

Day Trips from Prague





Good-bye Prague

According to a great number of people, Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, is one of the most beautiful cities in the world; however, it is not the only place that is worth visiting in the country.

Seeing all local sights would be a task for a lifetime. In the Czech Republic, there are almost two hundred castles, châteaux and ruined castles open to the public. A number of historic cities and well-known residences of nobility may be found within two or three hours' drive from Prague, and so they may be visited easily during a one-day trip. The aim of this booklet is to acquaint you with at least some of them.

The below mentioned destinations were selected not only thanks to their value, but also with regard to their ease of access. They all may be reached by the public transport; moreover, some of them are among the popular destinations offered by travel agencies. If you want more information about these places, your hotel staff will be happy to provide it.

Bus and train timetables – www.idos.cz

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www.czechtourism.com

Official tourist presentation of the Czech Republic

Český Krumlov

A town rich in history and full of colours today



The South Bohemian town of Český Krumlov is, after Prague, the most frequently visited tourist destination. The town is situated on the meandering river Vltava, which flows round the historic city centre. Český Krumlov's main attraction is, undoubtedly, its well-preserved ancient beauty, intact over centuries. On a hill over the river, a huge **castle**, which formerly belonged to the most powerful Czech noble family, the Lords of Rožmberk, stands out; its multicoloured Renaissance tower provides a magnificent view of the surrounding countryside. The castle houses a **Baroque theatre**, unique in Europe, which has been remarkably preserved, together with the original costumes, stage scenery and lighting apparatus; the theatre is open to the public, but, for the sake of better conservation, the number of visitors allowed inside is limited. You will find plenty of stylish restaurants, cafes and



souvenir shops in Český Krumlov. Every year numerous cultural events and music festivals are held there. **The Egon Schiele Art Centre**, named after a prominent Viennese Art Nouveau painter, hosts exhibitions of major Czech as well as international artists. In **Photo Studio Seidel**, a newly opened museum, you will see a great number of valuable photographs showing life of people in the Czech-Austrian-German border areas at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The main event of the year, the Five-petalled Rose Festival with participants in period costumes, is held in June; then the towns' inhabitants bring back to memory the Renaissance era, when the town of Český Krumlov flourished most. Theatre performances, period music concerts, and popular attractions as jousting are part of the programme, as well as a night parade with fire brands through the town.



Český Krumlov

www.ckrumlov.cz

www.jiznicechy.cz

TRANSPORT:

Bus – direct lines run several times a day from the Florenc coach station (underground station Florenc), the Na Knížecí coach station (underground station Anděl), and the Roztyly coach station (underground station Roztyly). The journey takes approximately 3 hours.

Car – GPS: 48°48'39.282"N, 14°18'55.758"E

Karlovy Vary

Film stars on the spa town's colonnade



West Bohemia has been world-famous for its tradition of providing treatment in mineral baths; Karlovy Vary, with its thirteen mineral springs that have curative effects, is the best-known of West Bohemian spa towns. Moreover, a herb liqueur named **Becher (Becherovka)**, which is produced there, is often called an additional one of Karlovy Vary's curative springs. Also Karlovy Vary wafers, thin dinner-plate-sized crispy wafers, are well-known for their delicate taste. The town prospered most in the 19th century, when the majority of bath houses and the elegant colonnade connecting individual springs under one roof were built. At that time, the most prominent personalities of European political and cultural life used to undergo treatment and meet there, as e.g. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Ludwig van Beethoven, Francois Chateaubriand or Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol.

Like Cannes, Venice or Berlin, also Karlovy Vary hosts an A-category prestigious **International Film Festival**, where film fans, producers and, for sure,



film stars meet every year in early July; this now traditional event was first held very soon after the Second World War.

Throughout the year, numerous other cultural, social and sports events are organised in the city. The scope and variety of events are so wide that, in this respect, Karlovy Vary may compete with other, much larger cities: the events offered range from theatre performances, classical music concerts, film shows and art exhibitions in local galleries to casino visits or horse races. Karlovy Vary's **Golf Club** takes pride in being the oldest golf course in the Czech Republic.



Karlovy Vary

www.karlovyvary.cz

www.kr-karlovarsky.cz

TRANSPORT:

Bus – a direct line runs from Florenc coach station (underground station Florenc) almost every 30 minutes. The journey takes approximately 2 hours 15 minutes

Car – GPS: 50°13'28.984"N, 12°52'58.399"E

Kutná Hora

A silver treasury of the kingdom



In the Middle Ages, Kutná Hora was called the Czech Kingdom's silver treasury thanks to its silver mines. Traces of its former wealth may be seen wherever you go: you will admire not only the magnificent **Late Gothic St. Barbara's Cathedral**, dedicated to Barbara, the patron saint of miners, but also impressive residential houses that belonged to rich patricians, or a richly decorated Late Gothic Stone Fountain at an upper square.

