



The Lira Ensemble

Performing Arts of Poland and America
Lucyna Migala, Co-Founder, Artistic Director and General Manager

The Lira Singers
Lira Chamber Chorus
Lira Chamber Ensembles
The Lira Symphony
Mina Zikri, Resident Conductor
The Lira Dancers
Iwona Puc, Choreographer

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Chair

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November 27, 2019

Dear Friend of the Lira Ensemble:

In the name of the Board of Directors of the Lira Ensemble, I invite you to come along on Lira's 2020 **15-day Tour of Southern Poland** and our **14-day Tour of Northern Poland**, or take both tours, with a short rest in between. This year, Lira is also offering a separate, optional **Tour of Lithuania following the Northern Tour**. If you choose to take two or three tours, you save significantly. Details of the tours are enclosed.

As you may know, the Lira Ensemble is the only professional performing arts company in the US specializing in Polish music, song, and dance. We are a symphony orchestra, singers and dancers, and are artist-in-residence at Loyola University Chicago. Lira is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to bring the best of Polish culture into American life. Since 1993, Lira has organized tremendously enjoyable, very personal tours of Poland. I am a second-generation tour director, trained by my parents, who were very successful travel agents specializing in Poland.

This is a great time to visit Poland, because prices are very good. The cost of everything has gone up in Poland as the country works to catch up with Western Europe, but because of the strength of the US dollar, tour prices are about the same as last year. And those prices were actually lower than the year before. At any price, Lira tours are a great value because they include most meals, entrance fees to concerts and other cultural events, private performances only for Lira tour members, plus lots more, including some lovely surprises. So, this year is the perfect time to see Poland, especially since the US State Department has repeatedly reported that Poland is one of the safest travel destinations on earth.

Lira tours stress personal service, fun, the arts, both folk and high culture, architecture and history. We are experts on Poland, so while we show you all the usual attractions, we also go to places unavailable to most tourists. Our trips are like a group of friends visiting Poland, because they attract interesting, like-minded people whose company I am certain you will enjoy. Ours is an exclusive tour; you will not be "bundled" with other groups; these excursions are only for Lira supporters, audience members, their families and friends. You do not need be Polish to join us - everything is in English.

I go along in order to provide cultural and historical context. I lead discussions about Poland. I teach you some Polish history, a bit of the Polish language, and a few Polish songs. We introduce you to all kinds of delicious Polish cuisine, in addition to the old favorites you may have loved since you were a child. And we have lots of fun.

These are first class tours, organized by the best travel company in Poland, with a state-of-the-art tour bus and the finest hotels. Our price includes hotels, all transportation in Poland and three meals a day, except a few meals on your own. We make certain you get many chances to choose your own menu and Lira can accommodate most dietary restrictions. Just ask us. **YOUR AIRFARE IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE**, so you can choose to fly any airline, but we recommend LOT Polish Airlines which flies Dreamliner jets to and from Chicago. You can use your United Miles on LOT or fly into Warsaw from another city in Europe.

Lira does not print fancy, full-color tour brochures and our advertising is mostly word-of-mouth. We use all your money showing you a great time - whatever is left supports our artistic mission. After the tour, when all bills are paid, we will provide you a tax deduction letter - usually about 8% of the tour price.

I lead these tours as a volunteer, because I love showing you the new, beautiful Poland. I hope you can come along this year.

Sincerely,

Lucyna Migala, Artistic Director/General Manager - and Tour Director



The Lira Ensemble

Artist-in-Residence at Loyola University Chicago
renowned for its excellent performances of Polish music, song & dance
and its first-class cultural tours of Poland

THE LIRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

invites you to be part of its

2020 TOUR OF CENTRAL & SOUTHERN POLAND

THURSDAY, JUNE 25th – THURSDAY, July 9

featuring music, dance, art, architecture, history, great cuisine and lots of fun
personally escorted by **LUCYNA MIGALA**

Artistic Director/General Manager of the Lira Ensemble & an experienced Tour Director

Lira will show you the Poland of your dreams during this 15-day tour of
WARSAW – KRAKOW – CZESTOCHOWA – JOHN PAUL II's BIRTHPLACE
ZAKOPANE – CHOPIN'S BIRTHPLACE – WROCLAW – AND MORE

The Southern Tour begins with a get-acquainted evening in Chicago
on Wednesday, June 24th with an authentic Polish dinner.

The tour price DOES NOT INCLUDE YOUR AIRFARE

You may choose to fly to Poland as you wish – and perhaps use your United Miles
Lira recommends that you fly non-stop to & from Warsaw
on LOT Polish Airlines Boeing Dreamliner jets.

Whatever you choose, Lira will purchase your airline tickets.
We travel in Poland on an ultra-modern, air-conditioned motor coach
with an emergency bathroom on board.

THIS TOUR INCLUDES:

FIRST CLASS HOTELS - ALL TOURS & TRANSPORTATION IN POLAND
ADMISSIONS TO CONCERTS & OTHER PERFORMANCES

ALL BAGGAGE HANDLING - MOST TIPS - THREE MEALS A DAY

EXCEPT FOR FOUR LUNCHESES & FIVE DINNERS ON YOUR OWN. AS INDICATED BELOW
SOFT DRINKS AT MEALS ARE INCLUDED – SOME ALCOHOLIC DRINKS ARE INCLUDED.

