



WARSAW

Judaica



In **Warsaw**, in spite of the disasters that befell the Jewish community during World War II, you can still feel the special atmosphere of the centuries-old co-existence, which also influences the modern face of this extraordinary city.



photo from the exhibition "And I Still See Their Faces"

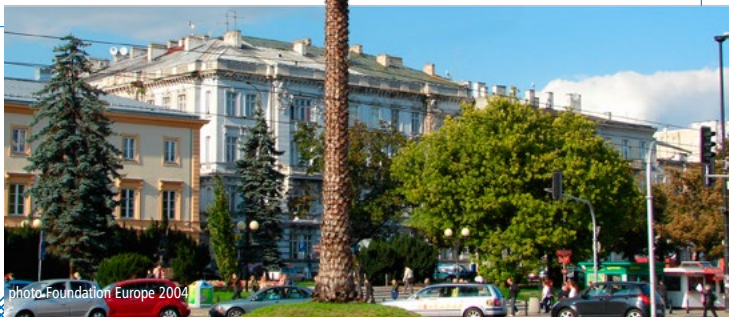
HISTORY

The first mention of the Jewish population in Warsaw dates back to the fifteenth century. Poland was then famous for its tolerance, which attracted many visitors. At first Jews settled in the Old Town, in Żydowska (Jewish) Street that does not exist today. With time, however, their growing prosperity caused that Warsaw burghers banned Jews from living within the city limits. For this reason, Jews started to settle near Warsaw – the memory of one of their settlements has survived in the name of **Aleje Jerozolimskie (Jerusalem Avenue)**.

23

Aleje Jerozolimskie (Jerusalem Avenue)

In 1774, near the present Zawiszy Square, a Jewish settlement called New Jerusalem was established – the road leading to it was called the Jerusalem Road. Warsaw authorities, recognising it as competitor in trade, liquidated it a year later, but the name has survived to this day. The installation of Joanna Rajkowska "Greetings from Jerusalem Avenue" – an artificial palm tree, similar to those that can be seen in Israeli cities, refers to the context of its creation.



Jews also settled in Praga, which was a separate city up to 1791. The royal banker Szmul Zbytkower, whose name lives on in today's district of Szmulowizna, received permission to establish a Jewish cemetery in Bródno.

Traces of the Jewish presence in Praga can also be found in the remains of a Jewish prayer house in the outer buildings at [Targowa 50/52](#).

28



**ul. Targowa 50/52 –
currently the Museum of Warsaw Praga**

A complex of three houses, one of which is the oldest brick residential building in Praga. In 1926, as many as three prayer houses were registered at this address. Traces of two of them remain in the outer buildings, which after the war served as a warehouse and a workshop. In other rooms, fragments of paintings depicting the signs of the zodiac, a drawing showing Jews praying at

the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem and a presentation of Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem have been preserved. On one wall is an inscription in Hebrew with information that the prayer house was built in 1934 with donations from the sons of Dawid Grinsztejn.

photo F. Kwiatkowski



Targowa Street, 1909, postcard / Museum of Warsaw

Targowa ul. na Pradze. — Rue Targowa à Praga.

Praga also had its synagogue. The building was demolished after the war, but the ritual bath – **mikvah** located next to it survived.



photo F. Kwiatkowski

27

Mikvah

ul. ks. Kłopotowskiego 31 (the former ul. Szeroka)

A Jewish ritual bath operated here in the nineteenth century, but the present building was built in 1911–1914. It was rebuilt after the war. It housed the offices of the Central Committee of Jews, then a kindergarten. Most of the rooms of the old bath survived.

After the third partition of Poland (1795), Prussian authorities abolished the ban on Jewish settlement in Warsaw. Jewish people were also given names. It is commonly believed that they were invented by E. T. A. Hoffmann – a German poet, composer and writer (author of the famous fairy tale entitled “The Nutcracker”), who served as city clerk. Apparently he was sent to Warsaw for a tendency to joke about his superiors, and this time his rebellious nature made itself felt. Names given by him often had a humorous connotation. Poor Jews were called, for example, Goldberg (gold mountain), or Goldstein (gold stone), or he used a series of “plant” names – Apfelbaum (apple tree), and Rosenbaum (rose tree). The names given in Warsaw at that time spread throughout the world.

The turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also marked the establishment of the Warsaw Jewish Commune and the establishment of **the Jewish Cemetery in Okopowa Street**.



