



Guide

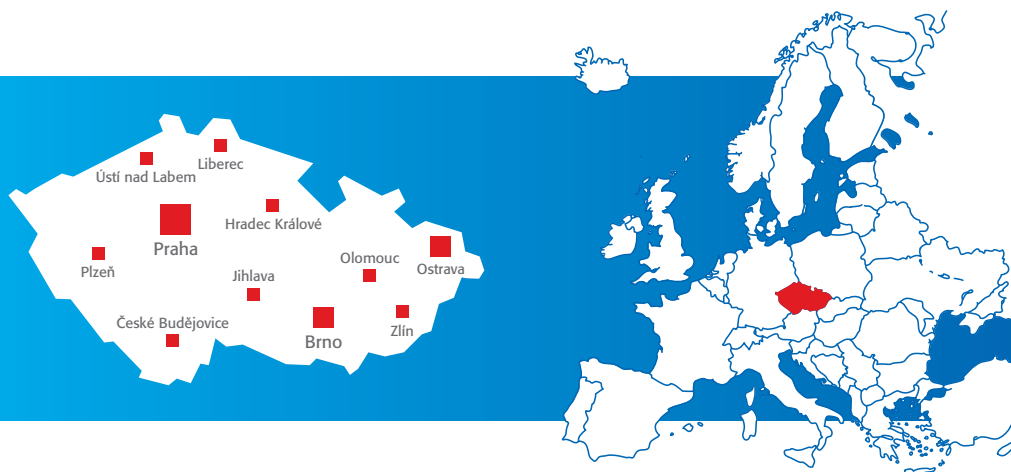
to studying and living
in the Czech Republic



www.studyin.cz

VÍTEJTE!
WELCOME!

Welcome to
the Czech Republic



FACTS AND FIGURES

Language

Area

Population

Borders with

EU member state

Capital

Currency

Political system

Climate

Average temperatures

Official website

Czech

78,866 sq km

10.4 million

Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Austria

since 2004

Praha (Prague)

Czech crown / CZK

(June 2010: 1 USD is 21 CZK)

parliamentary republic

seasonal variations (warm summers,

chilly autumns and cold winters)

January -4 °C; July 24 °C

www.czech.cz

About
this guide

VÍTEJTE!
WELCOME!



Dear student,

The aim of this guide is to help you to discover the beauties of the Czech Republic by providing practical information, as well as giving a general overview of the country in terms of its educational, cultural and social background. For more information please visit www.studyin.cz.

Enjoy your stay!



Living In The Czech Republic

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BASIC FACTS

Area

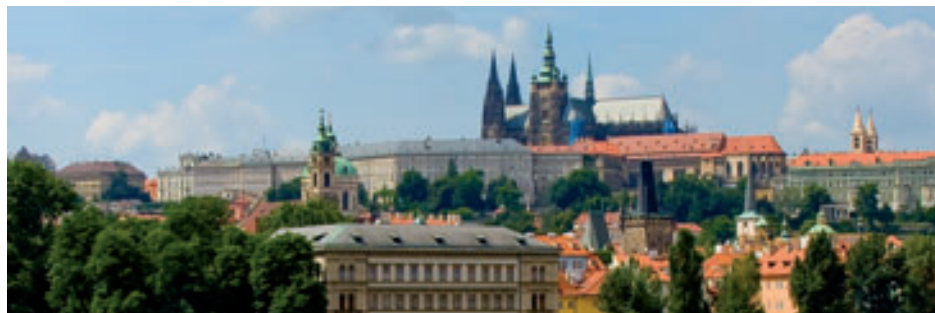
The Czech Republic is historically divided into three regions: Bohemia, Moravia, and a part of Silesia. The total area is **78,866** square kilometres and the country's population is around **10.4** million people. The capital city is Prague, with **1.2** million inhabitants, and there are 5 other metropolitan cities with a population exceeding **100,000** – Brno, Plzeň, Olomouc, Ostrava, and Liberec. The Czech Republic shares borders with **Germany, Poland, Austria** and **Slovakia**. The country is surrounded by extensive mountain ranges, which form most of the border – the **Krkonoše Mountains** in the northeast; the **Krušné Hory Mountains** in the northwest; the **Šumava Mountains** in the west; the **Hrubý Jeseník Mountains** in Moravia and the **Moravian-Silesian Beskydy Mountains**. The highest point of elevation is the peak of **Mt. Sněžka** (1,602 m above sea level). Many important European rivers (the Labe (Elbe), Oder, Morava, Vltava (Moldau), etc.) flow through the country.



History

The first evidence of a Czech state dates back to the early Middle Ages. A kingdom was established in the Czech Lands in the **13th century** and its significance peaked in the **14th century** under the rule of **Charles IV**, the Czech king and Holy Roman Emperor. He established a University in Prague in 1348. After **1620**, the Czech Lands became part of **Austria** and part of the **Austro-Hungarian Empire** after **1867**. Following the defeat of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the First World War, the Czechs and Slovaks declared **independence** in **1918** and **Czechoslovakia** was established as a sovereign country. During the 1920s and 1930s, Czechoslovakia ranked among the ten **most developed** countries in the world. After Hitler's occupation of the country

in 1938, Czechoslovakia was split into the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and the Slovak state. Czechoslovak statehood was **restored** after the Second World War, which ended in 1945, but with a territorial loss. The most eastern part, Transcarpathian Ukraine, was annexed by the Soviet Union. The **Communist Party** won the **1946** parliamentary elections in Czechoslovakia. This resulted in a change of regime and brought the country under the international communist movement, led by the Soviet Union. **November 1989** was a **turning point** in the history of the country. Under pressure from the citizens, the socialist regime handed over power during the so-called "**Velvet Revolution**", initiated by students and intellectuals. Free parliamentary elections in June 1990 confirmed the course of democratic development. The unitary state became a federation and the new name of the country was the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic. At the end of **1992** Czechoslovakia split into the **Czech Republic** and Slovakia. Both countries went through economic reforms and privatisations, and this process was largely successful. From 1991, the Czech Republic, originally as part of Czechoslovakia and now in its own right, has been a member of the **Visegrád Group** and from 1995, the **OECD**. The Czech Republic joined **NATO** in 1999 and the European Union in **2004**. It held the **Presidency of the European Union** for the first half of 2009.



System of Government

The Czech Republic is a **parliamentary democracy**. Every citizen over the age of 18 has the right to vote. The highest executive authority is the **president**, who is the formal head of state and is elected jointly by both houses of parliament for a term of five years. The **supreme legislative body** is the **parliament**, which consists of the House of Deputies, the lower house of the legislature, and the Senate, which is the upper house. The **supreme executive body** is the **government**. The **prime minister** heads the government and is appointed by the president of the republic. The president also appoints other cabinet members based on the prime minister's recommendations.

Human Rights

The Czech Republic respects **equal rights for all its citizens**. Human and civil rights including freedom of speech and the freedom of the press are guaranteed by the constitution. Many organizations have been established to promote, protect and monitor abuse of human rights within the Czech Republic, including the Czech Helsinki Committee and the Czech office of Amnesty International.

Religion

The Czech Republic is a secular state and every citizen enjoys **freedom of religion**. The number of people practising religion is low. More than 50% of the population describe themselves as **agnostic or atheist** while in northern Bohemia the proportion rises to about three quarters of the population. The main reasons for this are the suppression of the reformation movement followed by forcible mass re-catholicisation (after 1627), and forty years of the official suppression of religion during the communist period (1948 – 1989).

Language

The official language is **Czech**. Czech belongs to the Indo-European family of languages. The **Slavonic languages** are divided into the eastern, western and southern branches. Czech belongs to the western Slavonic family, along with Slovak, Polish and Wendish. The Czechs and Slovaks understand each other without major problems. Czech has a difficult grammatical structure but reading and pronunciation are fairly easy.

Climate

The Czech Republic as a landlocked country has moderate climate with four seasons corresponding to the temperate climate zone. The climate varies among the various regions of the Czech Republic, and throughout year. The average temperature in January, the coldest winter month is -4 °C. Summer weather can be very warm with temperatures around 24 °C in July. A nice time of the year to visit the Czech Republic is spring (mid-May to mid-June) and fall (September to mid-October), when the weather can be quite pleasant, although it can also be unpredictable.

For more information go to:

www.czech.cz

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Czech_Republic

ENTRY FORMALITIES

EU Students

Students from European Union countries, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and certain other states do not need a visa to come and study in the Czech Republic. To enter the Czech Republic, EU students only need a valid passport or national ID card.



Non-EU Students

After being accepted for studies in the Czech Republic, the student must turn to the local Czech embassy or consulate and apply for the visa. The whole procedure for **obtaining a visa for study purposes can take up to 60 days**, it is thus recommended to apply for the visa well in advance. The regulations for obtaining visas change from time to time.

This means that the regulations listed below should be considered as guidelines only and **students should consult their local Czech embassy or consulate for the latest information** regarding visa requirements.

There are short-term visa (for stays up to 90 days) and long-term visa (for stays over 90 days). Students arriving for a period longer than 3 months can also apply for a long-term residence permit for study purposes.

