



Time for Podlaskie

IN TOUCH WITH NATURE

BIEBRZA AND NAREW VALLEY

SUWAŁKI REGION

AUGUSTÓW FOREST AND RAJGRÓD LAKE

BIEBRZA AND NAREW VALLEY

KNYSZYN FOREST

BIAŁOWIEŻA PRIMEVAL FOREST AND THE BUG VALLEY



Podlaskie Regional
Tourism Organisation

PODLASKIE.TRAVEL

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Biebrza National Park

photograph: Małgorzata Pawełczyk

Biebrza National Park is the largest national park in Poland, famous for its wetlands, marshes and peat bogs. The majestic Biebrza River flows through it. The valley of the river has retained its natural character for almost its entire length, providing habitat for hundreds of bird species - including the unique ruff, proudly posing in the park's logo. When travelling along the Tsar Route, you might come across a mighty, unhurriedly walking moose. The park has a network of beautiful hiking trails, where you can immerse yourself (often literally!) in pristine nature untouched by man.

The protected Biebrza valley is more than 100 kilometres long. The picturesque marshland, the multi-coloured carpet of plants and the diversity of the animal world all add to its unquestionable value. In spring, when the river overflows its banks, you can see birds returning from distant migrations. Almost 300 species have been observed so far! There are also more than 100 species of butterflies, 38 species of fish and a lot of cute amphibians and reptiles. The nearby forests are home to strolling wolves, while otters playfully splash in the old riverbeds and small watercourses. The park also features huge forest ecosystems and a variety of plant communities. There are over 900 of them within the park's borders alone! Many of the plants and animals living in the area are endangered species, which can find a safe refuge there.

Osowiec-Twierdza is home to the Biebrza National Park Education and Management Centre, which is also its headquarters. Environmental education is high on the agenda there, and the Biebrza National Park is committed to promoting it. You can read one of the many popular science publications or view the museum's collection of exhibits, photographs as well as documentary and artistic materials. Enjoy the variety of educational trails offered by the Regional Education Centres: Osowiec with the „Footbridge” path, Grzędy with the „Red Swamp” and Trzyrzeczki, where you can stroll along the hiking trail from Wizna to Lipsko. If you are an history enthusiast, you will certainly be interested in the Osowiec Fortress – a Russian fortification from the second half of the 19th century, located on the only crossing through the Biebrza marshes. It is famous for its almost 7-month defence during the First World War. Ultimately, the fortress has never been conquered. Nowadays, it is the most valuable historical site in the Park, besides the Augustów Canal. Visit the Osowiec Fortress Museum and learn the unique history of the building. Explore its vaults and see the collection of military items from the Tsar times to the present day, displayed inside the historical barracks and on the nearby square.

The more active tourists will not be bored there either. The Biebrza National Park offers a network of cycling routes to explore the natural and cultural heritage of Podlaskie province. The uniqueness and specificity of the Biebrza makes it a perfect river for recreational canoeing and rafting: in its north part, from the springs to the narrowing near Sztabin, the river flows through a valley with high banks, with almost no forests, where rushes grow only in the immediate vicinity of the river. The central basin, located between Sztabin and the Osowiec fortress, is a vast, swampy and flat area covered by a thick layer of peat. The river flows closer to the southern, distinct edge formed by the upland on which the riverside villages have spread. The southern basin starts at the Osowiec Fortress and reaches the mouth of the Biebrza River to the Narew. The western banks of the basin are high and steep in some places, while the eastern banks are low and flat. This part of the river has preserved its savage nature to the fullest.

No matter which of these sections you choose – the Biebrza river rafting will undoubtedly be an unforgettable experience.



OSOWIEC FORTRESS

Tourist Information Centre
Biebrza National Park
Osowiec-Twierdza 8
19-110 Goniądz
(+48) 85 738 30 35
www.biebrza.org.pl

Grajewo Municipality

A straight road leads from the heart of the Biebrza National Park to the municipality of Grajewo. Having passed green forest complexes, you will find yourself in a place where the dairy industry, for which Podlaskie is famous, is dynamically developing. The location of the municipality enables various forms of active tourism. Water sports enthusiasts will find a place for themselves by Lake Mierucie and Lake Toczyłowo, which offer a recreation centre and a camp site. Forest ducts and trails, as well as clean air, will encourage walkers and hikers. The Linden Alley on the road between Wojewodzin and Wierzbowo, where you can find a nature monument made up of over a kilometre-long avenue of 200 monumental trees, is a unique place to spend your free time. If you are near the village of Białogrądy, be sure to see the castle built mainly of fieldstone.