10

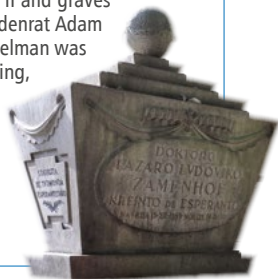
Jewish Cemetery

ul. Okopowa 49/51, tel. 22 838 26 22, warszawa.jewish.org.pl, www.sztetl.org.pl

Founded in 1806, it is one of the few currently operating Jewish cemeteries in Poland. Over 100 thousand tombstones survived here, many of high artistic value. Many prominent figures were buried at the cemetery – the creator of Esperanto, Ludwik Zamenhof, a writer Isaac Leib Peretz, an actress Esther Rachel Kamińska, and numerous rabbis and tzaddikim. There are also mass graves from World War II and graves of residents of the Warsaw Ghetto, such as leaders of the Judenrat Adam Czerniakow and Professor Majer Balaban. In 2009, Marek Edelman was buried here – the last leader of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, but also an outstanding cardiologist, social activist and oppositionist.

Opening hours:

Mon – Thu 10am – 5pm (in autumn and winter till dusk)
Fri 9am – 1 pm, Sun. 11am – 4pm



When after 1815 Warsaw was under Russian rule, the freedom of settlement was restricted again. Jews gathered around the district with the most important place in Nalewki Street. After the war, the preserved part of the street was renamed to **Bohaterów Getta Street (Ghetto Heroes Street)**.



3

Ulica Bohaterów Getta (Ghetto Heroes Street) – the former Nalewki Street

Once one of the most important streets of the Jewish Warsaw, which took its name from the river that does not exist today called Nalewka. All buildings except for the Arsenal building were destroyed, only the pre-war historic tram tracks and pavement have been preserved. Now a small housing estate street in Muranów district bears this name, but its route has nothing to do with the pre-war street of the same name.



In the second half of the nineteenth century in Warsaw, Jewish social life flourished. In the city centre a representative Jewish synagogue was established – **the Great Synagogue on Tlomackie Street**.



photo Jewish Historical Institute

2

The Great Synagogue

Built in 1875–1878. It became a symbol of Jewish Warsaw. It hosted festive celebrations on the occasion of national holidays, world-renowned cantors sang here. During the war, it was initially included in the ghetto, but in March 1942, together with the adjacent library building (the present seat of the Jewish Historical Institute), it was excluded from it and survived the outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising as a furniture warehouse. After nearly a month of fighting, General Jürgen Stroop, responsible for the suppression of resistance in the ghetto, found that the destruction of the synagogue would be the symbol of his victory. The building was blown up on May 16, 1943 at 8.15 PM, which is the symbolic date of the end of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

It does not exist any longer – its place has been occupied by the Blue Skyscraper which houses exhibition room of the Jewish Historical Institute and the headquarters of the Taube Center for the Renewal of Jewish Life in Poland.
www.centrumtaubego.org.pl

photo W. Hansen



Warsaw was home to many Jewish artists, scientists and thinkers, including Ludwik Zamenhof the creator of Esperanto. This universal language was to eliminate war on grounds of disagreements between users of different languages. Prominent writers, such as Isaac Bashevis Singer, also created here. The later Nobel literature winner lived in Krochmalna Street, which is often described in his works.

Another major figure associated with Warsaw was Janusz Korczak, M.D, a doctor, teacher and writer, author of a novel approach to children. The Old Doctor, because that was his nickname among his pupils, run [the Janusz Korczak Orphanage in Wola district](#).

12

The Janusz Korczak Orphanage (former address ul. Krochmalna 92, now ul. Jaktorowska 6) In 1912, a home for Jewish orphans, built thanks to the efforts of the “Help for Orphans” Society, started to operate here. From the beginning, it was headed by Janusz Korczak, M.D. (Henryk Goldszmit). After the creation of the ghetto, the Orphanage was moved to 33 Chłodna St., and later to 9 Śliska St. (now Świętokrzyski Park). From here, at the beginning of August 1942, the charges together with their teachers were taken to the Umschlagplatz and deported to the Treblinka death camp. In the courtyard of the orphanage there is a monument commemorating Janusz Korczak, while other monuments dedicated to him are located in Świętokrzyski Park, the Jewish Cemetery and in Marysin Wawerski.



Janusz Korczak Orphanage



Janusz Korczak Monument – Jewish Cemetery



Janusz Korczak Monument – Świętokrzyski Park

The number of Jewish pupils growing in the early twentieth century forced the establishment of a modern school building in Praga – **the Michał Bergson Education Building of the Warsaw Jewish Community**.

