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EXPLORER**



# Krakow and the High Tatras in Winter

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A winter holiday in Krakow and the Tatras.

**Holiday code:** KTW

**Countries included:** Poland, Slovakia

**Activity level:** 1

**Themes:** Cultural discovery, Winter

**Tour type:** Guided Groups

**Minimum age:** 16

**Duration:** 8 days

**Available in:** Jan, Feb, Mar, Nov, Dec

## Overview

You'll discover the Polish city of Krakow before exploring the Slovakian side of the High Tatra mountains on this week-long, guided winter tour.

Spend a day taking in the incredible architecture of Krakow, Poland's former capital and cultural hub, then head up into the snowy Tatra mountains where you'll find glacial lakes, hidden mountain villages and medieval towns.

The tour includes a cable car ride up to Lomnický Peak, which offers sweeping views at 2634 metres. And while you're touring the foothills of the Tatras you'll be given the option to visit caves and castles, and relax in indoor and outdoor thermal pools, all in the space of just one week.

**Why we think this trip is fantastic, and you'll love it!**



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Slovakia Explorer, Skalica, 90865, Slovakia  
00421 908 021 469 • [www.slovakia-explorer.com](http://www.slovakia-explorer.com) • [booking@slovakia-explorer.com](mailto:booking@slovakia-explorer.com)

- Krakow, the former Polish capital, has a fantastic atmosphere in winter
- On certain dates, you can experience Krakow's traditional Christmas market on the biggest square in Europe
- From Krakow, you'll reach one of Central Europe's highest mountain ranges in less than three hours
- The cable car journey up to Lomnický Peak opens up a 360° panoramic view of Slovakia and Poland
- You'll walk to some hidden gems, like mountain huts and glacial lakes
- The horse and carriage ride is really special – you'll canter through the forest and enjoy a traditional picnic cooked on an open fire

### Is this trip right for you?

- Walking forms a key part of this trip, but it's planned in a way that means almost anyone with an average level of fitness can take part.
- Some sections of the tourist paths can be icy. Spikes and walking poles will be provided so you can enjoy walking, even on slippery terrain.
- Temperatures can drop well below 0 C° in winter months, so you'll need to prepare for cold weather.

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Arrive in Krakow and explore the former Polish capital.

Krakow may not be Poland's capital any more, but it's undoubtedly the country's cultural hub – so it's the perfect place to start your Polish-Slovakian winter discovery tour.

You can start exploring the incredible architecture and pretty cobbled streets as soon as you arrive – your tour leader will meet you at your hotel to run through the plan for the week, so it's a good idea to arrange flights for a morning arrival. Later, they'll take you on a guided walk of the city. It starts at 5pm, so you'll need to be at your hotel by then.

The walking route has been carefully planned so you can take in all of Krakow's main sights, including the main market square – Rynek Główny – as well as Wawel Cathedral and Wawel Castle. Just bear in mind you'll need to pay the entrance fees if you'd like to get a closer look at any of these.

Christmas Market

If you're visiting between November 29 and January 7, you'll have the opportunity to enjoy the magical atmosphere of Krakow's Christmas market.

#### Activities included

Arrival airport transfer

#### Meals included

No meals included

#### Accommodation

Hotel – Krakow

### Day 2: Transfer to the snow-covered High Tatras, Slovakia's biggest mountain

## range.

This morning we'll leave the city of Krakow and country of Poland behind and head into the heart of the High Tatra Mountains, the biggest and oldest national park in Slovakia.

This is an area of phenomenal natural beauty, so you can expect to see frozen lakes and waterfalls, snow-covered valleys and forests, craggy peaks and ridges.

The journey takes just over two and a half hours, and you'll cross the Polish-Slovak border to head into the heart of the High Tatras.

Our destination is Tatranska Lomnica, one of the biggest and most popular villages in the High Tatras. After checking in there'll be an orientation walk around the hotel, so you can get your bearings.

### Activities included

Private vehicle from Krakow to Tatranska Lomnica

### Meals included

Breakfast

### Accommodation

Hotel – Tatranska Lomnica

## Day 3: Take the cable car to Lomnický Peak, then to Smokovec for a winter walk to Rainerova hut.

Start the morning with a cable car ride from Tatranska Lomnica, Slovakia's highest ski resort, to Skalnaté Pleso (1751m), where you'll find a frozen glacial lake and star-gazing observatory.

From here, you'll take a second cable car to Lomnický Peak, which is 2634 metres high. Take in the panoramic views over Slovakia and Poland – the snow-capped scenery is straight from a fairy-tale.

