

Kimberley i Peter w Europie 2011

# Poland & the Czech Republic



# Central Europe

(or Eastern Europe, depending on your definition)

When we cut 2 weeks out of our trip to Norway, we gained an opportunity to add two more countries to our itinerary. Poland and the Czech Republic.

What an amazing decision! This part of the world has so much to offer.

It's a place where you can....

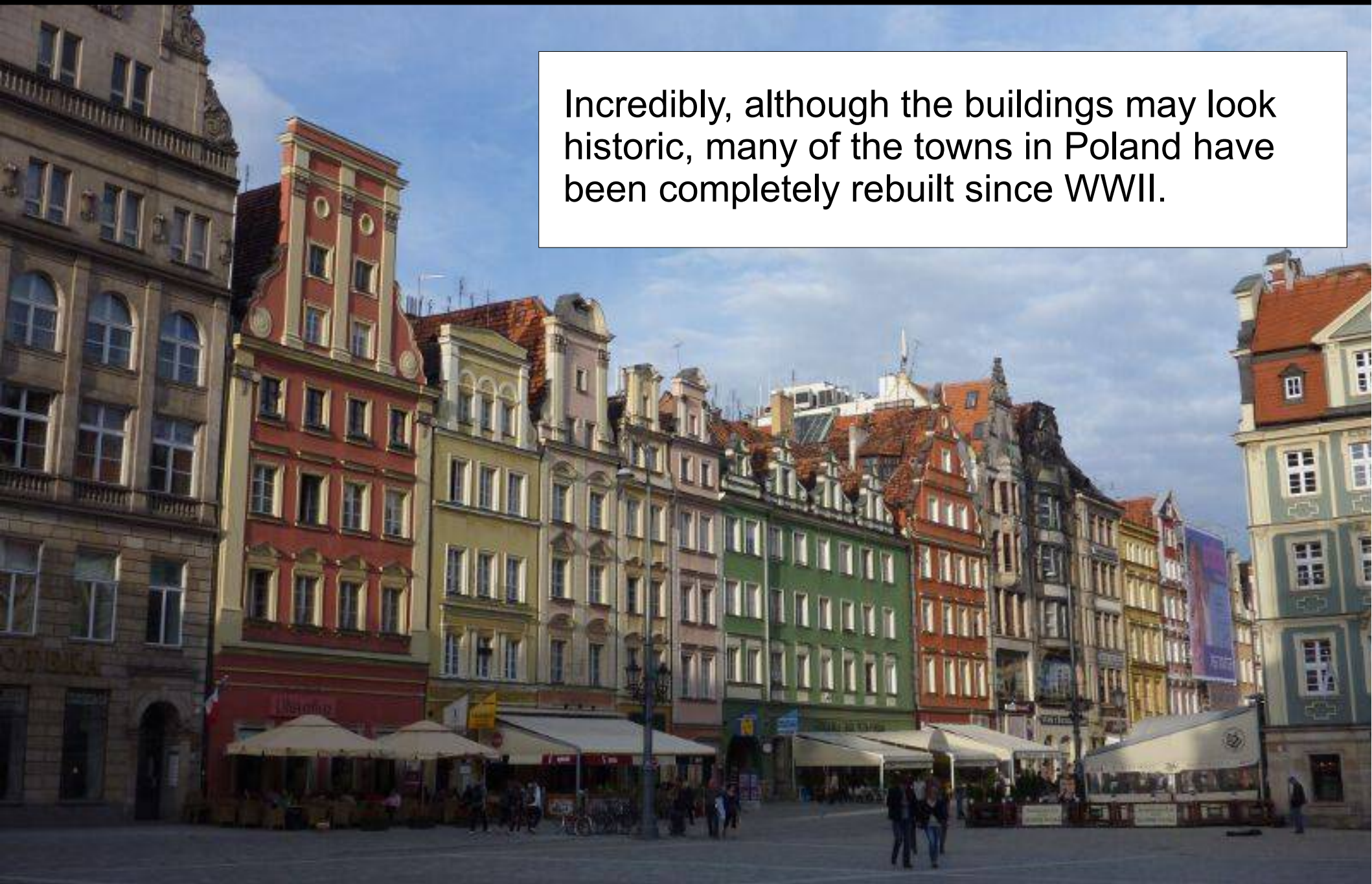
# See jaw-dropping architecture

On every street corner in some places!  
(Prague city skyline)



# Visit beautifully restored town squares

Incredibly, although the buildings may look historic, many of the towns in Poland have been completely rebuilt since WWII.



