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www.meetfactory.cz

Marek Schovánek • Pharmatopia (exhibition)

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www.dox.cz

Did you know that...

... in 1891 the first electric tram line in Prague and the Czech lands terminated next to the upper entrance to the **Stromovka park**? In 1893 the track was prolonged, leading through Stromovka to the Governor's Villa, crossing a railway tunnel. The rails were removed from the park in 1903. Stromovka, also known as the Royal Enclosure, a large oasis of greenery abounding in ponds and lakes, high-grown trees, a great place for picnics, strolls and bike rides, is "the Central Park of Prague". The park is accessible from one side directly from a tram stop, from the other from a steam boat. North of the jetty, there is a footbridge leading to the beautiful Troja chateau and Prague Zoo.



... the earliest mention of the Sova Mills, currently housing the **Kampa Museum**, dates from 1393? The museum contains Jan and Meda Mládek's collections of modern Central European art, including works by the pioneer of abstract painting František Kupka and the Czech Cubist sculptor Otta Gutfreund. The Sova Mills are situated on the charming Kampa island in Prague's Lesser Town. The museum also holds short-term exhibitions of works by both Czech and foreign artists, most recently, Yoko Ono, Julian Opie, Piet Mondrian, Theodor Pištěk and Andy Warhol. It was founded by the arts collectors Meda Mládková and Jan Mládek. In the 19th century, the Sova Mills and the adjacent garden were owned by the Odkolek family of bakers, who had the building converted to the Neo-Gothic architecture style.

... Prague's **Ladronka park** is named after the Italian Count Philip de la Crone? At the end of the 17th century, the aristocrat bought the original extensive vineyards and built there a roadside inn, which owing to the busy local thoroughfares became a highly prosperous business. Today, Ladronka is a one of the most popular in-line skating sites in Prague. Extensive grassy plains with the landmark of the former estate on the borderline of Břevnov, Vypich and Motol are visited by people of all ages. The park also features a popular restaurant with a bowling alley and indoor and outdoor seating, as well as a children's playground. Every Sunday at 4 pm a theatre performance for children takes place. The entire complex has been reconstructed and provides great recreational opportunities for everyone throughout the year.

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... **Tower Park Prague** is the tallest building in the Czech capital? The Žižkov TV tower was built between 1985 and 1992 according to the project designed by the Czech architects Václav Aulický and Jiří Kozák. The structure met with a hostile response on the part of the local inhabitants, who criticised the contrast between the hi-tech architecture and the historical buildings in the vicinity. Today, the tower is one of the main Prague landmarks and owing to its proximity to the city centre attracts locals, visitors from other parts of the Czech Republic and foreign tourists. The TV tower provides a breathtaking view of Prague and features themed cabins, an interactive section, restaurant, café, bar and luxury apartments. Close to Tower Park Prague there is a garden restaurant and a summer terrace.

Prague Walks – The Convent of St. Agnes of Bohemia



The Convent of St. Agnes of Bohemia is one of the oldest and most interesting historical monuments in Prague. It is located about ten minutes' walk from the Old Town Square through streets breathing medieval charm.

The convent was founded on the site of a former hospital by Princess Agnes, sister of King Wenceslas and one of the most remarkable members of the Přemyslid royal dynasty, who also became its first abbess.

Royal burial-ground

At the time of its construction (1233-1234), the convent was a truly unique building in that Gothic architectural elements were applied for the first time in a complex of such a size. Agnes founded on the

premises the Sanctuary of St. Salvator, intended as a family sepulchre. The Přemyslid crypt is the final resting place of King Wenceslas I, as well as Saint Agnes herself and other royals.

In the 1370s, the complex underwent a Gothic reconstruction but subsequently fell into despair until 1556, when it was taken over by the Dominican Order, who in the wake of a devastating fire in 1689 had it partially redeveloped in the early and, circa 1750, late Baroque styles.

National cultural monument

During the reign of the reformist Emperor Josef II, in 1782 the convent was abolished and its interior rebuilt into dozens of small flats for poverty-stricken Prague citizens. Until the 1930s, the complex and its adjacent area, including Josefov (the original Jewish Town), were a ghetto inhabited by the poor. Following the clearance of part of the Na Františku quarter in the late-19th and early-20th centuries, the convent buildings underwent a large-scale redevelopment, which lasted from the 1930s up until the end of the 1980s. This resulted in the entire complex assuming its original Gothic appearance.



Since 1978 the Convent of St. Agnes has been a national cultural monument and also houses a section of the National Gallery, featuring a permanent exhibition of medieval art works from Bohemia and Central Europe (1200–1550).