The local cycle paths invite you to go on long bike rides. Three scenic, but entertaining cycling routes (60, 76 and 94 kilometres long) begin and end in Grajewo. Despite the long distances, the routes are mostly flat, not very difficult to ride and suitable for all types of bicycles, so pack your lunch, be sure to stay hydrated and explore these magical surroundings while enjoying the proximity of nature.

If you stay in Grajewo with your children, we highly recommend the Milk Museum. It is the first (and, to date, the only!) such facility in Poland and it comes as no surprise that it was set up in a region that supplies milk to the entire country. The family-friendly, interactive museum is an absorbing adventure with the theme „where does milk come from?”. Designed with the little ones in mind, it is full of games, tasks and puzzles. There's even a recreation of a traditional cowshed, where you can try your hand at milking a cow! It will show you the path milk follows from the farmer to the supermarket and give you a real flavour of a traditional „milk bar”. This is a must-see trip if you're with young travellers.

Tourist Information Centre
Milk Museum in Grajewo
ul. Konstytucji 3 Maja 36
19-200 Grajewo
(+48) 86 262 10 67
www.grajewo.pl



Dairy Tradition Centre – the Milk Museum in Grajewo belongs to a network of new interactive museums. No one is bored there, thanks to the interaction of technology with the senses: touch, hearing and sight! The youngest visitors will be delighted with the entertainment available at the Museum: animal models featuring animations, educational multimedia and skill games, holo-boxes and much more!

Dairy Tradition Centre – Milk Museum in Grajewo
ul. Konstytucji 3 Maja 36
19-200 Grajewo
(+48) 86 262-10-67
www.muzeummleka.pl



Centrum Tradycji Mleczarstwa
- Muzeum Mleka w Grajewie

Bartlowizna Centre and Bartel Manor are located in the midst of the picturesque Biebrza landscapes. Admire the panorama of the Biebrza while tasting the local specialities – tench in cream, fish sausage or kartacze, game, pierogi, delicious pâtés and cured meat products.

Bartlowizna sp. z o.o.
ul. Nadbiebrzańska 32
19-110 Goniądz
(+48) 85 738 06 30
www.biebrza.com.pl



Goniądz Municipality



photograph: Małgorzata Pawełczyk

Goniądz municipality is an important part of the „Green Lungs of Poland” area. It occupies approx. 50% of the territory of Biebrza National Park. This is where you will find one of the oldest nature reserves in Poland, the famous Red Swamp strict protection area – the motherland of the Biebrza elk and a place created to protect this species, once endangered in Poland. Various species of birds can be observed in the municipality, both widespread ones such as storks and lapwings, as well as white-tailed eagles, lesser spotted

eagles or even short-eared owls. The richness of the local flora is also impressive, and all of this can be admired from the observation tower near Goniądz. Take a walk around Osowiec – climb the wooden bridge over the Biebrza or see the moat and shelters of the Osowiec Riverfront Fort. Visit Wroceń and relish the magic of the Biebrza Valley, or cycle along the Green Velo route which crosses the municipality. Stay overnight in one of the agritourism farms and feel the vibe of the Podlasie countryside!

Once you have experienced the uniqueness of the local landscape, be sure to visit the town, the history of which dates back as far as the 14th century. Goniądz – located in the centre of a valley on a beautiful plateau – is regarded as the capital of the Biebrza Marshes. There are sacral architecture monuments such as the St Agnes’ Church, the Holy Spirit Neo-Gothic Chapel and the St Florian’s Chapel. When you have visited the town, have a picnic near the „Dołek” water mill built in the first half of the 19th century, located on the Czarna

Struga stream. You can also visit the village of Downary, where the historic Church of Our Lady of the Angels is located, or the village of Klewianka, where you will see wooden houses with beautiful ornaments and decorated quoins.



Tourist Information
Centre „Dolina Biebrzy”
Wroceń 44
19-110 Goniądz
(+48) 603 078 051
www.dolinabiebrzy.pl

Tourist Information
Centre „Biebrza 24”
ul. Polna 50
16-310 Sztabin
(+48) 603 225 100
www.biebrza24.pl

