide range of fitness and beauty services available including a complex fitness centre, professional gym, cardio-fitness studio, aerobic studio, cycling studio, soft-gym studio, 2 squash courts, a swimming pool with jacuzzi, baths and sauna. Also on hand are professional trainers, and a beauty salon. ▶ Open 07:00 - 22:00, Sat 09:00 - 20:00, Sun 09:00 - 14:00.

Kolaseum Premium Life F-4, Al. Grunwaldzka 141 (Galeria Bałtycka), Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 345 22 76, www.kolaseum.pl. Find one of the city's best gyms located on the uppermost level of the Galeria Bałtycka shopping mall which offers brand new equipment and friendly, English-speaking personal trainers who are available to give advice, support or create personal training programs for you. ▶ Open 07:00 - 22:00, Sat 09:00 - 20:00, Sun 10:00 - 18:00.

Kolaseum Sopot Fitness L-5, Al. Niepodległości 697-701, Sopot, tel. (+48) 503 12 61 22, www.kolaseum.pl. A brand new gym close to the centre of Sopot located on the main Gdansk-Gdynia road. Find friendly English-speaking trainers who can offer personal training programs and advice. A wide range of sparkling new training equipment is available and the gym is available to walk-ins if you are here for a short time. ▶ Open 07:00 - 22:00, Sat 09:00 - 20:00, Sun 09:00 - 17:00.

Go-carting

Kart Center Arena L-5, ul. Beniewskiego 5 (entrance from ul. Droszyńskiego), tel. (+48) 692 27 79 78, www.kartcenter.pl. The people behind the Tri-city's best outdoor track have moved their nippy little carts indoors to hall 3 of the Gdansk International Trade Fair complex. Featuring a 420m track, a 30m bridge, electronic timing and imported safety barriers you can expect them to be here until at least mid-February, maybe even as late as April. Depending on the weather you can also race outdoors at their track in Sopot from around mid-March. It is strongly advised that you call ahead to check availability and to make a reservation. ▶ Open 09:00 - 23:00. Race sessions last approx. 8 mins. Adults 30-35zł. Children 25zł.

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Basketball



Basketball is a very popular sport in Poland particularly in the north where the country's biggest club Prokom Asseco Gdynia is based. There is a serious rivalry with neighbouring, top division side Trefl Sopot. For many years Sopot

were the home of Prokom and perennial champions as well as competitors in the Euroleague. That all changed when Prokom upped sticks and moved north so expect a hot atmosphere when these two clubs meet in the second stage of the league from February onwards. Before then while Sopot battle in the Polish league, Gdynia will see out their Euroleague fixtures before returning to Polish league action in February. You can find when and who each team is playing by visiting our website. Both clubs play their games in brand new arenas and even though tickets are very competitively priced you'll see some top players including a number who have moved here from the NBA.

Asseco Prokom Gdynia ul. Kazimierza Górskiego 8, Gdynia (Redłowo), tel. (+48) 58 628 88 22, www.asseco.prokom.pl. ▶ Open hours depending on matches schedule.

Trefl Sopot ul. Władysława Łokietka 61 (Ergo Arena), Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 551 09 45, www.sport.trefl.com.

Kart Center L-5, ul. 3 Maja 69c, Sopot, tel. (+48) 692 27 79 78, www.kartcenter.pl. Phone ahead to check availability, and note that the Sopot location is closed until March. ▶ Open 14:00 - 21:00. Sat, Sun 10:00-23:00. **TC**

Ice skating

City Skating Rink I-3, Plac Zebrań Ludowych, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 341 69 64. Located in a huge bubble just outside the Old Town in the shadow of that huge cross. It's 7/10zł for an hour with sessions starting every 90 minutes, and if you've made the mistake of travelling without your skates - silly you - then you can rent some out for 7zł. Family tickets (2 adults & 2 kids), 25zł. Open until the end of February. ▶ Open 14:30 - 20:30, Sat, Sun 11:30 - 20:30.

Hala Olivia Skating Rink (Lodowisko Hala Olivia) Al. Grunwaldzka 470, Gdańsk (Olivia), tel. (+48) 58 552 20 91. Go skate at the home of the local ice hockey team and the place where Solidarity held their landmark convention in 1980 which saw Lech Walesa become their leader. One-hour skating sessions separated by half-hour breaks. ▶ Open 10:30 - 19:30. Closed Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri. 10zł per hour, a 5 entrance pass costs 50zł and a 10 entrance pass 90zł. Open until the end of March or, if you're lucky, the beginning of April.

Sopot Pier Skating Rink M-4, by entrance to Sopot Pier, Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 551 00 02. Open from December 25-March 4, this 35x18m outdoor skating rink can hold up to 100 people and is located right at the foot of Sopot pier. ▶ Open 16:00 - 20:00, Sat, Sun 11:30 - 20:00. Admission for 1hr 5zł, Sat and Sun 8zł. Skate rental 5zł. Helmet 6zł.

Lechia Gdańsk

Lechia Gdańsk H-4, PGE Arena, ul. Pokoleń Lechii Gdańsk 1 (Letnica), tel. (+48) 58 345 21 87, www.lechia.pl. Supporters wishing to catch a game will get to see the wonderful new Gdansk PGE Arena, home to Lechia Gdansk. The best tickets in the main stands are priced at 65zł in sectors 3 and 28 or 100zł in sectors 1 and 2. In Your Pocket recommends heading for sectors 15 or 16 where you will have view, atmosphere and safety with prices a more palatable 45zł. In order to buy a ticket you will need to buy a Supporter's Card (Karta Kibicka) for 10zł and these should be purchased in advance at one of the Fan Shops (Galeria Bałtycka has one) where you'll need to show your passport or driving licence. Getting to the arena is not as straightforward as you might think. With construction of access routes still ongoing you are advised to jump in a taxi from central Gdansk and this will set you back 20-30zł. By public transport from the main station take the SKM train to Gdansk Politechnika (2nd stop) where a special bus T4 will take you to the stadium from the stop directly outside. The first two games in the schedule are confirmed dates while the rest will be decided two weeks before each match:

December 02 - Polonia Warszawa
December 11 - Jagiellonia Białystok
March 02-05 - Wisła Kraków
March 16-19 - Korona Kielce
March 23-26 - Podbeskidzie Bielsko Biala
April 06-09 - Zagłębie Lubin
April 20-23 - Śląsk Wrocław

Kid's fun

Centrum Nauki Experyment N-4, Al. Zwycięstwa 96/98, Gdynia, tel. (+48) 58 735 11 37, www.experyment.gdynia.pl. A rather small but nonetheless fun distraction for the kids on a day when the weather has driven you inside. Following the path laid by similar places around the world. Experyment is the kind of place which encourages you to learn about the world around you by pushing, pulling, jumping and experiencing rather than simply looking. Learn how and why different phenomena in our everyday lives work thanks to the English translations that can be found on rotating blocks next to each exhibit including the opportunity to understand blue screen technology by presenting the weather on TV. The rather good Eureka restaurant can be found on level -1 in the adjacent building. ▶ Open 10:00 - 16:00, Wed 10:00 - 20:00. Closed Mon. Admission 6/3zł, from January prices increase to 8/4zł. **TC**

Dinosaur Park ul. Karwieńska 3, Gdańsk (Oliwa Zoo), tel. (+48) 509 82 26 57, www.malpijar.pl. Set in the woodland of Gdansk Zoo, you'll find a dinosaur park featuring all your favourite dinos hiding amongst the tress. ▶ Open 09:00-15:00. By prior arrangement. Admission 6/4zł, family ticket 15zł.

Gdańsk Zoo ul. Karwieńska 3, Gdańsk (Oliwa), tel. (+48) 58 552 17 51, www.zoo.gd.pl. One of Poland's best zoos, set in the forests of Oliwa and at a fraction of the price of visiting a western zoo. On show are a host of wild animals with the kids' favourites being the elephants, hippos and chimpanzees. The zoo has invested a lot in recent years in updating the animals' accommodation and the monkeys and zebras have both benefited in recent years from investment in new spacious enclosures and more recently the zoo's two bears have finally been relocated to a brand new enclosure next to the tigers. The addition of 4 giraffes recently in a new giraffe/zebra enclosure is the result of years of donations from zoo patrons. On a pleasant day it is quite possible to spend most of the day here as the park makes for a pleasant and quite exhausting walk and there are additional attractions such as staggered feeding times, a train tour of the whole park, a dinosaur park and a central food area with some small kids' rides. There is also stuff for the grown-ups with a really challenging high ropes course which also offers one for the kids. In addition to the cheap fast food outlets in the zoo, the nearby Oliwa district offers a couple of very decent food and drink options including the city's best pizzas at Margherita Pizza and more upmarket dining at Palac Opatów (the Abbot's Palace) in Oliwa Park. Both of these places are in the shadow of the beautiful Oliwa cathedral. Bus N°222 runs from the Oliwa Petla stop all the way to the front gate. ▶ Open 09:00-15:00. Last entrance 60 minutes before closing. Admission 15/7,5zł. **TC**

Loopy's World Al. Grunwaldzka 229, Gdańsk (Oliwa), tel. (+48) 58 347 73 10, www.loopysworld.pl. A Swedish-born chain of entertainment centres aimed specifically at kids aged 12 and under. This place is as mad as they come, with features including electric cars, mini-basketball, penalty shootouts, slides, trampolines and even a train. The new face of playgrounds, and the sort of place that has you wishing you were a nipper. ▶ Open 10:00 - 20:00, Fri 10:00 - 21:00, Sat 09:00 - 21:00.

Skiing

Lysa Góra (Lysa Hill) ul. Herberta 9, Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 555 78 25, www.lysa-gora.pl. One ski-tow, nightlights, perfect for beginners. Also good for sledging or just having mulled wine in the chalet. Open only when there's snow on the ground. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00. **TC**

Wieżycza Kotlinka ul. Górska 3, Wieżycza, tel. (+48) 58 684 39 07, www.wiezyczakotlinka.pl. Ski rental and sledging, with bonfires organized at nightfall. ▶ Open 09:00 - 22:00, Sat, Sun 08:00 - 22:00.

