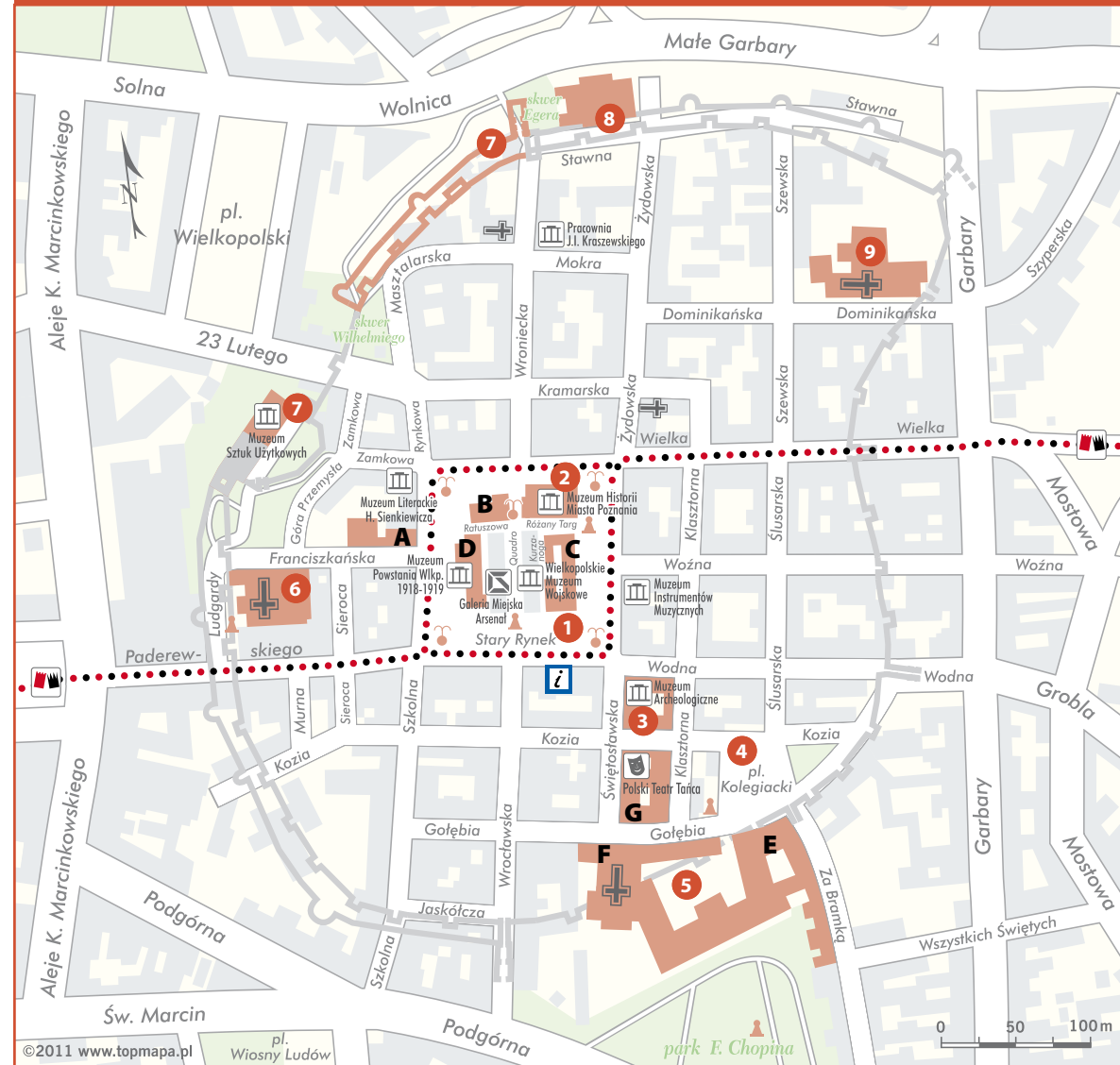
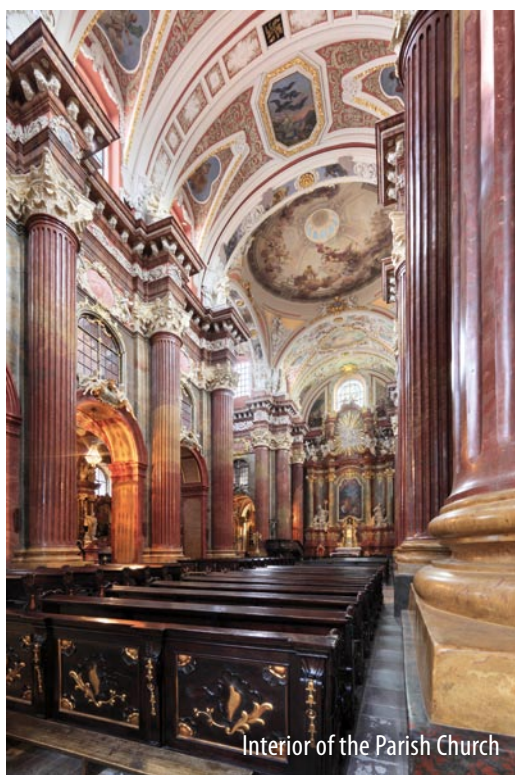


