

Livingprague Newsletter

November 2023



The Smetana Hall at the Municipal House

In the November newsletter we'll take a look at what we call the Darth Vader Statue I'll tell you about the area of the Old Town called Ovocny Trh. There's a post about the Bloomest self-service laundry. Finally, I published a supporting video for people who want to explore the Church of Our Lady Victorious in the Lesser Town.

The Activity Spotlight is a look at exploring the Mission Impossible (1996) filming locations. Blast from the Past includes another location for a "Havel's Place" in the city and some more info on farmers markets that may be celebrating ST Martin's festival.

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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Attraction – Darth Vader Statue

There's a very historic statue in Prague that people may think looks a lot like Darth Vader from Star Wars. The fact that he was a knight who wore black armour meant he was called the Iron Knight. Now add a jilted lover, at least two suicides, a murder and a ghost and you have the makings of one of Prague's legends. [Read more....](#)



Prague Streets – Ovocný Trh

Formerly the fruit market in the city Ovocný Trh is now a fairly quiet square with a couple of restaurants and bars but it has some unusual access ways if you are moving between the Old and New Towns. Plus you get a great view of the Estates Theatre. [Read more....](#)



Services – Bloomest Laundry

This is the post to support last month's video. If you are looking to do some self-service laundry during your visit then I recommend one called Bloomest on the border of the Old Town and Josefov.

Description, pricing and tips plus a walk-through video. [Read more....](#)



Video – Infant Jesus of Prague

Last month I published a post about how to explore the Church of Our Lady Victorious in Prague's Lesser Town, where the Infant Jesus is to be found, the museum and shop for buying souvenirs. This month I published the supporting video. [See more](#)

Blast from the Past (Updated Old Content)



There are now two “Havel’s Places” in Prague, the original one is in the Lesser Town but a new one has been installed on the Old Town side so I added a picture and location to the post. [Read more....](#)



Next week will begin a period of time usually covering two weekends but primarily on November 11th when we celebrate ST Martin’s Festival. That normally means eating a goose and drinking wine but a special beer is often brewed. We look to see if ST Martin arrives on a white horse. I added a link to local farmers markets which will be marking the festival. [Read more....](#)

Comment

Just Reward

The Independence Day on October 28th saw our new President Petr Pavel handing out awards. It was refreshing to see that many of the 62 people being honoured largely received recognition for their work in developing democracy, humanity and human rights. Not that the last president did not recognise these efforts but certainly he did not go out of his way to highlight them. This is just reinforcing my belief that although we have an ex-army general as President, we are returning to the less polarised Havel era where people are being recognised, sometimes “in Memoriam” for their work instead of using this process for the petty retributions seen in the last 10 years.

Out on the Town

Even though I live just to the south of the city I decided to book an Old Town Airbnb for one night. After checking in, my wife and I spent a couple of hours in the Museum of Decorative Arts followed by coffee and cake then a pleasant walk through the city, dinner and margaritas at La Casa Blu, concert at the O2. Finally back to the apartment via a Barracuda and Daiquiri at Buggy's cocktail bar and a breakfast of Eggs Benedict at the beautiful Municipal House in the morning. Probably not everybody's itinerary but just an example of how a local may spend some free time in the city.

In The News

The inventory list of weapons exported to Ukraine since February 2022 was published last month. It showed that Czech had sent 89 tanks, 226 armoured vehicles, 33 Salvo rocket launcher systems with 60,000 rockets, 39 Howitzers, 1.5 million pieces of ammunition and 900 metres of bridging equipment. All in all, about CZK40 Billion worth of which a quarter came from the government i.e. public coffers. The public feeling? Putin, Go F*ck Yourself!

The government is planning to remove the index-linking between pensions and inflation which currently is enshrined in law. The minority political parties are already positioning for a fight and even the newly elected President has not said that he would sign it into law even if it gets through parliament. There'll be some heated discussion.

From January 2024, somebody who has a conviction for driving offences in Czechia may have to undergo a 20 hour “therapy” course. The aim is to help these troubled souls to understand that they are sharing the road with many other people and we're all doing our best to get from A to B. So brake-check bad, leaving space good!

Czechia has asked the European Court of Justice to rule under what circumstances the Police can take DNA samples. For the past 20 years the Police here have been able to take DNA from a suspect even if there is no conviction and Czech law does not stipulate for how long a DNA sample can be kept.

The Car Importers Association reported an increase in sales in the first three quarters of 2023 of 42% for Hybrid and 62% for electric vehicles compared with 2022 but the majority of owners still charge their cars overnight at home due to the lack of fast-charging facilities in Czechia.

Trivia and Odd Statistics

Czechs drink an average of 129 litres of beer per capita per annum (in 2008 it was 160 litres).

October marked 25 years since the Czech Republic won the Gold Medal in Ice Hockey at the Nagano Olympics.

