

Livingprague Newsletter

April 2022



FIRST SHOPPING FOR 2 YEARS WITHOUT A MASK

In the April Newsletter for my new content I'll explain how Czechoslovakia came to be communist controlled for 42 years. We'll take a look at how the post-WW2 Beneš Decrees might be applied to Ukraine. I'll tell you about a scenic restaurant in an historic building and I'll also give you some tips about drinking Prague Absinthe.

The Activity Spotlight is how to hire bikes and plan a route. Blast from the Past includes updated pictures/links for the Journey of a Torah Scroll and a night time view of the main entry to the Palladium shopping centre (location of a former army barracks).

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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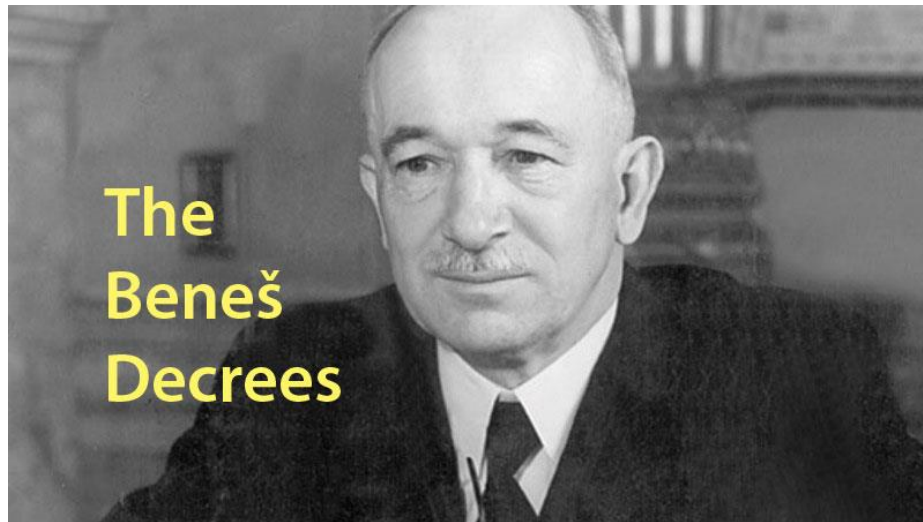
Prague Absinthe

Prague has a reputation for many things and one of them is Absinthe. Commonly misunderstood, on this post I'll tell you what to expect, what to look for, how to drink it and I'll debunk 8 myths about Prague Absinthe. [Read more....](#)



1948 Communist Coup

To get an understanding of why Czechoslovakia was under communist control for more than 4 decades you need some background info stretching back to the First World War. This post explains how it all happened. [Read more....](#)



The Beneš Decrees

Czech had been occupied in a war for 6 years. When they finally got liberated the first thing they did was to arrange for 3 million people to be deported. These were Czech citizens but in the previous census said their nationality was German or Hungarian. Unreasonable? How might that apply to Ukraine? [Read more....](#)



Hanavsky Pavilion

If you are looking for a place to go to get scenic views plus nice food in an historic location then Hanavsky Pavilion is a place you should visit. I'll explain how this building was initially constructed in a completely different location and then moved here. [Read more...](#)

Blast from the Past (Updated Old Content)

our number	Czech number	size inches	date of writing	Place from which the Scroll came	
1052 398	32 190	19 1/2 20 x 85 cm	1890	BRUNN - BRNO.	
band			condition of parchment		
good			NOT BAD		
rollers			condition of writing		
Broken			The PARASHAN 1717N is Bad Rub off in a lot of places, A lot of column are perfect.		
other physical features					
good	minor repair needed	much repair needed X	some columns usable	wholly spoiled	examiner AKIB

During a trip to London I managed to visit the Memorial Scrolls Trust Museum and was given the original 1964 assessment of the condition of Torah scroll #1052. I also updated the link to the site that shows the process of making the mantle/cover. [Read more....](#)



