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- Národní třída Promenade** • theatre and music at a site connected with events of November 1939 and 1989
Národní třída, 17 November www.dikyzemuzem.cz
- Un ballo in maschera** • a new production of Verdi's opera inspired by the murder of King Gustav III of Sweden
National Theatre, 9 and 21 November www.narodni-divadlo.cz
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- Tours of Prague's underground structures** • access to the underground areas of selected Prague buildings
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- More than the Laboratory** • an exhibition of discoveries made by amateur science fans
National Museum of Agriculture, until 7 January www.nzm.cz
- Christmas Night Run** • a run along the banks of the Vltava • Jan Palach Square, 16 December www.christmasrun.cz
- Selva morale e spirituale** • The baroque music ensembles play the music of Claudio Monteverdi
Rudolfinum concert hall, 19 December www.collegium1704.com
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BVV Trade Fairs Brno, from 18 to 21 January www.bvv.cz/go-regiontour
- New Year's firework** • Prague welcomes the New Year of 2018 with choreography of light in the city center
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- Czech Film Posters 1931–1948** • an exhibition of Czechoslovak cinematography
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- Holiday World** • 27th annual central European tourism trade fair, presenting leisure opportunities in the Czech
Republic and at foreign destinations; this show is combined with the gastronomy trade fair Top Gastro & Hotel
Prague Exhibition Grounds, Holešovice, from 15 to 19 February www.holidayworld.cz

Did you know that...

... **the Czechs have a “Halloween” of their own?** It is called “Dušičky” (Little Souls), a colloquialism for All Souls’ Day. It is even observed by people who are not members of any church. It falls on 2 November, the day after All Saints’ Day. It has a connection with the Celtic festival Samhain, which is celebrated at the end of the year on the night of 31 October to 1 November. It was viewed as the time when there was a blurring of the border between the worlds of the living and the dead. The souls of the dead were thought to return to earth and vice-versa: the living could reach the underworld. It is the Celts as well as the Slavs that have given us the tradition of lighting candles on that day. Back then, people believed that fire purifies and that light helped protect them from evil spirits. The Celts and then the Slavs in-

habited central Europe, and it is supposed that Samhain was also celebrated in Czech-speaking territory. With the arrival of Christianity, it was replaced by All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day. In the tenth century, All Souls’ Day was established by an abbot from the French town Cluny to help the church better compete with predominantly pagan ceremonies. Three centuries later, the custom spread to the rest of the Western church. In countries with a Christian tradition, including the Czech Republic, it is customary to visit the graves of family members during the time around 2 November (not necessarily on that exact day) and to light a candle and lay flowers there. One of the popular superstitions is that on All Souls’ Eve, souls rise from purgatory for a rest from their suffering. For this reason, people filled their oil lamps with butter,

so that the souls of their relatives could rub soot on themselves, or they drank cold milk or poured it on themselves to cool off the souls. The Czechs do not have the tradition, familiar from Halloween, of wearing frightening costumes for trick-or-treating.



... **the history of the National Theatre in Prague dates back to November of 1862?** It actually got its start a few decades earlier, when the national revival in the Czech lands began to draw attention to the importance of the nation’s consciousness, language, and culture. The Czech language gradually began to make headway on stages, but the Czechs did not have a

theatre for their own nationality. For this reason, an association was founded with the goal of building such a theatre. In 1852, the association purchased land on the banks of the Vltava near what is now called the Legion Bridge (at the time it bore the name of Emperor Francis I), but it took decades before the association managed to collect donations of about a hundred thousand gulden. While that sum was still far from enough to erect the building of the National Theatre, the Czech patriots decided they would first build a smaller stage – the Provisional Theatre, the predecessor of today’s theatre, nicknamed the “Golden Chapel”. The building was truly provisional, with cramped space. There were no dressing rooms or restrooms, and the auditorium held an audience of only about a thousand. Nonetheless, operations began on 18 November 1862.

