

# Livingprague Newsletter

May 2021

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ST VITUS GREAT SOUTH TOWER

For the May Newsletter as well as the most recent Coronavirus status, for my featured content I've included some little secrets about the Jan Hus Monument, an inspirational story about kids in the WW2 Terezin Ghetto who published their own magazines, the story of a Soviet soldier killed after Germany surrendered in WW2 and a look at why Herna Bars are going out of business in Prague. The Activity Spotlight is the Prague O2 Arena.

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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# Featured Content

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## Jan Hus Monument

You can't miss it on the Old Town Square but you should learn why it's here and how to interpret the figures on the Jan Hus Monument. Plus a little secret from the past that other guides won't tell you about. [Read more....](#)



## The Terezin Ghetto Editors

Kids ripped from their homes and sent to the Jewish internment camp at Terezin. The future did not bode well but despite their best attempts, it seems that even the toughest of regimes has trouble holding down the spirit of human creativity. [Read more....](#)



## Ivan Gončarenko

Killed on what was technically the day AFTER the German surrender in World War Two. The fascinating story of how communists twisted the circumstances of Ivan Gončarenko's death into an alternate history. [Read more....](#)



## Bye Bye Herna Bars

Once one of the most popular types of bar in the city for drinking and playing slot machines 24 hours a day in an unhealthy atmosphere. Now a victim of those very same things it looks like we'll be saying goodbye to Herna Bars. [Read more...](#)

# Comment

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## Coronavirus Life

Goodbye Mr Blatny and hello Mr Arenberger (that's the fourth Health Minister since a year ago). The vaccination process overall is frustratingly slow but there's a rumour that the 51-55 age group should at least be able to register for a jab in the next two weeks. Even though the heavy restrictions were lifted and pubs could at least serve outdoors the weather in mid-April was still snowing. Statistics show that this April has been one of the coldest on record and the coldest since 1941.

The Russian "Sputnik 5" vaccine looks to be off the table after Slovakia tested some doses and found they were different to those sent for European Medical Agency approval. And now politically there's a problem with Russia because a couple of GRU (Russian Military Intelligence) operatives have been linked to the deaths of two Czechs in an explosion in 2014.

If face protection is required then the current recommendations are that OUTSIDE an adult can wear a normal N95 mask however if it's INSIDE an adult must wear an FFP2 or a KN95 mask (in the USA look for NIOSH approved suppliers) which are specifically anti-particle respirators. Kids can wear an N95 anywhere because the respirators would not fit properly. I can tell you that most people are now using FFP2 inside and out.

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

# In The News

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**Czech took another look at the ban on same-sex adoption but again voted to leave the ban in place. It was tested when a same-sex couple living in the USA, one of whom was Czech, wanted to adopt a Czech child.**

The upper house of parliament voted down a proposed law which would have seen Czech supermarkets or any food shops over 400 square metres having to stock 55% of national produce. The parliament recognised that Czech had to increase self-sufficiency in some areas but that quotas were not the solution.

**Figures for 2021 Q1 showed that sales of land-skiing equipment rose almost 400%. This was explained because of the long-term closure of alpine resorts and ski runs so people took to the lower slopes and fields where there were no restrictions.**

The Premier bowed to the wishes of the President and removed his Health and Foreign Ministers. The Health Minister was replaced without difficulty but the guy selected for the Foreign Minister post turned it down. So for a few days we had a guy who was a vice-Premier, Interior Minister and Foreign Minister at the same time.

**Oh Dear! Another spat with Russia. Already the trust was low when doses of the Sputnik 5 Covid19 vaccine given to Slovakia were found to be different to the one being tested by the EU and then Russia wanted it all sent back. Now there's a connection between two GRU officers who used the Novichok poison in the UK and an arms depot explosion which killed to Czechs in 2014. Looks like it will just be the ambassador and a cleaning lady left at their respective embassies.**

# Trivia and Odd Statistics

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**The average cost of renting a 2 bedroom apartment in Prague fell by almost 12% since March 2020.**

Czech company GZ Media is the number one producer of vinyl records in the world.

**Czech vehicle producer Skoda delivered 1.004 Million cars in 2020, down 20% on 2019.**

99,329 self-employed people terminated their business licence in the last calendar year.

**IKEA in Czech posted sales of CZK10.3 Billion between September 2019 and August 2020 only 2% down on the previous year.**

Inflation in Czech has reached 3.2%, the highest for 8 years and was largely driven by increases in food and housing prices.

**In 2020 Czech banks gave a record-breaking CZK250 Billion in mortgage loans which was a 38% increase on the previous year.**

441,000 people in the Czech Republic are aged 80 or over.

**The Czech Republic had 130 murders in 2020, down 13 on 2019.**

Approximately 1200 Czech children each year become residents of an orphanage instead of going into foster care.

**The sugar cube was invented in the present day Czech Republic.**

Prague International Airport handled 3.66 Million passengers in 2020, a 79% reduction on 2019.

**The number of non-Czech workers employed in the country increased by 15% over the last 10 years to 407,000.**

Reported crime figures in 2020 were down 16.9% on 2019.

# Walking Tours

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This month I spent time mostly on administration tasks. Anybody that manages a booking system knows that little tweaks and changes are always being made. For me I added more pictures that you will see in the booking confirmation. I've started another project which should be ready to share with you in the July newsletter.

## Note:

- 1) Weekday scheduled tours will always show as available in the booking system.
- 2) Any pre-bookings made for scheduled or private tours and paid for in advance will be subject to the normal cancellation/refund process at <https://www.livingpraguetours.com/faqs/#refund>
- 3) Any pre-bookings for payment in cash on arrival are subject to local city rules in place on the day of the tour. I will contact you as necessary.
- 4) If the number of people on a tour exceeds the local restrictions in place on the day then the first people to book places get priority. Others will be offered an alternate tour date/time and/or refund.
- 5) For private tours I'm accepting bookings and confirming date/times but payment is not required until 7 days before the tour.

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:

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

[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](#) is running normally

[Architecture Tour](#) is running normally

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

[Christmas Markets](#) is running as "tour-only" in 2021



# Activity Spotlight! – Prague O2 Arena

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The multi-functional Prague O2 Arena

Although not specifically an activity in itself, the Prague O2 Arena in the 9<sup>th</sup> district hosts a variety of things to do during the year. In fact I've known several people come here to Prague on a short break purely because they had concert tickets.

It's better known for being the home arena for Prague's Sparta Ice-Hockey club but on the weeks between games and off-season the Prague O2 Arena becomes the largest indoor venue for concerts and sports events.

On this post I'll give you some Tips and Tricks for getting there, how to pick good seats and picking up tickets at the O2 Arena and also in advance in the city centre.






Check the post about the [Prague O2 Arena](#)



# Being Social

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**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><a href="#"><u>FACEBOOK</u></a>: You can read posts, view short videos, like/share content, follow and message me.</p>
	<p><a href="#"><u>INSTAGRAM</u></a>: You can view pictures, like/share content and follow me.</p>
	<p><a href="#"><u>PINTEREST</u></a>: You can view specific genre pictures, save Pins to your boards and follow me.</p>
	<p><a href="#"><u>YOUTUBE</u></a>: You view full length videos, comment, like/share content and follow me.</p>
	<p><a href="#"><u>TRIP ADVISOR</u></a>: You can view tour pictures and leave a tour review for others.</p>

# Surveys – Help me improve!

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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!

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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](mailto:fun@livingprague.com)