

Art Center Gallery EL

→ Ramps are rail devices powered by the force of water flow, and ships crossing them sail on grass.

After the short walk over the water, we come to the **Art Center Gallery EL (5)** located in the former Dominican church from the XIII century. In 1961 the municipal authorities handed over the church ruins to a fine arts workshop. In 2011, thanks to European Union's funds, the Gallery's interior received a modern, two-storey glass emporium, where exhibitions are organised. What is unusual is the combination of modern exhibits and glass emporium with historic interior of the Gothic church. The walls of the former church are decorated with a few hundred years old epitaphs, and on the floor old grave slabs were embedded. The Contemporary Gallery offer is very diverse, from typical exhibitions, through shows, concerts, festivals, as well as performances and workshops. Having "tasted" the art, in the cloister of the Gallery one can enjoy delicious coffee. In the courtyard of the Gallery EL colourful metal sculptures draw our attention, but more on that later.

From Studzienna Street we return to the Old Town. We now come to the **Market Gate (6)**, which formerly served as a fragment of urban fortifications. Its lower part was erected in 1319, and in the space of centuries the Gate was extended. Once surrounded by fortifications, today it plays the role of an observation point. From its topmost floor, one can admire the panorama of Elblag. Next to the gate, one can see a statue of an amiable young man – **the Baker of Elblag**, who according to the legend prevented the city from invasion of Teutonic Knights by cutting with his bakers shovel the ropes which fasten the gates to the city. To commemorate this deed, on the stone Gates a shape was carved in the form of a shovel. In turn, rails were laid at the Gate to recall memories of tram route which ran here in the past.

We continue our tour walking along the street by the Market Gate passing by the earlier-mentioned metal sculptures. This is a result of the **Biennale of Spatial Forms** which was held in Elblag in the 60s of the XX century. It was a sort of experiment (combination of artist's and labourer's works), which filled the city space with sculptures created in production halls of the Elblag industrial plant – ZAMECH. Today, the space of the whole city is an open gallery for these unique exhibits. One of the sculptures is a 7-metre structure with sticking out polygonal pipes, resembling a tree's branch – it is the work of the famous and internationally known Polish sculptor – Magdalena Abakanowicz.

Leaving the Old Town, at the back of the Market Gate we pass by the former **Empress Augusta Victoria Middle School (7)** (currently also a school), we cross Rycerska Street and continue further on alleys of the Planty park. But what is it? On the opposite side of the street one can notice a **colourful tank (8)**. This tank model type played a major role in the popular Polish war TV series. Taking a picture by this tank can be a great souvenir in the family photo album.

We return to the **Planty Park (9)**, which once used to be a party place for the elite social club. On the left, we can still observe metal sculptures, also called spatial forms. Among the park trees, we can admire a rarely seen in Poland – **Międzyzłab Japoński (Ginkgo biloba)**. The park ends with a small hill, which is the remnant of the **Bastion Młyński [Bastion Mill]** which was a part of the XVII century Swedish fortifications of city.



Old Town.  
View from the river Elblag

**W**e turn into 12-go Lutego Street. If we have extra time, it is good to turn left into 1-go Maja Street to see a monumental **edifice of the District Court (10)**. Just next to the building, there is a renovated **gas lamp (11)** from 1914, the only one of its kind in the north of Poland.

