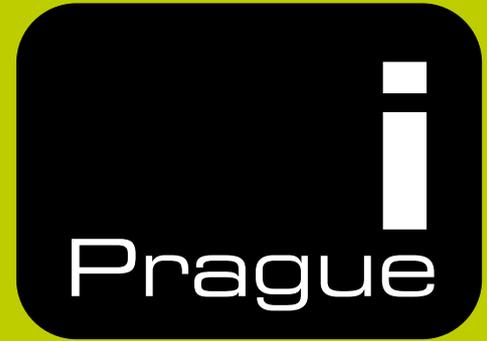
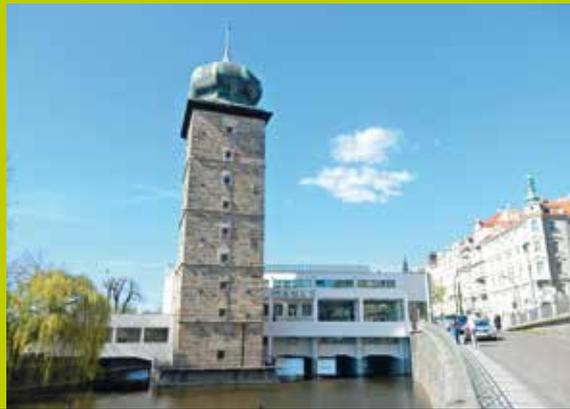
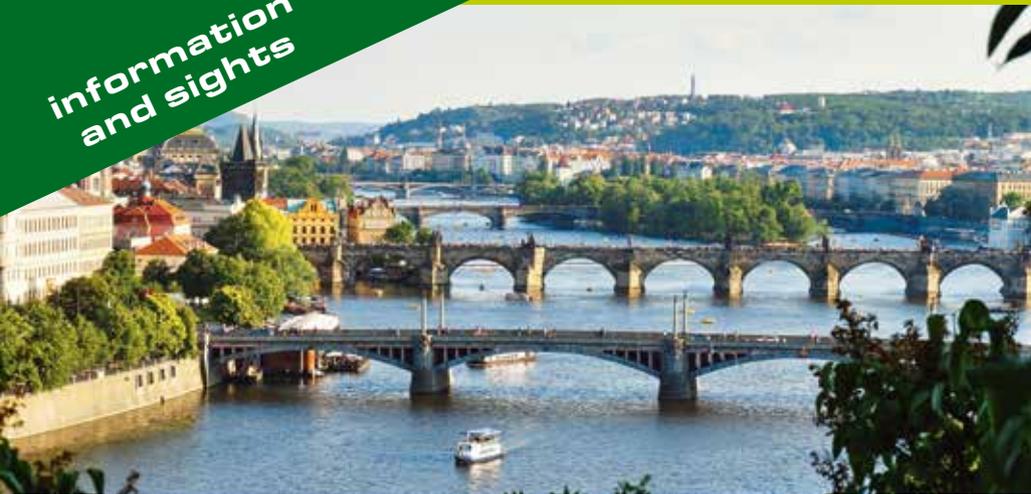


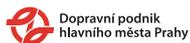
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Route: George of Poděbrady Square – Viktoria Žižkov Stadium, 2 and 3 February

www.praha3.cz

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Church of St Simon and St Jude in the Old Town, 12 February

www.jiribarta.cz

Spectaculare • multi-genre festival with guests including Luke Howard and Peter Gregson
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www.spectaculare.eu

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www.muzeumpolicie.cz

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www.nachtigallartists.cz

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www.chodovskatvrz.cz

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www.epoquequartet.com

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Probe 1 • an exhibition summarising Slovak (post-)conceptual art
Stone Bell House, until 24 March

www.ghmp.cz

Stabat Mater • performance of Antonín Dvořák's oratorio prepared for the Vatican
Municipal House, 17 and 18 April

www.obecnidum.cz

Belfiatio Quintet • the illustrious Czech ensemble plays Mozart and Françaix
Baroque Refectory, Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, 29 April

www.belfiatio.cz

Podskalí of Old and Life on the Vltava • history of rafting and shipping around Prague
Podskalí Customs House at Výtoň, permanent exhibition

www.muzeumprahy.cz

Do you know all about Czech crowns?

If you were to add together the value of all valid Czech coins and banknotes, you would arrive at the total of CZK 8,888. Do you know about the money used in the Czech Republic and the landmarks and people depicted on Czech crowns?

The Czech crown is divided into a hundred hellers, but these are now only used for cash-free transactions. The smallest unit in circulation is the **1-crown coin**. The numeral "1" is embossed above the Crown of St Wenceslas, the oldest and most important item among the crown jewels of Bohemia. Charles IV had it made in 1346 before he became king and emperor. The **2-crown coin** is decorated by a round "button-jewel", which was worn during the ninth and tenth centuries in the Great Moravian Empire. That country, which overlapped partially with the present-day territory of the Czech Republic, was the first stable principality of western Slavs in Central Europe. On the **5-crown coin** you will recognise Charles Bridge, one of the most important landmarks not only in Prague, but in the whole country. Charles IV, whom we mentioned above, had it built. The **10-crown coin** also depicts an important cultural landmark: the Cathedral of St Peter and St Paul with the adjacent bishop's residence in Brno. The **20-crown coin** shows the patron saint of Bohemia and Moravia, St Wenceslas, on horseback. The depiction is based on the statue on Wenceslas Square in Prague. The **50-crown coin** can be used as a quiz on a tour of the Czech capital. On it, you will find a group of Prague's characteristic landmarks: Charles Bridge, the building of the National Theatre, St Nicholas's Church in the Lesser Town of Prague, and a panorama of Prague Castle. Embossed on the obverse side is the Bohemian lion from the Czech coat of arms. The Czech banknotes commemorate historical figures

