

Long time no see - Discover Krakow Anew!

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Being a city well-known to every conference organiser, Krakow has its other less-well known face — which was discovered by the participants of the study tour organised as part of the 'Long Time No See - Let's Meet in Poland'.

Between 24-26 June incentive travel organisers associated with Site Poland took part in a junket organised by Poland Convention Bureau and Kraków Convention Bureau in cooperation with local partners. The aim of the visit was to demonstrate the potential of the city, even to test and experience it so as to inspire the development of creative incentive programmes in Krakow.

'Arranging an attractive programme was a challenge and a real pleasure for us. We wanted the participants to rediscover Krakow. On the one hand we do not turn away from what is best in Krakow, what makes the city famous, attracting visitors as a magnet – namely many centuries of heritage, culture, museum collections – yet presented in a completely new form – temporary exhibitions, city games and workshops. Facilities which, on a daily basis, serve as the venues for international events, have shown their other side – creative spaces that meet the requirements of the incentive organisers. I hope that professional congress infrastructure will be well remembered by the participants as well as the extent to which urban space can be creatively developed for groups - says Małgorzata Przygórska-Skowron, manager of Krakow Convention Bureau.

It is not an easy task to surprise the incentive travel organisers who have already seen a lot all over the world.

The organisers of our study trip have definitely managed to succeed in it. Firstly, we discovered Krakow as a perfect incentive destination, secondly, the hospitality, attention and commitment of the people who hosted us, which is an example of the highest standard in the field of hospitality. This reaffirms our belief that service providers in Krakow do not want to be just contractors, but they wish to be partners who are sensitive to the needs of the customer and, what is more, compete with each other. Therefore, we may be sure that our groups will be offered the same experience. We can certainly say that we liked everything here and that we already have some new ideas on how to combine the attractions and how to select them for different target groups from Poland and abroad. We are highly impressed by many event spaces, both modern and historic, as well as the splendid museum collections and exhibits on display. Krakow is a city of tradition, grand and yet so active. It is rich in legends, events and places which may provide the basis for an intriguing city game, where we can attend a concert or meet people from all over the world and of all ages. A modern hotel base, plenty of restaurants and catering facilities, many of which within walking distance, good railway, road and air connections make Krakow a truly ideal destination for an incentive trip.

The group was deeply impressed by the Srebrna Góra vineyard, only 11 km from Krakow, the distance that we easily covered by electric powered bikes, accompanied by a wonderful tour guide Szymon, admiring beautiful landscapes and making use of communication-facilitating technology.

We will surely return to Krakow! – as Grażyna Grot-Duziak, President of Site Poland, sums up.



**Magiczny
Kraków**

Since 2015, three complementary venues have been operating in Krakow: ICE Kraków, EXPO Kraków oraz TAURON Arena Kraków. We know them very well as congress, trade fair or entertainment venues. This time, however, their other dimension was demonstrated to us as a space ideal for organising creative business meetings. The team of the ICE Krakow Congress Centre deserves exceptional recognition as they prepared a number of non-standard attractions for us: a bike rally in the car park, a premiere ascent from the hidden, underground S5 Hall, from where, in the spotlight and to the sounds of Survivor's song "Eye of the Tiger", we went straight to the stage of one of the best concert halls in Poland, the Krzysztof Penderecki Auditorium Hall. There, a team of the ICE Krakow staff was waiting for us with... a karaoke session, which made us feel like the biggest stars on stage. We quickly got into the groove, sang a few songs and then were invited for a professional photo shoot using masks created as part of Orfeo & Majnun, an international community project promoting values such as freedom, tolerance and community at the cultural crossroads. The next item on the agenda was a chamber cello concert with a view of the Wawel Castle. After the concert, it was time for some specialist knowledge — a meeting with Rafał Szlachta, President of the PTO, and a presentation about ICE Krakow and new trends in incentive travel. Back at the hotel, all the participants were treated to promotional packs, which, again rather unusually, were personalised and hand-made by the congress centre team in the spirit of zero waste, using materials left over from events organised at the venue! It is impossible to convey all the emotions that accompanied us. Every day we experienced new thrills during activities and meetings with people full of passion, commitment and incredible hospitality. As a substitute for gratitude for this amazing welcome, we carried out a CSR action in the Radisson Blu hotel, funding and packing holiday backpacks for children from the Siemacha association. The good comes back. I am pretty sure that after such a professional and hearty presentation providing ready solutions for incentive programmes that have already been tested, also our guests will soon come back to Krakow with their clients - comments Aneta Książek, Manager of Poland Convention Bureau.

Tales, legends, tastes of Krakow. The Lady with an Ermine, the vineyard located just 11 kilometres from the city centre; a balloon flight; baking obwarzanek (delicacy made of parboiled dough); numerous Krakow restaurants and cafés; relaxing by the Vistula River, congress centre with a view of the Wawel Hill; the market hall and Poland's largest multi-purpose arena; the incredibly warm reception of the local industry —all this at lightning speed of a site visit. And they say that life is slower in Krakow. ☐☐

Plenty of attractions were provided by KCB team in close cooperation with POT PCB and SITE. We would like to thank our partners: ICE Kraków Congress Centre, TAURON Arena Kraków, Forum Przestrzenie, Balon widokowy in Krakow, Radisson Blu Hotel Krakow and Sheraton Grand Krakow for their commitment and contribution.