

# ENTERTAINMENT

## top picks

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What's your recommendation? [www.lonelyplanet.com/prague](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/prague)

# ENTERTAINMENT

Across the spectrum, from ballet to blues, jazz to rock, theatre to film, there's a bewildering range of entertainment on offer in this eclectic city. Prague is now as much a European centre for jazz, rock and hip-hop as it is for classical music. The biggest draw, however, is still the Prague Spring festival of classical music and opera.

For reviews, day-by-day listings and a directory of venues, consult the 'Night & Day' section of the weekly *Prague Post* ([www.praguepost.cz](http://www.praguepost.cz)). Monthly listings booklets include *Culture in Prague* and the Czech-language *Přehled*, available from PIS offices (see p255 for contact details).

Look out for *Provokátor* ([www.provokator.org](http://www.provokator.org)), a free monthly magazine that is dedicated to art, music, culture and politics; the website has listings of upcoming cultural events. You can pick up the print magazine in clubs, cafés, arthouse cinemas and backpacker hostels. There is also *Metropolis*, a free weekly booklet with film, theatre and music listings, available in cinemas, pubs and clubs (it's in Czech only, but the listings are easily deciphered), and the English-language magazine *Think Again* ([www.thinkagain.cz](http://www.thinkagain.cz)).

For web-based entertainment listings, check out [www.prague.tv](http://www.prague.tv), [www.heartofeurope.cz](http://www.heartofeurope.cz) and [www.pis.cz/en/prague/events](http://www.pis.cz/en/prague/events).

## NIGHTLIFE

If discussing Kafka over a coffee or analysing last night's hockey match over a glass of Pilsner seems too tame, Prague offers plenty of places for night owls to party on into the small hours. From traditional jazz joints in smoky cellars to innovative live music venues, cool cocktail clubs and even an underground nuclear bunker, you'll find a place worth staying up late for.

## CLUBBING

Prague's club scene is nothing to rave about. With few exceptions, the city's dance clubs cater to crowds of partying teenagers and tourists weaned on MTV Europe – if you want to dance to anything other than '80s hits or happy house, you'll have to look long and hard. Prague's main strengths are its alternative music clubs, DJ bars, 'experimental' venues such as Palác Akropolis and the Roxy and places that are just plain weird, like Bunkr Parukářka.

Refreshingly, dress codes don't seem to have reached Prague yet, and it's unlikely you'll be knocked back anywhere unless you're stark naked. And there are even a few places that would probably be OK with that...

Check [www.prague.tv](http://www.prague.tv), [www.techno.cz](http://www.techno.cz) /party or [www.hip-hop.cz](http://www.hip-hop.cz) for up-to-date club listings (the latter two are in Czech, but you can work out what's going on).

### BUNKR PARUKÁŘKA Map pp126–7

☎ 603 423 140; [www.parukarka.eu](http://www.parukarka.eu); Na Kříže, Olšanské náměstí, Žižkov; admission free-50Kč; 🕒 8pm-3am Thu-Sat; 📅 5, 9, 26

Only in Prague... A graffiti-covered steel door in the hillside at the west end of Parukářka park leads unexpectedly to a vast circular staircase that descends 15m underground into a 1950s nuclear bunker where a makeshift bar serves cheap beer in plastic glasses. This is the unlikely setting for one of Prague's most unusual clubs, a claustrophobic shrine to electropunk, industrial, psytrance-electro-acid and any other weird and wonderful avant-garde electronic music genre you can think of (winners of the most eccentric label so far are Vložte Kočku, whose music is promoted as 'psy-countrysymotriphoprap'). See the website for what's on when you're in town.

### CROSS CLUB Map pp132–3

☎ 736 535 053; <http://crossclub.cz>; Plynární 23, Holešovice; admission free-100Kč; 🕒 4pm-3am; 📅 Nádraží Holešovice

This is an industrial club in every sense of the word: the setting in an industrial zone in Holešovice, the throbbing music (with both DJs and live acts) and the interior, an absolute must-see jumble of gadgets, shafts, cranks and pipes, many of which move and pulsate with light to the music. The programme includes occasional cabaret nights, theatre performances and art happenings. There's drinking on two levels, plus a few

picnic tables outside in case it gets to be too much. It's easy to find despite the location: after exiting Nádraží Holešovice metro station, walk 100m to the east along Plynární street. You've arrived once you see the enormous industrial sculpture out the front.

