



**MAZOVIAN
WATER TRAILS**



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Text — Anna Jadaś, Krzysztof Łukawski, Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

Photos — Piotr Dylewski (Kajaki Dylewski), Andrzej Świątkowski (ZLOT), Krzysztof Michalak (Nadleśnictwo Gostynin), Grzegorz Hubert Gerek, Szczepan Przybyłowski, Adam Jasiński, Adobe Stock

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Editorial consultation — dr Piotr Kociszewski

Graphic design concept — Ewa Natkaniec

Composition — Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

Translations — Podgórskie Biuro Tłumaczeń (www.pbt.com.pl)

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Masovian Voivodeship Self-Government
26 Jagiellonska St., 03-719 Warsaw
tel. (+22) 59 79 100, fax (+22) 59 79 290
e-mail: urzad_marszalkowski@mazovia.pl

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INTRODUCTION

What you are holding in your hands is by no means a conventional canoeing guide, detailing every single mile of the canoeing routes on all of Mazovian rivers. There are many such publications out there, describing every river bend, shoal and fallen tree with pinpoint accuracy and locating them within a couple of metres. No matter whether you are eager to experience the majestic Vistula or challenge the crazy, meandering Wkra, you already have plenty of guides to choose from.

We decided to follow a different route and prepare our subjective descriptions of the Mazovian waterways, creating a certain kind of tours, which take into consideration some of the most interesting places, sections and nearby attractions.

We hope that all the information contained within our guide will inspire you to hop in your kayak, boat or sailboat and see for yourself that going with the flow of the Mazovian rivers is worth your while!

The descriptions include the distance to the mouth of the given river. Some of the more attentive readers might notice that these values are different from those reported in past publications. These differences are particularly stark in the case of the Bug River. This is due to several reasons. In recent years, the river has changed its current in several places, usually shortening its path to the mouth. What is more, in the past, the distance was measured based on maps, while modern measurements are based on GPS and satellite imagery. The distances shown in this guide also reflect the authors' own measurements and satellite data, and are virtually the same as in the best guide to the rivers of Mazovia: *Kajakiem w okolicach Warszawy* by Jakub Jagiełło and Marek Mazur (Warsaw 2016, Wydawnictwo CM).

The guide also features the Zegrze Reservoir, which is known to some as the Mazovian Sea, as well as brief descriptions of the Włocławek Reservoir and Gostynin Lake District, known as 'Mazovian Masuria'.

The appendix comprises an up-to-date list of Mazovian swimming sites with lifeguards available during the season, and water quality tests carried out on a regular basis. We hope that the list of kayak rentals and trip organisers will help those, who will want to pack up and go after reading the guide!



GO WITH THE FLOW OF THE VISTULA RIVER IN MAZOVIA

– from Solec to the Włocławek Reservoir –

With its length estimated at 1022 to 1048 kilometres, depending on which source you consult, the Vistula is without a doubt the queen of Polish rivers. It is also the last large wild river in Europe, which makes it a real treasure. Numerous plans to regulate its current and build dams, which were suggested in the 20th century, thankfully never came to fruition. As a result, the Vistula retained its natural character as a home and shelter for dozens of animal species.

The Dęblin – Płock section of the river is protected as a NATURA 2000 area. The Vistula is a meandering river, with shallows along the river bed, along with backwaters and isles. Between Modlin and Płock, the right bank rises sharply – more than 50 metres in Płock alone – and in several places the river washed the soil away, forming picturesque escarpments. It is also characterised by a large water level variance – depending on the season and precipitation, it can fluctuate by up to 8 metres.

For the purpose of our guide, we decided to split the Vistula into two sections in Mazovia – the upper one starting at the region's border near Solec and Wisła to Warsaw, and the lower one, starting in Warsaw, and going all the way to Włocławek Reservoir.

VISTULA RIVER FROM SOLEC NAD WISŁĄ TO WARSAW

You can start your journey near Solec nad Wisłą at the **608th kilometre of the river**. The Mazovian section of the Vistula starts about 1 kilometre south of the mouth of its left tributary, the Kamienna River. For almost 25 kilometres, the river or its banks form the border of the modern Mazovian and Lublin voivodeships. Farther down the river, in the vicinity of Kazimierz nad Wisłą and Puławy, the river flows into Lublin voivodeship. Then, after 30 kilometres or so, it becomes a border river again. After another 29 kilometres, near Holendry Kozienickie, the queen of Polish rivers starts running exclusively through Mazovia. When you decide to start near Solec, along the way you will kayak past:

- 568 km - Kazimierz Dolny
- 564 km - Nasiłów, ferry crossing
- 556 km - Puławy, bridge
- 553.3 km - bridge on S12 Road
- 536.5 km - mouth of the Wieprz River
- 536 km - Dęblin, railroad bridge
- 535 km - Dęblin, road bridge

If you start your journey in **Swierże Górne**, you will traverse the Mazovian section of the Vistula exclusively.



→ KAZIMIERZ NAD WISŁĄ
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ BRIDGE ON THE VISTULA IN PUŁAWY
→ photo: Adobe Stock



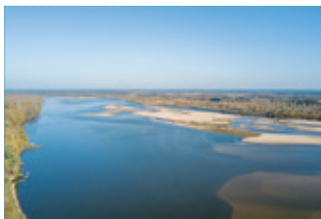
→ KAYAKING TRIP DOWN THE VISTULA
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



→ RADOMKA RIVER NEAR GŁOWACZÓW
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ 505,2 km - Swierże Górne

In Swierże Górne near the Kozienice Power Plant, **a ferry operates in the spring and fall**. You can see the mouth of the Zagożdżonka River to the left. The ferry makes for a great place to start your adventure. **Zagożdżonka is a left-bank tributary of the Vistula River with a length of about 49 kilometres, which flows through the Kozienice Primeval Forest**. You can traverse it only in winter and spring, when the water level is high enough.



→ VISTULA - DOWNSTREAM FROM DĘBLIN
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 499 km - mouth of the Radomka River

Radomka is about 124 kilometres long, and originates near the town of Końskie (in Świętokrzyskie voivodeship). You can enjoy a 76-kilometre section of the river (downstream of Domanowski Reservoir), but organized kayaking trips usually start in Jedlińsk (at about 46 kilometres).



→ MOUTH OF THE PILICA RIVER
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ 476 km - mouth of the Wilga River

On the left bank, you can see the village of Mniszew. **In August 1944, Soviet and Polish troops succeeded in establishing a bridgehead on the Vistula, which went down in history as the Warka-Magnuszew bridgehead.**

→ 475 km - mouth of the Pilica River

North of the mouths of the Wilga and Pilica rivers up to Warsaw's Siekierki stretches **the historic ethnographic Urzecze micro-region – an area inhabited by river people, namely raftsmen, fishermen, and the Olenders**. Their traditions are kept alive by folk groups and promoted during events such as the Flis Festival in Gassy and Pentecost in the Urzecze, which involves rafting down the Vistula in traditional boats.



→ A FAMILY OF COMMON MERGANSERS
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 463 km - Rembezy Isle

To the left, you can see a shallow branch of the Vistula, which is impassable when the water level is low. **It forms an isle, which is about 4.5 kilometres long and 1 kilometre wide**. In centuries past, the river flowed even farther west, right next to the walls of the former castle of the Dukes of Mazovia in Czersk, now almost 3 kilometres from its bank.



→ CZERSK CASTLE
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ 457,5 km - Czersk, Góra Kalwaria

More than 350 years old Góra Kalwaria was founded by Bishop Stefan Wierzbowski. **It was originally called Nowa Jerozolima (New Jerusalem) and its original layout based on the Latin cross has been preserved to this day**. Some of the noteworthy monuments include local churches: Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross,



and Church of the Lord's Supper in the Marianki district. Next to it, you can find the St Father Stanisław Papczyński Museum, dedicated to the founder of the Congregation of Marianans of the Immaculate Conception and a saint of the Catholic Church since 2016. Starting in the second half of the 19th century, the city became a hotspot for Hasidic Jews and a place of residence for the Tzaddikim of the Alter family, well-known across all of Europe. **It's also worth your while to take a trip to Czersk, the oldest capital of southern Mazovia with numerous attractions, including the ruins of the castle of Janusz I the Elder, one of the points of interest on the Mazovian Dukes' Route.**

Built at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries, it continues to impress the contemporary visitors with its towers. When planning a visit to Czersk, it is a good idea to check the calendar of events organised in the former stronghold.

→ 457 km - Urzecze road bridge

The bridge connects two parts of road no. 50. In the vicinity of the pillars and spurs, you might encounter whirlpools – be wary. **After passing the bridge, to the left you will see the entrance to the large river port of Góra Kalwaria, where you can leave your kayak and head to the town, which is located on the escarpment.**

→ 455,8 km - Glinki-Góra Kalwaria railroad bridge

A steel railroad bridge, consisting of six spans with a total length of 620 metres.

→ 453 km - isle comprising a part of the Łąchy Brzeskie Nature Reserve

The reserve protects a section **of the Vistula River with islands and sandbanks, home to many species of birds.**

→ 445 km - Gassy - Karczew ferry crossing

The ferry operates from 21 April to the end of November.

→ 443 km - mouth of the Świder River

In the vicinity of the mouth of the Świder River, you will pass through the Świder Isles Nature Reserve. **It covers an area of about 572 hectares and includes numerous islands, shoals and sandbanks at the mouth of the Świder River and the flowing waters of the Vistula.**

→ 434,5 km - Zawadowskie Islands Reserve

The total area of the Zawadowskie Islands reserve amounts to 530 hectares. Established in 1998, **it protects the natural**



→ CZERSK CASTLE
→ photo: arch. MROT



→ NADWIŚLAŃSKIE URZECZE ROAD BRIDGE
→ photo: Tadeusz Rudzki, CC BY-SA 4.0, WC



→ GASSY - KARCZEW FERRY CROSSING
→ photo: SkyMaja, CC BY-SA 4.0, WC



→ ŚWIDER RIVER JUST BEFORE MERGING WITH THE VISTULA
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ "ZAWADOWSKIE ISLANDS" NATURE RESERVE
→ photo: Wojciech Zabolotny, CC BY-SA 3.0, WC



→ ANNE JAGIELLON BRIDGE
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ SIEKIERKI COMBINED HEAT AND POWER PLANT
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ SIEKIERKI BRIDGE
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ GRUBA KAŚKA
→ photo: Adobe Stock

and unadulterated ecosystem of the middle Vistula River, including shoals, banks and isles that – together with the riverside riparian forest – creates perfect conditions for river fauna.

→ 434 km - Anna Jagiellon Bridge
(also known as the Southern Bridge)

The youngest and longest crossing on the Vistula in Warsaw is part of its Southern Ring. **The bridge, commonly known as the Southern Bridge, was named after Anna Jagiellon** – the sister of King Sigismund Augustus and wife of King Stephen Bathory, who managed to complete the construction of the first permanent crossing between the banks of the Vistula River near Warsaw, a project launched by her brother. The bridge, funded by the last of the Jagiellons, was used in 1573-1603. The current bridge was opened in 2022.

→ 430 km - Siekierki Combined Heat and Power Plant,
mouth of the Wilanówka River

→ 427,3 km - Warsaw, Siekierki Bridge

After passing the bridge, to the right you will see the mouth of the new relief canal (Kanał Nowej Ulgi). Just 200 and 700 metres away, you can notice two auxiliary water intakes for the Praga Water Treatment Station.

→ 424,6 km - Warsaw, Gruba Kaśka

Gruba Kaśka is Europe's largest infiltration well – potable water source located in the river current, which operates



↳ GRUBA KAŚKA AND PANORAMA OF WARSAW
↳ photo: Adobe Stock

on the basis of a natural filtration process. The innovative facility was built in 1964 and is still in use as the main source of water for 30% of Warsaw. The structure is 49 metres tall and has a circumference of 44 metres. It draws water from under the bottom of the Vistula River (from a depth of about 7 metres) by means of 15 drains and is pumped to the treatment station through a 311-metre-long tunnel. Gruba Kaśka is accompanied by Chude Wojtki – special vessels equipped with machines that loosen the filtering layers located above the drains.



↳ CZERNIAKÓW PORT
↳ photo: Adobe Stock

—> **244 km - Łazienkowski Bridge**

After passing the bridge, you will see the entrance to the large Czerniaków Port to your right. It is a perfect place to end (or start) a kayaking journey. After passing the port, you will see the marina for the Słonka ferry, which offers free transfer to the Saska Beach in Saska Kępa.

VISTULA RIVER FROM WARSAW TO NOWY DUNINÓW

When kayaking on the Vistula, always stick to the designated route. When kayaking down the river, along with its current, you should see red cylinder-shaped buoys to your right and green cone-shaped buoys to your left. They designate the width of the route, which is safe for you to traverse.

Other signs you might encounter concern mooring and anchoring bans - you will see them near water intakes, including Gruba Kaśka and Chudy Wojtek, as well as at the port entrances. You will also see signs indicating intersections (for example where the Vistula meets the Żerań Canal) and signs warning of overhead lines across



↳ MONUMENT TO THE WARSAW MERMAID
↳ photo: Adobe Stock



→ PRAGA CITY BEACH
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ ŚWIĘTOKRZYSKI BRIDGE
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ ŚWIĘTOKRZYSKI BRIDGE
→ photo: Andrzej Świątkowski

the river. The bridges are equipped with signs indicating proper conduct and recommendation, which will let you know where to pass, what is the height of the bridge and how wide is the safe crossing route.

The Warsaw section of the Vistula is extremely diverse. The left bank along a 5-kilometre stretch between the Czerniaków Port and the Warsaw Citadel is heavily regulated, with concrete wharves and boulevards offering various attractions, including gazebos with deck chairs, stone tables, and wooden benches. Smaller ships and vessels moored at the banks serve food and beverages, you are also close to the Copernicus Science Centre, Museum of Modern Art and the Multimedia Fountain Park.

The right bank is largely wild and overgrown by forests, even though a keen-eyed visitor will see some characteristic features of a regulated river – concrete spurs, which slow down the flow. It also features popular beaches (Saska, Poniatówka, and Rusalka), as well as cycling and walking paths. **During the summer season, the banks are connected by free ferry services, carried out by Wilga, Pliszka, Słonka and Dudek ferries.** Some of the attractions also include cruises along the Vistula on board of a wide variety of vessels, as well as a water cab and a water tourist route along the Żerań Canal to Serock.



—> **422,6 km - Warsaw, Poniatowski Bridge**

Under the bridge on the left bank, you can see the marina of the Pliszka ferry, offering free trips to the Poniatówka Beach. **On the right bank, you can see the PGE National Stadium.**

—> **422,3 km - Warsaw, Cross-City Railroad Bridge**

On the left bank, you can see the Kościuszko Wharf and the restaurant ships moored there.

—> **421,8 km - Warsaw, Świętokrzyski Bridge**

In front of the left-bank base of the Świętokrzyski Bridge, you can see a monument depicting **the Mermaid holding a sword and shield – the symbol of the city**. Beyond the bridge, can see the Copernicus Science Centre to your left.

—> **421,2 km - Warsaw, Praga Port**

To your right, you can see the entrance to Praga Port, home to the Warsaw River Police Station. **Behind the entrance to the port, there is a bridge for pedestrians and cyclists.** The crossing was built along Karowa (on the left bank) and Okrzei (on the right bank) streets.

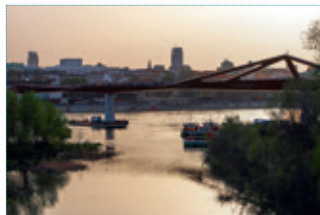
—> **420,7 km - Warsaw, Śląsk-Dąbrowa Bridge**

Along this section, the river flows closer to the foot of the Vistula Escarpment, **which reaches up to 20 metres and is home to the Royal Castle and the Old Town.** One of the most interesting spots is Gnojna Mountain, a former landfill turned a viewpoint. Between the Old and New Town is a brick tower – a remnant of the first permanent bridge in Warsaw, now called the Old Powder House. Once upon a time, the Vistula ran along the very foot of the hill. Farther up, you can see the New Town. Below, at the base of the escarpment, you can visit the Multimedia Fountain Park, which is famous for its water shows with lights, lasers and music.

At the height of the Multimedia Fountain Park is the marina used by the Wilga ferry, which offers free trips to the Rusatka Beach on the bank of the Praga district.

—> **419,1 km - Warsaw, Gdańsk Bridge**

After passing the bridge, look to your left to see the Warsaw Citadel – a remnant of the reprisals in the aftermath of the November Uprising. **These days, the complex houses numerous museums, including the 10th Pavilion Museum, the Polish History Museum and the Polish Army Museum.**



↳ PRAGA PORT
↳ photo: Adobe Stock



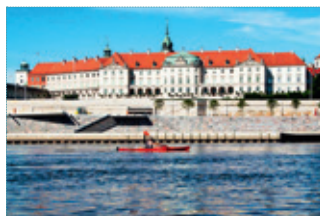
↳ FOOTBRIDGE OVER THE VISTULA RIVER.
THE NATIONAL STADIUM IS IN THE BACKGROUND
↳ photo: Adobe Stock



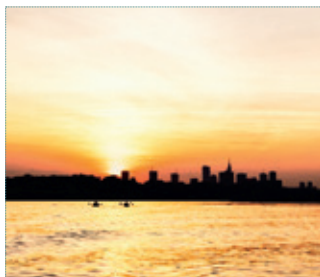
↳ WARSAW OLD TOWN
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ FOUNTAIN PARK
↳ photo: Adobe Stock



↳ THE VISTULA RIVER IN WARSAW
↳ photo: Andrzej Świętkowski



→ KAYAKERS ON THE VISTULA
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ **416 km - Warsaw, Grot-Rowecki Bridge**

Past the bridge, you can see the Żerań CHP complex to your right.

→ **414.6 km - Warsaw, footbridge, Żerań Port**

On the right bank, you can see the starting point of the Żerań Canal, with a steel pedestrian footbridge over it. 300 metres farther, there is a lock separating the canal from the Vistula. From here, you can take the canal to get to the Żegrze Reservoir.

On the left bank, you can see the Bielański Forest, almost entirely protected as a nature reserve. The forest is home to the former Camaldolese monastery complex – the white habits of the monks gave the entire district of Bielany its contemporary name.



→ KIEŁPIŃSKIE ISLES NEAR JABŁONNA
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ **412.2 km - Warsaw, Maria Skłodowska-Curie Bridge (also known as the Northern Bridge)**

→ **409 km - ferry**

The ferry runs between Młociny and Tarchomin.



→ BIRDS ON AN ISLE ON THE VISTULA
→ photo: Andrzej Świątkowski

→ **408 km - Ławice Kiełpińskie Nature Reserve**

One of several ornithological reserves on the Vistula created in 1998 to protect unique nesting sites of numerous wetland birds. The area of the reserve covers the river, islands and shoals.

→ **404 km - Jabłonna**

Look to your right – behind the tree line, there is Jabłonna, **a village that owes its name to the orchards, which once belonged to the bishops of Płock and have been growing here since the Middle Ages.** These days, Jabłonna is known for its palace and park complex, the former home of the Potocki family.



→ STEEL BRIDGE OVER THE VISTULA IN NOWY DWÓR
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ **389.5 km - Kępy Kazuńskie Nature Reserve**

This is another one of ornithological reserves on the Vistula, which encompasses the river, its isles and sandbanks – home to many bird species.



→ BRIDGE IN NOWY DWÓR
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski

→ **386.5 km - Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, steel bridge**

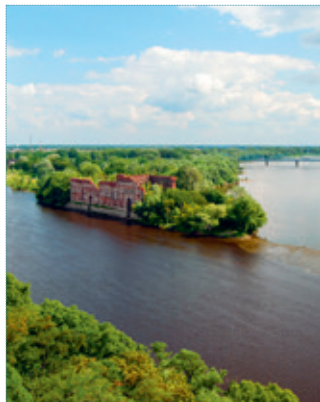
The steel bridge between Kazuń Nowy and Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki was named after Józef Piłsudski. **The left bank of the Vistula, overgrown with a natural poplar and willow riparian forest, is protected as part of the Ruska Kępa Nature Reserve.**



→ **385.6 km - mouth of the Narew River, granary, Modlin Fortress**

To the right, you can see the mouth of the Narew River, flowing into the Vistula. **There, you will also notice the Modlin Fortress – the largest and best-preserved fortification in Poland.** Its construction was ordered by Napoleon Bonaparte. In later years, both Russian and Polish troops were stationed there. In 1939, the Fortress became famous for its heroic defence against the Germans.

The buildings and fortifications are open to visitors. You can tour them with a guide or on your own, including at night. Cinephiles will certainly enjoy looking for locations seen in cult film productions – C.K. Dezerterzy, Pułkownik Kwiatkowski, Pan Tadeusz, Kiler and many more. In addition to fortifications, you might also enjoy the Officers' Casino, renovated and opened in the fall of 2023. Next to the casino, you will find the September Defence Museum and the Modlin Fortress. **The qualities of the Modlin Fortress as a tourist attraction was confirmed by the Polish Tourist Organization's Best Tourist Product Certificate.** A 19th-century granary dominates the promontory at the confluence of the Narew and Vistula rivers. It used to be one of the most beautiful buildings in the Kingdom of Poland. These days, the granary is largely destroyed.



