



In the footsteps of Wallachs

In the footsteps of Wallachs

Wallachs . Pastoral people who reached the Polish territory around the 15th century, bringing with them not only farming art of pasturing sheep in difficult, mountain area, but also rich culture, living till this day. The migration of Wallachians ran from the Bieszczady Mountains, through the Low Beskids, the Sądecki Beskids, the Gorce Mountains and the Podtatrze Region, through the Żywiec Beskids, the Silesian Beskids and further on to the west, towards Moravia. This study is the proposal of **15 thematic routes** running through the areas closely connected with the development of transhumance. Together they comprise a comprehensive, cross-cutting image of pastoral heritage, for which mountain areas are a background - a context, which gains additional, intangible value thanks to these routes.

The project „Trail of Wallachians Culture" is co-financed by the **European Regional Development Fund**.

GORCE: Ochotnica – far, far away...

Walking in the footsteps of Wallachs in Poland starts just like any other engaging story. Once upon a time, in a far off land... In the area of Gorce, there was a primeval forest – wild, dark and dangerous.

Those lands have remained untouched by a man for a long time, until the 18th century, when the Kings and Princes of Poland started to conduct intensive colonisation activities. The beginnings of existence of the Ochotnica village, the oldest Wallachian village, dates back to 1416 when Dawid Wołoch received a consent for establishing a town from King Władysław Jagiełło.

Settlements created on the basis of the Wallachian law of, were established on the so-called “raw root”. Wallachs, used to living in mountain areas that are not the best suited for farming, handled such conditions in a great way. They removed trees from local forests in place of which subsequent clearings were created. They completed settlements with their lords in the nature, most often with cheese, sheep or pigs.

Ochotnica, located on a river with the same name, was not always described this way on a map. This word originates from an old Polish verb “bypass” or “passer-by”, which shall be understood as passing around or detouring. The oldest mention about the Ochotnica Valley can be found in an establishment document of a neighbouring village of Tylmanowa from 1336 and it regards a river that was called ‘rivulus Ochodnik’ at that time. The name ‘Ochotnica’ in today’s spelling started to appear in the middle of the 16th century.

To this day, Ochotnica is considered the most important Wallachian village in the Podhale Region. A fun fact is that this village is one of the longest in Poland. Its axis is composed of a 20-kilometre road, while groups of buildings are also located in valleys of streams located along sides. The total length of Ochotnica along with all branches is 38 km.



7,7 km
3:15 h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
history

Ochotnica Dolna - Jaworzynka Gorcowska / Piorunowiec 4.8 km (1:30 h) -
GORC Student Tent Base 1.9 km (0:45 h) - Gorc Viewing Tower 1 km
(0:30 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, groups, families with children

Trail

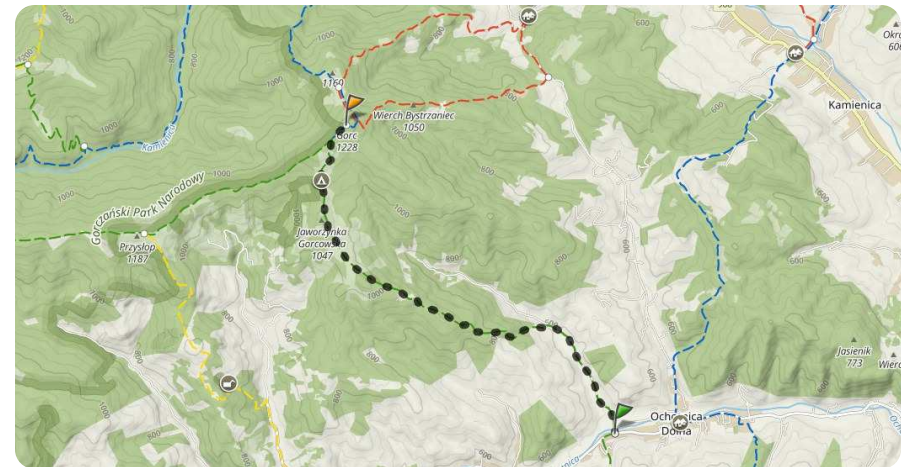
The walking trail starts in Ochotnica Dolna, the oldest Wallachian village and currently one of the most popular summer towns on the territory of Gorce. The trip may be started at the monumental Church of Finding of the True Cross, located in the centre of the village, however the green trail leading towards the mountain can be accessed in the Chryczki hamlet, near the petrol station and restaurant.

After crossing the bridge on Ochotnica, the trail leads along a paved road by the Gorcowe commune. After approximately 30 minutes of walking, the trail departs from the road leading through the village and goes towards the left. After quite a steep initial hike, the trail becomes less challenging and leads through clearings where you can still come across shepherd shelters. It presents a beautiful view onto the south, the Ochotnica Valley and village buildings, as well as the Lubania range seen far in the horizon. An experienced eye will certainly notice a viewing tower on it. After approximately 1:30 h of walking, you will reach the Jaworzynka Gorcowska peak, called 'Piorunowiec' by the local community (literally: Lightning Mountain).

From here, the trail leads through the large Gorce Pastures directly to the GORC Student Tent Base that can be a great accommodation point in the summer. The Gorc peak is not far away from here, where a viewing tower has been erected in 2015. It enables to view a 360° panorama onto all local ranges.

Viewing places

- Gorce Pastures
- Gorc Młyńieński Clearing
- Gorc Viewing Tower



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL

Tourist attractions nearby

1. Rusnaki – Ochotnica Dolna hamlet. The Wallachian-origin name relates to Russian peoples who arrived from the East; it is also a popular surname here of descendants of shepherds. Between the Rusnaki and Gorcowe estates, there is an old, huge great maple with expansive crown, on the left side. A Mother Mary shrine from 1964 is suspended on its trunk.

2. Jaworzynka Gorcowska – a peak in the Gorca range, called ‘Piorunowiec’ (literally: Lightning Mountain) by the locals. Its nickname refers to an event, which took place in 1927 - a lightning struck a shepherd’s shelter where tourists hid from a thunderstorm. The Wietrzna Dziura cave is located nearby, which is one of the most interesting caves in this region.

3. Gorce Pastures - expansive pastures located on the east slopes of the side of Jaworzynka Gorcowska. In the past, they were used for shepherds’ purposes. Numerous shelters and barns were located here, while the meadows were regularly mowed. The residents of Ochotnica Dolna pastured their sheep here. Shepherding life was a big part of this region in the summer season. Currently, the meadows are slowly starting to be overgrown. The GORC Student Tent Base is nearby.

4. The Gorc Viewing Tower was erected in 2015 within the scope of a project entitled “Enclave of Active Leisure”. Access stairs and viewing terrace are fully enclosed, which enables people with a fear of heights to visit the tower. The tower is a great viewing point - you can admire the wide panorama of the Tatra and Beskid Mountains from Babia Góra, through Island Beskids to the Jaworzyna Krynicka range in Sądecki Beskids.

5. Gorce National Park - covers the central range of Gorce, i.e. the massifs of Turbacz and Gorc. It was created due to the necessity of protecting the beautiful landscape and natural values of the Gorce area. The Bulandy shrine on the Jaworzyna Kamienicka clearing is the oldest monument of the Gorce National Park founded by Tomasz Chlipała, who was a popular shepherd in this region.



Photo. 2. Gorce Pastures, 3. Wieża na Gorcu (photos K. Bańkowski),
4. The Bulandy shrine - photo. J. Sekuła

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Weekend with the GNP, May, Gorce National Park
- Ochotnica Bonfire, August, Village Cultural Centre in Ochotnica Górna
- Autumn Trailing of the Sheep, September, Village Cultural Centre in Ochotnica Górna



GORCE: Fire and water - along the mountain ridge and stream valley

Fire and water – two elements that are so different from one another found space in Gorce to co-exist.

At the bank of Ochotnica River, the first Wallachian village was established that could obtain life-giving power from the mountain stream. Fire, on the other hand, enabled the Wallachs to transform old dense primeval forest into terrains, on which shepherding could be developed successfully. This is where the name of this mountain group originates from: ‘gorzeć’ - an old Polish word for firing, flaming, meaning slash-and-burn forest clearing.

Forest clearing was the easiest way, requiring the least effort, for obtaining clearing areas but it was not as easy and obvious as it may seem. How could a clearing be obtained in a planned zone without firing the entire forest at the same time?

Girdling was the answer. It consisted of removing tree bark (more or less at the level of a man’s chest) as well as of trimming and removing the brushwood growing between trees. The plants dried while trunks without bark protecting them against temperature changes and harmful weather conditions, died down. The best trees were cut down and used for building shepherd shelters, and whatever remained was fired. This way, space surrounded by a forest from all sides was created that was gradually covered by grass. Initially, such clearings were used for pasturing animals between tree remains that were gradually cut down for fuel purposes. As the years passed, the tree roots decayed and their place was taken by grassland, shaping the final appearance of clearings that could be mowed.

Despite the fact that girdling (Polish: cyrhlenie) today is an activity long forgotten, the word is still present in the Polish language. The Polish word ‘Cyrhla’ originating from girdling is common when naming peaks in the Carpathian Mountains.



Gorce, photo K. Bańkowski



18,2 km
5:45 h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
nature

Przysłop Pass (Lubomierz-Rzeki) - Podskąły Clearing 3 km (1:10 h) - Gorc Troszacki 1.8 km (0:50 h) - Pustak Clearing 1.5 km (0:30 h) - Borek Pass 2.1 km (0:35 h) - Stawieniec Crossing 4.6 km (1:15 h) - Trusiówka Clearing 3.7 km (1:00 h) - Przysłop Pass (Lubomierz-Rzeki) 1.5 km (0:15 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, groups, families with children



GORCE: Fire and water - along the mountain ridge and stream valley

Trail

The walking trail goes along picturesque clearings and the valley of one of the most important streams in Gorce, namely the Kamienicki Stream, a part of the Kaminica River, being a tributary of the Dunajec.

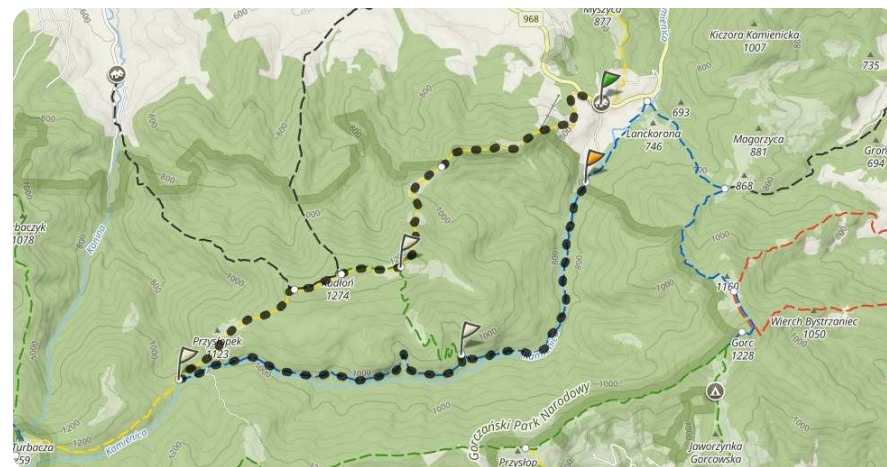
The trekking trip starts from the Przysłop Pass in the Lubomierz-Rzeki hamlet, through which the yellow trail leads, known as the Trail of 10 Clearings. It was indicated in 1925 by Priest Walenty Gadowski, the creator of Orla Perc' in the Tatra Mountains. Continue along the trail towards the forest, where you can come across signs of an educational path called "In the valley of the Gorcowy Stream". After approximately 1 hour of walking, you will reach the picturesque Podskała Clearing, where shepherd shelters were retained to this day. The trail continues along several other magnificent clearings (e.g. Adamówka, Gorc Troszacki, Pustak), and it reaches the Borek Pass where it is connected to the blue trail.

The Borek Pass is a very interesting place in terms of geography. Intense erosion caused by the Kaminicki Stream may result in breaking the ridge in the future and connecting waters with the Konina Stream. This type of phenomenon is called stream capture.

At this point, you will access the blue trail and follow it downwards along with the Kamienicki Stream. After approximately 2:30 h, you will reach the Trusiówka Clearing where one of two picnic areas function in the summer season at the Gorce National Park (the second one is on Oberówka Clearing in Poręba Wielka). From here, going along a path to the left without a trail, you will reach the entry point straight to the Przysłop Pass.

Viewing places

- Podskały Clearing
- Gorc Troszacki Clearing
- Pustak Clearing



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL



GORCE: Fire and water - along the mountain ridge and stream valley

Tourist attractions nearby

- 1. Podskały Clearing** – located between Gorce Troszacki and Jaworzynka in Gorce. A reconstructed shelter can be found on the clearing as well as several others that are decaying. They are remains of an old herding farm of the residents of surrounding Gorce towns. This clearing presents high landscape and natural values.
- 2. Kudłoński Baca** – a more than 10-meter high outlier on northern slopes of Kudłoń. It is located slightly off the trekking path in the forest just by the black tourist trail from Lubmomierz. According to a legend, the outlier was actually a shepherd that was transformed into a stone as a penalty for bad treatment of his assistants and helping boys.
- 3. Papieżówka Clearing** – a clearing in the valley of the Kamienica River. It features a shelter in which Karol Wojtyła lived for two weeks in 1976. To commemorate Cardinal Wojtyła's stay, a large rock was placed on the clearing with a board featuring famous words that Karol Wojtyła said as Pope John Paul II said during one of his pilgrimages to Poland: “Keep an eye on those trails for me.”
- 4. Trusiówka Clearing** – a small clearing located in the valley of the Kamienicki Stream just before the border of the Gorce National Park. Its name originates from the Polish word ‘truś’ that is used to describe a rabbit in the local dialect. The Clearing is a starting point of two educational paths of the Gorce National Park. “Kamienica Valley” and “Gorcowy Stream Valley”. A picnic place is available in the summer season on the clearing.
- 5. Gorce National Park** - covers central range of Gorce, i.e. the massifs of Turbacz and Gorec. It was created due to the necessity of protecting the beautiful landscape and natural values of the Gorce area. The Bulandy shrine on the Jaworzyna Kamienicka Clearing is the oldest monument of the Gorce National Park founded by Tomasz Chlipała, who was a popular shepherd in this region.

