



MINSK

The capital of Belarus is one of the most fascinating cities in Eastern Europe. Famous as much for its extraordinary history as its impressive, Soviet-style architecture, leafy parks and eccentric locals, Minsk is unforgettable.



BARS & NIGHTLIFE



There's no real part of town where you can head to just for bars alone so you need to spread your bet wide. Good local beers include Krynitsa and Lidskoe while it's no exaggeration to say that Belarusian vodka is some of the finest in the world. Minsk offers nightlife that you are unlikely to ever forget. Planning is everything when going for a night out in Minsk, especially considering the size of the city.

WESTWORLD CLUB

Attached to the Hotel Belarus, this infamous club is nicknamed "hockey puck" and attracts a colourful crowd of characters. The doormen alone are worth a trip. Closed on Mondays.

Vul Starazhouskaja 15, Minsk
+375 17 293 1798

REAKTOR

Rumour has it that there is a nuclear reactor somewhere in Reaktor. This is a cool joint popular with the younger crowd. Here you can find atomic-inspired furnishings. Like an A-bomb going off – the loud techno will shake your bones.

Very Khoruzhey 29, Minsk
+375 17 288 6160
www.reaktorclub.com

GAMBRINUS PUB

If you are a real beer lover, then Gambrinus Pub is the place to go to. The pub is divided into four different parts, each one representing a world famous beer capital.

Svobody sq 2, Minsk
+375 17 321 2376

RAKOVSKY BROVAR

One of the best bars in Minsk, Rakovsky Brovar, has its own small brewery where you must try the Grashovoe and Pilzenskoe. There are two floors of wooden tables and benches and a "sports corner". Open until midnight.

Vitebskaya 10, Minsk
+375 44 733 9339

DROZHCHI UNITED

Minsk's very own Irish pub is popular with the small group of expats in the city and successfully creates an authentic Irish pub ambience. Live Irish folk music on the weekend.

Sverdlova 2, Minsk
+375 17 200 5456

GRAFFITI

Located on the ground floor of a student dorm, Graffiti has some of the best live music in Minsk. It's an intimate red brick hangout where drinks are cheap, the locals friendly and the jazz, folk and indie bands top notch.

Per Kalinina 16, Minsk
+375 17 266 0154
www.graffiti.by

CAFES



There are several decent cafés located in the centre of Minsk. They range from “Beze” - Vienna-style cafés to Italian trattorias to trendy cafés/bars.

VERBA

This is very popular thanks to its signature dish shashlyk – a tasty, shish-kebab-like dish from the Caucasus.

Kropotkina 51, Minsk
+375 17 234 3467

CAFÉ TRAKTIR NA MARXA

This is a good café to sit and sink a few beers and watch the world pass by. The café offers local snacks like draniki and tasty potato pancakes.

Vul Karla Marxa 21, Minsk
+375 17 266 0361

GRUNWALD CAFÉ

Grunwald’s classy atmosphere, elegant Old World décor and a super mix of Berlarussian and European cuisine makes this a popular meeting point.

Karl Marksa 19, Minsk
+375 17 210 4255

LONDON

This cafe boasts a spiral staircase that could have come from an old London double-decker bus. Sit back, relax and enjoy.

Nezavisimosti Skoriny 18, Minsk
+375 17 289 1529

NEWS CAFE

This is a friendly and cosy café where many foreigners come to read foreign newspapers while sipping a coffee. They have an English menu and very courteous staff.

Karla Marksa 34, Minsk
+375 29 103 1111

DINING



The restaurant scene in Minsk is slowly changing. Old, formal restaurants are being usurped by a new breed of dynamic Western European-style eateries. The local cuisine, rich in baked meat, mushrooms, soups and heavy sauces, is making a comeback though.

Local favourites worth trying include Hribnoy sup (mushroom and barley soup), Kolduni (stuffed meat dumplings) and Golubsty (cabbage rolls stuffed with meat and rice). Many of the best restaurants are located near the Grand Opera. Several restaurants in offer performances to accompany your meal. Expect anything from a keyboardist tapping out Beatles hits to bikini-clad girls dancing around your table!

WESTFALIA

Westfalia offers fresh, healthy food in simple, elegant surroundings. The cuisine is German and central European. There is live jazz here every Friday.

Gazeta Pravdy 11, Minsk
+375 17 270 7004

TAJ

Taj serves delicious spicy North Indian cuisine. Popular with politicians and vegetarians - the dhal and pakoras are gorgeous. Taj is decked out with Buddhist statues and Russian dolls and is a real marriage of East and West.

