

Jewish Renewal in Poland plus Budapest

with Rabbi Haim Beliak, Dr. Richard Hecht
& Dr. Dominika Zakrzewska

June 23 – July 9, 2020

Poland only June 23 – July 6, 2020

(As of 1/15/20)



Day 1: Tuesday, June 23, 2020: DEPARTURE

- We depart the United States on our overnight flight to Poland.

Day 2: Wednesday, June 24, 2020: WELCOME TO POLAND!

- Welcome to **Gdansk!** We arrive in Poland and are met by our tour leader.
- We transfer to our hotel to check in and refresh.
- Later this afternoon, we visit **Sopot**, strolling along **Monte Cassino Heroes Street** for a chance to get familiar with the city.
- This evening, we join together for a **welcome dinner** with our fellow travelers.

Overnight in Gdansk

Day 3: Thursday, June 25, 2020: GETTING TO KNOW GDANSK

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Today, we tour Gdansk and hear about the history of the Jewish population dating back to the 15th century. We see the place where the **Great Synagogue** stood until its destruction in 1939.
- Next, we visit the **Museum of the Second World War** as well as the **Polish post office**, where the militia defended against one of the first German attacks of WWII.
- We conclude our day by meeting with the leaders of the **Reform Jewish community of Gdansk** to learn about Jewish life in Poland today, followed by **dinner** together.

Overnight in Gdansk



Day 4: Friday, June 26, 2020: GDANSK TO WARSAW

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we continue getting familiar with city with a visit to the **Gdansk shipyard**, site of the creation of the anti-Communist Solidarity Movement in 1980 that helped liberate Poland from Soviet rule, and the **National Solidarity Centre** dedicated to teaching and preserving the history of the Solidarity Movement.
- We depart Gdansk and travel to **Warsaw**.
- Upon arrival, we check into our hotel and freshen up.
- Tonight, we welcome **Shabbat** with member of **Beit Warszawa**, Warsaw's progressive congregation, followed by **Shabbat dinner** with members of the congregation.

Overnight in Warsaw

Day 5: Saturday, June 27, 2020: SHABBAT SHALOM!

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we attend **Shabbat services** at a local congregation.
- After services, we tour the **POLIN Museum (The Museum of the History of the Polish Jews)** honored with the title of European Museum of the year in 2016. The museum tells the story of a thousand years of Jewish presence in Poland. In addition to the exhibition, the museum provides a wide range of cultural, educational and social activities to tourists and Warsaw citizens.
- Next, we enjoy a walk around **Old Town**, the biggest reconstructed area on the UNESCO World Heritage site list.
- Evening at leisure and dinner on own.

Overnight in Warsaw

Day 6: Sunday, June 28, 2020: PRAGA DISTRICT

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day with a tour of the **Praga District**, formerly a separate town on the right side of the Vistula River, there was joined with Warsaw at the end of the 18th century. This part of the city was widely inhabited by the Jewish community and the first known Praga Jews dates back to the year 743.
- Next, we visit the **Jewish resistance bunker at Mila 18**, the **Umschlagplatz**, where transfers from the ghetto took place, and pass by **Janusz Korczak's** famous orphanage.
- This evening, we enjoy a **Chopin concert**, followed by dinner on own.

Overnight in Warsaw



Day 7: Monday, June 29, 2020: WARSAW – GORA KALWARIA - LODZ

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Today, we visit the unforgettable **Okopowa Jewish cemetery**, one of the largest in Europe and home to many splendid tombstone monuments of prominent cultural and religious figures.
- Our next stop is in **Gora Kalwaria**, a city known for being the center of the Hasidic movement in Poland for many years.
- We depart Warsaw and travel to **Lodz**, checking into our hotel upon arrival.
- After time to refresh, set out for dinner on own and a chance to explore the city.

Overnight in Lodz

Day 8: Tuesday, June 30, 2020: EXPLORING LODZ

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day with a panoramic **city tour**. The history of Lodz was shaped by the contributions of four peoples: Polish, Germans, Jews and Russians. Jews made up about one third of the city's population and owned a third of all the factories. We set out on a specialized tour that will provide us with insight into the life and history of this important community.
- Our first stop is at the **Jewish cemetery**, the biggest in Europe, still preserved in its pre-war state on Bracka Street.
- Next, we visit the **Radegast railway station**, once the departure point to death camps in Chelmno and Auschwitz.
- Later, we tour the areas of the former **Litzmannstadt ghetto**, one of the most remarkable ghettos in Poland.
- We visit the **Centre for Dialogue** named after Marek Edelman, to learn about the activities provided to the local community with a special emphasis on their cooperation with local schools.
- We complete our afternoon with a walk along **Piotrkowska Street**, the city's main promenade, and admire the newly renovated historic buildings of which almost every third was originally erected and inhabited by Jewish families.
- Enjoy the evening at leisure and dinner on own.

Overnight in Lodz

Day 9: Wednesday, July 1, 2020: CZESTOCHOWA

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we travel to **Czestochowa**, where our first stop is at the **Jasna Gora Monastery**, known for the blackened picture of the Virgin Mary, popularly known as the "**Black Madonna**".
- Next, we visit the **Jewish Museum of Czestochowa** to learn about the more than 30,000 Jews who lived in this Polish town before the Nazi German invasion.
- We also visit the **Jewish cemetery** and meet a man who dedicated several years to cataloguing the tombstones and creating a map of the cemetery.
- This afternoon, we continue to the **Galicia** area, where we check into our hotel and freshen up before setting out for dinner on own.

