

More attractions to visit in Minsk (excluding those included in the Free Walking Tour)

LOSHITSA PARK (take the bus 102 or trolley bus 6 to «Kamvol'nyy Kombinat» stop from the central railway station). This is the most romantic park in Minsk. You will find apple orchards and the ruins of a mill where according to legend a young girl hanged herself in the name of love.

VICTORY SQUARE AND MONUMENT («Plošča Pieramohi» metro station) is the oldest park named after the well-known soviet writer Maxim Gorky. This is a central recreational area of Minsk with children's rides, a couple of simple cafes and the training center of the Hockey Club Yunost-Minsk (where even in summer you can see snow when they are cleaning the ice in the rink).

THE MILITARY CEMETERY (Kazlova vul. 11). In addition to quite a few Belarusian cultural figures buried here (Yanka Kupala, Yakub Kolas, Kuzma Chorny), there is a beautiful Church of St. Alexander Nevsky, built in the late 19th century.

KASTRYČNICKAJA STREET is an industrial part of Minsk which has a huge colorful street with graffiti artwork in the style of Belarusian folklore made by Belarusian and Brazilian artists among huge Soviet factories. It is known as an alternative hipster district amongst locals.

NATIONAL LIBRARY (Ushod metro station) is a «space-station-like» building in the shape of diamond that attracts the attention of everyone who is on the way from Minsk airport to the city center. Come here to explore well-organised reading rooms and one of the best observation decks in the city.

VICTORY SQUARE AND MONUMENT. This sight was established in 1954 to honour the courage of all the soldiers and partisans who defended the freedom of their country in Second World War.

VULICA ZYBICKAJA is the main party-street in the center of Minsk which is filled with bars. It usually comes to life on Friday and Saturday nights. There is no point recommending any particular bars to you: firstly, this street totally accepts a «wander around» style and secondly, new bars keep opening here every month.

K. S. ZASLONOV CHILDREN'S RAILROAD IN MINSK. It is a railroad in Chelyuskintsev Park fully operated by teenagers! It is one of many children's railways that existed during the Soviet Union and has continued running after the break up of the USSR. Take a ride with the young train drivers!

BOTANIC GARDEN is one of the largest botanical gardens in Europe both by the composition of the collection as well as by area. Here you can find the best places to eat ice-cream while watching the gorgeous swans!

City transportation

PUBLIC TRANSPORT is well-developed in Minsk. We have buses, trolleybuses, trams and metro (there are 2 lines only: blue and red — no chance of getting lost), covering all of Minsk and its suburbs. One trip costs around 0.2 Euro. At some of stops (almost everywhere in the center) you can see a digital sign with the timetable of upcoming transport. To get the schedule of buses, trolleybuses and trams you can download the «Minsk Guide» application.

TAXI ONLINE ORDER:

TaxiNext — only online: taxinext.by.

Uber works in Belarus as well, and, by the way, is very cheap to use. Furthermore, you will never be cheated.

Taxi 135 — www.135.by (you can order online and pay the driver by credit card).

What to try (food and drinks) in Belarus

DRANIKI are potato pancakes, which can be filled with meat or fish, but the most original recipe is just hashbrowns with sour cream. By the way, you will see sour cream being added in lot of meals — don't hesitate to try — Belarusian dairy products are really worth tasting.

MACHANKA is a thick creamy sauce usually prepared from different trimmings (food that is left after cooking other dishes): smoked or salted bacon, ham, sausage, mushrooms, onion and sour cream.

BORSHCH is probably the most well-known Slavic food. Locals have grown up eating it regularly. In addition, this red soup is full of nutrients and vitamins!

SOLYANKA. This sour soup is full of different kinds of meat, pickled cucumbers, olives and lemon. It is commonly known as a «hangover» soup which is good to know if you have already explored night life in Minsk ;)

HOLODNIK (don't mix with «halodnae»!) — cold beetroot soup which sometimes foreigners call «pink soup» because of its color. The soup is very healthy and fresh which makes it the best choice for a summer lunch.

DUMPLINGS is a broad classification for a dish that consists of small pieces of dough (made from a variety of starch sources), often wrapped around a filling. The dough can be based on flour or potatoes and may be filled with fish, meat,

cheese or vegetables. They may be boiled, fried, simmered or steamed. Dumplings can be savoury or sweet, and both kinds can be eaten on their own or with gravy or sauce, as well as in soups or stews.

