Around Powisle

Katarzyna Ałaszewska
Architect loving theatre and long walks. Has been living in Warsaw for a few years.

Powisle is a green enclave in the heart of Warsaw, full of parks, cafés and peculiar local characters. Technically, this is still the city centre, but time goes by so slowly here...

The old meets the new, making this riverside district so unique that it is hard not to fall in love with it.

Start your stroll through this charming part of central Warsaw on the green roof of the University of Warsaw Library, one of the largest and most beautiful roof gardens in Europe. Do not forget to grab a cup of coffee and a croissant in one of the nearby cafés. I can assure you they taste great with such views in the background!

The next point on our route is Julian Smulikowski Street – one of the best preserved streets of pre-war Warsaw. Despite the individual nature of each of its modernist townhouses, the buildings belong together in perfect harmony. Time seems to have stopped still, since the buildings look as they did before 1939. Take a look at the yards where instead of outbuildings you will now find small lawns.

Return to Dobra Street, then take Jaracz Street where you will find the Athenaeum Theatre. If the building is open, go inside to see some amazing details bearing testimony to its splendour.

Head south towards Marshal Rydz-Smigly Park to find Elizeum, an underground rotunda forming part of a garden founded by Kazimierz Poniatowski. As this place is not yet open to the public, you need to use your imagination to set off on the journey through time that it may offer.

Right before you is Frascati Street, connecting Powisle with the City Centre. Stop for a while beside Pniewski's Villa, which is on the register of monuments as a Masonic Lodge. Today, the building belongs to the Museum of the Earth of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

A short stroll along Wiejska Street includes highlights such as the Parliament building and the legendary Czytelnik coffeehouse.

Finally, relax by the river bank and enjoy a delicious cheesecake in the atmospheric Fabryczna café.