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PRAGUE



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Prague, situated on the Bohemian Plain, has the river Moldava running through it and is considered one of the most fascinating European Cities, a UNESCO World Heritage listed gem much eulogised as the 'City of a Thousand Spires'. Whether you visit it in the cold winter, under a blanket of snow and enjoying a beer at the Christmas Market, or during the warmer months, cherishing a walk up to the castle where street artists entertain the tourists, the characteristic Czech Capital remains an extremely picturesque place to visit at any time of year.

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» PRAGUE AT FIRST GLANCE

For conveniently getting around in a few hours and get the most of the city, we can divide the historic centre of Prague into 5 parts. Once considered as separate towns, stretching on both banks of the river, these areas were unified during the 17th century.



The 5 zones include: 1. Castle and Hradcany; 2. Mala Strana (the Small Part); 3. Josefov (the ex- Jewish town); 4. Staré Mesto (the Old Town); 5. Nové Mesto (New town).

1. **The castle** (Prazsky) is the most visited and famous sight in Prague. The largest and oldest in the world, this castle is the official residence of the Czech government. It is an immense building comprising gardens, churches and museums. The heart of the castle is the Vladislao Room, a fine example of late Gothic. The Gothic San

Vito Cathedral, built in 929 on St Wenceslas's grave and Prague's signature postcard feature, rises up above the bulky mass of the castle. The Summer Palace (Letohradek) is in Renaissance style, while the Saint George Basilica is the best preserved Roman construction. Having passed the Basilica following the north wall of the castle, the visitor arrives at the Golden Alley (Zlata Ulicka) with its small and highly colourful houses, once the residence of gold merchants and later occupied by artists. The square



in front of the castle (Hradcanske Namesti) is surrounded by Baroque and Renaissance buildings. The Loretanske Namesti, situated to the west, is the site of the Capuccini Monastery, the Cernin Palace and the Loreta. A little further and one arrives at the Strahov Monastery, with splendid frescoed rooms, which house a monastic library of international fame.

2. **Mala Strana** district, perched at the foot of the castle, decorated



with monumental, predominantly residential buildings, has kept its integrity with authentic crumbled walls and darkened corners where little pubs serve mulled wine on the chilly nights of winter. At the heart of the quarter is Malostranske Namesti, a lively square with the Plague Column in its centre, edged by baroque palaces, closed at one end by the river and has the Wallenstein Palace, occupied by the Ministry of Culture, at the other. There, the Nerudova Ulice, Morzin Palace and Thun- Hohenstein Palace are some of the most beautiful buildings, having conserved their magnificent facades. The Saint Nicholas Church, situated right in the square, is richly decorated and has an enormous green dome and bell tower, a masterpiece of Killian Ignaz Dientzenhoffer and son. This zone of Prague hides Gothic interiors and cellars used for improbably rustic craft shops, jazz bars and tearooms. It's worth a visit before dinner!

3. Just crossing the Manesuv bridge to the opposite bank of the Moldova, it's Josefov, the **Jewish district** that stretches to the north of the city. The once-vital Jewish Ghetto is slowly coming back to life. Four synagogues from the old district are still standing, together with the Town Hall, a ceremonial room and the haunting old cemetery. Dating back to the 15th century and used till 1787, the Jewish cemetery hosts 100,000 graves hidden in dozen layers so over-crowded as Jews could not be buried outside the ghetto. The Old-New Synagogue



(Staronova Synagoga, 1270 d.C.) the spiritual heart of Prague's Jewish community for 700 years, is the only one in the world built in Gothic style and is the oldest among those still in function within Europe. It is said that under the Synagogue roof, Rabbi Löw created the Golem from clay. When this creature, from its slavery condition started its revenge, Löw had to destroy it. See the tomb of Rabbi Löw (1520-1609) in the

cemetery: it is tradition that anyone can leave a message of piece on its grave...



