Slow leisure in Podlaskie
Family-friendly Podlaskie
Active leisure in Podlaskie
Podlaskie – European bisons, elks, birds and insects
Water leisure in Podlaskie
Podlaskie – a melting pot of cultures

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Podlaskie is a region in which time seems to go a little slower. So it is a perfect tourist destination if you seek peace and serenity – for busy city residents and senior citizens who have more free time. Unspoilt nature, a wealth of cultures, religious sanctuaries, health resorts and spa & wellness centres will make you catch your breath and stop for a while. Active leisure enthusiasts and gourmets who look for the taste of local specialties long to be remembered will not be disappointed when visiting the Podlaskie Region.

We mention only some of the wide offer of local attractions of Podlaskie – those which will make your body to relax, to find a spiritual balance, to practice active leisure, and, last but not least, to taste Podlaskie regional specialties and to familiarize yourself with the region’s culture.

We have split them into five categories:

• **Something for the body** (health resorts, sanatoriums, spas)
• **Something for the soul** (pilgrimage centres, monasteries, museums)
• **Active in the bosom of nature** (Nordic walking paths, natural footbridges, jogging and walking trails)
• **Podlaskie tastes** (regional products, restaurants with local cuisine)
• **A lot is going on** (periodical events)

After a spa treatment your body has more energy, so it will be easier for you to spare more time for active leisure in the bosom of nature. After a walk along forest paths time will come to feast and to experience the unique taste of the region. Podlaskie cuisine specialties are as diversified as its residents. A Tatar pierekaczewnik, Lithuanian kolduny or a potato babka originating from Belarus are but a few dishes you might like to try. When the feast is over, you might opt for one of the many cultural events. The offer is very rich so everyone will find something to enjoy.
A wake-up to the sounds of the forest, a therapeutic mud bath, relax and chill-out during the treatment and savoury Podlaskie specialties – this is a vision of leisure time in the Knyszyn Forest and Supraśl health resort, situated in the very heart of the forest. The Knieja Hotel sanatorium and hotel are situated on the border of the forest. Treatment of motor organ diseases, rheumatologic and neurological diseases and lower respiratory tract diseases are offered. You can also benefit from a rich spa & wellness offer in Supraśl and its neighbourhood – in Knieja, Borowinowy Zdrój and Lipowy Most hotels. The latter offers therapeutic and relaxation treatment, swimming pools and sauna, a golf course, britzka and sleigh rides, bicycle and Nordic walking sticks hire.

Forests and lakes in Augustów – the summer capital of Poland – offer perfect climatic conditions for those who need therapeutic leisure. The Augustów Medical Spa Resort situated on Lake Necko offers physiotherapy, kinesitherapy, hydrotherapy, mud wraps, therapeutic massage and cryotherapy.

Air in the Augustów Forest is rich in phytoncides and natural aromatic oils. Water is taken from a 482 m deep intake. Augustów resorts specialise in the treatment of orthopaedic diseases and injuries, rheumatic diseases, peripheral vessels diseases, osteoporosis and general improvement of health condition.

**Tourist & Rehabilitation Centre in Krzyżewo**

Krzyżewo 30, 18-218 Sokoły
Phone: +48 86 4764218, +48 513816376
E-mail: recepcja@fpdn.org.pl
www.centrumkrzyzewo.pl

**Borowinowy Zdrój Hotel**

ul. Zielona 3, 16-030 Supraśl
Phone: +48 85 7183025, +48 660509590
E-mail: recepcja@borowinowyzdroj.pl
www.borowinowyzdroj.pl

**Lipowy Most Golf Park Hotel**

Borki 29, 16-030 Supraśl
Phone: +48 85 7491271, +48 730731732
E-mail: recepcja@lipowymost.pl
www.lipowymost.pl

**Royal Hotel & Spa Białystok**

Rynek Kościuszki 11, 15-001 Białystok
Phone: +48 85 8311801, +48 570181507
E-mail: recepcja@royal-hotel.pl
www.royal-hotel.pl

**Knieja sanatorium and hotel in Supraśl**

al. Niepodległości 6, 16-030 Supraśl
Phone: +48 85 7108394, +48 501416648
E-mail: recepcja.knieja@halgen.com.pl
www.hotellnieja.pl

**Augustów Medical SPA Resort, BiaVita Polska SA**

ul. Zdrojowa 3/5/7, 16-300 Augustów
Phone: +48 87 6432871, +48 606795542
E-mail: recepcja.sanatorium@biavita.pl
www.sanatorium.augustow.pl
The Camaldolese monastery complex in Wigry, situated on the hill and surrounded by monastery garden, Lake Wigry and the Agustów Forest, is a unique place. You might also visit the museum of John Paul III, the clock tower and the church catacombs. A night stay in a hermit houses where monks once lived can be an extraordinary experience.