who supported the Czech nation. Charles IV, whom we have already encountered more than once, appears on the **100-crown banknote**, while the **200-crown banknote** portrays the thinker and pedagogue John Amos Comenius. The **500-crown banknote** bears a portrait of the author Božena Němcová, whose book *The Grandmother* (1855) is a major work of Czech literature. Gazing at us from the **1000-crown banknote** is the historian and politician František Palacký, the founder of modern Czech historiography, known as the "father of the nation". The **2000-crown banknote** was devoted to the opera singer Emmy Destinn. The highest denomination, the **5000-crown banknote**, depicts Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, Czechoslovakia's first president.

History of the Czech crown on display

In 2018, the Czech Republic commemorated the 100th anniversary of the country's founding. The establishment of the new state a hundred years ago also



meant a new currency, of course – the Czechoslovak crown. After the joint state of the Czechs and Slovaks was split up in 1993, it was renamed as the Czech crown. An exhibition in the Imperial Stables at Prague Castle from 1 February to 28 April will recall the 100-year history of the currency. Exhibits will include gold ingots, coins, medallions, and original designs created with the participation of important Czech artists. The rarest exhibit is a gold coin with a face value of CZK 100,000,000. With a diameter of more than half a metre, it is also the world's second-largest coin.

What kind of money was formerly used in the Czech lands?

Paper money and coins with a worth dependent upon their face value rather than the precious metal used to make them were not in use in the Czech lands until the nineteenth century. Until then, a variety of coins of Czech and foreign origin were used as currency. Most important among these were coins made of high-quality silver. One of the silver coins of domestic origin was the denarius. Named for an old Roman coin, the denarius was minted in Bohemia from the end of the tenth century. Its minting ended in 1300 with the currency reform under King Wenceslas II. The denarius was replaced by the "Prague groschen", which was used in its day not only in Bohemia, but also elsewhere in central Europe. Its introduction was inspired by the discovery of rich silver deposits in the town Kutná Hora. The Jáchymov tolar, named for the mines in Jáchymov, then appeared in the sixteenth century. The word tolar (brought into Czech from the German word Thaler) was later used for other coins and currencies as well, including the dollar.



Strahov Monastery is the oldest Premonstratensian monastery in the Czech Republic



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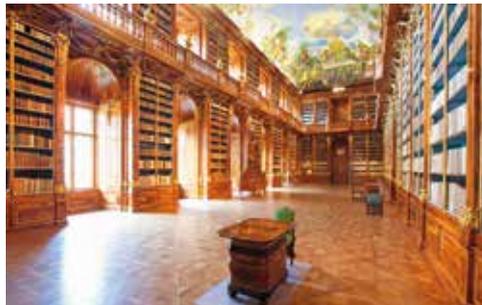
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Strahov Library

The Strahov Monastery Library: Hundreds of Thousands of Books from Nine Centuries

In the immediate vicinity of Prague Castle is one of the world's oldest Premonstratensian monasteries. The monastery is in full use, and it offers visitors an unparalleled view of both the religious and the secular history of the Czech Lands. The Royal Canonry of Premonstratensians at Strahov was founded in 1143, and the monastery has served as the base of the Roman Catholic religious order for Bohemia and Moravia ever since, almost without interruption. The monastery is home to an order that manages countless vicarages and other estates across the Czech Republic, in addition to educating novices and clerics. There are more than 20 members currently living at the monastery. Worship services take place every day at 6 p.m. and on Sundays at 10 a.m. in the monastery's baroque Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady. The basilica is exceptional not only for its ornamentation, but also for being the final resting place of the Premonstratensian order's founder



St. Norbert (Norbert of Xanten), who is interred in the northern aisle. At the time of the monastery's founding, a library was established. It currently contains more than 300,000 volumes of books and academic papers. This makes it one of only a handful of historical libraries still in operation. Having survived wars and fires, the original collections were given a new, dignified place in the 17th century in the baroque Theological Hall. This monumental space lined by original bookshelves is dominated by its painted ceiling framed with stucco ornaments. Another unique feature of the Theological Hall is the collection of globes from the 16th and 17th centuries, while there is a preserved compilation wheel made around 1678 for use in assembling texts. As the library collection expanded, an additional room, the Philosophical Hall, was added. This vast auditorium is famous mainly for its ceiling painted by the Viennese artist Anton Maulbertsch, depicting saints and numerous allegories. The library also includes a Cabinet of Curiosities which could be described as a predecessor of modern-day museums of natural history. In addition to the Premonstratensian monks, the library is also used by the Museum of National Literature. Besides the monastery itself, visitors to Strahov can also view the picture gallery featuring a permanent collection of paintings from the 14th to the 19th centuries. The entire monastery complex is open to the public every day, and the Strahov Monastery Library is open daily throughout the year, except for the 24th and the 25th of December and Easter Sunday.

