

Livingprague Newsletter

December 2022



OLD TOWN SQUARE CHRISTMAS MARKET

Happy Christmas. In the December newsletter I'll describe the classic Czech Goulash options, I'll tell you what to expect if you visit the city during the Prague Pride festival, we'll take a look at some of the filming locations for an Anastacia video and I'll do a brief bio of a Czech film director Miloš Forman including how he got his name.

The Activity Spotlight is a look at Mánes Exhibition Hall on the riverside, why you might like to visit and it's "political split". Blast from the Past includes an updated picture for the Cafe Fantova Kavarna post and updated information about the Prague Christmas Tree on the Old Town Square.

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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Czech Goulash

The NUMBER ONE item on any Czech food menu will be Goulash but there are three main types and several ways of presenting it in a restaurant so learn some tips on what to expect. [Read more....](#)



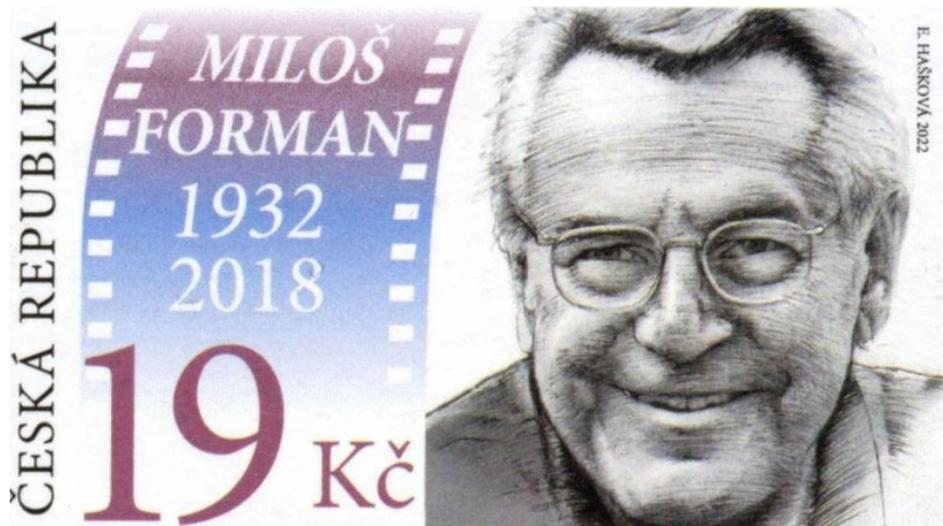
Prague and Anastacia

In 2012 Anastacia came to Prague to film a video for the hit single Pride (Deeper Love). This post is about the filming locations that they used in the city and you'll learn why this track was never included on any of her albums. [Read more....](#)



Festivals - Prague Pride

What started as a weekend event culminating in a parade of a couple of thousand people has grown into a whole-week event and the last parade had more than 60,000 festival attendees. Learn about what to expect in Prague Pride week. [Read more....](#)



Famous Czechs – Miloš Forman

Miloš Forman was already a successful film director in Czechoslovakia before having to emigrate to the USA post-1968. His future was not clear but then Kirk Douglas and his son Michael entered the picture and the rest is history. [Read more...](#)

Blast from the Past (Updated Old Content)



I was early for a meeting with clients booked on a World War Two walking tour so I took the opportunity for a coffee inside the Fantova Kavarna (normally I stay outside in the atrium). Lovely Art Nouveau décor and high ceilings. [Read more....](#)



Well it's that season of the year when Christmas trees will start appearing in squares all over the country and I have to update my "Prague Christmas Tree" post. This year the main tree on the Old Town Square was installed in the early hours of November 22nd. It's a Spruce, 58 years old and 25 metres tall. [Read more....](#)

Comment

Demographics

I'm not using extensive statistical resources here, only my own eyes. As I work in the city and I regularly use the Muzeum metro station at the top of Wenceslas Square I frequently pass a building used as a registration centre for Ukrainian refugees. I've watched the queue of people change demographically as the year has gone on. In the spring it was families with men included. By the late summer it was middle-aged women or young women with children and the queue was not quite so long any more. This month the queue grew and it's mostly older women i.e. 60+. Winter is coming and the broken energy infrastructure in the Ukraine will be a problem. Putin Go F*ck Yourself.

Privatisation Rules

30 years ago "Czechoslovakia" began the largest privatisation experiment since 1918. The plan was to sell shares in formerly state-owned companies to the general public in what was called "Voucher Privatisation". So the idea was that the public had a "say" in the running of the company but the reality was that some shareholders had more "say" than others. This resulted in an uneven allocation of assets and savvy businessmen took financial advantage. Was it a success? Well some people made a lot of money, many people made some money but many other people lost everything.

What it taught the country was that Privatisation is a good thing if it goes hand in hand with responsibility and accountability.