Heading south, do not forget to stop at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Studzieniczna. In 1999 Pope John Paul II visited this site, which has been commemorated by a monument set on the pier of Lake Studzieniczne. The sanctuary is connected with revelations of Our Lady which were reported here in the 18th century and consist of the Church of Our Lady of Scapular, a miraculous well (its water is believed to heal eye diseases) and the Chapel of the Holy Virgin Mary.

The crucifix in the chancel and candelabrums made from elk horns attract the visitors’ attention in the church interior. The sanctuary is picturesquely set among Augustów lakes and woods.

Podlaskie is the centre of Polish Orthodoxy. The largest population of Orthodox believers and the greatest number of Orthodox churches can be found in this region. The monastery in Supraśl and the Holy Hill of Garbarka are the main pilgrimage centres.

The Monastery of the Annunciation of the Holy Mother of God in Supraśl is a destination of annual pilgrimages and a home to monks who live there. The defensive Orthodox church is the most impressive structure here. There is also the interactive Museum of Icons. Its exhibitions, with fine sound and light effects, familiarise the visitors with the history of the site and help them to understand the role of the icon in Orthodoxy. There is also the pilgrim’s house. Its historic walls have been renovated and the interiors furnished with modern appliances.

The Sanctuary on Holy Hill of Grabarka attracts many pilgrims every year. Its main landmark is the Orthodox Church of the Lord’s Transfiguration on the hill, surrounded by thousands of crosses the faithful have brought here to thank or to ask for a grace. The Holy Mount Grabarka became famous for miraculously saving local people from cholera epidemic in 1710. The faithful still seek healing by the water of the miraculous spring at the foot of the hill. The convent of Sts Martha and Mary has been on the site since 1947.

**ATTRACTIONS**

- **Rev. Jerzy Popiełuszko’s family house in Okopy**
  (contact the parish office, phone: +48 85 7124128, +48 605237607)
- **Monastery of the Annunciation of the Holy Mother of God in Supraśl**
  ul. Klasztorna 1, 16-030 Supraśl
  Phone: +48 530551778
  E-mail: monastermpm@gmail.com
  www.monaster-suprasl.pl
- **Pilgrim’s house - Supraśl Academy**
  Phone: +48 85 7108288, +48 662254177
  E-mail: akademia@oikonomos.pl
  www.akademiasupraska.pl
- **Museum of Icons in Supraśl – a branch of the Podlaskie Museum in Białystok**
  ul. Klasztorna 1, 16-030 Supraśl
  Phone: +48 509336829
  E-mail: muzeum.ikon@muzeum.bialystok.pl
  www.muzeum.bialystok.pl
- **Monastery on Holy Hill of Grabarka**
  17-330 Nurzec Stacja
  Phone: +48 85 6550010, +48 507761241
  E-mail: grabarka@pdt.pl
  www.grabarka.pl
- **Post-Camaldolese Monastery in Wigry, Museum of John Paul II**
  Wigry Pro Foundation
  Wigry 11, 16-402 Suwałki
  Phone: +48 87 5662499
  E-mail: recepcja@wigry.pro
  www.wigry.pro
- **Sanctuary of Our Lady of Studzieniczna**
  Studzieniczna 10, 16-301 Augustów
  Phone: +48 87 6433143
  www.santtuarium-studzieniczna.pl
Velo connecting routes, you can plan a trip in the form of a loop, several dozen kilometres long. Cyclists will certainly be eager to see the Podlaskie Stork Trail, leading to the habitats of the white stork and the Rospuda Valley Cycling Trail.

