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# Travel Information for the Czech Republic

## A. Transportation Information

**Vienna:** Name & Airport Code: Vienna International Airport (VIE) Web: [www.viennaairport.com](http://www.viennaairport.com). The airport is located about 30 minutes from central Vienna. It is a well- connected hub, and you can expect to find several flights to get you here.

### To and From the Airport

**By commuter train:** The S-Bahn is the commuter rail that will provide the most convenient connection to the city center. Look for the S7 line, then hop on the train to Floridsdorf, get off at Wien Mitte-Landstraße; it will take about 25 minutes to reach the city center from the airport. Once you are in the city, take the U-Bahn to wherever you would like. The station for the commuter train is one level below arrivals. Make sure you purchase a Vienna Zone 100 ticket (for the inner Vienna area) and one VOR ('outside zone') ticket. Validate your ticket at the red ticket machines on the train platforms before boarding; conductors will charge you if you don't validate it! Train schedules can be found at <http://www.oebb.at/en/index.jsp>.

**By City Airport Train:** (CAT) This non-stop train takes you to Wien Mitte- Landstraße in 16 minutes. It leaves on the :05 and :35 of each hour; if you are not there for those times or are headed to a different part of the city center, take the commuter train.

**By Shuttle Bus:** Buses go frequently between the airport and the city center, operated by Postbus. The tickets can be purchased with cash from the operator.

**By Taxi:** In Austria, cab fare needs to be negotiated prior to the ride. It should cost around €25-30 to get to the city center. You can also work with Airport Service Wien for direct transfer. Details can be found at <http://www.airportservice.at/airport.htm>. Another taxi service is Rosenov Airport Service, which provides direct transfer: [http://www.rosenov.at/airport\\_taxi\\_en/rosenov\\_en.htm](http://www.rosenov.at/airport_taxi_en/rosenov_en.htm)

**Prague:** Name and airport code: International Airport Vaclav Havel (Ruzyně) (PRG) Web: <http://www.prg.aero/en/>. The airport is located 20km (12 miles) northwest of Prague central.

### To and From the Airport

**By Shuttle Bus:** Airport Express buses leave every 30 minutes from Prague's main train station, Hlavní nádraží, or Praha hl.n. Service begins at 5:45 am and ends at 9:15 pm. Tickets can be obtained from the driver. Regular shuttle bus transportation is available between the Václav Havel Airport Prague and the city center ("V Celnici" street, in front of CSA terminal, 50 meters from Republic Square - náměstí Republiky). <http://www.cedaz.cz/>

**By Hotel Shuttle:** If you are staying extra nights in Prague, your hotel should have some shuttles heading to the airport that you can reserve. These shuttles are generally less expensive than private taxis.

**By Taxi:** Feel free to arrange your taxi ride to the airport; your hotel will be able to help you with that transfer. It should cost between 500 and 700CZK for a ride.

### Major Train Stations:

Vienna: Wien (all stations in the city have 'Wien' before the station name)

Prague: Prag Hbf (Hauptbahnhof: central train station in German)

Munich: München Hbf

Budapest: Budapest Keleti

Warsaw: Warszawa Centralna (Central Station)

Trains are operated by Czech Railways (České Dráhy). All cities in the country have train stations and make train travel throughout Europe simple and economical. If you would like to look at train schedules, consult <http://jizdnirady.idnes.cz/vlaky/spojeni/?lng=e> or [www.bahn.de](http://www.bahn.de).

### Here are some common terms you may see at the train station:

Vlak - train

(Vlakové) nádraží - (train) station

Odjezdy - Departures

Příjezdy - Arrivals

Nástupiště - platform

Zastávka - stop

Jízdenka - ticket

Místenka - seat reservation

Pokladna - ticket window

Once you cross into Germany or Austria, you'll start seeing German signs. The word "Hauptbahnhof" means "central station", and is abbreviated as "Hbf". This is typically the most well-connected station in the town or city. The word "Flughafen" means "airport" and most trains will connect from the airport station to the main Hbf station.

### Types of Trains:

**Osobní (Os)** – slow local trains, stop everywhere

**Spěšný (Sp)** – faster than "osobní," usually skipping little villages

**Rychlík (R)** – fast trains, stop in major towns, commonly used trains for longer distances

**Expres (Ex)** – faster and usually a bit cleaner kind of "Rychlík"

**Intercity, Eurocity (IC, EC)** – pretty modern fast trains coming up to European standards, stop in major cities only. Includes the Student Agency-run & modernized **RegioJet** trains with free refreshments and wifi-connection on board.

**Supercity or Pendolino (SC)** – the fastest new trains bought recently by Czech Railways, operate just between biggest cities; require a compulsory seat reservation for CZK 200 (CZK 100 with the RAILPLUS customer card).

