

Sacred Places



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ARTitecture Germany



Weingarten Abbey

Was a Benedictine monastery on St. Martin's Mount founded in 1056. The monks there worked among other things at manuscript illumination. The largely demolished Romanesque abbey church was replaced by a large and richly Baroque church between 1715 to 1724. It is nearly exactly half the measure of the Peter's Dome in Rome and it is the hugest Basilica of the baroque in Germany.

The greatest treasure of Weingarten is its famous relic of the Precious Blood still preserved in the church of Weingarten. Every year on Friday after Ascension starts the "Procession of the Reliquary of the Holy Blood". The relic is carried by a rider, the "Heilige Blutritter", on horseback, followed by many other riders, and many thousand people on foot. The "Blutritt" proceeds through town on a special route with various altars.

Do you know that..

... the abbey and St. Martin's Basilica are a major attraction on the tourist route known as the Upper Swabian Baroque Route?



...The airline distance to Markdorf is 21,5 kilometers and it takes about 35 minutes by car?

...this year more than 3000 horses and equestrians were involved in the "Blutritt"?

...the cupola is 66 meters high?

...the church is 106 meters long?

Ulm Cathedral

It is the tallest Lutheran church in Germany, with 161,53 meters and 768 stairs. The Ulm Cathedral's start of construction was in the 14th century and it was completed in the 19th century. It is a famous example of gothic ecclesiastical architecture and till today, most of the original medieval material is conserved. From the top floor at 143m you have an arresting panoramic view of the two towns Ulm in Baden-Württemberg and Neu-Ulm in Bavaria and, in clear weather, a vista of the Alps from Säntis to the Zugspitze.

The construction work started in 1377, when the foundation stone was laid. The townspeople of Ulm decided to erect another church, because the old one was located outside the walled city. In a referendum in 1530/1531, the citizens of Ulm converted to Protestantism during the Reformation and in 1543 construction work was halted at a time when the steeple had reached a height of some 100m. In 1817 work resumed and the three steeples of the church were completed. Finally, on 31 May 1890 the building was completed.

Do you know that...

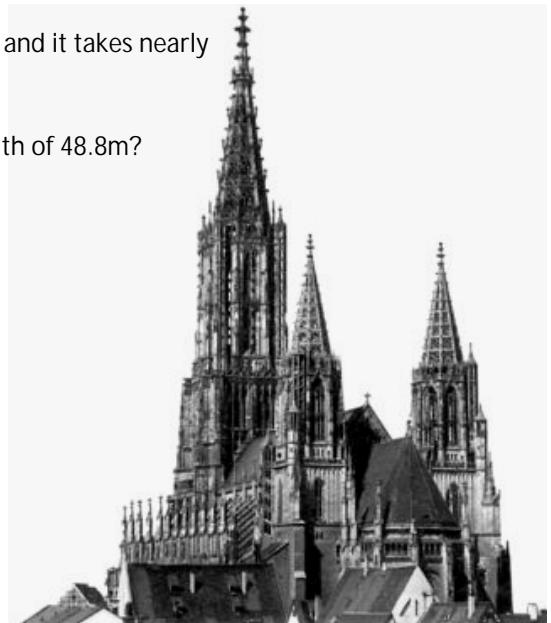
...the weight of the main steeple is estimated at 51,500 metric tons?

...in the Middle Ages, before pews were introduced, it could accommodate 20,000 people?

...the distance from Markdorf to Ulm is 104 km and it takes nearly two hours to go there by car?

...the church has a length of 123.56m and a width of 48.8m?

...the church seats a congregation of 2,000?



St. Maria Birnau

St. Maria is a pilgrimage church at the shore of Lake Constance, between Meersburg and Überlingen. It is the oldest place of pilgrimage in the south of Schwaben.

The baroque church was built in 1746 - 1749 for the Cistercians monastery by Austrian architect Peter Thumb in only 3,5 years. The church interior features notable frescoes by Gottfried Bernhard Göz as well as altars and stucco ornaments in rococo style by Joseph Anton Feuchtmayer. The church is among the most beautiful Baroque buildings of the Bodensee and archdiocese Freiburg. It is the home of the famous putto of rococo named "Honigschlecker" (Honeyeater).



Do you know that...

...there is a torchlight procession every 13th of each month?

...it is 18km from Markdorf and you can go there by bus from Meersburg?



St. George and St. Peter and Paul

The churches are located on the monastic island Reichenau. Once, there were more than 20 churches and chapels. Only three of them survived the centuries.

St. Peter and Paul was founded by bishop Egino of Verona, who had connections to the founders and patrons of the Reichenau monastery. His church, which was consecrated in 799, was torn down and in the 12th century, a new church was built at the same place. This columned basilica with 3 naves is still standing. Today Rococo décor dominates the church and impresses the visitors.

St. George, built around the end of the 9th century, served to keep the George's relic and remains in the style of the early Middle Ages. Inside, the church hall captivates with monumental mural paintings, showing the miracles of Christ. The paintings and ornaments in St. George are regarded as the only remaining church paintings north of the Alps, which are dated before the year 1000.

Do you know that...

...the Alemannic name of the island was "Sindleozesauua"?

...the monks of Reichenau were artists in manuscript illuminations?

