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About the region

Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship is one of Poland's sixteen regions, located in central-southern part of the country. The voivodeship covers the area of 11 710, 50 km sq. km and is inhabited by 1,23 mln people (3,3 of Poland's population).

The capital city of the region - Kielce, lies halfway between the biggest Polish agglomerations - Warsaw and Krakow.

The region's name comes from one of Europe's oldest mountain ranges, the Świętokrzyskie (Holy Cross) Mountains. Its highest peak is Łysica - „the Bald Mountain” (614 m above sea level). The biggest river of the region is the Vistula which flows through the region from the South to the North.

Świętokrzyskie has got over 2000-year long tradition of iron smelting as well as lead, silver and copper mining. An interesting example of traditional industrial activity of the region's inhabitants can be seen in the Krzemionki Prehistoric Striped Flint Mining Region (near Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski). The complex of striped flint mines is the biggest in Europe and it has been preserved in a very good condition, while its value is comparable to the megalithic Stonehenge. It is the only place in the world where striped flint - „the stone of optimism” - can be found. Today, jewellery made of flint is worn by Victoria Beckham, Robbie Williams, Boy George and members of the Royal Swedish Family. The Krzemionki mine was put on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The region is well-known for health&well-being tourism, provided by spa resorts, located in the towns of Busko-Zdrój and Solec-Zdrój, which have been hosting guests from Poland and abroad for more than 200 years. They are famous for rich mineral water deposits.

Regardless of age, all fascinated by the subject of geology shall find something for themselves on the Świętokrzyski Archeo-Geological Trail, e.g. the Wietrznia Nature Reserve -Geo-Education Center in Kielce, the Kadzielnia Nature Reserve or the Archeological Museum and Nature Reserve in Krzemionki.

Kielce - the capital of the region is an important culture center in the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship. There are many culture facilities, museums and art galleries. The architecture

of Kielce is dominated by religious monuments such as the Krakow Bishops' Palace, the Kielce's oldest Church of Saint Wojciech (St Adalbert) or the Cathedral Basilica of the Blessed Virgin Mary Assumption.

Świętokrzyskie is also the region's educational and sports center with 7 universities, 8 ski resorts, a modern football stadium, 9 sports halls, several aquaparks and an athletic stadium. The sports showcase of the region is, among others, the Łomża Vive Kielce team - a Polish handball champion and a many years' participant and winner of the Champions League.

The undeniable advantage of Kielce is the variety of green areas - numerous parks, squares, picturesque tourist routes and bicycle paths. One of the most beautiful bicycle routes in Poland - The Green Velo East of Poland Cycling Trail - runs through Kielce.

During a visit in the city center one can even take a quick trip in the Świętokrzyskie Mountains. Within the city's borders there are two of its peaks - the Telegraph Mountain (408 meters above sea level), offering a beautiful panorama of Kielce, a 500-meter long ski slope, classified as difficult, as well as hiking and bicycle trails running through its peak. The second viewpoint, which can be reached on foot from the Kielce center, is the Karczówka. From the 341 meter hill you can see a sweep panorama of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains.

Świętokrzyskie is also an interesting example of culinary tourism. The local agritourist farms, bakeries, fish ponds, apple and plum orchards and apiaries offer a great journey for our palates, full of healthy and traditional flavors. One can find here regional products famous all over Poland, such as "Majonez Kielecki" (local mayonnaise), wines from the Sandomierz vineyards, plums from Szydłów or sweet fudge from Opatów. While in Świętokrzyskie, it is also worth tasting the local cuisine, especially zalewajka świętokrzyska (a traditional potato soup from Świętokrzyskie), dumplings with cabbage or regional cheese.

Świętokrzyskie is full of unique places that are worth visiting and easily within reach, even during a one-day trip. Numerous monuments, tourist complexes, traditional local cuisine and skier-friendly mountains - all this makes Świętokrzyskie an ideal place for a relaxing visit.