Living in the Czech Republic



The following **documents** are mainly required for receiving a student visa or a residence permit:

- A valid passport and passport photos
- A letter of acceptance for studies
- A proof of financial resources for the stay (e.g. in the form of a bank account statement or confirmation of being beneficiary of a grant)
- A confirmation of guaranteed accommodation
- A valid international health insurance
- An abstract from the Register of Criminal Records

Please note that some documents (e.g. the abstract from the Register of Criminal Records) must be translated into Czech language by a translator with an official ruber stamp.

The Czech Foreign Police examine the visa application and notifies the Czech embassy or consulate to issue the visa.

Registering with the Czech Foreign Police

Registration at the Foreign Police Department is compulsory for all foreign nationals staying in the Czech Republic for more than 30 days. They must register within three days from the date of arrival to the country.

For more information go to:

www.mzv.cz/jnp/en/information_for_alien (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

www.mzv.cz/jnp/en/diplomatic_missions (Czech embassies and consulates abroad)

www.mvcr.cz/mvcren (Ministry of the Interior)

www.en.domavcr.cz (Practical advice for foreigners)



Living in the Czech Republic

MEDICAL INSURANCE

As a result of the Czech Republic's accession to the European Union, **students from EU countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland** are entitled to the provision of necessary and urgent health care free-of-charge. It is only necessary that they have a certified E 128 form from their home country or a European Health Insurance Card, which replaces the paper forms needed.

Students from non-EU country, staying in the Czech Republic for less than 3 months should have a supplementary travel health insurance. They should get one before they leave the country of their origin.

Students from non-EU countries, staying in the Czech Republic longer than 3 months must contract an insurance with an insurance company, which is licensed to operate the insurance in the territory of the Czech Republic according to a special legal regulation, i.e.:

- national insurance companies and insurance companies from non-EU countries that were provided by the Czech National Bank with a licence to carry on insurance business;
- insurance companies from other EU countries, whose operations in the Czech Republic are based on the right to set up branch offices or are based on the freedom to provide services temporarily.

It is recommended to consult the Czech embassy or consulate and verify whether the insurance meets the requirements for an application for a visa or residence permit for stays longer than 90 days.

For more information go to:

www.mzv.cz/jnp/en/diplomatic_missions (Czech embassies and consulates abroad)

www.mvcr.cz/mvcren (Ministry of the Interior)

www.cap.cz (Czech Insurance Association)

TRANSPORT AND TRAVELLING

By Air

The Czech Republic's **main** international airport is **Prague Ruzyně International Airport** (PRG), which has daily connections to/from major European cities. Passengers going to/from other destinations will have to change planes in Frankfurt, London, Amsterdam or Paris. Ruzyně airport is located on the northwest edge of Prague, about 15 km from the city centre. There are other airports in Brno and Ostrava. People flying into Moravia usually use the airports in Vienna or Bratislava.

For more information go to:

www.prg.aero

www.airport-brno.cz

www.airport-ostrava.cz

www.airportbratislava.sk

www.viennaairport.com

By Bus

Bus travel is the cheapest mode of transport inside Europe. There are ample bus connections between the major cities of the Czech Republic and other European cities. Most international buses arrive at **Florenc** Bus Station, the main bus station in Prague, where there are schedules, ticket offices and some travel agencies. **Černý most**, **Zličín** and **Želivského** metro stations are the final stops for some bus routes. In other Czech towns, buses connecting with European cities usually arrive at the main bus station.

By Train

It is easy to travel to the Czech Republic from all major European cities by train. In summer, the international trains tend to be full and one should book seats at least a week in advance. Most trains arrive at and depart from **Praha Hlavní nádraží** (Prague's Main Railway Station, abbreviated as Praha Hl. n.). A few of them arrive at other railway stations: **Praha-Holešovice**, **Praha-Smíchov** or **Praha-Masarykovo nádraží**. Each of these stations has its own easily accessible underground metro station. In other Czech towns, international trains usually stop at the main station.

For the best transport connections go to: www.idos.cz

By Car

The Czech Republic has a network of motorways and roads that are moderately well sign-posted. It is necessary to buy and display a mandatory motorway vignette when driving on Czech highways. Vignettes can be purchased at post offices, border crossings and selected petrol stations.

Traffic Regulations

Czech traffic regulations are similar to those in effect in other EU member states. A few basic rules are:

- The maximum permissible speed in towns and villages is 50 km/h.
- The maximum permissible speed for cars and buses weighing up to 3,500 kg is 90 km/h on roads and 130 km/h on highways.
- The maximum permissible speed for motorcycles is 90 km/h.
- No consumption of alcohol at all is allowed before driving or while driving.
- Seat belts must be fastened during the entire journey. (This applies for the driver and all passengers.)
- Motorcyclists and their pillion passengers must wear a helmet.



Public Transport

Trams, buses and trolley buses are used for public transportation in Czech towns. Three underground (metro) lines operate in Prague only. Each town has its own tariff. Tickets can be obtained at vending machines, at newsagents and tobacconists. It is always cheaper to buy a monthly or seasonal ticket. Passengers should buy a ticket before getting on to a bus, trolley bus or tram. The ticket must be **validated** (franked) as soon as you get on to the vehicle. A ticket inspector may check the validity of tickets at any time during the journey, and is authorised to ask the passenger to present a valid ticket. Inspectors will confiscate invalid tickets and collect a fine if they find anyone travelling without a valid ticket.

For more information go to:

www.idos.cz



Taxis

Unfortunately, Czech taxi drivers, especially Prague taxi drivers, have a very bad reputation. Taxi fares differ from place to place. The rate per kilometre must be displayed inside and outside of the taxi. Every taxi driver is obliged to issue a receipt for the fare paid. Passengers should require information on fares in advance. If one wants to hire a taxi in Prague, it is highly advisable to call one of the reliable telephone taxi services. You can speak English, but must explain where you want to be picked up.

- Dial **14014** for **AAA Taxi**
- Dial **2 4411 4411** for **Halo Taxi**
- Dial **14015** for **Profi Taxi**



Living in the Czech Republic

SHOPS AND SERVICES

Shops

The opening hours of Czech shops vary, but they are generally open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on working days and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday. Increasing numbers of shops are now open seven days a week. Hypermarkets and large shopping centres are open daily, usually from around 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Tipping

A tip of **5-10%** is appreciated in any restaurant with table service. The usual system is that the waiter or waitress announces the amount as he or she hands over the bill and customers announce how much they wish to pay with the tip included while settling their tab. It is also customary to tip hairdressers, barbers and people providing other services.

Banks and Currency

The Czech unit of currency is the Czech crown (koruna, abbreviated as Kč, or as CZK in English) = 100 h (Hellers). You can get the following denominations:

Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 CZK

Banknotes: 50, 100, 200, 500, 1,000, 2,000 and 5,000 CZK

Czech Republic is not yet a part of the EU's Euro Zone and therefore paying in EUR is possible rather exceptionally (in hotels, restaurants or stores mainly in Prague and other large cities). Check out the **exchange rates** updated daily by the Czech National Bank at www.cnb.cz/en.

Most banks remain open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on working days. Bureau de Change offices have even longer opening hours and are usually open on weekends. Money can also be changed by foreign exchange dealers in hotels, petrol stations, travel agencies, shopping centres and information centres authorised for this purpose. You will get the best exchange rate from a bank or from an ATM. MasterCard, Visa and American Express are widely accepted and there is a dense network of ATMs throughout the country. Students with travellers' cheques may redeem them either in banks or in places authorised to exchange foreign currencies.



COMMUNICATION

Postal Services

Most post offices remain open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The Main Post Office in Prague (Jindřišská 14, Praha 1) is open 24 hours a day. Standard letters and postcards need a **10 CZK** stamp when sent within the Czech Republic. You will pay at least **17 CZK** when sending letters to other European countries and at least **18 CZK** when sending them to non-European countries.

Phone Calls

When calling to a subscriber in the Czech Republic from outside the country, dial the country code **+420** and then the local number, which has nine digits. When making calls within the Czech Republic, only dial the local nine-digit number. Most public phones only accept telephone cards, which can be purchased at newsagents and tobacconists, post offices, department stores, hotels, travel agencies, etc.

Owners of standard GSM phones (not valid for the USA or Canada) with access to roaming services can usually use their phones in the Czech Republic. (Check with the operator for details.) Currently, three mobile operators provide services in the Czech Republic: **O2**, **T-Mobile** and **Vodafone**. A cheaper alternative is to register with one of the local operators. Pre-paid phone cards are perhaps the most efficient option for short-term use.

For more information go to:

www.cz.o2.com; www.t-mobile.cz; www.vodafone.cz





Living in the Czech Republic

Xcall – the cheapest means of phoning abroad

Xcall is a service that enables you to phone abroad at the cheapest rates for selected countries from your fixed line. You can make calls 24 hours a day for unrivalled prices. No activation is needed for this service. To use Xcall services, simply dial

970 00 + the country code + the area code + the phone number.

(For example, to call Germany dial: 970 00 + 49 + the area code without the zeros + the phone number)

Emergency Telephone Numbers

Emergency numbers are the same from all phones, including mobiles. They are free of charge.