# The Old Town



The City Hall and merchant buildings



Interior of the Parish Church

## 1 THE OLD MARKET SQUARE

For centuries, the tenement houses of the Old Market Square have been the most prestigious addresses in town. Today they include a number of stylish buildings ranging from Gothic tenement houses to Classical palaces, not least the magnificent **Działyński Palace [A]**. The center of the Square was taken by old commercial buildings such as the **City Weighing House [B]** (where each merchant seeking to sell his wares came to fulfill his obligation to weigh them) and **merchant houses [C]** (multicolored narrow buildings which once served as both shops and their owners' dwellings). The key architectural gems in the center of the Old Market Square are the Renaissance City Hall, the Classical **Guardhouse [D]** (the former town guard quarters) and the Modernist Arsenal. All of them have been converted to serve cultural purposes and house museums and the city gallery. A remarkable embellishment of Poznań's Old Market Square are the fountains placed in its four corners which represent mythological figures. The oldest of them, the Proserpine Fountain, has been set in front of the City Hall. The Square is also adorned with the Bamber Woman Well (added to commemorate the 18th-century arrival in Poznań of settlers from Bamberg), a figure of Saint John Nepomucene (who protected city residents from floods) and the Medieval pillory, once feared by all offenders, now serving as a popular meeting point for Poznań residents.

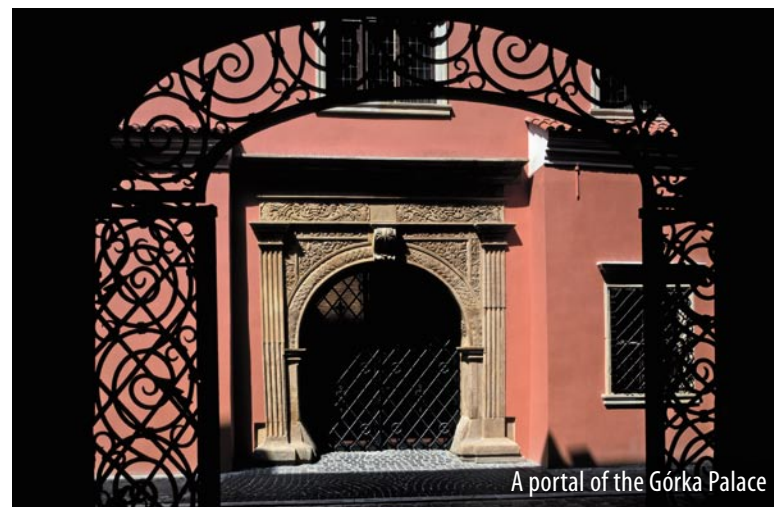
## 2 THE CITY HALL

The original city hall building stemmed most likely from a time shortly following Poznań's foundation. It was remodeled in the 16th century with the help of the Italian Architect Giovanni Battista di Quadro. His design work included the distinctive loggia façade crowned with attic walls. The sides of the loggia and the attic have been adorned with the likings of Polish rulers. For centuries, the City Hall served as the seat of the city authorities. The murals decorating the building contained a code of conduct binding upon city councilors. They included Latin inscriptions and allegoric representations of virtues to be cultivated by the officials.