Easter and Witch-burning

Easter is celebrated as an important holiday in the Czech Republic. Many historical traditions, both religious and non-religious, link up to it. Christians commemorate the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, while non-believers celebrate the coming of spring. Easter falls on the Sunday following the full moon after the vernal equinox, hence its date differs from year to year. In 2019, Easter falls on 22 April. The individual days of Easter week are known in the Czech lands as Blue Monday, Grey Tuesday, Ugly Wednesday, Green Thursday, Good Friday, White (Holy) Saturday, Easter Sunday and Easter Monday and each of these days has its own specific customs. Ancient Czech and Moravian folk customs culminate on Easter Monday, “thrashing” day, on which men and boys go from house to house singing carols and beating women with braided whips made from pussywillow twigs and decorated with ribbons. The women reward them with painted eggs and alcohol. This ritual serves to celebrate fertility. Easter Monday customs differ in individual regions, while the thrashing is often accompanied by pouring water over the women. There are also traditional Easter foods. A lamb-shaped cake to commemorate Jesus Christ, Agnus Dei, is baked from sweet dough. The cross-buns known as “Judases” are pastries whose shape is reminiscent of the rope on which Judas Iscariot hanged himself after his betrayal of Jesus. People in the Czech Republic also adorn their homes with various Easter decorations – coloured eggs, twigs in bloom, figures of lambs, hares, chickens, etc. In large towns you will find bustling Easter markets, where you can encounter examples of a number of traditional crafts, buy everything you need to set you up for the holidays and sample traditional Czech delicacies. The [annual] event



of mock **witch-burning** (alternatively called Philip and Jacob Night, Walpurgis Night or Beltane Eve) is an extremely popular tradition in the Czech lands. The custom, manifesting its decidedly pagan roots, takes place on the night from 30 April to 1 May. In the past, people often believed that on this night witches gather at a coven and that caves and underground caverns up and down the country open to reveal treasures hidden in them. To protect their livelihoods against evil, people would build bonfires on hills, and this gradually developed into “witch-burning” (pitch-covered broomsticks were set on fire and thrown upwards). The ashes left behind by these bonfires were traditionally said to have magical powers and boost the crop. In the past, cattle were led through the ashes so as to make them fertile. Today, girls dress up as witches and jump over the fire. On 30 April, in every Czech town and village people gather around bonfires, sing songs and burn an effigy of a witch to shrieks of delight. This custom symbolises the end of winter, purification, protection against evil, new beginnings. People welcome the coming of the month of May and the spring itself.

Did you know that you can find good luck in Prague? And it is found on one of Prague's best known landmarks, Charles Bridge. Standing on the bridge is a statue of John Nepomuk, one of Bohemia's patron saints. It was erected there for the 300th anniversary of John of Nepomuk's martyrdom. He was killed after having become entangled in a dispute between the archbishop and Wenceslas IV, King of Bohemia. At the time, Nepomuk was the vicar-general of the Prague archdiocese. This is far more probable than the romanticised story of his murder, according to which Nepomuk refused to violate the seal of confession against Queen Sophia, for whom he is said to have served as a confessor. The king ordered him tortured and then that his body be thrown into the Vltava River. References to his martyrdom and mentions of miracles began to appear immediately after his death. The cult of John of Nepomuk did not fully blossom until the seventeenth century, and his statue on Charles Bridge contributed to it. The bronze sculpture placed there in 1683 was based on a wooden model by Jan Brokoff, which had been inspired by a creation of the Viennese sculptor Matthias Rauchmüller. Brokoff's wooden model is now found at the Church of St John of Nepomuk on the Rock in Prague. Many people believe that touching the plaque on the sculpture of this martyr on Charles Bridge brings good luck. Another reference on the bridge to the fate of John of Nepomuk is a cross at the place where the martyr is said to have been thrown into the river. The cross is likewise said to fulfil the wishes of those who touch the stars surrounding it.



Prague's Islands

When visiting Prague, instead of just walking to landmarks, you can also choose to take a stroll through the city's natural surroundings. For example, you can visit one of the islands in the Vltava River.



A second bridge across the Vltava in Prague was not built until before the middle of the nineteenth century (until then, the people of Prague could only get from one side of the river to the other by crossing Charles Bridge, built in the early fifteenth century). At first, it was a chain bridge just for pedestrians, but progress then demanded that it be rebuilt as a stone bridge. Among those to cross the new bridge at its grand opening was Emperor Franz Joseph I. According to legend, the caption printed beneath a photograph in a newspaper on the occasion earned the emperor his nickname among the Czechs: "Procházka", the Czech equivalent of "Mr. Walker". Today, the bridge has a different name (Legion Bridge), but just like in those days, there are steps leading

from the bridge to the island, which lies about midway between the banks of the Vltava River. It is called **Střelecký Island** (meaning "Archers' Island". Archers were already practising there during the reign of Emperor Charles IV in the fourteenth century, aiming at a bird-shaped dummy on a pole. The island was also suitable for archery because of its strategic position, which helped with repelling attacks by various armies over the centuries. Originally, however, it had been used for a garden by a Prague apothecary, among other people. For this reason it was originally called the "Lawn" (Trávník). There is still plenty of grass if you go to the island for cultural events and other happenings. For example, on 20 April you can enjoy a drink at the wine tasting held here.

