



1978 - 2023. Krakow celebrates the 45th anniversary of entry on the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites

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The celebratory symposium at the offices of the City Council, featuring representatives of historic cities in Poland and elsewhere in the world, inauguration of the Europa Nostra Heritage Hub, or the opening of the exhibition on the Social Committee for the Restoration of Krakow Monuments with a debut film screening - these are just some of the events being held to mark the 45th anniversary of Krakow being entered on the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites, which will be held from 7 to 9 September 2023. Come and celebrate with us the anniversary of the historical event which changed the face of our city!

Krakow on the UNESCO list - then and now

'I am extremely pleased that we can share with our exquisite guests the celebration of the 45th anniversary of this groundbreaking event, when Krakow was added to the list in 1978', says Jacek Majchrowski, Krakow City Mayor. 'The fact that Krakow was added to this prestigious list and the status of a city known worldwide has been, is and will continue to be a signpost and reference point for development. *We are also aware of the great responsibility for the heritage that needs to be protected and taken care of.* This celebration entails a constant need to emphasize in the local, national and international arena the significance that the status of a world heritage has for Krakow', he added.

In September 1978, during the first session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, a historic decision was taken to add Krakow to the prestigious list of world heritage places with special significance. It is historic, because in the first listing, Krakow was **one of just twelve such places** in the world, together with the Wieliczka Salt Mine. Our city was the first in Europe to have not only an individual location, but the entire municipal unit, with the Wawel Royal Castle, the Old Town and Kazimierz and the old suburb of Stradom, honored.

The entry gave rise to a remarkable **social campaign supporting the renewal of the degrading city monuments**, for which much is owed to the community of art restorers in Poland. That was the moment which established Krakow in the following decades as a city whose heritage was the essence of its identity and the driving force towards further development.

The entry on the World Heritage List in the fall of 1978 was followed by the creation of the Social Committee for the Restoration of Krakow's Monuments. Its primary task was to support the restoration work on monuments, the foundation for which was the National Fund for the Restoration of Monuments of Krakow. Together with the post-transformation system of municipal grants for restoration works, the financing for the monuments contributed to the **unprecedented transformation of the appearance of the historic city center and recaptured the sparkle of numerous structures.**

In 2013, Krakow joined the UNESCO Creative Cities Network as the first non-English language **City of Literature**. The **autograph of *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres* by Nicolaus Copernicus**, now stored in the Jagiellonian Library, is inscribed on the UNESCO Memory of the World List, and the tradition of making cribs in Krakow is on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity. In 2017, Krakow hosted the **41st Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee**, during which the city was visited by



numerous delegations from all over the world. From 2019 to 2022, the Mayor of Krakow served as President of the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) and is currently on the OWHC Board of Directors and the League of Historic Cities established in Kyoto.

The city is always introducing new solutions to protect the authenticity and representative nature of the historic center, for instance by realizing the **idea of cultural parks** on an unprecedented scale in Poland or successfully passing the landscape resolution. The original nature of the city is also protected through local zoning as well as restoration and support programs for protected industries. It was also thanks to the great commitment of the people of Krakow that **new layers of the city's heritage** are gradually being rediscovered and their value recognized: the fortifications of the Krakow Fortress, modernist architecture, or the socialist realist Nowa Huta district, declared a Monument of History this year.

45th anniversary of entry on the UNESCO World Heritage List - program of events

Krakow began its celebration of the 45th anniversary at the beginning of the year. **New plaques** at entry roads leading to Krakow **now welcome visitors to the World Heritage City**, and a **commemorative plaque** was unveiled at the entrance of the historic Royal Road to the Old Town, under the Barbican. Once it was expanded, the **Krakow Heritage portal**, presenting a complete overview of the heritage of the city, was launched in two languages [here](#) ; in June, the open-air **Treasures of Krakow exhibition**, prepared in cooperation with the International Cultural Center in Krakow, was opened to the public in various city squares (from 1 September onwards in Aleja Róż in Nowa Huta). Visitors from all over the world arriving at the Balice Airport are welcomed by an illuminated plaque stating Krakow's status as a World Heritage Site. Publications, press supplements, and podcasts are produced in connection with the anniversary.

The culmination of the celebrations will be from 7 to 9 September.

7 September (10:00 a.m.): the seat of the Society of Lovers of History and Monuments of Krakow, one of Europe's oldest heritage NGOs, will be the venue of the inauguration of the **Europa Nostra Heritage Hub** – a satellite of this distinguished international organization for Central Europe. On the same day, an **exhibition on the activities of the Social Committee for the Restoration of Krakow's Monuments** will be opened at the Krzysztofory Palace (3:00 p.m.). An exhibition of **45 years of the restoration of Krakow - a city on the World Heritage List** will run until 8 October.