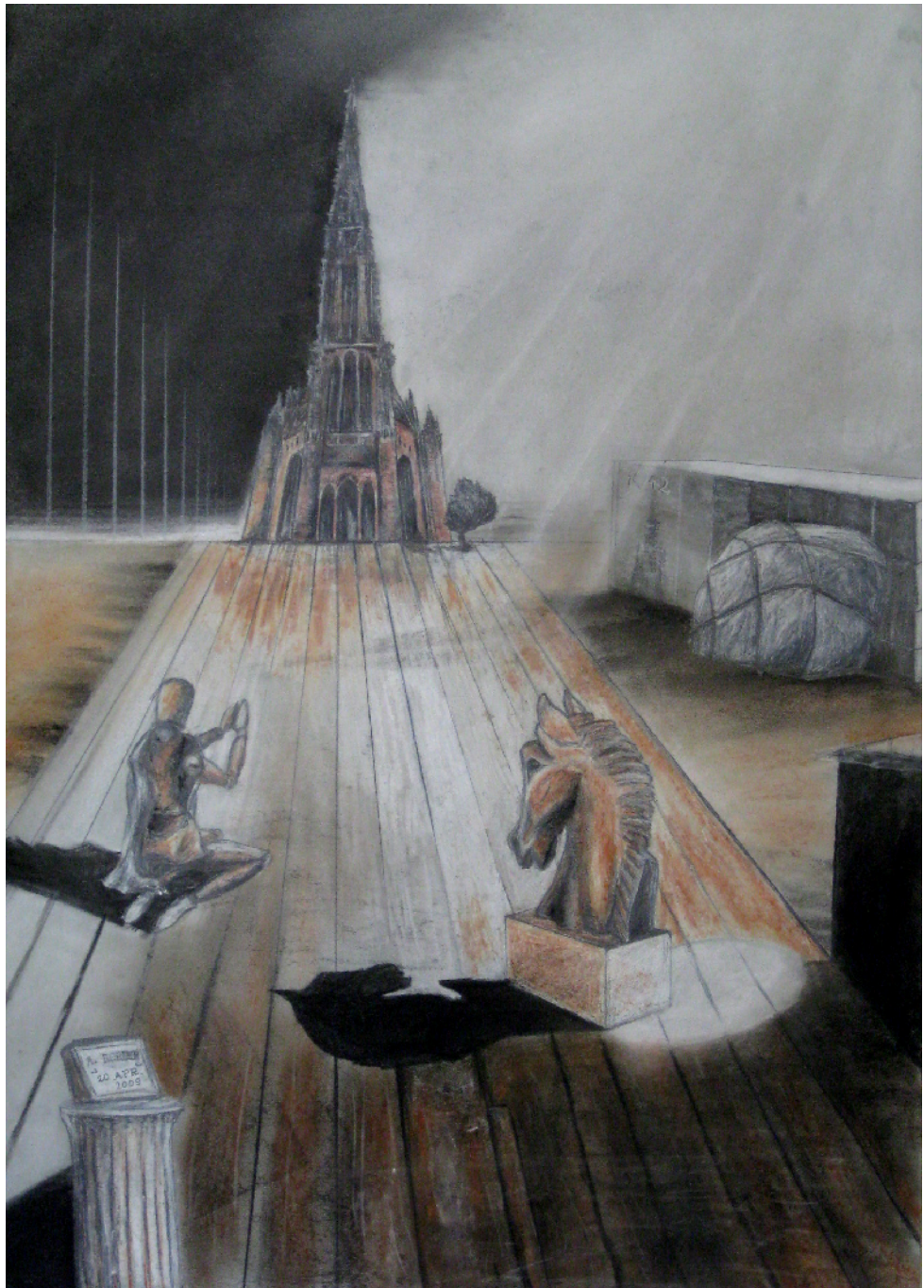
...today the island is also famous for its vegetable farms and wineries?

...you can pick up more information in a book named "Drei Kirchen im Gemüsebeet"?

St. Peter and Paul

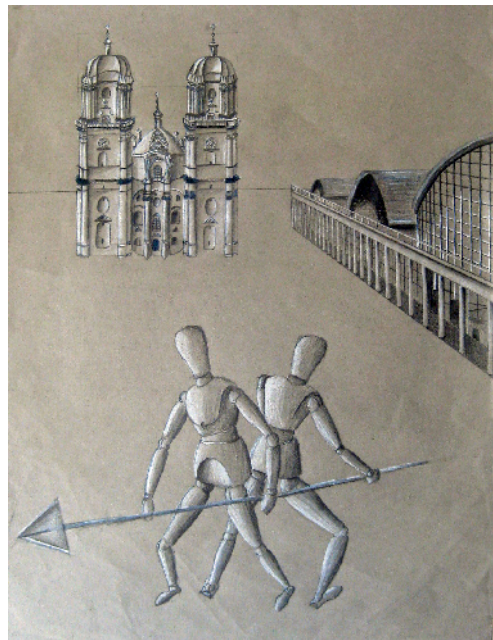


ARTworks class 12



Ulm Cathedral





Weingarten Abbey and others



St. Georg

Historical Monuments
Czech Republik



VELEHRAD

Velehrad is a village in the Uherské Hradiště District (Zlín Region) of the Czech Republic. It has a population of 1,323 and is the most important pilgrimage place in the Czech Republic. In Middle Ages it was the capitol of the Slavic state of Great Moravia. In the 1990s it was visited twice by the Pope John Paul II.



The monastery founded earlier by Cistercian monks in 1205 in the charming valley of the little river Salaška with the financial help of Vladislav Jindřich, Margrave of Moravia. By the middle of 13th century there was already a triple-aisled Romanesque basilica with transept and five apses at the east end. The sanctuary was consecrated in 1228, and by the end of the century the monastic buildings had been completed.



In the latter half of that century a single-aisled chapel called the Cyrilka was built within the monastery precincts. Badly damaged in 1423 by the Hussites, the buildings were not radically renovated until 1681-1769. Giovanni Pietro Tencalla was the architect responsible for the refashioning of the Romanesque basilica, Baltazar Fontana and Josef A. Winterhalder for the stucco of both church and monastery, while the sculpture was executed by Michal Mandík and Antonín Riga, and the paintings by



Michael L. Willmann, Franz Eckstein, Jan J. Etagens and Ignaz Raab. Nearby, an extensive lapidarium has been erected to contain architectural and sculptural fragments mostly deriving from the late Romanesque stage of construction. Velehrad is a lively religious centre attracting thousands of pilgrims every year.

KARLŠTEJN

Karlštejn Castle is a large Gothic castle founded 1348 AD by Charles IV, Holy Roman Emperor-elect and King of Bohemia. The castle served as a place for safekeeping the Imperial Regalia as well as the Bohemian coronation jewels, holy relics and other royal treasures. Located about 30 km southwest of Prague above the village named Karlštejn, it is one of the most famous and most frequently visited castles in the Czech Republic.



The castle was founded in 1348. Matthias of Arras is often credited with being the architect, but he already died in 1352, and Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV personally supervised the construction works and the decoration of interiors. The construction was finished nearly twenty years later when the "heart" of the treasury – the Chapel of the Holy Cross situated in the Great tower – was consecrated in 1365. Following the outbreak of the Hussite Wars, the Imperial Regalia were evacuated in 1421 and brought via Hungary to Nuremberg. In 1422, during the siege of the castle, Hussite attackers used Biological warfare when Prince Sigismund Korybut used catapults to throw dead (but not plague-infected) bodies and 2000 carriage-loads of dung over the walls[1], apparently managing to spread infection among the defenders. Later, the Bohemian coronation jewels were moved to the castle and were kept there for almost two centuries, with some short-time breaks.

The castle underwent several reconstructions: in late Gothic style after 1480, in Renaissance style in the last quarter of the 16th century. During the Thirty Years' War in 1619, the coronation jewels and the archive were brought to Prague, and in 1620 the castle was turned over to [[Ferdinand II, Holy Roman Emperor]. After having been conquered in 1648 by Swedes, it fell in disrepair. Finally, a neo-Gothic reconstruction was carried out by Josef Mocker between 1887 and 1899, giving the castle its present look. Individual buildings of the castle are situated at different height levels expressing their importance. Dominating on the hilltop is the 60m high and separately fortified Great tower built upon massive walls (4-6 m of thickness) that houses the Chapel of the Holy Cross. From there one can step down to the Marian tower, the five-storied Imperial palace and come to the Well tower and Burgrave's palace located at the lowest level.



