

SOUTH-WESTERN POLAND: STAYPOLAND E-BOOK

SOUTH-WESTERN POLAND

(StayPoland regional e-book)

For each Polish region we have prepared a special regional e-book. It is a short guide that enables you to quickly familiarize yourself with a new territory. The best of each region is listed in order of importance.

There are five regional e-books and each of them has five sections:

1. introduction to region and sights,
2. map,
3. “must-see” tourist sights (10 featured locations in South-Western Poland e-book),
4. “explore!": tourist sights (38 places in South-West),
5. information on what STAYPOLAND travel agency & reservation system can do for you in selected places.

Two important points:

- A great number of the place & activity recommendations are made based on our customers' experiences. Your comments are welcome. We are looking forward to your feedback at e-books@staypoland.com (best comments will be published).
- You will find the guide very practical. It enables the independent traveler to make the most of their trip to Poland. At the end of this guide we post information on what STAYPOLAND travel agency can do for you in every destination. For more details check: www.staypoland.com.

1. INTRODUCTION TO SOUTH-WESTERN POLAND

provinces: 4 voivodeships: dolnośląskie (Lower Silesia), lubuskie (Lubusz), and opolskie (Opole), wielkopolskie (Greater Poland)

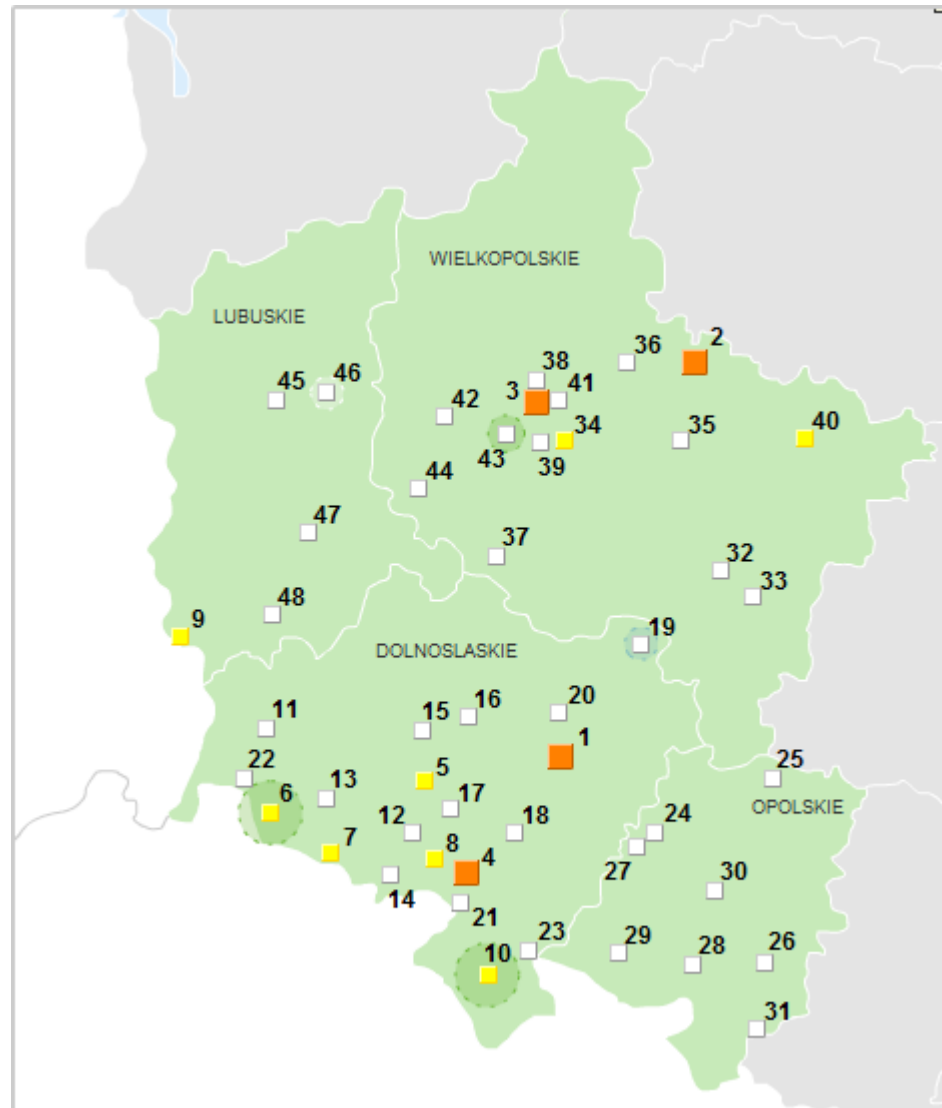
area / population: 73,170 sq km / 8.3 million people