4. **Stare Mesto**, the old city, is located to the east of the Moldova river and is the site of Starometske Namesti, the heart of the city. It is best approached from Charles Bridge that puts you squarely on the Royal Route (Kralovska Cesta)



and on the main tourist highway. Here the visitor is offered a sample of all the architectural styles of the city including **Tyn Church**, with its pointed roof covered with small spires, and the **Stone Bell-Tower House**, with its two chapels used as a modern art gallery and a chamber music room. The Old Town Square, an appealing public space, is the throbbing heart of tourist Prague whose yellow and light green buildings give it a wedding-cake look! The view from the top of the



Old Town Hall gives a solid idea of the layout. The Town Hall, built in Gothic style in 1338, possesses a splendid **astronomical clock** (Orloj) that makes any visit worthwhile. Since 1490 people have gathered on the hour to watch its rolling figures illustrating the 11 apostles and s. Paul strolling out of the opening doors. Other statues represent greed, vanity, death and 'the Turk'. The Klementinum, an enormous architectonic Jesuit complex situated a short distance away, houses libraries, museums and churches.

5. **Nove Mesto**, the new city, dates back to the 14th century and is situated beyond the walls that ring the old city. Silent witness of massive protests that brought down the Soviet Government with the Velvet Revolution in 1989, **Venceslaw Square**, although its shape resembles a 750-metres long boulevard, is the most famous commerce and shopping area in Prague for its chain stores, cinemas, theatres, daily traffic, sausage stands and dubious nightclubs... The National Museum (Norodni



Muzeum; ph:+420 224497111) is dominating the 'square' with the equestrian statue of S. Wenceslas. The Lucerna covered walk way is an elegant Art Nouveau complex comprising theatres, cafes, a cinema and a restaurant. In front of it Hotel Europe in the same style. The Gothic style, Saint Mary of the Snow Church, with its beautiful entrance and enormous altar,

stands at the end of the square. Charles Square (Karlovo Namesti), the largest square in Prague, is the site of the Baroque Saint Ignatius Church, the Town Hall for the New City, the Botanical Gardens, the Jesuit College and the "Casa Faust" a baroque building at the south end of the square.

» HOW TO GET THERE

By train:

Hlavni Nádrazí is the main train station where all long distance trains travelling to the Czech capital terminate. It is in the city centre, just east of Wenceslas Square.

By plane:

Ruzyne airport is situated approximately 20km (12.5 miles) northwest of Prague. Shuttle minibus services to the city centre (Námistí Republiky) are provided every half-hour by Cedaz (ph: +420 22011 4296; www.aas.cz/cedaz), at about Kč90, including one piece of luggage (journey time – 30 minutes).

To get to the city catch Bus 119 goes to metro Dejvická (Line A): from there catch the metro into the city centre. The bus operates every 10 minutes (ph: +420 4302330). Tickets cost Kč12 and are available for purchase from the newspaper stand or the machine in front of the terminal.

By taxi:

FIX s.r.o. taxi will charge about Kč720-870 depending on city zones (approximately Kč770 to the centre), but they have air conditioned cars (ph: +420 22011 3892). Other taxis are often unlicensed and unscrupulous and visitors should avoid these. Remember that some hotels and youth hostels can often arrange comfortable and reasonably priced pick-ups.

» TRANSPORTS

The city has a first rate inexpensive and efficient public transport system. It is run by Dopravní podnik Prahy – DP (Prague Public Transit Company; ph: +420 296191817; www.dp-praha.cz). The network includes the **metro**, **trams**, **buses** and the **funicular** on Petřín Hill.



Tickets are valid for 60 minutes from the moment of purchase during the week and for a 90 minute period at the week-ends.

TRAM

The best way to see all of Prague is by tram as they cover all parts of the city. The historic tram No.91 runs at weekends and on public holiday



between April and November, taking tourists on a ramble around the main sights for Kč25. For route maps you can try in some metro stations.

METRO

There are three metro lines (A green, B yellow and C red). There are three interchanges – Muzeum (A and C), Můstek (A and B) and Florenc (B and C). The subway operates every day, from 5am to mid-night. During rush hours the trains depart every 2-3 minutes whilst during other periods the wait can be from 4-10 minutes.

It is possible to reach the top of Petřín Hill by means of a rack- rail train, which calls at Ujezd, Nebozizek and Petřín.

The train operates every day from 9am to 11pm (Summer) and from 9:15 to 8:45pm (Winter). Departures are every 10-15 minutes.

TAXI

Prague is notorious for rogue taxi drivers. If using them in touristy areas haggle with drivers.

» CLASSIC YOU CAN'T MISS

A part from the main sites and areas we've mentioned above in the 'Prague at first glance' paragraph, we'd like to feature some spots of a certain interest and importance for first time visitors.

