POLAND JEWISH HISTORY & CULTURE:
WARSAW, ŁÓDŹ, KRAKÓW, AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU
MAY 11–21, 2019

SCHEDULE BY DAY
B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

SATURDAY, MAY 11
DEPART U.S. FOR POLAND

SUNDAY, MAY 12
WARSAW
Welcome to Poland. Upon arrival, you will be transferred to your hotel with the remainder of the afternoon at your leisure.
In the evening attend a welcome reception at the hotel.
Overnight: Hotel Bristol (R)

MONDAY, MAY 13
WARSAW
In the morning, walk through the former Warsaw Ghetto area, stopping to see remnants of the Ghetto Wall. Visit the Monument to the Ghetto Fighters, the memorial site of Mila 18, and the infamous Umschlagplatz, from where Warsaw’s Jews were gathered and deported to Treblinka.
After lunch visit the Old Town, a World Heritage site—beautifully rebuilt from scratch after having been razed to the ground in 1945. Also visit the Jewish Historical Institute and meet Helise Liberman, director of the Taube Center for the Renewal of Jewish Life in Poland, a foundation that supports the activities of Poland’s growing Jewish community and creates unique educational experiences for both Poles (Jews and non-Jews), and visitors from around the world.
Continue to the Royal Castle, the residence of monarchs for centuries. Explore the Old Town Market Square, the oldest part of the city, which was systematically blown up by the German Army immediately after the Warsaw Uprising, but which has been restored to its pre-war appearance. Wander along The Royal Route, with its superb aristocratic residences and famous monuments, including the Holy Cross Church (containing an urn with the heart of Frederic Chopin).
Next visit to Nowy Świat Street, one of the main historic thoroughfares of Warsaw, which comprises part of the Royal Route and is home to lovely cafés and shops.
Dinner is in a local restaurant within walking distance of the hotel.
Overnight: Hotel Bristol (B, L, D)

TUESDAY, MAY 14
WARSAW
After a lecture at the hotel, visit the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.
This multimedia narrative museum and cultural center presents the history of Polish Jews and the rich civilization they created over the course of almost 1,000 years.

Later, meet a local journalist for a briefing about current issues in Poland today.

Finish the day by enjoying a Chopin concert and a vodka tasting. The remainder of the evening and dinner is on your own.

Overnight: Hotel Bristol (B, L)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15
WARSAW

Visit the Royal Łazienki, a former royal residence set in a beautifully landscaped 18th-century park with a monument to Frederic Chopin. Continue to the Okopowa Street Cemetery, one of the largest Jewish cemeteries in Europe. The cemetery contains over 200,000 marked graves. Continue to Nożyk Synagogue, a pre-war Jewish house of prayer in Warsaw and a symbol of the continuity of Jewish life. After lunch visit the Madame Curie house-museum dedicated to the Polish chemist and winner of two Nobel Prizes in physics and chemistry. At the end of the day, visit Warsaw’s Jewish Community Center (JCC) and meet with young community leaders, educators and activists. Dinner will be at the JCCW.

Overnight: Hotel Bristol (B.L.D)

THURSDAY, MAY 16
WARSAW / ŁÓDŹ

After a lecture at the hotel, depart for Łódź, Poland’s third largest city. Visit the Manufaktura Museum to discover the history of the massive textile factory founded by the leading Jewish industrialist Izrael Poznanski in the mid-19th century. After lunch at the Manufaktura Complex continue to the memorial at Radegast Station, situated just beyond the boundary of the former Łódź Ghetto – the longest-lasting, most insulated, and most oppressive in Europe. From here, about 75,000 Jews were shipped in cattle cars to Auschwitz. Dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: Andel’s Hotel (B.L.D)

FRIDAY, MAY 17
ŁÓDŹ / KRAKÓW

Visit the Łódź Jewish Cemetery—one of the largest in Europe, then depart for Kraków, stopping for lunch in route. Upon arrival check in at the hotel. Visit the Jewish Community Center of Kraków, and meet with Executive Director Jonathan Ornstein. Enjoy a festive Shabbat dinner at the JCC with local community members.

Overnight: Hotel Stary (B.L.D)

SATURDAY, MAY 18
KRAKÓW

Following a lecture at the hotel, visit the Oskar Schindler’s Factory, a historical museum dedicated to Kraków under Nazi Occupation that is located in the former administrative building of Schindler’s enamel factory. In the afternoon enjoy a walking tour of Kraków’s Old Town, following the Royal Route past the 19th-century Baroque style Juliusz Słowacki Theatre to the enormous Main Market Square, home to St. Mary’s Basilica where, every hour, a trumpet is played from the top of the church’s tallest tower,
breaking off mid-note to commemorate the trumpeter who was shot while sounding the alarm before the Mongols attacked the city in the 13th century. Every day the noontime trumpet blast is broadcast on the radio across Poland. The evening is free and dinner on your own.

