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24. September 2018

Slow life: 10 Experiences To Enjoy Sustainable Travel in Pomerania, Poland





Do you feel drained from the fast paced daily routing? Chased by commitments? You can't remember when you just let it go for a few days or invested in **developing your creative skills**? That's at least how I felt in the last months. Always rushing, **no time to reflect**.

Well, it might be about time to **visit Pomerania, Poland** and to immerse in the wonderfully slow life of a region covered by lush forests, a colorfully intriguing culture and warm-hearted hospitality. Re-discover the slow life with these **10 sustainable travel experiences** in Eastern Pomerania, Poland.



Your first question might be: **why Pomerania, Poland?** Let me give you my reasons in crispy bullet points:

1. The colorfully Kashubian culture is as **lively** and vibrant as ever. It's pure delight to see how its bright colored motives are painted on houses, clothes, porcelain and everyday culture.
2. Nature remains mostly **untouched**. That means long walks in forests and fun sailing trips in over 3000 lakes.
3. It's at only a stone's throw from Gdansk, one of the **most beautiful European towns** after Bruges or Paris.
4. It's **cheap** for Western Europeans and Americans! Prices for Rooms in the qualitative, rural complexes can start at 29€ per double room (!) *Check here the best prices for hotels in Polish Pomerania*

The Pomeranian Voivodeship or *Pomorskie*, in Northern Poland is the perfect location to **enjoy the slow life**. Its people, both Polish and Kashubian, still uphold their traditions and connections to their cultural heritage.

That doesn't mean that they don't have to commute or live in the same stressful world as others.

However people in the Pomeranian countryside, you'll get to personally know some of them in this post, made the active decision to cherish their culture by **revering centuries-old traditions** and practices such as baking bread, making butter, doing traditional craftwork or cultivating medicinal plants. The lifestyle in East Pomerania, Poland is about finding a compromise of keeping a **rich cultural legacy in an increasingly "westernized"** and standardized environment.

The Kashubian are Key to the Pomeranian Folk Art

The cultural legacy of Pomeranian Voivodeship is mostly rooted in the Kashubian ethnicity and folk art.

So, who are the Kashubs and where is Kashubia? Kashubia is a language and ethnic area in Pomerania whose inhabitants, the Kashubs speak the Kashubian language, closely related to Polish. Kashubs are thus ethnically and linguistically different from the Poles, but without a separatist movement. They are living on the Baltic coast and Eastern Pomerania since 7th century AD. A colorful culture developed during centuries. Gdansk is the largest city of Kashubia.

A popular legend says that God created the land of the Kashubians with the leftovers he had after creating the world. Indeed you can find over **3000 lakes, hills, ski slopes, a beautiful coast and dense forest** in the Kashubian region.

Folk art is celebrated everywhere in Kashubia, the **traditional embroidery and pottery** being the most important ones. It's motives are easily recognizable and include just 5 colors: green, red, yellow, black and blue.

Traveling, especially sustainable travel, is **about learning and cultural exchange**. Visiting Pomerania, Poland allowed me to learn about alternative life models and the importance of cultural legacy to feel rooted. A cultural legacy that's been expressed in countless forms such as gastronomy, craftwork, fashion, wellness and well-being.

Let's **dip into the slow life** in Eastern Pomerania, Poland and find a new cultural rooting by these 10 sustainable travel experiences.

[Most of the mentioned places in this post can be visited with this private tour of Kashubia](#)

Find all locations in a map at the end of the post!



Sustainable Travel

Slow Travel Experiences in Poland



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general info

Geographic situation: The historical region of Pomerania on the southern Baltic shore is split in between Germany and Poland. Eastern Pomerania, also known as Pomeranian Voivodeship or



Pomorskie, is the land of the Kashubians, an ethnic and linguistic minority.

Language: Polish. English is widely spoken.

Currency: zloty

How to get there:

- By airplane to Gdansk Airport. Book here your airport transfer to your hotel
- Rent a car to drive from Gdansk to Kashubia and rest of Pomerania. Check rental car prices here
- Visit Pomerania and Kashubia with a day trip from Gdansk

Activities: Agriculture (forestry, fishery, the cultivation of cereals, sugar beets, potatoes) and industrial food processing. Since the late 19th century, tourism has become increasingly important, primarily in the numerous seaside resorts along the coast. Key producing industries are shipyards, mechanical engineering facilities sugar refineries, paper and wood fabricators.



where to stay in Pomerania, Poland

Slow Life and Family Owned Properties

Lawendowa Osada

Zielony Kot

Mid-Range

*Hotel & Beer SPA Browar Kościerzyna ****

Luxury

*SHERATON Sopot Spa Hotel ******

*Dwór Oliwski City Hotel & SPA ******



1. Wellness on a Lavender Farm



This must be the **purple paradise on earth**. *Lawendowa Osada*, the Lavender Farm, is surrounded by untouched forests and you'll feel like you're in a Southern French movie set.

