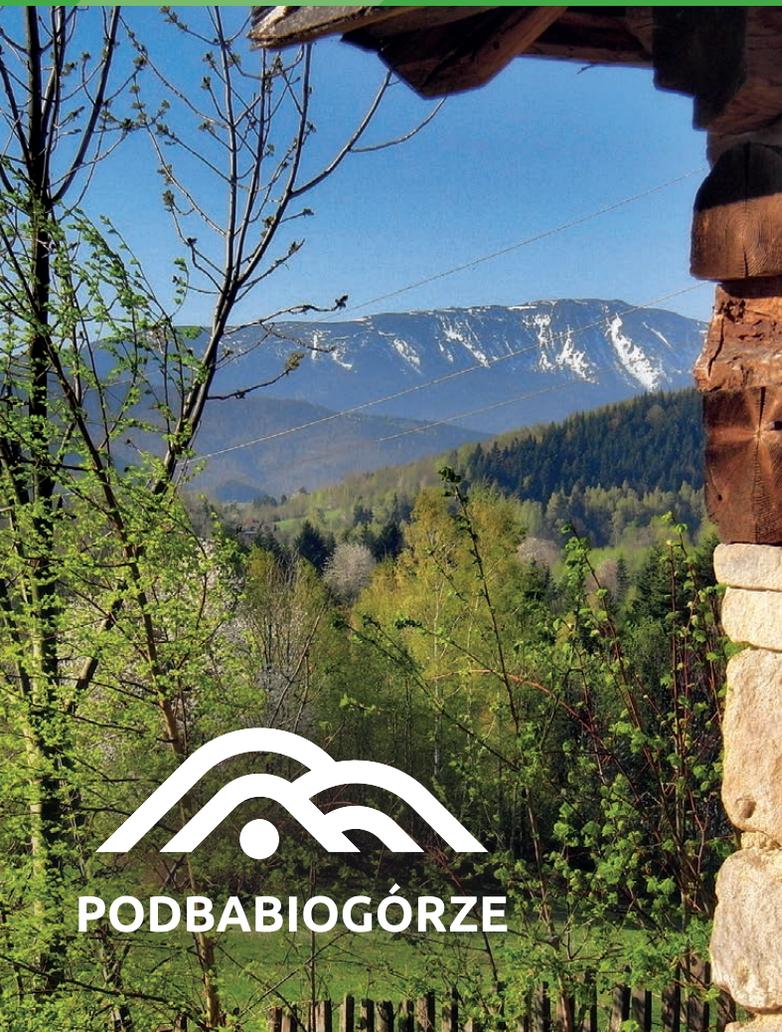
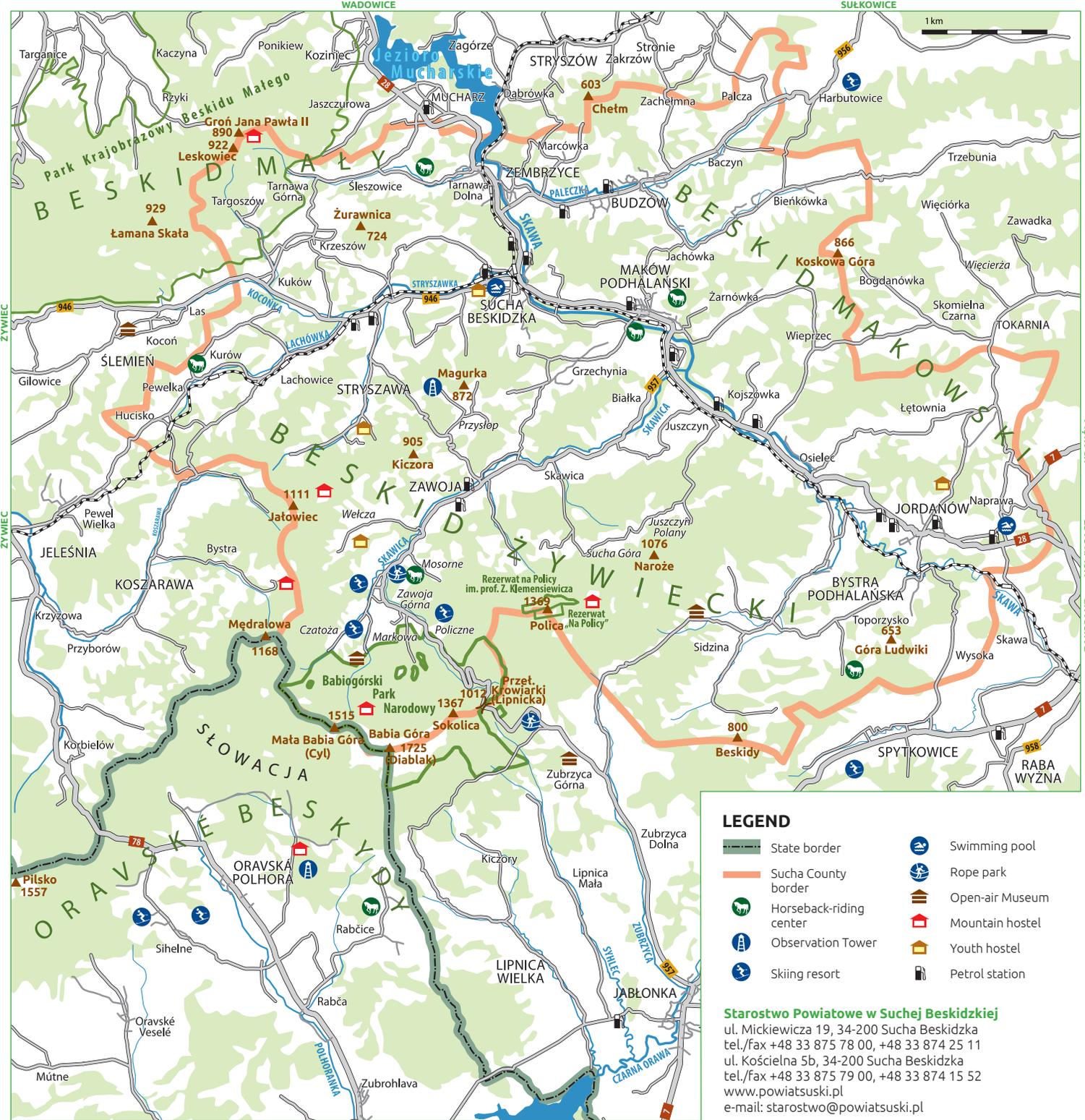