→ GRANARY BY THE MOUTH OF THE NAREW RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ PREPARATIONS FOR A KAYAKING TRIP DOWN THE VISTULA
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski

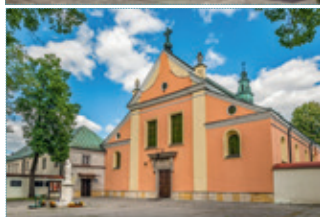
→ **384 km - bridge on Road S7**

The bridge marks the start of **an 8-kilometre section of the river covered by the Zakole Zakroczymskie and Wikliny Wiślane nature reserves.** The right bank rises significantly and forms a tall escarpment.

→ **379.5 km - Zakroczym**

In Zakroczym, you can still see the remnants and traces of the former splendour of the former capital of Zakroczym Region. These include sacred buildings – the Gothic-Renaissance Church of the Elevation of the Cross and the Baroque Capuchin church and monastery complex.

An interesting feature is the lantern-shaped monument set up in the market square. It commemorates the November insurgents and the Order of the Star of Perseverance (1831, never awarded) established by the Parliament of the Kingdom of Poland.



→ CAPUCHIN CHURCH OF ST LAWRENCE
→ photo: arch. UG w Zakroczymiu

→ **377.4 km - Wólka Smoszevska, cliff**

The Vistula washes up the right bank here, **forming a several-metre-tall escarpment.**



→ CZERWIŃSK ON THE VISTULA → photo: Adobe Stock



→ CHURCH IN CZERWIŃSK
→ photo: Adam Jasiński



→ WYSZOGRÓD
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ WYSZOGRÓD MARKET SQUARE
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ 359 km - Czerwińsk nad Wisłą

Czerwińsk is a city where you can follow in the footsteps of Władysław II Jagiełło and Casimir the Great. **Located on the tall bank of the Vistula River, the Basilica of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary towers over the area.** The church was built in the first half of the 12th century and is one of the few surviving examples of Romanesque architecture in Poland. The monastery adjacent to the temple – the Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation – houses the Missionary Museum and an exhibition of Cardinal August Hlond’s memorabilia. One of the most important events in the history of Czerwińsk was the march of Władysław II Jagiełło’s army on its way to the Battle of Grunwald. The Polish army crossed the Vistula in the town, using a floating bridge (the so-called skating bridge) in the process. **Other than the basilica, make sure to visit the historic house at Batorego Square 1 – the oldest secular building in the city, an example of small-town petty bourgeois architecture in Mazovia.** In the square, you can also notice two stone obelisks commemorating the 1000 years of the Polish Statehood and the crossing of King Władysław II Jagiełło’s troops.

→ 350 km - Wyszogród

Wyszogród is one of the oldest towns in Mazovia, comparable to Płock, Czerwińsk and Czersk. It is located on the right bank of the Vistula River, on a 30-metre escarpment. The first mention of its existence dates back to 1065. **The rich history of the town and its surroundings is evidenced by its temples – the Church of the Holy Trinity**



→ VISTULA UPSTREAM OF PŁOCK → photo: Adobe Stock

and the Church of Our Lady of the Angels, as well as the Franciscan monastery. The spatial layout of Wyszogród, as well as its market square and streets starting there, remains original. Make sure to visit the Middle Vistula and Wyszogród Land Museum (Branch of the Mazovian Museum in Płock), which displays collections related to Vistula and its use, as well as trade and customs of the people living on the banks of the middle Vistula. In addition to the original artefacts, the exhibit features models of old boats, barges and ships. Note the impressive 6-metre diorama of the wooden bridge in Wyszogród, the longest structure of its kind in Europe.

→ 349.2 km - mouth of the Bzura River and a branch of the Vistula River on the left

→ 347 km - Kępa Bieniew Stary

Kępa Bieniew Stary marks the beginning of the land of sandbanks, islands and islets - a true waterfowl sanctuary. Over the 24-kilometre stretch of the river, you can find several nature reserves, including Kępa Rakowska, Kępa Antonińska, Wyspy Zakrzewskie, Wyspy Białobrzeskie, Kępa Wykowska and Ławice Troszyńskie.

→ 328 km - Wiączemin Polski, Vistula Settlers' Open-Air Museum

On the left bank in Stubice, you can get off and take a 2-kilometre walk to the Vistula Settlers' Open-Air Museum in Wiączemin. It is one of the newest branches of the Mazovian Museum in Płock, dedicated to the Olenders – settlers who came to the Vistula River from the Netherlands and the German-Dutch borderlands.



→ KAYAKING TRIP DOWN THE VISTULA BETWEEN WYSZOGRÓD AND PŁOCK

→ photo: Andrzej Świątkowski



→ VISTULA SETTLERS' OPEN-AIR MUSEUM IN WIĄCZEMIN

→ Archive photograph by: MROT



→ TUMSKIE HILL
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

The open-air museum features the former parish of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, including the church, cemetery, and other buildings, as well as buildings characteristic of the Olender settlements brought from other villages and towns. The interiors are filled with exhibitions presenting the material culture of the Vistula River settlers – furniture, tableware, tools, ornaments, farm equipment, and more.

→ 314.4 km - Kępa Ośnicka

Kępa Ośnicka is a 2.5-kilometre long and 1-kilometre wide island breaking up the current of the Vistula River. **In the past, when the water levels were high enough, the river divided it into two islets: Tokarska and Ośnicka. Before World War II, the island was home to a small hamlet. Back in the 19th century, it was famous for its herd of cows, grazing there throughout the year.**



→ VISTULA IN PŁOCK
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 309 km - Płock, Solidarity Bridge

The Solidarity Bridge in Płock is **the largest suspended bridge in Poland**. Its main span measures 375 metres in length.

→ 307 km - Płock, road and railway bridge

Road and railway bridge connecting both parts of Płock, **built in 1937-38**. The bridge connects the relatively flat left bank in Radziwie and the escarpment on the right bank.



→ PIER IN PŁOCK
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ 305.5 km - Płock

To your right, you can see a pier, a beach and an amphitheatre. On the left bank of the Vistula, you can see the lower district of Płock – Radziew, home to the city's port, shipyard and the 13-story granary – the tallest building in the city, towering over its landscape. Built by the communist authorities, it was supposed to overshadow the religious buildings located on the opposite bank. Because of its monumental architecture, it is sometimes referred to as a counter-cathedral or the Church of Socialist Labour by residents.

Płock is one of the historical capitals of Poland. The right bank of the river features an over 50-metre tall escarpment, which used to be washed up by the river – the Tumskie Hill, home to sacred buildings – the cathedral, the Diocesan Museum, and the curia. The Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary was erected in the 12th century and lived to see many overhauls. One of the towers houses a crypt – the final resting place of the remains of the rulers of Poland (Władysław Herman and Bolesław the Wrymouth), as well as Mazovian Dukes. The Diocesan Museum hosts some of the most valuable religious artefacts from the Płock diocese.



→ NIGHT-TIME PANORAMA OF PŁOCK
→ photo: Adobe Stock



Walking north along the escarpment, you can get to Małachowianka – the Marshal Stanisław Małachowski General High School, which is known as the oldest school in Poland, founded at the Collegiate Church of St Michael back in 1180, if not earlier. Following the restoration of the oldest part of the school complex, a museum was established there – visitors are welcome. You can follow the route to get to the Płock Market Square. The surrounding townhouses date back to the 18th and 19th centuries, and one of them saw the first apparition of Saint Faustyna. It is now home to the Shrine of the Divine Mercy and St Faustyna Museum. Nearby, you can find the monument to Bolesław the Wrymouth and the Temple of Mercy and Love in Płock, the only cathedral of the Old Catholic Mariavite Church. The building stands out thanks to its architecture, it was built in the English Neo-Gothic style. The church complex is also home to an alpaca farm.

While visiting the royal city of Płock, you should not miss the local Mazovian Museum, once famous for Poland's finest exhibition of Art Nouveau works. These days, the museum's offerings are much more extensive. The Granary hosts its Department of Ethnography, while the rebuilt synagogue in the heart of the city houses the Museum of Mazovian Jews. Nearby, you can also visit the *Ten Centuries of Płock* multimedia exhibition, along with the latest exhibit on Art Deco.

South of Tumskie Hill, on the slope of the Vistula escarpment, you can see the Płock zoological garden. The terraced landscape, criss-crossed by ravines and overgrown by greenery, gives it a unique character. The small garden is home to nearly 7,800 animals representing 600 species.



→ MONUMENT TO BOLESŁAW THE WRYMOUTH
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

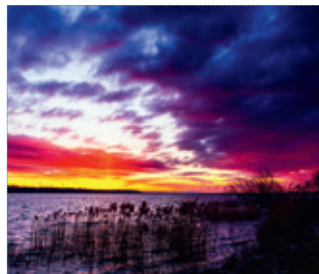


→ OLD TOWN MARKET SQUARE IN PŁOCK
→ photo: Adobe Stock

WŁOCLAWEK RESERVOIR

Downstream of Płock, the dam on the Vistula River in Włocławek forms the Włocławek Reservoir. It came to be in 1970, after a dam was built near Włocławek. The reservoir is located on the border between two voivodeships – Mazovian and Kuyavian – Pomeranian.

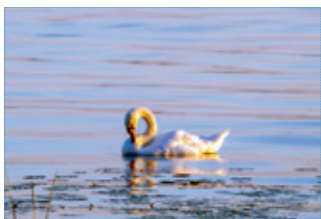
With the length of 58 kilometres and an area of 70.4 km² it is the largest artificial lake in Poland, and ranks second in terms of its volume. Originally, the dam was supposed to be the first of the eight such structures built between Warsaw and Gdansk, comprising the so-called Lower Vistula Cascade. Ultimately, only the first dam in Włocławek came to fruition.



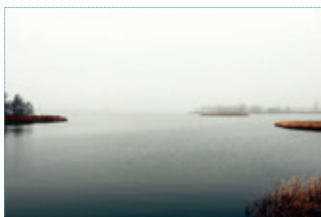
→ WŁOCLAWEK RESERVOIR
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ REGATTA ON THE RESERVOIR
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ MUTE SWAN
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ BAY BY THE MOUTH OF THE SKRWA PRAWA RIVER
→ photo: Andrzej Otrębski, CC BY-SA 4.0, WC



→ STANISŁAW MURZYNOWSKI MUSEUM
→ photo: MOsB'10, CC BY-SA 4.0, WC



→ ENTRANCE TO THE NOWY DUNINÓW PORT
→ photo: Adobe Stock

Even though the reservoir remains popular among sailors, it requires some considerable skill level. This is due to tall waves that occur in the windy weather – because of that, the Sea of Włocławek, as it is sometimes referred to, is not recommended to sailors who are just starting out.

The reservoir hosts the Anwil Cup regatta – the Polish Long-Distance Cabin Yacht Championships, solo regattas, the Duninów Municipality Mayor's Cup regatta and the Włocławek Reservoir Blue Ribbon of regatta, organised since 1978.

Thanks to the forests of the Gostynin-Włocławek Landscape Park stretching along the left shore between Płock and Włocławek, the area is amazing for water sports, as well as many other forms of recreation.

Be aware that kayaking during high winds and waves may be dangerous!

→ **296.7 km - Soczewka, bay, mouth of the Skrwa Lewa River**

On the left bank, you can see the Gostynin-Włocławek Landscape Park and its forests.

→ **295.5 km - Murzynowo, bay, port, mouth of the Skrwa Prawa River and Skrwa Bridge**

You can finish your journey here on the right bank. **A wide mouth of the Skrwa Prawa River is surrounded on both sides by the Brudzeń Landscape Park.**

→ **294 km - Murzynowo, Stanisław Murzynowski Museum**

Right off the right bank of the river, the wooden thatched house – formerly belonging to a Vistula porter – houses **an ethnographic museum** run by **the Mazovian Geographic Centre of the Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies of the Warsaw University.**

→ **291 km - Nowy Duninów, port**

You can finish your journey on the left bank. The village features an interesting example of Romantic-era architecture – a neo-Gothic castle erected in the first half of the 19th century. **In the area, you can also find a slightly older hunting lodge (built in 1829), now owned by the local Forest Inspectorate.**



GO WITH THE FLOW OF THE NAREW RIVER

At 484 kilometres in total and 448 kilometres in Poland, Narew is one of Poland's longest rivers. It originates in Belarus in the eastern part of the Białowieża Primeval Forest. It crosses the Polish border near Siemianówka, which now has a reservoir with an earthen and concrete dam in Bondary to raise the water level. Back in the day, it was the main waterway used for floating grain to Gdańsk.

The Mazovian section of the Narew River starts near the village of Kurpiewskie (the mouth of the Szkwa River) about ten kilometres north-east of Ostrołęka. From this point, it covers 162 kilometres through Mazovia all the way to the mouth in Modlin.

To cover the entire Mazovian part of the Narew River, you can start your journey in Rybaki in... Podlachia, at the former ferry (168 km) or in Mazovia, at the ferry in Teodorowo (153 km).

→ 162 km - mouth of the Szkwa River

The 103-kilometre long Szkwa River flows out of the Masurian lake Świątajno. A considerable section of it was converted into a canal.

You will enjoy the very picturesque surroundings – desolate and full of birds. Going down the river, you will encounter the summer resort of Teodorowo on the left bank.

→ 152.3 km - mouth of the Rozoga River

Rozoga flows from Masuria through Kurpie Zielone (Myszyniec) covering the distance of 83 kilometres.

The river itself is extensively channelled. After passing Myszyniec, you will find the relatively large Wykrot Reservoir. A few hundred metres down the river from its mouth you will start passing by the industrial part of Ostrołęka. Sometimes the smell in the area can be disturbing – it is caused by the pulp mills in the city, as well as other plants.

You also have to watch out for the dredgers, which often work on the river bed.

→ 145.7 km - road bridge in Ostrołęka

Just before the bridge, **you can spot a city beach**, where you can take a break and go to explore the city.

→ Ostrołęka

The history of Ostrołęka starts by the end of the 11th century. In 2023, the city celebrated 650th anniversary of receiving its city rights. Among the most interesting



→ NAREW RIVER BY THE MOUTH OF THE SZKWA RIVER

→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ TEDOROWO FERRY CROSSING

→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ SWANS (CYGNUS OLOR)

→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ BRIDGE IN OSTROŁĘKA

→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ OSTROŁĘKA
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ GREY HERONS AND COMMON MERGANSERS
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ MOUTH OF THE OMULEW RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ MOUTH OF THE RÓŻ RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ RÓŻAN
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

monuments and sights are: The City Hall, built in the 1920s; **the Museum of Kurpie Culture**, located in a 1928 building, displaying collections of exhibits of the Green Kurpie; the Ostrołęka Gallery, which in addition to exhibitions and openings hosts classical and jazz music concerts, the parish church of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary built in 1399, and Ostrołęka's most impressive landmark – the former convent church of St Anthony of Padua. From the surface of the water, you will have an amazing view of the General Antoni Madalinski Bridge, whose steel structure was inspired by the silhouette of a bridge in Seville. Other noteworthy landmarks include **Bem Forts – the Mausoleum and Monument to the 1831 Battle of Ostrołęka**, with monument to the horse artillery charge led by Józef Bem into battle nearby. The Mausoleum is a branch of the Kurpie Culture Museum. Also worth seeing in Ostrołęka is the Church of St Adalbert, which was originally an Orthodox church built in the late 19th century for Russian soldiers stationed at the local barracks, and the newly established Museum of the Cursed Soldiers. During the season, you can take a gondola cruise in Ostrołęka.

→ **143.9 km - mouth of the Omulew River**

A picturesque river flowing out of Omulew Wielki Lake and through Wielbark. It is 135 kilometres long.

Near the mouth of the Omulew River, on the other bank, you can see the remains of a hillock, which housed a defensive stronghold in the 10th century – the first traces of Ostrołęka.

→ **143 km - railroad bridge**

→ **141 km - Dzbenin**

To the left, **not far from the river bank, you can see the Bathy Stone**, partially submerged in the old river bed.

→ **134 km - Kamianka**

A camping site can be found on the left bank, with a chapel beyond the pine forest.

→ **121.6 km - mouth of the Róż River**

Róż is a 30-kilometre river flowing through Sieluńskie Lake, which is a large and overgrowing oxbow lake of the Narew River.

Along this section, you will see an interesting forest complex on the left – Szczawin Forest.



↳ DAWN OVER THE NAREW RIVER NEAR RÓŻAN ↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 115 km - Różan

Różan is a town located on the high escarpment of the Narew River, whose history dates back to the 14th century. **Some of the most noteworthy sights include the Church of St Anne, which was rebuilt in 1907-13 according to Stefan Szyller's design.** Some of its interior furnishings date back to the 16th century. By the end of the 19th century, the Russians started fortifying Różan in order to turn it into a minor fortress. The forts were expanded before World War I. Some of them have survived to this day, and one of them is home to the National Radioactive Waste Repository. The historic cemetery is home to the Kossakowski family burial chapel, which dates back to ca. 1880, as well as the Gromadzki family tombstone - an angel, built in 1896. In the heart of the town, near the Warsaw-Ostrołęka road, you can see a T34 World War II-era tank.



↳ RÓŻAN AREA
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ MOUTH OF THE ORZ RIVER
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 106 km - mouth of the Orz River

The Orz is a short (61 kilometre) river. Ambitious kayakers can start their journey near Goworów and go from there. **Approximately 5.5 kilometres upstream from the mouth, you can find a historic wooden watermill.**

→ 103 km - mouth of the Wymakracz River

The 48-kilometre river has several towns, with the largest one being Długosiodło.



↳ NOWE ŁĄCZY - FERRY CROSSING
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



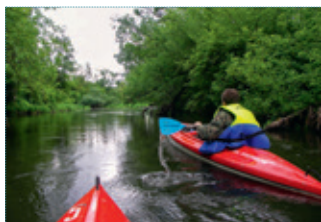
→ BINDUŻKA
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 97.5 km - Nowy Lubiel

On the right bank, you can find the perfect spot to set up a camp. **Just few hundred metres from the bank, you can find a beautiful wooden church of St Anne, which was built in 1890.**

→ 95.5 km - Nowe Łachy

The ferry crossing the river is used by locals and summer visitors alike. The nearest bridges are quite far away – in Różan and Pułtusk. The local governments of Rzewnie and Rząśnik municipalities are preparing plans to build a bridge across the river.



→ ON THE ORZYC RIVER
→ photo: Szczepan Przybyłowski

→ 90 km - Bindużka

A very picturesque place, featuring a small oxbow lake, extensive pastures and a poplar grove – one of the best spots to take some photographs.

→ 81.5 km - mouth of the Orzyc River

The Orzyc flows from the Mława hills for 146 kilometres before it ends up in the Narew River. The section starting in Krasnosielc is very interesting and attractive for kayakers. The largest city on the Orzyc River is Maków Mazowiecki. You might want to plan a break in Krasnosielc to see **the classical church of St John Cantius built in the late 18th century**, as well as **the monument to Tadeusz Kościuszko**. Other decent spots include Maków and Smrock – the latter will be a forced stop, caused by the small hydroelectric power plant. In Szelków, you can enjoy the view of the church from your kayak. Past Szelków, the river flows through a ravine, and the closer you get to the mouth, the more picturesque views you will see as it meanders among the meadows.



→ ZAMBSKI KOŚCIELNE
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ ORZYC RIVER NEAR ITS MOUTH → photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ **79.8 km - Zambski Kościelne**

Even when you are far away, you can see **the tower of the Church of St Adalbert**. It might be worth your while to plan a stop here and see the church erected in 1890-1900. It was built in the Neoclassical style and then rebuilt after it was destroyed twice – during World War I and World War II. Behind the church, you will find a cemetery – the final resting place of soldiers of the 1st Legion Infantry Division from Vilnius, who fell in the battles of 6-7 September 1939.



→ SWAN FAMILY
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ **74 km - Gnojno**

To the right side, you will see large excavations, **a remnant of the place, which provided gravel floated down the river** to major construction sites in Warsaw.



→ GNOJNO
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ **67.7 km - Pawłówek**

Before passing by this small resort village on the left bank, you can see **a colony of grey herons in the tall trees** – it is perfectly visible from the river surface.

→ **65 km - mouth of the Pełta River**

The Pełta is 50 kilometres long. Its mouth used to be located in the town named after it. The Pełta is hardly a river suitable for kayaking.