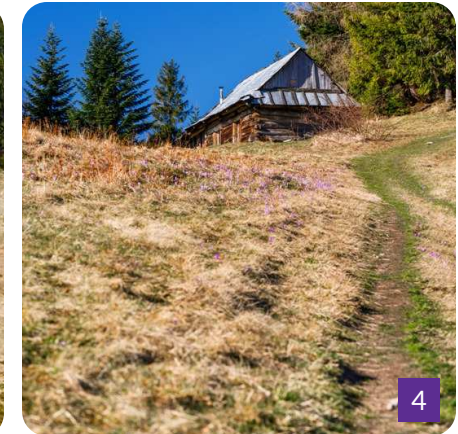


Photo. 2. Przystop , 3. Podskały Clearing, 4. Gorce, photos K. Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Weekend with the GNP, May, Gorce National Park
- Ochotnica Bonfire, August, Village Cultural Centre in Ochotnica Górna
- Autumn Trailing of the Sheep, September, Village Cultural Centre in Ochotnica Górna

A map may be like a book even though it does not look like it at all. Despite the fact that several centuries have passed and the world has changed significantly, many names of locations still feature traces of Wallachian origin. They hide unique stories of the mountain settlements – domesticating wild areas that have become a home to many generations.

Traditional names originating from the Wallachian language were given to villages and their hamlets but also to many peaks, clearings and streams hidden in forests of the Beskids. You can often come across them in Gorce, where the first Wallachian village was established, namely Ochotnica. You can also find such names in other regions of the Beskids and in the entire Carpathian Mountains. The Wallachian names moved along with shepherds reaching the most distant mountain areas. They usually refer to terrain formation and its different features as well as the nature, meaning plants and animals. There are also names relating to the activity of a man as well as those, which refer to names and surnames of landlords, where sheep and oxen were pastured.

The most popular names of Wallachian origin are as follows:

- Beskid** from 'bjêska' – mountain meadow, pasture
- Certeż, Czerzeż** from 'certez' – bright, clear, illuminated, burnt
- Groń, Gronik** from 'grui' – hill, peak, dome-shaped hill
- Kiczora** from 'chica' – hair, overgrown mountain
- Koszar, Koszary, Kosarzyska** from 'coşar' – barn, cow shed, mobile sheep stead
- Kotelnica** from 'kocić' – a place where sheep gave birth to lambs
- Magura, Magurki** from 'mägura' – a free-standing mountain massif
- Przysłop** from 'prislop, prislopul' – a pass, saddle, place on a ridge
- Runek** from 'runc' – pasture land
- Solnisko (salt plain)** – an area where salt was placed for sheep, goat or cattle herd.



Kosarzyska, photo K. Bańkowski



29,9 km
10:00 h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
ethnography

Kosarzyska (Piwniczna Zdrój, crossing) - Gromadzka Pass 8 km (3:00 h) - Obidza 0.3 km (0:05 h) - Radziejowa 4.2 km (1:45 h) - Przehyba Hostel of the Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society (PTTK) 4.9 km (1:30 h) - Dzwonkówka 6.8 km (2:15 h) - Krościenko 5.7 km (1:30 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, groups, families with children



Trail

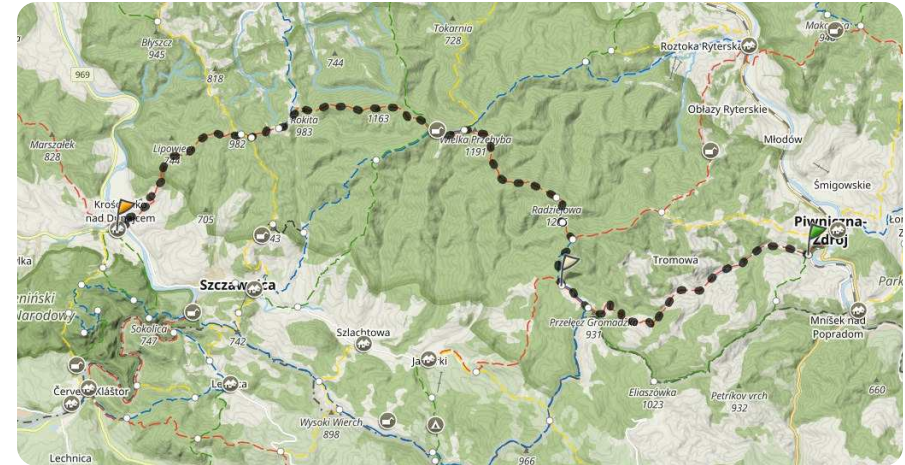
The walking trail starts in Kosarzyska, a community in Piwniczna-Zdrój located in the valley of Poprad. Follow the red trail towards the west. This is the oldest trail in Sądecki Beskids, indicated in 1906 as a path for patients who came to Piwniczna by train. From here, they were on their way to Szczawnica.

After approximately 3 hours of walking, you will reach the Gromadzka Pass where this trail is connected to the green trail. Several minutes later in Obidza, the red trail joins the long-distance blue trail connecting Wielki Rogacz and Tarnów. Leaving the red trail you will continue your trip towards Wielki Rogacz. This is where you will come across another red trail, namely the Main Beskid Trail and after approximately 40 minutes you will reach Radziejowa, the highest mountain of Sądecki Beskids (1262 m asl). After approximately 1:30 h, you will find the Przehyba Hostel of the Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society (PTTK), which presents a magnificent panorama view onto the Tatras.

Continue along the red trail and you will reach Dzwonkówka through the Przysłop Pass after approximately 2:15 h, whose massif includes several clearings being remains of a former herding farm, similarly to the name of the mountain. From Dzwonkówka, walk down through Groń to Krościenko, where after approximately 1:30 h you will come across another important river for Sądecki Beskids, i.e. Dunajec.

Viewing places

- Obidza Pass
- Wielki Rogacz
- Przysłop Pass



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL



Tourist attractions nearby

- 1. Shepherd Exhibit of “Folk Instruments in Carpathians” in Piwniczna** - an exhibit dedicated to folk instruments popular in the Carpathian region, with special focus on instruments used by shepherds. The exhibit features models, photographs, mock-ups and exhibits of the most popular instruments in Carpathians. The exhibit also includes boards with information about the Wallachian culture and subjects relating to it.
- 2. Przehyba** – mountain peak in the west part of the Radziejowa Range. Its name originates from the Ruthenians residing in the area of Shlakhtov Ruthenia in the past and it means a pass. Initially, this name related only to the pasture located here but later it was also applied to the peak. The PTTK hostel is located nearby, which features a magnificent panorama view onto the Tatra Mountains.
- 3. Rock outcrop on Skalka** - in the past there were shepherd halls along the Skalka ridge. Tomasz Guskiewicz, nicknamed “Gruś” was the landlord there, who was a popular shepherd in the area considered a sorcerer by the local community. Legends state that Gruś from Krościenko used pubic hair of a hanged man to remove a spell on a sheep herd, which in the folk culture was considered to be a magic artefact.
- 4. Partisan Statue on Przysłop** - the name of the pass originates from the Wallachian language and means a pass, saddle or a place on ridge. During World War II, Przysłop was a hiding place for partisans. Couriers also stopped here for rest or accommodation purposes. In 1944, 5 members of the 'Wilk' force were killed here, surprised by the Germans. Their death is commemorated by a statue located on the pass.
- 5. Obidza** – village located in the northern part of the Radziejowa Range. Its first probable residents consisted of Wallachian shepherds who took over the ridges of nearby hills for herding purposes, by clearing the local forests. Monumental farmhouses and residential buildings are still retained in the village being an example of traditional wooden architecture.

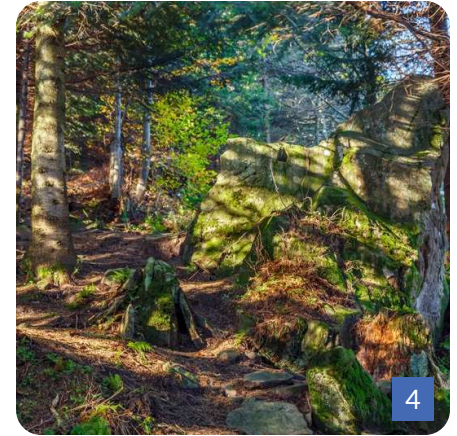


Photo 2 Kosarzyska, Radziejowa, 3. Przehyba, 4. Wychodnia Skalna Krzesło Św. Kingi, photos K. Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Mountain Children Day, July, SOKÓŁ Małopolskie Cultural Centre
- Pannonica Folk Festival, August, Stary Sącz Cultural Foundation
- Trailing of the Sheep in Jaworki, August, Szczawnica MOK

Sheep pasturage on mountain clearings lasting hundreds of years contributed to creating many customs and rituals present in the shepherd culture to this day. Standards regulating pasturage organisation that were strongly rooted in tradition have lasted through the difficult times of changes similarly to the characteristic vocabulary that still functions in the area of shepherd shelters. It is a supraregional value being a sort of a connector that joins highlanders from various areas, not only from Southern Poland, but also from the entire region of Carpathians.

Shepherd's Polish glossary with translation and description:

Baca (head shepherd) – an experienced shepherd who manages the shelter

Bacówka (shepherd shelter) – wooden cabin for shepherds

Bundz – sheep's cheese with mild taste

Bryndza (sheep's cheese) – sheep's cheese with intense slightly salty taste

Cerpak – a wooden vessel with carved handle

Ferula – a device for beating curdled milk

Gieleta – a wooden vessel where milk is poured directly after milking

Jadwiga – a movable arm for suspending a tank above a bonfire

Juhas – shepherd's assistant

Honielnik – boy helping with sheep herding

Kierdel – sheep herd in the mountains

Klag, klog – natural rennet for fermenting milk

Korbacz, korboc – sheep's cheese which looks like long noodles

Koszar – fenced area for sheep on a pasturage

Oscypek – hard smoked sheep's cheese with salty taste

Puciera – wooden vessel for storing milk after milking

Redyk (trailing of the sheep) – shepherd's official leaving to the pasturage and returning with sheep herds to the village

Redykołka – type of small cheese, usually animal-shaped or heart-shaped

Rosół (broth) – cooked and salted water for soaking Oscypek cheeses

Strąga – fence dividing an enclosure through which sheep are chased for milking

Warzecha – long, wooden ladle

Watra – bonfire

Zbyrcok – sheep bell

Żętyca – sheep whey



Trzy Korony, photo K. Bańkowski



67,5 km
21:00 h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
ethnography

Sromowce Niżne - Szopka Pass 3.2 km (1:20 h) - Trzy Kopce Pass 2.3 km (0:40 h) - Sromowce Wyżne 5 km (1:25 h) - Niedzica-Zamek 3.3 km (1:00 h) - Dursztyn 11.1 km (3:40 h) - Łapsze Wyżne 2.4 km (0:45 h) - Rzepiska 6.4 km (2:05 h) - Łapszanka 4.6 km (1:35 h) - Jurgów 4.9 km (1:20 h) - Brzegi 0.8 km (0:15 h) - Bukowina Tatrzańska, Klin 5.2 km (1:40 h) - Gliczarów Górny 4 km (1:05 h) - Poronin 4.3 km (1:10 h) - Zakopane 10 km (3:05 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists

Trail

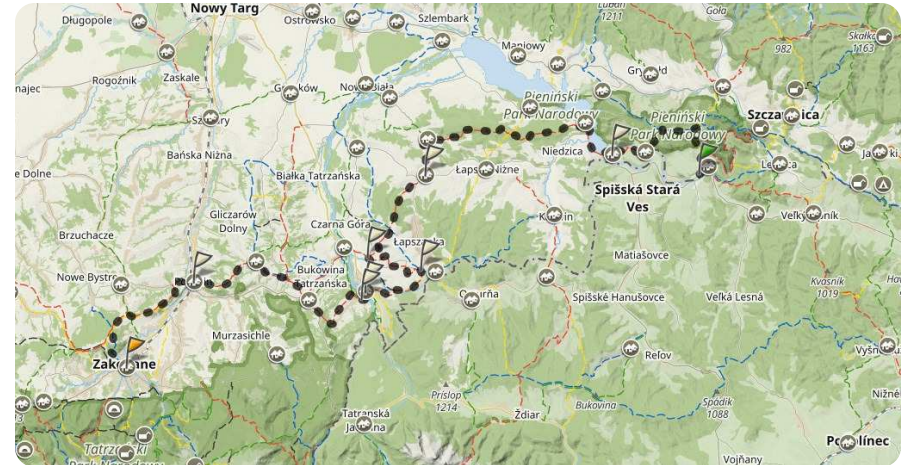
Long walking trail leading through the most magnificent areas of Pienins, Spiš and Podhale where shepherd traditions are still practised. It is accompanied by a panorama view of the Tatras that are almost within an arm's reach. Good tourist management of the region enables to easily divide quite a long trail into smaller sections and match the pace of trekking to individual needs.

The trip is started in Sromowce Niżne following the yellow trail towards Trzy Korony. After approximately 1:20 h of walking, you will reach the Szopka Pass and turn to take the blue trail. After approximately 0:40 h, you will reach the Trzy Kopce Pass. Choose the red trail which will take you to Sromowce Wyżne after approximately 1:25 h, and then walk over the dam on the Sromowiecki basin and go towards the castle in Niedzica. Continuing along the red trail, start your walk along the entire Pieniny Spiskie Range to reach Dursztyn located on the other side, after approximately 3:40 h. Pass popular towns in this area, namely Łapsze Wyżne, Rzepiska and Łapszanka, to reach Jurgów after approximately 5:45 h, at the border of Spiš and Podhale.

Continue along the red trail through Podhale towns, such as Brzegi, Bukowina Tatrzańska, Gliczarów Górny and Poronin, to reach the heart of Podhale, namely the town of Zakopane after approximately 7:15 h.

Viewing places

- Szopka Pass
- Cisówka Clearing
- Grandeus



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL

Tourist attractions nearby

1. Shepherd shelters under Trzy Korony – well-retained and restored shepherd shelters, where traditional production of cheese is still cultivated to this day. Trzy Korony is one of the most attractive tourist places in the Pieniny Mountains. A hostel of the Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society (PTTK) is located nearby as well as the Szopczański Ravine which is also called the Chwała Bogu Pass (literal translation: Thank God), which was perhaps applied to it as a result of people screaming the above in relief when reaching this place.

2. Pieniny National Park – Pieniny National Park takes up the most valuable areas of the Pieniny in terms of landscape and nature: the massif of Trzy Korony, Pieniny Czorsztyńskie, Pieninki and the Dunajec River Gorge. In the area of the Pieniny, there are viewing galleries on Trzy Korony and Sokolicy, which enable to see the magnificent view onto the Dunajec River at the mountain base.