SVATÝ HOSTÝN

Not far from Zlín is Hostýn hill which has a history of two thousand years of settlement. It was at the ramparts near the top of this memorable hill, that the local population was saved from the invading Tartars. The spot has become a place of pilgrimage. The Baroque church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary remained an active place of pilgrimage even throughout the years of the communist regime when such acts of worship were strongly discouraged. In 1982, the Pope declared the chapel a minor basilic.

Is the most frequently visited pilgrimage shrine in Moravia and after Velehrad the most memorable one. For three centuries now thousands of pilgrims have been converging on Hostýn mountain (735 meter above sea level) with its sanctuary of Our Lady (a Basilica minor) to seek and find there a refuge from their troubles and needs. Several archeological surveys of the location have shown traces of habitation from as far back as the Late Stone Age. The remnants of a fortification (with a circumference of more than 1.800 meters) of the La Tene culture of the Celts are conspicuous there. Recent research has vindicated the assumption that Hostýn was the second Celtic oppidum in Moravia (the first being Staré Hradisko near Protivanov). Above the main altar of the Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady is



located a life size statue of the Virgin Mary. The Child Jesus, whom she is holding in her embrace, is aiming bolts of lightning at the Tartars depicted beneath the statue. These cruel marauders, who were threatening Europe during the 13th century, invaded Moravia in 1241, murdering and plundering. The people sought refuge in the forests and mountains to save their lives and whatever property they could bring with them.

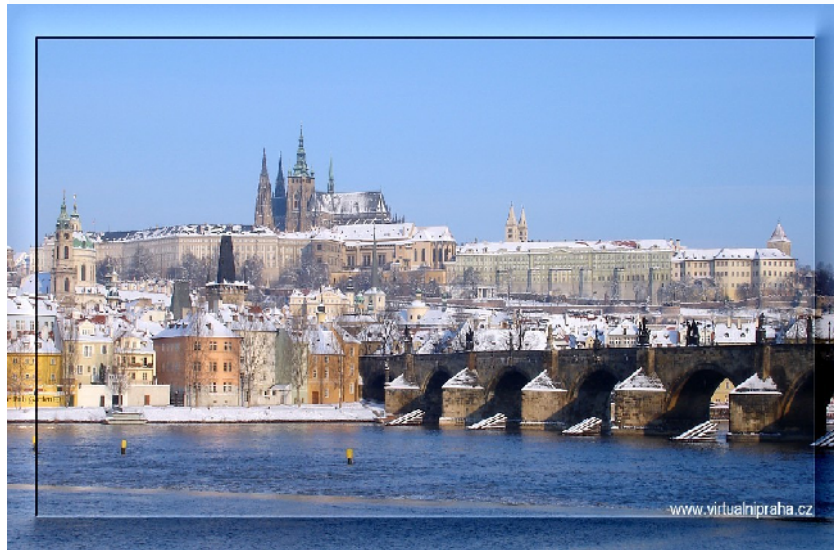
According to legend, those who found refuge on Hostýn were saved through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, when the encampment of the marauders was destroyed by fire caused by lightning. Another legend tells of a visit to Hostýn by the Apostles of the Slavs, Sts. Cyril and Methodius, who are said to have destroyed a pagan place of worship there and erected a chapel in honor of Mary. Written records concerning Hostýn come chiefly from the Jesuit Bohuslav Balbín. In the book, *Sacri pulveres*, of 1669 by George Crugerius, we read



that the people saved from the Tatar invasion erected a statue of the Guardian Virgin Mary on Hostýn mountain out of gratitude. Until the Thirty Years' War there was a small church on Hostýn mountain which was dedicated to the Virgin Mary. On the orders of the non-Catholic rulers of the domain the church was destroyed.

The present basilica has its origins in a magnificent edifice, which was built at the expense of Jan of Rottal and his heirs. Its cornerstone was laid in 1721. The completed edifice was solemnly consecrated by Bishop Ferdinand Julius Trojer of Olomouc on July 28, 1748. This church was destroyed several times and the entire mountain of Hostýn was abandoned completely. By imperial decree of Joseph II in 1784 the sanctuary was declared superfluous and pilgrimages were prohibited. During the first half of the 19th century the faithful began a fund-raising campaign in order to restore the church, which, as a result, was consecrated anew in 1845.

HRADČANY



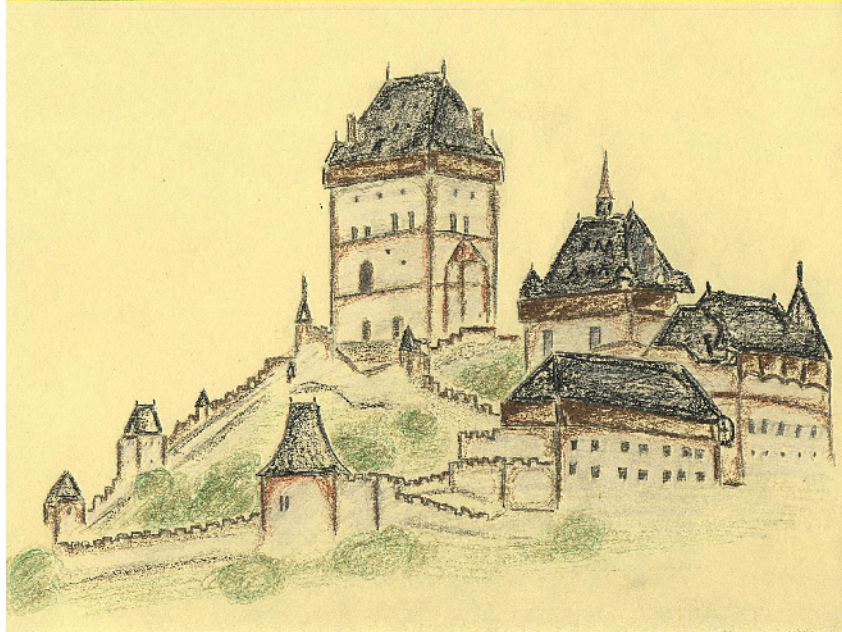
Prague is the heart of Bohemia and historical centre of the Czech state. The Prague Castle is the most important national cultural monument and symbol of the more than thousand years' history of the Czech state. There is the seat of the President of the Republic, Military Office of the President of the Republic and the Castle Guards. The castle is said to be the biggest castle in the world at about 570 meters in length and an average of about 130 meters wide. Its history stretches back to the 8th century. St Vitus Cathedral is located in the castle area. It was founded in the last quarter of the 9th century (about 880) by Prince Bořivoj, the first historically document Czech prince of the Přemysl dynasty. It has marked its glory days in the 14th century under Charles IV, when it became not only imperial residence but also, for the first time, a residence of the archbishop.

