

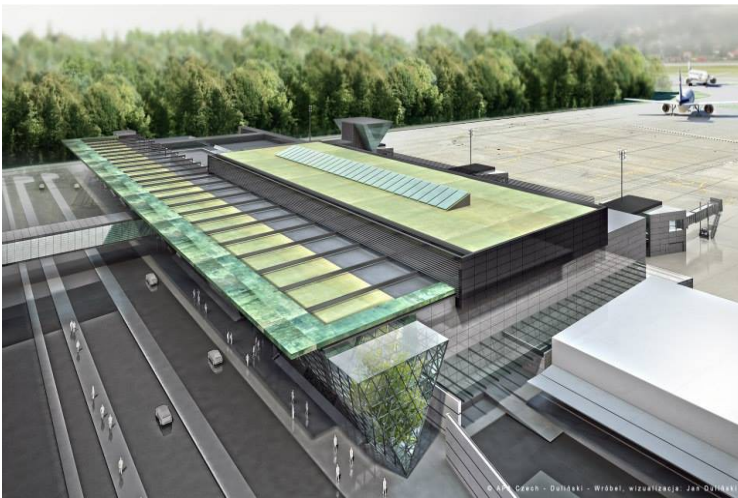
KRAKÓW 22. - 27 . SEPTEMBER 2014

We have had [Kraków](#) on our travel plan for a long time without putting it on top, but now we found it the right time to go. [Travel guide to Krakow.](#)



The 22nd of September we went by taxi to the station in Kongsvinger, where we took the airport bus to Oslo - Gardermoen.

We checked in at [Radisson Blue Gardermoen](#). We had a good dinner with wine in the evening.



In the period between 1923 and 1963 passenger flights went to and from Krakow from Krakow-Rakowice-Czyzyny Airport. This airport was closed in 1963 only to be partially reopened in 2005 as an aviation museum. In 1964 one started using parts of the then military airport in Balice, as civil airport. It is now called the [John Paul II International Airport Kraków-Balice](#) after [Pope John Paul II](#). When we were there, there was a lot of construction activity, and the picture above shows how the new terminal will be.

[Kraków](#) is one of the oldest cities in Poland, and the second largest after Warsaw.

Legend has it that the city was founded by the mythical ruler Krak over the cave of a dragon, hence the name Kraków. In reality, the origin is somewhat less regal; the ancient Slavic *krak* means raven, and its name meant therefore originally "a place of many ravens".



Early next morning we would go with [Norwegian](#) to Kraków.

When we have traveled with Norwegian in Norway lately we have had bad experience with them as they have been more or less delayed.

This time we departed at scheduled time. They might be more punctual when traveling to and from abroad?



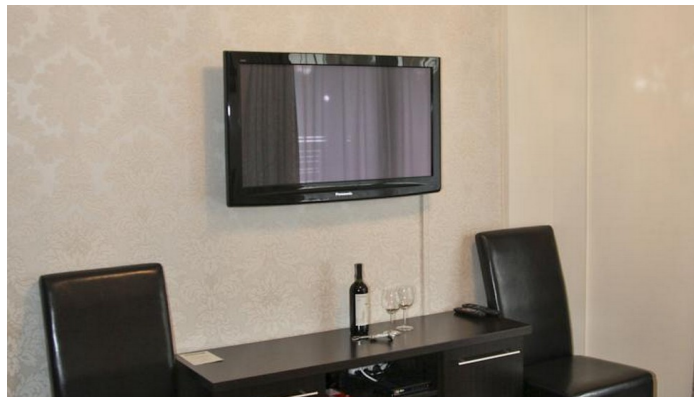
Krakows plassering i Polen.

Before the founding of the state of [Poland](#), Krakow was the capital of [the vistulan tribe](#). Under Casimir the Restorer, Krakow was made the capital of Poland in 1039. [Sigismund II Augustus](#) died in 1572 as the last [Jagiellonian king](#), and in 1596 the king [Sigismund III Vasa](#) moved the Polish residence to Warsaw.

Kraków was the only big city in Poland that was not destroyed during World War II.

In 1978 the city's Archbishop Karol Wojtyła was elected pope under the name [John Paul II](#). The Polish pope was hugely popular in Poland, and became an important symbol of resistance against the Communist regime that fell in 1989.

Today Kraków has become one of Europe's most popular tourist destinations. It was inscribed on [UNESCO's World Heritage List](#) as one of the 12 objects that ended up on the [first list](#) in 1978.



We took a taxi from the airport to the city. It took about half an hour. We had booked at the [Elite Apartments](#). The apartment is centrally located, just outside the heart of the old town. It's not great, but it is quite new and quite OK. There is also a terrace garden outside.



When we had got our suitcases into the apartment, we needed some food, so we went down the street to the old town. We did not have to go far to get to this restaurant.

Ready to enter.



Here I found a table by the window, and are ready to order lunch.

