

The background of the entire cover is a dense, repeating pattern of stylized orange leaves with black outlines. In the top left corner, there is a dark grey rectangular box containing the magazine's logo and subtitle. The logo 'ttgluxury' is in a white, elegant script font, while 'HONEY' is written vertically in a tall, thin, white sans-serif font to its right. Below the logo, the text 'FOR PREMIUM TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS' is written in a smaller, white, all-caps sans-serif font. The rest of the cover features several white text boxes with black borders, each containing a headline and a sub-headline. At the bottom, a large black box contains the main tagline in white, all-caps sans-serif font.

ttgluxury

FOR PREMIUM TRAVEL
PROFESSIONALS

H
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SPRING – SUMMER 2019

OUTSIDE THE KING'S ROUTE

Take a walk outside the center of Prague

BE THE FIRST TO DISCOVER THEM

Gorgeous towns that are worth a visit

AN EXTRAORDINARY ESCAPE

Forget all your worries and get well

GARDENS OF YOUR DREAMS

Ferdinand Leffler and his Atelier Flera

AMAZING PLACES,
AMAZING PEOPLE

Prague: off the beaten path

Discover Prague beyond the notorious city centre

Check out the series of walking routes and get to know a different, but all the more impressive side of the city. Walk with us through parks with remarkable vistas, once drab industrial neighbourhoods that are now vibrant centres of culture and gastronomy and much more.

[Prague.eu/walks](https://prague.eu/walks)

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Prague
City Tourism

Prague:emotion



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Won't you come to the Czech Republic? We would like our country to see you. And we can assure you that if you do you too will see a lot. Be it the capital Prague, this time we are offering less traditional and less visited yet beautiful and welcoming parts of the city, be it the rather small towns that you probably haven't heard of yet or be it the beautiful gardens designed by Ferdinand Leffler, the excellent Czech garden architect whose work has won an international acclaim. This issue of TTG Czech Luxury will also take you to a resort secluded in the forests at the border of Bohemia and Moravia where you will find, maybe surprisingly, wide range of Ayurvedic treatments, among other very pleasant things. And along with all that, we will present to you the usual mix of accommodation and fine dining offers and a couple of news. So read, enjoy and start planning. We would really like our country to see you!

Won't you come
into the garden?
I would like my
roses to see you.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

Naďa Rybářová



THE NEW AYURVEDIC PAVILION

In collaboration with the reputable Kairali Ayurvedic Centre we have built for you a new pavilion allowing us to provide therapies and procedures at the highest level.

Here at the Svatá Kateřina Resort we have been practicing Ayurveda for more than three years now. We work together with the renowned Indian Kairali Ayurvedic Medicine Centre in Kerala, India, where our therapists, doctors, and cooks are trained. From Kairali, we also obtain the necessary Ayurvedic massage

oils, cosmetics, natural shampoos, herbs, spices, and other products without which authentic Ayurveda is not possible.

ĀJURVÉDA

The first pavilion section is devoted to authentic Ayurveda. The Agni, Jala, Vayu, Satya, and Ananda therapeutic rooms feature original Indian Ayurvedic massage tables and steam cabins. This section also includes nearby Ayurvedic doctor's office, an atrium with discrete terraces and

a generous relaxation area with views of the nearby forest.

WELLNESS

The second pavilion section is devoted to Wellness and Spa offering a heated pool with several water-massage seats, two modern whirlpools, sauna and steam, and the Kneipp Walk Pool, all with views of the surrounding nature.

WELCOME TO OUR NEWLY OPENED.

AUTHENTIC AYURVEDA AT THE SVATÁ KATEŘINA RESORT

In collaboration with the renowned Kairali Resort in Kerala, India

Our Svatá Kateřina Resort Ayurvedic programs are tailored by Indian doctors to help you to be healthier, leaner and in good shape.

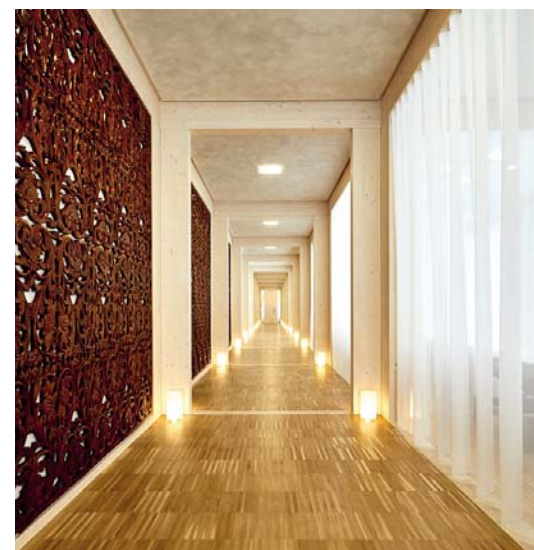
Join our most successful programs:

- Ayurvedic weekend
- Ayurveda back pain
- Ayurveda Panchakarma
- Ayurveda rejuvenation

- Ayurveda weight loss
- Ayurveda yoga detox
- Ayurveda for woman
- Ayurveda beauty

Recharge, find your inner balance with our Ayurvedic programs.

www.katerinaresort.cz



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spring – summer 2019



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editor's selection

FUN IN THE BE BOP LOBBY BAR IN

YOU'LL HAVE GREAT

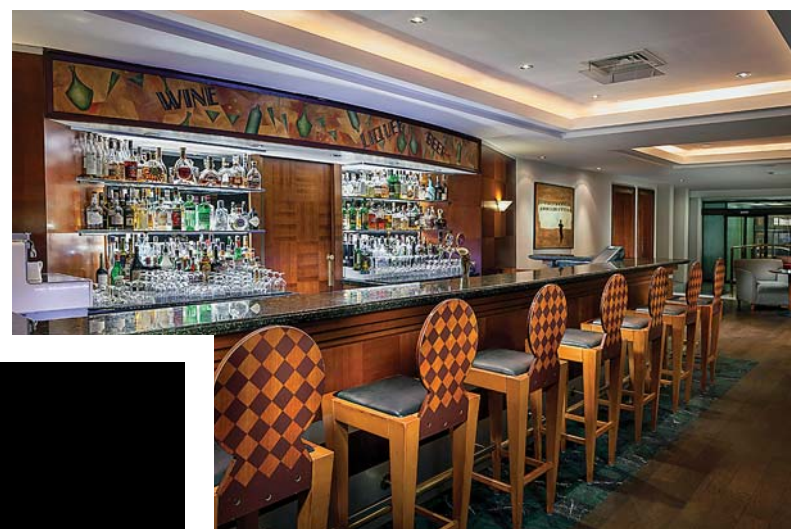


IN THE ALCRON HOTEL

Be Woody, Be Prepared, Be Chef, Be Refueled, Be Glamorous – these are just some of the cocktails at the popular Be Bop Lobby Bar in the Alcron Hotel in Prague. Bar Manager Milan Drahoš believes that a drink should both taste good and entertain. And he is doing a good job doing that. The history of the bar goes back to 1932, when the Alcron opened. The hotel itself, its restaurant and the bar have always been a sought-after place, thanks to their excellent meals, as well as the gorgeous environment and

outstanding services. No wonder guests such as Charlie Chaplin and Winston Churchill used to stay in the hotel. Back then the bar had a different name, though. It has borne its current name referring to bebop, a style of jazz, only since 1998, and the drinks to entertain were not served there at that time. This only started when Milan Drahoš, who has been working there since 2014, was put in charge. His signature drinks, i.e. all those whose names start with 'BE', are very popular with the guests. The drinks are conspicuously displayed right at the entrance in a way which makes new incoming patrons sure to see what awaits them. There is also a classic selection for the more conservative Be Bop Lobby Bar guests.

