



## **NEWSLETTER 1/2021**

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## The "Route of the Gothic Castles" surprises again!



Mobile guide about the route of the Gothic castles is one of the most dynamically developing tourist applications in Poland. It is ideal for people interested in history, for these who want to learn and discover unknown and interesting facts connected with important centres of the medieval Europe.

The main goal of the guide "Routs of the Gothic Castles" is to promote the cultural heritage of the Baltic Sea region (northern Poland, Kaliningrad Oblast in Russia) as attractive because of its universal historical and cultural values.

The previous version of the application had two new language versions: English and German. It was adopted to iOS and the possibility to listen to the descriptions was added. New places and routes running across the Pomeranian Voivodeship appeared. They were thematically related to the hydraulic engineering monuments and lighthouses.

The newest version of the guide includes other unique routes and quests in the Kaliningrad region: in the footsteps of Immanuel Kant, amber, fortifications and First World War routes. The Amber Trail runs across the Russian territory. It runs farther in Poland. An additional feature in the guide is a trip to the most interesting places in Kaliningrad - one of the most mysterious and unusual cities in the Eastern Europe.

The current version of the application enable the visually impaired people to use its resources. With the help of an assistant, the visually impaired person can navigate through his or her voice - simply speaking to the application, which part of it he or she wants to use at the moment and, for example, which castle or tourist route to hear about. The option of audio description of the photographs attached to places is added in this version. Thus the functionality of descriptions reading is extended.

The new version of the application was developed as a part of the project 'Tourism beyond the boundaries – tourism routes of the cross-border regions of Russia and North-East Poland' and is co-financed by the European Union under the programme of Cross-Border Cooperation Poland -Russia 2014-2020.

You can download the application using the below QR code, using the link <https://mobilne.wm.pl/zamki-gotyckie> or by entering „Szlaki zamków gotyckich” in the search engine of the Play or AppStore mobile market.



## The Trail of the Gothic Castles



arch. Hotel Zamek Ryn\*\*\*\*

Length: 642,00 km

Sign/colour: marked trail (road sign E-22 Zamki Gotyckie Szlak turystyczny)

The trail: Lębork - Bytów - Człuchów - Nowe - Gniew - Malbork - Sztum - Kwidzyn –Ostróda - Działdowo -Nidzica - Olsztyn - Lidzbark Warmiński - Kętrzyn – Ryn -Giżycko

This is a long trail on which we can admire Gothic castles of Warmia, Mazury, Kaszuby and Powiśle. The castles are part of the Association of Communes of the Polish Gothic Castles and they include castles once belonging to the Teutonic Order, chapters and bishops. These are magnificent structures of different sizes, purpose and defensive character. The trail has no precise course – however, we can find some different variants of the route. We will also see many information boards on the way that promote the trail.

Although the Teutonic Knights' Castle in Lębork is the seat of the district court, it also has a rich cultural offer provided by the local knight's brotherhood and the Museum operating in the city fortifications (tower no. 24, 32, 27). Lębork also lies along the Pomeranian Route of St James, which is part of the European network leading to Santiago de Compostela in Spain.

The castle in Bytów is a former seat of the Teutonic Knights' administration, also serving as an inn

for Western European knights, who were heading for the capital of the Teutonic state in Malbork. Currently, the castle houses, among others, the West-Kashubian Museum, a hotel and a restaurant.

In the Teutonic times the castle in Człuchów was the second most powerful defensive stronghold, just after Malbork. Only a 46-metre-high defensive tower, which is at present the seat of the Regional Museum, has survived till today.

Nowe is the smallest Teutonic castle in Pomerania. Currently, the only partially preserved element of the castle is a residential building which houses the culture centre.

Beautifully situated on the left bank of Vistula, the castle in Gniew takes pride in its Gothic architecture, as well as various events and historic re-enactments organized here. Three separate hotel buildings (the Marysieńka Palace, the Knights' Hotel, the Castle Chambers) functioning under the name Gniew Castle Hotel make the cathedral hill look really attractive.

On our way along the trail there is a landmark which is definitely worth visiting – the Malbork stronghold. It is a great medieval defensive structure which was never captured. The Malbork Castle is also the largest Gothic castle in Poland, one of the most outstanding examples of the defensive buildings of the Middle Ages, and in 1997 it was included in the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List. It consists of three castles surrounded by massive walls and a deep moat. Malbork was the capital city of the Teutonic Knights state between 1309 and 1457.

The Castle in Sztum enchants because it is set up on an irregular pentagon. In the times of the Teutonic Kingdom, it served as a summer residence of the Grand Master.

The next defensive structure on the trail - the Castle of the Pomesania Chapter in Kwidzyń – has a great eye-catching defensive tower called 'gdanisko'. In the Cathedral, adjacent to the castle, an extraordinary discovery has been made in recent years - the remains of three great masters of the Teutonic Order.

The Teutonic Knights' Castle in Ostróda became famous as the headquarters of Napoleon Bonaparte after the battle of Pruska Hława in February 1807 during the campaign in East Prussia. Ostróda is also associated with the Elbląg Canal, commonly known as the Ostróda-Elbląg Canal, which aspires to be included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The Teutonic castle in Działdowo has been renovated and opened to the public. The Museum of the Borderland is located within its walls, including the Interactive Exhibition of the State of the Teutonic Order in the Town Hall building.