Suchowola Municipality

THE CENTRE OF EUROPE



Suchowola municipality lies right at the borders of the Biebrza National Park. Due to the natural features of the Biebrza and Bachmacki Marshes with the Jurdyga Lake, as well as the nearby Knyszyn Forest, the municipality provides excellent conditions for enthusiasts of nature and active tourism. Those who prefer relaxation far from large cities will find peace, quiet and beautiful landscapes in the nearby agritourism farms. Enthusiasts of water adventures will certainly enjoy the Karpowicze reservoir beach, whereas cyclists will enjoy riding along the Cycling Trail of Blessed Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, which runs through the area. The village of Okopy, where he was born, is visited by pilgrims from all over the country, and Suchowola, the capital of the municipality, is home to a Memorial Chamber named after him. Suchowola is a place where many cultures intertwine. There are historical traces of various religions and nationalities, as evidenced by the 19th century Church of Saints Peter and Paul, the Tatar Centre of Islamic Culture at Goniądzka Street and the brick synagogue at Augustowska Street. A Centre of Three Cultures was established in Suchowola as a reference to the cultural richness of the region. Its purpose is to commemorate the history of Suchowola's inhabitants and to serve as a place for cultural activities, workshops and literary meetings, while tourists interested in Suchowola's past and interesting facts about the region may obtain tourist information there, rent an audio-guide or learn something about the 120 roadside crosses and shrines, which you may come across while travelling through the municipality.

If you feel like you're right in the centre of events while you're there, you're not wrong at all. Suchowola is home to a huge erratic boulder which represents the Geographical Centre of Europe, mapped here in 1775 by the royal cartographer and astrologist Szymon Antoni Sobiekranski!

Tourist Information Centre - Suchowola
Centre of Three Cultures
Plac Kościuszki 5D
16-150 Suchowola
(+48) 607 970 213
(+48) 696 054 346
www.um.suchowola.wrotapodlasia.pl

Łomża Landscape Park of the Narew Valley

Tourist Information Centre Łomża
Landscape Park of the Narew Valley
ul. Główna 52
18-421 Piątnica
(+48) 86 219 21 75
www.lpkdn.wrotapodlasia.pl

The Narew River and its surroundings are home to hundreds of species of water birds and animals – a true haven for ornithologists and wildlife photographers. The floodplains of one of the region's most beautiful rivers – the Narew, known as the „Polish Amazon” – present the most picturesque view in early spring. The 16-kilometre section of the twisting, meandering river with its numerous oxbow lakes is an image you will remember for a long time. The Łomża Narew Valley

Landscape Park is located on this river – it is where you can find beaver tracks, observe ruffs, geese and ducks and, if you are lucky, see an elk. Explore these wild areas by bike or on foot. Enter the Koty-Bronowo path, where you will discover the nature of the Park's environment. Take a trip through Pniewo Utrata-Pniewo Dziedziniec and indulge in forest therapy or take a walk along the nature trails of Kalinowo, which are most impressive in spring, when the

migrating birds make their presence known with their noises. If you look closely, you will see a great snipe, a white-tailed eagle, a red kite or a diving osprey. The explanation panels will help you to understand how seeds disperse, to discover the secrets of bats which feed after dark by moving quickly and efficiently between the trees, and to find out how amphibians have adapted to life in water and on land. The Park's attractions include the historic 18th century wooden-brick mansion of the

Lutowski family in Drozdowo. Today, it houses the Museum of Nature, with exhibitions presenting nature as well as the past court life. The museum park offers educational attractions on the route: puzzles, animal tracks and information panels. Nearby, there is a wooden foot-bridge called „Thrush Sanctuary” – an ideal place for a walk through the marshy floodplain forest, typical for this area.

Narew National Park

Narew National Park
Kurowo 10
18-204 Kobylin Borzymy
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www.npn.pl

photograph: Maciej Nowakowski

Approximately four thousand years ago the Narew river overflowed its banks, flooding the entire valley. It began to flow along multiple routes simultaneously, creating a complex river system – a true water maze. Today, from a bird’s eye view of the river, you can see a system of tangled riverbeds, alternately joining and separating, somewhat reminiscent of an intricately woven spider web. The Narew National Park, located at the heart of the region, is called the „Polish Amazon”, and the picturesque floodplains of the Narew delight travellers from all over the world. This marshy area covered with tall grass is home to many species of birds, so grab a pair of binoculars and have some patience – you might spot a grebe, snipe or heron! The Narew Valley is, in a sense, a border area, as the river separates the historic Mazovia from the eastern lands, now classified as Podlasie. It combines and blends influences of many cultures and traditions – Mazovian, Lithuanian, Belorussian and Jewish. People have lived in harmony with nature for centuries there – come and try it too.

