



JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER PORTLAND GLOBAL TRAVEL EXPERIENCES 2026-28



Jewish Federation
of Greater Portland



WHO WE ARE

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland For over a century, since 1920, the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland has served as a vital support system for the Jewish journey, nourishing Jewish life, enriching the community, and strengthening Jewish culture both locally and globally; we are your direct connection to impactful services, fostering connection, learning, and acts of good, while honoring tradition and ensuring the building and strengthening of the Jewish community in accordance with Jewish values.

Gil Travel

The Gil Travel Group has been a respected travel management company since 1974. Based in Philadelphia, with offices in New York and Israel, Gil's offerings expanded over the years – from tourism to Israel – to specializing in group travel experiences worldwide. Gil's expertise lies in understanding clients' needs, creating innovative custom programming, and managing logistics – all while offering competitive pricing.

The Gil Travel team has traveled the world. Members understand and can navigate the cultures of numerous destinations. They speak Hebrew, Spanish, French, Italian, Russian, Croatian, Hindi, Kahmer, and Albanian. Close and trusted partnerships have been formed with onsite agents and operators in Argentina, Berlin, Croatia, Cuba, India, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Poland, Portugal, Russia, and Spain. With the help of professional and educated local guides, this enables the creation of immersive experiences with local Jewish communities and others. Regardless of the country, Gil ensures that clients travel with extreme care and satisfaction.

When you travel with Jewish Federation you will....

Experience unique adventures and make personal connections with Jewish communities around the world.

Discover how the Jewish Federation responds to the global Jewish challenges around the world.

See first-hand the impact of the work, we and our partners accomplish around the world.

Deepen your connection to our global Jewish family and witness our collective impact.

Be an active participant – engaging your mind, body, and soul while learning about Jewish Communities around the world.

UPCOMING TRAVEL DESTINATIONS

2026

- Mexico City – February 11-15
- Poland – May 25-31
- Argentina/Uruguay - November 4-12

2027

- Costa Rica – February 3-7 Uzbekistan – May 31 - June 7
- Prague/Budapest – October 28 - November 3

2028

- Berlin/Belgium – May 10-16
- Morocco – November 6-14

POLAND

Before the outbreak of World War II, more than 3.3 million Jews lived in Poland, the largest Jewish population of Europe and second largest Jewish community in the world. Poland served as the center for Jewish culture - contributing to a wide variety of religious and cultural groups. Barely 11% of Poland's Jews - 369,000 people - survived the war. Half of all Jews who perished in the Holocaust were from Poland. Most American and European Jews can trace their roots to the region. And while many do not acknowledge it, 25,000 Polish citizens today are believed to be of at least partial Jewish heritage.

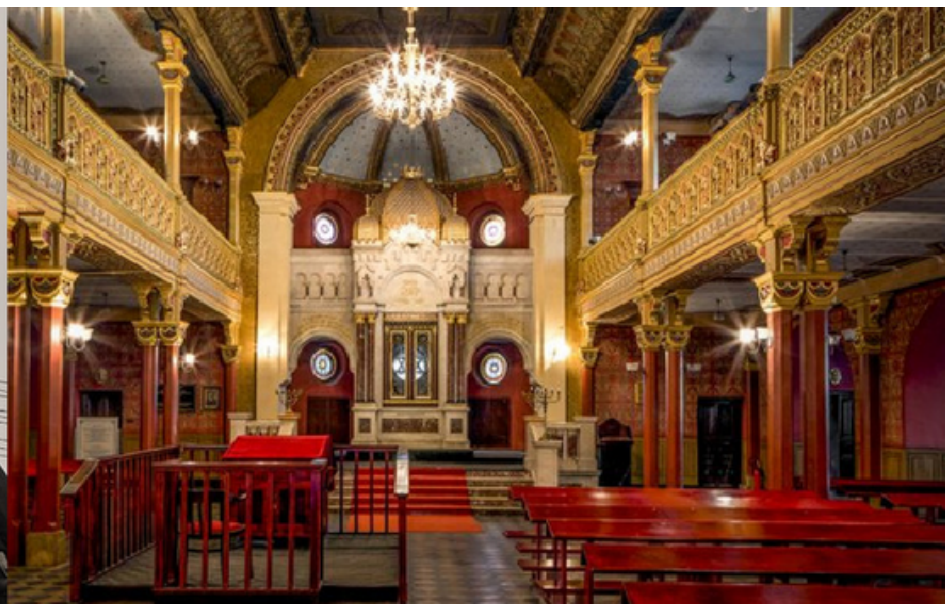
Explore Poland's complicated post-war history. Meet the people and community who have rendered the recovery of its long Jewish legacy and explore what the Jewish community in Poland has been doing to help displaced Ukrainians refugees.



