

Auschwitz

Auschwitz - Symbol of Genocide

There is nobody, who wouldn't have heard the name of KZ Auschwitz, a symbol of genocide, Holocaust and horror that people are able to do to each other. The concentration camp Auschwitz was established by Nazi Germany in the year 1940 nearby the Polish city of Oswiecim. In the following years it was extended: Auschwitz I, Auschwitz II Birkenau, Auschwitz III Monowitz and 40 subsidiary camps. At first Poles, then Soviet war prisoners, Sinti and Roma were kept imprisoned and died in the camp. From 1942 Auschwitz became the largest extermination camp for European Jews - immediately after arrival most of them were murdered by the nazis in the gas chambers.

Liberation - Number of victims

At the end of the war the Germans demolished the camp, the gas chambers and the crematoria. The most documents were burned to hide the traces of their horrible crimes. Many prisoners had to walk on so called death marches into the Third Reich. The prisoners staying in the camp were freed by soldiers of the red army at the beginning of 1945. The total number of 1.5 million murdered people shocks every today's visitor. The victims' remains in shape of hairs and other personal things can now be seen in the camp barracks.

Museum - Memorial place

In the year 1947 the Auschwitz Birkenau State Museum was created to make the extermination camp a eternal memorial place. Finally in 1979 the concentration camp Auschwitz was set on the UNESCO list of world heritage. Nowadays about 6 million persons - most of them young people - visit the camp every year. That's why in the hours before noon it is sometimes very difficult to find the necessary reflectiveness while walking through the camp. A few years ago, tour guide Christian wrote a poem about Auschwitz with the titel: Auschwitz - Rain - It is the heaven which cries for us.