Thursday
June 25

We depart from O'Hare Airport on a LOT Airlines Boeing Dreamliner or any other flight you may choose. Just be sure to join the tour in Warsaw on Friday morning, June 26th. If you take LOT, you'll enjoy dinner over the Atlantic. All meals/refreshments onboard, including wine and beer (should you want them), are covered in your tour price. Other alcohol is also available at reasonable prices. We nap/sleep or watch a movie or two on your onboard private computer, then have breakfast over Europe. The Dreamliner has lots of electronic "toys" and services, so you may not want to nap. We land at Chopin Airport in Warsaw, Poland's heroic capital city, on Friday morning.

Friday
June 26

We arrive in Warsaw in the morning and immediately see the magnificent, restored Royal Castle (because it closes to groups late Friday afternoon). Experts have told us that you will have little or no jet lag if you do not go to sleep upon arrival in Europe, instead spend the day touring and sleep Friday night. We know it works! Plus, you will probably be too excited to sleep. Next, we visit Warsaw's historic Old Town and New Town Market. We enjoy a light lunch in one of Warsaw's fine restaurants. We see a short documentary film about the tragic plight of Warsaw during World War II. Then we stop at the Sofitel Victoria Hotel to freshen up for our evening. Our welcoming dinner is at one of Warsaw's gourmet restaurants. Then we overnight at our hotel. (For those who have visited Warsaw before, Lira offers an alternate itinerary.)

Saturday
June 27

We enjoy a breakfast buffet at our hotel, with a large choice of Polish, Continental, and American dishes. After breakfast, we tour Warsaw, including the Royal Route with its many palaces (now often embassies), churches and monuments and see more of the capital city. We visit Wilanow Palace, the summer residence of King Jan III Sobieski, one of Poland's greatest heroes. Lunch is at another of Warsaw's excellent restaurants. After lunch, we tour the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw's newest and highly praised museum. Next, you will have time to freshen up for dinner at one of Warsaw's premier restaurants. Then we enjoy a private concert of Chopin music at a historic venue in Warsaw; then back to our hotel. If you're not too tired, we recommend a short stroll from the hotel to see a bit of Warsaw night life on Old Town Square.

Sunday
June 28

We attend Mass (if you like) at Holy Cross Church where Chopin's heart is buried, then enjoy breakfast at the hotel before our drive into the countryside to visit Zelazowa Wola, the birthplace of Frederic Chopin. Lunch is at a darling country restaurant. Then, we drive to Lowicz, the Mazovian region known for its colorful paper cutouts and excellent embroidery. We enjoy a folk art presentation and entertainment at the unusual, artistic home of Kasia and Wojtek Gronecki. We tour the ruins of the ancient castle they are restoring. They serve us a homemade, mostly home-grown, dinner in their charming cottage. We drive back to our hotel for the night.

Monday
June 29

Breakfast is at the hotel, then we drive southwest to the city of Lodz, Poland's second largest city, once an important industrial center and the home of three cultures: Polish-Catholic, Polish-Jewish and German. We do a short tour of Lodz (pronounced "WOULD-GE") to see how Poland is recovering from communism. Lunch will feature local specialties, then on to the city of Wroclaw (pronounced VROH-ts-wahf), the capital of Lower Silesia. We tour Wroclaw's charming Town Square. We have a group dinner reservation at one of the best spots in town, the Cesarsko-Krolewska Restaurant, ***where you have your first chance to make your own menu choices and pay individually in cash or by credit card.*** We will help with menu explanations. Then we overnight at the new AC Hotel by Marriot.

Tuesday
June 30

Our breakfast at the hotel is also a buffet, which is customary in Poland. Then we tour the city of Wroclaw with its Gothic architecture and Silesian style – different than in other part of Poland. We visit the unbelievable Aula Leopoldina at the University of Wroclaw, decorated in the ultimate Baroque Rococo style. We see the Raclawicka Panorama, the 360-degree painting of the Battle of Raclawice at which Tadeusz Kosciuszko led Polish troops against the Russians – and won the battle. Lunch is at the Malarska Restaurant, with lots of atmosphere, followed by free time for shopping, strolling or resting. ***Dinner is on your own at the restaurant of your choice***, and there are many choices in charming Wroclaw. You return to the hotel after a lovely evening.

Wednesday
July 1

After breakfast at the hotel, we head southeast into the mountains. We stop at the Adoria Vineyard to sample some Polish wine. Vineyards did not exist in Poland before recent climate change in Europe. We stop at the town of Swidnica to see an UNESCO Site, the Church of Peace – one the biggest timber-framed sacred buildings in Europe - with very unusual architecture. Lunch is at the charming Piwnica Ratuszowa in Swidnica, with lots of great ambiance. We continue our drive south through the gorgeous scenery of the foothills and the beautiful Tatra Mountains, part of the Carpathian chain. We stop in the town of Nowy Targ for dinner. We arrive at Zakopane and check into the refurbished Mercure Kasprowy Hotel.

