Beaches, cliffs and Kashubian folklore. Thousands of lakes hidden deep within forests, watched over by the towers of Teutonic fortresses. The domes of eastern churches scattered throughout the mountainsides. Poland is a fascinating jigsaw puzzle, composed of colourful regional pieces.

The beaches, cliffs and resorts of West Pomerania occupy a strip of the Baltic coast from the island of **Wolin** up to Kolobrzeg. This region also contains the Drawskie lake district.

In **East Pomerania**, you will find Poland’s largest shifting sand dunes (in the **Slowinski National Park**), the country’s longest peninsula (that of Hel) and the largest cluster of yew trees in Europe (in the **Tucholskie Woods**). All this is spiced with the folklore of Kashubia and Kujawy and reminders of the Mennonite culture in Zulawy.

**Mazuria** is a land not only of 4,000 bright blue lakes, but also of natural forests and rivers which provide excellent conditions for canoeing. Tourists are attracted here by the Trail of the Great Lakes and the unique Ostrodzko-Elblaski canal, as well as the nearby Teutonic castles and Prussian forest lodges.

Lost in the extreme north-east of Poland is the region of Suwalki, which enchants visitors with the charm of its glacier-shaped landscape and the rich culture from the Polish, Russian and Lithuanian border areas.

Across the middle of Poland lie the following regions: **Wielkopolska**, the cradle of the Polish state; next to it are the green lands of Lubuskie; the flat level plains of **Mazovia**; the region of Lodz; and **Podlasie**, a land of wild nature, multicultural border towns and villages with beautiful eastern churches.

Silesia, which occupies south-west Poland, is divided into Lower Silesia, with its capital in Wroclaw, and Upper Silesia, centred on Katowice. Although this is a heavily industrial area, there is no shortage of places of valued natural beauty, such as the Lower Silesian Woods, the Sudeten mountains, Beskid Slaski and Beskid Zywiecki.

A region particularly generously endowed by nature is **Malopolska**. The mountain ranges of the Beskids and the area of Jura Krakowsko-Czestochowska, with its many forts from the era of the Piast dynasty, border the historic towns of the Lublin region, the industrial wonders of Swietokrzyskie and areas of natural interest such as the loessial Roztocze and the marshy Polesie.

Podhale, the cradle of Polish highland culture, stretches from the Tatra mountains to Orawa and Spisz. Its capital is Zakopane. Podkarpacie is best known for the Beskid Niski and Bieszczady mountains, in which there are scattered wooden Orthodox churches, reminders of the Lemki and Bojki who once lived here.