### FUTURUM Map p138

☎ 257 328 571; [www.musicbar.cz](http://www.musicbar.cz); Zborovská 7, Smíchov; admission 100-120Kč; 🕒 7pm-2am; 📍 7, 9, 12, 14

Futurum is a cross-fertilisation of alternative and mainstream, with a bizarre décor that looks like a cross between an Art Deco ballroom and Flash Gordon's spaceship. Midweek nights see occasional live performances of jazz and soul, indie bands and record launches, but what really pulls in the crowds is the regular Friday and Saturday night '80s and '90s Video Party, with local DJs blasting out everything from REM and Nirvana to Bon Jovi and the Village People, complete with cringe-worthy videos.

### KARLOVY LÁZNĚ Map pp88-9

☎ 222 220 502; [www.karlovylazne.cz](http://www.karlovylazne.cz); Novotného lávka 1, Staré Město; admission 100Kč; 🕒 9pm-5am; 📍 17, 18

Self-proclaimed as 'the biggest club in middle Europe', KL is a vast, steaming hive of heaving young bodies, awash with alcohol and teenage pheromones. That said, it's a fascinating venue in a labyrinthine medieval building with old murals, mosaics and partly preserved Roman-style baths (now dance floors); a single cover charge admits you to four floors – from the Music Café (black music) on the ground floor, up through Discotheque (classic disco sounds) and Kaleidoskop ('60s, '70s and '80s revival) to Paradogs (dance, house, techno, drum 'n' bass etc).

## top picks

### GAY & LESBIAN PRAGUE

- Castle Steps (p215)
- Club Stella (p184)
- Friends (p182)
- Pension Arco (p221)
- Termix (p196)
- Valentino (p196)

### KLUB 007 STRAHOV Map pp76-7

☎ 257 211 439; [www.myspace.com/klub007strahov](http://www.myspace.com/klub007strahov); Block 7, Chaloupeckého 7; admission 50-250Kč; 🕒 7.30pm-midnight Sun-Thu, 7.30pm-1am Fri & Sat; 📍 143, 176, 217

Klub 007 is one of several grungy student clubs in the basements of the big college dormitory blocks in Strahov. The legendary 007 has been around since 1987, when it was a focus for underground music, and is now famed for its devotion to hardcore, punk, ska, ragga, jungle, ambient and other alternative sounds. On Saturday nights it hosts a regular hip-hop party.

### LE CLAN Map p121

☎ 222 251 226; [www.leclan.cz](http://www.leclan.cz); Balbínova 23, Vinohrady; admission 50-160Kč; 🕒 2am-10am Wed-Sun; 📍 Muzeum

A decadent French-accented after-party club, with DJs on two floors, lots of bars, cosy armchairs and myriad rooms stuffed with 'VSPs' (Le Clan's own acronym for Very Strange People). It's usually got a good, racy vibe.

### M1 SECRET LOUNGE Map pp88-9

☎ 227 195 235; [www.m1lounge.com](http://www.m1lounge.com); Masná 1, Staré Město; admission free; 🕒 7pm-3am Sun-Thu, 7pm-5am Fri & Sat; 📍 5, 8, 14

An American-owned, industrial-chic cocktail den where polished concrete and stainless steel contrast with candlelight and plush purple sofas, M1 attracts lots of English-speaking expats, well-heeled locals and the occasional visiting celeb (absolutely no stag parties). Wednesday nights are ladies' nights, while Fridays see a regular set from US DJ Big J, a dance-floor-filling mix of R&B, house and hip-hop.

### MECCA Map pp132-3

☎ 602 711 225; [www.mecca.cz](http://www.mecca.cz); U Průhonu 3, Holešovice; admission 100-300Kč (frequent free entry nights, check the website); 🕒 10pm-6am Wed-Sat; 📍 5, 12, 15

This former warehouse in Holešovice is now 10 years old and is still one of the best of the ultrafashionable dance clubs. Its industrial red brick and right angles are softened by rounded shapes, floaty drapes and futuristic curvy couches. Mecca is a magnet for models, film stars and fashionistas, and for the legion of clubbers who come for the huge, DJ-dominated dance floor and pumping sound system.