Podbabiogórze

SUCHA COUNTY



PODBABIOGÓRZE



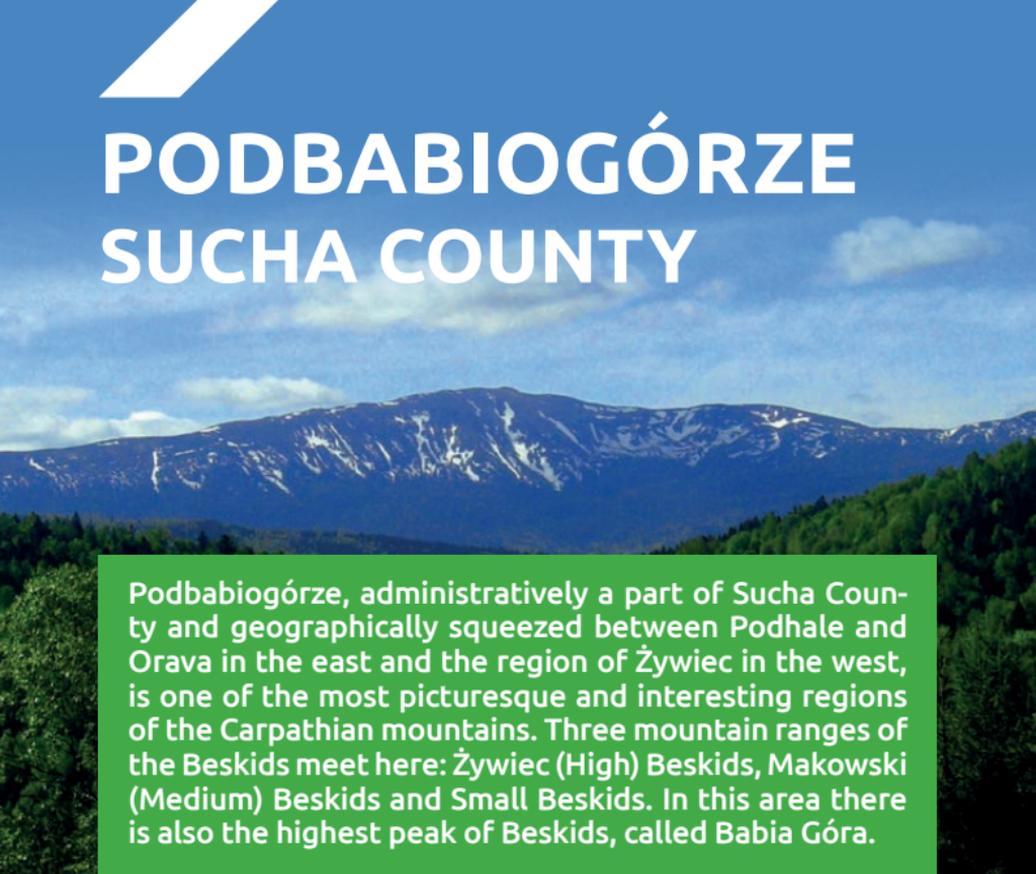
LEGEND

-  State border
-  Sucha County border
-  Horseback-riding center
-  Observation Tower
-  Skiing resort
-  Swimming pool
-  Rope park
-  Open-air Museum
-  Mountain hostel
-  Youth hostel
-  Petrol station

Starostwo Powiatowe w Suchej Beskidzkiej
 ul. Mickiewicza 19, 34-200 Sucha Beskidzka
 tel./fax +48 33 875 78 00, +48 33 874 25 11
 ul. Kościelna 5b, 34-200 Sucha Beskidzka
 tel./fax +48 33 875 79 00, +48 33 874 15 52
 www.powiatsuski.pl
 e-mail: starostwo@powiatsuski.pl



PODBABIOGÓRZE SUCHA COUNTY



Podbabiogórze, administratively a part of Sucha County and geographically squeezed between Podhale and Orava in the east and the region of Żywiec in the west, is one of the most picturesque and interesting regions of the Carpathian mountains. Three mountain ranges of the Beskids meet here: Żywiec (High) Beskids, Makowski (Medium) Beskids and Small Beskids. In this area there is also the highest peak of Beskids, called Babia Góra.