Palladium Shopping Centre at Republic Square has become popular with its mid-range shops offer (tax-free for some), dedicated food floor (with a casino), multi-floor parking, food supermarket and various places to stop and get a snack of a coffee. I added this picture to the post. [Read more....](#)

Comment

Ukraine

More and more humanitarian aid and equipment for self-defence is moving through the country. Of all the things Putin thought about before he began this madness I'm sure raising the spectre of being ruled by a communist regime to a whole new generation probably was not one of them. Anybody can now see that his wish is to turn Ukraine into a place where there is no Democratic law and the judiciary does what the leader says. It's a place where your political opponents and intellectuals are imprisoned or executed after a show trial. It's a place like Russia and Belarus are today. I find myself feeling a great deal of pity for regular Russians not even trusted to see both sides of the story to make up their own mind. Sláva Ukrajině! Putin, Go Fu*k Yourself!

Spare Some Change

The huge reduction in tourism has meant that it seems like there are more homeless people begging on the streets. Their presence is often quite passive, people kneeling with a hat or coffee cup in front of them etc but more and more it's a direct in-your-face request for money. Even when it's clear that I'm working i.e. presenting a tour, when asked for money and I say no, I frequently have to go through a tirade of swearing and personal insults from this total stranger. I am a foreigner here and don't wish any trouble but as I remember Mike Tyson say "you can say whatever you want until you get punched in the mouth".

In The News

After almost exactly TWO YEARS, the government mandated that we can finally go into shops without having to wear a mask. There are still places like public transport and hospitals that require you wear one but as from March 14th it's a voluntary measure for most. I don't think we'll throw away those spare FFP2 masks just yet. Looking forward to hugging again!

By the end of March, the figures show that more than 300,000 Ukrainian refugees have entered Czech (based on cell phone data) and 230,000 had received temporary visas so it seems that many are passing through. For those that have chosen to stay the metrics show that although the highest numbers are staying in Prague and surrounding areas, it's clear that ALL Czech regions are involved.

Ex-Premier Andrej Babiš has been charged with fraud. This is a long running story where one of his companies allegedly did some financial jiggery-pokery to allow them to claim EU grants worth more than CZK50 Million towards the construction of a conference centre. The centrepiece of the project was a building shaped like a Stork's nest and the Czech translation "Čapí Hnízdo" has regularly been in the news. The criminal charge is bringing things to a head. Babiš is of the opinion that everything was legal and people don't want him to be President. I think he is half right!

The Czech Postal Service has been contacting all its package delivery customers asking them to check their paperwork. It's now 6 months since the VAT rules changed but many people that have stuff delivered from outside the EU have not declared a value so Czech Post cannot deliver it. Warehouses are filling up with knock-off goods from all over the world!

Trivia and Odd Statistics

The Czech monthly minimum wage got a 6.5% raise to CZK16,200. 2021 data showed that the national mortality rate was 20% above average.

When former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was born in Prague's 5th district of Smíchov in 1937 her given name was Marie. Her grandmother nicknamed her Madla after a character in a 1941 Czech film. Her mother also took to calling her Madlenka and this ultimately ended up with her being known as Madeleine.

The average Czech adult is projected to eat annually 260Kg of Dairy products, 95Kg of Fruit/Veg and 85Kg of Meat.

80% of Carp fish bred in the Czech Republic is exported.

The Czech lower house of Parliament has 200 elected officials.

The Czech Army just bought 950 MINIMI light machine guns from a Belgian manufacturer. In the US these are called the M249 SAW.

2022 will be the last year that tourists can hire a horse-drawn carriage from the Old Town Square.

The bells that sound in the clock tower of the Loreto can be controlled either by a metal bar with pegs in the desired position or by using a keyboard.

Czech is aiming to build, on average, 50Km of new motorways per year over the next 4 years. The Prague ring road has priority.

30 new microbreweries were established around the country in the last year bring the total to almost 500 nationally.