Kampa Island is in Prague's Lesser Town, and you can reach it by from the Legion Bridge or from Charles Bridge by stairs that have shortened the trip there since the middle of the nineteenth century. The oldest written documentation of the island can be found in the charter of the Church of Our Lady beneath the Chain from the latter half of the twelfth century. The church is still standing, although it, like Kampa, has undergone

a transformation during the course of its existence. The island was gradually changed by deposits of sediment and by artificial embankments, while a great fire in the mid-sixteenth century also left its mark. Somewhat earlier, mills and millers' gardens began to appear on the island, and these were later displaced by landholding of the nobility. The name Kampa was derived from one of the latter (although there are several versions of how the island got its name). In the seventeenth century, an aristocrat from Campus in the Netherlands had a garden there. He was serving as a highly placed official at Prague Castle, where his grandfather, the astronomer and alchemist Tycho Brahe, had once lived. After the Second World War, the gardens were joined together to create the present-day public park. The island's past connection with mills is still shown by a channel called the "Devil's Stream" (Čertovka). Its name supposedly refers to the legend of a demonic woman who once lived there. The place is also called Prague's Little Venice because of

its romantic character with water directly adjacent to urban buildings, reminiscent of the Italian city. Some of the former mills have been preserved, but none still serve their original purpose. Sová's Mill is now the site of the Museum Kampa. Among the exhibits you can visit there now are Prague Was More Beautiful than Rome (from 9 Feb. to 12 May), inspired by the Italian Slavic scholar Ripellino, or exhibitions of the Czech artists Jiří Valenta (from 4 Feb. do 7 April) and Vladislav Mirvald (from 5 Feb. do 10 March). On Kampa Island, you can also see outdoor artworks, such as the supernatural babies that area also "crawling" on the television tower in Prague-Žižkov. One also should not miss the big millwheel belonging to the last preserved Renaissance-era mill. The little bridge by the mill that crosses the stream Čertovka is nicknamed the "lovers' bridge". This is a tradition carried over from the Ponte Milvio in Rome, where St Valentine is said to have died, and lovers hang padlocks from its railing.



Slavonic Island (Slovanský ostrov or “Žofín”) was formed gradually by sediment deposits during the seventeenth century. It lies almost adjacent to the National Theatre. After the island formed, it was settled by dyers, one of whom was actually the owner of the place in the latter half of the eighteenth century. At approximately that time, a hundred-year flood covered the island, but the island withstood the water, although its size at the time was just 150 x 100 metres. Over time, the dyers were supplanted by the manufacturing of cardboard, and baths were established there later on. The important figure for the present appearance of the island was the miller Václav Novotný, who bought the island in the 1830s. He made it accessible to Prague residents, who were able to take walks there or to ride a little train for two passengers. Novotný wanted his island to become an important social and cultural centre for the patriotically minded city. The palace that was to serve for this purpose was given the name Žofín – the same name is sometimes used for Slavonic Island itself. The palace was named after the mother of Emperor Franz Joseph, Archduchess Sophie. The palace was, among other things, the site of the Slavic Congress, which attempted to unify the Slavs living under the Austrian monarchy and to define their future relations with the empire. It was never completed, however. The congress took place in 1848, when revolutions were shaking all of Europe, and Prague was no exception. The unrest that erupted during the congress was put down by General Windisch-Graetz, whose wife was killed by a stray bullet during the rebellion. Žofín Palace survived the fighting in the streets, however, and it still serves as a venue for holding social events. Another noteworthy island structure is the water tower.



When it was built in the fifteenth century, it was made of wood, then it assumed its definitive, present appearance in the mid-seventeenth century. It was repaired after having been damaged by cannon fire from the Swedish troops who besieged Prague at the end of the Thirty Years' War. The water tower used gravity to supply water to the fountains and buildings of the New Town and Old Town of Prague until the mid-nineteenth century, and it has been preserved long since it ceased to function. Interestingly, in the 1970s in the era of socialist Czechoslovakia, it was used by the secret police as an observation post. Václav Havel lived not far from there in those days, when he was a persecuted dissident and not yet the first democratic Czech president.

There are two islands in Prague with names referring to the emperor. The island **Imperial Meadow** (Císařská louka) is near the Smíchov Port. During its existence, it got a “promotion”, because it had originally been called the Royal Meadow in honour of the coronation banquet of King Wenceslas II, which probably took place in 1297. At the time, however, it was not an island, but just a wide riverbank, which it remained until the end of the nineteenth century, when the meadow was a popular destination for the excursions of Prague's inhabitants. There were horse races there, and even panning for gold. It became separated from the mainland when the port was built. Do not confuse the Imperial Meadow with the **Imperial Island**, Prague's largest island with an area of 66 hectares. During the Renaissance, Emperor Rudolf II received the island from the Czech estates as a gift. You can get there by walking through the forested city park Stromovka. On the other hand, nearby is one of the smallest and newest islands. It does not yet have a name, but it is unofficially called Bird Island. It was formed by the flooding of 2002. It is a strip measuring about 60 x 10 metres, and it has become a night-time shelter for aquatic birds. To see more animals, you need not go much farther: **Bird Island** lies between the Imperial Island and the Prague Zoo, which can be reached all year by ferry. The ferry also goes from the Imperial Island to both banks of the Vltava River, but only from April to October.