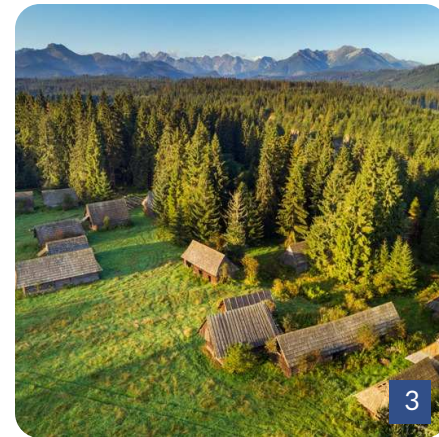
3. Podokólne Clearing in Jurgów – a shepherd clearing, which is characteristic for a large group of monumental sheds and shelters. They compose a heritage park of shepherding which is managed by the Tatra Museum in Zakopane. Currently, it features approximately 56 shelters. Many of them are over 100 years old. Some of them were built later on the site. Most of them are no longer used.

4. Szymkówka Clearing in Brzegi – shepherd traditions on the Szymkówka Clearing date back to the 18th century. Also the Kiczora Niżna and Wyżnia were used for shepherding purposes. Head shepherds from Białka Tatrzańska, Brzegi and Groń also pastured their sheep on the above clearings. In 2014, three small wooden shelters were erected on the clearing that resembled the traditional buildings in which shepherds present on the mountain pasture resided.

5. Tatra Museum Headquarters in Zakopane – one of the most popular regional museums in Poland. The museum gathers rocks and minerals, floral elements, art and literature. An interesting ethnographic exhibit is also available including clothing, decorative art and sculpture typical for the region of Podhale, Spiš and Orawa. Tatra highlander shepherding equipment is also worth noting - this is the biggest collection of this type of artefacts. Contact: +48 18 201 52 05. Open: Monday through Sunday Prices: – PLN 7.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 5.50/person.



2



3



4

Photo 2. Szymkówka Clearing in Brzegi, 3. Podokólne Clearing, 4. Małe Pieniny, photos: K. Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Head Shepherd Day in Tarasówka, April, Communal Cultural Centre in Poronin & Podhale People's Association & Małe Ciche Village Management
- Sabałowe Bajania, August, Bukowina Cultural Centre
- Meeting at Kopieniec, September, Podhale People's Association



ŻYWIEC BESKIDS: Trailing of the Sheep in the Carpathians

There are many hypotheses regarding the origin of Wallachians. The most popular one states that these nomadic people arrived in Southern Poland along the Carpathian Mountains looking for pasture areas for their cattle and sheep. These migration attempts have led to popularising these mountains and creating a highland herding culture still present to this day.

Trailing of the Sheep preceded and ended grazing on pastures. This was an official leaving of shepherds with herds and their return. The pasture season started traditionally on the Adalbert of Prague Day (23 April) and ended on the Saint Michael the Archangel Day (29 September). The trail of the head shepherd, assistant shepherds and sheep to the mountain pastures were accompanied by magical rituals aiming at protecting the herd against bad powers and guaranteeing successful grazing as well as safe return of the sheep to the village.

Despite the fact that the nomadic shepherding, also known as transhumance, is slowly being forgotten in Europe, trailing of the sheep is still cultivated but only in the form of a folklore attraction. This is a unique opportunity of learning the pasturing culture. An exceptional Carpathian Trailing of the Sheep event was organised in 2013 - it involved several hundred sheep along with sheep dogs, donkeys and horses. Shepherds and their animals walked for approximately 15 km daily. In total, their trail covered over 1200 km. It led along the Carpathians, from Romania through Ukraine, Poland and Slovakia. It ended in the Czech Republic.

The most important regular events relating the Trailing of the Sheep include:

- Head Shepherd Day in Ludźmierz**
- Trailing of the Sheep in Jaworki**
- Babia Góra Autumn in Zawoja**
- Trailing of the Sheep in Ochotnica Górna**
- Head Shepherd Day in Małe Ciche**
- Meeting at Kopieniec in Zakopane**



15,1 km
5:00 h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
ethnography

Zubrzyca Górna (Orawa Ethnographic Park) - Śmietanowa Pasture 3 km (1:00 h) - Krowiarki Pass 2.7 km (1:00 h) - Markowe Szczawiny, Hostel of the Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society (PTTK) 6.1 km (2:10 h) - Zawoja-Markowa 3.3 km (0:50 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, groups, families with children



ŻYWIEC BESKIDS: Trailing of the Sheep in the Carpathians

Trail

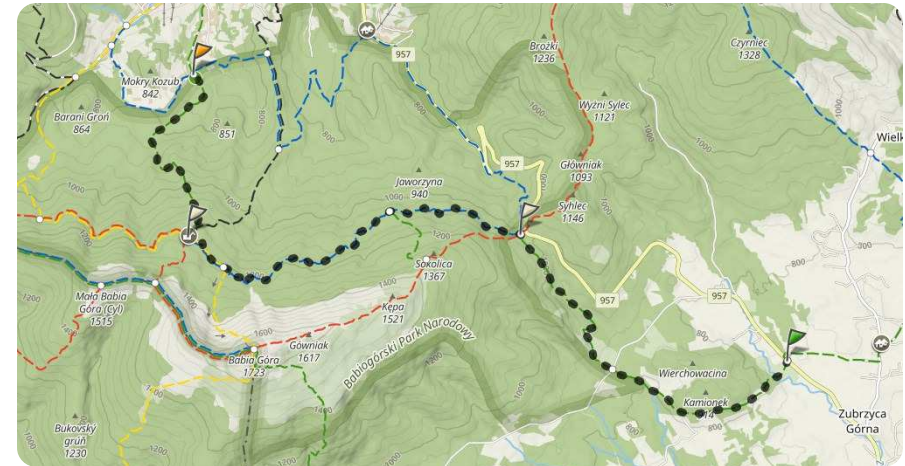
The trip starts in Zubrzyca Górna known for the Orawa Ethnographic Park – a regional heritage park presenting the history and culture of the Górna Orawa Region. From here, follow the green trail towards Babia Góra. After approximately 1:00 h you will reach the picturesque Śmietanowa Pasture, also known as the Zubrzucka Pasture. In the 18th century, it was one of the most popular grazing areas and remains one of the few places in this region where you can still come across sheep. Continue upwards along southern slopes to reach the Krowiarki Pass after 1:00 h. Its name originates from a folk description of female cowherds that used to pasture cows here in the past.

This is where you access the blue trail known as Górny Płaj - an old hunting path established in the second half of the 19th century, Follow it towards Markowe Szczawiny. This section is specifically rich in streams. As many as 9 of them are available in the valleys of Górny Płaj. After approximately 2:00 h you will reach the Markowe Szczawiny PTTK Hostel.

From here, you will walk down through Suchy Groń to Zawoja along the green trail. After approximately 1:00 h, you will reach the border of the Babia Góra National Park. In the surrounding area, you will find the Józef Żak heritage park in Zawoja Markowa - this museum presents traditional wooden buildings of the Babia Góra residents.

Viewing places

- Śmietanowa Pasture



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL



ŻYWIEC BESKIDS: Trailing of the Sheep in the Carpathians

Tourist attractions nearby

1. Orawa Ethnographic Park in Zubrzyca Górna - a regional heritage park presenting the history and culture of the Górna Orawa Region. An interesting exhibit presenting a combination of the wealth of two settlement waves - Wallachian shepherds and farmers coming from the Malopolska Region. Contact: +48 18 285 27 09. Open: Monday through Sunday Prices: adults – PLN 20.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 12.00/person.

2. Śmietanowa Pasture - a clearing located at the base of southern slopes of Babia Góra. It is also called the Zubrzycka Pasture. In the 18th century, it was one of the most popular grazing areas and remains one of the few places in this region where you can still come across sheep. An expansive view onto the most part of Orawa with the Tatras in the background can be seen from the top part of the pasture.

3. Krowiarki Pass - the highest mountain pass of Western Beskids available for communication. The Krowiarki clearing is located on this pass. Its name originates from the folk description of female cowherds. A symbolic tomb of Professor Zenon Klemensiewicz is located here. He died in an aviation accident on Polica in 1969.

4. Markowe Szczawiny – a clearing located on northern slopes of Babia Góra. Its name originates from the name of the owner and *rumex alpinus* (Polish name: *szczaw alpejski*), which grows densely here in place of the historical sheep pastures. The high content of nitrogen compounds in the soil (remaining from sheep excreta) contributed to the above. The clearing also features a PTTK hostel and the Mountain Volunteer Search and Rescue emergency office which includes a Museum of Mountain Tourism.

5. The Józef Żak heritage park in Zawoja Markowa - this museum presents traditional wooden buildings of the Babia Góra residents. Currently, the heritage park is composed of three residential buildings (one from the beginning of the 19th century and two from the beginning of the 20th century), a chapel, a smithy and a free-standing cellar with a granary. Contact: +48 607 250 980. Open: Monday through Sunday Prices: adults – PLN 3.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 2.00/person.

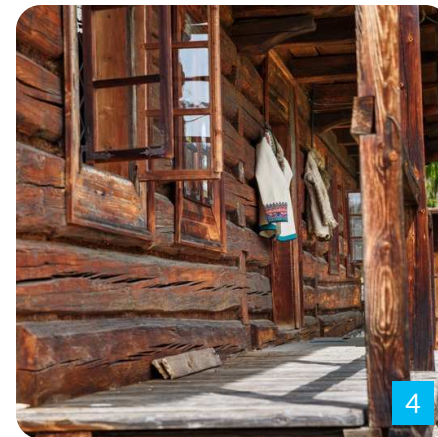


Photo 2. Śmietanowa Pasture, 3. Zubrzyca Górna, 4. Orawa Ethnographic Park in Zubrzyca Górna. Photos: K.Bańkowski

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Blueberry Day, July, Orawa Ethnographic Park
- Beskidy Cultural Day, August, Regional Cultural Centre in Bielsko-Biała
- Babia Góra Autumn, September, Babia Góra Cultural Centre



GORCE: Zagórzany highlanders – at the border of mountains and cultures

When the areas of Zagórzany highlanders, an ethnic group residing in the northern part of Gorce and a part of Island Beskids, were reached by Wallachians, the valleys at the mountain bases were already resided by Polish farmers who came from the north. The nomadic shepherds taking up large areas of the Beskid slopes that were not resided to that point, assimilated with the local community. They passed on their customs and farming methods, which had a significant impact on further development of the region.

The process of permanent settlement of newcomers in the region of north Gorce slopes has started for good from the 16th century. Seasonal shepherding was introduced to the traditional method of farming, consisting of land cultivation. Shepherding was conducted on pastures and Gorce clearings, as well as in the nearby Island Beskids, e.g. on Śnieżnica, Ćwilina, Mogielica and Łopień.

The Zagórzany head shepherds (originating from Poręba Wielka, Mszana, Lubomierza or Łętowe) often included sheep into their herds of farmers from surrounding areas, where joint pasturing was not so common. Gorce, right after the Tatras, were the second largest shepherding centre. It is estimated that in 1925, in the region of Gorce and Island Beskids, over 10 thousand sheep and 500 cattle were pastured.

The Zagórzany folklore was relatively weakly retained as it was affected by the neighbouring Podhale and other regions. Despite the fact that traditional instruments and shepherd dances were forgotten, numerous stories are still told regarding the popular head shepherds, sorcerers and quack doctors, e.g. About Tomasz Chlipała, nicknamed Bulanda, who was known for his ability to heal and his supernatural skills.



Museum of Highlanders and Highland Robbers in Rabka-Zdrój, photo K.Bańkowski



31,3 km
2:00 h



difficulty
level



cycling
trail



theme:
ethnography

Rabka-Zdrój - Olszówka 5.2 km (0:25 h) - Poręba Wielka 2.9 km (0:20 h) -
Niedźwiedź 1.6 km (0:05 h) - Podobin 2.3 km (0:07 h) - Mszana Dolna
4.8 km (0:15 h) - Raba Niżna 6.1 km (0:25 h) - Rabka Zdrój 8.4 km (0:30 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists



GORCE: Zagórzany highlanders – at the border of mountains and cultures

Trail

The cycling trail leads through some of the most interesting towns associated with highlanders residing in the north part of Gorce.

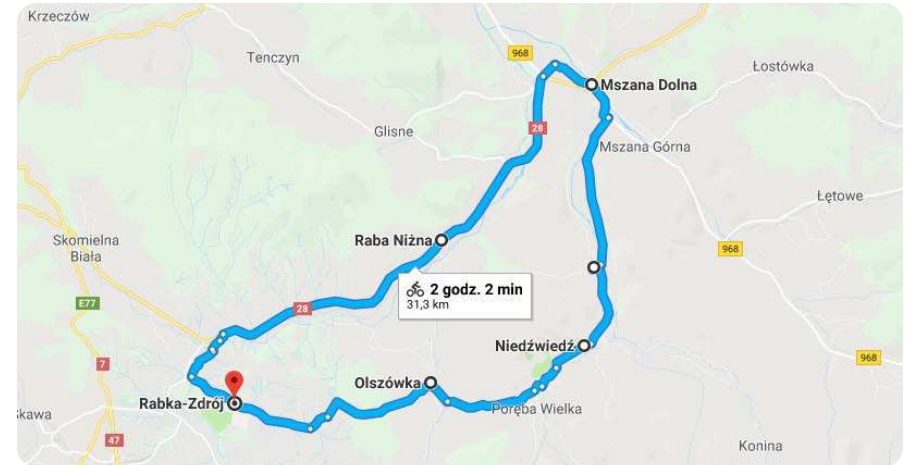
The trip starts in Rabka Zdrój, a town known as a popular health resort. Cycle towards the east, to the town of Olszówka that you will reach after approximately 0:25 h of the trip. Śmierdząca Clearing can be seen above the buildings, which was used for shepherding in the past.

Follow the main road to reach Poręba Wielka after approximately 0:20 h. The name of this village originates from a chopped-out piece of a forest. The headquarters of the Gorce National Park management is located here. Just behind the buildings in Poręba Wielka, you will see buildings of the Niedźwiedź village. The statue of Władysław Orkan, a Polish writer from the period of Young Poland, can be seen on the square. His works usually regarded the image of the poor Polish country life.