**RADOST FX** Map p121

☎ 603 181 500; [www.radostfx.cz](http://www.radostfx.cz); Bělehradská 120, Vinohrady; admission 100-250Kč; 🕒 10pm-6am; 📍 IP Pavlova

Though not quite as hot as it once was, Prague's slickest, shiniest and most self-assured club is still capable of pulling in the crowds, especially for its Thursday hip-hop night, FXbounce ([www.fxbounce.com](http://www.fxbounce.com)). The place has a chilled-out, bohemian atmosphere, with Moroccan boudoir-meets-Moulin Rouge décor, and there's an excellent lounge-cum-vegetarian restaurant that keeps serving into the small hours. DJs spin tunes in the ground floor gallery on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

**ROXY** Map pp88-9

☎ 224 826 296; [www.roxy.cz](http://www.roxy.cz); Dlouhá 33, Staré Město; admission free-250Kč Fri & Sat; 🕒 7pm-midnight Mon-Thu, 7pm-6am Fri & Sat; 📍 5, 8, 14

Set in the ramshackle shell of an Art Deco cinema (extensively restored after severe flood damage in 2002), the legendary Roxy has nurtured the more independent and innovative end of Prague's club spectrum since 1987 – this is the place to see the Czech Republic's top DJs. On the 1st floor is NoD, an 'experimental space' that stages drama, dance, performance art, cinema and live music; events here usually begin earlier in the evening before the nightclub kicks off at around midnight.

**SEDM VLKŮ** Map pp126-7

☎ 222 711 725; [www.sedmvlku.cz](http://www.sedmvlku.cz); Vlkova 7, Žižkov; admission free; 🕒 5pm-3am Mon-Sat; 📍 5, 9, 26

'Seven Wolves' is a two-level, art-studenty café-bar and club. At street level there's candlelight, friendly staff, weird wrought-iron work and funky murals, and music low enough to have a conversation; down in the darkened cellar, DJs pump out techno, breakbeat, drum 'n' bass, jungle and reggae from 9pm on Friday and Saturday nights.

**TERMIX** Map p121

☎ 222 710 462; [www.club-termix.cz](http://www.club-termix.cz); Třebízckého 4a, Vinohrady; admission free; 🕒 8pm-5am Wed-Sun; 📍 Jiřího z Poděbrad

Termix is one of Prague's most popular gay and lesbian dance clubs, with an industrial-high-tech vibe (lots of shiny steel and glass and plush sofas) and a young crowd that

contains as many tourists as locals. The smallish dance floor fills up fast during Thursday's best of the '80s and '90s party, when you may have to queue to get in.

**VALENTINO** Map p121

☎ 222 513 491; [www.club-valentino.cz](http://www.club-valentino.cz); Vinohradská 40, Vinohrady; admission free; 🕒 9pm-5am; 📍 Muzeum plus 📍 11, or 📍 Náměstí Míru  
Valentino bills itself as the biggest gay dance club in the Czech Republic, with DJs on two floors and theme nights that vary from the ubiquitous '80s and '90s to Oldies, Czech music and the 'Best of the Millennium'. It's located at the same address as **Bordo** (opposite).

**WAKATA** Map pp132-3

☎ 233 370 518; [www.wakata.cz](http://www.wakata.cz); Malířská 14, Bubeneč; admission free; 🕒 5pm-3am Mon-Thu, to 5am Fri & Sat, 6pm-3am Sun; 📍 1, 8, 15, 25, 26

There's no designer chic or style statements in this small, unpretentious, laid-back DJ lounge, a house-free zone where you can enjoy inexpensive beers and cocktails among the scuffed and mismatched furniture while you bop along to a soundtrack of funk, Latin, dub, ambient, jungle, reggae or hip-hop.

**XT3** Map pp126-7

☎ 222 783 463; [www.xt3.cz](http://www.xt3.cz); Rokycanova 29, Žižkov; admission free; 🕒 bar 11am-3am Mon-Fri, 2pm-3am Sat & Sun, club 6pm-3am Sun-Thu, 6pm-5am Fri & Sat; 📍 5, 9, 26

This is the essential Žižkov club – scruffy, laid-back, eclectic and great fun. There's a lively bar at street level, all red-brick arches and wood-and-leather booths, plus a cavern-like club venue that hosts local DJs and live music (from hardcore rock to acoustic singer-songwriters).

