



Set your course
for **ELBLAĞ**





Elbląg - a city

FULL OF SURPRISES

It is both an honour and a great pleasure to invite you to a city where **rich history** meets the closeness of nature and modern infrastructure. Elbląg has it all – and so much more.

One of the oldest cities in Poland, Elbląg was carefully rebuilt after the devastation of the Second World War, regaining its former charm. Today, you can stroll through the vibrant Old Town, marvel at the Gothic St. Nicholas Cathedral, pass through the Market Gate, and soak in the atmosphere of centuries past. For history enthusiasts, Elbląg is also one of the most important archaeological sites in Europe – here, the past truly comes to life. But Elbląg is not just about history. It is also a place where you can pause, breathe, and enjoy the embrace of nature. Our famous Bażantarnia, often called the “Bieszczady of the North”, offers

the perfect setting for active leisure and contact with nature – far from the crowds and noise of large cities. Surrounded by greenery, with numerous walking paths and parks woven into the urban fabric, Elbląg is a welcoming place for both residents and visitors.

We cannot forget our exceptional waterway. Here, you can embark on an unforgettable “ship on the grass” cruise – the only water route in the world with a system of inclined planes that allow vessels to overcome changes in elevation on special rail trolleys. Elbląg also boasts a modern marina, a yacht harbour, and a sea port with direct access to the Baltic Sea via the Vistula Spit Shipping Canal (Nowy Świat Navigation Canal).

Elbląg is also a city of art and culture. More than 50 sculptures and installations in public spaces form a unique open-air gallery. A rich calendar of events, concerts, and exhibitions means art is part of daily life here, and the city’s atmosphere fosters inspiration.

I warmly invite you – come, discover Elbląg, and let yourself be enchanted. I hope this guide will be just the beginning of your adventure.

Michał Pasze

Mayor of Elbląg



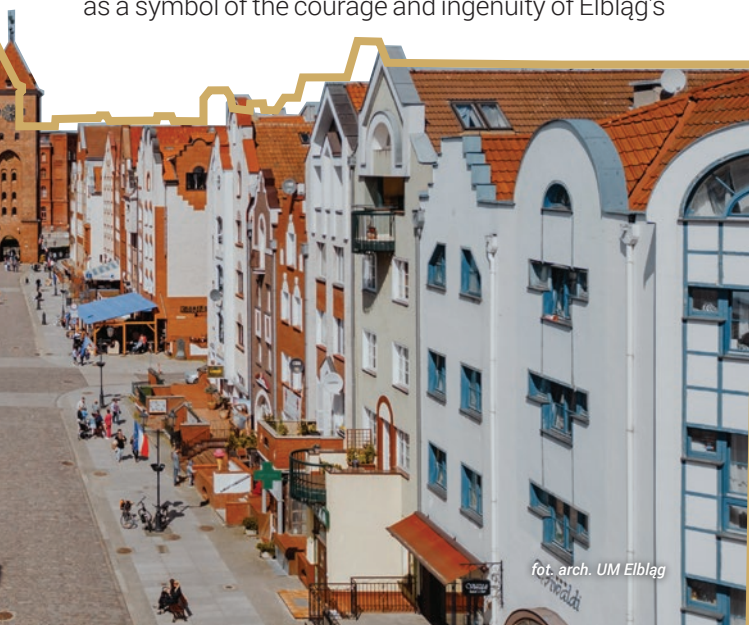


A Walk Through the
OLD TOWN – ELBLĄG'S
"New Old Town"



Elbląg's Old Town is a place of remarkable character and fascinating history. Almost entirely destroyed during World War II, it was rebuilt not as an exact replica but according to the concept of retroversion – a conservation-minded approach that allows new buildings to be created while respecting the original street plan, scale, and rhythm of the urban fabric. Thanks to this approach, Elbląg's "New Old Town" doesn't try to pass itself off as a historic city – it creatively reimagines it. Reconstructed on its historic street plan and with meticulous attention to detail, it enchants visitors with its authentic atmosphere and contemporary take on tradition.

