



Otázka: Czech holidays

Jazyk: Angličtina

Přidal(a): Lulu

January 1

- The first of January is New Year's Day. This day also marks the beginning of the independent Czech Republic. The Czech Republic came into existence on January 1, 1993 after the separation of Czechoslovakia into two states – the Czech and Slovak Republics – on December 31, 1992.
- *Reality:* It's the day after the New Year celebration so most Czechs try to get over their hangover. Those Christians who are sober attend mass to give thanks for the previous year.

Easter Sunday and Easter Monday

- April 24-25, 2011 (dates vary every year)
- Easter is the most important Christian holiday, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus was crucified on the cross on Good Friday and came back to life on Easter Sunday. In the Czech Republic Easter is a mixture of Christian and pagan traditions.
- On the morning of Easter Monday, boys and men whip girls and women on their bottoms with a willow stick to make sure they stay healthy for the rest of the year. As a reward girls treat them with hand-painted eggs. The egg is a symbol of fertility and new life.
- *Reality:* Kids get a lot of chocolate sweets and adult men are often treated with a shot of alcohol, so they can get very weary in the middle of the day if they visit a few female friends.



May Day, International Workers' Day, Labour Day

- May 1
- An international Day of Labour is celebrated to remember a strike by American workers in Chicago that took place on May 1, 1886. The strikers were demanding an 8-hour working day.
- *Reality*: Nowadays May 1 has become a day of love when lovers kiss under blooming cherry trees or, if in Prague, go and pay tribute to K. H. Mácha, the poet of all in love.

Liberation Day

- May 8
- This day celebrates the end of the Second World War (WWII) in Europe. Soviet troops captured Berlin, which led to Germany's unconditional surrender on May 8, 1945. In some parts of the world, however, WWII continued. The American army was still fighting with Japan. Prague was liberated in the morning on May 8, 1945 by the Soviet Army.
- *Reality*: Ceremonial acts take place; the Czech president, political representatives and WWII veterans commemorate the end of the war by placing flower wreaths at memorials of the victims of WWII.

Saints Cyril and Methodius Day

- July 5
- A day to remember Cyril (Constantine) and Methodius, two Byzantine Greek brothers who came to Great Moravia in 863 to spread Christianity. They influenced the cultural life and development of Slavs because they used the old Slavic language during the masses and created the Glagolitic alphabet.



Jan Hus Day July 6

- On July 6 in 1415, religious reformer Jan Hus was burned at the stake in Kostnice. Jan Hus was a priest and reformer who blamed Catholic representatives for unholy behaviour.
- Eventually he was sentenced to death by burning for spreading his revolutionary criticism.

St. Wenceslas Day, the Day of Czech Statehood

- September 28
- The day when the whole nation remembers the main patron saint of the Czech state. Wenceslas was one of the early Premyslid dukes of Bohemia. He was born in 907, the son of Bořivoj I. and Drahomíra. In 921 Wenceslas became the duke of Bohemia and ruled until his death on September 28, 935 when he was murdered by his younger brother Boleslav I. He is the first Czech ruler to suffer a martyr's death and many legends were created afterwards.

Independent Czechoslovak State Day

- October 28
- On this day the Czechoslovak state declared independence at the end of the First World War (WW I) in 1918. Until that time Czech and Slovak countries had been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The first president, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, worked from exile on the formation and later the recognition of Czechoslovakia as an independent state.
- *Reality:* On this day the president of the republic gives honours to people who did special deeds.

Day of the Fight for Freedom and Democracy

- November 17
- A day when we remember very important milestones from our history. In 1939,



Nazis invaded Czechoslovakia and proclaimed it the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Czech students demonstrated against the occupation and the demonstration was brutally suppressed. In reaction, Czech universities were closed by the Nazis on November 17.

- In 1989 the Velvet Revolution started as a student demonstration against the communist regime. This day commemorates the struggle and fight for freedom.
- *Reality*: Some people bring flowers and light candles on Národní třída in Prague and other places connected with the Velvet Revolution.

Christmas

- December 24-26

Christmas Eve

- December 24
- Christmas in Christian tradition is a celebration of the birth of baby Jesus. Jesus was born the son of a poor carpenter Joseph and his wife Mary in a stable in Bethlehem. His arrival in this world was announced by a comet that appeared in the sky.
- *Reality*: Christmas Eve is the most important feast day of all the Czech holidays. In the morning a Christmas tree is decorated. Vegetable soup is usually served for lunch as Christmas is a fasting time. In the evening the family gathers together to have a traditional dinner that consists of fish soup and carp fillet with potato salad. After dinner children await the ringing of the bell that announces that little baby Jesus has come to visit them and left presents under the Christmas tree. People often go to a midnight mass on Christmas Eve.

Christmas Day

- December 25
- *Reality*: It is not celebrated in a special manner in the Czech Republic, but the day is a time for family visits.



St. Stephen's Day, Second Day of Czech Christmas

- December 26
- *Reality*: Family reunions continue.