

The city of Kielce constitutes the administrative, economic, cultural, and tourist center of the Świętokrzyskie voivodeship. Kielce and the lands around it were donated to the Cracovian bishops by king Władysław Herman. The church dedicated to St Adalbert was probably built here at the turn of the 10th century. For the first time Kielce was described as civitas (city) in 1359. In 1789, it became a governmental city.

Regional Tourist Information Center in Kielce

ul. Sienkiewicza 29, 25-007 Kielce
tel. 41 348 00 60
www.swietokrzyskie.travel
informacja@swietokrzyskie.travel

Georaj, or Geological Paradise

Contemporary city of Kielce is considered a paradise for geologists. It's sometimes called an outdoor geological museum. Four geological reserves (Kadzielnia, Wietrznia, Ślichowice, Biesak-Białogon) are found in the former quarries located within the city limits. The most popular is

There are a few legends about the origins of Kielce. One of them says that Mieszko, the son of king Bolesław the Brave, set out for a hunting adventure one summer day. He arrived to an unknown forest glade, tried to call his companions, but none of them appeared so the prince decided to spend the night alone. He dreamt that robbers attacked him. The prince overpowered them but became very thirsty after the fight. One of them, who surrendered, offered him a copper bottle with bitter and burning liquid. He took a sip, but spat the liquid out immediately. Mieszko hoped to find water nearby and on entering the forest saw great brightness amidst the trees. It took the shape of St Adalbert who touched the ground with his crozier and a stream appeared. The prince satisfied his thirst and got rid of the poisonous taste in his mouth. That was the end of his dream.

When the prince woke up the next day, he saw a stream flowing across the glade and white tusks of an unknown animal next to his improvised bed. He then decided to build there a settlement of Kielce and a church devoted to St Adalbert. The name of Kielce is derived from the Polish word kły, meaning tusks in English. And the stream that restored his forces received the name of Silnica: force in Polish means siła

Kadzielnia reserve with its amphitheater set among rocks. This inanimate nature reserve features a variety of tectonic, mineralization, and karstic (26 caves) phenomena as well as many fossils including Placodermi (armored prehistoric fish). The Wietrznia nature reserve occupies the eastern part of the Kadzielnia Range. Here, in the Devonian limestone deposits, many animal remains are found belonging to corals, brachiopods, fish, snails, crinoids, bivalves, trilobites, and Placodermi. The Ślichowice reserve was created in order to preserve an overturned fold separating two closed quarries on Mt Ślichowica. It shows an interesting fragment of Hercynian tectonics of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains in form of characteristic and strongly folded lime rocks. Surrounded by forest the Biesak-Białogon reserve protects outcrops of Cambrian and Ordovician rocks representing many interesting tectonic phenomena such as a complex system of faults, and slickensides.

GeoPark Kielce

ul. Strycharska 6, 25-659 Kielce
tel. 41 367 66 54, fax. 41 367 65 83
www.geopark-kielce.pl

Ulica Sienkiewicza, or Sienkiewicza Street

The origins of the street go back to the early 17th century, but its current name has been in use since 1919. The street is 1270 m long and it has recently acquired quite a new look. Its pedestrian section was repaired and rearranged; stylish lamp-posts were installed. Many old houses from the 19th century and the early 20th century were repaired and modernized. Now the street is vibrant with life year round, and it has become the city's commercial, cultural and entertainment center. It's lined with shops, banks, restaurants, cafés, tea-shops, pubs, and art galleries. There are also hotels and the Stefan Jaracz Theater in ul. Sienkiewicza. Plac Artystów (Artists' Square) hosts thousands of people during such annual events as the Kielce Feast-Day, Scouts Festival of Youth Culture, Off Fashion fashion contest, and many others.