Our walk begins at the **Market Gate** (Brama Targowa) - a 14th-century defensive gate that once formed part of the city's fortifications. Today it is one of Elbląg's most recognisable landmarks and a symbol of its medieval heritage. At its base stands the **Piekarczyk Monument** – commemorating the local apprentice baker who, according to legend, saved the city in 1521 by cutting the gate's rope mechanism and halting the advancing troops of the Teutonic Order. The story endures in local tradition as a symbol of the courage and ingenuity of Elbląg's





townspeople, and Piekarczyk has become the city's folk hero. In the summer months the gate is open to visitors (free admission), and an observation deck at the top offers sweeping views over the city.

Walking further along Stary Rynek Street, we reach **St. Nicholas Cathedral** (Katedra św. Mikołaja) – one of the oldest sacred buildings in Elbląg, with origins dating back to the 13th century. Its present appearance is the result of centuries of rebuilding and restoration after wartime damage. The most distinctive feature is its 97-metre tower – the tallest church tower east of the Vistula. The cathedral also serves as a Sanctuary of the Relics of the Holy Cross.

Inside, the Gothic Hall-church plan has been preserved, with three aisles and octagonal pillars. High-

lights include a bronze baptismal font from 1387, statues of the apostles, a monumental crucifix, a statue of St. Nicholas, numerous altars endowed by the people of Elbląg, and colourful stained-glass windows. In one of the aisles you will also find the chair and kneeler used by Pope John Paul II during his visit to Elbląg in 1999.

From the tower, visitors can enjoy sweeping views of the city and its surroundings. On a sunny day you can spot Malbork Castle, the Vistula Spit, the Elbląg Upland, and the waterbird reserve at Lake Druzno. The observation deck is open from May until the end of September and is reached by 365 steps — as many as days in the year — taking about 20 minutes to climb.





Right next to the cathedral lies one of the Old Town's most intriguing sites – **the Church Path** (Ścieżka Kościelna). In the Middle Ages, it provided an important link between three churches: St. Nicholas, the Holy Spirit, and the Blessed Virgin Mary, allowing clergy and townspeople to move easily within the historic city centre.

Church Path is the only surviving example in Poland of a medieval passage between tenement houses, spanned by Brick Gothic arches. Laid out in the 14th century, its southern section survives today in near-original form. This narrow, cobblestone lane, tucked between the frontages, is a significant relic of the city's medieval street network and an architectural rarity in Poland.

Passing through Church Path, we emerge onto Świętego Ducha Street, home to the **Cyprian Norwid Elbląg Library**. The library is housed in a medieval complex of the former Holy Spirit Hospital (Szpital św. Ducha) – one of the best-preserved

historic ensembles in this part of Elbląg. Its origins date back to 1601, making it one of the oldest institutions of its kind in Poland.

The collection comprises nearly 400,000 volumes, including a rich heritage holding: more than 9,000 early printed books, incunabula, and manuscripts registered in the National Library Resource (Narodowy Zasób Biblioteczny). The treasures also include cartographic works, musical scores, prints and graphic art, and bookplates (ex libris). In 2008, a professional digitisation studio was established here, together with the Elbląg Digital Library (Elbląska Biblioteka Cyfrowa), which provides online access to many of the holdings. The library is also a lively cultural hub, hosting author talks and readings, concerts, exhibitions, and workshops.

In the restored vaulted cellars beneath the building, visitors will find Elkamera – a modern, interactive permanent exhibition dedicated to the history of the book, the press, and the region's written heritage. Here you can see reconstructed early printed works, learn about printing techniques from Gutenberg's era, and discover why books were once chained for safekeeping. The exhibition also features multimedia presentations, including one devoted to the Elbląg Canal. Elkamera is open during the library's regular opening hours.



fot. Biblioteka Elbląska im. Cypriana Kamila Norwida

From Świętego Ducha Street, we head towards Zamkowa Street, where one of the Old Town's most remarkable places awaits – **the Archaeological and Historical Museum** (Muzeum Archeologiczno-Historyczne w Elblągu). Here you can see Poland's oldest known medieval eyeglasses, with horn frames and green lenses, a unique Viking sun compass carved from whale bone, and a 15th-century gittern – a musical instrument of which only two examples survive in all of Europe.