Zielona Brama ul. Gdańska 26, Przywidz, tel. (+48) 509 87 07 05, www.nartyprzywidz.com.pl. While northern Poland is hardly the Alps there are opportunities to go skiing in the countryside surrounding Gdansk. Located about 30km south-west of Gdansk you'll find one of the biggest ski lifts in the whole of Pomerania. On offer are skiing lessons, ski rental, snow-tubing (sliding down a hill on an inflatable rubber tube) and sleigh rides. ▶ Open 10:00 - 22:00, Sat, Sun 09:00 - 22:00. A 60 minute **ski lesson** costs from 60zł per person (45zł per person for 2 people, 35zł for 3, 30zł for 4-5 people)

Big ski lift : one lift 1,80/1,50zł. Time tickets for 1hr: 09:00 - 16:00 - 65/50zł, 16:00 - 22:00 55/45zł, all day ticket (9:00 - 22:00) 75/65zł.

Baby lift: one lift 1zł, carnet of 11 lifts 10zł. Snowtubing 1 ride 2zł, carnet (11 rides) 20zł

Sleigh rides cost 10zł/child, 15zł/adult. for an hour long ride with tea included.

Ski rental costs 20zł/2hrs and 5zł for every additional hour.


Snowboard rental costs 30zł/2hrs, every next 5zł and 5zł for every additional hour.

Sleigh rides

If you've come from a country where the 'Fun police' and litigation have killed a lot of the fun you remember having as a child you're likely to love this. Great fun during the day with the kids or great fun in the evening with vodka, you can go sledging through the countryside on one of the horse drawn sleighs with bonfires organised mid journey. Those who would like a little extra excitement should sit themselves down on one of the small wooden sledges tied to the back of the sleigh and try to stay on. You're pretty much guaranteed to fall off, sometimes at speed, but we love it. Bring something to drink. Bring sausages. Your driver will make the fire for you and then bring you back. Prices and lengths of trip are for you to negotiate with one of the drivers waiting for your business in the centre of the village of Szymbark found about 45km from Gdansk, but you should expect to pay around 20zł per person.

Kolano Stables (Stadnina Kolano) Kolano 74, Wieżycza (Kashubia), tel. (+48) 58 684 38 93, www.stadninakolano.pl. Two horses pull one big carriage through the shadowy Kashubian woods. Sausages, hot drinks and a bonfire are the bonus, as well as the opportunity to see the world's longest wooden plank in Szymbark (really). Night-time rides are also available with torches. Organisers speak English and German. Price per person is around 15zł; 20zł Sat and Sun; 25zł at night. But to enjoy this, you'll need to raise a group of ten or more.

Tabun Otomin, ul. Konna 29 (7km from the centre of Gdańsk), tel. (+48) 58 303 97 10, www.tabun.kuznia.net. Horse-drawn sleigh rides.



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Grand SPA by Algoterm M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 12/14 (Sofitel Grand Sopot Hotel), Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 520 60 85, www.sofitel-grand-sopot.com. Find a wide range of Sopot spa treatments in the luxurious surroundings of Sopot's signature Grand Hotel, overlooking the gardens and beach. Also available are a hammam, sauna, gym and swimming pool. ▶ Open 09:00 - 22:00.

Hotel Haffner Spa M-3, ul. Haffnera 59, Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 550 98 53, www.hotelhaffner.pl. Located in the plush Haffner Hotel a range of spa and beauty treatments are available for guests and non-guests. Included in their offer are facials at 70zł, massages at 150zł as well as Kanebo and Babor face and body treatments with prices starting from 200zł. Haffner also has a pool, weight room and sauna available. ▶ Swimming pool 07:00-22:00. Treatments 09:00-20:00 by prior reservation.

Jacques André B-3, ul. Elżbietańska 9/10, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 682 06 63, www.jandre.pl. Also at Al. Grunwaldzka 141, Gdańsk (F-4, Galeria Bałtycka) and ul. Schuberta 102a, Gdańsk (Carrefour, Morena). ▶ Open 09:00 - 20:00, Sat 09:00 - 17:00. Closed Sun.

The Spa at Sheraton Sopot M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 10, Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 767 19 00, www.sheratonsopotspa.pl. The finest spa in Sopot, possibly Poland. Featuring select Anne Sémonin treatments pleasures that await include a dazzling swimming pool, Finnish sauna, steam room and a comprehensive range of massage therapies. For the full low-down check our dedicated spa feature. ▶ Swimming Pool & Fitness Open 07:00-22:00 (Pool

for children under 16 11:00-18:00). The Spa experience (saunas, hammam, hydrotherapy pool, rasul) Open 09:00-22:00. All other therapies and treatments Open 10:00-22:00. Spa closed every first Monday of the month.

TUI-NA Spa 0-2, ul. Armii Wojska Polskiego 30/1, tel. (+48) 58 620 16 60, www.tuinaspasopot.pl. ▶ Open 11:00 - 21:00. Closed Sun.

Swimming

Aquapark M-2, ul. Zamkowa Góra 3-5, Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 555 85 55, www.aquaparksopot.pl. One of the best water parks in Poland and found just off the main Gdańsk-Sopot-Gdynia road (nearest train station Kamienny Potok) the complex consists of a three-lane, 25m long pool set aside for those wishing to swim lengths in peace, a recreational swimming pool featuring cascades and a water grotto and a pool specially designed for children featuring slides, geysers and water cannons. A seasonal outdoor pool with slides and climbing frames is also open during the summer. And that's not all. Also find saunas and steam rooms, a six-lane bowling alley, a 'wet bar' in the swimming area and a Wild River. The recommended Pick & Roll restaurant can be found opening out on the gardens next door. Adults will appreciate the Thai massages now available in a number of styles (classic, aromatherapy, hot coconut oil, etc). ▶ Open 08:00 - 22:00. 15zł/hr Every additional minute 0.30zł. Day tickets: Mon - Fri 45zł, Sun, Sat 50zł. Many discounts often available. **TC**

Gdynia Hotel 0-1, ul. Armii Krajowej 22, tel. (+48) 58 666 28 87. A 25 metre pool found inside the Hotel Gdynia which is available to non-guests as well. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00. Admission Mon-Fri 12/9, 50zł per hour; Sat, Sun 12/7, 70zł per hour.

Euro 2012 In Your Pocket

With the 16 Euro 2012 finalists now knowing where it is they will be playing in Poland and Ukraine, there has never been a better time to check out In Your Pocket's guides to the host cities. With over 20 years of experience in writing guides to the rapidly changing central European region we have all the most important information you might need to plan your trip.

As the tournament approaches we will continually update all our information and keep you up to date on what's happening in each of the host cities – Warsaw, Gdansk, Poznan and Wroclaw in Poland and Kiev, Donetsk, Kharkiv and Lviv in Ukraine via our colleagues there.

The tournament promises to be a landmark event in the history of both nations while the visiting fan is promised a fascinating experience quite different from those you may have had at previous tournaments. In Your Pocket knows these countries like no other travel guide publisher. Let us help to make your visit as simple to organise and as enjoyable as possible once you are here.

The full Gdansk In Your Pocket guide can be downloaded in PDF format for free and there is also an iPhone app available on the AppStore.

Gdansk In Your Pocket is also active on Twitter (@GdanskYP) or find our Gdansk In Your Pocket page on Facebook. Feel free to ask us any question you like about Gdansk



and the traditionally hospitable people of Poland are well prepared to show their hosting capabilities for Europe's biggest football event.

While much of the news coming out of Poland is good at the moment – especially compared with other countries in the Eurozone – there are still a number of issues the country has had to tackle. As you might imagine from a country of over 300,000 square kilometres that is attempting a complete overhaul of its dated infrastructure, there are plenty of issues that fans should be aware of in advance.

Getting here

While getting to Poland will be a far simpler affair than getting to the Ukraine, navigating your travel to the country requires some forethought. For example, **Ryanair** does not fly to Warsaw from anywhere while until recently domestic flights in Poland could only be booked with **LOT Polish Airlines** and meant always being routed through its Warsaw hub. All things considered your best bet is to book flights to Poland well in advance. In addition to budget carrier Ryanair you will also find **Wizzair**, who serve all four Polish host cities from various cities around Europe. Poland's national carrier, the aforementioned LOT, has a number of direct routes to Poland from major European cities and is also a member of Star Alliance, which adds to your potential flight options. We recommend looking at the game schedules and searching for flights between host cities for the easiest transport. **EuroLOT** and **OLTJetair** now also fly some domestic routes direct, with new routes being introduced all the time. Fans are advised to look at the various carriers in the coming months to book flights as a time-saving transport plan for getting between cities for the games.

Gdansk itself

Football fans fortunate enough to draw the Tri-Cities will get to experience three times the fun of any other location thanks to the cities' sandy beaches on the Baltic, Sopot's great nightlife and the longest wooden pier in Europe, and Gdansk's stunning Old Town and impressive historical sites.

While all of Poland's stadia are very impressive Gdansk's, designed to look like a glowing piece of Baltic amber at night, is the jewel in the crown. The completely new 44,000-seater stadium named the PGE Arena Gdansk was finally handed over to the authorities in July 2011 ahead of an official opening game against the mighty Germans on September 6th which ended in a nail-biting 2-2 draw (the Poles have not beaten their neighbours in 14 attempts and were only foiled here when the Germans equalised with the last kick of the game).

With a football history that's far from illustrious, Gdansk was seen by many as something of a surprise inclusion among the host cities, yet this could well turn out to be the best stadium of the lot. Due to host three group games and a quarter final the PGE Arena has been built in the previously rundown Letnica district. 'Wow', was UEFA head Michel Platini's first reaction on viewing the construction, and the 620 million zloty project is due to be the centre piece of the area's full redevelopment. 'I must praise the city president and all involved for an amazing project, not only of the stadium itself but also of the revitalisation of the neighbourhood,' said Platini, 'the tournament lasts only three weeks, but the infrastructure will serve for 40-50 years'.

The local residents are not the only ones to benefit from Poland's selection as EURO 2012 host. Local club **Lechia Gdansk** have moved into the new stadium taking them from their run-down 12,000 stadium in ul. Traugutta to one of the continent's most modern stadiums. The potential for football in this region, and for Lechia's ability as a top division side to tap into this, has led many locals to predict a glowing future for the club.

You can check for yourself on www.en.euro.gdansk.gda.pl or on www.bieg2012.pl or better still take a trip out to the stadium to watch Lechia Gdansk play there once the season restarts after the winter break in February.