The Czech Silver Museum, another popular tourist attraction, offers, apart from its permanent exhibition, a tour in underground shafts under the city. Visitors, equipped with lamps and helmets and wearing traditional miner's period costumes with hoods, walk through about 250m of the original mine's underground shafts. The sight-seeing tour shows all parts of the production process that the iron ore used to undergo before, finally, coins were minted. Prague groschen, silver coins of Czech kings minted in Kutná Hora, were accepted and welcome all over Europe in the past. The city enjoyed



greatest prosperity under the rule of King Charles IV; Kutná Hora's citizens commemorate the king's era by holding a festival called **Royal Silver-Plating** every year in June.

In a nearby village of Sedlec, close to the railway station, **the Church of All Saints** with its Ossuary, one of the most remarkable local historic monuments may be found. The decoration in its chapel, including the altar and chandeliers, is made from human skulls and bones; however, the idea of this unique decoration is not to shock or scare visitors, but to remind them of the transience of human life.



Kutná Hora

www.kutnahora.cz

www.centralbohemia.cz

TRANSPORT:

Train – direct trains run from the Main train station several times a day, or change in Kolín. The journey takes 1 hour; the train station in Kutná Hora is about 3 km away from the city centre, it is possible to take a local bus or train.

Bus – on week days there are direct lines from the Florenc coach station (underground station Florenc) almost every hour; direct lines run also from the Černý Most coach station (underground station Černý Most) several times a day. The journey takes approximately 1 hour 30 minutes.

Car – GPS: 49°56'59.129"N, 15°16'7.413"E

Karlštejn Castle

A gem in the royal crown



The most significant European ruler in the Middle Ages, Emperor **Charles IV**, who founded Prague's Charles University, built St. Vitus's Cathedral as well as a stone bridge over the Vltava now bearing his name, built an unassailable castle called Karlštejn southwest of Prague. The castle, only one day on horseback away from Prague, served the ruler as a refuge, where he could meditate and pray, and also as a place of safety, where he could keep the royal coronation jewels and holy relics.

The unique **Chapel of the Holy Cross**, whose massive walls are up to seven meters thick, is situated on the upper floor of the Great Tower; its walls and ceiling are inlaid with gold and semi-precious stones. Entirely unique is also the Chapel's decoration of wall paintings – a collection of almost 130 panel paintings depicting Catholic saints; with the exception of Italy, nowhere



re else in Europe has such an extensive collection of 14th century paintings been preserved. The castle is open to the public; however, the Chapel of the Holy Cross may be visited only after a reservation made in advance prior to the visit.

Karlštejn is surrounded by the Czech Karst, hilly countryside with white lime stone rocks, which is an official national nature preserve. Its best-known place of interest – **Koněprusy Caves** – is to be found southwest of Karlštejn, approximately 10 km away from the castle. During the sight-seeing tour, which is over 500 m long and includes about 500 steps, visitors may admire underground halls decorated with numerous stalactite forms; the average temperature in the caves is not more than 11° C, even on hot summer days.



Karlštejn

www.hradkarlstejn.cz

www.centralbohemia.cz

TRANSPORT:

Train – direct trains run from the Main train station at least once every hour. The journey takes 45 minutes. The train station at Karlštejn is situated about 2 km away from the castle.

Car – GPS: 49°56'21.701"N, 14°11'16.37"E

Konopiště Château

The Belle Époque in Central-European style



Konopiště is a romantic château located outside the town of Benešov, southeast of Prague; it used to serve as a summer residence of Archduke Franz Ferdinand d'Este, the successor to the Austro-Hungarian throne, whose assassination in Sarajevo in summer 1914 triggered off World War I. The archduke was a famous art collector and an enthusiastic hunter; therefore, nowadays visitors may admire extensive collections of antiques, a large **collection of hunting trophies** from all over the world. Moreover, the Konopiště collection of historic weapons and armours is the largest of its kind in the Czech Republic. The building had initially been constructed as a Medieval castle, which was later rebuilt a number of times. After the reconstruction at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the château acquired its present appearance and interior design. Although **Franz Ferdinand d'Este** furnished his favourite residence in historic-like style, he equipped it with all available luxurious modern amenities: running water, central heating, electric lighting, and, in 1900, even a passenger lift.

The château is so large and its collections so extensive that it offers three separate sight-seeing tours for visitors.