It is worthwhile to visit this part of the Polish mountains as it is not yet spoiled by mass tourism, which means it is still a quiet, safe and inexpensive tourist destination. The region offers breathtaking landscapes, fascinating and valuable nature, as well as numerous opportunities for practicing active tourism all year round. It is the region of a lavish folklore and a genuine tradition, full of interesting sites and remarkable monuments of architecture. You can also enjoy excellent cuisine and have fun in local inns and taverns. Tourists, who decide to stay in Podbabiogórze for slightly longer, will find numerous opportunities to visit nearby fascinating objects listed by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites or World Network of Biosphere Reserves, e.g. the city of Cracow, Wieliczka and Bochnia (medieval salt mines), Auschwitz or a famous pilgrimage centre of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska. Podbabiogórze is also a perfect starting point for one-day trips to Zakopane, the Tatras, or the Pieniny mountains with an exciting rafting trip along the river Dunajec. You can also explore the nearby Slovakia, especially the areas south of the Babia Góra mountain. One can get from the village of Zawoja on the Polish side to Oravska Polhora on the Slovak side on foot along marked tourist trails or by bike along the trans-border mountain trail.

Sucha County is part of Małopolska Voivodship and consists of 9 municipalities, including two towns (Sucha Beskidzka, the seat of County Administration, and Jordanów), one urban-rural community (Maków Podhalański) and six rural communities (Budzów, Bystra-Sidzina, Jordanów, Stryszawa, Zawoja and Zembrzyce), with the total of 37 settlements.

NATURAL BEAUTY of PODBABIÓGÓRZE

Podbabiogórze is a region of rich and diverse nature. Beautiful forests cover nearly half the area. Several particularly valuable natural reserves of Sucha County remain under a special protection.

The massif of Babia Góra (1,725 m) is a characteristic symbol of the region, a dominating feature of its topography and a major tourist attraction of Sucha County. In order to preserve its unique landscape and natural habitats, the **Babia Góra National Park** was established in 1954, also listed in UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves since 1976. Nearly 1/3 of the park's area (1125.82 hectares) remains under a special protection. Easily observable model layers of alpine flora habitats, changing with altitude, appear in the National Park: the highlands, the lower forest belt (700–1,150 m), the upper forest belt (1,150–1,350 m), the dwarf pine belt (1,350–1,650 m) and the alpine belt (1,650–1,725 m), the latter to be seen in Poland only here and in the Tatras and Karkonosze (Giant) mountains.

The National Park has a lavish floral habitat, e.g. more than 70 species of rare alpine plants, like Wulfen (*Laserpitium archangelica*), a symbol of the Park, or Alpine chickweed (*Cerastium alpinum*), which appears only in this very region of Poland. There is also a diverse world of fauna in the reserve, e.g. bears, wolves or a permanent resident of the massif, a lynx.

The Babia Góra National Park offers 9 educational paths presenting its natural beauty and the cultural heritage of local people.

There are also two other natural reserves in Sucha County: “**Prof. Zenon Klemensiewicz Natural Reserve in Polica**” (with the area of 58.7 hectares, in the commune of Zawoja) and “**Na Policy**” **Natural Reserve** (with the area of 13.21 hectares, in the commune of Bystra-Sidzina). They are both forest reserves, whose aim is a conservation



of upper spruce forest belt with the habitat of protected animal species. North-western part of Sucha County (the upper parts of the Leskowice and Łamana Skąła mountains along with their southern and south-eastern slopes in the communes of Zembrzyce and Stryszawa) constitute the **Small Beskids Landscape Park**, established in 1998,



whose aim is to preserve the natural and landscape values of the mountain range, as well as the cultural heritage of local highlanders.

South-eastern territories of Podbabiogórze are part of the vast **Protected Landscape Area of South Małopolska**, which includes extremely attractive natural habitats and landscapes of the province.

Several areas of Sucha County also belong to the European international network of "Nature 2000".

The natural beauty of Podbabiogórze is not only to be found within the above-mentioned protected zones as there are also numerous monuments of nature spread all over the region. The most interesting examples include: four old oaks in the village of Sidzina, according to tradition planted from the seeds provided by King John Casimir at the site of the battle between local peasants of Sidzina and the Swedish armed forces during the Swedish invasion of Poland (1655-1660), as well as a magnificent "Sobieski" elm in Sucha Beskidzka, according to a legend planted by King Jan III Sobieski during his triumphant return from Vienna in 1683. Another interesting monument of nature are the so-called "Goat Rocks" on Żurawnica mountain (727 m) above the village of Krzeszów, forming a large rock crest of several hundred meters.

The region owes its exceptional charm also to swift mountain streams, forming picturesque rock thresholds and cascades. The biggest and the most beautiful is the **waterfall on the Mosorny Creek** in Zawoja, Also a little smaller, but equally spectacular, **waterfall on Uporny Creek** in Stryżawa Roztoki, near the yellow trail leading to the Jałowiec mountain (1,111 m), is worth seeing. In the village of Skawica, there is the longest hitherto explored cave of the Żywiec Beskids, the **Oblica Cave**, located below the hill of Śmietarniak (768 m). The cave consists of numerous narrow headings and corridors with a total length of 430 m.