European Emergency Number	112
Ambulance	155
Police	158
Fire Brigade	150

Other Important Telephone Numbers

Municipal police	156
Emergency road service	1230, 1240
Telephone directory enquiries (Czech Republic)	1180
Telephone directory enquiries (International)	1181
Tourist in need	1212
Free phone numbers in the Czech Republic begin with	800

COST OF LIVING

The prices can vary considerably depending on where you stay. **The average living costs of students** range from **350-750 USD/month**, incl. meals, accommodation, public transport and culture.

Accommodation

The majority of higher education institutions own its dormitories. If you are interested in, look for “koleje” or “dormitories” on web pages of the institutions. If you prefer to live on your own, you will rent a flat or only room in a shared flat. In that case you can visit e.g. www.spolubydlici.cz/en/ or www.expats.cz.

Student dormitory / month	around 150 USD
Private room in a flat / month	from 200 USD
Private flat / month	around 500 USD

Food and drinks



Lunch at a canteen	around 50 CZK / 2.5 USD
Pizza in a pizzeria	from 100 CZK / 5 USD
Restaurant meal	from 110 CZK / 5.5 USD
Beer at a pub	around 30 CZK / 1.5 USD

Dairy products	10 - 30 CZK / 0.5 - 1.5 USD
A loaf of bread	from 20 CZK / 1 USD
1 kg of meat (chicken)	from 100 CZK / 5 USD
1 kg of apples	25 - 30 CZK / 1.25 - 1.5 USD
1.5 l of mineral water	around 15 CZK / 0.75 USD

Culture

Cinema ticket	70 - 200 CZK / 3.5 - 10 USD
Theatre ticket	70 - 500 CZK / 3.5 - 25 USD
Museum admission	from 40 CZK / 2 USD

Sports

Fitness centre admission	from 100 CZK / 5 USD
Swimming pool / hour	from 60 CZK / 3 USD
Bike rental / day	200 - 500 CZK / 10 - 25 USD
Ski/snowboard rental / day	250 - 500 CZK / 12.5 - 25 USD

Student Card

The **ISIC** (International Student Identity Card) card is the best card for all students. It allows cardholders to get student discounts for transport, restaurants, cinemas, museums, exhibitions and concerts. In principal, students coming to the Czech Republic should obtain an ISIC card at their home university or in their home country. It is also possible to apply for the ISIC card at GTS centers: www.gtsint.cz.

PLACES TO VISIT

For more information go to:

www.czechtourism.com

www.lonelyplanet.com/czech-republic

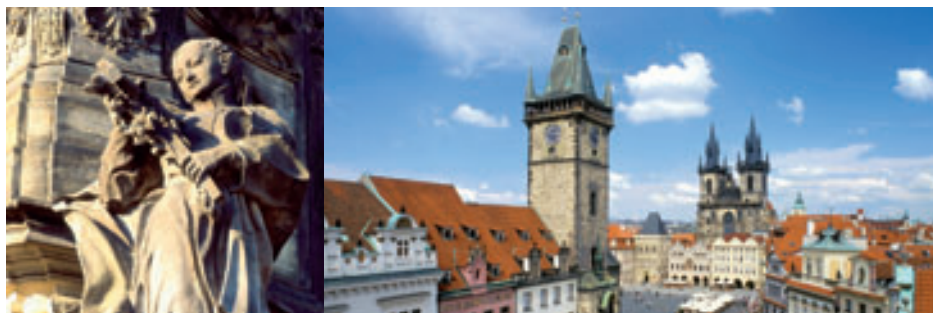
UNESCO Protected Monuments

The World Heritage Committee has placed twelve important historical sites in the Czech Republic on the UNESCO World Heritage List. You can visit e.g.:

Historical centre of Prague

Prague is considered to be one of the most beautiful cities in Europe and is one of the most visited cities on the continent. Nicknames for Prague include "the mother of cities", "the city of a hundred spires" and "the golden city".

www.prague-info.cz



Historical centre of Český Krumlov

Český Krumlov is a small city in the south Bohemian region of the Czech Republic, best known for the fine architecture and art of the historical old town and Krumlov Castle.

www.ckrumlov.cz

Historical centre of Telč

Telč is a town in southern Moravia, near Jihlava. It contains a castle and a long urban plaza with well-preserved Renaissance houses.

www.telc-etc.cz

The Pilgrimage Church of St. John of Nepomuk at Zelená Hora

Located in Žďár nad Sázavou, near the border between Bohemia and Moravia, this is the final masterpiece of Jan Santini Aichel, a maverick Czech architect who combined Borrominiesque baroque with Gothic elements in both construction and decoration.

www.zdarns.cz

**Historical town centre of Kutná Hora**

A city in the central Bohemian region, with an historical town, including the Church of Saint Barbara and the Cathedral of Our Lady in the neighbouring town of Sedlec.

www.kutnahora.cz

Lednice-Valtice cultural landscape

This is a natural complex of 283.09 km² in the south Moravian region, close to Břeclav and Mikulov.

www.lednicko-valticky-areal.cz

The Column of the Holy Trinity in Olomouc

A magnificent baroque monument built in honour of God in the years 1716 – 1754. The column's main purpose was as a spectacular celebration of the Catholic Church and faith, partly engendered by a feeling of gratitude for the end of the plague that struck Moravia between 1714 and 1716.

www.olomouc.eu

Living in the Czech Republic



Tugendhat Villa in Brno

A masterpiece from the German architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Built in 1930 in Brno for Fritz Tugendhat and his wife Greta, the villa soon became an icon of modern architecture. Van der Rohe used a revolutionary iron framework, which enabled him to dispense with supporting walls and to arrange an interior that achieved a feeling of space and light.

www.tugendhat-villa.cz



University Cities & Towns

Brno

Brno is the economic and cultural centre of the south Moravian region. It is the country's second largest city. Brno's architecture reflects the town's long and rich history, including such outstanding functionalist works as the Brno Trade Fair Grounds (host to more than 50 international trade fairs each year). The city skyline is dominated by Špilberk Castle, which was originally a Gothic palace and later became a baroque fortress. Other city features are the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul on Petrov hill and the Old Town Hall.

www.brno.cz

České Budějovice

The royal town of České Budějovice was founded in 1265 and is famous around the world for its Budweiser beer. Medieval houses, including a baroque town hall, Samson's Fountain and St. Nicholas's Cathedral, surround its large rectangular town square. The dominant feature of the town is the Gothic-Renaissance Black Tower, which offers a magnificent view. Another historical monument is the Dominican Cloister with the Church of the Sacrifice of the Virgin Mary, which contains Gothic fresco paintings.

www.c-budejovice.cz

Hradec Králové

Hradec Králové is a major administrative centre in eastern Bohemia. It is one of the oldest and most beautiful cities in Bohemia, and was also called “the City of Czech Queens”. The Gothic Church of the Holy Spirit, the Renaissance White Tower, the baroque church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and the Bishop’s Palace are landmarks representing the variety of architectural styles that Hradec Králové is proud of.

www.hradeckralove.org



Jihlava

Jihlava is a centre of the Vysočina Region. It is situated on the Jihlava river on the ancient frontier between Moravia and Bohemia, and is the second oldest mining town in the Czech Republic. Its principal buildings include the churches of St. James, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. John the Baptist and St. Paul, the Municipal Hall and the catacombs, which are the second largest in the Czech Republic.

www.jihlava.cz

Liberec

The nearby peak of Ještěd is the dominant feature of the district. Historical places of interest include the neo-Renaissance town hall from the 19th century and log houses from the 17th century. Liberec offers a wide range of cultural services, including regional gallery, a fine public library as well as zoological and botanical gardens.

www.liberec.cz

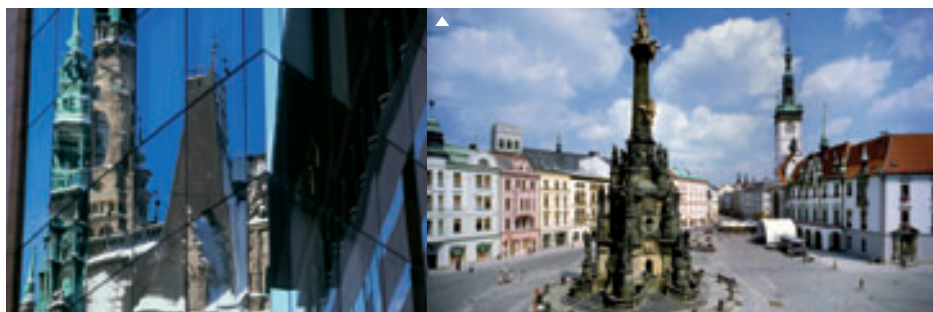
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Olomouc

Olomouc is protected by law to conserve its unique cultural heritage and monuments. Its notable landmarks include the Church of St. Wenceslas, founded around 1100 AD. The main square is a harmonious area dominated by the town hall, the Trinity column, a modern astronomical clock and two fountains from the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, which have been recently complemented by a third fountain. The Přemyslid Palace with its specific composite windows is an outstanding Romanesque monument.

www.olomouc.eu



Liberec

Opava

Opava is an ancient town and the historical centre of the Czech part of the Silesian region. Its historical monuments include a former Minorite Monastery, the "Hláška" City Hall, the parish Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary as well as the Silesian Theatre and Opera House. There are also regional archives and a number of libraries.