Located in the back of the bar is the icing on the cake – nine display cases, each of which houses a unique bottle. The following brands can currently be found here: Louis XIII, Martell Creation, Martell L'Or, Metaxa Aen Despina, Herradura Selección Suprema Tequila, Talisker 30 Year Old Whisky, Macallan 1957, Macallan No. 6 Liqueur and Jack Daniel's 150th Anniversary Whiskey. Guests may sample one centilitre, served by the bartenders in the way each of these premium alcohols deserve: ceremonially and wearing white gloves. Be Bop Lobby Bar simply turns every glass into an extraordinary experience.



The largest Czech hotel chain, **Orea Hotels & Resorts** with its 12 hotels across the entire Czech Republic, always offers something extra, and you can thus take advantage of the new Art Meeting Concept or Art of Culinary Concept, which includes such services as live cooking, coffee stations with baristas or the first humanoid employee, Pepper the robot.

THE OREA PYRAMIDA HOTEL ****



The Orea Pyramida Hotel is the ideal place for both holiday and corporate events. Due to its proximity to Prague Castle and the Lesser Quarter, the hotel enjoys excellent transport links not only to the city centre, but also to principal arterial roads and the airport. The hotel offers a total of 340 rooms, 280 of which have been newly refurbished, while the remaining 60 are to be refurbished this year. The rooms, designed by leading Czech architects, include categories ranging from

Classic to Junior Suites. 60 m² large suites with a terrace and views of Prague are also available. There is also a newly refurbished restaurant, with a seating capacity of 260, and a Lobby Bar with a capacity of 95 guests, which offer both a buffet and an à la carte menu, using primarily fresh local ingredients. You can use the pool, Finnish sauna or gym with a cardio zone in the hotel's Active Zone, or you can treat yourself to one of the

many relaxation or sports massages. Thanks to its strategic location, the hotel is also the ideal place for holding all kinds of private and corporate events. There is a total of nine fully air-conditioned conference rooms, with a total capacity of 1,200 people, covering an area of 1200 m², plus an additional display space spanning 800 m². The largest of the rooms can accommodate up to 522 people. All rooms offer good quality technical equipment, free Wi-Fi, complete catering services and conference services.



THE OREA HORIZONT RESORT ****



The newly refurbished four-star Orea Horizont Resort is the ideal place for your winter and summer holidays. It's located just three kilometres from Špičák Mountain, on the southern side of Pancíř Mountain in Železná Ruda, which lies in the Bohemian Forest (Šumava) Protected Landscape Area. You'll find a broad range of sports and tourist activities here. The hotel offers a total of 117 contemporary furnished rooms, designed by renowned architects, and includes a top-floor suite with its own infrared sauna, affording amazing

views of the surrounding landscape. There is a hotel restaurant with a seating capacity of 160, and a lobby bar with a summer terrace, which has a capacity of 75 + 40 places. The restaurant offers both a buffet and an à la carte menu, and all meals are prepared using fresh local ingredients. In the Orea Horizont Resort, you'll find a health spa centre with a pool, whirlpool tub, sauna and Roman spa. Also included is a gym with a cardio zone, stationary bikes and a tanning salon.

Thanks to its location, as well as the rooms and good quality services, the hotel is also suited for holding corporate events, such as conferences, workshops or teambuilding events. There are seven conference rooms with a total capacity of up to 345 people, good quality technical equipment and free Wi-Fi. You can also use the restaurant or lobby bar, which has a terrace. We can provide complete catering services during all events.



REJUVENATED SPA HOTEL SVOBODA



THE SVOBODA HOTEL complex in Mariánské Lázně is composed of the architecturally unique buildings of Margaret, Palladio and Svoboda. This follows



on the glorious past, when the Hotel boasted the renowned Carlton Luxury Hotel name. The modern accommodation includes 132 elegant bedrooms and excellent cuisine in the Carlton Restaurant. The location in a forest park near Forest Spring offers peace for relaxation and proximity to the renowned neo-Baroque colonnade. The wealth of services in the well-equipped Hotel Spa Centre provides perfect healing care and relaxation. Added bonuses are one of the most efficient thermal sources, Josef's Spring, as well as a new swimming pool with whirlpool, sauna, steam and relaxation zone.

www.danubiushotels.com

BENY JEWELLERY REPRESENTS THE SWISS BRAND OF CHOPARD AT 8 PAŘÍŽSKÁ



BENY JEWELLERY has been offering first-class jewellery and watches in our country for a quarter of a century. The quality of the services and products provided by this family company is also appreciated by the renowned Swiss company of CHOPARD. Its products are thus featured in the range, among other world renowned luxury brands, offered in BENY Jewellery stores. Especially at 8 Pařížská in Prague 1.

Beny is a family jewellery company that has been operating under this name since 1996. However, the original company was founded by Tuně Topalli in Croatia in 1976. The tradition of the manufacture and processing of jewellery and the diamond trade was then taken over by his son, Zef Topalli. Zef has considerably expanded the jewellery store, which has been successfully operating in the Czech Republic since 1992. At present, BENY stores in Prague are located at three prestigious addresses. In addition to Wenceslas Square, where the jewellery workshop and watch service are located, jewellery and watch treasures are also available in Karlova and Pařížská Streets. And just recently, the BENY Jewellery store at 8 Pařížská is also offering a new, wide range of jewellery and watches by the renowned Swiss brand of **CHOPARD**.

www.beny.cz

Q&A



We spoke with **Václav Řehoř**, Chairman of Prague Airport's Board of Directors, about the TouchPoint project, in which the airport is greatly involved.

The goal of the TouchPoint project is to boost inbound tourism to Prague, as well as the Czech Republic in general. At which clientele is the project mostly aimed?

As part of the collaboration, we'd like to focus on foreign clientele coming from more distant countries, such as the USA, Japan, China, India, Thailand, etc. Visitors from these countries are often more affluent than those coming from European countries. One of our other aims is to increase the number of nights that these visitors spend in the Czech Republic, which results in extending their stays here.

Part of the project was a large advertising campaign which took place in New York last December. Has it yielded any tangible results yet?

In our view, the New York campaign was very successful. The campaign was the first of this kind, and we're happy that it met with such great response both overseas and in the Czech Republic. The 'No Spoilers! See it live' campaign was seen in one of the main stations in the New York Subway system, as well as directly in subway carriages. Its goal was to draw attention to beautiful spots in Prague and its environs. Its main objective was to increase raise awareness of Prague and central Bohemia among US tourists, which was in fact achieved.

Are you planning this year to do more activities like the one that took place in New York? If so, where would they take place?

We are currently preparing a similar campaign to take place in Tokyo,

Japan, which is one of our priority markets. The campaign is scheduled to launch mid-year. Towards the end of this year, we'd like to follow up with a new campaign again in another Asian country.

One of the project's goals is introducing new routes to Prague, especially long-haul ones. Have any concrete talks with specific airlines been held yet?