Following the main road, cycle towards the north to the nearby town of Podobin, which you will reach after approximately 0:07 h. Craft was at its best here during the period of the village development. Furriers, wheelwrights, blacksmiths and carpenters operated here. Many farmers from Podobin were also owners of Gorce clearings where the local shepherds pastured sheep.

Continue the trip in the northern direction to reach road no. 968 after approximately 0:15 h, where Mszana Dolna is located. For many years, Doctor Sebastian Flizak, born in the neighbouring Podobin, lived here. He was the Manager of the Władysław Orkan Museum in Rabka-Zdrój, a classical philologist and ethnographer, a recognised researcher of the Zagórzany people's culture.

At the main crossing in Mszana Dolna, take a left and enter national road no. 28. It is called the Carpathian Route. Continue along it to the west towards Rabka-Zdrój, which you will reach after approximately 1:00 h, passing Raba Niżna on your way, a town located in the Raba valley - one of the most beautiful Carpathian valleys. Its natural beauty is primarily constituted by the surrounding Island Beskids and Gorce, as well as numerous viewing points.



↑ 384 m · ↓ 384 m



© maps.google.pl | Map data © 2018 Google



Tourist attractions nearby

1. Władysław Orkan Museum in Rabka-Zdrój – a museum located in a monumental wooden church from the first half of the 17th century. It features an exhibit of art, clothing, village craft and farming. You can also view musical instruments, toys and photographs relating to the life of Władysław Orkan. Contact: +48 18 267 67 47. Open: Monday through Sunday Prices: adults – PLN 8.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 6.00/person.

2. Museum of Highlanders and Highland Robbers in Rabka-Zdrój - a museum established as a result of passion for mountains and highlander traditions, in place of a former Gorce Museum, Glass Painting Academy and Wallachian Cultural Centre, managed by Jan Fudala. The museum includes the “Pod Trzema Madonnami” house - a highlander cottage from the 19th century and a mini heritage park. Contact: +48 795 222 925. Open: Monday through Sunday Prices: adults – PLN 12.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 10.00/person.

3. The “Pod Trzema Madonnami” cottage in Rabka-Zdrój - one of the buildings belonging to the Museum of Highlanders and Highland Robbers, which may also be admired from the outside. This is a highlander cottage from 1884, entered to the register of monuments. One of the oldest examples of highlander construction in Rabka-Zdrój. It is a typical example of a building made of timbers with two rooms, white and black, a lobby and two chambers that may also be admired from the outside.

4. Śmierdząca Clearing in Olszówka-Jasionów – expansive clearing located on the Bardo slopes, located within the borders of the Gorce National Park. The retained fragments of naturally valuable gladiolus and bentgrass meadows, characteristic for terrains where sheep were pastured. It features a magnificent panorama view onto Gorce and Island Beskids.

5. “Orkanówka” Biographical Museum of Władysław Orkan in Poręba Wielka – a family cottage of Władysław Orkan. Currently, this is a museum gathering and storing souvenirs associated with his life. The exhibits include items typical for the Zagórzany region. The museum is located along the Trail of wooden architecture. Contact: +48 608 731 557. Open: Tuesday through Saturday Prices: adults – PLN 7.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 3.00/person.

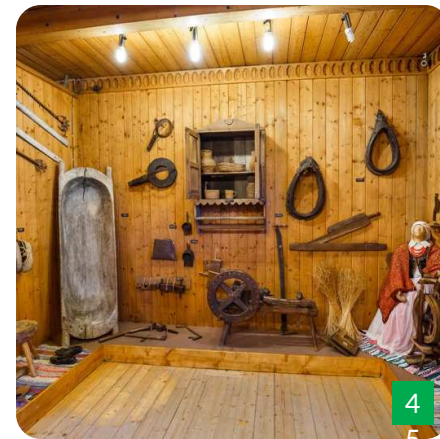
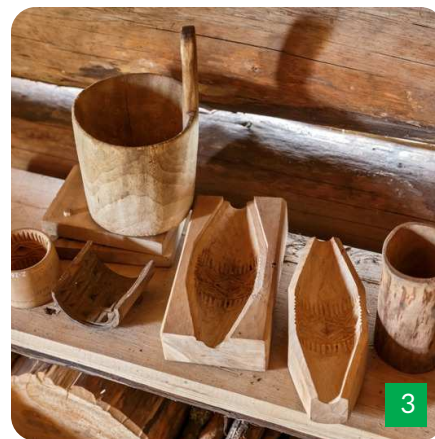
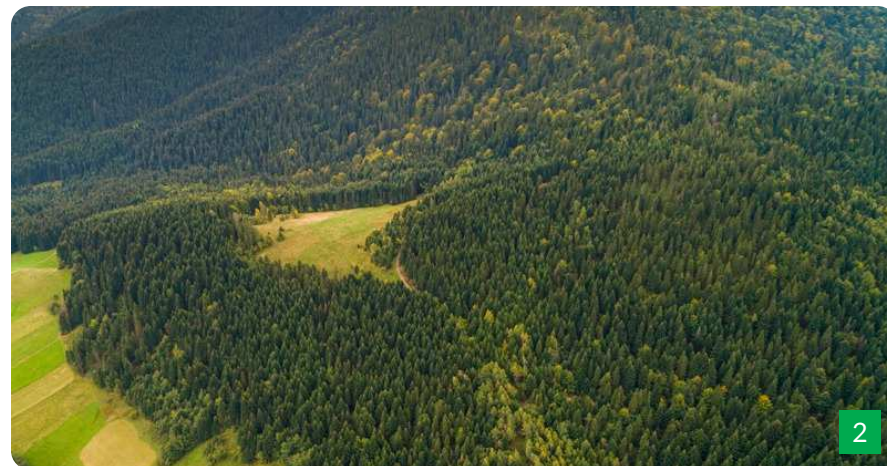


Photo: 2. Śmierdząca Clearing, 3. Orawa Ethnographic Park, 4. Museum in Rabce, photos K. Bańkowski

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Weekend with the GNP, May, Gorce National Park
- Ochotnica Bonfire, August, Village Cultural Centre in Ochotnica Górna
- Autumn Trailing of the Sheep, September, Village Cultural Centre in Ochotnica Górna

Typically for a real sorcerer, Bulanda predicted his own death. At the end of a farewell dinner, he went outside in front of the house and said: “Thank you dear sun for your light and thank you stars and wind for blowing softly when I needed it, and thank you dear river for speaking to me...” Then, he returned to the house and told his family and friends: “My beloved, I am passing away, my time has come. May you stay with God”. He died the same night.

Tomasz Chlipała was one of the most popular head shepherds in the region of Beskidy. His nickname was assigned to him with reference to the Bulandy settlement in the village of Szczawa, where he came from. Nevertheless, he was mainly associated with Lubomierz. This is where he was the head shepherd in autumn and winter, at the Dziejziny settlement. From March until the end of September, he was present on the Jaworzyna Kamienicka clearing, where he pastured sheep.

Bulanda became famous primarily as a quack doctor and “repairer” of broken limbs. Apparently, he learnt the art of magic and medicine from a magician originating from Lewocza, in the region of Spisz, whom he had to see one day to obtain help with an illness. Once he acquired the appropriate skills, he cured others of nearly all ailments, with an exception of venereal and communicable diseases. Such patients were removed from the shelter and he washed his hands thoroughly afterwards.

He was commonly considered a believer and a righteous person, respected by others. He was wealthy taking into account the local conditions, but his income was mainly obtained from shepherding. For the money he earned, he erected a shrine on Jaworzyna Kamienicka in 1904. It is still there to this day. You can find it in the top corner of one of the most beautiful Gorce clearings, by the green trail from the Gabrowska Duża clearing through Jaworzyna Kamienicka and Przystół clearing, leading to Gorc.



Jaworzyna Kamienicka Clearing, photo J. Sekuła



22,1 km
7:00 h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
ethnography

Ochotnica Górna - Gorczańska Chata 3.5 km (1:45 h) - Przystół Dolny 3.6 km (1:40 h) - Jaworzyna Kamienicka (Bulanda Shrine) 4 km (1:00 h) - Gabrowska Clearing 1.3 km (0:20 h) - Turbacz Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society (PTTK) hostel 2.1 km (0:35 h) - Wisielakówka 1.3 km (0:15 h) - Bukowina Miejska 2.4 km (0:30 h) - Nowy Targ, Oleksówki 3.9 km (1:00 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, groups, families with children

Trail

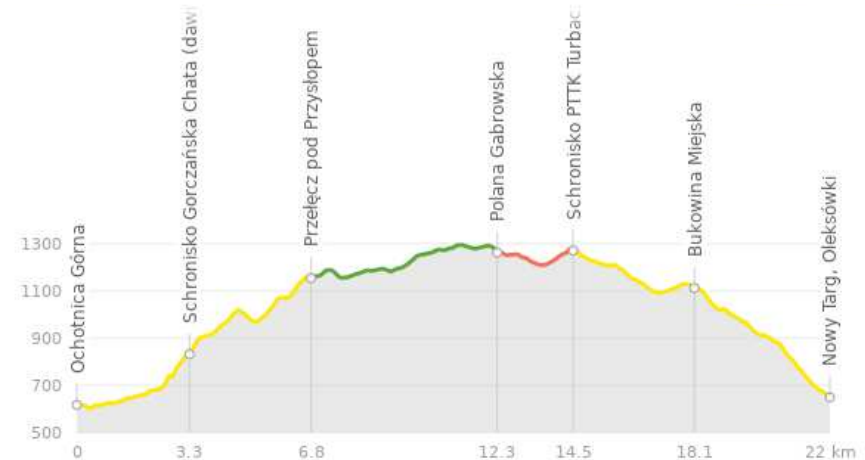
The walking trail combines several very important places for the area of Gorce. The trip is started in Ochotnica, the oldest Wallachian village being the centre of Gorce shepherding. From here, follow the yellow trail towards the mountain ridge passing the atmospheric Gorczańska Chata on the way.

The yellow trail on the Przysłop Pass is connected to the green trail on one of the most magnificent Gorce clearings in terms of views. It is worth visiting the shelter located in the area, near Skalka, where you can see traditional methods of preparing sheep's milk products. Another stop along the trip worth considering, is the legendary Bulanda Shrine located at the green trail on Jaworzyna Kamienicka. This is where Tomasz Chlipała pastured his sheep. The green trail is connected to the red trail on the Gabrowska Clearing, the Main Beskidy Trail, leading directly onto Turbacz, the highest peak of Gorce (1310 m a.s.l.).

The yellow trail leads by the hostel. You can take it to Nowy Targ, passing Bukowina Miejska and several picturesque clearings on the way. From here, you can enjoy a magnificent panorama view onto the south. You can admire Podhale, Spiš and the rocky peaks of the Tatras on the horizon.

Viewing places

- Przysłop Dolny Clearing
- Jaworzyna Kamienicka Clearing
- Wzorowa Pasture



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL

Tourist attractions nearby

1. Kurnytowa Koliba – clearing farm cottage in the Forendówki hamlet. It is located in the bottom part of Kurnytowa Clearing. A perfectly retained example of a wooden house designed in a log frame structure. It was used as a summer shepherding cottage until World War II.

2. Przysłop Dolny Clearing – clearing located on the south ridge of Przysłop. The name of the clearing and peak originates from the Wallachian word “prislop”, which means a pass, saddle or a place on a ridge. The clearing is one of many located along slopes in this range. In the past, it was an area heavily used by the residents of Ochotnica village for shepherding purposes.

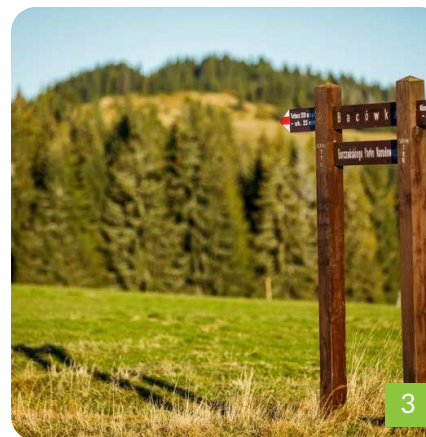
3. Bulandowa Shrine – a shrine on the Jaworzyna Kamienicka Clearing. It was founded in 1904 by the most popular Gorce head shepherd, Tomasz Chlipała, nicknamed Bulanda. He pastured sheep and oxen on this clearing for over 50 years. The Jaworzyna Kamienicka Clearing is one of the most beautiful clearings in the Gorce region. A magnificent, expansive panorama onto Sądecki Beskids and Island Beskids can be enjoyed from here.

4. Wzorowa Pasture – a large clearing being a part of the Długa Pasture. Its name originates from research works regarding grassland science and pasturing which may lead to creating an ideal herding farm. Currently, a shelter is located on the Wzorowa Pasture under the Długa Pass. In the summer season, cultural shepherding is conducted here.

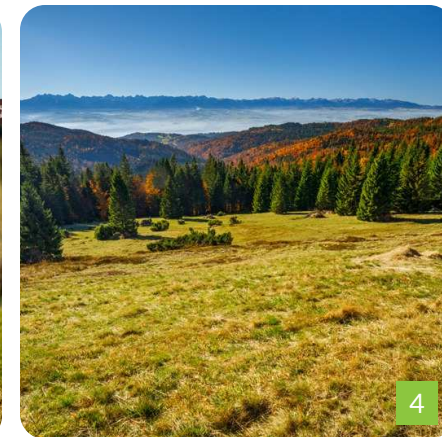
5. Wolnica Clearing – the highest-located clearing in the region of Turbacz, being a part of the Długa Pasture. Its name originates from oxen pasture conducted in this region in the past. In spring, crocus *scepusiensis* flowers bloom on the clearing. The clearing is located on the premises of the Gorce National Park. In its western part, you will find the PTTK hostel.



2



3



4

Photo: 2. Ochotnica Dolna, 3, 4. Wzorowa Pasture, photos K. Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Weekend with the GNP, May, Gorce National Park
- Ochotnica Bonfire, August, Village Cultural Centre in Ochotnica Górna
- Autumn Trailing of the Sheep, September, Village Cultural Centre in Ochotnica Górna



LITTLE BESKIDS: Mountain farming according to the Wallachians

For many years of their presence in the Polish mountains, the Wallachians settled subsequent regions of the Beskids gradually, moving towards the west. They reached the area of Little Beskids at the beginning of the 16th century, bringing along customs and increasingly better skills of combining seasonal activity with the settlement-style of life. The area of highland pastures was incomparably smaller than what they had known from other Beskid regions. In the top part of the village they created hamlets more and more often. Their arrangement in terrain is legible to this day.