Emperor Rudolf II of Habsburg also favored this place to that extent that he moved his court here from Vienna. Thanks to him, Prague became an important centre of Europe and of cultural and scientific life of the Habsburg monarchy at the turn of 16th century.

Another significant stage of development of the Prague Castle took place in the second half of the 18th century under Maria Theresa. Last adaptations and reconstruction of buildings were done after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic. Currently, a vast renovation of the whole area has been planned and gradually implemented. A monumental complex of place, official, sacral, fortification and residential building of all architectural styles covers an area of 45 hectares centered around 3 courtyards. It is a magnificent example of European architecture's development and a gallery of European history of art.



ARTworks





Historical sights Slovakia

One of the goals within the project Comenius is to know some historical sights of our adscendentes, so after Easter holiday we made a journey round the sacred places in the eastern part of Slovakia called Gothic route.

The Gothic route is one of the cultural and cognitive places in Slovakia. It's divided into four circuits and a visitor can visit some castles, preserved centres of historical towns, museums and cathedrals as well as some village churches, burgess-ship houses or romantic stone bridges.



Spiš – Gemer circuit Levoča

Levoča, the center of the region Spiš, where people's hands made stone and wooden beauty for ages. We can see it now in lots of historical sights and objects of art which came from the Gothic and Renaissance period. Thanks to that, Levoča became one of the prominent European towns. The scenery of the town and its atmosphere is attractive for visitors and tourists as well as for artists, photographers or even film-makers.

The history of the town

The first settlers round the town Levoča appeared in the early Stone age. The town was surrounded with a well-preserved town fortification, which was rebuilt several times. The architecture of burgess-ship houses gradually changed from Gothic to Renaissance style which we know today.

St. James's church is the most important sight of European meaning. The representatives of the town Levoča had supported education since 15th century and spent the part of their money on schools. There was also a library, pharmacy, spa and some doctors worked there.

There is a lot of cultural and historical sights in this town – St. James's church, historical building of the Townhall, Evangelistic church, mediaeval pillory and more than 60 burgess-ship houses from 14th – 15th century which make the square of Master Pavol. The square kept its mediaeval shape and belongs to the largest squares of this type in Europe. Its renaissance houses bear witness to wealth of this town in Mediaeval Age.



St. James's Church



St. James's Church in the town of Levoča belongs to the biggest gothic churches in Slovakia. It is a functioning cathedral and as a parish church of the former free royal town of Levoča, it has served its believers for daily worshipping for more than 700 years. It has a rich history and is a treasury of many art monuments. The evidence of it is the fact that it combines three National Cultural Monuments. Apart from the church architecture, the works of the medieval well-known woodcarver Master Pavol from Levoča (Majster Pavol z Levoče) as well as the works of the baroque jeweler Ján Szillassy are protected as another National Cultural Monuments.

The church is consecrated to St. James sr. the Apostle, protector of the fighters, the pilgrims and the workers, venerated by the whole medieval Europe. July 25th is a special day dedicated to him. In the past, big anniversary fairs took place in Levoča that day.

Roman Catholic Parish Church of St. James belongs to the most important monuments of sacral art in Slovakia. Since 1965, the church and its interior improvements, has been protected as a National Cultural Monument. The main altar is the most admired one. At the same time, it is the highest gothic altar in the world. Its author is a well-known late gothic woodcarver, Master Pavol from Levoča. The altar is 18 meters and 62 centimeters high.

The work of Ján Szillassy also belongs to a National Cultural Monuments. His monstrances, chalices and other sacral objects decorated by enamel and wrought decor, inset with gemstones and Bohemian garnets are from the second half of the 18th century. In 1992, this work was proclaimed a National Cultural Monument.

Townhall in Levoča

Its origin traced to 15th century. The building of Townhall burnt in 1550 and there was another fire in 1599. In 1615 it was enlarged and they built the southern part with arcades and vaults downstairs and upstairs. The rest of the origin paintings was saved on the southern right corner of the front side. Later they put other paintings on the front side between the windows upstairs. They present the symbols of civil virtue: moderation, carefulness, galantry, patience and justice. The building of the Townhall is now connected to the renaissance tower built between 1656 – 1661 and used as a bellhouse. There is an exposition of the Spiš museum upstairs.

There is also the painting of so called „White Lady“ on the door of the Townhall. The legend of „White Lady“ remained from the past times and there are also a few literary works about that lady.

The cage of shame

It traced to 16th century and it was used to punish not so important delinquency. It was originally built in the site of the present evangelistic church. Later it became the property of the family Probstners, it was in their park, in the site of present hospital. The family gave the mediaeval pillory to the town in 1933 and since then it has stood in front of the Townhall.



Spiš – Tatras circuit



Kežmarok

Kežmarok set in by means of connecting of three settlements in 13th century. But the first settlers appeared in that site in Stone age. There are rich founds of the bronz and iron age, village of Laten and Rome period, Slavonic village and the base of the sacred building from 12th – 13th century.

The first written mention about Kežmarok traced to 1251 in the deed of gift of the king Bela IV. In 1269 the town gained its town liberties. In 1380 Kežmarok became the royal town. As a free town it got some economic and political privileges. Between 15th and 19th century there were 40 handicraft corporations – trades in Kežmarok.

More than seven hundred years of its existence influenced the town architecture which contains every style of architecture beginning Romanesque style. Some of the more important sights is Basilica of of Holy Rood which belongs to the largest in the region of Spiš. There is a scattered Bell tower in front of the church. It regards the oldest renaissance bell tower in Slovakia. The houses in Kežmarok were very similar – they only differed from each other by the fact that smaller houses belonged to craftsmen and the bigger ones belonged to clerks, doctors or tradesmen. In 1950 the historical center of Kežmarok became historical town reserve. There are eleven of them in Slovakia. In 1985 the wooden Evangelistic church and The Evangelistic seminary became national cultural monuments.

Nowadays Kežmarok belongs to the biggest and the most beautiful towns in the region of Spiš. There are about 17 500 inhabitants in the town. Lots of cultural and historical landmarks make a very good condition for development of tourism. Visitors can stay in two hotels, several guest-houses or find some private accommodations.