26

Michał Bergson Education Building of the Warsaw Jewish Community

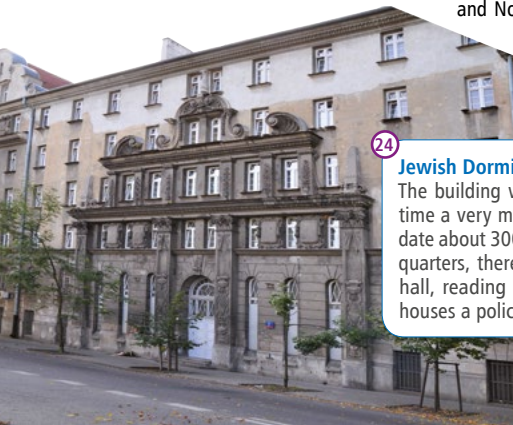
ul. Jagiellońska 28

The spectacular appearance of the building refers to the architecture of Polish Renaissance synagogues. The facade features a memorial inscription stating that the building was erected in 1911–1914. It housed a school, nursery and shelter for Jewish children. In 1940, all pupils were relocated to the Warsaw ghetto. Since 1953, the hall, which before the war was a prayer room, houses the “Baj” Puppet Theatre, and in other rooms there is a kindergarten, a health clinic and private residences.



photo J. Jagielski

Regaining independence by Poland meant the equality of Jews. A significant proportion of the Warsaw academic community were Jewish students. Menachem Begin, one of the leaders of the Zionist movement, proposing the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, studied at the University of Warsaw. During his studies, the future Prime Minister of Israel and Nobel Peace Prize winner lived in the **Dormitory in Sierakowskiego Street**.



24

Jewish Dormitory, ul. Sierakowskiego 7

The building was erected in 1926 and was at that time a very modern institution that could accommodate about 300 Jewish students. In addition to living quarters, there was also the Albert Einstein lecture hall, reading rooms and an infirmary. Currently it houses a police hotel.

In the 1930s, the Jewish population was about 30% of the city's population, actively participating in its life. Warsaw buildings were often designed by architects of Jewish origin. Among them was Edward Eber – who designed, among other things, the luxury Palladium Movie Theatre at 7/9 Żłota Street (now a club and theatre) and the Main Judaic Library – the present seat of **the Jewish Historical Institute**.



photo from the exhibition "And I Still See Their Faces"

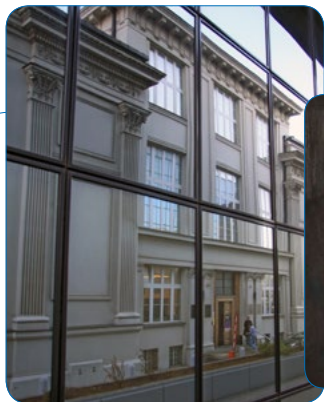


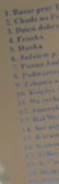
photo Jewish Historical Institute

1

The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute

ul. Tłomackie 3/5, tel. 22 827 92 21, www.jhi.pl

The building was erected in 1928–1936, in the vicinity of the Great Synagogue on Tłomackie Street. It housed the Main Judaic Library and the Institute of Jewish Studies, with scholars of the calibre of Meir Balaban, Moses Schorr, Ignacy Schiper. During the war the building was located in the ghetto. It housed the offices of the Jewish Social Self-Help. Emanuel Ringelblum who worked here founded the underground archive of the ghetto. In 1947, after restoration, the building became the seat of the Jewish Historical Institute. The rich collection of the Institute is presented in temporary exhibitions which can be visited in the company of guides. You can also make use of the archives gathered by the Institute. They include a wide range of documents related to the history of Polish Jews, in particular the times of the Second World War and postwar years. In addition to this the institute library holds over 80 thousand volumes referring to the history, culture and religion of Jews. Its book collection is considered to be the largest of its kind in Poland.



A number of Jewish newspapers were published in Yiddish, Polish and Hebrew. Active were artists like Roman Kramsztyk, whose works are exhibited in the National Museum, or sculptors – including Henryk Kuna whose sculpture “Rhythm” still decorates Skaryszewski Park. Movies were created in Polish and Yiddish, and many directors had Jewish ancestry. Samuel Goldwyn, co-founder of the Hollywood studio Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, whose branch was located at Marszałkowska Street, was from Warsaw. Composers and songwriters of Jewish origin also contributed to popular music, including songs that are extremely popular to this day. Popular artists included Arthur Gold, Henryk Wars, Władysław Szlengel, and Władysław Szpilman, whose occupation memories have become known through the Roman Polanski film “The Pianist”. Famous hits of that time are played by... **the Monument of Praga’s Backyard Orchestra located in Floriańska Street.**



photo I. Gmyrek

25

The Monument of Praga’s Backyard Orchestra ul. Kłopotowskiego, at the intersection of ul. Floriańska

The monument shows a traditional backyard band, which includes a violinist, accordionist, guitarist, banjoist and drummer. To listen to the songs played by the band, simply send a text message to 7141 with the text “KAPELA” and track number (100 titles), which are listed on the drum. Many of these works were created with the help of Jewish artists. The song “Come to Praga” (No. 2 on the list), considered the unofficial anthem of the Warsaw Praga district, was composed by Arthur Gold, and lyrics 6 and 7 wrote the poet Władysław Szlengel. Not all of them were created before the war – songs with numbers from 90 to 93 were composed by Władysław Szpilman afterwards.



photo I. Gmyrek

SUGGESTED SIGHTSEEING ITINERARIES

ROUTE 1 – approximately 3 km – 45–60 min.

