

Livingprague Newsletter

October 2020



I WAS MOTIVATED TO CLIMB UP TO A RESTAURANT

For the October Newsletter as well as the most recent Coronavirus status I've included an older post about our early season wine and also how one of our popular statues has changed over the years. I'll explain why you might like to visit the Bohemian Switzerland National Park. I'll give you some tips and tricks for dealing with Charles Bridge Portrait Artists. Plus there's a post about how a photo took me on another journey to learn about the city.

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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Burčák Early Wine

October will be the last month of the year to try some early wine. Not so strong, very yeasty and fairly sweet. Not one for the wine buff and remember not to close the cap on the bottle too tight or it'll explode. Tips and tricks to get the good stuff. [Read more....](#)



Bohemian Switzerland

This National Park straddling the border with Germany in the north-west of the country can be explored on your own or as an organised tour. Famous rock formations, climbing options, hiking trails, boat trips in the gorge and the location of an unusual world record. [Read more....](#)



The Jan Nepomuk Statue

Thousands of people every year will stop to touch the plaques on the Jan Nepomuk statue on Charles Bridge. Learn more about the man, why he died, see how the statue has changed over the last 150 years and make a wish on a special cross. [Read more....](#)



Story of a Photograph

“You must know a lot about the city!” is a frequent phrase that I hear on my walking tours but I always tell people that I continue to learn about Prague. Every now and again a random event will both increase my knowledge and provide a surprise. This post documents one of those times. [Read more...](#)

Comment

Coronavirus Life

Well, COVID19 came closer to us than ever before. My daughter started at a new school on Tuesday September 1st and although they sit in regular class sizes, whilst in the school they have to wear a mask. By Thursday the 3rd we got the email that somebody in her class had tested positive. Full marks to the system though. She had to self-isolate and by 10am the following morning we were given the code for a test appointment by the Hygienic Office. One after 3 days and a second a week later. Both negative fortunately. The problem seems to be with the teachers because of 42 teachers in the school already 12 are either in quarantine or isolation.

With the number of daily infections rising from 200-300 last month up to 2000+ this month, the country has increased it's protection level so it's back to wearing masks inside buildings but it's nowhere near the lockdown we had in March. The Czech Foreign Office is now publishing restrictions and guidelines at <https://www.mvcr.cz/mvcren/article/coronavirus-information-of-moi.aspx>.

The Health Minister resigned last week and was replaced by an epidemiologist. Looks great on paper but personally I think a good manager should be in overall charge of health. I'm not expecting an epidemiologist to be getting involved in budgets and all the day-to-day health service issues so I wonder who will do that part. Seems to me like a "we want you in the tent pi**ing out" sort of political move.

In The News

The Jindrich Chalupecky prize is awarded to a visual artist aged under 35. However this year there will not be an overall winner. The finalists agreed that they were against the concept of artistic competition and hoped all would benefit from the publicity.

The Czech government reacted vocally when the Belarus President Lukashenko accused Czechs of organising protests in his country. Troops in armoured vans, violence against protestors, secret police lifting political opponents off the street. Sound like 1950s Prague.

A guy walking his dog in a west-Bohemian forest stumbled across some coins dug out of the ground by wild pigs. It turned out to be hundreds of gold and silver coins dating back to 1300.

In mid-March when Covid-19 cases were at 1000+ per day we went into quarantine i.e. everything shut except chemists and supermarkets. In late September we are at nearly 3000 cases per day yet, no big response. Why? It's the economy stupid!!

Our Premier Babiš had some more legal difficulties. Having not quite separated himself from various companies he was accused even by the EU Commission of being in a conflict of interest. A lower Regional Court found he was not in a conflict of interest. The Supreme State Attorney said that judgement was incorrect, but failed to issue his own judgement on the matter.

The government continues to argue about income tax levels. It's accepted that the rate is based on the % of a person's gross annual salary plus whatever they had to pay in health insurance and pension. There's a move to abolish that method and make the income tax rate flat at 15%. It where the money will come from to support that new rate that they are arguing about.

Trivia and Odd Statistics

Per Capita, Czechs waste 4.5Kg of food per year but if you looked only at cities that figure rises to 37.4Kg heading to landfill.

15 Czech Border Collie dogs competed in the 2020 European Sheep Herding Championship.

In July 2020 there were 135 accidents on Czech Railways property, 28 people died and 55 were injured.

The Czech Fire Service sent 37 search and rescue experts to Beirut following the explosion.

Tick-borne encephalitis (Lyme disease) cases in 2020 rose by 25% (366) over the same period last year (297). 29% of Czechs are vaccinated against Lyme disease.

July 2020 was the coldest since 2012 with a top temperature 26.8 Celsius.

Police detained 5,677 illegal immigrants in 2020 (mostly Ukrainian and Vietnamese) which was 685 more than the same period in 2019.

South African MotoGP rider Brad Binder won the Czech Grand Prix in Brno covering 22 laps in 41 minutes and 38 seconds.

The metro station at Karlovo Náměstí (Charles Square) will have the deepest lift shaft on the network at 40 metres when finished.

It's official, tour guides in the country lost 90% of their work in the spring and summer of 2020. For me personally it was more like 98%.

The number of foreigners in the country with temporary or permanent residence status is 595,881, up 5.1% on last year.

Since 2018 the number of Czech people offering foster care services to homeless or orphaned children dropped by 66%.

Walking Tours

September 28th was a Bank Holiday so I took the day off.... like almost every other day since mid-March...ha! ha!.. Again, zero tours in the last month but you do get some silver linings on those black clouds. For example, after I sent the September Newsletter I got a couple of replies wishing me well and stressing that as soon as this settles down they'll certainly be hiring my services. Another client had to cancel a November booking but did not want a refund. They just wanted a promo code so they could rebook in 2021. As it was a booking for five people I replied that as an alternative to using the code I'd just reserve the time and set it up as a private tour for no extra charge.

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

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

Refunds are 96% (cost of tour minus any card transaction fee which is out of my control). Currently all scheduled tours are running normally. All clients are required to have a face covering available. I provide hand sanitiser.

The Scheduled Tours are below:

[Old Town and Jewish Quarter](#)

[City Walking Tour](#)

[World War Two](#)

[Architecture Tour](#)

[Czech Food and Beer Tasting](#)

[Christmas Markets](#)



Activity Spotlight!








October is usually the last warm month or at least sunny as the mornings will definitely get chilly. So as we come to the end of the regular summer season it will be the last time that you can see the Charles Bridge Portrait Artists. It's not the most strenuous activity in the city i.e. sitting down having your picture drawn but it's certainly a souvenir of a visit to Prague. Whether you want a fun caricature or a more carefully drawn portrait you'll be able to browse the different styles of the dozen or so options on the bridge and choose the one that's right for you.

On this post you'll get tips on how best to choose an artist, options for materials that he will use and what you can pay extra for. Plus tips on pricing and options for next-day collection.

Check out 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 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. I reply within 24 hours.

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

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

CALL/SMS/WHATSAPP: +420 603 187856

EMAIL: fun@livingprague.com