Clearings, meadows and swamps were used by shepherds from Little Beskids frequently throughout the year. Shelters were built on them where straw was stored for feeding sheep and oxen in the winter season without having to bring the herds to the village. As time passed, the shelters were transitioned into homes, while new independent farms were created on mountain slopes, generating a new layer of the society of mountain farmers. From time to time, landlords controlled and measured this type of areas, recording them in a register and legalising them by assigning property rights to their users. Wallachians have not only created clearings and mountain pastures, but also the distributed developments and numerous mountain hamlets, so popular in the region of Little Beskids.

Little Beskids, similarly to other regions of the Polish section of the Carpathians, had also undergone its golden period of shepherding growth. Historic documents of the Duchy of Zator and the Duchy of Oświęcim evidence the intensity of shepherding in this region. According to the above documents, in the 16th century, approximately 750 sheep were pastured in the royal forests. Mountain farming started to disappear gradually at the start of the 20th century. Most of the clearings today overgrew with time.



24,4 km
8:00 h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
ethnography

Czartak - Magurka Ponikiewska Pass 6.7 km (2:35 h) - PTTK Leskowiec hostel 2.1 km(0:45 h) - Krzeszów 5.8 km (1:30 h) - Gołuszkowa Góra 4.4 km (1:35 h) - Sucha Beskidzka 5.4 km (1:35 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, groups, families with children



Trail

The walking trail goes along the eastern part of Little Beskids, also called Andrychowski Beskids – from one of the key towns of this region: Andrychów.

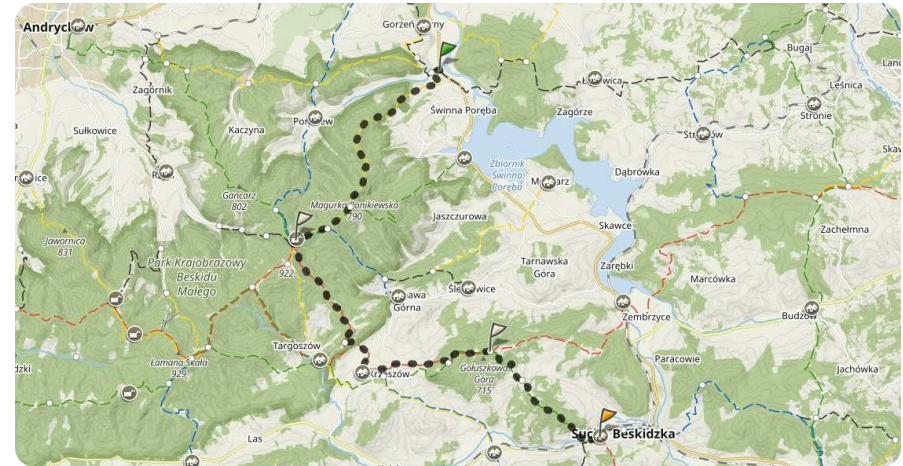
The trip starts in Czartak, the hamlet of Mucharz village. Czartak is also a name for a regional literary group founded by Emil Zegadłowicz - a Polish poet, prosaic writer and art expert who spent his childhood at a manor house in Gorzeń Górny, located nearby. From here, follow a trail towards the west to reach the Magurka Ponikiewska pass after approximately 2:30 h of marching. Along the way, you will pass the Żar Mountain, whose name refers to clearings obtained by means of the slash-and-burn method (the Polish word 'żar' means embers, glow). Ponikiew, a village located in a valley is also historically-associated with Wallachian settlements.

After approximately 0:45 h, you will reach the bottom of Leskowiec, a mountain that is overgrown by forest today. Its peak features a large clearing which remains from a former shepherd farm. This is an important node of tourist trails and one of the best viewing points in Little Beskids. PTTK hostel is located nearby.

From here, follow the red trail downwards to reach Krzeszów after approximately 1:30 h and continue towards the peak of Żurawnica and Gołuszkowa Góra. Follow the green trail from here to reach the Stryżawka River valley and then Sucha Beskidzka after approximately 1:30 h.

Viewing places

- Beskid Clearing
- Leskowiec
- Carchel Pass



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL



Tourist attractions nearby

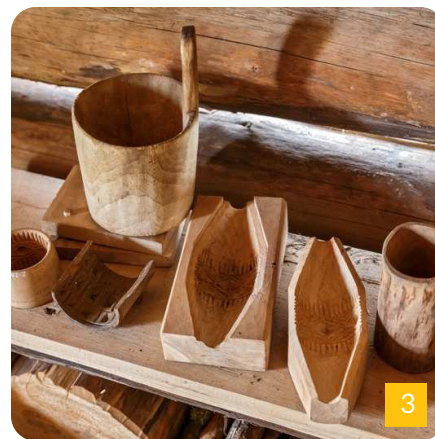
1. Rocky outcrops on Kamień and Żar - large outcrops in the form of a rocky embankment being a natural monument. The western slopes of Kamień fall into the Brejna stream valley in Ponikiew, while the eastern ones to the town of Koziniec. Both villages are historically associated with inflow of shepherds settling according to the Wallachian law in a system of clearing settlements. The name of the Żar Mountain refers to clearings obtained by means of the slash-and-burn method (the Polish word 'żar' means embers, glow).

2. Jaškowa Arka – a provisional shed, which is a building made of steel sheets in the shape of a boat, located beyond the trail under the peak of Magurka Ponikiewska. It was erected by Jan Sasor, one of the most mysterious and popular residents of Beskid Mały. He lived here since 1980 waiting for the approaching flood. A large clearing can be seen nearby which remains from a historic pasture.

3. Beskid Clearing – a clearing underneath the Groń Jana Pawła II (John Paul II Mountain), which used to be called Beskid. In the past, it used to be a mountain pasture, similarly to all clearings of this type. After its agricultural use was no longer profitable, it gradually started to be covered by a forest. It presents a panorama view onto the northern part. With good viewing conditions you can easily see Kraków and Nowa Huta. PTTK hostel is located nearby.

4. Semikowa Clearing – a clearing underneath the Groń Jana Pawła II (John Paul II Mountain), located on its southern slopes. In early springs, you will come across magnificent stretches of crocus *scepusiensis*. The clearing started to be covered by a forest after it stopped being mowed and used for shepherding. Currently, it is at the final stage of secondary succession.

5. Orawa Ethnographic Park in Zubrzyca Górna - a regional heritage park presenting the history and culture of the Górna Orawa Region. An interesting exhibit presenting a combination of the wealth of two settlement waves - Wallachian shepherds and farmers coming from the Malopolska Region. Contact: +48 18 285 27 09. Open: Monday through Sunday Prices: adults – PLN 20.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 12.00/person.



Photos: 2. Rocky outcrops on Kamień and Żar, 3. Orawa Ethnographic Park, 4. Sheep, photo K. Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Blueberry Day, July, Orawa Ethnographic Park
- Beskidy Cultural Day, August, Regional Cultural Centre in Bielsko-Biała
- Babia Góra Autumn, September, Babia Góra Cultural Centre



LOW BESKIDS: Countryside architecture – a door to the world of the past

Water is life – no wonder springs and streams were in the heart of villages. Watercourses had the biggest impact on shaping the spatial arrangement of settlements. In the mountain areas covered by forests, forest villages were established. Great examples of the above are Zawoja and Ochotnica – the two longest villages in Poland.

A farm is the key element of a village arrangement - a complex of farming and residential buildings - the centre of life and work of village families. Each farm was developed on one's own cleared-out field attached to the main road. It lead through the forest to the water divide being the border of the village. Long soil strips located directly next to one another, created a unique repeatable rhythm clearly visible today from a bird's-eye view.

As time passed and the conditions of the natural environment changed as well as social and economic changes took place, the villages evolved. Their initial shape was gradually expanded and started to fade away. In many cases you can still notice their initial assumptions. One of the most valuable village complexes with Wallachian roots is the inconspicuous village of Bodaki in Low Beskids, where traditional folk developments have been retained. Also the land plot arrangement is legible, the visible structure of soil as well as farm and forest borders, while grazing of cattle and sheep still takes place. You can come across wooden cottages here, etc. Their exceptionalness is the simplicity that does not follow and trends from other regions of Poland and abroad.

Walking through old, squeaky door of a cottage is like entering a world from the past that has been gradually disappearing from our eyes nowadays. It is worth taking a look inside before you will only be able to experience something like this by looking at yellowing photographs.



53,5 km
3:30 h



difficulty
level



cycling
trail



theme:
architecture

Gorlice - Sękowa 3.8 km (0:15 h) - Ropica Górna 5 km (0:20 h) - Bodaki 6.2 km (0:25 h) - Małastów 6.6 km (0:25 h) - Nowica 8.8 km (0:45 h) - Bielanka 8,5 km (0:35 h) - Szymbark 6.8 km (0:25 h) - Gorlice 8.2 km (0:25 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists



LOW BESKIDS: Countryside architecture – a door to the world of the past

Trail

The west part of Low Beskids, similarly to the entire region of Lemkivshchyna, is rich with ethnographic attractions that were generated as a result of assimilating two ethnic elements - Wallachian and Russian. The cycling trail leads through an easily-accessible area where you can come across remains of the world of the past.

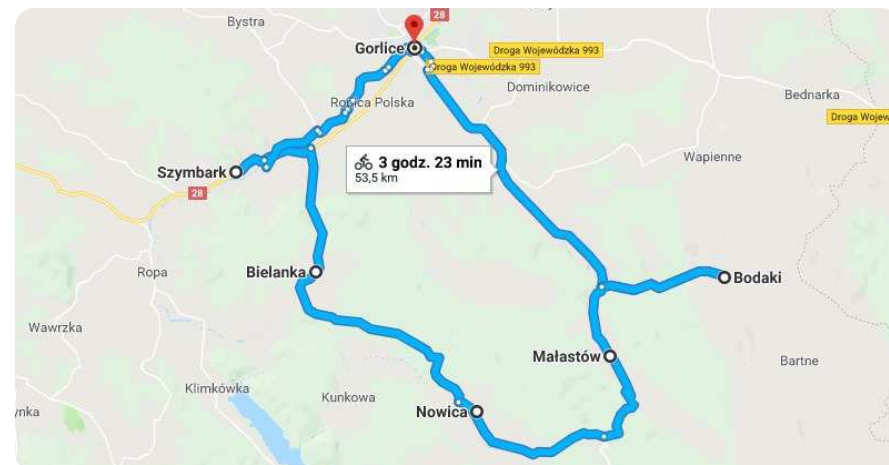
The trip starts in Gorlice. During fairs taking place here, the local community specialising in sheep and cattle breeding, sold its animals. Follow provincial road no. 977, reaching Sękowa after approximately 0:15 h. The village features a monumental wooden church registered by UNESCO.

Follow the road and after 0:20 h you will pass Ropica Górna, which is one of the oldest towns in the region that adopted the Wallachian law in the 16th century. Until 1949, the village was called Ropica Ruska. After approximately 2 km, take a left towards the town of Bartne. It is worth visiting Bodaki, where traditional folk developments are retained to this day quite well.

From Bodaki, return to road no. 977 to reach Małastów after approximately 0:25 h, one of the oldest villages of Low Beskids, historically associated with incoming Wallachian peoples. Continue along a steep uphill ride to a pass near a ski station and a take a left towards Nowica, which you will reach after approximately 0:45 h. There are numerous wooden buildings from the time of the Lemko peoples residing this village.

Cycle towards the west along the Przysłupianka valley. After approximately 0:35 h, you will reach the town of Bielanka, one of the biggest Lemko settlements in Low Beskids. Here, the road turns to the north to join national road no. 28 after approximately 4 km, called the "Carpathian Route". The town of Szymbark is located nearby which features a renaissance manor house and the Roman Reinfuss Heritage Park of Podgórze Village. Roman Reinfuss was a recognised ethnographer, expert in Polish folk art and Carpathian ethnography.

From Szymbark, follow road no. 28 towards the east to reach Gorlice again, after approximately 0:25 h.



↑ 637 m · ↓ 637 m



© maps.google.pl | Map data © 2018 Google



LOW BESKIDS: Countryside architecture – a door to the world of the past

Tourist attractions nearby:

1. Saints Philip and James Church in Sękowa – erected at the beginning of the 16th century. Considered to be one of the most beautiful wooden monuments in Poland. Along with other wooden churches in the Malopolska and Podkarpacie Regions, it was registered by UNESCO. Due to its history and specific appearance, it is often called the Pearl of Low Beskids.

2. The architecture and spatial arrangement of the Bodaka village – one of the most valuable architectural complexes, which features over ten buildings with initial or secondary characteristics of traditional construction. The arrangement of the land plots and the entire village are clearly noticeable. The structure of soils as well as the farming and forest borders are visible, while cattle and sheep grazing still occurs.

3. “Dziubyniłka”, An Educational Lemko Farm in Gładyszów – a farm that is a reconstruction of a traditional development in the Lemko region. It is composed of residential and farming buildings, two granaries, original wind mills, a well with crane and a horse mill. The rooms feature exhibits containing equipment and tools which were used daily. Contact: +48 513 011 863. It is possible to organise workshops upon a prior appointment.

4. Maziarska Farm in Łosie – a branch of the Dwory Karwacjanów i Gładyszów Museum in Gorlice, located in the Łosie village. The farm features an ethnographic heritage park presenting the history of grease making and trade that the residents of this village specialised in, in the past. Contact: +48 601 411 590. Open: Monday through Sunday Prices: adults – PLN 4.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 2.00/person.

5. Roman Reinfuss Heritage Park of Podgórze Village in Szymbark – a branch of the Dwory Karwacjanów i Gładyszów Museum in Gorlice, presenting examples of traditional village developments of the nearby areas. Most of the buildings are managed. The interiors are fitted with original equipment from the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, as well as the interwar period. Contact: +48 18 351 10 18. Open: Monday through Sunday Prices: adults – PLN 8.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 5.00/person.



Photo. 2. Bodaki, 3. Bartne, 4. Saints Philip and James Church in Sękowa, photo K Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Łemkowski Kermesz church fair in Olchowiec, May, Association of Lemko People
- Lemko Bonfire, July, Association of Lemko People
- Mountain Children Day, July, SOKÓŁ Małopolskie Cultural Centre



LITTLE PIENINY: Shepherding on a large scale – typical shepherd shelters

Expansive pastures, wide paths leading through non-forest spaces, convenient roads leading from valleys almost to the mountain peaks. It may seem that the image of sheep herd is a permanent component of the Little Pieniny landscape. Shepherding in this region did not fade away even after the Ruthenians were displaced from this area. For a while, there was a chance that shepherding would be conducted here on a large scale. Only remains of shepherd shelters can be seen today, that were to collectivise pasturage.