# Admire the street art

No one knows exactly how many dwarves are hidden in the city of Wrocław (at least 175).

New ones keep mysteriously appearing!



# Indulge in local cuisine



# Flirt with death on the roads

These quotes from travel advice websites sum it up:

“Poles are extremely reckless drivers, and even at night time, driving can be extremely dangerous.”

“If you leave a safety gap in front of your car, it will be filled by another driver as he is trying to push through the traffic.”

“Many drivers in Poland only stop at a red light if there’s another vehicle obstructing your path or you’re likely to get caught”

And seriously, don't even mention blocked roads, roads that don't exist, detours around accidents or our bloody GPS navigator!!!



# Get completely confused

Any guesses as to what this means (where you can and can't drive your car when it's on fire?!?)

Can you choose which toilet is yours?



Or some pronunciation skills:

**Łódź**

(sounds like "woodge")

**Wszyscy**

(don't ask!)



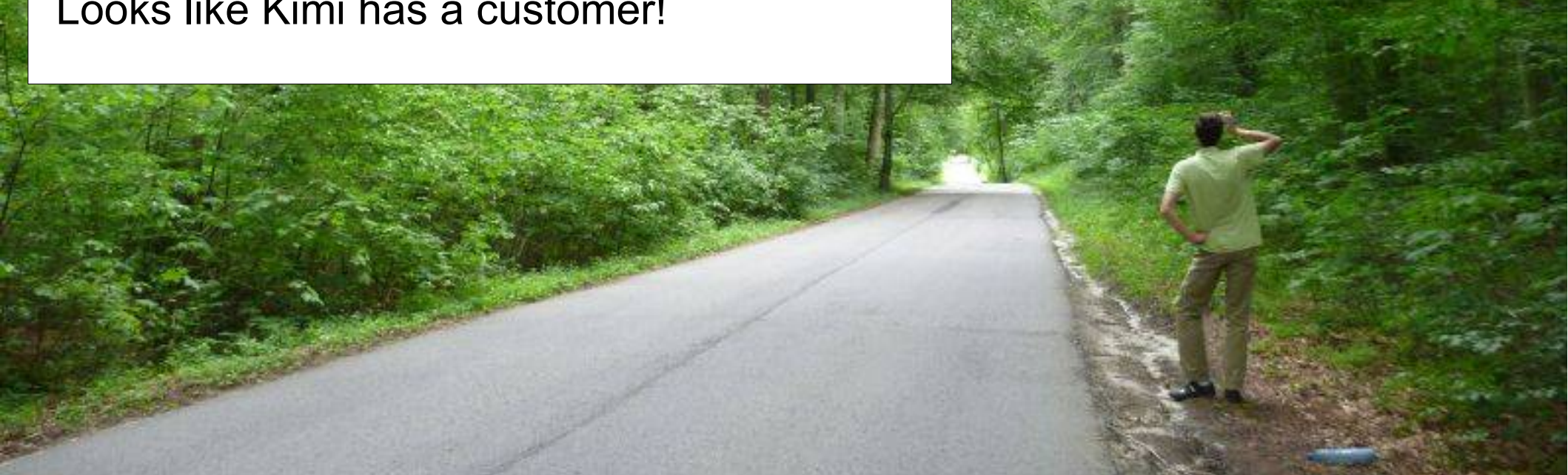


# Meet lovely young girls in the forest



We decided not to interfere with the Polish forest working girls by taking photos, so we had a go ourselves instead.

Looks like Kimi has a customer!