www.opava-city.cz

Ostrava

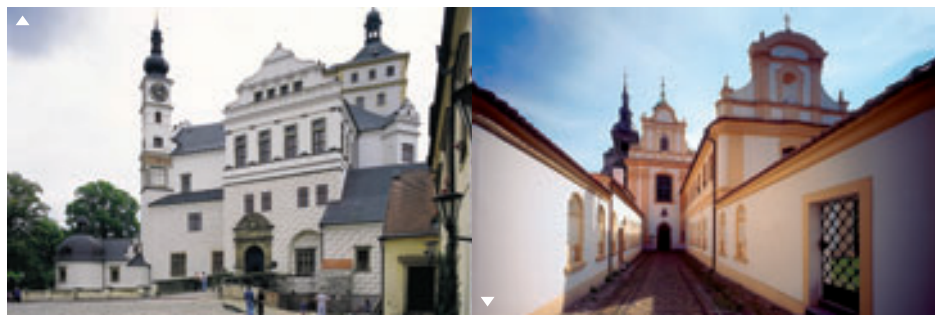
Ostrava is the third largest city in the Czech Republic and the administrative centre of the Moravian-Silesian region. It has become an important cultural, trade and sporting centre. The city has enjoyed rapid growth in its tourist potential, which has been helped by the city's location close to the Polish and Slovak borders, its wealth of unique industrial architecture and other sights, the rich historical and cultural heritage of the region and the sporting opportunities offered by the nearby mountains and countryside.

www.ostrava.cz

Pardubice

With its neo-Renaissance town hall, many burghers' houses and a castle, Pernštýn Square (Pernštýnské náměstí) is the highlight of the town centre. Other landmarks include the Green Gate and St. Bartholomew's Church, both dating back to the 16th century. The town is also famous for horse racing and for gingerbread.

www.mesto-pardubice.cz



Plzeň

Plzeň is the fourth largest city in the Czech Republic and is well known all over the world for its beer brewing. The dominant feature of the historical centre of Plzeň is the Church of St Bartholomew, with a tower over 100 metres high. A town hall and a number of burghers' houses and stone portals represent the Renaissance period. The episcopate building is one of a number of baroque sights. At the end of the 19th century, a synagogue, which is the third largest in the world, was built in a Moorish Romanesque style.

www.plzen.eu

Praha

Praha (Prague) is the capital city and the largest city in the Czech Republic. It is the seat of the president, the government and the parliament. It is a cultural and economic centre. It was built by the finest architects and artists from all over Europe. Its buildings, famed bridges, flowing river and narrow cobbled streets are breathtaking and charming. The centre of Prague is basically one big landmark, monument and historical site, spread across three districts - the Old Town (Staré Město), the Lesser Town (Malá Strana) with Prague Castle, and the Jewish Quarter.

www.praha-mesto.cz

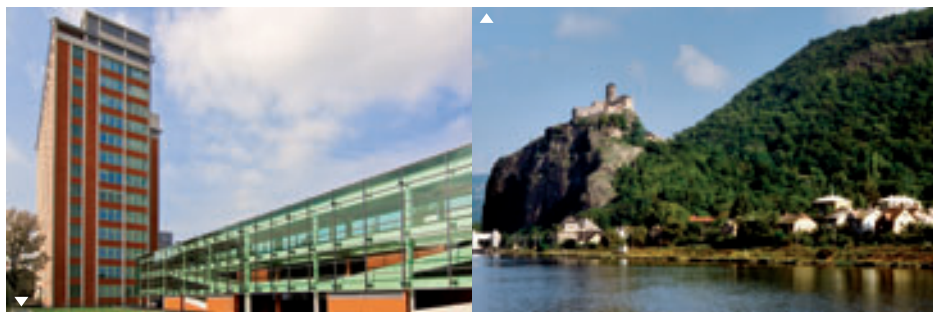
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Ústí nad Labem

Ústí nad Labem is a modern city in the north-western part of Bohemia located in the beautiful Labe (Elbe) River valley, 20 km from the German border. The Marian Bridge over the Labe was awarded a special prize in 2001 in a public survey commissioned by the Structural Engineering International journal, and was nominated among the world's 10 most beautiful construction projects in recent decades. The cliff-top ruins of Střekov castle dominate the skyline of the city.

www.usti-nl.cz



Zlín

Zlín is famous especially for the Baťa shoe company, which was established in the 19th century and prospered between the two world wars. Even today the city is a showcase of urban functionalism. From the point of view of historical interest, there is a large Renaissance chateau rebuilt in a baroque style situated in the middle of the city.

www.zlin.cz

Spas

The Czech spa tradition is an integral part of European culture. Thanks to the high quality of the country's natural therapeutic springs, it has earned an exceptional reputation and high level of respect among Europeans.

Františkovy Lázně

This small spa-town has preserved its early 20th-century atmosphere and is regarded as one of the most picturesque spas in the country thanks to its neo-classical spa buildings and pavilions. The spa has a gentle climate typical of the foothills of the Krušné Hory Mountains and it also has incredibly clean air.

www.frantiskolazensko.cz



Mariánské lázně

Karlovy Vary

Karlovy Vary (Carlsbad) is the largest and most famous of the Bohemian spas. It was founded around 1350 by Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia Charles IV. Thanks to its specific spa architecture, colonnades with hot springs and imposing hotels you can feel the town's atmosphere everywhere. Karlovy Vary's fame is also partly down to its famous Becherovka liqueur, which is sometimes called the 13th spring, and for its international film festival.

www.karlovyvary.cz

Luhačovice

The town of Luhačovice lies in a picturesque valley in the White Carpathians, a protected area in the south-eastern reaches of Moravia. Luhačovice's heyday came in the early 20th century following developments in modern balneology and the town gradually became a very popular spa frequented by many famous personalities such as the composer Leoš Janáček.

www.luhacovice.cz

Living in the Czech Republic



Mariánské Lázně

A strip of forest, which is almost 20 km wide and crisscrossed with numerous hiking trails, passes right through the spa. Mariánské Lázně (Marienbad) enjoys an excellent reputation around the world both for its treatment methods and effective natural curative resources as well as for its picturesque, enchanting surroundings. Almost 100 cold springs have been discovered in and around the town.

www.marianskelazne.cz

Poděbrady

The spa began to develop here in the 17th century and is situated between two parks where thick forest extends along both sides of the Labe (Elbe). Its relatively low elevation above sea level, the surrounding flat landscape, stable year-round climate and spring water are the main reasons the spa is popular with patients suffering from heart disease.

www.mesto-podebrady.cz

National Parks



Krkonoše

National parks (NP)	Establishment	Area	Max. altitude
Krkonoše NP	1963	363 km ²	1602 m
Podyjí NP	1991	63 km ²	536 m
Šumava NP	1991	685 km ²	1378 m
České Švýcarsko NP	2000	79 km ²	619 m

Krkonoše

This park extends along an area of the highest mountains of the Czech Republic and also includes some of their foothills. Characteristics of the natural environment: deciduous and mixed forests at the foot of the mountains, autochthonous and secondary mountain spruce forests, dwarf-pine growths and herb-rich alpine meadows, glacial cirques and lichen tundra on the highest ridges.

www.knap.cz

Podyjí

This national park is located along the Dyje River between the towns of Znojmo and Vranov nad Dyjí, close to the border with Austria. It is a biome whose well-preserved state is unique in Central Europe. Characteristics of the natural environment: a unique river valley with a mosaic of rock slopes and steep walls, meanders, vast scree fields and gorges, alluvial plain meadows and sunny forest-steppes with thermophilous flora.

www.nppodyji.cz



České Švýcarsko

Šumava

This national park extends along the most valuable area of the Šumava Mountains. A protected landscape area with the same name is located in the outskirts of the Šumava National Park. Characteristics of the natural environment: almost 85% of the area is forested in the central part. At higher altitude locations, there are remnants of primeval forests, abundant wetlands and raised bogs and glacial lakes. Many protected species of fauna and flora are relicts of the Ice Age.

www.npsumava.cz

České Švýcarsko

České Švýcarsko ("Bohemian Switzerland") is a picturesque region in the north-west of the Czech Republic. It lies on the Czech side of the Elbe Sandstone Mountains north of Děčín on both sides of the Elbe (Labe) River. It extends eastward into the Lusatian Mountains (Lužické Hory) and westward into the Ore Mountains (Krušné Hory). Characteristics of the natural environment: it boasts a unique geomorphology of sandstone rocks, rich biodiversity, herb-rich beech forests with an abundant number of plant species contrasting with the extensive pine and spruce forests growing on the sandstone. Fauna includes the lynx, eagle owl, and peregrine falcon.

www.ceskosaske-svycarsko.eu

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Summertime

Water sports

There are numerous places in the Czech Republic (such as water dams, artificial water reservoirs and lakes) that offer excellent conditions for various water sports. Water sports equipment can be rented from local sport clubs and at campsites.

The most popular water areas are

Lipno: Lipno is located in south Bohemia on the Vltava River. This valley dam reservoir offers excellent conditions for water sports, camping and sports fishing.

Orlík: This lake is surrounded by the picturesque serene landscape of the central Povltaví area. It provides excellent conditions for bathing, windsurfing, yachting, rowing and sports angling.





