

# Livingprague Newsletter

October 2022

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TOP OF THE OLD CASTLE STEPS – LESSER TOWN IS BEHIND ME

In the October newsletter I'll describe the classic Czech meal called Sekana, I'll describe an early evening visit to the Spot Cafe Lounge, we'll take a look at an unusual memorial plaque and I'll tell you about the history of Platnerska Street in the Old Town.

The Activity Spotlight is a look at a place where you learn to throw axes at a target. Blast from the Past includes what to expect when booking places with an official Prague Castle guide and this year's dates for the October Signal Light Festival which will be the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this 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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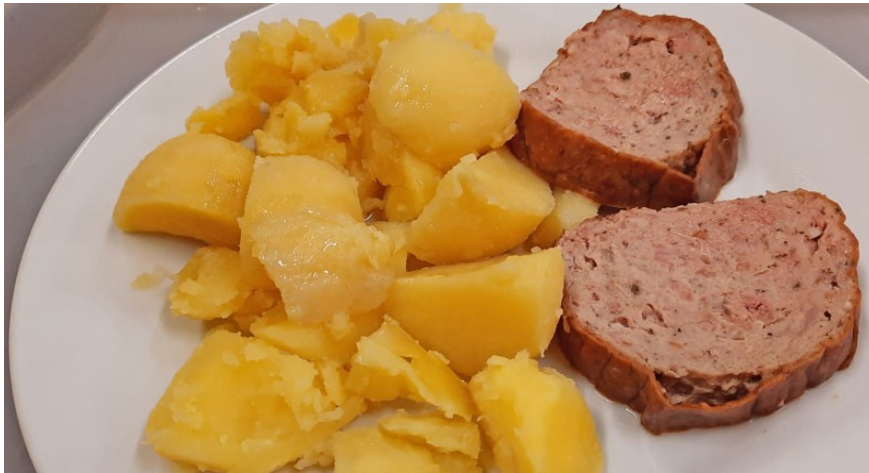
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# Featured New Content

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## Czech Food - Sekana

One of the classic Czech meals is Sekana which is basically meat loaf but there are different ways to order it depending on whether you are in a restaurant or a pub. [Read more....](#)



## The Spot Cafe Lounge

Based on the recommendation of a friend, my wife and I paid an early evening visit to the newly opened Spot Cafe Lounge and here I'll describe the experience about the location, decor and what we ordered from the menu. [Read more....](#)



### Platnerska Street

If you are walking from the Old Town Square to the Charles Bridge then you may walk down this street. If you are looking for the City Library and the Book Tunnel then you'll be in this street so it's worth knowing historically how it has changed and the business that used to go on here. [Read more....](#)



### Josef Škalda Memorial Plaque

One of thousands of memorial plaques to the events of World War Two relates to Josef Skalda. A word on the plaque tells you how he was killed but just as interesting is why he was arrested and where he eventually died. [Read more...](#)

# Blast from the Past (Updated Old Content)

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You can explore Prague Castle in several different ways either on organised tours or self-guiding. I updated the Prague Castle Tours post (Licenced Guides section) with how it works if you book a tour with an official Castle guide i.e. where you get your tickets and meeting point etc. [Read more....](#)



This year is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Signal Light Festival. I updated the post with this picture, 2022 dates and webpage so you can download the festival app plus what to expect. [Read more....](#)

# Comment

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## Loud and Clear

As tourists begin travelling again some “free” walking tour companies are looking to create larger and larger groups for their guides to make more money. Basically when a tour company is expecting it's guide to communicate with 30+ people the guide's voice must be exceptionally robust or else their voice has to be enhanced by using a microphone/speaker. Of course there are systems which allow the guide to communicate almost silently but it's expensive. The cheaper option is just to blast sound out of a speaker strapped to their chest. I have never used and will never use these enhancement systems and will continue to use my natural voice with small groups that don't block the city.

## Money, Money

Recent Local and Senate elections again highlighted two issues. Firstly that a small proportion of incumbent candidates are so good they they win outright in the first round of voting. But for those who expect to be in a second round run-off how do you decide between them. Many people are just voted for Independent candidates who statistically won the majority of the vote. But two of the centre-right parties have been blatantly offering money in one form or another to various age groups. Are voters so naive that future monetary policy and political direction can be bought so easily. Shockingly for some regions it looks like the answer is yes.

# In The News

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**Lost in the uproar over Russia's invasion of Ukraine and war crimes was the fact that Russia had a seat on the United Nations Human Rights Commission. Old news now but I thought I'd remind you that Russia was stripped of that seat and it was given to the Czech Republic until the end of the term in 2024.**

A query about how Ukrainian refugees were being counted revealed that the official number of visas issued (more than 417,000) was only for adults to be able to live and work for one year in the Czech Republic. Children under 15 do not require a visa so are not included in the official statistics. As the number of activated adult visas is around 107,000 and women/children make up the bulk of the refugees we can expect that number to at least double when children are counted.