The headquarters of the Narew National Park is located in a historic 19th century manor house in Kurowo. Inside you will see an exhibition presenting the natural and cultural assets of the Narew Valley. Once you’ve learnt the theory behind the Park’s wildlife, it’s time for the practical activities! Take the „Footbridge Among the Marshes” trail – a route that leads over 600 metres over a wooden footbridge with two viewing platforms along the way. Here you will be introduced to the flora that can be found in the Narew Valley, remarkable for its high biodiversity. Due to the wild and inaccessible nature of the area, there are water trails in the Narew National Park, while hiking and cycling trails can be found in its buffer zone. So rent a canoe and follow the „Canoe Around Kurowo” trail, or cross the river in a flat bottom boat – a traditional boat once used for farm work and try to cross the „Narew Labyrinth” or enjoy the beauty of nature from the saddle of your bike on the Podlasie Stork Trail or the Narew Bicycle Route. Discover the culture and history of the region on hiking trails: the Narew Trail or the Zygmunt Gloger Trail.

Sokoły Municipality

photograph: Katarzyna Pec / ©katarzyna_pec



The area of Sokoły municipality is for the most part adjacent to the Narew National Park. There are numerous architectural monuments, the oldest of which is the wooden Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. It is an old, baroque Basilian Uniate Orthodox church from the 18th century, relocated from Tykocin. Other notable sites include the parsonage granary and the wooden bell tower as well as cemetery tombstones from the 19th century. An early 20th century neo-Gothic church, elevated to the rank of a Minor Basilica in 2012, is the centrepiece of the village. Inside you can see 17th century paintings as well as an 18th century baptismal font and monstrance. One of the towers features a clock with chimes. Admire the town's architecture as you stroll through the complex of tenements or explore the surrounding hiking and cycling trails. There are also archaeological sites in the municipality, including the Waniewo castle, which now houses a watchtower from which you can admire the panorama of the Narew Valley. You'd be wrong if you thought this was all that Sokoły municipality has to offer – this area is famous for being one of the biggest attractions in Podlaskie province. An extraordinary adventure – and a true paradise for photographers – awaits in the Narew National Park, between the villages of Waniewo and Śliwno. A wooden footbridge, stretching over a kilometre, runs over the Narew floodplains. It provides views of the entire river valley, particularly from the viewing towers along its route. Don't be surprised if you find that the footbridge breaks during your walk – you can get to the other side of the river using floating platforms moved by ropes. This is the perfect way to get to the very heart of the Park. If you embrace the challenge and decide to walk the entire route, you will find yourself at the end of it in Śliwno, in Choroszcz municipality.

Tourist Information Centre in Waniewo
Waniewo 22
18-218 Sokoły
(+48) 500 192 858
www.sokoly.pl



WANIEWO - ŚLIWNO FOOTBRIDGE

Białystok district is a precious and unique area due to its beautiful scenery and natural assets. This is where concrete blocks of cities coexist harmoniously with the ubiquitous, frequently still wild, nature. It is a real cluster of tourist attractions: historic Catholic and Orthodox churches, roadside shrines and wooden cottages decorated with unusual ornaments,

typical for this region only. Open-minded and multicultural attitude are not alien to anyone here - over the years the inhabitants of this region have lived in harmony with each other, regardless of their religion. A large Orthodox population is still present here and historical traces of Jewish and even Muslim culture can also be found.

Choroszcz Municipality

The municipality of Choroszcz is only a 20-minute drive away from the capital of Podlaskie province, but it by no means resembles a classic concrete jungle. Vast forests and farmlands allow time to pass more slowly here, and your body gains strength necessary to return to everyday life - often full of hurry and additionally spiced up with city noise. If you find yourself in Kruszewo, be sure to see the Torn Bridge there. At the turn of the 19th and 20th century, when the so-called „Tsar Route” from Białystok to Stare Jeżewo was created, people needed a structure to facilitate crossing the Narew river. The wooden bridge eventually burned down, and the folk tale claims that the devil himself must have done it! Today, this spot is a wonderful viewpoint on the Narew Valley. The end of the summer in Kruszewo is a celebration of the gifts of nature. A Cucumber Day is held there at the beginning of September, which means fun, folk music concerts and, above all, the opportunity to taste and buy certified local traditional products.

Choroszcz, the heart of the municipality, is a place with unique, small-town character, and its beautiful, well-kept buildings and streets invite you to take a leisurely stroll. There are beautiful sacral architecture monuments and the Branicki Family Summer Residence located on an artificial island among the greenery – a little white palace among the flora of the surrounding park, with moats, water channels and romantic alleys and bridges, which now houses the Museum of Palace Interiors. It houses a permanent exhibition from the 18th and 19th century, as well as documents related to the history of the palace and its owners, furniture and handicrafts from that period. In the summertime you cannot miss the famous Dominican Fair in Choroszcz. Although there are no longer any Dominicans there today, this event refers to the tradition of this order. An exhibition of folk products, home-made food, open-air concerts and dances – this is the annual agenda of the fair.