Among the figures whose activities are associated with the Provisional Theatre are two important Czech composers. Antonín Dvořák played the viola in the orchestra there, and Bedřich Smetana was the conductor of theatre’s opera company, which gave the premieres of his operas *The Bartered Bride* and *The Kiss*. Construction of the National Theatre began in 1868 next to the Provisional Theatre, and it was financed largely from donations. Its grand opening took place in 1881, but it was destroyed by a fire shortly thereafter. The provisional theatre therefore continued to be used. Only after the National Theatre had been reopened in April of 1883 was the building of the Provisional Theatre renovated and joined to the building of the new theatre. It remains a part of the National Theatre to this day.



What's Going On in Prague

František Kupka and Group de Puteaux – An Exhibition. The beginnings of the collaboration of the Group de Puteaux, named for a suburb of Paris, date to 1911. At that time, there were gatherings in the studio of Jacques Villona that included Albert Gleizes, Francis Picabia, Roger de La Fresnaye, Fernand Léger, Jean Metzinger, and František Kupka, as well as authors such as the poet Guillaume Apollinaire. Jacques Villon's two brothers, the sculptor Raymond Duchamp-Villon and Marcel Duchamp, also joined the movement. An impulse arose from their shared discussions that ultimately turned upside down all of the rules for art being

taught at the academies in those days. There will be a survey of this key period until 9 January at the exhibition **Studio Neighborhoods** at Prague's Kampa Museum. Most of the ca. sixty works are from the famed Parisian gallery at the Centre Georges Pompidou. Exhibits include a model of a cubist house, an architectural installation created for the Autumn Salon in 1912 in Paris, which introduced the cubist vision of architecture. Kupka's *Amorpha – Warm Chromatics* was also first shown at the same salon. Together with the painting *Amorpha – Fugue in Two Colors*, it is regarded as one of the very first abstract paintings.



In Pursuit of Design and Fashion. One can never get too much inspiration for gifts or for one's own creativity. As Christmas approaches in Prague, you can choose from among several different events (mostly involving sales) connected with fashion and design. The trade fair **Fashion Fair Prague & Handmade Original** will focus on Czech and Slovak artists. You will find it on 4 and 5 November at the Prague Exhibition Grounds in Holešovice. The Campus on Hybernská Street in Prague's New Town will present **Mint: Prague Fashion Market** from 8 to 10 December. It offers products from local designers and foreign brands, and it also of-

fers opportunities to spend time engaged in creative activities at some of its workshops. From 27 November to 3 December, the venue will then be used for **Czech Design Week**. Again, the event will not be limited to just Czech artists, as it will also present the work of designers from Sweden, Belgium, and Italy. There will also be room for presentation of Czech schools of the arts. **Dyzajn market** will be presenting goods on two weekends (9 and 10 December and 16 and 17 December). On Václav Havel Square in front of the National Theatre, you can choose from among art objects, jewelry, fashion, accessories, and affordable design. You can compare the Dyzajn market offerings with the **Christmas Lemarket**, which will be taking place just a few steps away from the theatre. It will be held at the Mánes Exhibition Hall, which will be transformed on 9 and 10 December into a market for young Czech and Slovak brands. Visitors can also meet in person with fashion designers, natural cosmetics manufacturers, and even cobblers and chocolatiers.

Portraits of Renaissance Nobility. Members of the Bohemian and Moravian aristocracy are introduced by an exhibition at the National Gallery in the Šternberk Palace. The exhibition with the title **Images and Stories** will last until 4 March. It