Charles Bridge (Karlův Most)

An area bustling with tourists, painters and souvenir sellers, home to stalls selling local arts and crafts, and buskers, who spend their



days entertaining the crowds, this beautiful fully pedestrian bridge is one of Prague's most photographed landmarks and links the Lesser Town with the Old and New towns. Till 1714 this bridge was the only one over the Moldava river. 520 metres long, the Prague's most famous and most photographed location was

begun in 1357, as part of Charles IV's immense building programme that included the Castle, St Vitus Cathedral and the University. All were supervised by the architect Peter Parler. The bridge, that replaced the former Judita bridge, is itself rather mysterious and the statues make it visually stunning. Most of them represent saints and were added between 1706 and 1714 but most of them are copies: the originals are housed in the Lapidarium in Letná Park. We suggest a romantic walk as the sun comes down while a young violinist wafts music across the Vltava... that's one of the quintessential Prague experiences. It is said that a kiss given to your beloved over the bridge will guarantee a life-long relationship! Watch out! Metro Staroměstská; tram 17, 18, 51 or 54.

Prague Castle (Pražský Hrad)

Prague's history is highly connected to its castle history. Founded in IX century, its prominent position over the city, made it the centre of the reign of Prince Borivoj. Standing from almost every spot of the city you can see its towers dominating the skyline. The castle has been rebuilt several times in its history and after the big fire on 1541, its splendour and magnificence have never been discussed. Three courtyards, fortifications, ancient walls, stunning gardens, state



apartments, churches, galleries, almost a small town in its own right, make this castle impossible to visit in a single day. Since 1918 it has been the residence of the President of the Republic. Every half hour don't miss the guard change whilst at noon you get extras: the band plays!

Located within the castle's grounds stands stunning **St. Vitus Cathedral (Katedra sv Vta)**. Entering this enormous cathedral from its golden door means walking onto 1000 years of history. Renaissance pieces of art, modern neo-gothic columns and chapels, mediaeval statues, frescos and icons, colourful gothic windows make this cathedral unique and an important site to visit. The cathedral works began in 1344, but it was not completed until 1929, due to the decline in Prague's wealth and status during this period. The finest of the 22 chapels of the Cathedral, with gilded walls inlaid with hundreds of semi-precious stones,

is the one located right in the middle and it is said to hold the remains of St Wenceslas the. Erected for the beloved wife Anna, **the Belvedere** was one of the buildings that Ferdinand I wanted to be made following the Italian Renaissance style. Now is an art gallery that holds various exhibitions every year, once was Anna's summer residence. (Prague 1; Admission castle: Kč220; free the grounds; opening hours: 9-5 pm (Apr-Oct); 9-4pm (Nov-May); ph: +420 224 3733 68; www.hrad.



cz; transport: Tram 22, 23; metro to Hradcanská)

Old Town Square (Staroměstské Náměstí)

The 12th-century Old Town Square is the indisputable heart of Prague: the 14th-century religious reformer Jan Hus statue, horse-drawn carriages, tables spilled out from the restaurants, Christmas Markets, the Prague Meridian...all are steeped in centuries of history.



All of the wonderful surrounding palaces, churches and houses are of major historical interest. Beware the pickpockets!

The 14th cent. Gothic **Old Town Hall** complex (Staroměstská Radnice) features a tower with its **Astronomical Clock** added in 15th century. It strikes hourly (9am-9pm): the climb or lift up the tower is rewarded by stunning views. Opening: 9am-6pm; Mon 11am-6pm; Admission: 50 Kc; reductions apply.

Tomb of the astronomer, **Tycho Brahe** just to the east of the square in the superb Gothic Tyn Church (Chrám Matky Boží Před Týnem). The church is open only for the religious functions: Mon- Fri at 4.30 pm; Sat 1pm; 11.30am and 9pm on



Sundays. (ph: +420 2223 18186). Metro Staromestská; tram 17 or 18.

Josefov (Jewish Quarter)

Until the end of the 19th century, the area north of the Old Town Square constituted the Jewish Ghetto. For centuries the 2 community of Byzantine and western Jewish lived together confined in the ghetto. They had to undergo the discriminatory laws and be victim of pogroms. Thanks to the Edict of Tolerance issued by Joseph II in 1784, they were allow to exercise their cult and the secularization of the education,

science and art were permitted. The Jewish town is called Josefov to this day in his honour. From 1880s, in the name of slum-clearing, most of the quarter was razed to the ground and only a few synagogues, the cemetery and the Josefov Town Hall were saved and give some flavour to the city.

