
Travel Guide

Lviv

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Quick view

Lviv – a brief overview

Connoisseurs of Soviet-style brutalism won't find much to love here: Ukraine's second city is an eclectic mix of medieval and Renaissance architecture, much of which consists of delicate wedding cake churches. So lovely is Lviv's city centre, it was handed a UNESCO listing in 1998 – an honour of which the locals are justifiably proud.

But the city isn't all beautiful buildings and picturesque parks. It also boasts some of the best (and most bizarre) museums in Ukraine, among them the Salo Gallery, which is quite possibly the only establishment in the world to focus on sculptures made from pork fat.



Ukraine

General Information

Country overview

Vast and vaguely mysterious, Ukraine is barely known to outsiders despite being one of the largest countries in Europe.

Long associated with its colossal neighbour Russia, it's a country of varied landscapes and surprising cultural diversity.

Geography

Ukraine is bordered by the Russian Federation to the north and east; Belarus to the north; Poland, the Slovak Republic and Hungary to the west; and Romania and Moldova to the southwest. It is a varied country with mountains in the west, plains in the centre and the Black Sea views to the south.

The north of the state is dominated by forests. Its other two main features are wooded steppe with beech and oak forests and the treeless steppe. The River Dnieper divides Ukraine roughly in half, and flows into the Black Sea.

General knowledge

Key facts

Population: ca 43 million (2018)

Capital: Kiev.

Language

Ukrainian is the sole official state language.

Currency

Hryvnya (UAH) = 100 kopyok (singular: kopyka). Notes are in denominations of UAH500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1. Coins are in denominations of UAH1 and 50, 25, 10, 5, 2 and 1 kopyok.

Electricity

220 volts AC, 50Hz. European plugs with two round pins are used.

Public holidays

Listed below are the public holidays for the period January 2020 to December 2021.

Note

Holidays falling on the weekend are observed the following Monday. Holidays falling on Tuesday or Thursday may be observed the preceding Monday or following Friday.

2020

New Year's Day: 1 January 2020
Orthodox Christmas Day: 7 January 2020
International Women's Day: 8 and 9 March 2020
Orthodox Easter: 19 and 20 April 2020
Victory Day: 9 and 11 May 2020
Trinitatis/Orthodox Whitsun: 7 and 8 July 2020
Constitution Day: 28 June 2020
Independence Day: 24 August 2020
Day of the defender of the nation: 14 October 2020
Catholic Christmas Day: 25 December 2020

2021

New Year's Day: 1 January 2021
Orthodox Christmas Day: 7 January 2021
International Women's Day: 8 March 2021
Orthodox Easter: 2 and 3 May 2021
Victory Day: 9 and 10 May 2021
Trinitatis/Orthodox Whitsun: 20 and 21 June 2021
Constitution Day: 28 June 2021
Independence Day: 24 August 2021
Day of the defender of the nation: 14 October 2021
Catholic Christmas Day: 25 December 2021

All information subject to change.



Travel etiquette

How to fit in

Social Conventions

Ukrainian people are generally warm and friendly to visitors. It is not at all uncommon for Ukrainians to invite strangers into their own homes. Shoes should be removed on entering a home. Formal attire is rarely required, though people dress smartly for the theatre.

Visitors should avoid ostentatious displays of wealth in public places. Men should not shake a woman's hand unless it is offered to them. Women should cover their heads when entering a church or mosque.



Health

Health

Food & Drink

Water used for drinking, brushing teeth or making ice should have first been boiled or otherwise sterilised. Milk is pasteurised and dairy products are safe for consumption. Only eat well-cooked meat and fish, preferably served hot. Vegetables should be cooked and fruit peeled. Street food is generally safe if it is fresh and hot. Freshwater fish and mushrooms or berries gathered in the area

around Chernobyl north of Kiev are best avoided.

