

St. John's Cathedral Wrocław



The **Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Wrocław**, (Polish: *Archikatedra św. Jana Chrzciciela*, German: *Breslauer Dom*, *Kathedrale St. Johannes des Täufers*), is the seat of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Wrocław and a landmark of the city of Wrocław in Poland. The cathedral, located in the Ostrów Tumski district, is a Gothic church with Neo-Gothic additions. The current standing cathedral is the fourth church to have been built on the site.

The cathedral was almost entirely destroyed (about 70% of the construction) during the Siege of Breslau and heavy bombing by the Red Army in the last days of World War II. Parts of the interior fittings were saved and are now on display at the National Museum in Warsaw. The initial reconstruction of the church lasted until 1951, when it was reconsecrated by Archbishop Stefan Wyszyński. In the following years, additional aspects were rebuilt and renovated. The original, conical shape of the towers was restored only in 1991.

Wroclaw Town Hall



The **Old Town Hall** (Polish: *Stary Ratusz*) of Wroclaw stands at the center of the city's Market Square (*rynek*). Wroclaw is the largest city in western Poland and is the site of many beautiful buildings.

The Old Town Hall's long history reflects the developments that have taken place in the city over time since its initial construction. The town hall serves the city of Wroclaw and is used for civic and cultural events such as concerts held in its Great Hall. In addition to a concert hall, it houses a museum and a basement restaurant.

The town hall was developed over a period of about 250 years; from the end of the 13th century to the middle of the 16th century. The structure and floor plan changed over this extended period in response to the changing needs of the city. The exact date of the initial construction is not known, however, it is known that in the period between 1299 and 1301 a one story structure with cellars and a tower, called the consistory, was built. The oldest parts of the current building, the Burghers' Hall and the lower floors of the tower, may date from this time. In these early days the primary purpose of the building was trade rather than civic administration.

In the early years of the 20th century improvements continued with various repair works and the addition of the Little Bear statue in 1902. During the 1930s the official role of the Ratusz was reduced and it was converted into a museum. By the end of World War II about 10% of the building was destroyed. The roofs were seriously damaged, and some sculptural elements were lost.

Restoration work began in the 1950s following a period of research and this conservation effort continued throughout the 20th century. It included refurbishment of the clock on the East facade.

Today the Ratusz is open to visitors as the Museum of Bourgeois Art and is also the venue for cultural events.

Centennial Hall



The **Centennial Hall** (German: *Jahrhunderthalle*, Polish: *Hala Stulecia* (formerly **Hala Ludowa** - People's Hall)) is a historic building in Wrocław, Poland. It was constructed according to the plans of architect Max Berg in 1911–1913, when the city was part of the German Empire.

The building and surroundings is frequently visited by tourists and the local populace. It lies close to other popular tourist attractions, such as the Wrocław Zoo, the Japanese Garden, and the Pergola with its Multimedia Fountain.

As an early landmark of reinforced concrete architecture, the building became one of Poland's official national Historic Monuments (*Pomnik historii*), as designated April 20, 2005, together with the Four Domes Pavilion, the Pergola, and the Iglica. Its listing is maintained by the National Heritage Board of Poland. It was also listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2006.

White Stork Synagogue



The **White Stork Synagogue** is a nineteenth-century synagogue in Wrocław, Poland. Rededicated in 2010 after a decade-long renovation, it is the religious and cultural centre of the local Jewish community, under the auspices of the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland. It is the only synagogue in Wrocław to have survived the Holocaust.

The synagogue, which opened in 1829 when the city was known as Breslau and part of the Kingdom of Prussia, is a three-story Neoclassical designed by the architect Carl Ferdinand Langhans (1781–1869). Langhans was one of the foremost 19th-century architects of Silesia. He was among Germany's foremost theater designers. He also designed the Breslau Actors' Guild Theater and Opera House. The original interior, now lost, was designed by the painter Raphael Biow (1771–1836) and his son Hermann Biow (1804–1850).^[2] The name was taken from an inn of the same name which had previously stood on the site.

The main prayer hall is surrounded on three sides with women's galleries. Two levels of galleries to the north and two on the south flank a single gallery on the eastern Torah ark wall. The wooden frame of the Torah ark and the damaged tablets of the Ten Commandments are all that remain of the original religious features.

Wroclaw Palace



Initially a Baroque palace of Heinrich Gottfried von Spätgen, chancellor of Bishop Francis Louis of Neuburg, it was built in 1717 in a Viennese style. In 1750, after Prussia took control over Silesia in the First Silesian War, the palace was purchased by the Prussian king Frederick the Great and was converted into his residence. The palace was extended from 1751 to 1753 in the Baroque style with Rococo interiors designed by the royal architect Johann Boumann. Boumann's additions included a transverse wing with a festive hall, throne hall and Frederick the Great's private quarters.

The successor of Frederick the Great, who died in 1786, was his nephew Frederick William II of Prussia (1744–1797). He performed remodelling of the royal palace according to the design of Karl Gotthard Langhans (1732–1808). The remodelling took place in 1795 to 1796 in the classical style. As a result, the wings surrounding the northern courtyard, a new staircase and utility rooms were added.

In March 1813, during the War of the Sixth Coalition with Napoleon, King Frederick William III of Prussia announced two famous manifestos: "To My People" and "To My Military Commanders". On April 1813, in the Yellow Living Room of the Palace, the king proclaimed the Iron Cross as a war medal.

In the middle of the 19th century, drawing on a Florentine Renaissance style, architect Friedrich August Stüler added a new southern wing (1844–1846) and a new courtyard wings along with the gate and railing (1858). In 1918 the palace was donated to the city of Breslau.

National Museum



The **National Museum in Wrocław** (Polish: *Muzeum Narodowe we Wrocławiu*), established in 1947, is one of Poland's main branches of the National Museum system. It holds one of the largest collections of contemporary art in the country.

The holdings of Wrocław Museum are closely connected with the history of border shifts in Central Europe following World War II. After the annexation of Eastern half of the Second Polish Republic by the Soviet Union, main parts of Poland's art collections were transferred from the cities incorporated into the USSR including Lwów and Kijów. Collections not returned included the Ossolineum holdings which became part of the Lviv National Museum. The cultural heritage shipped in 1946 included Polish and European paintings from 17th to 19th centuries. The 1948 unveiling of the Wrocław Gallery of Polish Painting at a brand new location, composed of national treasures from already disappropriated museums, had a symbolic meaning in the lives of people subjected to mass expulsions from the Eastern Kresy. The Gallery was arranged to remind them, that they were again residing in Poland.