

NEWSLETTER

for foreign offices

February 2019

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TRADE NEWS

Hotels & restaurants



Chateau Hotel Sychrov for sale

Chateau Hotel Sychrov is for sale. The hotel that had been managed for years by the **EuroAgentur Hotels & Travel** chain has been closed since last fall. The owner, Regal estate, offers the hotel for sale in a tender organized by the Naxos company. Bidding deadline is March 15, 2019.

Hotel Thermal to undergo reconstruction

Hotel Thermal in **Karlovy Vary** will undergo a major reconstruction worth CZK 580 million. The refurbishment of the hotel from the 1970s will start this year and should be completed in 2021. More at www.thermal.cz.

Transportation



147,000 passengers pass through Pardubice Airport

The **Pardubice Airport** saw **147,000 passengers** last year despite a two-month lockout. In 2017, only 88 thousand passengers used the airport. The 2018 result is the third best since 1994. More at www.airport-pardubice.cz.

Prague Airport Expands Retail Space

Prague Airport has opened a new **commercial zone** at Terminal 2. The new area of 2,200 m² includes six shops - three fashion boutiques under the name of The Fashion Place, a Rituals cosmetics shop, a shop offering Italian handbags by Coccinelle and a Hamleys toy shop – and a restaurant. The restaurant is run by Swiss Marché International, which already operates two venues in Terminal 1. A children's corner is to follow shortly. More at www.prg.aero.

Prague Airport invites passengers to interesting European destinations

The **Prague Airport** has launched a new campaign to support outgoing tourism and invite tourists to interesting European destinations. This year, the campaign will include 15 destinations in four countries – France, Croatia, Italy and Spain. All destinations have direct air connection with Prague. The destinations will change each year.

Prague Airport negotiates new long-haul routes

Prague Airport is negotiating new **long-haul routes** with several airlines. Tokyo, Hong Kong and Delhi are among possible new destinations, final decision about direct connection with

Bangkok is expected in autumn. The airport will add flights to Newark and Casablanca this year. More at www.prg.aero.

Czech railways reach record number of passengers in 2018

A total of 179.23 million passengers used the **Czech Railways** last year, an increase of 4.5 million compared to 2017. It was the highest number in the last ten years. More at www.cd.cz.

Over 10 million people travel aboard SmartWings Group's planes last year

Smartwings Group reported over 8.8 million passengers last year, an increase of 7.5 percent compared to 2017. Another 1.3 million passengers travelled aboard the group's planes serving other airlines. The group made a record 72,405 flights last year. More at www.smartwings.com.

MICE

Blockchain & Bitcoin Conference Prague



The Czech Republic will host **Blockchain & Bitcoin Conference** Prague March 22, 2019 for the fifth time – the event about blockchain and cryptocurrencies organized by Smile-Expo. The conference will feature blockchain specialists, entrepreneurs, and investors from different countries. At the event, experts of leading blockchain companies will discuss global trends of the cryptocurrency market and the future of the technology. March 22,

2019, Panorama Hotel, Prague. More at <https://prague.bc.events>.

People

Czech Prime Minister asks Vietnam to abolish short stay visa requirements for Czechs

Czech Prime Minister **Andrej Babiš** asked his Vietnamese counterpart **Nguyen Xuan Phuc** to abolish visa requirement for Czech traveling to Vietnam for up to 15 days to improve tourism. According to a report by the ČTK news agency, no promise by the Vietnamese Prime Minister to abolish the visa was given. For more [HERE](#).

Ondřej Rušíkvas leaves ERV Evropská pojišťovna for Blue Style

Ondřej Rušíkvas has recently left ERV Evropská pojišťovna, a company he co-founded for foreign owner together with Vladimír Krajíček, to become **COO/Deputy Chairman** of **Blue Style**, a tour operator. In the new function, Mr. Rušíkvas will be responsible for business development, marketing, service, client centre and internal operations.

Data & Research

Number of accommodation facilities in the Olomouc region decreased

Number of **accommodation facilities** for tourists in the **Olomouc** region **decreased** slightly between 2014 and 2017 due to drop in the number of cheaper accommodation opportunities. On the other hand, number of three and four star hotels in the region rose during the period, from 48 three-star hotels in 2014 to 48 in 2017, and from 11 four-star hotels to 15. More at www.czso.cz.