At the **Jewish Museum** you can get a single ticket, that allows admission to the Jewish Town Hall (Židovnická Radnice), the Klausen, the Maisel, the Pinkas Synagogue and the Spanish Synagogue, the Old Jewish Cemetery (in use from the 15th century until 1787) and the



Ceremonial Hall. A separate ticket is required for the 13th-century Old-New Synagogue (Starovoná Synagoga), the oldest synagogue in Europe

(Metro Staroměstská. Address: U Staré školy 1, Prague 1; www.jewishmuseum.cz; ticket reservations ph: +420 22481 9456; e.mail: rezervacni.centrum@jewishmuseum.cz;

opening hours: Mon-Fri and Sun 9am-6pm (Apr-Oct); Mon-Fri and Sun 9am-4.30pm (Nov-Mar); Jewish Museum sites admission: Kč490; Old-New Synagogue: Kč200)

Veletzrni Palace

This stunning modernist palace built in 1929 is house to the National Gallery's collection of Modern and Contemporary Art since 1995. Works by Klimt, Much, Picasso, Mirò and modern Czech art are present there.



(Praha 7, Dukelských hrdinů 47; ph: +420 222 3214 59; www.ngprague.cz; tram 5, 12, 17 to Veletzrni. Open 10 am- 6 pm; closed on Mon. Admission: 50-300 Kc)

City Gallery Prague

The 19th century Czech Art and Czech Sculpture of the municipal collections are hosted in the magnificent Troja's Baroque Villa for a total of 3000 paintings, 1000 sculptures and 4000 prints.

Opening hours: 10 am- 6pm; closed on Mon. Admission 140 Kc; free entrance to the gardens. (Praha 7, Trojskeho zamku 1; metro: Holesovice; ph:+420 222 3276 77; www.citygallery-prague.cz)

Sternberg Palace

In 1796 Franz Joseph Sternberg founded a Society of art lovers which was hosted in this magnificent 18th-century Palace. A precious collection, donated to the Government before the Second World War, gathers



ancient and modern European pieces of Art. Just a few names to attract your attention: A. Durer, P. Brueghel, Rubens, Rembrandt, El Greco, Rodin, Klimt, Schiele, Munch, Manet, Matisse and 3 impressive self portraits by Gauguin, Picasso and Rousseau are there. Don't miss it! (Hradcanske namesti 15; metro: Hradcanska Maolostranska; www.ngprague.cz; ph +420 2051 4598; open: 10 am-6pm Tue- Sun; last guided tour at 5 pm)

Wenceslas Square and National Museum

Don't expect to find a typical square as it is a long boulevard exposing the best and worst of post-Communist Prague – from the fashionable and



expensive stores to the prostitutes and taxis controlled by organised crime rings. Some neo-Renaissance style and Art Deco buildings still remain and got well restored to house arcades (as the Lucerna, a jazz/rock concert hall, cinema, excellent café and much more...), mega-stores, trendy shops and cinemas. There you can find your international newspaper. One of the most celebrated buildings in Prague is the National Museum that stands right on top of the square. Despite his fame, its exhibits are not as impressive: collections dedicated to palaeontology, geology, zoology and anthropology are mainly hosted there.

(New Town; Metro Můstek (bottom) or Muzeum (top); Václavské, 68; ph: +420 224 497 111; www.nm.cz/



english; Opening hours: Daily 10am-6pm (May-Sep); daily 9am-5pm (Oct-Apr); closed first Tues of the month; admission: Kč100; concessions available; free first Mon of month)

If you wish to get into the green or you can't miss having your daily jogging or still you feel ashamed for last-evening Czech dinner and the couples of beers you got... then **Letna Park** is your spot! Take the metro and get off at Hradcanska. It's a large park on the top of a hill, fabulous for outdoor sports: biking / skating paths, playing fields and tennis courts, kids playground and more.

Botanical Gardens

At present, open air exhibitions, historical vineyard St. Claire and Japanese Garden are open for public, entry to the tropical greenhouse Fata Morgana is off the main entrance. Japanese Garden is

considered to be the most attractive section of the Gardens open-air exhibitions.