This is, in our view, our primary aim. Tourism is driven precisely by the establishment and existence of direct flight routes, which leads to further market stimulation. We're currently holding business talks with air carriers from both Asia, concerning routes to such locations as Bangkok, Taipei and Tokyo, as well as with the United States. Our priority here are a year-round flight routes to New York or Philadelphia, and acquiring a new flight route to Chicago. Introducing a new long-distance route is 'a long-haul journey'. The task of our airport is to make a convincing case to an airline and provide them with a broad range of good reasons why the route should be introduced.

Tourism development goes hand in hand with the ever-increasing demands placed not just on the airport's capacity, which has its limits, but also on the services provided to passengers at the airport. What plans does the airport have in this regard for the nearest, as well as for the more distant future?

The number of checked-in passengers at Prague Airport is continually growing. Last year again saw a record number of passengers. We're approaching the airport's current limit, which is 17 million checked-in passengers per year. We must therefore expand. We've prepared long-term development plans, which include a new parallel runway, a new extension to Terminal 2 and new structures within the public space on the airport's premises. The first short-term development projects have already been executed, and more will follow. We're currently working on taxiway repairs and refurbishing our baggage sorting room. The building of the fourth check-in island at Terminal 2 is about to commence. We've also designed the outdoor space in front of the extended Terminal 2, which will include two new multi-story parking garages. In addition, we're expanding the range of services provided to passengers. Earlier this year, we opened a new commercial zone in Terminal 2 and put out a large call for tenders from operators of duty-free shops. Our aim is to select one of the best and most notable operators of duty-free shops, thus helping to further increase passenger satisfaction.

HOMES SURROUNDED BY GOLF AND OTHER SPORTING ACTIVITIES



THE LATEST PLAN of the Real-Treuhand Reality & Development company is the preparation of a very interesting project called the **Green Village**, in close proximity to the Konopiště Golf Resort. The complex will comprise small family houses, with an area of about 140 square metres of living space, and separate villas with an area of more than 300 square metres. "Our goal is to prepare new unique homes for sporting couples and families with children, who want to combine an active lifestyle with golf and other activities, such as biking, horseback riding, skiing or cross-country skiing, all that in a wonderful location in the heart of the countryside with excellent transport connections to the metropolis. However, nearby Bystřice also boasts facilities such as a modern school and kindergarten and other civic amenities, including a health centre," Gabriela Hasková, Real-Treuhand Reality & Development representative, explains the main idea of the project.

www.rt-reality.cz

LAGARTO SET TO OPEN A NEW RESTAURANT



North Bohemia's coffee house chain is set to add a new outlet to their existing five, located in Teplice. However, the new addition is not another coffee house, but rather a new dining-style project with a focus on lightened-up, contemporary Czech cuisine. The Lagarto chain's two coffee houses in Chomutov, a coffee house and bistro in Most and a coffee house in Teplice, will be complemented by a Lagarto J&J restaurant which will have a terrace offering not only a unique view of Teplice but also, and above all, an interesting culinary experience. The kitchen will be under the leadership of head chef Jacob Racek, who has until now worked

in Most's bistro Deli by Lagarto. Alongside the North Bohemian gastronomic visionary and owner of the chain, Jan Hawelka, Lagarto J&J was born – as in Jan & Jacob. The daily operation will be divided into a number of time-sensitive periods, which the guests must follow. Each period of time will fulfil a different dining purpose: Breakfast will be served between eight and ten, and then from ten to eleven the venue will serve as a coffee house. Lunch will be served between eleven and two, followed by a patisserie between two and half past five. An aperitif bar will operate from half past five to seven, and dinner will be served between seven and ten o'clock.

NEW COMMERCIAL ZONE AT PRAGUE AIRPORT

New commercial zone has opened at the Terminal 2 of the Prague Airport with six shops and a restaurant. The new area, located right after the security checkpoint, covers 2,200 m² and soon will also include a children's corner. The new project is the airport's response to a growing number of passengers and represents the biggest expansion of the Terminal 2 retail space since its launch of operations. Rituals cosmetics or Hamleys or Coccinelle are among the new shops, the restaurant promoting a unique market concept is run by the Swiss Marché International chain, which already operates two venues in Terminal 1.



FLYING NOODLES IN PRAGUE



A new restaurant, BON Fresh Ramen & Soba, recently opened in the center of Prague. This is a completely new project in Prague. Thanks to way they are prepared and served, the buckwheat Soba noodles really fly. The owners of the restaurant were inspired in New York, where they visited several Japanese restaurants during their long-term stay there. The decisive moment for them was when they met master Shuichi Kotani, a head chef and noodle master from Japan. For the past 20 years, he has lived in New York, where he owns three restaurants. He helps start up Ramen & Soba projects all over the world. He

arrived in Prague at the end of January in order to show support for Bon, as well as to demonstrate his art to the guests. The restaurant is owned by a young couple, Dan Nguyen Quoc Anh and Linh Phuong Do. Dan, who was born and grew up in the Czech Republic, is the head chef. His partner, Linh, born in Vietnam, is in charge of the restaurant's aesthetics and runs the operation. The restaurant's menu offers several kinds of Ramen and Soba noodles, all fresh and made by hand. Thanks to this restaurant, under the wing of the outstanding noodle master, you can now taste real Japanese cuisine in Prague.

JAROSLAV RÓNA: DRAWINGS FROM ELSEWHERE



Jaroslav Róna, probably best known as the author of the highly acclaimed Franz Kafka memorial in the Prague's Old Town, was one of the founders of the Czech art group Tvrdohlaví, or The Stubborn. His exhibition at the Jewish Museum in Prague presents drawings from 2012-2018. At the first glance, it may seem that his style remains the same, he, however, began to address new topics; one can catch a glimpse of stories behind his works as well as humor elements. He created most of his Drawings from Elsewhere when traveling and they represent a kind of a diary. Some of them were draught in Malta, Crete, Rhodes, Corfu, Venice, Milan, Amsterdam, Vienna or Budapest, inspired by local monuments and influenced by the author's fantasy and dark vision.

HILTON PRAGUE OLD TOWN COMPLETED MULTI-MILLION RENOVATION



The centrally located Hilton Prague Old Town has recently completed a multi-million dollar renovation, including 303 refurbished guest rooms and 1,200 square meter conference and

meeting floor. The newly renovated spaces include modern amenities whilst the interiors work seamlessly with the hotel's elegant art deco design, befitting its location in the beautiful Old Town area of Prague. The newly renovated guest rooms have a fresh and elegant design with a mix of modern and classic elements and thoughtful amenities. Depending on room type, guest rooms feature either one king size bed or two single beds with custom designed headboards and mattresses exclusively manufactured for Hilton. Rooms also feature a spacious working desk with a built-in USB socket, a 55-inch flat TV, a large elegant wardrobe and a cocktail cabinet-style mini bar with an innovative draw fridge. For extra guest comfort, rooms have also been fitted with new carpet and a cosy

relaxation corner with a lounge armchair and standing lamp. The guest room renovations extended to the bathrooms with Italian marble tiling, a large walk-in shower and wall-sized anti-fog heated mirror. The 1,200 square meter conference and meeting floor with 14 function rooms, including the Dvorak Ballroom for up to 340 delegates, has seen a redesign as well. Hilton Prague Old Town is part of Hilton Honors, the award-winning guest-loyalty program for Hilton's 14 distinct hotel brands. Members who book directly have access to instant benefits, including an exclusive member discount, a flexible payment slider that allows members to choose nearly any combination of Points and money to book a stay, free standard Wi-Fi and the Hilton Honors mobile app.