The restaurant is called [Pieciolinia Smakow](#). It is quite small, but it turns out that the food here was so good and the staff was so nice, that we mostly ate here.

When we check at Tripadvisor, we found out that it is ranked # 24 of 845 restaurants in Krakow.

Link to their menu: [MENU](#)



When we came out on the streets afterwards, this horse drawn carriage passed by. There were many of them at the town square.



This car also passed by. These sightseeing cars seemed to be popular because there were so many of them. They are powered by electricity, so they go silent. They run normally in regular sightseeing routes and they have pre-recorded tapes in many languages, so one can get explained what you see along the way.



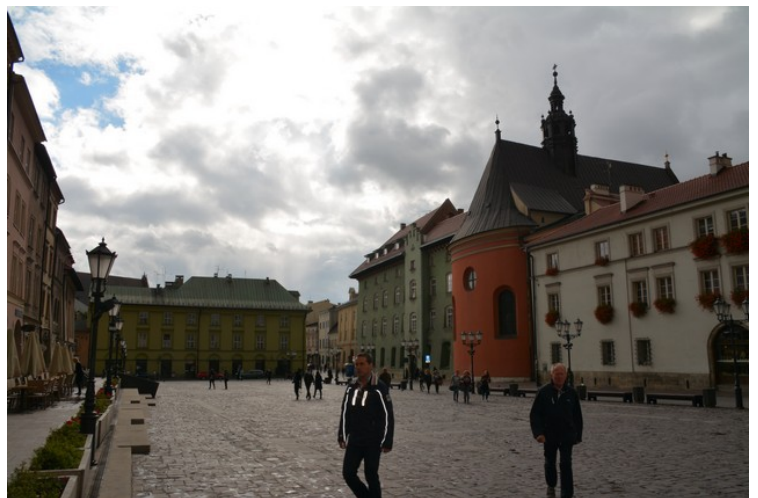
A small restaurant with one table outside on the sidewalk.



Nice decorations on the wall.



Here we are at the square called Maly Rynek and see two churches. The left is called St. Mark's Church and the right is St. Mary's Basilica, St. Mary's Church. [St. Barbara-kirken](#) is a Gothic church, built in the fifteenth hundreds. [Link](#). [Video](#) [Video](#) [Video](#) (Must see)



Here we look southward along the square. In the Middle Ages it was meat market here. In the 1700s there was strife between Protestants and Catholics who lived on opposite sides of the square.



View along Maly Rynek towards the other side.



Nice building near Maly Rynek.



In the middle of the big market square, [Rynek Główny](#), in the old-town, this big building is situated. It is called [Sukiennice](#), the Cloth Hall.

The hundred-meter hall was originally built in the 1300s to protect shoppers from the weather. The small shops on the ground floor is now turned into souvenir shops, while the second floor is a collection of paintings belonging to the National Gallery.



A horse drawn carriage at the far edge of the Cloth Hall. Now it has started to rain, so the driver has opened the umbrella. We seek shelter inside the Cloth Hall.

The large market square is 200x200 meters. It was founded in 1257. It is considered the center of Krakow.



The view south.
It is quite rainy and wet.



The horse drawn carriages are queuing up.



From the Cloth Hall we look at St. Mary's Church.



The front of St. Mary's Church.

St. Mary's Church is Poland's most famous church. The first St. Mary's Church was completed in 1222. Just a few decades later it was destroyed during the Mongol attack on the city. The present church was begun in 1355 but was not completed until the mid 1500s. Every hour, there is played a short, interrupted trumpet tune, called Hejnal. The signal comes from the highest of Mary Church two towers, known as the Hejnal Tower. The melody Hejnal is played in memory of a soldier who was struck by an arrow in his throat as he blew his horn to warn against the Mongols when they attacked. Every day, exact at 12:00, it is also played on the Polish Radio.



Decorations outside on the church walls.



Inside the Cloth Hall.



Inside the column row outside the Cloth Hall.



Along the walls inside the Cloth Hall are coat of arms from a variety of cities in Poland. This is from Warsaw.



This is [the Town Hall Tower](#). The only thing that is left of the old town hall in the city. The town hall was ravaged by fire and was demolished in the early 1800s.



The rain decreased gradually so that we could get back to the apartment. We took a picture of the fountain, which stands between the Cloth Hall and St. Mary's Church as we walked past.



This house is just south of St. Mary's Church. It houses a [Hard Rock Cafe](#).



We have to walk through the park to get back to the apartment. There was a fortified wall around the old town in the old days, but the wall was torn down and replaced with parks and trees.



When we come to the apartment we can see a couple of church towers. This is the [St. Nicholas' church](#).



The next day, Saturday the 24th, a new sightseeing day is starting. This day there is a clear sky and good temperatures.

We go first to the north.
There are some nice houses here.



The Holy Cross Church is located north in the old town.



The pigeons is bathing in a pool.

