



The historic rampart.
View from today's K. Marcinkowski Avenue.

Bell Founders', Tailors', Cloth Makers', Traders' and Chimney Sweeps'. The task of defending the city was shared by the Shooting Society established shortly after Poznań's foundation. For a long time, the magnificent Merchants' Tower (also known as the Clock or the Red Tower) served as a prison house. Positioned between the Grand and the Water Towers was the Executioner's Tower also referred to as the Master's Tower.

While the city authorities bore the lion's share of the cost of maintaining the wall, a portion of the expense was financed by national taxes. In 16th century, King Sigmund III allowed the city to tax the local brewers at the rate of a penny per keg. Afterwards, each successive ruler would renew the privilege. To repair its deficient budget, the City leased some of the towers for residential use. One of them became a part of the Saint Catherine's Convent and has survived to this day as Church property. The Swedish *Deluge* and Poznań's occupation by Saxon, Swedish, Brandenburg, Russian and Prussian troops left the city and its fortifications severely damaged. Much time elapsed until the Four-Year Parliament established the Good Order Commission in the 18th century which helped restore the City complete with its gates and wall.

As the Prussians assumed their rule at the turn of the 18th century, the medieval wall was torn down not to impede the City's further growth. Only sections of the historic fortifications remain, fitted harmoniously into Poznań's contemporary landscape. During archeological excavations occasioned by new development projects, archeologists and historians frequently stumbled upon remnants of medieval fortifications. As of today, the best-preserved sections of the city wall are found at the Wroniecka Gate and at the Corner Tower at Masztalarska Street. Large fragments of the outer wall can be seen at Ludgardy Street, on Przemysł Hill and near Wrocławska Street.

Museum of Applied Arts, Branch of the National Museum of Poznań

(the former Royal Castle)

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Model of historic Poznań

cellars of the Franciscan Monastery
entrance on ul. Ludgardy, 61-768 Poznań

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The Royal-Imperial
Route in Poznań

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.

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Poznań, Poland.
The place to be.

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The Royal-Imperial
Route in Poznań



The historic rampart: a section from the Wroniecka Gate to the Castle.
View from today's Wolnica Street.

From time immemorial, fortifications have always played a prominent role in city life. The ones built in Poznań made it one of Poland's best protected cities.

When the Piast Dynasty Dukes Przemysł I and Boleslav the Pious set up their settlement on the left bank of the Warta River in 1253, they made ingenious use of the natural features of the local terrain. They fitted the town's oval shape in between the Warta and the Hills of Saint Adalbert and Saint Martin as well as Castle Hill. The town's northern limits were secured by the floodplains of the Warta and its tributaries. The ring of fortifications around the city measured a total of 1700 m in length. Its 1.5 meters thick inner brick wall stood 7 meters high. More than 30 towers crowned the wall's perimeter. On the city side, the wall was lined with wooden arcades used for defense purposes. To protect the most vulnerable parts of the original wall, an outer brick wall was added in the mid-15th century. Topping the structure were over a dozen semi-circular towers. A ring of water-filled moats provided extra security. The very heart of the city fortifications was the Castle. Poznań was accessible through the Wroniecka Gate on the north, the Wrocławska Gate on the south and the Wodna (Water) and Wielka (Grand) Gates on the Warta River side on the east. The City could also be entered by way of a number of smaller entrances.

The first mention of the Poznań Wall has been found in 13th century in a record produced by the Polish king Władysław Łokietek. The City's fortifications passed their strength test in 1331 as they foiled an attack and withheld a week-long siege by the army of the Czech King John of Luxembourg.

Besides the locally-stationed ducal and royal troops, Poznań was also defended by city and burgher forces. Craftsmen associated in guilds were assigned to defend specific sections of the wall. Each tower was guarded by a designated guild after which it was named. The towers were thus called Coopers', Butcher's,

The historic city wall of Poznań



1 THE WRONIECKA GATE AND THE OUTER WALL ALONG WOLNICA STREET

The Wroniecka Gate led to Western Pomerania and Brandenburg. Its name is derived from the town of Wronki where travelers along that route would cross the Warta. A portion of the western foregate at the exit from Wroniecka Street has survived to this day. The Gate has been restored based on knowledge derived from archeological finds. The foregate wall includes a canal through which Bogdanka River water was fed into the city moat. A section of the outer wall with crenelles can be found to the west of the Gate. A recently added tourist trail leads to the Wroniecka Gate and the Corner Tower at Masztalarska Street.

