



EDEN - European Destinations of Excellence

Polish editions 2009-2013





Ladies and Gentlemen,

For many years, the Polish Tourist Organisation has been working to initiate the creation and development of tourist packages ensuring for tourists travel experiences that are not only coherent and innovative, but also compatible with the standards of sustainable tourism development.

We introduce you to exceptional places that meet both the criteria of attractiveness and the conditions of the European Commission's prestigious contest 'European Destinations of Excellence'. The aim of this constructive competition is to identify those sites not only characterised by an interesting and diverse range of attractions for tourists, but where there is an exceptional commitment to caring for the local environment and cultural heritage. So far, among the themes have been: 'Tourism and protected areas', 'Aquatic tourism', 'Tourism and regeneration of physical sites' and 'Accessible tourism.'

We now present the winners of all editions of the EDEN contest, all of which offer the opportunity to spend free time in an original and memorable fashion, along with the chance to discover Poland's unique places.

Discover your EDEN

Discover your EDEN

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The photographs included in the above publication were made available thanks to the laureates of the EDEN competition.



2009

***Tourism and protected
areas***

European Destination of Excellence 2009

The Bird Republic in the Warta Mouth



The idea to establish the Bird Republic belongs to the Society of Friends of Słońsk "Unitis Viribus". It is dedicated to promote the wetland and unique nature in the lower Warta valley and associate birdwatchers visiting the Warta Mouth region.

In Słońsk, tourists can get special passport to become a citizen of the Bird Republic. They can collect stamps with birds of the year. The Warta Mouth is a waterfowl paradise in the western part of Poland, still not very well known.



European Destination of Excellence 2009 The Bird Republic in the Warta Mouth



The Warta Mouth is a waterfowl paradise in the western part of Poland, still not very well known. Several thousand hectares cover mainly open rural areas, flooded meadows and old riverbeds. It is very important habitat for birds in Europe, protected as the National Park of the Warta Mouth, as well as the landscape park and the Natura 2000 area.

Tourist Information, tel.: +48 95 757 22 12, +48 607 08 13 17, Stacja Pomp 2, 66-436 Słońsk

www.pnujsciewarty.gov.pl www.hoopoe.com.pl

European Destination of Excellence 2009

The Bird Republic in the Warta Mouth

Over 270 bird species, including 170 breeding ones have been observed in the Bird Republic.

In the early spring visitors can already admire flocks of thousands of ducks, in April ruffs perform their mating on islets surrounded by water, while black-tailed godwits, lapwings, redshanks and some species of grebes, gulls and terns begin their breeding season.

In the summer white and black storks can be seen on the meadows, and cranes begin to gather. The autumn is time of migration of tundra bean geese, and in the winter one can observe whooper swans and white-tailed eagles.



Barlinek

Is a town whose history dates back to 1278. Once known as the 'Tourist Pearl of the Neumark', today it is a magical place. Surrounded by old buildings, ancient defensive walls, and a picturesque lake with a flock of white swans, you can relax far away from the hustle and bustle of big cities. This is the hometown of Emanuel Lasker, grandmaster, who ruled the kingdom of chess for 27 years.

This unique place, located in Western Pomerania, is known for its beautiful forests, lakes and surrounding nature. In Barlinek itself there are three lakes, the largest of which is Lake Barlinek with its four islands. In the area can be seen about 30 other lakes and forest ponds. More than 50% of the community is covered by forests, with a wealth of mushrooms, berries and wild game.



Tourist Information Centre, tel.: + 48 95 7462-874, ul. Paderewskiego 7, 74-320 Barlinek