This exhibition will feature the screening of the documentary *Stones can tell the future about the past*, directed by Marta Węgiel and produced by TVP Kraków, about the transformation of the city. The material is illustrated with archives from the 1970s, guiding us through the times of transition until today.

On the evening of 7 September, **the European Heritage Award / Europa Nostra Award will be presented at St. Mary's Basilica (8:00 p.m.) for the restoration works carried out between 2015 and 2021 on the famous Veit Stoss Altarpiece**. The award will be presented by Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović, Secretary-General of Europa Nostra. The European Heritage Awards are presented by Europa Nostra for exceptional achievements in the area of



cultural heritage in Europe in five main categories. The Veit Stoss Altarpiece was listed in the 'restoration' category.

8 September (from 10:00 a.m.) a **ceremonial symposium at the offices of the Krakow City Council**. This will be an open-access event with speeches delivered by the Krakow City Mayor, the Chair of the Krakow City Council, the Director of the World Heritage Center, the Chair of the Polish National Commission for UNESCO, the Secretary-General of Europa Nostra, **Prof. Krzysztof K. Pawłowski** – one of the architects of the 1978 entry, and others. The speech delivered by Prof. Pawłowski coincides with the premiere of his new book, *Meanders of Research on the Forming of the City (Meandry badań nad kształtowaniem miasta)*, published by the Universitas publishing house in Krakow.

The panel planned for later will feature speeches by representatives of historic cities from all over the world, including Warsaw, Vilnius, Lviv, Vienna, Regensburg, Dubrovnik, Quito and Shiraz. The Wieliczka and Bochnia Royal Salt Mines also will be represented. Anniversary lectures will also be given by Prof. Jacek Purchla and Prof. Jerzy Hausner.

The anniversary session will come to an end at the **Wawel Royal Castle** with an unveiling of a commemorative plaque with the World Heritage emblem.

On the next day, 9 September, the streets of the city will see a celebratory Copernican Parade, full of dance, music, acrobatics and – of course – astronomy. It will combine the 45th anniversary of the UNESCO entry with the 550th anniversary of the birth of Nicolaus Copernicus. The parade begins at 5:00 p.m. at the Florian Gate.

Accompanying events

The anniversary events in Krakow will coincide with the **European Heritage Days**. On 9 October, the event will also include an exhibition on wooden churches of southern Lesser Poland and wooden Orthodox churches of the Polish Carpathian region. To find out more go to click [here](#).

The anniversary will be commemorated with a bilingual publication – *I See You, Krakow* – as a kind of notebook of thoughts about Krakow's heritage and its future. Prepared together with the International Cultural Center, the publication will be available from 6 September at the local branches of the Krakow Museum and the Wawel Royal Castle. The electronic version is available [here](#).

The celebration of the 45th anniversary of the entry will end symbolically with the **re-hanging of the distinctive crown from 1666 on the tower of St Mary's Basilica**. One of the symbols of Krakow will be returned to the tower spire in the first half of September after a short, two-month renovation financed by the Social Committee for the Restoration of Monuments Krakow and the Parish of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

A detailed program of the events held to celebrate the 45th anniversary of Krakow's entry on the World Heritage List is available [here](#).



**Magiczny
Kraków**

Celebration for all in Krakow

'What causes a city to earn world heritage status? It gives as much as we want it to, or, in other words: as much as we can take,' reads the brochure *I see you, Krakow*. *The achievement of being named a World Heritage Site is also an achievement of the residents of Krakow, but this also means collective responsibility for how the city should be taken care of and how to respond to the changing challenges of the present day. 'This way, the 45th anniversary is not only a celebration for all of us, but also an opportunity to express gratitude for the joint and harmonious cooperation of various institutions to protect and promote our city's heritage',* says Robert Piaskowski, Plenipotentiary of the Krakow City Mayor for Culture.

The event is created and financed jointly by the Municipality of Krakow, Social Committee for the Restoration of Krakow's Monuments, Wawel Royal Castle, Krakow Museum, the International Cultural Center in Krakow, KTO Theatre, Ballet Cracovia Danza, Capella Cracoviensis, the Society of Lovers of History and Monuments of Krakow, and Europa Nostra Heritage Hub Krakow.

Partners of the event: Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Europa Nostra, Organization of World Heritage Cities, League of Historic Cities, Polish National Commission for UNESCO, Polish League of Historic Cities.