Romanovskaya slabada 26, Minsk
+375 17 306 2961

www.taj.by

LIDO

This chain serves hearty Latvian food and is always busy. Enjoy Latvian Smorgasbord where they serves everything from pizzas to pork chops.

Nezavisimosti Ave 49-1, Minsk
+375 28 482 08
www.lido.by

BERGAMO

Enjoy the Italian cooking and true qualities of the food just as in Italy here at Bergamo. This restaurant makes you feel at home with the attentive service and delicious food and wine.

Kulman Str, 37, Minsk
+375 17 334 4556
www.bergamo.relax.by

STRAUNYA TALAKA

Straunya Talaka is based in a cellar and has an interesting décor consisting of stuffed animals and the tables are made from old beds. It's a popular place so you might need to book early.

Rakovskaya 18, Minsk
+375 17 203 2794

KHUTOROK

South east of the city centre, Khutorok is one of the best restaurants in Minsk. The restaurant has several themed rooms as well as a terrace that is fantastic in summer.

Pr Partizansky 174, Minsk
+375 17 299 6194

UZBEKISTAN

Delicious exotic food in the heart of "White Russia", Uzbekistan is a great place for a snack. While you eat you can watch belly dancers perform.

41 Surganova St, Minsk
+375 17 292 6982

PLANETA SUSHI

Planeta Sushi offers good value and tasty Japanese food, it is a part of a Russian chain. Great option when you feel like something different.

Nezavisimosti Ave 18, Minsk
+375 17 210 5645

TALAKA

At Talaka you can experience traditional Belarusian food. This is a cosy restaurant, located in a cellar on a small street in central Minsk. The atmosphere is rustic and there are many delicious meals to choose from on the menu.

Rakovskaya Street 18, Minsk
+375 17 203 2794
www.talaka.relax.by

GOSTI

If you want to go to a low key, relaxed place then Gosti is the place to be. They serve pub food with great beer and on certain nights they have live music with a small dance floor where you can move your hips.

Nezavisimosty ave 25, Minsk
+375 29 677 7999
www.gosti.relax.by

TAPAS BAR

If you do not know what you are in the mood for then tapas is a great option. Visit this Spanish restaurant where they serve good portion tapas in a relaxing atmosphere and fantastic service.

Internatsionalnaya 9, Minsk
+375 29 399 1111

PAN KHMELIU

Pan Khmeliu is one of the most popular restaurants in town. Here you can enjoy giant portions of food complemented by live bands and other entertainment. Open until 4am.

Internatsionalnaya 11, Minsk
+375 17 229 7602

KAMYANITSA

Kamyanitsa is an authentic Belarusian restaurant. They have a great selection of beer, both local and international, as well as a menu of typical Belarusian food. On some evenings you can catch a performance of a local band.

Pervomayskaya Str. 18, Minsk
+375 17 294 5124
www.kamyanitsa.by

BIERKELLER

BierKeller is a German beer cellar with a big selection of exclusive German beer. Try the German food, dance to the music and why not buy an authentic German beer glass to take home?

Zavulak Vajskovy 12, Minsk
+375 44 588 8333
www.bierkeller.relax.by

ID BAR

ID bar makes delicious homemade pasta and bread, and serves a great steak. Not only is this a good dinner option but they also serve a big breakfast. The staff is attentive, drinks tasty and atmosphere cosy.

Vul. Rumiancava, Minsk
+375 17 293 1396
www.idbar.by

DO & SEE



Minsk is all about monumental excess, with its grand boulevards and big squares, but its Old Town is tiny. The best place to start exploring Minsk is at Independence Square with its statue of Lenin and the Belarusian University building.

EXPLORE THE OLD TOWN

The Old Town sits on the eastern side of the Svislach River, bordered by Vul Maxima Bahdanovicha. Known as Troitskoe Predmestiye, or “Trinity Suburb”, the Old Town is not really that old. The original 17th and 18th century houses were recreated in the 1980’s. However, it’s a delightful place to walk around in. You can relax in quaint cafés or browse through the souvenir shops.

Troitskoe Predmestiye, Minsk

VISIT THE ISLAND OF TEARS

Down from the Old Town by the riverbanks is the evocative Ostrov Slyoz, or “Island of Tears.” This is a memorial to Belarusians who lost their lives in battle, but particularly in remembrance of those that died in the Soviet Union’s war in Afghanistan in the 1980’s.