Noteworthy buildings located or in Sienkiewicza Street:

- No 2 - Józef Gildewski House from 1909 covered with yellow clinker brick;
- No 5 - the corner house with neoclassical front from 1825, formerly occupied by land registry;
- No 7 - the house built in 1823, still occupied by the post office;
- No 9 - the corner house of the Reichelt family built in 1870;
- No 21 - the Bristol hotel functioning under the same name since 1902;
- No 30 - the Kłodawski family house from 1905;
- No 31 - the building of the former Wersal hotel from 1912;
- No 32 - the building of the present Stefan Żeromski Theater for 700 spectators and a hotel section was erected in 1877;
- No 47 - the building of the former TWK Bank from 1912; it's the most spectacular example of Art Nouveau style in Kielce.

www.sienkiewicza.pl

National Museum – the Palace of Cracovian Bishops

The Palace of Cracovian Bishops was founded by Jakub Zadzik in the years 1637-44. It's Poland's best-preserved architectural structure from the Vasa dynasty times. It became a museum of the Polish Country Lovers' Society (PTK) in 1908. After many ups and downs, its exhibits became an origin of the present National Museum with its rich collection of Polish paintings and items representing material culture and history. Noteworthy are the permanent exhibitions of Polish painting and decorative art covering the period from the early 17th century till the 1950s. On display are the masterpieces of such artists as Piotr Michałowski, Juliusz Kossak, Józef Brandt, Józef Chełmoński, and Jacek Malczewski. Other interesting museum displays include a sanctuary devoted to Marshal Józef Piłsudski, period interiors from the 17th and 18th centuries, and collections of European and Eastern arms and weapons. An Italian decorative garden with the 17th century layout was reconstructed in the back yard of the palace.

National Museum – the Palace of Cracovian Bishops

Plac Zamkowy 1, 25-010 Kielce
Booking Office: tel. 041 344 23 18, 344 40 14
www.mnki.pl

Open: Tue-Sun 10am-6pm; free entrance to the garden.

Cathedral of the Ascension of the Holy Virgin Mary

In 1171 bishop Gedeon founded a Romanesque collegiate church of the Ascension of the Holy Virgin Mary on the Castle Hill. Altered several times during the subsequent centuries, the church has eventually acquired its present-day shape of an early Baroque, three-nave basilica. Its richly decorated interiors feature a Gothic triptych representing the coronation of Our Lady and a highly venerated picture of Our Lady of Grace with Child (1600) crowned by Pope John Paul II in 1991. The cathedral of Kielce was raised to the status of the Basilica Minor in 1971. Tourists can visit the cathedral treasury and the burial crypt of the Kielce bishops.

Cathedral Treasury

Pl. Panny Marii 3, 25-013 Kielce
tel. 41 344 63 07

Open to visitors after a previous telephone request.

Museum of Stefan Żeromski's School Years

The writer lived in Kielce and attended one of the city's gymnasiums. Today the school building houses the Museum of Stefan Żeromski's School Years. Besides the first editions of his works, the museum features

The collections of the museum include a fragment of the writer's manuscripts of his novel *Wierna Rzeka* (1912); letters to Edmund Masalski (1923), editor of *Gazeta Kielecka*, naturalist and lover of the region; a unique record with the writer's voice produced in Warsaw (1924); school reports; 20 photographs of school colleagues with dedications from the years 1864-1867; a student's uniform from gymnasium and school benches from the 19th century. z XIX w.

a rich collection of family mementos, documents and materials connected with his literary work, childhood and school years. The exhibition also covers his activities connected with social problems and fight for national independence.

Museum of Stefan Żeromski's School Years

ul. Jana Pawła II 5, 25-013 Kielce
tel. 41 344 57 92, fax. 41 344 82 61
www.mnki.pl/zeromski

Open: Tue, Thu, Fri, Sun 9am-3:30pm, Wed 11am-5:30pm

Kielce Historical Museum

Open in October 2006, the Kielce Historical Museum is one of the youngest cultural institutions of the Świętokrzyski region. It features a permanent exhibition entitled *Kielce Through Centuries*, which tells us about the city's medieval times, the rule of Cracovian bishops till the end of the 18th century, and its role of the regional capital in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Kielce Historical Museum

ul. Św. Leonarda 4, 25-303 Kielce
tel. 41 340 55 20
www.muzeumhistoriikielc.pl

Open: Tue, Thu, Sat, Sun and Holidays 9am-4pm, Wed, Fri 10am-6pm, closed on Mondays.