presents a selection of preserved portraits of Renaissance aristocrats. The title reminds us that behind the likenesses that stare down at visitors to castles and palaces, there are hidden stories of real people. And these stories, together with the images, are part of the legacies of aristocratic families. The exhibition also introduces Bohemian and Moravian noble families using artifacts of heraldry and genealogy, archival materials, artworks, or crafts. And there are the Renaissance portraits brought into palace and castle collections by families that settled in Bohemia and Moravia during later centuries. Also returning to the Renaissance period is another exhibition of the National Gallery, this time located in the Waldstein Riding School. It is devoted to the Archduke **Ferdinand II**. It introduces him as a Renaissance ruler and a patron connected with Prague and Innsbruck. The exhibition project has therefore been prepared in collaboration with the Museum of Art History in Vienna. 2017 saw the 470th anniversary of the archduke's arrival in Bohemia. Among his tasks was the restoring of Prague Castle, which he carried out under the supervision of his father Ferdinand I, King of Bohemia and Hungary. Ferdinand earned a place in the history of Czech architecture by building a hunting castle, the Star Summer Villa in Prague. Visitors can learn about Ferdinand II between 3 November and 25 February.

Music from the Middle Ages to the Present. The January concert schedule offers fans of classical music and sacred music several programmes that should please them. At the same time, they have the opportunity of hearing interpretations of the music performed by Czech musicians. **Schola Gregoriana Pragensis** will be appearing at the Rudolfinum on 3 January. The ensemble is one of the leading exponents of medieval sacred music. For the concert, it has chosen a mass by the French poet and composer Guillaume de Machaut, who served as, among other things, the secretary of King John the Blind of Luxembourg. **The woodwind quintet of the Prague Philharmonia** invites you to the Czech Museum of Music on 8 January for musical time travel. The programme begins with a composition by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and it continues with a work by a man a generation younger, the neglected Czech composer Antonín Rejcha. Next will be a sample of the music of the Romantic era, represented by the Danish violinist and composer Carl Nielsen. The concert ends with a work by Luciano Berio, an Italian composer who was part of the avant-garde movement of the post-war period. For **The Art of Improvisation**, Jaroslav Tůma has chosen the Church of Saint



Simon and Saint Jude in Prague's Old Town. Together with other artists, this player of the positive organ, harpsichord, and clavichord has taken inspiration from Thomas Mann's novel *The Holy Sinner*. The music and dance performance will take place on 16 January. And inviting us back to the concert hall at the Rudolfinum is a performance prepared by the singer **Adam Plachetka** for the evening of 22 January. The renowned Czech bass-baritone is a soloist with the Vienna State Opera. This time, he will be presenting himself as an artist-in-residence with the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra. The programme will feature works by Johannes Brahms and Richard Strauss.

Photography by Pavel Baňka. Pavel Baňka is a distinctive, solitary figure of Czech photography of the last four decades. He makes no secret of his strong ties to ama-



teurism. The exhibition **Proximity** surveys the author's work in the area of portrait photography with a social subtext. It has been prepared by the Prague City Gallery and will be on display until 7 January at the House of Photography. It presents photographic cycles created from the 1970s to the present. Among other things, Pavel Baňka set up improvised photo studios at Czech flea markets he organized himself. In the 1980s while on a residency in the USA, he made portraits primarily of the local black population.

Karel Zeman Museum. Creations of Czech filmmaker Karel Zeman include fantasy films, some of which were based on science fiction novels by Jules Verne. As Karel Zeman deployed previously unseen special effects in his films he proved a great influence on countless other filmmakers, including Tim Burton. Zeman's career spanned almost 40 years. Prague's Karel Zeman Museum offers a peek into a special effects studio and an opportunity to learn about Zeman's filmmaking legacy.

Prague's History through a Geocaching Game.

These days, geocaching is a quite popular way to spend leisure time. Those who are not satisfied to "just" search might enjoy the game GEO-FUN. Along with searching, the mobile application for smart phones and tablets adds the performing of fun tasks, which are first assigned to the players when they reach the site. These tasks may be physical, require thinking, or show how willing the participants are to embarrass themselves. The game is connected with Prague and its history and legends. The curious learn about the tale of the ghost of the innocent boy on Charles Bridge. The adventurous have a chance to take part in Operation Anthropoid from the era of the Second World War and prepare to assassinate Reinhard Heydrich, the Deputy Reich Protector. Or in Sterboholly you can come with a soldier and see the battle in 1757 and find his brother Tambor. There are five games available, and the application can be downloaded free of charge for the Android and iOS operating systems at www.geofun.cz.





