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Trade has always been one of Krakow's strong points - the city lies at the intersection of major routes.

The tradition of trade, strong since the Middle Ages, is still firmly maintained in Krakow: After all, in the middle of the Main Market Square is the Cloth Hall, once the commercial centre of the city. Today you can buy regional products, souvenirs, jewellery there... but it is also the home of the National Museum in Krakow and several traditional cafes. In contrast, the Market Square and the surrounding area hosts numerous Polish and foreign brands. The highest concentration - including the pioneering Likus Concept Store - is in the intimate and exclusive Pasaż 13, located in a designer restored historic building.

Brands, brands...

Within a short distance from the Main Square, there are two major shopping centres: considered to be one of the best such places in Poland is the Galeria Krakowska, located just next to the Main Station, and by the Vistula River - Galeria Kazimierz. Outside the centre of Krakow there are over a dozen such centres, including the huge Bonarka. It is worth noting the Polish companies in them, usually unavailable outside the country, and offering original style and design: brands like Deni Cler, Hera, Hexeline and Vistula, jewellery from Apart, Batycki or W.Kruk, Gino Rossi shoes and perfumes by Dr Irena Eris enjoy a well-deserved reputation. In contrast, at the exit of the motorway in the direction of Katowice is an enormous Factory Outlet, where you can find products of most chains of global brands - including those hard to find in the centre - often at heavily discounted prices. Anyway, regardless of the district where the tourist resides - smaller and larger purchases will be close by.

A souvenir from Krakow

The further away from the Market Square, the smaller the shops are, but also more original, and often... mysterious. On Dominikańska St. there is the small boutique La Perle, Zemełka & Pirowska, run by a talented pair of Polish designers; going further towards Kazimierz the passerby will encounter numerous small galleries of applied arts and crafts, and in Kazimierz itself, in the quiet Bocheńska Street, a fashionable concept store - Idea Fix. For those interested in handmade souvenirs or gifts, we recommend Józefa Street, where there are several places that offer them. In the Old Town and Kazimierz it is worth buying works of art - Krakow is famous for its numerous galleries that - leading rich exhibition activity - hit a chord with collectors.

Colourful and bustling

If the visitor is interested in the picturesque colour of the city and the region, the aroma of local products, the ability to haggle with the seller - the biggest attraction will be visiting one of Krakow's market squares. In the centre there are several - Kleparz, Nowy Kleparz, Hala Targowa - these are places for everyday purchases for inhabitants. It is easy to buy fresh regional highland cheese - oscypek or bundz - and on weekends at Hala Targowa (Sunday) and Nowy Square in Kazimierz



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(Saturday) there are flea markets where among the millions of small things you can still find something unique – an old trinket, a photograph or an engraving.

Małopolska Fairs

Market squares are part of a still living Małopolska tradition of organising fairs. Once they were conducive to the development of the region, affecting the lives of towns and maintenance of roads. Even today at the weekly market in Nowy Targ, buyers come from all over Podhale, from Slovakia, and even from Silesia. Others have been restored in many municipalities in the region to the delight of tourists. Traditional crafts, arts and crafts and simple farm equipment, regional products – cheeses, meats, clothing and alcohol – all this and much more can be purchased, often to the accompaniment of music from folk bands on stage. In Krakow, this tradition is cultivated by several events, such as the referring to the mediaeval and Renaissance tradition St. John's Fair (organised by the Vistula River near Wawel in June, just before the summer solstice) or the Easter and Christmas fairs held in the Main Square.