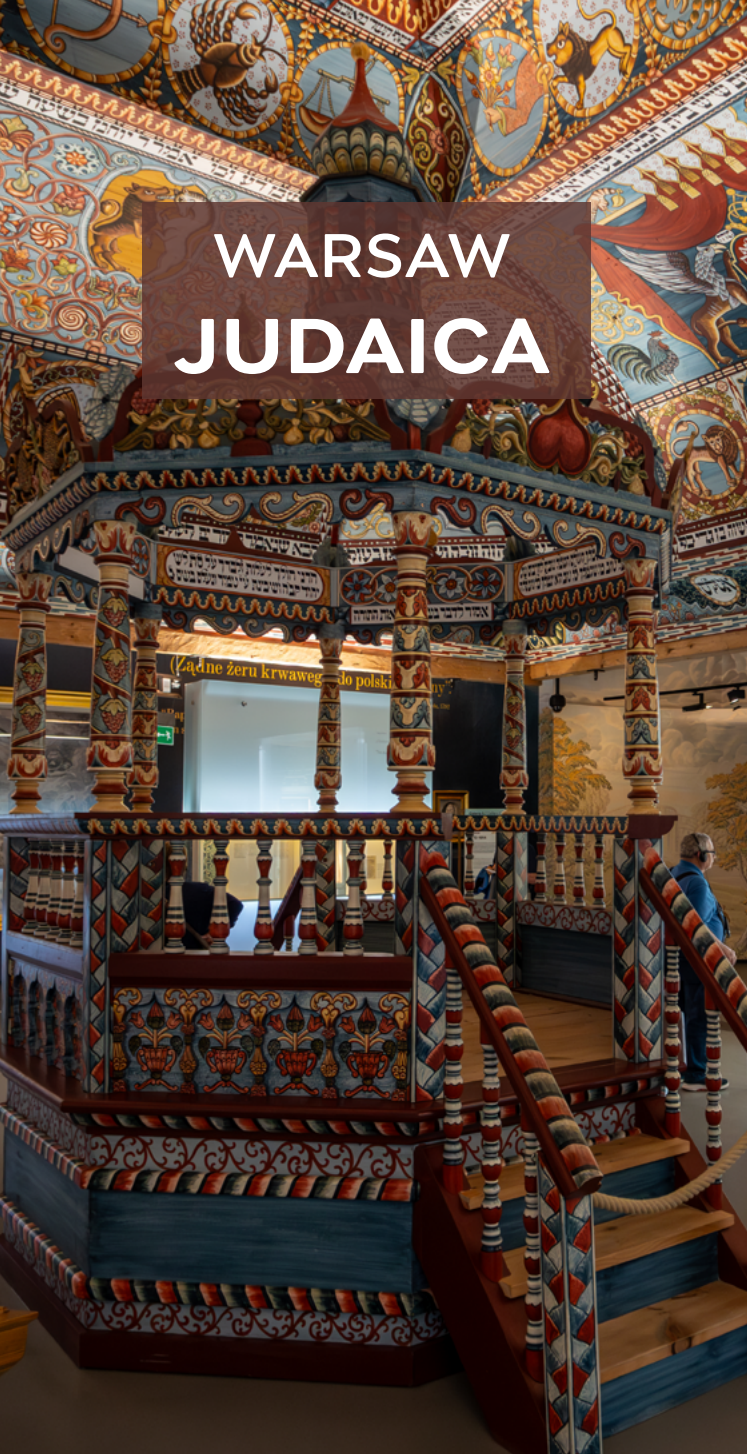


WARSAW JUDAICA



Warsaw

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Did you know that before World War II, Warsaw was one of the largest centres of Jewish culture in Europe? Connections with Jewish tradition were visible at every step, from everyday life to architecture, art and literature. This colourful world was almost completely destroyed during World War II. The Germans separated out the Jewish community of several hundred thousand from other Varsovians and locked them in the Ghetto, later sending them to extermination camps. They destroyed numerous Warsaw synagogues and houses of prayer and completely demolished the pre-war Jewish quarter. Discover traces of the heroic Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, see the few surviving monuments of Jewish culture, and if you want to learn about the history of the centuries-old presence of Jews in Poland, visit the POLIN Museum. At the end of every summer, you can feel the spirit of Jewish Warsaw during the Singer's Warsaw Festival.

POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews (Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich POLIN)

This interactive museum cultivates memory of the rich, 1,000-year history of Polish Jews, from the Middle Ages to the present day. Take note of the unique architecture of the main hall, the shape of which resembles a ravine, symbolising the Jews' passage through the Red Sea on their way to the Promised Land. Stop under the reconstructed vaulted roof of the replicated 17th-century Gwoździec synagogue to admire an example of the painting in Poland's wooden synagogues. Stroll through the streets of the pre-war Jewish quarter.

