

During the harrowing Partition period, Cathedral Island became the site of Polish patriotic manifestations and social campaigns. A prime example of the latter was the drive to construct the Golden Chapel to serve as a mausoleum to Poland's original rulers.

World War II brought unprecedented devastation upon Cathedral Island. The Cathedral's reconstruction continued until as late as 1956. A decade later, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński and the then Archbishop Karol Wojtyła celebrated the millennium anniversary of the adoption of Christianity by Poland at this very site. Karol Wojtyła returned to Cathedral Island in 1983 as Pope John Paul II.

1 SAINT PETER AND PAUL ARCHCATHEDRAL BASILICA

Erected more than a millennium ago soon after Poland adopted Christianity, the Poznań shrine is Poland's first Cathedral. Its construction was commenced by the country's first Christian ruler Mieszko I together with Poland's first bishop Jordan. The name of Saint Peter (later supplemented with that of Saint Paul, Poznań's other patron saint), underlined the significance of the country's new links with the Holy See and Poland's entry into the inner circle of Latin culture.

The Cathedral became a burial site of Poland's first rulers. It holds the remains of three kings and five dukes of Poland's oldest Piast dynasty, starting with Mieszko I and Bolesław the Brave.

The memory of royal burials was kept alive in the centuries that followed. In the 14th century, King Casimir the Great funded a magnificent tomb to his eminent ancestor Bolesław the Brave. In the 19th century, in a display of remembrance of the origins of the Polish state, the public collectively financed the construction of the Golden Chapel to serve as a mausoleum of the original Piast rulers and a symbol of identity that would help sustain the stateless nation.

Today's Cathedral emerged during its post-World-War-II reconstruction which restored its Gothic form. Some of the most remarkable items in its interior include the Golden Chapel, the Holy Sacrament Chapel with its magnificent Renaissance tomb of the Górka family, bronze tombstones from the Vischers' workshop in Nuremberg and the Gothic main altar. The cellars hold relics of the original Cathedral, the tombs of Mieszko I and Bolesław the Brave and the Baptistery, the presumed site of the 966 christening.



Presumed appearance of Cathedral Island and the Gothic Cathedral in the 16th century.

Archdiocese Museum

ul. J. Lubrańskiego 1, 61-108 Poznań

tel. +48 61 852 61 95

www.muzeum.poznan.pl, muzeum@archpoznan.pl

Opening hours: Tuesday through Friday: 10am–5pm, Saturday: 9am–3pm

Closed on Sundays, Mondays and holidays

Admission until one half hour before closing time

Admission at a charge

THE ROYAL-IMPERIAL ROUTE IN POZNAŃ

The Royal-Imperial Route is a tourist and cultural proposition for those fascinated with the uniqueness of this part of Europe. It is an exciting attempt to interpret the history of the city of Poznań within the context of European history. The Royal-Imperial Route is a quality tourist product that links important places and historic monuments. It runs through the most significant historical areas of the city demonstrating its spatial and cultural development. The route focuses on the most attractive features of Poznań that emphasize the city's position on the cultural map of Europe.

The Royal-Imperial Route is an exciting "journey", full of dramatic turns, through the history of the city, Poland and Europe.

Published by

TRAKT Center for Cultural Tourism

ul. Zagórze 6A

61-112 Poznań

tel. +48 61 279 70 20

e-mail: centrum@trakt.poznan.pl

www.poznan.pl/trakt, www.trakt.poznan.pl

Written by Anna Maciejewska, Bartosz Małolepszy

Translation Krzysztof Kotkowski

Expert consultation Janusz Pazder

Images Piotr Walichnowski

Photographs Łukasz Zandecki (cover), Anna Jabłońska (x2),

Zbigniew Szmidt (x2)

Map Pietruska & Mierkiewicz Wydawnictwo i Bank Geoinformacji Sp. z o.o.

Graphical design Joanna Pakuła

Publisher Wydawnictwo Miejskie

ul. F. Ratajczaka 44, 61-728 Poznań

tel. +48 61 851 86 01, www.wm.poznan.pl



The Royal-Imperial
Route in Poznań

www.poznan.pl

POZnań*

* Eastern energy, Western style



The Royal-Imperial
Route in Poznań



Cathedral Island in Poznań



THE HISTORY OF CATHEDRAL ISLAND

Surrounded by the floodwaters of the Warta and Cybina Rivers, Cathedral Island offered a defensive advantage and shelter to migrant tribes as early as the 9th century. It is there that, as legend has it, the brothers Lech, Czech and Rus reunited after long-time separation and established the town of Poznań (from Polish *poznać* – to recognize) to commemorate the occasion.

Cathedral Island's location along a waterway and a land route helped the town grow to become a mainstay of the Piast Dynasty. In the mid-10th century, Duke Mieszko I had the settlement encircled by powerful battlements. The Ruler's castle was then erected at its west end. His wife, the Bohemian duchess Dobrawa, who arrived there in 965, spread the Christian faith throughout Poland. She had the settlement's first chapel built in the town castle.

It is on Cathedral Island that Mieszko I is believed to have been christened in 966. Two years later, the region became Poland's first bishopric with a new Cathedral erected for its purposes. It would long serve as the burial site for Piast rulers, which demonstrates its significance.

The period of Cathedral Island's magnificence ended abruptly with the 1039 raid by the Bohemian Duke Bretislav. The attack brought immense destruction upon Wielkopolska towns prompting the decision to move the country's power center to Cracow. Once restored, Poznań became the seat of district dukes who ruled over Wielkopolska. In 1253, the heart of the city shifted to the left bank of the Warta while Cathedral Island continued as an ecclesiastical power hub.