Next, you'll travel by mountain tram to Starý Smokovec, the oldest settlement in the High Tatras, before taking a funicular to pretty Hrebienok, one of the most-visited destinations in the Tatras and host of the unofficial ice statue carving world championships. From here, you'll take an easy 30-minute walk to the oldest mountain hut in the Tatra Mountains, Rainerova. Here, you can warm up with a steaming mug of Tatra tea – made from herbs gathered from the Alpine meadows, before returning to Tatranska Lomnica late afternoon.

### Total walking

Distance: 1,4 km

Total ascent: 72 m

Total descent: 67 m

Min elevation: 1258 m

Max elevation: 1303 m

### Activities included

Cable car to Skalnaté Pleso and Lomnický Peak

Local train to/from Smokovec

Funicular to Hrebienok

Walking

### Meals included

Breakfast

### **Accommodation**

Hotel – Tatranska Lomnica

## **Day 4: Ride a mountain tram to Strbske Pleso, Slovakia's highest village, then head to the magical village of Liptov.**

Today, a 40-minute scenic train ride takes you to Strbske Pleso (1347m), Slovakia's highest village and the official spot where the winter sports world championships were held in 1970.

The village's beautiful lake is a popular place for winter walking and cross-country skiing, and there are very popular ski jumps and an outdoor stadium close by. After a guided stroll around the village you'll have the chance to take a cable car to Solisko mountain. At a height of 1814m, this peak offers yet more spectacular views.

After lunch in a traditional Slovak restaurant, KOLIBA, we'll transfer to the magical village of Liptov – an open-air museum of folk architecture – before heading back to the hotel in the late afternoon.

### **Activities included**

Mountain tram and private vehicle

Outdoor museum

Walking

### **Activities not included**

Cable car to Solisko – 15 EUR

### **Meals included**

Breakfast

### **Accommodation**

Hotel – Tatranska Lomnica

## **Day 5: Explore medieval Levoca and enjoy a horse and carriage ride with a picnic on an open fire.**

After breakfast, we'll transfer to the medieval town of Levoca. Surrounded by three national parks, Levoca is famous for its beautifully preserved historical houses, city walls and the church of St James, hiding the biggest wooden alter in the world.

We then transfer to the goral village of Zdiar. In the foothills of the Belianske Tatras, this village showcases unique architecture and you can learn all about the painted houses, log houses and barns at the local museum.

Later, you'll hop on a carriage pulled by a pair of horses to enjoy a ride through the village and deeper into the forest, where you'll sit down to an outdoor picnic cooked on an open fire.

**Activities included**

Transfers by private vehicle  
Sightseeing in Levoca  
Visit to outdoor museum  
Horse and carriage ride with picnic

**Meals included**

Breakfast, picnic (filling enough to call it a lunch)

**Accommodation**

Hotel – Tatranska Lomnica

**Day 6: Spend a day exploring the High Tatra Mountains under your own steam.**

Today is all yours. Set off on a winter walk, go skiing on the sunny side of the Tatras, go ice skating, sledding or snow-tubing, or visit the beautiful Belianska cave. Your tour leader can help you plan the perfect day for you.

If you want to soak up more culture, you could visit the unique Luboviansky castle or the medieval town of Kezmarok. Nearby Poprad is also well worth exploring at your own pace.

If relaxation is on the cards, head to one of the aqua parks in the foothills of the Tatras. There are outdoor and indoor thermal pools and wellness centres where you can relax after all the walking you've done in the last week.

**Meals included**

Breakfast

**Accommodation**

Hotel – Tatranska Lomnica

**Day 7: Head back to Krakow and spend some more time exploring.**

This morning we'll drive back to Krakow, where you'll have a free afternoon to explore the city at your own pace. Get a better look at Wawel Castle, where the country's rulers lived and governed Poland for 500 years. Spend some time soaking up the atmosphere on busy Rynek Główny, the central square and beating heart of the Old Town. Or tuck in to authentic Polish cuisine at one of the city's many restaurants while you look back on an incredible week.

**Activities included**

Transfer back to Krakow

**Meals included**

Breakfast

**Accommodation**

Hotel – Krakow

## Day 8: Head home.

Your adventure comes to an end today – until next time...

### Activities included

Departure airport transfer

### Meals included

Breakfast

## Essential Holiday Information

### What's Included

#### Meals

Seven breakfasts, one lunch

#### Transport

Airport transfers

Private vehicle, trains

#### Accommodation

Two nights in a three-star hotel

Five nights in a comfortable mountain hotel

#### Activities

Walking

Cable car to Lomnický peak

Funicular

#### Tour Leader

English speaking tour leader from start to finish.

### What's not Included

International flights

Travel insurance

Any optional activities mentioned in the itinerary

### Supplements

Single room Nov, Dec, March 110 EUR

Single room Jan, Feb 130 EUR

### Group Size

Normally min 5, max 16.

## Start Point

This tour starts in Krakow, Poland

## Flights & Airports

Our holidays do not include flights. This gives you the freedom to choose a local airport that works for you and shop for the best deal.