Legends and myths relating to the St. Agnes Convent

One of the legends has it that once St Agnes's remains, which were allegedly taken away and hidden by the nuns from the Hussites, have been found the Czech nation will thrive and experience happiness and harmony. According to another legend, one day the convent was entered by a woman who had come all the way from Poland. Penniless and exhausted, she sought refuge with the nuns, who duly took care of her. The woman wanted to compensate them for their kindness and since she had no money she revealed to them a secret family formula for preparing a healing elixir. The nuns began producing it and all of a sudden throngs of people from the neighbourhood and far further afield started visiting the convent to ask them for help. The concoction was dubbed "Swallow Water".

www.ngprague.cz



Prague Walks - Břevnov Monastery

A place to spend a pleasant time is the large complex of the Břevnov Monastery with the St. Margaret Basilica and a Baroque garden. It is located about an hour's walk west of Prague Castle.

The Břevnov Monastery is a Benedictine archabbey situated in the Břevnov district. It was founded in 933 AD by Saint Adalbert, the second Bishop of Prague, with the support of Duke Boleslav II of Bohemia. In the monastery's garden there is the Vojtěška villa with a chapel, which was given its current Baroque appearance during the entire complex's renovation between 1722 and 1725, after it had been destroyed by the Hussite warriors.

The Břevnov Monastery is the first monastery to have been built in Prague. The St. Margaret Basilica was constructed between 1708 and 1715 according to Křištof Dienzenföf's architectural design. It is adorned with paintings by Jan Jakob Steinfels, dating from 1719 to 1721, and other distinguished artists of the time. The altarpieces are the work of Petr Brandl.

The monastery's decline and renovation

During the Prussian siege of Prague in 1757, the St. Margaret Basilica served as stables and a military hospital. Owing to the Břevnov abbot František Štěpán Rautenstrauch's participation in reforms of universities, legal and clerical education, Emperor Josef II did not decide to close the monastery, unlike in the case of other religious institutions.

Over the next period, however, the Břevnov Monastery experienced decline, right up until the 1930s, when it was taken over by monks from Chevetogne and Anastáz Opasek became its prior. In 1938 the



monastery was seized by the German occupation forces and in 1950 finally expropriated by the Communist regime. Abbot Opasek was condemned for high treason and espionage in a show trial, the monastery was dissolved and the remaining monks were deported. Until 1990, the monastery housed the Ministry of the Interior Archive. In 1991-1993, after Opasek's return, the whole complex was refurbished with support from abroad.

The most beautiful part of the Břevnov Monastery is the Theresian Hall, with an exquisite Baroque fresco

On 24 October 2013 the Břevnov Monastery began selling its own bottled beer at its gates. The stall is **open on weekdays** from 8.30 to 11.30 am and 1 to 5 pm, on **Saturdays and Sundays** from 9 to 11 am and 1.30 to 4 pm. (With regard to possible changes owing to special masses, guided tours and events in the prelature, it is recommended to verify the opening hours at the weekends by calling 220 406 111.)

ceiling plate created by Kosma Demián Ason in 1727. Another interesting place is beneath the St. Margaret Basilica: Romanesque crypts with columns and cubical capitals from the original monastery church. The complex also contains an extensive terraced garden, which is ideal for taking a stroll and reposing.

St. Adalbert Brewery

The Břevnov Monastery can boast of having the oldest tradition of beer brewing in the Czech lands. The brewery was evidently founded soon after the monastery itself was established. Just like the rest of the complex, it was destroyed during the Hussite Wars in the 1420s, and only rebuilt in 1720. The monks not only brewed beer themselves, they also leased out the premises. During the War of the Austrian Succession, the brewery was devastated by French and Bavarian troops, and it was again repaired several times. The cellar's capacity, insufficient for maturing of lager, was one of the reasons for the brewery's closure in 1889. The original building was then pulled down, when the road from Prague to Karlovy Vary was being extended.

The current Břevnov Monastery's St. Adalbert Brewery has linked up to the long tradition. It is located in the Baroque building of the former stables and produces approximately 3,000 hectolitres of beer a year. In addition to its flagship lager, it brews a number of speciality beers, using various types of malt and hops. Today, the monastery beer is sold under the trademark Břevnovský Benedikt. The monastery complex also contains a restaurant with, naturally, Břevnovský Benedikt on tap and a speciality beer shop.