Hiking and biking in the areas around the Narew River are also good options. The picturesque Narew Trail, some 30 km long, marked in yellow, runs down the river valley. The beginning of the trail runs through woodlands, which surround Białystok on the south. Further on the trail passes along the Horodnianka River, a complex of fishing ponds in Topilec and viewing points overlooking the Narew backwaters, including Zerwany Most (Broken Bridge) in Kruszewo. Legend has it that the devil cast a spell on the builders of the river crossing. Some 350 m from Kruszewo you can see the remnants of the “Koziołek” redoubt dating from the 17th century, and a Siberian Iris stand.

You can practice healthy walks with sticks almost everywhere, but the Podlaskie Region offers special trails for it. Nordic walking loops in the Land of Forest and European Bison Park cross the Białowieża Forest. Walking along the trails you can see hundred-year-old sets of trees, picturesque forest clearings, charming villages, an open-air museum and the miraculous spring Krynoczka.

It is up to you to choose trails of various lengths and level of difficulty:
• Trail 1 – A walk in the forest (green): 3 km, ca. 30 min
• Trail 2 – Near Krynoczka (green): 9 km, ca. 90 min
• Trail 3 – Around Sacharewo (red): 11 km, ca. 2 hrs
• Trail 4 – Czerwonka landscapes (red): 9 km, ca. 90 min
• Trail 5 – Along the Białowieża Forest roads (black): 15 km, ca. 3 hrs
• Trail 6 – European Bison Loop (black): 15 km, ca. 3 hrs
• Trail 7 – To Old Białowieża (black): 21 km, ca. 4 hrs

A path leading to Lake Komosa, hidden in the Kryszyż Forest, is a perfect choice for active leisure in the bosom of nature. The trail starts before the bridge in Krasne, turning right and continuing along a forest path for around 700 m.

An attractive Nordic walking path runs along the Narew River around Łomża. The trail is 13 km long, running in the village of Stara Łomża on the Rzeka River and combining further through Siemiert Nadzeczyń, Prniev and Gac, where there is a viewing tower from which you can admire the beautiful landscapes of the Łomża Landscape Park of the Narew Valley.

Excellent trails for people practicing active tourism, jogging, Nordic walking and cross-country skiing were also created in the Biebrza National Park. Stretching equipment and roofed resting places have been installed along the trails. It is up to you to choose one of the three trails:
• Jogging trail - Trzyrzeczki – 3.2 km (on the trail: Forest educational path, equipment for exercise in the forest, a shed)
• Jogging Trail around the fort of the 4th Osowiec fortress – 4.6 km (along the trail: pine woods, moats of Osowiec forts)
• Jogging Trail – Barwik – 4.8 km (on the trail: pine woods, Tsar’s Route, swamp)

The Kryszyż Forest is perfect for Nordic walking, forest jogging and biking trips. Walking and jogging trails (Lesnie Wlodrownicze and Lesnie Biegownicze) have been created here. The trails begin at the Silvarium in Poczopek and abound with attractions, including: a women’s cross, the bison tower, railway bridges, a wooden church and a rampart built by insurgents. The trails differ from one another in length and level of difficulty:
• Forest jogging trail (Short – Krótka) – 1100 m
• Forest jogging trail (Oldies’ – Geriatka) – 5500 m
• Forest jogging trail (Extreme – Ekstermka) – 2700 m (the most difficult)
• Forest jogging trail (Seven – Siódemka) – 7500 m
• Forest walking trail (Piećkowa) – 28 km
• Forest walking trail (Józkowa) – 21 km

**ATTRACTIONS**

Silvarium – Kryinki Forest District Office Poczopek 7b, 16-113 Szudziałowo
Phone: +48 85 7229647
When visiting the Podlaskie Region, tasting its unique Tatar cuisine is a must. You will sense its aroma around the mosques in Kruszyniany and Bohoniki. Try pierekaczwnik – a traditional stuffed pie, cottage-cheese stuffed mandy (steamed dumplings) or zbiżele (dumplings with vegetable stuffing) and many other Tatar-style delights.

Potato cake (babka) and potato sausage are specialties to be found throughout the region, but they taste the best in Supraśl. At the turn of May/June World Championship in baking a potato cake and potato sausage have been part of the Uroczysko Festival which attracts many people fond of such dishes every year.

Zaguby podlaskie, potato-stuffed dumplings, are specialties particularly popular around Drohiczyn on the Bug River. Podlaskie rivers and lakes abound with fish. Many local restaurants and farm holdings in Augustów, Łomża, Stary Folwark and elsewhere offer delicious fish dishes. Biebrza bream, dumplings stuffed with pike, cured vendace and eel from Lake Rajgrodzkie are worth a try.