Getting around

Getting around the country to catch games at more than one of these stadiums during your stay in Poland may cause some problems. Major road and rail construction is ongoing, and we can confidently say all the work won't be completed on time. Add to that the strange composition of the groups, with Wroclaw/Poznan and Warsaw/Gdansk far more natural partners in terms of infrastructure available and distances that will have to be covered than the actual groupings of Warsaw/Wroclaw and Poznan/Gdansk. Driving in Poland, while not completely discouraged, is not as straightforward as it is in most western European countries and travel times can be outlandish. Visitors are surprised to find there is no direct motorway between Poznan and Gdansk, for instance, and the 300km haul will take at minimum 4 hours despite a stretch of 100km on the new A1 dual carriageway. On the rails the Intercity train between Warsaw and Poznan currently takes 4-5 hours and more trains are expected to be laid on during the tournament.

Accommodation

When hoping to ensure a comfortable and convenient night's rest away from home, early booking is always recommended, but never more so than in this case. While the accommodation options available in every Euro 2012 host city have expanded dramatically since Poland won the right to host the tournament in 2007, many rooms, and indeed entire hotels, have already been reserved by UEFA and the 'football family' for the duration of the tournament, meaning availability is already limited. Those that book early will not only have the peace of mind of a confirmed crash-pad, but may also enjoy special discounts. While accommodation prices are generally affordable in comparison to western Europe, the high demand around match days will no doubt drive their value upwards. To combat a potential lack of availability there were whispers of bringing in some temporary sleep options (a proposal to moor a cruise liner on the Gdansk waterfront was mooted), and camping accommodation will be increased, however for those that want the comfort of a conveniently-located bed,

Euro 2012 in Gdansk

Matches to be played in Gdansk (all kick offs CET)
Group C fixtures
Spain v Italy, Sunday June 10, 18:00
Spain v Republic of Ireland, Thursday June 14, 20:45
Croatia v Spain, Monday June 18, 20:45

Quarter-final
Winner Group B v Runner up Group A, Friday June 22, 20:45

The Gdansk Fan Zone
Originally pencilled in for the main square (Dlugi Targ) plans have been announced to move the fan zone to a field just outside of the old town to (I-3) Pl. Zebran Ludowych in anticipation of double the expected 15,000 fans wanting to use it. Close to the railway station, which is due to be connected to the stadium early next year, this will be as good a spot as any for ticketless fans to watch the match with the huge screens and live music that are planned.

we can't over-stress the importance of booking ahead. One tip may be to consider the ease of access to the city from the aforementioned A1 highway which makes places such as Torun (around 170km south of Gdansk) an attractive alternative. Many hotels seem to be restricting availability until January 2012 when the deadline for confirming UEFA reservations passes. Hotels will then be both clearer on reservations they really have available and prices will have been set.

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The range and quality of shopping in Gdańsk has vastly improved over the last decade. Where once old-style Hala Targowa (Covered markets) were the main source of everything from food to clothing, the 21st century has seen an explosion in modern, air-conditioned shopping malls. The Tri-city ring road (Obwodnica) has either hypermarkets or shopping malls at most major junctions while the huge developments have sprung up in and around the city. Particular bargains appear to be shoes and electrical goods while it has been widely reported that Swedes buy up a lot of IKEA and building materials here. Recommended places are Madison, which is the only genuine shopping mall in the old town area; Fashion Outlet found outside the city which has a number of major brands selling their goods at knockdown prices and Alfa Centrum up in Przymorze which is the only one to incorporate a cinema and leisure activities on-site. The mother of all of them though is the latest to open - Galeria Bałtycka - which tips the scales at 200 stores and can be found a 10-minute tram ride away in the Wrzeszcz district.

24-hour shops

KOS C-4, ul. Piwna 7-12, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 309 15 20, www.calodobowygdansk.pl.

Mila N-2, ul. Świętojańska 18, Gdynia.

Non Stop L-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 60, Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 551 57 62.

Sklep całodobowy N-1, ul. Dworcowa 11a, Gdynia, tel. (+48) 58 620 92 21.

Alcohol

Of course you didn't come to Poland just for the booze, but while you're here it'd be rude not to check out what the country has to offer. Primarily that means vodka, with the two

most highly regarded clear Polish vodkas being Belvedere and Chopin. Find them in any alcohol store. Others to watch for include Żubrówka - that's the one with the blade of bison grass inside - krupnik, a sweet honey vodka, and wiśniówka, a sickly sweet cherry drink usually consumed after meals. Finally, check Goldwasser, a unique elixir characterized by the 22 karat gold flakes floating in it. Bottle shops are numerous in Poland, as common as cabbage, though the ones we list come guaranteed to have no tramps or underage teens.

Sklep Cyrano Wina i Sery ul. Wielkopolska 31, Gdynia (Orłowo), tel. (+48) 668 93 82 49, www.cyrano-roxane.com. Fine wines from the south of France, and over 20 types of gourmet cheese including goat and sheep. ▶ Open 11:00 - 19:00, Sat 10:00 - 19:00. Closed Sun.

Wine Express ul. Światowida 52, Gdynia (Orłowo), tel. (+48) 58 620 08 17, www.wine-express.pl. Now you don't have to travel down to Kashubia to the beautiful Kania Lodge to pick out your wine. You don't even have to go online and order to your front door. Now it is possible to enjoy the act of choosing and purchasing a wine by popping into their new ('ish) store opposite Klif on the main Sopot - Gdynia road. On offer a great selection of world wines, hand chosen by John Borrell and his team, and available retail at wholesale prices. ▶ Open 10:00 - 19:00, Sat 10:00 - 17:00. Closed Sun.

Books, Music & Films

EMPIK B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 8, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 301 62 88, www.empik.com. Also at ul. Kołobrzeska 41c (Przymorze), ul. Grunwaldzka 141 (F-4), ul. Złota Karczma 26 (Matamia); in Gdynia, ul. Świętojańska 68 (N-2); in Sopot, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 63 (M-4). From December 20 - 23 hours are extended to 7:00-22:00. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.

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29 Długa St., tel. 58 305 11 50

EMPIK M-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 63, Sopot, tel. (+48) 22 461 06 61, www.empik.com. Books, DVDs, games and international press. ▶ Open 10:00 - 21:00, Sun 11:00 - 19:00.

Fashion

Komis Rzeczy Wyjątkowych & Vintage Inn L-4, ul. Bohaterów Monte Cassino 21d, Sopot, tel. (+48) 501 25 08 44, www.vintageinn.pl. Classic second hand, retro and vintage clothes for men and women inside an eclectic space frequented by the fashion minded. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00, Sat 10:00 - 17:00. Closed Sun.

Tru Trussardi F-4, Al. Grunwaldzka 141 (Galeria Bałtycka), Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 345 21 14, www.trussardi.it. The modern Italian-led, urban fashion range is now present in Poland. Elegant but casual clothing for men and women designed for the modern day where it is typical to move from business function to private meeting and back. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00. Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00. December 10 - 22 open from 09:00 - 22:00, Sun 10:00 - 21:00.

Tru Trussardi N-6, Al. Zwycięstwa 256 (Klif), Gdynia, tel. (+48) 58 743 61 50, www.trussardi.it. The modern Italian-led, urban fashion range is now present in Poland. Elegant but casual clothing for men and women designed for the modern day where it is typical to move from business function to private meeting and back. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.

Flowers

As in much of Eastern Europe the giving of flowers comes with a sophisticated set of rules. Should you wish to stay on the right side of your lover, parents-in-law, etc pay heed to the following. Always give an odd number of flowers (or stems) unless the occasion is a solemn one. If visiting somebody with flowers be sure to remove the paper before you arrive. Decorative foil can be left on. Always give flowers with your left hand in order to shake or kiss the right hand of the recipient. Attention should also be paid to colour. If you're proposing, then it's red for your fiancée and pink for her mother. Pink flowers are also considered the most neutral, so when in doubt use those. Yellow is the colour of envy, chrysanthemums are for the dead and carnations remain unpopular, especially among women, due to their communist connotations. Good luck.

Jewellery

Vodka isn't the only golden nectar popular in Poland. Poland is renowned for its amber and the craftsmen who hand-somely shape the fossilised resin into unique and coveted pieces of jewellery. Come back from PL without bringing baby some Baltic Gold and you've booked yourself a stint in the doghouse. The best place to begin is Mariacka in Gdańsk, a picturesque street lined with amber galleries.

Amber Moda M-4, ul. Grunwaldzka 12-16, Sopot, tel. (+48) 501 41 49 00, www.ambermoda.com. Expertly crafted necklaces, rings, bracelets etc. Shows and exhibitions also regularly organized. ▶ Open 12:00 - 18:00.

Studio Amber C-4, ul. Mariacka 2/3, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 301 10 55, www.studioamber.istore.pl. Amber pieces, many of which being the work of budding graduates from the Gdańsk Academy of Fine Arts. ▶ Open 10:00 - 18:00. **TC**

Produced and distributed by TRS Evolution SpA - Ph. +39 059 421511
Polskie TRS Polska Sp. z o.o. - Ph. 022 636 60 16 - www.trussardi.com

Białystok, Bydgoszcz, Częstochowa, Gdańsk, Gdynia, Katowice, Kraków,
Poznań, Szczecin, Warszawa, Wrocław

TRUSSARDI 100 YEARS

Markets

Once upon a time, these were the places where the bulk of shopping was done by locals. Rows and rows of kiosks would offer you anything they could get their hands on to sell and particularly in the post-1989 years these places positively thrived. The advent of the western style shopping mall and the huge out-of-town hypermarkets have turned these market places into little more than flea markets and the number of people using them has dropped dramatically. Still many people use them both out of habit and because prices tend to be cheaper so they can present an interesting look into what life used to be like. While products such as clothes and perfumes can now be bought in better quality elsewhere there are still bargains to be had and fruit and veg still tends to be fresher and cheaper here.

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Covered Market (Hala Targowa) C-3, Pl. Dominikański 1, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 346 31 33, www.halatargowa.pl. One of the strangest buildings in the city, the covered market wouldn't look out of place posing as a provincial 19th-century train station in the south of France. Built in 1896 in a Neo-Gothic style, the market has recently been completely renovated at a cost of 20zł million, an act that led to the discovery of the foundations of one of the city's oldest churches, the 12th century Church of St Nicolas, underneath the main market building. Amid the cheap clothing stalls and rows of meat and dairy produce, the church's foundations have been left as they were found, providing a small, living archaeology museum in the basement along with a display of photographs, objects found during the excavations and drawings of how the church might have looked. ▶ Open 09:00 - 18:00, Sat 09:00 - 15:00. Closed Sun.