**JAZZ CLUBS**

Prague has lots of good jazz clubs, many of which have been around for decades. Unless otherwise indicated, most have a cover charge of around 200Kč.

**AGHARTA JAZZ CENTRUM** Map pp88-9

☎ 222 211 275; [www.agharta.cz](http://www.agharta.cz); Železná 16, Staré Město; 🕒 7pm-1am, music 9pm-midnight; 📍 Můstek

Agharta has been staging top-notch modern Czech jazz, blues, funk and fusion since

1991, but moved into this very central Old Town venue only in 2004. A typical jazz cellar with red-brick vaults and a cosy bar and café, the centre also has a music shop (open 7pm to midnight), which sells CDs, T-shirts and coffee mugs. As well as hosting local musicians, the centre occasionally stages gigs by leading international artists.

### BLUES SKLEP Map pp88–9

☎ 221 466 138; [www.bluessklep.cz](http://www.bluessklep.cz); Liliová 10, Staré Město; admission 100Kč; ☎ bar 7pm–2.30am, music 9pm–midnight; 📍 Staroměstská

One of the city's newest jazz clubs, the Blues Sklep (*sklep* means 'cellar') is a typical Old Town basement with dark, Gothic-vaulted rooms that provide an atmospheric setting for regular nightly jazz sessions. Bands play anything from trad New Orleans jazz to bebop, blues, funk and soul. The icing on the cake – the bar serves excellent, competitively priced Ferdinand beer (28Kč for 0.5L).

### METROPOLITAN JAZZ CLUB Map pp108–9

☎ 224 947 777; Jungmannova 14, Nové Město; ☎ 7pm–1am, music 9pm–12.30am; 📍 Národní Třída

Regular performers the Senior Swingers sum up the atmosphere and age range at this traditional basement jazz haunt, which offers an easily digestible menu of Dixieland, ragtime and swing. The Met shows a similar preference for substance over style in its choice of décor, with a plain tiled floor, a few musical instruments and posters on the walls, and a general lack of adornment that focuses the attention on the solid, dependable, evergreen music.

### REDUTA JAZZ CLUB Map pp108–9

☎ 224 933 487; [www.redutajazzclub.cz](http://www.redutajazzclub.cz); Národní třída 20, Nové Město; admission 300Kč; ☎ 9pm–3am; 📍 Národní Třída

The Reduta is Prague's oldest jazz club, founded in 1958 during the communist era – it was here in 1994 that former US president Bill Clinton famously jammed on a new saxophone presented to him by Václav Havel. It has an intimate setting, with smartly dressed patrons squeezing into tiered seats and lounges to soak up the big-band, swing and Dixieland atmosphere. Book a few hours ahead at the box office (open from 5pm Monday to Friday and from 7pm Saturday and Sunday), or through Ticketpro.

### U MALÉHO GLENA Map pp76–7

☎ 257 531 717; [www.malyglen.cz](http://www.malyglen.cz); Karmelitská 23, Malá Strana; ☎ 10am–2am, music from 9.30pm Sun–Thu, from 10pm Fri & Sat; ☎ 12, 20, 22, 23 'Little Glen's' is a lively American-owned bar and restaurant where hard-swinging local jazz or blues bands play every night in the cramped and steamy stone-vaulted cellar. There are regular jam sessions where amateurs are welcome (as long as you're good!) – it's a small venue, so get here early if you want to see, as well as hear, the band.

### USP JAZZ LOUNGE Map pp88–9

☎ 603 551 680; [www.jazzlounge.cz](http://www.jazzlounge.cz); Michalská 9, Staré Město; admission 250Kč; ☎ 7pm–2am, music 9pm–midnight; 📍 Můstek

Located in the basement of the Hotel U Staré Paní, this long-established jazz club caters to all levels of musical appreciation. There's a varied programme of modern jazz, soul, blues and Latin rhythms, and a nightly DJ spot from midnight onwards.

## LIVE MUSIC

Prague has a high-energy live-music scene, with rock, metal, punk, electro, industrial, hip-hop and newer sounds at a score of DJ and live-music venues; most have a cover charge of around 50Kč to 200Kč. As well as the venues listed here, clubs such as Futurum, Klub 007 Strahov, Palác Akropolis and Roxy (see under Clubbing, p194) also host live rock bands.