Starting point: Ratusz-Arsenał metro station

- ① Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute – p. 10
- ② Great Synagogue (currently non-existent – the Blue Tower was built in its place) – p. 7
- ③ ul. Bohaterów Getta (Ghetto Heroes Street) – the former Nalewki Street – p. 6
- ④ Museum of the History of Polish Jews POLIN – p. 26
- ⑤ Monument to the Ghetto Heroes – p. 21
- ⑥ Memorial Route of the Martyrdom and Struggle of the Jews 1940–1943 – p. 18
- ⑦ Miła Street, the corner of S. Dubois Street – p. 20
- ⑧ Umschlagplatz – p. 19
- ⑨ Gęsiówka – plaque in 34 M. Anielewicza Street – p. 22
- ⑩ Jewish Cemetery in Okopowa Street – p. 5

Nearby:

- ⑪ Monument to the Memory of Jews and Poles – p. 21
- ⑫ Janusz Korczak Orphanage – p. 8

ROUTE 2 – approximately 4 km – 60–75 min.

Starting point: Metro Świętokrzyska metro station

- ⑬ ul. Próżna – p. 24
- ⑭ Charlotte Menora & Infopunkt – str. 25
- ⑮ Nożyk Synagogue – p. 23
- ⑯ White Building – ul. Twarda 6 – p. 24
- ⑰ ul. Chłodna 20 – p. 19
- ⑱ Keret House – p. 25
- ⑲ ul. Chłodna 22 – the place where the footbridge was located – p. 18
- ⑳ Waliców Street – p. 16
- ㉑ Fragment of the ghetto wall in 55 Sienna Street – p. 17

Nearby:

- ㉒ ul. Prosta 51 – Evacuation of Ghetto Fighters Monuments – p. 20
- ㉓ The Palm Tree – Aleje Jerozolimskie (Jerusalem Avenue) – p. 2

ROUTE 3 – approximately 1,5 km – 20–30 min.

Starting point: Weteranów 1863 roku Square
(bus and tram stop: Park Praski)

- 24 Former Jewish Dormitory – p. 9
- 25 Monument of Praga's Backyard Orchestra – p. 11
- 26 Former Michał Bergson Education Building of the Warsaw Jewish Community – p. 9
- 27 Mikvah – p. 4
- 28 ul. Targowa 50/52 (currently the Museum of Warsaw Praga) – p. 3

Nearby:

- 29 Villa of the director of the ZOO – p. 22

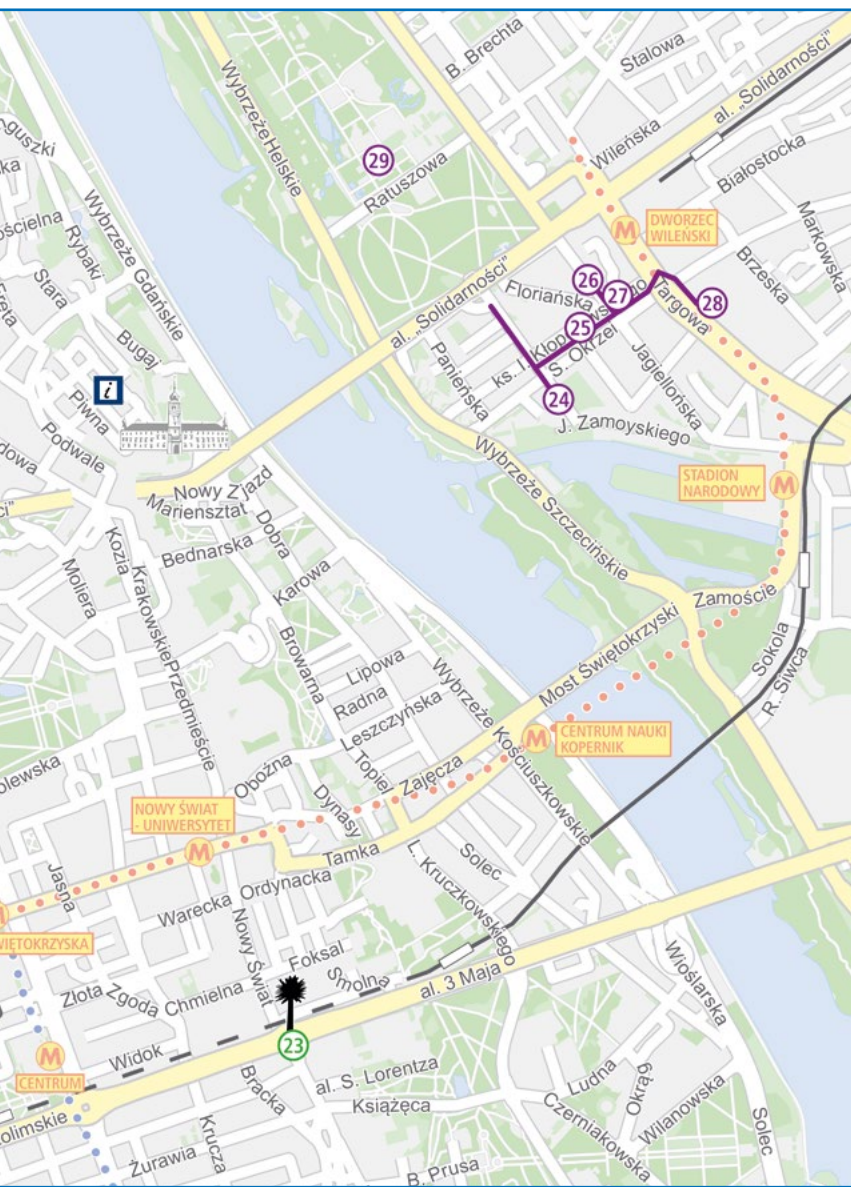
The suggested routes do not form a complete list of places to encounter Jewish culture.