Hala Targowa N-1, ul. Wójta Radtkiego 36-40, Gdynia, tel. (+48) 58 621 64 63. One of the few places left in the Tricity where you can get that authentic old time shopping experience. While you won't get the rough and tumble associated with Warsaw's famous 'Russian Market', what you will find is a large Hala Targowa (Trading Hall) containing rows of independent traders offering everything from clothing to electronic equipment. Very popular with the visiting Swedish shoppers looking to pick up a bargain, the market is a glimpse into post-communist Poland before the arrival of the western style Hypermarket and Shopping Malls now so familiar in Poland. Find it close to Gdynia Main Railway station. ▶ Open 08:00 - 18:00, Sat 08:00 - 16:00. Closed Sun.

Become a fan of Gdansk In Your
Pocket on 

Shopping Malls

Alfa Centrum ul. Kołobrzaska 41c, Gdańsk (Przrmorze), tel. (+48) 58 769 40 00, www.alfacentrum.pl. Seventy shops squeezed into 15,550m² of retail space. Operating since 2000 they double as an impressive entertainment complex with multiplex cinema and a climbing wall to their credit.

The Smyk toy shop can claim to be one of the best in the city, and the mall also features an H&M. Other stores to note include Tatum, Cottonfield, Esprit, Wallis, EMPIK and the Bomi supermarket. Parking for 600 cars complete the facilities ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.



Galeria Bałtycka (Baltic Gallery) F-4, Al. Grunwaldzka 141, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 521 85 50, www.galeriabałtycka.pl. The tri-city's biggest and most popular shopping gallery can be found in the Gdańsk district of Wrzeszcz at the junction of the main Tri-city road and the road connecting the city to the airport. With over 200 stores, cafes and restaurants set in a brand new state of the art building, Galeria Bałtycka raises the level of the whole shopping experience in the city. Headline stores include a three-level H&M, Peek & Cloppenberg, River Island, Tommy Hilfiger and Zara. Carrefour provide the supermarket while the choice of restaurants and cafes include Coffee Heaven, Pizza Hut, Wedel and BIOWAY. On-site parking for 1,100 cars complete the picture. If you don't have a car it is close to Gdansk-Wrzeszcz train station and can also be reached by a host of buses from Gdansk city centre. ▶ Open 09:00-21:00, Sun 10:00-20:00. December 10 - 23 open 09:00-22:00, Sun 10:00-21:00.



Fashion House ul. Przywizka 8, Gdańsk (Szadółki), tel. (+48) 58 320 99 44, www.fashion-house.pl. A variation on the typical out of town malls which have sprung up over the past few years. What you'll find here, set in what looks like a seaside fishing village complete with lighthouse, is big name brands at knockdown prices. Stores include Adidas, Nike, Reebok, Mexx, Puma, Levis, Big Star, Hilfiger, Quicksilver, Timberland, Reserved, Atlantic and Converse. The centre also includes cafes and an indoor play area for the kids. Located on the Tri-city ring road just outside Gdańsk, the centre can be reached easily by car or by bus 174 from Gdańsk main railway station. A taxi will cost about 30zł one-way. ▶ Open 10:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.



Klif N-6, Al. Zwycięstwa 256, tel. (+48) 58 664 93 45, www.klif.pl. Klif can be described as the Tri-city's original shopping mall and continues to offer a choice of some of the highest quality brands in Poland. Recent changes have seen the centre expand from 20,000 metres to over 30,000, with two level car park holding 1,200 cars also added. Featuring over 100 shops the flagship stores include Marks & Spencer, H&M, with other retail units numbering Tommy Hilfiger, Escada Sport, Liu Jo, Patrizia Pepe and Pollini. Longer term tenants include Max Mara, Benetton, Deni Cler, Emanuel Berg, Mothercare and Sephora. For more practical purposes find the excellent BOMI delicatessen operating on the ground floor, Nota Bene with its decent selection of English-language books and a crêche to which to despatch your cherubs. The usual mix of banking, travel, pharmaceutical, cosmetic and home design stores can also be found while the centre also has two restaurants of note - Como and Hana Sushi which are far better than you would expect to find in a shopping mall. Right by Gdynia Orłowo train station, and also accessible by bus S or trolleybus 21 and 31 from Sopot. From downtown Gdynia you can get there with bus S, or trolleybus 21, 26 and 31. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.



Madison Park B-2, ul. Rajska 10, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 766 75 30, www.madison.gda.pl. The Madison Shopping Gallery is a unique shopping and leisure centre found in the heart of Gdansk. Perfectly located, right on the edge of the Old Town, the mall presents a medley of unmissable distractions and attractions for the passing tourist. Shoppers have a choice of over one hundred shops and service outlets, restaurants, cafes and ice-cream parlours as well as tourist agencies, currency exchanges and underground parking. After shopping, visitors can go to the third floor and check out the gym, or take advantage of the numerous relaxation and body care treatments. Madison Shopping Gallery, however, is more than just a shopping centre, it's now part of the folklore of Gdansk - scattered around visitors can discover countless famous people and symbols now rendered in sculptures which evoke the history and mystique of old Gdansk. ▶ Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.



Shopping
in the centre
of the
OLD TOWN

mon - sat 9.00 - 21.00
sun 10.00 - 20.00

www.madison.gda.pl

SHOPPING GALLERY
MADISON

Gdańsk, 10 Rajska street, tel. +48 58 766 75 30



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Currency Exchange

Changing money is increasingly less fretful to do, but as with most international destinations it is still worth keeping checking rates particularly at entry points such as airports or in major tourist areas. We check rates of a selection of money exchange offices (kantors) every two months. Here were their buying rates (how many zloty you would get for one unit of foreign currency) for the **30.11.11** compared to the following National Bank of Poland (NBP) published rates for that morning of **Euro 1 = 4,4820zł, US\$1 = 3,3518zł, GBP 1 = 5,2187zł.**

Conti F-4, Al. Grunwaldzka 141, Gdańsk (Galeria Bałtycka), tel. (+48) 58 345 20 26, www.kantor-conti.pl 1 Euro = 4.45zł, 1 Dollar = 3.35zł, 1 Pound = 5.20zł, No commission.

Currency Express ul. Słowackiego 200, Gdańsk (Airport), tel. (+48) 58 348 13 52. 1 Euro = 3.89zł, 1 Dollar = 2.92zł, 1 Pound = 4.55zł, No commission.

Diament N-1, ul. 10 Lutego 11, Gdynia (Batory), tel. (+48) 58 661 85 60. 1 Euro = 4.43zł, 1 Dollar = 3.32zł, 1 Pound = 5.19zł, No commission.

Kantor Morski L-4, ul. Kościuszki 3a, Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 551 30 82, www.kantormorski.pl 1 Euro = 4.45zł, 1 Dollar = 3.35zł, 1 Pound = 5.24zł, No commission.

Whether a traveller or an ex-pat our directory has many useful contacts for you. Remember to email us if you find any of our contacts particularly helpful or, for that matter, unhelpful. We also welcome new additions.

24-hour pharmacies

Aptecus 4 A-2, Gdańsk Główny Train Station, tel. (+48) 58 763 10 74.
Apteka Dyżurna L-4, ul. Kościuszki 7, Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 551 32 89, www.aptekadyżurna.pl.
Super Apteka N-1, ul. Starowiejska 34, Gdynia, tel. (+48) 58 620 19 82.

Conference organisers

Gdańsk Convention Bureau C-5, ul. Długi Targ 28/29, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 300 06 59, www.gdan-skconvention.pl.
Hotel Scandic B-2, ul. Podwale Grodzkie 9, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 300 60 00, www.scandichotels.com.
Sheraton Sopot Hotel Conference Center&Spa M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 10, Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 767 16 70, www.sheraton.pl/sopot. The most modern, well-equipped and largest conference centre in northern Poland. And is that wasn't enough to attract you here, the complex is neighbored by the sandy beaches of Sopot on one side and the spas, bars, restaurants and clubs of Poland's summer capital on the other. Never would the slogan 'work, rest and play' have been used so genuinely. If they'd used it. Played host to Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin at his landmark meeting with Polish prime minister Donald Tusk.
Sofitel Grand Sopot Inspired Meetings M-4, ul. Powstańców Warszawy 12/14, tel. (+48) 58 520 60 44, www.sofitel-grand-sopot.com.

Consulates and embassies

Germany H-3, Al. Zwycięstwa 23, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 340 65 00, www.danzig.diplo.de.
Sweden D-5, ul. Chmielna 101/102, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 300 20 00, www.swedenabroad.com.
UK F-3, ul. Grunwaldzka 102, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 341 43 65, ukinpoland.fco.gov.uk/en. The UK honorary consular is based in the Gdańsk suburb of Wrzeszcz. It is likely that you will need to contact the embassy or consular services in Warsaw for most services and they can be contacted via the website listed.

Dentists

Artdent M-4, ul. Władysława Jagiełły 4/2, Sopot, tel. (+48) 515 15 42 45, www.artdent-sopot.pl. A modern dental clinic offering a range of services. English spoken.
Dental Art ul. Wielkokacka 2 (Witawa Shopping Centre), Gdynia (Witomino), tel. (+48) 58 699 20 10, www.dentalart.eu.
Jazzdent ul. Arkońska 38, Gdańsk (Przymorze), tel. (+48) 501 05 50 20, www.jazzdent.pl.

Genealogy

Archiwum Państwowe (National Archive) B-1, ul. Wałowa 5, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 301 74 63, www.gdansk.ap.gov.pl.

www.inyourpocket.com

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Dear Sirs,

Our service is aimed at both Polish and international patients who appreciate world-class medical services, perfect precision and aesthetics, backed up with a full guarantee of customer satisfaction.

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Our skills and knowledge enable us to provide our customers with the highest level of aesthetic and functional recovery of oral cavities, even in the most complicated of cases. We combine those elements which are considered the most important in our profession: Polish hospitality, German quality, Swiss precision and the Italian sense of beauty and aesthetics.

Welcome!
Agnieszka Misiejuk, Dentist

ul. Władysława Jagiełły 4/2, 81-757 Sopot, Tel. +48 58 380 03 58, +48 515 154 245, www.artdent-sopot.pl

International schools

British International School Gdańsk ul. Jagiellońska 46, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 342 26 00, www.bisg.edu.pl.

Language schools

The Centre for Polish Studies L-2, ul. Kraszewskiego 31/1, Sopot, tel. (+48) 601 59 32 17, www.learnpolish.edu.pl. Tailored courses for people wanting to learn the Polish language.

Laundry

Caffe Pralnia L-4, ul. Armii Krajowej 91, tel. (+48) 58 765 05 81.
Lux Laundry M-5, ul. 3 Maja 1, Sopot, tel. (+48) 58 345 00 18. Get your washing done by other people at Lux Laundry and have it back at the end of the day. Three kilos of your finest kit will set you back between 30-60zł and 6kg 60-120zł. These guys also go that step further by ironing each item should you wish for an extra 6zł.

