

Beer World: Warsaw

Budget travel king ADRIAN BELL continues his mission to show Darlington drinkers that good beer can be enjoyed overseas, in our DD series on short-break destinations.



Photos: Bierhalle and Browarmia (AB)

AS ALL the Polish seem to be coming over here why don't you go and see what it's like over there? Warsaw's much better than you might think.

The impressively rebuilt Old Town houses mainly upmarket restaurants and few good pubs. There are two brewpubs in the city centre though, situated along the main street ul Krolewska/Nowy Swiat.

The first, **Browarmia** (www.browarmia.pl) has the best beer in my opinion. They brew an unfiltered pils, a stout, a weiss (German style wheat beer) and an interesting beer flavoured with ginger. The interior is modern and not to my taste but the beer compensates. They also have a restaurant which I didn't get a chance to try.

The next one, **Bierhalle** (www.bierhalle.pl) is more Germanic in feel, with waitress only service. To me their beer didn't taste particularly home-brewed. Their regulars include a pils, an alt and a weiss; also specials. I can vouch for the quality of their meals - they have an extensive menu of German and Polish fare, and not too expensive (from £6).

On my last night in Warsaw I discovered where the Poles really drink. Past the Bierhalle there is an alley on the left under an arch, and once through it there are lots of little bars with no outside lights to advertise them. It looks like you're not supposed to be there, but once inside them they are just like other bars. One had quite a range of different draught and bottled beers.

Note that standard Polish beer (pils) is around 6% - so watch out! Try and seek out the excellent porter at 8% though.

DETAILS, DETAILS:

Food...Eat at a 'bar mleczny' (milk bar) for about £1.50. Some translations: barszcz, beet-

root soup; zurek, rye soup; pierogi, big ravioli; herbata, tea. There's one in the Old Town with an English menu.

Sights...include the Royal Palace, Old Town, Palace of Art & Culture, War Museum. Further out (get a bus) there is Lazienki Park. See www.warsawtour.pl and www.explorewarsaw.com.

Accommodation... at Hotel Praski (www.praski.pl) from £30/nt single/double. For others see www.booking.com.


Flights...Durham Tees Valley to Warsaw (www.wizzair.com) starts at £35 return. Bus 175 from takes you to the centre: get tickets from 'RUCH' kiosk in the airport (they cost more on the bus); a 72 hour ticket is best value.

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