«BLINCHIKI» are a thin tasty pancakes, which you can eat with just jam and sour cream, or eat with different fillings: cottage cheese («tvorog») or meat — **best option for breakfast!**

SYRNIKI are fried quark pancakes, garnished with sour cream, jam («varenie»), honey or apple/berry sauce. The cheese mixture may contain raisins for extra flavour — **good for a dessert!**

KOMPOT is a necessary feature of any local canteen. It is usually a drink made of such dried fruits as raisins, prunes, apricots, oranges, and, of course, apples.

EVERYTHING MADE FROM CRANBERRIES, BLUEBERRIES AND BILBERRIES. A significant part of Belarus is occupied by forests and swamps, so our cuisine uses plenty of berries which are typically found in this environment. **Make sure to try cranberry sauce in meat dishes!**

KVAS is a traditional Slavic and Baltic fermented beverage commonly made from rye bread, known in many Eastern European countries and especially in Belarus as black bread. It is classified as a non-alcoholic drink as the alcohol content from fermentation is typically low (0.5—1.0%). You can order a home-made kvas in local restaurants, or if you buy it in supermarket we recommend you try out «Lidsky» («Лидский») kvas brand.

LOCAL BEER. For many centuries Belarus has had breweries (brovars) producing delicious malty drinks made according to original recipes. Nowadays mini-breweries and brewing restaurants offering tasty unpasteurized and unfiltered beer are becoming increasingly popular in Belarus. You can try the Belarusian brands Alivaria, Krinitza or Lidskae.

VODKA AND BALMS. The most popular Belarusian liquor is vodka (garelka, burnt wine). The quality of this drink is really good here and, what's more, the price is cheap (around 4 Eur per bottle). The most popular varieties are vodka made from bread, vodka with extracts of birch buds (leaves), cranberry vodka, and vodka with pepper and honey. Nastoikas and balms are very popular as well. These are strong alcoholic beverages made from herbal extracts, buds, berries, spices and honey. The most famous of them are krambambulya and zubrovka.

GLAZIROVANNY SYROK (GLAZED CURD) is a curd snack — a type of sweet snack made from curd cheese (quark) covered in chocolate glaze, known as a Soviet healthy sweet snack.

«KARTOSHKA» cake is a favourite childhood sweet from the Soviet Union. The literal translation of «kartoshka» from Russian is «potato». The history of its

name goes back to Soviet times when the sweet cake was made of cut-offs and cost as little as a potato. It also looks a little similar to this vegetable. Nowadays it's made of quality ingredients but it has preserved the taste and nostalgia of that era.

«MEDOVİK» CAKE (RUSSIAN HONEY CAKE) is a legendary cake with delicious shortcakes. Women in families pass down the recipe of this cake from generation to generation. Make sure to try it.

DARK CHOCOLATE. The two biggest Belarusian chocolate factories «Kommunarka» and «Spartak» produce high quality dark chocolate (54—90% cacao). There are only a few ingredients — proof of the naturalness and high quality of the product!

«USHKI». Ushki from the Russian language is an affectionate term for «ushi» (ears) because of its look. It is another Soviet pastry and is delicious when it is freshly baked and softly sprinkled with sugar.

KASHTAN (KAШТАН) ICE-CREAM. Just vanilla ice cream in chocolate glaze. But what a one!

DARK BREAD. **We advise Narochansky or Radzivilovsky**, very dark bread with cumin spices. Try it with local milk or kefir!



Coffee houses worth visiting

STORIES (Internacyjanal'naja vul. 14).

LET IT BE (Kastrыčnickaja vul. 23a).

SEADOG & FRIENDS (Zalataja Horka vul. 21).

26 (Sviardlova vul. 26).



Places where you can try national cuisine

KUCMISTR (Karla Marksa vul. 4C).

GRAI (Internacyjanal'naja vul. 33).

VASILKI (praspiekt Niezaliežnasci 16).

KAMJANITSA (Piersamajskaja vul. 6).



Good Bars in Minsk

KARMA ROOM (Kamsamolskaja vul. 4).

NA PLYAZHE (Zybickaja vul. 6).

BUTLER (Hercena vul. 4).