Living in the Czech Republic

Slapy: This valley dam reservoir on the Vltava River, located 18 kilometres west of Benešov, offers many opportunities for bathing, yachting, rowing, water skiing and windsurfing.

Water tourism

Sailing on Czech rivers means floating by beautiful natural scenery and landscapes, which are rich in cultural and historical significance.

The most popular routes are

Vltava: Lenora – Nová Pec, Vyšší Brod – České Budějovice

The Vltava River is easy to sail on thanks to its water level. Boaters can enjoy sailing from the beautiful virgin landscape of Šumava to the plain region of the Třeboň fishpond.

Lužnice: Suchdol – Veselí nad Lužnicí, Tábor – Bechyně

Sailing down this typical lowland river with wooded banks, you will float through the peaceful colourful landscape of south Bohemia.

Otava: Sušice – Písek

The most demanding but romantic route leads through the deep wooded valley cut into the Táborská Highland (Táborská pahorkatina). Traces of gold panning are still noticeable on the banks of this river, which once produced gold.

Sázava: Vilémovice – Píkovice

Nearly all of the Sázava River flows through romantic narrow curves alternating with wide, open valleys. The length of the river offers a number of colourful and dramatic experiences.

Fishing

Breeding fish has a long and rich history in the Czech Republic. Excellent conditions for fishing are offered, especially in many places along south Bohemian rivers, ponds and reservoir dams. The most famous are in Třeboňsko, dominated by Rožmberk – the largest fishing pond in the Czech Republic. Great conditions are provided as well in the ponds around České Budějovice, Hluboká nad Vltavou, Protivín and Blatná.

Mountain tourism

There are plenty of interesting localities (sandstone, limestone, crystalline rocks – granite, gneiss) with rock walls and towers where climbing at various grades of difficulty is possible. Popular tourist routes for mountain tourism can be found in the regions of the Krkonoše Mountains, the Šumava Mountains, the Jizerské Hory Mountains, the Jeseníky Mountains,

Living in the Czech Republic

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

the Beskydy Mountains and other mountainous areas encircling the territory of the Czech Republic. The majority of the rocks suitable for climbing are located in protected landscape areas. Only registered mountain climbers are permitted to climb in these areas independently. Beginners must be accompanied by an instructor.



The most popular climbing places are

- Labské Pískovce (Labe sandstones)
- Location: Ústí nad Labem region
- Český Ráj (Czech Paradise)
- Location: North-east Bohemia
- Teplicko-adršpašské skály (Teplicko-adršpašské rocks)
- Location: Broumovsko area, Hradec Králové region
- Moravský kras (Moravian Karst)
- Location: Blanensko area, south Moravian region
- Český kras (Czech Karst)
- Location: Berounsko area, central Bohemian region
- Křivoklátsko
- Location: Rakovnicko area, central Bohemian region

Hiking trails

The Czech Republic offers ideal conditions for walking tours. An unusually rich network of well-marked footpaths evenly covers the entire territory. This makes it possible to find one's way even in remote areas of the country. Hiking trails are marked with signs consisting of three horizontal stripes. The middle stripe indicates the trail colour, which can be red, blue, green or yellow. The colour indicates the level of difficulty of the trail. Both the upper and the lower stripes are white to make the sign more visible.

The most popular tourist regions include the Krkonoše National Park and the Šumava National Park. Walking enthusiasts should not miss the romantic sandstone “rock towns” in Český ráj (Bohemian Paradise), or some of the wild river valleys such as the valley of the Dyje River in Moravia, the Vydra River in Šumava or the Střela River in west Bohemia.

Cycling

If you plan to travel around the Czech Republic by bicycle, you are legally required to have a properly equipped bicycle (functioning brakes, a bell, a red rear reflector, a white front reflector, a red rear light, a white front light as well as front and rear fenders). Bicycle helmets are compulsory for cyclists younger than 18, but are recommended for everyone. Riding a bike while under the influence of alcohol can lead to a fine.



The wine trails

Biking trails are divided into road trails and off-road trails. Signs indicating a biking trail have a yellow background. Road trails are on roads or well-paved paths, and they are marked with signs similar to road signs for motor vehicles. All signs show a bicycle symbol and trail number, and sign posts also show distances in kilometres to other places along the trail. Off-road trails are those that depart from roads with motor traffic and lead through the countryside and terrain, mostly on paths through fields or forest. These trails are marked with striped signs and with guideposts.

The wine trails of southern Moravia make up a unique network of regional bicycle trails connecting the most interesting wineries with historical monuments. The main Moravian Wine Trail connects Znojmo with Uherské Hradiště and travels through ten winemaking regions. Some 1,000 kilometres of trails pass through the beautiful vineyards and gardens of southern Moravia.

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Caves

The underground world of the Czech Republic includes such unique places as labyrinths of caves connected by underground rivers, large caverns with unique stalagmites and stalactites, extensive halls with historic traces, and a river with a depth of 100 meters that forges its way through the largest Czech gorge.

Koněpruské Caves

The Koněpruské Caves are situated in central Bohemia, seven kilometres south of Beroun, in the middle of the Bohemian Karst nature reserve, not far from the Křivoklát and Karlštejn castles.

Punkva Caves

The Punkva Caves can be found in Pustý Žleb, about one kilometre from the Skalní Mlýn information centre. Visitors walk through mighty underground spaces and corridors, as far as the bottom of the world-famous Macocha Abyss. The abyss is 138.7 meters deep, with awe-inspiring dimensions of 174 x 76 meters. The walking tour is followed by a motorboat ride along the Punkva underground river.

www.caves.cz



Punkva Caves

Maps

Hiking, biking or sailing maps can be bought in almost every bookshop or at most information centres.

Winter Resorts

Good winter conditions allow for winter sports to be enjoyed for several months. One can take advantage of hundreds of kilometres of well-kept cross-country trails, which are very well marked and regularly maintained, as well as of downhill runs of varying difficulty, snow parks, and skating and sledding facilities. Most winter resorts in the Czech Republic are situated in national parks or in protected areas.

Ski areas also provide a variety of services, including mountain pubs and restaurants. Newcomers to the winter sports scene are also looked after in the Czech mountains, as rental shops provide both ski equipment and experienced instructors to help first-time skiers.

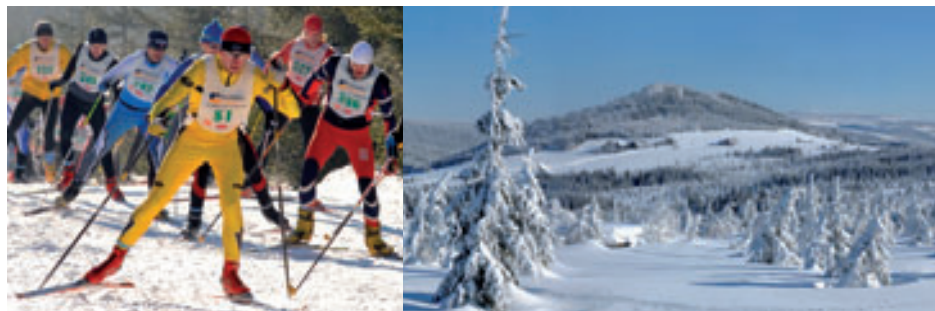
The most popular places are

Krkonoše Mountains

The country's best-known ski areas are in this mountain range, including Špindlerův Mlýn, Pec pod Sněžkou, Harrachov and Rokytnice nad Jizerou. Excellent conditions ensure that even the most demanding skier or snowboarder will have something to choose from. The cost of a three-day pass in high season is 1590 CZK for adults, while a one-day ski pass costs 750 CZK for an adult. The Krkonoše cross-country track is something of a novelty in Europe, as it comprises 520 km of maintained trails. 69 km are used for regular competitions.

Jizerské Mountains

This is a favourite destination for cross-country skiers. It has some 130 km of well-kept trails.



Šumava

Zadov, Špičák and Kramolín make up the ski areas of Šumava. A three-day pass here costs 1130 CZK. Snowboarders have their own area within the confines of Zadov, while cross-country enthusiasts have more than 150 kilometres of trails to choose from.

Beskydy

Cross-country skiers travel to Beskydy to take advantage of more than 100 kilometres of trails. The Lysohorská trail, the Těšínských Beskyd trail and the Pustevny trail are just a few of the famous routes in the area.

CULTURAL SURVIVAL

Famous Czechs

History

Charles IV. (1316 – 1378)

King Charles IV (Karel IV), Czech king and Holy Roman Emperor. He founded Central Europe's first university and initiated the construction of many of Prague's great Gothic monuments. During his reign, Prague grew into one of the largest and most important cities in Europe.

John Amos Comenius (Jan Ámos Komenský) (1592 – 1670)

Comenius wrote several textbooks on education (e.g. Orbis Pictus), which were so original that they won him the name "the father of modern education".

František Palacký (1798 – 1876)

Czech nationalist and historian. He is considered to be the "father of the modern Czech nation". Palacký played a leading role in the Czech cultural and national revival of the 19th century.

Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850 – 1937)

The first Czechoslovak president, under whose presidency Czechoslovakia was a strong democratic country and one of the most developed countries in the world. Apart from being politician, Masaryk was also a philosopher and a sociologist.