A memorial statue of Florian Straszewski north of the park. He was a landowner and was one of those who created the park. Previously there was a wall that went around the old town. It decayed and it was decided that it should be demolished and make a park instead. This was done in the years 1822-1830. The park is called [Planty](#).



Here we see some of the park with St. Florian's Gate in the background.



[Juliusz Słowacki Theatre](#). The theatre opened in 1893. It was earlier a monastery and a church here, and there were huge discussions when it was proposed to demolish these to set up the theater.



Some of the garden around the theater.



From the theater we look towards the St. Florian's Gate.



On the other side of St. Florian's Gate lies [Barbican](#). This was a garrison in front of St. Florian's Gate. It was at the time connected with it via a covered walkway.



Two musicians are standing in the gate playing.



Anne Berit is allowed to stand in the middle.



A model showing the remains of the wall with St. Florian's Gate and Barbican.



Here is [St. Florian's gate](#). This is about what is left of the old wall. After all the discussions, the result was that this had to be left standing.



Next door is one that has exhibited his painting production. The hope is to sell as much as possible. Many of the photos are quite nice.



This gate is nice.



Here is a statue of Mercury, which is made by the Danish sculptor [Bertel Thorvaldsen](#).



Outside [Museum Czartoryskich](#). It was closed due to renovation.



Nice windows in Museum Czartoryskich



Right next door is the church, [Piarist Church of the Transfiguration of Our Lord](#).



A guy that sells fresh bread.



Flowers in the Planty park.



One who feeds the pigeons.



This is [Teatr Stary](#) that is situated at [Plac Szczepanski](#). The theater is one of the oldest in Krakow.



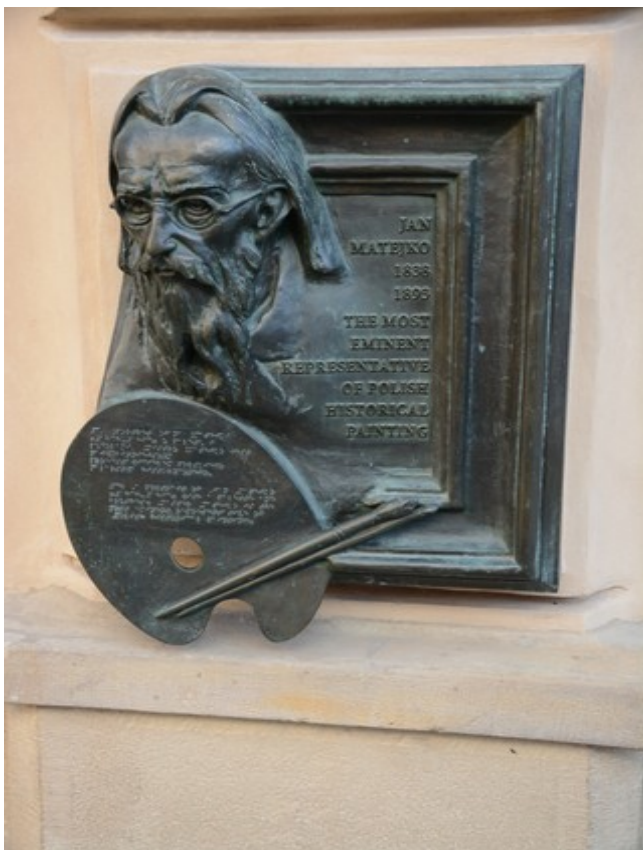
At the same place is also [Palac Szuki](#) or The Palace of Arts. It's just one of the departments of the museum.



There is a nice fountain outside.



Decoration outside a shoe shop.



Jan Matejko (Born 28th of July 1838 in Kraków in Poland, død 1. November 1893 same location) was a Polish painter known for paintings of famous historical political and military events in Poland. His most famous works are possibly the oil painting [The Battle of Grunwald](#). He has also done several paintings of numerous battle and court scenes, and a gallery of Polish kings.

He is considered to be among the most famous Polish painters. His important paintings were hidden during World War II. The painting *The Battle of Grunwald* was buried in Lublin. After 1945 the majority of his work were found and restored. They are now mainly in Warsaw's National Museum.



This is how the house looks like.



One of the figures on the top of the house.



On the way to St. Mary's Church.



The Cloth Hall in sunshine.



Here we are at Plac Mariacki looking towards the [St. Barbara church](#).



S statue on Plac Mariacki.



The entrance section of St Barbara church.



This is one of three skulls that seem to carry a large stone structure.



Here is the entire structure.



Some pictures from inside of St. Mary's Church.





When we came here, we had gone so long that we thought we deserved beer and wine, so we sat for a while at one of the sidewalk restaurants on the site. We took a few pictures of the horses while we sat there.



Then we see some imaginative ways to make money.



He is playing on drinking glasses.



Folk music.



These three played accordion and they were just lovely.



Then some of the people at the square.