Caorle, an award winning vase

Created by designer Lukáš Jabůrek for the famous Czech glass maker Moser, the Caorle vase has won an award in the prestigious 2019 Tableware International Awards of Excellence in the "Artisanal" category. The 30-cm-tall crystal vase combining an ocean green underlay with rose colors is hand-blown and finished with a six-angled hand cut, inspired by Italian architecture and the magic of the aquatic world. A jury of 26 prestigious international panelists, from buyers, boutique owners to global designers and luxury distributors chose the vase because of the quality of Czech crystal, its colors and a the perfect cut.

Moser, a luxury glass manufacturer based in Karlovy Vary, is known for manufacturing stemware, decorative glassware (such as vases, ashtrays, candlesticks,) glass gifts and various art engravings. Moser is one of the most collected decorative glass and has been used everywhere from palaces to local restaurants. From its beginnings in 1857 as a polishing and engraving workshop, it developed into a lead-free glass manufacturer lasting through the 20th century until the present.

GARDENS FOR LIVING

12
feature **AMAZING
GARDENS**



Are you dreaming about the perfect garden that will truly be an extension of your home? Gardens by Ferdinand Leffler, Czech architect whose work has won an international acclaim, are exceptional in beauty, exceptional in functionality, they are exactly what you are longing for.



Ferdinand Leffler always listens carefully to his clients to learn how they live, what they are missing, what they are looking for. Sometimes they seek harmony and balance, sometimes they seek adventure, whatever it is, a garden can help, he says. And he gives them gardens that are wonderful places to live in, not just to admire. A garden by Ferdinand Leffler can be an excellent playground for both children and adults, it can be place where you can sit in your private hidden shelter and relax or sit by the fireplace with friends and celebrate, place where

you can cook, grow your own vegetables - that can be a very rewarding experience, place where you can do whatever you wish to. Ferdinand's gardens are natural, full of local plants that are easier to be cared for, and with no artificial materials, just wood and stone. Even the pool is a bio pool, natural swimming pool that mimics the self-regulating process of wetlands.

Ferdinand Leffler's Atelier Flera, one of the biggest in Europe, however, does not design only private gardens but it participates in large housing projects and takes part in beautifying public space too.

"I welcome the growing interest of developers to invest into green outdoor areas within their new projects," says Leffler. "People today do not want just a nice apartment or villa, they expect more. ... They expect place where they could meet

God Almighty first planted a garden. And indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures.

Francis Bacon

their neighbors and build new relationships in a natural way." One such project is the Chateau Troja Residence, a gated residential estate in one of Prague's most coveted and upscale neighborhoods right along the Vltava River. Built on the reconstructed grounds of a 16th-century renaissance homestead, the residence includes six restored historical buildings and seven new buildings designed to add a contrasting modern touch, all that complemented by Atelier Flera's garden inviting for a walk or just for spending a while on a bench with a good book. Another such project is SAKURA, a project that combines world class architecture by the London-based Jestico + Whiles studio with lush vegetation. The project, located in a residential area atop of one of Prague hills, gives residents a sense of living in a family house with a garden, while maintaining the benefits of urban

living that an apartment building brings. The entire perimeter of houses on all floors is lined with continuous planters that provide sufficient soil for vegetation, spanning from grasses to mature shrubs. The project is named after Sakura Japanese flowering cherries. Sakura will be a prominent feature and can be found both in the adjacent private park and gardens and roof terraces. The residential building contains a total of 64 units and three roof villas and 32,000 flowers, plants, shrubs and trees. (Bosco Verticale in Milan, the most known project of same kind, houses only 20,000 plants and trees.) Atelier Flera does not limit its activities to the Czech Republic. It has successfully completed a number of projects abroad, from the neighboring Slovakia to the distant island of Zanzibar. So, should you long for a garden of your dreams, now you know whom to address.



PRAGUE off the BEATEN PATH

Millions of tourists visit Prague every year, and the city centre is bursting at the seams. Would you like to be one of them but you would rather not spend your time being packed like sardines in a can? Join us on a walk outside the city centre! Let's discover interesting places outside the King's Route and other notorious paths.

KARLÍN: From Rags to Riches

The once drab Karlín district, squeezed between the River Vltava and Vítkov Hill, paradoxically acquired a new lease on life from the devastating flood of 2002. Today it is a vibrant part of the city where locals and visitors head for the trendy cafés and bistros or cultural venues in former factory halls. Karlín today represents its own blend of an industrial past, Art Nouveau elegance and modern architecture. Where the port once used to be, Karlín now shows its futuristic face. The extensive River

City project has remarkable office buildings, designed by American, French and Danish architects. You pass buildings bearing the names of the world's major rivers – Danube House, Amazon Court and Nile House – to arrive at 'Port 18600', named after the local zip code. This charming spot is the work of a group of locals who wanted to turn a neglected Vltava waterside into a place where you can relax, socialize and enjoy some culture. Here, you can play volleyball, the kids can enjoy themselves on a submarine-shaped climbing frame, there's

a seasonal bar, and for 250 crowns you can rent your own barbecue grill. The Negrelli viaduct, which forms the imaginary border between Karlín and the New Town, is now under repair. This railway bridge first enabled trains to cross the Vltava River in 1850 and with its 1110 metres was the longest bridge in Europe until the early 20th century. Nearby this technical monument, pay a visit to the Karlín Barracks, a multi-functional centre, where you will find a stylish café, a music club, and a great gallery. In winter months, there is an outdoor ice-skating rink; in summer months you can enjoy an open-air cinema. Fans of industrial architecture mustn't miss Pernerova street, once the site of the engineering conglomerate ČKD. These days you'll find Forum Karlín here, one of the best concert halls in the city; a popular restaurant/bakery Eska operates in the same complex. Formerly the birthplace of steam engine boilers, the complex received its current look from Catalan architect Ricardo Bofill. We suggest you round off your visit to Karlín with a peek at the majestic panorama of the city from the top of Vítkov Hill. The shortest way there is through the Hill itself – via the pedestrian Žižkov tunnel, which connects Karlín to the neighbouring district of Žižkov.

ŽIŽKOV – Prague's Montmartre

Just 150 years ago, east of the Old Town gates were only vineyards, pastures and some homesteads. The population and industrial boom in the last quarter of the 19th century quickly turned the hilly territory into an idiosyncratic and picturesque district of apartment buildings, free of any overall architectural concept. Its unmistakably bohemian legacy has always been largely down to its residents – labourers, hustlers, students, and artists. Although the wheel of history has turned a great deal since then, luckily the local 'free-wheeling' atmosphere remains. Welcome to the district that never sleeps. Welcome to Žižkov! While here you shouldn't miss the famous Žižkov TV Tower. An attribute of modern Prague and at 216 meters the tallest building of the metropolis; apart from the technical stuff, it houses a luxurious six-star hotel suite, the One Room Hotel, the Oblaca restaurant, a bar, café and a panoramic viewing room with breath-taking views of the city. The



tower is dotted with weird crawling infants sculpted by David Černý. Right beneath the tower, you will find the magnificent Old Jewish Cemetery which served the Prague Jewish community as a major site of remembrance since 1787. There are many wonderful gravestones from the 18th and early to mid-19th century marking the graves of many prominent Jewish figures. Žižkov is also inextricably tied to the only Czech Nobel Prize winner in literature, Jaroslav Seifert, who was born there and educated at the local grammar school. The renowned poet's life is commemorated by a plaque on the house of his birth (in Bořivojova street 104) and with an interesting ribbon-styled memorial stone. Not far from here you can visit the Bethlehem Chapel. Hidden inside a block of apartment buildings you can find a discreet but extremely interesting Cubist chapel with late Art Nouveau elements.