LEISURE AND ACTIVE TOURISM

Sucha County is a perfect tourist destination for hiking tours in Żywiec, Makowski and Small Beskids. The area is covered with a dense network of fascinating tourist trails of various level of difficulty, which will satisfy both young and elderly, as well as highly advanced hikers and visitors enjoying easy routes, where they can just contemplate beautiful views and pristine nature.

Beyond any doubt, it is the Babia Góra mountain (1,725 m), the highest peak of the Western Beskids, that is the biggest attraction of the region. It is called "the Queen of Beskids" as it is a magnificent and one-of-the-kind massif, from the rocky top of which you can admire a breathtaking panorama, not to be found anywhere else in Poland. The panorama is especially beautiful during sunrise and attracts thousands of visitors every year. Tourists can climb the peak of Babia Góra along one of numerous hiking trails of varied difficulty. The most demanding and exciting route is the so-called "Students' Path" (Pol. "*Perć Akademików*"), the only alpine climbing trail equipped with buckles and chains in Poland outside the High Tatra mountains. Climbers and hikers can also visit the Polica Range, covered with thick forests, connected with the massif of Babia Góra mountain through the Krowiarki Pass (1,012 m).

The Jałowiec Range, which is slightly lower than both the Babia Góra and Polica mountains, offers very attractive landscapes with enchanting panoramas of the nearby massif of "The Queen of Beskids".

The northern part of Sucha County embraces lower mountain groups, like Small and Makowski Beskids (the highest peaks of those ranges do not exceed 1,000 m). Owing to their accessibility and picturesque panoramas, they are a perfect destination for short and relaxing half-day trips. One of the most famous peaks of Small Beskids is Leskowiec (922 m), which was frequently climbed by Karol Wojtyła, the later Pope John Paul II, in his youth, when he lived in the nearby town of Wadowice. The Pontiff and the Saint is



commemorated in the Mountain Shrine erected just below the peak in the place named in his honor as “Groń Jana Pawła II” (890 m above sea level).

Sucha County offers numerous attractions not only to hikers and backpackers. Also mountain bike lovers will find numerous opportunities for active pastime in the region. Numerous bicycle trails, mostly mountain trails, have been marked in Podbabiogórze. In 2018, 20 kilometers of a single-track type complex of mountain bike trails, called “**Babia Góra Trails**”, was opened. It has a trans-border character and links Zawoja with Oravska Polhora in Slovakia. It is one of the best such complexes in Poland.

In addition, two long-distance cycling trails run through the area: the **Amber Trail** (Budapest – Kraków – Gdańsk) and the **Main Carpathian Bike Trail**.

The picturesque landscapes of Podbabiogórze can be also admired from a horseback. The Trans-Beskid Horseback Riding Trail of the Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Association (PTTK) runs along the roads and paths of the southern part of Sucha County. Also the

Babia Góra Horse-Riding Trail with a total length of approx. 200 km and many local horse-riding centers *en route*, leads through the most beautiful spots of the region.

Clean and swift waters of mountain rivers and creeks in Podbabiogórze encourage holidaymakers to have a refreshing swim in the summer time. Also the Lake Mucharskie in the northern part of the coun-



ty, which has been recently opened to the public, offers numerous sports and leisure opportunities. The still developing facilities on its shores encourage water sports lovers to visit the place.

Throughout the year, regardless of the temperature and weather, tourists visiting Sucha County can enjoy public indoor swimming pools in Sucha Beskidzka and Naprawa.

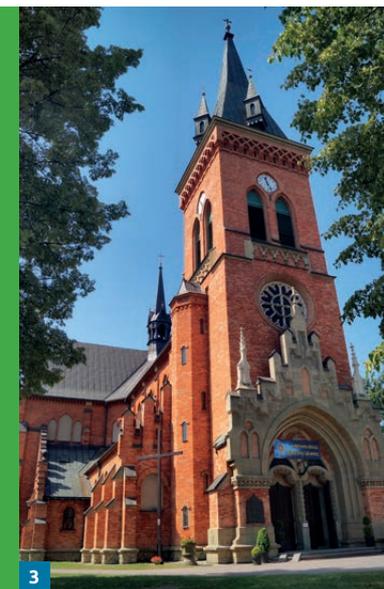
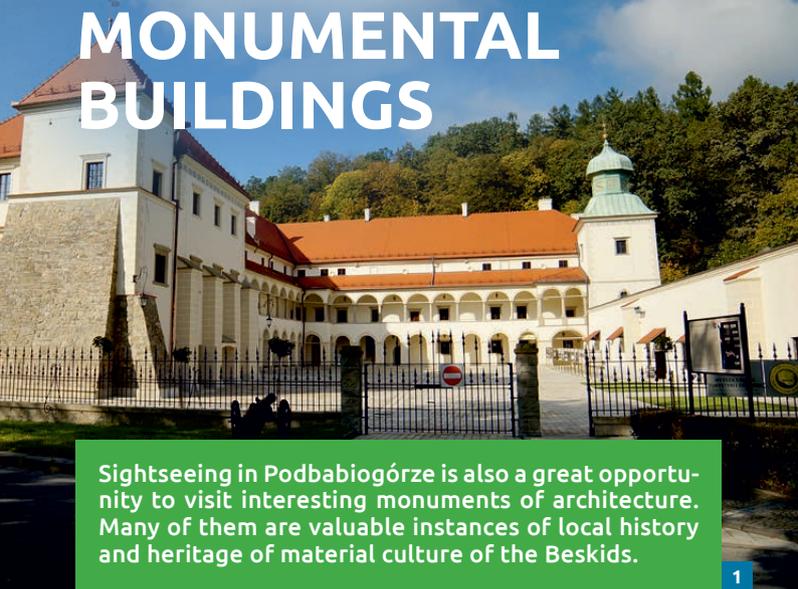
In winter, the visitors to Podbabiogórze certainly will not be bored. Zawoja, one of the biggest villages in Poland, beautifully situated at the foot of the picturesque Babia Góra massif, is the main resort for winter tourism and winter sports in the region. Skiing freaks will definitely enjoy the four-seat chairlift and many downhill ski routes of the “Mosorny Groń” Skiing Resort (the longest route has 1,420 m). In addition, there are a few other, smaller ski lifts in Zawoja. The fans of ski touring can take advantage of three trails with a total length of about 7 km, running along the foot of the Babia Góra mountain. Hiking and cross-country skiing is also possible along numerous unmarked routes in the local forests in other parts of the county.