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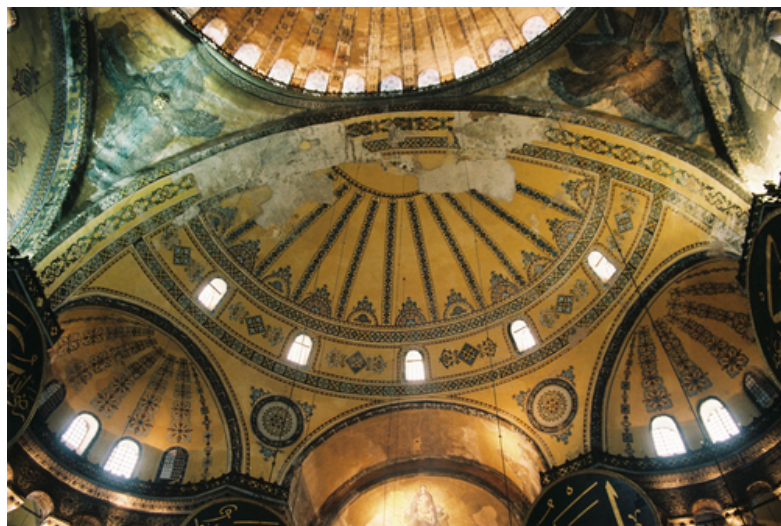
Sacred Places in Turkey



HAGIA SOPHIA



The world-famous Hagia Sophia (Church of Wisdom) was built on the orders of Emperor Justinian in the 6th century AD, and for over a millennium was the world's largest church. It was converted into a mosque after the Ottoman conquest in the 14th century, but in the 20th century Ataturk - the secular "father of Turkey" - made it a museum. There are beautiful Byzantine mosaics on the walls and ceilings, especially the preternatural Mary figure that seems to float on the high domed ceiling, and the famous "Christ Pantocrator." Mosaics on the second floor portray Byzantine rulers paying a priest in order to insure entry into heaven, with the baby Jesus approving.



BLUE MOSQUE

One of the highlights of Istanbul, the huge and magnificent early 17th century Blue Mosque (also known as the Sultan Ahmed Mosque) is a stunning visual extravaganza inside and out. It is considered the last great mosque of the classical period. Istanbul (formerly known as Constantinople and Byzantium) is one of the most historically fascinating of all cities, and the Blue Mosque is a good starting point.

It is situated next to the Hippodrome, site of Roman chariot races and featuring a 1500 BC Egyptian obelisk brought to Constantinopolis by Emperor Theodosius in the 4th century AD.

The bronze Spiral Column dates from 500 BC, when it stood in front of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi; it was brought to the Hippodrome by Constantine in 330 AD and later suffered damage when the Crusaders sacked Constantinople.

Across the central park from the Blue Mosque is even mightier structure of Hagia Sophia (Church of Wisdom). Built on the orders of Emperor Justinian in the 6th century AD, for over a millennium this was the world's largest church. It was converted into a mosque after the Ottoman conquest in the 14th century, and is now a museum.



NEMRUT DAGI

Situated at 2150 meters in the mountains of south central Turkey stands the archaeological site of Nemrut Dagi. The unique mountain top shrine, previously known only to local herders, was discovered in 1881 by a geologist working for the Ottoman government. Assumed to be the burial site of Antiochus, a king of the 1st century BC Commagene dynasty, the peak of Nemrut Dagi has been extensively contoured, capped with a conical mound, and ornamented with two temples and many beautiful stone sculptures. The conical mound rises 50 meters above the temples, is 150 meters in diameter and is



composed of countless thousands of fist-sized pieces of white limestone.

Archaeologists excavating in 1953 tunneled into the cone of rocks but found no burial remains nor gained insights concerning

the construction methods or use of the high altitude temples. The mound is bounded on the east, west and north by terraces, each carved from the mountain rock. The eastern and western terraces contain altars, the remains of walls, and stone statues 8 – 10 meters tall. The statues depict various deities and there are also carvings of Antiochus shaking hands with Zeus, Apollo and Herakles.

The heads of all the statues have fallen to the ground, probably the result of earthquakes which frequently disturb the region. Among the carved stones on the western terrace, one known as the 'Lion of Commagene' bears significant astronomical information. Nineteen stars may be seen in the background and on the lion's body; a crescent moon is shown on the lion's neck. Above the lion's back are three planets named as Mars, Mercury and Jupiter. These carvings, interpreted by archaeoastronomers, seem to indicate the date of July 6 in 61 BC. Some scholars believe this to be the date when Antiochus was installed on the throne by the Roman general Pompey while others see it as an esoteric coronation of Antiochus as head of secret Persian/Anatolian brotherhood. The purpose of the strange mound and its enigmatic carvings remains a mystery.

MT. ARARAT

Mt. Ararat, the traditional landing place of Noah's Ark, is located in eastern Turkey near the Armenian and Iranian borders. The summit of Ararat is 16,946 feet (5,165 meters) above sea level. Also called Agri Dagi, Ararat is a dormant volcano and its last eruption was in 1840. Classical writers considered Ararat impossible to scale and the first known ascent was by a German in 1829.

Over the years various groups have explored Ararat in the hopes of finding remains of Noah's Ark. Both Josephus in about 70 AD and Marco Polo about 1300 AD mention the Ark's existence on the mountain, but their reports are based on others' accounts.

The story of Noah's Ark told in the Old Testament is a reworking of an earlier Babylonian myth recorded in the Gilgamesh Epic, itself based on a devastating flood in the Euphrates River basin. The Biblical references to a great flood and Noah's Ark have remarkable parallels in many other archaic myths found around the world. These myths of great floods devastating human civilization are not the imaginative creations of ancient people but are instead reports, embellished and altered over the millennia, of real events



KONYA AND SHRINE OF RUMI

Occupied for nearly 4000 years, the city of Konya is famous for the shrine of the Sufi poet Rumi. Born in 1207 in Khurasan (contemporary Afghanistan), Jalal al-Din Rumi was the son of an Islamic scholar. At the age of 12 he and his family made a pilgrimage to Mecca and then settled in the town of Konya in 1228. Initiated into Sufism, Rumi studied in Aleppo and Damascus, returned to Konya in 1240, and began teaching as a Sufi sheikh. Within a few years a group of disciples gathered around him, due to his eloquence, theological knowledge and engaging personality.

In 1244 a strange event occurred that was to profoundly change Rumi's life and give rise to the extraordinary outpouring of poetry for which he is famous today. A wandering mystic known as Shams al-Din of Tabriz came to Konya and began to exert a powerful influence on Rumi. Despite his position as a teacher, Rumi became devoted to Shams al-Din, ignored his own disciples and departed from scholarly studies. Jealous of his influence on their master, a group of Rumi's students twice drove the dervish away and finally murdered him in 1247.

Overwhelmed by the loss of Shams al-Din, Rumi withdrew from the world to mourn and meditate. During this time he began to manifest an ecstatic love of god that was expressed through beautiful poetry, listening to devotional music and trance dancing. Over the next twenty-five years, Rumi's literary output was phenomenal. In addition to the Mathnawi, consisting of nearly 25,000 rhyming couplets, he composed 2500 mystical odes and 1600 quatrains. Virtually all of the Mathnawi was dictated to his disciple Husam al-Din in the fifteen years before Rumi's death. Rumi would recite the verses whenever and wherever they came to him – meditating, dancing, singing, walking, eating, by day or night - and Husam al-Din would record them.