Thursday
July 2

Breakfast is at our hotel, then we tour Zakopane with its distinctive architectural style of intricate wood carvings. Zakopane is Poland's most popular ski resort town, so we go up into the High Tatras in a cable car to see the picturesque panorama of the mountains. ***Lunch is on your own today*** and there is time for resting or shopping in the afternoon. There is much to buy here, especially unique mountaineer folk artifacts. Later, we visit the Orski Gallery of works by Polish-American artist Ryszard Orski. Our hearty dinner is at a Highlanders' inn with mountaineer decor and folk entertainment. We overnight at the Kasprowy.

Friday
July 3

After a good rest in the clean mountain air, we breakfast at the hotel. We drive to a national park for a restful - totally not dangerous - raft ride down the Dunajec River Gorge at the very southern border of Poland. Slovakia is on the other side of the river and we actually enter Slovakian territory - a second country at no extra charge! We enjoy Polish country dishes for lunch at a local inn, then head for Krakow, the beloved capital of southern Poland. We check into the elegant Holiday Inn, which is walking distance from Old Town Square. Since we have had a long bus ride, our superb dinner is at our hotel.

Saturday
July 4

Breakfast is at the hotel, then we tour scenic Krakow, the capital of Malopolska (Little Poland - the heartland). Conde Nast Traveler Magazine calls it "the most European of all cities." We see Wawel Castle and Cathedral, St. Mary's Church, Old Town Square, the Sukiennice (an historic shopping mall) and much more. ***Lunch is on your own***, followed by lots of free time for shopping or anything you want to do. Krakow **is** the best city to shop in. Our special Fourth of July dinner is at the famous Wierzynek Restaurant – probably the oldest in the world, and a famous Krakow tradition. Be sure to spend some time in the Old Town Square after dinner. It is fun on a Saturday night. Then we overnight at the Holiday Inn.

Sunday
July 5

Breakfast at the hotel, then we drive to Wadowice, the birthplace of Pope John Paul the Great during this 100th anniversary year of his birth, and tour the excellent new museum dedicated to his life and accomplishments. We attend Mass (if you like) at the old parish church where St John Paul II was baptized and served as an altar boy. After a country lunch, we drive to Auschwitz-Birkenau, the Nazi German concentration camp - an unforgettable experience. It is an extremely tragic, but important part of Polish history. Back in Krakow, we drive through the city's former Jewish district, Kazimierz, with several interesting Jewish restaurants featuring terrific klezmer music. Since **dinner is on your own**, we can make a reservation for you in Kazimierz or elsewhere in Krakow. We overnight at the Holiday Inn.

Monday
July 6

We rise early for breakfast at the hotel before our drive west to Czestochowa, the spiritual capital of Poland. We see the miraculous, historic painting of Our Lady and tour the monastery on the Mount of Light. We will have the opportunity to request Masses for your loved ones to be celebrated at the foot of the painting, and a chance to buy religious souvenirs at Czestochowa. We lunch at the enchanting small palace in Czarny Las. We drive back to Krakow to Lagiewniki, the new Sanctuary of Divine Mercy, founded by one of Poland's newest saints, Sister Faustina. We see the new St. John Paul II Center. **Dinner is on your own** before overnighing at our hotel.

Tuesday
July 7

After breakfast at our hotel, we visit the Sukiennice Gallery of spectacular, 19th century Polish art. Next, we see Krakow's newest attraction - the Underground Route under Old Town Square - a great way to learn about the history of this fantastic city. **The rest of the day and evening - including lunch and dinner - are on your own**, since you may want to do more shopping or make your own plans - perhaps to visit your ancestral home. We can recommend many great restaurants - or how about eating under an umbrella in Old Town Square. The food is very good and it's not expensive. What's more, it is the Krakow thing to do. Don't be afraid of the street food and the street vendors; they are perfectly safe. Again, not expensive and yummy. We also have the option of getting a reservation for as many as want to come at the exclusive Wentzel Restaruant for a quiet and elegant dining experience, and each pay our own bill. We overnight at the Holiday Inn.

Wednesday
July 8

Since you have been very good travelers and very busy, we offer you all the morning off. You can sleep in and have a leisurely late breakfast, do some final shopping, or start packing, or do anything else that makes you happy. **Lunch is on your own**, but remember, you have a big dinner coming. We get together in the afternoon to visit the famous church in suburban Nowa Huta that launched St. John Paul II's career. In the early evening, we tour the remarkable Wieliczka Salt Mine - which has to be seen to be believed. Our elegant farewell dinner is in one of the salt chambers - a very unusual, enjoyable experience. We enjoy Cracovian folk song and dance and then return to the Holiday Inn.

Thursday
July 9

Do have a big breakfast, because this will be one of the longest days of your life, due to our trans-Atlantic flight. If you fly with the group, we must be at Krakow's John Paul II Airport early for our flight to Warsaw, where we catch our flight to Chicago. Since your bags have been checked through to Chicago, your hands are fairly free. If there is time, try to do a bit of duty-free airport shopping at Krakow or Warsaw Airport. On our flight home, lunch and a small snack will be served on board. Again, beer and wine are complimentary, as are soft drinks, coffee and tea. Our flight will take about 10 hours, but when we arrive in Chicago, it will be Thursday afternoon.

PLEASE NOTE: The tour itinerary is subject to change. And there will be some surprises!