In recent years, winter snowshoe tours are becoming increasingly popular. In the massif of Babia Góra and the nearby Polica mountain range, several convenient snowshoeing trails have been marked lately. Professional equipment can be rented in the local mountain hostels, e.g. “PTTK Markowe Szczawiny” and “PTTK Hala Krupowa”.

Tourists visiting Podbabiogórze in winter can also use artificial skating rinks in Sucha Beskidzka and Zawoja.

The charm of winter in the Beskids can also be admired during traditional sledging cavalcades organized in winter season in several villages.

MONUMENTAL BUILDINGS



The most famous monumental building in the region is the castle and park complex in Sucha Beskidzka. The Renaissance residence, commonly referred to as “Little Wawel” **1**, was erected as a defense manor by Gaspar Castiglione-Suski already in the second half of the 16th century. Soon the subsequent owner of Sucha, Piotr Komorowski, transformed the manor into a magnificent lordly residence. The castle is a three-wing massive construction of local broken stone and brick, with large rectangular courtyard surrounded by impressive two-storey arcades. For several centuries the castle functioned as the administrative, economic and cultural center of the domain called “the state of Sucha”, which was in the hands of famous Polish aristocratic families of Komorowski, Wielopolski, Branicki and Tarnowski. Currently southern wing of the castle houses the Municipal Museum of Sucha Beskidzka, a local center of culture, an art gallery and a tourist information office. Also a hotel, a restaurant and the University College of Tourism and Ecology function in the building. A romantic English-style landscape park with its original early 19th century layout, with a neo-gothic orangery and the so-called Gardener’s Lodge, today housing an ethnographic exhibition, is located on the southern side of the castle complex.

Another interesting late 16th/early 17th century monument of architecture is a defense manor in Wysoka **15** near Jordanów. The late Renaissance building changed its function into a lordly residence during late 18th century reconstruction

Also a church and a cloister complex in Sucha Beskidzka is worth visiting, consisting of the so-called “old” church (erected 1613-1614)

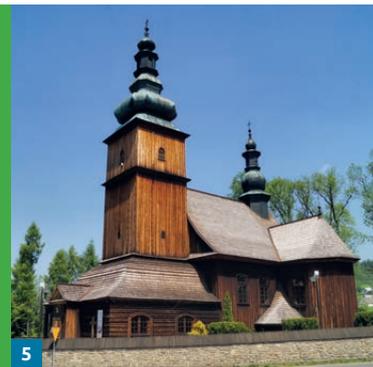
connected with former cloister of regular canons (currently a rectory) **2** and three 17th century chapels (one with a belfry) **16**, as well as the early 20th century “new” church, all surrounded by a stone wall with an entrance gate. The “old” church is a single-nave Late Gothic building with Renaissance ornamental elements. The “new” church is one of the finest designs of the famous Polish architect, Teodor Talowski, described as “the Polish Gaudi”, in his characteristic style called the “picturesque eclecticism”, resorting to monumental medieval architecture, combining Gothic and Romanesque details.

Other examples of interesting architectural realizations in the region are several brick monumental buildings in Jordanów, designed by a famous Polish architect, Jan Sas-Zubrzycki. All of them are characteristic red brick buildings with Neo-Gothic and Neo-Romanesque details. They are the late 19th century corner building with a tower, the early 20th century town hall and the Trinity Church **3**, a famous Marian Shrine with a miraculous image of Our Lady of Jordanów. Another famous and oft-visited Marian shrine in the region is the Transfiguration Church in Maków Podhalański **17**, rebuilt in the years 1828-33, with the 16th century miraculous image of Our Lady of Maków (Madonna of Family Care and Queen of Families) in the main altar. Other interesting examples of brick sacral architecture in Sucha County include: Trinity Church in Bieńkówka (1793), St. Nicholas Church in Sidzina (1815-1825) and Saints Philip and James Church in Osielec (1838-1855).