What's Going On in Prague

Do you believe in the supernatural? Are you unafraid of being afraid? The **Museum of Prague Ghosts and Legends** (on Mostecká Street) offers an atmosphere of mystery. On the ground floor of the building is the library of the Spirit of Prague – Genius Loci Pragensis. The most daring adults and children can go down into the cellar, part of which dates back to the twelfth century. Here, one can experience the atmosphere of Prague at midnight many centuries ago, and more than twenty Prague ghosts are waiting to add to the fun. The **Museum of Alchemists and Magicians** (at the address Jánství vršek) offers a similar experience. It makes reference primarily to the era of Emperor Rudolph II, who had a notorious weakness for alchemy and magic. The museum exhibits focus on the alchemist Kelly.

Going to the theatre. Even if you can't speak Czech, you can go to some of the productions at Czech theatres that are based on acrobatics, music and audiovisual effects. For example, a performance by the Losers Cirque Company is all about the eternal contest between the young and old, which none can escape without a damaged ego. The ensemble is one of the leading Czech representatives of New Circus. The production titled

Ego is based on a simple situation: what happens when a man at the pinnacle of his sports faces a younger, more skilled opponent. This parable about how most competitions that people enter are nothing other than battles against themselves can be seen at the venue La Fabrika in Prague-Holešovice on 18 and 19 March. At the theatre Laterna magika, which was created at the end of the 1950s as the world's first multi-media theatre, you can let yourself be engulfed by *The Garden*. This magi-

Golden Prague. The second half of the 19th century was the period of exceptional urban, architectural, and technical upswing of Prague, the crucial stage of its transformation from a provincial town of the Habsburg Monarchy into a busy and bustling metropolis of the newly awakened nation abounding with confidence as well as cultural and economic strength. The Golden Prague exhibition (to 31 March) seeks to introduce visitors to Prague during the 1860s–1880s, familiarising them with its transformation as depicted in illustrations and texts of Czech picture magazines *Zlatá Praha* (Golden Prague), *Květy*, and *Světozor* of that time. www.muzeumprahy.cz

cal visual/dance production is the story of a group of children who discover a seemingly abandoned garden, which is in reality the site of never-ending childhood fantasy. The performance was inspired by a book by the important Czech artist and animator Jiří Trnka. For the creation of a world of imagination, it uses puppetry, large-scale projections, and mapping. *The Garden* is also open to children from the age of seven, and it is performed several times each month.

Contemporary Czech Photography. The National Gallery has prepared an exhibition of seven important figures of contemporary Czech photography. It is presenting them under the title *400 ASA*, which is also the name of the association that brings together two generations of photographers. Their pictures tell of the artists' interest in intimate and society-wide topics. The exhibition can be seen from 1 March until 8 September. Visitors to the exhibition *The Best of Czech Press Photo* will also get an overview of contemporary Czech photography, summarising a quarter century of the competition, which is the Czech analogue to World Press Photo. In a single place on the premises of the Karolinum near Old Town Square, one may observe the events and topics that have driven photo journalism during the past two decades. The exhibition will last until the end of February.



The Garden



Golden Prague



Golden Prague



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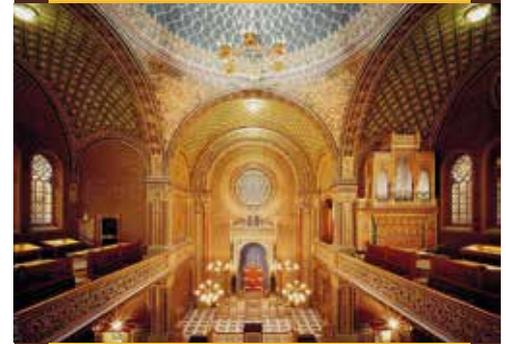
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From Czech History: (In)Famous Executions



Jan Mydlář, apparently the most famous Czech executioner, died 355 years ago. He made Czech history with the mass execution of 27 noblemen, knights, and burghers. There have been a number of famous and infamous executions in this country's history, of course.

Jan Mydlář was born in the latter half of the sixteenth century, apparently to the family of a town scribe. He, too, was highly educated, having become a Master of Medicine at Prague's university, but his hopes of a career as a physician were dashed by his ill-fated love for the wife of a miller. Doubly ill-fated, in fact: firstly, his love was unrequited, and secondly it ended tragically. The woman named Dorotka was sentenced to death by being buried alive for having poisoned her husband. Still in love with her and wishing to prevent her death, Jan took a job as an assistant executioner despite knowing that such a profession meant falling to the very bottom of society. An executioner was basically a pariah and was forced to bear various humiliations: he had to live outside the city walls, he sat in a special place in church, and an undignified place was reserved for him in the

tavern, where he even had to drink from a cup without a handle. The stigma even affected his family. Mydlář submitted to all of this out of love, but he was unable to save Dorotka from execution. Nonetheless, he had to remain an executioner. And by all accounts he was a capable master of the executioner's sword, because the Old Town executioner took him as an apprentice, and Mydlář later took over the position. It was in this capacity that in 1621 he was ordered to execute the leaders of the Bohemian Revolt. The executions were to serve as an example after the sequence of events that had begun with the Defenestration of Prague, which triggered the Thirty Years' War in 1618 and ended two years later at the Battle of White Mountain near Prague. The Catholic army crushed the Czech protestant troops, and this influenced the history of the Czech lands for three hundred years to come. The crushing victory solidified the Habsburgs' power, and these executions were meant as the first demonstration of that fact. The severed heads were displayed publicly as a warning for another ten years. The executions are now commemorated by crosses in the pavement of Old Town Square. Among those executed was Jan Jessenius, a physician, who did the first public autopsy and who became a friend of Jan Mydlář. Mydlář himself lived more than ninety years, a very respectable age in those days. He worked as an executioner until 1632, when he passed on the executioner's trade to his son, from whom it was in turn inherited by the next generation. Paradoxically, one of Mydlář's grandsons, also an executioner, was himself executed. He was sentenced to death for his role in one of the worst Prague fires, which occurred in 1689. More than eight hundred houses were reduced to ashes. Like Jan Mydlář before him, his grandson was also motivated by love.