2020 TOUR OF SOUTHERN & CENTRAL POLAND

Tour prices and important notes

- **\$4,679.00** base charge per person, double occupancy, departing from Chicago. This is for a group of 15. If fewer than fifteen people sign up for this tour, the price will be about \$600.00 more.
 - **\$900.00** single room supplement
 - We will purchase your airline ticket if you like, but not before we have a group of 15. The sooner we have 15, the better, because airfares are higher closer to the departure date.
 - **Register for this tour as soon as possible; you will save considerably on your airfare.**
 - The first deposit of **\$2,000.00** is due as soon as possible upon registration
 - A second payment of **\$2,000.00** on April 1, 2020.
 - **The balance is due on May 1, 2020.**
 - Tour payments must be made by check only. Sorry, no credit cards.
-
- We can arrange for LOT Airline departures from the New York (JFK), or from Miami, as well as Chicago. **You may also upgrade** your seat from Economy Class to Premium Economy or Business Class (the LOT equivalent of First Class). **If we have 15 people registered soon, the current Premium Economy fare is very reasonable and we recommend it – for comfort and special service in the air.**
 - Lira prices are closely tied to value of the dollar abroad; if the dollar falls steeply, there may be an additional charge.
 - A portion of the tour price is deductible from your federal taxes. A tax receipt will be issued after the tour, after all bills are paid.
 - U.S. and Canadian citizens need only a valid passport to visit Poland; no visa is required. **If you do not have a valid passport, please apply for one as soon as possible** - the closer to summer, the longer the lines at the passport office and the longer it takes to get your passport.
 - **IMPORANT: Your passport expiration date must be at least six months after your return to the United States.**

*You can arrive in Poland before the tour, and/or remain in Poland after the tour. Lira can help arrange **HOTELS, TRANSPORTATION and TOURS** for your extended stay. If you want to find your family, your ancestral city, town or village in Poland, Lira can suggest a trusted specialist in Poland with excellent English.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 773-508-7040 - OUTSIDE OF ILLINOIS, CALL 1-800-547-LIRA

Ask us about taking both the Southern and Northern Tours this year!

Taking both tours in one year is a great saving.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

HOTELS: Twin-bedded or double-bedded rooms with bath or shower in first class or deluxe hotels. A limited number of single rooms are available at the supplementary charge. Hotels are subject to change.

TIPS & TAXES: Service charges, as imposed by hotels and taxes by local administrations and government authorities on accommodations, meals, and transportation, are included. Tips to local guides and baggage handlers at the airport and at hotels are included. It is customary for tour members to tip the tour guide ("pilot") and bus driver who travel with the tour, on the last day of the tour. These tips are not included.

SIGHTSEEING & TRANSFERS: Sightseeing is as specified in the itinerary, including entrance fees, and subject to change. Transfer upon arrival and departure overseas by motor coach between airport and hotel and vice versa if traveling with the tour group.

RESERVATIONS & PAYMENT: A deposit of \$2,000.00 per person is required at the time of booking. A second installment of \$2,000.00 is due April 1, 2020 and the balance is due on May 1, 2020. ***Reservations and payments are accepted with personal or bank checks only. Sorry, credit cards are not accepted for tour deposits or payments.***

TRIP CANCELLATION, BAGGAGE AND MEDICAL INSURANCE: It is advisable to purchase insurance coverage for cancellation or emergency evacuation due to illness or accident. Applications for suggested insurance as well as baggage and travel insurance will be provided once tour deposits are received.

CANCELLATION AND REFUNDS: Cancellations must be in writing. Cancellation charges will apply: *Within 90 days prior to departure - 30% of the cost; within 60 days prior to departure - 50% of the cost; within 30 days prior to departure - no refunds.*

YOUR RATE DOES NOT INCLUDE: Passport fees, taxes or tips on services not included in the itinerary; laundry or valet service; excess baggage charges; insurance of any kind; wines, beers, liquors or any food or beverages not on regular menus of included meals.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS: A valid passport is required for all U.S. and Canadian citizens traveling to Poland. ***Your passport expiration date must be at least six months after your return date to the US.***

RESPONSIBILITY: The Lira Ensemble acts only as an agent for the hotels, airlines, bus companies or owners, operators or contractors providing accommodations, transportation, meals, tours, or other services. All vouchers, coupons, contracts and tickets issued are subject to any and all tariffs, terms and conditions under which the foregoing or any services whatsoever are provided by such hotels, airlines, bus companies or owners, operators or contractors. By the acceptance of the above, the tour member agrees to the foregoing and also agrees that the Lira Ensemble shall not be or become liable or responsible for any loss, injury or damage to person, property or otherwise in connection with any transportation, accommodation, meals, tour or other services referred to herein, or resulting from neglect or default of any person, corporation or other entity engaged to supply the same. The tour operator reserves the right to make changes in the itinerary, whenever, in their sole judgment, conditions warrant; or if they deem it necessary for the comfort, convenience or safety of the passengers. They can accept no responsibility for losses of additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine or other causes. All such losses must be borne by the passenger as tour rate provides for arrangement only for the specified. All alterations may be made without penalty to the tour operator. The airline concerned is not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not aboard their planes or conveyance. The passenger contract in use by the airline concerned, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and purchaser of this tour and/or passage.

