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Warsaw: The Ancient Is History, The Modern A Necessity

By Frank Johnson

Like most other inland European cities, Warsaw is built around a large body of water, straddling the sparkling Vistula River. The small fishing town was first fortified as a Masovian stronghold in the early 14th century. Compared with the histories of its pre-Roman Polish neighbors, the city of Warsaw is practically a fledgling on the grand timeline of human settlement in the region. However, it did not take long for Warsaw to become the center of the Poland-Lithuanian Commonwealth and soon thereafter the capital of the (periodically) independent Poland nation until present.

Warsaw is far more inspiring for what has come and gone in the city limits and in the minds of the people than for the physicality of the city today. Warsaw has been destroyed and rebuilt more times than fathomable in its brief history. No other European city experienced quite as extensive horrors and bombardment during World War II from Nazi (and Russian) forces than Warsaw. Over 80 percent of the city was completely razed, including the Old Town and Royal Palace, and nearly 800,000 citizens perished. Though many important buildings were restored after the war, the city has lost much of its Baroque luster and instead has grasped on to the modern era of post-communist art and architecture. The invaluable history is well documented in the immaculately maintained museums and exhibits while, outside, the commitment to present and future life is clearly a driving force in Warsaw's working gears.

Rebuild, Revive, Reinvent

Travel to Warsaw to marvel at its graceful execution of eclecticism. The visible stratification of decades in time is embodied by the rotating façades of building structures. Art-Deco and elaborate Modernist office buildings of the 1990s independence era rub shoulders with giant stone-slab housing complexes built during the chilling post-war Communist period, and somewhere in-between, old Baroque-style manors and museums accent the amalgamation. Many tours lead in and out of these fascinating buildings and locations.

Take the Memorial Route to the Struggle and Martyrdom of the Jews 1940-43 through the former Jewish District, which was transformed into a ghetto and then obliterated in WWII, and pass 16 commemorative granite blocks representing significant people, places or events. Just south of here visit the tallest skyscraper in Poland, the triumphant Palace of Culture and Science, a gift from the

Soviet Union in the 1950s. Although it was destroyed per Hitler's orders, the restored Royal Palace in Old Town should also be visited. Much of the grand residence has been returned to its 18th century splendor, complete with a museum of the salvageable works of art. Much of Warsaw's grid-like structure is rife with greenery. Warsaw University hosts a magnificent Botanical Garden and the south of the city is just the beginning of the enchanting Kabacki Forest.

Travel to Warsaw to experience all of the joys of the big city, but with a uniquely Polish twist. The city is not only the seat of the National Opera and Philharmonic, but also jamming with jazz clubs and music bars. Come seek out the nuanced history in Central Europe's staggeringly modern metropolis.

For more information, visit

<http://www.cfares.com>

Recommended Undergraduate Classes

By Andrea Jussim

Recommended Undergraduate Classes by Andrea Jussim

In your college years, you should take classes to increase both your general knowledge (breadth) and your knowledge about a particular academic field (depth). I believe that there is enough time to take many classes in both the breadth and depth groups. I've been out of college for more than a decade, and I still think about the classes I took and didn't take. Here, then, are my recommendations for the breadth courses.

Literature, Philosophy, Language, and Linguistics.

- A year of English literature courses, surveying ancient to modern literature.
- One Introduction to Western Philosophy course.
- One Principles of Critical Reasoning or Principles of Argumentation course (a philosophy or speech course).
- A year of a foreign language, unless you are fluent in a second language.
- One Introduction to Linguistics course.

Visual and Musical Arts.

- One Introduction to Art History course.
- One Music Appreciation course or Introduction to Musical Theory course.

Social Sciences

- A year of European History or World History courses, surveying ancient to modern history, unless you've learned European History or World History well in high school.
- A year of American History courses, surveying colonial to modern history, unless you've learned American History well in high school.

- One East Asian History survey course.
- One Introduction to American Politics course.
- One introductory course in psychology, sociology, communication studies, or anthropology.
- One Introduction to Economics course (or maybe a Macroeconomics course and a Microeconomics course).
- One Abnormal Psychology course.
- One Introduction to Statistics course.

Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Mathematics.

- One Introduction to Human Anatomy course.
- One Introduction to Biology course, unless you've completed a year of biology in high school.
- One introductory course in Life Sciences (other than Biology), Earth & Space Sciences, or Atmospheric Sciences.
- One Introduction to Chemistry course, unless you've completed a year of chemistry in high school.
- One Introduction to Physics course, unless you've completed a year of physics in high school.
- One year of mathematics, unless you've completed a year of calculus in high school.

Andrea Jussim is an experienced writer with experience in teaching and research. She entered a prestigious 5-year Ph.D. program immediately after completing her undergraduate studies, but left with an M.A. and her sanity two years later.



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