Václav Havel (*1936)

A Czech writer, dramatist and politician. His first publicly performed full-length play, The Garden Party (1963), presented in a season for the Theatre of the Absurd, won him international acclaim. Havel became a leading figure in the Velvet Revolution of 1989. He was the ninth and last President of Czechoslovakia and the first President of the Czech Republic.



King Charles IV

Music

Bedřich Smetana (1828 – 1884)

Smetana was the first composer to write music that was specifically Czech in character. Many of his operas are based on Czech themes and myths, the best known being the comedy *The Bartered Bride*. Other major works: *Dalibor*, *The Kiss*, *My Country*.

Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904)

A composer of Romantic music, who employed the idioms and melodies of the folk music of his native Bohemia and Moravia in symphonic, oratorical, chamber and operatic works. Major works: *Slavonic Dances*, *Stabat Mater*, *Rusalka*, *New World Symphony*.



Antonín Dvořák



Alfons Mucha - Job

Leoš Janáček (1854 – 1928)

A Czech composer who is particularly remembered for his orchestral piece *Sinfonietta* and his operas. He is generally recognised as one of the foremost Czech composers. Major works: *Jenufa*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *The Macropoulos Case*.

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Arts

Petr Brandl (1668 – 1735)

Petr Brandl was a famous late-baroque painter. The major art museum in Prague (the National Gallery) has an entire hall devoted to the artist's works, including the wonderful "Bust of an Apostle" from sometime before 1725.

Josef Mánes (1820 – 1871)

A famous Czech painter, who produced landscape paintings, portraits and historical paintings. Among other things, he created the calendar dial face of Prague's astronomical clock.

Mikoláš Aleš (1852 – 1913)

Mikoláš Aleš was a Czech draughtsman, painter, decorator and illustrator. He is one of the most prominent figures of the so-called National Theatre generation. He is a classic figure of the Czech art scene of the 19th century. In 1879, he won a competition for decorating the National Theatre.

Alfons Mucha (1860 – 1939)

Mucha produced a plethora of paintings, posters, advertisements, and book illustrations as well as designs for jewellery, carpets, wallpaper, and theatre sets in what came to be known as the Art Nouveau style.

Josef Lada (1887 – 1957)

Lada created landscapes, frescoes and designed costumes for plays and films. Over the years he produced a series of paintings and drawings depicting traditional Czech occupations. He is best known as the illustrator of Jaroslav Hašek's World War One novel *The Good Soldier Švejk*.

Literature

Jaroslav Hašek (1883 – 1923)

A Czech humorist and satirist who became well-known primarily for his world-famous novel *The Good Soldier Švejk*, an unfinished collection of farcical incidents about a soldier in World War I, which has been translated into sixty languages.

Karel Čapek (1890 – 1938)

One of the most influential Czech writers of the 20th century, and a Nobel Prize nominee (1936). He introduced and made popular the frequently used international word robot, which



Living in the Czech Republic

first appeared in his play R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots) in 1921. Other major works: The White Plague, The Macropoulos Case, Krakatit, An Ordinary Life, Tales from Two Pockets.

Jaroslav Seifert (1901 – 1986)

A Czech writer, poet and journalist. In 1967 he was made a National Artist. He was the official Chairman of the Czechoslovak Writer's Union for several years and was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1984. Major works: City in Tears, Sheer Love, On the Waves of TSE, The Nightingale Sings Poorly.

Franz Kafka (1883 – 1924)

One of the major German-language fiction writers of the 20th century. Kafka's works have come to embody the blend of the absurd, the surreal and the mundane which has given rise to the adjective "Kafkaesque". Major works: The Judgement, The Metamorphosis, The Trial, The Castle.

Milan Kundera (*1929)

A writer of Czech origin who has lived in exile in France since 1975, where he became a naturalized citizen in 1981. He is best known as the author of The Unbearable Lightness of Being, The Book of Laughter and Forgetting, and The Joke.

Film

Oscar Winners

Miloš Forman (*1932)

Forman is an actor, screenwriter, professor and two-time Academy Award-winning film director. He emigrated after the Soviet invasion in 1968. Oscar-winning films: One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (1975), Amadeus (1984).

Jiří Menzel (*1938)

A Czech film director, theatre director, actor, and scriptwriter. His films often combine a humanistic view of the world with sarcasm. Oscar-winning film: Closely Observed Trains (US title: Closely Watched Trains – Ostře sledované vlaky, 1966).

Jan Svěrák (*1965)

Jan Svěrák is the most successful Czech film director since the Velvet Revolution in 1989. His films have received dozens of awards, including an Academy Award, Crystal Globe, Golden Globe, and the Tokyo Grand Prix. Oscar-winning film: Kolya (Kolja, 1996).

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Science

Gregor Johann Mendel (1822 – 1884)

A Moravian priest and scientist, who is called the “father of modern genetics”. He studied the inheritance of traits in pea plants and established the Mendelian Laws of Heredity.

Jan Evangelista Purkyně (1787 – 1869)

A Czech anatomist and physiologist, best known for his discovery of the Purkyně effect, Purkyně cells, Purkyně fibres and Purkyně images. He was the first to use a microtome and discovered the use of fingerprints as a method of identification.

Jan Jánský (1873 – 1921)

Jánský was a Czech serologist, neurologist and psychiatrist. He is credited with the first classification of blood into the four types of the ABO blood group system (A, B, AB, O).

Jaroslav Heyrovský (1890 – 1967)

Heyrovský was the inventor of the polarographic method, the father of electroanalytical chemistry, and the recipient of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1959.

Oto Wichterle (1913 – 1998)

Wichterle was a Czech chemist and inventor, best known for his invention of modern contact lenses.

Public Holidays

People usually don't work on these days. Schools, shops, banks, post offices and hospital outpatient departments are closed.

JANUARY 1	Foundation Day of the Czech Republic in 1993
EASTER MONDAY	Easter Holiday
MAY 1	Labour Day
MAY 8	Liberation Day: the end of World War II
JULY 5	The feast of St. Cyril and St. Methodius: the arrival of the Christian missionaries sent from the Byzantine Empire to the Czech Lands



Living in the Czech Republic

JULY 6	Jan Hus Day: commemoration of the religious reformer's death at the stake in 1415
SEPTEMBER 28	St. Wenceslas' Day: in remembrance of the patron saint of the Czech State
OCTOBER 28	Czechoslovak Statehood Day: this day commemorates the establishment of democratic Czechoslovakia in 1918
NOVEMBER 17	Freedom and Democracy Day – commemorating the anti-Communist demonstrations of 1989
DECEMBER 24	Christmas Eve
DECEMBER 25, 26	Christmas Holidays

Customs and Traditions

Easter (Velikonoce)

Although Good Friday, White Saturday and Palm Sunday are not commonly celebrated, Easter Monday is widely enjoyed. It is a day when various popular customs coming from the pre-Christian era are practised. The customs vary in different regions of the Czech Republic. The main Easter Monday tradition is so-called "whipping". Boys call on the girls in the neighbourhood and whip them with plaited willow switches. The whip and the custom are called pomlázka. This "painful" procedure is supposed to guarantee good health and beauty to women in the coming year. According to tradition, girls pay for the service with decorated eggs (both real and made of chocolate) and sometimes with shots of alcohol.

Burning of Witches

The night of April 30th is traditionally known as Čarodějnice (Witches' Night) in the Czech Lands. On the eve of May 1st, Czechs all over the country burn effigies of Morana, "the witch of winter," on bonfires to celebrate the arrival of spring.

Lovers' Day

On May 1st, every girl is supposed to be kissed under a blooming cherry-tree to stay fresh all year through.

Living in the Czech Republic



St. Nicholas's Day (Mikuláš)

On the evening of December 5th, St. Nicholas visits people's homes with devils and angels to find out whether the children have been good during the year. They leave gifts – usually sweets, nuts or fruits. In return, the children should read a poem or sing a song. If the child has been naughty, he/she is given pieces of coal and potatoes.

Christmas (Vánoce)

The spirit of young Jesus, invisible to everybody, comes to children and adults for Christmas. The traditional dinner on Christmas Eve is carp fried with breadcrumbs and served with potato salad. The symbol of Christmas is a decorated Christmas tree, under which the family places gifts, which are opened after dinner. Some families go to church to attend midnight mass. In some families there are other customs such as singing Christmas carols, cutting an apple in half so that the core appears as a star, which brings good luck, or making little boats from nutshells and sailing them in a wash basin. According to one of the Czech Christmas customs and traditions, people are supposed to fast all day before dinner in order to see a golden piglet. During the Christmas period all families bake traditional Christmas cookies.



Christmas tree in Prague

Local Cuisine

Traditional Czech cuisine reflects the influence of neighbouring countries: German roast goose, Austrian schnitzel, Hungarian goulash, etc. Typical Czech food is mostly based on meat, flour and sauce. Czechs usually have lunch as their main meal (soup and a main course), which is eaten around midday. In recent times, Italian cuisine and healthy diets have become fashionable among young people.

