



Where I eat in Krakow: Kuba Janicki

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Europejska, Stylowa, Jagiellońska - Kuba Janicki despite the prevalent urge to constantly look for something new, offers a journey back in time.

For breakfast: Europejska

During the day, because of its location on the Main Market Square, it is a bustling tourist hub. But if you arrive just after opening at 8am, sit in the furthest nook of their Art Nouveau interior and order Vienna style poached eggs – this is just the quintessential Krakow experience.

For coffee: RIO

Can coffee taste Polish? Can the average age of the bohemian artists and layabouts who sip it be two or three times the age of a standard hipster? It can indeed. In Rio, at Jana Street. This is not a café. It is an institution.

For Sunday lunch: Pod Baranem

Paintings of renowned artists and letters from Nobel literature prize winners including would-be winners alike decorate the walls of this establishment. Tables are full with cultural luminaries sitting next to multi-generation middle-class families and gourmands of various provenance. A busy, classic restaurant with reserved, Parisian-style male waiting staff and excellent traditional cuisine.

For a quick snack: Blue Nysa van

For more than 20 years, a blue Nysa van has been parking every evening in a dodgy neighbourhood close to a railway embankment (for your convenience: Nysa is an old type of car). Two gentlemen carry their barbeque apparatus out of the van and sell grilled sausages to queuing rascals, night owls and a whole array of night shift workers. A one of a kind experience.

For an evening get-together with friends: Stylowa

The oldest restaurant in Nowa Huta – open since 1956 – after 6pm on weekends it transforms into a den of debauchery with raucous dancing. The ghosts of communism still loom large in the room, but it is not a mock show for tourists – the crowd is still predominantly made up of local characters and zesty Nowa Huta ladies in their forties.

For a date: Loch Camelot

It is not even the place itself – although its Krakow-style charm is undisputed – but a certain table to the left of the entrance as you go in, on a raised platform at the window can be easily seen from Tomazsa Street. Here you will be on display for the whole of Krakow to see and that is the whole point, n'est-ce pas?

For something sweet: Jagiellońska patisserie



**Magiczny
Kraków**

In an era of newfangled, cosmopolitan pastries, it is worth dropping in to this cake shop that has ostentatiously ignored the passing of time – since 1933. What creates the atmosphere is the wallpaper, the tables, even the guests, also the more mature ones, giggling over a piece of cake like schoolchildren; finally there is the sweet treats themselves. It is a true parade of timeless temptations. You must try their rum balls!

A place in Krakow where I relax: Drink bar U Jolki

Let me tell you a big secret. Coming back to Krakow from any train journey, instead of heading straight home, I head for the nearby Topolowa Street to this inconspicuous yet convivial establishment. Order a beer, idly sip your brew, and enjoy being back here, in Krakow and not someplace else.

A dish that I strongly associate with Krakow is caraway soup

One's leaning towards caraway is a sure test of an individual's saturation with Krakow – regardless of whether it is due to being born here or your mindset. A true local loves caraway and would willingly rub it all over themselves. A genuine caraway soup is hard to come by these days so I mention it here rather to represent a general trend. It is an example of our weak spot for caraway.

Kuba Janicki, born in 1980 in Krakow, still lives here. Creative director at an advertising agency, formerly a full time journalist in the Krakow media. He occasionally writes wine- and food-related articles and reviews, composes wine lists for restaurants, sometimes cooks for people. An enthusiast of natural wines, offal and honest gastronomy that transcends passing fads.