CZAPSKI BAR (Zybickaja vul. 6).

BEERCAP (Hercena vul. 10).

HULIGAN (Kastrыčnickaja vul. 16).



City Museums, Theatres and Circus worth a visit

BIG THEATRE OF OPERA AND BALLET («BOLSHOI») (plošča Paryžskaj **Kamuny 1**). In contrast to the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, the prices of tickets here start from just 5—6 Eur and it is not necessary to wear evening dress, however the quality of performances is of the same level.

JANKA KUPALA NATIONAL THEATRE (**Engel'sa vul. 7**). A small, neat theatre with excellent performances by talented producers. All working staff speak only Belarusian, but there is an option to buy a simultaneous translation in English at an affordable price.

And **JANKA KUPALA MUSEUM** (**Janki Kupaly vul. 4**). This museum dedicated to one of the most outstanding Belarusian writers Janka Kupala. The museum staff is such inspired by him that they can make you immediately fall in love with him too. The museum is very modern and interactive, and you can buy postcards with the writer's beautiful poems translated into over 80 languages!

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM (**Lienina vul. 20**). There are more than 30,000 exhibits and 20 collections of Belarusian and foreign works of art.

GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR OR SECOND WORLD WAR MUSEUM (**Praspiekt Pieramožcaŭ 8**). The topic of the Second World War is still relevant for local citizens. Don't hesitate to book an excursion inside of museum in English — the cost is 15 Eur per group, however even the most unassuming exhibits will come to life.

ALIVARIA BEER BREWERY MUSEUM (**Kisialiova vul. 30**). Do you like a beer? This is a great opportunity to get acquainted with huge varieties of local beer and learn more about the history of brewing in Belarus.

MUSEUM "MINI-LAND" (**praspiekt Niezaliežnasci 25**). If your time in Belarus is limited, we advise you to discover mini-copies of famous Belarusian attractions in just 2 hours.

AZGUR MUSEUM (Azhura vul. 8). Do you want to step into a room, where hundreds different sizes busts of Soviet leaders are looking at you? Wanna feel these stares on yourself?

BELARUSIAN NATIONAL STATE CIRCUS (praspiekt Niezaliežnasci 32). The only immovable circus in Europe, a favourite place of local children near Gorky (or Central Children) Park.



What to visit near Minsk

MIR AND NESVIZH CASTLES is one of the most popular places among tourists over here. The castles are under UNESCO protection and are considered to be the most unusual European castles of Radziwill family (the richest and most powerful clan in Grand Duchy of Lithuania). **Must visit!**

STALIN LINE. Ride a Soviet tank or helicopter, shoot from Soviet weapons at this historical complex, which was constructed on the basis of the restored fortifications of the Minsk fortified area (so-called «Stalin's Lines») which is in fact a huge open-air museum of military WWII machines.

BELARUSIAN RURAL EXPERIENCE:

MUSEUM OF FOLK ARCHITECTURE AND RURAL LIFESTYLE

«OZERCO» (4 km from Minsk). This is an example of exceptional ecological countryside estates, which is located deep in the Belarusian forests and near huge, pure lakes. You will find harmony and absolute privacy with no humans around. You can go horse-riding, take a boat out on the lake, go fishing and enjoy a barbeque.

DUDUTKI OLD FOLK CRAFTS MUSEUM (60 km from Minsk) is a village-museum of Belarusian rural culture and handcrafts, where many national crafts and workshops are represented. You can see the only working mill in Belarus, a pottery studio, a forge from the XIX century, a bakery and an exhibition of vintage cars. Moreover, there are horse stables, and open-air enclosures for ostriches, wild boars and other animals and birds.

BELARUSIAN NATURE:

BEREZINSKY BIOSPHERE RESERVE (130 km from Minsk) is the only nature reserve in Belarus with protection of the highest rank. It is a real model of the natural environment, one of the very few undisturbed corners of the European part of southern taiga. And they have an amazing zoo too!

NATIONAL PARK «NAROCHANSKY» (160 km from Minsk) based on the largest lake in Belarus — Naroch, and surrounded by more than 40 lakes and 60 rivers together with a rich flora and fauna can definitely make you feel the charm of Belarusian nature.