The number of Czech tourists in hotels exceeds 10 million last year

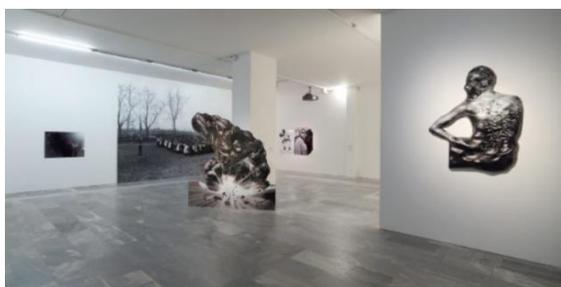
CzechTourism estimates that the **number of Czech tourists** in Czech hotels, B&Bs and camps exceeded 10 million for the first time. “We expect that 2018 will again see record-breaking arrivals of Czech and international tourists. 8.1 million of foreign tourists used accommodation in the Czech Republic, a 4.7-growth on the same period in the prior year,” said Renata Kasalová, CzechTourism spokesperson.

There was a marked **increase in the arrivals of Chinese tourists**, which reached 480,000 in Q1–Q3/2019. For the first time ever, Chinese arrivals **overtook Russian** ones (413,000). Domestic arrivals were also growing, at 8.7 million in the first three quarters. As far as minor source market are concerned, there was a marked growth in arrivals from the **United Arab Emirates** (+18 percent) and **Taiwan** (+19 percent).

PRODUCT NEWS

Culture

Arthur Jafa: A Series of Utterly Improbable, Yet Extraordinary Renditions



Galerie Rudolfinum presents the first exhibition by the acclaimed American filmmaker, cinematographer and artist **Arthur Jafa** in the Czech Republic. Jafa’s exhibition in Prague is presented as part of his European tour; after London, the exhibition was held at the Julia Stoschek Collection in Berlin in the summer 2018, and after Prague, it continues to Moderna Museet

Stockholm in early April. Jan. 17 – March 31, 2019, Galerie Rudolfinum, Prague. More at www.prague.eu.

Cities, communities & regions

Chinese company RiseSun to build spa center in Southern Moravia

Chinese company **RiseSun** plans to build a **spa center** near the south Moravian village of **Pasohlávky**. The center worth over 1 billion CZK should open within seven years. RiseSun has already purchased building plots for 380 million CZK near the village.

European spa towns apply for UNESCO listing

Eleven European **spa towns** have applied for inscription on the **UNESCO World Heritage List**. Czech towns Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně and Františkovy Lázně, Baden-Baden, Bad Ems and Bad Kissingen of Germany, the Belgian town Spa, Italian Montecatini Terme, Austrian Baden and City of Bath in England have applied as The Great Spas of Europe. The vote will be held at the session of the World Heritage Committee in summer next year.

Airbnb may collect municipal accommodation tax for the city

Prague municipality is negotiating a deal with **Airbnb** under which the company would collect municipal accommodation tax from its customers and pass them over to the city. Prague has about **650,000 apartments** and **about 1.4 percent** of them are being rented **through Airbnb**, in the historical Old Town of Prague it is about 20 percent.

The city of Brno wants to attract more visitors whose children have left home already

The **Tourist Information Center of Brno** wants to focus this year on **couples whose children have already left home** and they are free to travel now. According to research, these couples account for about **15 percent** of Brno visitors. 590,000 tourists arrived in Brno in 2016 and 723,000 in 2017. Numbers for 2018 are not yet available but further increase is expected.

Villa Bertramka declared national cultural monument

The Czech government declared **Villa Bertramka** where **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** stayed during his Prague visit a national cultural monument to help finance its refurbishment. The 18th-century villa has been closed for the last two years.

Left bank of the Ostravice River to be changed into a promenade

The city of **Ostrava** will cultivate the space around two new university buildings it will build behind the **Antonín Dvořák Theater** on the left bank of the **Ostravice River**. Construction of the promenade is expected to be finished in 2021, along with the opening of new faculties of the **Ostrava University**.

Moravian Karst receives Tripadvisor's Certificate of Excellence 2018

The administration of caves of the **Moravian Karst** has received for the fifth year in a row the Certificate of Excellence by Tripadvisor for 2018 and was included in the Hall of Fame of the world's biggest travellers' server. More at www.moravskykras.net.