Libraries

British Library C-5, ul. Ogarna 27, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 301 60 62, www.gdansk.librarynet.pl.

Private clinics

Lux-Med H-3, Al. Zwycięstwa 49, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 22 33 22 888, www.luxmed.pl.
Medicover ul. Beniowskiego 23, Gdańsk (Oliwa), tel. (+48) 411 95 96, www.medicover.com/pl.

The Swissmed Hospital G-5, ul. Wileńska 44, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 524 15 00, www.swissmed.com.pl.

Real estate

MP Property Consulting ul. Gryfa Pomorskiego 54B/3, Gdynia (Wielki Kack), tel. (+48) 535 50 60 61, www.propertygdansk.com. Specialists in residential and commercial property with services ranging from purchase to management.

Ober-Haus Real Estate Advisors F-3, ul. Dmowskiego 12/6, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 520 40 99, www.ober-haus.pl. Long established experts in residential, office, logistics and retail real estate, both in Poland and the Baltics. Founded in 1994 the database includes all types of large and small flats, luxury suites, houses and villas.

Relocation companies

Corstjens Worldwide Movers Group ul. Nowa 23, Stara Iwiczna-Piaseczno, tel. (+48) 22 737 72 00, www.corstjens.com.
Express Relocations ul. Krzywoustego 12, Gdynia (Chylonia), tel. (+48) 58 623 20 19, www.expressrelocations.com.
Mamdom, www.mamdom.com.

Tattoo

Stoneheads C-4, ul. Chlebnicka 43/44, Gdańsk, tel. (+48) 58 301 83 22, www.tattoo.gdansk.pl.
Swiost Tatoo & Piercing Studio L-4, Al. Niepodległości 765, Sopot, tel. (+48) 662 27 80 47, www.swiost.pl.

Located in the province of Warmia about 100km east of Gdańsk, evidence suggests that Frombork (German, *Frauenburg*) was settled long before the town known as Civitas Frowenburg was first mentioned in a document dated 1278. Established as the seat of the Warmia bishopric in the same year, Frombork received its civic (Lübeck law) rights in 1310. A once much coveted defensive stronghold, Frombork has seen more than its fair share of war, plunder and destruction, having been ruled by the Teutonic Order, Royal Prussia, Germany and Poland to name but a few over the centuries. Traditionally the home of merchants, farmers and fishermen, Frombork's most illustrious inhabitant was the astronomer and mathematician Nicolaus Copernicus (Polish, Mikolaj Kopernik), who lived and worked as a priest in Frombork as well as writing his *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* in the town. Almost completely destroyed during WWII, since becoming reincorporated in Poland Frombork has developed into a peaceful seaside tourist destination with an intriguing astronomical twist. Less than two hours from Gdańsk, Frombork is a pleasant and decidedly quirky place to visit any time of year.

Arriving in Frombork

You can get to Frombork from Gdańsk using one of the 4 daily PKS buses which leave from the main bus station. Between June and September there is also a ferry service which runs from Krynica Morska.

By bus

Buses leave Gdańsk's main PKS bus station at 09:50, 13:00, 16:35 and 19:15, returning at 07:13, 08:43, 12:53 and 15:28. The journey time is just under two hours. Taking the earliest bus to Frombork and the latest one back gives you about four hours in town, which is just about enough to cover the main sights without having to stay the night.

By car

Take the E75 out of Gdańsk in the direction of Warsaw. At Elbląg your luck runs out and it's a series of thin and bumpy roads the rest of the way. Take a right onto Route 22 just after Elbląg then a left onto the tree-lined, pothole-ridden Route 505 a few kilometres further along. Route 505 takes you all the way into the centre of Frombork. Depending on the traffic, the journey takes somewhere in region of 90 minutes.

What to See

Besides the opportunity to enjoy the coastline around Frombork the only real draw is the spectacular Cathedral Hill, which offers a number of attractions from the Cathedral itself to an array of Copernicus-related treats.

Cathedral Hill

Cathedral (Archikatedra Warmińska) ul. Katedralna 8, tel. (+48) 55 244 44 24, www.frombork.info.pl. Frombork's massive 14th-century Gothic Cathedral (1329-1388) is the main focal point of the town. A masterpiece of brickwork, the breathtaking interior is packed with Baroque altars and tombstones, and features a gigantic 17th-century Baroque organ, one of the most famous organs in the country. Recitals are often given, and the Cathedral plays host to an annual organ festival during the summer. The key sight now is the grave of Nicolaus Copernicus himself which can be found in the South Nave. Located in the spot where the remains were discovered that were finally proved to be those of Copernicus, the grave features a black granite tombstone which identifies the great man as a canon and the man who discovered the heliocentric theory. The tombstone bears a representation of



Copernicus' model of the solar system - a golden sun encircled by six planets. ▶ Open 09:00-15:30, Sun 10:00-18:00. No visiting during mass please. Last entrance 30 minutes before closing. Admission 6/3zł. Sun free.

Cathedral Hill (Wzgórze Katedralne) is the collective name for Frombork's famed development complex composed of a medieval cathedral, bishopric palaces, diocesan chanceries, defensive walls, towers and keeps. Dating from at least the 14th century, this was where Copernicus was believed to have worked, and is therefore something of a shrine for Copernicus fanatics the world over. Remarkably, Cathedral Hill was practically the only part of Frombork left standing at the end of the Second World War. With no explanations in English you might wish to consider using a tour guide. Local expert Stanisław Kuprjanik is the very man for the job. Call him in advance one day before you want to visit on tel. 609 68 33 13.

Copernicus Museum (Muzeum Kopernika) ul. Katedralna 8, tel. (+48) 55 244 00 71, www.frombork.art.pl. Housed in the former Bishop's Palace, this rather sparse collection of Copernicus-related paraphernalia includes several likenesses of the great man including Teodor Rygiel's eerie 1893 miniature of Copernicus dead in a chair. Other treats include samples of Copernicus' writings, telescopes and medals, all of it unfortunately explained in Polish and German only. ▶ Open 09:00-16:00. Closed Mon. Last entrance 30 minutes before closing. Admission 6/3zł. Sun free.

Radziejowski (Belfry) Tower (Wieża Radziejewskiego) ul. Katedralna 8, tel. (+48) 55 244 00 71, www.frombork.art.pl. Inside is what many believe to be the best planetarium in Poland, equipped with precise Carl Zeiss machinery that projects images of the sky onto the eight-metre domed ceiling, and a replica of Foucault's pendulum, proving beyond doubt that the earth is in a state of permanent rotation. The 70m viewing platform provides wonderful views of the town below and the Baltic Sea. Note that the planetarium is closed until the end of the year, reopening at the beginning of January. ▶ Open 09:00-16:00. Last entrance 30 minutes before closing. Admission 6/3zł, sky show 10/6zł.

Maps & Money

The excellent *Pilot* map of Elbląg is available in most bookshops in Gdańsk for about 9zł, and includes street plans of several towns in the area around and including Frombork, and also has an excellent map of the Polish coast from Gdańsk to the Kaliningrad border. There is just one ATM in town at ul. Mickiewicza 5 and many of the places in town (including Cathedral Hill) only accept cash. Make sure you take enough money with you to cover your expenses.

Copernicus

Nicolaus Copernicus was born the youngest son of a copper trader in Torun on February 19, 1473. His father died when he was just 10, and in 1488 the young Nicolaus was sent by his uncle, the canon at Frombork Cathedral Lucas Watzenrode, to the Cathedral school of Włocławek where he received a first class humanist education. In 1488 Copernicus began his studies at Krakow University (then the capital of Poland), where he studied Latin, mathematics, astronomy, geography and philosophy, learning his astronomy from Johannes de Sacrobosco's 13th-century book, *Tractatus de Sphaera*.

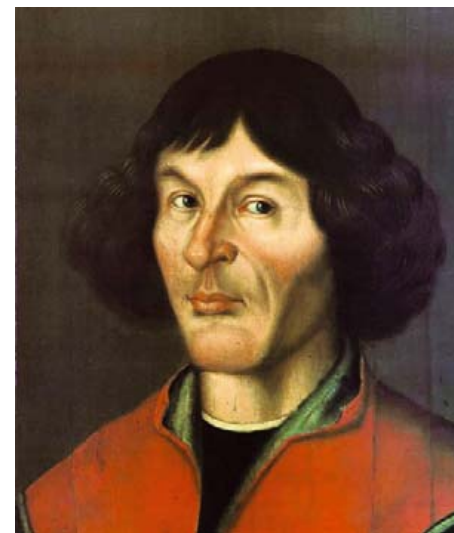
It was at Krakow University that Copernicus, still known as Mikolaj Kopernik, started using the Latin version of his name. Nicolaus Copernicus finished his studies in Krakow after four years without formally graduating, and, encouraged by his uncle, travelled to Bologna in 1496 to take a degree in Canon Law. Whilst studying in Bologna Copernicus received official notification of his appointment as a canon at Frombork, a well-paid job that didn't initially require his presence in Frombork. Alongside his official course Copernicus also studied Greek, mathematics and astronomy, renting rooms in the house of the university's professor of astronomy, Domenico Maria de Novara. Assisting him with his observations, on March 9, 1497, Nicolaus Copernicus witnessed the Moon eclipse the star Aldebaran. After an obligatory year in Rome in 1500 Copernicus travelled to Frombork and was officially installed as canon of the Ermland Chapter on July 27, 1501.

Having still not completed his studies in Canon Law Copernicus was soon back in Italy, this time choosing to study law and medicine in Padua, being granted permission to study the latter as his elders felt it would be a useful skill to possess when he returned to Frombork. However, Copernicus had another motive for returning to Italy, that being to continue his studies of astronomy. The rather fickle Nicolaus finally decided to complete his Canon Law studies, which he completed in Ferrara in 1503. There is no record that he ever finished his medical studies.

Back in Frombork Copernicus was granted leave from his official duties to allow him to be physician to his uncle, who was now the Bishop of Ermland. Acting more as his uncle's private secretary, these duties were carried out whilst living for about five years in nearby Heilsberg Castle, the official residence of the Bishop of Ermland. In 1509 Copernicus began publishing serious works, the first being Latin translations of the work of an obscure Greek poet, Theophrastus Simocattes. In 1512 Copernicus' uncle died. Returning to his duties as canon in Frombork, Copernicus dedicated more and more of his time to the study of astronomy. It's believed that he lived in one of the towers in the Cathedral complex and built an observatory there, but no proof exists that this was ever the case.

