

Livingprague Newsletter

May 2023



SPRING IN THE FRANCISCAN GARDEN BUT NOT YET WARM

In the May newsletter we'll compare the two main Prague City Tourist Cards, we'll take a look at a social enterprise called Bistro Strecha, I'll tell you about a popular Czech-style cafe with a dozen locations in the city and you'll find out what to expect from the Boat Hotel Matylda in the New Town.

The Activity Spotlight is a look at what to expect from the Charles Bridge Portrait Artists, prices and tips on getting a good portrait. Blast from the Past includes a huge discount for people aged 70 or over at Prague Castle and a new URL link to book tickets online for the Klementinum.

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 New Content

City Card Comparison

Bistro Strecha

Ovocny Svetozor

Boat Hotel Matylda

Blast from the Past

Exploring Prague Over 60

Klementinum

Comment

Blaringly Obvious

Where is Everybody

In The News

Trivia and Odd Statistics

Walking Tours

Activity Spotlight!

Charles Bridge Portrait Artists

Social/Surveys/Contact

Featured New Content



Cool Pass or Prague Visitor Pass

The two main Prague City Tourist Cards seem to be offering much the same thing so I spent time breaking them down into an easy to read comparison so you know which is best for you. [Read more....](#)



Bistro Strecha

Bistro Strecha in the New Town looks like a regular pub/restaurant but it's part of a social network. Not that social network, I mean a real city network of places that are helping local Czechs get back on their feet after bad times. Have a nice lunch and Pay it Forward. [Read more....](#)



Ovocný Světozor

We don't call it Cafe Ovocný Světozor. It's just known as Ovocný Světozor but for residents in Prague in one form or another it's been one of the most popular cafes to go to since the 1970s. Snacks, cakes, coffee, pancakes, open sandwiches and ice-cream, you'll find something here. [Read more....](#)



Boat Hotel Matylda and Klotylda

There are many hotels in Prague and even a few boat hotels but for me the Boat Hotel Matylda is the best of the lot both for the quality of accommodation and also the location. Something to tell your friends about for years to come. [Read more...](#)

Blast from the Past (Updated Old Content)



Prague Castle tried to sneak one under the radar because only the Czech website says that if you are 70 or over and show your passport at the Prague Castle ticket office, you get FREE entry to the historic buildings. Post updated with this nice discount. [Read more....](#)



The Klementinum in Prague did some major work on their ticketing system which ended up killing their old website and the new ticket operator apparently does not have the rights to forward the old domain to the new website. At least I could update my post to show the new info and how to book tickets here online. [Read more....](#)

Comment

Blaringly Obvious

Yes, it's another of my frequent rants about how the city still allows huge groups of tourists to be shown around the city blocking pavements and doorways and generally pi**ing off the locals but my own personal gripe is not the size, it's that it forces the guide to use electronic methods to amplify their voice. This could be the whisper system popular on large groups but more and more it's just a bog-standard loudspeaker blaring out all over the place. Is this really what the city wants? I've got no problem with the "Free" tour operators but in general, tour companies are just increasing their profit by forcing their guides to take larger and larger groups that impact on the city. Me being able to say "Excuse me can we pass?" in 5 different languages helps but it does not solve the problem.

Where is Everybody

I don't live in the centre of the city so when I'm working I drive to the edge of Prague where I use the Park and Ride system which connects to the metro. Before the Pandemic if I got to the P&R after 8am I might get one of the last couple of places or more likely I would find the big red sign saying "full" and I'd have to find somewhere else to park. But since the Pandemic I find that I can just turn up at any time and not have to worry about it being full. I've become quite relaxed about it compared with 2019 even after the parking price went up. It has got me wondering what all the people who used to drive here are doing now. They can't all be working from home surely?

In The News

The permanent perimeter security at Prague Castle will finally be eased in favour of temporary and/or random security checks. It has been 4 years since the additional security was added after Prague Castle was found to be on a terrorist target list (that and every other tourist hot spot in the Lonely Planet guide).

The discussion on legalisation of the sale of cannabis is still in the news. Purely from a financial point of view the country has published numbers that indicate the State is looking to make in excess of CZK15 Billion per year in taxes. But for Joe Public it's more about the downgrading of the criminal status and being able to legally grow your own. CZK1 Billion has been allocated to drug addiction prevention and treatment.