The City Hall is the stuff of many popular legends, among them the story of the billy goats, which are Poznań's most recognizable symbol. The goats make their daily appearance above the clock on a City Hall façade attracting crowds of onlookers in all seasons. Today, the City Hall houses the Museum of the History of Poznań. A particularly noteworthy attraction in the building is its Grand Hall, the most beautiful of all City Hall interiors.

## 3 THE GÓRKA PALACE

In the 16th century, the Palace belonged to the Górka magnate family, which was very influential in the country. The Palace's upgrade during the Renaissance period was one of the first architectural projects in the new style, later replicated in other buildings. The top floor of this ornate structure featured a pond with a fountain and fish placed there for the joy of its residents! Following the death of the last of the Górkas, the building would often change its use. Once a Protestant Church, it was converted to a Convent, a girls' high school and even a tenement house. Preserved unchanged from the Renaissance period, its original features include the inner courtyard with a row of open arcades accessed by way of a highly decorative stone portal. Today, the Palace houses the Archeological Museum with a courtyard featuring an obelisk to Pharaoh Ramesses II, a constant reminder of the involvement of Poznań archeologists in research on ancient Egyptian culture.



A portal of the Górk Palace

## 4 KOLEGIACKI SQUARE / PLAC KOLEGIACKI

The name of the square stems from the former Saint Mary Magdalene Collegiate Church: the city parish church which once stood in it. The church was an expression of the artistic ambitions of Poznań burghers and a symbol of their wealth. It impressed viewers with its imposing shape and height of its tower whose 90 meters made it even taller than the Cathedral tower. Over 50 altars founded by the patriciate and city craftsman guilds could be admired within. The frequent disasters of the 17th and 18th centuries left the church in ruin, the impoverished city unable to finance its reconstruction.

The space freed up after the church's demolition was named the New Market and set out for commercial use. After the liberation of Poznań in 1945, its name changed to Kolegiacki Square. Today, its chief building houses the City Hall. The youngest residents of Poznań are attracted by the contemporary sculpture of Poznań goats which is also a popular target with photographers.

## 5 THE POST-JESUIT COMPLEX

In the late 16th century, Europeans highly esteemed schools ran by the Jesuits, who were known for offering a solid Catholic education. The founding deed of the Poznań college was signed in 1570, making it Poland's forth institution of its type. In the early 17th century, the school boasted the largest student population of all Jesuit colleges in the country.



Kolegiacki Square

city growth, not least in the field of architecture. The former college building and the neighboring parish church (which originally served as a monastery church) today rank among Poznań's most remarkable works of architecture.

**The College building [E]** dates back to the early 18th century. It once housed research laboratories, a library as well as monk and student quarters. The school was famous for its well-equipped astronomical observatory. In the 18th century, the Jesuit Order's closure ended its involvement in the Poznań College. In the early 19th century, its building became the command center of Emperor Napoleon. Soon afterwards, in 1828, as a seat of the viceroy of the Grand Duchy of Poznań, it received Frederic Chopin, who is said to have given a concert there. Today, the former Jesuit College houses the Poznań City Hall.

Poznań's post-Jesuit heritage also includes the **Collegiate Parish Church of Stanislaus the Bishop [F]**. The intermittent construction of this building took nearly a century. Despite the long and complicated building process, the Poznań parish church has emerged as a harmonious structure ranked among Poland's most magnificent Baroque buildings. It astonishes with its monumental exterior and ornamental interiors. Particularly noteworthy are its splendid paintings of Saint Ignatius of Loyola (the founder of the Jesuit Order) and Saint Stanisław Kostka (the first Polish Jesuit to be canonized).

Over the centuries that elapsed since its opening, the Parish Church has been visited by many outstanding figures. Suffice it to name Napoleon Bonaparte, who in 1806 took part in a solemn holy service held on an anniversary of his crowning and his victory in the Battle of Austerlitz.