In 1514 Copernicus published a hand-written book, *The Little Commentary*, setting out his theories of a universe with a sun at its centre, and it's generally believed that he started writing the book that made him so infamous, *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium*, in the same year. His fame as an astronomer had by now reached the highest circles, and in 1514 (the same year he published what was essentially a heretical work) Copernicus was approached by the Pope for his advice on improving the calendar, which was known to be out of phase with the Moon.

With a war breaking out between Poland and the Teutonic Knights in 1519 Copernicus' now peaceful life was once again disrupted, and he found himself constantly on the



move and unable to dedicate himself fully to his work. During this period more strings to his bow were added, with Nicolaus Copernicus playing the (unsuccessful) role of delegate in the peace talks that tried but failed to end hostilities. When peace did eventually arrive Copernicus was appointed Commissar of Ermland and given the task of rebuilding the district after the war. Finally returning to Frombork Copernicus was again free to work on his observations and to perfect the ideas around his heliocentric theory. *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* was eventually published in Nuremberg at the very end of Copernicus' life in March 1543, almost 30 years after he started writing it. Although many before him had hinted at the unthinkable, that the Earth wasn't the centre of the Universe as the Church believed, it was Nicolaus Copernicus who first stated it so publicly.

Nicolaus Copernicus outlived the publication of his masterpiece by just two months. His final resting place was never recorded. Shortly after WWII workmen in Frombork Cathedral discovered human remains hidden under the floor. Originally believed to be the remains of Copernicus, the bones turned out to be those of soldiers from the 20th century. However, during further work in the building in 2004-5, scientists discovered a skull and other bones of a male of about 70 years old, the same age as Copernicus when he passed away.

Subsequent forensic facial reconstruction of the skull revealed a startling similarity with portraits of the great man, an event that led to a subsequent series of DNA tests. In November 2008, Polish scientists matched the DNA of a tooth and femur bone from the remains with several strands of hair found inside a book in Sweden's Uppsala University that once belonged to Copernicus and confirmed these were in fact Copernicus' remains.

On February 19, 2010, on the 537th anniversary of his birth, chemical element #112 was named Copernicium and on May 22, 2010 Copernicus was reburied with a full funeral ceremony in the Cathedral here in Frombork. A tomb marks the spot where he is buried - the same spot where his remains were originally discovered.

The small town of Malbork some 60km south of Gdańsk on the main railway line between Warsaw and the coast offers visitors not only the world's biggest brick castle, but a number of other poignant and occasionally bizarre sights and sensations to boot. A delightful mix of medieval architecture, grey communist-era monstrosities and a handful of fascinating churches and monuments, Malbork is on closer inspection more than the sum of its Unesco-protected fort. A wide range of accommodation possibilities and one or two better than average places to eat and drink make an overnight stay, which up until now has never really been an option for visitors, an attractive choice for those whose tourism philosophy extends beyond the indignity of spending a few hectic days hurtling around the country and being herded on and off a tour bus.

Getting There

Malbork is located approximately 50km from Gdansk and is easily reached by rail and now also by road thanks to the new A1 highway.

By car

Malbork can be reached by the main A1 road which will eventually connect Gdańsk, Łódź and the south. At the moment the new dual carriageway only reaches the junction for Malbork. From any of the three cities, head for the city ringroad (Obwodnica) and follow signs for Łódź. Pass by Tczew before turning off when you see signs for Malbork some 6km on. This road brings you onto the 22 which will take you to Malbork in about 15 minutes. The castle will be to your left as you enter the town.

If you don't have your own car and don't want to hire one from a car rental company you can hire a taxi to take you and bring you back. While considerably more expensive than the train, the cost is still not prohibitive to most western visitors especially if there are a few of you. To book a taxi, which will cost you a minimum of 250zł depending on waiting time, call City Plus Neptun on (58) 19686.

By train

Trains run regularly to Malbork from both the Tri-city and Warsaw. With both local and Intercity trains running to Malbork from the Tri-city it is worth spending the extra money to travel via Intercity or Ekspres trains en-route to Warsaw and further south. The journey should take between 40 and 90 minutes depending on which part of the Tri-city you are traveling from. Be warned that Polish train stations carry the bare minimum number of signs informing you of the station you have reached so you should pay attention at stops to make sure you don't miss yours. Coming from the opposite direction, a fast train from the capital takes a lengthy 4 to 5 hours. For more information see the excellent www.rozklad-pkp.pl. The train station is less than 1km northeast of the town centre which can be reached on foot in about 15 minutes. Taxis are parked outside, and cost around 10zł.

Tourist information

Tourist Information Centre B-3, ul. Kościuszki 54, tel. (+48) 55 647 47 47, www.visitmalbork.pl. Just east of the Castle, the local Tourist Information Centre is worth popping into. Find the usual array of local crafts as well as a series of excellent free maps published by the local municipality. ▶ Open 08:00 - 16:00. Closed, Sat, Sun.



What to See

Sightseeing in Malbork for many visitors IS the Castle and our section on what to see reflects that. Once you are done with the castle however, it is worth giving the town a closer inspection. It reveals a number of other sights that despite being nowhere near as grand are both colourful and interesting.

Background

The history of Malbork Castle is inescapably linked with the rise and fall of the Teutonic Knights, a German Roman Catholic order whose fate was effectively sealed in 1410 on the battlefield of Grunwald.

Thought to have been formed in 1190 in the middle eastern territory of Acre, early evidence suggests the order started off as a benign operation - primarily responsible for hospitals and the protection of visiting catholic pilgrims. Within decades they had been expelled from the Middle East, and found themselves setting up shop first in Transylvania and then in Venice. Finding a permanent home was a tougher challenge though, and the Knights found themselves shunned by most rulers, roaming round searching for a more permanent base. Fortune smiled on them when Duke Konrad Mazowiecki invited the Knights to Poland, primarily to protect his territory from the Lithuanians to the right and the Prussians to the left.

In 1230, and in conjunction with the Poles, the Teutonic Knights embarked on a crusade against the Prussians. So far so good, but in the long term the Knights would double cross the Poles - after decades of playing by the rulebook this mercenary outfit was once more hired in 1308 by the Poles, this time to seize Gdansk, a task they fulfilled with zealous enthusiasm, massacring the citizens who stood in their way. Known as 'the Gdańsk Slaughter', the Knights displayed a particularly worrying thirst for savagery, murdering anything up to 10,000 civilians (this figure is largely debatable, with many scholars suggesting Gdańsk didn't even have a population of 10,000 at the time). Indeed, so brutal was their fury the Pope was even moved to excommunicate the order, albeit for a short time.

As a PR stunt 'the Gdańsk Slaughter' really signalled the arrival of the Teutonic Knights as a force to be reckoned with. Unmoved by their open appetite for destruction, the Poles displayed a rather naive lack of common sense - and in a move they'd live to regret queried and dallied over the cash figure they were to pay the Knights in exchange for their demolition job on Gdańsk. Not ones to sit around chewing the fat and talking numbers, the Knights did what evidently came so naturally to them - they launched into a full on offensive against Poland. First Świecie fell, then Tczew.

Malbork was established as their capital in 1309, and while they had made sworn enemies of both Poles and the Lithu-

anians, and aroused the disciplinary chagrin of the Vatican, the Knights looked a formidable mob. Northern Poland was theirs, and their control of the amber trade route and Hanseatic cities reaped them untold riches. After decades of sniping and fighting Poland was finally kowtowed into signing the 1343 Treaty of Kalisz, and an uneasy truce between the two powers ensued. For the Knights it signalled the height of their power - vast tracts of Northern Europe came under their control, and their Kingdom at one stage stretched from Slupsk to Estonia.

The first alarm bells were heard in 1386, a year in which Queen Jadwiga of Poland was married to Grand Duke Jogaila of Lithuania (who thereby became Władysław II Jagiello, the new King of Poland). For the first time the Teutonic Knights faced a united enemy, though at first managed to duck the potential threat by playing Jogaila and his cousin Vytautas off against each other. The Teutonic empire was at its zenith, though much like Hitler's over half a millennium on, would largely crumble with one epic battle.

The Battle of Grunwald

Fought on the 15th July, 1410, the Battle of Grunwald (known in some circles as the First Battle of Tannenberg - the Poles naming the battle after the place where the Knights were encamped and others vice versa) was to become the defining engagement of Medieval times, and has been likened to Stalingrad in its impact and importance. Led by Władysław II Jagiello and Vytautas the Great (now allies once more) a combined force of up to 50,000 Poles and Lithuanians faced off against 32,000 Teutonic Knights under the command of Grand Master Ulrich von Jungingen.

The battle had been preceded by months of festering tension, and centuries of ill will between the two foes. In 1409 the residents of Teutonic-occupied Samogitia rose in rebellion against their masters, prompting both Poland and Lithuania to declare their intention to protect their borders if the Knights strayed where they shouldn't having crushed the uprising. Ulrich von Jungingen was infuriated by such cocksure brevity, and on 14th August, 1409 declared war and mobilized his troops. Initial exchanges were conducted in the area around Bydgoszcz, and after a series of tit-for-tat battles an armistice was signed on the 24th June, 1410.

This was however just a smokescreen; both Jagiello and Vytautas had long been of the opinion that the Teutonic threat needed to be smashed once and for all, and the armistice allowed them to recruit more mercenaries and consolidate their strength. For their part the Teutonic Knights had a good idea what was coming, they just didn't know where. Having anticipated a two pronged pincer attack the Knights were caught with their trousers down when it dawned on them one very big, very nasty army was approaching - and making full steam in the direction of Malbork.

Grand Master von Jungingen moved fast to re-organize his troops, and on the 15th July the two forces came head to head between the villages of Grunwald, Stębark (a.k.a Tannenberg) and Łodwigowo.

That we know what happened next is to the credit of two people - Heinrich von Plauen the Elder, who wrote a series of heavily biased letters recounting the battle from the Teutonic side, and Jan Długosz, a priest, diplomat and something of an olden day war correspondent. However their accounts, written from two opposite perspectives, offer several contradictions and a fair dose of medieval hyperbole. Precisely what happened has been lost to time, though needless to say historians have pieced together a good idea of the events that unfolded.