Aleksander Gierymski, *Jewish Woman Selling Oranges*, ca. 1881,
photo P. Ligier / National Museum in Warsaw.

Many centuries of Jewish people's presence had an immense influence on numerous fields of life. Art is a great example. Jewish motives often inspired artists, also the ones who were not Jewish. One of them was Aleksander Gierymski, painter of life scenes from the 19th century Warsaw, including the remarkable paintings such as "The Feast of Trumpets" depicting Rosh Hashana – Jewish new year, and the recently retrieved "Jewish Woman Selling Oranges".

These paintings and many more are exhibited at the National Museum in Warsaw.



THE WAR

The outbreak of World War II marked the end of the world known so far to the Warsaw Jews. Occupation authorities ordered them to wear the Star of David, and outlined the area where they could live. In October 1940, the Germans established a ghetto and locked 350,000 people identified as Jews behind its walls. One of the preserved fragments of this barrier is located in **Walićów Street**.

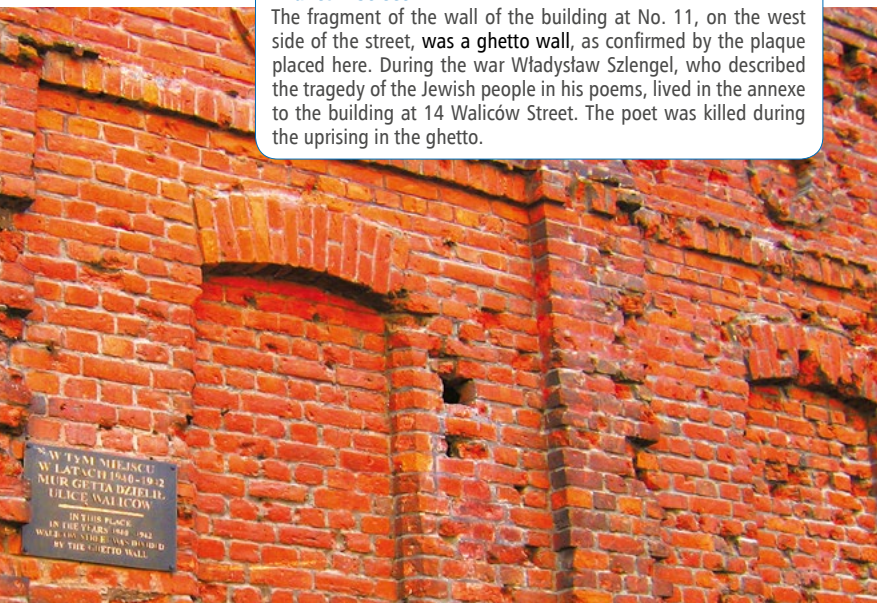


photo J. B. Deczkowski / Warsaw Rising Museum

20

Walićów Street

The fragment of the wall of the building at No. 11, on the west side of the street, was a ghetto wall, as confirmed by the plaque placed here. During the war Władysław Szlengel, who described the tragedy of the Jewish people in his poems, lived in the annexe to the building at 14 Walićów Street. The poet was killed during the uprising in the ghetto.



W TYM MIEJSCU
W LATACH 1940-1942
MUR GETTA DZIAŁAŁ
ULICZ WALIĆÓW
—
IN THIS PLACE
IN THE YEARS 1940-1942
WALL THE GETHO WAS DIVIDED
BY THE GETHO WALL

The border of the ghetto often crossed streets and squares, and even backyards – as in the case of the **fragment of the ghetto wall in 55 Sienna Street**.

21



One of the surviving fragments of the wall is located in the courtyard between Sienna and Złota Streets. (entrance from ul. Złota 62)



Other places marked by the boundaries of the ghetto are commemorated with cast iron plates set in the pavement, and special plates with maps, photos and descriptions in English and Polish were placed at 22 selected spots.