One of the most valuable items in the Church is its organ, the work of the famous organmeister Friedrich Ladegast. Weekly organ concerts are held there every Saturday. Finally, the post-Jesuit complex includes a building of the **former Jesuit school [G]**, which now houses the Comprehensive High School of Ballet and the Polish Dance Theatre.

## 6 ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA CHURCH AND THE FRANCISCAN MONASTERY

The Franciscans arrived in Poznań in the mid-17th century. It was not immediately, though, that they were allowed to build their church. The local authorities denied their permit, influenced by the city's chapter of the Bernadine order. Despite these hurdles, the monks eventually succeeded and set their church and monastery near Przemysł Hill. The Church is a sanctuary of the Mother of God (the Lady of Poznań). Her miraculous painting is held in an ornamental sculpted wooden altar in a side nave. Much like the rest of the decorations in the Church, the altar was the work of the Franciscans Antoni and Adam Swach.

A particular attraction at the place is a mockup of historic Poznań in its cellars. Accompanied by special effects and a historical commentary, its display provides a perfect starting point for a sightseeing tour of the city.

## 7 THE ROYAL CASTLE AND FORMER CITY WALLS

The Royal Castle on the hill has once served as monarch residence. While the exact date of its establishment is unknown, it is thought to have been erected during the reign of either Przemysł I or his son, Przemysł II. It was the latter that first used the white eagle as the state emblem, as commemorated with a plaque on the front of the Castle.

The building has born witness to a number of momentous events, including royal weddings (of Wenceslaus II and Elisabeth Richeza, the daughter of Przemysł II, as well as

of Casimir III the Great and Adelaide of Hesse). It also saw the Prussian Tribute paid to John I Albert by the Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights. Destroyed repeatedly by wars and fires, the building was subject to many architectural changes. The existing structure is only a part of the original grandiose edifice. It houses the Museum of Applied Arts. Its reconstruction is currently under way.

The building was once integrated into the defensive walls around the city. It was fortified and designed as the city's last line of defense. The reconstructed section of the historic walls and the former Wroniecka Gate can be found nearby today's Wroniecka Street. The other three entryways into the city are associated with Wielka, Wodna and Wrocławska streets.

## 8 THE FORMER SYNAGOGUE AND THE JEWISH DISTRICT

For centuries, Jews maintained a sizable community in Poznań. They inhabited an area around today's Żydowska, Szewska and Mokra streets. In the 16th century, Poznań's Jews made up Poland's third largest Jewish municipality. The rabbis who headed it were highly esteemed in the rest of Europe.

The largest of Poznań's many synagogues was established in 1907. Capped with a Neo-Romanesque cupola, the shrine could accommodate a congregation of approximately 1200. It was a showcase of the Poznań Jewish community. Sadly, it was turned into a swimming pool during the German occupation. Recent plans envision its restoration to previous glory to house the Center for Judaism and Dialogue.

## 9 POST-DOMINICAN CHURCH (Church of the Holy Heart of Jesus and Mother of God, the Comforter)

As this shrine dates back to 1244, its construction predates the founding of Poznań on the left bank of the Warta by nine years. The arrival in Poznań of the Dominicans, who ranked among Europe's oldest monastic orders, is considered to have portended the foundation of a new town. In keeping with the Order's Rule, the church was simple in form. Of the adjoining monastery buildings, only one wing remains, with ornaments of the old ambulatory still to be seen from Garbary Street. The Dominicans were renowned for their reverence for the rosary. In the 15th century, they built the Chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary with a corresponding painting which survived to this day. The Church grounds feature the Jesuit Gallery of contemporary art.



