Local Life Warsaw - PDF Guide

Quick intro

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Best rated restaurants in Warsaw

- Saffron Spices
  Pl. Konstytucji 3
- Zapiecek Polskie Pierogarnie
  ul. Świętojańska 13
- Pierogarnia na Bednarskiej
  ul. Bednarska 28/30
- Sofa
  ul. Emili Plater 28
- Eataway
  at homes right across the city
- Zapiecek Polskie Pierogarnie
  Al. Jerozolimskie 28
- Wedel
  ul. Szpitalna 8
- Hard Rock Cafe
  ul. Złota 59

More on www.local-life.com/warsaw/restaurants ›

Most popular pubs & clubs in Warsaw

- Palladium
  ul. Złota 7/9
- Legends
  ul. Emili Plater 25
- level 27
  Al. Jerozolimskie, 123A
- Sketch
  ul. Foksal 19
- Dekada
  ul. Grójecka 19/25
- Stodola
  ul. Batorego 10
- Proxima
  ul. Żwirki i Wigury 99a
- Heaven Sauna
  WALICÓW 13

More on www.local-life.com/warsaw/pubs ›

Best hotels in Warsaw

- The Westin Warsaw
  Al. Jana Pawła II 21
- Warsaw Hotels
  City Centre
Essential services in Warsaw

Warszawa Centralna
Al. Jerozolimskie 54

Joka Car Rental
ul. Okopowa 47

Jean Louis David
ul. Grójecka 22/24

Warsaw Airport
ul. Żwirki i Wigury 1

Fotojoker
Al. Jerozolimskie 148

Catholic Community
Al. Solidarności 80

Jakub Lotz at Open Finance
Plac Dąbrowskiego 3,

Edu & More Polishoninenow.com
u. Nowogrodzka 44/7

More on www.local-life.com/warsaw/services ›

Need some culture?

Teatr Sabat Revue Show
ul. Foksal 16

Warsaw Philharmonic
ul. Jasna 5

Fabryka Trzciny
ul. Otwocka 14

Wilanow Poster Museum
ul. Stanisława Kostki Potockiego 10/16

Wilanow Palace Museum
ul. St. Kostki Potockiego 10/16

National Museum
Al. Jerozolimskie 3

Zachęta National Gallery of Art
pl. Malachowskiego 3

Lazienki Palace
ul. Agrykoli 1

More on www.local-life.com/warsaw/culture ›
Travel tips

Avoid changing your money at the Bureaux de Change in the town centre unless you want to hand a complete stranger an early Christmas present - the rates can be awful.

Don't hail your taxis from the rank - ask someone to phone for one - it's 30 percent cheaper.

During winter temperatures make it more difficult to move around the city on foot. Taxis are great, unless you're watching your wallet. Why not invest in an unlimited public transport pass: 24-hours for 7.20 PLN, 3-day for 12 PLN; 1-week for 24 PLN.

Coin-operated phone boxes are almost non-existent. You'll need to buy a telephone card (karta telefoniczna) from a Post Office or roadside kiosk.

Take care when buying antiques. It's illegal to export certain items, particularly old paintings, produced before 1945.

Tipping is not expected. No self-respecting waiter will turn away a few extra zloty, but you won't get the customary grimace if you don't. You're not guaranteed a smile if you do either.

If you haven't booked ahead, feel free to bargain for your accommodation, particularly in the low season. This probably won't work in the Radisson however.

Unlike in the UK, pubs don't close at 11. Most just about get going then. Poles are famous for their vodkas, beers, and have a healthy capacity for drink!

Bring warm clothes and a hat. You may just end up blessing that ridiculous old balaclava.

Poles are passionate about their food. Throw away your preconceptions about miserable Eastern Bloc stews, and be prepared for a great surprise.

Poland has adopted its own uniquely confusing symbols for differentiating public toilets for men and women. Remember, too, that you may well have to pay. Oh, and by the way, the circle is for women, the triangle for men! (Or is it the other way around?)

Above: It's all mapped out!

Below: Bedtime reading

Since 2006 making a phone call from a Polish landline to another Polish landline has changed. You now have to dial a zero and the appropriate area code before the number. So in Warsaw you now dial '0' then '22' and then the number. If you are making a call from abroad nothing has changed. You simply dial +48 and then the city code and then the number!

Getting around

By taxi

If your Polish is up to it, or your driver feels like practising his English, you could be treated to an endless discourse on anything from politics to Balzac - i.e. humourless but profound. Warsaw taxi drivers don't have the greatest reputation when it comes to fare charging, particularly from the airport. Avoid drivers hanging around the arrival gates - that's a guaranteed rip-off, as in any city. Call a cab (or ask any of the information points to do it for you), or simply head to an airport taxi rank and look for clearly marked cabs. The absolute easiest way to get picked up from the airport is to let someone do it for you! Just contact our Warsaw taxi and transfer service and let us know the when and wheres... we'll take care of
By car
You can hire a car to get around, but if you plan to spend most of your time in the city, think carefully. Apart from the difficulty of driving on the right, there are trams to contend with, a boggling one-way system, and signs that have even native Poles struggling to comprehend. Parking is severely restricted in the Old and New Town, and there are three different enforcement agencies (Parking, Municipal and National Police) to contend with. The alternative, public transport, is a far better bet.

By public transportation
What most cities dream of - safe, efficient and cheap transportation city-wide, through a network of trams, buses and metro. Though Warsaw's underground has only one line at the moment, it is by far the fastest option of travelling through the city - and not only to you avoid terrible Warsaw traffic, but you can hide from the summer heat or winter chill in a climate-controlled subway car. Buy your tickets from any of the little kiosks that are dotted around the town. All journeys cost the same (2.80 zloty), irrespective of distance. Jump aboard the bus or tram and punch your little ticket in one of the little orange and brown boxes that are located all around. Keep the stamped stub for the not infrequent checks by plain-clothes inspectors.
If your Polish is up to it, or your driver feels like practising his English, you could be treated to an endless discourse on anything from politics to Balzac - i.e. humourless but profound. The driving is secondary, but the notices on the back of the headrests (which tell you to fasten your seatbelts or suffer the consequence) are well-merited. Have a stiff drink before you get in (your driver probably has already), and enjoy the fun.