Island of Tears, Minsk

BELARUSSIAN STATE CIRCUS

Few things are as exciting and amazing as going to the circus. At the Belarussian State Circus you will find different performances, you should really try to catch one.

Praspyekt Nyezalyezhnastsi 32, Minsk
+375 17 227 7842
www.circus.by

HOLY SPIRIT CATHEDRAL

Standing defiantly on a small hill is the Holy Spirit Cathedral, one of the most instantly recognisable landmarks of Minsk. This two-towered Orthodox cathedral is situated in the Upper Town. It was once part of a Polish Bernadine convent. The monastery buildings nearby are now a music academy.

Kirila i Mefodiya 3, Minsk
minskcath.anitex.by

HAVE A PICNIC IN GORKY PARK

Gorky Park is the city’s oldest park and is lovely in the summer. It is very popular with locals who often stroll along the well-tended paths. Gorky Park is a big draw to children due to the enormous Ferris Wheel. Another reason to come here is the great view of the city.

Gorky Park, Minsk

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

National Library of Belarus is one of the most iconic buildings in the city, and it is easy to see why. Not only will you find the library here but there is also an art gallery, cafe and an observation deck with a beautiful view over the city.

Praspyekt Nyezalyezhnastsi 116, Minsk
+375 17 237 6778
www.nlb.by

CHURCH OF ST. SIMON AND HELENA

Better known as the “Red Church”, the Church of St. Simon and Helena was built in 1910 by a Polish noble to commemorate the death of his two children – the tower’s three bells are named after him and the dead children.

Savetskaya 15, Minsk

DREAMLAND PARK

Dreamland Park is one of the main amusement parks in Minsk. It is a park for all ages but children will probably find some things more exciting. There are lush walking paths, a zoological area with exotic birds and live entertainment.

Vulitsa Arlowskaya 80, Minsk

VICTORY SQUARE

At the junction of Nezavisimosti and Zakharava is this huge square, with a giant victory obelisk emerging from the centre. The monument has an eternal flame at its feet, which has been burning since 1954, and is accessible from an underground passageway.

Victory Square, Minsk

MUSEUM OF THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

Next to the classical-style Trade Union's Culture Palace, lies the Museum of the Great Patriotic War. This museum tells of Belarus during World War II. It also tells the story of Minsk's Jewish population following the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. Behind the building is a park filled with vintage tanks and planes.

Skoriny 25, Minsk

+375 17 227 5611

www.warmuseum.by

SIT IN TSENTRALNY PARK

Across the road from the Museum of the Great Patriotic War lies a delightful little park that stands on the site of a 19th century marketplace. You often see people playing music here.

Tsentralny Park, Minsk

MINSK ARENA

Minsk Arena is a great place to visit for concerts or a fun-filled hockey games. Check out their website while you are there to see what is on. You will also find 7 cafes and 3 different restaurants in the building.

Praspyekt Pyeramozhtsaw 111, Minsk

+375 17 363 45 98

www.minskarena.by

VISIT THE KGB MUSEUM

North-west of Independence Square is a yellow neo-classical block, which houses the KGB building. On the other side of the street is a park, where you can find a bust of the founder of the KGB's predecessor, the Cheka, Felix Dzerzhinsky.

Francyska Skaryny 17, Minsk

CENTRAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

This is one of the most beautiful places in Minsk. The Botanical Garden is a leading scientific institution and home to more than 1,000 different plants. It is a tranquil place with a beautiful lake and the perfect spot to have a picnic at on a sunny day.

Surganova Str., 2V, Minsk

+375 17 284 1484

www.cbg.org.by

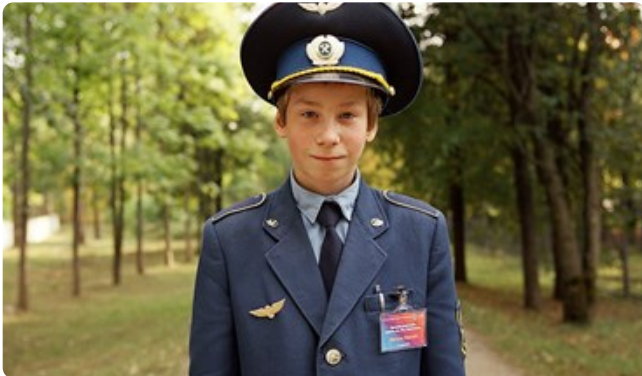
PALATS MASTATSVVA

The Palats Mastatsva is a stylish and trendy hangout – well compared to the dour museums that tend to make up Minsk's cultural scene. Palats Mastatsva is an arts institute where you will find galleries and book stalls.

