

The fabulous story of the **Warsaw Mermaid**







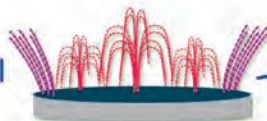
Mermaid Statue
in
the Old Town Square



Mermaid Statue
on the bank
of the Vistula River



Royal Castle
and
King Zygmunt III
Waza Column



Multimedia
Fountain Park



Copernicus
Science
Centre



Fryderyk Chopin
Museum



Palace
of Culture
and Science



PGE Narodowy
Stadium



Warsaw
ZOO



Pedestrian
and bicycle
footbridge



Presidential
Palace

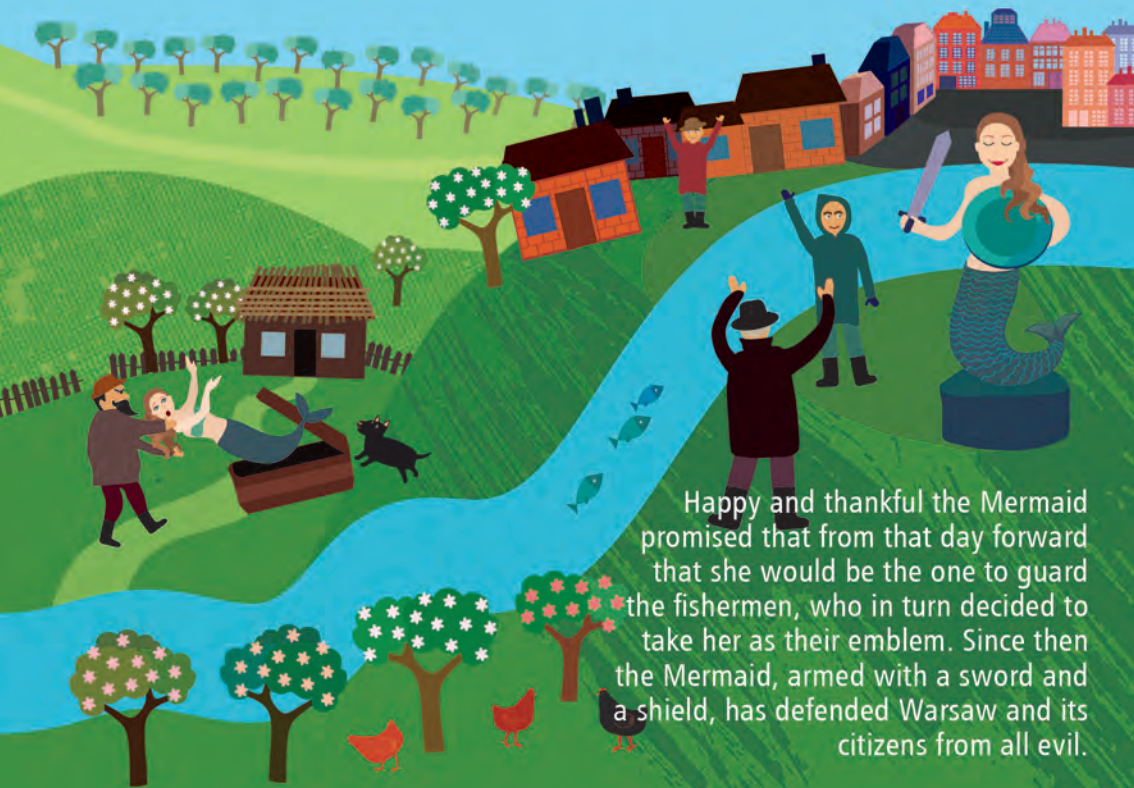


Tomb
of the Unknown
Soldier



Once upon a time,
when Warsaw was just a tiny
fishing village, seas and rivers were
inhabited by mermaids. One day, one of
these mermaids set off on a journey down
the Vistula river from the Baltic Sea. As she
swam, she admired the views and when she
got tired she decided to rest on a sandy
shore by what today is Warsaw's Old
Town. She looked around and exclaimed
in joy: "Such a pretty place, isn't it? Why
shouldn't I settle down here?" And so she
settled, bathing by the Vistula by day, and
hiding in the depths at night. Some time
later, the fishermen started to wonder: "Who
tangles our nets? Who stirs the water? Who
takes our fish out? We need to deal with this
pest!".

The Mermaid didn't feel any fear; she simply started singing a song about the Vistula. Her voice attracted all kinds of animals: beavers stuck their noses out of their burrows and cormorants sat on logs of wood. Even the fishermen were moved so much that they abandoned their plans and swore never to hurt the Mermaid. They promised instead to guard and protect her. However, there was a rich merchant who kidnapped the Mermaid and imprisoned her in a wooden chest. A young fisherman's son heard her cries and freed her together with his comrades.



