The Levin JCC & Anna Klein to explore the Jewish roots of

POLAND

June 21 – July 5, 2020
Featuring the Krakow Jewish Culture Festival

(As of 7-10/19)

Together we’ll explore Europe not through the lens of the Holocaust, but with an eye on the long history of Europe as the center of Jewish culture, filled with periods of incredible intellectual achievement and spiritual growth. We’ll also interact and share with members of the modern day Jewish communities, experiencing a re-birth in these regions.

About tour leader Anna Klein:
A native of Poland, Anna S. Klein followed the path of a wandering Jew. After graduating from the University in Lodz, with an MA in psychology, Anna immigrated to Belgium where she studied computer programming. In the US, she specialized in substance abuse counseling. In 2015, Anna graduated from Duke University with a MA degree in Liberal Studies. Her thesis, Jewish Cemeteries in Poland as a Testimony to the State of Affairs, confirms her life-long interest and connection to the land of her ancestors. She is a member of Judea Reform Congregation in Durham, where she stays active in the Cantor Corps and the Women’s Group.

Day 1: Sunday, June 21, 2020: DEPARTURE
- We depart the United States on our overnight flight to Poland.

Day 2: Monday, June 22, 2020: WELCOME TO POLAND!
- We arrive in Warsaw where we are met by an Ayelet Tours representative.
- We pass by the Royal Castle, then continue on to Old Town Square and Lazienki Park.
- Later this afternoon, we check into our hotel and have time to relax and freshen up.
- This evening, we join together for a welcome dinner and tour orientation at our hotel.

Overnight in Warsaw
Day 3: Tuesday, June 23, 2020: JEWISH WARSAW

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Today, we set out on a walking tour of Warsaw’s main Jewish sites. Our first stop is at the Nozyk Synagogue, the only surviving pre-war synagogue in Warsaw, founded in 1900. Meet with a leader from Eitz Chaim, a progressive community that shares this space.
- Next, we visit the Jewish Historical Institute whose mission is to spread knowledge about the history of the Jewish presence over thousands of years in Poland.
- We also stop to see the Jewish Resistance Bunker at Mila 18 and the Stawski Street buildings, where the SS had their headquarters.
- Our final stop today is at the Gesia Cemetery, established in 1806 and containing graves of about 250,000 people, and the stories of some of Warsaw’s most notable Jewish former residents.
- This evening, we enjoy dinner with members of the Progressive Beit Warsawa community as we learn about Jewish renewal in Poland today.

Overnight in Warsaw

Day 4: Wednesday, June 24, 2020: HISTORY OF THE POLISH JEWS

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We spend the morning at the astonishing and newly constructed POLIN Museum (The New Museum of the History of the Polish Jews), located on the site of the former Warsaw Ghetto. The museum provides a unique learning environment with a wide range of media, documents and artifacts.
- Along the way, we admire the Warsaw home created by Israeli writer and artist, Etgar Keret, the skinniest house in the world, and see the place of the infamous and iconic Warsaw Ghetto Bridge.
- We continue to Umschlagplatz, where thousands of Warsaw Jews were gathered for final transport to Treblinka.
- Next, we drive to the Warsaw Zoo and visit the zookeeper’s house owned by the couple that saved many Jews during the Holocaust, now memorialized in the movie “The Zookeeper’s Wife”.
- Enjoy an early dinner on own, followed by a performance at the Teatr Zydowski (Jewish Theater).

Overnight in Warsaw
Day 5: Thursday, June 25, 2020: TREBLINKA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Today, we travel to Treblinka, an extermination camp outside of Warsaw in operation from July 1942 to October 1943 as part of the Final Solution. Somewhere between 700,000 and 900,000 Jews were killed here, more than at any other Nazi extermination camp apart from Auschwitz.
- We return to Warsaw later this afternoon for time to process and reflect on our visit.
- Evening at leisure and dinner on own.
- Optional: Enjoy some excellent Jazz at Stodowa, Akwarium, 12on14 Jazz Club or similar (on own, accompanied by Anna Klein).

Overnight in Warsaw

Day 6: Friday, June 26, 2020: LODZ

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we depart Warsaw and travel to Lodz, Poland’s third largest city and a former industrial hub, as well as the former home of our group leader Anna Klein. The history of the city was shaped by the contributions of four people: Poles, Germans, Jews and Russians. Jews made up about one third of the city’s population and owned a third of all factories.
- We set out on a tour that provides us with insight into the life and history of this important community. We begin at the Museum of the City of Lodz, once the former palace of the Poznanski family, one of the richest factory families in Lodz in the 19th century. The most recognizable building and a testimony to the city’s history, we’ll learn what life in Lodz was like for our ancestors.
- Time for lunch on own.
- We check into our hotel and have time to relax and refresh.
- As the sun sets, we join together to welcome Shabbat at Lodz’s only surviving synagogue, followed by Shabbat dinner together.
- Later this evening, we may choose to visit the Geyer Music Factory for a concert held in the factory’s courtyard (additional cost).

Overnight in Lodz

Day 7: Saturday, June 27, 2020: SHABBAT SHALOM!

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we visit the former Jewish ghetto formed after the 1939 Nazi invasion of Poland. It was the second largest ghetto in all of German-occupied Europe after the Warsaw Ghetto. The ghetto was transformed into a major industrial center to manufacture war supplies for the German Army.
- Our next stop is at the Radegast station, the predominant point of departure for Jewish inhabitants of Lodz.
• We continue to **Piotrkowska Street**, a main thoroughfare and shopping destination in Lodz. Along the way, we stop at the childhood home of master musician **Artur Rubinstein** and see the statue of him playing the piano.
• Stay for dinner on own at one of the city’s best restaurants.