The château is situated in the middle of a big landscaped park with a lake; the park is open to the public. In the close vicinity of the château, on the site of the former Baroque garden, a well-kept **Rose Garden** with a big hothouse containing rare warm-requiring plants is to be found. The garden is extraordinary in terms of its botanical value; moreover, it is designed in a sophisticated way and hosts a number of fine statues.



Konopiště

www.zamek-konopiste.cz

www.centralbohemia.cz

TRANSPORT:

Train – trains run from the Main train station to Benešov at least every hour. The journey takes 1 hour 15 minutes. The château is about 30 minutes from the station on foot, or it is possible to use the local transport.

Bus – direct lines to Benešov run from the Roztyly coach station (underground station Roztyly) every hour on week days. The journey takes 40 minutes. The château is about a half an hour's walk from the coach station; it is possible to use the local transport.

Car – GPS: 49°46'46.31"N, 14°39'23.55"E

PLANNING EXCURSIONS



Český Šternberk Castle

My castle, my home



Český Šternberk is the **oldest inhabited family residence** in the Czech Republic. Founded in 1241, the castle is still owned by the descendants of its founders, the Sternbergs, noblemen from the starlit hill (as a poetic translation of the name may be), who belong among the oldest Czech aristocratic families. The castle was nationalised and state-owned during the communist era, but the Sternbergs got it back in restitution and started to live there again. The present appearance of the castle is a result of numerous alterations and reconstructions in the course of centuries. From the outside, it has preserved, to a large extent, its Medieval character and still looks like a fortress; the interior rooms, on the contrary, reflect the life style of aristocracy in the Baroque period. A great deal of the castle's interior is open to the public; the sight-seeing tour shows fifteen rooms, richly furnished with period furniture, paintings, and family art collections. The Sternberg collection of period graphic prints, thematically focused on the history of the Thirty-Year War, is quite unique. In addition, **the collection of copperplate engravings**, collected by Jiří Šternberg at the beginning of the 20th century, which includes 545 prints, is considered as one of the most remarkable collections concerning this theme. The exhibition rooms also host an intriguing collection of historic weapons, collections of valuable porcelain, and various handicraft objects produced in the past centuries.



At the foot of the castle hill, along both sides of the river Sázava, Český Šternberk, a small village bearing the same name, is situated, which is accessible by train. The railway running along the Sázava valley, called **the Sázava Pacific**, ranks among the most beautiful scenic railways in the Czech Republic. At some weekends in the summer months, the Czech Railways operate special tourist trains drawn by a historic steam engine.



Český Šternberk

www.hradceskysternberk.cz

www.centralbohemia.cz

TRANSPORT:

Train – trains run from the Main train station approximately every hour. Change trains in Čerčany. The journey takes about 2 hours.

Bus – very few direct lines, it is necessary to change in Benešov or Vlašim. All buses run from the Rožtyly coach station (underground station Rožtyly). The journey takes almost 2 hours.

Car – GPS: 49°48'33.74"N, 14°55'35.861"E

Křivoklát Castle

A fortress and, at the same time, a place to relax

West of Prague in the forest, in the midst of Křivoklátsko, a natural landscaped preserve, one of the most beautiful Czech castles, **Křivoklát**, is to be found. It has ranked among the most significant Czech royal castles for centuries because it has always been an important stop on the way to Germany; moreover, Czech kings and princes took pleasure in using it as a hunting base when hunting in the surrounding forests, or as a prison for prominent prisoners.



From the distance, Křivoklát looks rather severe; surprisingly, its interior architectural decoration is very elegant. **The Castle Chapel** with its Late Gothic star-ribbed vault and an exquisitely carved altar is a wonderful example of the best of late 15th century courtly art. Above the gate to the castle, visitors may admire a richly decorated relief showing the Czech Kingdom's emblem with royal initials dating back to the 15th century as well. They may also see



the castle prison with torture chambers and Medieval torture instruments, which evoke the castle's history as a prison.

All the year round, the castle regularly hosts **music festivals, theatre festivals and fairs**. In the castle courtyard, various artisans, such as potters, gunsmiths, basket-makers, wood-carvers or herbwomen have stalls and offer their products: imitation Gothic cups, leather goods, swords, shields, and halberds are available.

Křivoklát

www.krivoklat.cz

www.centralbohemia.cz

TRANSPORT:

Train – trains run from the Main train station almost every hour, but it is necessary to change in Beroun. The journey takes 1 hour 30 minutes.