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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.



How Christmas Is Celebrated in the Czech Republic

As in other countries with predominantly Roman Catholic traditions, preparations for the Christmas holidays in the Czech Republic begin with Advent. Advent wreathes are commonly found in Czech homes. Of course, the period is no longer viewed only as a preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ, but also more generally as a prelude to holidays of peace, family, and love, regardless of religious beliefs. The wait is made shorter by **St Nicholas**, who brings gifts even before Christmas. The man with the white beard, dressed as a bishop, and carrying a staff visits homes on 5 December, but you can also run into him on the street. He is always accompanied by a devil and an angel. He rewards good children with sweets and little gifts, but for the less obedient he usually has pieces of coal or potatoes in his basket. The tradition refers to Bishop Nicholas of Myra, who lived in the late third and early fourth centuries. He was famed as a guardian against injustice and for his philanthropy. In Prague there is, for example, a church on Old Town Square that bears this saint's name. The highpoint of Czech Christmas celebrations comes on **Christmas Eve**. The Czech name for Christmas Eve, "Štědrý den" (literally "Generous Day") is actually a mistake. For centuries, it was just called "Generous Evening", i.e. the eve of the birth of the Savior. This was overlooked by a parliamentary decree issued in 1990, which made 24 December a state holiday. Since then, the Czechs and Slovaks have been among the few people in the world with Christmas Eve recognized as a state holiday. Christmas Eve is also the last day of fasting, although the fast is not observed in the Czech Republic. There is, however, an observed superstition that anyone who fasts on the 24th of December will see the "golden piglet". Parents often create this promised reward for their children by



using a reflection from a mirror. The "Generous Day" ends with **Christmas Eve supper**. The traditional meal is fried carp with potato salad. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, carp became a widespread menu item for the holiday meal in Czech homes as an inexpensive food that was permitted on fast days. The original recipe with an almond sauce, gingerbread, and sweet beer was replaced by a Viennese recipe for breaded fried carp. Potato salad did not appear as a side dish until the Second World War. The dish probably has its origins in Russian cuisine. Christmas Eve supper usually ends with the ringing of a bell announcing the arrival of

the infant Jesus. In the Czech tradition, it is he who puts presents under the Christmas tree. A variety of **customs** are observed on this holiday in many families. For example, keeping a carp scale under your plate should ensure you will have plenty of money in the coming year, and slicing an apple will show whether you will have good luck (if the middle of the apple slice appears as a star) or bad luck (if the core of the slice shows a cross). Unmarried girls can toss a slipper to see which way the toe points, revealing whether they will marry in the year to come. Molten lead is poured, as the shape of the casting helps predict the future, or little boats are made from nutshells and candles and are floated on water. Regardless of people's religious beliefs, they often conclude Christmas Eve by attending Midnight Mass. The following two days are also Czech state holidays. In addition, there is caroling in connection with the **Feast of St Stephen** on 26 December. The holiday **season continues** with New Year's Eve celebrations, although only New Year's Day on 1 January is an official holiday, and festivities extend from 31 December to 6 January. On **Epiphany**, decorations are removed from Christmas trees, and Caspar, Balthazar, and Melchior write their initials K (or C) † M † B † in white chalk above doorways, expressing the wish that Christ will bless the household throughout the following year.

Each year, there is a Procession of the Three Kings in Prague. In 2018, the kings will depart on camels on 5 January at 2 p.m. from St Thomas's Church in the Lesser Town, cross Charles Bridge, and proceed to Old Town Square. There, people can bring gifts for children from needy families and shelters.