Specialities

- vepřo-knedlo-zelo: roasted pork served with sour cabbage and dumplings; the most typical Czech dish
- svíčková: pot-roasted marinated beef in a rich creamy vegetable sauce, served with cranberries, whipped cream and dumplings
- bramboráky: garlic-seasoned fried potato pancake
- smažený sýr: fried cheese
- nakládaný Hermelín: a soft, marinated Camembert-type cheese
- párek v rohlíku: hotdog encased in a roll, sold from kiosks
- pstruh: trout
- ovocné knedlíky: fruit-filled dumplings, served with sugar and curd
- koláče: small pastries topped with almonds, poppy seed, jam, or a sweet curd cheese
- domácí štrůdl: home made apple pie



Koláč



Vepřo-knedlo-zelo

Drinks

The Czech Republic is world-famous for its beer (pivo), which is an important part of the culture. It is recognized as one of the world's best. There are over sixty breweries in the Czech Republic, of which Plzeňský Prazdroj (Pilsner Urquell), Budvar, Gambrinus, Radegast and Velkopopovický kozel are the most famous. Slivovice, a plum brandy from south Moravia, is the typical spirit of the region. Another typical spirits are Becherovka, a bittersweet herbal liqueur from Karlovy Vary and Fernet, a bitter herbal spirit from Pilsen.

For a list of Czech bars and pubs go to: www.ceske-hospudky.cz

FOREIGN CULTURAL INSTITUTES

BRITISH COUNCIL

www.britishcouncil.cz

AMERICAN CENTRE

www.amerikecentrum.cz/english

CZECH-VIETNAMESE SOCIETY

www.cvs-praha.cz

SLOVENSKÝ INSTITUT

www.mzv.sk/praha

MAGYAR KULTURÁLIS KÖZPONT

www.hunginst.cz

INSTITUTUL CULTURAL ROMAN

www.icr.ro/praga

INSTITUTO CERVANTES

<http://praga.cervantes.es>

INSTYTUT POLSKI

www.polskyinstitut.cz

**BULGARIAN CULTURE AND
INFORMATION CENTRE**

www.bki.cz

ISTITUTO ITALIANO DI CULTURA

www.iicpraga.esteri.it

GOETHE-INSTITUT

www.goethe.de/prag

ÖSTERREICHISCHEN KULTURFORUMS

www.bmeia.gv.at/pragkf

INSTITUT FRANCAIS

www.ifp.cz

HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Czech higher education dates back six hundred years. In 1348 Emperor Charles IV founded a university in Prague which is the oldest academic institution in Central Europe. It is now called Charles University. Higher education is the highest level of the education system. Since 2001 the three cycle structure has strictly been implemented in higher education (i.e. Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral study programmes). The main tuition language is Czech, however the range of programmes delivered in foreign languages (mainly in English) is expanding in order to cater for international students.

Bachelor degree programmes

Bachelor study programmes are **3 to 4 years** in duration (180 – 240 ECTS credits) and constitute **the first level** of higher education. Graduates receive the academic degree bakalář umění (**BcA.**) in the field of arts, and bakalář (**Bc.**) in other fields. The study programme must be completed with a final state examination, which usually includes the presentation and defence of a thesis. Successful graduates may enter the labour market or continue their studies in follow-up master's programmes in related fields.



Master's degree programmes

Master study programmes may either follow on from bachelor programmes as **follow-up master programmes (2 to 3 years; 60 – 180 ECTS credits)**, or they may be **full programmes (4 to 6 years; 240 – 360 ECTS credits)**. Programmes focus on the acquisition and application of theoretical knowledge, and on the development of creativity and talent. Graduates in master programmes have to take a final state examination and publicly present and defend a thesis. Studies in medicine, veterinary medicine and hygiene are completed by a demanding state examination, including the presentation and defence of a rigorous thesis.

Studying in the Czech Republic

**STUDY IN
THE CZECH
REPUBLIC**

Studies in master programmes result in the following degrees:

- magistr (**Mgr.**): Master of humanities, sciences, law, education, pharmacy and theology
- magistr umění (**MgA.**): Master of Arts
- inženýr (**Ing.**): Engineer in the field of economics, technical sciences and engineering, agriculture, forestry and military branches of study
- inženýr architekt (**Ing. arch.**) – Architect in the field of architecture;
- doktor medicíny (**MUDr.**): Doctor of Human Medicine in the field of medicine
- zubní lékař (**MDDr.**): Doctor of Dental Medicine in the field of dental medicine
- doktor veterinární medicíny (**MVDr.**): Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in the field of veterinary medicine



Holders of a “magistr” master degree can sit a demanding state examination in **the same field**, and present and defend a rigorous thesis. Upon successful completion the following academic degrees are awarded:

- doktor práv (**JUDr.**) in the field of law
- doktor filozofie (**PhDr.**) in the field of humanities, teacher training and social sciences
- doktor přírodních věd (**RNDr.**) in the field of natural sciences
- doktor farmacie (**PharmDr.**) in the field of pharmacy
- licenciát teologie (**ThLic.**) in the field of Catholic theology
- licenciát teologie (**ThLic.**) or “doktor teologie” (**ThDr.**) in the field of theology, excluding Catholic theology

All the aforementioned academic titles are at master’s level and are written **before the holder’s name**.

Doctoral programmes

Doctoral programmes (which normally last **3 years**) are intended for graduates from master programmes and focus on independent creative work in research, development or the arts. Doctoral studies are completed by way of a state doctoral examination and the public presentation and defence of a doctoral thesis (dissertation) based on original work, which must be published.

Graduates of doctoral study programmes are awarded the academic degree of:

- doktor (**Ph.D.**)
- doktor teologie (**Th.D.**) in the field of theology

Those academic titles are written **after the holder's name**.

For more information go to:

www.msmt.cz (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports)

www.naric.cz (National Academic Recognition Information Centre)

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

In terms of the founder the higher education institutions can be public, private or state-run institutions (only in the case of military and police academies). In terms of the study programmes they offer, they may be non-university institutions of higher education (offering mainly Bachelor's study programmes) or university-type (offering all types of study programmes).

There are 26 public, 2 state and 46 private higher education institutions in the Czech Republic. In the academic year 2009/2010 there were 389,231 students studying at the Czech higher education institutions, of which 34,552 were international students.

List of Higher Education Institutions

Public higher education institutions

Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague	www.vsup.cz
Academy of Fine Arts in Prague	www.avu.cz
Academy of Performing Arts in Prague	www.amu.cz
Brno University of Technology	www.vutbr.cz
College of Polytechnics, Jihlava	www.vspji.cz
Czech Technical University in Prague	www.cvut.cz
Czech University of Life Sciences Prague	www.czu.cz
Charles University in Prague	www.cuni.cz
Institute of Chemical Technology, Prague	www.vscht.cz
Institute of Technology and Economy in České Budějovice	www.vstecb.cz
Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem	www.ujep.cz
Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts Brno	www.jamu.cz
Masaryk University	www.muni.cz
Mendel University of Agriculture and Forestry Brno	www.mendelu.cz
Palacky University in Olomouc	www.upol.cz
Silesian University in Opava	www.slu.cz
Technical University of Liberec	www.tul.cz
Tomas Bata University in Zlin	www.utb.cz
University of Economics, Prague	www.vse.cz
University of Hradec Králové	www.uhk.cz
University of Ostrava	www.osu.cz
University of Pardubice	www.upce.cz
University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice	www.jcu.cz
University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences Brno	www.vfu.cz
University of West Bohemia	www.zcu.cz
VŠB – Technical University of Ostrava	www.vsb.cz

State higher education institutions

Police Academy of the Czech Republic	www.polac.cz
University of Defence in Brno	www.unob.cz

Private higher education institutions

Academia Rerum Civilium	www.vspsv.cz
Akcent College	www.akcentcollege.cz
Anglo-American University	www.aauni.edu
Archip - Architectural Institute in Prague	www.archip.eu
Banking Institute – College of Banking	www.bivs.cz
Brno International Business School	www.bibs.cz
Business School Ostrava	www.vsp.cz
Central Bohemia Institute of Higher Education	www.svikladno.cz
Cevro Institut	www.cevroinstitut.cz
College of Applied Economic Studies	www.vsaes.cz
College of Applied Legal Studies	www.vsap.cz
College of Business in Prague	www.vso-praha.eu
College of European and Regional Studies	www.vsiers.cz
College of Information Management and Business Administration	www.vsmie.cz
College of Logistics	www.vslg.cz
College of Nursing	www.vszdrav.cz
College of Physical Education and Sport Palestra	www.palestra.cz
College of Regional Development	www.vsrz.cz
College of Social and Administrative Affairs	www.vsss.cz
College of Tourism and Hotel Management	www.hotkolabno.cz
College of Tourism and Territorial Studies in Prague	www.vscrts.cz
College of Tourism, Hotel and Spa Management	www.vscrhl.cz

Studying in the Czech Republic



**STUDY IN
THE CZECH
REPUBLIC**

Educational Institute of Frank Dyson	www.fdyson.cz
European Polytechnic Institute	www.edukomplex.cz
Film Academy of Miroslav Ondříček in Písek	www.filmovka.cz
Institute of Finance and Administration	www.vsfs.cz
Institute of Hospitality Management in Prague	www.vsh.cz
International Baptist Theological Seminary	www.ibts.cz
Jan Amos Komenský University Prague	www.ujak.cz
Josef Škvorecký Literary Academy	www.lit-akad.cz
Karel Engliš College	www.vske.cz
Metropolitan University Prague	www.mup.cz
Moravian College Olomouc	www.mvso.cz
Newton College	www.newtoncollege.cz
Prague College of Psychosocial Studies	www.viap.cz
Private College of Economic Studies	www.svses.cz
Private College of Economic Studies in Znojmo	www.svse.cz
Rašín College	www.ravys.cz
Sting Academy	www.sting.cz
Škoda Auto College	www.savs.cz
Unicorn College	www.unicorncollege.cz
University College of International and Public Relations Prague	www.vip-vs.cz
University of Economics and Management	www.vsem.cz
University of Karlovy Vary	www.vskv.cz
University of New York in Prague	www.unyp.cz
West-Moravian College Třebíč	www.zmvs.cz

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The principal requirement for entering a **Bachelor degree programme** or a **full Master's degree programme** is the completion of a full secondary general education or vocational education with a "maturita" school-leaving examination. Admission to a **follow-up Master's degree programme** depends on the completion of the relevant Bachelor degree programme or its equivalent. Admission to **Doctoral studies** depends on the successful completion of a Master's degree programme.