Other Risks

Vaccinations against tuberculosis and hepatitis B are sometimes advised. Tick-borne encephalitis is quite common in the Ukrainian countryside between April and August. Visitors should take precautions against ticks in forested areas by wearing long sleeves and trousers and a hat.



Phone calls & Internet

Telephone/Mobile Telephone

Dialing code: +380

Telephone

You can buy telephone cards of UAH20, 50 or 100 for public payphones in post offices and at kiosks. Many post offices have international phone booths where calls can be made after paying a deposit. International phone cards are also available in the larger cities, but by far the cheapest connections are those found at internet cafés.

Mobile Telephone

Roaming agreements exist with most international mobile phone companies. Ukraine's mobile phone coverage is good and local SIM cards (Kyivstar or UMC) are available.

Internet

Internet cafés are available in all cities and towns. Connections are usually reasonable. Some hotels offer Wi-Fi connectivity.



Top 10 sights

Top 10 sights in Lviv

Ploshcha Rynok

The heart of Lviv's UNESCO-listed city centre, Ploshcha Rynok is a beautiful old market square that throbs with life and boasts an eclectic array of architecture, including a 65m neo-Palladian tower.

Ploshcha Rynok
79000 Lviv
Ukraine

Pototsky Palace

Built in the early 1800s by French architect Louis d'Overnu, the monumental Pototsky Palace bears a striking resemblance to Versailles and now houses a portion of the city's art collection.

Kopernika 15
Lviv
Ukraine

Opening times:
Tue-Sat 1100-1800
Sun 1200-1700

www.lpm.com.ua

Museum of Beer Brewing

Lviv's oldest brewery celebrates its 300th birthday in 2015 and is still going strong – both as a purveyor of ale and as a museum. Tours leave from the reception every hour, give or take a few minutes.

Klepariwska 18
Lviv
Ukraine

Opening times:
Wed-Mon 1030-1800

www.lvivbeermuseum.com

Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum

Opened in 1905 by Andrey Sheptytsky, a local priest, this museum originally housed a selection of ecclesiastical artefacts but is now home to a 10,000-strong collection of icon paintings and folk art.

Drahomanova St, 42
Lviv
Ukraine

Opening times:
Tue-Sun 1000-1800

ct.lviv.ua

Dominican Cathedral

Topped with a viridian dome, Lviv's Dominican Cathedral is one of the city's most iconic sights. An elaborate confection of scrolled pillars and tapering towers, it is easily one of the city's loveliest buildings.

1 Muzeina Square
Lviv
Ukraine

Opening times:
Various

Lychakiv Necropolis

Laid out in the late 18th century, Lviv's answer to Père Lachaise is packed with gothic monuments and boasts a smattering of famous inhabitants, among them Soviet gymnast Viktor Chukarin.

Mechnykova St, 33
Lviv
Ukraine

Opening times:
Daily 0900-2100 (Apr-Sep)
Daily 0900-1800 (Oct-Mar)

www.lviv-lychakiv.ukrain.travel

Lviv Historical Museum

This fascinating (and huge) museum contains 330,000 different artefacts ranging from porcelain clocks to elaborate carved swords, all of which help piece together the story of Lviv.

Rynok square, 6
Lviv
Ukraine

Opening times:
Thu-Tue 1000-1730

www.lhm.lviv.ua

Boyim Chapel

Built in 1615 as a burial place for wealthy merchant Georgi Boyim and his family, this mortuary chapel is decorated with Gothic carvings and topped with a contemplative statue of Christ.

Katedral'na square, 1
Lviv
Ukraine

Opening times:
Tue-Sun 1000-1700

Salo Museum

Possibly the world's only gallery dedicated to sculpture made from pig fat, the Salo Museum's displays are bizarre to say the least, although the connected restaurant is excellent.

Swobodi 8
Lviv
Ukraine

Opening times:
Sun-Wed 1000-2300
Thu-Sat 1200-0200

www.saloart.com.ua

Vysokyi Zamok

Formerly the site of a castle, the Union of Lublin Mound was created in 1869 to mark the 300th anniversary of the eponymous treaty. The observation deck at the summit offers lovely views of the city below.