What to buy as a souvenir from Belarus

LINEN. Belarus is ranked the second in the world in linen production, that's why you can find lot of clothes and items for home and kitchen at a cheap price.

DARK CHOCOLATE. Minsk's local chocolate factories «Spartak» and «Kommunarka» produce perfect dark chocolate which is made only from natural ingredients: you can find chocolates with 56%, 68%, 72% and even 90% cacao dark chocolates in any supermarket.

ALCOHOL. Vodka, liqueurs, krambambulya or hrenovuha balms.

SUGARCOATED CRANBERRIES: are a kind of a healthy snack: each cranberry is covered with sugar.

ZEFIR is a type of soft confectionery made by whipping fruit and berry purée (mostly apple puree) with sugar and egg whites with a subsequent addition of a gelling agent like pectin, carrageenan, agar, or gelatine. It is commonly produced and sold in the countries of former Soviet Union. The name is given after the Greek god of the west wind «Zephyr» which symbolizes its delicate airy consistency. It can be plain or covered in chocolate; all the varieties are tasty.

SGUSHENKA is condensed milk with sugar, locals love to add it to coffee or it serve with pancakes for breakfast.

WATCHES (**praspiekt Niezaliežnasci 95**). Have you ever thought about Belarus as a country producing top quality watches for a fair price? You can have a look yourself by visiting the showroom of «luch» (**luch.by**) on the main avenue. Despite the luxurious interior, the prices are very low.



Where to buy?

GUM (**praspiekt Niezaliežnasci 21**). This Department Store was opened in 1951 and remains a museum of Soviet trade practices, preserving the traditions and style of the time to a large extent. You can buy literally everything here — textile, souvenirs, alcohol, cosmetic, clothes, bags, goods for children and much more.

TSUM (**praspiekt Niezaliežnasci 54**). This is another place of Soviet trade that has been preserved in its pristine state. Similar to GUM, just the location is different.

STOLITCA SHOPPING MALL (**praspiekt Niezaliežnasci 3—2**). This is an underground shopping mall at Independence Square. You can drop by if you want to buy gifts like Belarusian sweets or alcohol. Also there are several cafes where you can have a snack.

GALILEO SHOPPING MALL (Babrujskaja vul. 6). This is a large shopping mall right next to the train station. There is a food court on the top floor with sandwiches, kebabs, and several restaurants. One of them (**Vasilki**) serves Belarusian national cuisine. There is also one of the best cinemas in the city right over there.

GALLERIA SHOPPING MALL (praspiekt Pieramožcaŭ 9) is one of the newest, largest and most beautiful multifunctional shopping and entertainment centers in Belarus built as a part of DoubleTree by Hilton hotel.



City life hacks

- ❑ Unfortunately, here we don't have many spots of **FREE WI-FI ACCESS** in Minsk, so you might be in need of Internet and phone calls. Local mobile operators are: MTS (mts.by), Velcom (velcom.by) and Life:) (life.com.by) which offer some deals for **SIM CARDS**. **We asked Life:)** to develop a special tariff plan for foreigners just for the Free Tour in Minsk. So now you can contact us to get a SIM card with 11 Gb of Internet and unlimited calls with Life:) tel.network and 300 min to call to any other tel.network. This tariff plan also has lower prices to call abroad. This SIM card costs 10 Euros.
- ❑ Welcome to **KOMAROVKA LOCAL MARKET (Viery Charuža vul. 8)** in the center of the city. You can find all kinds of local fruit & veg, berries, fresh pastries, meats and cheeses. The name Komarovka comes from the word «komar» («mosquito»), a long time ago this place used to be a swamp and, consequently, there were lots of mosquitos around.
- ❑ Try to be careful in **TALKS WITH LOCALS**. You should keep in mind that Belarusians are very sensitive to every topic about their identity and particularly about the Belarusian nation.
- ❑ **EXCHANGE MONEY**. You can exchange currency at numerous currency exchange offices (if you are buying Belarusian rubles, you don't need your passport), the local banks don't use any special secrets, commissions, or other cheating techniques. The exchange rates might vary, but not dramatically. There are twenty-four-hour exchange offices at the train station (**Pryvakzal'naja plošča 3**) and in Hotel Minsk building (**praspiekt Niezaliežnasci 11/1**).
- ❑ There are not that many **TWENTY-FOUR-HOUR STORES**, most of them close at 11:00 PM. But there are Korona Zamok (**praspiekt Pieramožcaŭ 65**) and Sosedni Store (**Charužaj vul. 15**) which are open till 2 AM. Rublovskiy (**praspiekt Niezaliežnasci 117**) and Sosedni Store at the Riga Mall (**Surhanava vul. 50**) work 24/7.



