



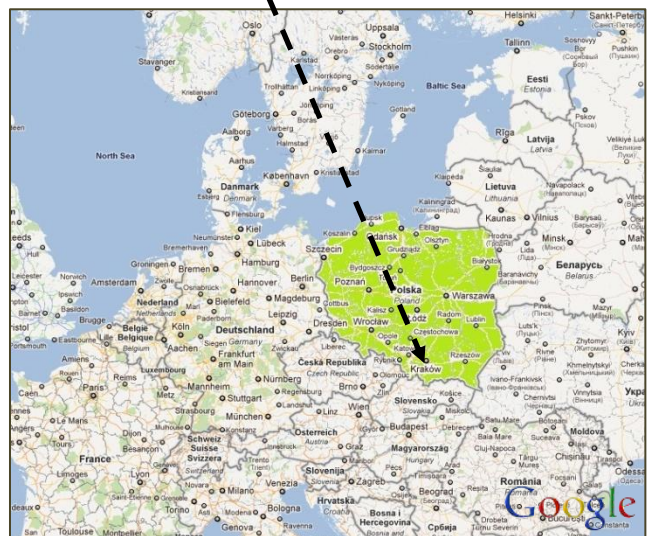
# Trekking the Planet

Discovering the Cultural and Natural Significance of the World



## Where are we now?

- Darren and Sandy are in Kraków, Poland, located at 50° N and 20° E.
- We have traveled approximately 32,161 miles (51,758 kilometers) from our starting point in California.



## Did you know?

A Name Day is a celebration of the day of the year associated with one's name. In Poland, calendars contain names on each day of the year. Some Polish people over the age of 13 celebrate their "imieniny" or name day instead of their birthday. "Sto lat!" (a hundred years!) is sometimes sung at the celebration.

MARZEC						
PON:	WTO:	SRO:	CZW:	PIA:	SOB:	NIE:
	1 Albina Antoniego	2 Heleny Halszki	3 Maryny Kunegundy	4 Arkadiusza Eugeniusza Kazimierza	5 Adryjana Fryderyka	6 Rozy Wiktora
7 Tomasza Felicyty	8 Beaty Wincentego	9 Franciszki Dominiki	10 Cypriana Aleksandra	11 Benedykta Konstantego	12 Alojzego Bernarda	13 Bozeny Krzyszyny
14 Leona Martyny	15 Longina Klemensa	16 Izabeli Oktawii	17 Patryka Zbigniewa	18 Cyryla Edwarda	19 Jozefa Bogdana	20 Klaudii Eufemii
21 Ludomira Benedykta	22 Katarzyny Bogusława	23 Pelagii Feliksa	24 Marka Gabriela	25 Marioli Wienczysława	26 Emanuela Larysy Teodora	27 Lidii Ernesta
28 Anieli Jana	29 Viktoryna Helmuta	30 Anieli Leonarda	31 Beniamina Balbiny			

sources:

[Polandpoland.com](http://Polandpoland.com),

[Calendar.zoznam.sk](http://Calendar.zoznam.sk)



The main square of Kraków. This area was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978. (source: [UNESCOworldheritagesites.com](http://UNESCOworldheritagesites.com))

## People and Culture

- The kingdom of Poland was created in 1025 and lasted until 1795, when land was divided between Austria, the Russian Empire and the Kingdom of Prussia. Poland regained its independence in 1918.
- Germany invaded Poland in 1939, triggering World War II. Over six million Polish citizens died during the war. Poland was under Soviet influence from the end of the war until forming the "Third Polish Republic" in 1989.
- Poland joined the European Union in 2004. It is the sixth most populated country in the European Union with about 38 million residents. Among all EU member countries, Poland residents marry the youngest on average (24 years old for women and 26 years old for men).
- Poland was the birthplace of astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus, composer Frederic Chopin, scientist and first woman Nobel Prize winner Marie Curie, as well as Pope John Paul II.
- Kraków is one of the oldest Polish cities, dating to the 7<sup>th</sup> century and the second largest in the country. It is known as an academic, artistic and economic center.



*Błędów Desert and Tatra Mountains*  
 (sources: [Krakowpost.com](http://Krakowpost.com), [Wikipedia.org](http://Wikipedia.org))

## European Bison

The heaviest surviving land animal in Europe is the wisent or European bison. They roamed much of Europe at one time and were hunted to the brink of extinction by the end of World War I. The last few wisents survived in Poland. Since that time their populations have grown and are now listed as a vulnerable species. They can weigh up to 2,000 pounds (920 kilograms), which is lighter than the American bison or buffalo.



source:  
[Wikipedia.org](http://Wikipedia.org)

## Nature and Environment

- Poland is the 69<sup>th</sup> largest country in the world and the 9<sup>th</sup> largest in Europe. The terrain varies from lowlands and lakes in the north to mountains in the south.
- Poland has one of the largest numbers of lakes in the world. It is second only to Finland in the greatest density of lakes in Europe. The coast along the Baltic Sea is about 330 miles (530 kilometers) long.
- One of five natural European deserts is found in southern Poland. The Błędów Desert has a total area of 12 square miles (32 square kilometers).
- Significant land is devoted to agriculture with over two million private farms in the country. Potatoes, rye and sugar beets are leading crops.
- Forests cover about 29% of the land. This forest has served to preserve animals that have died out in other parts of Europe. These include the brown bear, gray wolf and Eurasian Lynx.
- Of all the birds who migrate to Europe in the summers, about 25% breed in Poland. The white-tailed-eagle is on the Polish Coat of Arms.
- There are 23 national parks in Poland, which cover about 1% of the country's land area.

## Our Plans

- During our time in Krakow we plan to visit the old town and Wawel Castle. We also plan to visit the Auschwitz concentration camp.
- Our next stops will be in Slovakia and Germany. We will visit Dresden and Bamberg in Germany. Then we will move on to Slovenia and our next trek.
- As we travel through Europe, let us know what questions or comments that you have via Facebook, Twitter or email. We look forward to hearing from you!

## More Information

- <http://www.eupedia.com/poland/trivia.shtml>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poland>
- <http://www.staypoland.com/poland-food.htm>
- <http://birds.poland.pl/directory/>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Krakow>
- <http://lifestyle.iloveindia.com/lounge/facts-about-poland-2094.html>

## Polish Cuisine

Food in Poland consists of a variety of hearty meat dishes. Popular main courses include:

- **Bigos:** seasoned "hunter" stew made from sauerkraut with chunks of various meats and sausages
- **Gołąbki:** cabbage parcels stuffed with meat or meat and rice
- **Kotlet schabowy:** traditional breaded pork cutlet
- **Kiełbasa:** Polish white sausages



*Bigos (sources: [Staypoland.com](http://Staypoland.com), [wn.com](http://wn.com))*

## Our Partners



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