Žižkov is also home to the largest graveyard in Prague spanning over 50 ha with the remains of some two million deceased. It is the final resting place of prominent Czech figures e.g. the student Jan Palach, painter František Ženíšek or the actors Jan Werich and Jiří Voskovec. One of the most sought-after is the grave of Franz Kafka (tomb 21-14-21) at the New Jewish Cemetery. Žižkov also boasts perhaps the largest concentration of restaurants anywhere in Prague. In this regard, probably the most well-known and sought-after among (not only) young people is Bořivojova street. In the spring and summer, you shouldn't miss the Parukářka park. This is a large and secluded park with a beautiful view of Prague, situated on the hill of the Holy Cross between the nearby Vítkov hill and Olšanské Cemetery. In addition to an outdoor pub, the grounds encompass three children's playgrounds, an agility dog training park and picnic places with

a firepit. The park is also the venue for a wide variety of concerts, happenings, sports events and children's programmes.

SMÍCHOV – Post-industrial, Surprising, and Diverse

More than ever, the Smíchov of today is a perfect reflection of its name – it's a place where people, architectural styles, and landscape features mingle ("smíchat" in Czech). This lively district on the left bank of the Vltava now only offers the occasional glimpse back to its industrial roots. Baroque, Art Nouveau and Neo-Renaissance exist here in symbiosis with modern buildings; office buildings are interspersed with beautiful parks; long-time residents go about their daily business amongst shopaholic visitors and employees of multinational companies with their headquarters here.

Begin your walk through Smíchov at the former Count Kinský Gardens, one of the most beautiful, yet lesser known Prague's parks. Its hilly terrain is crisscrossed with winding paths leading across the Petřín Hill all the way to the Prague Castle. You'll find several romantic niches here – ponds with artificial waterfalls and a plethora of views of the Old and New Towns and of Smíchov itself. The park's dominant feature is the charming Můsaion summer palace featuring an exposition dedicated to Czech folklore and traditions. Higher up the slope stands the timber Church of the Archangel Michael, brought here in 1929 by train from Ruthenia as a gift for the newly-opened ethnographic museum. Office buildings, entertainment, and shopping can all be found around the Anděl metro station. The area gets its name from the building called At the Golden Angel, which corner was adorned by frescoes. The Ringhoffer family built an extensive industrial complex here and was the largest manufacturer of trains and trams in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. At the end of the 20th century, these factory buildings were torn down and replaced with the Nový Smíchov shopping centre and multiplex and the Zlatý Anděl corner building, designed by Jean Nouvel. The building's glass facade is decorated with figures of angels and excerpts of works by authors who worked in Prague – Franz Kafka, Rainer Marie Rilke, Gustav Meyrink, and Guillaume Apollinaire. A bit farther upstream along the Vltava sprawls the largest industrial brewery in Prague, named for the local lager, Staropramen. The beer has been brewed here since 1869 and its history and taste are best experienced in the brewery's visitor centre.

OFF THE TRADITIONAL TOURIST TRAIL

Prague, Český Krumlov, Karlovy Vary or Brno, these are the most visited Czech cities by foreign tourists. Sure, it would not make sense to visit a country without exploring its capital and Prague and the other named cities alike undoubtedly are a must see. However, the Czech Republic has many more absolutely gorgeous towns, some of them with populations just of a couple of thousands that are definitely worth visiting and are not yet crowded with tourists. Let us take you to some of them before others discover them.



Located in the westernmost part of the country just a few kilometers from the German border, **Cheb** is a gateway to Bohemia. The rich history of Cheb has left the town with some amazing streets and buildings that are a delight to explore, from the iconic medieval merchants' houses to the majestic twin towers of the Church of Saint Nicholas. Cheb indeed has a unique atmosphere. The town also is the ideal base from which to explore western Bohemia, with the spa towns of Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně and Františkovy Lázně all within easy reach.



Just about 35 kilometers to the northeast is **Loket**. The Locket Castle dating to the 12th century – originally a border fortress, is the town's main attraction. Another attraction is the Ohře River. Taking a boat ride under the castle is an experience you will not forget.

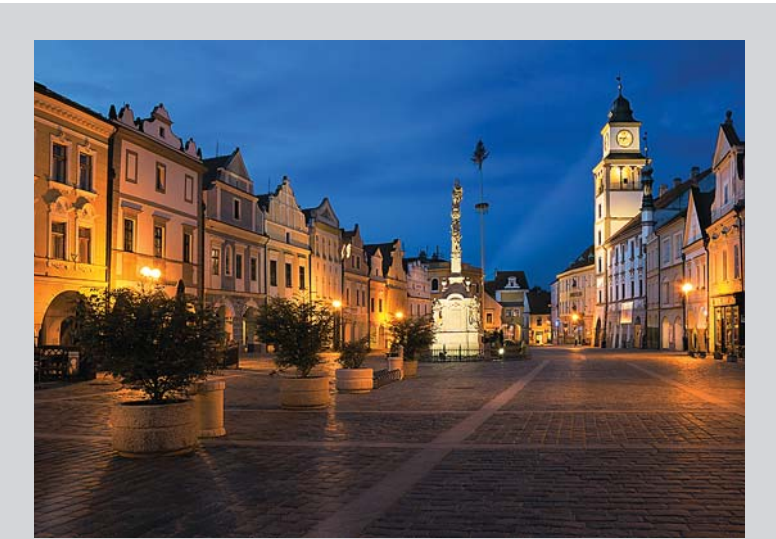


A small town is a place where there's no place to go where you shouldn't.

Burt BacharachMaugham

Jindřichův Hradec in south Bohemia used to be a very important trading centre and in the mid-17th century, it was the second largest city in Bohemia, right after Prague. Today, it is a lovely town with monumental castle – the third biggest in the country, beautiful historical center, two ponds and a narrow gauge railway. In summer, you can take a ride to the village of Obrataň or to the other side to the village of Nová Bystřice in historical coaches pulled by a steam locomotive. The countryside around the town is beautiful. During the rest of the year, diesel-hauled passenger trains are serving the town and its surroundings.

Mikulov, known abroad as Nikolsburg, once supplied quality kosher wine to most of Central Europe, preliminary peace conditions between France and Russia were negotiated there after the battle of Austerlitz and one of the most beautiful UNESCO sites, the Lednice-Valtice Area, is just around the corner. Yet most foreign visitors pass Mikulov on their way between Prague and Vienna without knowing what gems they are missing. Stop by, if you are around. It takes some effort to climb to St. Sebastian Chapel on a hill above the town. But if you do, you will be rewarded with a great view. Also, Mikulov has a rich Jewish history. The Jewish town survived many fires and other disasters until WWII, when it ceased to exist. However, about 90 houses have survived and half of them have been declared a cultural monument. A large Jewish cemetery, one of the most important in the Czech Republic, also survived.