One of the oldest museums in Poland – and the oldest in Warmia and Masuria – it is housed within the historic complex of the former castle's outer bailey. The collections have been built up over many years of intensive archaeological research in Elbląg and the surrounding area. Among the exhibits are everyday objects, jewellery, amulets, pilgrims' badges, vessels, and fragments of fittings from houses and workshops, made of ceramics, metal, wood, leather, glass, and amber. The artefacts come from the medieval Old Town, the Viking settlement of Truso, and the Goth (Gothic tribe) necropolis at Weklice, bearing witness to the far-reaching trade links of the region's former inhabitants.

Permanent exhibitions – such as Truso – Legend of the Baltic, Elbląg Reconditus, and History Hidden Underground – reveal Elbląg layer by layer, from pre-charter times to the post-war reconstruction. Despite its historical focus, the museum takes



fol. Muzeum Archeologiczno – Historyczne



fol. Fotka miesiąca/Zbigniew Cieśla

a thoroughly modern approach, combining traditional collections with engaging multimedia and contemporary storytelling.

After leaving the museum, we head for **Zygmunt August Boulevard** (Bulwar Zygmunta Augusta) — the riverside promenade along the Elbląg River. It is an ideal spot to pause and take in the city from the water. From here you can set off in two directions: south, towards the Elbląg Canal with its lakes and inclined planes; or north, across the Vistula Lagoon (Zalew Wiślany) to the Gulf of Gdańsk. The Vistula Spit Shipping Canal (Nowy Świat Navigation Canal) has opened new routes for navigation, giving Elbląg direct access to the Baltic Sea.

We continue towards **Galeria EL** — the city's centre for contemporary art. Housed in a former Dominican church dating back to the 13th century, it is one of Elbląg's oldest surviving sacred buildings. After the war, the ruined church was brought back to life thanks to artist Gerard Kwiatkowski, who launched an exhibition programme here in the 1960s.

The interior retains its Gothic character, with epitaphs on the walls and historic ledger (tomb) slabs



fot. arch. UM Ełbląg

set into the floor. In one of the aisles, a modern glazed mezzanine with a lift provides additional exhibition space. The gallery presents contemporary art exhibitions, staying true to its founding spirit of openness and experiment.

Closely associated with Galeria EL is a unique collection of Spatial Forms – metal sculptures created during the International Open-Air Workshops (1965–1973) as part of the Biennale of Spatial Forms. The lasting result is over fifty sculptures installed across the city, by leading artists including Magdalena Abakanowicz, Zbigniew Dłubak, Zbigniew Gostomski, and Jerzy Jarnuszkiewicz.



fot. Centrum Sztuki Galeria EL

This living legacy of one of the most important communist-era art projects has given Elbląg the distinctive character of an open-air gallery of modern art.

Elbląg's Old Town is more than a collection of monuments and reconstructions – it is a place with a distinct personality. Tenement houses raised on medieval foundations, varied in form, colour and detailing, create an extraordinary architectural mosaic and give the area its unmistakable atmosphere.



fot. arch. UM Elbląg

This is the heart of the city – the hub of Elbląg's cultural life. Day to day you can wander along charming lanes, settle into a café, or visit a gallery. This is also where open-air events, performances, exhibitions and meetings bring residents and guests together.

Elbląg's Old Town – younger than it looks – is one of the most distinctive places in Poland. Rebuilt with respect for the past and openness to the present, it is a place you will want to return to – in every season.

A City

FULL OF ADVENTURES

for Young Explorers!

Elbląg is a fantastic destination for families looking to spend time together in a way that is not only fun but also active. From tracking down city legends, to parks full of attractions, to splashing around in the water – here, children will not be bored for a single moment!

Following the Trail of Piekarczyk

The adventure begins in the Old Town, right next to the Market Gate, where you will find the monument to Piekarczyk – Elbląg's local hero who, according



to legend, saved the city from a Teutonic invasion. But that's only the beginning! The real fun starts when you look a little closer...