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**THE LIRA ENSEMBLE 2020 TOUR
OF SOUTHERN & CENTRAL POLAND
TOUR REGISTRATION FORM
June 25 – July 9, 2020**

Please use a separate form for each individual joining the tour. Each individual must sign personally.
Please print or type. This form may be duplicated.

NAME (*exactly as it appears on your passport*) _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME TELEPHONE _____ CELL PHONE _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Please send all future tour information by e-mail _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ CITIZENSHIP _____

PASSPORT NUMBER _____ PASSPORT EXPIRATION DATE _____

I PLAN TO DEPART ON LOT AIRLINES FROM: CHICAGO _____ NEW YORK (JFK) _____

NEWARK _____ MIAMI _____ OTHER _____

If you are not flying from Chicago, please contact us so that we can coordinate your transportation.

Would you like a single room throughout the tour? (Extra cost of \$900.00) _____

If not, with whom are you sharing a room? _____

Do you want us to find a roommate for you? _____ Do you smoke? _____

If you are traveling with your spouse, do you prefer twin beds? _____ Or a double bed? _____

Will you return with the tour on July 9? _____ If not, what is your return date? _____

Would you like us to book hotels or arrange travel or tours for you in Poland after the tour? _____

Would you like us to contact an expert to do research for you in Poland, for a fee? _____

How did you learn about the Lira Tour? _____

DISCLAIMER: By making application for the above captioned trip sponsored by the Lira Ensemble, I hereby acknowledge that the Lira Ensemble (including its directors, officers, volunteers and employees) have no connection or responsibility with regard to the transportation or other facilities offered by the tour operator and airline making arrangements for the trip, and that the Lira Ensemble is not contracting parties with regard to any of the arrangements made or to be made. I understand that by signing this document I have contracted directly with the tour operator (Mazurkas Travel of Warsaw) and LOT Polish Airlines or other airline concerned and that contractual responsibilities, if any, are directly between Mazurkas Travel, the airlines, and me. I am fully cognizant of all risks of travel and arrangements for trip of this nature and fully disclaim, waive, and discharge the Lira Ensemble (including its directors, officers, volunteers, and employees) from any and all liability, claims, or responsibilities with regard to the proposed trip and arrangements made with respect thereto, even if caused by the negligence or purported negligence of the Lira Ensemble (including directors, officers, volunteers, and employees). **I certify that I have read and understand the Terms & Conditions of this tour.**

SIGNATURE OF TRAVELER _____ DATE _____

please send this completed form, with a \$2,000.00 deposit as a check payable to the Lira Ensemble, as soon as possible, to:

The Lira Ensemble, 6525 N. Sheridan Road #CH-052, Chicago, Illinois 60626



The Lira Ensemble

Artist-in-Residence at Loyola University Chicago
renowned for its superb performances of Polish music, song & dance
and its excellent cultural tours of Poland

THE LIRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
invites you to be part of its

2020 TOUR OF NORTHERN & CENTRAL POLAND THURSDAY, JULY 16– WEDNESDAY, JULY 29

featuring music, dance, art, architecture, history, great cuisine and lots of fun
personally escorted by LUCYNA MIGALA

Artistic Director/General Manager of the Lira Ensemble & an Experienced Tour Director

Lira will show you the Poland of your dreams during this **14-day** tour of
WARSAW - GDANSK/GDYNIA/SOPOT - POZNAN - GNIEZNO
CHOPIN'S BIRTHPLACE - MALBORK CASTLE – TORUN - AND MUCH MORE

The tour price DOES NOT INCLUDE YOUR AIRFARE.

You may choose to fly to Poland as you wish – and perhaps use your United Miles.

Lira recommends that you fly non-stop to & from Warsaw on LOT Polish Airlines

Whatever you choose, Lira will purchase your airline tickets, if you like.

We travel in Poland on an ultra-modern, air-conditioned motor coach
with an emergency bathroom on board.

THIS TOUR INCLUDES:

**FIRST CLASS HOTELS - ALL TOURS & TRANSPORTATION IN POLAND
ADMISSIONS TO CONCERTS & OTHER PERFORMANCES
ALL BAGGAGE HANDLING - MOST TIPS - THREE MEALS A DAY
EXCEPT FOR THREE LUNCHESS AND ONE DINNER ON YOUR OWN
AS INDICATED BELOW**

Thursday
July 16

If you fly with the tour, we depart from O'Hare Airport on a LOT Airlines Boeing Dreamliner. You may choose any other flight. Just be sure to join the tour in Warsaw on Friday morning, July 27th. If you take LOT, you'll enjoy dinner over the Atlantic. All meals/refreshments onboard, including wine and beer (should you want them), are covered in your tour price. Other alcohol is also available at reasonable prices. We nap/sleep or watch a movie or two on your onboard private computer, then have breakfast over Europe. The Dreamliner has lots of electronic "toys" and services, so you may not want to nap. We land at Chopin Airport in Warsaw, Poland's dauntless capital city, on Friday morning.