After the war, the areas left by the Ruthenians were resided by Tatra highlanders. This lease was a type of a compensation for losing pasturages due to creating the Tatra National Park and nature protection related thereto. In 1948-1951, the People's Government in Little Pieniny has erected the so-called four typical shepherd shelters, planning shepherding on a large scale.

The buildings featured residential rooms and farming rooms, a cheese smoking room, as well as cattle and sheep barns. Manure tanks were created around them, which were to be used for fertilising the local grasslands as well as a system of barriers and stone channels that aided in watering the pastures. However, the above developments started to decay quickly. Shepherds preferred to stay on pastures with sheep all day long, just like they were used to. A roof was not required for the herds. Sheep are well-adapted to mountain conditions and they handled variable weather conditions well, while spending the entire vegetation period outdoors.

After social and political changes that took place in 1989, the interest in shepherding in Little Pieniny dropped drastically. Nevertheless, you can still come across herds from May to September that expand across the green pastures like a white rug.



Pod Wysoką Clearing, photo K Bańkowski.



12,8 km
4:00 h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
history

Jaworki - Homole Ravine 1.6 km (0:35 h) - Pod Wysoką Tent Base 0.9 km (0:20 h) - Pod Wysoką Clearing 0.9 km (0:35 h) - Pod Durbaszką 2.1 km (0:35 h) - Wysoki Wierch Crossing 1.1 km (0:20 h) - Szafranówka 4 km (1:00 h) - Szczawnica 2.2 km (0:35 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, groups, families w



LITTLE PIENINY: Shepherding on a large scale – typical shepherd shelters

Trail

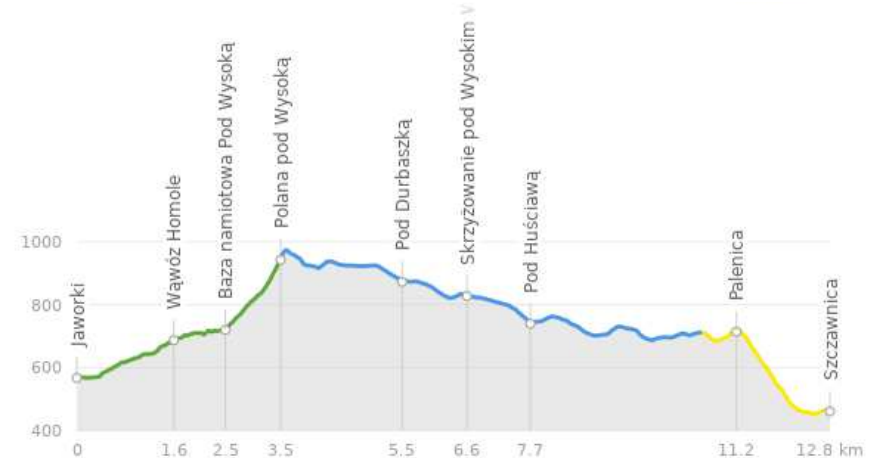
The walking trail leads through almost the entire range of Little Pieniny. Its starting point leads through the Homole Ravine - the most popular place that was visited early in the past, and Jan Długosz wrote about it in his works. The Ravine is a natural reserve. When leaving Jaworki, follow the green trail towards the ridge passing the Pod Wysoką Tent Base functioning in the summer season. After approximately 1:30 h of walking, you will reach the Pod Wysoką clearing. In this area you can still notice the concrete watering channels running along the streams as well as ruins of a typical shepherd shelter.

In the Wysokie Skalki reserve region, the green trail is connected with the blue trail. Continue along it towards the Polish-Slovakian border, and move towards the east along the Małe Pieniny ridge. After approximately 0:35 h, you will reach Durbaszka and you can walk down to the hostel. The building was erected in 1949-1952 as a typical shepherd shelter for sheep grazing. After 0:20 h of walking, you will reach the crossing under the Wysoki Wierch. It is worth climbing this peak as it presents a magnificent 360° panorama view onto Magura Spiska, Trzy Korony Massif, Tatras, Gorce and Sądecki Beskids. Cultural sheep grazing takes place on the meadows surrounding it.

The blue trail leads along a flat ridge for 1:00 h to Szafranówka. This is where you access the yellow trail through Palenica to reach Szczawnica after approximately 0:35 h. It is possible to go down by a chair lift.

Viewing places

- Wysoka
- Wysoki Wierch
- Szafranówka



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL



LITTLE PIENINY: Shepherding on a large scale – typical shepherd shelters

Tourist attractions nearby

- 1. Muzyczna Owczarnia** – a music club and an association in Jaworki with its seat in an old sheep building moved from pasturages by Wieńczysław Kołodziejski. After adaptation and modernisation, the Muzyczna Owczarnia club started activity as a special artistic work place. Concerts, painting and sculpture workshops and musical workshops are organised here.
- 2. Pod Wysoką Clearing** – this clearing was created in place of farmlands of Jaworki, which were used for grazing of cattle and sheep. You can still notice the concrete watering channels running along the streams as well as ruins of the typical shepherd shelter. This inoperable building was adapted in 1974 into a hostel that burnt down in 1980.
- 3. Durbaszka Hostel** - the building was erected in 1949-1952 as a standard shepherd shelter for sheep grazing. In this building unused by shepherds, renovation and modification works were completed in the 1970s and 1980s aiming at creating a youth tourist base. Currently, the facility is a branch of the “Dom Harcerza” Youth Cultural Centre in Krakow.
- 4. Pod Wysokim Wierchem shepherd shelter** – one of traditional shepherd shelters, where you can still see sheep grazing in the summer season. This place is also used for production of sheep’s milk products. You can learn about traditional methods of producing sheep milk cheese here.
- 5. Pieniny National Park** - Pieniny National Park takes up the most valuable areas of the Pieniny in terms of landscape and nature: the massif of Trzy Korony, Pieniny Czorsztyńskie, Pieninki and the Dunajec River Gorge. In the area of the Pieniny, there are viewing galleries on Trzy Korony and Sokolica, which enable to see the magnificent view onto the Dunajec River at the mountain base.



Photos: 2. Pod Wysoką Clearing, 3. the Dunajec River Gorg, 4. Durbaszka Hostel, photos.K Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Poprad Bonfires, June, Local and Municipal Cultural Centre in Piwniczna-Zdrój
- Trailing of the Sheep in Jaworki, August, Szczawnica MOK
- Autumn Trailing of the Sheep, September, Village Cultural Centre in Ochotnica Górna



PODHALE: Shepherds' religious beliefs – Shepherdess of Podhale

The profound faith and raw nature of highlanders existed side by side for many years, inspiring artists fascinated by the Podhale region. Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, a poet and playwright born in Ludźmierz was one of them. He dedicated a collection of stories entitled “Na Skalnym Podhalu” to the exceptional world of mountains. They were described in the dialect of the people of Podhale which you can still hear to this day almost in the same form.

Ludźmierz, the writer's home town is one of the most important places in the Tatra Mountains. Not only highlanders and pilgrims from the entire Poland come to this place every year but also Polish people living abroad. The miraculous statue of Madonna and Child called the Shepherdess of Podhale can be found in this church, which has been watchful over the residents of the settlements in Podhale.

The Ludźmierz-based parish is popular for its very exalted Head Shepherd Holiday which is associated with the beginning of pasture. It takes place around the time of the Adalbert of Prague Day (23 April) and is celebrated to bless sheep that are walked to the pasture in an official trailing of the sheep ceremony. During the mass, also water and wood chips are blessed that the shepherds take with them to create a bonfire at the shelter.

Arrival of Wallachians had a significant impact on this region's development. Shepherds have brought with them the ability of sheep grazing in difficult mountain conditions as well as many elements of contemporary culture of Podhale - from surnames (e.g. Bargiel, Galas, Rogala), through garments (e.g. shepherd belts and trousers) and shelter fittings (e.g. mobile sheep enclosure, milk mixer, ladle) to magical celebrations that co-existed with the Catholic faith for many years.



58,8 km
1:20 h



difficulty
level



car
trail



theme:
ethnography

Ludźmierz - Szaflary 5 km (0:08 h) - Zakopane 16.8 km (0:25 h) - Dzianisz 12 km (0:17 h) - Chochołów 5 km (0:06 h) - Czarny Dunajec 9 km (0:11 h) - Ludźmierz 11 km (0:11 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, families with children



PODHALE: Shepherds' religious beliefs – Shepherdess of Podhale

Trail

The car trail leads through the most important towns of Podhale:

Ludźmierz – the oldest village in Podhale. Poet Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer, was born here, songster of the highland and Podhale culture. In the House of the Podhale People's Association, you can see a theme-specific exhibit, whose main motif consists of a flame at a shepherd's shelter.

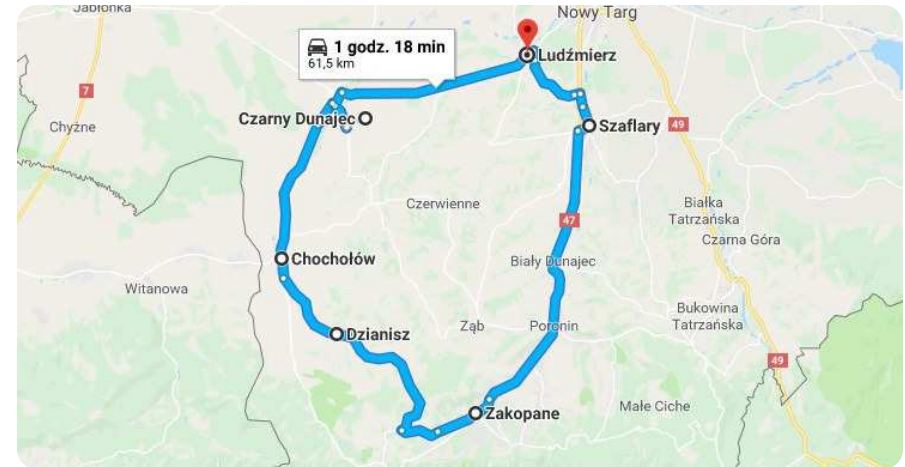
Szaflary – the name of this town is associated with the period of German colonisation. Most likely it originates from the following words: "Schafler" – barrel maker, "Schafflare" – sheep breeder or a misspelled word "Schaffner" – landlord, manager.

Zakopane – from the end of the 19th century, this town has been a centre that is visited (or resided) by popular people who are fascinated with the region of Podhale. The following people were associated with Zakopane: Władysław Orkan, Stanisław Witkiewicz, Jan Kasprowicz, Karol Szymanowski, Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz and more.

Dzianisz – the name of the village probably originates from the Wallachian combination of the words "dzea-nysz" (river in a valley). A magnificent view onto the Tatras, Czarny Dunajec, Nowotarska Basin and Slovakia can be admired from the Ostrysz Mountain.

Chochołów – village built almost entirely with original highlander cottages. A local tradition includes their washing from the outside with water and soap twice a year, for Easter and Corpus Christi.

Czarny Dunajec – Czarny Dunajec manor houses were an important element of the architecture here. They are brick houses with a porch supported on pillars. Currently, not many of them remain. You can still see many monumental wooden houses in traditional construction.



© maps.google.pl | Map data © 2018 Google



PODHALE: Shepherds' religious beliefs – Shepherdess of Podhale

Tourist attractions nearby

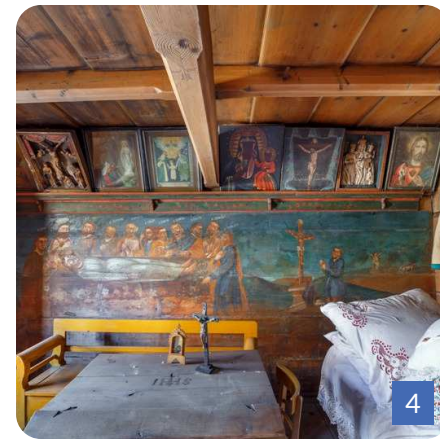
1. Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Ludźmierz - Sanctuary of Our Lady of Ludźmierz, also called the Shepherdess of Podhale. Its probable age is 600 years. The replica is located near the stream at the entry to the sanctuary. The stream is said to have miraculous properties.

2. Anna Dorula Cottage in Szaflary – a monumental cottage from 1843. One of the wooden walls features a painting by an unknown artist entitled “Falling asleep of Mary”. You can also see historic fittings of the cottage: household appliances, embroidered pillows, highlander garments and photos of ancestors.

3. Sacred Heart chapel in Zakopane - a small shrine in Jaszczurówka, designed by Stanisław Witkiewicz, creator of the Zakopane style. The main wooden altar looks like a highlander cottage. The chapel is located along the Trail of Wooden Architecture.

4. Wooden cottages in Chochółów - traditional Chochółów developments, which are a type of a living heritage park. A cottage with the front elevation made of wood of one fir tree is worth specific attention (Chochółów 24). The tree was cut down in the surroundings of Chochółów. Traditionally, the cottages are washed by their residents in spring, which aims at keeping the buildings clean, while the used mixture is also a great maintaining agent for the wooden logs.

5. Szymkówka Clearing in Brzegi – shepherd traditions on the Szymkówka Clearing date back to the 18th century. Also the Kiczora Niżna and Wyżnia were used for shepherding purposes. Head shepherds from Białka Tatrzańska, Brzegi and Groń also pastured their sheep on the above clearings. In 2014, three small wooden shelters were erected on the clearing that resembled the traditional buildings in which shepherds present on the mountain pasture resided.



Photos: 2. Head Shepherd Day, 3. Trailing of the Sheep in Male Ciche, 4. Anna Dorula Cottage, photos K. Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Head Shepherd Day, April Sanctuary of Our Lady of Ludźmierz
- International Folklore Festival, August, Zakopane Promotion Centre
- Meeting at Kopieniec, September, Podhale People's Association



GORCE: Secondary succession - when the forest returns

The landscape of the Beskid Mountains was shaped by many centuries of people's activity – shepherds coming from far away who have domesticated the wild highland space with their own manual work. Clearing and firing forests enabled to prepare new areas for sheep pastures. Shepherds' farming lasting several hundred years contributed to creating subalpine clearings where you can come across numerous rare plant species that occur in high mountains. As time passed, sheep were present in pastures less often and the forest started asking back for what belonged to it.