POLAND

HIGHLIGHTS

- Starting at the **Klezmer-Hois** in the heart of the Jewish district Kazimierz join your scholar on a walking tour - getting a taste of pre-war Poland.
- Meet with **Jonathan Ornstein**, Executive Director, JCC of Krakow and learn the role it's playing in creating a contemporary Jewish community.
- See the city from your front row seat on your **horse and buggy** and explore Kraków Stare Miasto (Krakow Old Town).
- Visit the **Wieliczka Salt Mine** and discover the underground city of the salt miners as you walk through the labyrinth of alleyways and corridors.
- Pay tribute to the lives lost during the atrocities of World War II at **Auschwitz- Birkenau** on a private guided tour of the concentration camp.
- Visit the **Warsaw Zoo** where Jan and Antonia Zabinski rescued hundreds of Polish Jews from the Germans by hiding them in the Warsaw Zoo.
- Have dinner at **B'Kef** - an 'authentic' Israeli Kosher restaurant with Chef Maimon and students from Hillel in Warsaw.
- Visit the **Nozyk synagogue** and meet with the Chief Rabbi of Poland, Rabbi Michael Schudrich.
- Tour the "Oneg Shabbat" Archive, also known as the **Ringelblum Archive** -documenting the reality of life under Nazi occupation.
- Walk through the streets that were once the **Warsaw Ghetto** – paying tribute to our past.



Your Itinerary

MONDAY, DAY 1

Group Arrival in Warsaw. Meet your guide in the arrivals hall and transfer to the Westin hotel. Check in and refresh for dinner.

Dinner at B'Kef

Overnight: Westin Warsaw

TUESDAY, DAY 2

Breakfast at the hotel

Depart hotel

Visit the **Warsaw Zoo**, where Jan and Antonina Żabiński heroically rescued hundreds of Polish Jews from the Germans by hiding them within the zoo's grounds. You will be privy to an exclusive tour of the villa featured in the movie "The Zookeeper's Wife."

The Jewish Historical Institute (JHI) of Poland was established in Warsaw in 1947. It includes a historical research institute, a museum, a library and reading room, archives on the history of Polish Jewry >from 1700 to the present day, and several specialized departments (Historical Sites, Righteous of the Nations, Holocaust Claims, etc.). Among its holdings are the communal archives of Cracow and Breslau, the underground archives of the Warsaw Ghetto, a collection of some 7,000 Holocaust testimonies and over 300 diaries, as well as unique manuscript collections.

Invited Guest: Mr. Yale Reisner

Lunch and a visit to the JCC in Warsaw offers a unique opportunity for young leaders to witness the remarkable resilience of the Jewish community. In a city where the tragedy of the Holocaust nearly extinguished Jewish life, JDC's bustling JCC Warsaw stands strong as a reemerging spark of the legacy of Warsaw Jewry. Pierogi workshop.



Your Itinerary

TUESDAY, DAY 2 - CONT

The Rappaport Memorial, better known as the Ghetto Uprising Memorial- is a tribute to the fighters (on the front panel) and the other victims (on the rear panel) of the Warsaw Ghetto. Natan Rapoport (1911-1987) was the sculptor who designed the memorial which was unveiled in April 1948. It stands as a symbol of remembrance and hope. **Mila 18**, the headquarters "bunker" of the Jewish resistance group in the Warsaw Ghetto and **Umschlagplatz** - a term used during the Holocaust to denote the holding areas adjacent to railway stations where Jews from ghettos were assembled for deportation to Nazi death camps.

*After a day immersed in the harrowing history of the Warsaw Ghetto, we will pause to reflect on the profound impact of the Holocaust. Standing on the very ground where countless lives were lost, we will honor the memory of the six million victims and renew our commitment to ensuring that we will never forget. We will lay a **wreath** as a symbol of our remembrance and our promise to future generations.*

Return to hotel to refresh before dinner

Dinner at **Kosher delight** with **Yael Branovsky**, Head of The Jewish Agency for Israel **Poland**, and two inspiring beneficiaries: 2 Ukrainian Refugees. Learn about their unique journeys and the impact of the Jewish Agency's work.

Overnight: Westin Hotel, Warsaw



Your Itinerary

WEDNESDAY, DAY 3

Breakfast at the hotel

Depart Hotel

Noyzk Synagogue - the only surviving prewar synagogue in Warsaw was built in 1898 and was restored after World War II. Meet with **Rabbi Schudrich, Chief Rabbi of Poland**.

Jewish Cemetery stopping at the **Footbridge Memorial** on the way. The cemetery was established in 1806 and occupies 83 acres of land and contains over 250,000 marked graves, as well as mass graves of victims of the Warsaw Ghetto.