Scattered across the Old Town are several small bronze statues of Piekarczyk – each holding a different object. Finding them all is not only great fun, but also a wonderful way to explore the city step by step.



fot. arch. UM Elbląg

Dolinka – A Park Full of Fun

After the excitement of the Old Town, it is worth heading for the greener parts of the city and taking a breather at **Dolinka Park** (Park Dolinka). Here, the youngest visitors will find a modern playground with a safe surface, plenty of attractions, and play areas tailored to different ages: slides, swings, carousels, and obstacle courses – everything kids love most.

But Dolinka Park is more than just a playground – it is a place to simply relax. Paths, small water cascades and natural greenery create a peaceful atmosphere that soothes and recharges. It's a space where children can let off steam, while adults slow down and recharge their batteries in beautiful, green surroundings.



fot. arch. UM Elbląg

Water Fun in Elbląg

When temperatures rise, the best place for family refreshment is the pool! In Elbląg, you can choose between the indoor Recreation and Water Centre Dolinka or the modern open-air Dolinka Water Park. Both are located close to each other on Moniuszki Street.

At the Recreation and Water Centre Dolinka, little ones will love the colourful paddling pools, slides and water fountains. Adults can unwind



fot. MOSiR Elbląg

in the leisure pool or jacuzzi, or on comfortable loungers, while more active visitors can take advantage of swimming lanes. Just bring your good mood and swimsuit – in Dolinka, summer lasts all year round!

The Dolinka Water Park is perfect if you are looking to cool off outdoors while staying active – a great alternative to the crowded beaches of



the Vistula Spit. With five slides, swimming lanes, a lazy river, paddling pools for the youngest, recreation zones, a playground, volleyball courts and a tasty food area, it guarantees fun for the whole family.



Elbląg

FROM the Water



fot. Przemysław Rombel

Elbląg is a city best discovered... also from the water. Set on the Elbląg River, it is a key point on northern Poland's network of waterways – and water tourism here is thriving year by year.

From the city's waterfront at Zygmunt August Boulevard (Bulwar Zygmunta Augusta), two remarkable routes set out. The first heads south – across Lake Druzno to the **Elbląg Canal**, famous



fot. Żegluga Ostródzko-Elbląska

for its unique inclined planes. On the so-called “ship on the grass” route, vessels overcome almost 100 metres of elevation on special rail trolleys – a 19th-century engineering feat that still amazes today. Cruises on this route are operated by Żegluga Ostródzko-Elbląska (**Ostróda–Elbląg Shipping**).

The second route leads north – along the Elbląg River and across the Vistula Delta (Żuławy Wiślane) to **the Vistula Lagoon** (Zalew Wiślany) and Krynica Morska. In summer it is served by **Żegluga Gdańska**, providing a convenient link to the Vistula Spit. En route you can see the port, shipyard halls, and draw and swing bridges – including Poland’s longest swing bridge in Nowakowo – as well as the wild nature of the Elbląg Bay Nature Reserve (Rezerwat Zatoki Elbląskiej). White-tailed eagles, cormorants and gulls often accompany the ships for much of the cruise.

The region is surrounded by outstanding natural areas: **the Vistula Delta** (Żuławy Wiślane) with Poland’s lowest point at Marzęcino, the scenic **Elbląg Upland Landscape Park** (Park Krajobrazowy Wysoczyzny Elbląskiej), and **the Vistula Lagoon** itself, which – thanks to the Nowy Świat Navigation Canal (Vistula Spit Shipping Canal) – connects Elbląg directly with the Baltic Sea, opening new opportunities for sailors, kayakers and water sports enthusiasts.



The Green **SIDE OF** the City



phot. arch. UM Elbląg

BAŻANTARNIA

Elbląg is more than its Old Town – it is also a city blessed with abundant greenery. Within the city limits lies a true natural gem, often called the “Bieszczady of the North.”

This is **Bażantarnia** – Elbląg’s largest and best-known forest park. It’s a place to breathe deeply, listen to the rustle of the trees and disconnect from the city for a while. Well-maintained, waymarked routes for hiking, cycling and Nordic



walking lead through picturesque ravines, distinctly hilly terrain and forest streams. You will find short, easy loops ideal for families, as well as longer circuits for the more determined. Highlights include a historic amphitheatre, little bridges, shelters and rest areas. Bażantarnia is one of Elbląg's most popular and well-loved green spaces all year round.