# See the best legs in Europe



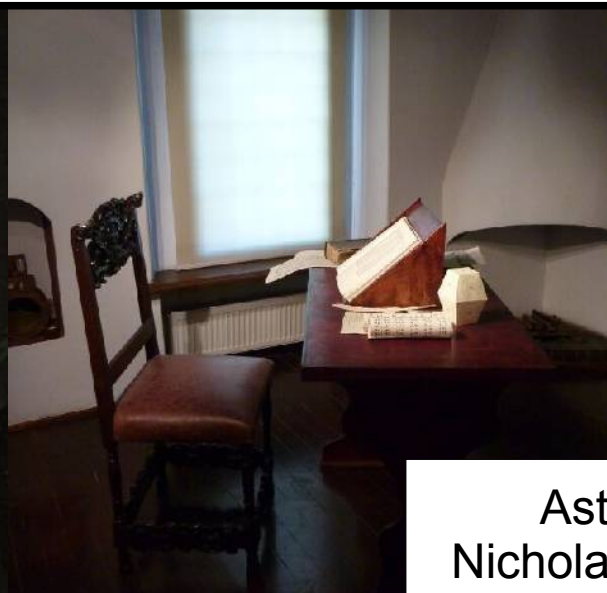
Ahem, who was holding the camera for these photos??? (But you have to admit, Polish girls do have great legs!)



# Stand on the shoulders of giants



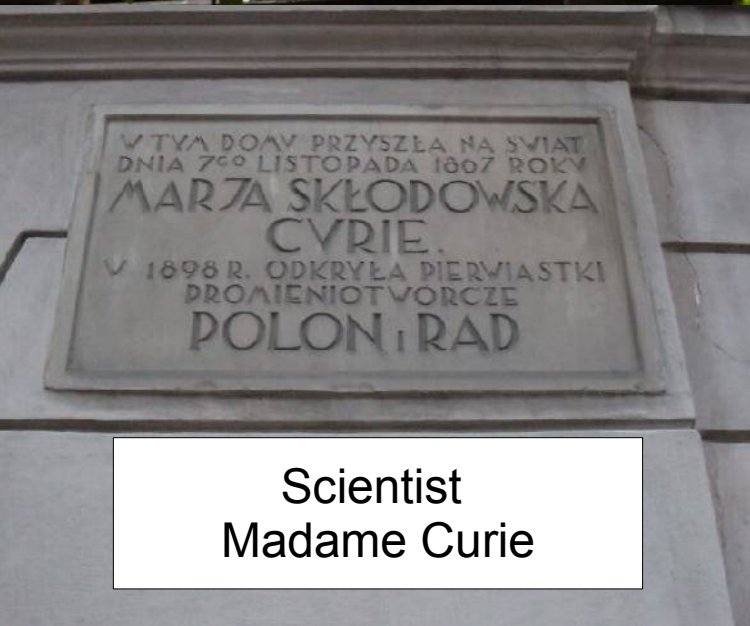
Composer  
Frederick Chopin



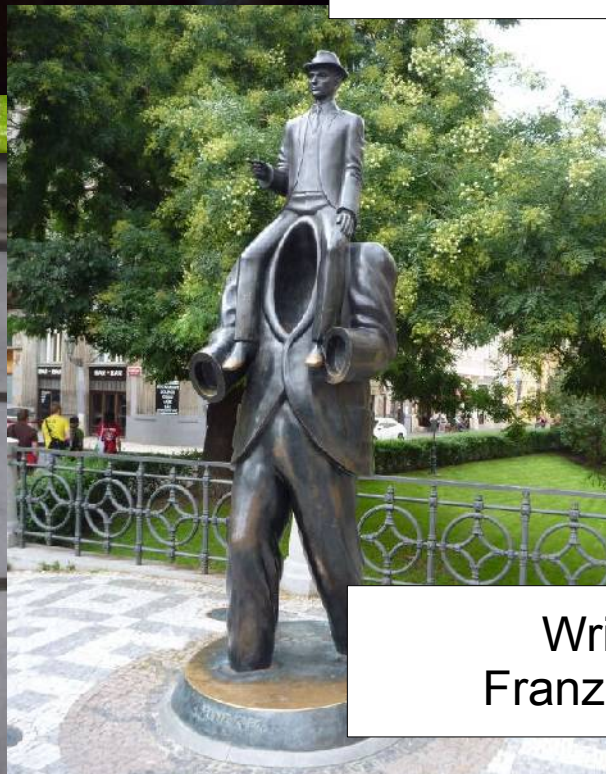
Astronomer  
Nicholas Copernicus



Writer  
Franz Kafka



Scientist  
Madame Curie



# Examine history....

Borders in this region have moved numerous times, sometimes peacefully and sometimes by force.