→ CANALS IN PULTUSK
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ **61 km - Pułtusk**

One of the oldest strongholds in Mazovia. The historic part of the city with **the former Castle of the Bishops of Płock territory, is an island formed by the canals criss-crossing the city and the Narew River. That is why Pułtusk is often**



→ PULTUSK - A PICTURESQUE CITY ON THE NAREW RIVER → photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ KAYAKERS NEAR PUŁTUSK
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ NEAR PUŁTUSK
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ NAREW
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ STAWINOĞA PONDS
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ WIDE NAREW RIVER NEAR DZIERŻENIN
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

referred to as the **Mazovian Venice**. The river separates Pułtusk from Popławny – one of its districts. Among the city's many attractions, some of the most noteworthy ones include the Collegiate Basilica of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary with a Renaissance polychrome on the ceiling. In 2018, the basilica joined the ranks of Monuments of History. You should also pay a visit to the 300-year-old cellars of the former town hall, the 16th and 17th century corridors under Abraham's Hill – built by Jesuits, and recently named one of Mazovia's most precious monuments, as well as the aforementioned Castle of the Bishops of Płock, home to the House of Polish Diaspora, renowned for the *Stories on Table Manners*. Other particularly interesting monuments include **the chapel of St Mary Magdalene, the Napoleon Bonaparte Townhouse, the Town Hall Tower, the Regional Museum with fragments of the Pułtusk meteorite, Church of Holy Apostles Saints Peter and Paul, the Tower** – a remnant of the city walls, the remains of the main city gate, the Church of St Joseph, the former Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which now houses the State Archives, the Church of the Holy Cross, as well as the oldest Catholic cemetery in Pułtusk, with tombs dating back to the 19th century. You may also take a walk along the longest cobblestone market square in Europe.

During the season, **you can go to the Dom Polonii marina to take a gondola cruise on the Narew River and Pułtusk canals**. There are two kayak and boat rentals in Pułtusk.

→ **57 km - Kacice**

A small, quaint village. From the surface of the water, you can see **the tiny church of St Stanisław Kostka**.

→ **50 km - mouth of the Prut River**

The Prut is 24 kilometres long. Only a small section of that river is accessible for kayakers. In the past, the river was called Śliwka – Plum.

→ **46.5 km - Stawinoga Ponds**

One of the most interesting bird enclaves in Mazovia. **The majority of the ponds are overgrown, and some are included in the Stawinoga Nature Reserve**. A walk along the causeways offers a unique opportunity to watch at least a dozen species of birds living in the area. In the spring and fall, you can see ducks, as well as many other bird species – geese, coots, mute swans, white and grey herons, cormorants, white-tailed eagles, kingfishers and the rare osprey.



→ 43.5 km - Dzierżenin

From the water's surface, you can see the neo-Gothic Church of St Thomas the Apostle.

In the vicinity of Dzierżenin, the Narew River gets very wide. It also features numerous islands and clumps of reeds.

Be wary – the river proper can get very deep, while the broads can get too shallow to navigate though. **Not far from Dzierżenin, in the middle of the river you can encounter an island that forms the Dzierżenińska Kępa Nature Reserve.**

In the springtime, a multitude of birds nest in the reed and near the numerous islands, including gulls, terns, swans, ducks, coots and grebes. Do not get too close to the nests – try to avoid disturbing the birds.

→ 41 km - Dzierżenińska Kępa Nature Reserve

The reserve was established in 1991 on an island in the main, wide stream of the Narew River. **It is home to numerous wetland birds – black-headed gulls, common terns and black terns.** The breeding colony of the latter species was one of the largest in Poland. Due to the fact that the island is overgrowing, most of the birds breed in the nearby reeds and shallows in the spring.

→ 39 km - road bridge in Wierzbica

According to hydrological parlance, by the time you pass the Wierzbica bridge, you are no longer kayaking down the Narew River – you are in the waters of Zegrze Reservoir.

It was established in 1963, after the Narew River was dammed up in Dębe, located about 18 kilometres from Wierzbica. The Zegrze Reservoir is described in more detail in Chapter IV.

→ 37 km - Serock (beach)

Serock – a city located on the escarpment of the Narew River, which continues to develop to this day, adding new chapters to its 600-year-long history. It features a medieval market square where events and musical gatherings are held in the summer. **A modern multimedia exhibition in the Chamber of Remembrance and Fishing Traditions tells the history of the city and its surroundings.**

Next to it you can find a historical mural depicting the city's origin. Follow the walking path in Serock to reach the house where Picasso spent the night. You should not miss the small hill on Radzymińska Street, dubbed *Barbarka*. This spot serves as a reminder of the oldest pages in the history of Serock.

Back in the Middle Ages, a stronghold was built there, which later grew and became a town. From the top of the Barbarka



→ NEAR THE DZIERŻENIŃSKA KĘPA NATURE RESERVE

→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ SUMMER NEAR DZIERŻENIN

→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



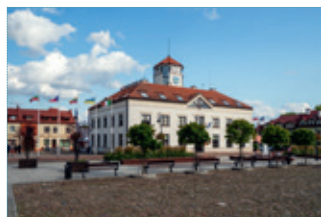
→ SEROCK

→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ PLAZA W SEROCKU

→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ SEROCK TOWN HALL

→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ DĘBE DAM → photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ NIEPOREŃ PORT
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ ROAD BRIDGE IN ZEGRZE
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

Stronghold, you can see a view of the junction of the Bug and Narew rivers. You should also see the Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary – one of the oldest monuments in Mazovia. Serock's location on the shore of the Zegrze Reservoir cements its role as a resort town. A city beach, game fields, a water playground and a pier await the visitors. The Zephyr Water Tram is a cruise ship that serves the route between the local harbour and Warsaw, and the Mazovian Shipping Company offers cruises on Zegrze Reservoir on board of their *Albatros*.

→ **36.5 km - mouth of the Bug River**

The Bug River is described in a separate chapter. It is interesting to note that, **although the Bug is much longer, the Narew carries more water**, which is why it was considered the main river and the Bug was deemed its tributary.

→ **33 km - mouth of the Rządza River**

The Rządza is 66 kilometres long and starts in the Kałuszyn area. The last section of the river, which starts near Załubice, is particularly friendly to kayakers. At the mouth of the Rządza River, you will find the Euzebia Isle.

→ **28.2 km - road bridge in Zegrze**



→ **20.7 km - Dębe dam**

The reservoir and its embankments were built in 1957-1963. **The Dębe Power Plant is a run-of-river power plant**, encompassing four hydroelectric power generation systems with Kaplan turbines, each with the **design power of 5.3 MW**.

→ **5.5 km – mouth of the Wkra River**

The **Wkra River** is described in a separate chapter.

→ **3 km - Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki (beach)**

→ **Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki**

The city lies almost in the very centre of Poland. It was founded before 1233 by Conrad I of Mazovia. The first recorded mention of the city dates back to 1294.

Divided in two parts by the Narew River, the city is an excellent destination for hiking and cycling enthusiasts.

The decision to spend some time around these parts is much easier thanks to all the monuments and tourist attractions, including the Józef Wybicki Park and the Church of St Michael the Archangel, sponsored by King Stanisław August Poniatowski. The church is home to *Crucifixion*, a painting from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The so-called Swedish Mound, which marks the spot where the Narew River flows into the Vistula, is where you can find the ruins of a large granary. It used to be a part of a fortress located on the other side of the river. On Paderewskiego Street, you can see old military facilities. The buildings, now used by the Nowy Dwór Cultural Centre, were built by Russians at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. In 1921, they were used as the base of operations for the Electrical Engineering Battalion. In the vicinity of the Centre, you can also see the Scouts' Home and red brick buildings, which now house the prosecutor's office and clinic.

A stroll towards Bohaterów Modlina Street will take you past a privately-owned historic wooden house.

Other noteworthy monuments include the remains of a Jewish cemetery with an obelisk made of tombstones excavated from the ground, and a historic pharmacy on Kościuszki Street – the first such establishment in Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki. It dates back to 1896 and is one of the oldest brick buildings in the city.

→ **1.6 km – road bridge in Modlin**

→ **0 km – mouth of the Narew River**



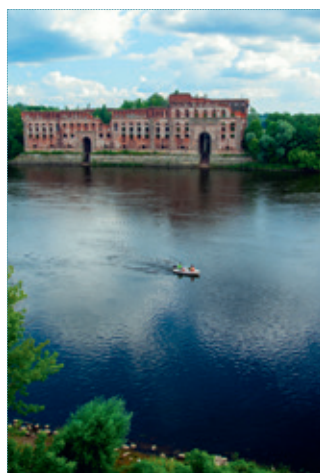
→ BOAT ON THE NAREW RIVER IN NOWY DWÓR MAZOWIECKI
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ MODLIN FORTRESS
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ EVENING ON THE NAREW RIVER, MODLIN.
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



→ SWEDISH GRANARY
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



↳ BRIDGE OVER THE NAREW RIVER IN MODLIN
↳ photo: Marcin Oporski



↳ THE GREAT CRESTED GREBE (PODICEPS CRISTATUS)
↳ photo: Andrzej Świątkowski

On the 550.5 kilometre mark, you can see the Modlin Fortress to the right, and the ruins of a monumental granary from the 19th century to the left. The fortress was erected in the 19th century. After Poland regained independence, it was used by a Polish Army garrison. Its main claim to fame is the heroic defence against the Germans in 1939. The commander of the Polish armed forces, General Victor Thommée decided to surrender only in the face of inevitable defeat, after the fall of Warsaw and after all supplies were exhausted. Today, the buildings and fortifications are open to tourists, including during the night. If you are interested in the history of the white bear from Modlin, choose the Baška Murmańska hiking trail. Cinephiles will certainly enjoy looking for locations seen in cult film productions – *C.K. Dezerterzy*, *Pułkownik Kwiatkowski*, *Pan Tadeusz*, *Kiler* and many more. In addition to fortifications, you might also enjoy the Officers' Casino, renovated and opened in the fall of 2023. Next to the casino, you will find the **September Defence Museum and the Modlin Fortress. In 2021, the Polish Tourism Organisation awarded the Modlin Fortress the Best Tourist Product certificate.**



↳ MOUTH OF THE NAREW RIVER ↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



GO WITH THE FLOW OF THE BUG RIVER IN MAZOVIA

– from Serpelice to Serock –

Each of Mazovian rivers has something that allows it to claim the title of the most beautiful of them. If one were to rank them in terms of beauty, making the final decision would not be an easy task at all. One thing is certain – the Bug River would definitely score one of the top spots, because it is by all means unique. Enormous, picturesque and yet somewhat wild and mysterious. Most importantly, it remains relatively unadulterated by human activity. Its spring is located in the Southern Borderlands, 772 kilometres from its mouth, where it connects with Zegrze Reservoir. A 363-kilometre section of the Bug River constitutes a border between Poland, Ukraine and Belarus. Then, for 224 kilometres it turns into another Polish river.

The Mazovian part of the river starts in Borsuki, just past Serpelice and forms the natural border between Mazovian and Podlachian voivodeships. It is also a junction of borders of three voivodeships – Podlachian, Mazovian and Lublin. It is also the easternmost part of the Mazovian region – the border with Belarus is located just 4 kilometres upstream.

→ 202.5 km - Serpelice

A picturesque summer resort with numerous accommodations and spots, with an amazing beach by the river, and pine forests inviting visitors for long walks. In Serpelice, you can find **an interesting wooden church of the Holy Apostles, Saints Peter and Paul**. It was built in the 1940s by Capuchin friars repatriated from areas of present-day Ukraine. The Capuchins are also taking care of Kalwaria Podlaska (Podlasie Calvary) – Stations of the Cross and chapels spread across the forests surrounding the village. One of the resorts in Serpelice offers trips down the river on a wooden ship. The Bug River Valley in this area is protected as part of the Bug River Gorge Landscape Park, which was established in 1994. The river is almost wild, meandering and extremely picturesque.

→ 197.5 km - Mielnik

A picturesque Podlachian town located on the escarpment of the Bug River. Although it is not a Mazovian city, it is worth your while to stay for a couple of hours and see what it has to offer. Some of the most noteworthy spots include **ruins of the castle church, as well as an open pit chalk mine**, which is best viewed from the observation deck. You can also visit an exhibition of costumes created for the cinematic version of Sienkiewicz's *Trilogy*. You should also pay particular attention to xerothermic vegetation, characteristic of areas



→ BUG RIVER NEAR SERPELICE
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ CHURCH IN SERPELICE
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ RUINS OF THE CASTLE CHURCH IN MIELNIK
→ photo: Adobe Stock



↳ ON THE BUG RIVER IN FRONOŁÓW
↳ photo: Piotr Dylewski

located much farther south. In the Uszeście Nature Reserve, located atop a local hill, you can see *Scorzonera purpurea* – a sun-loving plant that seems to thrive there.

→ 186 km - railroad bridge in Fronołów

A historic railway bridge built after World War II **according to the 1933 design**. The previous bridge, erected in 1905, was demolished in 1944.



↳ "DROHICZYŃ" FISHING VESSEL IN DROHICZYŃ
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 181 km - Kózki road bridge

Past the bridge, near the river bend, you can find the Kózki Ornithological Nature Reserve, with more than 86 hectares of protected sandy grasslands growing on river dunes, as well as oxbow lakes and shrubs. **The aim of the Reserve is to protect the habitat of rare water fowl**. You might even encounter the common ringed plover, little tern, black-throated loon and red-rumped parrot.



↳ A VIEW OF DROHICZYŃ
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 163 km - Drohiczyń

Even though the town is located on the Podlachian side of the river, but its beauty is worth getting out of the kayak, especially when you decide to visit its numerous churches. **The Castle Mountain in Drohiczyń offers an amazing view of the bend of the Bug River, as well as both river banks**. Drohiczyń is the historic capital of the region, the town that saw the coronation of the only king in the history of Ruthenia – Daniel of Galicia. Back in the day, the Bug River divided the Lakh and the Ruthenian parts. You could see the river if you have watched *Nad Niemnem* – it was prominently featured in the film. If you love kayaking, you should definitely pay a visit to the Bug River Kayak Tourism Centre – the only kayaking museum in Poland, which hosts numerous trips throughout the season. The Diocesan Museum is also worth your while, as is **the Vintage Motorcycle Exhibition in the Bug River Cultural and Historical Park**.



↳ A VIEW OF THE BUG RIVER FROM THE CASTLE MOUNTAIN IN DROHICZYŃ ↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ **155 km - mouth of the Myśla River**

Myśla is a 22-kilometre long river, which starts in the vicinity of the village of Remiszew Duży in Sokołów District.

→ **152 km - bridge in Tonkiele**

→ **148.5 km - Wirów**

A small village, where you can find a unique monument – the buildings of **the Monastery of Christ the Saviour**, once an Orthodox female monastery.

→ **143 km - Mołożew**

You can find **two nature reserves: Mołożew Dune Nature Reserve and Mołożew Escarpment Nature Reserve**.

The former protects vast pastures with occasional oxbow lakes and marshes in the river bend – a sanctuary for birds, including rare ones. The other includes the Bug River escarpment, which is systematically eroded by its waters.

→ **140.5 km - Gródek**

An 18th-century wooden church, which used to be a Greek Catholic temple. Just like the Wirów monastery, it constitutes a part of the Trail of Sokołów Uniates.

→ **121.5 km - mouth of the Nurzec River**

Nurzec River is a 100-kilometre long river that originates in the bogs near the border with Belarus. Its final section, right before it joins the Bug River, it makes up the border between Mazovia and Podlachia.

→ **112 km - Nur**

A small town on the right bank, with extensive history. **Back in the day, it used to be a city that maintained trade relations with Gdańsk**, the capital of the Nur Region and an assembly area.

→ **110,5 km - bridge in Łęg Nurski**

→ **106 km - Zuzela area**

The birthplace of the Primate of the Millennium Stefan Wyszyński. **The Museum of the Childhood Years of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński**, which was established in a former school, is located about a kilometre from the river bank. The village is also home to the historic Church of the Transfiguration of Christ built in 1908-1913 according to a design by Józef Pius Dziekoński. The church is also where Primate Wyszyński's father used to work as the organist.



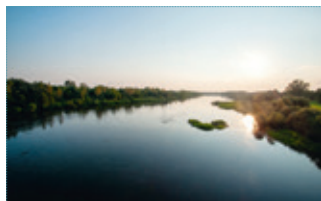
↳ BUG RIVER NEAR WIRÓW
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ FORMER ORTHODOX MONASTERY IN WIRÓW
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ THE AREA OF NUR
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ BUG RIVER FROM THE BRIDGE IN NUR
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ ZUZELA ↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ MOUTH OF THE BROK RIVER
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 88 km - road bridge in Małkinia

On the right bank, just over a kilometre from the Bug River, lies the village of Treblinka. A couple of kilometres away, you can encounter a unique memorial site – the Treblinka Museum – **the former German Nazi extermination and labour camp, operating in 1941-44**. Approximately 900,000 people died at this extermination site. The original buildings have not survived. The museum features a permanent exhibition concerning its history.



↳ BUG RIVER NEAR BROK
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 86 km - railroad bridge in Małkinia

→ 77,3 km - mouth of the Brok River

The river originates near the village of Brok in the Wysokie Mazowieckie district. Its length is 72.9 kilometres.



↳ BRIDGE AND PORTIN BROK
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 74 km - Brok

Brok is one of Europe's smallest towns with city rights and privileges. Why is it called that, though? It is derived from the Brok River – a right tributary of the Bug River. The word itself means *“to leak, to pour through like water”*. The city is located on the high right bank of the Bug River, surrounded by the Biała Primeval Forest.

Some of the most noteworthy sights include **Church of Saint Andrew the Apostle, designed by Giovanni Battista of Venice**, with furnishings from the 17th and 18th centuries. To the east of the church, you will find the ruins of a tower, once a part of a palace, which did not survive to this day. While visiting Brok, it is worth taking a stroll to the Catholic cemetery and see its log chapel built in 1842, the



↳ BROK ↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



Jewish cemetery established in the 19th century – one of the best preserved Jewish cemeteries in this part of Mazovia, as well as plague victims' burial mound from the 17th century (the final resting place for the remains of approximately 1,500 people), and the town hall built between 1929 and 1935. In the vicinity of the church, you will find the oldest houses in the city – a wooden house from the 19th century, a single-floor brick house from the 19th century, and a wooden building erected at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. At the intersection of roads, between Brzostowa Street and Bojany, you can see **the shrine to Saint Magdalene**.

Since 2021, Brok boasts a beautiful port located near the road bridge and the "Binduga" complex.

→ 60 km - mouth of the Tucheńska River

The renowned **cardiologist Zbigniew Religa** often came to this area to fish. He used to claim that there is no place where the rising sun is as beautiful as on the Bug River, near the mouth of the Tucheńska River.

→ 51.3 km - Szumin

A summer resort village on the right bank of the river which marks the beginning of its meandering section. Past Szumin, the waters of the river wash away the sandy bank, overgrown with forests. Then, Bug passes by vast meadows.

→ 43.5 km - Brańszczyk

Brańszczyk is a large village, located in a picturesque spot on the Bug River. It is worthwhile to take a short break here to see **the Maria Żwirska Open-Air Museum**, named after an ethnographer born there. The open-air museum features a Kurpie cottage with a garden, a barn filled with tools and a blacksmith shop. The mayor's house hosts an exhibition of works by local artist Stanisław Kądziela, who carved miniatures of all the shrines and wayside crosses in the municipality using only traditional tools. There are more than 180 of them.



→ CASTLE RUINS IN BROK
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ MOUTH OF THE TUCHEŃKA RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



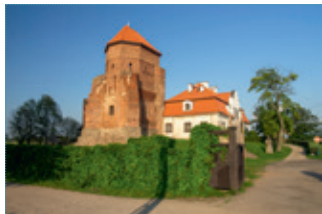
→ SZUMIN
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ BUG RIVER BENDS DOWNSTREAM OF BRAŃSZCZYK
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ OPEN-AIR MUSEUM IN BRAŃSZCZYK
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ CASTLE IN LIW ON THE LIWIEC RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ WĘGRÓW
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ HYDROELECTRIC POWER PLANT
ON THE LIWIEC RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ KAYAKING TRIP DOWN THE LIWIEC RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ 40 km - mouth of the Liwiec River

Liwiec is a perfect river for a fascinating kayaking trip. It originates east of Siedlce, 142 kilometres from its mouth. It is the longest of the Bug River's tributaries in Mazovia. The total length of the river is about 148 kilometres, and your kayaking trip can start from the mouth of the Muchawka River near Siedlce, as well as from the mouth of the Kostrzyń River. Many have claimed that the river marked the border between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Following the Union of Lublin, it connected the lands of the Kingdom.