featured must-see places: 4 Polish must-see: Wrocław (the top place), Gniezno, Poznań, Świdnica
6 regional must-see: Jawor, Karkonosze Mountains, Karpacz, Książ, Łęknica, Ziemia Kłodzka region

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- explore!:** 38 off-the-beaten-path: Bolesławiec, Bolków, Brzeg, Byczyna, Gołuchów, Góra św. Anny, Jelenia Góra, Kalisz, Kórnik, Krzeszów, Łąd, Lake Lednica, Legnica, Leszno, Lubiąż, Łagów, Małujowice, Międzyrzecki Military Area, Morasko, Moszna, Nysa, Opole, Paczków, Rogalin, Rogoźnica, Stary Licheń, Stawy Milickie, Swarzędz, Ślęza Mountain, Trzebnica, Walim, Wąsowo, Wielkopolski National Park, Wolsztyn, Zamek Czocho, Zielona Góra, Złoty Stok, Żagań (in text below listed by voivodeship)
- UNESCO World Heritage:** 3 listings: the Centennial Hall in Wrocław, the Churches of Peace (Świdnica and Jawor), and Łęknica/Bad Muskau (Park Mużakowski)
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3. MUST-SEE PLACES

** WROCŁAW (1)

Behind the metropolitan atmosphere of the capital of Silesia lies a tumultuous history. The large old town with fabulous square and numerous islands connected by 112 bridges help explain why it is considered as one of the most interesting places in Poland.

++ Rynek (the Market Square) with a late Gothic town hall (visit the chambers & in the cellar, the oldest inn in Poland) and imposing burghers houses – there are 11 streets leading out from the square, giving you plenty of choices for strolls around the city; several majestic Gothic churches (St. Elisabeth's, St. Dorota's, St. Maria Magdalena's, St. Vincent's, St. Adalbert's (Św. Wojciech)) and a Bernardine Monastery; Piasek Island with a beautiful Nativity Scene in the Church of Visitation of St. Mary; Ostrów Tumski (Cathedral Island), the oldest part of Wrocław with St. John's Cathedral (visit the tower); Panorama Raclawicka (3D painting depicting the Raclawice Battle); Aula Leopoldina (splendid Baroque ceremonial hall in the University); Hala Ludowa (the Centennial Hall built by Max Berg in 1913, UNESCO heritage site); plus great bars and clubs.

+ National Museum (medieval sculpture, fine Polish painting); Most Oławski (Olawski bridge); Ogród Japoński (Japanese-style garden); Botanical Garden and a zoo; Archeology and Ethnographic museums in the Spaetgen Palace; Stare Jatki street with clubs and a monument to slaughterhouse animals; Hala Targowa (modernist Market hall from 1908 – look inside); Promenada Staromiejska (boulevard along the past fortification walls south of the old town); Awangarda Art Gallery, and the "Olympic" stadium where Hitler had planned to hold the Olympic games.

[min: 1 day – best: 2.5 days – max: 4 days]

** GNIEZNO (2)

Gniezno was the first capital of Poland in the 10th-11th century and since year 1000 had been seat of the first archbishopric. The cathedral is a must for anyone with a keen interest in Polish history.

++ The Gothic Cathedral houses the sarcophagus of the Polish patron saint, St Adalbert (Św. Wojciech), and a Romanesque art masterpiece – bronze doors dating from 1175 depicting the St. Adalbert legends.

+ Town centre, fortifications and especially St. John's church, Museum of the Origins of the Polish State at Jelonek Lake, the view from the cathedral. It is a good idea to travel to Lake Lednica 18 km to the west and take the Gąsawa-Żnin narrow gauge railway more to the north (see Northwestern e-book).

