



## MAGICAL CHRISTMAS TIME IN PRAGUE

SHOPPING, ADVENT AMBIENCE, EXCITING FESTIVE EXCURSIONS FROM PRAGUE, CONCERTS

### DAY 1 – ARRIVAL TO PRAGUE

Our English speaking guide will welcome you at the airport. A short sightseeing tour on the way to the hotel will get you briefly familiar with Prague and the Czech Republic, after which you will have free time to explore or to rest up after the journey.

**ADVENT SEASON** Advent begins the fourth Sunday before December 24th. It means “arrival” (adventus in Latin) and is considered to be a time of joyful anticipation. It was typically a period of a strict fasting; today it is mostly a period when religious traditions are mixed up with ancient pagan customs. At the beginning of advent, children receive an advent calendar, which makes the waiting for Christmas easier for them, and each household prepares an advent wreath. Families light a new candle on the wreath every Sunday before Christmas; the lighting of the candles symbolising the arrival of Christ.



### DAY 2 – CHRISTMAS AMBIENCE IN THE OLD TOWN AND MALA STRANA

During this first half day tour, you will discover the heart of Prague: the **Old Town** and the **Astronomical Clock**, as well as the biggest Christmas tree and largest Christmas markets in Prague. You will be attracted by the beautiful Baroque, Renaissance, or even Art Nouveau facades, decorations and statues. You will go across the Vltava river, via **Charles Bridge**, the oldest bridge in the capital dating back to the 14th century, and a bridge which is shrouded in various legends. The tour will end on the other bank of the Vltava river, in **Mala Strana**, where you will visit the **Church of Our Lady Victorious** and get the chance to see the revered **Infant Jesus of Prague** statue wearing a Christmas costume.

**CZECH CHRISTMAS** Families meet by the decorated Christmas tree, under which the Baby Jesus (not Santa Claus) secretly places gifts on the evening of December 24th. The traditional meal consists of fish soup, fried carp with potato salad and Christmas cookies. Some families keep other traditions, such as placing a fish scale under each plate, or waiting to see a “golden pig” in the sky before being allowed to start on the food. On December 25th and 26th people usually visit relatives.

### OPTIONAL/ IN ADDITION Christmas Concert

The concert will take place in a church or a concert hall in the Prague city centre (for example, the Church of St. Nicholas, the Church of the Holy Saviour, Klementinum, or the Church of St. Francis Seraph).



### DAY 3 – NEW TOWN AND THE CHRISTMAS MARKET

In the afternoon, our guides will take you on a tour of **Wenceslas Square** and the New Town. This important square in Prague is dominated by the **equestrian statue** of the patron saint of Czechs, **St. Wenceslas**. Many important historical events have taken place here, and it is still a place where demonstrations and mass gatherings are usually organised. The second biggest Christmas market is located here during this period of the year. The mixture of architectural styles in the New Town district is incredible. You can admire the Cubist constructions, the neo-renaissance buildings such as the **National Museum** or the **National Theatre**, or the **Hotel Evropa** in the Art Nouveau style. You will enjoy the visit of the Church of Our Lady of the Snows, where contemporary and old Christmas cribs made from various materials are exhibited. Other Christmas nativities are displayed in several other churches in Prague.



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## DAY 4 – A FREE DAY OR AN EXCURSION TO VIENNA, DRESDEN OR NUREMBERG

You can spend a free day in Prague to soak up more of the local **Christmas atmosphere**, or explore a **Christmas market in Vienna** (A, 295 km), **Dresden** (D, 147 km) or **Nuremberg** (D, 296 km)

ONE EXTRA COUNTRY



### OPTIONAL/IN ADDITION

It is usual to go on a one-day long excursion to **Vienna, Dresden or Nuremberg** to visit the local Christmas markets. You will discover different Christmas habits, local cuisine and Christmas treats. You will taste delicious *stollen* in Dresden, drink some Christmas punch in Nuremberg and eat potato pancakes in Vienna. Several Christmas markets in the city centre offer typical products. Grab a mug of hot wine, punch or grog at each of the markets to warm up during the chilly weather. At the end of the day, you can return the mug or keep it as a souvenir. The services of a guide, the visit of the historical city centre, lunch (3-course menu + 1 drink) and transport are included in the price of the excursion. Departure early in the morning and return late at night.