(Praha 7, Nadvorní 134; ph: +420 234 14 8111; open 9am-4pm; tickets: 40Kc; www.botgarden.cz)

The **Petrin Hill**, is 318 metres tall and is the site of 8 parks which group together to form the most extensive green open space in Prague. It is easily reached by rack railway and is ideal for pleasant strolls and for admiring the view over the city. The Tower of Petrin, which stands to the north of the park, resembles the Eiffel Tower and can be climbed by means of its 299 steps.

Kampa Island is situated south of Mala Strana and is linked at its extreme northern point by the Charles Bridge. The most picturesque island in Prague and once the property of the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem: the houses here look out directly onto the water, mills and parks. Na Kampa Square situated directly under the bridge is the ideal location to spend a relaxing moment.



» ITINERARIES

There are myriad half and full day trip options around Praga. Here's some tips. **Zbraslav Castle** is situated 10 km south of Prague. **Karlstejn Castle** is located a further 20km south-west, which contains notable works of art.

Continuing in the same direction for a further 15km and the visitor arrives at **Krivoklat Castle**, a Gothic-Roman construction, built to the orders of King Venceslao I and which today houses a Czech-Gothic art museum. Konopiste Castle stands 45km south-east of Prague. The castle is famous for its



collection of weapons and hunting trophies.

In an old suburb beyond the river Moldava, it is possible to visit the 16th century **Troy Castle**, surrounded by a large park, home to the city's zoo.

The **Veltrusy Castle**, built in Rococo and Imperial style at the beginning of the 18th century, is located 30km

north-east of the city.

Two kilometres further, is the site of the Nelahozeves, built in Renaissance style and home to a Czech art gallery.

Melnik is a pretty town immersed in the country, in the centre of the Bohemian wine region, at the point where the Moldava river meets the Elba. The town is the site of Saint Peter and Paul's Church and the Town hall. The Gothic castle dominates the town. It is possible to visit the old rooms and wine cellars, where, paying a supplement, it is possible to take part in one of the organised wine-tasting sessions.

Beroun, a town to the south-west of Prague, is the departure point for visiting the Koneprus Caves, which are located 6km south. These 600 metre deep limestone caves are open every day from April to September and house rich rock formations, human bones, a rhinoceros and a 15th century forge.

» RESTAURANTS

Although in Prague you can find every kind of food from Thai to Mexican or French, we will only report the Czech cuisine spots... as we want to think local! The Vinarna, for example, are a curious aspect of Prague. These places have for centuries, offered tasting of fine wine accompanied with excellent

food. Some of the finest Vinarna are to be found in the medieval part of the city at Stare Mesto and in the Baroque houses in Mala Strana. The automats of Venceslao Square are another interesting aspect of Prague: these self service areas, where guests eat standing up, offer quick snacks at reasonable prices. To know: all restaurant prices in Prague usually include 22% VAT. However, where a service charge has not been included, diners should leave 10-15% of the bill.

Very Czech! Try the central **Kamenny most**. Fashionable music bar, sport bar, Irish pub and restaurant all in one... open till 4am they serve a very creative menu. (Praha 1, Smetanovo nabr. 195; metro Starometska; ph +420 224 097100; www.kamennymost.cz; open: 11.30 am-24; average price 180-500 Kc per person for a full menu)

For a no smoking dinner with candle lights and some music, **U Modre ruze** is the perfect budget place rich of atmosphere in the heart of the old



city! The Blue Rose serves refined dishes in an old romantic brick cellar setting...Enjoy!

(Praha 1, Rytirska 16; ph +420 224225873; www.umodreruze.cz; open 11.30am- 11.30 pm; av. prices: 350-750 Kc)

A friendly crowded spot and unbelievable central is the budget **U Provaznice** specialized in beers! (Praha1; Provaznicka, 3; Metro: Mustek; ph: +420 224 232 528; open: 11am-midnight; av. Prices 75-333 Kc)

Dark walls and modern paintings for **Scandals** restaurant, located in Josefov, on a corner site, with high ceilings and very nice view on the lanes. Good and handy solution for Old Town and Jewish areas.