The woodland is also a hub for sport and recreation, hosting events such as **the Elbląg Orienteering Grand Prix**, the family-friendly **Bażantarnia Jump & Run** obstacle race and **Bażantarnia XC** cycling.

A section of the Meble Wójcik **Ultra Wysoczyzna** – one of the most exciting mountain runs in this part of Poland – also passes through here. For many, Bażantarnia brings together everything that matters: greenery, challenge and the pure joy of movement. Bażantarnia is where nature, activity and tranquillity meet – perfect for a short walk, a long workout or a full-day adventure.

Green Velo – Cycling Through Elbląg and Beyond
Cycling in Elbląg is pure pleasure – especially on the Green Velo Eastern Cycling Trail, the longest continuously signposted cycling route in Poland. Stretching 1,985 kilometres, it crosses five provinces of eastern Poland, beginning (or ending) here in Elbląg and finishing (or starting) in Końskie

in the Świętokrzyskie region. The Elbląg section follows the Elbląg River, passes the charming surroundings of Dolinka Park (Park Dolinka) and Bażantarnia, then heads into expansive woodlands and the picturesque rural landscapes of the Vistula Delta (Żuławy Wiślane) and the Elbląg Upland (Wysoczyzna Elbląska). It's ideal for those who value a peaceful ride in nature – far from noise, crowds and rush.

The route is excellently waymarked and tailored to cyclists' needs, with cyclist service areas, shelters and rest spots along the way. Green Velo in Elbląg is a great choice for families, active travellers and anyone who wants to combine time outdoors with discovering the region's natural beauty.

Parks

Elbląg is home to more than a dozen parks and green spaces that enrich the urban landscape. They offer everyday places to unwind, take a stroll and connect with nature – and they're within easy reach across the city.





fot. arch. UM Elbląg

Among them, **Kajki Park** (Park Kajki) – with its seasonal rose garden – is one of Elbląg's most recognisable summer spots. **Modrzewie Park** (Park Modrzewie), which preserves the remnants of a former manor-and-park ensemble, stands out for its natural layout and historic tree stands. **Dolinka Park** (Park Dolinka), with cascading water features and a modern playground, is perfect for a family afternoon.

Just a few steps from the lively city centre you'll find **Planty Park** (Park Planty). Wide walking avenues, a convenient cycling path, a children's playground and the distinctive Snail Hill (Ślimacza Górka) with its grotto – a popular meeting point and viewpoint – make it an inviting urban refuge. Nearby pergolas offer shady seating, ideal for relaxing while enjoying the fountain's play of light and water, which gives this city oasis its special ambience.



fot. arch. UM Elbląg



Beyond **THE CITY**

Just a few kilometres beyond Elbląg lie places rich in history, scenic beauty and unique character. This proximity makes Elbląg a perfect base for day trips – whether you're after an active adventure or a peaceful escape among greenery and views.



fot. Przemysław Rombel

In the Vistula Delta (**Żuławy Wiślane**), between **Raczki Elbląskie** and **Marzęcino**, you can visit Poland's lowest-lying points. For many years Raczki held the record; today it belongs to Marzęcino, where the land lies more than two metres below sea level – a treat for fans of geographical curiosities and unusual records.

A little further on, **Pasłęk** – a 13th-century town with its medieval urban layout preserved – offers not only heritage architecture but also a highly regarded 18-hole golf course, inspired by the finest courses of Scandinavia and Scotland, whose picturesque setting makes every round a pleasure.



fol. Sand Valley

In **Nowakowo** you can see Poland's longest swing bridge, while **Suchacz** is home to a memorial stone commemorating the victorious 1463 naval battle, when the fleets of Elbląg and Gdańsk defeated the Teutonic Order – a landmark event in regional history.