In The News

With the next presidential election planned for January 2023 we say goodbye to our 2-term incumbent Miloš Zeman. The story now is about the 21 people who want to replace him. 18 of those people don't have a cat's chance in hell of making it to a potential second round so the fun has been around trying to find out what the motives are to spend all that money for effectively nothing except the raising of their profile. Still, six of these people are on the ballot because at least 50,000 citizens gave their support. That must be a nice feeling.

Not making the headlines but there's been an archaeological dig going on in the eighth district of Karlín after the discovery of a Napoleonic era graveyard. Mass graves and individual graves, men and women, soldiers and civilians. Some battle injuries but most deaths were connected with Syphilis, Typhus and Cholera. Fascinating to read that the body of an army officer was very often accompanied by the earrings of his wife. Whole skeletons will go to the National Museum. Incomplete skeletons will be reburied in the Olšany Cemetery.

One of the benefits of being President is that you can pardon people convicted of a crime. One of the latest pardons was for a Polish couple who had received prison terms totaling 14 years. The crime was that they imported and distributed Ayahuasca which is popular in south-American countries where shamans use this hallucinogenic drink in rituals. Unfortunately it contains a substance called DMT which is illegal here.

With only 39% of Czech companies planning to offer a pay rise next year and then only a maximum 5% (inflation is currently 15.1%), a survey showed that 75% of the eternally optimistic Czechs say that their finances will be better or at least not any worse in the next year.

Trivia and Odd Statistics

The Czech Republic received 15 “Leopard 2” tanks from Germany to replace the 20 T72 tanks that were given to Ukraine.

In May 2022 the Czech State was maintaining 13 Million food ration packs, enough for 1.3 days in the event of a national emergency.

The first Leksell Gamma Knife here was publicly funded in 1992.

There are 82 statues on the Lidice Children’s Memorial.

10.6% of Czech men and 4.1% of Czech women drink alcohol at a level considered to be harmful.

The average waiting time for hip replacement in Czech is 2 years.

The average monthly salary of public sector employees is CZK44,782.

Any Czech can run for the Presidency as long as they are at least 40 years old and have collected signatures from either 50,000 citizens, 20 members of parliament or 10 senators.

The painting called Old Prague Motif by Bohumil Kubišta is the most valuable ever sold at a Czech auction. In 2022 it was sold for CZK123.6 Million.

Since March 2022, 140 “significant” sites in Prague have either had their lighting dimmed or turned off.

The Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra is 96 years old.

The average old age monthly pension is CZK16,000.

The Czech Constitution says the only crime that a sitting President can be charged with is High Treason. This can only result in removal from office, not a custodial sentence.

Over 30 Million cubic metres of timber was harvested in 2021 with 86% infected by bark beetle.

Walking Tours

For the first time since 2019 Prague will have fully opened Christmas Markets so bookings are up for this period. Clients have always given me feedback that getting tips on how to enjoy the markets is valuable. But it's learning about the Christmas traditions which remains in the memory. There's always fascination about the smaller and lesser known Christmas festivals and I enjoy educating clients about why we celebrate in this way.

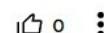
There will be less tour availability until March 2023 as I'll be in the UK about a quarter of the available time and I'm generally blocking dates and times to allow for travelling. If you have not heard from me then you are not affected. Prospective clients should contact me to see what options or referrals may be available.

Review

It's not unusual for me to provide tour services to extended families and the challenge is always to engage with different generations and stay flexible. Steve's family was immersed in the history of the city and asked many questions both about the city history and my own personal experiences of living here. I was happy to answer all those questions to give them a wider perspective.



Steve M
1 contribution



Fun, Friendly and Knowledgable

Jul 2022

Booked a two day private tour with Jason for 11 of us; ages 7 to 75. Jason was an outstanding tour guide. Always on time, friendly, knowledgable, accommodated any and all personal preferences, good with both adults and children and just plain fun. We experienced the Old Town, Jewish Quarter, Riverside, great Czech food, with a mix of WWII, New Town, Charles Bridge, Lesser Town and so much more. You are going to see a lot so wear good walking shoes. Consider asking Jason to avoid that street with the Louis Vuitton store; very happy wife, but that cost me a lot on money.

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

Written November 10, 2022

This review is the subjective opinion of a Tripadvisor member and not of Tripadvisor LLC. Tripadvisor performs checks on reviews.

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 2022 with time for people to buy food/drink as required.



Activity Spotlight! – Manes Exhibition Hall



Art and great food at the Manes Exhibition Hall

You are going to visit the Mánes Exhibition Hall for a variety of different reasons.

Although it's a small exhibition space it attracts architecture lovers to the late 1920s design which has a feeling of Art Deco but which is considered to be Czech Functionalist.

For photographers you get an unusual shot of the Dancing House and if you are looking for food/drink options then people stop at the Grom Gelato shop or there's a restaurant open the whole year with a great scenic summer terrace between April-October.

On this post you'll also learn about the ongoing ownership argument.

Check the post about the [Mánes Exhibition Hall](#)

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/>