Vysokyj Zamok Park
Lviv
Ukraine



Shopping in Lviv Shopping in Lviv

Key Areas

Like most cities that were once part of the Soviet Union, Lviv's markets do a roaring trade in Communist antiques as well as gorgeous local crafts. Much of the action happens in and around Ploshcha Rynok, although little boutiques selling piles of interesting curios are found almost everywhere you look. The main place to go for souvenirs is the huge Vernisazh market with everything from goat-hair blankets from the Carpathians to painted eggs and traditional embroidery on offer. The city also has several shopping malls, although much of what's inside is the same fare as you'd find elsewhere.

Markets

Vernisazh (near the opera house) is the biggest and best, although smaller markets are dotted about the city.

Shopping Centres

King's Cross Leopolis (Stryiska) is the biggest mall in town and is home to all the usual suspects. Edwardian mall Magnus (Shpytalna) is also worth a visit.



Restaurants

Restaurants in Lviv

Eating out in Lviv is a real pleasure – both for your stomach and your wallet. Prices are low and there's plenty of choice, whether you're planning to sample the local fare (recommended) or tuck into Italian, British or any other cuisine imaginable.

Amadeus

One of Lviv's swankiest restaurants, Amadeus serves up a mix of local and European fare.

Katedral'na square, 7
Lviv
Ukraine

Price: Expensive

Masonic Restaurant

Esoteric décor notwithstanding, this is a fabulous place to come for a slap-up meal.

Rynok square, 14
Lviv
Ukraine

Price: Expensive

Trout, Bread and Wine

This quirky little restaurant does indeed serve trout, bread and wine, and very nice it is too.

49 Brativ Rohatyntsviv Str
Lviv
Ukraine

Price: Moderate

Pid Zolotoyu Rozoyu

The traditional Jewish food is delicious, but be warned: there are no prices – the final bill is settled by haggling.

Staroievreiska St, 37
Lviv
Ukraine

Price: Moderate

Kupol

Don't be put off by the pre-Soviet décor (and cutlery) – the Ukrainian food is excellent and plentiful.

Chaikovs'koho 37
Lviv
Ukraine

Price: Cheap



Nightlife

Nightlife in Lviv

There's no shortage of things to do when night falls in Lviv. From vibrant clubs to cosy bars, the city has a wealth of nightspots, most of which are thronged with friendly locals come weekends. Best of all, drinks cost next to nothing and measures are generous.

Bierlin Lemberg

With more than 17 types of Ukrainian beer on tap, this is a place that ale fans shouldn't miss.

Chaykovskoho 18
Lviv
Ukraine

Fashion Club

Popular with Lviv's cool crowd, Fashion Club boasts blingy patrons and good cocktails.

Beryndy St
Lviv
Ukraine

Picasso

Consistently popular with both locals and expats, Picasso is located in a former theatre.

Zelena St, 88
Lviv
Ukraine

Pid Synoyu Plyashkoyu

A tiny bar tucked away down a side alley, this is the place to come for good wine and political gossip.

Ruska St, 4
Lviv
Ukraine

Pozitiff

Hidden away behind an internet café, Pozitiff is the coolest lounge in Lviv.

Yevhena Petrushevycha square, 3
Lviv
Ukraine



Calendar of events **Calendar of events**

Doughnut Festival

Lviv's biggest Christmas event attracts around 100,000 festivalgoers, who munch their way through 50,000 doughnuts of every variety imaginable, from savoury to poppy seed to chocolate. Aside from doughnut gorging, there are nativity plays, a 4m-high Christmas star and a cutest angel contest.

January 2020

Venue: Rynok Square

Easter Fair

A ginormous decorated Easter egg is the centrepiece of Lviv's Easter fair. Souvenirs, hand-made goods and local produce are piled high on stalls lining prospekt Svobody. Visitors can pick up anything from wicker baskets to beeswax candles and try their hand at painting, puppetry and carpet weaving in craft workshops.