Old Market Square: a view of the Działyński Palace

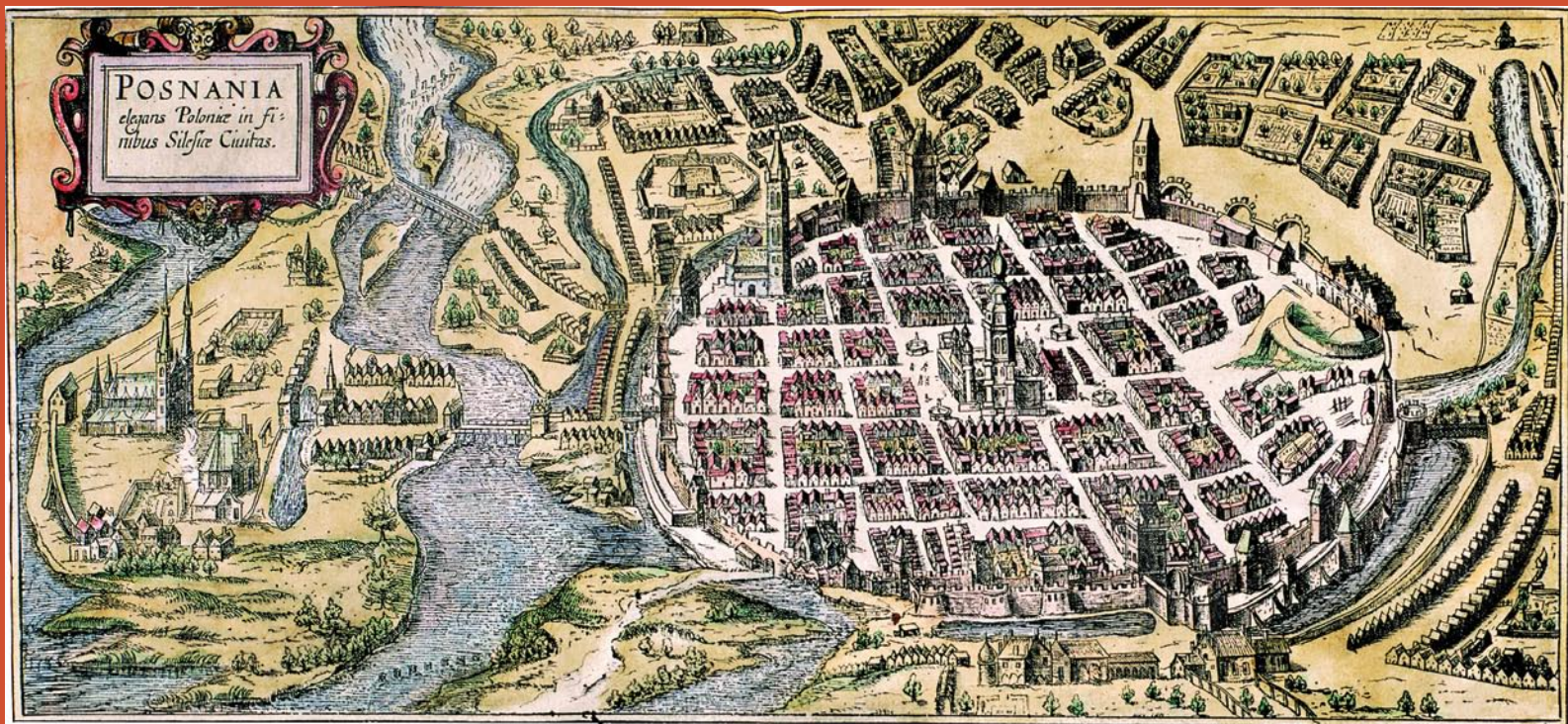
## THE OLD TOWN The Medieval Heart of Poznań

Poznań's fascinating story begins with two brothers, the Dukes Przemysł I and Bolesław the Pious. The brothers resolved to found a town on the left bank of the Warta River after having concluded that the location of the original settlement on Cathedral Island stifled further growth. Flanked by the Warta and its tributaries and flat on the west, the site on the left bank was ideal for the new town. It adjoined a natural elevation which proved to be a perfect spot for a ducal castle. In 1253, Przemysł I founded the town under the Magdeburg Law which governed its layout as well as its administrative and legal systems. The work was continued by successive rulers starting with the Duke's son, Przemysł II, who ascended to the Polish throne at a young age.

The town's grid of perpendicular streets with a central square laid out in the 13th century has survived to this day with only slight modifications. The limits of former Poznań, which correspond to those of today's Old Town, were marked by a ring of defensive walls (which have since been taken down).