www.it.barlinek.pl

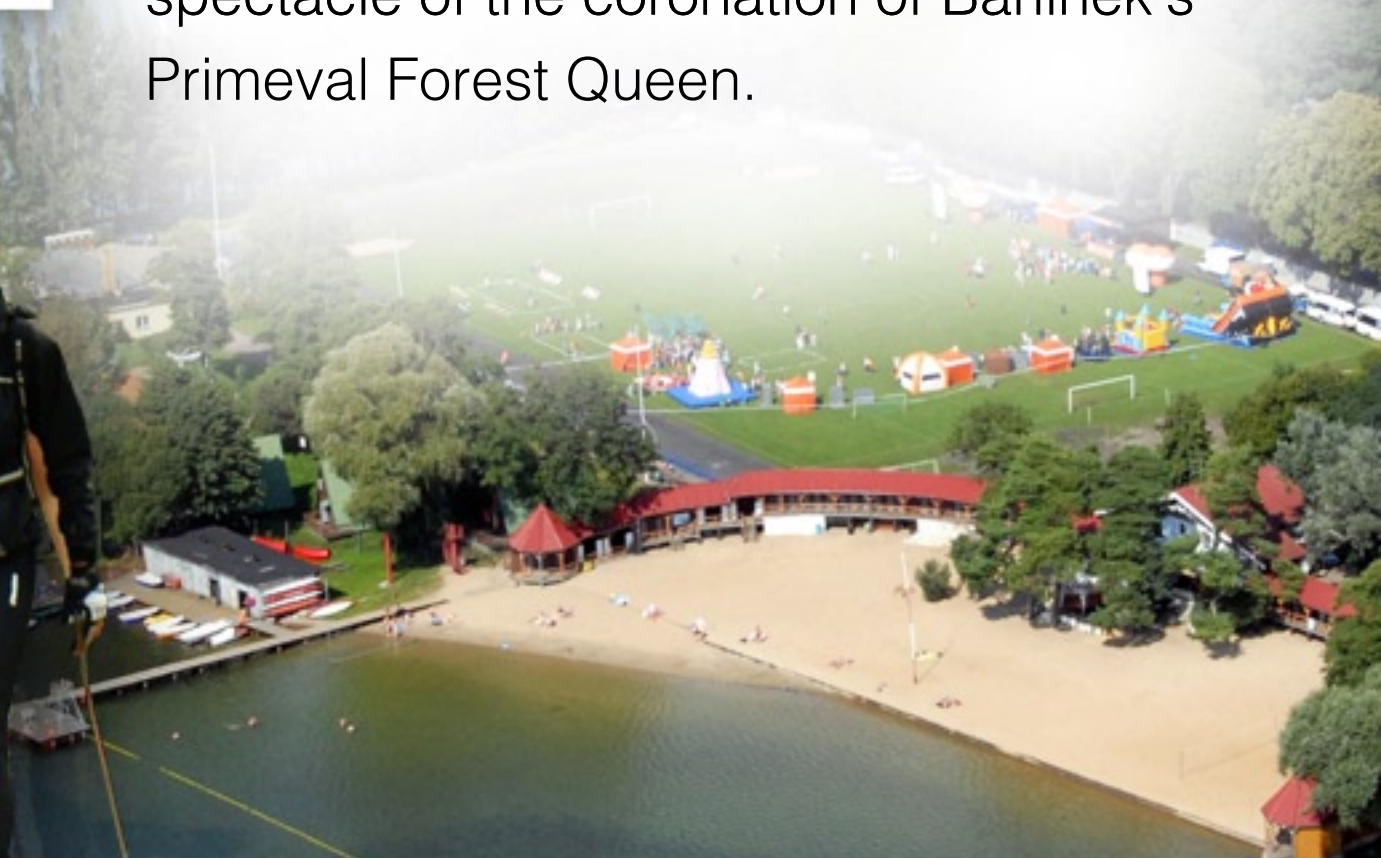
www.stolicanordicwalking.pl

Barlinek - it moves me!

Awaiting tourists here are the waterways around Lake Barlinek, trails for hikers, cycling paths and Nordic walking routes, totalling 230 km, most of which pass through the picturesque Barlinek-Gorzów Nature Park, famous for its beautiful forests full of ravines, lakes and streams.



Nearly 1,000 beds, cozy cafés and restaurants, many water-sport equipment rentals, the Sailing Club, horse riding, tennis courts and other attractive recreational activities await guests. Visitors are welcome, especially in June for the Barlinek Days, whose main attraction is the colourful spectacle of the coronation of Barlinek's Primeval Forest Queen.



Janow Lubelski

The Janowska region is a place where you can recharge your batteries away from urban hustle and breathe freely, but where you can also experience an unforgettable adventure on horseback, in kayaks, in off-road vehicles, on cross-country skis, or racing a four-wheel bicycle.

This is a place where a stroll through a swamp can really draw you in and where you can find yourself standing face to face with a wolf or a wild grouse. Here, you can let yourself go with monkeyshines in the rope-climbing park, jump off the Tower of Power, hang on the Devil's Pendulum or get your hands dirty making a clay pot. Golden natural beaches encourage you to take off your shoes and dip your feet in the soft sand on the shore of the lagoon.

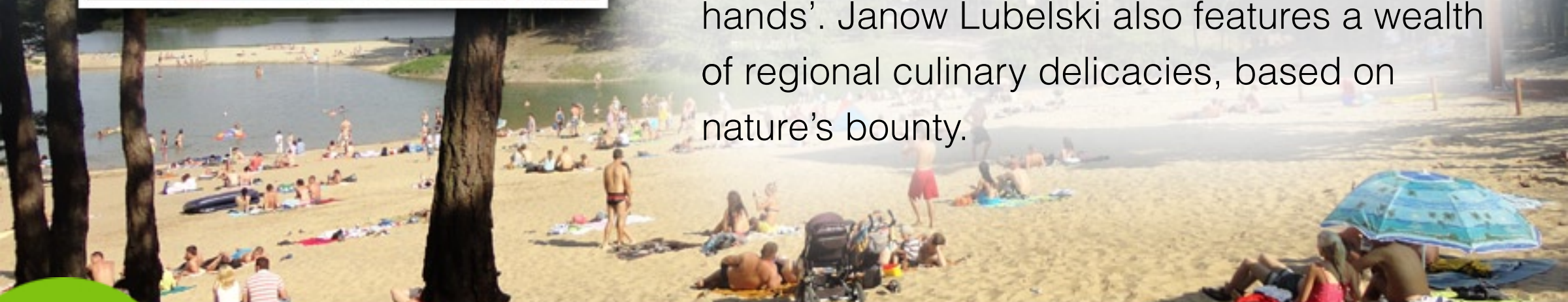




The whispering firs and pines invite you on strolls with the scent of fragrant resin or bike rides to a horse refuge in Szklarnia, where the music of the Biłgoraj sukas (violin-like instruments) can still be heard. Here you can touch trees still stained with the blood of anti-Nazi partisans and resistance fighters during one of the largest guerrilla battles of World War II on Porytowe Hill.



We invite you to the Sanctuary, pearl of late Baroque architecture, to follow the traces of apparitions of the Virgin Mary. After entering the gate of the Janowski Forest we reach the chapel in Kruczek or the historic wooden church in Upper Momoty, a 'work of heart and hands'. Janow Lubelski also features a wealth of regional culinary delicacies, based on nature's bounty.



Flint Circle

On the Trail of Turtles and Dinosaurs



Striped-flint mines from 3,000 years ago, bloomeries from Roman times (traces of which can be found at every step), the monumental ruins of the rolling mill in Nietulisk, chimneys of the old foundries in Bodzechów or Ostrowiec, the picturesque gorges of the Kamienna River in Podgrodzie and Bałtów, and the Holy Cross Mountains – all of these amazing places lie on the world's most famous commercial route: the Amber Road.



Tourist Information Centre, tel. +48 41 264 12 93 wew. 34, 27-423 Bałtów 55

www.krzemiennykrag.info www.baltow.info www.juraparkbaltow.pl

Flint Circle - on the Trail of Turtles and Dinosaurs

The first Jurassic Park in our part of Europe was opened in Bałtów. Along with it appeared new tourist attractions: rafting on the Kamienna, the Zwierzyniec Bałtowski aquarium and zoo, a ski slope visited annually by more than a half million guests.

Here you can stand face to face with a dinosaur, see the devil's footprints, and relax in the shade of a tree planted by King Sobieski himself.

The tremendous value of the Amber Road is enriched by a theme tour following in the footsteps of Witold Gombrowicz, very famous Polish writer.