For current listings and reviews check out the media listed at the start of this chapter, and keep an eye on flyers posted around town.

### BATALION Map pp88–9

☎ 220 108 147; [www.batalion.cz](http://www.batalion.cz); 28.října 3, Staré Město; ☎ bar 24hr, music from 9pm; 📍 Můstek Batalion is a delightfully grungy bar with a basement music club offering anything from rock and jazz to punk and death metal performed by up-and-coming Czech bands (plus DJ-fronted dance parties on Friday and Saturday). Despite a location in the midst of the tourist hordes, it pulls in a young, mainly local crowd.

### BORDO Map p121

☎ 774 039 991; [www.bordo.cz](http://www.bordo.cz); Vinohradská 40, Vinohrady; ☎ 8pm–3am Mon–Sat; 📍 Muzeum plus ☎ 11 or 📍 Náměstí Míru

A cavernous rock and experimental music club, Bordo is part of the former Radio

Palác complex on Vinohradská. The interior vaguely resembles a dance at a high school gym. Though Bordo shares an address with gay-friendly **Valentino** (p196), this is an all-gender, all-preference affair, with people here for the live music, which can be pretty good some nights.

### LA FABRIKA Map pp132–3

[www.lafabrika.cz](http://www.lafabrika.cz); **Komunardů 30, Holešovice**; admission free-100Kč; ☎ variable depending on events; 📍 **Nádraží Holešovice plus** 📍 5, 12 or 📍 **Mltavská plus** 📍 1, 3, 5, 25

The name refers to a 'factory', but this is actually a former paint warehouse that's been converted into an experimental performance space. Depending on the night, come here to catch live music, theatre, dance or film. Summers are usually slow, but the season picks up again in autumn. Consult the website for the latest programme. The ticket office and bar open about an hour before the event starts.

### LUCERNA MUSIC BAR Map pp108–9

☎ 224 217 108; <http://musicbar.iquest.cz>; **Vodičkova 36, Nové Město**; ☎ 8pm-4am; 📍 **Můstek** Nostalgia reigns supreme at this atmospheric old theatre, now looking a little dog-eared, with anything from Beatles tribute bands to mainly Czech artists playing jazz, blues, pop, rock and more on midweek nights. But the most popular event – don't ask us why – is the regular 1980s and '90s video party held every Friday and Saturday night, which pulls in huge crowds of young locals bopping along to Duran Duran and Gary Numan.

### MALOSTRANSKÁ BESEDA Map pp76–7

☎ 257 532 092; **Malostranské náměstí 21, Malá Strana**; ☎ bar 5pm-1am, music from 8.30pm; 📍 12, 20, 22, 23

Malá Strana's former town hall now houses a large café-bar that hosts anything from hard rock to bluegrass via jazz and folk, playing to a young, mostly Czech crowd – it packs out early, particularly on weekends. The building was closed for reconstruction at the time of research, but should be open again in summer 2009.

### PALÁC AKROPOLIS Map pp126–7

☎ 296 330 911; [www.palacakropolis.cz](http://www.palacakropolis.cz); **Kubelíkova 27, Žižkov**; admission free-50Kč; ☎ club 7pm-5am; 📍 5, 9, 26

The Akropolis is a Prague institution, a labyrinthine, sticky-floored shrine to alternative music and drama. Its various performance spaces host a smorgasbord of musical and cultural events, from DJs to string quartets to Macedonian Roma bands to local rock gods to visiting talent – Marianne Faithfull, the Flaming Lips and the Strokes have all played here. DJs do their stuff in the Theatre Bar (Divadelní Bar) and Small Hall (Malá Scéna), spinning everything from house to hip-hop, and reggae to breakbeat.

### RETRO MUSIC HALL Map p121

☎ 222 510 592; [www.retropraha.cz](http://www.retropraha.cz); **Francouzská 4, Vinohrady**; admission 150-500Kč; ☎ box office 9am-7pm, shows start 8pm; 📍 **Náměstí Míru** There's been a dance club here for years, but Retro Music Hall has come into its own in the past year or two as a live venue for old rockers, niche bands and, well, 'retro' acts as diverse as Asia and Fishbone (yes, they're both apparently still touring). Consult the website for what's on when you're in town. Definitely worth checking out.

