



**Otázka:** My home and town

**Jazyk:** Angličtina

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## LOUNY

Louny is a small district town situated in the north-west Bohemia in Ústí nad Labem Region on the river Ohře. It covers an area about 25 square kilometres and has almost 20 000 inhabitants. It's a district centre of culture, institutions and offices, shopping and many other things.

### ● History:

The city was established in 12<sup>th</sup> century. The first known written record comes from **1115**, when it belonged to the **monastery of Kladruby**. This Romanesque settlement was situated at the place of the present St. Peter Church by the ford across the Ohře River. As a royal town, Louny was located at the tongue of land above the river in the 1260's during the reign of Přemysl Otakar II. Foundation of the city, motivated by the location on the important country road from Prague to Germany, was realised with a significant participation of **colonists from Saxony**. A **Dominican monastery**, which was destroyed in the Hussite Wars, was founded together with the town.

In the Luxembourg times the city witnessed a great boom based on intensive craft and agricultural productions, growing cereals and wine especially. Louny together with Žatec made up a **military union** during the Hussite Wars. After the devastating **fire in 1517**, the town was rebuilt and a new **St. Nicolas Church** was built. A local municipal school became famous and a great boom in wine growing occurred in the **16<sup>th</sup> century**.

During the anti-Hapsburgs uprising between 1618-1620 Louny joined the rebel party; shortly before the Battle of **White Mountain, Albrecht of Valdštejn** occupied Louny, required high protection money and established his headquarters here. That period was catastrophic for the town also because of a series of horrific plagues. Louny became an ordinary town of a local meaning after the **Thirty Years War**.

3 monarchs of anti-Napoleon coalition were accommodated here in **1813**. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Louny became the seat of the **District Office**. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 1960's and 1970's there were carried out vast **demolitions in the historical centre**. That was the reason why many magnificent Renaissance houses, a town hall and city gates disappeared. Louny began to develop economically in the **second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century** when railway workshops, a sugar mill, brewery, slaughter house, mills and financial institutions were founded. **In 1896** the first secondary school – the grammar school – was opened, the Václav Hlavatý Grammar School today.

Between 1872 and 1904 Louny became a **railway crossroad** with main directions to Prague, Most, Žatec, Libochovice and Rakovník. A great building of residential houses was carried out at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Residential areas were situated at the places where agricultural land used to spread out originally. During the 1970's the original Žatec suburb was demolished and a panel housing estate was built instead. Louny has always been situated on the language border. E.g., the town of Postoloprty, lying 8 km of western direction, was German already in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. But the Czech character of Louny has prevailed during its whole history. Since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Louny has been the seat of the **District Office**. In 1960 the Districts of Žatec and Podbořany were joined to it.

Louny area is the place of birth of several famous personalities: the poet **Jaroslav Vrchlický**; **Kamil Hilbert**, an architect who completed the building of St.Vitus' Cathedral in Prague; **Václav Hlavatý**, a world-known mathematician. The neighbouring borough of Cítoliby is the architect **Josef Mocker's** place of birth; the poet **Konstantin Biebl** was born in a close village of Slavětín.

**St. Nicolas Church** is the most significant architectural monument in Louny. Only a tower remained from an original Gothic building and a three-nave hall was built between 1519 and 1538. Benedict Rejt, its architect, was also buried in the church but his grave has not been

preserved. Also **St. Peter's Church** from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, **God's Mother Church** from 1493 and the **Church of Fourteen Holy Helpers** from 1716 can be named among other church buildings. The churches of the Bohemian Brethren and the Czechoslovakian Hussite Church are important constructivist monuments from the 1930's. The house **No.57** at Mírové Square, called Daliborka, with Renaissance gables and a log-cabin room on the first floor has been preserved from the middle ages and is **the seat of the District Archives**. A late-Gothic hall with ribbed vaulting has been preserved in the house No.43 in Pivovarská Street. The building serves as exhibition premises of the **District Museum**.

**The town hall** at Mírové Square was built in neo-Renaissance style and dates from **1887**. A housing development for railway workshop workers from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which was designed by **Jan Kotěra**, certainly has its place in the history of the present architecture. The town centre is surrounded by city walls with bastions and **Žatec Gate**. Louny fortification in its today's shape is a result of the gradual reconstruction in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Other historical monuments include e.g. the plague column, Baroque Hospital; the Poděbradova Street represents the Secession with its houses and buildings; other places are Jiráskův Mill or Jewish Synagogue.

Also the surrounding of Louny has a lot of things to offer, e.g. in Peruc the chateau or Oldřichův oak-tree, the chateau in Libochovice, the monastery in Panenský Týnec or Březno, where we can visit the open-air museum.

Louny is also a town of many cultural opportunities. We can visit our 3D cinema, the marionette theatre, also the Vrchlický theatre, which was recently rebuilt, then many parks, swimming hall, the paragliding centre on Raná Hill etc. etc.

## **MY HOME**

I live with my mum, my sister and my stepfather in Kotěra Colony in a detached house at the edge of the town. I used to live in Postoloprty until my parents divorced when I was 15, so I'm not an old settler of Louny. The house belongs to my stepfather, it's not very big, it includes a small cellar, 5 rooms and a fence which is under reconstruction now and it's going to be an attic, where my sister and I will have our rooms and also a balcony. The house is very old, it

was built in 1905 and it looks like it's going to fall down in every second. Anyway, it is surrounded with a quite large garden, where is a lot of mess now, something like a store of building materials, many different iron things and another very "useful" stuffs. I hope sometimes it will look like a garden.

At home we have a small hall, where we have only the shoe cabinet, because nothing else could fit into this room. Then we have a bigger corridor, from which we can go in all other rooms in the house. Firstly, there are the toilet, the pantry and my parent's room, and then there's a small kitchen and the same bathroom, with a basin and a bath tub and a washing machine inbuilt in the wall. In the corridor opposite the kitchen, there's the living room. We use it also as an eating room and my father has there his work-corner including a big table with a computer, a lot of papers, CDs, wires and mess on it.

In the corridor there are two doors on the left. The first leads to the fence and the second to the cellar, where is also a small store of cleaning tools and preparations, because my stepfather owns a cleaning company. At the end of the corridor there is the room of my stepsister, who doesn't live with us anymore, so we have there a small living room now; and from this room I get to my and my sister's room, which we share. I'd like to have my own room, because my sister and I are different creatures with different habits and natures, and sometimes we have problems with each other. But fortunately, my sister is in Prague during the week, because she visits there the school at the airport, so I have a bit privacy and space. Our room isn't very big, we have there one big clothes cabinet, and one chest of drawers, where stands a TV on it. Otherwise, we have both our own bed, night table, work table with a computer and a shelf with a mirror.