

SEPTEMBER 2009

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**POLISH  
CINEMA  
WEEKEND IN  
LODZ**  
WORDS  
TIM RICHARDS

Once a textile factory, Manufaktura is now an entertainment hub

Poland's second-largest city used to be an industrial centre, but visit "Holly-Woodge" today and you'll discover it's alive with cinematic and artistic endeavour

#### FRIDAY

Check into Qubus Hotel Łódź (from €60, book at [hotels.easyjet.com](http://hotels.easyjet.com)) and start your visit to Poland's second-largest city by strolling along the main drag, Ulica Piotrkowska. The Industrial Revolution transformed the city into a mighty player in textile manufacturing, and Piotrkowska became lined with graceful art nouveau buildings. Statues of famous locals line the street, among them the pianist Arthur Rubinstein, seated at a piano bearing a giant outstretched wing.

Another attraction along Piotrkowska is the Walk of Fame. Łódź has long been the centre of the Polish film industry, and these

plaques honour noted movie practitioners. For more movie madness, head a few blocks east to the Cinematography Museum (*1 Plac Zwycięstwa*, [www.kinomuzeum.pl](http://www.kinomuzeum.pl)), housed in an impressive 19th-century mansion once owned by a German cotton baron. Have dinner back on Piotrkowska at Chłopska Izba (*65 Ulica Piotrkowska*), a great place to be introduced to traditional, hearty Polish food. If you fancy a spot of nightlife afterwards, Bagdad Café (*45 Ulica Jaracza*) is a lively, alternative music joint.

#### SATURDAY

Begin the day with a trip into the past at the History Museum (*15 Ulica Ogrodowa*,

[www.muzeum-lodz.pl](http://www.muzeum-lodz.pl)), which is in the magnificent Poznański Palace, named after Izrael Poznański, the city's greatest 19th-century industrialist and "king of cotton".

Just to the west is Manufaktura (*5 Ulica Karskiego*, [www.manufaktura.com](http://www.manufaktura.com)). This vast, red-brick complex was once Poznański's textile factory, and reopened in 2006 as an architecturally dazzling shopping and entertainment centre. Grab lunch at Pierrogeria (*5 Ulica Karskiego*, [www.pierrogeria.com.pl](http://www.pierrogeria.com.pl)), which specialises in the humble Polish dumpling. Then walk to 2 Plac Wolności to join Detka for a fascinating tour of the original red-brick sewer system beneath the city's streets. >



Clockwise from here, MS2 art museum; central Łódź; entrance to the Cinematography Museum

Next, experience a sombre element of Łódź's history by taking a taxi to the vast Jewish Cemetery (40 Ulica Bracka, [www.jewishlodz.cemetery.org](http://www.jewishlodz.cemetery.org)) in the city's northeast. The 160,000 graves underline the importance of the Jewish community to Łódź's development.

Returning to the centre, sample Japanese cuisine at Hana Sushi (72 Ulica Piotrkowska, [www.hanasushi.pl](http://www.hanasushi.pl)) and then head out to the Piotrkowska Klub 97 (97 Ulica Piotrkowska, [www.97.com.pl](http://www.97.com.pl)) down the street and snuggle into one of its glamorous wood-panelled booths for a nightcap.

#### SUNDAY

Poland has a notable history of artistic endeavour, so start your Sunday by visiting two galleries. The Museum of Art's newest premises, known as MS2 (19 Ulica Ogrodowa, [www.msl.org.pl](http://www.msl.org.pl)), contains a cutting-edge collection of 20th- and 21st-century art, displayed by theme rather than chronology. Its original branch (36

Ulica Więckowskiego) houses the colourful Neoplastic Room, designed by artist Władysław Strzemiński in 1948.

Have lunch at Anatewka (2/4 Ulica 6 Sierpnia, [www.anatewka.pl](http://www.anatewka.pl)). Its menu is inspired by Jewish culinary tradition, with some playfully titled dishes such as Rothschild's duck in cherries.

In the afternoon, wind up a culturally rich weekend by taking a taxi to the Herbst Palace (72 Ulica Przędzalniana, [www.msl.org.pl](http://www.msl.org.pl)). Yet another former residence of a wealthy industrialist, this restored mansion showcases Łódź's 19th-century culture.

Your time in Poland's great industrial city is drawing to a close, so treat yourself to some memorable sweet, filled crêpes and coffee at Café Lulu (72 Ulica Piotrkowska, [www.cafelulu.pl](http://www.cafelulu.pl)), before bidding a *fond do widzenia* (farewell) to Łódź.

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## ★ GET YOUR FIX OF LODZ FILMS

Since its National Film School was established in 1948, Łódź has been Poland's cinematic hub. In fact, as the city's name is pronounced "Woodge", there's been many a pun on Holly-Woodge. Here are some of the directors and films most associated with the film school and the city:

#### ★ Roman Polański

Polański achieved Hollywood success with *Rosemary's Baby* and *Chinatown*. His 2002 wartime movie, *The Pianist* (pictured), won three Oscars.

#### ★ Krzysztof Kieślowski

This director is best known for his *Three Colours* trilogy, made in the 1990s.

#### ★ Andrzej Wajda

Wajda's 1981 *Man of Iron* won the Palme d'Or at Cannes. He was awarded an honorary Oscar in 2000.

#### ★ Promised Land

This 1975 film by Wajda depicted Łódź in its industrial heyday at the turn of the 20th century.