Vul Kazlova 3, Minsk

+375 17 213 3549

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION



EXTRA USEFUL INFORMATION

Demonstrations in central Minsk are fairly commonplace. Most of these pass peacefully although some have been known to turn violent. The resulting police response can be sudden and occasionally frightening. The important thing to remember is that if caught up in a demonstration, stay alert and get out of it as quickly as possible.

Minsk has a serious problem with prostitution. Particularly in bars and lobbies, always be wary of overfriendly girls, or indeed guys for that matter.

10 per cent is the usual tip. In some hotels 10-15 per cent service charge will be added to your bill.

TAXI

Yellow cabs are the state run taxis that are best used. Prices depend on distance. Taxis can be called on 052 and 084.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

You can get around Minsk by using the bus, tram, or the metro. All three are cheap and reliable. The two line metro is an interesting way of getting around as each station is decorated by a theme. For instance the October Square station evokes the 1917 revolution.

Public transport operates from about 05.30 to 01.00 daily and serves all parts of the city. Trolleybuses 1, 2 and 18 pass through Minsk's main street, Pr Francyska Skaryny. The metro closes at 24.30 every night.

Remember to validate it by punching the ticket on one of the red punching machines. Ten day or monthly passes are available for all modes of transport.

PHARMACY

The pharmacies in Minsk are marked by a green cross and there are many of them in the city. Often you can buy medicine that are not usually common in other countries.

MINSK NATIONAL AIRPORT

Minsk II is the main international airport located 42 km from the city. You can get a taxi from outside the arrivals hall which will take you into the centre of town. The airport bus is cheaper but takes longer to get into town and runs sporadically.

Minsk
+375 17 279 1300
www.airport.by

TELEPHONE

Country code: +375
Area code: 17

ELECTRICITY

220V AC, 50Hz

SHOPPING



You can find some lovely souvenirs in Minsk, such as delightful wooden carved figures. Belarus is famous throughout the former Soviet-bloc for its ladies underwear called “Milavitsa”. Other products to look out for include Belarusian vodka, which is rated very highly.

International goods are available throughout Minsk. Francyska Skaryny is Minsk’s main shopping drag. Here you will find a big branch of the famous GUM department store as well as the Podzemka emporium, where you will find art and CD’s. Another good bet is the Nemige shopping centre on Vul Njamiha 8, which stocks “Milavitsa” lingerie.

For markets, head to the Zhdanovich Market where you can buy anything from radios to shoes. The Kamarovsky Market is a food market where you can buy yourself a whole pig and all kinds of seasonal produce. If you fancy bringing home art work, then head for the Artists’ Market, halfway between metro stops Kupalovskaya and Nemiga, or the Outdoor Art Market, located between Oktiabrskaya and Pobedy Square metro stations.

GUM

It’s great fun wandering around GUM, where you can find all manner of products. GUM is big, brash and an unforgettable place to shop.

Nezavisimosti Ave 21, Minsk
+375 17 226 1048
www.gum.by

TOPSHOP

Topshop is full of clothing, shoes, bags, accessories, make up and more. Here you will find an easy-going lifestyle with tons of different fashion brands to choose from.

Babruyskaya Vulitsa 6, Minsk

H&M

This Swedish chain, that you nowadays find almost everywhere in the world, provides high street fashion for both men and women at prices suiting everyone.

Praspekt Niezalienasci 55, Minsk
www.hm.com

MANGO

At Mango, the urban young woman finds everything from sleek work-wear to the fabulous cocktail dress to reasonable prices. Match your new outfit with the perfect shoes and accessories that you also find here.

www.mango.com

ZARA

This world famous brand soon has a store in every mid-size town. Here you find the latest fashion for men, women and children, everything from street wear to the more up-dressed look.

www.zara.com

WOMEN'S SECRET

As the name reveals, this boutique sells women's underwear, lingerie, swimwear and cosy homewear. This Spanish chain offers everything from comfy pyjamas to sleek, sexy bras and panties.

. 6b, Minsk

MASSIMO DUTTI

Massimo Dutti has its focus on sophisticated business wear for both men and women. They are famous for their classic and elegant clothes and accessories made of high quality fabrics and leather, but still to affordable prices.