### ROCK CAFÉ Map pp108–9

☎ 224 933 947; [www.rockcafe.cz](http://www.rockcafe.cz); **Národní třída 20, Nové Město**; ☎ 10am-3am Mon-Fri, 5pm-3am Sat, 5pm-1am Sun, music from 7.30pm; 📍 **Národní Třída** Not to be confused with the Hard Rock Café, this is a multilevel club next door to the Reduta Jazz Club sporting a stage for DJs and live rock bands, a funkily decorated café-bar downstairs, a cinema and an art gallery. Live bands are mostly local, ranging from nu-metal to folk rock to Doors and Sex Pistols tribute bands.

### SKUTEČNOST Map p121

☎ 728 927 118; [www.skutecnost.cz](http://www.skutecnost.cz); **Francouzská 76, Vršovice**; admission free-100Kč; ☎ shows start 8pm; 📍 **Náměstí Míru plus** 📍 4, 2, 23

This experimental not-for-profit performance space just below the Czech Inn hostel hosts high-quality Czech and foreign indie bands, as well as art happenings, openings, film nights, readings and general groove-ins. Check the website to make sure something's on before venturing out here.

## THE ARTS

For classical music, opera, ballet, theatre and some rock concerts – even with the most thoroughly 'sold-out' events – you can often find a

## BUYING TICKETS

The 'wholesalers' with the largest agency networks are Bohemia Ticket International (BTI), FOK and Ticketpro; the others probably get their tickets from them.

**Bohemia Ticket International** (BTI; [Map pp88–9](#); ☎ 224 227 832; www.ticketsbti.cz; Malé náměstí 13, Staré Město; 🕒 9am–5pm Mon–Fri, 9am–1pm Sat) BTI provides tickets for all kinds of events. There's another **branch** ([Map pp108–9](#); ☎ 224 215 031; Na Příkopě 16, Nové Město; 🕒 10am–7pm Mon–Fri, 10am–5pm Sat, 10am–3pm Sun) near the Municipal House.

**FOK Box Office** ([Map pp88–9](#); ☎ 222 002 336; www.fok.cz; U Obecního Domu 2, Staré Město; 🕒 10am–6pm Mon–Fri) Prague Symphony Orchestra box office, for classical concert tickets; also open for one hour before performance begins.

**Ticketcentrum** ([Map pp88–9](#); ☎ 296 333 333; Rytířská 31, Staré Město; 🕒 9am–12.30pm & 1–5pm Mon–Fri) Walk-in centre for all kinds of tickets; branch of Ticketpro.

**Ticketpro** ([Map pp108–9](#); ☎ 296 333 333; www.ticketpro.cz; Pasází Lucerna, Štěpánská 61, Nové Město; 🕒 9am–1pm & 1.30–5.30pm Mon–Fri) Tickets are available here for all kinds of events. There are Ticketpro branches in PIS offices (see [p255](#)) and many other places.

**Ticketstream** (www.ticketstream.cz) Internet-based booking agency that covers events in Prague and all over the Czech Republic.

ticket or two on sale at the theatre's box office a half-hour or so before show time.

If you want to be sure of a seat, Prague is awash with ticket agencies (see the boxed text, [above](#)). Their advantage is convenience: most are computerised, fast and accept credit cards. Their drawback is a probable 8% to 15% mark-up.

Many venues have discounts for students and sometimes for the disabled. Most performances have a certain number of tickets set aside for foreigners. For rock and jazz clubs you can turn up at the door, but advance bookings are recommended for big names.

## CLASSICAL MUSIC, OPERA & BALLET

There are half-a-dozen concerts of one kind or another almost every day during the summer, making a fine soundtrack to accompany the city's visual delights. Many of these are chamber concerts performed by aspiring musicians in the city's churches – gorgeous but chilly (take an extra layer, even on a summer day) and not always with the finest of acoustics. However, a good number of concerts, especially those promoted by people handing out flyers in the street, are second-rate, despite the premium prices that foreigners pay. If you want to be sure of quality, go for a performance by one of the city's professional orchestras.

In addition to the hours indicated here in the individual reviews, box offices are also open from 30 minutes to one hour before the

start of a performance. For classical music, opera and ballet listings, check out [www.heartofeurope.cz](#) and [www.czechopera.cz](#).