The violet idyll with the omnipresent **smell of lavender** has been created by Barbara and Bartosz, who quit their jobs to pursue their dreams of creating a place for others to be happy. One day, the couple was thinking what they could do to live a **more fulfilled life** and spend more time with their children. Eventually one of the two found the key: "LAVENDER!" That's how the wellness and agrotouristic complex *Lawendowa Osada* was founded.

The guest houses are surrounded by **wide lavender fields** that bloom in mid-june. They avoid pesticides and chemicals, harvesting and processing are done in the traditional way. The claim of doing things organically goes way beyond the lavender process: the **bread, lavender jam and lavender honey** of your breakfast is handmade, butter comes from the farm next door. Even the goat cheese and typical lard spread, traditionally eaten with a pickle on your sandwich, is produced in accordance with ancient traditions.

You'll be spoiled for options when it comes to well-being and creativity at the Lavender Farm. There is a hot **Jacuzzi**, a sauna and a swimming pool just at the forest's edge. They invite to relax and listen to the sounds of the surrounding woods.

The **SPA treatments** can be continued in the Salt Cave with 40 centimeters of salt on the floor and Himalayan salt fragments on the walls. Here you can enjoy an aromatherapy to treat your lungs and respiratory tracts. They say it feels like getting a new pair of lungs.



Lavender Oil is one of the many produces

Barbara offers several **workshops** that are more or less linked to lavender. As a former chemist, she'll teach you about about the **health benefits of lavender**, how to process lavender, how to create your own natural cosmetics. Another workshop is about women's happiness.

You think that's all? Oh no! Can you believe that Barbara and Bartosz built an **astronomical observatory** with a massive telescope? It will be Bartosz pleasure to give you an introduction to the Pomeranian starlit sky.

Why you should stay at Lawendowa Osada

The rooms of *Lawendowa Osada* have been decorated with **great care** and the violet theme of lavender is present in every detail. The architecture of the half-timbered guest houses are representative for the Kashubian culture in Polish Pomerania and every cottage has a kitchen, several rooms and bathroom. There are 24 beds in total.

To me, each cottage and every corner in their interior looked like a perfect Pinterest pin. It's all so simple but yet incredibly beautiful and rooted. You can book your stay by calling or mailing them.

Lawendowa Osada

Młyńska 6a, 83-047 Przywidz, Poland

Tel.:+48 511 975 929



 26144,30312,178916: Get Your Guide

2. Traditional Craft in the largest Ethnographic Park in Poland





Trying to focus on my paper flowers

The [Kashubian Ethnographic Park](#) in Wdzydze Kiszewskie is not only a must-visit when traveling to Pomerania, Poland, but also the perfect place to disconnect and **learn about Kashubian traditions** in the numerous workshops of the museum. The landscape with abundant woods and immense lakes is ultimately relaxing.

The open air museum was founded in 1906, the first of its kind in Poland. It consists of 22 ha next to the vast Gołuń lake and holds over **50 buildings of regional architecture** including a school, windmills, a church (the only one in town and having service on Sundays), cottages, manors... Inside the houses you get a valuable insight in the daily life in the Kashubian culture as all of them are authentically refurbished with the household items of that item.

The Kashub Ethnographic Park offers several workshops proliferating **Kashub folk art** and learning about former crafts like spinning, weaving baskets, embroidery, wood carving, singing, drawing...

[Book here your private day tour to the museum and Kashubia](#)

I had the privilege to do a **paper flower workshop**. Kashubs are masters in the art of making paper flowers. I had absolutely no idea that making paper flowers could be even considered as an art. Even nowadays you can find them in an household, church or graveyard. Sometimes you really need to take a close look in order to see whether it's a real or fake flower.

Against my expectations, I ended up loving the paper flower workshop. It made me realize how much I missed to **create something with my hands** and see the immediate result. The glass painting with traditional Kashub moties was great fun and even relaxing.

You can book your workshop directly at the entrance of the museum and prices range from 2-10€, depending on the workshop.

Kashubian Ethnographical Park

ul. T. i I. Gulgowskich 68
83-406 Wdzydze

Estimated Visit duration: 2-3hours

Where to eat: there's a superb, traditional restaurant in the museum complex

Entrance fee: 16 PLN (~4€)



3. Kashubian Pottery Workshop



Learning about pottery

Pottery is one of the most ancient Kashubian crafts which has a **centuries-old tradition since the middle ages**. As in the Kashubian embroidery, the designs are quite simple, but colorful.

A clay or pottery workshop is a great way to learn about Kashubian culture and create a meaningful item with your hands. Admittedly, I underestimated the relaxing effect of forming vessels from clay, but finally it gave me a deeper **understanding of pottery as a Kashubian cultural expression**.

[Book here your stay and pottery workshop](#)

I had the pleasure to do a clay workshop with Asha from [Gospodarstwo Zielony Kot](#) in Lipuzc. After working on Polish national TV, she decided with her husband to create a more fulfilling and **slow-paced lifestyle**.

That's how they renovated his grandmother's rural house and created a [Bed&Breakfast](#) with an open space for creative workshops such as **pottery, sewing, painting** or theater science. Not only the couple, but the entire atmosphere at their guest house is absolutely warm-hearted and ultimately relaxing.