The process of degradation of subalpine clearings that are valuable in terms of nature and landscape, is called secondary succession. Wealthy meadows on which sheep and cattle are no longer grazed, die down. They are overgrown by expansive species of grass and shrubs, such as *nardus stricta* also known as matgrass, European blueberry or raspberry. The last stage of succession covers development of second-grown spruce trees that have appeared on the clearing in the last several dozen years, as it has not been used. Trees start to appear on unused meadows covering views on the mountains and valleys.

One of the more interesting plants that you can still come across on the Gorce clearings is the orchid - a plant that has adjusted well to entomophily in an evolutionary way. The special feature of an orchid is its bright colour that attracts butterflies and bees, as well as its seeds. They are some of the finest seeds in the world and if a seed coat is slightly too large, it enables them to be carried by wind easily. Orchid growth, from the seed to first blooming, still takes very long (3-6 years). Decaying of environments in which orchids have a chance of growing created a hazard of their extinction, hence all species of this type occurring in Poland are strictly protected.



Lubań, photo K. Bańkowski.



23,2 km
7:00 h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
nature

Knurowska Pass - Studzionki Tourist Station 2.9 km (1:00 h) - Pod Kotelnicą 1.7 km (0:30 h) - Runek 2.6 km (1:00 h) - Kudów Clearing 2.9 km (0:50 h) - Jaworzyny Ochootnickie 1.5 km (0:30 h) - Lubań tent base 1.9 km (0:40 h) - Krościenko 9.7 km (2:30 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, groups, families with children



GORCE: Secondary succession - when the forest returns

Trail

The walking trail leads through the entire Lubań range. From the Knurowska Pass, where the trail starts, to Krościenko where it ends, follow the red trail, also known as the Main Beskid Trail.

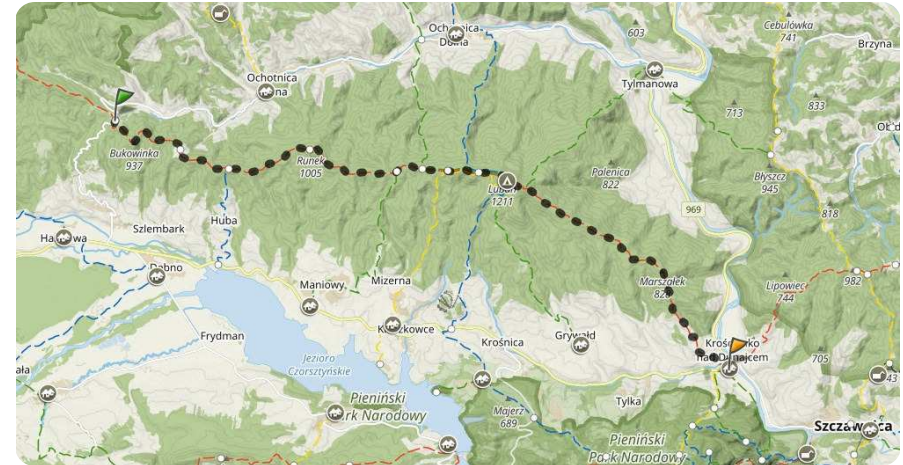
The Knurowska Road, which is one of the most beautiful view roads in Poland leads through the Knurowska Pass. From here, continue towards the east to reach Studzionki after approximately 1:00 h, in the Ochotnica Górna hamlet where a small private ethnographic chamber and tourist station operate. Further trail leads through the ridge. On your way, you will pass numerous clearings being the remains of former pastures. Most of them are gradually overgrown with trees today.

At a walking distance of approximately 3:30 h from Studzionki, climb the Lubań peak that is popular for its magnificent panorama views. A viewing tower erected in 2015, enables their convenient admiring. According to legends, Lubań is a cursed and magical place. This is where the local sorcerers held disputes between one another. Folk documents state that once one of the head shepherds and sorcerers uttered a terrible curse, the entire sheep herd along with shepherd assistants collapsed below ground. Sound of sheep bells can apparently be heard on Saint James Day (25 July).

From Lubań, go down towards the Lubań tent base open in the summer season. Then, continue towards Krościenko that you will reach after approximately 2:30 h of walking.

Viewing places

- Studzionki
- Kudów Clearing
- Viewing Tower in Lubań



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL



GORCE: Secondary succession - when the forest returns

Tourist attractions nearby

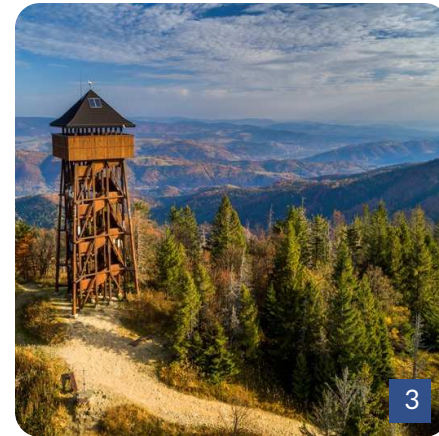
1. Heritage Park in Studzionki - a private ethnographic heritage park that is composed of a house-museum, a wooden highlander chapel and a smithy. The house features a collection of highlander items of daily use, originating mostly from the area of Ochotnica Górna. The Park can be visited with a consent of its owners. There are no specific business hours or guides.

2. Remains of stone shelters - some clearings on the Lubań massif feature remains of stone shepherd shelters (e.g. Piszczowa Clearing, Wyżna Czerteż Clearing). The peak clearing of Lubań as well as low-peak clearings were mowed and used by shepherds in the past. Oxen were also pastured on the clearing of Wierch Lubania.

3. Viewing Tower in Lubań - it was erected in 2015 within the scope of a project entitled "Enclave of Active Leisure". Access stairs and viewing terrace are fully enclosed, which enables people with a fear of heights to visit the tower. The tower is a great viewing point - you can admire the wide panorama of the Tatra and Beskid Mountains from Babia Góra, through Island Beskids to the Jaworzyna Krynicka range in Sądecki Beskids.

4. Pope Cross under the Lubań peak - founded by the members of the Wolski Family from Mizerna and Krośnica, and Priest Stanisław Wojcieszak from Ochotnica Dolna. It features a commemorative plate with the words of Pope John Paul II, who walked in the Beskid Mountains still as a priest. "I loved Gorce very much. I climbed Lubań many times".

5. Gorce National Park - covers central range of Gorce, i.e. the massifs of Turbacz and Gorec. It was created due to the necessity of protecting the beautiful landscape and natural values of the Gorce area. The Bulandy shrine on the Jaworzyna Kamienicka Clearing is the oldest monument of the Gorce National Park founded by Tomasz Chlipała, who was a popular shepherd in this region.



Photos: 2. Pope Cross under the Lubań peak, 3. Viewing Tower in Lubań, 4. Heritage Park in Studzionki, photos K. Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Weekend with the GNP, May, Gorce National Park
- Ochotnica Bonfire, August, Village Cultural Centre in Ochotnica Górna
- Autumn Trailing of the Sheep, September, Village Cultural Centre in Ochotnica Górna



SADECKI BESKIDS: Black sheep - how much is the wool?

Black sheep – different from the rest of the herd in a bad way. Usually, it also brings bad luck. It is best to keep at a safe distance from it. Just in case... And how were things in the past?

Before the war, some sheep in the valley of Poprad had a dark colour and a shepherd who owned white sheep was respected less by the local community. A black sheep was the reason for pride for each farm. Black wool was used by the residents of Piwniczna or Rytro to produce clothing and this is where their name, Black Highlanders, originates from. You could come across black sheep in the range of Jaworzyna Krynicka and the east part of Radziejowa range until the Lemkos were displaced from Beskid Sądecki. After Operation Vistula, the abandoned farms were resided by highlanders from Podhale and white sheep came along with them, which took over black sheep breeding.

Shepherds assure that the meat of black sheep tastes better than that of white sheep. This is not the only culinary speciality from this region. “Pyrógi Łomnicońskie” (Łomnica Pierogi) – traditional dumplings made of potatoes, flour, stuffed with sheep cheese or cheese curds. Legends about the size of the above pierogi became an element of the local folklore. The least probable anecdote states that once, when Poprad flooded Piwniczna, people took out the stuffing from pierogi and used the empty dumplings to float across the river.

An idea was created by the Poprad highlanders to reach back to the roots and restore black sheep grazing on local pastures. Nearly 50 sheep that joined three herds can be seen today in the area of Łomnica-Zdrój, Piwniczna-Zdrój and Wierchomla.



Łabowska Pasture, photo K. Bańkowski.



31,3 km
10:00 h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
ethnography

Piwniczna-Zdrój - Łomnica-Zdrój 4 km (1:30 h) - Łabowska Pasture PTTK Hostel 6 km (2:30 h) - Runek 7 km (2:10 h) - Nad Wierchomlą PTTK Hostel 2.2 km (0:35 h) - Wyżnie Młaki 2.8 (0:50 h) - Szczawnik 4.5 km (1:10 h) - Muszyna-Złockie 1.8 km (0:25 h) - Muszyna 3 km (0:45 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, groups, families with children



SĄDECKI BESKIDS: Black sheep - how much is the wool?

Trail

The walking trail joins three towns related to historical breeding of black sheep.

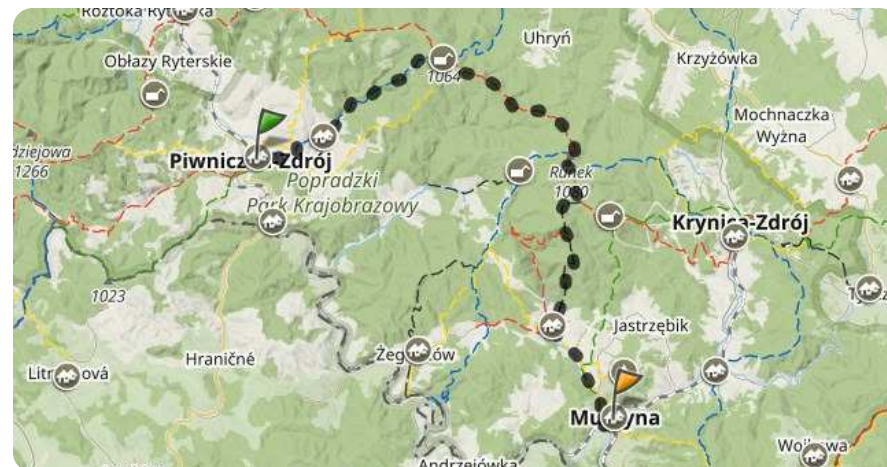
The walk starts at the Piwniczna-Zdrój railway station. Follow the blue trail towards the east, to the Łomniczanka valley and the town of Łomnica- Zdrój - the shepherding heart of Sądecki Beskids. Climb up towards the main ridge of the Jaworzyna Krynicka range, passing overgrown clearings and former shepherding shelters on the way. After approximately 4:00 h of walking, you will reach the Łabowska pasture – a clearing on which the residents of the Łabowa village grazed their sheep in the past. The pasture is a great viewing point towards the north and north-east - it presents a panorama onto the peaks of Low Beskids and the nearby peaks of Sądecki Beskids. Currently, a PTTK hostel operates here.

Follow the red trail from here, also called the Main Beskid Trail, towards Runek, where you will return to the blue trail after approximately 2:00 h of walking. Take the blue trail and you will reach the Nad Wierchomlą PTTK Shelter after approximately 0:30 h. It is a hostel housed in a rebuilt granary that was moved from Złockie. You can enjoy a magnificent panorama of the Tatra Mountains from here.

Continue along the blue trail to reach the yellow trail after approximately 1:00 h in the area of Wyżnie Młaki. It will lead you to Muszyna through Szczawnik and Złockie hamlet. At a certain point, this town was a Polish enclave among the numerous Russian and Lemko villages located nearby.

Viewing places

- Łabowska Pasture
- Jawor Peak
- Długie Młaki Clearing



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL



Tourist attractions nearby

1. Piwniczna Enthusiast Regional Museum - ethnographic collections present the daily lives of Black Highlanders: their garments, professions, tools, regional dialect and customs. Contact: +48 661 821 810. Open: Tuesday through Sunday. Prices: adults – PLN 5.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 3.00/person. You can visit it in organised groups with an appointment.

2. Łomniczanka waterfall and mineral springs – in the top part of Łomnica-Zdrój, a 3-metre high waterfall can be observed on the Łomniczanka stream. Mineral springs can be seen below the waterfall. Non-living nature objects such as rocks or springs have accompanied the shepherding culture for a long time. Today, you can see black wooden sheep at one of the springs, being a regional symbol.

3. Łabowska Pasture – the name originates from a Lemko village of Łabowa, which was used by the residents for sheep grazing. The clearing is located on the premises of the Poprad Landscape Park. Three natural reserves are located nearby: Łabowiec, Barnowiec and Lembarczek. As a result of ceasing shepherding activity, the pasture has been partially overgrown by forest. Currently, a PTTK hostel operates here.

4. Nad Wierchomlą Clearing - a clearing located on the ridge of Runek-Pusta Wielka. A PTTK hostel is located on the clearing. It is housed in a rebuilt granary that was moved from Złockie. You can enjoy a magnificent panorama of the Tatra Mountains from here. The town of Wierchomla Wielka was established according to the Wallachian law. Wallachian shepherds were its first residents, coming from the south.

5. Długie Młaki Clearing – a clearing located on the slopes of Runek. It remains from the time of Lemkos residing these areas and used for farming. After Operation Vistula, its use was continued by incoming Polish community, due to which the area was not covered by a forest, and hence became an outstanding viewing point.



Photos: 2 Poprad river, 3. Piwniczna Enthusiast Regional Museum, 4. Wool, photos K. Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Poprad Bonfires, June, Local and Municipal Cultural Centre in Piwniczna-Zdrój
- Mountain Children Day, July, SOKÓŁ Małopolskie Cultural Centre
- Pannonica Folk Festival, August, Stary Sącz Cultural Foundation



TATRAS: Cultural grazing - shepherding in the past and today

Shepherding throughout centuries has become an integral part of the Podhale residents' life. Its biggest growth on the Polish side of Tatras took place after World War II. Estimates show that as many as 30 thousand sheep were grazed on pastures at that time. This was not without an impact on the nature in the Tatras.