The rivers constantly meanders along the way. Near the village of Jarnice, you can find **Sowia Góra (Owl Mountain) – a viewpoint and likely a historic pagan worship site.**

There are some who claim that back in the 1970s some witches were seen there. The mountain offers an amazing panorama of the Liwiec River Valley. An unusual view awaits kayakers in Liwa – the former castle of the Mazovian Dukes, a former border fortress converted into a museum and a historic armoury, located right by the river. Its history dates back to the late 14th century. The restored castle walls house a museum with an interesting collection of weapons spanning the period from the 15th to the 20th centuries. The castle's location right next to the river makes it a must-see destination even for kayakers who are tired of paddling. Węgrów, the largest city on the Liwiec River, also offers numerous interesting sights and monuments. **The Baroque Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary by the Market Square hosts the legendary Twardowski's mirror.** Other noteworthy sights include the post-Reformation 18th-century monastery complex, which now hosts a museum exhibit *Węgrów – the city of many cultures and faiths*, as well as the Gdańsk Manor – a former inn built in the 18th century, and a historic Evangelical cemetery. Węgrów and Kalinowiec are home to dams and power plants, which necessitate disembarking and carrying your kayak. Along the route, you will also encounter the village of Starawieś with a beautiful neo-Gothic mansion built in the 19th century. The palace houses the National Bank of Poland Training Centre. The palace is located about 2 kilometres from the banks of the Liwiec River. If you want a tour, contact the owners beforehand.

Right by the river, you will see the wooden mansion in Paplin, one of the best-preserved wooden mansions in Mazovia. Tours are available after making an appointment with the private owner.

After passing the summer resort of Urle, the river flows into the woods of the former Kamieniec Primeval Forest.



In Julin, you might see a historic villa built back in 1904 right by the river bank, now used as the headquarters of the Bug River Landscape Park. Before the war, the villa belonged to Ignacy Paderewski's wife Helena, who founded the School of Poultry Breeding and Housekeeping there. After passing the bridge on the Wyszków – Węgrów road, on the right bank of the river in Puste Łąki you will see the sanctuary of Our Lady of Loreto in Loretto.

It was established by Father Ignacy Kłopotowski, founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Loreto in 1928. A year later, the name of the village was changed to Loreto, a reference to the Italian town of Loreto, where the Santa Casa Shrine is located.

The closer you get to the river mouth, the wider and the shallower the Liwiec becomes.

→ 39.5 km - Kamieńczyk

This picturesque village used to be a ducal city by the name of Kamieniec Mazowiecki, which gave its name to the primeval forest stretching far to the east and south. **In the 19th century, the small Kamieniec was famous for its excellent rafters, who floated goods down the Bug, Narew and Vistula rivers to Gdańsk.** It comes as no surprise that a statue of a raftsman by Elżbieta Pietras now stands in the former (and still exceptionally beautiful) market square. A private Ethnographic and Historical Museum has been operating for many years there. It is run by Henryk Słowikowski, who has amassed a sizeable collection of everyday objects, weapons, saddles, looms, farming tools, as well as models of rafts. The museum is open daily, but it is best to make an appointment in advance by phone +48 29 741 17 78.

→ 32 km - Wyszków

Wyszków is a town located on the high right bank of the Bug River. It formerly belonged to the bishops of Płock. Some of its key landmarks include the parish church of St Giles, erected in 1793–95. **While in the park, which is located on the river escarpment, make sure to visit the historic guardhouse, as well as Jerzy Różycki's bench, dedicated to the famous cryptologist, one of the fathers of successful breaking of the Enigma code, who graduated from high school in Wyszków. The park also houses a monument to Cyprian Kamil Norwid.** Two monuments have been erected by the Wyszków bridge on the Bug River – the monument to the left is dedicated to the Cursed Soldiers from Wyszków region, and the other one is devoted to the Wyszków-born



→ FERRY ON THE BUG RIVER IN KAMIENIĘCZYK
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ STATUE OF A RAFTSMAN IN KAMIENIĘCZYK
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ POPLAR FOREST IN KAMIENIĘCZYK
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ KAMIENIĘCZYK MUSEUM
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ WYSZKÓW
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ MOUTH OF THE FISZOR RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

commander of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising – Mordechai Anielewicz. In Wyzwolenia Square, you can find a monument to pre-war Mayor of Wyszków Stanislaw Wolski, who saved two Jewish girls during the war with his wife.

→ **21 km - mouth of the Fiszor River**

Fiszor is a tiny river – only 27 kilometres long – the last stretch of which flows among picturesque meadows, spilling into wide lakes in places where Bug used to flow back in the day. A short section of several kilometres is suitable for a kayaking trip.



→ CHURCH IN BARCICE
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ **15.5 km - Barcice**

The village houses one of the most beautiful wooden churches of north-eastern Mazovia. The Church of St Stanislaus the Apostle was built in 1758. Although relatively small, it houses three altars – one of which was built in 1640.



→ OPEN-AIR MUSEUM IN KULIGOWO
→ fot. Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

→ **7.5 km - Kuligów**

Kuligów is a large summer resort, which enjoys particular popularity and is bustling with life during the season. **The Open Air Folk and Land Culture Museum of the Narew, Bug and Liwiec Valley has been operating in the town since 2000.** This somewhat long name should not discourage you – make at least an hour to see everything it has to offer. Wojciech Urmanowski, a collector and lover of historic items related to countryside culture, managed to collect and display tavern equipment, as well as a smithy, carriage house, barn, granary, countryside cottage and even a small nobleman's manor. (skansen.powiatwolominski.pl)

→ **0 km - Zegrze Reservoir**

Opposite Serock (for more information, see the journey down the Narew River).



→ BUG RIVER NEAR POPOWO KOŚCIELNE → photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



THE MAZOVIAN SEASIDE

– Zegrze Reservoir –

In 2023, the Zegrze Lake, also known as the Zegrze Reservoir and Dębe Reservoir, celebrated its 60th birthday. Among the local populace, it is sometimes referred to as the Zegrze Balaton and the Mazovian Sea. The total area of the reservoir covers 30.3 square kilometres, while its length along the Narew River is about 18 kilometres. At its widest point, it spans 2.5 kilometres.

Zegrze Lake is an artificial reservoir on the Narew River, which emerged after the Dębe Power Station was built on the Narew and Bug rivers in 1958-1963. The waters of the lake hide the former villages of Rybaki and Zagroby, now flooded by the reservoir that collects water for the Warsaw metropolitan area and is also used for both energy production, as well as recreation. The Zegrze Lake has quickly become one of the biggest attractions in Mazovia and one of the favourite vacation spots for residents of Warsaw and surrounding areas. During the summer season, it enjoys great popularity. This is a result of several factors – not only is it close to Poland's capital (only 30 kilometres), but it also offers attractions that would not be out of place at the seaside and around some of the resorts in Masuria. Other than the location, one of the major boons of the site is its excellent selection of accommodation, catering, shopping and entertainment facilities. The Reservoir is the starting point for the Żerań Canal, which connects the shipping routes of the Vistula, Bug and Narew rivers.

Legend has it that the waters of the Zegrze Reservoir are home to Paskuda – a creature similar to the famous Nessie, the Loch Ness Monster. There are some who could swear that in the summer of 2023, they saw it swimming near the Euzebia Isle!

Mateusz Kuznierewicz, the world and Olympic sailing champion, started his sailing career here. The Reservoir was also where he placed the first base of his sailing academy, which makes it a perfect place to take a sailing course.

Zegrze Reservoir comprises three main parts – the **northern part**, which spans the area from the Wierzbica bridge, all the way to the main body of water, which is commonly referred to as the pan, then the **pan** itself, located between Zegrze in the north, the road bridge and Zegrze Południowe in the west, Nieporęt in the south, as well as Białoźbrzegi, and Rynia in the east, and the **western part**, found between the road bridge in Zegrze and the Dębe dam. As you might have guessed, each of these parts is somewhat different.



→ DĘBE DAM
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ THE AREA OF JACHRANKA
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ BOATS IN SEROCK
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ JACHRANKA PORT
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ BRIDGE IN WIERZBICA ↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

AROUND THE RESERVOIR

You can start your journey around Zegrze Reservoir from its **northern part** – for example in Wierzbica. The bridge over the Narew River offers a beautiful view of the northern part of the lake. You can even notice the skyscrapers of Warsaw in the distance, with the characteristic outline of the Palace of Culture. Just by the bridge, you can find marinas and the “Cicha Zatoka (“Quiet Bay”) fishing resort.

A Polish Anglers’ Association resort can be found in Serock, a mere kilometre away.

What is more, Serock is the most beautiful town on Zegrze Reservoir, facing the junction of the Bug and Narew rivers.

The picturesque township, situated on a high escarpment, it lures visitors with its historical monuments, great atmosphere, as well as accommodation, catering and recreational offering. The town’s most important monument is the late Gothic Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, located on an escarpment overlooking the Narew River and the mouth of the Bug River.

Not far from the church, in a well-kept park on the Barbarka Hill a defensive fortification stood back in the Middle Ages. When walking past the Serock Market Square, you can walk all the way to the Reservoir, see the beach with a pier, as well as walk along the shore thanks to the promenade. The beach offers numerous attractions – seasonal food stands, fields and pitches, as well as a water playground. It is also a perfect vantage point to watch kayaks, boats, sailboats and jet skis. Serock beach is also the stop for the Zefir (“Zephyr”) water tram, which takes passengers from Warsaw, along the route that starts in Żerań (Cementownia O2 stop), and then goes through the Żerań Canal and Zegrze Reservoir, all the way to Serock – and then back. The tram runs from May to September. In Serock you can also board the Albatros – a historic passenger ship of the Mazovian Shipping Company – go on a cruise on the Narew River and the Zegrze Reservoir. **You can also see the entire shore by taking a walk along the promenade.** After a walk along the



↳ MARKET SQUARE IN SEROCK
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ A VIEW OF SEROCK FROM THE OTHER BANK
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ BUG JOINS THE NAREW RIVER
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ ZEGRZE RESERVOIR
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ THE MAZOVIAN SEA → photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

boulevard, you can turn into Rybaki Street, which leads to the forest. Along your way, you will pass the house, where the famous Spanish painter Picasso spent a few days in 1948. You can also follow the shore along the Jadwisin ecological path, which passes the beach of the Narvil Hotel and leads to the port of the Warsaw Yacht Club, one of the largest ports on the lake.

The path continues along the Jadwisin Nature Reserve, home to the neo-Renaissance palace of the Radziwiłł family, located in the heart of it. **You can find another nature reserve – the Szaniawski Gorge Nature Reserve – very nearby.** It was named after writer and playwright Jerzy Szaniawski, who lived there. The house burned down in the 1970s. The reason was never found. Only fragments of the foundation and stairs remain. The Club Milla Zegrzynek port is located opposite to the mouth of the Rządza River.

The eastern shore of the northern part of the Reservoir is home to the Narew River meadows and oxbow lakes separated from the lake by a dike. Opposite Serock, the Bug River flows into the lake, and 3 kilometres further there is the mouth of the Rządza River with Euzebia Isle – the largest island on the lake.

Zegrze Północne is a fortress built in the late 19th century by the Russian invaders. Following its overhaul and expansion, it played a major role in the battles of World War I. The fortified buildings of the old fortress can still be seen in a number of places. Zegrze is still home to the military

→ JACHRANKA PORT
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek→ ZEGRZE PÓLNOCNE
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek→ BRIDGE IN ZEGRZE
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ SAILBOATS
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ NIEPORĘT PORT - PILAWA
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ ON THE LAKE
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

– the Communications Officers’ School, which has existed for decades, trains military IT specialists. The headquarters of the Territorial Defence Forces is also located here. In the eastern part of Zegrze, a 19th-century palace houses a hotel, restaurant and a training facility. Until the 1990s, it was used as the training centre for the Polish Press Agency. Zegrze is also home to a number of marinas, including one belonging to the Zegrze Military Sports Club. The middle part of the lake is commonly referred to as the **frying pan**, or just a **pan** for short. This is the widest point of the reservoir – almost 2.5 kilometres across from Zegrze to the estuary of the Żerań Canal, which is located on the southern shore. **During the summer, one can see dozens of sailboats and motorboats, as well as yachts, kayaks and windsurfers enjoying the waters of the pan.** It is almost as crowded as Masurian lakes.

A road bridge on the Warsaw–Pułtusk road separates the pan from the third section of the reservoir – the **western part**, which stretches over a distance of more than 7 kilometres, all the way to the Dębe dam. There are far fewer sailors and motorboat enthusiasts there. To the right, the relatively high bank is home to several villages – Skubianka, Jachranka and Izbica, where you can find a number of recreation and conference complexes, with “Warszawianka” being the most famous among them. Even though the area cannot be compared to the frying pan in any way, there are several smaller ports and beaches at recreational resorts.



→ THE BRIDGE IN ZEGRZE SEPARATES THE MIDDLE AND WESTERN PARTS OF THE LAKE → photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



On the other side, near Wieliszew, the bank is lower – the extensive Wieliszew meadows are protected by a dike. A walk along the dike from the dam all the way down to the lake takes you past a forest complex surrounding one of the most important developments associated with the lake – the water intake of the northern water supply system for Warsaw. **Behind the waterworks, closer to Zegrze Południowe, a dike separates the lake from the vast meadows and oxbow lakes of the Narew River, some of which are protected as part of the Wieliszewskie Łęgi Nature Reserve.** Enjoy the peace and quiet!

Zegrze Południowe, which has recently been connected to the Fast Municipal Railway system, is now bustling with activity. There are more than a dozen ports and marinas, hotels, water sports centres, restaurants and seasonal food outlets. You can rent a yacht, boat, or motorboat, as well as take a sailing or motorboat course. From Zegrze you can see the entire frying pan. 300 metres from the shore, you can see the distinctive Electric Island with a concrete building that once housed a transformer that powered dredgers.

The southern and eastern shores of the lake, from Nieporęt to the mouth of the Rządza River, are particularly popular among beach enthusiasts, as well as sailing and water sports aficionados during the season. Biało-brzegi and Nieporęt can be reached from Warsaw by commuter bus, and a cruise ship arrives on the Żerań Canal during the season. **Between Zegrze and the mouth of the canal, you can find several restaurants, bars and perhaps the most popular Wild Beach in Nieporęt – but you do not need to worry, it is merely a name.** In reality, you can find a pier and playground for children, walking paths among the greenery, an outdoor gym, water equipment and bicycle rentals, as well as sanitary and catering facilities there. If you venture further, you will find some more restaurants and hotels, as well as a large port by the mouth of the Żerań Canal.



↳ MUTE SWANS
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ NIEPORĘT MARINA
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ NIEPORĘT - PILAWA PORT
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ ON THE LAKE ↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



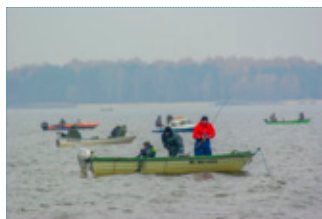
↳ LAKE SHORE NEAR IZBICA AND JACHRANKA

↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



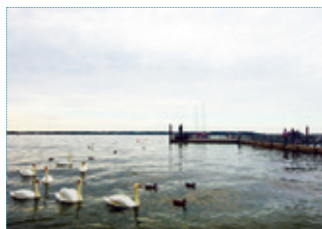
↳ PORT IN ZĘGRZE PÓŁNOCNE

↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ ANGLERS

↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ NIEPORĘT

↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

The next port – Nieporęt – Pilawa – is home to many sailing clubs. Up to the mouth of the Rządza River, on and near the shore, you can find numerous restaurants, hotels and holiday resorts. Among the many advantages of these lakeside areas, we can list not only sandy beaches, but also excellent air, saturated with the scent of pine forests.

The lake is a paradise for anglers and fishing enthusiasts – you can catch a variety of fish, including bream, zander, pike, catfish, roach or perch, as well as many others. Some of the facilities available to anglers include Polish Anglers' Association's fishing harbour in Serock and the Cicha Zatoka fishing resort in Wierzbica, the Zegrze Rybaki fishing harbour and the Zegrze fishing resort.

You can also find up-to-date information on the accommodation and catering facilities, as well as attractions and other important news in the Official Tourist Portal of the Zegrze Reservoir Region available at

www.jezioro.zegrzynskie.pl

You can even download an application developed for visitors to the Reservoir and its area by the Legionów District.

The application features information on accommodation, catering facilities and equipment rentals, tourist routes, descriptions of attractions and monuments, as well as a calendar of cultural and entertainment events. It also offers a sailing map with alerts and warnings concerning obstacles.



THE RIVER WKRA

The Wkra is one of the most important right tributaries of the Narew, which it joins in the vicinity of Pomiechówek. It is the smallest part of the largest hydrological hub in Poland: the Narew, fed by the water from the Bug, is joined by the Wkra about 30 km later, and after another 5 km joins the Vistula.

The Wkra, flowing through Mazovia, passes by nature reserves: 'Gołuska Kępa' near Gołuszyn, 'Dziektarzewo' in Glińnojeck, and the Wkra Valley near Pomiechówek.

As we can read on the website of one of the companies that organise kayaking trips on the Wkra, www.kajaki-wkra.com, the name of the Wkra was noted as early as the first half of the eleventh century. It does not come from the word kra [ice floe] as it is often explained. The ice flowing down the river after the winter thaws did not play a significant role on such a small river. Linguists have concluded that 'Wkra' derives from the Prussian *yikru*, which means nimble, agile, twisting. In the *Mogilno Falsification* (ca. 1065), the word *nauchra* appears, which, according to Józef Płocha, a scholar of the Falsification, refers to the Wkra. Aleksander Bruckner derives the name of the river from the word *wiar*, which in turn comes from *wjahor/wjahra*, meaning 'twisting', 'bending'. There are also notes stating the name of the river may come from the word *krza* or *krzów*, that is, the bushes that grew on the banks of the river.

The Wkra flows from the vicinity of the village of Szkotowo (Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship), first as the Nida, then as the small river Działdówka, and then it flows into Mazovia as the Wkra. A perfect river for kayaking. We suggest beginning your expedition in Strzegowo, an exactly 100 kilometres from the estuary.

→ 100 km – Strzegowo

Flowing along the Wkra through the village whose history dates back to the mid-fourteenth century, on the right bank you can see the historic wooden church of St Anne from 1756 and a nineteenth-century wooden bell tower. **Growing by the church are two oak trees which, according to legend, were planted by King Casimir the Great.** There is a Jewish cemetery in Strzegowo, where the oldest gravestone dates back to 1911. It is interesting to note that the village met the conditions to become a town, but the residents opposed the idea.

→ 96.5 km – past Strzegowo, the confluence of the river Struga and the Wkra

→ 93 km – Unierzyż

A bridge on a local road.

→ 85 km – Glińnojeck

In Glińnojeck, there is a riffle on the old mill weir, and portage is necessary. **Nearby are the picturesque ruins of an old sugar refinery.** The first mention of the village comes from a document dated 1403.



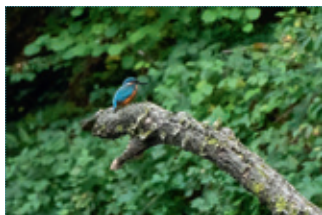
→ WKRA RIVER DOWNSTREAM OF STRZEGOWO
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ READY FOR ANOTHER TRIP
→ photo: Andrzej Świątkowski



→ WKRA RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ KINGFISHER
→ photo: Andrzej Świątkowski

→ 81 km – Kondrajec Szlachecki

A new hydroelectric power station operates here. Depending on the water level, portage may be necessary, otherwise, a cautious crossing is possible.

→ 78.5 km – Wkra

Another former mill damming up. **Earlier, a wooden bridge over the river, and in the village, a wooden manor from the late nineteenth century surrounded by a historic park.**



→ WKRA RIVER IN THE DZIEKTARZEWO NATURE RESERVE
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski

→ 72 km – ‘Dziektarzewo’ nature preserve

This section of the Wkra kayaking route is considered to be the most beautiful, most likely due to the trees growing on the high escarpment, creating a sort of tunnel over the heads of the kayakers, and at the same time the incredible atmosphere of the expedition. Fallen trees in the water make kayaking here full of excitement and full attention and caution is required.

→ 70 km – Dziektarzewo

In Dziektarzewo, less than 100 metres from the river, stands one of the most beautiful brick churches of northern Mazovia. The church of St Catherine was built in the fifteenth century and, although it has been rebuilt many times, it has retained its late Gothic appearance. An interesting feature is the sundial on one of its walls, dating back to 1842. The section from Dziektarzewo through Goszycze Poświętne all the way to Malużyn is a strongly meandering Wkra, running through fields and meadows.



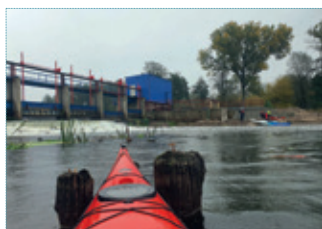
→ CHURCH IN DZIEKTARZEWO
→ photo: Kot.peter, CC BY-SA 3.0 PL, WC

→ 58 km – Malużyn

A bridge spans the Wkra here, the current underneath is fast, with possible posts or rocks. An attraction of the town is the unique sixteenth-century brick-and-wood church of **the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary**. A wooden nave was added on to the brick presbytery. Next to the church is a wooden bell tower from 1655, the oldest in Mazovia.

→ 56 km – bridge in Kępa

A historic wooden bridge over the river.



