

Livingprague Newsletter

December 2020



11AM TUESDAY NOVEMBER 24TH AND NOBODY IN THE TYN COURTYARD

For the December Newsletter as well as the most recent Coronavirus status I've included seasonal content including what to expect from the scaled down Prague Christmas Markets, where to participate in some glass blowing, understand what options you'll find for eating Halušky, learn where there's a hidden time capsule in the city, view a copy of a VERY historic building and there's a book review for people who want a reason to explore.

Just before you launch into the newsletter take a few seconds to think if your friends or colleagues might find it interesting. If so please consider forwarding to them and they can [subscribe to the newsletter](#) separately if they want.

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Christmas Markets

The Christmas Markets will be scaled down this year but still there's a lot to experience in the culture, the food, the drink and the traditions. Different markets, tips, tricks and recommendations to help you enjoy the festive season here. [Read more....](#)



Prague Loreta

The Loreta complex is one of Prague's Baroque beauties but the story of why it is here goes back 2000 years and tells the story of Christianity before the first Christmas. A political statement or Christian homage? You decide. [Read more....](#)



Czech Food - Halušky

It will usually be street food or you might find it in a restaurant served in different ways. You know it as Gnocchi but there are different variations in the Czech and Slovakian styles that you need to know about. [Read more....](#)



Josef Jungmann – A Hidden Secret

Just one of hundreds of statues and cultural sights in the city but a closer look at Josef Jungmann reveals one of the giants of the National Revival, an intellectual who fought for his native language and there's a literal hidden secret. [Read more...](#)

Comment

Coronavirus Life

At the time of writing we are just about to come out of the administrative State of Emergency or Lockdown or increased restrictions depending on who you listen to.

At the time of writing the advice is to carry a face covering with you all the time so that you have one available in case of local restrictions (Chemists sometimes want you to cover your mouth and nose). All shops and building receptions have sanitising spray (smells awful). You need to show a negative COVID test if entering the country or isolate for 14 days.

The number of new cases per day is still in the region of 4000 and total deaths through the period went past 7000. It's bad, just not as bad as it was a few weeks ago. Some countries should take note that although painful, lockdowns do reduce deaths.

It's clear that the current government strategy was to shut down in November so that there could be some kind of normality during the Christmas period but I guess the price for that will be paid in January/February 2021.

The Czech government has ordered 2 million doses of a vaccine but as there are over 10 million in the country I guess that most of us will have to keep drinking strong beer, eating garlic and going for long walks in the living room.

The Czech Foreign Office is publishing up to date restrictions and guidelines at <https://www.mvcr.cz/mvcren/article/coronavirus-information-of-moi.aspx>.

In The News

From 2021, foreigners settling in Czech may have to undergo paid “integration lectures” to help them with the culture and traditions of the country. I seem to be thinking more about whether the 1615 “Language Act” is still law!

Trdlo wars continue with the man who owns the rights to market the Trdlo as a pastry (the name for the popular “chimney cake” in Prague), suing street vendors using the name Trdlo or Trdelnik without paying him. In an interesting response, the vendors insisted that they only used “Trdlo” on the paper napkins.

For the first time in 75 years there will be a bell ringing at the ST Havel (ST Gallus) church in the Old Town. The original bell was one of hundreds removed from Prague’s churches during WW2. Crowdfunding raised 7000 Euros to pay for it.

There was a Czech film called “Shadow Country” released this year but without much fanfare because the subject was the massacre of German-supporting Sudetenland Czechs during their expulsion from the country at the end of WW2. A storyline of revenge, ethnic cleansing and human nature.

Coronavirus restrictions are causing an anomaly in Czech statistics because of so many postponed marriages and divorces. This is expected to correct in the second half of 2022.

2022 should see the start of a new Prague city-wide tourism initiative to explain the origins of the street names. Guides like me find a lot of good material in telling clients literally what the names mean and what it applies to as a person or building in the street but the city is planning to add QR codes for anybody to read. Best to download Google Translate for your mobile.

