Magiczny Kraków

Wawel – the holy mountain for Poles. A residence, a citadel, a museum

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Wawel Hill had been fortified even before Wawel became the residence of Polish kings and Kraków became the capital of Poland. Along with an increase of the city's power, the residence of princes – and, shortly afterwards, of kings – was protected more and more strongly. Fortifications were adapted to contemporary requirements and, at the same time, their grandeur was maintained. The history of Wawel is not devoid of difficult moments – for example, it was plagued with fires and endured occupations by foreign armies. In 1846, it was occupied by the Austrians; during the Spring of Nations in 1848, they used cannons on Wawel Hill to shell Krakow, killing some of the inhabitants and causing extensive damage.

During the Kraków Fortress period, Wawel Castle was turned into a citadel, but the fortifications erected at that time, including caponiers from the side of Floriana Straszewskiego and Kanonicza streets and St Idzi's Church, served defensive purposes.

The Austrian army garrisoned the castle until 1911, when the Galician authorities managed to regain the castle, which made its renovation possible.

Currently, Wawel Castle is home to the Wawel Royal Castle National Art Collection.

Accessibility: Information about the accessibility of the Castle, the hill and the collection to visitors can be found at: www.wawel.krakow.pl.