

CURIOUS CITIES... PRAGUE

Unique locations, hidden corners and unusual objects as recommended by...



FAMOUS SAINT

No visit to Prague is complete without a stroll across Charles Bridge. The 16-arched medieval crossing is lined with Baroque statues, most famously that of Saint John Nepomuk, a priest drowned by royal decree for not divulging secrets from the confessional.



CUBIST LAMP

Prague is famous over for its Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque architecture but less so for its contribution to Cubism. As well as several Cubist houses dotted around the city, Prague boasts the world's only Cubist lamp post on Jungmannovo náměstí.

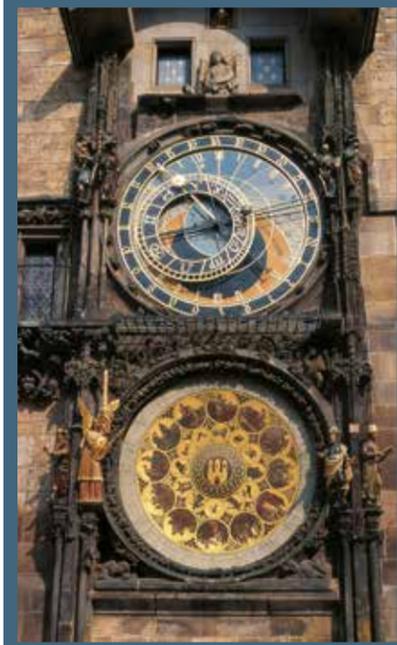
BAROQUE GARDEN

During the 17th century, Catholic aristocrats transformed the area beneath Prague Castle into a district of Baroque palaces. Many had Italianate gardens attached, including the magical Vrtba Garden (Vrtbovská zahrada) on Karmelitská.



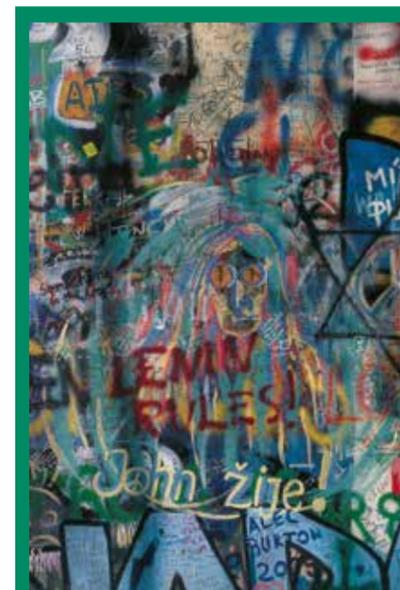
ASTRONOMICAL CLOCK

Visitors can't resist gathering in front of the Old Town's Astronomical Clock to watch its mechanical parade of figures. Few understand the mass of dials and symbols though, nor the static figures that act as a medieval morality tale.



VELVET REVOLUTION

The Velvet Revolution of 1989 marked the end of Czech Communism. This striking memorial of outstretched hands is located where the revolution began, in an arcade at Národní třída 16, where police forcibly broke up a public march.



LENNON'S WALL

Following the death of John Lennon in 1980, anti-Communists daubed an image of the peace-loving Beatle on this wall in Grand Prior Square (Velkopřevorské náměstí). Fans and activists still come here to add their own slogans and sentiments..



ALCHEMIST'S QUEST

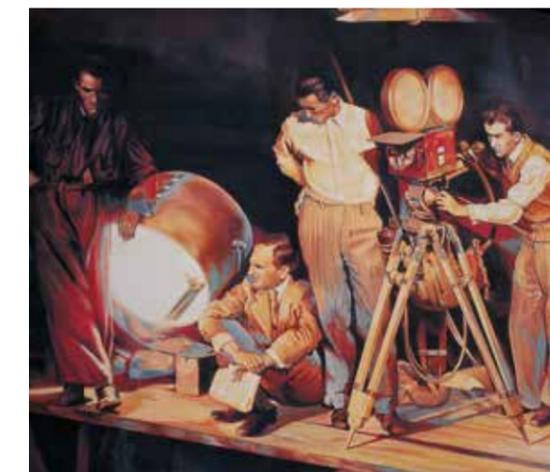
Colourful King Rudolf of Bohemia was a devotee of astrology and alchemy, considered mainstream scientific fields in Renaissance Prague. He never found the Philosopher's Stone but his mysterious obsession is recalled in this fresco in Old Town Square.



“The iconic skyline was created by a roll-call of evil emperors and firebrand clerics, royal alchemists and obsessive astronomers.”

FIRST MONASTERY

One of Prague's suburban gems is the Břevnov Monastery (Břevnovský klášter). Bohemia's oldest, it was established in AD 993 by the Benedictines, with its present Baroque incarnation dating from the first half of the 18th century.



CZECH HOLLYWOOD

Prague's Barrandov film studios have rightly been dubbed the 'Hollywood of the East'. Established in the early 1930s, they have survived both Nazi and Communist regimes and more recently played host to both Tom Cruise and James Bond.

JEWISH GRAVES

The Jews arrived in Prague during the 12th century and stayed in the Josefov district until the 1890s, when the area was cleared. What remains is a handful of historic synagogues and an ancient cemetery filled with higgledy-piggledy gravestones.



Discover more with *Only in Prague* by Duncan JD Smith Published by The Urban Explorer www.onlyinguides.com

“Straddling the banks of the Baltic-bound River Vltava, the Czech capital is compact, storied and achingly beautiful.”