

The Ultimate Chopin Tour

The most comprehensive Chopin tour on the market is a special treat for anyone who admires the talents of the most famous Poland-born composer. See all the formative places that influenced Chopin during his first twenty years. Expect some highly enjoyable sightseeing interspersed with inspiring music.

The tour focuses on Fryderyk Chopin, but at the same time, you will not miss **the highlights of Central and Southern Poland**, exploring all three historical Polish capitals (Gniezno, Kraków, and Warsaw), and partially trace the roots of two other world-renowned Poles: Nicolaus Copernicus and John Paul II.

Duration: 12 days

Availability: every day

Departures from: Warsaw

Price per person

PRICING

No. of people

PRICE

INCLUDED IN PRICE

- all transportation services including airport transfers
- service of English-speaking local guides in Warsaw, Torun, Gniezno, Wroclaw and Krakow
- tickets for Chopin piano concerts in Warsaw
- dinner in Warsaw and Wrocław
- entrance tickets to the Chopin Museum, Royal Castle and Żelazowa Wola museum, gingerbread museum in Torun; church of peace in Swidnica
- tickets for guided tour in English in Auschwitz-Birkenau
- tour organisation, all fees and taxes

NOT INCLUDED IN PRICE

CUSTOMISED TO YOUR PREFERENCE

(we'll help you select the best value options according to your preferences):

- accommodation (50-400 EUR/ person, let us recommend the best deal for your budget)
- other meals (we can help making the right choice and reservations)
- program for 1-3 persons

ITINERARY

Day 1: ENTRÉE

Transfer from the airport to your hotel in Warsaw. In the afternoon, a welcome dinner in a restaurant in historical Warsaw. Overnight in Warsaw.

Day 2: WHERE THE HEART IS

In the morning, a guided tour of **Warsaw**, a city which had a very special place in Chopin's heart. Fryderyk Chopin lived in Warsaw for the first seven years of his life. Unfortunately, the Saxon Palace, where the Chopin Family moved into after leaving Żelazowa Wola, was destroyed during World War II. You will see the only remaining arcade of the palace on **Pilsudskiego Place**, now the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. We cannot miss some other Warsaw highlights: the Old Town, the Royal Castle, and especially the Ostrogski Palace, where the new hi-tech **Chopin Museum** is located. In the evening you attend a **Chopin Piano Concert** in side wing of Royal Castle. Overnight in Warsaw.

Day 3: HOME IN MAZOVIA

Breakfast in the hotel, then departure to Żelazowa Wola and Brochów. In **Żelazowa Wola** is the traditional manor house where Chopin's parents met and Fryderyk was born. In the autumn of the same year, the family moved to Warsaw. They did, however, return to visit Żelazowa Wola several times. After touring the museum and the gardens of Żelazowa Wola, we will drive to the Gothic-Renaissance parish church in **Brochów**, the only example of a fortified church in Poland. This is where Chopin's parents were married and Fryderyk was baptized. From Brochów you drive directly to Toruń. Overnight in Toruń.

Day 4: SUMMER VACATION AND GINGERBREAD

The day starts with a city tour. **Toruń** historical buildings left an immense impression on the 15-year-old Chopin. He was charmed by its unique and diversified architecture, Gothic churches and other Toruń landmarks such as the **Crooked Tower**. In a letter to his friend Jan Matuszewski, Chopin shared a discovery he made in Torun: *'That is all that I am able to write to you about Toruń, I might tell you more, but only this will I write, that the greatest impression [...] was made on me by the gingerbread. I have seen, it is true, all the fortifications from all sides of the city, with all the details. I saw the famous machine for moving sand from one place to another. I saw the leaning tower, the famous town hall, both outside and inside [...]. Yet all of this does not surpass the gingerbread, oh that gingerbread, a piece of which I've sent to Warsaw.'* Just like Chopin you will get a chance to taste the **gingerbread**. See how to bake it in the basement of the house that is a prime historical monument: the house where Nicolaus Copernicus, the famous astronomer, was born in 1473. **Optional excursion in the afternoon:** This tour takes you to the small villages connected to Chopin's life. The tour starts in **Golub**. Fryderyk Chopin visited Golub during the excursion from Szafarnia, where he spent his holiday. You will see fortified castle on the hill which Chopin enjoyed visiting on outings from **Szafarnia**. From Golub you will travel to Szafarnia, a charming village. It was here in the family estate of Chopin's friend, the young composer spent his 1824 and 1825 summer vacations and edited his own mock gazette "Kuryer Szafarski". The Dziewanowski residence still exists, now housing a small museum. The local Chopin Center has a concert hall and the building is surrounded by a three-hectare park with six natural monuments. Overnight in Toruń.

Day 5: TWO EVES & POLONNAISE BRILLANTE

On the way to Wrocław you will stop in **Gniezno**, the first Polish capital. The town is a must-see for anybody interested in Polish history. The cathedral, a true gem, was the coronation site of five Polish kings and features the tomb of Saint Wojciech (Adalbert in Latin). It is equally noted for its artistic and famous Romanesque bronze doors. The next stop will be the **Antonin** hunting lodge, located in the southern part

of the Greater Poland province. In the autumn of 1829, the teenage Chopin spent a few days here and composed his Op. 3, Polonaise "Brillante" in C-major. In his correspondence to his friend Tytus Woyciechowski, he wrote: *'[...] I was there for a week, and you'll not believe how well I felt there. [...]. As for my own person and passing amusement, I would have stayed there until I was chased away, but my affairs, and my Concerto in particular, not yet finished, and impatiently awaiting the completion of its finale, compelled me to leave that paradise. There were two Eves there, the duke's young daughters, extremely kind and polite, musical, tender creatures.'* Overnight in Wrocław.