→ GUTARZEWO POWER PLANT
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski

→ 51.5 km – the confluence of the river Łydynia and the Wkra

The Łydynia is a left tributary of the Wkra. **The largest town along it is Ciechanów, where it flows around the Castle of the Masovian Dukes.** A legend featuring the river, Ciechanów, and Queen Bona says the river owes its name to the queen, who soaked her legs in the water up to her calves (Polish: *łydki*).

→ 51 km – Gutarzewo

A small hydroelectric power plant operates in the location of a destroyed bridge. The river is dammed before the bridge, necessitating portage. Farther on, the Wkra grows wider, but the current becomes slower. There are beaches on both banks, offering a place to rest.



→ **48 km – the confluence of the river Raciążnica**

This is the largest, right tributary of the Wkra. Passable only in the spring.

→ **47.5 km – Sochocin**

The Sochocin municipality is located along the banks of the Wkra, Raciążnica and Łydynia rivers. Its entire area falls within the 'Green Lungs of Poland' ecological area. In Sochocin, the confluence of the Raciążnica and the Wkra and the dangerous dam left over from a former mill make portage necessary. **In the town, there is the neo-Gothic church of St John the Baptist from the first half of the twentieth century, with a Rieger organ from 1931.** Operating in Sochocin is the Memorial Chamber of Button-making – a Sochocin history museum that recalls its button-making traditions. The tourist event route 'Starry March – on foot, on horseback, by kayak or bicycle through the Płońsk district' runs through Sochocin.

→ **41.7 km – the confluence of the river Płonka and the Wkra**

→ **41 km – Bolęcín**

Another hydroelectric power plant on the Wkra. **Portage is necessary.** There is also a road bridge along the way; the posts hidden in the water underneath require caution.

→ **30 km – Joniec**

A village founded by King John III Sobieski. Several hundred metres before the bridge, **there is a dam left over from an old water mill** – requires caution due to posts in the current. In Joniec, there is a historic church of St Louis from 1784. The town is often visited by fishing enthusiasts.

→ **26.5 km – the confluence of the river Sona and the Wkra**

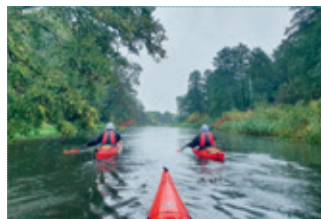
The Sona is a left tributary of the Wkra, longest of all its tributaries, which it joins near the village of Popielżyn-Zawady.

→ **20 km – Ciekşyn**

Located near the confluence of the river Nasielna (left tributary) and the Wkra. Boulders in the water require caution. The attraction of the town is **the church of St Dorothy, designed by Renaissance architect Giovanni Battista di Quadro of Venice,** author of churches in Mazovia (including the characteristic ornamented barrel vault) described as the so-called Pułtusk group.

→ **19.5 km – Borkowo**

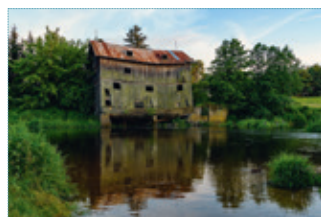
Road bridge. A rocky dam in the location of the old bridge. **On the way from Borkowo, on the left bank, is an old manor of the Ostrowski family from 1925.**



→ WKRA RIVER DOWNSTREAM OF GUTARZEWO
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



→ KAYAKING TRIP DOWN THE WKRA RIVER
→ photo: arch. MROT



→ OLD WATER MILL IN JONIEC
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ TALL ESCARPMENT OVER THE WKRA RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ WINTER-TIME KAYAKING TRIP DOWN THE WKRA RIVER, CHURCH IN POMIECHOWO.
→ photo: Andrzej Świątkowski



→ BRIDGE OVER THE WKRA RIVER IN GOŁAWICE
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ WKRA RIVER IN KOSEWKO
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ WKRA RIVER NEAR THE BRIDGE IN POMIECHÓWEK
→ photo: arch. MROT



→ BEACH ON THE WKRA RIVER IN POMIECHOWO
→ photo: arch. MROT

→ 17 km – Błędowno

A dam left from an old mill, caution necessary. On the right, a certain distance from the river, is Pomocnia Lake, **a favourite spot of many bird species**, including ducks and swans. You may also encounter cormorants.

→ 13 km – Goławice Pierwsze

The town includes an impressive suspension bridge, built in 1985 from a 1 : 5 scale copy of the project for the General Stefan 'Grot' Rowecki Bridge in Warsaw. It is worth mentioning that due to financial constraints, the construction of the bridge in the capital city was abandoned. **Along a section more than a kilometre long, the river flows through the 'Wkra Valley' nature reserve.**

→ 8 km – Kosewko

Near an old dam, there is a wood-and-metal footbridge; there are also remnants of a wooden bridge. **The current under the footbridge is fast; caution necessary.**

→ 4 km – Pomiechówek

A road and railway bridges over the Wkra. Before the road bridge, there is a beach with recreational infrastructure. Among the attractions that make visiting the town worthwhile are tourist trails, playgrounds, football pitches, and outdoor gyms, as well as Park Dolina Wkry – a modern sport and recreation complex, built using natural materials. *The Park is a unique place in Mazovia, and even in Poland. It is an extensive wooded recreational area, which takes advantage of the benefits of the river and the wooded area located along it, which begins in the centre of Pomiechówek*, says the Pomiechówek Municipal Office website. **The Park includes a rope park, a climbing wall, a zipline over the Wkra, a beach with a promenade, educational huts along the nature trail, a butterfly meadow, and picnic spots.** There is also an observation tower. Park visitors can experience a walk in the treetops along a footbridge more than 200 m long, from 2.5 to 6.8 m above the ground.

→ 3 km – Pomiechowo

Visitors can see the church of St Anne and relax in the recreational complex with a beach. Nearby is **the Książa Góra Escarpment** – an observation point.

→ 0 km – the confluence of the Wkra and the Narew

Just before joining the Narew, the Wkra flows through expansive meadows, strongly meandering and forming oxbow lakes.



THE RIVER PILICA

Pilica is the largest of the left tributaries of the Vistula. It is 319 km long, from its source in the Krakow–Częstochowa Upland, it flows through the Silesian, Świętokrzyskie, Łódź and Mazovian voivodships. The Mazovian course of the river begins in the vicinity of the village of Myślakowice-Kolonia and runs for approximately 94 km. Flowing through Nowe Miasto, Białoźbrzezi and Warka, it joins the Vistula, queen of the Polish rivers, near Mniszewo. This is a popular kayaking route, with a rapid current, numerous islands, backwaters and oxbow lakes, with no hydrotechnical obstacles.

→ 90 km - Domaniewice ferry

Domaniewice is a good place to start your kayaking trip. On the left, the Pilica is joined by the waters of **the Rokitna river** (approx. 17 kilometres long, not passable), the river-bank on this side is overgrown with a pine forest.

→ 86 km - Łęgonice and Łęgonice Małe

Until the eighteenth century, Łęgonice and Łęgonice Małe were one town, which the Pilica flowed around on the south side. By the end of the century, the river changed course, dividing the town into two parts. The larger, northern part – Łęgonice – found itself in Mazovia, while the smaller, southern part – Łęgonice Małe – in Lesser Poland.

→ 82 km - Nowe Miasto nad Pilicą

Nowe Miasto nad Pilicą is located on an escarpment rising over 20 m over the left bank of the river. Its picturesque surroundings are the former territory of the Rawa Land of historical Mazovia. Many historical sacral sites can be found here: the churches of St Casimir and of the Care of Our Lady of Dolours, as well as a Capuchin Friars monastery. At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it was the residence of Father Honorat Koźmiński – a beatified Catholic, founder of more than a dozen religious congregations. He lived here until his death. In 1997, he was named the patron of the town. The monastery museum holds some of his everyday use objects, a pen, a lock of his hair, relics, and robes. While walking through the town, it is worth noting the palace complex from the eighteenth–twentieth century with a palace and park, the station of the Grójec Commuter Railway, and a historical cemetery. Before the First World War, the town was the location of a popular natural treatment facility, which hosted, among others, Henryk Sienkiewicz, Eliza Orzeszkowa, and Maria Dąbrowska. The war ruined the resort, and the facility did not resume operations in independent Poland.

→ 80.7 km - the confluence of the river Drzewiczka and the Pilica

Drzewiczka is one of the longest tributaries of the Pilica (91.5 km); fishponds have been constructed at its estuary. **On the opposite, left bank of the Pilica is the Nowe Miasto swimming spot.**



→ PILICA
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ PILICA RIVER, BRIDGE AND BEACH IN TOMCZYCE
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ WOODEN BRIDGE OVER THE PILICA RIVER
IN GOSTOMIA
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ PILICA RIVER NEAR GOSTOMIA → photo: Adobe Stock

→ **75 km - Gostomia, wooden bridge**

In Gostomia, we pass under the longest wooden bridge in Poland. **Constructed by the military in the late 1980s, it measures 126.3 m in length and 4.2 metres width.**

Stretching out from approximately a kilometre from the right bank of the river is the large nature preserve 'Sokół' which protects natural woodland habitats characteristic of the Pilica valley. It is worth taking a walk there.

5 kilometres downstream, on the bank of the river itself, is the **'Tomczyce' nature preserve**. The steep escarpment, with several arroyos and covered with an old pine and oak forest, is under the protection of the preserve. The slope of the valley, its height reaching 30 m, remains steep thanks to the constant erosion by the waters of the river.



→ PILICA RIVER NEAR THE TOMCZYCE NATURE RESERVE
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ **69 km - Tomczyce**

Bridge and beach. Starting here, there is a long stretch through uninhabited terrain. **The river flows far from any villages until Osuchów.**



→ MOGIELANKA
→ photo: GeoKrzychu, CC BY-4.0, WC

→ **56.8 km - The confluence of the river Mogielanka and the Pilica**

The Mogielanka is a left tributary of the Pilica, 43 kilometres in length, with strong meanders and picturesque surroundings, navigable only in the lower section.

→ **56.6 km - Osuchów, road bridge**

→ **53.6 km - Przybyszew, bridge, islands on the Pilica**

Przybyszew was once the property of the Plock bishops; to this day, **the neo-Gothic church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul** dominates the town. Buried in the church crypt is a hero of the Kościusko Uprising, General Antoni Madaliński.



→ MARKET SQUARE IN PRZYBYSZEWO
→ photo: GeoKrzychu, CC BY-4.0, WC



→ 51.8 km - Pancew, bridge

→ 49.6 km - Góry, bridge

→ 47 km - Białostrzegi

Białostrzegi – known as Brzegi until the second half of the seventeenth century – is a town located within the historic Zapilicze region of Mazovia. **We can find most of the interesting attractions near the town square – Zygmunt Stary Square.** These include a monument to the Białostrzegi geese (referring to the legend of the town's name origins [*Białostrzegi*: white shores] – the banks of the Pilica white from the geese grazing there), a bench dedicated to Jeremi Przybora and the Eurasian jay he domesticated (he lived on the Pilica and visited Białostrzegi frequently), as well as twelve plaques recalling the most important events in the town's history. Also worth visiting in Białostrzegi is the neo-Baroque church of the Holy Trinity, designed by Stefan Szyller. For lovers of architecture and history-making technological achievements, the reinforced concrete bridge constructed in the 1930s is sure to be a hit. At the time, it was the largest crossing of its kind in the country. In the Borki district, on the Pierzchnia river, is a wooden mill, constructed in the nineteenth century and modernised after the Second World War – it is likely that some of the furnishings came from the Białostrzegi synagogue.

→ 45.5 km - Białostrzegi, Bishop Jan Chrapek Bridge

The bridge on road S7 is named after Radom Bishop Jan Chrapek, who died tragically in a vehicle accident in the nearby village of Stare Siekluki.

→ 40.2 km - Brzeźce, Pilica oxbow lake (right bank)

→ 38.2 km - Budy Blejkowskie, bridge

→ 33.3 km - Budy Michałowski, bridge

→ 31.4 km - The confluence of the river Dyga and the Pilica

On the right, **the river Dyga joins the Pilica.** This is a non-navigable and regulated nearly along its entire course (25.5 kilometres) tributary of Pilica.

→ 17.1 km - Warka, iron railway bridge

→ 17 km - Warka

The first mention of Warka dates back to the thirteenth century. There are at least three theories of the origin of the name: from the prefix *war-*, meaning a place of river eddies, from the word *warować*, meaning to fortify, or from the word *warzyć*, or to cook. **The last word signifies a stage in the production of beer and recalls the noble brewing traditions of the city.** The fame of Warka beer reached far and wide; according to one anecdote, its mention was meant to have saved the life of Pope Clemens VIII! **Standing out among**



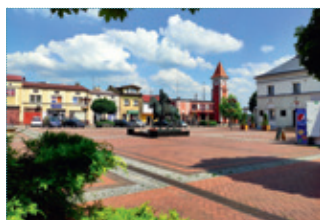
→ JEREMI PRZYBORA'S BENCH IN BIAŁOBRZEGI
→ photo: Wawa65, CC BY-SA 4.0, WC



→ BRIDGE IN BIAŁOBRZEGI
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



→ PILICA RIVER IN BRZEŹCE
→ photo: Wawa65, CC BY-SA 4.0, WC



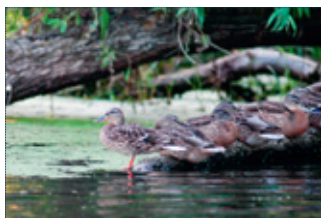
→ WARKA CITY CENTRE
→ photo: arch. MROT



→ PUŁAWSKI MUSEUM IN WARKA
→ photo: arch. MROT



→ PILICA RIVER DOWNSTREAM OF WARKA
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ ODPÓCZYWAJĄCE KACZKI KRZYŻÓWKI
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ STEEL BRIDGE OVER THE PILICA RIVER
→ photo: Adobe Stock

the city's historical buildings is the church of St Nicholas of Myra, with its 'Dziekanka' well, whose water is said to have magical properties. Interred in the crypt of the church of Our Lady of Scapular are the remnants of Mazovian dukes Trojden I and Siemowit II. Standing in front of the neoclassical town hall, in the centre of the town square, is a statue of Hetman Stefan Czarnecki, who commanded Polish troops to victory in the battle with the Swedes that took place near the city. In the Winiary district in the north-east of Warka is the Kazimierz Pułaski Museum. There, you can see an exhibition dedicated to the museum patron and Poles meritorious to the United States. Another permanent exhibition presents the history of the city. The museum is surrounded by a revitalised palace park. **Another attraction of a stay in Warka will certainly be a visit to the Warka Brewery** (after a prior appointment). Warka is one of the points on the Grójec–Warka Apple Trail.

→ 13.5 km - Warka, sewage treatment plant

After the bend of the river, on the left bank, steep escarpments begin and continue all the way to the village of Pilica.

→ 11 km - Stara Warka, hillfort

Visible on the hill over the left bank of the river are the ramparts of a medieval hillfort.

→ 1.1 km - Iron bridge on the Warsaw – Sandomierz route

→ 0 km - Confluence of the Pilica with the Vistula



→ PILICA JOINS THE VISTULA → photo: Adobe Stock



LESSER RIVERS OF MAZOVIA

– Bzura, Skrwa, Wilga and Świder –

BZURA

Length: 173 kilometres, basin size 7763 km², average drop approx. 30 cm/km, flow speed 0.4 m/s (slow).

The Bzura starts its course within the boundaries of Łódź. Regulated in its upper course, it only regains its natural character after passing Łowicz and begins to meander. It reaches Mazovia a little below where the Rawka joins it. The only significant population centre it flows through within Mazovia is Sochaczew. As a left tributary, it joins the Vistula across from Wyszogród. **Its larger tributaries include the Ochnia, Mroga, Słudwia, Skierniewka, Rawka, Pisia and Utrata.**

The Bzura is undervalued as a kayaking route due to the unflattering reputation of the quality of its water. This state, however, has been improving over the years. The water is growing cleaner, and the ease of navigating it and the attractive views it offers attract increasing numbers of kayaking enthusiasts.

→ **42.7 - km Kozłów Szlachecki, road bridge**

In the village, approx. 300 metres from the river, is the Gothic church of St Nicholas from the end of the fifteenth century. Despite numerous damages and reconstructions (the most recent serious ones at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries), some elements of its original Gothic substance have been preserved. 200 metres downstream from the bridge, on the left side, is an old flooded mining pit (Łowisko Łabędź).

→ **40.7 - km the confluence of the river Sucha and the Bzura**

On the right side, **the Bzura is fed by the Sucha**, a small river navigable only when the waters are high, during which time it is rapid flowing and not very pleasant.

→ **37.8 - km Kozłów Biskupi, road bridge**

On the right, visible 60 metres from the shore **is the Gothic church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, built in 1443.**

→ **35.3 - km on the left, the confluence of the river Witonia (Lutomia) and the Bzura**

→ **33.4 - km the confluence of the river Pisia and the Bzura**

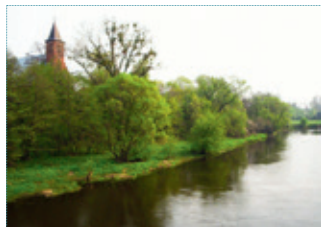
On the right, **the Bzura is joined by the Pisia**, a river of about 60 kilometres in length, which flows through Radziejowice, Żyrardów, Wiskitki and others.



→ BZURA RIVER NEAR KOZŁÓW
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ KAYAKING TRIP
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ CHURCH IN KOZŁÓW BISKUPI
→ photo: Tomasz Kuran, CC BY 2.5, WC



→ KAYAKING TRIP DOWN THE PISIA RIVER
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



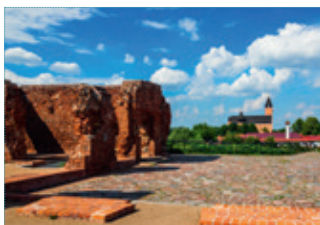
→ RAILWAY MUSEUM
→ photo: Marta Przygoda

→ **32.4 km - Sochaczew, footbridge, road bridge**
Spanning the current is a footbridge (suspension bridge), one of two in Sochaczew. Approx. 25 metres farther on is a road bridge.
Sochaczew is one of the oldest Mazovian settlements. It is said that Duke Bolesław II Wrymouth passed away in the local Benedictine monastery in 1138. **The building of the old town hall is currently the Museum of Sochaczew Land and the Battle of Bzura River.** The town is also the home of the Narrow Gauge Railway Museum, whose collection includes 163 pieces of rolling stock (locomotives, carriages, etc.). From here, you can set out on an 18-kilometre journey on a vintage locomotive. The museum is one of the points on the Industrial Mazovia tourist route. Also running through Sochaczew is the Chopin Trail, and while you're here, you should taste the local biscuits – Chopin's mazurkas.



→ MUSEUM OF THE SOCHACZEW LAND AND THE BZURA BATTELFIELD → photo: Wistula, CC BY 3.0, WC

→ **30.6 km - beach, boulevards**
The terrain between the beach and the ruins of the castle has been revitalised in recent years. **Boulevards were constructed, and they won the title of Modernisation of the Year in 2021.**



→ CASTLE RUINS IN SOCHACZEW
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ **30.1 km - Sochaczew, castle**
Ruins of a castle of the Mazovian Dukes have been preserved in the town. Currently, they are renovated and provide a fantastic viewing point.

→ **30.2 km - Sochaczew, Major Feliks Kozubowski road bridge**
→ **28.8 km - Sochaczew, footbridge**



→ UTRATA RIVER IN ŻELAZOWA WOLA
→ photo: Chepy (Andrzej Barabas), CC BY-SA 4.0, WC

→ **28 km - The confluence of the river Utrata and the Bzura**
On the right, the Bzura is joined by the Utrata, its second longest (after Rawka) tributary. A little over 4 km from here, the Utrata flows through **Żelazowa Wola – the birthplace of Frédéric Chopin** – lending the museum park a romantic character. For many years, the river was known for its high level of pollution (it flows through highly urbanised areas). In recent years, the quality of the water has improved, and kayaking enthusiasts have begun visiting it.



→ BZURA RIVER NEAR PLECEWICE
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski

→ **27.6 km - Gawłów, palace**
On the left bank, about 200 metres from the river, is a neo-classical, four-storey **palace in Gawłów** from the end of the nineteenth century. It is separated from the Bzura by the manor park with an area of 3.5 hectares.

→ **25.3 km - Sochaczew, road bridge**

→ **21.4 km - Plecewice, Moto Marina**
On the right bank, there is a marina, a **kayak rental**, a campground, rental homes, and a playground for children.