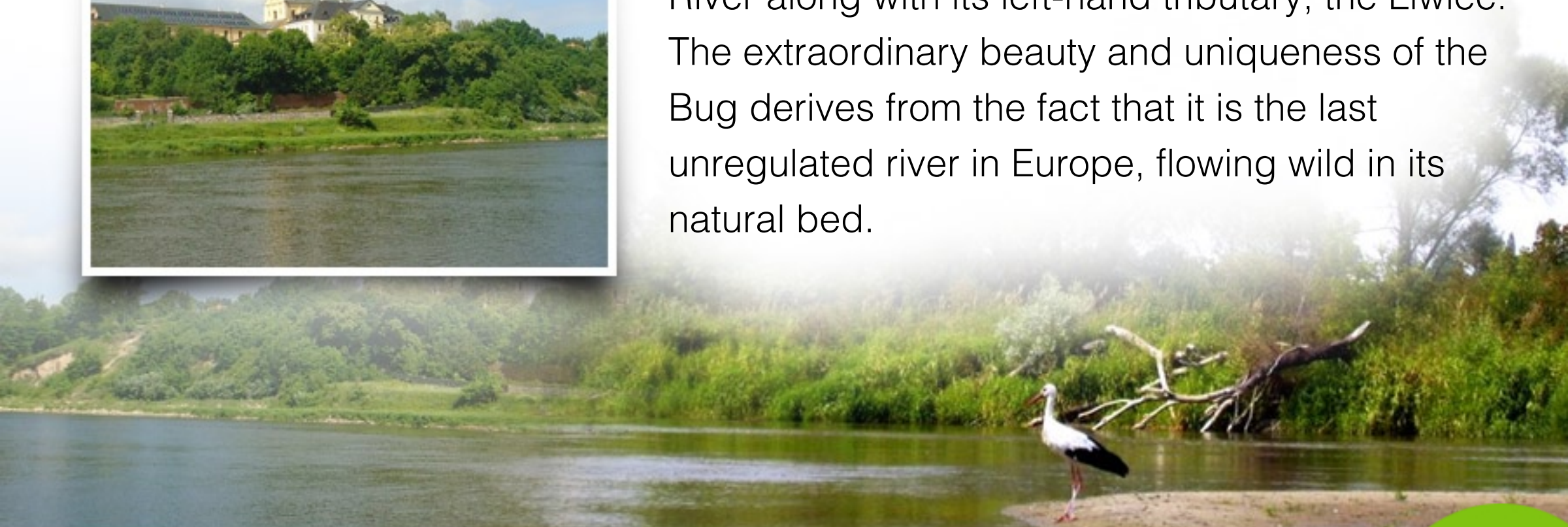
Bug River Basin Region



The Bug River Basin region, located near Warsaw within the Masovian and Lublin voivodeships, is considered in a geographical sense to be part of the eastern Masovian and western Podlaskie regions.



It is an exceptionally valuable area of great natural value, characterised by a natural environment unique on a global scale, forest complexes rich in flora and fauna, and the Bug River along with its left-hand tributary, the Liwiec. The extraordinary beauty and uniqueness of the Bug derives from the fact that it is the last unregulated river in Europe, flowing wild in its natural bed.



Bug River Basin Region

Within the region are many religious monuments as well as manorial and palatial complexes, cemeteries, statues and memorials relating to important historical events and figures, including the January Uprising, Napoleon's march on Moscow, and the First and Second World Wars.

There are also many opportunities for active tourism: horse riding, water tourism, fishing, canoeing, hiking, biking, hot air ballooning and gliding, as well as activities associated with nature and rural life.



A person wearing a cowboy hat is riding a dark horse across a field. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and silhouettes. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

2010

Aquatic Tourism

European Destination of Excellence 2010

The Biebrza Valley and Marshes

Are among the most extensive wetlands in Central Europe, protected for over 20 years as Biebrza National Park, the largest national park in Poland, with an area of approximately 600 km².

The symbols of the park are beavers and moose, for which the park is the only natural sanctuary in this part of Europe. The park is famous as the habitat of many species of waterfowl, which stop here in large quantities during their spring migrations when the Biebrza River floods. Tourists include a large contingent of ornithologists.



European Destination of Excellence 2010 The Biebrza Valley and Marshes

An interesting way to travel along the Biebrza River is by raft. Biebrza rafts feature a bedroom, dining room and scenic terrace. They are particularly recommended for tourists who wish to commune with pristine nature.



Tourist Information Centre Biebrza National Park
Osowiec -Twierdza 8, 19-110 Goniądz, tel. +48 85 738 30 35, tel. +48 509 970 035

www.biebrza-eden.eu www.biebrza.org.pl info@la-ventura.pl

European Destination of Excellence 2010

The Biebrza Valley and Marshes



Another main attraction of the Biebrza area is kayaking on the wild and untamed river, whose course traverses a broad valley. Designated camping sites, cared for by local residents with a hospital, friendly attitude towards tourists, can be found along the route.



Barycz Valley

Cistercian monks introduced fish farming to this area during the Middle Ages. In modern times, an economy marked by extensive development is conducted, thanks to which the area's natural values have been preserved, including habitats of many plants and animals.

The diversity and uniqueness of the species occurring here were confirmed by the establishment of a Special Protection Area for birds in the Barycz Valley region under the European Natura 2000 network. The largest Polish landscape park was created here as well.



Tourist Information Centre, tel. +48 71 383 00 35
pl. Ks. E. Waresiaka 7, 56-300 Milicz

www.barycz.pl

The Milicz Ponds are the only bodies of water in Poland to belong to the global network Living Lakes. The Barycz Valley wetlands are also covered by the Ramsar Convention, protecting wetlands and wetland birds.