Nestled in forests on the shore of the Vistula Lagoon, **Kadyny** – once an imperial residence – captivates with its striking architecture. This is where

the famous majolica manufactory operated, producing ceramics still prized by collectors today. Nearby **Tolkmicko** boasts a charming harbour with seasonal cruises on the lagoon. Increasingly popular are bicycle railcars (draisines) running along a former railway line that hugs the shoreline – superb views and a great family adventure. It's also worth visiting the Church of St James, which houses relics of St Faustina, St Dominic Savio, and the church's patron, St James.

Astronomy enthusiasts should not miss **Frombork**, closely associated with Nicolaus Copernicus



fol. Przemysław Rombel



– his tomb, the famous Cathedral Hill, and a market square laid out in a heliocentric pattern can all be seen here.

Braniewo, the oldest town in Warmia, is a fine choice for lovers of history and sacred architecture, with the Minor Basilica of St Catherine, remains of the bishop's castle, and monuments of the former Collegium Hosianum – one of the first Jesuit colleges in Poland.





Events with **CHARACTER**

Elbląg pulses with life all year — from summer festivals and open-air concerts to thrilling sports events and a winter market aglow with festive lights. Whatever the season, something is always happening. The calendar features events that have become part of the city's rhythm — shaping its identity, bringing people together and attracting visitors from across the region.



fot. arch. UM Elbląg

Each has its own distinct character – from Dni Elbląga (Elbląg Days), which open the summer season in style, to gatherings for runners, jazz aficionados, food lovers and those who value culture, literature and conversation. This diversity is what makes Elbląg open, dynamic and full of positive energy – all year round.



June – Elbląg Days (Dni Elbląga)

The city's annual celebration with concerts, shows and open-air attractions.

June – Piekarczyk Run (Bieg Piekarczyka)

The region's largest street race – for amateurs and seasoned athletes alike.

July – Jazzbląg

Top-tier jazz in intimate settings and on big stages.

August – Sea Days (Dni Morza)

Waterfront attractions, demonstrations and artistic performances in a maritime mood.



fot. arch. UM Elbląg

August – Elbląg Bread Festival (Elbląskie Święto Chleba)

A bustling market with regional produce, crafts and live music.

September – Gardens of Politics (Ogrody Polityki)

A festival that blends intellectual debate with high-quality artistic entertainment.

September – Bażantarnia Jump & Run

A forest obstacle race for families and adults – sport, fun and adrenaline in the city's green heart.



fot. arch. UM Elbląg



December – Elbląg Christmas Market (Elbląski Jarmark Bożonarodzeniowy)

Festive stalls, concerts and a community Christmas Eve in the city centre.

December / January – New Year's Eve in Style (Sylwester w formie)

A spectacular, multimedia welcome to the New Year – the largest event of its kind in the region.





Elbląg AFTER HOURS

As the pace of the day slows, Elbląg doesn't lose its energy. In the evening the city offers countless ways to spend your time – surrounded by art, music, film and a welcoming atmosphere. Whether you're after a quiet night out or a more immersive cultural experience, you'll find it here.

Classical music lovers can enjoy concerts by the Elbląg Chamber Orchestra (Elbląska Orkiestra Kameralna), which regularly presents a rich repertoire – from renowned masterpieces to less-



er-known gems of Polish music. Each concert is not only a musical occasion but an aesthetic experience, woven into the city's cultural life.

The Aleksander Sewruk Theatre (Teatr im. Aleksandra Sewruka) stages everything from classic drama to contemporary comedy – a meeting place for the spoken word, fine acting and moving stories.

Film fans can choose modern multiplex cinemas or screenings at the European Meeting Centre "Światowid" (Centrum Spotkań Europejskich „Światowid”), which also hosts exhibitions, workshops and cultural events for all ages.

Elbląg after-hours is for those seeking calm, inspiration or a moment of escape within the city.



An evening stroll through the Old Town, seasonal open-air concerts, cultural events, or the inviting ambience of cafés and restaurants – all create a friendly space to unwind, whatever the season or day of the week.

Step by Step WITH "PIEKARCZYK"



Follow the Legend!







Can you find
them all?



**Want to know more?
Drop in, ask,
and stay a little longer!**

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