Podlaskie is also known for excellent meat and cured meat prepared in a traditional way. The taste of Kindziuk and kumpiak to be found in the Suwałki region and in Sokółka has become legend. If you like hunting-style cooking, you will not be disappointed by a truly royal feast in Białowieża, where you can taste exquisite terrine, game-stuffed dumplings, or a venison saddle and other local specialties.

Delicious regional dairy products can also be easily found in the Podlaskie Region. Wiżajny and Korycin are known for their rennet cheese, you might also give a try to dried cheese in Sokółka, or klinka cottage cheese and ripened "tsar’s cheese" in Hajnówka. Butter from Filipów has no match. The products owe their unique taste to clean areas of origin in the Green Lungs of Poland and to traditional production methods.

Kruszewo is known for its pickled cucumbers (known as Kruszewskie Ogórki Herbowe). They owe their taste to centuries-old traditions of cucumber cultivation, aromatic spices, with an adequate amount of dill and garlic, and production methods passed from generation to generation. In the olden times cucumbers were marinated in wooden barrels which were sunk in the Narew River. Today the process is a little different, but the final result is still delicious. The story goes that Napoleon appreciated the taste of cucumbers from Kruszewo. Now the delicacy is on the List of Traditional Products. If you like the taste of pickled cucumbers you should come here for the annual National Cucumber Day.

Ending a feast of Podlaskie specialties you might be tempted to try some sweets. Many of you probably already know sękacz – which absolutely rules among Podlaskie sweets. Take a few dozen eggs, a generous amount of butter and sugar (of course all of them best quality), and a wooden roller to turn it over the fire. Be patient when pouring successive layers. This is a brief recipe for the unique cake in the form of a knobby tree trunk. You may buy a traditional sękacz (e.g. in Suchowola or Suwałki), or bake it yourself in some agritourist farms in the Suwałki region around the Biebrza National Park.

The cake known as marcinek is Hajnówka’s specialty. Making it is a very laborious process. It consists of 20–30 thin layers, each spread with cream. Marcinek is one of the most popular desserts served at weddings and on holidays in the Białowieża Forest area.

A traditional Christmas, or more specifically Christmas Eve delicacy in Podlaskie is kutia – millet groats with poppy seed and honey, and sometimes also with nuts and dried fruit. It is one of the oldest known regional dishes. It cannot be missed on any Christmas table, in particular in Orthodox families.

If you want to keep the taste of Podlaskie for longer, why don’t you purchase delicious local honey: linden honey from Białowieża or mixed flower honey from the Sejny region. If you like honey, you should come to the Honey Feast in Tykocin. Every year in September, the market square fills with stalls offering natural honey and honey-based products – liquors, cakes and cosmetics. The Avenue of Traditional Podlaskie, Kurpie and Lithuanian Products offers delicious regional dishes, whilst the Folk Artists Avenue various craftworks and music by folk ensembles.
Among many events which showcase local traditions and culture, one should mention fairs, organised in Białystok (Kaziuki, Easter Fair, St. John’s Fair), Choroszcz or in the open-air museum in Jurwce (e.g. Podlaskie fragrant with herbs). You can listen to folk music, taste Podlaskie cuisine specialties and purchase folk crafts products. You might also go to the Museum of Agriculture in Ciechanowiec for the Podlaskie Bread Festival. Here in the natural setting and among centuries-old cottages, you can participate in mowing and threshing, to watch traditional baking of bread and a show of historical farming vehicles.

Strawberry Days are always held on the last weekend of June on artificial lake Korycin. You will have good fun and the opportunities to participate in quite unusual contests, such as the Strawberry Fashion Show, world championship in eating strawberries, a competition for the largest strawberry and the best strawberry cake and the most original folk craft product with strawberry as a theme, or a Strawberry Battle – the fighters will come out of it smiling, red and fragrant with strawberries.