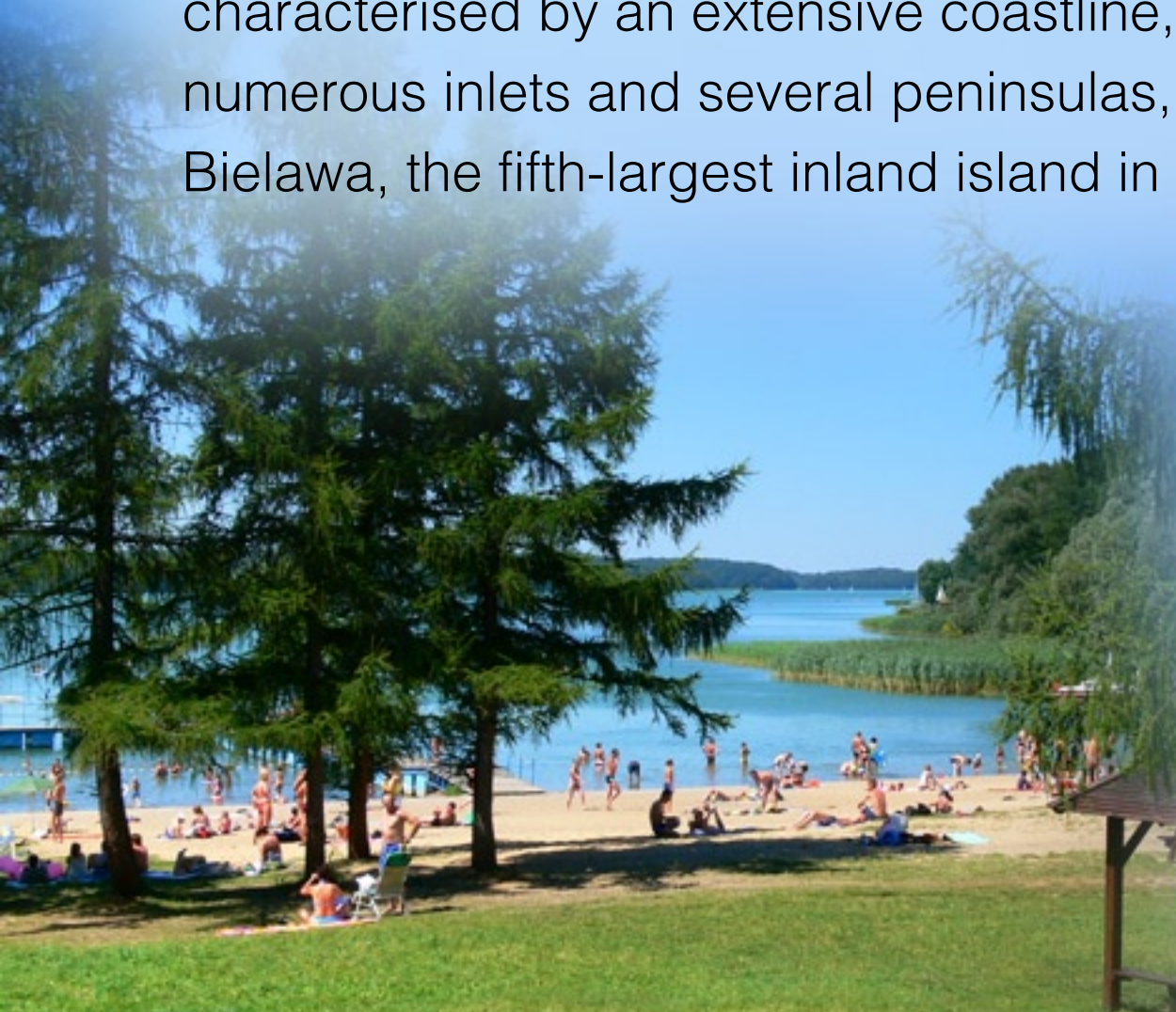
The area favours the development of active tourism. The Foundation for Sustainable Development, as part of its activities, organises kayaking on the Barycz River and hiking around the ponds combined with bird watching and horse riding.



Lake Drawsko

Czaplinek, a small town located in Western Pomerania, offers perfect conditions for people looking for peace, fresh air, sunshine and great adventures. This, for the most part, is thanks to Lake Drawsko.

Drawsko viewed from above looks like a star tossed on a dark velvet pillow. It's a star in another sense as well: it has charm, style and possibilities. In terms of depth, the lake ranks second in the country (83 m). It is characterised by an extensive coastline, 76 km long. The lake features numerous inlets and several peninsulas, as well as 12 islands, including Bielawa, the fifth-largest inland island in Poland.



Lake Drawsko - stop by the shores ...



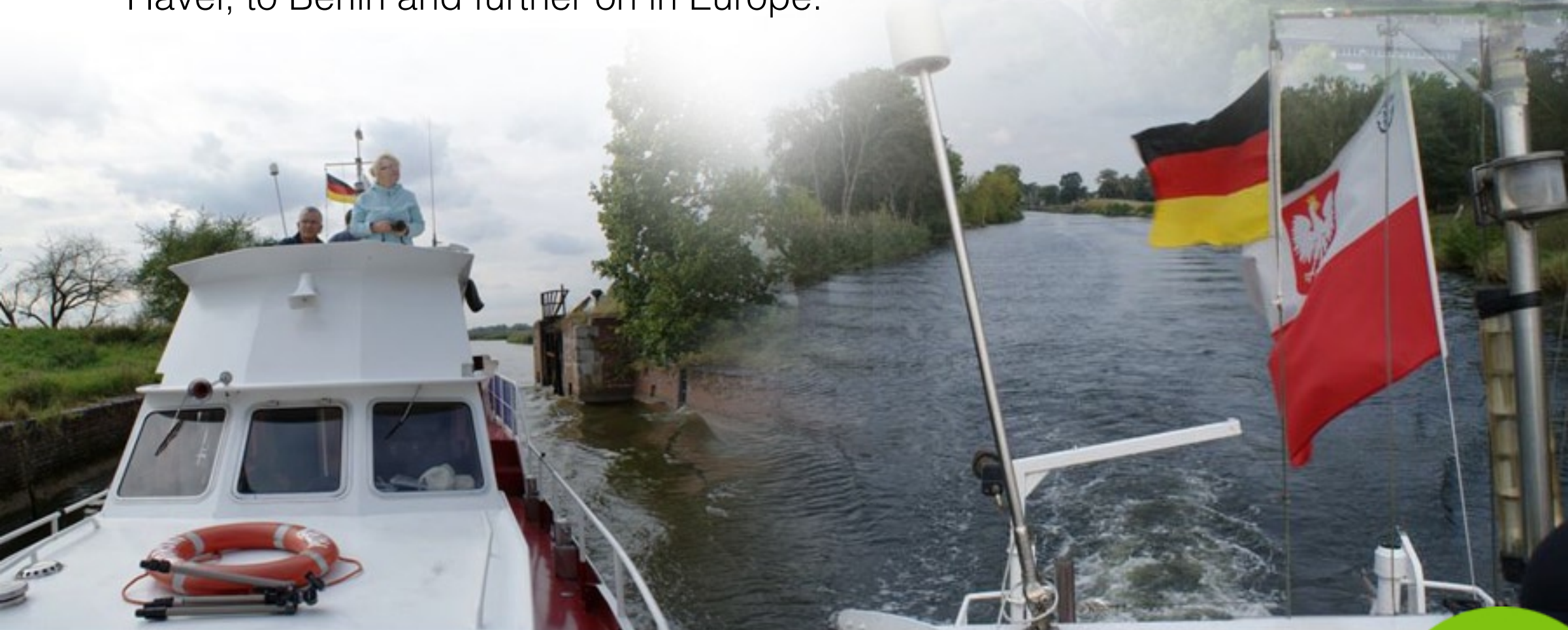
Lake Drawsko attracts not only boaters of all kinds, but even those who never leave dry land can see the beauty of this lake: still waters, foaming white billows, sunrise and sunset, sunbeams reflected in the water, white sails, winter ice, foraging birds and hunting eagles.