When a border changes (e.g. part of Poland becomes Russia) the people living there can be deported, often with nowhere else to go.

Prague citizens have seen their country change names 7 times in the last 100 years!



...or see history in the making!




We were lucky enough to be in Prague for their first ever Pride Parade.


This country has come a long way from pre-1989 Communist suppression (although the current President still publicly condemned the organisers).

Enjoy the party guys and gals!


# War monuments



The first shots of WWII were fired here.




This is for postal workers who died during the resistance.



The two world wars had an enormous impact in this area. And that means war monuments.... for just about everything.



For Poles deported to Siberia.



For the kids who took up arms in the defence.

# A monument like no other - Auschwitz

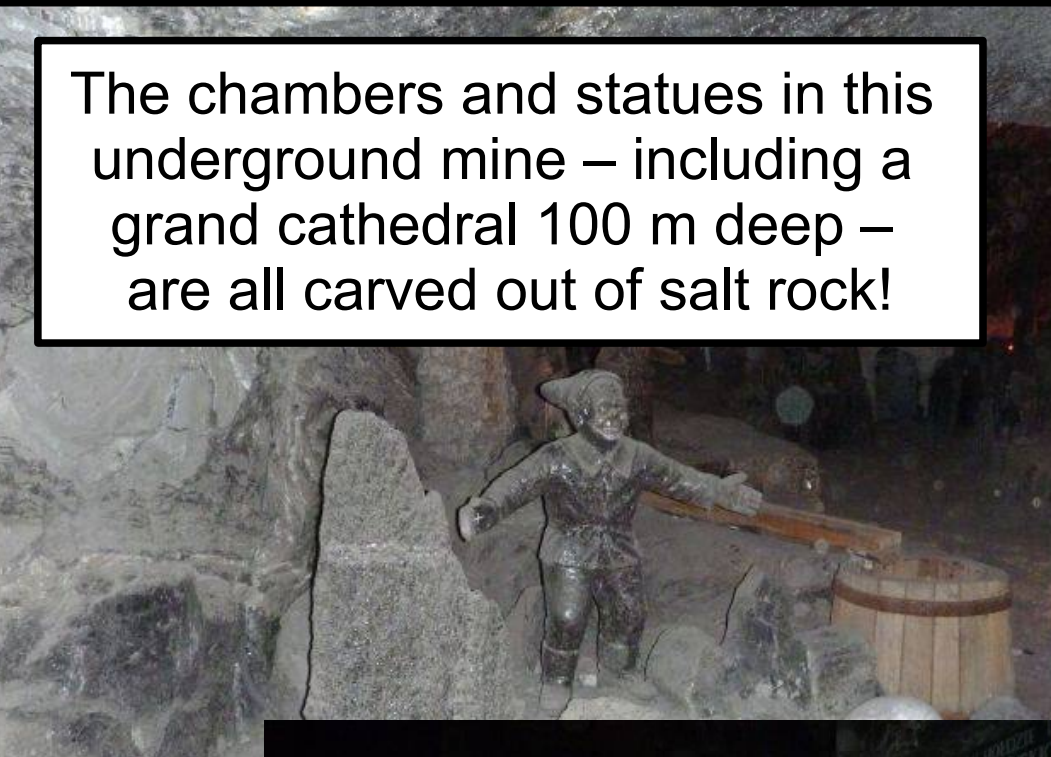
This was one of the more moving experiences we had on the trip. If you want to hear about it, please ask us!

But we will say this: with all the great weather we had so far we were a little concerned that we might go there and see beautiful sunshine with a blue sky and birds chirping – well, no need to worry! Steven Spielberg himself could not have orchestrated a gloomier atmosphere.



# And finally, the remarkable and the bizarre

The chambers and statues in this underground mine – including a grand cathedral 100 m deep – are all carved out of salt rock!



And if that's not weird enough, a chapel decorated with the skeletons of 40,000 plague victims!!



# Poland & the Czech Republic

After 2 weeks here, it's hard to believe we originally left it off our itinerary. Both these countries delivered in so many ways.

And now that we're alive and we've managed to navigate our way through the tourist gauntlet without any permanent scars.... we're glad we went!

Do widzenia Polska i Czecho!