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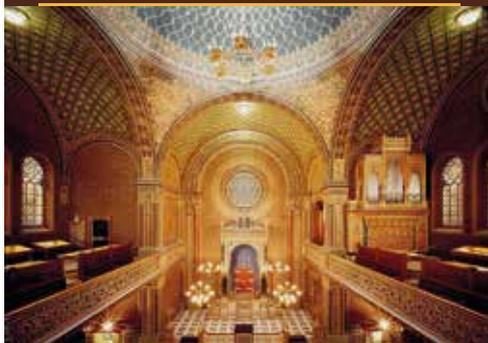
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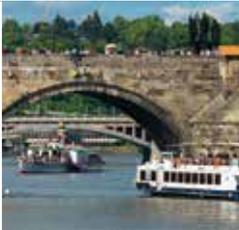
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An Excursion to the Regions: Olomouc

Olomouc is unquestionably one of the loveliest historical cities of the Czech Republic. It has approximately a hundred thousand inhabitants and lies in central Moravia. Its historical core is the country's second most important urban landmark reservation after that of Prague. What are some of the landmarks and curiosities one can see there?

The Plague Column

The most important Olomouc landmark is the Holy Trinity Column. Since 2000 it is one of the greatest works of the High Baroque in Central Europe that is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The monument is 35 meters tall, making it the tallest sculpture in the Czech Republic. It was built between 1716 and 1754 to the glory of God as a thanksgiving for the end of a plague epidemic in Moravia. The pride taken by the people of Olomouc in this column is shown by the following story: just four years after the column was consecrated, it was struck several times by cannonballs fired by the Prussian army, which was



besieging the city. The inhabitants of Olomouc therefore went to see the Prussian general and asked him to keep the hostile troops from shooting at the column. The general honored their request. The event is commemorated on the column by a gilded replica of a cannonball. Another peculiarity of the sculpture is a small chapel.

The Cathedral of Saint Wenceslas

The cathedral is located at Olomouc Castle in the historical center of Olomouc. The original Romanesque basilica underwent Gothic reconstruction at the beginning of the thirteenth century, but the church was given its present appearance by radical renovations in the Neo-Gothic style at the end of the nineteenth century. The church has ties to Czech history. In 1311 it was consecrated by the son of the first known Czech chronicler, Cosmas. In the neighboring building of the former Olomouc deanery, King Wenceslas III, the last ruler of the Přemyslid Dynasty, was murdered in 1306. The main tower attracts attention to the cathedral. At 100.65 meters, it is the second-tallest church tower in the Czech Republic.

The Astronomical Clock

The Olomouc Astronomical Clock is part of the Town Hall on the Upper Square (Horní náměstí). It was built in the fifteenth century. At the end of the Second World War, the astronomical clock was damaged by a grenade, and in 1955 it was completely renovated in the spirit of Socialist Realism. Reminders of folk traditions like the Ride of the Kings were supplemented by a mosaic of a laborer and a chemist. The calendar on the lower part of the astronomical clock displayed dates of importance to the communist regime, such as the birthdays of Stalin and Klement Gottwald, the post-war Com-

munist president of Czechoslovakia. The carillon was originally supposed to have played The Internationale, the hymn of the worldwide labor movement, but in the end it just played folksong melodies. Noon in Olomouc is announced by a brass rooster, but its crowing releases a display of various professions in the windows of the clock: observers see figures of a digger, a baker, a butcher, a dairy woman, and a female volleyball player.

Where to Go for Culture in the Olomouc Region?

The Olomouc Synagogue (1897–1939). Through 7 January, the gallery of the Olomouc Archdiocesan Museum is showing an exhibit devoted to the city's defunct synagogue, which was burned down in March of 1939 by Olomouc fascists. On the basis of this example, the museum also presents the importance of the Jewish community in the city's history. One of the main themes is the religious life of the Olomouc Jewish community until 1942, documented by period photographs and objects.

Living Together. From 16 November to 18 February, the Museum of Modern Art in Olomouc will be commemorating the phenomenon of Czech collective housing. It will review the interwar and postwar efforts at shared housing and will introduce its architectural forms.