Miedzyodrze - Labyrinths of the Lower Oder Valley

Miedzyodrze is a peat valley between the East and West Oder Rivers in the Nizina Szczecińska area. This area extends over 77 km in length; in some places its width reaches 11 km. It is the largest peatland area in Central Europe, with unique flora and fauna.

The waterway enables barges and sailing and motor yachts to travel via the German canals, Friedrichsthal-Hohensaaten and Havel, to Berlin and further on in Europe.



This international waterway, including the East and West Oder, is being promoted as a water route connecting Berlin, Szczecin, and the Baltic. The northern part of Międzyodrze is home to the Lower Oder Valley Landscape Park, with an area of about 6,009 ha, 1,149 of which constitutes an environmental buffer zone. In addition to protecting the peatland, which is unique on a European scale, the park was created to protect the abundant aquatic fauna and wetlands, fish, shellfish, endangered flora and vanishing plant communities.



The Żuławska Loop

Consists of a network of waterways linking together the Vistula River, the 'Dead Vistula', the Szkarpawa, Vistula Królewiecka, Nogat, the Jagiellonian canal, the Elbląg and Pasłęka rivers and the Vistula Lagoon.

The loop totals 303 kilometers. You can go sailing and have adventures aboard a kayak, sailboat, motorboat or houseboat. The waterways of the Żuławska loop are accessible to boaters from both the Baltic Sea and inland routes.



Pomeranian Tourist Information Centre, tel.: + 48 58 732 70 41
Wały Jagiellońskie 2a, 80-887 Gdańsk

www.petla-zulawska.pl

www.pomorskie.travel

The Żuławska Loop



The Żuławska loop combines an attractive network of waterways, complete with modern infrastructure, with the fascinating nature and heritage attractions of the Żuławy Vistula. Outstanding among the latter are Gothic castles, unique on a national scale, and Dutch arcaded houses, along with monuments of hydrotechnology, drawbridges and locks.



Thanks to its natural, geographical, and cultural qualities and complex infrastructure, the region of the Vistula delta and the Vistula Lagoon can lay claim to the title of best-prepared and friendliest location for water tourism in Poland.

Pomeranian Tourist Information Centre, tel.: + 48 58 732 70 41
Wały Jagiellońskie 2a, 80-887 Gdańsk



2011

***Tourism and regeneration
of physical sites***

European Destination of Excellence 2011

Żyrardów - a visit to a nineteenth-century factory settlement

Friendly, hospitable Żyrardów invites you to stroll through the charming nineteenth-century streets of the only post-industrial settlement in Europe that has been 95% preserved. Żyrardów, Poland's former linen capital, delights visitors with the richness – unexpected in such a small town – of its industrial sites. Another reason to visit Żyrardów is its rich cultural heritage.



European Destination of Excellence 2011

Żyrardów - a visit to a nineteenth-century factory settlement

The many concerts, exhibitions, and theater performances offer something for everyone, no matter what his interests or moods. Testifying to the glorious history of the city are many monuments, including Our Lady of Consolation, one of the largest churches in Mazovia; the Ochronka, the oldest functioning kindergarten in Poland, dating back to 1875; Resursa with its dazzling theatre/ballroom; the villa of Karl Dittrich, Jr. located in 'The most beautiful park of Mazovia'; and the renovated linen factory, where the past meets the present



European Destination of Excellence 2011

Żyrardów - a visit to a nineteenth-century factory settlement

The more than 200 historic buildings of this factory settlement enchant the visitor along with hospitable hotels, charming restaurants and atmospheric cafés, all situated in the unique atmosphere of busy streets winding between factory walls.



Pompeii of Kostrzyn



Among the most interesting attractions in Kostrzyn is 'Pompeii of Kostrzyn', the ruins of a fortress and the Old City with an intact street grid.

The fortress of Kostrzyn, built in the years 1537-1568, is composed of six bastions connected by curtain walls and surrounded by a moat and ravelins.

A masterpiece of the art of fortification, it was, around the close of the seventeenth century, Europe's second-largest fortress (after Germany's Magdeburg). The defensive walls, the Berlin Gate, the Kietz Gate, the August Wilhelm ravelin, three bastions ('Philip', 'Brandenburg' and 'King'), and fragments of the outer moats and forts have survived to this day.