What's on in Prague

The Slovak New Wave – photography exhibition

The Slovak New Wave in photography is represented by Jano Pavlík, Rudo Prekop, Vasil Stanko, Tono Stano, Martin Štrba, Miro Švolík, Kamil Varga and Peter Župník, all of whom were born circa 1960, studied at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague and in the mid-80s were among the most distinguished photographers in Czechoslovakia. Although not an organised group with a set programme, their relatively uniform visual language came across as one of the first demonstrations of photography modernism in this country. The exhibition at the House of Photography runs until 16 March and is open every day except Monday. www.ghmp.cz



Jonas Kaufman

The charismatic globally celebrated tenor is returning to Prague with a new programme. His previous performance at the Smetana Hall in the Czech capital was packed to the rafters and was followed by rapturous standing ovations. Jonas Kaufmann will be appearing on 10 April at 7.30 pm at the Municipal House. www.obecnidum.cz

Carnevale Prague 2014

The festival links up to historical allegoric festivities held in the Czech lands since the Middle Ages. This year's edition will take place from 20 February to 4 March on the Old Town Square and at the Clam-Gallas Palace. You can look forward to the Masked Procession, the opening ceremony of the Prague Carnival season, which starts at 2 pm on Saturday 22 February on the Old Town Square. With the participation of Czech and foreign guests, 12 days before Ash Wednesday, the gates of the city open to the Carnival. Divertimento Furioso, juggling and acrobatic performances take place every day of the festival. Carnevale Prague also includes the Menu Carnevale - feasts in selected city-centre restaurants. www.carnevale.cz

One World - film festival

The unique international festival of human rights documentaries, organised by People in Need, is currently the world's largest project of its kind. The Czech edition starts in Prague and then moves on to other cities throughout the country. One World also provides a platform for exchange of opinions and experience, with the audiences afforded the opportunity to discuss the topics dealt with in the films with their creators and specialists in the respective issues. The festival will take place from 3 to 12 March. www.jedensvet.cz

Robbie Williams

Last year saw the release of Robbie Williams's studio album Swings Both Ways, a homage to swing. The CD contains seven arrangements of swing standards and



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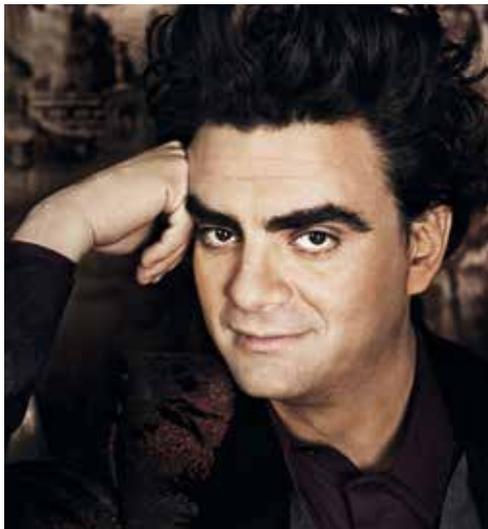
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six new pieces. Robbie Williams invited to the studio musicians of such renown as Lily Allen, Michaela Bubl , Kelly Clarkson and Olly Murs. To date, he has sold more than 60 million albums, received 17 Brit Awards, and six of his albums are among the 100 best-selling discs in British music history. Within his current European tour, Williams will be performing on 26 April at the O2 Arena in Prague, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary. www.o2arena.cz

Rolando Villaz n

Over the past few years, the world-renowned tenor Rolando Villaz n has taken various musical paths. He has made a recording of Mexican folk songs and embraced Claudio Monteverdi's Baroque music. Following last year's tour featuring Verdi works, his cur-



rent programme is dedicated to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Villaz n enchanted Prague two years ago, and remarked after giving his concert: "Prague was fantastic, my heart is full of unforgettable experiences – the people were amazing, the city is simply incredible. I love Prague... ", promising to come back soon. On 28 March at 7.30 pm Villaz n will be performing at the Smetana Hall of the Municipal House, accompanied by the distinguished Kammerorchester Basel. www.nachtigallartists.cz

Petr Nikl – Play for Time

Petr Nikl, a founding member of the Tvrdohlav  (Stubborn) group of artists, has recently garnered great acclaim owing to numerous interactive projects in which he has applied children's imagination. Owing to his openness, creativity and airiness, he has had a great influence on the formation of the current thinking. The exhibition presents Nikl's works divided into several contrastive sections. The pictures, drawings, photographs and other artefacts on display introduce the visitors to a current of associations and imaginations. Visual-music chamber performances regularly take place at the gallery. The exhibition on the first floor of the Municipal Library on Mari nsk  square in Prague 1 runs until 23 March. www.ghmp.cz