Throughout its history, Cathedral Island has served as a major cultural and scholarly center. It benefited from having a Cathedral school and a thriving music scene. Local patrons of arts commissioned top European artists to produce magnificent masterpieces. The heyday came in the early 16th century during the time of Bishop Jan Lubrański. The Bishop ordered a thorough revamping of the Cathedral, the construction of a ring of defensive walls and, as his prime achievement, the establishment of Poland's first humanities-oriented university.

In 1800, Cathedral Island ceased to operate as a separate town, engulfed by the sprawling Poznań. A ring of fortifications soon surrounded it to form part of a system engineered by the Prussian authorities who turned the city into a stronghold.



Presumed appearance of Cathedral Island and the Medieval Romanesque Cathedral.



4

2 BISHOP JORDAN BRIDGE

The Cybina River bridge has been in place in one form or another since the times of Mieszko I. Over the centuries, the site saw an array of successive wooden and iron structures. Following the recent construction of an expressway, the bridge became redundant and was ultimately torn down.

In 2007, Cathedral Island and the Śródka District were reconnected after prolonged separation. The bridge included a span from the former Saint Roch Bridge: moving it to its present site along the river bed and over the neighboring Mieszko I Bridge proved to be a major feat of engineering. The Bridge is named after Poland's first bishop, whose seat was located in Poznań.

3 CATHEDRAL LOCK GATE

In the 19th century, the occupying Prussian authorities resolved to turn all of Poznań into a stronghold and surrounded it with a ring of fortifications. Sturdy fortified walls were built around Śródka and Cathedral Island. The Cathedral Lock Gate, which formed their part, has survived to this day.

The Lock once straddled the Cybina forming a bridge across the river. It was fitted with a set of valves which, once shut, would dam the waters and flood stronghold foreground. In 2012, the surviving Gate will be incorporated into the Heritage Center of Cathedral Island to present the history of this oldest district of Poznań which spans over more than a millennium.

4 ARCHBISHOP PALACE

The first mention of the Archbishop Palace dates back to the 15th century. This seat of bishops and, since 1821, also archbishops and Polish primates, often changed its appearance throughout the centuries. Its present shape is the result of a 19th-century renovation. The Palace's entrance is adorned with figures of Saint Peter and Paul, patrons of the Cathedral and Poznań, from the Cathedral's large pre-World-War-II altar.



6

Cathedral Island in Poznań



The Royal-Imperial Route map

©2010 www.topmapa.pl

5 MONUMENT TO JOHN PAUL II

John Paul II visited Poznań on two occasions: in 1983 and 1997. During his first visit, which included a stopover at Cathedral Island, he said: "I realized that this site had played a fundamental role in the history not only of Christianity but also of the Polish state and culture".

6 SAINT MARY CHURCH IN SUMMO

The term *in summo* refers to the Church's location "within town". It is situated in the very heart of the old Piast dynasty settlement at the site of the former ducal residence. Archeological excavations conducted there have revealed remnants of Mieszko I's Palace and Duchess Dobrawa's chapel.

The 15th-century temple features an unusual tall facade whose abrupt edge makes it appear unfinished. The 19th-century church fell into ruin and was to be torn down. It was saved, however, to serve as a hospital warehouse and a granary.

The eastern wall of the Church features a rock bearing distinctive grooves. Some maintain they are left by warriors sharpening their swords, others believe they are scratches made by the devil's claws...



7

7 PSALTERY

The Psaltery was built in the early 16th century for a group of Cathedral psalm singers. Their lives were far from easy: 12 choir members took turns to sing *The David's Book of Psalms* around the clock and take part in other services.

The Psaltery is among many works by the Poznań bishop Jan Lubrański. His coat of arms is placed to the right of the building's entrance.

8 LUBRAŃSKI ACADEMY (ARCHDIOCESE MUSEUM)

In the 16th century, Bishop Jan Lubrański set up, in Cathedral Island, an academy believed to be Poland's first institution of education to offer programs in the spirit of Renaissance-style humanism. The institution continued to work for nearly three centuries through times of glory and decline.

Today, the former academy building houses the Archdiocese Museum. Among a host of other works of art and historic memorabilia, its holdings include Saint Peter's sword, brought to Poland by bishop Jordan and once used by an apostle to cut off a Roman soldier's ear in the Olive Garden.

9 MONUMENT TO JAN KOCHANOWSKI

In 1884, on the 300th anniversary of the death of one of Poland's most prominent poets, Jan Kochanowski, Poznań residents raised funds to finance the construction of a monument to his memory. Their effort was blocked by the Prussian authorities who withheld the permission to erect a monument to a poet who symbolized the Polish spirit. Yet, after an archive search revealed that Kochanowski had once served as a nominal curate of the Poznań Cathedral, the residents referred to Prussian law. One of its provisions stated that permissions to construct monuments to such figures were to be granted automatically – in effect, rather than dedicating the monument to a Polish poet, it was made to an ordinary (or rather extraordinary) curate.



8

10 PLANNED ARCHEOLOGICAL RESERVE

Recent archeological excavations have unveiled remnants of Cathedral Island fortifications. They revealed a section of late-10th-century defensive wall which once surrounded the latest northern part of this Piast settlement. The monumental scope of this defensive project is evidenced by the sheer size of the surviving fragment. The explorers discovered another set of protective walls, dated six centuries later, which once surrounded Cathedral Island, built at the order of Bishop Jan Lubrański. The defensive walls will be displayed in an archeological reserve slated for completion by 2012.

11 SEMINARY

The Poznań Seminary, which dates back to 1564, ranks among Poland's oldest institutions of its kind. Its present building, named Collegium Leoninum in the honor of Pope Leon XIII, stems from the late 19th century. With the exception of its chapel, the seminary building has been completely renovated following the devastation of World War II to set it apart from the loathed Prussian style.