

NOT A DREAM, NOT A VISION, BUT A PREMONITION!

Wednesday September 25th, 2025

Warsaw

Those who had the privilege of experiencing Warsaw in the 90's, would today agree, the city has come a long way !

In 1991 I returned to Poland after a 35 year absence, and most of what I saw in those days, has since been changed, improved, optimized, revitalized or simply disappeared.

Today, as I prepare for my trip to New York, I walk around to recollect and capture the transformation of the past 17 years. The last time I had an opportunity to do this was in 2008.

I look at the city and see a transformed center, populated by Skyscrapers designed by world famous architects, such as Libeskind, Saha Hadid, Frank Gehry, Jean Nouvel's... the Modern Art Museum on Plac Defilad, designed by Christian Keres, Opened in 2012 and in a short time achieved a tradition of organizing world class temporary exhibits, such as Frida Kahlo's, Salvador Dali and the Hermitage.

I see the entire Palace of Culture (PKiN) perimeter encircled by the world longest river like multi level fountain that integrates sculptures, water features. Lighting and musical effects with some parts of the fountain interacting with the public.

This year round water spectacle transforms the Palace of Culture into a living heart of the city. The Wedel Giant Chocolate Fountain is always a big hit with the kids.

The Palace of Culture is now 70 years old, but recently undertook a life time transformation. Now called "The Poland Design and Concept Centre". As I stroll these remodeled spaces, I notice the corporate showrooms, and model quarters that house the Polish companies that specialize in design and concept 3D research. The old PKiN

metamorphosed into The Poland Showroom; here “The Polish Best of Class Corporations” are featured.

I cross Emilii Plater towards the spectacular Centralna F. Chopin Train Station, which was designed and built using a Grand Piano subject. Featuring the Frederick Chopin’s most famous musical melodies as the announcements on the hour every hour. This gigantic crystal and glass Grand Piano, becomes a nightly Light Spectacle, a truly unique work of architectural miracle by Polish designer Krzysztof Wodicko. With its computerized and synchronized Chopin evening concerts. One of his sonatas is featured every evening. (My favorite is Sonata Number 1 played on Saturdays at 19.00).

These days Warszawa’s city brand does in fact take up Chopin with the slogan, “Warszawa, where Chopin plays!).

Warszawa’s buses, taxis, and mini buses, are indeed hybrid (Eco Friendly), and the new Metro Line also displays well designed public friendly stations, Each of them displaying a quarterly rotation of Polish upcoming young artists.

When I walk the Nowy Świat and Stare Miasto, (closed for motorized traffic) I quickly notice that in contrast to 2008, the graffiti is not part of the facade of each of the buildings.

The Krakowskie Przedmieście fully renovated, has become the High Street of the capital, where locals, visitors and tourists mingle by walking, shopping, and admiring the lovely architecture. The Café’s, and Designer High Fashion stores complement the streets new found charm.

On Chmielna St. we can visit the only 3 star Michelin eatery in Poland. Its owner and world famous Chef Marian Pawel Potocki serves his acclaimed Polish “New Generation” creations.

Earlier this year also unveiled the long awaited “Wisła Riverwalk”. This EU funded project is a culmination of 10 years of planning and building. We see the entire water front converted into a Mix Use environment, where high quality residential, retail, office, and hotel venues integrate

the boardwalk with spectacular riverfront restaurants, pubs and cafes. The Wisła Riverwalk is nominated for the ULI International Revitalization Project of the year 2025.

Across the river, in the Praga district, I quickly visit the National Stadium (now called PZU Sports and Congress Centre), as I remember it... this world class venue was inaugurated for the UEFA Euro 2012 Championships. This multi functional monument was in fact the starting point for the renaissance of the entire Praga neighborhood.

This area now attracts 250.000 conferences and exhibitors yearly from all over the EU, as well as locals who populate and visit these areas daily. This interesting mix of buildings has become the place where major congresses, conferences, sporting and musical events are held. Just last week, The Madonna GrandMa World Tour concert was held.

The smartly designed and themed bus stations and sitting benches are featured in most areas of the City Center. It gives one the feeling that local governments in the past years, have implemented and followed through on the concept of “Friendly City”. I get the impression that now the locals as well as visitors feel pampered by these common but interesting public necessities.

As most Europeans know, Warszawa is celebrated for its greenery, with city centre underground parking, and plenty of manicured arbors in the heart of the capital. What other European capital has an expansive park with palaces in the middle of the city?

As I walk to the Daniel Libeskind Tower, I look up the elegant glass, granite, marble edifice with the Four Seasons Hotel and Residences sign. I remind myself of the early 2000’s where the hospitality industry struggled, and never imagined a Luxury Hotel in Warszawa, or any other city in Poland for that matter...

On my mobile phone I get instructions, how to get to one of my favorite restaurants, and following this GPS direction; I continue my walk along the Marszałkowska. By the way on the corner of Aleje Jerozolimskie, I see the now world famous rotating Copernicus

Plaza, Office and Condominium tower designed by David Fisher. Also serves as the Pekao Bank headquarter.

As I prepare for my short trek to the Okęcie International Airport, (last year 2024 20 Million passengers were serviced). I am directed to the MonoRail one stop electric train from Centralna F. Chopin Train Station to the airport. The time of travel is 13 minutes. Of course this train has free WiFi for passengers, as does most of the Warszawa City Centre.

In the train, I peruse the adverts for the fast speed train that connects Kraków to Warszawa, it takes you there in 70 minutes, and for Łódź, second largest city in Poland, a mere 58 minutes. Certainly more convenient than in 2008. As we cruise on the elevated Mono Rail something quite interesting the reduction in city vehicle traffic. This is due to a combination of various factors, traffic tax for city center, the efficient and economic mass transport grid, the Warsaw round-about, which relocates passing traffic to other cities in Poland. The newly installed GPS and Motion Sensored Traffic Management System, coordinates and synchronizes the traffic load factors around the city.

In my seat A 23 aboard the 797 Dreamliner 11, on the LOT flight to New York, taxing for take off, I cannot help but think about our presentation to the IOC next week. Warszawa 2036 Summer Olympic bid. I cannot forget to include in our presentation, some more facts that make our city perfect for the Summer Olympic Games.

The fact that we are the safest and cleanest city in the EU, ever since we joined the EURO Zone the GDP of Poland has grown at unprecedented levels.

A detail that cannot be excluded is our GPS/Mobile phone City Street Signs (MCSS) program. This (now common) mobile phone Point/Inform platform gives everyone information in voice to their mobile devices by simply pointing any street sign. This system was developed by the Warsaw Technology Centre and now used by most major cities in the world. (The MCSS also point the tourist to the closest shopping mall, café or restaurant. In their language! I did include in our WARSZAWA 2036 OLYMPICS presentation, the one and only pedestrian Aquarium Bridge “Quo Vadis” that elegantly unites Stare Miasto with Port Praski Marina. This 2.0 Km. Aquarium tube is the most visited attraction in Poland.

Our entire WARSZAWA 2036 OLYMPIC GAMES Bid committee is joining me in this flight including the newly elected President of Warsaw, who won the election on the WARSZAWA 2036 OLYMPICS theme.

Its only a 6 hour flight, I have not been in the Apple City since 2008, I am looking forward visiting this fabulous Megatropolis...including the Freedom Tower!

To be continued...



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