The castle in Nidzica is very interesting - it is the largest Teutonic castle in Mazury. It is distinguished by two high towers in the entrance wing. The castle in Nidzica is also a place of knightly tournaments. Two knightly events take place here annually. Additionally, the castle offers accommodation in guest rooms.

The castle in Olsztyn also attracts tourists' attention as it is a massive Gothic chapter fortress with an astronomical board made by Nicolaus Copernicus, which is located in the cloister. Copernicus used the board to determine the spring equinox.

In Lidzbark Warmiński lived Ignacy Krasicki - a famous poet and bishop, whereas the castle itself, due to its structure (a courtyard surrounded by cloisters), is called Wawel of the North. There is the



four-star Krasicki Hotel in the bailey.

What is most worth visiting in Kętrzyn is the Teutonic castle, renewed last year, the St. George church and the Masonic lodge.

Getting slightly off the track, you can visit the Wolf's Lair - the former military headquarters of Adolf Hitler in Gierłoż.

The Teutonic Knights' Castle in Ryn, fully adapted for a four-star hotel offers a unique form of accommodation with the possibility of sightseeing the castle. In the town you can also see an old mill, as well as a nineteenth-century Dutch windmill.

The last town on the trail is Giżycko, where you can find the four-star Hotel St. Bruno in a beautifully restored Teutonic castle.

[www.szlak.zamkiotyckie.org.pl/index-ang.html](http://www.szlak.zamkiotyckie.org.pl/index-ang.html)

## The bishop castle and the Hotel Krasicki\*\*\*\*\*in Lidzbark Warmiński



The bishop castle in Lidzbark Warmiński is called “the Wawel of the North”. It belongs to the most precious sights of the Gothic architecture in Poland, it is well preserved and, to a great extent, original. The castle was built between 1350-1401 in the mouth of the rivers Łyna and Symsarna. It was mostly patterned upon the Teutonic architecture of commander castles and had a medieval character of a defensive structure. The whole castle was encircled by defensive walls and moats independent of the town. There is a museum in the castle now and the Hotel Krasicki\*\*\*\*\* in an outer bailey. Sophisticated rooms and suits in the Gothic and Baroque parts of the hotel refer to the original style of the building. They are named after former guests of the castle: King Stanisław Leszczyński, Sigismund III Vasa, John Sigismund Hohenzollern, Tsar Paul I Romanov. At present there are 122 guest rooms, along with such unique propositions as The Library Cafe and the observatory, which is equipped in honour of Nicolaus Copernicus, who also lived here. The terrace of the town is an excellent vantage point for viewing the whole of Lidzbark Warmiński, which is known as the pearl of Varmia. In the basement there are excellent facilities for guests, including: SPA & Wellness, swimming pool, whirlpool, fitness room and saunas.

[lidzbark.muzeum.olsztyn.pl](http://lidzbark.muzeum.olsztyn.pl)

[www.hotelkrasicki.pl](http://www.hotelkrasicki.pl)

## The Hotel St. Bruno\*\*\*\*



### Past and present times

The Hotel St. Bruno was built in a stylishly restored Teutonic castle, whose history dates back to the 14th century. The building changed its appearance and purpose over the centuries. Originally erected by the Teutonic Knights, the fortified fortress served as a Renaissance hunting residence of the dukes, and after 1850 - as the headquarters of the Boyen Fortress command. In the interwar period, when Giżycko-Lötzen was an elite resort, the future President of Germany, Paul von Hindenburg, set up a regional museum in the castle. Earlier it was his personal quarters. The post-war years rather took away its glamour, and during the communist era the castle gradually fell into ruin. It was only after 2010 that it was carefully renovated and got a new function: a four-star boutique hotel, the only facility of this standard in the area. The St. Bruno Hotel combines the uniqueness of a historic site with the extraordinary precision of modern design and new global hotel trends. The uniqueness of the interior is determined by harmoniously selected details: old wooden beams, stylish accessories referring to the 1920s and 1930s, elements of the historic castle construction and old foundations.

### Location

The St. Bruno Hotel is a prominent symbol of Giżycko, the sailing capital of Poland. It is the most characteristic building with an interesting history together with the Boyen Fortress, the Water-Tower or the 19th century tenement houses. The city is also famous for the most modern and the largest yacht port in Masuria. The Hotel itself is located in an unusual place - by the Łuczański Canal, connecting two Masurian lakes: Niegocin and Kisajno, in close proximity to the 19th century rotating bridge, which is operated manually by only one person – a rarity in Europe.



## Peace and quiet

The cosy, boutique character of the hotel enables you to relax in carefully designed interiors. The restaurant La bibliotheque, rich in culinary specialities, will provide a romantic atmosphere for every dinner. It will satisfy the taste of every gourmet and design aficionado. Morning jogging in the Oak Woods or a swimming pool training in the Spa area will be an ideal start into a new day along with a tasty breakfast served in the restaurant.

[www.hotelstbruno.pl/en/relax](http://www.hotelstbruno.pl/en/relax)