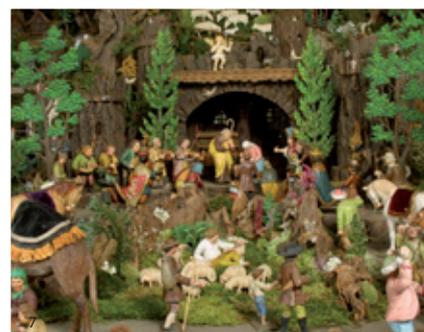
### OPTIONAL/IN ADDITION

Take a **cruise down the Vltava river** where you can admire a magical view of Prague at Christmas time with its enchanting decorations and special ambience. A coffee/tea or a hot wine and tasting of Czech Christmas cookies are included.



## DAY 5 – PRAGUE CASTLE AND THE HRADČANY QUARTER

Free morning. In the afternoon you will explore Prague Castle, a majestic place which towers above the city. It is also one of the largest castle complexes in the world. **St. Vitus Cathedral** dominates the centre of the complex, and inside you will find the outstanding stained glass of Alphonse Mucha. At the Church of the Virgin Mary Angelic, you can admire a gorgeous Christmas crib from the 18th century. The figurines are up to 175 cm high. **The Church of the Virgin Mary Angelic forms part of the Capuchin** convent and is situated close to the Church of the Nativity.



## DAY 6 – FREE DAY OR EXCURSION TO KARLOVY VARY OR KUTNÁ HORA

You can spend a free day in Prague to enjoy more of the local Christmas atmosphere, or you can explore **Karlovy Vary** (128 km) or **Kutná Hora** (67 km). On your last night in Prague, our guides will take you out for dinner with music (three-course menu and two drinks included).

### OPTIONAL/IN ADDITION

During the farewell dinner, you can **meet the celebrated figures of Mikulas (St. Nicholas) and his accompanying Angel and Devil** who will present this ancient Czech tradition and give you some presents.



### OPTIONAL/IN ADDITION

Visit of the **medieval mining town Kutná Hora**. The town has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1995. The silver mines were the chief wealth of the city. You especially shouldn't miss **the St. Barbara Cathedral**, which is dedicated to St. Barbara, the patron saint of miners. It is built in the late Gothic style and construction of this architectural and religious jewel took more than 500 years. You will also visit the Cathedral of the Assumption in Sedlec with its famous ossuary, the Italian Court, which was a former royal mint, a Marian column, etc.



### OPTIONAL/IN ADDITION

This excursion lets you discover the thermal bath city, **Karlovy Vary** (Carlsbad) which is also well known for its International Film Festival. You will visit the traditional Moser glassworks and the museum of the famous liquor **Becherovka** (degustation included). The town is very picturesque largely due to the typical spa architecture and **5 spa colonnades**. The city was founded by the emperor Charles IV in the 14th century, and its golden age was in the 19th and 20th century when Tsar Peter the Great and composer Richard Wagner visited the city. The hot spring "Vřídlo" is an unequivocal symbol of the city. The temperature is 73,4° C, and it sprouts up to 12 meters.



## DAY 7 – FREE DAY

Free time for individual activities, e.g. individual visit and/or shopping, depending on the time of your departing flight.

### RATES: ADVENT SEASON (DECEMBER)

Starting from 233 € per person in a double room (based on 30 pax)

### SERVICES INCLUDED:

- 6 nights including breakfasts in a the 4\* hotel
- welcome by an English speaking guide
- 3 guided tours for half day in English in Prague on days 2,3 and 5
- 1 farewell dinner
- coach transport on days 1, 5 and 7
- a small gift for each participant
- baggage handling
- local taxes

Starting from  
**233 €**/person  
in a double room

### ADDITIONAL SERVICE:

- see blue boxes:
  - cruise ship, concert,
  - Kutná Hora, Karlovy Vary,
  - Church of St. Nicholas,
  - Vienna, Dresden, Nuremberg
- lunches and dinners

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