



Prague: A Cultural Guide

Andrew Beattie

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Prague, the focus city of revolutions and ethnic slaughters since the 9th century, has somehow maintained its architectural heritage and its literary and artistic fervor, according to Andrew Beattie, the author of this devilishly detailed (think Kafka) guide book.

He warns that a first-time visitor risks being overwhelmed by a confusion of buildings reminiscent of the medieval and Baroque and advises a pause for the iconic view across the River Vltava with the arches of the Charles Bridge in the foreground and the spires of the 14th century Saint Vitus Cathedral and castle buildings beyond.

Prague, with a population of 1.25 million, is now the capital of the Czech Republic, but it got that way only after imperialist subjugations, most recently by Nazi Germany—which decimated the city’s significant Jewish community—and the former Soviet Union.

Despite its grim history, Prague offers a plethora of art galleries, concert halls, nightclubs, and expanses of public parks, fit places for touristy relaxing. And there is great Bohemian beer, which helps explain why the Czech Republic boasts the highest per capita consumption of the beverage of any country in the world.

THOMAS BEVIER (Winter 2015)

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