**Overnight in Lodz**

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Day 8: Sunday, June 28, 2020: LODZ THEN AND NOW**

• Breakfast at our hotel.
• Next, we visit the **Herbst Villa** constructed in 1876 for the daughter of Karl Scheibler, the city’s most important textiles industrialist. We tour the sprawling gardens, ballroom, stables and orangery since acquired and renovated by the Lodz Museum of Art.
• Adjacent to the villa, we tour the **Ksiezy Mlyn** (Priest’s Mill), originally an industrial complex turned city within a city with a factory, school, fire station and palatial residences.
• Time for lunch and at leisure at the **Manufaktura**, a mall and leisure complex and a main part of the city’s regeneration in the past 25 years with stunning brick architecture built by Izrael Poznanski.
• Our final stop today is at the **Jewish cemetery**, one of the largest Jewish burial grounds in the world. Burial sites from lavish monuments to mass graves can be found here.
• We join together for **dinner** this evening at a local restaurant.

**Overnight in Lodz**

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Day 9: Monday, June 29, 2020: CZESTOCHOWA**

• Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
• Today, we depart Lodz and travel to **Czestochowa**, a religious city filled with history.
• Upon arrival, we visit the **Jewish museum** to learn about the more than 30,000 Jews who lived in this Polish town before the Nazi invasion, followed by a stop at the **Jewish cemetery**, where there are several mass graves containing remains of Jews who died during the German occupation.
• Next, we visit the famed **Jasna Gora Monastery**, known for the blackened picture of the Virgin Mary, popularly called the “Black Madonna”.
• We continue to Krakow and check into our hotel with time to refresh.
• This evening, we join together for **dinner** at a local restaurant.

**Overnight in Krakow**
Day 10: Tuesday, June 30, 2020: DISCOVERING KRAKOW

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we set out on a tour of the old Jewish district known as Kazimierz, where we visit the Old Synagogue, a massive fortress-like building erected in the 15th and 16th centuries, followed by the “Temple” and the “Remuh Synagogue”.
- We walk to the nearby Galicia Museum for a tour with one of their docents and a better understanding of our Jewish history in Poland.
- The Krakow Jewish Culture Festival is ongoing during our time here, and we’ll have the opportunity on our own to attend some of the absolutely incredible events and performances over the next few days!
- Enjoy a free evening for dinner on our own.

Overnight in Krakow

Day 11: Wednesday, July 1, 2020: THE REBIRTH OF JUDAISM IN POLAND

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we visit the Krakow JCC and meet with Executive Director Jonathan Ornstein to hear about the incredible rebirth of Jewish life in Krakow.
- We continue to the Little Monument at the Drug Store inside the Jewish ghetto, then stop at the site of the former Plaszow Concentration Camp constructed on the grounds of two Jewish cemeteries in a suburb of Krakow. The camp was populated by Jewish prisoners when the Krakow ghetto was liquidated in March 1943. A large and imposing memorial stands on a hillside marking the site.
- This afternoon, we travel to the Wieliczka Salt Mines, which are over 700 years old and is one of the largest monuments in the world. An elevator will descend to the first level of the mine, where we will be able to see the 180-foot chapel made out of salt rock and lit with salt crystal chandeliers. There are many other chambers carved out of a huge block of salt, including underground museums and even tennis and volleyball courts.
- We return to Krakow for an evening at leisure, dinner on our own, and free time attend events at the Krakow Jewish Culture Festival.

Overnight in Krakow
Day 12: Thursday, July 2, 2020: AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Today, we travel to Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi concentration and extermination camp, now a state memorial and museum. We tour Auschwitz I, which incudes the prison block and museum exhibits, including a new exhibit on the camp’s Jewish victims, followed by Auschwitz II-Birkenau, site of the gas chambers.
- We continue on to the neighboring town of Oswiecim, where the Auschwitz Jewish Center houses a museum depicting Jewish life in the town and a functioning synagogue.
- We return to Krakow for time to reflect on our day.
- Dinner on own this evening.
- Late night option to visit Pwincia Pod Baranami, a well-known cabaret jazz performance in the city center (with Anna – entrance on own).

Overnight in Krakow

Day 13: Friday, July 3, 2020: KRAKOW JEWISH CULTURE FESTIVAL

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We spend the day attending the Krakow Jewish Culture Festival, which is celebrating its 32nd year. Originally created by two men from Poland, the festival is comprised of a series of events presenting the Jewish history of Poland and the Jewish contribution to its development.
- This evening, we join together for Shabbat dinner with members of Beit Krakow, a small Progressive congregation.

Overnight in Krakow

Day 14: Saturday, July 4, 2020: KRAKOW JEWISH CULTURE FESTIVAL

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We spend the day attending the amazing Krakow Jewish Culture Festival (entrance/tickets on own).
- Evening at leisure and dinner on own.

Overnight in Krakow

Day 15: Sunday, July 5, 2020: DEPARTURE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We transfer to the airport for our flight back to the United States, landing later today OR extend your stay with a private guided tour to places of personal heritage – Contact Ayelet Tours for options.

THE MEMORIES LAST FOREVER!!

*itinerary subject to change