Friday
July 17

The group tour arrives in Warsaw about 10am and we immediately tour the magnificent, restored Royal Castle. Meanwhile, our bags are taken to our hotel – the Sofitel Victoria, one of Warsaw’s best. (For those who have been to Warsaw, we can offer an alternate itinerary if you like. However, you may want to see the Castle again, because there is so much to see and sometimes they open new rooms.) After a light lunch, we tour Warsaw’s Old Town, and New Town Square. We view a film about the tragic history of Warsaw during World War Two. You will have some shopping time and a chance to change for our evening events. We attend a private concert of Chopin piano music in one of Warsaw’s many palaces. Our welcoming dinner is at one of Warsaw’s fine restaurants. Then, we overnight at our hotel.

Saturday
July 18

We enjoy a breakfast buffet at our hotel, with a large choice of Polish, continental, and American dishes. We drive to Wilanow, known as the Polish Versailles, to tour the summer residence of King Jan III Sobieski. (For those who have seen Wilanow, we can suggest an alternate itinerary, such as the unusual Warsaw Uprising Museum.) We have lunch at another of the city’s excellent restaurants. After the light lunch, we visit Warsaw’s newest attraction, the Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews – a remarkable experience. Alternatives are available if you have already seen the Polin Museum. We have dinner at another of Warsaw’s exquisite restaurants. Since it is Saturday night, a walk through Old Town is a great idea to see how Poles enjoy the weekend. Then back to our hotel.

Sunday
July 19

We attend Mass (if you like) at Holy Cross Church where Chopin’s heart is buried or another of Warsaw’s historic churches if you have already seen the Holy Cross Church. Then back to our hotel for breakfast. Next we visit the National Museum of Art to view some of Poland’s most treasured paintings. Then we leave Warsaw, driving northeast into the countryside. We lunch at a charming country inn, then continue our drive east to the town of Bialowieza and check into the rustic Zubrowka Hotel. Our dinner is at the famous Czarska Restaurant and includes includes an introduction to Zubrowka, the delicious vodka created in this region. Then we overnight at our hotel.

Monday
July 20

After breakfast at our hotel, we tour the world famous Bialowieza National Park, which includes one of last primeval forests in Europe and is included in the UNESCO list of World Natural Heritage Sites. A walk through this silent, haunting woodland is refreshing and memorable. Then we see the zubry – Poland’s buffalos and other exotic animals native only to Poland. We enjoy a picnic lunch near the forest, then drive to the village of Hajnowka to visit the Orthodox Church there to learn about Poland’s surprising religious diversity. Dinner is at our hotel and after dinner, Lucyna offers a quick review of Polish history over a snifter of French cognac (or whatever else you wish), so you can better understand what you are seeing.

Tuesday
July 21

Following breakfast at the hotel, we drive northwest through Poland’s beautiful and unspoiled glacial lake region. We stop to see the historic synagogue at Tykocin. Lunch is at a charming, wooden country inn. Then we drive to the renowned city of Bialystok to briefly see the Branicki Palace. Then we drive to the resort town of Mikolajki and check into the new Mikolajki Hotel, where we have dinner. You might want to take an evening walk around this peaceful, pleasant area.

Wednesday July 22	Breakfast is at the hotel, then we continue driving through the “Land of a Thousand Lakes” toward the Polish seaside. We stop at Sw. Lipka – a gorgeous Baroque church surprisingly situated in the middle of Poland’s least populated region. Lunch is at a homey, country restaurant in the small town of Sw. Lipka. We drive further west to the Tri-City of Gdansk/Sopot/Gdynia. Dinner is at one of Gdansk’s finest restaurants. Our hotel is the perfectly located Hanza Gdansk in Old Town.
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Thursday July 23	After breakfast at the hotel, we tour the seaport city of Gdansk with its unique late Renaissance and Baroque architecture and interesting history. Gdansk was a member of the historic Hanseatic League – an important economic alliance between European cities during the Middle Ages – so it has a very prosperous past. Lunch is on your own , followed by some free time for shopping, strolling or resting. Later in the day, we visit the new Museum of the Second World War. Dinner is at another of the famous restaurants of Gdansk and includes an alcoholic surprise that was created here. Then back to the Hanza Hotel.
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Friday July 24	Breakfast is at the hotel, then we visit the new European Solidarity Center – Gdansk is the home of the Solidarity Movement that freed Poland and provided the template that the rest of Eastern and Central Europe used to end communism. And then free time for shopping or plans of your own. After lunch, we drive to Gdynia for a brief visit to another of the Tri-Cities. Later we drive to the final Tri-City of Sopot, which is a renowned sea resort and home to the longest pier in Europe. We enjoy dinner at a restaurant on the Baltic Sea, then drive back to the Hanza Hotel.
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Saturday July 25	After breakfast at the hotel, we drive to Malbork Castle, the former seat of the Order of Teutonic Knights. We tour this huge, imposing, very interesting fortress, then have lunch in Malbork. We drive into the heart of the Kaszubian Region of Poland to visit an outdoor Ethnographic Park with an authentic, historic Kaszubian village. We drive to town of Zukowo for a classic Kaszubian meal with folk songs and dances and an opportunity to purchase Kaszubian folk crafts. Then back to our hotel.
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Sunday July 26	We attend Mass at St. Brygida Church (if you like) – which became famous worldwide as the Solidarity church. Then breakfast at the hotel and we drive to Torun, home town of Nicholas Copernicus, the great Polish astronomer. Torun is also home of Polish gingerbread, which you can munch on as we make a short tour of this lovely, historic town. Torun’s Old Town is on the UNESCO list of world treasures. Several Polish cities made the list. You will have time for shopping and/or lunch on your own and there are many cute spots. Then we drive to Gniezno, the first capital of Poland, with its huge Gothic Cathedral with bronze doors that date back to the 12 th century - one of the best examples of Romanesque art in Europe. We continue on to Poznan, one of Poland’s major cities and a business center that is the capital of Greater Poland. We check into the Sheraton Hotel. Our dinner includes local treats, then back to the hotel for the night.
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Monday
July 27