→ 18 km - Stare Mistrzewice, road bridge

→ 15.4 km - Church in Brochów

On the right, visible about 400 metres from the river, is the three-towered basilica of St John the Baptist and St Roch in Brochów. The church was built in the mid-sixteenth century by Giovanni Baptista di Quadro of Venice, with a coffered barrel vault ceiling typical for this mason. Despite being located in the safe Mazovia, the location gives the impression of being a defensive structure. This is further enhanced by fence 'bastions' placed in the corners. In 1807, Justyna Krzyżanowska and Nicolas Chopin were married here. **Four years later, their son, Frédéric Chopin, was baptised here.** During both world wars, the temple was destroyed, irretrievably losing its furnishings and decorations. In the early twenty-first century, the polychromes that decorate it were recreated.



→ CHURCH IN BROCHÓW
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ 11.9 km - Witkowice, General Tadeusz Kutrzeba Bridge

This is a **small iron truss bridge**. Right next to it on the left bank is an installation commemorating the crossing of the Polish armed forces during the Battle of Bzura in September of 1939. Past the bridge, on the left, is a nobleman's manor and park.



→ BRIDGE IN WITKOWICE
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ 8.6 km - The confluence of the Łasica Canal and the Bzura
On the right, the Łasica Canal joins the Bzura. **Approximately 25 km long, it has drained excess water from the Kampinos Forest since the second half of the nineteenth century.**

→ 7.1 km - The confluence of the Kromnów Canal and the Bzura

On the right side, **the Kromnów Canal** joins the Bzura. It was built, like the Łasica Canal, to drain the Kampinos Forest.



→ ŁASICA CANAL
→ photo: Semu, CC-BY-SA 4.0, WC

→ 1.2 km - Kamion, road bridge

→ 0 km - Confluence of the Bzura with the Vistula



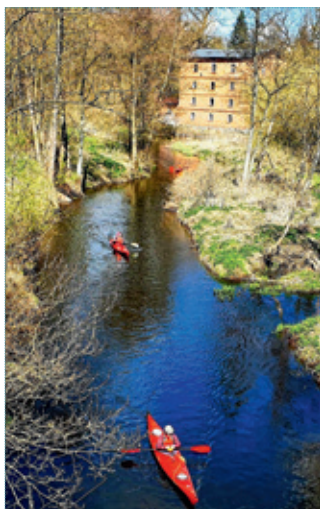
→ BZURA RIVER NEAR KAMION → photo: Adobe Stock



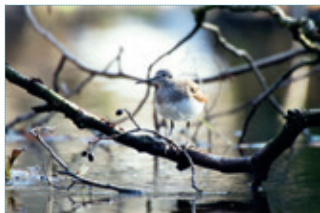
→ SKRWA PRAWA RIVER
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



→ OPEN-AIR MUSEUM IN SIERPC
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ MILL IN ŻOCHOWO
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



→ GREEN SANDPIPER (TRINGA OCHROPUS)
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

SKRWA PRAWA

Total length 114 kilometres, basin size 1704 km², average drop approx. 70 cm/km, flow speed 0.1- 0.2 m/s (very slow). Right tributary of the Vistula.

The Skrwa has its source in the Górzno-Lidzbark Landscape Park. It flows south, crossing the boundary of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, marking its course on a small section.

The river meanders strongly, its banks are often overgrown with shrubs, and the slow current is obscured by blockages. Kayaking down this river is physically demanding, but worth the effort for the beautiful views. Due to the uniqueness of the landscape, which differs from that typical for Mazovia, **the areas along the Skrwa are called the Mazovian Switzerland.** The lower course of the Skrwa is protected within the Brudzeń Landscape Park. As a right tributary, the river joins the Vistula at a wide confluence in the vicinity of Murzynów.

You can start your trip at the Museum of Mazovian Countryside in Sierpc – more precisely, under the bridge on state road no 10.

→ 75 km - Sierpc, bridge and confluence with the Sierpienica

The Sierpienica river is a left tributary of Skrwa, about 52 kilometres long, with a source in the vicinity of Bielsko. Towards the end of its course, it flows through Sierpc.

→ 74.8 km - Dam, railway bridge

→ 73.4 km - Railway bridge

→ 73.2 km - Mieszczk, bridge

→ 70.9 km - Żochowo, mill

Dam and spillway at the mill on the right bank.

→ 70.7 km - Road bridge

The section starting past the **bridge includes numerous obstacles** – branches and trunks of trees that have slid down from the escarpments above the riverbank.

→ 70.1 km - Footbridge

→ 60.4 km Choczeń, bridge, dam

The dam was established for the needs of a mill that once operated here. **Its building from the late nineteenth century has survived on the right bank.** On the left bank is a shrine and statue commemorating the participants of the January Uprising.

→ 57.9 km - Malanowo, Żurawin Mill

A mill, built in the 1920s, and a dam.

→ 57.7 - Malanowo Stare, bridge



- 52 km - Tłuchówek, mill
- 51.6 km - Tłuchówek, bridge
- 46.3 km - Obręb, bridge
- 42.2 km - Cieślin, bridge

→ 40,8 km - Cieślin stronghold

Visible about 30 metres above the river on the left bank are **the remnants of a hillfort** from the 12th century, along with an outline of the ramparts.

- 34.9 km - Zdziembórz, bridge
- 30.1 km - Bądkowo-Rochny, bridge

→ 29.3 km - Bądkowo Kościelne, footbridge

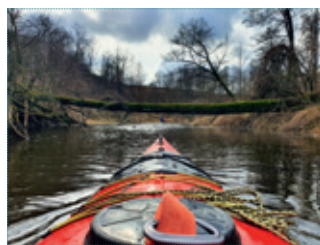
This is an iron truss footbridge crossing. On the right bank, **about 250 m from the river, is the baroque church of St Vincent de Paul, from 1790.** About 1 kilometre downstream, the Brudzeń Landscape Park begins.

→ 26.8 km - Brudzeń Duży, bridge, dam

Established in 2002 to preserve the escarpment of the Skrwa Prawa, the nature reserve 'Brudzeńskie Jary' begins downstream of the bridge. The area of the reserve includes an early medieval ringfort.

→ 22.9 km - Parzeń, road bridge

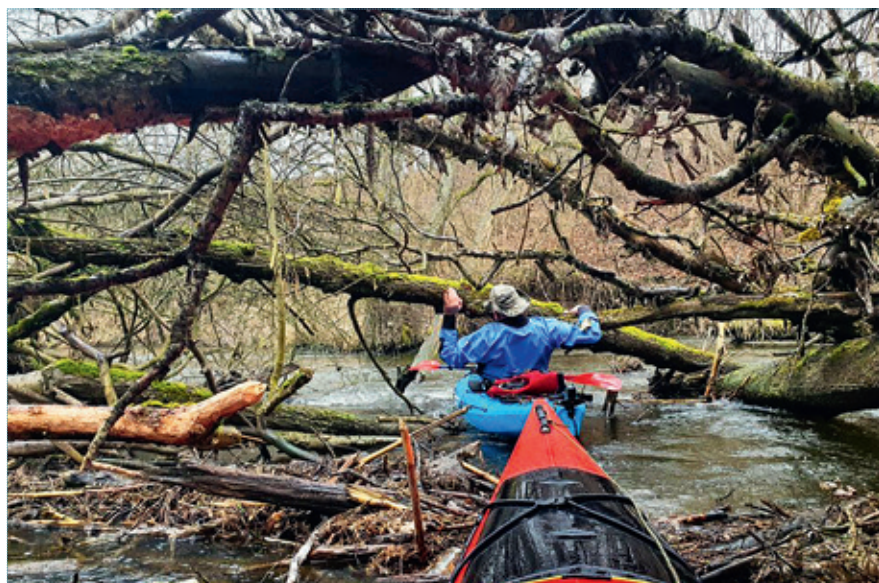
About 3 kilometres past the bridge, **on the left bank escarpment, the outline of a twelfth-century hillfort has been preserved.**



→ SKRWA RIVER NEAR TŁUCHÓWEK
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



→ KAYAKING TRIP DOWN THE SKRWA RIVER
FROM TŁUCHÓWEK TO ZDZIĘBÓRZ
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



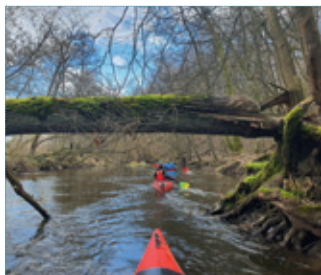
→ KAYAKING DOWN THE SKRWA SOMETIMES GETS EXTREME → photo: Piotr Dylewski



→ BRIDGE IN SIKÓRZ
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ 16.9 km - Sikórz, bridge, 'Sikórz' reserve

About 300 metres before the bridge, there is a dam, left over from an old mill. **The Skrwa flows here through a rather deep gorge; the 'Sikórz' reserve**, with an area of 137 hectares, begins here. The escarpments in this section have an incline of 30–45% and a height of up to 50 metres. They are crossed with ravines. Within the reserve, numerous monuments of nature trees can be found.



→ KAYAKING TRIP DOWN THE SKRWA RIVER
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski

→ 8.8 km - Radotki, mill and footbridge

On the right bank is the agri-tourism homestead Osada Młynarza, **located in the buildings of an old mill, with a kayak rental and accommodations**. Next to the homestead, there is a footbridge over the Skrwa.

→ 8.5 km - Radotki, bridge

→ 7.8 km - The confluence of the river Wierzbica and the Skrwa

Joining the Skrwa on the right is the Wierzbica, a small river about 20 kilometres long.



→ SKRWA JOINS THE VISTULA
→ photo: Andrzej Otrębski, CC BY-SA 4.0, WC

→ 3.5 km - Cierszewo, bridge

Before the bridge, there is a recreation centre with a marina, a kayak rental, and a restaurant. The Skrwa riverbed grows wider, forming spillways, which is related to the proximity of the Włocławek Reservoir.

→ 0.7 km - Murzynowo, bridge and observation point

In Murzynów, about 2 km west of the bridge, on the shore of the Vistula, is **an Ethnographic Museum** operated by the Mazovian Geographical Centre of the University of Warsaw's Faculty of Geography and Geographic Studies.



→ SKRWA LEWA RIVER
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski

→ 0 km - confluence of the Skrwa with the Vistula

SKRWA LEWA

Total length 45 kilometres, basin size 400 km², average drop 0.18 m/km, flow speed 0.1- 0.2 m/s (very slow). Left tributary of the Vistula.



→ SOCZEWKA LAKE
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski

The river flows out of the Kłodawa Hügelland and flows through, among others, Łanięta, Sokołów, Gostynin and Lucień. Before joining the Vistula in Brwilno Dolne, it runs into the artificial Soczewka Lake, created in the nineteenth century for the needs of the paper mill in Soczewka. The river is navigable below Gostynin, where, running through a tunnel valley, it meanders strongly. At the latitude of Lucień, the river flows between Lucieńskie and Białe lakes. **Past the village of Klusek, for a few kilometres, it flows through the dense forests of the Gostynin–Włocławek Landscape Park.**



WILGA

Total length 72.1 kilometres, basin size 573 km², average drop approx. 107 cm/km, flow speed 0.5 m/s (average). Right tributary of the Vistula.

In the past, the Wilga was intensively utilised for economic purposes. There were more than a dozen mills operating along it until the end of the Second World War. None of them survived until today; their traces can be seen in the current of the river and on its banks. Its source is located in the Lublin Voivodeship (east of the village of Kasyldów); **it flows through the Żelechów Hügelland and the Middle Vistula Valley. It flows into the queen of Polish rivers in the town of Wilga.**

→ 53.5 km - Zwola Poduchowna, bridge on a local road

→ 52 km - Zwola, bridge

→ 49.5 km - Miastków Kościelny, bridge

Located in the village are a neo-Renaissance palace from the end of the 19th century and **a neo-Gothic church** built in the early twentieth century. The Gothic church that stood here from the 15th century was included in its walls.

→ 48.2 km - Bridge, 45.5 km - Stary Miastków, bridge, weir

→ 42.1 km - Oziemkówka, bridge, dam

→ 36.4 km - Głosków, bridge, barrage

→ 28.9–27 km - Garwolin, bridges, barrages, water reservoir, mill

In the Old Poland days, Garwolin was famous for the beer that was brewed here. The town's most important monument is **the neo-Baroque collegiate church of the Transfiguration of the Lord**, built at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Four road bridges and a truss railway bridge span the river. Thanks to the industry and products manufactured here, Garwolin is known as the 'town of health, fashion, and beauty'.

→ 23.3 km - road bridge, 22.3 km railway bridge,

→ 19.4 km - Rębków, bridge, 13.6 km Stoczek, bridge,

→ 13.4 km - Stoczek, weir 11.3 km Trzcianka, bridge

→ 3.2 km - Wilga, bridge

In the interwar period, on the land belonging to the Count Rostworowski family of Nałęcz coat of arms, plots were marked out near the village of Wilga for the construction of the 'Wilga nad Wisłą' Climatic Housing Estate. **Today's Wilga Housing Estate has retained its spatial layout and the summer resort character of its buildings.**



→ KAYAKING TRIP DOWN THE WILGA RIVER

→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



→ WILGA POWYŻEJ GARWOLINA

→ photo: Demon666777, CC BY-SA 3.0, WC



→ WILGA RIVER IN GARWOLIN

→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF GARWOLIN

→ photo: dronek.pl (UM Garwolin)



→ STEP AND A BRIDGE ON THE ŚWIDER RIVER
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ **2.4 km - Wilga, barrage, bridge**

Below the barrage, the regulated, final section of the river begins.

→ **0 km - Confluence of the Wilga with the Vistula**

ŚWIDER

Total length 100.7 kilometres, basin size 573 km², average drop approx. 115 cm/km, flow speed 0.5 m/s (average). Right tributary of the Vistula.



→ DŁUŻEW MANOR HOUSE
→ photo: Miedzionikiel, CC BY-SA 4.0, WC

The Świder river is formed by the joining of the Świder (15 kilometres) and East Świder (14 kilometres) near Stoczek Łukowski. In the upper and middle course, the river is regulated, slowed down by many hydrotechnical constructions (concrete barrages). It regains its natural, unregulated flow near Dłużew, at the start of the Świder Nature Reserve, which protects 41 kilometres of the river.

→ **52.1 km - Bridge in Starogród**

→ **51.6 km - Dłużew, concrete barrage and footbridge**



→ ŚWIDER RIVER
→ photo: Adobe Stock

→ **48.1 km - Dłużew, road bridge, start of the Świder Nature Reserve**

In Dłużew, the Świder encircles a park and the early twentieth-century manor located within, which currently serves as the Plein-Air Home of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. **After the bridge in Dłużew, the 'Świder' reserve begins.** Established in 1978, it encompasses 41 kilometres of the riverbed and a 20-metre shoreline. The total area under protection is 238 hectares.

→ **46.5 km - The confluence of the Świder and its right tributary, the Sienniczka**

Unnavigable river, 17 kilometres long.



→ „ŚWIDER” NATURE RESERVE
→ photo: Tomasz Kuranaka Meteor2017, CC BY-SA 3.0, WC

→ **45.2 km - Spillway**

→ **42.8 km - Sufczyn, road bridge**

→ **40.8 km - Iron road and railway bridge**

→ **39 km - Footbridge**

→ **38 km - Kołbiel, road bridge**

About 300 metres before the bridge, 120 metres from the river on the right side, **there is a neo-Gothic church of the Holy Trinity.** Due to the different dress and traditions of the people living in the Kołbiel area, the Kołbiel ethnographic region is distinguished here.

→ **31.9 km - Sępczów, bridge, Świder oxbow lake past the bridge (about 500 m section)**

→ **26.8 km - Siwianka, ruins of a nineteenth-century mill and dam**



→ 22 km - Wola Karczowska, 1.5 m-tall weir

→ 18.7 km - Kopki, suspension footbridge

A light foot traffic construction, **at the entrance there is a wooden sculpture of St John of Nepomuk** – a saint of protection against floods.

→ 11.2 km Młάζd, bridge

Near the road bridge, there is a kayak rental. Downstream, the river meanders, undercutting the sandy shore.

→ 9.3 km the confluence of the river Mienia and the Świder.

The Mienia is the largest tributary of the Świder, which it joins on the right side. **It is 50.6 kilometres long**, nearly half of it is regulated, and its lower course, about 5 kilometres from Wiązowna to where it joins the Świder, it is very picturesque. The Mienia also carries the waters of the small river Srebrna, on the shore of which lies the city of Mińsk Mazowiecki.

→ 5.9 km - Otwock, road and railway bridges, 100 metres downstream remnants of a wooden bridge

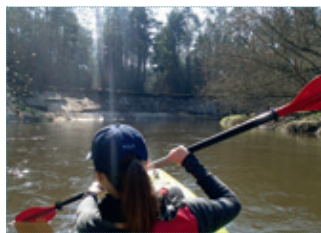
Ottock was established and experienced its heyday at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when the fashion for spa towns came into vogue. The opening of the Vistula River Railroad (1877) and the establishment of the first permanent lowland pulmonological sanatorium (1893) particularly influenced this. In a short time, villas of wealthy patients (mainly Warsaw Jews) began to be built next to the settlement along the railway route. **By the beginning of the twentieth century, there were already 600 summer manor houses in the characteristic style.** The buildings were of light construction, and had porches and verandas, pointed roofs, and ornate details (balustrades, openwork decorations). The name of the Świder-side style initiated by Michał Elwiro Andriolli was coined by Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński, who wrote in the poem 'A Trip to Świder', 'The village mayor/calls them "Świdermajer"': **Świdermajer was widely adopted to describe the style of the summer homes built in villages and towns south-east of Warsaw.**

→ 5.1 km - town beach and old railway bridge

This is a bridge of the old Jabłonna Narrow-gauge Railway. Before the bridge, there is a town beach with food vendors and a skate park. Below the crossing, on the right side, is the modern hotel complex of the Holiday Inn Resort Warszawa Józefów.

→ 0 km - confluence of the Świder with the Vistula

The Świder confluence, along with a six-kilometre section of the Vistula in its vicinity, is under protection as **the 'Wyspy Świderskie' nature reserve.** It encompasses 572 hectares and is the home to natural breeding and feeding sites of many aquatic birds.



→ KAYAKING TRIP DOWN THE ŚWIDER RIVER
DOWNSTREAM OF WOLA KARCZEWSKA
→ photo: Piotr Dylewski



→ NARROW-GAUGE RAILWAY BRIDGE IN OTWOCK
→ photo: Adobe Stock



→ A ŚWIDERMAJER-STYLE GUREWICZ VILLA
→ photo: arch. UM w Otwocku



→ BEACH ON THE ŚWIDER RIVER
→ photo: arch. UM w Otwocku





GOSTYNIN LAKE DISTRICT, OR THE 'MAZOVIAN MASURIA'

In Mazovia, we have our own 'little Masuria'. The Gostynin–Włocławek Lake District, because that is what we are talking about, is an area of over forty lakes on the left bank of the Vistula, overgrown with pine forests. Most of the forests grow on gentle hills shaped by glaciers, known as osses or eskers.

Its boundaries are marked by three towns – Gąbin, Gostynin, and Włocławek. The local landscape is protected by the Gostynin–Włocławek Landscape Park, established in 1979.

In **Gostynin** you can see a mid-fourteenth century castle, which twice hosted King Władysław II Jagiełło. Duke of Mazovia Siemowit IV, owner of Gostynin, ensured the expansion of the castle. He also died here. At present, it is the site of a hotel and conference centre (www.zamek-gostynin.eu). Heading west, near the Gostynin Os and the Skrwa Lewa, there are a few small lakes. Let us begin our expedition in Lake Kocioł. This is a lake that, according to legend, was formed in the place of a chasm that swallowed up the starost's castle. It was a punishment sent by the spirit of the starost for his wife and her lover, who lived together in the castle while the starost was away at war. **Near the lake is the historic chapel of St James, below which are probably the remains of the oldest medieval church in Gostynin.**



→ GOSTYNIN CASTLE
→ photo: Adobe Stock

About 9 km from Gostynin is **Lucieńskie Lake**. This is the third largest, but probably the most popular lake of the Gostynin Lake District. On its shore is the summer residence of the President of the Republic of Poland. **Miałkówkę and Budy Lucieńskie are where most of the accommodations, beaches and swimming spots can be found.** The shores of the lake are overgrown with vegetation, and they may be hard to access. Therefore, if you are planning to fish on the lake, make sure to rent a boat. Because the area is a quiet zone and there is a ban on engine use, you may only use a boat with oars. **Among others, you can catch bream, perch, roach, catfish, eel, crucian carp, tench, pike, ide, zander, carp, and grass carp.**

Renting boats and kayaks is possible, among others, in the lakeside agritourism establishment 'Słoneczna Farma' in Budy Lucieńskie (www.slonecznafarma.com). The 'Natury Dar' ranch in Miałkówkę also offers watercraft rental and fishing piers.

500 m from the ranch is the largest and only public beach in the area. It is located near Bar Jędreń, not far from the so-called 'old roundhouses', the abandoned 'Lucień' Recreation Centre, which was established for the employees of the Linen Industry Plant.