Happy and thankful the Mermaid promised that from that day forward that she would be the one to guard the fishermen, who in turn decided to take her as their emblem. Since then the Mermaid, armed with a sword and a shield, has defended Warsaw and its citizens from all evil.

From a dragon to a mermaid – The Warsaw badge's history



The Mermaid has been the badge of Warsaw for a long time, but she didn't always look as she does today. The oldest images come from the 14th century city's seal, where she was presented as a winged man with a birdlike tail and two paws. On some ancient drawings one can also see that her belly was covered with scales. Later, the Mermaid was shown as a woman with dragon's wings and flippers instead of legs. Then she looked more like a dragon than a curvy half-woman, half-fish! She only changed into a beautiful girl in the 18th century, and she got her current appearance in the times of your grandparents. Today she is painted on a red background, carrying a sword and a shield. Look around carefully, as Mermaids can be spotted all over Warsaw: on the walls, street lamps, stained glass windows and sign boards.



WARSZAWA

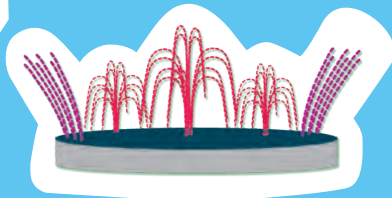
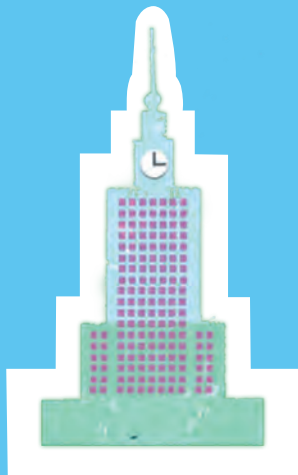
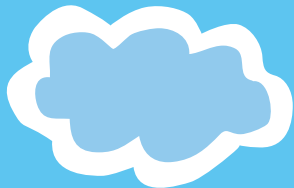