Seven years after beginning the work, the entire 61 Prague metro station network is now covered by mobile phone cellular signal.

Walking Tours

Ahhhh! April. Every guide in the city will tell you that the official beginning of the summer season in Prague brings both optimism and the chance of sunburn. By optimism I mean the almost-certainty of being able to wear shorts and of course the financial optimism after a couple of slow winter months. It's great to sit outside a pub in a garden or courtyard but please, slip on that hat and slap on that cream because you will catch the sun. Likewise on the tours expect that I'll be drinking at least 0.75 Litres during a 2.5 hour tour so you should be drinking at least 0.5 Litres to make sure that you don't dry out. Unfortunately that's water, not beer!

Not wanting to put too much faith in advance bookings (got caught out big time by Covid cancellations in 2020) and I'm aware of the Ukraine situation but, bookings are coming through for both my regular tours and private tours. Strangely, two private tour bookings are taking advantage of my knowledge about the video filming locations for the pop group INXS.

Review

The review from Mary is an example of some back and forth with the client to establish what they might like to see and then being flexible on the day with a private tour that's also a relaxing exploration of the city.



Mary S wrote a review Yesterday
3 contributions



Excellent afternoon tour with Jason!

We're so glad we booked Jason for our tour of Prague! It was an excellent experience.

My husband and I had limited time in Prague, so we booked a private afternoon tour with Jason to get the most out of our visit. It was a very enjoyable and informative afternoon. Jason is very knowledgeable of Prague history, architecture, and the important sites. He is also personable and fun to listen to, so it made for a wonderful afternoon.

Jason was also very professional and prompt in his communication when I was initially inquiring about arranging a tour. He made sure we saw all the things we wanted to see, and he thoughtfully gave us ideas for spending our remaining time in Prague.

If we are lucky enough to visit Prague again, I would certainly book a tour with Jason again. I highly recommend him!

Read less ▲

Date of experience: November 2021

Gift Vouchers

Read about the Gift Voucher system on the [Gift Voucher page](#). You can buy individual tours as a gift for somebody and by contacting me the recipient of the gift will have options to swap tours or use the credit to upgrade to a private tour etc. Vouchers are valid for 1 year.

Tours and Card Payment

For any Private Tours or for any Scheduled Tours booked directly through a tour calendar, clients can pay the full cost of a tour in advance by card payment with the understanding that refunds are maximum 96% (cost of tour minus any card transaction fee which is out of my control). In this case you first receive a payment request which has to be completed within 48 hours. Then you receive the booking confirmation.

Tours and Cash Payment

If you prefer to pay for a tour either scheduled or private in cash then you need to contact me. We will agree the tour details and I will quote a price in CZK and your own currency equivalent. You will then receive the booking confirmation and payment is made on the tour day at the agreed amount so in this case there is no advance payment and cancellation is free.

Other Tours:

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

[City Walking Tour](#) is running normally.

[World War Two](#) is running normally.

[Architecture Tour](#) is running normally.

[Czech Food and Beer Tasting](#) is suspended due to restaurant/bar closures. Option of food/drink is now only on Private Tours.

[Christmas Markets](#) has restrictions: "tour-only" in 2022 with time for people to buy food/drink as required.



Activity Spotlight! – Bike Hire and Trip Plan



Hiring a bike in Prague and Planning a Route

April has arrived. It's time to be thinking about getting out and stretching those legs so what better than a bike trip.






I'm not suggesting that you take your chances with our traffic on regular roads. Instead this is a post which explains how we planned a half-day bike ride, what bikes we hired and what to expect from our example route.

It's very pleasant to ride in April so this post has a guide to our own trip on the A1 and A2 bike routes, some suggestions for places to stop, what public transport you can access and a link to a planner so you can play around with a route to find distances and approximate times.

Check the post about [Prague Bike Hire](#)

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, read 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.

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CALL/SMS/WHATSAPP: +420 603 187856

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/livingpragueguide/>