Grzybowski Square and Próżna Street – one of very few areas in Warsaw that survived the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto, **Waliców street** – once the ghetto border, **Chłodna Street** – monument commemorating the footbridge once connecting parts of the Warsaw ghetto and the courts on former **Leszno Street** – the point of contact between the ghetto and the so-called Aryan side, allowing meetings of friends and families, smuggling and escapes. **WALKING**

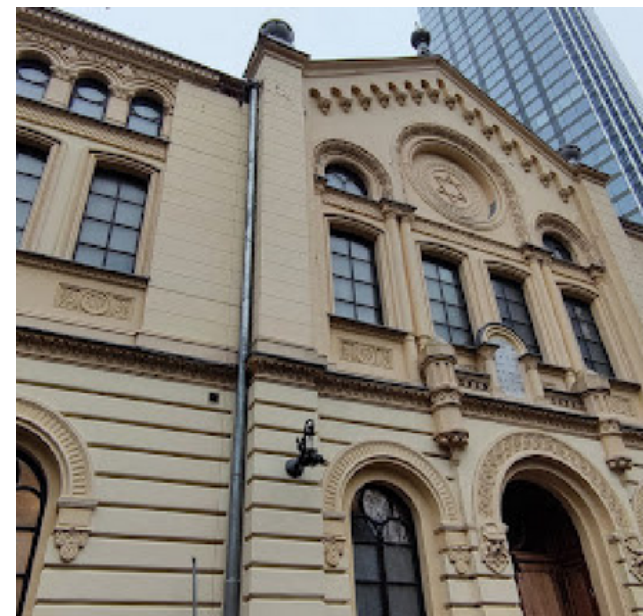
Lunch at **Kosher Delight** with **Magda Dorosz, Director, Hillel, Poland**

Guided tour of the **Polin Jewish Museum** documenting 800 years of Polish Jewish history.

Indulge in a **vodka tasting** experience with a special selection of Poland's finest vodkas, each with its unique character and history. Learn about the traditional production methods and fascinating cultural significance of this iconic Polish spirit. **Invited Guest: Helise Leiberman**

Return to hotel for an evening at leisure

Overnight: Westin Hotel, Warsaw



Your Itinerary

THURSDAY, DAY 4

Breakfast at the hotel and checkout

Depart hotel for Pendolino Fast Train to Krakow departing Warsaw 9:40am and arriving in Krakow at 11:59am

Lunch at Cafe Hafouch

Explore “**Podgórze**” district which was the Jewish ghetto from 1941 to 1943.

Visit the famous “**Eagle Pharmacy**” which now houses the museum that tells of the tragic story of the Kraków ghetto.

Visit **Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory** - the place where more than 1,200 Jews in Krakow were saved thanks to the efforts of one man.

Check into hotel and dinner at leisure.

Overnight: Radisson Blu, Krakow



Your Itinerary

FRIDAY, DAY 5

Breakfast at the hotel

Depart from hotel

Pay tribute to the lives lost during the atrocities of World War II at **Auschwitz-Birkenau**.

Participate in a private guided tour of the concentration camps, and – perhaps most important – take time to commemorate the victims and bear witness with ‘we shall never forget.’

Walk along the tracks in to Birkenau wearing an Israeli flag - a powerful symbol of resilience. At the conclusion of our time at Auschwitz- Birkenau we will say Kaddish and our own personal prayer. Kosher Box Lunch Drive back to Krakow (90 minutes) Refresh back at the hotel as you prepare for Shabbat. Shabbat begins at 4:15pm Depart for **private briefing with the Executive Director of the Jewish Community Center in Krakow, Jonathan Ornstein**. Mr. Ornstein will delve into the vital role the JCC plays in shaping a contemporary Jewish community in Poland. He will address shared challenges and examine the similarities and differences in tackling key issues such as engagement, leadership development, and sustaining a vibrant Jewish life.

Shabbat dinner with the Jewish Community in Krakow Walk back to the hotel after Shabbat dinner. **Overnight:** Radisson Blu, Krakow



Your Itinerary

SATURDAY, DAY 6

Breakfast at the hotel

Depart for **Wawel hill**. Visit the castle from the outside and go into Cathedral to see the collection of grave tombs of Polish Kings, including the grave of King Kasimir the Great who established The Jewish district. The Jewish district is named after him – Kazimierz. Continue our walking tour and experience the perplexity of Kazimierz in Kraków, the historical Jewish district. During the tour, you may feel contradictory emotions all at once: joy at discovering the rich history, culture, and traditions of Polish Jewry; sadness and nostalgia for all that was lost; and perhaps excitement at witnessing the rebirth of Jewish life.

Meet with **Holocaust Survivor, Mrs. Pani Zosia**

Volunteer at the JCC in Krakow where we will pack food for Ukrainian refugees.

Come curious, leave inspired: A Cross-Community Leadership Experience

Have lunch at the JCC and spend Shabbat afternoon connecting with dynamic young leaders from Hillel Krakow in an energizing, hands-on workshop. Dive into shared stories, bold ideas, and the challenges of leading in a rapidly changing world. We'll explore how our histories and traditions influence the way we connect, build community, and tackle issues that matter most to our generation. But this isn't just about talking—be ready to think on your feet, collaborate, and discover new perspectives. We'll cap it off with an unexpected twist that's designed to spark creativity, connection, and a bit of fun.

We'll close with a reflection session, creating space to share insights & emotions.

Havdalah

Return to hotel to refresh for your farewell dinner

Depart for your **farewell dinner at Kosher Delight**

Overnight: Radisson Blu, Krakow

SUNDAY, DAY 7

Breakfast at the hotel and checkout -Group Transfer to airport for departure



Poland

May 25-31, 2026

Estimated Land Cost per person - \$5,400

Single Supplement - \$1,000

Airfare is not included in this price.