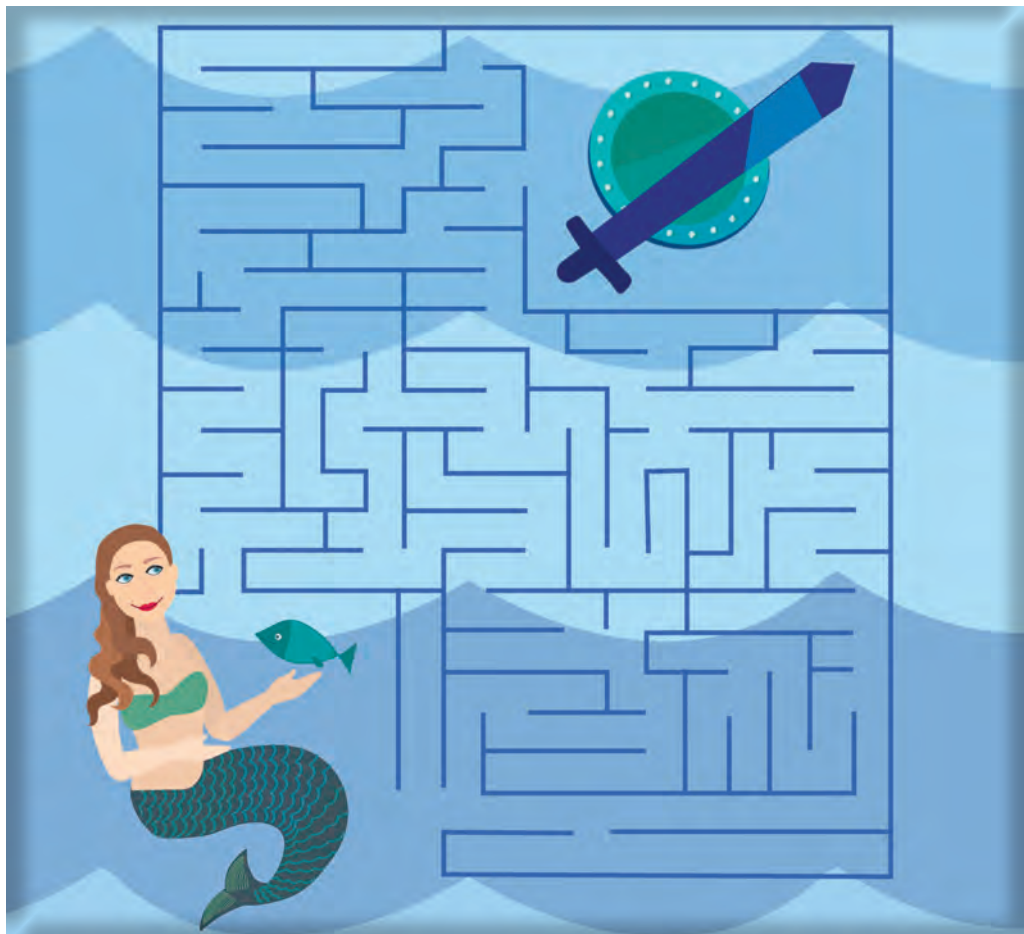
Find 10 differences



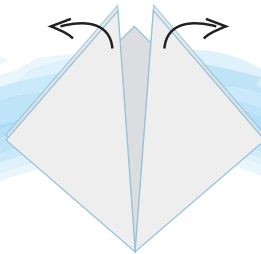
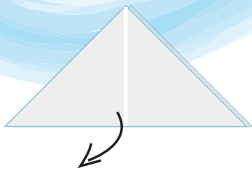
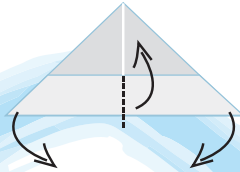
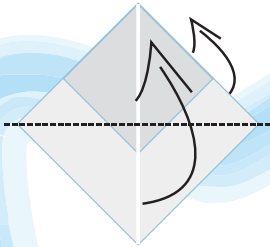
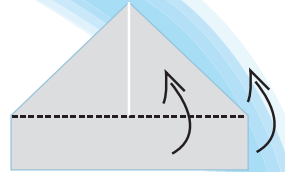
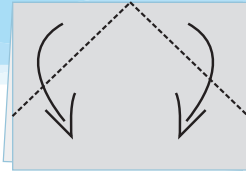
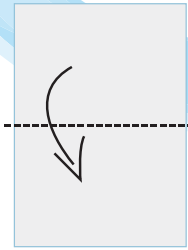


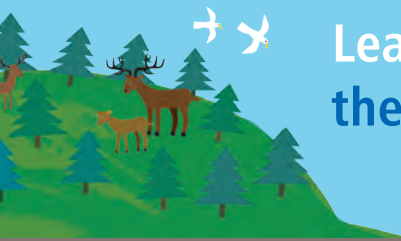


Help the Mermaid to find the shield and sword



Make a paper boat





Learn more about the Vistula



The **V**istula is a clean river and therefore home to many species of fish. In summer, one can meet anglers who sometimes catch really big fish! Among them are catfish, zanders, asps and even burbot.



Shoals look like sandy islands and can be spotted when the water level is low. These islands can sometimes move! Grass and even trees grow there. In such a case a shoal becomes a holm – a very typical part of our river landscape!

The riverside flora is very rich and diverse. Many rare species of grass, flowers and trees grow here and make up dense riparian forests on the river banks. Sometimes they look like a real jungle and form an impassable thicket.



Usually it is difficult to see wild animals in big cities, but in Warsaw it is possible! The riverside is home to many mammals: otters, beavers, hedgehogs, muskrats and martens. One can even come across roe deer, boars and elks!



Lots of birds also live here. The thicket growing along the banks is an ideal place for seagulls, terns, kingfishers, woodpeckers, swans and herons.

And these are the features which make the Vistula so special!





COPERNICUS SCIENCE CENTRE

The Copernicus Science Centre is a real paradise for explorers and the realm of experiments. You can conduct fascinating experiments on your own, lie on a Fakir's bed of nails, or check your temperature with a thermal imaging camera. Hundreds of interactive exhibits help you understand the secrets of science and nature. It is also worth going up to the roof from where there is a beautiful view. More: www.kopernik.org.pl



→ The Vistula district is cool

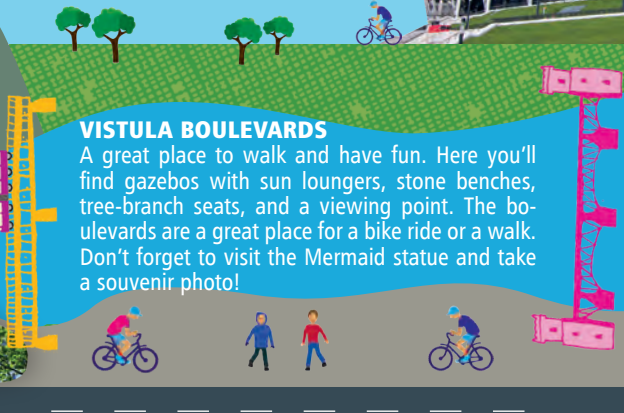
PGE NARODOWY STADIUM

resembles an unusual red and white basket. Important football matches are played here and interesting events such as concerts are also held. Places where usually only footballers go can be visited with a guide. More: www.pgenarodowy.pl



VISTULA BOULEVARDS

A great place to walk and have fun. Here you'll find gazebos with sun loungers, stone benches, tree-branch seats, and a viewing point. The boulevards are a great place for a bike ride or a walk. Don't forget to visit the Mermaid statue and take a souvenir photo!