• ul. Anielewicza 6, www.polin.pl



Jewish Historical Institute (Żydowski Instytut Historyczny)

Before the war, this historic building housed the Main Judaic Library and the Institute for Judaic Studies. During the war, Jewish Social Self-Help offices were located here. In 1947, following its reconstruction, the building became the headquarters of the Jewish Historical Institute. See the priceless documents of the underground Warsaw Ghetto 'Ringelblum Archive' stored here, which appear on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. If you have never been to a Jewish synagogue before, visit the second of the permanent exhibitions. There



re you can see traditional synagogue furnishings. Right next door, on the site of the neighbouring skyscraper, stood the Great Synagogue on Tłomackie—its blowing up on May 16, 1943, was the symbolic date of the end of the Ghetto Uprising.

• ul. Tłomackie 3/5, www.jhi.pl

Grzybowski Square and Prózna Street (Plac Grzybowski i ulica Prózna)



For many years, this area formed the focal point of life for Warsaw's Jewish community. It was famed for its numerous small ironmongers. In November 1940, Grzybowski Square became part of the Warsaw Ghetto.

Próżna, a small side-street leading off the square, is one of the few places where the atmosphere of the bygone Jewish Warsaw has been preserved. The area's ambience is evoked by the 'Singer's Warsaw' Jewish Culture Festival held here every year at the end of August and start of September. You can then listen to traditional klezmer music, see theatrical performances, and take part in dance, ceramics or kosher cuisine workshops. If you want to hear the Yiddish language, attend a production at the Jewish Theatre (www.teatr-zydowski.art.pl), one of two in Europe that perform in this language. The repertoire includes classics of Yiddish literature, Jewish-themed art, and cabaret shows.

Nożyk Synagogue (Synagoga Nożyków)

Visit the only synagogue in the capital that survived the Holocaust. It was founded by Zalman ben Menashe Nożyk, a wealthy textile merchant, and his wife Rywka. The Nożyk Synagogue was built in the Neo-Romanesque style. During World War II, the building was used by the Germans as a stable and feed storage depot. Despite being damaged, after



the war it regained its original function. Currently, it is the main synagogue of the Jewish Community in Warsaw and houses the Chief Rabbi of Poland's office. In addition to daily services, it also hosts exhibitions and concerts, including a concert of cantors as part of the Singer's Warsaw Festival of Jewish Culture.

• ul. Twarda 6, warszawa.jewish.org.pl

Monument to the Ghetto Heroes

(Pomnik Bohaterów Getta)



The monument was unveiled on April 19, 1948, on the fifth anniversary of the outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in the place where the first fighting took place. The creator of the bas-reliefs is a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Nathan Rapoport. The western flank of the monument, entitled 'Fight', symbolises the heroic uprising of the

insurgents, while the other side, entitled 'March to Extermination', is a reference to the suffering and martyrdom of innocent victims. The Warsaw monument is covered with stone slabs ordered during World War II by the Germans in Sweden as material for monuments planned to commemorate Hitler's victories. It was at this monument in 1970 that the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Willy Brandt, knelt to apologise for the crimes committed by the Third Reich. This fact is commemorated by another monument located next to the museum on the Lewartowski Street side.

• [plac Bohaterów Getta Warszawskiego](#)

Memorial Route of Jewish Martyrdom and Struggle (Trakt Pamięci Męczeństwa i Walki Żydów)

The route is formed by 22 commemorative stones honouring events and figures of the Warsaw Ghetto. It leads from the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes, along Zamenhofa, Dubois and Stawki streets, all the way to the Umschlagplatz Monument.



Anielewicz Bunker

(Bunkier Anielewicza)



The basement of the house that once stood here was where the headquarters and secret bunker of the Jewish Combat Organisation was located. More than 100 people hid in it. When it was discovered by German troops, most of the insurgents sheltering in it, led by the uprising's commander, Mordechai Anielewicz, committed suicide. After the war, in 1946, a mound was built on the ruins of the house and a commemorative stone bearing an inscription in Polish, Yiddish and Hebrew was laid on it.

• [ul. Miła, corner of ul. S. Dubois—at the site of the house at Miła 18](#)

Umschlagplatz Monument

(Pomnik Umschlagplatz)



The Umschlagplatz Monument (from the German for ‘trans-shipment yard’) is located at the site of a former railway ramp from where, in 1942, transports of Jews departed for the Treblinka extermination camp.

