

## Gdańsk Tour Plan- The Royal Way

The Royal Route in Gdańsk was the longest urban axis in the European Middle Ages. The most interesting and monumental route in Gdańsk was the venue of parades and important events, as well as triumphant entries of kings to the city. When the king of Poland traveled from Warsaw to Gdańsk, he would enter the city through the Brama Wyzynna (**Upland Gate**) (1), continue through the Złota Brama (**Golden Gate**) (3), and then head along ulica Długa (**Long Street**) and Długi Targ (**Long Market**).

The Royal retinues often stopped for longer periods to watch tightrope walkers and street acrobats and to listen to musicians, hear the mayor's speech or watch the knight's fights. They could enjoy the views of rich houses at the Long Street, where the influential Gdańsk families resided. To this day particular attention is attracted by **Uphagens' house** (5), **Ferbers' House** (6) and the **Schumanns' House** (8).



- Upland Gate (1)
- Fore Gate Complex (2)
- Golden Gate (3)
- Long Lane
- Uphagen's House (5)
- Ferber's House (6)
- Lion's Castle (7)
- Schumann's House (8)
- Town Hall (9)
- Long Market
- Neptune's Fountain Statue (10)
- Artus Court (11)
- Gdańsk Vestibule (12)
- Golden House (13)
- Royal Houses (14)
- Green Gate (15)

Just behind the town hall there was the Long Market (Długi Targ), for many centuries the crowded centre of urban life. Here trade flourished, the crops market operated, contests took place and the kings received oaths.

The kings visiting Gdańsk very often chose accommodation in the houses by the Long Market, admiring their beauty and location. This was the reason why the first four houses at Długi Targ were referred to as the Royal Houses (14). From the windows of these houses the kings could admire the Artus Court (11), one of the greatest buildings of its kind in northern Europe. Here the wealthy patricians met and it was the centre of social and commercial life. The Neptune's fountain (10) also fits in extremely well with the place as a symbol of the city's alliance with the sea. Next to the Artus Court the guests are impressed by the neighbouring houses located on the same side of the market. The Golden House (13), seems especially outstanding and is referred to as the most beautiful building in Gdańsk. Despite the fact that the Kings admired the houses by the Long Market and they loved to stay there, Gdańsk's residents committed themselves to the construction of an official royal residence. Hence the Green Gate (15) was constructed

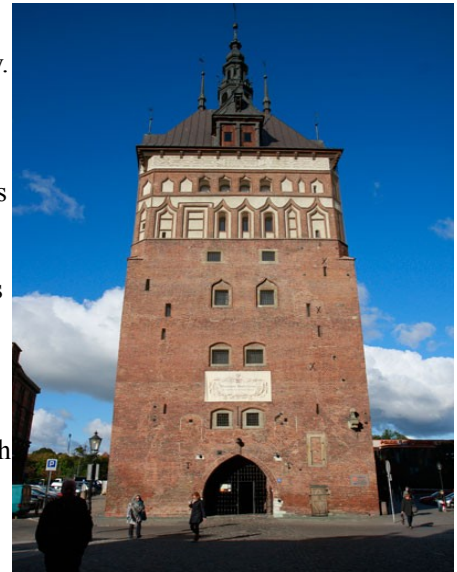
### (1) Upland Gate

The Upland Gate is probably the most impressive gate for tourists to see. It dates from the 16th century. Historically it was the most important gate leading into Old Town Gdańsk. The King started his route inside the city at this gate. Walking through this gate, is walking in his footsteps. It's the beginning of the *Royal Route*.



## (2) Fore Gate Complex

The branch of the Gdańsk History Museum not only boasts of this curiosity. The Amber Museum in the Fore Gate Complex of Długa Street - Gdańsk's popular barbican - continues its prewar tradition, alluding to the Gdańsk inclusion collection located in the Green Gate which was lost during World War 2. The latest unique specimen in the nature collection of the museum is the second, known in the world, inclusion of Solifugae in amber (these modern relatives of spiders are found in the tropics, they can run at a speed of 15km/hour and jump 1 metre high). In the collections of world museums you will not find such a specimen. In the recesses of the museum you can learn the history of the formation of "Northern Gold" and inclusion, the medicinal use of amber, see a display of how it is crafted and finally beautiful collections, including the most precious-objects from the collection of Georg Laue - which were made in Gdańsk in the 17th and 18th century.