Jews crammed into the ghetto were decimated by diseases, hunger and increasing repression by the Nazis. These events are commemorated by **the Memorial Route of the Martyrdom and Struggle of the Jews 1940–1943**.

6 The Memorial Route of the Martyrdom and Struggle of the Jews 1940–1943.

The route runs from the Umschlagplatz Monument to the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes. It consists of black stone blocks with the names of those associated with the ghetto.



Jews deported from other Polish cities and Europe were also placed in the ghetto. The area of the ghetto was continuously reduced by dividing it in early 1942 into the so-called “large” and “small” ghetto. These individual parts were connected only by **a footbridge over Chłodna Street**.

19 ul. Chłodna 22 – the place where the footbridge was located

In early 1942, a wooden bridge for Jews migrating from the “small” to the “large” ghetto was built in the vicinity of this building. Under the bridge there was Chłodna Street, which was excluded from the ghetto because of its role in communication. Currently, the site features a special art installation – “A Footbridge of Memory”, which through multimedia restores the memory of those tragic events.



photo Jewish Historical Institute

On July 22, 1942, the Germans started the so-called “Great Deportation” of the Jews to the death camps. At the news, Adam Czerniakow, president of the Warsaw Jewish Community, who before his death lived in the still existing tenement house at **20 Chłodna Street**, committed suicide.



ul. Chłodna 20

17

Since autumn 1941, the whole Chłodna Street was excluded from the ghetto, but the houses on the north and south side from Elektoralna to Żelazna Streets belonged to the “small” and “large” ghetto. The preserved building in which president of the Jewish Community (Judenrat) Adam Czerniakow lived is called “Under the Clock” tenement house.



From mid-July to mid-September 1942, most of the inhabitants of the ghetto were deported to death camps. The railway sidings in Stawki Street, which the Germans euphemistically referred to as the “transfer site” – **Umschlagplatz**, were used for this purpose.

8

Umschlagplatz, ul. Stawki 10

Since July 22, 1942, transports of Jews to the Treblinka death camp departed from this square. This is commemorated by a monument with around 450 names, from Abel to Żanna, cut in one of its walls, as a symbol of the thousands of Jews trapped in the Warsaw ghetto, and next to it there is a verse from the Book of Job 16:18 “O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.”

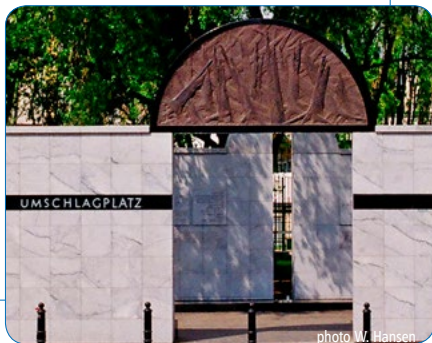


photo W. Hansen

After the deportation, tens of thousands of people remained in the ghetto, some of whom had been hiding. There was a decision on armed struggle. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising broke out on April 19, 1943. Jewish fighters were not adequately equipped or trained, but still they put up prolonged resistance. The result, however, was doomed. On May 8, 1943, the Germans discovered and surrounded the headquarters of the Jewish Combat Organisation, whose members committed suicide [in the bunker in Miła Street](#).

7

Miła Street, the corner of S. Dubois Street

– former location of the house in ul. Miła 18

The basement of the house that used to be located here served as the headquarters bunker of the Jewish Combat Organisation. It served as a shelter for more than 100 people. When it was discovered by German troops, most of the rebels staying in it, headed by the leader of the uprising Mordechai Anielewicz, committed suicide. After the war, in 1946, a mound was formed and a stone with an inscription in Polish, Yiddish and Hebrew was placed on the ruins of the house.



Some of the insurgents managed to leave the ghetto – dozens of them escaped through the sewers. This site has recently been commemorated by a monument located in [51 Prosta Street](#).

22

ul. Prosta 51

On this street there is a hatch, through which in May 1943 dozens of insurgents, including Marek Edelman – one of the leaders of the uprising, escaped from the ghetto. Right next to it there is a symbolic monument in a tube-like form resembling the descent into the sewers.

The symbolic gesture of suppression of the uprising was blowing up the Great Synagogue on May 16, 1943. The heroic resistance of the Jews against the Nazis is today commemorated by [the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes](#).

5

Monument to the Ghetto Heroes

It was unveiled on the fifth anniversary of the outbreak of the uprising on the ruins of the ghetto. The reliefs were created by Natan Rappaport. The west side of the monument, entitled "Fight", shows men, women and children holding grenades, guns and bottles of gasoline in their hands. This side of the monument symbolises the heroic uprising of insurgents, while the other side entitled "March to death" represents the suffering and martyrdom of innocent victims. Copies of these reliefs are exhibited at the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem, which deals with the study of the Holocaust. The Warsaw monument is covered with slabs of stone ordered during the war by the Germans in Sweden, as a material for monuments which were to commemorate the victory of Hitler.