### Other Types of Transportation

**Rental Car:** Highways in the Czech Republic are incomplete and are not in great condition. They are slowly being built, and traffic in Prague proper is very heavy. If you decide to rent a car, we suggest arranging this from the U.S. - it's cheaper. Be sure to find out the exact address of the location to pick up your rental car. It's best to make these arrangements in advance.

**Tram & Metro:** There are several metro, train, and tram lines in the city associated with Prague Integrated Transport (PID). The schedules are posted on the stops and public transportation in the city is the best way to get around and most efficient. You can get tickets at tobacco shops, convenience stores, public transit offices, and ticket machines. Don't forget to validate your ticket the first time you board; yellow boxes are located in the metro stations right by the stairs and the trams have them inside.

**Bus:** Look for vending machines that say “Public Transport” where you can purchase tickets. Tickets purchased from the bus drivers are more expensive. Machines and drivers require payment in Czech crowns. Remember to validate your ticket at a yellow machine with a green glowing arrow when you get on the bus to avoid fines from the conductors. You can browse schedules and connections here: <http://idos.dpp.cz/idos/ConnForm.aspx?tt=pid&cl=E5>.

**Taxis:** Taxis can easily be found outside airports and train stations. It is good practice to ask for an approximate fare before the ride and pay meter start. Keep in mind that the cost may vary depending on traffic in the city. Prague has had some issues in the past for overpriced taxi fares; make sure you insist that the taxi meter is turned on and request a receipt upon leaving the car. The maximum price set by city government per km is 28CZK (status 2015); the easiest way and best way to avoid being overcharged is to call a reputable company yourself. Sometimes the hotels have commission deals with the taxi companies and you'll find yourself potentially paying 50% more than usual. We recommend looking for other transportation options in the city.

## B. Language Tips

Welcome to the Czech Republic: Vítejte Česká republika

**Language Lessons:** Czech is a West Slavic language, and is the official language of the country. Watch for the ř letter; it is pronounced by combining the trilled ‘r’ sound and ‘su’ to make a ‘rrzh.’ Czech people are often bi and tri-lingual; English is widely spoken, as well as German.

### Signs you may see

- Open: Otevřeno (oh-teh- VRZHEH-noh)
- Closed: Zavřeno (zah- VRZHEH-noh)
- Entrance: Zchod (fkhot)
- Exit: Východ (VEE-khot)
- Toilet: Toalety/WC (toa-LEH- tih/VEH TSEH)

### Common Phrases

- Hello: Dobrý den (DOH-bree dehn)
- Good morning: Dobrý ráno (RAHH-noh)
- Nice to meet you: Těší mě (TYEH-shee myeh)
- Please: Prosim (proseem)
- Thank you: Děkuji (dyekooyih)
- Yes: ano (AH-noh)
- No: ne (neh)
- Goodbye: Na shledanou (NAHSH-leh-dah-noh)
- Do you speak English?: Mluvíte anglicky (Mlooveeteh unglitskee)
- Where is the toilet?: Kde je záchod (Gdeh yeh ZAHH- khoht)

### Bicycling Specific Phrases

- Bicycle: Bicykl (BIH-tsyk)
- Flat tire: Defekt pneumatiky (deh-FECT punayo ma-TEH- ky)
- Water: Voda (VOH-DAH)
- I am on a bicycle tour: Jsem na cestě kole (Yeesem-nyachiesTE-se COLA)

**Courtesy and Respect:** Always say hello and goodbye when you enter and leave a small shop. The Czech Republic is in Central Europe, not Eastern Europe; the Czechs are very sensitive to that misappropriation. They also are sensitive to comments about how inexpensive things are in the country; as it reflects poorly on the country's economic standing.

## C. How to Dial Telephone Numbers

The International Access Code (IAC) for the US and Canada is 011 and for the Czech Republic it's 00  
The Country Code (CC) for the Czech Republic is 420 and for the US and Canada it's 1

Area Codes in the Czech Republic can be various digits in length

To call the Czech Republic from the US or Canada, dial IAC + CC + Local Number.

**Example:** The local telephone number for the Pizzeria Latrán is +420 (0) 380 712 651. You would dial 011-420-380 712 651. Notice the Trunk code (0) is dropped when you dial.

To call the US or Canada from the Czech Republic, dial IAC + CC + Local Number.

**Example:** The local telephone number of the ExperiencePlus! headquarters in Colorado is 970-484-8489. You would dial 00-1-970-484-8489.

To call the Czech Republic from another European country, dial IAC + CC + Local Number.

**Example:** The local telephone number for the Pizzeria Latrán is +420 (0) 380 712 651. The number could also be listed as (0) 380 712 651. In both cases, you would dial 00 380 712 651. Notice the Trunk code (0) is dropped when you dial.

To call the Czech Republic from within the Czech Republic, dial the Local Number

**Example:** The local telephone number for the Pizzeria Latrán is (0) 380 712 651. Unlike in the US, there is no need to differentiate local and long distance by dialing a 1. Notice the Trunk code (0) is dialed.