**Czech State accounting showed for the first time the negative impact of Covid-19 on the country's finances and remarkably 2020 was not as bad as 2021. Over the two years an eye-watering CZK670 Billion in revenue was either not collected by the State due to Covid-19 tax legislation changes or was spent directly for health costs.**

Thoughts now turn to the Presidential election planned for January 2023. With the incumbent having served two full terms the public are getting a look at the people who want to take over as President. Again it looks like a crappy choice between the leader of a centre-right political party or a retired army general. If you are a betting person then neither will win outright in the first round but projected distributed votes from the other contenders is showing that the army general has a good chance of winning.

# Trivia and Odd Statistics

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**Permission to begin construction of the new Dvorecký Bridge across the river was officially given. It is expected to cost at least CZK1 Billion and will not be a road traffic bridge other than for Emergency Services. Trams, bikes and pedestrians can use it.**

The last “Witches Night” on April 30<sup>th</sup> 2022 saw 90 different fires get so out of control that the Fire Brigade had to be called.

**The Czech city of Brno donated two Trams and six Trolleybuses to the Ukraine city of Kharkiv to go towards the replenishment of their destroyed public transport infrastructure.**

In May 2022 approximately 74,000 Czech secondary school students (Grammar or High School) sat the official school leaving exam, the Maturita. But only 17% chose the option to be examined on their knowledge of Mathematics (83% chose English).

**There are approximately 10,000 fewer pigs in the country compared with 2021.**

With an average unemployment rate of 3.3% the Czech Republic has either had the lowest or second lowest rate in the EU during 2022.

**Meda Mládková, art collector and patron of the Kampa Modern Art Museum died this year aged 102.**

The “Reporters Without Borders” World Press Freedom Report ranked the Czech Republic as 20<sup>th</sup> which was an improvement from 2021 when they were 40<sup>th</sup>.

**The 38<sup>th</sup> survey of large animals in the Beskydy Mountains found the presence of Lynxes and Wolves but not Bears.**

The Czech language version of Wikipedia is 20 years old.

# Walking Tours

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I can say that the River Cruise business on the Danube and Rhine must have picked up because many of my clients in September had either enjoyed or were about to enjoy some late summer cruising. September always has lots of German schools sending their kids on cultural tours of the city and to be honest they don't look 100% interested. Time to pack away the summer stuff and on with jumpers and jackets with cold mornings giving way to warmer afternoons. The evenings cool down a lot now.

There will be less tour availability for the rest of 2022 as I'll be in the UK about a quarter of the available time and I'm generally blocking dates and times to allow for travelling. If you have not heard from me then you are not affected. Prospective clients should contact me to see what options or referrals may be available.

## Review

This was a couple on a private Old Town and Jewish Quarter tour who had booked Jewish Museum tickets for a certain dates and wanted to change the details so in this case we made a detour to the Jewish Information Centre as part of the tour. So when they finished their tour with me they could immediately start exploring the synagogues.



simcha wrote a review Sep 19  
📍 PA • 101 contributions • 21 helpful votes



### Wonderful tour with Jason Holt

Review of: **Small Group Prague Old Town and Jewish Quarter Walking Tour**

Jason guided my husband and myself for 4 hours in early Sept. I'd read glowing reviews and can add to them. Not only did he have fascinating info, but he helped me with ticketing at the Jewish Museum. I'd also read his comprehensive posts with varied and detailed info on Prague-- so helpful! Visitors can expect a terrific tour from Jason, a most helpful and friendly guide.

[Read less](#) ▲

**Date of experience:** September 2022

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## 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! – The House of Axes

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The House of Axes and a damn good score

Tucked away in a little place in the New Town called “Black Street” you’ll find a building where one of the entry boxes just has the name “AXES”.

Descending down stone steps into the old basement you find yourself in a cavern split into a places for sitting and drinking and places for throwing axes.

That’s right, you’ve got a 90 minute slot to learn how to throw axes at a wooden target following international rules so if you’ve done this in the USA or Canada it’s the same system.






Completely safe as long as you follow the rules and listen to the instructor plus it’s great fun once you learn how to throw properly. Now you just have to beat my score.....

Check the post about the [House of Axes](#).

# 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, read 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.

**EMAIL:** [fun@livingprague.com](mailto:fun@livingprague.com)

**CALL/SMS/WHATSAPP:** +420 603 187856

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