Easter markets

The highly popular Easter markets offer a wide selection of traditional seasonal items – hand-painted eggs, bunnies and chickens, decorative willow switches and pastries, interior decorations, candles, craftwork, wooden toys, etc. The largest Easter markets will be open on the Old Town Square and Wenceslas Square from 5 to 27 April. www.trhypraha.cz



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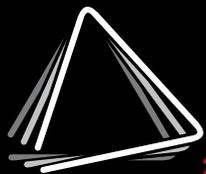
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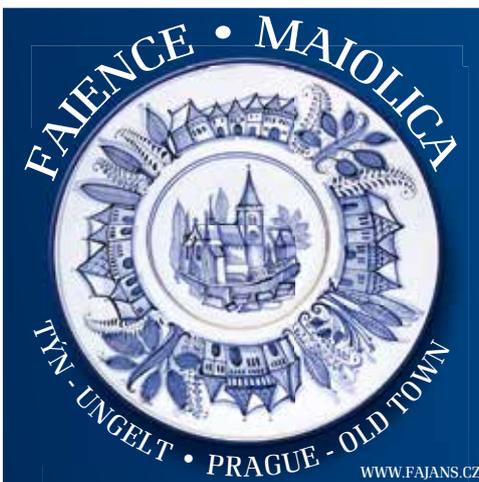
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Carnival in the Hlinsko region



Carnival is a three-day festival of feasting and merry-making between two fasting periods that takes place between the middle of February and the beginning of March, in dependence on the date of Easter. In line with the tradition, during these days people are supposed to eat their fill so as to be ready for the forty days of Lent. It is also a time for dance parties and holding weddings. The end of the Carnival entails annual rites too, including masked processions, a traditional custom that has been maintained in the Czech countryside up to the present day.

Masked processions differ region by region, with the most famous in the Czech Republic being those held in the villages near Hlinsko, a small town situated approximately 150 kilometres south-west of Prague. Since 2010 the local Carnival festivities have been UNESCO—listed!

The first written mentions of the Hlinsko region parades and masked processions date back to the end of the 19th century. In some villages (Hamry, Studnice, Vortová) they have maintained a virtually unchanged

form for centuries. Visitors can witness this singular and exquisitely staged festivity throughout February, starting on Saturday, 8 February.

Carnival procession

The masks possess their traditional fashion and function: they are mostly worn by men, with women, and possibly children, appearing in disguise only in a couple of villages (Blatno, Studnice). Accompanied by loud oompah music, the procession, led by the Spotty and his wife, followed by the Mare and Brute, Straw Men and Chimney Sweeps, makes its way through the entire village. The masked figures stop in front of each house, sing and dance, so that the farmer has a good harvest. The house owner and his wife treat them mainly to doughnuts and spirits, and contribute to the money-box. The procession ends with the traditional “killing” of the Mare: the masked figures surround the Mare, who runs around the circle and one of them, usually the Brute, reads aloud a testament of the sins the Mare has allegedly committed throughout the year.



In a humorous manner, the text describes various events in the village, as well as events relating to the entire society (for instance, rising prices, unemployment, etc.). After the text has been read, the Brute is given the order to slit the Mare’s veins. The Mare collapses to the ground, while the other maskers dance around. After a while, the Brute gives the Mare some alcohol, then the Mare springs up and begins dancing with the other maskers. At this moment, the Carnival procession is over and the maskers invite all those present to a dance.

Dates of UNESCO-listed Carnival processions:

Veselý Kopec: 8 Feb., 10 am;

Hamry: 15 Feb., 4pm;

Studnice: 22 Feb., 9 am;

Hlinsko-Blatno: 23 Feb., 9 am;

Vortová: 1 March, 8 am;

Hlinsko-Betlém: 4 March (bidding farewell to the Carnival – day-long Carnival merry-making, masks from Blatno).

www.hlinsko.cz



Day trips from Prague - Jílové u Prahy

If you have grown weary of the big-city hustle and bustle of Prague, a day trip to a peaceful nearby town is the ideal remedy. Amid a picturesque landscape, 35 km south of Prague, lies Jílové u Prahy, where you can also visit a very interesting museum.

The oldest buildings in the town include the Church of Saint Adalbert, the Coin House, the Town Hall and the Corpus Christi Church. The Church of Saint Adalbert was established in the 1230s. Interesting in architectural terms is the placement of the tower between the choir and the nave. The main altar was created in 1510. The Coin House is a stone building dating from the first half of the 14th century and until 1420 was the seat of the Royal Mining Authority. For a short time, it was inhabited by the famous English alchemist Edward Kelley, who worked at the court of Emperor Rudolf II. At the present time, the Coin House serves as a museum.

