



THE SULPHUR INSTITUTE'S **SULPHUR WORLD SYMPOSIUM 2019** —PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC—

Reason to Visit Prague

Largest castle complex in the world

Dating back to the ninth century, Prague Castle is recognized by the Guinness Book of Records as the largest castle complex in the world, covering an impressive 70,000 square meters. The castle complex is comprised of a number of buildings, which include the gothic St. Vitus Cathedral, a number of defense towers, a few museums and churches, the presidential palace, and Golden Lane, a 16th-century street that once housed the royal goldsmiths.





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To admire stunning architectural masterpieces

Because Prague wasn't severely damaged during WWII, many of its most impressive historical buildings remain intact today. Thus, Prague has another major advantage going for it: while many major European capitals were rebuilt and destroyed during the 17th and 18th centuries, Prague's buildings were left untouched. As a result, the city is a breathtaking mix of baroque, gothic and renaissance architecture, hard to find anywhere else in Europe. The Our Lady Before Týn church in Old Town Square is a magnificent example of gothic architecture, while Schwarzenberg Palace inside the Prague Castle's grounds is a perfect example of renaissance design. Examples of cubism and neoclassicism also abound, with touches of Art Nouveau in places, such as the Municipal House.





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To see where Franz Kafka grew up

Franz Kafka was born and grew up on the streets of Prague, not far from Old Town Square. Born into a Jewish family who spoke German (the language in which Kafka wrote all his books), Kafka was a lawyer who worked at an insurance company even though all he wanted to really do was write. His books are a mix of the fantastic and the realities of turn-of-the-century Prague, and you can see traces of the city in many of them. While the home where he was born no longer exists, Kafka's final resting place can be visited at the New Jewish Cemetery.





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To people-watch on one of the oldest bridges in Europe

One of the oldest bridges in Europe still in use, Charles Bridge was built between 1357 and 1402. The now pedestrian-only bridge has survived floods and the Thirty Years' War, and it's one of the most popular attractions in Prague today. The bridge is decorated with 30 statues representing saints.





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To check out a still-functioning 600-year-old clock

Prague's astronomical clock, installed in 1410, is the oldest operating clock of its kind on the planet. Located in Old Town Square, the clock marks not only the time, but also the months and the astronomical position of the sun and moon, making it sort of a tiny planetarium. The clock is decorated with gothic sculptures and additional wooden statues of the apostles that were added over the centuries—and if you happen to stop by on the hour throughout the day or night, you'll see them come to life and chime.





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To drink beer in the beer capital of the world

Czechs consume more beer per capita than any other country in the world. Czech beers tend to be light and foamy, with brewers such as Pilsner Urquell and Staropramen leading the pack. Beer gardens are part of summer culture here, where both children and dogs are welcome, and families and friends congregate to watch sports or music videos in giant screens. Prague has beer spas and even an organic beauty products company (Manufaktura) that makes beer-based creams and shampoos.





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To learn about life under Communist rule

Communism ruled over Czechoslovakia from 1948 to 1989, stripping citizens of their rights and their freedoms. Today, you can learn about those dark times with visits to unique museums such as the Museum of Communism and the KGB Museum. The first one is particularly interesting because it features artifacts of everyday life from the time, including a classroom and a number of films representing what life was like back then. For a more modern twist on Communism, head out to Bunkr Parukářka, an old nuclear bunker turned nightclub and bar. Or join a guided tour of a real Nuclear Bunker Exhibit, complete with gas masks and other Cold War items.





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To attend a slew of amazing festivals

Naplavka (Prague's river boardwalk area) comes alive during the summer months, attracting tons of festivals, live music, floating beer gardens, and other live events. From ice cream festivals and cheesecake festivals to microbrewery festivals and even a veggie food festival, there are plenty of reasons to head out in Prague. In early fall, a wine festival takes over the city, and in winter the Christmas markets (including one of the biggest ones in Europe in Old Town Square) light up the streets.





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To marvel at the audacity of David Černý's sculptures

Černý is a Czech sculptor known for his tongue-in-cheek works of art that are spread all throughout Prague. From giant crawling babies on the sides of the TV Tower to the two statues of urinating men outside the Kafka museum, Černý is all about making an impression. He also sculpted a statue of St. Wenceslas riding a dead horse, a fun wink to the St. Wenceslas statue sitting in front of the National Museum—the statue can be seen inside the Palác Lucerna shopping passage.

