

Prague: A Practical Guide for Beginners

Climate

Prague has a typically European continental climate with warm summers and cold snowy winters. The differences between winter and summer temperatures are quite high with summer months June -

August average temperature around 29°/84.2 F and winter months December - February average slightly below 0°/32 F. The temperature usually increases rapidly, especially during April, when the temperature and weather tends to vary widely during the day.

Winters can get quite chilly; January is the coldest month, with daytime temperatures



around zero and cold winds. Snowfall can be common between December and March, in recent years also in April although snow cover is more common in higher grounds and mountains and is rarely seen in the city. Although when the snow falls in Prague, the fairytale atmosphere of snow-covered roofs is without a doubt rewarding when visiting Prague in winter. **Summers** usually bring plenty of sunshine and occasionally rain and thunderstorms followed by rainbows.

Prices

As for the cost of living, a thirty-day transportation pass is 670 CZK. Once you get your transport pass, called *Lítačka*, you can pay for 3 months or 1 year transport pass for a very reasonable price. Food prices vary a lot but generally speaking, you can get a meal at a restaurant for about 120 - 200 CZK, a pizza for around 140 CZK, lots of restaurants offer lunchtime menus for a special price of around 100 CZK. A meal in an Asian restaurant is usually around 100 – 120 CZK. You can get a beer for around 30 CZK and at some places, mostly in the city center beer can be even cheaper than water! Expensive Prague items: Accommodation, Furniture, Clothing, Household goods. Cheap items: Food, beer, entertainment, medical care.

For more, check <https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/in/Prague>

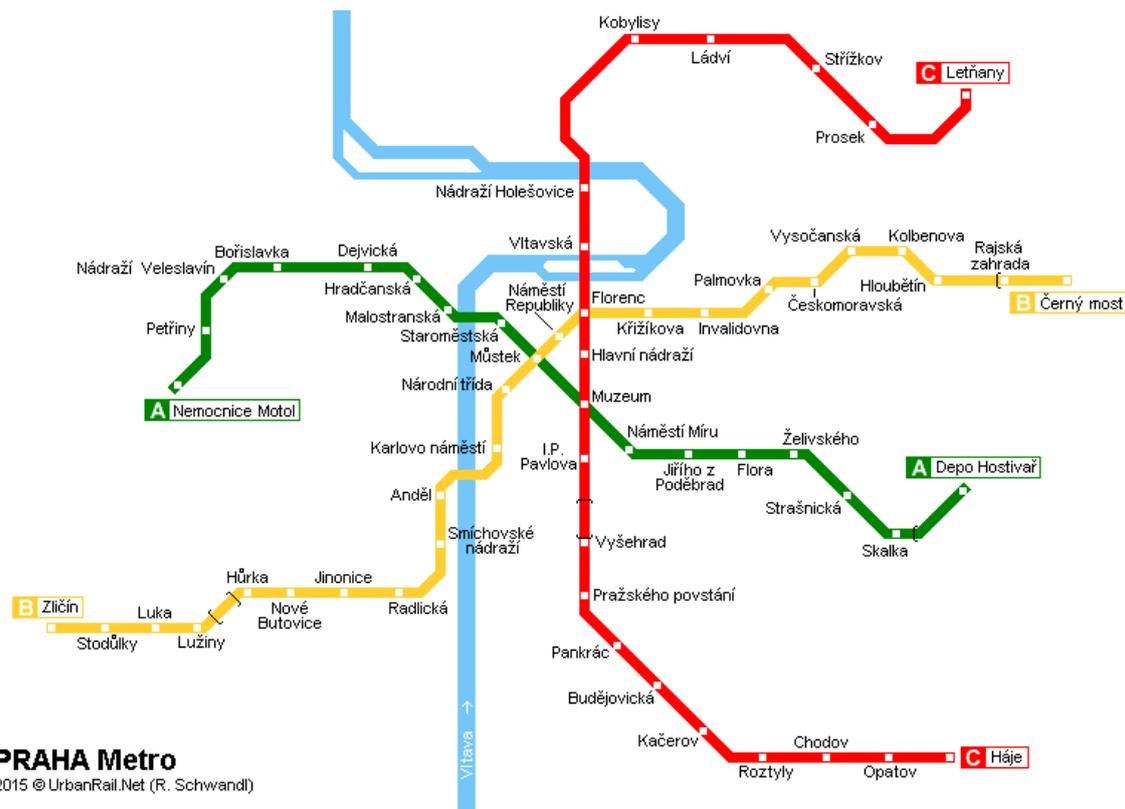
Phones

There are 3 major mobile service suppliers in Prague. T-Mobile, O2 and Vodafone. It is possible to buy prepaid SIM card in a news stands or mobile supplier stores to put in your phone. After you use all the credit on the prepaid SIM card, you can 'charge' your card again with money at one of these newspaper agencies and continue using your phone. If you have your phone through a contract, don't forget to

check before your departure if your phone is internationally unlocked so you can put a new SIM card in it!

Public Transport

The public transport is very reliable in Prague. Prague has 22 districts and it is becoming very spacious but the public transport connects the distant parts with the center extremely well. There is a metro system with 3 lines (A-green, B-yellow, C-red) which works nicely in the city center and goes to the remote areas as well. The metro stops at midnight and starts again around 5:45 in the morning. The intervals during the week are 2-3min, at the weekend, especially on Sunday up to 8 min.



In addition to metro, trams are a good way to move around the city center. The trams have day and night schedules, at night there are fewer trams covering more distances and the time intervals are longer.

