

# SHTETL ROUTES BELARUS

AUGUST 16-21, 2020



Have you ever heard of a land, where once people spoke Yiddish, prayed in Hebrew, learned Polish and talked in Belarussian with their non-Jewish neighbours? Do you know in which country Yiddish was an official language? Would you like to follow the traces of history?

Come with us on a journey through the forgotten continent and learn more about the Jewish cultural heritage of Belarus – one of the least visited countries in Europe!

## SIGN UP FOR THE TOUR

Rootka Tours and Shtetl Routes invite you for a 6-days study tour to Belarus. The program includes sightseeing of Minsk, day trips to former shtetls, meetings with survivors and local experts, lectures, cultural events and many more. Do not hesitate and join us on this special tour through space, culture, and time.

Our tour will be led by **Tamara Vershitskaya** – a linguist and a Museum researcher, a founder and curator of the Jewish Resistance Museum in Novogrudok, a translator of memoirs of Holocaust survivors; an author of dozens of articles about the Holocaust, the Novogrudok ghetto and the Bielski partisans; an author of the book *Pain and Anger. Holocaust and Resistance in Novogrudok*; a specialist in Jewish cultural heritage in the project 'Shtetl routes. Vestiges of Jewish cultural heritage in cross-border tourism. Poland, Belarus, Ukraine'.

### Itinerary highlights:

- Small and comfortable group (up to 16 participants)
- Meetings with local activists, leaders, and representatives of Jewish communities
- Guidings by local experts
- Optional individual trips based on your hometown interest after/before or during our program



monument to Holocaust victims, Minsk ghetto, Maly Trostenets (former Nazi death camp near Minsk). Visit to the **Minsk Jewish Museum**, possible meeting with a survivor from Minsk ghetto.

- Dinner, night in Minsk

for the Bielski brothers' partisans. Visit: city center, Museum of Jewish Resistance, ruins of the castle, Adam Mickiewicz's monument.

- Dinner, night in Alfa Radon Health Resort

## PROGRAM

### DAY 1, AUGUST 16TH (SUNDAY): ARRIVAL

- Arrival in Minsk on your own before 6 p.m.
- Transfer to the hotel, check-in
- An introduction to the program
- Welcome dinner
- Night in Minsk

### DAY 2, AUGUST 17TH (MONDAY): MINSK

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- A full-day program:  
**Minsk** – the capital city of Belarus heavily destroyed during WWII and rebuilt in Soviet era. Visit: city center, Independence Square, the Parliament building, part of Independence Ave, Russian theatre (the building of the former main synagogue), Jewish district, the Pit (Yama)

### DAY 3, AUGUST 18TH (TUESDAY): VOLOZHIN – NALIBOKI FOREST

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- A full-day program:  
**Volozhyn** – a town known as a motherland of all yeshivot, one of the graduates of the Volozhyn yeshiva was a great Hebrew poet Haim Nachman Bialik. Visit: yeshiva building, Jewish cemetery.  
**Naliboki Forest** – the Bielski partisans' camp site, during WWII known as the Jerusalem Forest – the largest Jewish partisan unit in Europe formed by the Bielski brothers (Hollywood movie *Defiance* with Daniel Craig was based on this story). Visit: Bielski brothers' partisan camp site, a private mikvah in Naliboki.
- Dinner, night in Minsk

### DAY 4, AUGUST 19TH (WEDNESDAY): MIR – NAVAHHRUDOK

- Breakfast at the hotel, check out.
- A full-day program:  
**Mir** – UNESCO World Heritage Site. Visit: former synagogue complex, Yeshiva building, Mir castle (from the outside), a local private museum  
**Navahrudok** – the cradle of Belarussian statehood and a birthplace of a famous poet Adam Mickiewicz; a town known for a successful escape of 250 people from the ghetto through an underground tunnel and

### DAY 5, AUGUST 20TH (THURSDAY): BARANAVICHY – SLONIM

- Breakfast at the hotel, check out.
- A full-day program:  
**Baranavichy** – by many known from Max Reichardt song, who sang *A nice shtetl, a small shtetl, beautiful, my dear town – Baranovich*. Visit: a yeshiva building (sport school today), a former synagogue building, a memorial stone at the ghetto site, local museum, optional visit to the Memorial in Gai to the murdered Jews from Vienna.  
**Slonim** – a town with a history dating back to the mid-13th century, known mainly for a beautiful preserved 17th-century baroque style synagogue. Visit: Main Synagogue, city center, a former Zionist synagogue.
- Optional visit to **Dzyatlovo (Zhetl)**, an example of a typical shtetl
- Diner, night in Alfa Radon Health Resort

