The Barbican was built as a military construction. It currently serves as a representation of the olden days. It is one of the most interesting and beautiful elements of the Kraków Old Town. The Barbican was built in 1498-1499, following the design of an excellent, but unknown architect. Until the 18th century, the building underwent numerous reconstructions. Then the Barbican gradually deteriorated. In the 1840s, Karol Kremer managed the renovation works with the current shape of the monument being their result. The Barbican is an example of late Gothic architecture. Its foundations are made of limestone and sandstone. The lower part of the wall, hidden underground, is made of sandstone. The visible parts of the walls are made of brick with sandstone elements. Their top is covered with a brick-tiled gable roof. The dominating color of the building is dark red i.e. the color of bricks .

The Barbican consists of thick walls built on an almost circular plan. They are twelve meters high. The building has two gates: the south gate and Kleparz Gate. In front of the south gate facing Floriańska Street, there is an eleven-meter long corridor. Its walls are made of brick. It is currently covered with a modern semi-circular glass roof. The corridor is called a gorge. It leads into a wall with a huge pointed-arched gate closed by an iron grille.

The other gate is called Kleparz Gate. As the name suggests, it faces the Kleparz neighborhood, i.e. the west. When we stand inside the Barbican, with our backs to the south gate and the gorge, Kleparz Gate is closer to the left side. It is closed by almost six-meter high wooden doors.

The walls surround an open courtyard. Its internal diameter is almost twenty-four and a half meters. The outer diameter of the Barbican walls is more than thirty meters. Their thickness in the lower parts is over three and a half meters, and in the upper parts – two and a half meters. The Barbican walls are circular in sixty percent of its circumference. The sections on both sides of the south gate are straight. The left section is about six and a half meters long and the right section is nearly ten meters long.

The walls are crowned with seven observation towers. They are located every few meters in the circular part of the Barbican walls, with round towers alternating with octagonal ones. They are covered with pointed copper roofs decorated with tin flags. The copper has turned green.

The walls hide narrow corridors. The entrance to them is located to the left of the south gate. A winding staircase goes up a few meters, leading to a narrow corridor. It overlooks a porch surrounding the walls from the courtyard at a height of almost seven meters. The porch is protected by a solid brick balustrade. It is held by beige stone supports. From the porch you can go up the stairs over the upper edge of Kleparz Gate. They climb both to the right and left of the gate's edge, leading to the highest corridor inside the walls. From the outside, the corridor protrudes beyond the main walls like an enclosed balcony. This part of defensive walls is called machicolation. It is supported by 105 (one hundred and five) beige stone supports. At the top of the wall, there are 99 (ninety-nine) embrasures. They are also located in the machicolation floor and are secured with a grille.

Some embrasures are shaped like a keyhole. A narrow slit turns into a circular opening at the bottom. These are the so-called keyhole embrasures. Others are rectangular in shape, topped with a pointed arch, or semicircular. Additional embrasures are located in the part of the walls below the machicolation. They are also situated on the side of the inner courtyard. There are a total of 75 (seventy-five) embrasures.

The Barbican is surrounded by the remains of a former moat. It is a pit that is less than two meters wide – on the north side (or eleven meters wide – on the east and west sides), and six meters deep. In front of Kleparz Gate, there is a reconstruction of a wooden bridge. The south gate serves as the entrance to the historic building.