[min: 3 hours – best: 2 days – max: 3.5 days]

** POZNAŃ (3)

Poland's most western major city (both geographically and in character) hosts the well-known Polish trade fairs. However, Poznań is not just about business,

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it is a welcoming destination for any traveler interested in culture and fun.

++ The colorful Stary Rynek (another superb market place with an impressive Renaissance town hall: Museum of Poznań's History, pillory and weigh House); Ostrów Tumski (Cathedral Island) – Basilica of St. Peter and Paul (the cradle of Poland, Poznań was the seat of Polish Kings before Kraków); brazenly Baroque St. Stanislaus (św. Stanisława) parish church, pubs and clubs; and the Stary Browar shopping centre (contemporary design converted from a brewery, the most beautiful mall in Poland).

+ National Museum (an extensive collection of valuable Polish and European art); the Franciscan Church and Monastery (see the model of old Poznań), the Kaiserhaus (the Zamek) built for German Emperor Wilhelm II – now a culture centre (one of the few remaining interiors with Third Reich design elements in Europe); the monument to the victims of June 1956; the Palm House; the Archeology Museum; the charming but forgotten Śródka district; pleasing Malta Lake; Cytadela: the park on the Citadel Hill enclosing the Museum of Weapons and inspiringly strange statues by M. Abakanowicz; St. Adalbert's (św. Wojciech) Church: a wooden belfry and Art Nouveau paintings.

[min: 3 hours – best: 2 days – max: 3.5 days]

** ŚWIDNICA (4)

The old historical town is internationally known for its UNESCO Heritage Church of Peace.

++ The Kościół Pokoju (Church of Peace) was built in 1656 (after the 30 Years' War) for the Protestant minority. The magnificent church is allegedly the biggest timber-framed church in the world, and it has a great organ within interesting interiors.

+ Rynek (the Market Square) with the Shop-Keeping History museum in the town hall and a view from the Gothic belfry (103 m) of the St. Stanislaus and St. Wenceslas Church, plus a Military Museum.

[min: 1 hour – best: 3 hours – max: 8 hours]

* JAWOR (5)

The older Church of Peace in Silesia, along with Świdnica, Jawor is a UNESCO Heritage site.

++ If you were enthralled by the timber church in Świdnica, you should see the Church of the Holy Ghost in Jawor as well. There are four floors of balconies and the church can take in 6,000 people.

+ St. Martin's Church in the main square.

[min: 1 hour – best: 1.5 hour – max: 2.5 hours]

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* **KARKONOSZE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK (6)**

The Karkonosze Mountains are the highest non-Carpathian hills in Poland. The national park stretches along the national border, and the round peaks are contrasted by cirques (called kocioły), abruptly sloping valleys formed by glaciers and numerous picturesque lakes. The Karkonosze are quite different from the Tatras.

++ Kocioł Łomniczki and the imposing border mountain of Śnieżka (1602 m – the largest mountain in the Karkonosze and the Czech Republic) accessible by hiking or chairlift from Karpacz; Mount Śrenica (1351 m) accessible from Szklarska Poręba (after Karpacz, Szklarska Poręba is the second most popular destination in the Karkonosze); for a longer hike follow an 8 hour trail connecting Śrenica and Śnieżka mountains: there will be three cirques on the way: Śnieżne Kotły, Wielkiego Stawu, Małego Stawu; see interesting rock formations: Końskie Łby near Szklarska Poręba and Pielgrzymy or Słonecznik near Karpacz; downhill skiing in Karpacz and Szklarska Poręba.

+ Waterfalls Szklarki & Kamieńczyka near Szklarska Poręba; cross-country skiing in Jagniątków; why not spend more time to discover the equally interesting Czech part of the Karkonosze Mountains?

[min: 1.5 days – best: 3-7 days – max: 14 days]

* **KARPACZ (7)**

The most important holiday resort in the Polish Karkonosze Mountains. The best place to start hiking or go skiing in this part of Poland.

++ Start of hiking trails & ski lifts; the impressive Wang Chapel (Świątynia Wang) – this 12th century chapel is built of wood and in 1841 it was moved from its original location in southern Norway (village of Vang, Valdres region) by a Prussian king.

+ Toy museum (Muzeum zabawek) and the Museum of Sport and Tourism, plus eating and drinking places.