Overnight in Galicia



Day 10: Thursday, July 2, 2020: OSWIECIM/AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Today, we start by visiting the synagogue in **Oswiecim** and stop at the local **Jewish museum** to learn about the educational programs dedicated to the local community, educators and state officers.
- Later today, we travel to **Auschwitz-Birkenau**, the infamous Nazi concentration camps, where many Jews and others perished in WWII. Here, we see the museum and pay tribute to the victims.
- We continue to **Kielce** and check into our hotel before heading out for an evening of exploring and dinner on own.

Overnight in Kielce

Day 11: Friday, July 3, 2020: KIELCE TO KRAKOW

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we participate in events related to the celebration of the **Kielce Pogrom anniversary**, including a commemorative concert.
- We meet with **Bogdan Bialek**, a man who restored the local community in memory of the traffic events of the pogrom, and who was involved in the implantation of a number of initiatives aimed at combating anti-Semitism and xenophobia.
- This afternoon, we continue to **Krakow** to welcome **Shabbat** and enjoy dinner with the **JCC Krakow** community.
- We check into our hotel later this evening.

Overnight in Krakow

Day 12: Saturday, July 4, 2020: DISCOVERING KRAKOW

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day with a **Jewish heritage tour** of Krakow. We begin in the old Jewish district known as **Kazimierz**, where we see the **Old Synagogue**, a massive fortress-like building erected in the 15th and 16th centuries. We also see “**the Temple**” and the **Remuh Synagogue**.
- We return to the **JCC Krakow** to meet with **Executive Director, Jonathan Ornstein** to learn about their work in keeping Judaism alive in Poland today.
- We continue to the **Little Monument at the Drug Store** inside the Jewish ghetto, followed by a visit to **Schindler’s factory**, where he employed hundreds of Jews, saving them from the concentration camps.
- We stop at the **Galicia Jewish Museum** to see the photos exhibitions documenting the remnants of the once vibrant Jewish life and culture in Polish Galicia.
- Evening at leisure and dinner on own.

Overnight in Krakow



Day 13: Sunday, July 5, 2020: KRAKOW JEWISH CULTURE FESTIVAL

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Enjoy the day at leisure to attend the **Krakow Jewish Culture Festival**, which features programs throughout the day and the final concert this evening.
- Dinner on own tonight.

Overnight in Krakow

Day 14: Monday, July 6, 2020: KRAKOW TO BUDAPEST/DEPARTURE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we board our flight from Krakow to **Budapest**, the capital of Hungary. Located on the Danube River, the former cities of Buda and Pest are linked by a series of graceful bridges.
- Upon arrival, we see the **Parliament**, the **Royal Palace**, **Coronation Church** and **Hero's Square**. *(For those on the Poland only trip, transfer to the airport for your flight back to the United States, landing later today.)*
- After time for lunch on own, we visit **Gellert Hill**, as well as the **Castle Hill area** and the **Fisherman's Bastion**.
- Later this afternoon, we check into our hotel and have time to refresh before **dinner** with **Rabbi Ferenc Raj** (pending confirmation) or a representative from **Bet Orim**, who will discuss the challenges of Jewish life in Budapest amidst the Nationalist resurgence in Hungary **OR** meet with members of the **Budapest JCC** or **Frankel Synagogue (Rabbi Tamas Vero)**.



Overnight in Budapest

Day 15: Tuesday, July 7, 2020: JUDAISM IN BUDAPEST

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Today, we visit the **Israel Culture Institute**, the only one of its kind in the world, for a tour and to meet with young professionals from the Minyanim program to hear about their experiences living as Jews in Budapest today.
- This afternoon, we discover the **Great Market Hall** and all it has to offer, from colorful product to beautiful flowers and fantastic meals to fresh fish, plus great people watching and photo opportunities. Time for lunch on own here.
- We complete our day with a visit to the local **Moishe House**, a place where young adults in their 20s come together to create a vibrant Jewish community. We meet some of the residents and learn about the programs they host for their peers.
- This evening, we set sail on a two-hour **Danube River cruise**, including **dinner** on board and a **Hungarian wine tasting** – Hungary is known for its excellent wines!

Overnight in Budapest



Day 16: Wednesday, July 8, 2020: BEAUTIFUL BUDAPEST

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day at the **Raoul Wallenberg memorial statue**, then visit the **Dohany Synagogue**, the largest synagogue in Europe.
- We continue to the **Jewish cemetery and museum**, the **Holocaust memorial** and the **Shoes on the Danube River memorial**. We also view the **suitcase memorial**, the Jewish community's answer to the new and controversial memorial installed by the Hungarian government many believe seeks to absolve the state from their involvement in WWII.
- Next, we see the beautifully restored **Rumbach Street Synagogue**, soon to be the site of a new interfaith museum focusing on battling racism and Anti-Semitism. We have a conversation with the museum leadership while here.
- This evening, we enjoy a **farewell dinner** at a local restaurant.

Overnight in Budapest

Day 17: Thursday, July 9, 2020: DEPARTURE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we transfer to the airport for our flight back to the United States, landing later today

The Memories Last Forever!!
Itinerary subject to change