Toy Museum

The Toy Museum is Poland's oldest and largest (700 sq m) cultural institution of that type. Its fame reposes on the collection of old toys. The oldest is a German wax doll from the late 18th century. The museum possesses a few thousand items and features several exhibitions including historical and folk toys, Barbie dolls, theatrical puppets, lead soldiers, and models of cars, planes, and ships. Najstarszym eksponatem muzeum jest niemiecka lalka woskowa z końca XVIII w.



Klasztor na Karczówce w Kielcach



Kielce – ul. Sienkiewicza



Performance in the Stefan Żeromski Theater in Kielce



Kielce – New Year festivities



Toy Museum

In order to make children enjoy visits to the Toy Museum even more, the staff organizes interactive displays. In this way the children can not only see but also touch the exhibits. There are also indoor and outdoor playgrounds available for the young visitors on the premises of the museum.

Toy Museum

Pl. Wolności 2, 25-367 Kielce
tel. 41 344 40 78, 344 48 19
www.muzeumzabawek.eu

Open: 9am – 5pm, every day except Mondays.

Karczówka

It's a picturesque hill situated in the western part of the city and topped with a beautiful Bernardine monastery (17th c.) founded by bishop Marcin Szyszkowski. First an early Baroque church was built, and later a monastery with cloisters and monastic outbuildings were added. In the church, noteworthy is St Barbara's Chapel with an interesting Baroque sculpture representing the patroness of miners. It was hewn out of a lump of galena (lead ore) extracted near Karczówka in 1664. The Karczówka hill is a landscape reserve overgrown with pine and from its top unfolds a beautiful panoramic view over the city of Kielce. The reserve also protects traces of the material culture connected with the extraction of mineral and metal ores, mainly that of lead. On the Karczówka and the neighboring hills one can find 3220 pits and small shafts left by the miners.



Cathedral in Kielce

Karczówka Klasztor 1
POBox 17
25-602 Kielce
tel. 41 345 05 38,
041 368 38 09
www.karczowka.pl

St Adalbert's Church

It's the oldest church in Kielce. The first wooden building was erected at the turn of the 11th century. The next church was founded by canon Józef Rogalla in 1763. It was made of brick and acquired the Baroque ap-

pearance. The present neoclassical shape of St Adalbert's Church is due to subsequent remodelings in the 19th century. Inside the church visitors can admire paintings by Jan Stryka, the author of the famous Panorama of Raławice, who lived in Kielce in the years 1888-90.

Tomasz Zieliński Residence

In 1847, the head of the Kielce county authorities Tomasz Zieliński, a patron of fine arts and lover of antiquities, became a leaseholder of a riding school building and transformed it into a private residence. In this way, a romantic palace-cum-park complex came into existence; it's surrounded by a wall with a tower known and Plotkarka (gossipy lady). Now it houses a café and a recreation center for creative artists.

Dom Środowisk Twórczych
(recreation center for creative artists)
ul. Zamkowa 5, 25-009 Kielce
tel. 41 368 20 54, tel./fax. 41 368 20 53
www.kielcedst.net

Laszczyk Family Manor

Built on the southern slope of the Castle Hill (18thc.), it's the only timber (larch wood) manor in Kielce. Covered with shingle roof and entered through a charming portico with columns, the Laszczyk family manor houses the head office of the Open-Air Museum of the Kielce Village and temporary exhibitions.

Open-Air Museum of the Kielce Village
ul. Jana Pawła II 6, 25-025 Kielce
tel. 41 344 92 97, fax. 41 344 50 08
www.mwk.com.pl
Open daily from 9am till 5pm.