10% of Czech families have 3 or more children.

Between October 4th and October 20th, Czech Police at the Czech/Slovak border checked 110,000 people, turned back 745 illegal immigrants and detained 32 people smugglers.

There were 127 cases of Whooping Cough in Czechia so far in 2023.

Czechia has a Gas storage capacity of 3.46 Billion cubic metres.

A Tax being considered on sugary drinks, juices and energy drinks would raise CZK3 Billion per year.

Czech honey production in 2023 is expected to be 15% (2000 tonnes) less than 2022.

The average price per square metre for an apartment in Czechia is CZK90,900.

Czech beach volleyball players Ondřej Perušič and David Schweiner won the World Beach Volleyball Championships in Tlaxcala, Mexico.

Czechia had 498 cases of Tuberculosis recorded in 2022.

Parents with children born from January 1st 2024 will get an extra CZK50,000 added to the parental allowance bringing it to CZK350,000.

Former Czech tennis player Ivan Lendl sold his collection of Alfons Mucha works to an investment company for almost CZK300 Million.

The film "Brothers" will be the Czech entry for the 2024 Academy Awards Foreign Film category.

Walking Tours

I actually look forward to November for two main reasons. First is the slow-down in pace as fewer people are travelling in the first three weeks so I get some reading time and the chance to catch up with fellow guides. The other reason is clothing i.e I don't have to dress for 5 degrees in the morning and 20 degrees in the afternoon which is a typical October. Pretty much you can expect a top temp of 10-12 degrees Celsius with cold mornings and a chance of snow which brings a bit of magic when the Christmas Markets open in the last week of the month.

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

“Marty” had booked a 6 hour block of time so that's usually the Old Town and Jewish Quarter to begin, then lunch, then the City Walking Tour to finish. Along the way we adapted the route as required and in the lunch break they plugged into my knowledge of the city for some specific interests.



Livingprague Tours are great!

Sep 2023 • Couples

Jason gave us a fantastic tour of his adopted hometown of Prague. He was very entertaining and really gave us a great understanding of the history and people of this beautiful city. At lunch we talked about the food scene in Prague and he shared his recommendations, which we enjoyed greatly. Jason paced the tour to match our group's interests and the weather (it was sunny and very warm). I strongly recommend Jason if you're visiting Prague.



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

Written October 16, 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.

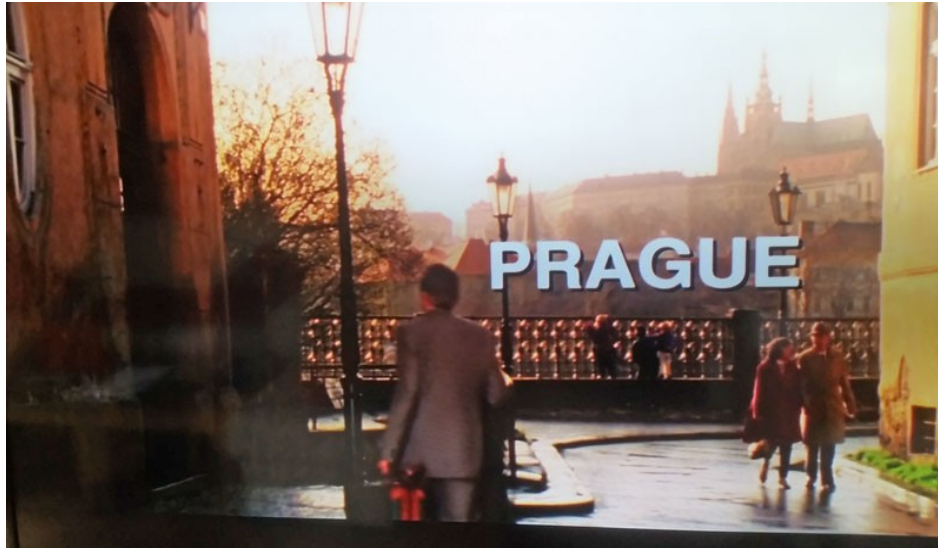
[Architecture Tour](#) is running normally.

[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! – Exploring the Mission Impossible (1996) Filming Locations



Mission Impossible (1996)






Themed visits to Prague are becoming more popular. Sometimes you can explore a city and also have some fun finding locations for films and music videos shot here.

The original Tom Cruise Mission Impossible from 1996 is a popular film to explore as it takes you to places in the Old Town, New Town, Lesser Town and Kampa (later they will return and use Prague Castle in Mission Impossible IV Ghost Protocol for the Kremlin internal scenes). I've put a lot of "then and now" pictures with location info for people who want to get out and about looking for specific places. I warn you now, Mission Impossible has some terrific scene editing so it's often entertaining to find what they had to add to the city. Must be a fascinating job looking for filming locations.

Check the post about the [Mission Impossible \(1996\) Filming Locations](#)

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/>