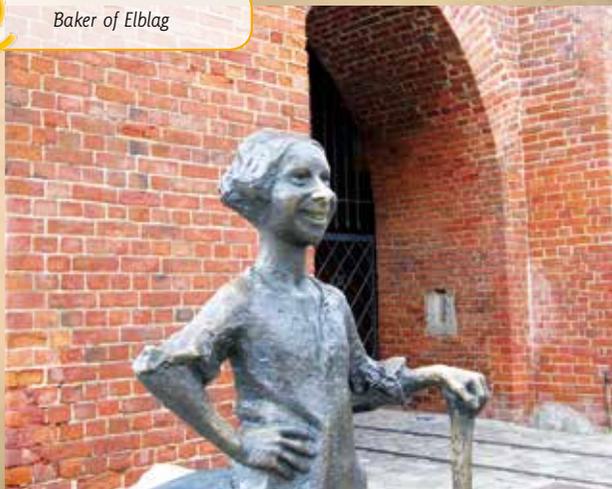
We return along the 1-go Maja Street towards the Old Town. While walking along the promenade, we will certainly be passed by one of **Elblags' trams**, which have been plying this route since 1895. On the way we can take a short break sitting on a bench near the fountain and try some ice-cream from one of the nearby bakeries.

We now approach Słowiańskiego Square, where the **1908 fountain stands (12)**, which once on its top stood the monument of the Teutonic commander – Herman Balk, the legendary founder of Elblag.

From Słowiańskiego Square we return to the Old Town passing by the historic **Post Office building (13)**, built in 1887 by Otto Depmeier – builder of the most prominent buildings in Elblag and its surroundings at the turn of the XIX and XX century.

From Wieżowa Street, we head back to the Old Town where we can take a rest in one of the restaurants or cafeterias. ■

Baker of Elblag



fot. Arkadiusz Ławrynowicz



For tourists who can only devote a few hours to explore Elblag, we recommended the following route:



View on Old Market Square

**B**egin your tour by exploring the Old Market Square – the main street of the Old Town, whose historic arrangement of streets has remained unchanged since the Middle Ages.

Elblag Old Town in terms of surface area is one of Europe's largest land areas subject to complex archaeological studies. Successive reconstruction is preceded by archaeological works, which have been conducted since 1980 to the present day. On the basis of large amounts of excavated objects, from the XIII to XIX century, we are familiar with the everyday life of the former inhabitants of Elblag; how they lived, worked, had fun, dressed and what they ate. The multitude and variety of discovered objects testifies to the affluence of the ancient inhabitants of Elblag and their intensive trade relations with nearly the whole of Europe, from Norway through Spain, to England and Italy.

Rybacka Street. Old Town



St. Nicolas Cathedral

**T**he first steps of our walk should be directed to the XII century **St. Nicolas Cathedral** ①, which overlooks the Old Town (the bell tower is 95 meters high).

Having visited the historic interior of the Cathedral, we continue towards the XIV century **Church Path** ②. It is the only architectural monument of its kind in Poland. It is a narrow passage between tenement houses, in the Middle Ages this route was longer and linked all churches in the Old Town (hence the name).

Next, we head towards Zamkowa Street, passing the historic building of the previous **Holy Spirit Church and Hospital** ③, which primarily served as a shelter for the sick and elderly. It currently houses the seat of C. Norwid Library of Elblag, which apart from possessing valuable historical collections, is as well a centre of culture, where concerts, exhibitions and film screenings take place.

From Zamkowa Street, turn into Gimnazjalna Street and come to the courtyard of **the Museum of Archaeology and History** ④, which provides an opportunity to see highly interesting exhibits taken from archaeological sites of the Old Town and former trade settlement – Truso. Systematically executed excavation works means every year the museum collections increase in the number of exhibits. Elblag Museum also possesses a unique collection, which relates to the history of the region. Archaeological treasures associated with the functioning of the aforementioned Truso settlement account for this history. In the period of the VIII to X century A.D., on the shores of the nearby lake Druzno, a trading post was founded by Danish Vikings, which even had trade contacts with the Arab countries.

After leaving the Museum, we head to Sigismund August Boulevard along the bank of the **Elblag River**. This is where the Elblag Canal Cruises originated – it is a unique historic monument of hydro-engineering art. The uniqueness of this watercourse is overcoming the 83 kilometres stretch of 100-metres differences in the water levels. It occurs by means of the system of floodgates and ramps, which have been working since 1860.