[min: 2 hours – best: 2 hours to 7 days depending on your plans and the season]

* **KSIAŻ (8)**

Perched scenically on a hill and having some charming interiors, this is probably the most fairytale-like castle in Poland.

++ A huge 13th-century castle: 12 beautiful terraces; first-floor halls (especially Maximilian Hall) and chambers; a view of the tower.

+ Horse-riding at the nearby steed farm, and an Industrial museum in the town of Wałbrzych.

[min: 2 hours – best: 3 hours – max: 4.5 hours]

* **ŁĘKNICA (9)**

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On the two banks of the Nysa River, both in Poland and Germany, lies Park Mużakowski, one of the most beautiful 19th century aristocratic parks in Europe (UNESCO heritage site).

++ See the bridges, viaducts, Nowy Zamek (New Castle) and other buildings in the impressive landscape gardens.

+ Check the ambiance in the German part of the park – in the spa town of Bad Muskau.

[min: 3 hours – best: 4 hours – max: 2 days]

* **ZIEMIA KŁODZKA (10)**

This almost unknown region ranks among the most compact and varied of holiday regions in Poland. Historically a distinct province, Ziemia Kłodzka is a hilly area enclosed on three sides by the Czech border. It is superb for spa treatments and walks.

++ Kłodzko: the fortress labyrinth and the underground tourist trail; the historical centre with bridge and Church of Our Lady; the Góry Stołowe National Park (impressive rock formations: Szczeliniec Wielki, Błędne Skały “Erratic boulders”, Skalne Grzyby “Rock Mushrooms”); Czerмна: the haunting Chapel of Skulls; Kletno: Jaskinia Niedzwiedzia (Bear’s Cave), one of the two best caves in Poland (the other is Raj cave in Central-East Poland); Wambierzyce: the Baroque pilgrimage church in countryside recreated to resemble Jerusalem, with a beautiful mechanical nativity scene.

+ Duszniki-Zdrój: a spa town hosting the Chopin music festival in August, and the Museum of the Paper Industry (very interesting wooden architecture); Bystrzyca Kłodzka: picturesque square and Museum of Matchboxes; Kudowa-Zdrój: Toy Museum; Międzygórze: Fairytale Garden (Ogód Bajek) showing scenes from Polish fairytales; Wilczki Waterfall - 21 m high; Łądek-Zdrój: the most interesting spa hall in the region – Sanatorium Wojciech; Polanica Zdrój: spa town; several streams good for trout fishing.

[min: 2 days – best: 4-5 days – max: 7 or more if you go for spa treatments or want to discover the neighboring Czech areas, especially the amazing castles and “rock towns”]

4. eXPLORE! PLACES

LOWER SILESIAN (DOLNOŚLĄSKIE) VOIVODESHIP

BOLESŁAWIEC (11)

In the past known as Bunzlau, this small historical town produces the best of the world-renowned Polish pottery. Stop here if you are in a shopping mood to visit the ceramics museum and the rewarding old town. If you like this place, do not miss another small old town jewel – the well-fortified Lwówek Śląski, 15 km to the south.

BOLKÓW (12)

Romantic 13th-16th century castle ruins on a hill overlooking a small town. The only castle in Poland built in a style resembling the castles of Normandy.

JELENIA GÓRA (13)

In Cieplice (southern suburb of Jelenia Góra) there is a large spa area, and it is pleasant to walk in the spa parks or to visit the ruins of Chojnik castle (superb view – for even better view ascend to Szybowisko Mountain just to the north of Jelenia Góra). The town centre is worth noting for the interesting Holy Cross (św. Krzyża) church, the picturesque square and the glass art collection in the Karkonosze Regional museum.

KRZESZÓW (14)

Krzeszów churches stand out among the rich array of Silesia's Baroque religious monuments. If you want to be impressed by sheer size, go to Lubiąż, while if you seek beauty, then Krzeszów is the place. Visit St. Joseph's church (Willmann's frescos), the large, richly decorated Church of the Assumption, and the mausoleum of Piast princes.