Małopolska Wooden Architecture Trail passes through Sucha County, connecting the finest objects of folk wooden architecture in



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the region, e.g. Saints Peter and Paul Church in Lachowice **4**, one of the most precious monuments of sacral wooden architecture in the province of Małopolska. Erected in the years 1789-1791, the church is a single-nave log construction with wood shingle roofing and a massive tower with a spherical crown. There are characteristic low arcades surrounding the building from outside with the Stations of the Cross from 1846. The church interior represents Baroque-Classical style.

Another interesting example of wooden sacral architecture is the Saints Apostles Simon and Jude Church in Łętownia **5**, erected in the years 1760-65 in the site of two previous churches built in the 15th and 16th century respectively. The current building is a single-nave log construction (one of the biggest such buildings in the Beskids), with two side chapels and a massive square tower with a spherical crown with a cupola on its top. There are also low arcades attached to the tower with two new chapels. The church interior represents a Baroque-Rococo style.

Saint Clement Church in Zawoja **6**, erected in 1888 as a foundation of the then-owner of the village, Archduke Albrecht Habsburg, stands on the site of the previous mid-18th century wooden church, preserving part of its original layout. Built in the form of a basilica, it is a single-nave church with two side aisles, a transept, a presbytery separated from three sides and a four-storey tower. The Baroque and Late Baroque church interior is furnished and decorated with mostly 18th century objects.

Wooden inn called "Rzym" ("the Rome") in Sucha Beskidzka **7**, erected in 18th century, is a single-storey log construction covered with a hipped shingle roof with a ridge. In its



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front there are characteristic low arcades supported with carved wooden columns with open-work balustrades and hanging metal ornaments. The building owes its today's glamour to a complete renovation carried out in 1960s. The tavern is also widely known for its literary connotations: it was prototypical for the inn described in the famous ballad of Adam Mickiewicz featuring a legendary figure of Twardowski, a nobleman who, like Goethe's Faust, entered a pact with the devil. According to the literary tradition, it was exactly here, at the market square in Sucha, where Twardowski met the cunning Mephisto.

Open-air Museum in Sidzina – Museum of Folk Culture is a small complex of wooden objects, opened in 1963, presenting an early 19th century wooden farmer's cottage of the Banasiki family, an old cottage of Anna Kozioł of Spytkowice, erected in 1901, a late 18th century dwelling of Voyt Maj (a village head of Sidzina), a typical late 19th peasants' cottage, a granary (called "górką" in a local dialect) from 1897 **8**, a fully equipped 19th century smithy from Sidzina Górna, an early 20th century water-mill, and a Loreto belfry from Sidzina Wielka Polana, erected in 1937. The most precious exhibit of the museum, the cottage of Banasiki, is a log construction with wood shingle roofing and stone fundaments with cellars. The interior of the cottage traditionally consists of a 'black' chamber (called



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"piekarnia" in local dialect), a 'white' chamber (called "świątynia"), an additional chamber, which served as a warehouse, and a space in the attic (called "wyska"), which served as a small home granary. Inside the cottage there is an exposition of typical 19th century furniture and equipment used by peasant dwellers.

Józef Żak Open-air Museum in Zawoja **9** was established in 1973. The most precious building of this small museum, located in the outskirts of Babia Góra National Park, is a chimneyless cabin of Franciszek Stopniak, built in 1802-1815 of fir and spruce logs on a low stone foundation with a cellar, and covered with a gable shingle roof. The exhibition also presents a cottage of Franciszek Kudzia (erected in 1900, preserved in its original location) and a cottage of Stefan Gancarczyk (1910). Apart from typical peasants' dwellings there are also a smithy, a detached granary with a small cellar and a wayside shrine with the figure of Our Lady in the collection. The oldest cabin has been transformed into an ethnographic exhibition showing furniture and household equipment used by peasants, whereas the cottage of Franciszek Kudzia houses an exhibition presenting the history of tourism in the Carpathian mountains.

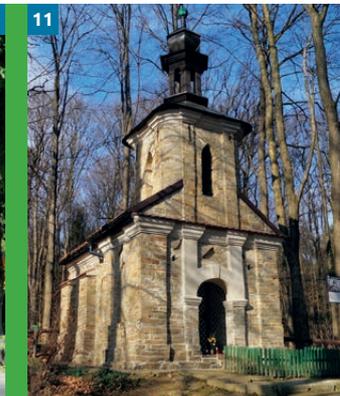
Podbabiogórze is also known for numerous objects of small sacral architecture. One of the most precious such buildings is the early 19th century roadside chapel of John the Baptist in Zawoja Policzne, also called "Highland Robbers' Chapel" **10**, with a characteristic shingle roofing with a spherical dome with a cupola on its top.

Other interesting examples of small sacral architecture include: the Chapel of Bar Confederates in the Jasień mountain (Sucha Beskidzka) **11** and the Filasowa Chapel in Maków Podhalański and the chapel in Śleszowice. Also numerous wayside shrines placed on trees, columns or pedestals, dating back even to 18th century, are very characteristic for the region.

Tourists visiting Podbabiogórze can also visit elegant wooden villas, e.g. early 20th century holiday homes in Zawoja, Maków Podhalański or Sucha Beskidzka, as well as 19th century wooden villas, the former seats of forest administration (Stryszawa, Sucha Beskidzka, Zawoja).