Rumi is also known for the Sufi brotherhood he established with its distinctive whirling and circling dance, known as Sema and practiced by the Dervishes. The Sema ceremony represents the mystical journey of an individual towards union with the divine. Dressed in long white gowns, the dervishes dance for hours at a time. With arms held high, the right hand lifted upward to receive blessings and energy from heaven, the left hand turned downward to bestow these blessing on the earth, and the body spinning from right to left, the dervishes revolve around the heart and embraces all of creation with love.

Rumi passed away on the evening of December 17, 1273, a time traditionally known as his 'wedding night,' for he was now completely united with god. In the centuries following Rumi's death, many hundreds of dervish lodges were established throughout the Ottoman domains in Turkey, Syria and Egypt, and several Ottoman Sultans were Sufis of the Mevlevi order. With the secularization of Turkey following World War I, the Mevlevi Brotherhood was seen as reactionary to the new republic and banned in 1925. While their properties were confiscated, members of the Mevlevi Brotherhood continued their religious practices in secret until their ecstatic dances were again allowed in 1953.

The former monastery of the whirling dervishes of Konya was converted into a museum in 1927. In its main room may be seen the tomb of Rumi covered with a large velvet cloth embroidered in gold. Adjacent to Rumi's burial are those of his father and sons, and other Sufi sheikhs.

The burials are capped with turbans, these being symbolic of the spiritual authority of Sufi teachers. Each year on December 17th a religious celebration at Rumi's shrine is attended by tens of thousands. In the shrine there is a silver-plated step on which the followers of Rumi rub their foreheads and place kisses. This area is usually cordoned off but is opened for these devotional actions during the December pilgrimage festivities. Mevlana Rumi is generally known in the west by the name Rumi (which means Anatolian) and in Turkey he is referred to as Mevlana, meaning 'Our Master.'



E KHOR VIRAP MONASTRY



The Khor Virap Monastery is one of Armenia's favourite visitor attractions - it has an excellent story to it, this is where St. Gregory the Illuminator was imprisoned for 13 years before curing King Trdat of a disease. Once cured, Armenia became a Christian nation in the year 301, the first ever Christian nation. Today, you can still visit the places where St. Gregory was imprisoned and admire the view of Mt. Ararat looming in the distance.

PHESUS

The Library of Celsus was commissioned by the Consul Julius Aquila as a mausoleum for his father, Julius Celsus Polemaeanus, Roman governor of the Asian Provinces. It may be that Celsus was granted heroic honors, which would further justify the expense. The monument was constructed between 110 and 135 AD, after which Celsus was buried in a niche on the right side of the back wall. With a few centuries of its construction a fire destroyed the reading room and the library fell into disuse. Around 400 AD, the courtyard below the exterior steps was converted into a pool. The facade collapsed in an earthquake in the 10th century. The Library of Celsus was raised from the rubble to its present splendid state by F. Hueber of the Austrian Archaeological Institute between 1970 and 1978.



APHRODISIAS

Located in the rolling hills of southeastern Turkey, the lovely ruins of Aphrodisias contain what was once the preeminent temple of the goddess Aphrodite in Asia Minor. Yet long before the Greek sanctuary of Aphrodite was constructed in the 1st century BC, the site was a holy place and pilgrimage destination of importance to other cultures.

Excavations conducted in the 1900's indicate settlements since at least the 5th millennium BC. Once named Ninoe and associated with the goddess Astarte or Ishtar, the use of the name Aphrodisias began after the 3rd century B.C.

The similarities of Aphrodite, the goddess of nature, beauty and love, to Artemis of Ephesus and other Anatolian mother goddesses are evident in cult statues found at the ruins. During the early years of Christianity the shrine of Aphrodite was still visited by pilgrims because of the great popularity of the goddess.

Following their habit of destroying the religious sanctuaries of other cultures, Christians later demolished the temple of Aphrodite and erected a church where the temple had stood.

HOUSE OF VIRGIN

Ephesus by the Apostle John after the Resurrection of Christ and lived out her days there. This is based mainly on the traditional belief that John came to Ephesus (see St. John's Basilica) combined with the biblical statement that Jesus consigned her to John's care (John 19:26-27).

Archaeologists who have examined the building identified as the House of the Virgin believe most of the building dates from the 6th or 7th century. But its foundations are much older and may well date from the 1st century AD, the time of Mary. This site had long been a place of pilgrimage for local Orthodox Christians.

The modern history of the Virgin Mary's House is unusual. It was "discovered" in 1812 by a German nun, Sister Anne Catherine Emmerich, who never traveled away from her home.

Sister Emmerich, an invalid confined to bed, awoke in a trance with the stigmata and visions that included the Virgin Mary and Apostle John traveling from Jerusalem to Ephesus. She described Mary's house in detail, which was recorded at her bedside by a writer named Brentano. Emmerich described a rectangular stone house, which John had built for Mary. It had a fireplace and an apse and a round back wall. The room next to the apse was Mary's bedroom, which had a spring running into it. The German nun went on to say that the Virgin Mary died at the age of 64 and was buried in a cave near her house. When her coffin was opened soon after, however, the coffin and burial shroud were empty. The house was then turned into a chapel.



Years after Emmerich's visions, a French clergyman named Gouyet read Brentano's account and traveled to Ephesus to find the House of the Virgin. He found a house matching the nun's description and sent word to the bishops of Paris and Rome, but didn't receive much of a response.

On June 27, 1891, two Lazarist priests and two Catholic officials set out to Ephesus to see the house. They found a small chapel in ruins with a damaged statue of the Virgin. They returned to Izmir with their report, and more priests and specialists were sent out to the site. Since 1892 the House of the Virgin has been a Catholic pilgrimage site. It was restored by 1897 and a shelter for visitors was set up.

The Meryama was later visited by Popes Paul VI and John Paul II, who confirmed its appropriateness as a place of pilgrimage. On November 29, 2006, Pope Benedict XVI celebrated mass here.

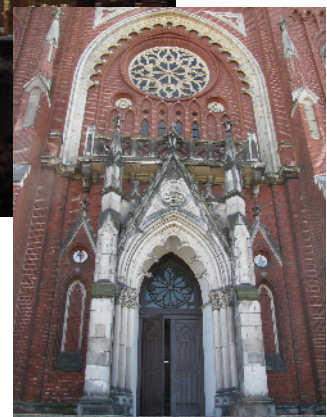


Sacred Buildings in Poland



Archcathedral of the Holy Family in Częstochowa

The archcathedral of the Holy Family is one of the largest churches in Poland, if not in the whole of Europe. It was erected in the Neo-Gothic style, with three aisles, an elongated presbytery and a twin tower facade. The interior of the cathedral is finished in Scandinavian granite taken from the dismantled statue of Tsar Alexander II at Jasna Góra. The windows and rose windows, except the main aisle are decorated with stained glass. The stained-glass windows depict important events in the history of the nation and the Holy Sacraments. Beneath the chapel of Our Lady of Czêstochowa are buried the city's bishops.