Students may apply for several study programmes at various institutions and faculties. The **deadline for submitting applications** is normally the end of February or March. Most higher education institutions offer the option of filing an application in electronic form. The date, content and form (oral or written examination, aptitude test) of the entrance process are decided upon by the dean of the faculty or the rector of the higher education institution. **Entrance examinations** are normally held between June and September. Examinations at higher education institutions for the arts take place earlier, in January, and the deadline for filing applications is normally the end of November. Student administration departments at various faculties can provide information on applications, admission requirements and studies.



ORGANISATION OF STUDIES

The **academic year** lasts 12 months; the start is fixed by the head of the higher education institution (rector). Courses are divided into **semesters, years or blocks**, which are composed of a period of teaching, an examination period and a vacation.

Studying in the Czech Republic



**STUDY IN
THE CZECH
REPUBLIC**

The structure of the academic year is decided by each institution. It usually begins in October and is divided into two semesters: winter and summer, with approx. a five-week examination period after each semester. The summer vacation is in July and August.

The frequency and methods of **assessing students' achievements** differ according to the field of study. In some cases, a system of partial examinations taken after each semester has been introduced, in other cases one comprehensive examination after each completed part of studies is prescribed, mostly at the end of a certain module. Performance in examinations and in the defence of the thesis is graded. In majority, institutions students are assessed by means of credits. The credit system (ECTS, European Credit Transfer System) has been encouraged since it allows completed parts of studies to be recognised, thus contributing to transferability within the system.

TUITION FEES

By law, higher education at public and state institutions is free of charge for citizens of all nationalities, with the following exceptions:

- fees for administration of admission proceedings;
- fees for extending the duration of study beyond a set limit;
- fees for the study of an additional programme;
- fees for study in a foreign language.

Private institutions of higher education can fix their own fees. The tuition fees differ from 2,000 - 15,000 USD per year and the amount depends on the relevant institution and study programme.

LANGUAGE COURSES

Some Czech higher education institutions organise language courses for foreign students. The courses are usually paid, but there may be exceptions (e.g. language course as a part of a scholarship). The **Institute for Language and Preparatory Studies** (www.ujop.cz) offers teaching of Czech language to foreigners and preparing them for university studies.

For more information about the Czech language go to:

www.czech-language.cz

<http://check-your-czech.com>

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

Foreign students can receive a scholarship under **bilateral international agreements** on cooperation in the field of education (offered by Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of the Czech Republic) or within the **framework of the Foreign Development Aid** (offered by the Government of the Czech Republic). Information about these scholarships is available at Czech embassies and consulates. Some Czech higher education institutions grant scholarships for excellent study results or in cases of hard circumstances of a student. European students can take advantage of a number of exchange programmes (e.g. Erasmus, EEA/Norway Financial Mechanism, Aktion, Ceepus). The EU Erasmus Mundus Programme offers scholarships for highly qualified students to follow a selected Erasmus Mundus master or doctoral study programme.

For more information go to:

www.studyin.cz/scholarships

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

There are many student organizations functioning mainly at public universities. Let's mention the most important ones:

Erasmus Student Network Czech Republic

connects and supports international student clubs in Czech Republic which help international students coming to study at Czech universities. The organization is represented in 6 towns (Prague, Brno, Ostrava, Pilsen, Olomouc and Hradec Králové).

www.esn-cz.cz

AIESEC Czech Republic

is a part of the world's largest youth-run organization. AIESEC offers young people the opportunity to participate in international internships, experience leadership and participate in a global learning environment.

www.aiesec.org/czech-republic

IAESTE Czech Republic

is a student exchange organization that provides students of science, engineering, technology and the applied arts with paid, course-related, technical training abroad.

www.iaeste.cz

Useful links



**BROWSE
THE
INTERNET**

Study in the Czech Republic

www.studyin.cz

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

www.msmt.cz

The official web pages of the Czech Republic

www.czech.cz

The official travel site of the Czech Republic

www.czechtourism.com

A destination guide

www.myczechrepublic.com

Presentation of the Czech Republic abroad

www.czechcenters.cz

Czech embassies and consulates abroad

www.mzv.cz/jnp/en/diplomatic_missions

News in English

www.praguepost.com

<http://praguemonitor.com>

www.radio.cz/en

Practical advice for foreigners

www.en.domavcr.cz

Join us at Facebook

www.facebook.com (Fanpage: Study in the Czech Republic)

Osobní údaje	Personal data
Příjmení	Surname
Jméno	First name
Datum narození	Date of birth
Země	Country
Bydliště	Residence; Address
Povolání	Profession
Pas	Passport

Pozdravy	Greetings
Dobrý den	Good day (suitable for use all day)
Na shledanou	Good-bye
Ahoj	Hello (also Bye) – informal greeting
Čau	Hi (also Bye)
Děkuji	Thank you
Není zač	Not at all (My pleasure), you're welcome.
Promiňte	I'm sorry. Excuse me.
Prosím	Please

Jak se máte?	How are you?
Jmenuji se ...	My name is ...
Rád/a vás poznávám.	Nice to meet you.
Neumím česky.	I don't speak Czech.
Mluvíte anglicky?	Do you speak English?
Kolik to stojí?	How much does it cost?
Cena	Price
Kde je...?	Where is...?
Nevím.	I don't know.

Vocabulary



Ano	Yes
Ne	No

Be careful when you hear someone say **“no”**, as this is a shortened version of **“ano”** which means **“yes”**.

Nápisy	Notices
Divadlo	Theatre
Hospoda	Inn, Pub
Jízdní řád	Timetable
Kino	Cinema
Letiště	Airport
Muži/Páni	Gentlemen
Nemocnice	Hospital
Pokladna	Box Office, Cash Counter
Policie	Police
Pošta	Post Office
Pozor!	Watch out!
Příjezdy/Odjezdy	Arrivals/Departures
Restaurace	Restaurant
Směnárna	Bureau de Change
Stanice	Station/s, stop/s
Studený/studená	Cold
Šatna	Cloakroom
Teplý/teplá	Hot
Vstup volný	Admission Free
Vstupné	Admission price

Vchod	Entrance
Vyprodáno	Sold Out
Východ	Exit
Zadáno	Reserved
Zavřeno/Otevřeno	Closed/Open
Záchod(ky), toalety	Lavatory, toilets
Ženy/Dámy	Ladies

Týden - Dny	Week - Days
Pondělí	Monday
Úterý	Tuesday
Středa	Wednesday
Čtvrtek	Thursday
Pátek	Friday
Sobota	Saturday
Neděle	Sunday
Dnes	Today
Včera	Yesterday
Zítra	Tomorrow

Měsíce – Rok	Months – Year
Leden	January
Únor	February
Březen	March
Duben	April
Květen	May
Červen	June
Červenec	July
Srpen	August

Vocabulary



**CHECK
YOUR
CZECH**

Září	September
Říjen	October
Listopad	November
Prosinec	December

Obchody a služby

Shops and services

Čistírna	Dry-cleaner's
Drogerie	Drugstore
Kadeřnictví	Hairdresser's
Knihkupectví	Bookshop
Lékárna	Pharmacy
Obchodní dům	Department store
Obuv	Shoes
Pekařství	Bakery
Potraviný	Grocery
Samoobsluha	Supermarket

Číslo

Numbers

Jeden/jedna	1
Dva/dvě	2
Tři	3
Čtyři	4
Pět	5
Šest	6
Sedm	7
Osm	8
Devět	9
Deset	10



Vocabulary

Jedenáct	11
Dvanáct	12
Třináct	13
Čtrnáct	14
Patnáct	15
Šestnáct	16
Sedmnáct	17
Osmnáct	18
Devatenáct	19
Dvacet	20
Dvacet jedna	21
Dvacet dva	22
Třicet	30
Čtyřicet	40
Padesát	50
Šedesát	60
Sedmdesát	70
Osmdesát	80
Devadesát	90
Jedno sto	100

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WHEN,
WHERE?**

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