We recommend booking your flight to Krakow Airport with only 20 minutes transfer to your starting hotel.

## Transfers

### Arrival airport transfer

Arrival airport transfer from Krakow's airport directly to your starting hotel is provided.

## Transport

During this tour you will use: trains, funicular, cable cars and private vehicles.

## Accommodation

During this tour you will stay in two comfortable hotels. That includes one night in Krakow at the start of the tour, five nights in the Tatra mountains, and one night again in Krakow at the end of the tour.

Both hotels are conveniently located in the centre of your destination, within walking distance to restaurants. All rooms are comfortably furnished with private facilities. There is also a restaurant and free Wi-Fi access.

## End point

This tour ends in Krakow.

## Extra Nights

If you need to arrive or leave on a different date, please contact us and we'd be more than happy to arrange extra pre or post tour accommodation for you.

## Packing

We recommend you pack as light as possible, with a suitcase or backpack that is easy to lift and carry, because you will be expected to carry your own bag during travelling, and take it to your hotel room etc.

We strongly recommend keeping the weight under 10 kg / 22lb. You will also need a day pack/bag to carry water and a camera etc for day trips. Below you will find a recommended packing list. It is by no means exhaustive, so if you're in any doubt, please contact us.

A thick coat or ski jacket

Thermals

Waterproof trousers

Fleeces and warm jumpers

Gloves, hat and scarf

Walking boots  
Strong trainers  
Water bottle  
Small first-aid kit  
Sun cream and sunglasses  
Beach towels and flip flops for thermal pools

## Group Leader

This trip is accompanied by one of our local group leaders. All of the organisation, including transfers and activities, is managed by your leader. Our experienced guides are some of the best in the country; they will be there to assist you with anything you might need, giving you advice and organising your activities on a daily basis so you can fully focus on one thing – enjoying Slovakia's spectacular mountain scenery!

## Money matters

Poland: Polish złoty, Slovakia: EUR

Compared to other mountainous, European countries such as Switzerland and Austria, your money goes much further in Poland and Slovakia. Prices of services and goods may vary depending on the type of establishment, but as a guide this is what you can expect to pay during your stay:

Mineral Water, 1.5 litre - from 0.45 EUR

Beer - from 0.65 EUR

Wine - from 2.30 EUR

Lunch (soup + main dish) - from 4 EUR

Dinner (three-course) - 10 - 15 EUR

## Tipping

Tipping in Slovakia and Poland is an accepted part of the service and tourism industries. We thought it would be helpful to provide a guide on what to tip the different people who will make your trip an excellent one. Of course, this is just to give you an idea – it's entirely optional, and you can choose to tip as much or as little as you wish.

Tour leader – 2-4 EUR per day

Guides/activity instructors – 2-3 EUR per day

Drivers – 1-2 EUR per day

Restaurants – round up to the nearest EUR

## Climate

Temperatures during the winter are very cold. Daytime temperatures in the mountains can range from -15 to 0 degrees Celsius. Temperatures drop considerably at higher altitudes and it's vital that you come prepared with suitable clothing and footwear, as well as protection from the mountain sun.

## Travel Insurance

It is a condition of travelling with us that you have holiday insurance. Please make sure you arrange this prior to travel.



## Visa Requirements

An entry visa is not usually required by citizens of the EU, USA, CAN, AUS and NZ. Citizens from other countries should confirm all visa-related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

## Health and Vaccinations

You need to be in good physical health to participate in this trip. Please read the itinerary carefully and, if you're in any doubt, contact one of our team for guidance. We recommend you carry a first-aid kit with you, and contact your doctor for up-to-date vaccination advice.

## Ready to go? Signing up is quick and easy!

1. Check availability online or contact us by email or phone.
2. Secure your place/s online by clicking the BOOK NOW button and following the three easy steps or contact us by email/phone.

Your place is secured with a 99 EUR deposit per person, and you can pay by debit or credit card (no fees apply) or by bank transfer (fees apply).

3. A confirmation email will be sent to your email automatically.

## Need more information?

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions at all. Trip Notes provide detailed information including visa info, how to get to your hotel, what to pack, money matters, climate – pretty much everything you need to know about this tour and more.

Our knowledgeable and helpful team is here to help, and we look forward to welcoming you to our spectacular country soon!

## Why book with Slovakia Explorer

This holiday is operated by our in-country team of experts at Slovakia Explorer. By booking with us, you get our unrivalled local knowledge and 24/7 support during your trip.

Our holidays offer unique experiences that give you an unparalleled insight into Slovakia. During the planning and booking process, we pay attention to every detail of your holiday to make sure your trip is perfect.

Our prices are fair and our standards are sky-high, which means you get top quality and great value.