Festival Blues Alive in Šumperk. You can visit Šumperk from 16 to 18 November to attend a music festival. The main stars for the 22nd annual event are the American guitarist Jonny Lang, the trio Blues Harp Explosion, the songster Eric Bibb, John Medeski's Mad Skillet led by the organist John Medeski, the British blues singer Bex Marshall, and the fresh discovery of the American blues scene Mr. Sipp.

From Czech History: The Crown Jewels

The crown jewels of Bohemia exist thanks to Charles IV, King of Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor. He wanted them to be kept permanently at Prague Castle, but this was not done. They were not returned permanently to their rightful place until a hundred and fifty years ago. Their history thus also reflects a part of Czech history.

Emperor Charles IV had his golden crown decorated with precious stones and pearls in 1347 on the occasion of his coronation. He dedicated it to the first patron saint of the Czech Lands, St Wenceslas. Together with the crown, there are also a royal orb and scepter. The set, which is a national cultural treasure, also includes the coronation vestments, which are kept in a specialized depository in the Collections of Prague Castle. The crown, scepter, and orb are permanently kept in the Crown Jewels Chamber at St Vitus's Cathedral in the most inaccessible part of Prague Castle. The seven locks on the door can be unlocked only by seven different keys held by seven different persons, including the President of the Republic and the Mayor of Prague.

During their long history, the crown jewels have not always been kept in Prague. Emperor Charles IV had decided that they should never leave the Bohemian capital, but his son, Wenceslas IV, had them taken to Karlštejn Castle. They remained there, with brief interruptions, until 1619, then they were moved back to Prague Castle, because Karlštejn Castle ceased to be regarded as a sufficiently secure place for their safekeeping. During the Thirty Years' War that followed, they were again moved several times for the same reason, and finally, in advance of the attack by the Swedes, they were taken to the Imperial Treasury



in Vienna. There, the original, more austere Gothic scepter and orb were replaced with more lavishly decorated ones, which Ferdinand I, the first Habsburg on the Bohemian throne, probably had made during the first half of the 16th century. The crown jewels remained in Vienna until 1791, when the decision was made to return them to Prague.

It was also at this time that the tradition of the seven keys was established. The tradition was interrupted during the Second World War, when all of the keys had to be turned over to Nazi Germany, which had occupied Czechoslovakia. This was probably the origin of the unverified story about the Deputy Reich Protector Reinhard Heydrich, who is said to have put the crown on his own head and on the head of his young son. Both died not long afterwards – Heydrich was assassinated, and his son Klaus was killed in an automobile accident. Accord-

ing to legend, any usurper who places the crown on his head is doomed to die within a year. In fact, the Germans tried to protect the jewels from being damaged by Allied bombing by having them immured in the royal palace. After the liberation of Prague, the crown jewels were returned to the Crown Jewels Chamber.

They are only seldom taken from there to be put on public display, and the president must make the decision on exhibiting them. They were exhibited most recently last year, when the Czech Republic commemorated the seven-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Charles IV. A golden reliquary cross and a ceremonial coronation sword are usually displayed together with the crown jewels, but those items can also be seen at other times, because they are part of the permanent exhibition at the Treasury of Saint Vitus in the Second Courtyard of Prague Castle.

The Crown Jewels by the Numbers

The Crown of Saint Wenceslas is made of 21–22 karat gold; it is decorated with 19 sapphires, 44 spinels, 1 ruby, 30 emeralds, and 20 pearls; it weighs nearly 2.5 kilograms; it is 19 centimeters tall; its diameter is also 19 centimeters.

The royal orb is made of 18 karat gold and is decorated with precious stones and pearls; it weighs 780 grams and is 22 centimeters tall.

The royal scepter is made of 18 karat gold, is decorated with 4 sapphires, 5 spinels, and 62 pearls, is 67 cm long, and weighs 1013 grams.

The coronation vestments decorated with royal ermine are 312 centimeters long and 236 centimeters long from the collar to the end of the train.