Church in Konopiska



First, in Konopiska there was a little wooden church. In 1903 the building of a new brick one was started. It was completed in 1910. On 4th June 1914 there was a ceremony of consecration of the new church in Konopiska. The church was built in neogotic style. In the central nave there is a wooden altar with some figures of St. Valentine - the patron saint of Konopiska. The church was renovated many times and thanks to it has served its congregation by now.

Church of st. Egidius in Zrębice

The Parish in Zrębice was established in 1334. The church is made out of wood.



The historic monuments in the church are: painting of Saint Idzi, painting of Mary, Mother of God, also known as Mother of Bethlehem, a figure of Risen Jesus from the XVII century, figures of Saint Antoni and Saint Paul, barock altars from XVIII Century and the bell from the woodem belfry from 1632.



Church of St. Sigismund

The 14th century three-aisle church with an elongated presbytery is located at the eastern end of the Avenue of Our Lady (in Ignacy Daszyński Square). The church was frequently rebuilt and enlarged.

The presbytery is probably the oldest part of the temple, with conspicuous traces of Gothic influence.

After being rebuilt in the 18 century, the church was given its present Baroque form and interior decoration. Next to it there is a two-storey priest's house, an old brick monastery from the first half th of the 17 century, rebuilt in 1729 and directly linked to the church at the first floor level.



The Church of St. Wojciech



The Church of St. Wojciech located to the side of the Main Market Square In Old Town, Kraków, is one of the oldest stone churches in Poland. The church was built in the 11th century. According to the tradition St. Wojciech preached sermons there. A little stone church was built in memory of this event. The interior of the church is cramped, relative to its larger exterior. The floor level is situated under the present level of the Square, witch reflects the overlaying of the subsequent surfaces of the plaza witch pavement originally adjusted to the two existing churches (including St. Wojciech's).



The church was partially reconstructed in the Baroque style between 1611-1618. The walls of the church were raised up in the 17th century and then covered witch stucco. The new entrance was built from the west side and the church was topped with the new Baroque dome. The restoration of the church conducted in the 19th century led to the discovery of its Romanesque past. On the other hand the last renovation wasted beautiful baroque décor. There is The Museum of The Market's History in the callar.

The Sanctuary of Our Lord's Mercy in Krakow's Lagiewniki District

The 19th- century brick convent of the Sisters of God's Mother of Mercy is part of the vast Sanctuary of Divine Mercy complete with a spacious main church, an array of chapels, a viewing tower, a modern pastoral lodge, cafeterias, shops, parking lots, ect.



It depicts Christ as He appeared before a visionary Polish nun, St. Faustyna Kowalska, one February evening in 1931. The Lord instructed her to commission this very likeness of Himself, complete with the caption which reads in Polish: Jesus, I trust Three. What is more, in the series of appearances over the ensuing years He also revealed to St. Faustyna His dogma of Divine Mercy. The Church gave rather lukewarm support to St. Faustyna and the revelations she had heard. Nonetheless, with time the knowledge of them and the cult of the picture have spread far. On August 17, 2002 Pope John Paul II consecrated the sanctuary's majestic 1.600- sqm brand- new basilica. His Holiness, previously the Krakow archbishop Karol Wojtyla, is said to be once a driving force behind the worldwide Catholic movement to worship the Lord's Mercy with its center in the Lagiewniki sanctuary. Every year some two million pilgrims from all over world visit the shrine. And pilgrims, both Polish and foreign, come daily in their thousands to pray before the original picture at the Krakow convent in the Lagiewniki area.



Saint Anna's Church in Kraków

Saint Anna's Church is placed in Kraków. It is one of the most beautiful baroque buildings in Poland. The first wooden church, built in the 14th century, was burnt down in the first half of the 15th century.

Then, a brick, gothic church was elevated in its place. It was then demolished in 1689-1073, as the Krakow Academy was paying for it, and replaced it with the present church, built in the project of Tylman with Gemeren. Rich decorations inside are designed and made by Baltazar Fontana. On the main altar there is a painting of Saint Anna, painted by Jerzy Siemigionwski.



St. Mary's Basilica in Kraków

St. Mary's Basilica (Polish: *Kościół Mariacki*), is a Brick Gothic church built in the 14th century, adjacent to the Main Market Square in Kraków, Poland. Standing 80m (262ft) tall, it is particularly famous for its wooden altarpiece carved by Veit Stoss (Wit Stwosz).

On every hour, a trumpet signal — called the *hejnal* (*hejnał*) — is played from the top of the taller of St. Mary's two towers. The plaintive tune breaks off in mid-stream, to commemorate the famous 13th century trumpeter, who was shot in the throat while sounding the alarm before the Mongol attack on the city. The noon-time *hejnal* is heard across Poland and abroad broadcast live by the Polish national Radio 1 Station.



St. Mary's Basilica also served as an architectural model for many of the churches that were built by the Polish diaspora abroad, particularly those like St. Michael's and St. John Cantius in Chicago, designed in the so-called Polish Cathedral style.

The church is familiar to many English-speaking readers from the 1929 book *The Trumpeter of Krakow* by Eric P. Kelly



Siewierz St. Maciej Apostle's Church

It is dated to the first half of 15 century. The chancel then was built, but a nave was wooden. Before 1598 the nave was rest restnicted. It's the single – nave church with the harrower Chancel of Mather of God Rosary Aund Jenis Christ Crucified. In the high alter there is a painting Of the church patron – St. Maciej.



St John's the Baptist Church

It is one of the oldest manuments In Silesia county. It was erected around 1140 by a famous church founder Piotr Włast Dunin . At first it was a parisch church.

It 's a Romanesque church, stane, rectangular with a single nave and a semicircular apse. At the west wall there are some remains of empora; in the apse there are fragments of two – layered Romanesque and Gothic polychrome with illegible figurantive scens. The offset portal semicircular closed with a rectangular eutrauce hde leads to the interiov of the temple. It has got a gable roof covered with shingle.