After the end of the uprising, almost all the buildings in the ghetto were razed to the ground, and the entrance to the area was punished with death. Only St. Augustine church tower, converted into a warehouse, protruded from the ruins. The Germans carried out secret executions here, as evidenced by [the Monument to the Memory of Jews and Poles located in Gibalskiego Street](#).

11

Monument to the Memory of Jews and Poles, ul. Gibalskiego 21

A monument commemorating the mass graves of Poles and Jews murdered during World War II was erected in 1989.



The Germans stationed in the deserted ghetto, forcing the surviving Jews to slave labour. Some of them were liberated during the Warsaw Uprising, when on August 5, 1944, Polish troops seized **the so-called Gęsiówka concentration camp**.



9 **The so-called Gęsiówka concentration camp** – plaque in 34 M. Anielewicz Street (the former Gęsia Street)

Konzentrationslager Warschau, i.e. concentration camp called "Gęsiówka" after Gęsia Street, was established in August 1943 in the ruins of the ghetto. About 5,000 Jews from Greece, France, Hungary brought from Auschwitz-Birkenau were placed in the barracks. They worked in the ghetto, destroying burned houses, sorting bricks and non-ferrous metals. The camp was evacuated on July 29, 1944. There were only 348 prisoners,

who, during the Warsaw Uprising, were liberated by soldiers of the "Żośka" battalion. Many of them joined the Home Army and fought in the Warsaw Uprising. This is written on a granite plaque placed on the wall of a block of flats standing here today.



Deprived of aid, the Warsaw Uprising ended with a surrender on October 2, 1944. Ruined and deserted city was occupied by the Red Army on January 17, 1945. Only several Jews managed to survive until the end of the war, and the survivors owed their lives to the extraordinary support and dedication of their non-Jewish neighbours, who were threatened by the death penalty. One of the refuges for dozens of people was **the villa of the director of the ZOO**.

29 **Villa of the director of the ZOO**
ul. Ratuszowa 1/3, tel. 22 619 40 41
www.zoo.waw.pl

A modernist villa in the zoo, where during the occupation director Jan Zabinski and his wife Janina were hiding Jews. In 1965, both spouses received the title of Righteous Among the Nations.



photo Warsaw Zoological Garden

PRESENT TIME

Until 1989, communist governments cast a shadow over the Polish-Jewish relations. As a result of the anti-Jewish campaign of 1968, about 15 thousand people of Jewish origin left Poland. In sovereign Poland Warsaw is once again the centre of Jewish life, which is focused around Grzybowski Square. There is the only pre-war synagogue in the city – **the Nożyk Synagogue**.



The Nożyk Synagogue

ul. Twarda 6
www.warszawa.jewish.org.pl
 tel. 502 400 849,
 22 624 14 84,

Visiting hours:

- Mon.–Thu 9am – 40 minutes before dusk
- Fri. 9am – till dusk
- Sun 11am – 7pm admission PLN 10

The neo-Romanesque building was built in 1898–1902 on the initiative of Zalman and Rivka Nożyk. During the war the Germans converted it into stables. Despite the damage, shortly after the war it regained its original function.

In addition to church services, various cultural events such as concerts, exhibitions, and meetings are also held in the synagogue. In the vicinity of the synagogue, there is the seat of the Jewish com-

mune. It is located in the building which before the war housed, among other things, the community clinic. Due to the present colour of the building facade, it is called **the White Building – 6 Twarda Street**.

16

ul. Twarda 6

In the interwar period, the building housed a number of Jewish institutions. The interior features memorabilia of the clinic operating here – inscriptions in Polish, Hebrew and Yiddish. Documents of families living in the building until their deportation in July 1942 were also found in the building. Today it houses, among other things: the Jewish Community of Warsaw, the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage, the Association of Jewish War Veterans and Victims of World War II, the editors of the “Midrash” monthly, Prof. Moses Schorr Foundation. There is also a kosher cafeteria.



Warsaw's Jewish history is recalled by numerous cultural events, including the Festival of Jewish Culture “**Singer's Warsaw**”, which takes place on Grzybowski Sq. and in **Próżna Street**.

13

ul. Próżna

The small street is one of the few places where Jews lived before the war, in which the vibe of the old Warsaw has survived. The Jewish atmosphere of the area is evoked by the “Singer's Warsaw” festival, which is held every year in late August and early September.