LEGNICA (15)

If you are interested in medieval history or Mongolia, you might wish to visit this notorious battlefield: in 1241, 14 years after Genghis Khan's death, Mongol archers decimated the united forces of Polish, Silesian, and German princes in the fields at Legnica (Liegnitz). This was the most western reach of the Mongol warriors in the 13th century. Visit the museum and St. Jadwiga's Church (built by K.I. Dientzenhofer – the man responsible for the best of Prague's Baroque architecture). It is also possible to stop inside the town of Legnica and see its square, best churches, copper mining museum, and castle.

LUBIAŻ (16)

In Silesia, Lubiąż could be your off-the-beaten-path favorite. It has a colossal Baroque Abbey – actually the biggest abbey of the Cistercian order worldwide. The building is twice the size of the Wawel Castle in Kraków, but presently because it is very oversized, and hence unused, only a small part has been renovated and suitable for visitors (must-see Sala Książeca – Prince's Hall).

ROGOŹNICA (17)

Rogoźnica is known by its German name of Gross-Rosen, one of the first (and relatively small) concentration and forced labor camps built in Poland by the Nazis. There is a small museum commemorating the atrocities. In nearby Strzegom there is a fine Gothic church.

SOBÓTKA & ŚLĘŻA MOUNTAIN (18)

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The solitary mountain of Ślęża gave its name to the whole Silesia province. In pagan times there was a long-standing solar cult center flourishing here, and from those times several queer granite carvings remain (resembling mushroom, monk, maiden with a fish, and a bear) as well as parts of a strong fortification. These mysterious artifacts and the splendid view attract many weekend visitors from nearby Polish towns.

STAWY MILICKIE (19)

In the north of Lower Silesia, there is the extensive area of the Milicz ponds (a member of the Living Lakes global project). The first ponds were built by Cistercian monks in the 13th century, and today these ponds cover an area of 77 sq km and contain reputedly the largest school of carp in Europe.

TRZEBNICA (20)

This small town is not very far from Wrocław and is well known in Silesia because the former Cistercian Convent's church contains the final resting place of St. Jadwiga, the patron saint of Silesia. The sumptuous Baroque basilica has interesting Romanesque and Gothic artistic touches.

WALIM (21)

Polish visitors interested in Lower Silesia often pay a visit to the huge "underground city" at Walim, built during World War II with the intention to expand it into the biggest Nazi secret factory (Project Riese). It is a special and mysterious place indeed. If you liked Walim, consider nearby Głuszyca as well.

ZAMEK CZOCHA (22)

Czocha Castle (Zamek) near the town of Leśna dates back to the 13th century, it looks very romantic and if you want to discover the farthest edges of Lower Silesia, it is a good idea to stop here overnight. The hotel rooms are not extremely luxurious, but curious travelers might be satisfied. Contact StayPoland's reservation department.

ZŁOTY STOK (23)

If you travel with kids or are a budding venture capitalist, you might fancy visiting a real goldmine. Silesia has one accessible to the general public, known as "Sztolnia Czarna". You can learn how gold and later arsenic was mined. Back in the 16th century there were 190 goldmines here and allegedly produced 8% of European gold. There is also minerals exhibition and one of the longest underground waterfalls (10 m).

OPOLE (OPOLSKIE) VOIVODESHIP

BRZEG (24)

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Possibly the most noteworthy historical monument of Opole voivodeship, Brzeg castle has been nicknamed as the “Silesian Wawel” as an allusion to its grandeur in the times when the castle was owned by the dukes of the Piast family (descendants of the first Polish royal dynasty). It is a good idea to examine the exquisite Renaissance gateway and to visit the castle museum with an eclectic exhibition. There are a number of quite interesting brick-and-stone churches in Brzeg and several very interesting wooden churches in nearby villages (Małujowice, Strzelniki, Łosiów, and Pogorzele).

BYCZYNA (25)

Byczyna has one of the best-preserved medieval layouts in the region. The almost perfectly preserved fortified walls form a near-perfect oval. There are trout in the water moats, and it is recommended to climb the town hall tower and enjoy the rustic ambiance of this small town in the fields.

GÓRA ŚW. ANNY (26)

The Mountain of St. Anne has a Franciscan monastery and is one of the top Polish pilgrimage destinations (July 26). There is a good view and an impressive Cavalry consisting of 33 chapels.

MAŁUJOWICE (27)

People visiting Brzeg often pop into the village of Małujowice to see the small wooden St. James’ church. 15th century polychromic paintings adorn the church walls and the ceiling, and they may even take your breath away.