Thought-provoking books by Belarusian writers

SVETLANA ALIEKSIEVICH: «Second-hand time» (to understand the Soviet mindset), «The Chernobyl Prayer: The Chronicle of the Future», «Boys in Zinc», «The unwomanly face of war» — **the Nobel Prize winner of 2014!**

ULADZIMIR KARATKEVICH: «King Stakh's Wild Hunt» — a breathtaking historical novel with elements of mysticism.

ARTUR KLINOV: «The Sun City of Dreams» — a psycho-geographical description of the city-utopia of Minsk.

YAKUB KOLAS: «A new land», «Simeon the musician», «Fisherman's cabin» — Belarusian classics about peasant's life in Belarus in pre-war time.

VASIL BYKOV: «Alpin Ballad, Pack of Wolves, The Ordeal», «His Battalion and Live Until Dawn» — about the Second World War, psychological stories about soldiers, and love at war.

MIKHAIL VOLODIN: «Our old good Babylon: a city tour in Minsk anecdotes» — **you can use this book instead of a Minsk book-guide!**



Best observation decks in Minsk

NATIONAL LIBRARY: working hours 12:00—23:00, cost is around 1,5 Eur.

BELARUS HOTEL: (**Storozhovskaya vul. 15**) working hours 10:00—24:00, cost is around 1,5 Eur.

THE VIEW RESTAURANT ON 28TH FLOOR: (**praspiekt Pieramožcaŭ 7a, «Royal Plaza» shopping mall**) free of charge (but you should make an order).

FERRIS WHEEL AT GORKY PARK: Mon: 15:00—21:00; Tue—Thu: 11:00—21:00; Fri, Sat, Sun: 11:00—22:00. Cost is around 1,5 Euro.

GALILEO SHOPPING MALL: (**Babrujskaja vul. 6**), 10:00—22:00 — free of charge.



Emergency services (common in all Belarus)

FIRE RESCUE SERVICE: 101.

POLICE: 102.

EMERGENCY (AMBULANCE): 103.

EMERGENCY SERVICE OF THE GAS NETWORK: 104.



Self-service laundries

☑ Unfortunately, we don't have self-service laundries in the center of Minsk. But you can ask any hostel in Minsk (the closest one to your location) to wash your clothes. Price is around 2—3 Eur per wash.



Useful mobile applications and links

MAPS.ME is a mobile app that provides offline maps using OpenStreetMap data. You can download the map of Minsk and make hiking routes yourself — **developed by Belarusian programmers!**

MINSK GUIDE is an application with transport schedules and much other useful information.

VIBER is one of the most popular messenger services among the locals — **developed by Belarusian programmers!**

E-DOSTAVKA.BY. If you want to cook something at home and don't want to go to the supermarket, you can use this delivery service. The website is in Russian however all products have an image so it's easy to choose, order and pay by credit card (<https://e-dostavka.by>).

TICKETS.BY. A Belarusian aggregator of plane tickets (<https://tickets.by>).

RW.BY. A website for intercity and international trains (<https://rw.by>).

TICKETBUS.BY. A website for intercity buses (<https://ticketbus.by>).

MENU.BY. An aggregator of all kinds of food delivery services in Minsk (<https://menu.by>).

KVITKI.BY. A website to buy tickets for all events in Belarus (concerts, water parks, circus, theaters, seminars, festivals, sport events and etc.) (<https://kvitki.by>).



We would like to introduce you to some of our services you might be interested in

CAR RENTAL. Sometimes, the most fascinating places in Belarus don't have a direct connection with Minsk. If you have a driving license, car rental can be a solution. Prices start from 60 rubles (30 Euro) per car. No hidden additional payments and only reliable companies!

TRANSFER TO/FROM AIRPORT

We can organize you transfer to/from airport any time!

Just contact us in advance: info@whitewings.by or +375257997558 (whatsapp)

**Our team wishes you a wonderful
journey around Belarus!**