→ LUCIEŃSKIE LAKE IN THE WINTER
→ photo: Krzysztof Michalak (Nadleśnictwo Gostynin)



→ PRZYTOMNE LAKE
→ photo: Krzysztof Michalak (Nadleśnictwo Gostynin)



↳ SUNSET OVER BIAŁE LAKE
↳ photo: arch. SGPG

The lake's surface area is about 203 hectares. 'It is little frequented, mainly by boats and kayaks, and there are fewer and fewer sailboats', reported an agritourism operator. It takes a minimum 2 hours to circumnavigate the lake by kayak or boat.

On the northern shore of Lucieńskie Lake is the 'Leśny Lucień' nature reserve, established in 1987. It encompasses a 50-metre wide strip of reed beds in addition to a forest area. In the areas adjacent to the reserve, there are reminders of the Second World War – traces of trenches and fortifications.



↳ PRZYTOMNE LAKE
↳ photo: Krzysztof Michalak (Nadleśnictwo Gostynin)

About six kilometres separate Lucieńskie Lake and Białe Lake, one of the cleanest lakes in Poland. There are many beaches, campgrounds, accommodations and food vendors here. The clear water of the lake meant that until recently, fans of diving had their training and recreation centre here. Now, you can bring your own equipment and dive individually. **One of the places where you can rent water equipment – kayaks, boats, etc. – is Plaża Pod Lipami in the town of Białe (jeziorobiałe-plazapodlipami.pl).** In the cooler periods, you can also enjoy a good cold plunge here.

The fish-rich Białe Lake is an attraction for anglers, as it features bream, roach, perch, tench, pike, eel, and others. The lake is private. If you plan to sail it in your own sailboat and want to moor anywhere along the shore, make sure beforehand that this will be possible. According to one of the local resorts, this must always be arranged with the owner of a given specific plot of land on the lake. The jetties are private; mooring is paid.



↳ DAWN OVER BIAŁE LAKE
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ ZDWORSKIE LAKE ↳ photo: Adobe Stock



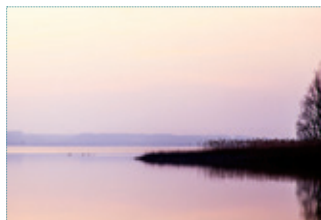
Nearby are the Drzesno (next to the 'Jeziro Drzesno' nature reserve) and Sumino lakes. The shores of the latter are overgrown with quite tall trees, which make sailing difficult. There is a 'weak wind' on the lake, which is why it's perfect for recreational kayaking.

About 14 kilometres, heading towards Gąbin, divide Drzesno Lake from Zdworskie Lake located in the Płock Valley, the largest of the Gostynin lake group.

The conditions on the lake are good for sailing. Sailboats and water equipment can be rented at resorts located on the opposite shores of the lake in Zdwórz and Koszółówka. In the southern part of the lake, characterised by a gentle shore, there are fishing spots. Roach, perch, bleak, pike, zander, and eel can be caught here. **There are campgrounds, resorts, and beaches around the lake.**

In Łąck it is worth seeing the neo-Renaissance palace built in 1872–1873 from a design by Kornel Gabrielski made for Mikołaj Fuhrman – a Russian officer and owner of the Łąck estate. The palace served as the residence of Marshal Edward Rydz-Śmigły (1938–1939), and it also hosted General Władysław Anders. Currently, it is private property. The palace is surrounded by a nineteenth-century landscape park, with an old forest and a lake. On the other side of the lake is the palace chapel of Sts Peter and Paul from the nineteenth century. Łąck is also the home of Państwowe Stado Ogierów, a stallion stud farm, established in 1923. In 2023, the stud farm celebrated its centennial.

From here, there are only 12 kilometres to Gąbin, once a royal city of the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland, located in the buffer zone of the Gostynin–Włocławek Landscape Park. It is worth noting the 1824 town hall, the townhouses in the Old Market Square (the oldest of them, from 1824, is the home of the Museum of Gąbin Land), as well as a nineteenth-century Jewish cemetery, and a historic steam mill from 1864. In 2023, the State Treasury's share in this property was transferred to the Town and Municipality of Gąbin. From Gąbin, you can drive to the part of the park bordering the Vistula River – from Soczewka to Nowe Duninowo. **Both towns are beautifully located by the Skrwa River, which is perfect for kayaking, sand by the Włocławek Reservoir on the Vistula, which is excellent for sailing, and by Lake Soczewka, an ideal place for fishing enthusiasts.** This is a true Mazovian tourist rarity, not only for fans of water.



↳ ZDWORSKIE LAKE
↳ photo: Muphygen, CC BY-SA 3.0 PL, WC



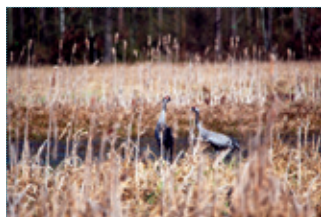
↳ GÓRSKIE AND CIECHOMICZKIE LAKES
↳ photo: arch. Nadleśnictwo Łąck



↳ ST HUBERTUS SHRINE ON THE ŁĄCKIE LAKE
↳ photo: arch. Nadleśnictwo Łąck



↳ ŁĄCKIE DUŻE LAKE
↳ photo: Adobe Stock



↳ CRANES (GRUS GRUS)
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ PALACE OVER THE ŁĄCKIE DUŻE LAKE. ŁĄCKIE MAŁE AND ZDWORSKIE LAKES CAN BE SEEN IN THE BACKGROUND.

→ photo: arch. Nadleśnictwo Łąck



→ SMALL CASTLE IN NOWY DUNINÓW

→ photo: Salacinskik, CC BY-SA 4.0, WC



→ FRYDERYK CHOPIN EUROPEAN ART CENTRE IN SANNIKI

→ photo: arch. ECA

In Nowe Duninowo, it is worth seeing the red brick neo-Gothic palace, constructed in 1835–40. Surrounded by ponds, the palace was entered in the register of monuments in 1959. It currently belongs to a private owner.

Admittedly in the non-Mazovian part of the park (but being so close, it is worth visiting, as it's only 30 minutes from Nowe Duninowo – about 15 km) is a natural phenomenon unlike others in the world – Lake Gościąg, the bottom of which hides many secrets. **Settlements have been preserved in its waters, from which the history of this place over many thousands of years can be traced.**

Rakutowskie Lake, which along with its wetlands forms the 'Błota Rakutowskie' nature reserve, has been entered in the Central Register of Nature Conservation Forms kept by the General Directorate for Environmental Protection. There is a tower on the shore of the lake from which birds can be observed. The area is a bird sanctuary of European significance. Rare and endangered species live here. If you are lucky, you may spot, among others, the black-tailed godwit, whose likeness can be found in the landscape park logo. Not far from the lake is a Polish Konik breeding farm.

There are 14 nature reserves within the Gostynin–Włocławek Landscape Park and its buffer zone. In the vicinity of Gostynin these are 'Dolina Osetnicy' (established in 1988 to protect the unique landscape of the Osetnica river canyon, 'Dybanka' (established in 1988 to protect the northern section of the Gostynin Os), and 'Drzewce' (established in 1988 to protect the oak-hornbeam forest groupings located in the urstromtal valley of the Skrwa Lewa river.

Another interesting tourist attraction in the Gostynin District is the Palace in Sanniki, the home of the **Frédéric Chopin European Art Centre**, which promotes the works of Frédéric Chopin.



ORNITHOLOGICAL TOURISM IN MAZOVIA, OR HOW TO OBSERVE BIRD LIFE

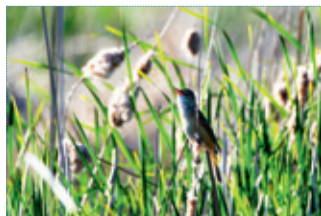
Rivers, lakes, reservoirs, and ponds are all excellent places for rest and recreation. You can sail, kayak, or fish. You can also enjoy motor water sports, or simply spend your time lazing on a beach. An unusual and undoubtedly one of the more fraught activities possible at the waterside is peering into the lives of some of the most colourful and interesting creatures on earth – birds – in their natural habitat.

Aquatic environments, river valleys, river marshes, pastures, meadows, and the forests that surround them are the habitats of numerous wetland birds. Observing them can be a fascinating adventure that is drawing more and more people, including photography enthusiasts.

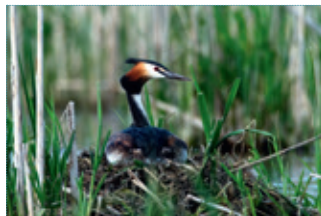
Birdwatching is a hobby of a growing number of Poles. You can watch birds anywhere, even in the middle of a big city. This was the case in October 2023, when Warsaw residents had the opportunity to observe the Sardinian warbler.

This tiny grey bird with a black head is an unusual sight in Mazovia, especially in the centre of the city. So far, it has only been seen three times in Poland.

The most fun are trips to the forest, to meadows and fields, and especially to the waterside. Rivers, lakes, reservoirs and ponds are the kingdoms of wetland birds, which are exceptionally rewarding to watch. They include species as large as swans, as marvellously colourful as kingfishers, as loud as cranes, and as migratory as geese in flocks of thousands. They range from the well-known and popular as mallards, to the incredibly rare and secretive, such as **bitterns or Eurasian curlews.**



→ GREAT REED WARBLER
(ACROCEPHALUS ARUNDINACEUS)
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



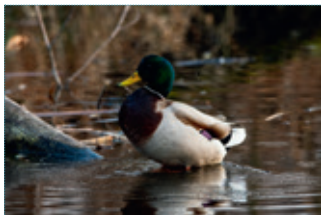
→ GREAT CRESTED GREBE (PODICEPS CRISTATUS)
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



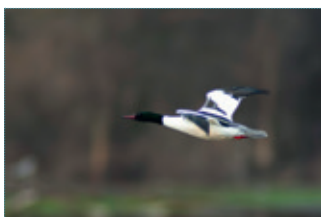
→ BIRD ENCLAVES ON THE NAREW RIVER → photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ BLACK-HEADED GULL
(CHROICOCEPHALUS RIDIBUNDUS)
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ WILD DUCK (ANAS PLATYRHYNCHOS)
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ GOOSANDER (MERGUS MERGANSER)
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

Mazovia is excellent for watching its winged inhabitants. The region enjoys plenty of bodies of water – almost anywhere you go, there is a pond, a small stream or a river, and ducks living in the vicinity. In Warsaw, you can find these birds not only in the urban parks in the centre of the million-plus city, but also in the city's housing estates and apartment blocks, which they frequently visit to take advantage of the food laid out for the regulars – the pigeons. Ducks will be a rewarding subject for those beginning their birdwatching adventure. However, we strongly recommend heading out of town for this purpose.

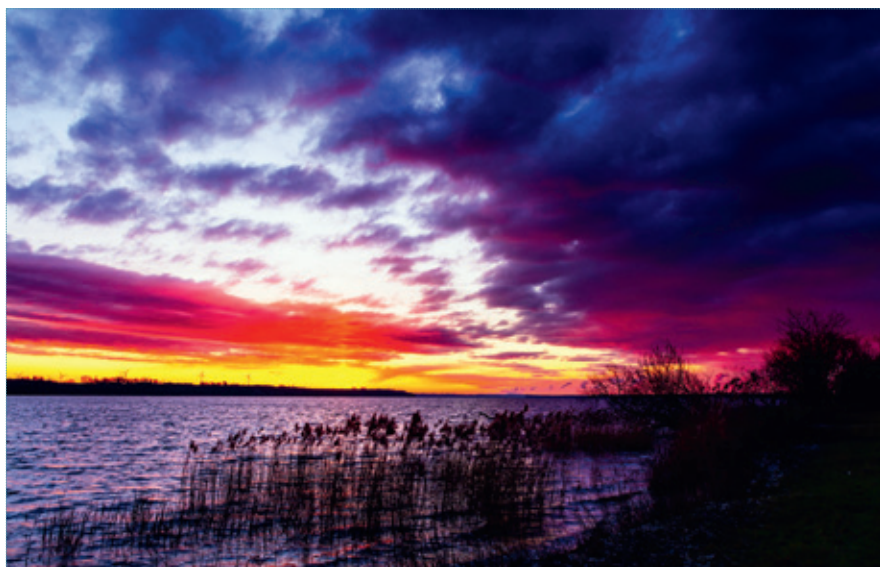
If you can't yet tell the different bird species apart, and you want your trips to be educational, get a bird guide to help you recognise the species you encounter. **Binoculars will also be helpful, and for more advanced bird watchers, a spotting scope.** It's also worth downloading an app to your phone to help you identify birds by the sounds they make. We encourage you to visit some of Mazovia's most interesting bird enclaves.

ZEGRZYŃSKIE LAKE

Birds abound here at any time of year, but the most interesting species can be spotted from autumn to spring, especially during migrations. **In addition to the mute swans, mallard ducks and coots living on the lake year-round, rare species can be observed during migration: greater white-fronted geese, grebes, and red-throated loons. Occasionally, white-tailed eagles visit the lake.**



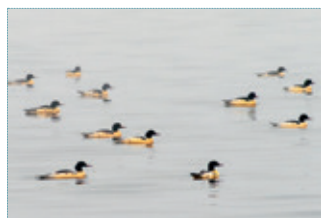
→ CORMORANTS (PHALACROCORAX CARBO)
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ WŁOCLÁWEK RESERVOIR
→ photo: Adobe Stock

WŁOCLÁWEK RESERVOIR

Ornithologists have identified more than two hundred species of birds occurring in and around the Włocławek Reservoir. The broad surface of the water makes it possible to observe a wide area from one spot, **so powerful binoculars or a spotting scope will come in handy**. Which one to choose? You can find plenty of advice on birdwatching websites and discussion forums. The largest numbers of birds can be seen during spring and autumn migrations.



→ IN THE FALL, THE RESERVOIR IS HOME TO LARGE FLOCKS OF COMMON MERGANSERS
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

RASZYN PONDS

Only 15 km from the centre of the capital city, right next to the busy Aleja Krakowska, is **an avian enclave – Raszyn Ponds**. Some of them are protected in a nature reserve of the same name. There are half-wild ponds, overgrown with reeds and relatively shallow. There are also those that are used to raise fish, but in such a way that nature is not overly interfered with. Here you can find not only ducks and swans, but also such 'avian rarities' as great crested grebes and little grebes, as well as ospreys, kingfishers, black-headed gulls, and rheas. On the island in one of the ponds, there is a colony of cormorants. **The reserve covers an area of 156 ha. A hiking trail has been marked out around the ponds, and it includes three observation towers located at the Falencki, Raszynski and Parkowy Górny ponds.**



→ RASZYN PONDS
→ photo: Adobe Stock



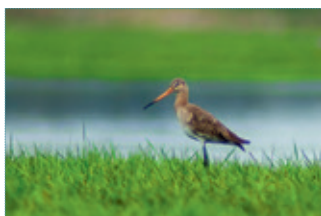
→ MUTE SWAN WITH A NEST
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ MUTE SWANS → fot. Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ BUG RIVER IN THE "WYDMA MOŁOŻEWSKA" NATURE RESERVE → photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (LIMOSA LIMOSA)
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ KĘPY KAZUŃSKIE NATURE RESERVE
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



→ CORMORANTS
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

BIRD RESERVES ON THE BUG RIVER

Ornithological reserves have been established within the **Podlasie Bug Gorge Landscape Park and the Bug Landscape Park**. In the Sarnaki municipality (Łosice district), just on the bank of the river, is the 'Kózki' nature reserve, which is an area where more than ninety bird species occur. As many as 55 species have been recorded breeding here, including such rare species as the little tern, the common tern, the dunlin, and the common redshank.

The '**Wydma Mołóżewska**' nature reserve, located in the Jabłonna Lacka municipality (Sokołów district) is of similar importance to the avian species of the Bug valley. These extensive pastures and fallow fields in the bend of the river are a breeding ground for dozens of species. In spring, thousands of geese rest here during migration.

ORNITHOLOGICAL RESERVES ON THE VISTULA

Through the efforts of the **Polish Society for the Protection of Birds**, the ornithological reserve '**Ławice Kiełpińskie**' was established in 1998, encompassing numerous islands and the shore of the Vistula from the Warsaw district of Białołęka to the municipalities of Jabłonna and Łomianki. The total area of the reserve is 803 ha. The reserve protects the nesting sites of water and marsh birds, especially the nesting colonies of the little tern, the black-headed gull, the common gull, the common tern, the little ringed plover, the common ringer plover, the common sandpiper, the common merganser, and the common kingfisher.

On the other side of Warsaw, two reserves were also established on the Vistula in 1998: '**Wyspy Zawadowskie**' and '**Wyspy Świdorskie**'. They encompass islands and sandbanks on the Vistula in the Warsaw districts of Wawer and Wilanów, as well as in the municipalities of Konstancin-Jeziorna, Józefów, Karczew and Otwock. More than 150 species have been identified in the reserves.

Other interesting ornithological reserves are located on the Vistula between Warsaw and Płock: '**Kępa Rakowska**', '**Kępa Antonińska**', '**Kępa Wykowska**', and '**Ławice Troszyńskie**'. They cover the river, islands, and sandbanks which are breeding grounds for rare species of waters, gulls, and terns.



STAWINOĞA NATURE RESERVE

This is a true bird paradise. Nesting here are not only the popular mallard ducks, mute swans, coots and greylag geese, but also Eurasian bitterns, cranes, and great reed warblers. In spring and autumn, the area is a stopping point for large flocks of rare **garganey ducks, Eurasian teals, northern pintails, northern shovelers, and tufted ducks.**

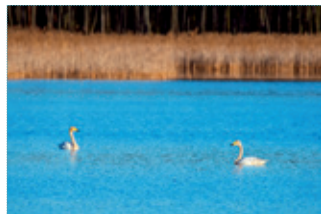
You can also encounter the very rare whooper swans. Grey herons, great egrets, and cranes visit the ponds practically year-round (with the exception of days when the water is completely frozen). Of the birds of prey, in addition to harriers, hawks, and buzzards, you can see white-tailed eagles, kites, and occasionally ospreys.

Some of the ponds are protected within the 'Stawinoga' nature reserve, which also includes fragments of a forest and marshes.

The river Narew flows near the ponds. You can easily spot cormorants in the riverside trees. The embankment near the river, thanks to its elevation, is an excellent place for birdwatching.



↳ GREYLAG GEESE (ANSER ANSER)
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ WHOOPER SWANS (CYGNUS CYGNUS)
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



↳ MALLARDS RESTING IN THE PONDS
↳ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek





SWIMMING AREAS

When you are going for a vacation by the water, make sure to choose a supervised swimming area, where water is tested by the Chief Sanitary Inspectorate. The entity responsible for organising the area (usually the local government) also ensures safety and employs lifeguards to supervise the swimmers at the days and times specified in the regulations. These swimming areas often offer additional attractions – food and beverages, beach volleyball courts, recreational facilities and more.



LIST OF SWIMMING AREAS COVERED BY THE REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT BOARD IN WARSAW AND THE SANITARY INSPECTORATE

*The provided opening dates are subject to change.