Car – GPS: 50°2'16.36"N, 13°52'18.59"E

Nelahozeves

A Renaissance pearl on the river Vltava



The lovely Nelahozeves chateau is the seat of the Lobkowiczs, a noted noble family. The three-winged building with corner buttresses is a unique example of Czech Renaissance architecture. Curiously enough, the chateau has preserved its original form without having undergone any major construction modifications in later years. Its biggest attraction is an extremely valuable collection of paintings and art handicraft objects. In the castle interior, visitors will see beautiful furniture, a great number of religious objects, articles of precious glass, ceramic, and porcelain, musical instruments, and valuables made of precious metals. Two halls are dedicated to hunting and shooting – a popular pastime of the gentry, inherently linked with its social life. Nelahozeves is also well-known as a birthplace of **Antonín Dvořák** (1841-1904), a Czech composer, the son of a local butcher. In the house where Dvořák was born and where his father used to have a tavern there



is a museum today. Every year for more than ten years now, from spring to autumn, the chateau hosts a series of concerts called Dvořák's Musical Nelahozeves.

If you travel by car, a trip to Nelahozeves may be linked with a visit to nearby **Mělník**, a historic city with a castle located at the confluence of the Elbe and Moldau rivers. On the southern slope of the castle hill in the city centre as well as on other neighbouring slopes, a lot of grapevine is grown; visiting the castle wine cellars from the 14th century is an attractive part of the sight-seeing tour. Tradition has it that grapevine has been grown in the Mělník region for over a thousand years. The first vineyard is said to have been founded by Saint Ludmila, a princess from the ruling Přemyslid dynasty. The Mělník vine-growing region is rather exceptional as it is one of the northernmost in Europe.



Nelahozeves

www.lobkowiczevents.cz

www.centralbohemia.cz

TRANSPORT:

Train – trains to Nelahozeves run from the Masaryk train station almost every hour, and trains to Kralupy nad Vltavou, which is 4 km away from the chateau, even more frequently. The journey takes about 1 hour.

Car – GPS: 50°15'38.74"N, 14°18'5.22"E

Mělník

www.chateaumelnik.eu

www.centralbohemia.cz

TRANSPORT:

Bus – direct lines run from the Holešovice train station (underground station Holešovice) several times an hour. The journey takes 30 minutes.

Car – GPS: 50°21'3.04"N, 14°28'23.851"E

Bohemian Paradise

An area of sandstone rock towns and meadows with flowers in bloom



The Bohemian Paradise is a picturesque region nearly 100 km northeast of Prague. It is famous for its extraordinary natural diversity and numerous historic sights. The region's dominant and best-known symbol is, undoubtedly, **Trosky**, castle ruins, consisting of remains of Medieval towers built on two basalt cones. Another popular tourist destination is **Kost**, a spectacular castle, hidden in the Plakánek valley.

For most visitors, however, the Bohemian Paradise is predominantly an area with sandstone rock towns – listed in UNESCO's European Geoparks Network –, each of which offers a fantastic natural maze of deep canyons and high rock towers, which were being created, due to wind and water related processes, over millions of years. Lovers of **hiking** will welcome a dense network of marked tourist trails, ladders attached directly to rocks to help hikers climb up, and also small view plateaus on rock tops.



A number of places may be reached while **biking**; moreover, there are opportunities for lovers of adrenalin sports. Rock towers in the Bohemian Paradise are attractive destinations for **mountain climbers**, and there are also several places suitable for **paragliding** in the region.

The city of **Turnov** is a good starting point for excursions in its vicinity: the nearest rocks are only 5 km away, the ruins of the Trosky castle about 15 km southeast of Turnov. In the city itself, it is possible to visit **Hrubý Rohozec**, a lovely château, or the local museum hosting unique collections of precious stones and jewellery. The Bohemian Paradise is a major deposit of **Czech garnets**, traditional stones used in Czech jeweller's craft.

Turnov

www.cesky-raj.info

TRANSPORT:

Train – direct trains run from the Main train station every two hours. The journey takes 2 hours.

Bus – direct lines to Turnov run frequently from the Florenc coach station (underground station Florenc) or the Černý Most coach station (underground station Černý Most). The journey takes 1 hour 30 minutes.

Car – GPS: 50°35'14.789"N, 15°9'29.125"E

Terezín Memorial and the town of Litoměřice

In front of the Terezín Ghetto's gate



Terezín, established as a fortress, is notorious as Teresienstadt, according to its German name. During the Second World War, the Nazis turned the Terezín fortress into a concentration camp, a ghetto, through whose gates passed approximately 140 000 Jews from all over Europe; they were massed there before they were deported to extermination camps further east. Over 35 000 people died in Terezín itself. Moreover, **the Small Fortress** next to the ghetto served as a police prison of the Gestapo. Shortly after the end of the Second World War, the Terezín Memorial was created, with the aim of preserving this site of suffering to provide an enduring memory to future generations. The fortress itself is a remarkable architectural work; it took over ten years to build, the total fortress area covers almost 400 hectares, and the overall length of its underground passages connecting the individual parts amounts to 30 km. If necessary, the surroundings of the fortress were to be artificially flooded out. Considering its construction and strategic concept, Terezín ranks among the most sophisticated fortress structures in the world; undoubtedly, it is the top master work of fortress construction in the late 18th century.