## (3) Golden Gate

The Golden Gate is one of the fortifications that was done in Gdańsk. Abraham van den Blocke, a German architect of Flemish origin, created it. He had several projects in Gdańsk like the Artus Court and the Neptune's Fountain Statue. He built this gate in the Dutch Mannerism style. This project took place between 1612 and 1614. His mission was to replace the former gate which was built in Gothic style.

## Long Lane & Long Market

The *Long Street* or *Long Lane* (Ulica Długa) is exactly like the name says. It connects the Golden Gate to the Long Market place and further to the Green Gate at the Motława river. Unofficially, the Long Lane is part of the Royal Road which starts at the Upland Gate.

When walking this Lane, you will notice the many merchants' houses. Some of the houses are quite known depending on the background and influence of the merchant who lived there. Most famous buildings you will see in the Long Market. In this extension of the Long Lane, Polish merchants did business with their English, Dutch, Italian, ... colleagues. Some foreign merchants bought a house in this area. As they came often to Gdańsk they wanted to have a place to live and work. Often they were found at Artus Court negotiating interesting business deals.

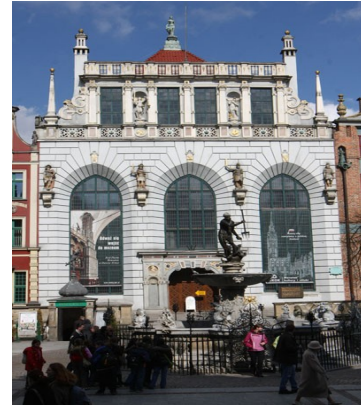


## (10) Neptune's Fountain Statue

According to the legend of the fountain, Neptune got sick and tired of people throwing coins of gold in his fountain. They did this to pray for wealth and financial luck. One day he got very enraged: he hit his trident so hard on the ground that he pulverized all of the gold coins into tiny bits that they became worthless. This is how allegedly Gdańsk got its the Goldwasser, a liqueur with tiny goldflakes.

## (11) Artus Court

The name is derived from the popular medieval King Arthur. Arthur was the symbol of courage and chivalry. His name was given to these houses where the nobility and the bourgeoisie used to meet. The idea was to talk about important issues in the true spirit of King Arthur and his round table: in equality and with mutual respect.



## (15) Green Gate

When you start walking from the Golden Gate along the Long Market towards the Motława river, you will encounter the Green Gate. The gate has 4 entrances and has green windows, hence the name 'Green Gate'. Unlike other gates there is a construction on top which gives the impression that it is a castle.

During World War II the building got destroyed but completely restored in its glory. Today the Green Gate hosts the National Museum in Gdańsk. Former Polish president Lech Wałęsa has an office in one of the rooms.

## The Crane

Gdańsk became increasingly important in the 14th and 15th century as trade city. It had a strategic location near the Baltic Sea and was appealing to many merchants. Authorities built the first wooden port crane in the second half of the 14th century. In the first half of the 15th century it got rebuilt after burning down. It is one of the biggest port cranes in its sort.

As primary purpose the crane lifted goods (e.g wine and beer barrels) from ships using a treadmill or treadwheel mechanism. As the crane had to lift heavy loads, it consisted out of a double mechanism. Treadwheel workers operated the crane by walking inside it, pretty much the same as a hamster operating its treadmill wheel. A rope was rolled around a large wooden wheel. The treadway of one wheel had to be wide enough so that 2 workers could operate it by walking side by side. In this way 4 treadmill workers could lift heavy loads, sometimes as much as 2 tons.

The port crane changed its function

In the 19th century the port crane changed its function: it got specialized at mounting masts to newly built sailing ships. At a later stage, in the 20th century, it became a tool to lift engines from vessels that needed repair.

After the last crane master died in 1858, private people used the crane. There was a shoe maker, a hairdresser's and other local businesses.