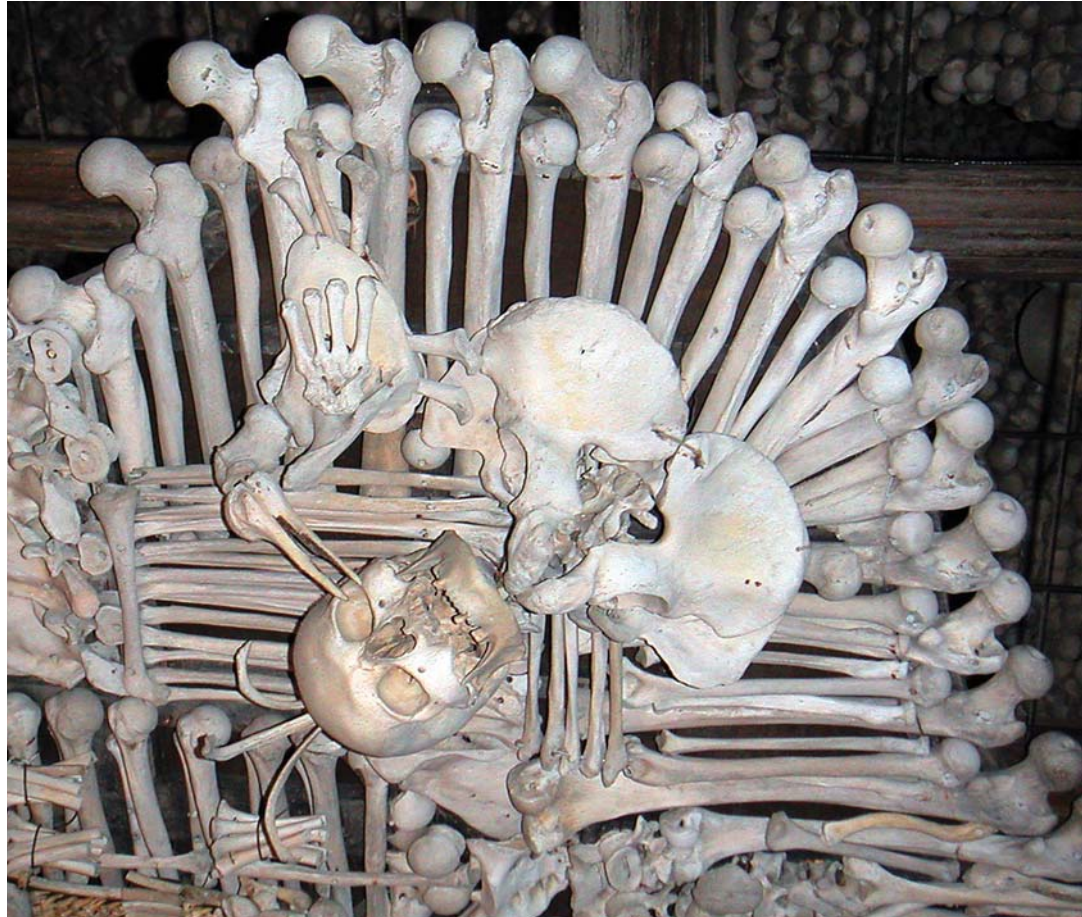
Třeboň, yet another south picturesque Bohemian town with long history, surrounded by numerous ponds nestled in pure nature. The town itself is the true paradise for history lovers or for those who just love to walk its cobblestone streets and then have a dinner in one of its great fish restaurants, its surroundings are great for bikers, hikers, canoeists or fishermen.

Winding cobblestone streets, houses built in different styles, miniature backyards and tiny square, this is the Jewish Quarter in **Třebíč**, the only fully preserved Jewish quarter in Europe and the only Jewish UNESCO heritage listing outside Israel. At a time, some 1,200 people lived on this small space, some 60 percent of the town's population. The town that today has a population of some 35 thousand has yet another UNESCO listing, the St Procopius Basilica, a unique blend of Gothic and Romanesque architecture.





Kutná Hora, an hour-long drive to the east of Prague, began in 1142 with the settlement of the Sedlec Abbey. In the town itself, you can admire the five-naved St Barbara Church, the Italian Court, formerly a royal residence and mint, the Gothic Stone House, a museum since 1902, or the St James Church with its 86-meter high tower. But do not miss Sedlec, its Gothic Cathedral of the Assumption of Our Lady and St John the Baptist and most importantly, its Cemetery Church of All Saints with the famous Ossuary. Seeing the Baroque skeletal decoration is quite an experience, albeit somewhat macabre. Both the center of Kutná Hora and the Sedlec Abbey are a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



For those who do not want to travel too far from Prague: there is a real gem near the Czech capital that is definitely worth visiting. About a 30-minute drive to the south-east will bring you to **Sázava**, a lovely town on a river of the same name. It's main attraction is an ancient monastery on a rocky cliff over one of the many meanders of the Sázava River, one of the oldest and best preserved monasteries in all of Bohemia. The monastery grew over the centuries to include a variety of architectural styles, ranging from the 11th century foundations to Gothic towers and Baroque interiors.



The dominant feature of the east Bohemian town of **Litomyšl** is the Renaissance castle dating from 1568-1581. The originally Renaissance arcade-castle of the type first developed in Italy and then adopted and further developed in central Europe in the 16th century was added to the UNESCO heritage list in 1999. Since 1945, Litomyšl, the birthplace of famous Czech composer Bedřich Smetana, has been hosting the festival of classical music Smetana's Litomyšl. The main venue of the annual event is the Litomyšl Castle.

Q&A



Gorjan Lazarov has been the general manager of the largest Czech hotel chain, Orea, for almost three years now. We spoke with him about what it takes to transform previously not-particularly-luxurious hotels into a symbol of quality and exquisite service.

Your hotels were mostly built in the 1980s. How do you manage to keep up with the competition, which is especially large in Prague?

It is not our desire to keep up with or worse, catch up to our competition. We want to be the ones who set the bar, and I believe we're on the right track. One of our biggest advantages is that Orea has the second-best brand awareness on the Czech market, which is something we can build on very well. We're massively investing in modernizing our hotels, as well as in our employees, because we want them to provide the best possible level of service to our guests. This has been working out very well as we have had great results in terms of guest happiness. We are on the path to becoming the symbol of flawless customer service in the Czech Republic.

How far along are you now in modernizing your hotels?

All rooms in the Pyramida hotel in Prague have been refurbished, so they're really luxurious now. We have also refurbished our restaurant. On the ninth floor of the hotel, we have created a unique meeting area with a beautiful view of Prague Castle. Last

December, we finished remodeling the Horizont Resort in the Bohemian Forest (Šumava), close to the German border. This hotel will be truly appreciated by parents with children as we have built there, among other things, an amazing playground for kids. We're now starting to modernize the Horal Hotel in Špindlerův Mlýn in the Giant Mountains (Krkonoše). I dare say that, once it's completed, it'll be one of the best hotels in this largest and most popular of Czech ski resorts. I'd say that we are now half way through in our hotel modernization process. There are fourteen of them in total, so we still have a lot of work to do. The rest of the hotels in our portfolio should be refurbished within two years.

Do you intend to expand your portfolio?

Yes, we would like to have thirty hotels in five years' time. We're starting a development project in Mariánské Lázně. We'll rebuild an old building and add a new extension to it. It'll be a luxury hotel aimed at the health spa clientele. We're seeking opportunities to have a five-star hotel in Prague, as well. However, we are also looking into expanding our portfolio with hotels that we wouldn't own but would only operate.

Small things may often play a big role. Do your hotels offer any small touches that would really make me happy if I were a guest in one of them?

They do, provided that you like coffee. The Orea hotels are unique in the sense that the baristas in each of them make excellent coffee for your breakfast. I'm very proud of our coffee, and not just the coffee served at breakfast. What I'm really proud of, though, is our staff, thanks to whom our guests leave with a smile on their faces.