After breakfast at the hotel, we tour Poznan, including its Renaissance Town Hall and bustling town square. We'll watch the Poznan goats butt heads at the strike of noon - an old tradition. We see an example of how Poland is updating without losing its heritage - a modern shopping mall in an historic brewery. Then, free time for shopping/resting/private touring followed by ***lunch on your own***. You have been very good travelers, so you deserve a night off. There are many restaurants to choose from for ***dinner on your own***. You may want to dine in the open air on the square. It is not expensive and quite good. And people watching is fun. We overnight at the Sheraton.

Tuesday
July 28

Breakfast is at the hotel before we drive toward Warsaw. On the way, we stop at Lichen, called the "Czestochowa of the North" because it has become a major place of pilgrimage. Its huge basilica was built as Poland's thanks to the Blessed Virgin for freeing the country of communism. We stop at Zelazowa Wola, the birthplace of Frederick Chopin. We have lunch at a country inn and then drive to the center of Warsaw, to the elegant Polonia Palace Hotel where a farewell dinner awaits us with a last taste of Polish folklore. Do get a good night's sleep before your return flight.

Wednesday
July 29

Today is one of the longest days of your life, because of your trans-Atlantic flight. After breakfast at our hotel, we drive to the Chopin Airport. There will be an opportunity to do some shopping at the duty-free shops and it is recommended. As before, all food and drinks onboard your flight (including wine and beer) are included in your ticket price. When you arrive in Chicago, it will be 10 hours later, but it will still be Wednesday afternoon. **Check departure and arrival times!!!!!!**

PLEASE NOTE: The tour itinerary is subject to change. And there will be some surprises.

2020 TOUR OF NORTHERN & CENTRAL POLAND

Tour prices and important notes

- **\$4,959.00** base charge per person, double occupancy, departing from Chicago
This is for a group of ten. The tour will not take place with less than ten.
 - **\$875.00** single room supplement
 - We will purchase your airline ticket if you like, but not before we have a group of ten.
The sooner we have ten, the better, because airfares are larger closer to the departure date.
 - **Register for this tour as soon as possible; you will save considerably on your airfare.**
 - The first deposit of **\$2,000.00** is due as soon as possible upon registration
 - A second payment of **\$2,000.00** on April 1, 2020
 - **The balance is due on May 1, 2020**
 - Tour payments must be made by check only. Sorry, no credit cards.
 - **The OPTIONAL 2020 Tour of Lithuania follows the Northern Tour. Details will be determined by those requesting the tour, so no itinerary is enclosed. Do call us about it - 773-508-7040.**
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- We can arrange LOT Airlines departures from the New York (JFK), Newark and Miami as well as Chicago. **You may also upgrade** your seat from Economy Class to Premium Economy or Business Class (the LOT equivalent of First Class).). **If we have 10 people registered soon, the current Premium Economy fare is very reasonable and we recommend it – for comfort and special service in the air.**
- Our prices are closely tied to value of the dollar abroad; if the dollar falls steeply, there may be an additional charge.
- A portion of the tour price is deductible from your federal taxes. A tax receipt will be issued after the tour.
- U.S. and Canadian citizens need only a valid passport to visit Poland; no visa is required. **If you do not have a valid passport, please apply for one as soon as possible** - the closer to summer, the longer the lines at the passport office and the longer it takes to get your passport.
- **IMPORANT: Your passport expiration date must be at least six months after your return to the United States.**

*You can arrive in Poland before the tour, and/or remain in Poland after the tour. Lira can help arrange **HOTELS, TRANSPORTATION and TOURS** for your extended stay.
If you want to find your family, your ancestral city, town or village in Poland, Lira can suggest a trusted specialist in Poland with excellent English.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 773-508-7040 - OUTSIDE OF ILLINOIS, CALL 1-800-547-LIRA

Ask us about taking both the Southern and Northern Tours this year!

taking both tours in one year is a great saving.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

HOTELS: Twin-bedded or double-bedded rooms with bath or shower in first class or deluxe hotels. A limited number of single rooms are available at the supplementary charge. Hotels are subject to change.

TIPS & TAXES: Service charges, as imposed by hotels and taxes by local administrations and government authorities on accommodations, meals, and transportation, are included. Tips to local guides and baggage handlers at the airport and at hotels are included. It is customary for tour members to tip the tour guide ("pilot") and driver who travel with the tour, on the last day of the tour. These tips are not included.