Its shape resembles the walls of the Ghetto and a railway carriage, and over four hundred names are engraved on the inner walls as a symbol of thousands of Jews—victims of the Holocaust. Every year, on July 22, the March of Remembrance that sets off from here commemorates the victims of the ‘Great Liquidation Action’.

• [ul. Stawki 10](#)

Jewish Cemetery

(Cmentarz Żydowski)

The cemetery is one of the world’s largest Jewish necropolises, full of matzevot—characteristic tombstones in the shape of rectangular slabs. Many outstanding people are buried here, including the creator of the Esperanto language, Ludwik Zamenhof, and Icchok Lejb Perec (Isaac Leib Peretz), who is buried in the Mausoleum of Three Writers with two other creators, as well as Marek Edelman, the last leader of the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto. Be sure to visit the symbolic grave of the outstanding pedagogue Janusz Korczak, who died together with the children in his care in the Treblinka extermination camp during World War II.



• [ul. Okopowa 49/51](#), warszawa.jewish.org.pl

Monument of Jews’ and Poles’ Common Martyrdom (Pomnik Wspólnego Męczeństwa Żydów i Polaków)

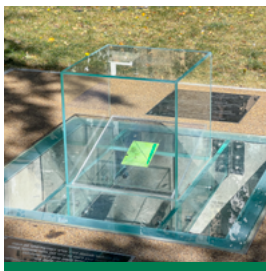
This is the only monument in the world erected on a common mass grave of Jews and Poles. It covers the remains of about 300 people shot here. Discovered in 1988, they were solemnly buried with the participation of 21 rabbis and Catholic clergy from around the world. It is located at the site of a pre-war sports club, which during the war



was the scene of mass executions. In the years 1940–43, a total of about 7,000 people were murdered here. During ceremonies, a gas flame burns atop the obelisk.

• [ul. Gibalskiego 21](#)

'Ringelblum Archive' Commemoration Monument (Pomnik „Archiwum Ringelbluma”)



The monument is located on the site of the discovery of the underground Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto—one of the most important testimonies to the extermination of Polish Jews. Compiled by historian Emanuel Ringelblum and the secret organisation Oneg Shabbat, it is made up of tens of thousands of documents. Letters, reports, diaries, posters, drawings,

and even sweet wrappers hidden in metal boxes and milk churns were buried in the basement of the house that once stood here. The archive has been entered on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register and is kept at Warsaw's Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute.

• [Square at ul. Nowolipki 28-30](#)

Memory Footbridge (Kładka Pamięci)

You will probably not notice it during the day since the wooden bridge erected here in 1942 no longer exists. Until the start of the deportation operation, the bridge connected two parts of the ghetto. The footbridge appears in the evening, recalling the tragic times

of World War II, when it was the only place from which ghetto inhabitants could glance at life being lived in the occupied but still slightly freer Warsaw.

• [ul. Chłodna at the crossroads with ul. Żelazna](#)



Memorial to the Evacuation of the Warsaw Ghetto Fighters (Pomnik Ewakuacji Bojowników Getta Warszawskiego)



There is a sewer access hatch here to the canal through which dozens of insurgents escaped from the ghetto in May 1943. Among them was Marek Edelman—one of the leaders of the Ghetto Uprising. Directly adjacent is a symbolic monument in the shape of a pipe resembling the descent into a sewer.

• [ul. Prosta 51](#)

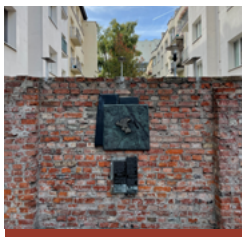
Ghetto walls

(Mury getta)

Among other locations, preserved fragments of the ghetto wall can be seen between Sienna and Żłota Streets and on Waliców Street at No. 11. Right next door, at the [MIPOLIN MEZUZAH CENTER](#) (ul. Żłota 62), you can see and



learn the history of 170 mezuzahs – pieces of parchment inscribed with verses from the Torah – and a unique collection of Judaica. While walking around the city centre, look out for information boards with maps and photos, as well as cast-iron markers embedded in the pavement indicating the boundaries of the former ghetto. If you see the marker turned upside down, it



means you are standing on its former territory.

- ul. Sienna 55, entrance from ul. Żłota 62
- ul. Waliców 11

Stare Nalewki Street

(Ulica Stare Nalewki)

This was once one of the most important streets of Jewish Warsaw, which took its name from a no longer existent river—the Nalewka. All buildings apart from the Royal Arsenal building were destroyed, but the pre-war tram tracks and historic pavement have survived.