MOSZNA (28)

If you own a wall calendar with Polish castles and palaces, the odds are that photogenic Moszna will grace one of the months. This pretty neo-Gothic castle has 99 towers, spires and turrets; although of the 365 rooms only a few serve as museum space. In the remaining part there is a hotel, and health centre for treating neurosis. Your visit will not be stressful.

NYSA (29)

Formerly the most important town in the region, Nysa suffered great destruction during WW2. It still serves well as a good destination for a couple of hours to visit the imposing Gothic cathedral, exuberant Baroque Saint Peter and Paul church, plus a few other remaining monuments. If you have seen old news clips of Poland during Communist times, you will often spot the police driving Nysa vans.

OPOLE (30)

This capital of the voivodeship is associated with the Polish song festival that takes place here every June. You may want to visit the quadrangular market square, the tombs of the Piast dynasty princes in the Franciscan Church, and the Pasieki islet: the Gothic Piast Tower and Art Nouveau villas in Pow-

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stańców Śląski Street. If you have more time, drive to the open-air folk museum in the city suburbs or perhaps try a pub crawl in the centre.

PACZKÓW (31)

Paczków is nicknamed as “Polish Carcassonne” because it has the best-preserved fortified walls in Poland. An exaggeration perhaps, but the 1.2 km of fortifications have survived very well (19 of the 24 towers and 4 gates are still in place). Another special feature is the small Museum of the Gas Industry. It is possible to connect your visit to Paczków with an in-depth exploration of nearby Kłodzko area.

GREATER POLAND (WIELKOPOLSKIE) VOIVODESHIP

GOŁUCHÓW (32)

The old castle in Gołuchów was completely rebuilt in the 1870s and 1880s by the artistic spirit of Izabela Czartoryska, who turned it into a palace resembling those of the Loire Valley. It is one of the most romantic buildings in Poland, the interior collections are exquisite and the landscaped park is gorgeous.

KALISZ (33)

There is a theory that Kalisz might be the oldest town in Poland as there seems to be a reference to it by Claudius Ptolemy in 150 AD, but whatever its provenance, Kalisz is a midsize town with considerable character. The old town has an attractive market square, a handful of cobblestone streets, fortifications, and some very good churches.

KÓRNIK (34)

The neo-Gothic castle in Kórnik is undoubtedly one of the best castles to visit while in Poland. The exteriors draw inspiration from Moorish Alhambra, while the interior furnishings date back to the 19th century. The castle is also a home to one of the largest Polish libraries (200,000 volumes) and next to the castle is the biggest arboretum in Poland (2,500 species of herbs, bushes and trees). Do not forget to take a stroll through the castle park.

ŁĄD (35)

Łąd is not usually a prime destination for most people, but it has one of the best architectural monuments of Greater Poland: the Cistercian Abbey from the 13th-18th centuries (well-restored) and an ornate Baroque church (splendid cupola).

LAKE LEDNICA (36)

This lovely lake is located 18 km east of Gniezno. The natural beauty and good fried fish in the beach bar are not the key reasons for a visit though. People

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come to take the short ferry ride to the islet with excavations of a palace belonging to the first rulers of Poland: Mieszko I and Bolesław Chrobry (Boleslau the Brave). It is possible that Mieszko I was baptized here, and it was where Bolesław Chrobry hosted Emperor Otto III in 1000. On the south-eastern shore there is a superb open-air village museum park with probably the oldest windmill in Poland among other buildings.

LESZNO (37)

A mid-sized provincial town noted for its valuable 17th century town hall and St. Nicholas' (św. Mikołaja) church with superb stuccowork. There is also a bust of Comenius (Jan Amos Komenský), an outstanding member of the Bohemian Brethren, who lived in Leszno in exile in 1628-1641 and 1654-1658. He wrote the first illustrated language-teaching textbook in human history (5 foreign languages at one time). The Leszno fire in 1656 burnt the manuscript of the extensive Czech language dictionary he had worked on for his whole life.

MORASKO (38)

Morasko is a northern suburb of Poznań (local bus lines 88 and 188). Off-the-beaten-path travelers can find here a real treat: seven craters of various sizes (the biggest of them is 100 m in diameter) that are usually filled with water. The nickel-iron alloy meteorite, responsible for the craters, hit the earth some six thousand years ago.