Overnight: Hotel Stary (B,L)

SUNDAY, MAY 19
KRAKÓW / OŚWIĘCIM / KRAKÓW

Travel one hour to Auschwitz-Birkenau, the infamous concentration and extermination camp complex where approximately two million people were killed between 1942 and 1945. At Birkenau, also known as Auschwitz II, see the entrance tower, the railway platform, various barracks and the ruins of the gas chambers and crematoriums. After lunch continue to Auschwitz I, which was the administrative center as well as the site of the deaths of approximately 70,000 ethnic Poles and Soviet prisoners of war. Today Auschwitz I is a museum displaying pictures, documents and victims’ belongings. At the end of the day participate in a debrief session at the Oświęcim Holocaust Center. Dinner is at a local restaurant.

Overnight: Hotel Stary (B,L,D)

MONDAY, MAY 20
KRAKÓW

Tour Kazimierz, the area of Kraków that was home to a significant Jewish community from the 14th century until the Holocaust. Visit the Remuh Synagogue, the synagogue of Rabbi Moses Isserles, who was one of the great codifiers of Jewish law. Located behind the synagogue is The Remuh Cemetery, where many great Polish rabbinical leaders are buried. Also visit the Old Synagogue, the oldest synagogue building still standing in Poland, (now a museum), the Izaak Synagogue, built in 1644, the 16th-century High Synagogue, aptly named as it was once was the tallest synagogue in the city and the Tempel Synagogue, a Moorish Revival style building built in 1862 that was home to Kraków’s Reform congregation. After lunch visit the Jagiellonian University. Founded in 1364 by King Casimir the Great, it is one of the oldest universities in Europe. Meet with Edyta Gavron, Professor of Jewish Institute Studies and learn about the University today. At the end of the day enjoy a farewell dinner at the hotel and a concert of Jewish klezmer music.

Overnight: Hotel Stary (B,L,D)

TUESDAY, MAY 21
KRAKÓW / U.S.

After breakfast check out of the hotel and transfer to the airport for flights home. (B)

PRAGUE EXTENSION

TUESDAY, MAY 21
KRAKÓW / PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

After breakfast drive to the airport to take the one and a half-hour flight from Kraków.
to Prague. Upon arrival drive into the city and enjoy lunch. In the afternoon take a guided tour of Jewish Prague. Visit some of Prague’s fabled synagogues including the Alt-Neu Synagogue (the oldest functioning Jewish house of worship in Europe), and the Spanish, Maisel, Pinkas and Klausen Synagogues that serve as exhibition halls for the Jewish Museum, and contain many documents and artefacts pertaining to Prague’s 1,000 years of Jewish history. Enjoy dinner in a local restaurant.

Overnight: Hotel Paris (B,L,D)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22
PRAGUE

Start the day visiting the 17th-century Strahov Monastery Library. Continue to the Royal Castle, visit the gothic St. Vitus cathedral, and the Golden Lane, a brightly painted street of 16th century houses, one of which was once home to Franz Kafka. Continue to the Kampa neighbourhood and visit the Church of Our Lady Victorious, a church belonging to the Carmelite order and home to the famous statue of the Infant Jesus of Prague. After lunch cross the 15th-century Charles Bridge and walk through Karlova Street to explore the Old Town. The evening is free and dinner is on your own.

Overnight: Hotel Paris (B,L)

THURSDAY, MAY 23
PRAGUE

Visit the Old Jewish Cemetery in Josefov, where one of the most important Rabbis in Jewish history, Rabbi Yehuda Loew ben Bezalel, is buried. Better known as the Maharal, Rabbi Loew was the creator of the legend of the golem, a creature made out of clay whose role was to protect the Jewish community from attack. Take a boat ride on the Vltava River then enjoy a free afternoon. In the evening visit the Municipal House where Thomas Masaryk declared the independence of Czechoslovakia in 1918 and attend a classical music concert featuring the works of great Czech composers Bedřich Smetana and Antonín Dvořák, followed by a farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight: Hotel Paris (B,L,R,D)

FRIDAY, MAY 24
PRAGUE / U.S.

After breakfast, check out of the hotel and transfer to the airport for flights home. (B)