MULTIMEDIA FOUNTAIN PARK – Throughout the summer, the Multimedia Fountain Park is an attraction both for Varsovians and tourists. On Fridays and Saturdays, just after dark, the extraordinary 'water, light and sound' show starts: lasers, coloured lights, music and animations create a dazzling spectacle. You can also splash around to your heart's content in the water playground on hot days. More: www.estrada.com.pl



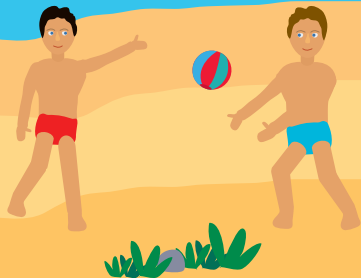
The Vistula district is cool

CRUISES ON THE VISTULA – are a great way to discover the river's beauty and to look at Warsaw from a completely different angle. In summer, the choice is vast – from traditional flat-bottomed boats, to a historic ship, or comfortable catamarans and gondolas. For adrenaline fans there are motorboats and yachts, and for more sedate trips – mobile kayak rentals. Take binoculars – you will definitely be able to spot rare species of birds! More: go2warsaw.pl/en/cruises-on-the-vistula



FERRY CROSSINGS – during the summer season these are the best way to get to the beaches of the Praga district. There are five ferry crossings in Warsaw – Pożamcze-ZOO, Poniatowski Bridge-Poniatówka Beach, Czerniakowski-Saska Kępa, and two on the outskirts of the city: Łomianki-Nowodwory and Wilanów-Wawer. The crossings are free and you can take a bicycle on board.

A TRIP ON THE SHIP 'ZEFIR' – is a great idea for a lazy, all-day cruise to Serock. The ship sails at weekends and takes more than 100 passengers. You can buy grilled food and drinks on board. In Serock, there is a two-hour break on the picturesque Zegrze Reservoir during which you can sunbathe, walk along the shoreline or explore the charming town. More: www.wtp.waw.pl.



BEACHES – Warsaw can boast real sandy beaches. It's the perfect place for a family picnic and to laze away warm days on a sun lounger. On the beach called Poniatówka you can also play volleyball and go wild in the playground. For the peckish, numerous bars await that resound with music in the evening and become a venue for cultural events.



Do you know that...?

The Vistula is **the longest river** in Poland. It begins at Barania Mountain in the Silesian Beskids and runs into the Baltic Sea.

The **river's depth** depends on weather and season. Sometimes the water reaches as high as a human's knees, sometimes it is so deep that it could cover a whole house!



Fat Kate – this is a green tower which stands in the river and serves as a well and water pump. The special ship which goes around it is called **Skinny Adalbert** and its role is to loosen the river bottom.



On the Warsaw stretch of the Vistula there are nine road **bridges** used by cars and bicycles, one railway bridge, and a modern bridge designed solely for pedestrians and cyclists.

There are two **river ports** in Warsaw – Czerniakowski Port and Żerań Port. Barges, catamarans and traditional Vistula boats are moored there that provide cruises as part of the capital's passenger shipping service. At Port Praski, which is currently undergoing thorough reconstruction, is the River Police Station, where police and City Guard boats are stationed.

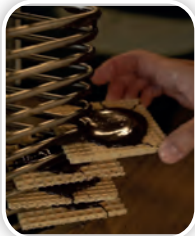




Other things to do in Warsaw

The Museum of Dollhouses, Games and Toys

Travel back in time to your childhood and discover over 120 restored houses, shops and rooms for dolls from various countries and eras. See how interiors, furniture and fashion have changed. The exhibits you will find here include a blue Moomin House, a Victorian cottage, and Noah's Ark. More: www.muzeumdomkow.pl



E.Wedel Chocolate Factory

Do you know where cocoa comes from and how your favourite chocolate is made? At the E.Wedel Chocolate Factory, you will find out about the whole production process – from cocoa beans to finished bars. At the interactive exhibition, you can try different types of chocolate and see a chocolate model of Kamionek, the neighbourhood the factory is located in. A sweet adventure guaranteed! More: fabrykaczekolady.pl

Warsaw Zoological Garden

Warsaw Zoo features 12,000 animals of 500 species in 40 hectares of nature! Spend the day with bears, giraffes and chimpanzees. See seals and hippos being fed and visit the terrarium and shark aquarium. It's the ideal place for the whole family to relax, and full of exotic adventures! More: zoo.waw.pl



Smart Kids Planet

Have a great adventure at Smart Kids Planet at Norblin Factory (Fabryka Norblina)! In nine themed zones, you can play at being a courier, a shop assistant or a customer. A building site, a pitch with obstacles for dribbling round, and many more attractions await you. Learning through play is guaranteed! More: smartkidsplanet.pl





**Warsaw
Tourism
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