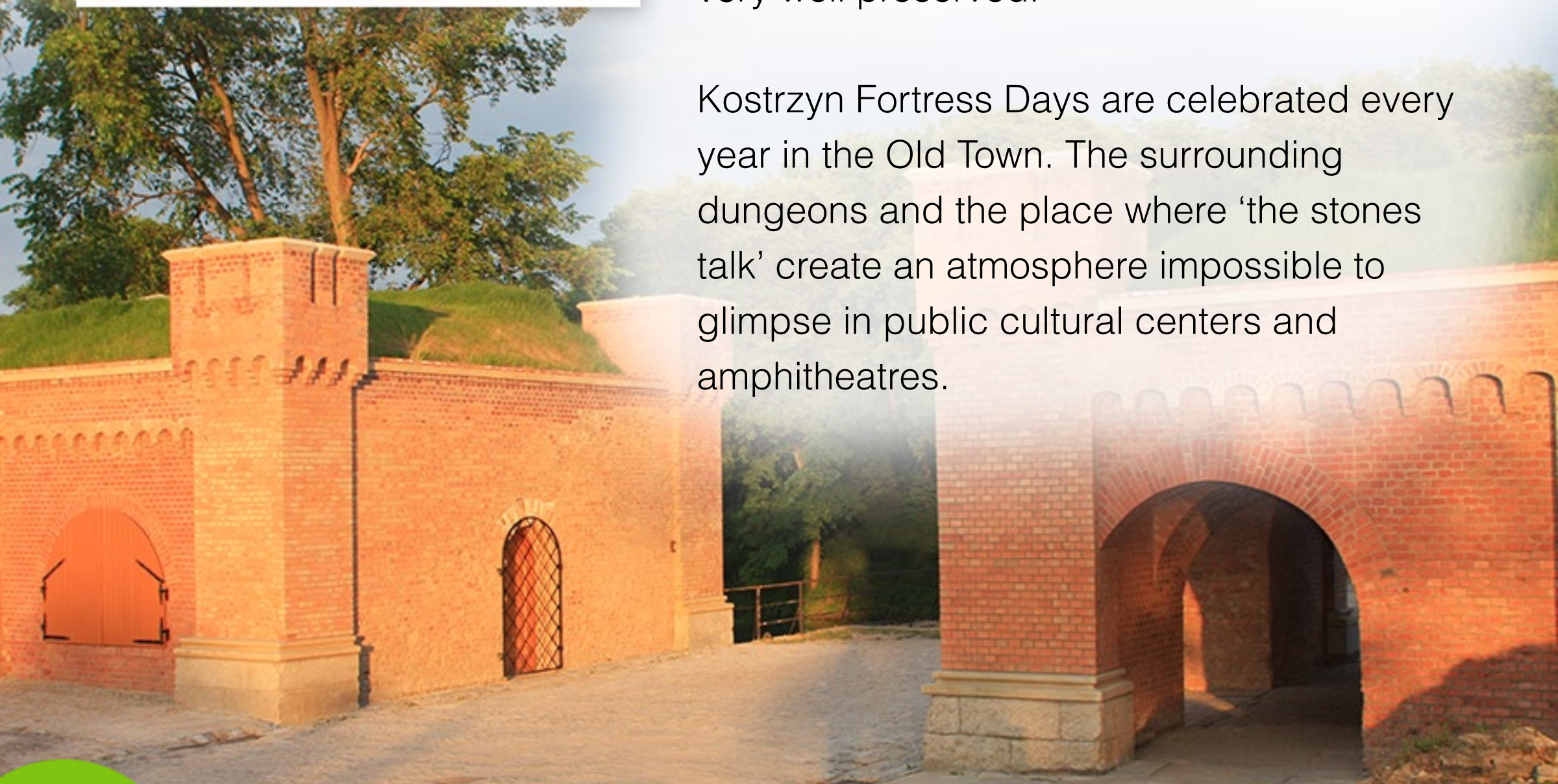


Pompeii of Kostrzyn



The fortress surrounds the area of the Old City, which was destroyed during World War II. The ruins of the old city, the so-called 'Pompeii of Kostrzyn', is a one-of-a-kind tourist attraction. The historic street layout, cobblestones and pavements, the ruins of buildings – the castle, the church and urban development – are all very well preserved.

Kostrzyn Fortress Days are celebrated every year in the Old Town. The surrounding dungeons and the place where 'the stones talk' create an atmosphere impossible to glimpse in public cultural centers and amphitheatres.



Museum of Basketry and Hop Growing in Nowy Tomyśl

Museum of Basketry and Hop Growing in Nowy Tomyśl was established in May 1985 as a branch of the National Museum of Agriculture in Szreniawa. The Museum is housed in two buildings, a Dutch settlers' house and barn.

The museum's permanent exhibitions include:

- 'History of basketry and wickerwork in Poland'
- 'History of hops cultivation in Poland'
- 'Varieties of wicker and other raw materials for wickerwork'
- 'Artistic and practical forms of wickerwork'
- 'Baskets of yesterday and today: 100 years of Polish wickerwork design'



Museum of Basketry and Hop Growing, tel.: +48 614 422 311, ul. Topolowa 10, 64 – 300 Nowy Tomyśl

www.nowytomysl.pl www.muzeum-szreniawa.pl nowytomysl@muzeum-szreniawa.pl

Museum of Basketry and Hop Growing in Nowy Tomyśl

There are also open-air exhibitions and display booths related to the processing of willow.

The Museum organises lessons in growing and processing wicker, weaving, history of wickerwork, wickerwork and hops, wickerwork workshops for children, adolescents, adults, and, in the form of occupational therapy, for people with disabilities. As well, there are demonstrations of weaving, cooking and peeling of wicker.

The annual National Outdoor Wickerwork festival in June and the meeting of Young Basket Weavers in September are also held here.



Rudnik on the San

The town of Rudnik nad Sanem, a pearl on the map of Poland and Podkarpacie (Subcarpathian voivodeship), delights visitors with the original wicker sculptures that can be found within its environs and which blend beautifully with the local nature.

The unique handicrafts of Rudnik feature rich designs and workmanship of the highest quality, incorporating local organic materials. The dynamic development of industry and the masterful practice of wicker craft have made the woven products of Rudnik on the San renowned throughout the world.



Both monumental wicker sculptures and dresses with the addition of wicker jewelry are trademarks of the Polish Wicker Capital. Rudnik nad Sanem, the source of wickerwork, is one of the most modern centres of its kind in Poland, breaking the 'museum stereotype'.

The Polish Wicker Capital features an appropriate selection of accommodation and catering facilities. Here one can enjoy a nice and pleasant rest thanks to local hospitality, which includes numerous attractions: fishing, mushroom gathering, hiking, biking, campfire feasts featuring regional cuisine, and above all, learning the secrets of weaving wicker baskets.



