

Livingprague Newsletter

January 2021



WE HAD THE XMAS TREE BUT NO STALLS

Happy New Year. Three small words. In fact, let me just say that again properly. **I wish you all a very Happy New Year!** For the January Newsletter as well as the most recent Coronavirus status and some Brexit notes, I've included why you might like to visit a very historic church, I've picked a lovely palace courtyard for lunch, an artistic monument to terrible times plus the story of an angry man who met a brutal end. For "Adrenalin" sports fans we'll also look at Indoor Skydiving in Prague.

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.

IN THIS ISSUE

Featured Content

ST Martin in the Wall

Victims of Communism Monument

Platyz Palace

The Prague Bomber

Comment

Coronavirus Life

Brexit

In The News

Trivia and Odd Statistics

Walking Tours

Activity Spotlight!

Indoor Skydiving

Being Social

Surveys/Contact

Featured Content



ST Martin in the Wall

If it looks old to you then let me say that it's even older than you might think. A church of real religious significance, known for its chamber music it has a German connection plus you'll learn how it got the unusual name. [Read more....](#)



Victims of Communism

There are many monuments and memorials to victims of Communism in the country. This is perhaps the most visual and popular in the guidebooks. But those books might not tell you some of the lesser known facts. [Read more....](#)



Platz Palace and Courtyard

A Gothic palace owned both by royalty and businessmen extended into where the Old Town fortress wall used to be and adapted to be neo-Renaissance apartments. It has an interesting history as well as being a great place for outside eating. [Read more...](#)



The Prague Bomber

You might think of Prague as historical and picturesque but you probably would not associate it with a near 14 year period of homemade bombs going off in and around the city or the manhunt which resulted. [Read more...](#)

Comment

Coronavirus Life

Is that some light at the end of a particularly long tunnel? I'm optimistic even though as I write this we are at the second highest level of lockdown and it's clear that there'll be a price to pay for the mixing over Christmas and New Year.

We'll know more in the next month regarding vaccinations but as I am writing this the UK just allowed the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine to be used in the UK and the Czechs have reserved 9 million doses of that one.

Historically January is the month when leasing and rental contracts come up for renewal so it's not uncommon to see businesses choosing this coming month to decide if they want to commit to another year. We'll know by February what has survived.

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

Brexit

For Brits travelling to Czech there are some things to note:

- Passports: not older than 10 years and with 6 months validity.
- A Visa may be required if you intend staying longer than 90 days, for study or for work.
- At the airport border you'll be using the "All Passports" route.
- If driving, then if you are resident in mainland UK then there are no new driving restrictions on your route to the Czech Republic but if your licence was issued in the Isle of Man, Jersey, Guernsey etc then you may need the IDP (International Driving Permit) and it's the 1968 version check the link at <https://www.gov.uk/driving-abroad/get-an-idp> and contact the relevant embassies on your route.
- Your Duty Free will be cheaper.

In The News

Construction of Prague's fourth metro line is due to begin this spring.

Discussions continue on whether to end "Guaranteed Salary" i.e. setting a minimum payment rate based on educational level. The Communist Party wants to keep it so that seems like a damn good reason to bin it.

A Czech family was arrested in Austria for failing to declare the correct worth of imported goods. The declaration was for 4000 Euros but the 800 bars of silver and gold found in the car were estimated to be worth closer to 700,000 Euros.

The flooding of a former mine created the largest pit lake in the country with a surface area of 300 hectares. The new Lake Most cost CZK2.5 Billion and took 12 years to complete.

A voting poll by Kantar suggested that if a general election were held then the Communist Party would receive 4.5% of the vote. This is less than the minimum 5% required to be allocated seats in Parliament and would be the first time since 1918 (except WW2) that the Communist Party was not in either government or opposition. In the regional elections they failed to win any Senate seats and their regional assembly seats reduced from 86 to 13.

A post-1989 prosecution of three top Communist officials has finally been halted after one died and the other two were deemed mentally incapacitated.

The country is providing protection and treatment for 50 Belarusians mostly aged between 20 and 30 whose physical injuries include broken bones, gunshot wounds, eye/ear damage caused by explosion, and torture.

Trivia and Odd Statistics

Every 186th person in the country is named Václav (Wenceslas).

620,000 Chinese citizens visited the Czech Republic in 2019.

The Czech Parliament passed legislation in a move to ban the farming of chickens in cages by 2027.

In August 2019 banks granted 6,868 mortgage loans worth CZK19.2 Billion.

80% of respondents in a public opinion poll said that they would stay in their current job even though they felt they were being underpaid for the position.

A Labour Ministry audit found that 98,300 Czechs who are entitled to a pension, collect that pension in another country.

2.9 Million Czechs have an Instagram account, up 20% on 2019. The most followed person is Peter Čech, former goalkeeper.

The 1926 painting called “La Dame de pique” by Marie Čermínova (known as Toyen) sold for CZK78.65 Million, a Czech record.

1,493 personal bankruptcies were declared in September 2020.

The government announced that February 4th would be the “Day of Czechs Abroad”.

A Czech online grocer and a mineral water company have teamed up to develop the first refundable canned product.

Healthcare workers received CZK11.5 Billion in bonuses in 2020 and will receive a general 10% wage increase in 2021.

For protection against COVID-19 a study found that 62% of people in Czech use a textile mask, 27% use a surgical mask, 6% use a respirator and 2% use nothing.

Walking Tours

Due to the current National Lockdown, no tours will be possible until at least Monday, January 10th 2021.

I'll be 55 in 2021 and I'm actually feeling more optimistic than I have been for some months. With the confidence of the vaccination programs in various countries I'm hoping that May 2021 will see me breaking even. Yes, that is five months from now and things can change. At the start of 2021, Trip Advisor is showing 879 walking tour options in Prague (I'm 23rd on that list). I wonder how many are still going!

Private Tours can be arranged by contacting me and Scheduled Tours can be booked via <https://www.livingpraguetours.com/>.

Cash on the day is fine or advance credit card 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:

National Lockdown until January 10th. No Tours until then.

[Old Town and Jewish Quarter](#)

[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](#)

[Architecture Tour](#)

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

[Christmas Markets](#)



Activity Spotlight! – Indoor Skydiving



Nobody was harmed in the making of this photograph!

Although it can't give you the thrill of jumping out of a plane at 10,000 feet and looking at the ground coming towards you at an alarmingly fast rate, there is another option.

The Prague Indoor Skydiving Arena, or what is currently called the Hurricane Factory, offers people from the age of 5 the chance to experience a lot of the thrill but without the danger element.






In fact you'll never be more than 14 metres above the ground during this Prague activity but when you've got forced air underneath you blowing at up to 270Km/h it all feels fairly realistic.

The other thing to mention is that skydivers from a plane don't get the opportunity to go up as well as down. Professional trainers, multi-lingual, great fun and super memories.

Check the post about [Prague Indoor Skydiving](#)

Being Social

Click, Like, Subscribe, Follow, Review. Could I ask you to spend a minute interacting with one or more of the social platforms below that have 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. I reply within 24 hours.

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

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