South Bohemian Tourism to offer jams, laces and new tips for trips to tourists

South Bohemia Tourism is going to offer several dozen **regional products** to tourists at the information centre in the **Mercury** shopping centre in **České Budějovice**, including ten tips for hiking trips and a brochure on renovated monuments. About 10 000 visitors came to the information centre in summer. South Bohemia tourism is also preparing an **e-shop** with about 50–regional products, such as jam, lace or spirits. To visit the shop, click [HERE](#).

Events

BLIK BLIK: festival of light 2019



Blik Blik, a festival of light, presents contemporary art through light and interactive installation at unusual places in the city of Pilsen at night. The festival route will light the city centre and will lead from the [DEPO2015](#) past the Regional Authority to the Brewery Museum. March 29 and 20, Pilsen. More at www.depo2015.cz/blikblik.

Garden Food Festival

This food and drink festival aims at presenting high-quality restaurants and great chefs to the public, also focusing on local farmers, regional ingredients and brands, and (gastro)tourism in the region. The event takes place in **Olomouc**, **Rožnov pod Radhoštěm**, Uherské Hradiště, Ostrava and Prague. Dates: April 4–6, Praha; April 27–28, Ostrava; May 25–26, Rožnov pod Radhoštěm; August 31–September 1, Uherské Hradiště; September 28–29 Olomouc. More info at gardenfoodfestival.cz.

SkiTour

The 12th edition of the largest **cross-country skiing series** will take place in the Jizerské hory, the Šumava, the Orlické hory, the Beskid and the Jeseníky mountains. The series will start with the unique **Night Light Marathon** and end with JeLyMan. **SkiTour** comprises a total of 5 cross-country races, accessible to general public. More at www.ski-tour.cz.

52. Jizerská 50

The legendary **Jizerská 50 cross-country event** will welcome a total of **7 000 participants** from 30 countries from February 8 till 10 in Bedřichov, Jizerské mountains. The 52nd edition will offer 10, 15 and 50km routes for classic style and 30km for skating, as well as children's routes, relays and 1.5km sprint. More at: www.jiz50.cz.

Davis Cup 2019

Davis Cup, a tennis competition of men's teams, regarded as unofficial world championship and with tradition going back to 1900, will visit **Ostrava-Zábřeh** from February 1 till 2, for a qualification match of the **Czech team** against the **Netherlands**. Find more at www.daviscup.com.

Fed Cup 2019

Fed Cup, the **most prestigious women's tennis competition**, will have a stop at Ostrava on February 9, from 12:45 (singles) and February 10 from 12:00 (singles and a double). The Czech team will against Romania. More at www.fedcup.com.

Alpine skiing world cup in Špindlerův Mlýn 2019

After a 8-year pause, the **Women's Alpine Skiing World Cup** returns to **Špindlerův Mlýn**. World skiing stars, including Ester Ledecká, will compete in **giant slalom** and **Super-G** on March 8–9. More at www.worldcup2019.cz.

Kolo pro život 2019

Since its inception in 2000, **Kolo pro život (Bike for Life)** has developed into the largest and most popular amateur MTD series in the country. The event is intended for bikers of all ages and performance levels. Individual events take place from April till October across the country. Find more at www.kolopro.cz.

Febiofest

The 26th **Prague International Film Festival (Febiofest)** brings a broad selection of international and Czech cinematography, as well as movie celebrities. Prague, March 21–29, regions April 1–18. More at <https://www.febiofest.cz>.

RunCzech 2019

RunCzech events are among the most popular open running events in the country, attracting thousands of runners to half-marathon and marathon distances in Prague, Karlovy Vary, Olomouc, Ústí nad Labem and České Budějovice. From April till October. Visit www.runczech.com for details.

Běhej lesy

The **Běhej lesy 2019** (Run to the Woods) running series will start at the Lednice chateau on April 27, leading through the UNESCO-protected Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape. The whole series spans April–September and takes place in various regions. For details, visit www.behejlesy.cz.

J&T Banka Prague Open 2019

The 9th **WTA – J&T Banka Prague Open 2019**, an international women's **tennis** tournament and a part of the ITF series takes place on the clay courts of **Sparta Praha Tennis Club** in Stromovka from April 29 till May 4. More at www.jtbopen.cz/en.

CORPORATE

CzechTourism & resort