Numerous woodlands and compact forest complexes, including the Knyszyn Forest, are a mushroom pickers’ paradise. Every year at the beginning of September the Mushroom Festival is held in Sokolin the Michałowo municipality. The organisers prepare a lot of attractions for participants. The competition for the title of “King Mushroom”, the largest mushroom, and the culinary competition for the best mushroom dish enjoy great interest, producers of regional food and folk crafts are also promoted during the Mushroom Festival. The stalls offer mushrooms in various forms: fresh, marinated, fried, dried and even wooden. The event is held at the Local Product Centre. It is an excellent opportunity to familiarise yourself with traditional ways of manufacture of folk craftworks. If you like, you can take part in various workshops and shows, e.g. ceramics, beer brewing, sculpture, souring cabbage, baking a korowaj cake, cross-stitch embroidery or production of natural cosmetics.

For over 30 years, Hajnówka has hosted a few hundred singers from all over the world who have been drawn here by their love for Orthodox Church music. The most beautiful musical pieces from various Christian traditions resound in the Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity during the International Festival Hajnówka Days of Orthodox Church Music. The Festival is accompanied by scientific seminars, exhibitions of local traditions and Orthodox culture and an open-air concert in the Białowiwa Forest. Down by 500 Kayaks enjoys great interest among tourists. It leads through a picturesque Bug River valley, abounding with natural and cultural attractions. The kayaking event is held at the beginning of August and takes two days. The event was held for the first time in 2013, on the 500th anniversary if the Podlaskie Region. The recreational expedition down the largest river in the south of the region offers the opportunity to get in touch with the beauty of nature around the Bug, and in particular the river itself which has not been regulated and thus kept its natural character. The kayaking expedition starts at the beach in Drohiczyn – the first historical capital of Podlaskie. Crews from Poland and abroad participate in the event.

ATTRACTIONS

International Festival Hajnówka Days of Orthodox Church Music
Venue: Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity in Hajnówka
Date: May
www.festiwal.cerkiew.pl

Strawberry Days in Korycin
Venue: artificial lake in Korycin
Date: last weekend of June
www.nowa.korycin.pl/odkryj-korycin/kraina-truskawki

Podlaskie Bread Festival
Venue: Krzysztof Kluk Museum of Agriculture in Ciechanowiec
Date: mid-August
www.muzeumrolnictwa.pl

Down by 500 kayaks
Venue: A beech in Drohiczyn
Date: August
www.kultura-drohiczyn.pl

Mushroom Festival
Venue: Local Product Centre in Sokol
Date: first half of September
www.cplsokole.pl
CERTIFIED TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES

Augustów, CIT, rynek Zygmunta Augusta 44, Phone: +48 87 6432883, it@urzad.augustow.pl
Białowieża, PIT BPN, ul. Park Pałacowy 11, Phone: +48 85 6812901, info@bpn.com.pl
Białowieża, PIT PTTK, ul. Kolejowa 17, Phone: +48 85 6812295, pttk@pttk.bialowieza.pl
Białystok, CIT, ul. Odeska 1, Phone: +48 85 7326831, cit@podlaskieit.pl
Białystok, PIT przy SSM „Podlasie”, al. Piłsudskiego 7B, Phone: +48 85 6524250, ssm@hostelpodlasie.pl
Choroszcz, PIT przy MGCKiS, ul. Sienkiewicza 29, Phone: +48 85 7191431, kultura@choroszcz.pl
Ciechanowiec, PIT, pl. 3 Maja 31, Phone: +48 50 7793404, it@ciechanowiec.pl
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Hajnówka, CIT Regionu Puszczy Białowieskiej, ul. 3 Maja 45, Phone: +48 85 6825141, biuro@lot.bialowieza.pl
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Łomża, PIT „Pamiątki z Łomży”, ul. Stary Rynek, Phone: +48 69 2892063, pamiatkizlomzy@gmail.com
Mielnik, PIT przy GOKSiR – Muzeum w Mielniku, ul. Brzeska 71, Phone: +48 85 6577100, it@mielnik.com.pl
Narewka, PIT, ul. Hajnowska 33, Phone: +48 85 6858062, rezerwacja@stanica.narewka.pl
Osowiec-Twierdza, PIT BPN, Osowiec-Twierdza 8, Phone: +48 85 7383035, it@biebrza.org.pl
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Siemiatycze, Biuro Promocji Powiatu Siemiatyckiego, ul. Legionów Piłsudskiego 3, Phone: +48 85 6555856, promocja@siemiatyckie.pl
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Supraśl, PIT „Bukowisko”, ul. Piłsudskiego 64, Phone: +48 85 7102470, turystyka@powiatbialostocki.pl
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