Valley of Reptiles

Opened in April 2007, the Kielce exotarium is located on the premises of the Park Stadion. The display includes a variety of reptiles such as spectacled caiman, Yemen chameleon, Indian py-



Valley of Reptiles

thon, Chinese water dragon, bearded dragon and frilled lizard. Very interesting are monitor lizards and snakes such as boa constrictor, reticulated and royal pythons. Certain endangered species (Ceylon python, Russian tortoise) are also present in the Kielce exotarium.

Next door is the equestrian center and the Karczma Cztery Konie (Four Horses Inn), which has a roofed banqueting site and playgrounds for kids. Trips on horseback for beginners and experienced riders are available.

Egzotarium "Dolina Gadów" (Exotarium Valley of Reptiles)
ul. Kusocińskiego 61 A, 25-045 Kielce
tel. 41 345 35 76, 514 908 336,
www.dolinagadow.pl

Website of the Cultural Information (PIK) for the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship
www.pik.kielce.pl

Cultural Events and Institutions in Kielce

Filharmonia Świętokrzyska to jedyna tego typu placówka w całym regionie świętokrzyskim. Jest głównym organizatorem koncertów symfonicznych, kameralnych, recitali oraz innych form prezentacji utworów muzycznych. Propaguje polską i zagraniczną twórczość muzyczną, prezentuje twórczość kompozytorów klasycznych i współczesnych wcześniej niewykonywanych lub wykonywanych bardzo rzadko.

Filharmonia Świętokrzyska im. O. Kolberga
– siedziba w Kieleckim Centrum Kultury
Pl. St. Moniuszki 2 B, 25-334 Kielce, skr. poczt. 160
tel. 41 368 11 40, kasa biletowa - 41 368 05 01
fax. 41 368 11 91
www.filharmonia.kielce.com.pl

Stefan Żeromski Theater The Stefan Żeromski Theater has its seat in the building founded by Ludwik Sztumpf in 1877. The first performance took place in 1879. The former Ludwik Theater carries the name of Stefan Żeromski nowadays. It produces at least five premières each season (ca 200 performances) and, including other events of their repertoire, it hosts approximately 50,000 spectators annually. Every year the plebiscite O Dziką Różę is organized during which the public votes for the best performance and the best actor of the season.

Stefan Żeromski Theater
ul. Sienkiewicza 32, 25-507 Kielce
tel. 41 344 60 48, 41 344 75 00 – kasa
tel./fax. 41 344 47 65
www.teatr-zeromskiego.com.pl

Kubuś Puppet and Actor Theater It was founded as a traveling theater by Stefan Karski in 1955. Its objective was to reach even the smallest villages and towns of the region. It acquired a permanent seat only after

ten years, and since 1992 the Kubuś Puppet and Actor Theater boasts one of Poland's best theater houses seating 150 spectators. Its repertoire is dominated by adaptations of fairy-tales and fables by Polish and foreign authors designated for children. It's been a few years now that the theater organizes the Świętokrzyski Festival of Puppet Theaters entitled Brzechwa and others... .

Kubuś Puppet and Actor Theater
ul. Duża 9, 25-304 Kielce
tel./fax. 41 344 58 36,
www.teatr-kubus.pl

Kielce by Night

To the enthusiasts of evening entertainment and nightlife Kielce offers quite a choice of cafés, pubs, discos, restaurants, theaters, concert halls and cinemas. There are enough options to meet all kinds of expectations and satisfy desires of those who like dancing, listening to good contemporary or classical music, seeing a new film, or enjoying a meal composed of traditional dishes of old Polish cuisine or tasting ethnic cuisines. Pubs and bars as well as beer gardens in summer time located in ul. Sienkiewicza and near Kielce Cultural Center (KCK) are to be recommended. Everywhere the hosts show their hospitality and do their best to create a pleasant ambience.



Kielce club

Regional Tourist Information Center in Kielce
ul. Sienkiewicza 29, 25-007 Kielce
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www.rot.swietokrzyskie.travel



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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ŚWIĘTOKRZYSKI REGION

KIELCE – THE HEART OF THE REGION