ROGALIN (39)

Rogalin palace is the biggest Baroque-Classical palace in Western Poland. The large interiors house a Polish art gallery, the London exile cabinet of President Raczyński (1979-1986), beautiful orangery, plus a valuable collection of historical clocks and historical coaches. The English landscaped park has over 1400 mighty oak trees: three of them are over 800 years old and are particularly memorable, being named after the mythical Slavonic forefathers Lech, Czech and Rus. On the other side of the palace, there is the chapel - mausoleum of the Raczyński family, a replica of the Roman temple in the French town of Nîmes.

STARY LICHEŃ (40)

If you plan to remain in Greater Poland for a few days or are just passing through, there is little excuse for missing Licheń Stary (or Stary Licheń), the most monumental manifestation of modern Catholic spirit in Poland. The main Church of Our Lady has a miraculous figure of the Virgin Mary, drawing great numbers of pilgrims from all over Poland. This pilgrimage site is in fact a huge complex of buildings; the main church basilica (built 1994-2004) is the seventh biggest in Europe and tenth or eleventh in the world. Get ready for a lot of golden gildings and an impressive Golgotha.

SWARZĘDZ (41)

Just on the eastern edge of Poznań, you will find a great attraction for adults and kids: the Museum of Beekeeping. There are over 250 beehives from all re-

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gions of Poland. The beehives come in very curious shapes (a bear, a Jew, a priest, a nobleman, a windmill) and most of them are still inhabited by bees.

WAŚOWO (42)

While traveling around Poland it is a good idea to book into Polish castle or palace hotels: for instance in Wąsowo. The two palaces (one Neo-gothic and the other more Classical) and the budget Gardener's Lodge come recommended. There is a restaurant, wine cellar, and a fine and very long lime tree alley. The palaces are on the way to Lubuskie Voivodeship or Wolsztyn.

WIELKOPOLSKI NATIONAL PARK (43)

The people of Poznań have a beautiful natural park just next to their city. Are you in the mood for a 15-km walk along crystal-clear lakes, forests and gentle post-glacial hills? If you start in Mosina and follow the red trail, you can make it into a pleasant half-day trip along the lakes to Puszczykowo in the north. You will still have enough time to visit Rogalin palace a few kilometers to the east.

WOLSZTYN (44)

Famous personalities visiting Poland (recently Michael Palin) head to Wolsztyn to hitch a ride on the steam engine trains. On weekdays there are two (regular not tourist!) services to/from Poznań and one to/from Leszno. When in Wolsztyn, visit the superb engine shed (parowozownia) which is also great for kids. In this pleasant little town situated between two lakes is the Doctor Robert Koch museum. The discoverer of TBC bacilli lived in Wolsztyn for 8 years.

LUBUSZ (LUBUSKIE) VOIVODESHIP

ŁAGÓW (45)

The Lubuskie Province is mostly covered by forests and randomly scattered lakes. Probably the most attractive place for visitors is Łagów, flanked by the lakes of Ciecz and Łagowskie, and embellished by the picturesque tower of the castle, which once belonged to the Protestant Order of St. John (Zamek Joannitów).

MIĘDZYRZECKI MILITARY AREA (46)

Before WW2 the Germans built here a very strong fortification belt often compared to the Maginot Line. The impressive tunnels have become a local attraction (Międzyrzecki Rejon Umocnieniowy) – entrance near the village of Boryszyn, where there is also an exhibition of military equipment. The most special tunnels are further south, in the Netoperek Reserve inhabited by 12 species of bats. In total, 20 thousand bats are said to live in the area: the bats paradise is open to humans from March till October. Once you are in the neighborhood, consider visiting the 13th century abbey in Gościkowo.

ZIELONA GÓRA (47)

The Lubuskie Province has two regional capitals: Gorzów Wielkopolski and the more interesting Zielona Góra – quite a large town which came through WW2 almost unscathed. There is no special news about Zielona Góra except its winemaking traditions (very uncommon in Poland), but it is still a very pleasant place for the traveler to stroll around: an old town, a number of good churches, a glass or two of beer (or Polish wine!) and perhaps also a visit to the open-air folk art museum in the outskirts.