Singer's Warsaw Festival. Photo Marta Kusmiercz

14

Menora InfoPunkt & Charlotte Menora, pl. Grzybowski 2

For more than a century, Grzybowski Square has been a unique meeting place for Polish and Jewish communities. The popular Jewish restaurant Menora served customers there for years. Today, Charlotte Menora, inspired by the previous restaurant,

has opened in its place and offers traditional kosher delicacies. Menora Infopunkt operates in the building, offering information about Jewish cultural events in Warsaw and thematic tours of the capital. Food connoisseurs will be interested in culinary workshops that reveal the secrets of Jewish-Polish cuisine.



photo New Order

An example of a completely new place on the map of Jewish Warsaw is the art installation and at the same time a working space for artists. This is the narrowest house in the world, whose the first tenant is an Israeli writer Etgar Keret. The house was called after him – **the Keret House**.

18

Keret House, the space between buildings in ul. Żelazna 74 and ul. Chłodna 22, www.kerethouse.com

The building built in 2012 – with the narrowest point of 92 cm, and the widest of 152 cm – fills a narrow gap between the post-war block and an old tenement house, and is now the narrowest house in the world. The interior has been designed making the maximum use of the available space. On two levels, there is everything necessary for life – bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, and a space to work. Various artists from around the world are to be invited there, the first of whom is Etgar Keret – an Israeli writer, whose family came from Warsaw. The house can be visited in a specially designated times – details on the project website.



POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews is a place that brings back the memory of the rich, thousand-year history of two peoples, the Jews and the Poles.

4

POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews

ul. M. Anielewicza 6

www.polin.pl

visiting hours: Mon, Thurs, Fri,
10.00-18.00.

Wed, Sat, Sun 10.00-20.00.

Admission: PLN 25 - PLN 15

An extraordinary museum in a unique location. A thousand years of history told in a symbolic location in the centre of Warsaw: in the pre-war district inhabited mainly by Jews, and during the war transformed by the Germans in the ghetto. The museum brings back the memory of their rich culture and heritage. Before World War II, Warsaw was for years home to the largest concentration of Jews in the world.



The museum building is an architectural jewel – an icon of modern Warsaw and a monument to its multi-coloured past. Its edifice incorporates a host of symbols and meanings. The main hall cuts through the building from the basement to the roof, symbolizing the rupture that the Holocaust caused in the history of Polish Jews. Glass panels located on the outside of the building are covered by Hebrew letters arranged in the **word “Polin” which can be translated as “rest here” or “Poland”.**



photo A. Łogus / City of Warsaw

The **mezuzah** placed next to the entrance is made from half bricks excavated from the foundations of the demolished tenement house that once stood on the corner of Nalewki and the now non-existent Gęsia streets. In Judaism, a mezuzah has a symbolic, historical and religious value. It is a container that protects a rolled up parchment – known in Hebrew as a klaf – with two fragments of the Torah. It is mounted on door frames in Jewish homes.



photo M. Starowiejska

The Main Exhibition comprises eight multimedia galleries depicting the chapters of the thousand-year history of Polish Jews. From the first settlement in the Middle Ages, through the stormy events of past centuries and the Holocaust, to the rebirth of the Jewish community after 1989. This fascinating history introduces visitors to antique objects, paintings, interactive installations, reconstructions and video projections. **The biggest attraction of the exhibition is the reconstruction of the painted ceiling of the wooden synagogue in Gwoździec.**

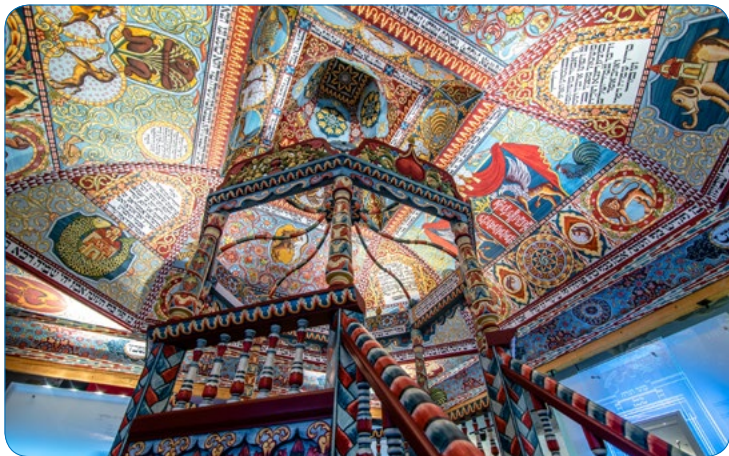


photo Warsaw Tourism Organization

In Warsaw, Jewish holidays – Pesach, Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah or Hanukkah – are celebrated as in the past. They are often accompanied by numerous cultural events addressed also to non-Jewish people. Warsaw is slowly regaining the awareness of its unusual history of many centuries' neighbourhood, which has an increasing influence on today's image of this unique city.



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official tourist website of Warsaw
[**www.warsawtour.pl/en**](http://www.warsawtour.pl/en)

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Cover photos:
top – POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews / M. Starowieyska
bottom left – POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews / F. Kwiatkowski
bottom right – Jewish Cemetery in Okopowa Street / Warsaw Tourist Office

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