Market Square and Castle in Siewierz

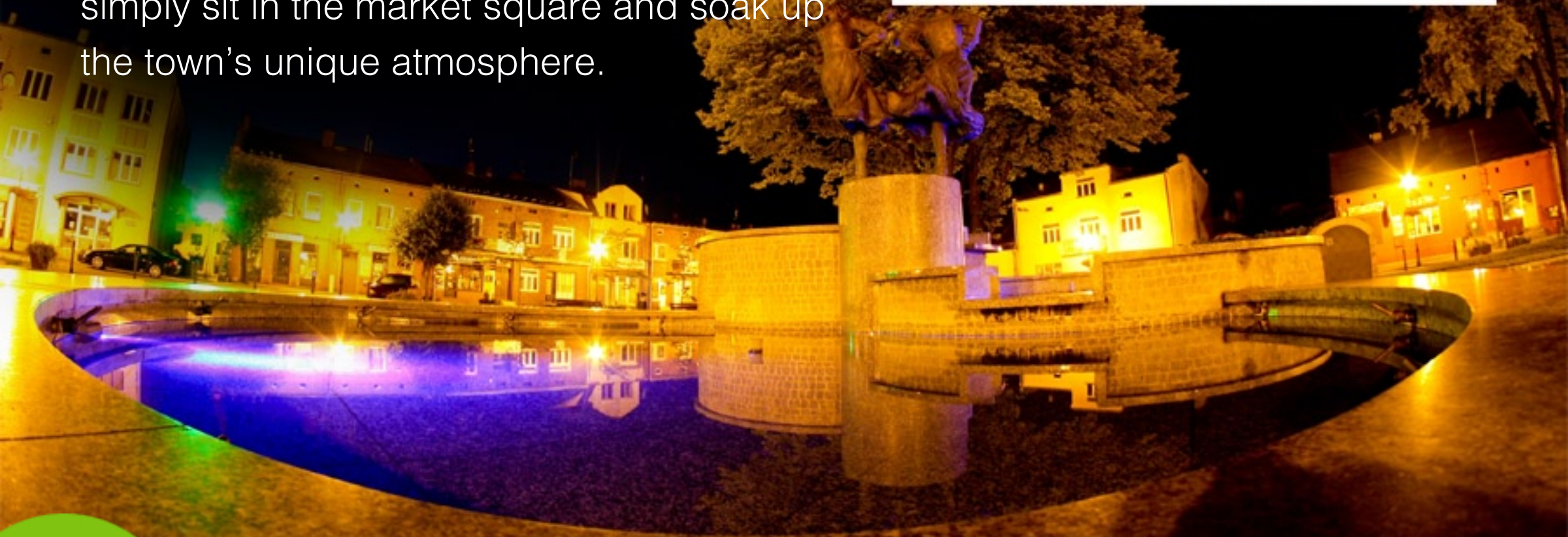
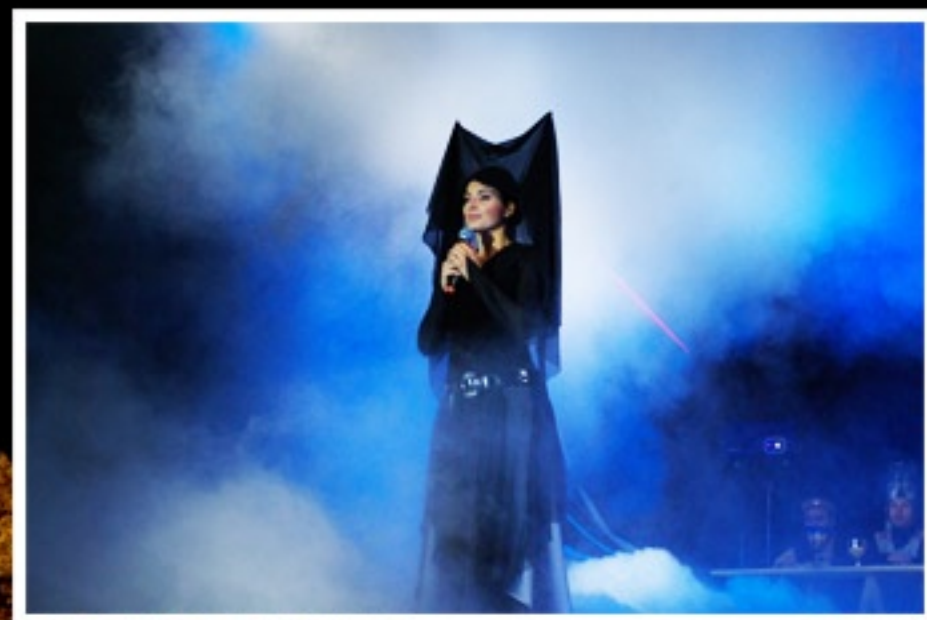
Siewierz, a beautiful place once famous throughout Poland as the Duchy of Siewierz, boasts many historical monuments, interesting spots for nature lovers and tourists, and extremely hospitable residents – including charming members of the fair sex, as evidenced by the folk song ‘A carriage came from Siewierz, full of lovely ladies...’



Market Square and Castle in Siewierz

The local monuments are witnesses to Siewierz's long and fascinating history: the ruined castle of the dukes of Siewierz, which often hosts knights' tournaments; the medieval layout of the market square; or the Church of St. John the Baptist, pearl of Romanesque architecture.

Here you can rest from big-city hustle and bustle; you can eat well, savouring goose gizzards, freshly- baked bread (for which Siewierz is known throughout the region), and the local żurek (sour rye soup - a closely-guarded recipe); or stay active using the modern sports facilities. Or you can simply sit in the market square and soak up the town's unique atmosphere.



Tourist Information Centre, tel. +48 32 674 24 61, ul. Kościuszki 5 42-470 Siewierz

www.siewierz.pl

The background of the entire image is a photograph of a stone archway, possibly part of a historic building or bridge. The arch is made of light-colored stone blocks. Through the arch, a smaller archway is visible, leading to a building with a square window. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent green overlay. In the lower-left quadrant, the year '2013' is written in a large, white, italicized serif font.

2013

Accessible Tourism

European Destination of Excellence 2013

Tourist City – Przemyśl Fortress

Over the thousand-year-old city of Przemyśl, one of the oldest and most beautiful in Poland, towers a royal castle from the fourteenth century. In the old town you can visit the Gothic Roman Catholic cathedral with its 71-metre tower, a Greek Catholic cathedral, and other historic churches.



European Destination of Excellence 2013

Tourist City – Przemyśl Fortress



The unique sloping Market Square is adorned by houses from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when Przemyśl was one of the largest and richest cities in Poland. The Clock Tower is the home of the unique Museum of Bells and Pipes. The rich exhibitions of the National Museum of the Przemyśl Region, Museum of the History of Przemyśl, and the Museum of the Archdiocese are also worth visiting.



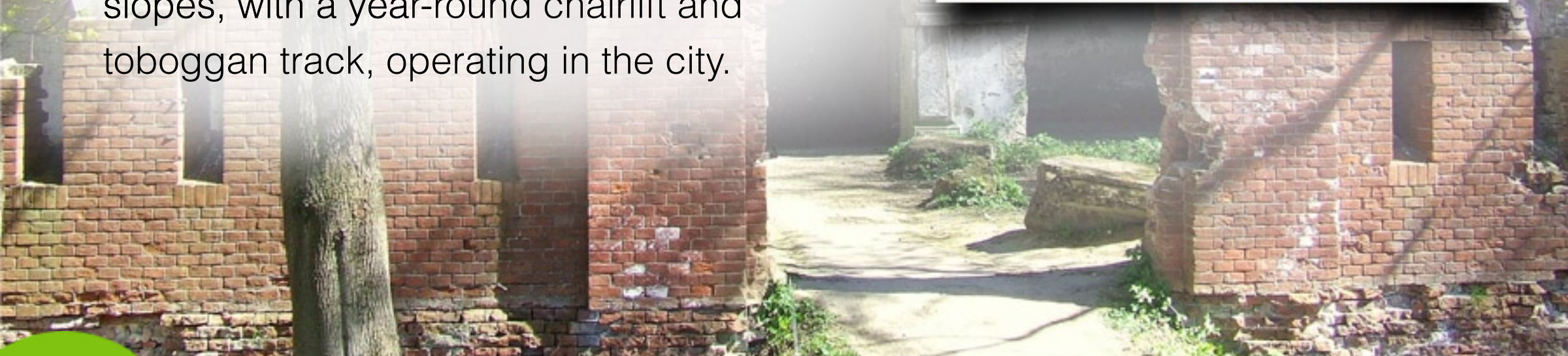
European Destination of Excellence 2013

Tourist City – Przemyśl Fortress

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Austrians built one of the largest fortresses in Europe. Following the outbreak of the First World War, it was besieged for months by the Russian army. The ruins of the mighty forts are now a magnet for many tourists to the city.