Fragments of polychrome at the Praga Museum of Warsaw (Fragmenty polichromii w Muzeum Warszawskiej Pragi)



One of the two preserved remains of original Jewish wall paintings in Mazovia. They are located in the halls of one of the former private prayer houses. The decorations depict Jews praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, Rachel's tomb in Bethlehem, and the signs of the zodiac in the Hebrew calendar. Interestingly, you can see the figures of people on them, which was forbidden by Jewish law. Discovered at the end of the 20th century, they are a testimony to the religious life of Warsaw Jews.

- ul. Targowa 50/51, www.muzeumpragi.pl

Mikvah (Mykwa)

The only preserved ritual Jewish bath in Warsaw, it existed at this location as early as in the 19th century, but the current building was erected only in 1911–1914. After the war, it was rebuilt. It was home to the Central Committee of Jews, and later a kindergarten. Most of the rooms of the former bathhouse have been preserved. The building currently houses a high school. The mikvah building was adjacent to the synagogue, which has not survived to the present day.

• ul. ks. Kłopotowskiego 31 (formerly ul. Szeroka)



Educational Establishment of the Jewish Community of Warsaw (Gmach Wychowawczy Warszawskiej Gminy Starozakonnych)

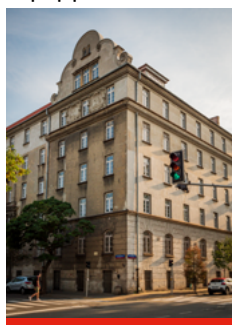
One of the most interesting monuments of Old Praga, with extraordinary architecture and decorations characteristic of the former synagogues of the Republic of Poland. It was built in 1911–1914 on the initiative of the president of the Warsaw Jewish community, Michał Bergson. It housed three four-grade schools, a care centre and a kindergarten, as well as a large house of prayer, which was accessed by a separate entrance directly from the street. During the war, the Wehrmacht and later the Red Army were stationed here. Since 1953, it has been the seat of the 'Baj' Theatre—the oldest children's puppet theatre in Poland.

• ul. Jagiellońska 28



Jewish Academic House (Żydowski Dom Akademicki)

Built in 1926, it impresses with its magnificent façade decorated with exquisite bas-reliefs. For its time, it was an extremely modern building with 147 mostly single rooms equipped with washbasins, showers and toilets, as well as other facilities including a gym, reading room, library, games rooms, a sick room with a doctor's office, a hairdresser's, a radio studio and an impressive lecture hall. Its most famous tenant was a student at the University of Warsaw, Menachem Begin, later Prime Minister of Israel and a Nobel Peace Prize winner. The building has changed its function many times throughout its history. During the German occupation, it served as a hospital, and later as an



outpost of the Russian NKVD, the seat of the Provincial Security Office, the halls of residence of the Higher School of Officers, and a police hotel.

- [ul. Sierakowskiego 7](#)

Żabiński Villa (Willa Żabińskich)

The house is located in the grounds of Warsaw Zoo. During World War II, the director of the zoological gardens—Jan Żabiński, and his wife Antonina—hid here Jews who had



managed to escape from the Warsaw Ghetto. Their fate is depicted in the Hollywood film 'The Zookeeper's Wife' starring Jessica Chastain as Antonina Żabińska. In 1965, the couple were awarded the distinction of Righteous Among the Nations.

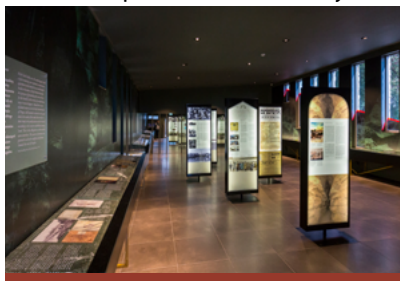
- [ul. Ratuszowa 1/3,](#)
www.zoo.waw.pl

Bródno Jewish Cemetery (Cmentarz Żydowski na Bródnie)

The oldest and largest Jewish necropolis in Warsaw, founded in 1780. Poor Jews from Warsaw's Praga district were buried here. It is entered through a monumental gate with bas-reliefs depicting Praga Jews. Destroyed during the First and Second World Wars, it was closed by the Germans in 1941 and many of the tombstones were taken by the occupiers to be used as building materials. After the war, this practice was continued by the communist authorities.



If you want to learn more about the moving fate of this place, visit the exhibition 'Beit almin—eternal home', located in the pavilion by the entrance. Walk through the central avenue, see the tombstone lapidary and find the burial place of Shmul Zbytkower—founder of the



cemetery and banker to King Stanisław August Poniatowski—and Abraham Stern, the constructor of the arithmometer—one of the first calculating machines.

- [ul. Wincentego 15,](#)
warszawa.jewish.org.pl



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