Over the centuries, the story of the executioner Mydlář has acquired an air of the romantic, but there have been executions in Czech history that are still chilling, in part, of course, because they involve recent history. The list of names of prisoners sentenced to death in post-war history includes two women. Both were put to death by hanging, but their lives were absolutely different. **Milada Horáková** became the victim of judicial murder in 1950. During the post-war period, the communist regime in Czechoslovakia followed the example of Stalinist Russia and took vengeance on its "enemies". During the Second World War, the lawyer and politician Milada Horáková had been imprisoned for participating in the anti-fascist resistance, and after the war she warned of the dangers of communist totalitarianism. In a rigged trial, she was convicted of

espionage and treason. **Olga Hepnarová** was put to death fifteen years later as the last woman executed in Czechoslovakia. She was convicted of mass murder. In cold blood, Hepnarová deliberately drove a lorry over a tram stop, killing eight people. Her act was supposedly revenge on a heartless society. The tragedy occurred on a street that is now coincidentally named after Milada Horáková. The death penalty was abolished in this country in 1990. The last Czech to be executed was **Vladimír Lulek**, who was executed in February 1989 for the brutal murder of his wife and four children.



Excursion to the Regions: Pilsen



Interiors created by Adolf Loos

Beer and mechanical engineering in the transportation sector are the two things that Czechs most closely associate with Pilsen. An excursion to the city is still worthwhile if you are not interested in the manufacturing of trams or of light-coloured lager beer. It is also worth a trip to Pilsen for its landmarks and culture, and it is conveniently accessible from Prague in about an hour and a half by train or bus.

Pilsen was founded at the end of the thirteenth century by the King of Bohemia. Its advantageous position at the confluence of four rivers made the place an important crossroad on the trade route leading from Nuremberg to Regensburg. Two centuries later, Pilsen was the third-largest city in Bohemia, with 290 houses and nearly 3,000 inhabitants. Since then, its importance has hardly suffered, because today, with approximately 171,000 inhabitants, it is the fourth-largest city in the Czech Republic. The middle of the nineteenth century was an especially important time for Pilsen, with the founding of two of the city's important businesses: the manufacturing company Škoda, which grew into one of the largest factories of its kind, and the brewery where

light-coloured lager beer was first brewed. Pilsen's industry does not, however, mean that it is culturally backwards.

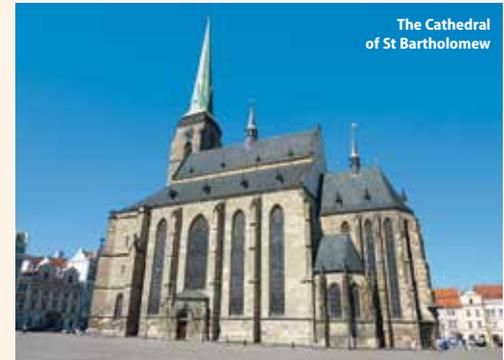
Pilsen has the third-largest synagogue in the world (after Jerusalem and Budapest). Called **the Great Synagogue**, it bears witness to Pilsen's former Jewish minority, which was virtually annihilated during the period of Nazi occupation. The Moorish-Romanesque building was paid for by donations from Pilsen's Jews at the turn of the 1880s and '90s. It was originally to have been built in the Gothic style with a 65-metre tower, but the town council denied a permit for the project because of concerns that the synagogue would compete inappropriately with the Christian Cathedral of St Bartholomew. In the end, the tower's height did not exceed 45 metres, but the synagogue is still an impressive structure. You can tour it from April until October.

The Cathedral of St Bartholomew is the dominant feature of Pilsen. Work on it began when the city was founded, and it was not completed until the sixteenth century. The Gothic church in the very centre of the city also has a record of its own: the tallest church tower in the Czech Republic, measuring 102.6 metres. From the galleries at a height of 60 metres, there is a lovely vista of the whole city and its environs. The tower is open all year, but the interior of the cathedral is closed to the public at the moment because of renovations, which will last until 2020. Then, among the things you can see at St Bartholomew's is a sculpture depicting Christ at the Mount of Olives. According to legend, one of the little angels protecting him is capable of granting secret wishes.

Fans of modern architecture should not miss the tour of interiors created in Pilsen by the architect **Adolf Loos**. His clientele in the 1930s included many wealthy Jews, and

preserved to this day are eight flats, which bear witness not only to Loos's skill as a designer, but also to the actual stories of the inhabitants. At the address Benda Street No. 10, for example, you can visit the flat that belonged to the chemical engineer Vilém Kraus and his wife Gertrude. She died in a concentration camp together with their children. Vilém survived the war, but the communist regime took his flat from him, and he fled into exile. The flat is an example of Loos's clever solutions, such as the well-conceived storage space in the bedroom, which has been preserved almost in its entirety. The best preserved interior, however, is found in a flat on the street Husova třída in a flat that Loos had furnished for the merchant Brummel and his family. For example, he created an extravagant yellow room for the entrepreneur's mother-in-law.