The Town Hall is one of the landmarks of the main square. It acquired its present appearance in 1724, yet the history of the house dates back to the 14th century, when it was the residence of the mayor, Mikuláš. The Corpus Christi Church was founded in the 14th century by miners and originally stood in the middle of their settlement.

Regional Museum in Jílové u Prahy

The museum was founded upon the initiative of the Jílové citizen Leopold Čihák, who in 1891 offered his collection to the town. The main theme of the permanent exhibition is the history of gold mining and processing. The section titled Hiking and Nature in the Southern Environs of Prague is dedicated to the landscape between the rivers Kocába, Vltava and Sázava, and the history



St. Anthony of Padua Gallery



Halíř Pit Gallery

of hiking, a leisure time activity that was extremely popular in the previous century. Circa 1918, the Czech hiking movement actually originated south of Prague.

Easter Show Day

A week prior to Easter Sunday, which this year falls on 20 April, the museum annually prepares show days. Within the holiday event, visitors can witness the traditional customs, including dyeing beautifully coloured Easter eggs, basket-weaving, pot-making and other folk crafts and arts. In the courtyard, the museum always erects stalls selling spices, food, Easter items and souvenirs. Folk music is played all day long, performed by bagpipers, vocal groups and bands singing traditional Easter songs. This year, the show day in Jílové will take place on 12 April. Come and have fun! www.muzeumjilove.cz

The visitors to the museum can also see three historical mining galleries.

St. Joseph Gallery

Reopening of some of the hundreds of abandoned mining pits was first considered circa 1995. The St Joseph Gallery in Dolní Studené was opened to the public in 2002 and since then has been a great permanent attraction for those visiting the region.

St. Anthony of Padua Gallery

2005 saw the launch of work on reopening of another mining gallery, situated about 100 metres from the St. Joseph Gallery. The abandoned mine was secured by the state enterprise Diamo. In 2007 the rights and obligations pertaining to the St. Anthony Pit were transferred to the museum in Jílové u Prahy.

Halíř Gallery

The mining gallery was driven in the 1950s during geological research in the Jílové mining district. It displays modern mining work and the unique geological structure of the gallery vault. Unlike the other pits operated by the museum, it provides barrier-free access.

Regional history exhibition

Archaeological findings have revealed that the Jílové region has been inhabited since the late Iron Age. The nearby settlement of Závist is one of the largest Celtic oppida in the Czech Republic.

A significant Christian centre at the beginning of the second millennium was the Ostrov Monastery. Jílové is also crossed by one of the most beautiful Czech railways – the famous Sázava Pacific line.

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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 16th and 17th centuries 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 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, 24 January – 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 location) from CZK 150 to CZK 300.
- ▶ **Popular souvenirs** purchased in the Czech Republic include Czech cut glass, porcelain, traditional liquors (Becherovka – herbal bitters, mead,

Slivovice – plum brandy), Bohemian garnets, amber, wooden marionettes, art and design pieces, folk art pieces, spa wafers and typical spa drinking cups, etc.

- ▶ **The majority of shops open** from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on workdays. It is, however, easy to do one's shopping at weekends as well, primarily thanks to numerous shopping centres (e.g. Palladium near metro station "Náměstí Republiky", Nový Smíchov near metro station "Anděl", or Centrum Chodov at metro station "Chodov").
- ▶ **Currency exchange rates**
One US dollar buys approximately 19 CZK, one Euro approximately 27 CZK, and one pound sterling approximately 30 CZK.
- ▶ **Banks**
Most banks in Prague are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays.
- ▶ **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. After midnight, public transport is ensured by night tram and bus lines.



Public transport fares

TYPE OF TICKET	Adults	Children up to 15 years
Basic 90 min.	CZK 32	CZK 16
Short-term 30 min.	CZK 24	CZK 12
1 day 24-hour	CZK 110	CZK 55
3 days 72-hour	CZK 310	-
Airport Express (AE)	CZK 60	CZK 30

Public transport links to Václav Havel Airport Prague (Letiště Václava Havla)

Bus 119 – “Dejvická” (metro line A) – “Letiště Václava Havla” – 22 min.

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

Bus 179 – “Nové Butovice” (metro line B) – “Letiště Václava Havla” – 38 min.

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

Emergency number of the Police
158

Information (tel. numbers, information on traffic, cultural events, etc.)
1188

Useful Czech telephone numbers
1180

Prague contact centre
12444

Roadside assistance
1230

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.praguewelcome.cz
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.jizdnirady.idnes.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