Another possibility how to get to a remote district of Prague is to go by bus. The buses usually don't go to the city center very often and serve rather to cover the remote areas and therefore there are many request stops (you need to press the button to indicate you would like to get out). They have a day and night system as well.

A monthly public transport pass costs 670 CZK (if you have Lítačka 550 CZK) and works for all buses, trams and metro in Prague area and you can buy it in most of the metro stations. You can also buy a year ticket which costs 3650 CZK which is a very reasonable price as it equals just 10 CZK per day. Single tickets can be purchased at news stands or yellow machines in metro stations and cost 32 CZK for 90 min, 24 CZK for 30 min. Single tickets have to be validated at the yellow validator boxes. There are ticket inspectors (identifiable by yellow-red badges) regularly going through the public transport, checking tickets. The fee for not having a ticket is 1500 CZK (800 CZK if you pay on the spot) so we recommend having the validated ticket/Lítačka with you 😊



Not surprisingly, taxis are usually very expensive Liftago, Taxify, Uber, and if it isn't too late at night, we recommend the public transport as it is very safe, cheaper and reliable.

There is a law in the Czech Republic prohibiting smoking in public areas (public transport platforms – bus and tram stops, train stations; on public transport; in cultural facilities; in healthcare facilities).

Banks

Opening a bank account is very easy in the Czech Republic and if you plan on applying for a long-term visa we recommend that you open a Czech bank account as you will save some money on the bank statement translations. In order to open a bank account you need 2 types of ID (Passport, Driving License) and to pay the fee which differs bank to bank but is approximately 500-2000 CZK. As for which bank to choose, there are a lot of options. Česká spořitelna has a lot of ATM's around Prague so you won't have to pay extra fees for withdrawals from different bank ATMs. Reiffeisen Bank and Citibank are known for their English-speaking customer service.

Currency

The official Czech currency is Czech crown – Česká koruna. Even though Czech Republic is a member of the European Union, it is not a member of Eurozone yet. There are coins of value 1,2,5,10,20 and 50 crowns and banknotes in a value of 100,200,500,1000,2000,5000 crowns. If you are changing your money, we recommend not to take 5000 banknote as it has a lot of value and it will not be accepted in most shops. When you are shopping for groceries, cashiers are always happy for lower value banknotes. If you are changing your money, always check how much money did you get. You can find current exchange rate here: www.cnb.cz



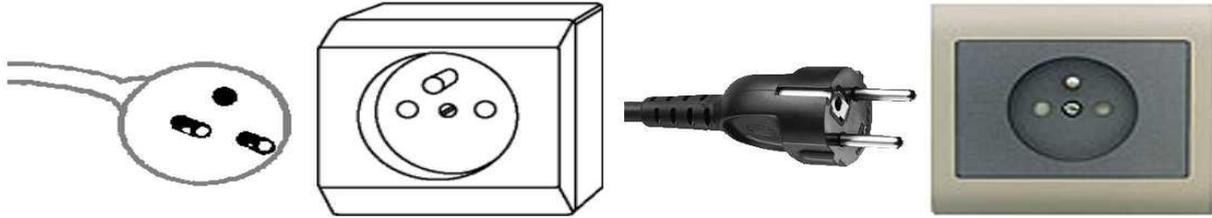
Political system

The Czech Government is a multi-party, parliamentary democracy with three branches: Executive (cabinet + president), Legislative (Parliament – Chamber of deputies + Senate), Judicial. In 2013 for the first time in history, Czech citizens directly elected their president (not through the Parliament). The Czech president is elected for 5 years and since 2013-2018 it has been Miloš Zeman. In 2017, Parliament election took place and most seats in the Parliament were delegated to a populist movement lead by Andrej Babiš.

Electronics

The electrical current in the Czech Republic is 230V at 50Hz with a typical two-pin European plug. Electronics with a C, E or F type of plug will also work here.

If you need an adapter, you can purchase one at Tesco, at the airport, or before you leave your home country.



Restaurants

Prague is a rich city for many different types of restaurants so it is safe to say that Prague has something to offer for everyone. It is still a bit harder to find good vegetarian and vegan restaurants but they have been visibly spreading all over Prague in the last few years so the vegan and vegetarian offer is growing as well. Of course it is cheaper to shop in supermarkets and make your own meals, if you are on a budget, eating out every day can get quite expensive. If you are eating in a restaurant and you are happy with the service, it is customary to leave a tip. The tips are usually 10-15% of the price on the bill. When you receive a bill, you tell the waiter how much you want to add to the actual price or you can pay for your meal first and then give the tip to the waiter. **Since May 2017, it is prohibited to smoke in all dining establishments.**

Language

The official language of the Czech Republic is Czech. It belongs to Slavic languages and it is similar to Slovak or Polish which are in the same group. Czech and Slovak people understand each other very well, also Czech and Polish people but usually only those who live near the border. English is well understood in major cities.

Even if you don't speak fluent Czech, Czech people always appreciate the effort of foreigners trying to speak Czech. Learning a few phrases to use in a restaurant or shops is always a good way how to make a Czech person smile.

Czech Holiday Calendar

- **January 1**
- **March/April** - Easter
- **May 1** – Labor Day
- **May 8** - Liberation Day (End of WWII)
- **July 5** – St Cyril and Methodius Day
- **July 6** – Jan Hus Day
- **September 28** – St Wenceslas Day
- **October 28** – Foundation of the independent Czechoslovak state
- **November 17** – Struggle for Freedom and Democracy day
- **December 24** – Christmas Eve
- **December 25** – Christmas Day
- **December 26** – St Stephen's Day