SIGHTSEEING & TRANSFERS: Sightseeing is as specified in the itinerary, including entrance fees, and subject to change. Transfer upon arrival and departure overseas by motor coach between airport and hotel and vice versa if traveling with the tour group.

RESERVATIONS & PAYMENT: A deposit of \$2,000.00 per person is required at the time of booking. A second installment of \$2,000.00 is due April 1, 2020 and the balance is due on May 1, 2020. ***Reservations and payments are accepted with personal or bank checks only. Sorry, credit cards are not accepted for tour deposits or payments.***

TRIP CANCELLATION, BAGGAGE AND MEDICAL INSURANCE: It is advisable to purchase insurance coverage for cancellation due to illness or accident. Applications for suggested insurance as well as baggage and travel insurance will be provided once tour deposits are received.

CANCELLATION AND REFUNDS: Cancellations must be in writing. Cancellation charges will apply: *Within 90 days prior to departure - 30% of the cost; within 60 days prior to departure - 50% of the cost; within 30 days prior to departure - no refunds.*

YOUR RATE DOES NOT INCLUDE: Passport fees, taxes or tips on services not included in the itinerary; laundry or valet service; excess baggage charges; insurance of any kind; wines, beers, liquors, soft drinks or any food and beverages not on regular menus of included meals.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS: A valid passport is required for all U.S. and Canadian citizens traveling to Poland. ***Your passport expiration date must be at least six months after your return date to the US.***

RESPONSIBILITY: The Lira Ensemble acts only as an agent for the hotels, airlines, bus companies or owners, operators or contractors providing accommodations, transportation, meals, tours, or other services. All vouchers, coupons, contracts and tickets issued are subject to any and all tariffs, terms and conditions under which the foregoing or any services whatsoever are provided by such hotels, airlines, bus companies or owners, operators or contractors. By the acceptance of the above, the tour member agrees to the foregoing and also agrees that the Lira Ensemble shall not be or become liable or responsible for any loss, injury or damage to person, property or otherwise in connection with any transportation, accommodation, meals, tour or other services referred to herein, or resulting from neglect or default of any person, corporation or other entity engaged to supply the same. The tour operator reserves the right to make changes in the itinerary, whenever, in their sole judgment, conditions warrant; or if they deem it necessary for the comfort, convenience or safety of the passengers. They can accept no responsibility for losses of additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine or other causes. All such losses must be borne by the passenger as tour rate provides for arrangement only for the specified. All alterations may be made without penalty to the tour operator. The airline concerned is not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not aboard their planes or conveyance. The passenger contract in use by the airline concerned, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and purchaser of this tour and/or passage.

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THE LIRA ENSEMBLE
2020 TOUR OF NORTHERN & CENTRAL POLAND
TOUR REGISTRATION FORM
July 16 – July 29

Please use a separate form for each individual joining the tour. Each individual must sign personally.
Please print or type. This form may be duplicated.

NAME *(exactly as it appears on your passport)* _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME TELEPHONE _____ CELL PHONE _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Please send all future tour information by e-mail _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ CITIZENSHIP _____

PASSPORT NUMBER _____ PASSPORT EXPIRATION DATE _____

I PLAN TO DEPART ON LOT AIRLINES FROM: CHICAGO _____ NEW YORK (JFK) _____ NEWARK _____
MIAMI _____ OTHER _____

If you are not flying from Chicago, please contact us so that we can coordinate your transportation.

Would you like a single room throughout the tour? (Extra cost of \$875.00) _____

If not, with whom are you sharing a room? _____

Do you want us to find a roommate for you? _____ Do you smoke? _____

If you are traveling with your spouse, do you prefer twin beds? _____ Or a double bed? _____

Will you return with the tour on July 29? _____ If not, what is your return date? _____

Would you like us to book hotels or arrange travel or tours for you in Poland after the tour? _____

Would you like us to contact an expert to do research for you in Poland, for a fee? _____

How did you learn about the Lira Tour? _____

DISCLAIMER: By making application for the above captioned trip sponsored by the Lira Ensemble, I hereby acknowledge that the Lira Ensemble (including its directors, officers, volunteers and employees) have no connection or responsibility with regard to the transportation or other facilities offered by the tour operator and airline making arrangements for the trip, and that the Lira Ensemble is not contracting parties with regard to any of the arrangements made or to be made. I understand that by signing this document I have contracted directly with the tour operator (Mazurkas Travel of Warsaw) and LOT Polish Airlines or other airline concerned and that contractual responsibilities, if any, are directly between Mazurkas Travel, the airlines, and me. I am fully cognizant of all risks of travel and arrangements for trip of this nature and fully disclaim, waive, and discharge the Lira Ensemble (including its directors, officers, volunteers, and employees) from any and all liability, claims, or responsibilities with regard to the proposed trip and arrangements made with respect thereto, even if caused by the negligence or purported negligence of the Lira Ensemble (including directors, officers, volunteers, and employees). **I certify that I have read and understand the Terms & Conditions of this tour.**

SIGNATURE OF TRAVELER _____ DATE _____

Please send this completed form, with a \$2,000.00 deposit as a check payable to
the Lira Ensemble, as soon as possible, to:
The Lira Ensemble, 6525 N. Sheridan Road #CH-052, Chicago, Illinois 60626