If want to learn more about the Kashubian pottery, make sure to visit the [Necel family company and museum](#).

Zielony Kot

Hieronima Derdowskiego 4, 83-424 Lipusz, Poland

Tel.: +48 506 505 503



4. Folk Painting on Glass and Pottery



Painting the Kashubian motives on mugs

As many ethnic minorities, the Kashubian express their cultural identity through folk art forms such as **embroidery, pottery or paper cutting**.

A great form to value the heritage of the Kashubian culture, is to teach how to paint the Kashubian motives on glass or everyday items. Asha from [Zielony Kot](#) in Lipuzc offers a workshop during which you paint the **colorful motives on mugs or vases**.

The [Ethnographic Park](#) offers workshops to paint Kashubian motives on glass. Both workshops were absolutely rewarding experiences as it allows you to gain a **privileged insight in the Kashubian culture**.

Did I mention that each of the **5 Kashubian colors** has a **symbolic meaning**: the 3 shades of blue, dark blue for the Baltic Sea, medium blue for the Kashubian lakes, and light blue for the sky. Green is for meadows and forests, the color red is for the blood that was shed in defense of the homeland, and black represents the Earth. Yellow represents the color of the Sun and amber, which is mined in this region.

[Book your stay and ethnic painting workshop here](#)



5. Indulge in Pomeranian Food



Getting Ready To Order in Sztuczka Bistrot in Sopot

Pomeranian celebrate food (a lot!), but they only use the **freshest ingredients** to prepare their meals. As the soil is fertile and the coast is always nearby, you can find a lot of food variety in any restaurant you may visit. The Pomeranian cuisine is hearty and, what I call, honest. The vast majority

of the meals we had were made of **organic** ingredients without using pesticides and only local produce.

Lunch and dinner are very important moments in Pomerania: it is celebrated among friends and the perfect occasion to understand Pomeranian hospitality.

Some of the **most popular ingredients** are cod, herring and salmon from the Baltic Sea, trout from the rivers, potatoes, mushrooms and all kind of vegetables. Sugar beet and Pomeranian goose are particularly renowned in the area.

The **traditional dishes** that you can't skip on your visit to Pomerania, Poland are

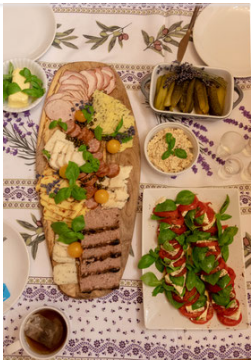
- dumplings
- sausages and other smoked meat
- the legendary sandwich with lard spread and pickles on top
- goose meat and liver

When it comes to **drinks**, every meal finishes with a wodka sharing among friends. They say it brings bad luck if you don't finish a bottle. Pomerania is also one of the biggest exporters of **honey wine**, that you should absolutely taste once during your visit. However I was glad to find many non-alcoholic and healthy alternatives in most restaurants like fresh lemonades and homemade fruit juices (try the *kompot* with all kind of red fruits).

[Book here your private day tour to Pomerania and Kashubia](#)

I indulged in Pomeranian food in the following locations and I recommend every single one as they all include regional and organic ingredients:

- [Zielno Brama](#), a manor in Przywidz
- [Brewery Stary Bowar](#) in Kościerzyna
- [Traditional Kashubian cuisine in the restaurant](#) of the Ethnographic Museum in Wdzydze
- [Sztuczka Bistro](#) (serves refines Pomeranian food) in Sopot



6. Bread Workshop with Award-Winning Karola



Working on that dough

The moment you enter the house of award-winning Karola, you'll step into a the **magical wonderland of bread baking** and more. Karola's home is not only her bakery, but also a **museum** where she treasures up recipes and baking forms from the 19th century. The queen of bread-baking is living in Lipusz where she produces over 300 breads. Every day.

Once you passed the doorstep of the traditional Kashubian house, you'll be confronted with the compelling mix of **ethnic Kashubian embroidery** and porcelain, piles of centuries-old baking forms and towers of hundred year old cooking books.

Karola even has one of the earliest Dr.Oetker baking forms (she still uses it today!) that dates back from early 1900. Many of her cultural artifacts cannot be found in any other part of the world, and yet they were commonly used in every household before the **Second World War**.



The Queen of Bread Making: Karola

In that way Karola preserves recipes and the 400 molds as witnesses of a time period and makes a major contribution to preserve both Pomeranian and Kashubian heritage. Did I mention that her household also includes over **1700 ancient tapestries**?

The best part of visiting Karola are her baking workshops during which you follow **100 -150 years old recipes**. All the ingredients are locally grown. She knows over 9 bread recipes by heart and her **bestseller** is the multigrain buttermilk, with linseed, fennel, black cumin and sunflower seeds for which she won an award.

People from all over the world visit Karola for her famous bread workshops. Feel free to contact the [Pomorskie Prestige Organization](#) or [Michał, our guide for Kashubia](#).

Karol Bober

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