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LAVISH FOLKLORE AND TRADITIONS



Podbabiogórze surprises visitors with an exceptionally lavish cultural heritage. From a historical and ethnographical point of view, three groups of highlanders can be distinguished in the region. The largest of them are the Babia Góra Highlanders **12**, dwelling in the south of Sucha County. The western outskirts of the region is inhabited by the Żywiec Highlanders **13**, whereas the eastern and north-eastern territories of the county are inhabited by Kliszczaki **14**.

Nowadays, this division is to a large degree purely traditional and is practically reflected only in local folklore cultivated by regional music bands, folk dance ensembles, farmer's wives' associations and other cultural societies. In Sucha County there are more than a dozen folk bands and ensembles, including "Babiogórcy", "Juzyna" and "Cieślica" from Zawoja, "Zbójnik" from Skawica, "Babiogórzanie – Polana Makowska" from Maków Podhalański, "Zbyrcok" and "Zbyrcoczek" from Skawica, "Ziemia Suska" and "Kapela Mała Ziemia Suska" from Sucha Beskidzka, "Stryszawskie Gronicki" from Stryszawa, "Holniki" from Sidzina and "Budzowskie Kliszczaki" from Budzów.

Genuine folk music and dance of Podbabiogórze belong to and resort to the cultural heritage of Polish Highlanders, creating a fascinating fusion of shepherds' culture with highland robbers' customs. The latter subject appears in many local couplets, whose most famous hero is the highland robbers' gang leader, Józef Baczyński of Skawica, executed in Cracow in 1735. The Austrian botanist and specialist on regional geography, J. A. Schultes, during his exploration of the area north of the Babia Góra mountain, wrote in 1806 that the local highlanders were "(...) still walking around with their typical axes in the hands, able to use this tool perfectly; (...) they do not put it away even when dancing, and you can be sure that they are ready to throw it at any time and will hit the target precisely even from the distance of 40 steps." Nowadays dangerous "armed"



12



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dwellers of Podbabiogórze cannot be seen on a daily basis any more, as tourists are welcome with open arms and a friendly smile. However, the visitors can get to know the local genuine customs and traditions better during numerous folk festivals and other cultural events organized in Sucha County. The most important annual folk events include: Week of Beskid Culture, Babia Góra Autumn Festival, Folk Toy Festival, County Harvest Feast, "Babiogórskie Podtazy" – a caroling contest, and "Podbabiogórskie Posiady" – County Contest of Folk Storytellers, Singers and Instrumentalists. Throughout the year, particular communes of Sucha County organize their own cultural and sports events, e.g. Days of Sucha, Days of Maków Podhalański, Days of Jordanów Region, Days of Budzów, Zembrzyce Community Festival, Days of Zawoja, Tree Festival in Bystra-Sidzina and Village Contest in Jordanów.



TRADITIONAL HANDICRAFT

Podbabiogórze is famous internationally for its traditional folk wooden toys, especially colorful toy birds and horses, the manufacturing of which began already in mid 19th century, when one of the oldest and most important centers of wooden toy handicraft in Poland emerged here, referred to as "Żywiec-Sucha center for folk wooden toy" by ethnographers. Through the decades, various hand-made toy patterns appeared, produced in significant amounts by the local artists and craftsmen.

The oldest folk toys include rattles, horse-pulled carts, toy farmer's carts and cradles. They were ornamented with painted or carved geometric and floral motives. In early 20th century, hobbyhorses, horses on wheels, carousels with horses, as well as birds on wheels (called "klepoki") emerged. Nowadays, the various types of toy birds enjoy the greatest popularity, e.g. hoopoes, waxwings, goldfinches, cuckoos, woodpeckers, finches, pheasants, bullfinches, nightingales, owls, magpies, falcons, etc. The hand-made wooden toy birds, with their almost a century's long tradition in this area, have become a flagship folk product and an unofficial symbol of Stryżawa. In 2011, the Beskid Center for Folk Wooden Toy was opened in the village with the exposition presenting the history of wooden toy manufacturing and a souvenir shop. In 2016, the traditional wooden toys from Żywiec and Sucha region were included on the Poland's Non-Material Culture Heritage List.

Another kind of folk handicraft largely contributing to the cultural heritage of Podbabiogórze is embroidery. Its tradition was cultivated in the region for centuries but its massive development began in the