Day 6: SILESIAN HOSPITALITY

After breakfast, we take you on a tour of **Wrocław**, a city which Fryderyk Chopin visited on several occasions. However, it was only in 1830 that he managed to spend more time here. Most likely, during his visit to Wrocław, Chopin had an opportunity to see **Tumski Island**, the oldest part of the city, as well as the **Old Town** and the **Market Square**. We will also drive to the Centennial Hall, a huge multipurpose building (1911-1913, designed by Max Berg) listed as a UNESCO Heritage site. Wrocław is one of the all-time favourites for our customers and we schedule a delightful free afternoon. Dinner in the oldest restaurant in Europe and overnight in Wrocław.

Day 7: THE CURE

On the way to Duszniki, one of the most popular spa towns in Poland, we stop over in the medieval town of **Świdnica** with its fascinating protestant Church of Peace, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Chopin spent a summer in Duszniki Zdrój in 1826. Together with his mother he went there to join his sister Emilia for curative treatments. You will probably find **Duszniki Zdrój** very charming, although it was a bit boring for a young boy to partake in the routines of 19th century "Kurort". In a letter to his friend Wilhelm Kolbert, he described a typical day: *In the morning, 6 o'clock at the latest, all the Ailing at the spring; here, wretched brass music compiled from a dozen or so caricatures in various tastes [...] is played to the slowly perambulating Kur-gästs [...] This promenade along the lovely avenue connecting the Anstalt with the town lasts usually until eight, depending on how many cupfuls one has to drink in the morning, then everyone (each to his own) goes off to breakfast. - After breakfast I usually go off for a stroll, walk until 12, at which time dinner must be eaten, because after dinner we go once again to the Brun. The afternoon [...] is again sullied by music, and apart from that one walks around until evening. Like me, since I drink only two glasses of Lau-brun after dinner, so I go home early for supper, and after supper to sleep.'* Enjoy the slow pace of Duszniki. We will definitely take a glance at Fryderyk Chopin's Spa Theater where Chopin gave two concerts and the Chopin's Monument. If you have free afternoon, we recommend the visit in **the Museum of Papermaking** where you will find the history of Polish paper industry. Overnight in Duszniki Zdrój.

Day 8: TOTAL IMMERSION IN HISTORY

From Duszniki Zdrój we take you to Kraków. Chopin was in **Kraków** only once, and from what we know, he enjoyed his visit immensely. However before Kraków, we will make a stop in **Auschwitz** for a tour the Holocaust Museum at the location of the most notorious genocide site of the 20th century and possibly all human history. It is only by being there in person that you can fully comprehend the scale of the immense

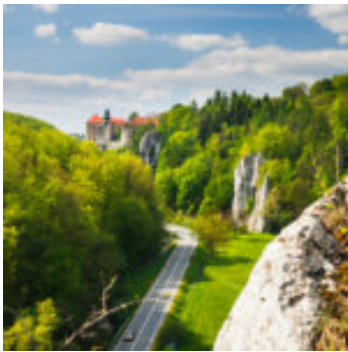
tragedy. Overnight in Kraków.

Day 9: THE CITY OF THE POLISH KINGS

In the morning, we start off with a guided tour of **Kraków**, the biggest tourist attraction of Poland. During the half-day thorough introduction to Kraków, you will learn about the old capital's key interesting facts and listen to entertaining tales and fables of bygone days. Your guide will take you round the magical **Old Town**: to the Castle and Cathedral on the Wawel hill. On the Royal Route, we will go along Kanonicza and Grodzka Streets to see the ancient Jagiellonian University district the largest mediaeval **Market Square** in Europe. While in the square, you can stop to browse in the oldest shopping mall, the Sukiennice cloth hall, and then explore the **Church of the Virgin Mary** (including the magnificent Gothic wooden altar created by Veit Stoss). The tour ends at the fortified city walls by the Barbican Gate. Free time in the evening. Overnight in Kraków.

Day 10: WANDERING SOUL

Free Day in Kraków or an optional full-day tour to Wieliczka and two Jura region castles, the tourist destinations young Chopin went to when he was in Kraków. 1/ The **Wieliczka Salt Mine**: one of the top attractions in Europe. The route in the mine leads you through galleries and chambers on three levels, all of these from 64 to 135 meters below the ground and including the unique and splendidly adorned Chapel of Saint Kinga. You need to be reasonably fit, as the route is 2.5 km long and the tour starts by descending 400 steps down one of the main shafts (the return journey is by elevator, though!). And this is just a small section of the entire labyrinth, which has a total of 9 levels and 300 kilometers of corridors.



2/ **Ojców and Pieskowa Skala**. Both places left a great impression on Chopin.

In Ojców he visited the Dark Cave and King Lokietek's Cave and from there he went directly to the **Pieskowa Skala Palace**. This 14th century fortress was converted into a beautiful Renaissance residence during the 16th century. Today it is a home to the Museum of the National Wawel Art Collections. Overnight in Kraków.

Day 11: THE GRAND FINALE

Breakfast in the hotel. In the morning we will depart for Warsaw. Overnight in Warsaw.

Day 12: DEPARTURE

Breakfast and departure from Warsaw.