For long centuries, Poznań remained a predominantly merchant town. Most of the plots in the Old Market Square were set out to hold merchant buildings. The Town Council supported their construction while obliging the merchants to adhere to a prescribed architectural style and an esthetic code. The Square featured bread, meat and shoemakers' stores, herring shacks and a cloth hall. The merchants were associated in guilds. The Town Council took particular care of the appearance of its building, the City Hall, which symbolized Poznań's independence and lent the Market Square significance as the site of the local government and the judiciary. The City Hall housed the office of the judges. Their sentences were performed by the city executioner, the main enforcer not only of morality but also of other rules effective in the town. City privileges in Medieval Poznań were limited to property owners. The richest and most influential of the local citizens would reside at the central square and in the main streets around it. The plebeians were relegated to side streets and an area within the outer defensive wall. Regardless of their social status, all burghers were given duties (such as to defend city walls in case of danger) and enjoyed rights (the use of four public wells located in the four corners of the central square to draw drinking water).

Although the town was the seat of the local government, it was also the site of the royal residence occupied by the ruler during his visit to Poznań or by its representative, the starost. The Przemysł Hill castle (as it is currently known) could be reached from Cathedral Island by the Royal Route that crossed the Old Market Square. Each passage of rulers and their retinues through Poznań city gates was a major event attracting crowds of burghers as well as nobility.



Poznań panorama of 1618 as published in vol. 6 of the famous *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* by G. Braun and F. Hogenberg. The figure features the City Hall in the Old Market Square, Saint Mary Magdalene Collegiate Church, the main defensive wall and the outer fortified wall; on the left, a panorama of Cathedral Island showing the Cathedral.

The city grew rapidly. Its architecture changed dramatically during the Renaissance period. Although the wooden buildings of the Market Square had by that time been replaced with brick-and-mortar structures, the turn of the 16th century brought further breakthroughs. The new style was reflected in the designs of magnate residences. Yet, the most spectacular example of the new architectural and design fashion was the City Hall, whose conversion was overseen by Giovanni Battista di Quadro of Italy.

An interesting complex of buildings emerged near the central square. Made up of Baroque structures of the Jesuit Order (erected nearby today's Kolegiacki Square), the complex became a hub of spiritual and intellectual life in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Over the centuries, the Old Town did not escape the devastation of wars and occupations which severely damaged Poznań's historic heritage. Much destruction came from fairly frequent natural disasters such as floods, fires and plagues which decimated the local population. By the mid-18th century, their cumulative effect left the town in a truly sorry state.

A rescue effort came from the Good Order Commission. This efficient organization focused on restoring Poznań's old architecture and erecting new buildings. At was at this time that Poznań acquired its Guardhouse and the new Arsenal building and had its City Hall tower reconstructed.

The Prussian rule did away with Poznań's urban fabric inherited from the Middle Ages. In the 19th century, the city walls were torn down allowing the city to expand westward with a new center in the west becoming a key event venue. As it expanded, Poznań took a technological leap forward gaining gas lighting, an upgraded water supply network and a horse-drawn tram service. No longer a prestigious showcase, the Old Market Square nevertheless remained in the center of city life. It was a crossing point for five tram lines, a site of exclusive shopping and the city's first department stores placed in the tenement houses around the Square.

Another wave of dramatic changes came with World War II which left some 60 percent of the buildings of the old Medieval district razed to the ground. A post-war effort led to the reconstruction of the square and the surrounding streets. Certain architectural novelties were added, among them the modernist redesign of the Arsenal in a style markedly different from that of the surrounding historic buildings.

Today's Old Town, and primarily its Old Market Square, features hosts of museums, galleries, restaurants and cafés. The spirit of the past centuries lingers detectably in the air. Do not miss a walk down the streets of Medieval Poznań!

## CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

### Arsenal City Gallery

(Galeria Miejska Arsenal)  
Stary Rynek 6, 61-772 Poznań  
Open to visitors:  
Tue.–Sat. 12 noon to 7pm  
Sun. 11am to 3pm  
ph.: +48 61 852 95 01  
www.arsenal.art.pl

### Archeological Museum

(Muzeum Archeologiczne)  
ul. Wodna 27, 61-781 Poznań  
Open to visitors:  
Tue.–Thu. 9am to 3pm  
Fri.–Sat. 10am to 6pm  
Sun. 1pm to 6pm  
ph.: +48 61 852 82 51  
www.muzaarp.poznan.pl

### Museum of the History of Poznań

(Muzeum Historii Miasta Poznania)  
Stary Rynek 1, 60-772 Poznań  
Open to visitors:  
Tue.–Thu. 11am to 5pm (16.06–15.09),  
9am to 3pm (16.09–15.06)  
Fri. 12 noon to 9pm  
Sat.–Sun. 11am to 6pm  
ph.: +48 61 856 81 93  
www.mnp.art.pl

### Museum of Musical Instruments

(Muzeum Instrumentów Muzycznych)  
Stary Rynek 45, 61-772 Poznań  
Open to visitors:  
Tue.–Thu. 11am to 5pm (16.06–15.09),  
9am to 3pm (16.09–15.06)  
Fri. 12 noon to 9pm  
Sat.–Sun. 11am to 6pm  
ph.: +48 61 856 81 78  
www.mnp.art.pl

### Henryk Sienkiewicz Literary Museum

(Muzeum Literackie H. Sienkiewicza)  
Stary Rynek 84, 61-772 Poznań  
ph.: +48 61 852 63 40  
www.bracz.edu.pl  
Closed for alterations through the end of 2012.

### Museum of the 1918–1919

**Wielkopolska Uprising**  
(Muzeum Powstania Wielkopolskiego 1918–1919)  
Stary Rynek 3, 61-772 Poznań  
Open to visitors:  
Tue.–Fri. 10am to 5pm  
Sat.–Sun. 10am to 3pm  
ph.: +48 61 853 19 93  
www.muzeumniepodleglosci.poznan.pl

### Museum of Applied Arts

(Muzeum Sztuk Użytkowych)  
Góra Przemysła 1, 61-768 Poznań  
Open to visitors:  
Tue.–Thu. 11am to 5pm (16.06–15.09),  
9am to 15pm (16.09–15.06)  
Fri. 12 noon to 9pm, Sat.–Sun. 11am to 6pm  
ph.: +48 61 856 81 83  
www.mnp.art.pl

### Polish Dance Theatre

(Polski Teatr Tańca)  
ul. Kozia 4, 61-835 Poznań  
ph.: +48 61 853 23 70  
www.ptt-poznan.pl  
Open 8am to 10pm

### Museum/Workshop of Józef Ignacy Kraszewski

(Pracownia-Muzeum Józefa Ignacego Kraszewskiego)  
ul. Wroniecka 14, 61-673 Poznań  
Open to visitors:  
Mon.–Fri. 10am to 3pm  
ph.: +48 61 855 12 44  
www.bracz.edu.pl

### Wielkopolska Military Museum

(Wielkopolskie Muzeum Wojskowe)  
Stary Rynek 9, 61-772 Poznań  
Open to visitors:  
Tue.–Thu. 11am to 5pm (16.06–15.09),  
9am to 3pm (16.09–15.06)  
Fri. 12 noon to 9pm  
Sat.–Sun. 11am to 6pm  
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## The Royal-Imperial Route in Poznań

As is common with many Polish cities, relaxation and entertainment, key cultural events, busy sites and charming secluded spots, local cuisine delicacies, astonishing historical sights, a diverse social scene and a unique atmosphere, can all be found in the old town. Poznań is slightly different. While its cultural and social life does indeed center on the Old Market Square, which is famous for its architectural beauty and many attractions, anyone who, having seen the Square, would think they have explored all of the Old Town would be gravely mistaken. After all, cutting across this part of Poznań is the Royal-Imperial Route. The Route winds its way through its historic streets and offers a perfect avenue for further sightseeing.

The Royal-Imperial Route is a tourist offering for all seeking to learn about the history, traditions and culture of Poland at the site of their origin. A millennium of historical ups and downs, the intertwining of fates and the interaction of cultures have all contributed to the making of today's Poznań with its wealth of tourist attractions.

