



Otázka: Prague

Jazyk: Angličtina

Přidal(a): Kate

BASIC INFORMATION

Prague is the capital and the biggest city of the Czech Republic, the seat of the President, government and parliament and the political, cultural and economic centre of the country. Prague lies in the centre of Bohemia on both banks of the river Vltava, not far from its confluence with the Elbe. The whole city consists of 22 administrative districts. The most famous and the oldest parts are the Old Town, The Lesser Town, the New Town, Josefov, Hradčany and Vyšehrad.

According to foreigners, this old town with a long history is one of the most beautiful towns in the world. Due to its unique architecture, Prague historical centre was in 1992 put on the UNESCO world cultural heritage list.

Prague is sometimes called "Golden Prague", "The Mother of Cities" or "Prague of Hundred Spires", because there are a lot of historical monuments and church towers and domes.

POPULATION

Prague has about 1.2 million inhabitants and a lot of people from the other parts of the country commute to work to Prague. The biggest ethnic groups are: the Slovaks, the Ukrainians and the Russians. A big group of people is created by students, because there are a lot of universities and colleges, for example Charles University, which is the oldest university in Central and Eastern Europe.



HISTORY

A legend connects the foundation of Prague with Princess Libuše of the Přemyslid dynasty, who prophesied the future glory of Prague which “would touch the stars”.

In the 9th century Prince Bořivoj founded a castle and it became the seat of princes of the Přemyslid dynasty.

In the 10th century another castle, Vyšehrad was built and it became temporarily a seat of Přemyslid Princes too.

The Golden Age of the city came with the king Charles IV. During his reign Prague was the biggest city on the continent at that time. He founded Charles University in 1348 and the New Town, and promoted the construction of Charles Bridge and St. Vitus Cathedral.

In the 15th century Prague was the centre of the Hussite movement.

At the end of the 16th century Prague became the seat of Rudolph II, who invited artists and scientists there, for example Tycho de Brahe or Johannes Kepler.

At the end of the 18th century Czech scholars and writers began the process of national revival and Prague became the centre of Czech cultural life.

In 1918 Prague was chosen as the capital of the independent Czechoslovak Republic and Prague Castle as the seat of the first Czechoslovakian President T. G. M.

In 1939 it was occupied by German troops and on 9th May, 1945 it was liberated by the Russians.

In 1968 the process of „normalization“ began and the Velvet Revolution on 17th November 1989 began democratic changes in our society and finally Czechoslovakia was divided into 2 independent states on 1st January 1993 and Prague became the capital of Czech Republic.

SIGHTS



PRAGUE CASTLE

Without any doubt, the Prague Castle is the dominant of the city. It is a block of palaces, religious buildings, fortresses and houses from all periods of history. In the past, it was the seat of Czech princes and kings, and since 1918 it has been the seat of the president.

The most impressive building at the Castle is St. Vitus Cathedral, which was designed by two famous architects, Petr Parléř and Matthias of Arras.

The most admired part of the cathedral is the Gothic St. Wenceslas Chapel, where the crowning jewels are kept.

THE OLD TOWN SQUARE

In Prague, there are a lot of important squares. The Old Town Square is the centre of the Old Town. It is surrounded by beautifully decorated houses with coloured facades and gables of all styles. The best known building in the square is the Old Town Hall with an Astronomical clock by Master Hanuš.

In the centre of the Square, there is the John Huss Monument. Not far from the square, there is the Bethlehem Chapel, where John Huss preached.

JEWISH TOWN

Paris Street takes us to the Jewish town. Nowadays, there are only a few synagogues and the Old Jewish Cemetery. There is the Old New Synagogue, which is the oldest active synagogue in Central Europe.

WENCESLAS SQUARE

Wenceslas Square is the heart of the New Town. It is a 750 m long boulevard lined with banks, department stores, boutiques, shops, hotels, restaurants, cafés, theatres and cinemas.



The upper end of the Square is closed by the National Museum which contains historic and natural history collections.

In the upper part of the square stands the St Wenceslas Memorial, the bronze statue by J. V. Myslbek. It is a favourite meeting place of tourists.

On the bank of the river Vltava, there is the National Theatre. I have never been there to any performance; I only went there for an excursion with my schoolmates.

CHARLES BRIDGE

Charles Bridge is the oldest and the most charming of the 15 Prague bridges. It is decorated with statues and it is a favourite place for walks and tourist attraction.

Every year, Prague is a popular destination for millions of tourists from all over the world.

SHOPPING AND ENTERTAINMENT

In Prague there are a lot of opportunities for shopping and entertainment. The most famous boutiques are in the Paris Street – it is the most expensive street in Prague. A lot of shops are in the Wenceslas Square too.

In Prague there are a lot of cinemas, theatres and galleries too. The most famous theatres are the National Theatre, Vinohrady Theatre and Theatre Na Zábřeh.

TRANSPORT

Prague is an important road, rail (Wilson Station), air and river transport junction. Ruzyně Airport was renamed; the new name is Airport of Václav Havel.



INDUSTRIES

There are many industries in Prague too. The most important kind of industry are the engineering, food industry (dairies, breweries- Staropramen, confectionery- Orion), textile, chemical and film industries.