Tourist Information
Centre in Choroszcz
ul. H. Sienkiewicza 29
16-070 Choroszcz
(+48) 85 719 14 31
www.kultura.choroszcz.pl

THE SUMMER RESIDENCE OF
BRANICKI FAMILY IN CHOROSZCZ



photograph: Tryumf Hotel/Manor

Tryumf Manor offers you a break from the hustle and noise of the city. You will certainly appreciate the way the silence, space and greenery surrounding the hotel affect the quality of your relaxation. You can taste the most delicious dishes of Polish and international cuisine at Rubinowa Restaurant, in candlelight and accompanied by romantic music. In the evening, enjoy a barbecue by the garden house.

Tryumf Hotel/Manor
ul. Klepacka 1
16-001 Książyno
(+48) 85 663 29 18
www.dworek-tryumf.pl



The Czarnecki Manor, located close to the heart of the forest, is a place where you will find inner peace. You will enjoy a surprising bouquet of flavours and aromas of roast duck in cherry sauce in the hotel restaurant. Pay a visit to the SPA & Wellness zone and let qualified professionals take care of your body and well-being.

Czarnecki Manor Hotel
Spa & Wellness
Porosły-Kolonia 54 A
16-070 Choroszcz
(+48) 85 66 37 400
www.dworczarneckiego.pl



Tykocin Municipality



Tykocin municipality is located among three extremely important natural areas – the Narew National Park, the Biebrza National Park and the Knyszyn Forest. The extraordinary natural environment of the area abounds in delightful flora and fauna, while the proximity of the river and the protected landscape means that the crisp air cleanses your body and mind. The pine forest complex on a vast dune area in Szelańcówka, the Tykocin Swamp located between Tykocin and the nearby Góra village, observation towers as well as hiking and cycling trails attract tourists from all over the world. We recommend that you start your visit in Tykocin. Coming here is a real trip back in time. In the 16th century King Sigismund Augustus built a fortress in Tykocin and shortly afterwards, thanks to the Branicki family, the town was given a baroque look, which is evidenced by the historical town layout, the Holy Trinity Church and the Bernardine Monastery Complex from the 18th century. You can also stay at the 17th-century Seminary, a former hospital for war invalids, which now serves as a hotel and restaurant. The Tykocin Castle is another undoubted attraction of this area. Reconstructed at the turn of the 20th and 21st century, the facility is a hotel and conference centre today. Due to extensive research, we can see its southern and western part as well as the basement, the Glass Hall and the prison tower. The 17th-century Great Synagogue (which now houses the Tykocin Museum) and the Talmudic House, on the other hand, prove that Jews have also contributed to this place in the past. You can explore the city by taking an electro-bus ride through its streets or by taking a cruise with a water tram on the Narew River. Today Tykocin municipality is lively and vibrant, partly due to its cultural centres. Thus, you can see a reconstruction of the Tykocin Castle storming as early as in February, celebrate Tykocin Days in June and taste regional products at the Podlasie Honey Feast in Kurów in August.

Podlasie Stork Trail - The Podlasie
Regional Tourist Organisation
ul. Malmeda 6
15-440 Białystok
(+48) 85 653 77 97
www.podlaskiszlakbociani.pl

Tourist Information Centre in Tykocin
ul. 11 Listopada 8
16-080 Tykocin
(+48) 85 686 93 07
www.um.tykocin.wrotapodlasia.pl



Cultural and tourist attractions of Tykocin municipality attract cyclists. The Green Velo Eastern Bicycle Route and the Narew National Park Bicycle Route cross its area. Right next to Tykocin lies Pentowo, known as the European Stork Village, where the birds sometimes build up to 30 nests! The best way to get there is by bicycle, along the Podlasie Stork Trail which is a part of the Greenways network in Poland.

photograph: Biebrzanski Park Narodowy, Piotr Tatałaj

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Choroszcz Municipality
Office
ul. Dominikańska 2
16-070 Choroszcz
(+48) 85 713 22 00
www.choroszcz.pl

District Starost Office in
Białystok
ul. Borsucza 2
15-569 Białystok
(+48) 85 740 39 51
www.powiatbialostocki.pl

Goniądz Town Hall
Plac 11 Listopada 38
19-110 Goniądz
(+48) 85 738 00 39
www.goniazd.pl

Grajewo Municipality
Office
ul. Komunalna 6
19-200 Grajewo
(+48) 86 272 30 00
www.gminagrajewo.pl

Sokoły Municipality
Office
ul. Rynek Mickiewicza 10
18-218 Sokoły
(+48) 86 476 30 10
www.sokoly.pl

Suchowola Municipality
Office
Plac Kościuszki 5
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Cover photograph

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