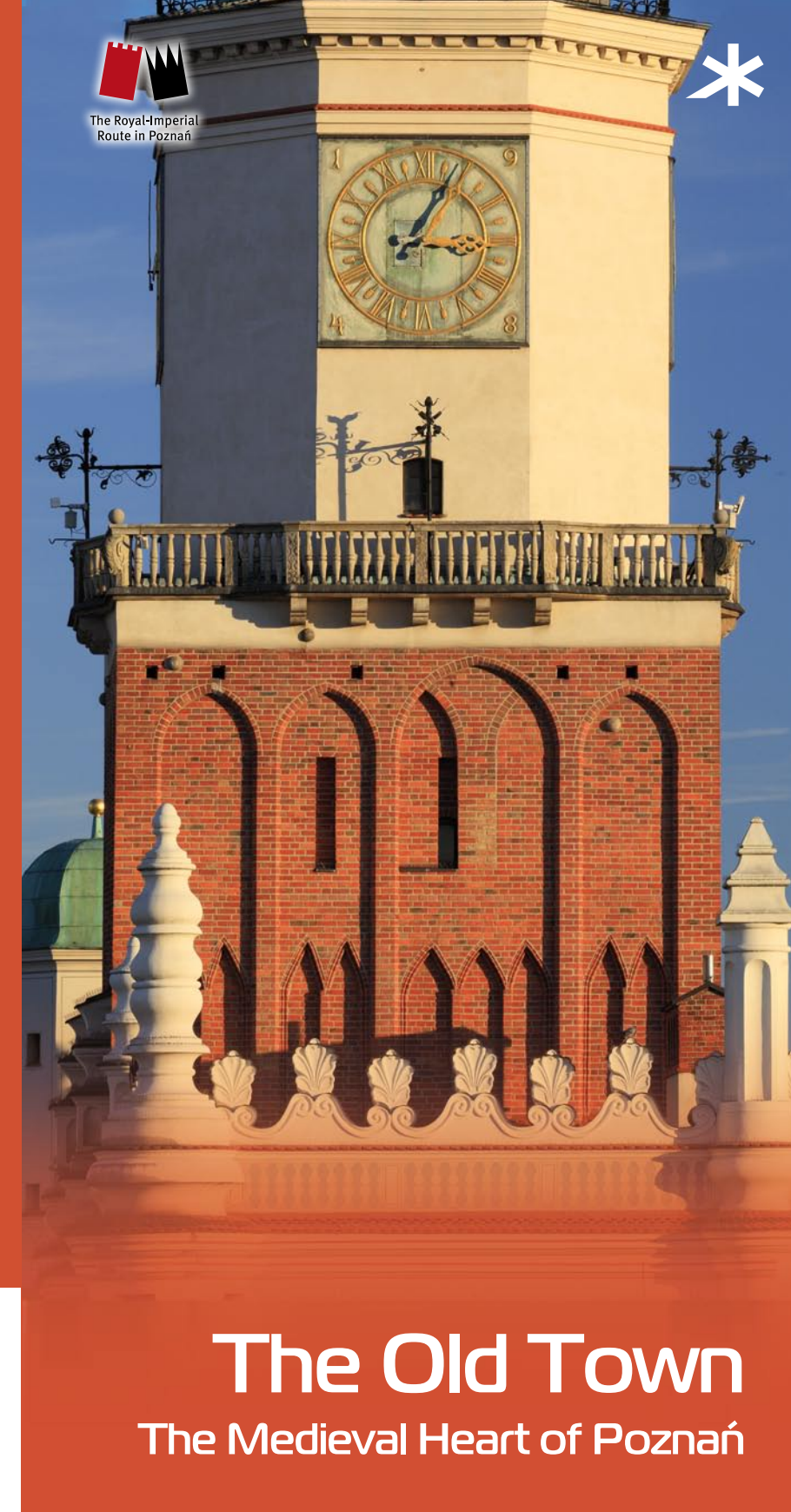
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**POZnań\***  
\*Eastern energy. Western style



# The Old Town

## The Medieval Heart of Poznań