It was largely expected that a "Windfall" tax was going to be applied to energy companies for the period 2023-25 but the government pulled a fast one and retroactively applied it to 2022 as well. A quick way of raising another CZK85 Billion for the budget.

Although military conscription has not been activated for the last 30 years it has come as a surprise to many people that legally the State can call-up any adult between 18 and 60. There are annual exercises that take place on a smaller scale and the "practice" call up of civilian doctors this year has definitely raised it's profile.

It was in the news that the Czech Postal Service is planning on closing 300 branches nationally. Legislation that required a post office to be available within 2km of any population more than 2500 has simply increased to distance of 3km. Closing 300 post offices also makes 1000 staff redundant and saves the post office approximately CZK700 Million per year.

Trivia and Odd Statistics

Due to the spike in energy prices in 2022 it's projected that the price of many alcohol products will rise by up to 20% this year.

As of October 2022 the Czech State had issued 446,811 temporary visas to Ukrainian refugees.

In 2022 the Prague Transport Company donated 20 trams and 2 buses to the Ukrainian town called Khmelnytsky.

Since it became legal to do so in 2012 more than 5000 people in the Czech Republic have undergone gender reassignment.

A survey of 10,000 Czech homes in October 2022 found that one third were heating their home to 22 degrees celsius.

The new organ for the ST Vitus Cathedral cannot be installed yet because it's too heavy for the existing floor. It's expected that after the floor has been reinforced, visitors to the Cathedral can see the new organ from late 2023.

Zlín Zoo has the largest Jaguar breeding area in Europe.

During the Czech Presidency of the EU Council an inflatable copy of the John Lennon Wall measuring 35m by 5m was installed outside of the Paris Pantheon.

The Foreign Office Ministry of Culture operates 26 "Czech Centres" in 24 countries around the world.

By November 1st 2022 approximately 600,000 people had elected to receive the 3rd Covid-19 booster (4th injection).

When it came to testing the load safety of the new Skalka ski-lift in Liberec the local council used a tried and tested method, 200 50L Beer kegs provided the weight.

Walking Tours

As I write this in the last week of April I find that I've not yet been able to pack away the winter stuff yet. This will change though and I'll be in shorts at some point in May. The English are back as I had three consecutive days in April with only UK clients. I'll be guiding a bigger group this month who want to use an architecture tour as an introduction to the city which should be interesting. May sees my birthday so one random tour will get a surprise. According to my booking system the most popular tour booked in the last month was.....Old Town and Jewish Quarter.

People might be interested to know that despite the Covid-19 pandemic and the high rates of inflation since then, my scheduled tour prices have stayed the same.

Review

Robyn just booked places on a regular small group tour but the confirmation gives you a lot of tips and access to information for how to make the most out of your trip combined with the actual tour which itself has loads of tips and advice. There's also a reminder 48 hours before the tour.



Fantastic Small Group Experience

Apr 2023 • Couples

Jason is the most organised guide we've met, providing lots of information leading up to the tour. The two and a half hour tour flew by and was just the right amount of time to see and absorb all of Jason's wealth of information. Jason keeps you engaged throughout the tour with his passion and knowledge of all aspects of this wonderful city, and uses humour and sensitivity throughout. The guaranteed small group is real value for money.

Thank you Jason for this exceptional experience and thank you for all the revealed secrets and tips.
Robyn and Martin



[Review of: Small Group Prague Old Town and Jewish Quarter Walking Tour](#)

Written April 14, 2023

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.

Tours:

[Private Tours](#) are arranged as required.

[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. The option of food/drink is now only on Private Tours.

[Christmas Markets](#) has restrictions: "tour-only" in 2023 with time for people to buy food/drink as required.



Activity Spotlight! – Charles Bridge Portrait Artists



Activity and Souvenir all at the same time






All over the world you'll find immensely talented artists plying their trade at tourism hot spots and Prague is no exception.

On this post you'll learn some tips on how to find the right artist for you based on the kind of portraits that they draw, how much it's going to cost and what you can do to get a portrait even if you haven't got time to sit down for 30 minutes on the Charles Bridge.

Check the post about [the Charles Bridge Portrait Artists](#)

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.

EMAIL: fun@livingprague.com

CALL/SMS/WHATSAPP: +420 603 187856

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