To Pilsen for an exhibition: You can choose from among several exhibitions at the West Bohemian Gallery. Through 28 February, Studio of the Republic presents the architecture of Pilsen from 1918 to 1938. The gallery is devoting another exhibition (from 1 March until 12 May) to the Czech fine arts based on folk and especially village culture.



The Cathedral of St Bartholomew

Points of interest

- ▶ There are numerous beautiful parks and gardens in Prague, occupying approximately 5% of the total urban area. The most beautiful include the former Royal Preserve, now more frequently referred to by its popular name "Stromovka", the complex of gardens on the Petřín Hill, the Vrtbovská Garden (from November to March closed), the gardens at Letná, the Wallenstein Garden (Valdštejnská zahrada), and the Prague Castle gardens.
- ▶ There are ten islands on the Vltava (Moldau) River running through Prague (e.g. Střelecký, Císařský, Dětský). A few years ago, the prestigious traveler's server VirtualTourist.com declared the Prague island of Kampa the second most rewarding urban island in the world.
- ▶ Prague's astronomical clock (Pražský orloj), one of the best-preserved medieval astronomical clocks in the world, is a feature of the tower of the Old Town Hall. It was created by Mikuláš z Kadaně, a clockmaker to the royal court, in 1410.
- ▶ The Jan Žižka Monument on Vítkov Hill is one of the world's largest bronze equestrian statues. It weighs 16.5 metric tons and is 9 meters tall and 9.6 meters long.
- ▶ Charles Bridge was the only bridge in Prague right up until the 19th century. It is the second oldest bridge in use in the Czech Republic.

Useful information

- ▶ **Prague is the capital city** of the Czech Republic. It has approximately 1.3 million inhabitants on an area of some 500 sq km (193 sq mi). It originated around 1000 A.D. and for many years remained a group of independent villages. Under the rule of Charles IV (14th century) medieval Prague experienced its greatest development. At the turn of the 17th century the city gained further renown owing to Emperor Rudolf II. Between 1918 and 1992 Prague was the capital city of Czechoslovakia, and since January 1993 it has been the capital of the independent Czech Republic. Since 1 May 2004 the Czech Republic has been a member of the European Union, and on 21 December 2007 it became part of the Schengen Area.
- ▶ **Bank holidays** in the Czech Republic: 1 January – New Year, 19 April – Good Friday, 22 April – Easter Monday, 1 May – Labour Day, 8 May – Liberation Day, 5 July – The Day of Missionaries and Saints Cyril and Methodius, 6 July – Jan Hus Day, 28 September – Czech Statehood Day, 28 October – Independence Day, 17 November – Struggle for Freedom and Democracy Day, 24 December – Christmas Eve, 25 December – Christmas Day, 26 December – Boxing Day.
- ▶ **Traditional Czech dishes** are a meal of braised beef with cream sauce and bread dumplings and roast pork with dumplings and cabbage, while the traditional Christmas meal is carp. Main courses in restaurants usually cost (depending on the location) from CZK 150 to CZK 300.
- ▶ **Banks and Currency exchange rates**
Most banks in Prague are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays. One Euro buys approximately CZK 24.5,

one US dollar approximately CZK 21.5, and one pound sterling approximately CZK 28. We recommend not changing money on the street with strangers; use banks, money exchange offices and hotels. Listed exchange rates are for the purchase of hard currency.

- ▶ **Most shops are open** from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays, but business hours are limited on holidays. Stores with sales space in excess of 200 m² are closed on 1 January, Easter Monday, 8 May, 28 September, 28 October, and 25 and 26 December. There are exceptions for pharmacies, filling stations, shops on hospital grounds, and at airports and train stations.
- ▶ **Popular souvenirs** purchased in the Czech Republic include Czech cut glass, porcelain, Becherovka (a traditional bitter herbal liquor), mead, Slivovice (plum brandy), Bohemian garnets, amber, wooden marionettes, art and design pieces, folk art pieces, spa wafers and typical spa drinking cups.
- ▶ **Postal services**
The main post office is open daily from 2 a.m. until midnight. It is located at 14 Jindřišská Street in the very centre of the city, near metro station "Můstek"; the interchange Metro station for the A and B lines.

Public transport information

- ▶ **There are three underground (Metro) lines** operating in Prague – green (A), yellow (B) and red (C). The metro system interconnects all the important places around the city, with tram and bus connections to destinations where the metro does not reach. The public transport network is reliable and covers the city thoroughly. The metro operates daily from 5 a.m. to midnight. Night tram and bus lines provide public transportation after midnight.

**Taxi to
the airport
for €18**



www.transport-in-prague.com





Fare

Tickets		Adult		Child		Senior	
Basic	90 min.	CZK 32	CZK 16	CZK 16			
Short-term	30 min.	CZK 24	CZK 12	CZK 12			
1 day	24 hrs	CZK 110	CZK 55	CZK 55			
3 days	72 hrs	CZK 310	•	•			

○ For children from 6 to 15 years ^(note) of age N.B. and seniors from 65 to 70 years ^(note) of age N.B. that have an opencard with a „Special fare endorsement“ (endorsement price is 120 CZK), the fare for travel in Prague (tariff zones P, 0 and B) is 0 CZK. Children from 6 to 10 years of age N.B. require only an identification card certified by its issuer (a corporate entity) with name, surname, date of birth and a photograph.