### DAY 6, AUGUST 21ST (FRIDAY): NYASVIZH – MINSK

- Transfer to Minsk. Optional on the way:  
**Nyasvizh (Nesvizh)** – a place known as a residence of the Radziwill family, one of the most beautiful residences of former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth with rich and diverse architecture and attractive gardens. Today, by many considered the most popular tourist attraction in Belarus. Visit: Radziwill Palace.
- Arrival to Minsk around 4 p.m (optional transfer to the hotel or to the airport).
- The end of the tour.





**Details:** The program is conducted in English, therefore participants are required to have good English skills.

**The program includes:**

- 3 nights with breakfasts in Minsk in a 4-star hotel (double room\*),
- 2 nights with breakfasts, lunch boxes and dinner in Alfa Radon Health Resort (double room\*),
- transportation within the program,
- 5 dinners (3 dinners include 3 dishes and a cold drink, 2 dinners at Alfa Radon – a buffet),
- snacks and water on the bus during trips outside Minsk,
- full-time tour leader and expert,
- guided tours and meetings with local experts,
- educational materials,
- travel insurance on the territory of Belarus (medical insurance policy with coverage for 10 000 euros).

**Services not included:**

- travel to and back from Minsk,
- transfers from the airport (optional for 30 \$ one way)
- transfers outside of the announced arrival and departure dates,
- pre or post-tour hotels or other accommodation,
- meals and services not mentioned above,
- personal expenses,
- tips for guides and drivers,
- visa fee (if applicable).

\* single supplement is 600 PLN (around 150 \$)

**Price:**

4400 PLN (approx. 1150 \$) if you sign up before February 1st, 2020  
 4800 PLN (approx. 1250 \$) if you sign up after February 1st, 2020

**Deposit: Payment:**

A deposit of 2000 PLN (approx. 520 \$) per traveler is required to sign up for the tour. To sign up for the tour, each traveler must fill in the reservation form and make a deposit of 2000 PLN. Your deposit is fully refundable until April 20th, 2020. The second payment has to be paid no later than May 20th, 2020.



**Cancellation and refunds:**

The Participant shall bear the following costs in case of cancellation:

- a) 20% of the value of the canceled reservation – for 120 or more days before the arrival,
- b) 40% of the value of the canceled reservation – for 90-119 days before the arrival,
- c) 60% of the value of the canceled reservation – for 65-81 days before the arrival,
- d) 80% of the value of the canceled reservation – for 31-64 days before the arrival,
- e) 100% of the value of the canceled reservation – for less than 30 days before the arrival.

Shtetl Routes Belarus is a study tour prepared for the 2020 season together with Shtetl Routes project experts, organized in cooperation with the „Grodzka Gate – NN Theatre” Center.

The „Grodzka Gate – NN Theatre” Center is a municipal culture institution based in Lublin, which for the last 28 years has been working in the area of Jewish historical and cultural heritage and commemoration of the Shoah. [www.teatrnn.pl](http://www.teatrnn.pl)

Shtetl Routes is one of the Center’s projects, aimed to support the development of cultural tourism based on the Jewish heritage in Central and Eastern Europe. [www.shtetlroutes.eu](http://www.shtetlroutes.eu)

ROOTKA Tours is a travel agency specializing in tailor-made tours and bookings related to Jewish heritage sites in Poland, Ukraine and Belarus. [www.rootkatours.com](http://www.rootkatours.com)

**VISA TO BELARUS**

To enter Belarus you need a passport. The passport must be valid for at least 90 days beyond the intended date of departure from the Republic of Belarus.

According to the Presidential Decree, effective from July 27th, 2018, foreign citizens of 74 countries can enter Belarus without a visa for up to 30 days and exit from the territory of Belarus only through the State border checkpoint of the Republic of Belarus “Minsk National Airport”. The given order of visa-free movement through the airport does not extend to persons coming to Belarus by plane from the Russian Federation, as well as to those who intend to fly to the airports of the Russian Federation (such flights are considered as internal ones and do not have border control).

More information about visa-free movement you can find [here](#).

**Contact:**

Agata Radkowska-Parka:  
[info@rootkatours.com](mailto:info@rootkatours.com)  
 +48 720 88 55 33, skype: rootkatours  
[www.rootkatours.com](http://www.rootkatours.com)