ŻAGAŃ (48)

This small town has strong links with both Central European history (Wallenstein) and British history (the Great Escape movie from 1963, directed by J. Sturges, starring Steve McQueen, James Garner, Richard Attenborough). The mastermind of the Thirty Years' War and military leader Wallenstein was awarded the Dukedom of Żagań. From those days comes the big Wallenstein palace (interiors not accessible, but quite a pretty park around the Bóbr River). The town centre is also worth a visit as it has pleasant streets and links to another two well-known personalities: astronomer Jan Kepler and French writer Stendhal, who stayed there for some time. The POW camp of Stalag Luft III, immortalized in the Great Escape movie, has a museum located just 2 km south of the centre.

5. WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU IN SELECTED DESTINATIONS?

SOUTH-WESTERN POLAND

- Reservations of 110 contracted hotels (1-5 stars) and guesthouses. Tourist information on an additional 900 properties.
- Car rental: we partner with 6 trusted local rental agencies in the region. High-quality models of all car types. Pick-up and drop-off recommended from either Wrocław or Poznań.
- Private tailor-made tours: for South-Western Poland a self-drive tour is possibly the best choice, but we also recommend railway tour or chauffeur-driven tours starting in Kraków or Wrocław.
- Holidays in Karkonosze Mountains: 3 popular resorts (Karpacz, Szklarska Poręba or Jelenia Góra).
- 14 SPA hotels in 8 towns.
- Coach rental. Private chartered planes. (Your journey should start in Wrocław or Poznań).
- Professional support and consultancy before and during your tour: free restaurant and event booking; 24/7 emergency phone line during your stay

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in Poland; complimentary restaurant guides sent in advance to your postal address.

- Incentive and teambuilding programs in cities or in the countryside.

GNIEZNO

- 1 best hotel in town available online.
- Private chauffeur-driven tours from Poznań to Gniezno.

JELENIA GÓRA

- 11 best hotels in town available online.

KALISZ

- 2 best hotels in town available online.

KARPACZ (KARKONOSZE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK)

- 9 best hotels in town available online.
- 3 hotels in town with very good SPA facilities.

KŁODZKO

- 1 best hotels in town available online.
- 5 SPA hotels in the nearby picturesque Kłodzko area (Kudowa Zdrój, Łądek Zdrój and Duszniki Zdrój).

KSIAŻ

- 1 hotel at the castle and 2 other in nearby Wałbrzych.
- Książ castle is visited during GRAND TOUR OF POLAND, our fixed-date Escorted tour.
- Private chauffeur-driven tours from Wrocław to Książ.

LEGNICA

- 1 best hotel in town available online.

OPOLE

Do you have any comments or suggestions? Send your feedback at: e-books@staypoland.com. Best comments will be published.

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- 2 best hotels in town available online.

POZNAŃ

- 26 best hotels in town available online.
- 57 car models available for rental from Poznań.
- Business assistance and conference organization.
- Hotel reservations during Poznań's international fairs (individual and group tours).
- 3 kinds of city tours and private excursions from Poznań.
- City break packages.
- Quality sight and restaurant guide for Poznań (100 pages) sent in advance to anyone interested in our tailor-made tours.

ŚWIDNICA

- Świdnica Church of Peace is visited during GRAND TOUR OF POLAND, our fixed-date Escorted tour.
- Private chauffeur-driven tours from Wrocław to Świdnica.

SZKLARSKA PORĘBA (KARKONOSZE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK)

- 3 best hotels in town available online.
- 2 of hotels with SPA facilities + 1 hotel in nearby Świeradów-Zdrój.

WAŚOWO

- The palace hotel available online.

WROCLAW

- 21 best hotels in town available online.
- 50 car models available for rental from Wrocław.
- Wrocław is highlighted during GRAND TOUR OF POLAND, our fixed-date Escorted tour (2 overnights in Wrocław).
- 5 kinds of city tours and private excursions from Gdańsk.
- City break packages.
- Quality sight and restaurant guide for Wrocław (120 pages) sent in advance to anyone interested in our tailor-made tours.
- Incentive travel programs for companies.

ZIELONA GÓRA

- 3 best hotels in town available online.

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