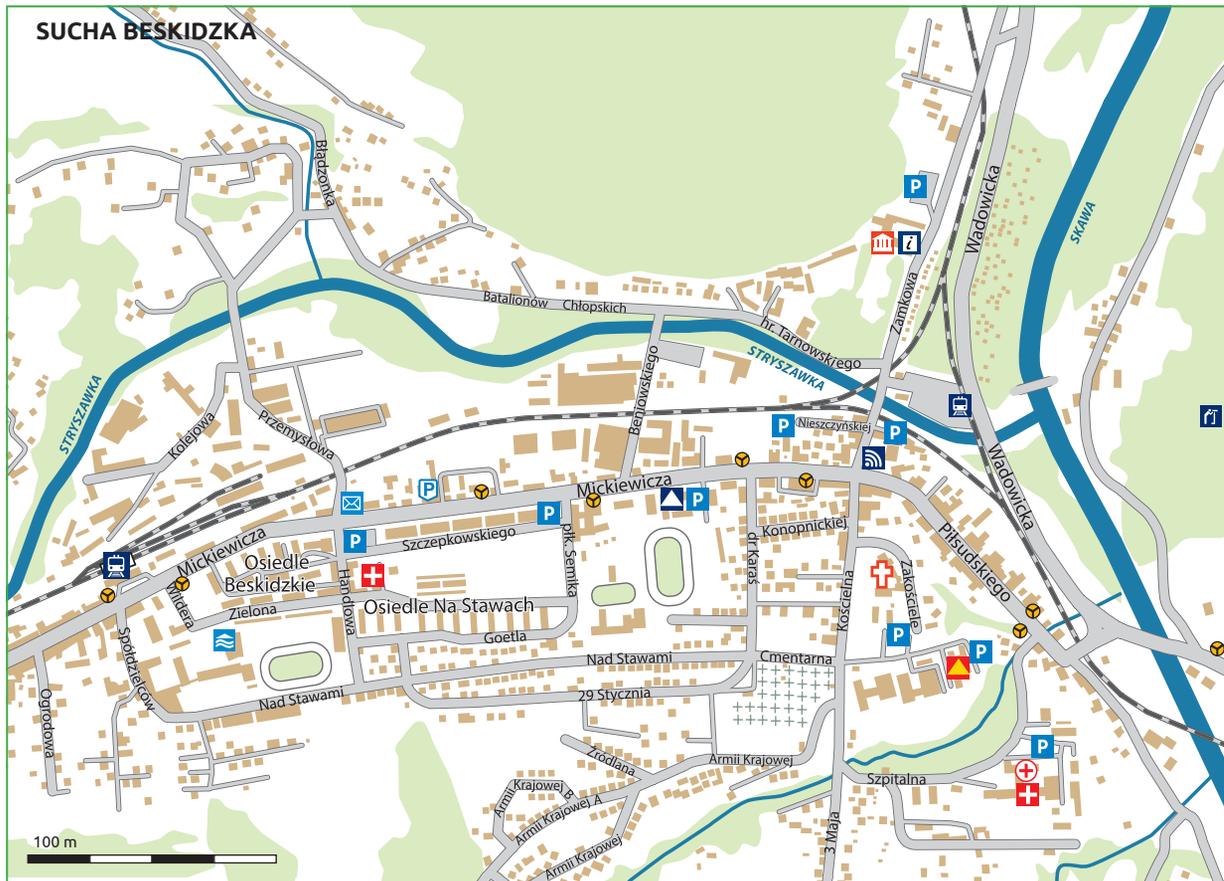
late 19th century, when the National School of Embroidery was established in Maków Podhalański. A local, highly characteristic style of white embroidery with delicate floral motifs, like round flowers and small branches with oval leaves, soon became recognized and highly appreciated both in Poland and abroad.

Another example of local folk handicraft is wicker weaving, which was practiced in the past mostly in the commune of Budzów. Nowadays, the weavers manufacture beautifully ornamented artistic souvenirs gradually substituting wicker with tree-bark or thin, chipped wood straps. Local craftsmen and folk artists from Białka are famous worldwide for producing lavishly ornamented carved wooden chess. Colorful crepe paper compositions are still manufactured in several local communities of Podbabiogórze. The tradition of hand-made production of crepe flowers, flower bunches, garlands, wreaths or tree compositions has been cultivated in the region, especially by local women, for more than a century.

Each of the above-mentioned handicraft products may become not only an interesting souvenir from the visit to Podbabiogórze but also a genuine gift on various occasions.



SUCHA BESKIDZKA



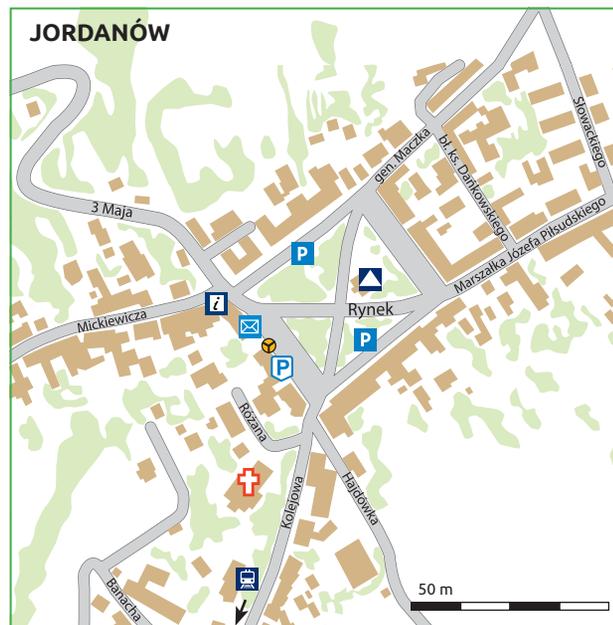
LEGEND

-  parish, church
-  museum, exhibition
-  parking place
-  Tourist Information
-  Starostwo Powiatowe
-  Urząd Miasta
-  post office
-  police
-  hospital
-  ośrodek zdrowia, przychodnia
-  wi-fi
-  swimming pool
-  viewing platform
-  bus stop
-  railway station

MAKÓW PODHALAŃSKI



JORDANÓW





15



16



17



Editor:
Janusz Kociotek

Text:
Janusz Kociotek,
Marcin Leśniakiewicz

Translation:
Jerzy Zabawa

Photo:
Janusz Kociotek

Layout:
Maciej Hojda (homago.pl)

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