Take your children to Buddha Café

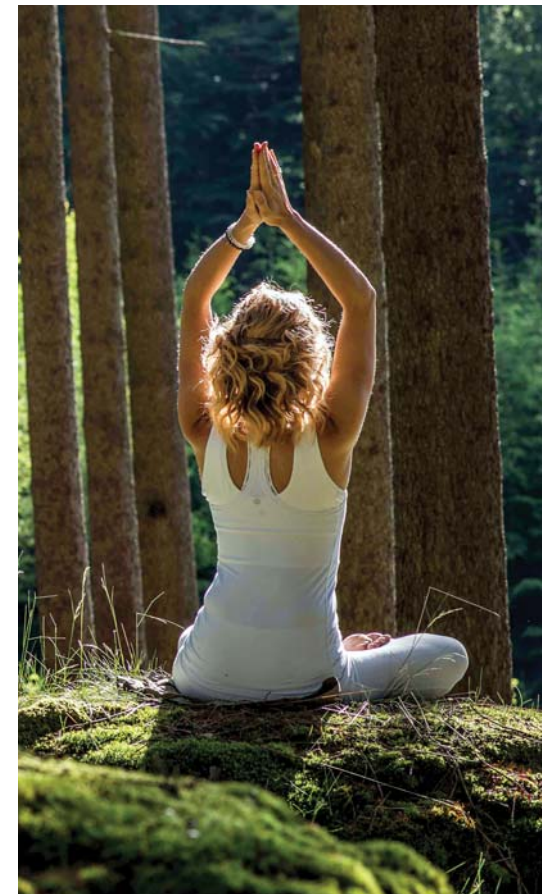


BUDDHA CAFÉ, on Balbínova Street in Prague's Vinohrady, has recently introduced a children's menu. Steamed Homemade Jiaozi – Chinese dumplings with spring onions; a Mini Bowl of Kiddie Miso Soup – Japanese broth; Tempura Donburi – a bowl of rice with vegetables or chicken; Mini Maki – sushi rolls with vegetables or salmon for young sushi lovers; and Yaki Udon – Japanese stir fry noodles, these are but a few of the meals on the menu available for our young guests. While the kids are enjoying their children's meals, their parents can take their pick from among the other new items on the menu that Buddha Café has introduced, the Back to Basics menu. This menu goes back to the essence of Asian cuisine and, at the same time, to the best recipes that have proved most popular with the guests over the years. Restaurants, bistros and food bars often turn to the ever-popular wine pairing. Buddha Café has opted for sauce pairing. This is thus the first Asian restaurant in Prague that offers a selection of twelve homemade signature sauces with their dumplings, rolls and noodles.

400 ASA

THE 400 ASA EXHIBITION in the National Gallery's Trade Fair Palace displays photos by seven prominent Czech photographers from two generations. Although the photographers mainly concentrate on the present day, they also show interest in the past. Particularly, Antonín Kratochvíl's contribution adds a historical dimension to the show, his series was born over a period of more than twenty years and was published under the title Broken Dream (New York, 1997). Karel Cudlín and Jan Mihalíček both track the revival of religious traditions, while Jan Dobrovský follows Roma families in the Czech Republic's North Bohemian Region. The exhibition draws examples from photographic series focused on the current transformation of the more broadly defined Central and Eastern European Region, including Slovakia as captured by Tomki Němec, Alžběta Jungrová's Burlesque photos taken in Prague, and Martin Vágner's Ukraine.

PAMPER YOURSELF AT AN EXTRAORDINARY ESCAPE



In 2006, Petr Zempler learnt from a friend that a place with a couple of abandoned buildings, hidden in the deep forests at the border between Bohemia and Moravia, is for sale. He made what originally seemed as a crazy and very risky decision: to buy. It took him lot of investments, lot of hard work and many sleepless nights to transform the derelict houses and the many acres of the uncared-for land to what today is one of the best wellness resorts in the country, Resort Svata Kateřina.

A bit of history

The resort is situated at the site of the original Spa of St. Catherine built at the turn of the 18th and 19th

century at the healing spring dedicated to St Catherine. The great time of the spa came a hundred years later, at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. At that time, it included also Russian spa and light and electric spa, something other resorts could hardly afford. The place was flooded with visitors suffering from all kind of ailments, be it kidney, heart or bladder problems, or just a nerve disease. The treatment, however, included also physical work, the patients were mowing meadows, milking cows and had to walk a lot. To drink a glass of fresh milk every day was an obligation. Also the restaurant and the ballroom attracted many visitors. The spa went through bad times too, though. Later, under the communist rule, it served for two years as a training facility for tractor drivers at the beginning of the 1950s, and then was transformed into a sanatorium for children with respiratory problems. That sanatorium ceased to exist in the 1990s and the whole place was abandoned and left to dilapidate.

Wellness seeks more than the absence of illness; it searches for new levels of excellence. Beyond any disease-free neutral point, wellness dedicates its efforts to our total well-being - in body, mind, and spirit.

Greg Anderson

Enough of history, let's have a look at the resort as it looks today.

Resort Svata Kateřina today is a place where you can forget all your everyday worries and concentrate solely on yourself. You can choose from many activities, from yoga to tennis or golf. The picturesque surroundings are ideal for horse riding, and yes, there are horses at the resort. Just make sure your weight does not exceed 100 kilos. And if it does, you can maybe pick up the weight losing program. Or, regardless your weight, you can opt for the yoga detox weekend. You will drink spring water, eat detox food, practice yoga and meditate. The resort offers also romantic stays. Imagine, only the two of you, romantic dinner on a pier by the lake. (Yes, there is a lake too, actually two.) Jacuzzi under the starry sky with a glass of Prosecco... And a ride in a carriage pulled by horses the next day or a bath in a lava stone bathtub filled with coconut milk, whatever you dream of.

Across five thousand years and nine thousand kilometers

The resort has added yet another attraction recently, a 1,600 m² Ayurvedic Pavilion. The wooden structure of the building floats on hundreds of huge granite pillars extracted from a nearby quarry. The glass casing of the pavilion strengthens the feeling of constant contact with the surrounding nature. A meditation garden with a waterfall, roaring stream and statues of Hindu Gods will take the guests nine thousand kilometers east and five thousand years in the past, to the cradle of Ayurveda in Kerala, India. "We decided to build the new Ayurvedic Pavilion primarily to provide our clients with Ayurvedic treatments at the highest possible level. At the same time, we wanted to expand the wellness & spa offer and increase the capacity of the existing center. There is now a long-awaited and desired pool in the pavilion," says Petr Zempler.

The pavilion, or one part of it, offers the widest range of Ayurvedic treatments in the Czech Republic and, thanks to its long-standing cooperation with the Indian Kairali Clinic, offers its clients the

highest quality service. There are six specialized rooms in the new pavilion, five of them with steam cabin for intensive absorption of therapeutic oils after Ayurvedic therapies. The rooms are furnished with original mahogany wood massage tables made in Kerala. The resort offers several Ayurvedic programs, has an Ayurvedic doctor Sanjay Das, a renowned practitioner from Karnataka, India, who studied Ayurvedic medicine and the University of Bangalore, and even an Ayurvedic chef, Rahul Gopalakrishnan, a certified Ayurvedic nutritionist from Kerala. After the therapies, you can use the vast relaxation areas and soak up the proximity and strength of the healing nature. The Ayurvedic Pavilion Atrium is great for meditation and sun therapy.