April 2020

Venue: Prospekt Svobody

Great Hayivka Festival

Families, usually clothed in national dress, flock to this popular festival celebrating Ukrainian Easter traditions. *Hayivkas*, special songs sung only at Easter, are performed on the main stage, along with folk dancing and music. Visitors can paint eggs, learn traditional dances and join in competitions.

11. April 2020

Venue: Museum of Folk Architecture and Rural Life

Pysanka Festival

Colourfully painted Easter eggs are dotted throughout Lviv in this nearly month-long art project. Famous artists, amateurs and kids all join in with the decorating before the delightful results are put on display in various public buildings and places. The eggs are eventually auctioned off for charity.

April 2020

Venue: Throughout Lviv

Lviv City Day

A spectacular, noisy parade kicks off Lviv's annual City Day celebrations. Kids, stilt walkers, musicians, and locals kitted out in historical costume create a colourful carnival that's terrific to watch. The weekend party continues with street artists, concerts and film screenings.

May 2020

Venue: City centre

Leopolis Jazz

Renowned artists from around the world land on Lviv to play at this open-air summer jazz fest. Concerts, many of them free, take place in parks and squares throughout Lviv. Keep an eye on the programme for special masterclasses and jam sessions.

June 2020

Venue: Various venues

Independence Day

Blue and yellow flags and balloons adorn houses and cars for the annual Independence Day festivities. Street shows, art exhibitions and special events mark the occasion, with residents donning traditional embroidered clothing. A massive rock concert usually rounds off the day.

24 August 2020

Venue: Throughout Lviv

Lviv International Book Fair

Ukraine's biggest book fair encompasses a huge range of events for librarians, publishers, booksellers and members of the public. A packed programme of literary debates, readings, book signings and kids' activities takes place in museums, galleries, theatres and cafés throughout the city.

September 2020

Venue: Various venues

Contrasts: International Contemporary Music Festival

World-class composers, soloists and ensembles join forces in this highly respected contemporary music showcase, on the go for two decades and hosted by the Lviv Philharmonic Orchestra. Favourite 20th-century compositions and avant-garde new music are guaranteed to feature in the eclectic programme.

December 2020 - January 2021

Venue: Various venues

Christmas Fair

Carol singing fills the air at Lviv's annual Christmas market, where pretty wooden stalls are crammed with all manner of enticing goodies, from handcrafted toys to embroidered Ukrainian shirts to beautiful ceramics. Shoppers can warm up with mugs of mulled wine and *varenyky*, traditional Ukrainian stuffed dumplings.

December 2020 - January 2021

Venue: Rynok Square and prospekt Svobody

**Hotels**
Hotels in Lviv

With hotel rooms available for under US\$10, in Lviv you get plenty of bang for your buck when it comes to finding somewhere to stay. What's more, Soviet blocks are few and far between. Instead, the city boasts a convivial mix of big names and boutique hotels.

Leopolis

Boasting opulent décor and a central location, Leopolis is a great base for a weekend break.

Teatralnaya 16
79008 Lviv
Ukraine

Category: Expensive

Astoria

Slick modern rooms, plenty of space and friendly staff in the middle of Lviv.

Horodotska St, 15
Lviv
Ukraine

Category: Expensive

Swiss Hotel

Gorgeous from the outside and comfortable within, Lviv's Swiss Hotel is excellent value.

Knyazya Romana Str, 20
Lviv
Ukraine

Category: Moderate

On The Square

A gorgeous little boutique hotel in the heart of the Old Town and which costs next to nothing.

Rynok square, 13
Lviv
Ukraine

Category: Moderate

George Hotel

Few are the cities in which you can stay in a well-appointed palace for less than US\$30 a night – Lviv is one.

Mickiewicz Square 1
Lviv
Ukraine

Category: Cheap