



**Magiczny
Kraków**

Košice - European Capital of Culture 2013

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Košice in Slovakia and Marseille in France were awarded the prestigious title of the 2013 European Capital of Culture. The celebrations in Košice opened with a bang on January 19th and 20th, with 180 events and attractions. Krakow was officially represented by Vice Mayor for Culture Magdalena Sroka.

The official opening took place on 20th January in Košice's Municipal Theatre and was attended by municipal, state and European officials. Krakow was represented by Vice Mayor Magdalena Sroka and the Director of Krakow's Historical Museum, Michał Niezabitowski.

Košice, Slovakia's second largest city, is located in the country's southeastern corner, only a short distance away from the borders with Hungary, Ukraine or Poland. The city takes pride in its well-preserved historic gems, especially the stunning St. Elizabeth's cathedral, whose gothic tower stands majestically over the old town.

The European Capital of Culture title is a great challenge to Košice, as the town has to re-define its position after the unfortunate period of communist industrialization. Yet, it is also an opportunity that both the city and the entire region simply cannot miss. Ever since the European Union awarded the title to Košice in 2008, the city has been expanding its cultural facilities often displaying exceptional creativity and resourcefulness. The old military barracks, for example, have been turned into a 'Kulturpark', a derelict swimming pool now serves as a cultural centre and the brand new 'Steel Arena' - formerly a steel mill - was the venue for one of the opening concerts starring Jamiroquai. There are now also 9 cultural SPOTS scattered throughout the city's residential areas.

Košice invited other cities in Slovakia and abroad to support the project. Krakow, Košice's cooperating partner for several years, is among them. Our city, as an experienced co-organizer of the Jewish Festival, will assist in the organization of a similar event. We are also planning for several joint cultural and promotional events.

Creativity is at the heart of the 2013 celebrations in Košice, yet the organizers wish also to emphasize the regional traditions, the rich local folklore and cultural diversity resulting from the city's location. This year the city will see an unprecedented flurry of festivals, including 25 international key events, 60 smaller, yet significant projects and 300 side-events. Visit Košice in 2013 and both your soul and your body will be fully satisfied. The former may benefit from the Music Spring Festival or the Sacral Art Festival, the latter will enjoy the Food Festival or a similar event concentrating on Wine. The city will also see a special edition of the local marathon, a Balloon Festival, fashion events or MobilFest - an international festival of films shot on mobile phones and much more.