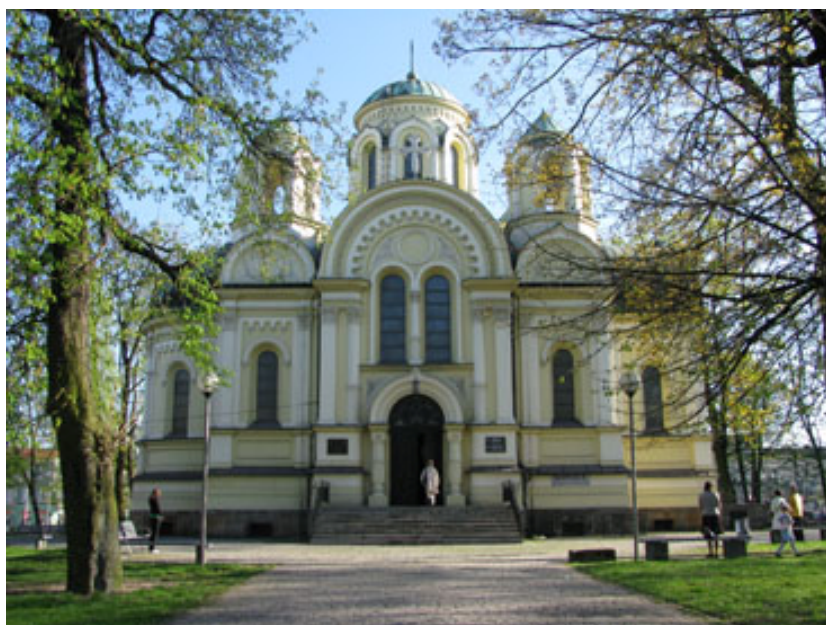
St Barbara's & Valentine Church

It was a hospital church, built in 1618 with effort and from funds of Siewierz burgesses in the place of an old wooden one. The separate hospital parish existed to 1840 looking after the hospital located Reaby . The church situated in Krakowska street, is reather small with a single – nave and semicircular apse. Inside there are beautiful altars: a high one with a painting of St Barbara's Valentine.

From 1639 a side baroque one with painhing of Mother of the Angel and the second side one, also Baroque with painting of St Anthony. The church has got a gable roof covered with metal Streeting.

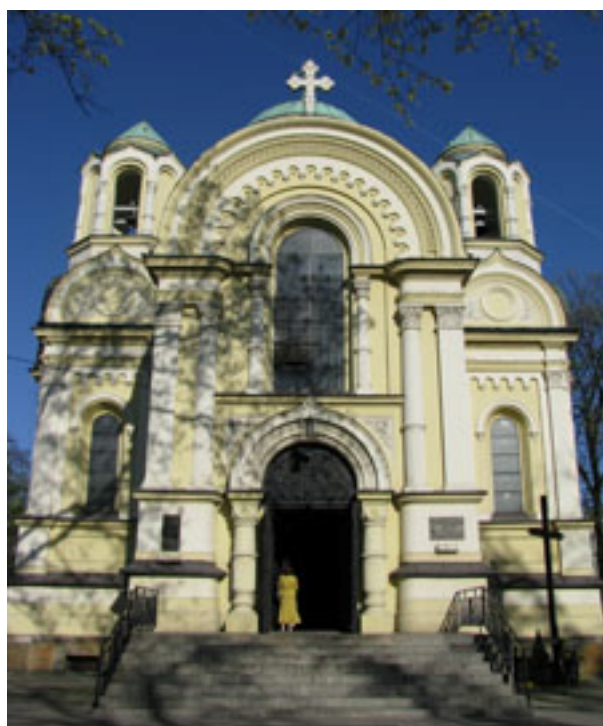
The turret has the little bell of the baroque shape, octagonal with the lamp post. In years 1987-1995 successively the of the church was being renovated, the floor and new plaster were put and the main alter was restored.

Church of St. Jacob's in Częstochowa



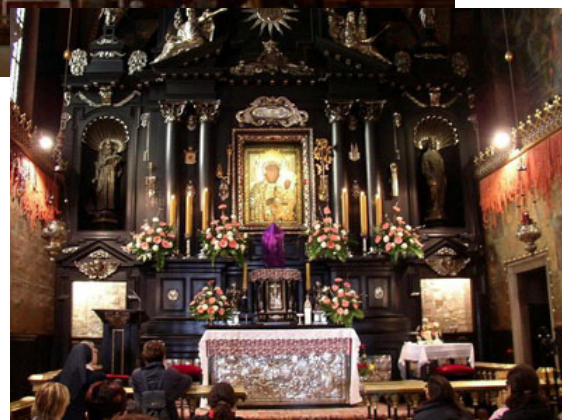
Church of St. Jacob's. A single glance is enough to tell that it is different from other Polish churches, as its cupolas and arches resemble that of an Orthodox temple. This impression is absolutely legitimate: from 1870-1872 when the building was erected until 1918 it was the Orthodox church of St. Cyril and St. Methodius.

The temple returned to the parish of St. Jacob in 1947. The small interior of the church is surprisingly modest. There are paintings on the walls depicting the Stations of the Cross in a Byzantine manner.



The Jasna Góra Monastery in **Częstochowa**

The Jasna Góra Monastery (Polish: Jasna Góra, English: Bright Mount) in Częstochowa, Poland is the most famous shrine to the Virgin Mary in Poland and the country's greatest place of pilgrimage - for many its spiritual capital. The image of Black Madonna of Częstochowa, to which miraculous powers are attributed, is Jasna Góra's most precious treasure. Founded in 1382 by Pauline monks who came from Hungary at the invitation of Władysław, Duke of Opole.





The monastery has been a pilgrimage destination for hundreds of years, and it contains the most important icon of the Virgin Mary in this part of Europe. The icon, depicting the Mother of God with the Christ Child, is known as the Black Madonna of Częstochowa or Our Lady of Częstochowa, which is widely venerated and credited with many miracles.

Among these, it is credited with miraculously saving the Jasna Góra monastery during a siege that took place at the time of The Deluge, the 17th century Swedish invasion. Although this event was of little military importance, the event stimulated the Polish resistance. The Poles could not immediately change the course of the war but after an alliance with the Crimean Khanate they repulsed the Swedes. Shortly thereafter, in the cathedral of Lwów, on April 1, 1656, Jan Kazimierz, the King of Poland, solemnly pronounced his vow to consecrate the country to the protection of the Mother of God and proclaimed Her the Patron and Queen of the lands in his kingdom.

St. Andrew's and St. Barbara's Church in Częstochowa



St. Andrew's and St. Barbara's Church- built in the mid-17th century for the novitiate of the Jasna Góra Monastery. The location of the Church was probably determined by the presence of the spring in which, according to the legend, the profaned picture of the Black Madonna, stolen from the Jasna Góra Monastery, was washed in 1430.

At the end of the 19th century the church became a parish church.

The church itself was built in Baroque style with some traces of Gothic, originally with one nave, later extended by two side aisles into chapels. The tower is crowned with a Baroque dome. Behind the church there is St. Barbara's Chapel with the spring.



Church of St. Adalbert and Our Lady of Sorrows



The Parish Church of St. Adalbert and Our Lady of Sorrows in Modlnica dates from 1553. Originally the church was built in a cross shape, but already in 1622 the north wing was replaced by a renaissance brick chapel and tomb for the Kucharski family, and the wooden sacristy was replaced with a brick one. It is worth paying attention to the gothic portals capped with ogee arches. Inside the church there is impressive renaissance polychrome decoration from 1562 while the chapel has ornamental and figurative polychrome dating from the middle of the C17th. The church fittings include C17th altars with the main altar including a gothic painting of Madonna with Child.



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