Trivia and Odd Statistics

40% of employed Czechs have changed or expect to have to change jobs during the Coronavirus period.

There are currently 153 dogs owned per 1000 residents in Prague.

The 2020 Czech Book of the Year was a biography of 15th Century Hussite General Jan Žižka.

The Czech Republic sent CZK3.5 Million to Peru to help them in their fight against Covid19.

Between April and June 2020 the Czech economy contracted by 11% or 8.7% of GDP. This was the worst figure since Q1 of 1993 when Czechoslovakia split in the Velvet Divorce. Falling demand for Czech exports was the biggest factor.

Radio Prague International celebrated its 84th anniversary.

The Czech National Cyber and Information Security Agency reported 217 successful cyber attacks within the country in 2019.

In the first half of 2020 the country recorded 460 tonnes of illegally imported rubbish and waste products.

August 2020 was the 8th hottest August in Prague since records began in 1775.

2,870,000 is the number of Czech residents aged over 60.

Alcohol prices increased in the last year with spirits up 9.5% and beer up 3.7%.

A survey by Social Progress Imperative ranking quality of life showed that the Czech Republic was 25th out of 163 countries.

53,800 children were born alive in the Czech Republic between January and June 2020.

Walking Tours

If anybody noticed a middle-aged guy walking around the Old Town and Jewish Quarter talking to himself last month then that was likely to be me. One, I miss doing the tours and two, I have to put in some time to maintain all the knowledge.

On the brighter side I'll do some Christmas tours for friends in the city plus I've got a few bookings for Jan/Feb 2021. I'm flexible so it's cash on the day etc and no issues with refunds. A glimmer of hope.

Private Tours can be arranged by contacting me and Scheduled Tours can be booked online at

<https://www.livingpraguetours.com/>.

Note that the scheduled tours have a few changes and you can see the detail on the tour list below.

Refunds are 96% (cost of tour minus any card transaction fee which is out of my control). See the scheduled tours status below.

All clients are required to have a face covering available. I provide hand sanitiser.

The Scheduled Tours:

[Old Town and Jewish Quarter](#) is running normally

[City Walking Tour](#) (if Prague Castle is closed then the route changes to include John Lennon Wall, Our Lady Victorious if open and the riverside plus there will be no tram ride).

[World War Two](#) is running normally

[Architecture Tour](#) is running normally

[Czech Food and Beer Tasting](#) (suspended until March 2021)

[Christmas Markets](#) (Dec 2020 tour-only, no food/drink)



2020
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Activity Spotlight! – Pragl Glass Blowing



Glass Blowing

It's getting quite common now for people visiting a city to try one or two learning experiences during their trip and in the past I've written about subjects like cooking and photography but now for something completely different.