(Dlouhá 7, Prague 1 Ph: +420 224 818 320; scandals@volny.cz; Price: Kč 400 for a complete three-course meal for one person)

Desperately looking for veggies?? Our best spot is located in a fairy-tale house, built in about 1410, on the shortest street in Prague, in the place of a formerly well-known



teahouse. The vegetarian restaurant and teahouse Clear Head will serve you healthy and delicious dishes from 11.30am till midnight. (Lehka Hlava, Praha 1; Borsov, 2; metro: Narodni trida; ph: +420 222 220665; www.lehkahlave.cz; av. prices: 80-150 Kc; no smoking)

The basement of the **Příčný Rez** (Cross-Cut) becomes a dance club most nights whilst the restaurant with a balcony area and large windows is rich in atmosphere and warmth. Arty and cosy, the kitchen offers steaks, chicken roll stuffed with ham and cheese and a delicious breast of duck. The service is excellent and we recommend the Sunday brunch. Better reserve a table for the evenings; no credit cards are accepted.

(Prague 1; Příčná 3, at Reznická, ph: +420 222 233 283; Average price for a three-course meal for one person: Kč225. Wine: Kč159)

» CITY NIGHT LIFE

As usual, we suggest the local weekly listings (in English) Prague Post (www.praguepost.cz), the Prague Pill (website: <http://prague.tv/pill/>) or the bi-weekly magazine Downtown (www.downtown.cz) or Houser – weekly magazine as best informative tools for night events, concerts and hot spots in Prague. Tickets for live performances

and venues can be bought from TicketPro (www.ticketpro.cz or www.ticketsbti.cz). If you wish to listen to life music you need to look for 'Music' or 'Jazz Clubs', whilst discos are also called 'dance clubs'. Opening hours: bars usually do not close before 2/4am and clubs not earlier than 5/ 6am. Drinking age in the Czech Republic is 18 years and drinks are inexpensive. So, take it easy on the Absinth! Looking for jazz vibes finally sipping your Pilsner beer?



U Sadu (Praha 3, Skroupovo nam; metro: Jiriho z Podebrad; ph: +420 2227270 72;open: 10 am-6 am; av prices: 60-300 Kc). It's simply a Czech legend where you can drink till 4 am a fantastic beer and have food in a wonderful summer terrace till morning!

AGHArta Jazz Club is a beautiful arched medieval cellar that is used to host fine bands on the Prague jazz circuit... Find it in Praha 1; Zelezna,

16 (metro: Staromestska; ph: +420 22221 1275; www.agharta.cz; open: 9pm-11.30 pm; concerts daily at 9 pm; Admission: 150 Kc)

Jazz Boat Excellent jazz while floating on a boat on 2,50 hour cruise on the Moldava... of course while having dinner in the restaurant. There is one bar on the boat and you can get a drink there. The meals are served á la carte at your table, whether inside or on the open deck. Romantic and fun! (Open 8.30 pm- 11pm; credit card and euros accepted; no smoking; Metro Staromestska; ph: +420 603551680; www.jazzboat.cz, Praha 1; Cechuv most, Kotva Boat)

Located in Malá Strana, U Malého Glen is one of the oldest jazz bars in Prague serving good food and a comfortable, friendly atmosphere. (Karmelitská 23, Prague 1)

» CLUBS AND DISCOS

The **Lucerna Music Bar** hosts popular Czech bands during the week and is an 80's/90's themed nightclub at weekends with plenty of space to dance. (Vodickova 36, New Town, Prague 1; website: www.musicbar.cz; Daily 7pm-6am; Enter Vodickova from Wenceslas Square. You will see it there! Featuring different music style for each of the 4 floors and for this reason claimed to be the largest club

in central Europe, at the **Karlove Lázně** you can enjoy music from techno, retro, radio pop, hip-hop and funk. Nice privè relaxing area too. Located in Novotného Lávkawith A very popular Bar & Dance Club (they also have an internet point) is the Lávka Club, by the Charles Bridge serving good food on a wonderful riverside terrace during the summer. On cold winter nights, it is a good spot for a drink and a dance. (Prague 1, Old Town, Novotneho Lavka 1; metro: Staromestska (line A); Bar opens daily from 1pm-5 am; Club 10 pm-6am: admission 50Kc) Latino homesick? La Habana (Míšeòská, 12) and Mánes (Masarykovo nábřeží, 250) both in Prague 1, are your clubs. Open Fri and Sat.