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, 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, 30 March – Good Friday, 2 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 27,

one US dollar approximately CZK 22, and one pound sterling approximately CZK 29. We recommend not changing money on the street with strangers; use banks, money exchange offices and hotels.

- ▶ **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 Buss – 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

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.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
- Hradčanská • Nádraží Veleslavín



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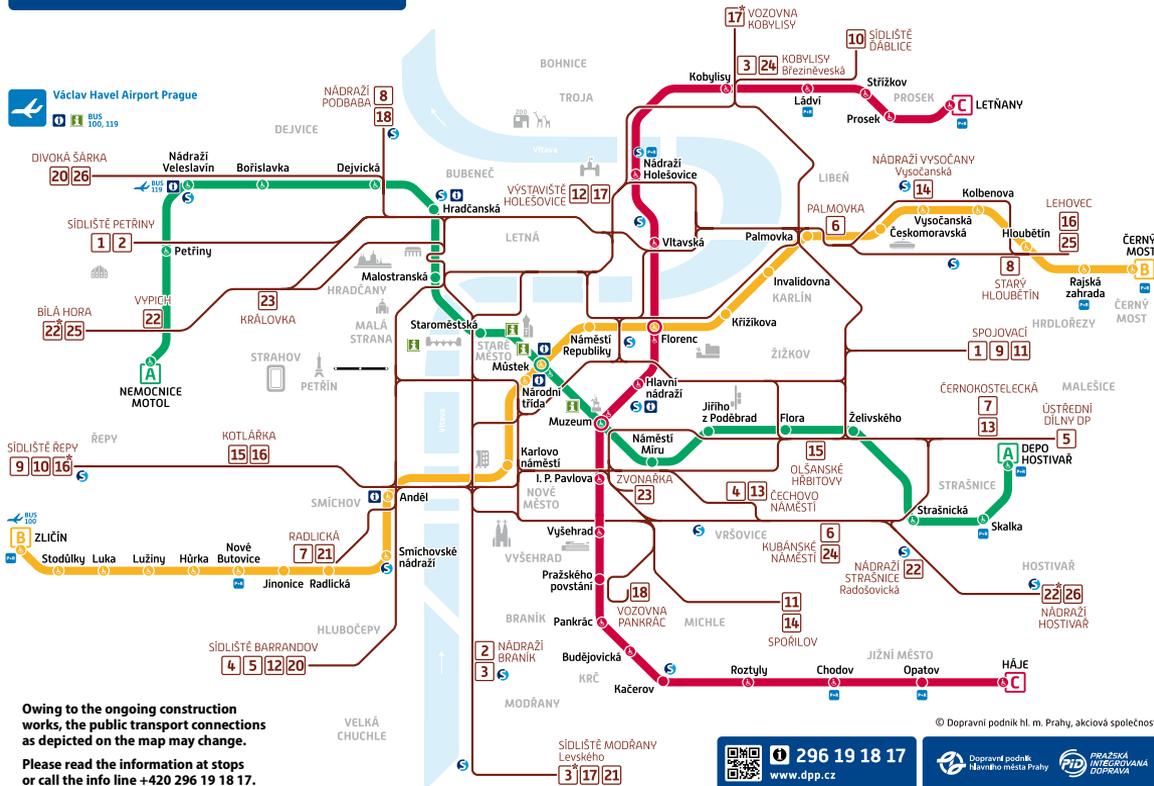
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Trams and Metro in Prague

Map – Daytime operation – Permanent situation – October 2017



Owing to the ongoing construction works, the public transport connections as depicted on the map may change.

Please read the information at stops or call the info line +420 296 19 18 17.

- Metro lines with and without barrier-free access stops
- Metro transfer station
- Tram line with terminus

- Only selected connections run to these final stops
- Public transport buses to Václav Havel Airport Prague
- Funicular

- Park and Ride
- Public transport information; Tourist information centre
- Transfer to lines S and other railway lines

296 19 18 17
www.dpd.cz

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