2 THE CATHERINE'S CONVENT TOWER

Much like Poznań's other towers, the Catherine's Convent Tower constituted a bay window on the city side of the wall. Its open design was closed up as the Tower became embedded in the Dominican Monastery (originally known as Saint Catherine's Convent, hence the name of the Tower) in the 16th century.



3 THE FIREMAN'S TOWER

After the moat was leveled and the city wall demolished, the Fireman's Tower immediately to the west of the Catherine's Convent Tower was replaced, in 1877, with a more sophisticated fire station which exists to this day and which has recently lent the Tower its name. Before World War II, the Tower was used for residential purposes. It was dismantled in 1940 and restored in 2008 along with a section of the inner wall along Wolnica Street.

The historic city wall of Poznań



LEGEND

- the original bulwark ring
- existing or restored wall sections
- historic wall sections marked on ground surface
- historic bed of the Warta
- 18th century wall postdating the construction of the Jesuit College

Wall location marked on today's street grid.

4 THE ARTILLERY CORNER TOWER

The Corner Tower at Masztalarska Street forms one of the best-known sections of Poznań's Medieval wall. The end stretch of the outer wall protected the city on the north-west. Only a fragment has survived its 19th century demolition. The Corner Tower features crenelles and an inner indenture where a wooden plank was fitted to provide footing for city defenders. The Tower adjoins a restored straight section of the wall.



5 THE FORMER ROYAL CASTLE

The Royal Castle once formed a core of the city fortification system. Built most likely by Duke Przemysł I in the 13th century and expanded by his son Przemysł II, it served as a residence for Polish kings during their Poznań sojourns. It was damaged and remodeled on multiple occasions. Today's building, restored after World War II, is only a part of the original edifice. Also remaining to this day is a large section of the external wall adjacent to the Castle which includes crenelles and supporting embankments.

6 THE OUTER WALL TOWER

The outer wall tower was one of the canon towers used to defend the external wall section between the Wrocławska Gate and the Royal Castle. The City has made plans to restore its fragments and expose the remnants of the Tower, which was dismantled in 1940. The Tower is currently closed to the public.

7 THE WROCLAWSKA GATE

The Wrocławska Gate opens onto a commercial route to Lower Silesia and the city of Wrocław. Its main part was a Gate Tower with a foregate integrated into the outer city wall. Today, red pavement tiles at the outlet of Wrocławska Street mark the location of the wall.

8 SECTION OF THE WALL AT PODGÓRNA STREET (near Wrocławska Street)

The wall section dates back to the early 18th century. The builders of the Jesuit College, which was being expanded, discovered at the time that the new building would not fit within the city wall. They dismantled a fragment of the old wall replacing it with a new one moved further to the south. A fragment of this wall has been incorporated into a Wrocławska Street tenement house while another can still be seen in Chopin Park.

9 ZA BRAMKĄ STREET

As suggested by its name (which translates into Behind the Gate), the Street has once been a passage through the Medieval city wall, the so called Dark Gate, also known as the Grim Gate, leading from Kolegiacki Square to the suburb of Piaski, today's Bernardyński Square. The Gate's name is a reminder of funeral processions which used it to reach an outer cemetery.

10 THE WODNA (WATER) GATE

The Wodna Gate lied en route to Środa Wielkopolska, Kalisz and Warsaw. It was accessible through a wooden bridge placed over a moat. A tower mounted on its outer side protected passage across the river. The Gate was dismantled in the late 18th century. Archeological excavations in Wodna Street area produced clues on the original location of the wall.

11 THE GRAND GATE

The Grand Gate, which was one of the four main city gates, was also known as Magnificent. The Gate provided a way from the Old Market Square to the Warta River and on to Ostrów Tumski. It was at the Grand Gate that distinguished guests were welcomed on entering the city. The Gate was also used by various processions on their way to the Cathedral.