If you feel like 'Hip-Hop and R&B' N11 Club is the spot, where young Czech's on Friday and Saturday nights gather. A good alternative! (Narodni 11, New Town, Prague 1; Metro: Narodni trida (line B); Mustek (lines A & B); admission 50 Kc; open Mon- Sun 7pm-5am)

One of Prague's oldest and most well-known music bars and dance clubs is La Fabrique. Its bar and buzzing nightclub areas in the downstairs cellar are very popular among locals and tourists!

(Prague 1, Uhelny Trh 2, Old Town; free entrance; metro: Mustek (lines A & B); open: Wed-Thu 5pm-3am; Fri-Sat 5pm-4am)

» SHOPPING AND MARKETS

Prague shops open earliest 8am to 10am and usually close at 5pm, or some at 8pm, whilst on Saturdays they are open from 10am-2pm. Many tourist shops and larger stores remain open all day including Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Most shopping malls and arcades are located close to Wenceslas Square, Na prikope & Narodni trida. Pretty much everything from clothes, electronics and music stores to glass shops and antiques can be found there although you won't generally be able to find great bargains. The best furnished large store is Kotva (Namesti Republiky, 8; Stare Mesto), whilst the Golden Cross is the city's most important



shopping centre. The roads which make up the Golden Cross are the Vaclavske Namesti in Wenceslas Square and Na Prikope, Ulice 28, Rijna and Narodni Trida. This is an

elegant pedestrian zone, where it is possible to buy Bohemian crystal, antiques, pieces of art and Cds of classical music at a very low price. Works of Czech composers (like Dvorak, Smetana, Martinu, Janacek) as well as folk music are good buys at any bookstore. But the best selections are at Bonton Megastore, (Palác Koruna, Václavské náměstí 1, Prague 1) and at Bontonland/Supraphon (Jungmannova 20, Prague 1; www.supraphon.cz) which draws on a wealth of stunning Czech music in its archives. If you're looking for a different shopping - we do not mention souvenirs shops of the city centre!- you should head down to backstreet shops of Mala Strana and Old Town where it's easy to find bargains and curious and interesting things as the traditional Czech marionettes. Try the Obchod pod Lampou shop (U Luzickeho Seminare 5, Prague 1) where there are plenty of them differing in shapes, sizes and splendour. For wooden toys try at Czech Traditional Handicrafts (Karlova,12; in front of the Clementinum, right before Charles Bridge) or at Pottery Tupesy for ceramics (Havelska,9). Away from the centre, Bazars (glorified junk shops) occasionally turn up real finds. Of course you'll need time to find out your bargain... but the rewards can be worthwhile! If you are for antiques and artworks, just be aware that they could be non-exportable, especially if made before

1920... Some markets sell just fruit and veggies, others target tourists and sell handcrafts and their hours generally correspond to standard



shopping hours.. The biggest one is the Holesovice, (Mon-Fri 6am-5pm) where you are able to find anything from chicken, fresh fish and fabrics, to electronic devices and old cars. The most renowned is Havelský Trh (Havel's Market): a very popular market, located south of the Old Town Hall, and considered to be among the best markets for leather goods, wooden toys, crafts, hand embroidery as well as for seasonal home-grown fruits, vegetables and flowers. Also for X-mas is worthwhile. (stalls in Staroměstské náměstí). Offering some seasonal fruits & veggies, Praz Trznice (Pankrac Market) is also considered the Prague's most famous flea market held every Saturday and Sunday from 12.30 (metro station Pankrac). Other small markets can be found on the Charles Bridge and at metro station Karlovo nám. and Hradcanská (mostly selling fresh

produce). Don't forget that Prague's X-mas Markets, held throughout December, are excellent for gifts and offer fabulous scenery, although the tourists crowd!

» INTERNET POINTS

With an average of 60Kc/ hour we list some Internet points divided per 3 main Prague's areas.

Located in Prague 1: Call Point (Vodičkova, 20); Cybeteria (Stepanska, 18); Platyz (Narodni, 37); Cocoloco (Bilkova, 12); Internetcafe Prague (Narodni, 25 or Liliova, 18); Krakatit (Jungmannova, 14); Roxy (Dlouha, 33); Blue mail (Konviktska, 8); Cafè Net (Havelska, 27); Inetpoint (Jungmannova, 32). In Prague 2: Spinka (Dlazdena, 4); U Rybicek (Gorazdova, 17); Netwave & Klub Azyl (Na Bojisti, 8); V Siti (Jana Masaryka, 46); Grial Cz (Vratislavova, 12/28). In Prague 3: Olsanka (Taboritska, 23); Planeta (Vinohradska, 102).

» FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Like many cities steeped in history, Prague too offers a rich calendar of events.

Various venues during Lent: Ball (Ples) Season, including the nice

and colourful Easter Markets. (Jan-Mar/Apr)

Nights of the Witches: head to Kampa Island for all-night bonfires! (April)

Prague Marathon: 26 mile race (May)

The Khamoro Festival of Roma (gypsy) culture. Music, films, theatre, dance, art are part of the main events (www.khamoro.cz). (Late May)

The most important is the Prague Spring, held between 12th May and the 12th of June, with dances, concerts and theatre plays in the park (www.festival.cz); but there is also the Prague Autumn (www.pragueautumn.cz) held in mid-Sep with many different events.

The Jazz on the island of Slovansky



(June).

The Theatre festival on the island of Strelecky and the Modern Dance festival in the Smetana Theatre and the Magic Lantern (July).

First edition in 1977, the Prague

International Jazz Festival attracts people and artists from all over the world (October).

The festival celebrating the proclamation of the Czech Republic takes place at the castle and the Staromestske Namesti. (Oct. 28th) In northern and western Europe countries, Father X-Mas is represented by St. Nicholas that on the 5th of December gives out treats to good children.

Don't miss the Prague Christmas markets, festival of carols and customs, concerts, craft stalls and various other venues in the Old Town Square.

St Sylvester's Eve, 31 Dec: fireworks and fun around Václavské náměstí and the Old Town Square.

» USEFUL NUMBERS

Language: Czech

Area Code: +420 (CZK); 02 (Prague)

Currency: Czech Koruna. The Czech Republic expects to join the Euro in 2010 which is currently accepted in some hotels and restaurants and certain international shops. However, we recommend holding Czech Crowns. Cash points (ATM's) spread throughout the city.

Main tourist information offices:

>Old Town Hall, Prague 1

Staromestska Radnice

Apr-Oct: Mon-Fri 9am-7pm; Sat-

Sun 9am-6pm
 Nov-Mar: Mon-Fri 9am-6pm; Sat-Sun 9am-5pm
www.prague-info.cz; ph: 12444

>Main Train Station Prague 2
 Wilsonova 8, New Town
 Apr-Oct: Mon-Fri 9am-7pm, Sat-Sun 9am-6pm;
 Nov- Mar: Mon-Fri 9am-6pm, Sat-Sun 9am-5pm

Central Post Office:
 Jindřišská 14 (just off Wenceslas Square) Prague 1
 Open daily 7am-11pm; ph. +420 221 131 111

Emergency telephone numbers
 General emergency number 112
 Fire 150
 Ambulance 155
 Municipal police 156
 Police 158

Medical emergencies 24/7 tourist services
 First aid 141 23
 Pharmacy first aid 141 24
 Dental first aid 141 22

Prague Health Centre
 -Vodickova 28, Prague 1; Ph:+420 603 433 833/ 603 481 361
 -Sokolska 27, Prague 2; ph: +420 224 266 150
 -Konevova 205, Prague 3; ph: +420 284 862 149

Pharmacy: 24/7 tourist services
 Palackeho 5, Prague 1; ph: +420 224 946 982
 Belgicka 37, Prague 2; ph: +420 222 519 731
 Stefanikova 6, Prague 5; ph: +420 257 320 918

Dental: 24/7 tourist services
 Wenceslas Square 33, Prague 1
 Mon-Fri 8am-11pm; Sat-Sun 9am-

6pm
 24 hour on-call emergency service (extra charge)
 Ph: +420 224 228 994; www.edcdental.cz

Embassies / Consulates
 USA: +420 257 530 663
 UK: +420 257 402 111
 Canada: +420 272 101 800
 Australia: +420 296 578 350
 South Africa: +420 267 311 114
 Ireland: +420 257 530 061
 Germany: +420 257 113 111
 Spain: +420 224 311 222
 Italy: +420 233 080 111
 New Zealand: +420 222 514 672
 France: +420 251 171 711

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