Public transport links to Václav Havel Airport Prague (Letiště)

Bus 119 – “Nádraží Veveslavín“ (metro line A) – “Letiště” – 17 min.

Bus 100 – “Zličín“ (metro line B) – “Letiště” – 16 min.

Airport Express Bus – Prague main railway station “Hlavní nádraží“ (metro line C, with SC, EC, IC and EN type rail links) – “Letiště” – 33 min.

Important telephone numbers:

The EU universal emergency telephone number

112

Fire brigade emergency number

150

Emergency medical service number

155

Municipal police emergency number

156

State police emergency number

158

Information (tel. numbers, information on traffic, cultural events, etc.)

1188

Useful Czech telephone numbers

1180

Prague contact centre

12444

Roadside assistance

261 104 123

Airport information – nonstop line

220 111 888

International country calling code for the Czech Republic

+420 (00420)

Useful links:

www.czech.cz

official website of the Czech Republic

www.praha.eu

web portal of the City of Prague

www.prague.eu

Prague tourist web portal

www.czechtourism.com

official travel site of the Czech Republic

www.kudyznudy.cz

ideas for trips

www.florenc.cz

website of the Florenc coach terminal

www.cd.cz

Czech Railways website

www.prg.aero

Prague Airport website

www.dpp.cz

website of the Prague public transport operator

www.idos.cz

website timetables of trains, buses and public transport in the Czech Republic and Europe

www.chmi.cz

website of the Czech Institute of Hydrometeorology – information on weather in the Czech Republic



PRAGUE CITY TOURISM INFORMATION CENTRES

- Old-Town Hall
- Rytiřská 12
- Wenceslas Square
- Václav Havel Airport Prague



PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION

- Václav Havel Airport Prague, Terminal 1 and 2
 - Prague City Hall, Jungmannova 29/35, Prague 1
- Metro stations:
- Můstek • Hlavní nádraží • Anděl
 - Hradčanská • Nádraží Veveslavín



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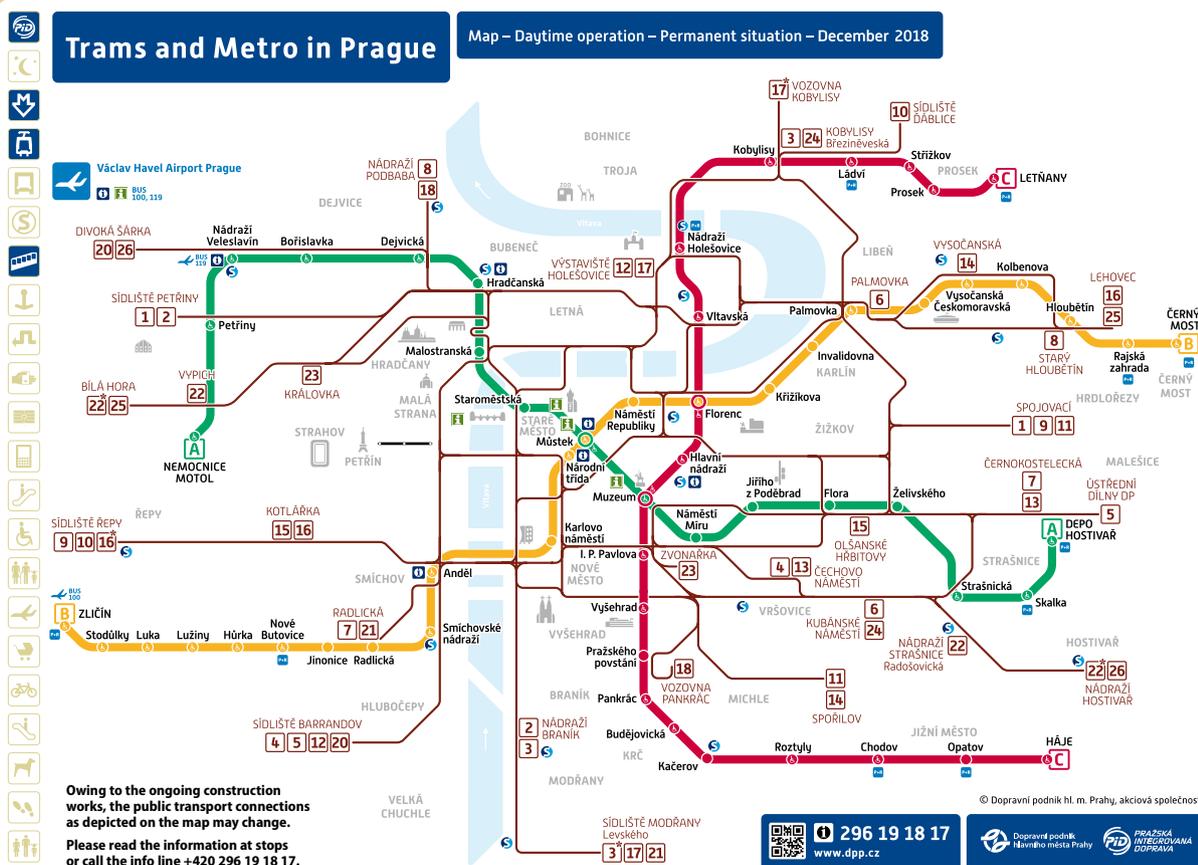
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Trams and Metro in Prague

Map – Daytime operation – Permanent situation – December 2018



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