No.	Name of the Swimming Area	Municipality	Opening dates
1	City Beach on the Narew River in Pułtusk Swimming Area	Pułtusk	24 June 31 August
2	"Syrenka" Swimming Area on the Pilica River	Falęcice, Białobrzegi	1 July 31 August
3	Bathing area on the "Glinianka Hosera" Reservoir	Pruszków	1 July 31 August
4	Glinianki Swimming Area	Zielonka	24 June 31 August
5	Bratoszewo Swimming Area on Lake Bratoszewo	Gostynin	19 June 31 August
6	Kozienice Swimming Area on Lake Kozienice (Zdziczów)	Kozienice	24 June 31 August



→ BEACH IN PUŁTUSK ON THE NAREW RIVER → photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek



7	Nowe Miasto Reservoir Swimming Area	Nowe Miasto	24 June 31 August
8	Sobótka Municipal Swimming Area on Włocławek Reservoir	Płock	15 June 31 August
9	Borki 1 Swimming Area on Mleczna River	Radom	24 June 31 August
10	Borki 2 Swimming Area on Mleczna River	Radom	24 June 31 August
11	Żyrardów Reservoir Swimming Area on the Pisia Gągolina River	Żyrardów	17 June 31 August
12	Municipal Reservoir Swimming Area	Maków Mazowiecki	24 June 31 August
13	Szydłowiec Reservoir Swimming Area	Szydłowiec	1 July 31 August
14	Summer Playground North, Summer Playground Lake Swimming Area 1	Słopsk	1 July 31 August
15	Summer Playground East 1, Summer Playground Lake Swimming Area 2	Słopsk	1 July 31 August
16	Krubin Swimming Area	Ciechanów	24 June 31 August
17	Kąck Swimming Area on the Kąck Pond	Wiązowna	15 June 31 August
18	Iłża Lake Swimming Area	Iłża	1 July 31 August
19	Zwoleń Reservoir Swimming Area	Zwoleń	1 July 31 August
20	Upper Pond Swimming Area on the Zagożdżonka River	Pionki	24 June 31 August
21	"Patelnia" Beach Swimming Area on Górskie Lake	Grabina	24 June 31 August

22	"Zacisze Bis" Swimming Area on Lake Zdvorskie	Koszelówka, gmina Łąck	24 June 31 August
23	Walczewski Ponds Municipal Swimming Area on the Rokicianka River	Grodzisk Mazowiecki	24 June 31 August
24	Swimming Area of the "Dzika Plaża" Municipal Recreation and Leisure Complex in Nieporęt on the Zegrze Reservoir	Nieporęt	17 June 31 August
25	City Market Square Swimming Area in Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki on the Narew River	Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki	24 June 31 August
26	Swimming Area at the Nowy Dwór Volunteer Water Rescue Station on the Narew River	Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki	24 June 31 August
27	Krypianka Brzeźniczka Swimming Area	Garbatka -Letnisko	1 July 31 August
28	Czerniaków Lake Swimming Area	Warszawa	4 June 10 September
29	Serock City Beach on Zegrze Reservoir	Serock	17 June 31 August
30	Municipal Swimming Area near Węgrów on the Liwiec River Reservoir	Węgrów	24 June 31 August
31	Muchawka Reservoir Municipal Swimming Area	Siedlce	24 June 31 August
32	Kąpielisko Miejskie w Ostrołęce na Narwi	Ostrołęka	17 June 31 August
33	Łosice Reservoir on the Toczna River in Łosice	Łosice	24 June 31 August



LIST OF RAFTING TRIP ORGANISERS AND KAYAK RENTALS

ACTIVE ADVENTURE

Duboisia 2, 17-307 Mielnik
Phone: 606 662 225
e-mail: kontakt@active-adventure.pl
www.active-adventure.pl

„AGAT” AGNIESZKA KLAT

Śniadówko 27, 05-180 Pomiechówek
Phone: 697-703-985, e-mail: agata19_73@wp.pl
www.kajaki-sniadowko.pl

AGENCJA KAJAKOWA „ZWINKA”

Nad Strugą 16, 87-100 Toruń
Phone: 609 977 020, e-mail: kajaki@zwinka.pla
www.kajaki.zwinka.pl

„AGRO-KAJAK” AGNIESZKA NYKLEWICZ

Bieżany 9, 06-540 Radzanów
Phone: 604 238 795, e-mail: nyklewicz@wp.pl
www.kajaki-wkra.pl

AGROTURYSTYKA „RANCZO U GUCIA”

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Phone: 606 522 300, e-mail: kontakt@nadpilica.eu
www.nadpilica.eu

AMBER.TRAVEL – FIRMA DOBRYCH KAJAKARZY

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www.amber.travel

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Phone: 600 408 506,
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www.pomiechówek-kajaki.pl

BARTEX KAJAKI KOSEWKO

Głęboka, 05-180 Kosewko
Phone: 517 382 489,
e-mail: kajaki-kosewko@wp.pl
www.kajaki-kosewko.pl

BAZA RZEKAMI.PL

Błędowo 30B, 05-180 Pomiechówek
Phone: 503 817 171,
e-mail: splywy@rzekami.pl
www.rzekami.pl

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Smrock - Dwór 16 A, 06-220 Szelków
Phone: 791 102 393, www.kajakiorzyc.pl

CENTRUM KAJAKOWE „RIVER SQUAD”

Jan Bełdycki, Mładzka 46A, 05-462 Emów
Phone: 661 971 032, e-mail: biuro@riversquad.pl
www.riversquad.pl

CENTRUM TURYSTYKI AKTYWNEJ „BAJDARKA”

Piłsudskiego 3, 18-105 Suraz
Phone: 603 369 460,
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www.bajdarka.pl

„DWOREK NAD WKRA” - AGROTURYSTYKA

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e-mail: dworekbrudnice@gmail.com
www.dworeknadwkra.com/atraccje/kajaki

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Reymonta 10/204, 01-842 Warszawa
Phone: 602 265 239,
e-mail: ekoturyzm@ekoturyzm.pl
www.ekoturyzm.pl

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Phone: 608 365 418,
e-mail: w.niepytalski@gmail.com
Baza w Jońcu, Joniec 88b, 09-131 Joniec
Phone: 669 880 313,
e-mail: w.niepytalski@gmail.com
www.eldawkajaki.pl

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www.splywypilica.pl

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Olszewka 61a, Olszewka
Phone: 795 941 264

GOSPODARSTWO AGROTURYSTYCZNE „KLEPACZEW”

Klepaczew 34, 08-221 Sarnaki
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Phone: 502 051 365,
e-mail: kontakt@borkowokajaki.pl
www.borkowokajaki.pl

KAJAKI DYLEWSKI

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Phone: 500 775 999
e-mail: biuro@kajaki-dylewski.pl
www.kajaki-dylewski.pl

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e-mail: kajakiomulew@gmail.com

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→ KAYAKERS ON THE LIWIEC RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek

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www.kajakiupawla.pl

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e-mail: splywy@kajakiem.pl
www.kajakiem.pl

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www.kajaki-borkowo.pl

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Phone: 509 293 401, e-mail: info@sosenka-kajaki.pl
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www.nadliwie.com

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Przystań i kajaki nad Wkrą
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Phone: 505 501 767
e-mail: przystan@kaja-sobieski.pl

PRZYSTAŃ KAJAKOWA „MRZONKA”

Joniec 93, 09-131 Joniec
Phone: 696 436 799,
e-mail: kajaki-mrzonka@wp.pl
www.kajaki-mrzonka.pl

„PRZYSTAŃ LIWIEC” KRZYSZTOF LADA

Senatorska 1, 07-100 Liw
Phone: 538 00 00 58,
e-mail: biuro@przystanliwiec.pl
www.przystanliwiec.pl

„SMAK PRZYGDY”, „LETNISKO TEOFILÓW”

Domaniewice 1, 26-420 Nowe Miasto
nad Pilicą, Phone: 696 118 424
e-mail: mirekkowalski@autograf.pl
www.safari.net.pl

SPLYWY.KAJAKOWE.ORG

Łomna, Jana Kochanowskiego 186,
05-152 Czosnów
Phone: 601 397 791, www.kajaki-wisla.pl

SPŁYWY WKRA

Szczypiorno, 05-180 Pomiechówek
Phone: 727 544 378,
e-mail: rezerwacje@splywy-wkra.pl
www.splywy-wkra.pl

STANICA WODNA

i gospodarstwo agroturystyczne
Wólka Proszewska 54, 08-124 Mokobody
Phone: 606 691 580, 788 464 814
e-mail: kajaki.rowiccy@gmail.com
www.kajaki-liwiec.pl

STER WARKA

Mostowa 30, 05-660 Warka
Phone: 601 418 860, e-mail: sterwarka@gmail.com
www.sterwarka.pl

STODOŁA NAD BZURĄ

Północna 5, Kozłów Biskupi
Phone: 501 586 503
e-mail: stodolanadbzura@gmail.com
www.stodolanadbzura.pl

STOWARZYSZENIE AKTYWNA STREFA

Garwolińska 2A, 08 420 Miastków Kościelny
Phone: 502 150 729,
e-mail: biuro@aktywnastrefa.com
www.aktywnastrefa.com/kajaki

STUDZIANKA - WYPOŻYCZALNIA KAJAKÓW

Malużyn 5A, 06-450 Malużyn
Phone: 730 643 895
e-mail: wypożyczalnia.studzianka@gmail.com

TOP KAJAK

Popielzyn Górny 12A, 09-131 Joniec
Phone: 48 512 144 558, e-mail: biuro@top-kajak.pl
www.top-kajak.pl

„U KAFLIKA” W BRAŃSZCZYKU NAD BUGIEM

Nadbużna 39, 07-221 Brańszczyk
Phone: 503 144 834, e-mail: ukaflika@wp.pl
www.ukaflika.pl

WINCENT SPORT

Falęcice 182, 26-803 Promna
Phone: 603 353 639, e-mail: wincentsport@wp.pl
www.wincentsport.pl

„WIOSEŁKO” OŚRODEK WYPOCZYNKOWY

Nasielska 05-192 Ciekosyn
Phone: 881 651 651, e-mail: rezerwacja@wioselko.pl
www.wioselko.pl

WWW.DZIKIERZEKI-KAJAKI.PL

Phone: 505 666 424, e-mail: kozirad@wp.pl

WWW.KAJAKI.PRO

Wojska Polskiego 62, Kuligów
Phone: 507 605 189, e-mail: kajaki.pro@gmail.com

WWW.KAJAKI-JEZIORKA.PL

Dworska, 05-500 Wólka Kozodawska
Phone: 571 861 776, e-mail: kajakijeziorka@gmail.com

WWW.KAJAKINADPILICA.PL

Piliczna 23, Nowe Miasto nad Pilicą
Phone: 720 800 009
e-mail: rezerwacja.kajakinadpilica@gmail.com

WWW.KAJAKI-PIASECZNO.PL

Aleja Brzóz 39, Zalesie Dolne/Piaseczno
Phone: 690 679 179, e-mail: graff@poczta.onet.eu



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WWW.KAJAKISKRWA.PL

Skrwa Parzeń k/Płocka
Phone: 505 480 840, e-mail: kajakiskrwa@wp.pl

WWW.KAJAKPATROL.PL

Nowy Zjazd 4 05-660 Warka
Phone: 501 191 226, e-mail: kajakpatrol@kajakpatrol.pl

WWW.KAMYK-KAJAKI.PL

Marek Kamiński
Różana 6, 07-202 Kamieńczyk
Phone: 508 638 465, e-mail: biuro@kamyk-kajaki.pl

WWW.LIWIEC.COM

Stacja wodna Zaliwie Szpinki 1K
08-124 Mokobody
Phone: 797 807 807, e-mail: info@liwiec.com

WWW.LIWIEC-KAJAKI.PL

Jarnice 59, 07-100 Węgrów
Phone: 503 877 747, 798 371 605
e-mail: zygmunt.dziewulski@o2.pl

WWW.SPLYWY-WKRA.PL

Słowiańska, 05-180 Szczypiorno
Phone: 727 544 378, rezerwacje@splywy-wkra.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA „KAJAKI-WKRA.COM”

przy Biurze Turystyki Aktywnej ZLOT
Łomna, Jana Kochanowskiego 186
05-152 Czosnów, Phone: 22 785 01 01,
Phone: 601 397 791, www.nasza-wkra.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA KAJAKOWA „RAWKA”

Leśna 12, 99-417 Joachimów Mogiły
Phone: 506 098 456, e-mail: polkolo@interia.pl
www.splywykajakowerawka.pl

**WYPOŻYCZALNIA KAJAKÓW „POD PRĄD”**

Wiązowska 104, 05-420 Józefów,
Phone: 607 032 679
e-mail: kontakt@kajakipodprad.pl
www.kajakipodprad.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA KAJAKÓW „WODNIK”

05-180 Goławice Pierwsze
Phone: 668 669 022
e-mail: biuro@kajakiwodnik.waw.pl
www.kajakiwodnik.waw.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA KAJAKÓW „CYRANECZKA”

Gutarzewo 12b, 09-110 Sochocin
Phone: 534 355 095,
e-mail: kajakicyraneczka@onet.pl
www.kajakicyraneczka.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA KAJAKÓW „WAŻKA”

Mirosław Woźnicki
Kuchary Żydowskie 2, 09-110 Sochocin
Phone: 886 277 472, 23 661 27 94,
e-mail: kajaki.wazka@gmail.com
www.kajaki-wazka.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA KAJAKÓW „KAJAK-ARKA”

Rydzyń Włościański 10
06-445 Rydzyń Włościański
Phone: 604 859 123,
e-mail: arkakajaki@gmail.com
www.splywywkra.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA KAJAKÓW „MARCO”

Śniadówko 25, 05-180 Pomiechówek
Phone: 514 116 466
e-mail: marekpierzchala@gmail.com
www.kajaki-marco.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA KAJAKÓW

Józefów nad Wisłą, ul. Basonia 43
Phone: 785 493 824, e-mail: mmtabaka@gmail.com

WYPOŻYCZALNIA „PLAŻA NA ZAWADACH”

Popielżyn-Zawady 45, 09-131 Joniec
Phone: 500 252 025
e-mail: kontakt@plazanazawadach.pl
www.plazanazawadach.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA KAJAKÓW „POD LASEM”

Śniadówko, 05-180 Pomiechówek
Phone: 693 216 908
e-mail: info@kajaki-podlasem.pl
www.kajaki-podlasem.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA „KAJAKUS”

Ryczywół, Kłoda 100, 26-910 Magnuszew
Phone: 510 356 050, e-mail: kajakus@onet.pl
www.kajakus.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA „KEJA-WKRA”

Szczypiorno, 05-180 Pomiechówek
Phone: 661 427 044, e-mail: kejawkra@gmail.com
www.kejawkra.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA „MODRZEWIOWY ZAKĄTEK”

Szczypiorno 1B 05-180 Pomiechówek
Phone: 506 052 948
e-mail: modrzewiowyzakatek@wp.pl
www.modrzewiowyzakatek.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA „PRZYSTAŃ EMÓW”

Kręta 8, 05-462 Emów
Phone: 601 258 846, e-mail: przystan@emow.pl
www.przystan-emow.pl

WYPOŻYCZALNIA „KEJA”

Stare Miasto 28, 06-100 Pułtusk
Phone: 600 590 109

XTREME W MIERZWICACH

Phone: 502 545 660
e-mail: xtreme@barmierzvice.pl
www.barmierzvice.pl

ZAWISZYŃ KAJAKI LIWIEC SPŁYWY KAJAKOWE

Tęczowa, 05-280 Zawiszyn
Phone: 880 300 205



→ MARKING OF THE KAYAKING TRAIL IN KRASNOSIELC ON THE ORZYCA RIVER → photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerec

KAYAKING 101

WHAT TO BRING ON A RAFTING TRIP?

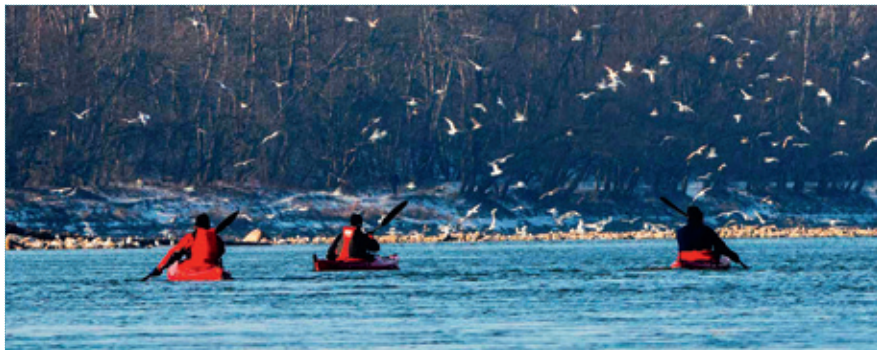
- > A first aid kit with basic wound dressing supplies: bandages of different widths, a waterproof band-aid, scissors, hydrogel dressing for burns;
- > High SPF sunscreen – you can easily get sunburned in a kayak, even during a cloudy day;
- > glasses with UV filters;
- > comfortable, quick-drying clothes suitable for changing weather – remember to bring a change of clothes;
- > protective case for your phone and documents – aquapack;
- > head covering to protect you against heat stroke;
- > hoes with hard soles (preferably designed for water sports) so as not to injure your feet while carrying your kayak;
- > gloves (such as cycling gloves) to protect your hands from blisters;
- > a piece of rope – a mooring line, which can be used to tie your kayak, pull it or dry wet clothes;
- > trash bag;
- > cash – keep in mind that finding an ATM along the route might not be possible;
- > if you are going to spend the night along the route – a tent, mattress/sleeping mat, blanket, torch (preferably a headlight), knife. Remember that camping is allowed only in designated areas. Burning bonfires are allowed only in designated areas due to the risk of accidentally starting a fire.

HOW TO PACK YOUR KAYAK?

- > Bring drinking water, food and a flask with warm beverage for colder weather.
- > When planning your loadout, check whether you will be able to replenish your supplies along the route – if there are stores along the way, you can bring less food with you.



→ KAYAKERS ON THE WKRA RIVER → photo: Andrzej Świątkowski



→ ON THE VISTULA → photo: Andrzej Świątkowski

KEY SAFETY RULES WHILE KAYAKING

- Always board your kayak against the current. Do the same while departing from the bank and arriving at the bank;
- When dealing with taller waves, try to position your kayak with the bow towards the waves;
- Always make sure that all participants wear individual lifesaving equipment – a buoyancy aid (if they can swim) or a life preserver (if they cannot swim). This can save their lives when the kayak capsizes or during windy days. The life preserver's buoyancy must be matched to the person's body weight. Additionally, it should be equipped with crotch straps and a number of other features;
- Children should always be accompanied by an adult;
- Try to finish your journey before sunset – it may be difficult or impossible to help you in case of an accident in the dark. Additionally, you might not notice stones and tree branches, dams, thresholds and other water obstacles in the darkness;
- Check the weather forecast before setting off;
- Never get into the water or your kayak under the influence of alcohol or other drugs;
- Stay in the cockpit and keep your legs inside;
- If possible, travel in groups – you will be much safer that way;
- Choose routes that match your skill level and fitness – water is a truly formidable force of nature.

MY KAYAK CAPSIZED! WHAT DO I DO?

- If your kayak capsizes in deeper waters, try to pull it to a shallower area or to the shore without turning it over.
- In the event of capsizing, save the people first – things can be replaced.
- Never let go of the paddle – especially after your kayak capsizes.

CALLING FOR HELP

It is a good idea to let your loved ones know that you are going on a kayaking trip, which rental company you will be using, as well as where you are going to start and end your journey.

- Phone numbers:
 - Water rescue emergency numbers: 984 / +48 601 100 100
 - Single European emergency number for landlines and cell phones: 112

- Ratunek App – install the app before starting your trip.
 - the application will automatically connect to the integrated emergency number +48 601 100 100 for water rescue and +48 601 100 300 for mountain rescue;
 - it will relay the caller's location to the rescue services automatically via SMS during the phone call;
 - it will share information on the battery charge status of the caller's phone, enable them to send text messages and call back;
 - it will relay key health information provided by the user, as well as contact details of a designated contact person in case of an accident.
 - The Ratunek app, which is integrated with the official emergency notification system, can be downloaded from Google Play, App Store, and Windows Phone Store.

HELP SIGNALS ON THE WATER

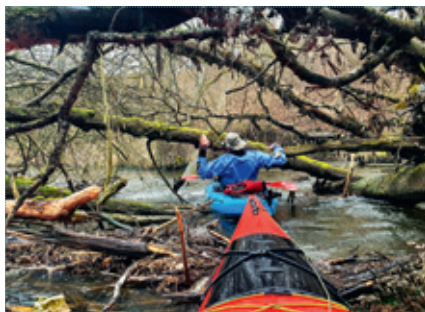
- Quickly lift your arms above your head, raise and lower the paddle above your head;
- Give signals using red or orange material (for example your life preserver or a sweatshirt);
- Use long sound signals – loud shouting, signal whistle;
- Use light signals – mirror, torch, at night give signals by making circles with your torch;

PASSING OBSTACLES ON THE WATER

- Divide the responsibilities – the helmsman sits in the back, and the person in the front will watch the water and report obstacles;
- When navigating a river, keep looking at the water surface in front of the kayak's bow, paying close attention to any wrinkles, as well as waves and eddies. Usually, they will signal underwater obstacles that you have to avoid.
- Try to avoid any eddies, whirlpools and logs. On the Vistula, Bug or Narew rivers, lifting and moving your kayak might be difficult.
- When passing low obstacles such as bridges or fallen trees, go under them leaning forward, keep your paddles along the sides of the kayak.
- If the water level is low, stick to the current to avoid hitting the bottom and carry the kayak over any obstacles;
- When getting out of the canoe in the shallow water, check the sturdiness of the bottom with your paddle.



→ OVERCOMING OBSTACLES ON THE ORZYC RIVER
 → photo: Szczepan Przybyłowski



→ OVERCOMING OBSTACLES ON THE SKRWA RIVER
 → photo: Piotr Dylewski



PROTECTING YOUR THINGS FROM GETTING WET

- Protect the things in the kayak from getting wet – put them in screw-top plastic containers, pack them in a sailor's bag or a sturdy ziploc bag. Tie them to the kayak to avoid losing them.
- Do not carry your kayak when it is loaded – this can lead to damage.

KAYAKING SAVOIR VIVRE

- Pay attention to others and help them when they are in trouble.
- Give way to larger vessels – keep your distance from ships and ferries, and on lakes keep close to the shoreline.
- Do not litter in the water and camping areas. Pack your trash in a plastic bag and take it with you to leave it in a designated place after the trip.
- Do not make excessive noise - you are a guest on the river.
- Do not destroy nature and infrastructure intended for relaxation.



→ A PLACE SOMEWHERE ON THE NAREW RIVER
→ photo: Grzegorz Hubert Gerek