The battle appears to have kicked off at noon, and after hours of heavy fighting the Teutonic Knights appeared to be gaining the advantage. One source claims that von Jungingen himself led his cavalry into the ranks of an elite Krakówian unit, and by all accounts the Polish-Lithuanian force were at this stage stretched to breaking point and bouncing off the ropes. Using his last throw of the dice Jagiello ordered his final batch of reserves into the fray, a move which proved a masterstroke. By this stage large numbers of Teutonic Knights had recklessly galloped off in pursuit of retreating Poles, and Jagiello's solar plexus blow stabilized a battle which was edging from his grasp.

The balance shifted once more when Nikolaus von Renys - founder of the Lizard Union, a group of Prussian nobles sympathetic to the Polish cause - decided to lower his banner and withdraw the Teutonic soldiers under his command. The battle was now Poland's to lose, and von Jungingen once again rode into the thick of combat, leading from the front as he attempted to wrestle control from his Polish-Lithuanian counterparts. Regardless of their superior firepower (artillery is believed to have been used for the first time in this part of the world), the Prussians were numerically outnumbered. Pinned in from all sides they suffered devastating losses (including von Jungingen), and those who did escape encirclement were relentlessly pursued and cut down by light cavalry formations.

Aftermath

Over eight thousand Teutonic Knights are thought to have been killed, and over fourteen thousand captured, and while Polish-Lithuanian casualties are perceived to be high (accurate figures appear to be unknown) Grunwald was seen as nothing less than a landslide success. Jagiello had triumphed over his bitter enemy, restored Polish pride and inflicted a hammer blow on an order which had seemed almost invincible. Strangely though, the decision to push on to Malbork wasn't taken till it was way too late. Instead of going for the knockout blow the victors stayed on the battlefield for the next three days, no doubt raising a couple of glasses of mead, by which time the Teutonic Knights had rallied and organized the defence of their HQ. Jagiello ordered a siege, but after a few weeks realized the futility of attacking an impenetrable monster like Malbork and withdrew his troops.

But even failure to capture Teutonic Ground Zero was not seen as calamitous. The Battle of Grunwald had decimated the enemy forces, and from there on their once legendary army was patched and plugged with unreliable, mercenary troops. They had no choice but to sue for peace, and in 1411 the Treaty of Thorn was signed. The Poles proved sporting



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mering, with cloisters and windows bricked up, gateways enlarged and outhouses dismantled. That the castle survived further attempts at 'modernization' was thanks only to a protracted campaign by the citizens of Berlin. Spurred by this public outcry the Prussian state embarked on something of a U-turn, and a huge programme of restoration was undertaken. The results were impressive, and by the early 20th century much of the castle had regained its original look.

But the 20th century wasn't kind to Malbork. On May 1, 1933 the swastika was raised over the castle, and for the next twelve years it was to become a favourite haunt of high-ranking Nazis. Plans were drafted to build an amphitheatre in the castle grounds, and it was in the Great Refectory that Nazi Gauleiter Albert Forster made a landmark speech in 1939 announcing that the territories on the left bank of the Wisla were to be incorporated into the Reich. Malbork's grandeur wasn't lost on the Nazis, and for the next few years its imposing courtyards and halls were used for swearing in ceremonies by the Hitler Youth and League of German Girls. With the tide of war turning steps were taken to protect Malbork, and in 1944 all stained glass was painstakingly removed. Even still, Malbork and its castle were smashed as the Marinenburg Task Force and 2nd Russian Strike Force faced off in 1945. Over half the castle was destroyed, and black and white pictures from the day show the castle as little more than a desolate set of ruins. With no hope in sight the retreating Nazis dynamited the bridges spanning the Nogat, and the Siege of Malbork was lifted.

This all left Malbork in bad shape, with the brunt of the damage affecting the east side. Plundered by looters and abandoned by the state - who understandably had the unenviable task of rebuilding what was left of Poland - Malbork fell into abject decline. Finally, on January 1, 1961, the Malbork Castle Museum was founded and restoration work given the green light. It was a huge effort, but the meticulous restoration work was finally rewarded in 1997 when the castle was recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

What to See

Visible from 20km away Malbork is best appreciated by paying to cross over its northern drawbridge and spend an hour or two exploring its extraordinary interior. Made up of three distinctly different ensembles known as the High Castle, Middle Castle and Outer Bailey and surrounded by a vast dry moat, the most impressive sights all lie within the High Castle, the Brethren Knights' original monastery, and the Middle Castle which served as the centre of the Teutonic Knights' political activity. Among the jaw-droppingly awesome collection of buildings, impossible to miss are the 14th-century Palace of the Grand Masters, the original residence of the so-called Grand Master of the Teutonic Order. The vaulted interiors are marked by columns that fan out like palm trees, supposedly to remind the knights of their Palestinian roots, and it's inside the main refectory you'll find one such palm supporting an entire ceiling - a cannonball hole can be spotted on a nearby wall from when Polish soldiers tried to collapse the pillar. They missed by just the narrowest of margins, the result of their vandalism still in evidence. Also to visit is the breathtaking St. Mary's Church, the Grand Masters' final resting place and the impressive courtyard in the centre of the Middle Castle. Many rooms are open to the public, including during the summer a wonderful recreation of the Castle's mill hidden away in a garden in the southwest corner of the High Castle. In contrast to the spartan, simple style of the Grand Masters Chambers the rest of the castle is a trove of treasures, and includes an enormous collection of weaponry as well as an amber exhibition. Other rooms are devoted to the Teutonic life and feature the requisite collection of armour, flags and goblets.

Keep an eye out for the 112-page *Illustrated Guidebook to Malbork Castle* published by the Castle Museum by in Polish, German and English costing 26 zł and available in the tourist information and the Castle Museum shop.

Malbork Castle (Zamek) B-3, ul. Starościńska 1, tel. (+48) 55 647 09 02, www.zamek.malbork.pl.
 ▶ **Castle** Open 10:00 - 16:00. **Castle Museum** Open 10:00 - 15:00. Closed Mon. **Tower** Closed during the winter. Admission 29/20zł. **IG**

Exhibition of Medieval Siege Engines (Wystawa Machin Obłężniczych) B-3, ul. Starościńska 1, tel. (+48) 601 37 78 02, www.siegestudio.com. Will open for individual visitors beginning April 14, probably from 09:00 - 18:00. Note that the website will also change to www.zamekmalbork.pl. ▶ Open by prior arrangement for groups only. Admission 6/5zł, children under 5 free, 5zł per person in group (min. 20 people), 4zł per child in school groups.

Cemeteries

Commonwealth War Cemetery (Cmentarz Brytyjskiej Wspólnoty Narodów) A-5, ul. 500-lecia. Located about 5km from the centre of town on the road to Kwidzyn, commemorating Commonwealth servicemen from both WWI and WWII and one of three similar cemeteries in Poland (the other two being in Poznań and Kraków), Malbork's haunting Commonwealth War Cemetery features several rows of simple graves marking the final resting places of 14 British soldiers from WWI and 232 British, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand soldiers, sailors and airmen from WWII who either lost their lives on or over Polish soil or who died in the country as a POW.

Soviet Army Cemetery (Cmentarz Wojenny Żołnierzy Armii Radzieckiej) A-5, ul. 500-lecia. A beautiful example of pompous Russian arrogance and the absurd mindset of the Soviet Union, this small cemetery came about as a way of celebrating the so-called liberation of Poland by the Red Army during the closing days of WWII. Specifically commemorating the Red Army soldiers who lost their lives liberating Malbork and the surrounding area, the cemetery in its current form dates from 1948 and features eight mass graves containing the remains of 529 soldiers who died in Malbork, Stare Pole, Zwierzno, Żurawiec and other parts of the region. A large concrete monument painted red takes pride of place, and is covered in typically heroic figures, acts and deeds.

Churches

Church of Holy Mother of Eternal Help (Kościół MB Nieustającej Pomocy) B-4, ul. Słowackiego 76, tel. (+48) 55 272 26 82. Once known as St. George's Church, a fact borne out by the rather nice stone carving to the right of the main entrance, this exceedingly Germanic beauty of a building was first mentioned in 1403 when it was recorded that the Teutonic Grand Master of the day gave it some candles. Rebuilt in the 1470s after the Thirteen Year War and again at the start of the 18th century, the church was in the hands of the Evangelical Church and then the Lutherans before becoming a Polish Catholic church at the end of WWII with the first Mass taking place on May 16, 1945. Avoiding major damage during the war, the church remains a delight to see both inside and out. Of particular interest is the church's original front, a bas-relief sculpture of the Passion from 1687 and the rather fine 18th-century main altar. Lying at rest in the graveyard is Konrad Steinbrech (1849-1923), Malbork Castle's chief conservator and



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curator. ▶ No visiting during mass please. Instead visit between Sunday masses (07:00-18:00) and shortly after mass during the week (06:00 and 18:00 until Christmas, 07:00 and 18:00 after Christmas).

Church of St. John the Baptist (Kościół Św. Jana Chrzciciela) B-3, os. Stare Miasto 22, tel. (+48) 55 273 37 94, www.jan.rel.pl. A version of this church has been kicking around Malbork since at least the 13th century, having been destroyed and rebuilt on several occasions. The current building was like so many other old ones in the town rebuilt at the end of the Thirteen Year War in 1468, although the current wooden bell tower dates from the 1520s. Always a Catholic church, the interior, most of which dates from extensive conservation work between the wars, is rather plain. Outstanding features include a medieval sculpture of St. Elizabeth of Turin and the neo-Gothic altar. ▶ Open during mass only.

Old town

The first thing you'll notice about Malbork's old town is that it doesn't exist. After spending 30 minutes wandering around with a map trying to find it, the fact that you're in it suddenly, somewhat depressingly, dawns on you. Almost completely destroyed during fierce fighting between the retreating Germans and the Red Army towards the end of WWII, the communist town planners set about rebuilding the area with gay abandon, putting up large modern tenement blocks where the original medieval buildings stood. What little that did survive is however worth hunting down. At the junction of ul. Piłsudskiego and ul. 17 Marca is the fine Brama Garncarska (Garncarska Gate). Built between 1320 and 1330 as part of the original defensive town walls the tower was badly damaged during the war and was partially rebuilt in 1955 including the addition of a four-sided roof. In a state of disrepair, the gate is currently closed to visitors. Immediately northwest along a dreary concrete pedestrianised street on the corner of Trakt Jana Pawła II and Stare Miasto is the splendid Ratusz Staromiejski (Old Town Hall). Its current look dates from a combination of work from around 1380 and the 19th century, and is a typically over the top German affair. The building lost its original purpose in 1929 and now houses a cultural centre, that among other things organises Malbork's annual Medieval Festival. Walking south along Trakt Jana Pawła II takes you to the old town's final gem. The scruffy-looking Brama Mariacka (Mariacka Gate) dates from the same time as the town's other gate and originally served as a passage from Malbork to Sztum. Originally sporting a clock, WWII saw the gate burnt and bullet-riddled, and the building lay empty until 1964 when it was partially rebuilt only to be further ruined by a fire in 1980. Today, Brama Mariacka houses the superb bar, Baszta.

