

Montelupich Prison

Jail, located on Montelupich Street in Cracow, which was used by the Gestapo throughout World War II. Prisoners in Montelupich included political prisoners, members of the SS and Security Service (SD) who had been convicted and given prison terms, British and Soviet spies and parachutists, victims of *Gestapo* street raids, soldiers who had deserted the *Waffen-SS*, and regular criminals. Only male prisoners were held at the Montelupich prison; females were housed in a nearby convent. One thousand men and 300 women could be detained at a time; altogether, 20,000 prisoners passed through the prison.

The Jewish political prisoners in Montelupich were treated much worse than the other prisoners. They lived in the cellar, were given paltry food rations, and were frequently tortured. After weeks or months in the prison, they were transferred to Plaszow to be killed or sent to Auschwitz or Gross-Rosen.

In late April 1943 a group of prisoners, members of Cracow's Jewish Fighting Organization, were being sent from Montelupich to Plaszow. They attacked their German guard and tried to escape; most were killed in the struggle, but a few managed to escape and join the underground. Only two prisoners, Shimon and Gusta Draenger, successfully made it to the Wisnicz forests.