Przemyśl is also a great base for visits to nearby Krasiczyn, Kalwaria Pałacowska, to the Przemyśl and Dynowski foothills of the Bieszczady Mountains, and to Lvov and the borderlands. The city and its surroundings offer numerous hiking trails. Przemyśl also attracts visitors in winter, thanks to its ski slopes, with a year-round chairlift and toboggan track, operating in the city.



Beskidzka 5

Beskidzka 5 is the heart of the Silesian Beskids. It offers a combination of tradition and modernity: beautiful scenery, authentic highland culture, delicious cuisine and unique historical sites.

Scenic hiking and biking and winter cross-country and downhill skiing trails await lovers of active holidays. Beskidzka 5, like the intricate lace of Koniaków, intertwines advanced facilities and accommodation with the cultivation of regional customs and traditions.

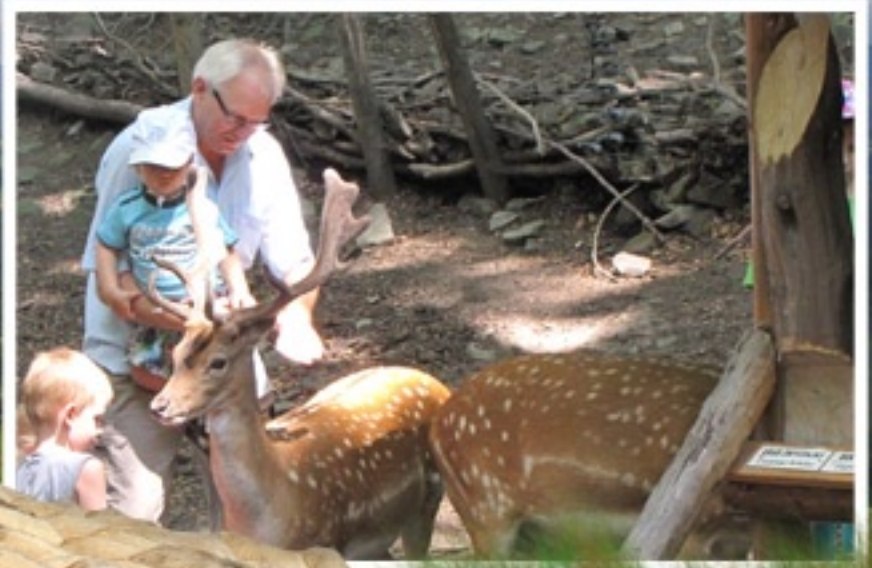


Since 2004, Beskidzka 5 has consisted of five Beskid municipalities.
Depending on your preference, we have assorted varieties of positive energy:

- Brenna – the power of peace;
- Istebna – the power of tradition;
- Szczyrk – the power of energy;
- Ustroń – the power of health;
- Wisła – the power of the source.

Beskidzka 5 – Power flows from
the mountains!

Welcome to Beskidzka 5. Find out
what a real vacation feels like!



Duszniki Zdrój – Museum of Papermaking

The Museum of Papermaking in Duszniki Zdrój is housed in the only surviving paper mill in Poland, whose origin dates back to 1605.

This unique mill is priceless on the scale of European monuments of technology. Based on the 2011 decision of the President of Poland, it gained the status of a historical landmark, thanks to which the Museum of Papermaking became formally qualified for the group of the most valuable monuments of particular importance for the culture of our country.



Museum of Papermaking, tel.: +48 74 862 74 00, ul. Kłodzka 42, 57-340 Duszniki Zdrój

www.muzpap.pl

Duszniki Zdrój – Museum of Papermaking



Based on technology developed in the Middle Ages, handmade paper was and continues to be produced here. In the Museum of Papermaking you can not only watch sheets of paper being produced, but also make paper yourself with a watermark or the imprint of your hand.



Meanwhile, the history of paper is presented in the halls of the museum, as well as techniques to create watermarks and tests to evaluate paper. Here you can also see the significance of paper in the past and in today's world.



Tuchola Forest



Tuchola Forest is a magical place where time passes slowly and every moment can be savoured. Uncontaminated nature and aspects of the local culture visible in everyday life combine to create an amazing world whose motto is: 'The forest welcomes you, and the people entertain you.'



Tourist Information Point, tel.: +48 52 334 21 89, ul. Podgórna 3, 89-500 Tuchola

www.it.tuchola.pl

www.portal.tucholski.pl

Tuchola Forest

In Tuchola Forest, Poland's largest UNESCO Biosphere Reserve located near Bydgoszcz, Gdańsk and Toruń, visitors can admire the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature.

More than 900 enchanting forest lakes and crystal-clear rivers await canoeists and anglers. Hikers, cyclists and horse riders can travel more than 600 km of marked trails. Large flocks of birds, rutting deer and avenues of trees make great subjects for photos. Theme villages, nature reserves, a lookout tower – there's something for everyone here!

Tourist Information Point, tel.: +48 52 334 21 89, ul. Podgórna 3, 89-500 Tuchola

www.it.tuchola.pl

www.portal.tucholski.pl

Zaborek

The 'Uroczysko Zaborek' pension is a historic complex of old wooden buildings in the Podlaski Bug Gorge National Landscape Park with an area of 70 hectares, near the Arabian Horse Stud in Janów Podlaski.

You can stay in the presbytery, which dates from 1880, in the 'Koźlak' windmill, Bielony Dworek or Zaścianek. The historic church is used for conferences and exhibitions. Group stays for up to 100 people for both the young and the elderly can be organised here.



'Uroczysko Zaborek' pension, tel.: +48 83 341 30 68, Kolonia 28, 21-505 Janów Podlaski

www.zaborek.com.pl

Zaborek – a place with soul



The surrounding nature is ideal for either passive or active recreation for families with children, seniors, and the disabled. The range of activities includes horseback riding, horse-drawn carts, biking paths, rafting on the Bug and social activities.



The pension not only guarantees the atmosphere of an old Polish manor, but also serves Podlasie cuisine and provides an excellent getaway in the midst of ubiquitous nature.



‘Uroczysko Zaborek’ pension, tel.: +48 83 341 30 68, Kolonia 28, 21-505 Janów Podlaski