## D. Eating and Drinking

Breakfast (Snídaně) in the Czech Republic consists of coffee or tea and a slice of bread with some sort of spread (ranging from butter to jam, eggs, and salami to cheese). Sweet breads and yogurts are also popular.

Lunch is the main meal in the Czech Republic, and is traditionally designed to refuel the workers coming in off the fields. It is heavy in meats like pork, duck, or goose. Sauerkraut often is a side with knedlíky (dumplings). This meal is served often in three courses, starting off with a bowl of polévka (soup), then to a meat and side dish and an optional third course of a sweet treat with coffee or a small salad.

Polévka (soup) is a mainstay in Czech cuisine, and you can expect to see many different types containing everything from mushrooms to potatoes, lentils, beans, and garlic.

Knedlíky are quite varied also. Some are used as a side dish made with bread or potatoes and look like white bread served with gulas (goulash), or beef sirloin paired with root vegetable sauce and cranberry sauce. Czech beer goes well with these heavy and traditional meals.

Vegetables are a rarity as a main part of a meal; you can expect to see them as garnishes rather than parts of meals. Mushrooms (plentiful in the forests), cabbage, and tomatoes are the most common veggies in Czech side dishes.

Beer is the national beverage. Apparently, the town of Pilsen (Plzeň) in Bohemia is the home of the invention of modern pilsner beer. A couple of trips to the local pubs should be on your list of places to visit. You can also try some beer snacks unique to the country from pickled meats and cheeses served with your pint.

## E. Hotel Recommendations

### Prague

[Bishop's House](http://avehotels.cz/en/hotelbishopshouse.html) (<http://avehotels.cz/en/hotelbishopshouse.html>)

Drazického náměstí 6/62, Prague 8, 180 00

[Hotel Mucha](http://www.hotelmucha.cz/en/hotel.html) ([www.hotelmucha.cz/en/hotel.html](http://www.hotelmucha.cz/en/hotel.html))

Sokolovská 26, 118 00 Prague 1

[Hotel Waldstein](http://www.hotelwaldstein.cz/en/hotel.html) ([www.hotelwaldstein.cz/en/hotel.html](http://www.hotelwaldstein.cz/en/hotel.html))

Valdštejnské náměstí 6, 118 00 Prague 1

[Hotel Red Lion Praha](http://www.hotelredlion.cz/index_en.php?cat=home) ([www.hotelredlion.cz/index\\_en.php?cat=home](http://www.hotelredlion.cz/index_en.php?cat=home))

Dům U Červeného Lva

Nerudova 41, 118 00 Praha 1 - Malá Strana

[Hotel Golden Star](http://www.hotelgoldenstar.cz/index_en.php) (www.hotelgoldenstar.cz/index\_en.php)

Nerudova 48, 118 00 Prague 1 - Mala Strana

[Hotel Denisa](http://www.hotel-denisa.cz/en/hotel.html) (www.hotel-denisa.cz/en/hotel.html)

Národní obrany 33, 160 00 Prague 6

[Hotel Three Storks](http://www.hotelthreestorks.cz/jazyk-anglicky.html) (5 Star) (www.hotelthreestorks.cz/jazyk-anglicky.html)

Valdstejnske nam.8, 11800 Praha 1

## F. Reading and Movie List

### Literature on the Czech Republic

- *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* by Derek Sayer
- *A History of the Czech Lands* by Jaroslav Panek
- *Prague: A Cultural and Literary History (Cities of the Imagination)* by Richard D. E. Burton
- *Prague in Danger: The Years of German Occupation, 1939-45: Memories and History, Terror and Resistance, Theater and Jazz, Film and Poetry, Politics and War* by Peter Demetz

### Movies About or Set in the Czech Republic or by Czech Filmmakers

- *The Shop on Main Street (Obchod na korze)* – 1965 Slovakia. Academy Award best foreign language film winner. During the World War II expulsion of Jews, a mild mannered carpenter takes over a sewing notions store run by an elderly senile Jewish woman that tends to live sheltered from the current political climate. Believing him to be her nephew and with financial support from the Jewish community the situation works until the “nephew” must make a decision to hide or turn in the old woman.
- *Closely Watched Trains (Ostře sledované vlaky)* – 1966 Czechoslovakia. Academy Award best foreign language film winner. Set during World War II, this is a coming-of-age story of a young boy that works at a train station in Czechoslovakia. It combines humor and sadness with the relationships of the characters in their rural setting and busy small train station.
- *Loves of a Blonde (also titled A Blonde in Love)*. – 1965 Czechoslovakia. A working-class woman from a factory town sleeps musician from Prague but when she leaves home for the big city she finds that he is not interested.
- *The Firemen’s Ball* – 1967 Czechoslovakia. The volunteer fire department of a small town organizes and annual ball featuring a lottery and an beauty contest. Whatever can go wrong does in this comedy film in which the fireman are portrayed by actual firefighters and not actors.