Changes that were not easy to restore affected mainly the layer of forests and mountain pine where coniferous trees and shrubs were burnt and cut to expand grazing areas. Only after the Tatra National Park was created in 1955, was the number of grazing sheep limited until their complete elimination. Unused clearings started to overgrow gradually - as time passed, it turned out that this process has a huge impact on changes in the natural environment.

Sheep returned to the Tatra pastures and clearings only after 1981 in the form of the so-called cultural grazing. Today, it is a form of protecting the mountain landscape as well as an exceptional method for handing over and retaining shepherding traditions, which are so important for this region. During cultural grazing everything takes place as it did in the past. The shepherding customs and traditions are retained, the shepherds talk in a dialect and wear traditional clothing. Only local mountain sheep are grazed on Tatra clearings and they are watched over by Polish Tatra Sheepdogs.

Sheep's milk is used to make products such as bundz and bryndza cheeses as well as popular nationwide salty smoked oscypek cheese. A side product that may also be tasted in a traditional shepherd shelter is Żentyca - a drink made of sheep milk whey. The recipe for producing sheep cheeses has not changed for ages.

Cultural grazing of sheep in the Tatra National Park currently takes place on 30 clearings.



Chochołowska Clearing, photo K. Bańkowski.



9,8 km
3:40 h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
ethnography

Kiry - Wyżnia Kira Miętusia 1.7 km (0:25 h) - Niżnia Kominiarska Clearing 1.6 km (0:40 h) - Chochołowska Clearing 6.1 km (2:25 h) - PTTK Hostel on Chochołowska Clearing 0.4 km (0:10 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, groups, families with children



TATRAS: Cultural grazing - shepherding in the past and today

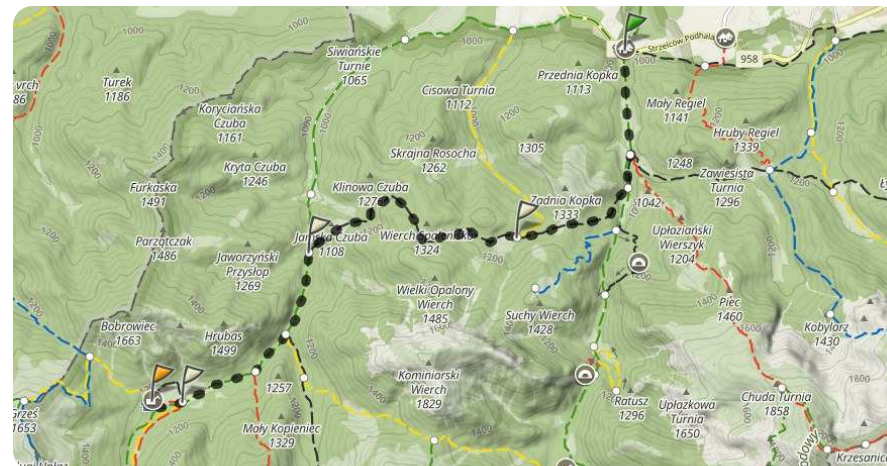
Trail

The walking trail leads through two very attractive Tatra valleys - the Kościeliska and Chochołowska Valleys. The Tatra National Park conducts cultural grazing of sheep on clearings located in the valleys so that it is possible to look at traditional work of shepherds from up close.

The walk starts in Kiry, whose name originates from a dialect description of a road, path or river turn: In Polish: 'kira' or 'kiera'. From here, take the green trail towards the Kościeliska Valley to reach Wyżnia Kira Miętusa after approximately 0:25 h. This is a large flat clearing surrounded by lower subalpine spruce forest. Here, take the black trail called the "Subalpine Path", which leads to the Chochołowska Valley.

After approximately 0:40 h, you will reach Niżnia Polana Kominiarska Clearing where you can see one of rare species of plants in Carpathians, namely the gagea minima registered on the red list of plants and mushrooms of Poland that have a risk of being extinct.

Continue along the black trail until it crosses the green trail in the area of Dudowa Valley. After approximately 1:00 h, you will reach the Chochołowska Clearing - the biggest clearing in the Polish Tatras and one of the biggest clearings in the entire Tatra range. The clearing is popular for the mass crocus flowers blooming at the beginning of spring, which attracts attention of many tourists. PTTK hostel is located nearby.



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL



Tourist attractions nearby

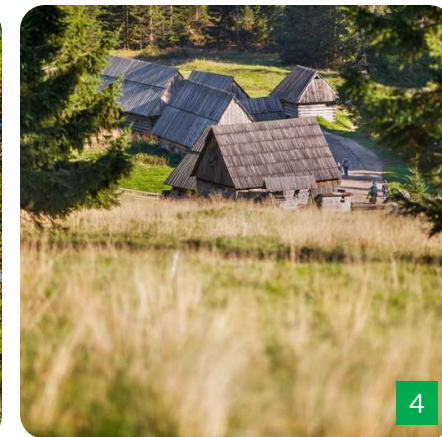
1. Wyżnia Kira Miętusia – a subalpine clearing in the Kościeliska Valley, located at its mouth, above the Kira hamlet. Several dozen years ago a row of approximately 10 shepherd buildings could be seen here and the clearing itself was used intensively. After the clearing was included in the Tatra National Park, grazing and mowing was ceased and the clearing started to be overgrown. Currently, cultural grazing of sheep is conducted here.

2. Niżnia Kominiarska Clearing – a subalpine clearing located below the northern slope of Kominiarski Wierch, in the top part of Lejowa Valley. Numerous shelters were located here in the past, which started to decay after regular grazing was ceased. The top, steeper parts of the clearing have been covered by forest. Currently, cultural grazing of sheep is conducted here.

3. Chochołowska Clearing – a clearing in the Chochołowska Valley, the biggest clearing in the Polish Tatras and one of the biggest clearings in the entire Tatra range. It was one of the main shepherding centres in the past. It was mowed regularly. Sheep and cattle were grazed here. In 1930, 60 various buildings were located here, such as shelters, sheds and barns with straw. PTTK hostel is located nearby. Currently, cultural grazing of sheep is conducted here.

4. Sabała Cottage in Zakopane - a traditional wooden house, commonly known as Sabałówka. It was a house of the family of Jan Krzeptowski Sabała, a Polish highlander, honorary Tatra guide, musician and hunter who was popular for his stories and songs. The Sabała Cottage is the oldest house in Zakopane. Contact: +48 601 412 221. Open: Monday through Saturday Prices: adults – PLN 7.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 5.00/person.

5. Tatra Museum Headquarters in Zakopane - one of the most popular regional museums in Poland. The museum gathers rocks and minerals, floral elements, art and literature. An interesting ethnographic exhibit is also available including clothing, decorative art and sculpture typical for the region of Podhale, Spisz and Orawa. Tatra highlander shepherding equipment is also worth noting - this is the biggest collection of this type of artefacts. Contact: +48 18 201 52 05. Open: Monday through Sunday Prices: adults – PLN 7.00/person, children and school youth – PLN 5.50/person.



Photos: 2 Sabała Cottage in Zakopane, 3. Tatra Museum Headquarters in Zakopane, 4. Chochołowska Clearing, photos K. Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Head Shepherd Day in Tarasówka, April, Communal Cultural Centre in Poronin & Podhale People's Association & Małe Ciche Village Management
- Sabałowe Bajania, August, Bukowina Cultural Centre
- Meeting at Kopieniec, September, Podhale People's Association



SADECKI BESKIDS: Take a seat and admire - rest on a viewing clearing

The viewing clearings along the Beskid peaks or hidden among forests, are evidence of presence of the Wallachians that you can admire to this day. They are a proof of domesticating the Carpathian forests and determination of people who came from far away along with their herds to find new space for living.

They established their homes here after clearing thick forests. Gradual resigning from nomadic lifestyle while developing the shepherding activity, started a phenomenon called transhumance - seasonal moving of herds from mountain summer pastures to winter pastures located in valleys.

Mountain pastures are great viewing points where you can admire everything in the surrounding, often in 360° panorama views. This perspective enables to see the river valleys along which human settlements were established centuries ago. The clearings also enable to see the surrounding peaks with names originating from the Wallachian language. The shepherding shelters are an interesting exhibit on the mountain slopes. They are an example of traditional wooden architecture.

Despite the fact that the traces of Wallachians who arrived to Poland at the turn of the 14th century have already vanished, their presence in the southern part of Poland is still noticeable. This is evidenced in traditional sheep grazing, cultivated by the today's head shepherds, holidays that relate to shepherding customs as well as availability of sheep's milk products, which are manufactured according to recipes that were not changed for hundreds of years. Also museum exhibits present the cultural heritage of the Wallachians in the Malopolska Region that provide an insight into the lives of highlanders in the past.

It is worth following the past trails of Wallachians and discovering their secrets along the way.



12,8 km
4:25h



difficulty
level



walking
trail



theme:
nature

Rytro - Kordowiec Hostel 4.1 km (1:45 h) - Niemcowa 2.6 km (1:05 h) - Piwniczna-Zdrój 6.1 km (1:35 h)

Trail recommended for: individual tourists, groups, families with children



Trail

The walking trail leads through the eastern part of the Radziejowa range and through viewing clearings located in its surroundings.

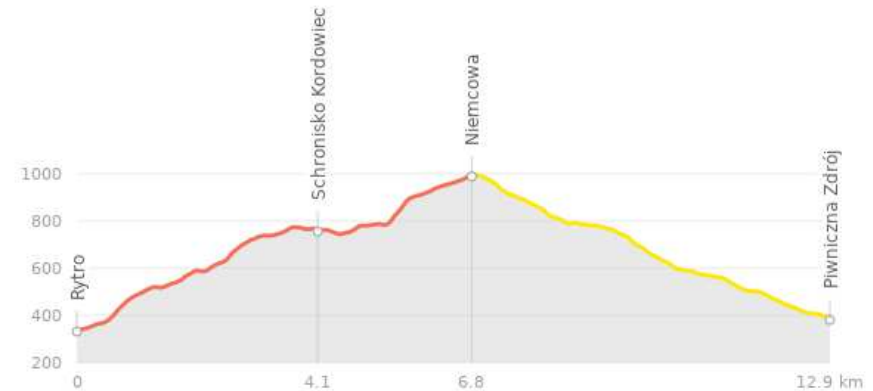
The walk starts in Rytro, a town located by the Poprad River. Follow the red trail, known as the Main Beskid Trail towards the west. The trail is uncovered and very picturesque along a bigger section. It presents magnificent views onto the river in the valley and the Jaworzyna Krynicka range located on the other side. Ruins of the Rytro castle are easily visible.

After approximately 1:45 h, you will reach the Kordowiec peak. One of the clearings features a building of a former school which is opened as a hostel called “Szkoła pod obłokami” (Polish for: School under the clouds). The name of the facility refers to the title of the book written by Maria Kownacka, about a similar school located by Niemcowa, whose ruins can be seen further along the trail. You will come across a thatched hut of Ludwika Nowakowska on your way. She was called the shepherdess of Beskid space by the local residents. You will also pass several viewing clearings. In the summer season you may see grazing sheep on them.

After approximately 1:00 h of walking, you will access clearings that expand towards the Niemcowa peak. Above, there is an expansive pasture of Kramarka and crossing of trails under the Trześniowy Groń. The “Chatka pod Niemcową”, a seasonal hostel, is located nearby. Follow the yellow trail that will take you down to the Poprad valley. After approximately 1:35 h, you will reach Piwniczna-Zdrój.

Viewing places

- Clearing on Kordowiec
- Poczekaj Clearing
- Niemcowa Clearing



© mapa-turystyczna.pl | Map data © OpenStreetMap, ODbL



Tourist attractions nearby

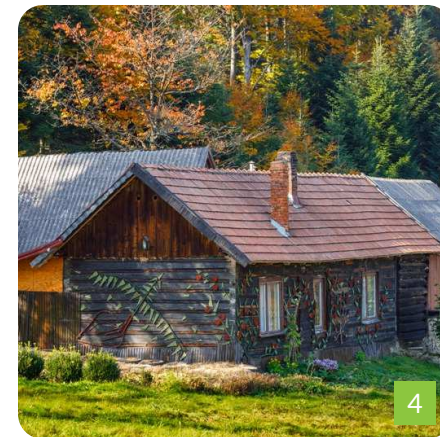
1. Clearing on Kordowiec – a large clearing on the slopes of Kordowiec. A farm and a building of a former school are located here, which currently operates as a seasonal hostel, called “Chata Kordowiec”. An expansive view onto the Poprad valley, Island Beskids and the nearby Jaworzyna Krynicka range can be seen from the northern slopes. The clearing on Kordowiec was mowed until recently. It is no longer in use.

2. Poczekaj Clearing – a clearing located between Kordowiec and Niemcowa. It takes up the ridge of eastern slopes that fall into the Młodowski stream valley. In the past, this area featured farms. A horse barn and a wooden thatched hut of Ludwika Nowakowska, called the shepherdess of Beskid space by the local residents, remained to this day. Due to lack of profitability, farming and mowing on the clearing were ceased. This creates a risk that it will be covered by a forest.

3. Niemcowa Clearing – an expansive ridge clearing. Five smaller clearings are located within its borders from top to bottom. In the past, there were many farms on Niemcowa, whose residents made a living from crops, shepherding and collecting items. Currently, a large part of the clearing is covered by a forest. In the top part, under the forest, a School on Niemcowa operated in the past. Currently, there is a monument next to its ruins.

4. Trześniowy Groń – a clearing and mountain peak. Its name originates from a folk name for cherry trees that often grow in the mountains in regions of human settlements. ‘Groń’ originates from the Wallachian language and it means a mount, peak or dome-shaped hill. In the past, the clearing was used for farming purposes. Currently, a seasonal hostel, called Chatka pod Niemcową, operates in two buildings of a former farm.

5. Shepherd Exhibit of “Folk Instruments in Carpathians” in Piwniczna – an exhibit dedicated to folk instruments popular in the Carpathian region, with special focus on instruments used by shepherds. The exhibit features models, photographs, mock-ups and exhibits of the most popular instruments in Carpathians. The exhibit also includes boards with information about the Wallachian culture and subjects relating to it.



Photos: 2. Niemcowa, 3. Chatka pod Niemcową, 4. Chata Kordowiec, photos K. Bańkowski.

Tourist and cultural events in the area

- Poprad Bonfires, June, Local and Municipal Cultural Centre in Piwniczna-Zdrój
- Mountain Children Day, July, SOKÓŁ Małopolskie Cultural Centre
- Pannonica Folk Festival, August, Stary Sącz Cultural Foundation