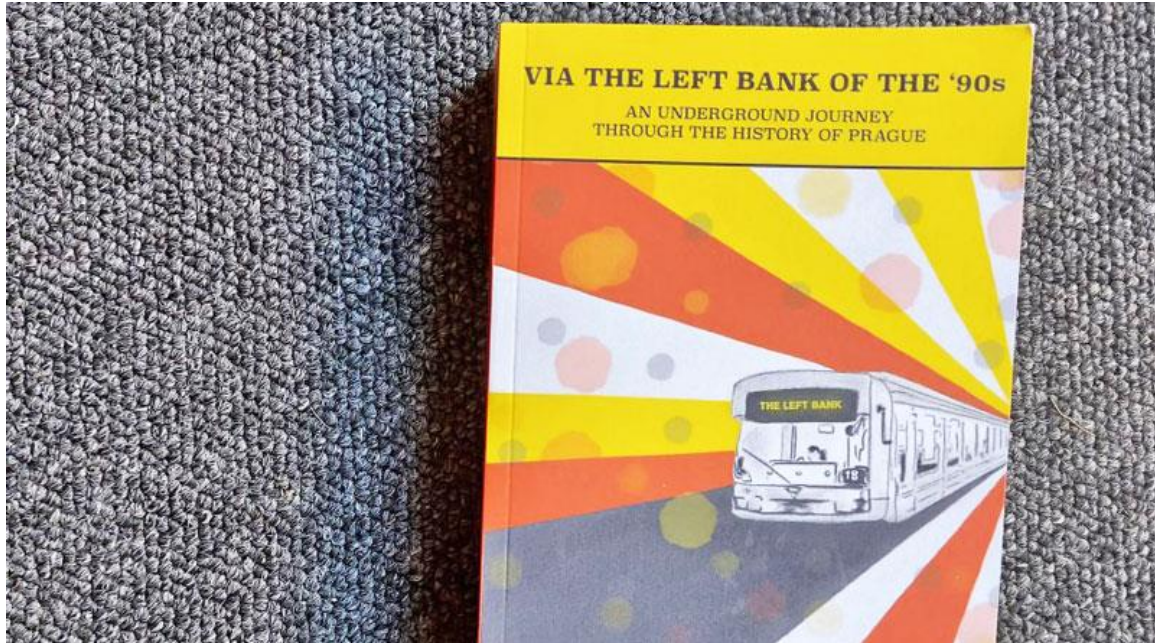
It's winter in Prague and you know it's going to be cold so if you're looking for some warm things to do then why not some glass blowing? I mean really! how many cities have you been to where you can even do this? and in Prague you have the chance to blow your own glass just 60 seconds walk from the Old Town Square.

The format is simple in that you are paying for a glass blowing lesson from an expert but as I say on the post linked below, if you have trouble blowing up balloons then avoid this.

Remember, whatever you make, you keep.

Check out [The Pragl Glass Experience](#)

Book Review – Via The Left Bank of the 90s



When an eBook about Prague drops into my inbox the first thing that crosses my mind will be “when will I have time to read this”. Fortunately that’s not a problem at present.






So breaking the book down into chapters, I worked my way through what I thought was a very well researched book by somebody prepared not just to scratch the surface of the city but actually to dig it up completely.

If a well-read 24 year expat resident of the city can learn something new then anybody can. Using the city metro stations to explore Prague, introducing characters most of which I knew but not all, dropping Prague trivia like confetti throughout the book, it’s ideal reading for people researching a trip to Prague or for those looking to expand their horizons.

Read the [Review of the Via the Left Bank of the 90s eBook](#)

Being Social

Click, Like, Subscribe, Follow, Review. Could I ask you to spend a minute interacting with one or more of the following options. Lots of great content to share. Subscribe and/or follow to stay updated.

	<p><u>FACEBOOK</u>: You can read posts, view short videos, like/share content, follow and message me.</p>
	<p><u>INSTAGRAM</u>: You can view pictures, like/share content and follow me.</p>
	<p><u>PINTEREST</u>: You can view specific genre pictures, save Pins to your boards and follow me.</p>
	<p><u>YOUTUBE</u>: You view full length videos, comment, like/share content and follow me.</p>
	<p><u>TRIP ADVISOR</u>: You can view tour pictures and leave a tour review for others.</p>

Surveys – Help me improve!

If you have a bit of time then consider a survey. It's anonymous so I just see answers to questions not who it's from.

It should take no more than 2 minutes on any survey.

The “Quick” survey is an overview. The other surveys are content specific. You do not have to finish the whole survey so feel free to answer as many or as few questions as you want.

Just “Send It” when you're ready. You will be helping me to improve all aspects of the sites.

Quick Survey – 1 minute survey

Accommodation – 2 minute survey

Activities – 2 minute survey

Walking Tours – 2 minute survey

Site Navigation - 1 minute survey

Contact Info – Engage with me!



I've now put so much information, local knowledge, tips and tricks into the Trip Planner that I've now renamed it the Trip Planner and Mini-Guide which you can always [download for free](#). But even that might not be enough to help. Sometimes all you want to do is ask a quick question, sometimes it's a bit of advice regarding an activity or accommodation etc. You're always welcome to contact me via one or more of the following options. Just keep an eye on your spam folder if using email.

Website: <https://livingprague.com/contact-us/>

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