The other part of the pavilion is a classic wellness & spa. Guests can relax in Finnish sauna, in an aro-



matherapy steam cabin or in two large whirlpools, or they can take a stroll along the Kneipp path. A hall with a heated swimming pool occupies a significant part of the pavilion's wellness section.

An overall healthy place

No cars and no motorbikes are allowed in the resort with the exception of electric cars and golf carts. So unless you don't drive an electric car you will have to leave your vehicle at a guarded parking lot in the nearby town of Počátky and you will be brought to Svatá Kateřina by the resort's shuttle bus. If you have an electric car you do not have to worry about getting stuck somewhere during your way back home, the resort has charging stations, even two supercharging Tesla stations. The heating at the resort is only electric power or wood and also everything else is hundred percent ecological.

Little note at the end:

While the accommodation at the Resort Svatá Kateřina is a pure luxury, you can visit also just for a couple of hours in the afternoon or in the evening, the resort is open to general public and its food and wines are truly delicious. But we strongly suggest you stay longer, if only for the delicious and healthy breakfasts served on the pier by the lake.

After all, breakfast is said to be the most important meal of the day.

However, should you stay for one or more nights and you are traveling with your dog, be careful, retriever is the biggest size allowed.



Q&A



We interviewed **Hana Třeščíková**, Prague City Council member in charge of culture, historical monument conservation, exhibitions and tourism, on where tourism in Prague is heading now and where it should be heading in the future.

Prague is a destination immensely popular with foreign tourists, which everyone is pleased with, but a few improvements could certainly be made to what our capital city has to offer...

Definitely. Given the abundance we have here - historical buildings,

cultural events, parks, outstanding gastronomy - I do feel we are selling Prague short, which is a shame. We wish to promote Prague as a city where tourists can always find things of interest, whether these be concerts, festivals, galleries, the ballet or the opera, all of which are attractions available to them regardless of their language, as opposed to portraying Prague as a city where you can drink all night. There are groups of tourists who get here by plane in the morning, go to Dlouhá Street in the city center, where they visit all the clubs and bars, and then go back home the morning after they party night. We don't want Prague to be a "party" destination, we don't want Dlouhá Street to become a ghetto, nor do we want people to visit Prague just for the beer, even though it is very good. What's more,

such groups are always seen and heard the most, and it is not only the residents who are unhappy with this. Of course, we cannot and we don't want to prevent anybody from coming here, but we do have to regulate nightlife a little bit. We have already established the position of "night mayor". As far as this position is concerned, we were inspired by Amsterdam, but there are night mayors in other cities abroad, too.

What type of tourists are you primarily focused on?

We would like Prague to attract more affluent tourists who would stay a while and, ideally, come back again. We greatly appreciate the TouchPoint project, a joint project involving Prague City Tourism, CzechTourism, the Central Bohemian Region and Prague Airport, which can have a considerable impact on the type of tourists coming here. The airport has been doing a great job in this respect, specifically in acquiring long-haul flights to Prague. Tourists who come here on such flights do not come for just a short break, which means that they do not just go along the King's Route, have a beer and then go home. Having come such a long way, they put themselves up in a hotel, they have a longer stay and, last but not least, spend more money.

Particularly during the summer season, the center is crowded with tourists. What can be done about this?

This problem is difficult to resolve. We are trying to spread the tourists throughout Prague, to make them interested in Vyšehrad, Holešovice and other Prague neighborhoods worth visiting, but this could be a bit of a double-edged sword, as we cannot put too much strain on residential areas where people are used to having their peace and quiet. After all, most people, including the residents, have become accustomed to the fact that there are crowds of tourists on the King's Route. Moreover, those who come to Prague for the first time should not and cannot miss visiting the city center, which is understandable.

VIENNA HOUSE DIPLOMAT PRAGUE NEWLY REFURBISHED

Vienna House Diplomat Prague, a luxury conference hotel in the Prague's borough of Dejvice that has been opened as the first hotel of the Vienna House group nearly 30 years ago, has recently completed a complex renovation, including 400 refurbished guest rooms and 23 conference and meeting halls.

Its welcoming lobby now offers new services, for example a florist or a barber shop, the hotel's brand new restaurants blend Czech flavors and modern cuisine and the newly designed rooms are cozy and comfortable. The renovated meeting rooms, the largest of them accommodating up to 500 guests, are equipped with the latest technology, and coffee breaks are served in several styles, such as zero waste, brain food or fresh & healthy. For exceptional functions, be it just an extraordinary meeting, a birthday party or a wedding, the 9th floor offers a real gem: a unique loft with big terrace that offers a breathtaking view of the Prague Castle and the Petřín tower.



premium picks

Roman Raimund Straub,

globetrotter and Chief Executive Officer of the Prague Congress Centre, shares his affection for some special places in Prague.

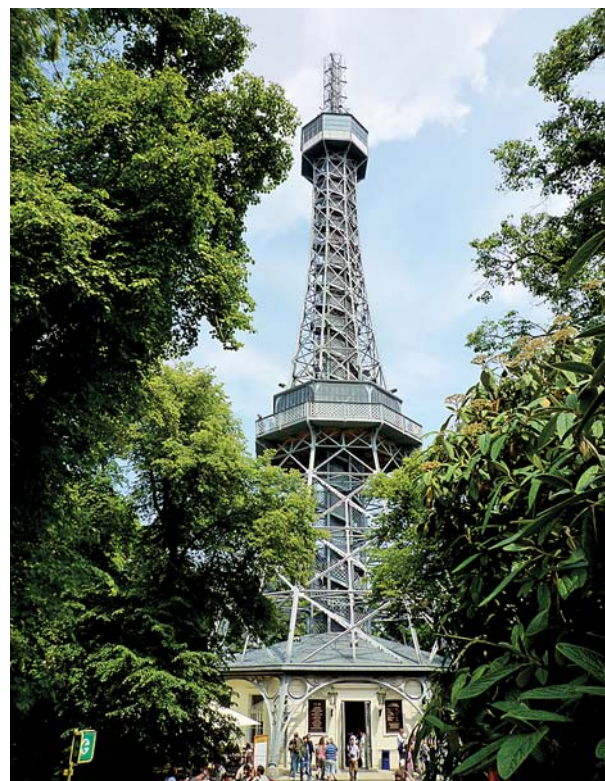


1 Library Strahov – The library of the Premonstratensian monastery at Strahov is one of the most valuable and best-preserved historical libraries. It is unique and very important to the Czech history.



4 Barrandov studios – This famous set of film studios has produced world-known movies such as Amadeus, Mission Impossible, Casino Royale and many more.

3 Kampa – This artificially constructed island in the Vltava river in central Prague is separated from the Lesser Town by a millstream known as Čertovka, which for centuries drove the local mills. I like to walk there because even in a busy season it is very calm and quiet place and one can enjoy the view of the beautiful houses by the water and the island's location which certainly fits the nickname for this place: "the Venice of Prague."



2 Petřín – The hill, filled with parks, is a favourite area for the citizens of Prague where they come to spend some family time. I like it also for the view over the city from the Petřín lookout tower, not to mention the Mirror Maze, Rose garden and Štefánek's Observatory.



5 I like the **Prague tramway** as this way you can see a lot of surroundings and travel through the time. For instance, tram no. 22 will bring you from Kampa to the Strahov Library while passing the Prague Castle.

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