Restauracja Villa Uphagena

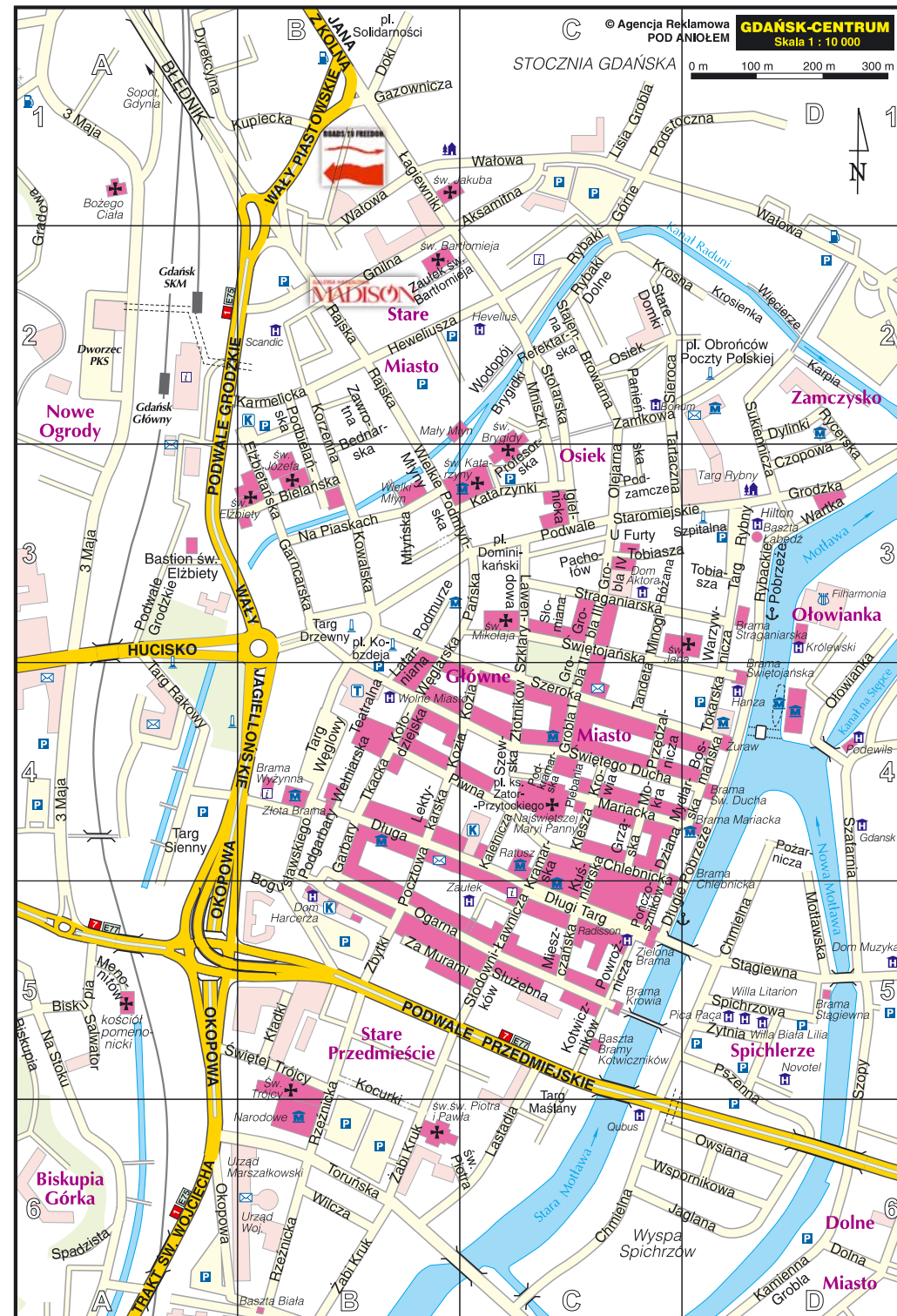
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GDĄSK-OLIWA
Skala 1 : 15 000

0 m 150 m 300 m 450 m

OLIWA
Westerplatte
Oliwa Park
Stary Rynek Oliwski
Opata Rybinskiego

GDĄSK-NOWY PORT
Skala 1 : 27 000

0 m 270 m 540 m 1080 m

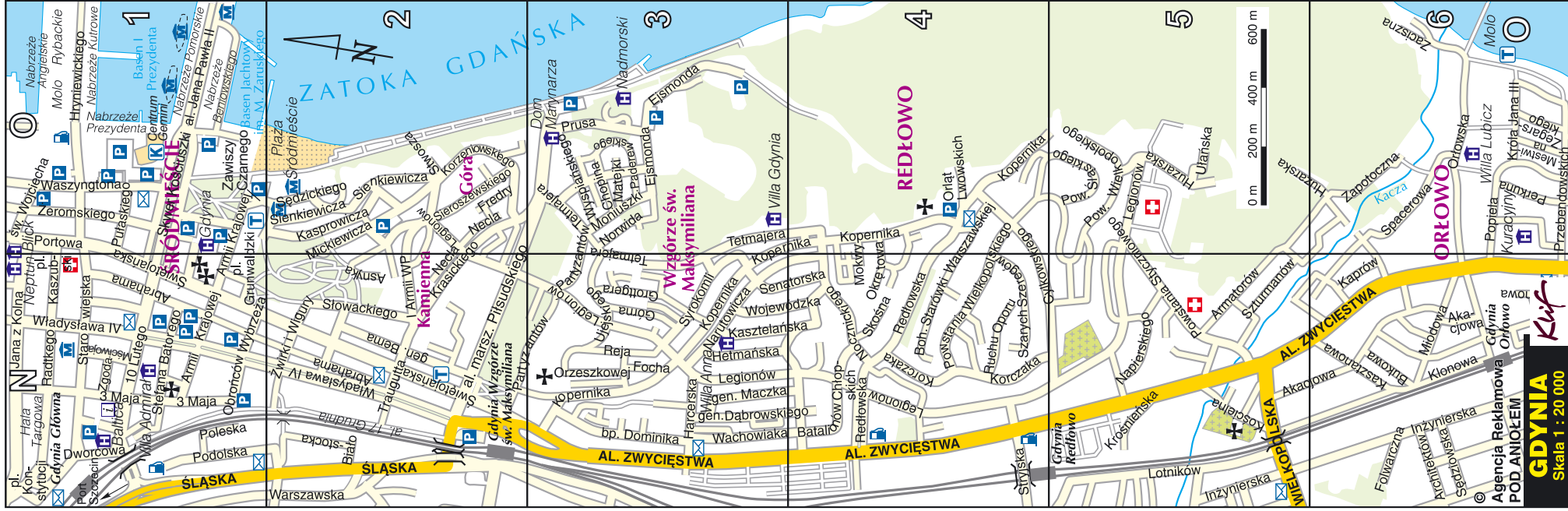
Zatoka Gdańska
Westerplatte
Kanał Portowy
Przemysłowa
Oliwska
Nowy Port

GDĄSK
Skala 1 : 26 000

0 m 260 m 520 m 1040 m

ZASPA
Strzyża Góra
Strzyża Dolina
Galeria Bałtycka
Wrzeszcz
Studenka

GDĄSK
Stocznia Północna
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Sopot (pg. 140-141)

Table listing streets in Sopot with corresponding page numbers (e.g., 1 Maja L-4, 23 Marca L-3).

Gdańsk (pg. 137-139)

Table listing streets in Gdańsk with corresponding page numbers (e.g., Małopolska L-2, Mamuszkowski al. M-3/4).

Gdańsk (pg. 137-139)

Table listing streets in Gdańsk with corresponding page numbers (e.g., 3 Maja A-1/2/3/4, Aksmatna C-1).

Table listing streets in Gdańsk with corresponding page numbers (e.g., Kartuska J-4, I-5, Reduta Żbik K-3).

Table listing streets in Gdańsk with corresponding page numbers (e.g., Refektarska C-2, Reja G-2/3).

Symbol Key

- List of symbols and their meanings: Air conditioning, Casino, Child friendly, Internet, Fitness centre, Restaurant, Sauna, Live music, Animal friendly, Fireplace, Tourist Card accepted, Credit cards accepted, Conference facilities, Facilities for the disabled, Guarded parking, No smoking, Smoking room available, Swimming pool, Wi-Fi, Take away, Old Town location, Home delivery.

GDAŃSK WHERE TO STAY

Table listing accommodation options in Gdańsk with page numbers (e.g., Abak i Mac-tur 32, Amber 28).

Table listing accommodation options in Gdańsk with page numbers (e.g., Cico 36, Czerwone Drzwi 36).

Gdynia (pg. 140-141)

Table listing streets in Gdynia with corresponding page numbers (e.g., 10 Lutego N/O-1, 3 Maja N-1).

Table listing streets in Gdynia with corresponding page numbers (e.g., Norwida O-3, Obrońców Wybrzeża N-1).

Table listing streets in Gdynia with corresponding page numbers (e.g., Orłowska O-6, Orzeszkowej N-3).

Table listing streets in Gdynia with corresponding page numbers (e.g., Garbary B-4, Garmcarska B-3).

Table listing streets in Gdynia with corresponding page numbers (e.g., Piłkowskiego G-4, Pilotów E-3).

GDAŃSK RESTAURANTS

Table listing restaurants in Gdańsk with page numbers (e.g., Amsterdam Bar Beer & Bagel 42, Bar Mleczny Neptun 38).

Table listing restaurants in Gdańsk with page numbers (e.g., Cico 36, Czerwone Drzwi 36).

Advertisement for Restauracja Euro, featuring a photo of the restaurant interior and text: 'True to its name we specialise in international and old Polish cuisine. The ROCOCO interior and stylish furniture and soft lighting create a warm atmosphere.'

Advertisement for Pizzeria Napoli, featuring a photo of the restaurant interior and text: 'We specialise in Italian cuisine with 40 types of pizza, spaghetti, macaroni and meat dishes. Delicious food and the charm of old Gdańsk make this place irresistible.'

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