Only a few kilometres away from Terezín, on the other side of the river Elbe, **Litoměřice**, a historic town, is situated. Its historic sights are worth seeing: a large square with patrician houses and arcades, numerous churches, a **bishop's residence**, or preserved remains of the former town ramparts. In addition, the North Bohemian Art Gallery, a major regional museum of art, which organises numerous art exhibitions and hosts a very good collection of old Czech art, is to be found in Litoměřice.

Terezín and Litoměřice

www.pamatnik-terezin.cz

www.litomerice.cz

TRANSPORT:

Bus – buses to Terezín and Litoměřice (two subsequent stops) run from the Holešovice coach station (underground station Holešovice) almost every hour. The journey takes 1 hour.

Terezín Memorial

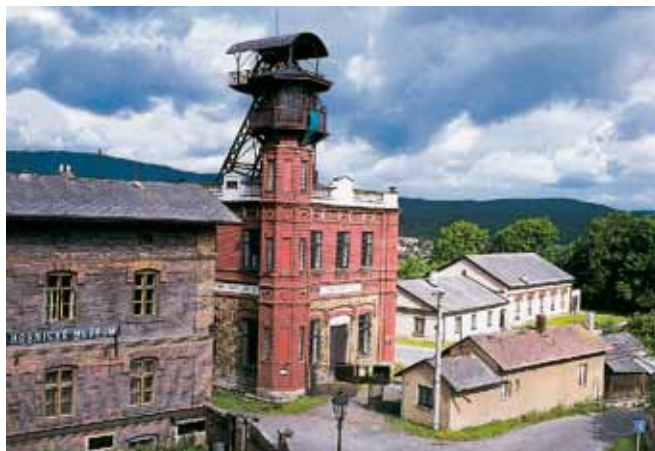
Car – GPS: 50°30'52.266"N, 14°9'56.726"E

Litoměřice

Car – GPS: 50°32'0.651"N, 14°7'53.953"E

Příbram

A secret on top of a hill and under the hill



In the past, Příbram used to be a significant mining town; today, none of its mines is in operation any longer. However, some have been preserved as technical monuments administered by the local **Mining Museum**. In Příbram's Little Castle-Ernestinum, visitors may see a permanent exhibition of photographs by **František Drtikol** (1883—1961), an art photographer and a native of Příbram, and a museum of anticommunist resistance. As a part of the museum, it is possible to visit **the Vojna Memorial**, situated in the town's vicinity; this place is a former gulag: a work camp where political prisoners were kept in the 1950s.

Svatá Hora at Příbram is a major European pilgrimage centre of the Marian cult. This extensive complex includes a holy shrine, cloisters, and a number of chapels; it was built on the site of an original Gothic church in the 17th century. The best Czech artists of the time participated in the construction and decoration of the Church of the Virgin Mary. On top of a hill, the Svatá Hora pilgrimage complex looms above the city, linked with it by a Broque staircase with 365 steps, now roofed over. The main object of pilgrims' admiration is the miraculous Svatá Hora statuette of Virgin Mary. The main pilgrimage is held every year on the third Sunday after Whitsuntide. The complex is open to the public; a guided tour is available on request.



This indicates officially certified accommodation facilities



This indicates official tourist information centres

Published by Sign-Print for CzechTourism
Prague 2009

Text: © Jan Skřivánek

Translation: © Zdena Pošvicová

Photos: © CzechTourism, Pavel Frič, Dan Friedlaender & Sr., Jaroslav Jeřábek, Miroslav Krob & Jr., Roman Maleček, Libor Sváček,
Vydavatelství MCU s.r.o., Archiv Posázaví o.p.s.
Printed: Print Design & Production s.r.o.

Official tourist presentation of the Czech Republic
www.czechtourism.com

Příbram

www.pribram-city.cz

www.centralbohemia.cz

TRANSPORT:

Bus – direct lines run from the Na Knížecí coach station (underground station Anděl) every 30 minutes. The journey takes 1 hour.

Car – GPS: 49°41'23.725"N, 14°0'37.403"E

Day Trips from Prague

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