### DVOŘÁK HALL [Map pp88–9](#)

Dvořákova síň; ☎ 227 059 352; www.rudolfinum.cz; náměstí Jana Palacha 1, Staré Město; tickets 200–600Kč; 🕒 box office 10am–12.30pm & 1.30–6pm Mon–Fri; **M** Staroměstská

The Dvořák Hall in the neo-Renaissance Rudolfinum is home to the world-renowned Czech Philharmonic Orchestra (Česká filharmonie). Sit back and be impressed by some of the best classical musicians in Prague.

### DVOŘÁK MUSEUM [Map pp108–9](#)

Muzeum Antonína Dvořáka; ☎ 224 918 013; Ke Karlovu 20, Nové Město; tickets 565Kč; 🕒 concerts 8pm Tue & Fri Apr–Oct; **M** IP Pavlova

The pretty little Vila Amerika was built in 1717 as a count's immodest summer retreat. These days it's home to the **Dvořák Museum** ([p114](#)), and stages performances of Dvořák's vocal and instrumental works by the **Original Music Theatre of Prague** ([www.musictheatre.cz](#)), complete with period costume. Tickets are available through BTI (see the boxed text, [above](#)).

### ESTATES THEATRE [Map pp88–9](#)

Stavovské divadlo; ☎ 224 902 322; www.narodni-divadlo.cz; Ovocný trh 1, Staré Město; tickets 100–2000Kč; 🕒 box office 10am–6pm; **M** Můstek

The **Estates Theatre** ([p101](#)) is the oldest theatre in Prague, famed as the place where Mozart

## OTHER CONCERT VENUES

Numerous churches and baroque palaces also serve as concert venues, staging anything from choral performances and organ recitals to string quartets, brass ensembles and occasionally full orchestras. You can get comprehensive details of these concerts from PIS offices (see p255). We've listed here a selection of the more popular venues around town.

### Hradčany & Malá Strana

**Basilica of St George** (Bazilika sv Jiří; Map p62; náměstí U sv Jiří, Prague Castle) The Czech Republic's best-preserved Romanesque church.

**Lichtenstein Palace** (Lichtenštejnský palác; Map pp76–7; Malostranské náměstí, Malá Strana; ☎ 12, 20, 22, 23) Home to the Music Faculty of the Prague Academy of Performing Arts (Hudební fakulta AMU; www.hamu.cz).

**St Nicholas Church** (Kostel sv Mikuláše; Map pp76–7; Malostranská náměstí 38, Malá Strana; ☎ Malostranská) Mozart himself tickled the ivories on the 2500-pipe organ here in 1787.

**St Vitus Cathedral** (Katedrála sv Víta; Map p62; 3rd Courtyard, Prague Castle, Hradčany; ☎ Malostranská) The nave of Prague's cathedral is flooded with colour from beautiful stained-glass windows, and the acoustics are just as impressive.

**Strahov Monastery** (Strahovský klášter; Map pp70–1; Strahovské nádvoří 1, Hradčany; ☎ 22, 23) Mozart is said to have played the organ here as well.

### Staré Město

**Bethlehem Chapel** (Betlémská kaple; Map pp88–9; Betlémské náměstí 1; ☎ 6, 9, 18, 21, 22, 23) This 14th-century chapel was torn down during the 18th century and painstakingly reconstructed between 1948 and 1954.

**Chapel of Mirrors** (Zrcadlová kaple; Map pp88–9; Klementinum, Mariánské náměstí; ☎ 17, 18, 53) Ornately decorated chapel dating from the 1720s.

**Church of St Francis** (Kostel sv Františka; Map pp88–9; Křížovnické náměstí; ☎ 5, 8, 14) Alongside the complex of the Convent of St Agnes.

**Church of St Nicholas** (Kostel sv Mikuláše; Map pp88–9; Staroměstské náměstí; ☎ Staroměstská) Built in the 1730s by Kilian Dientzenhofer.

**Convent of St Agnes** (Klášter sv Anežky; Map pp88–9; U Milosrdných 17; ☎ 5, 8, 14) Prague's oldest surviving Gothic building.

### Nové Město

**National Museum** (Národní muzeum; Map pp108–9; Václavské náměstí 68; ☎ Muzeum) Chamber music and operatic duets performed on the grand staircase in the museum's main hall at 6pm most evenings.

Take care when buying tickets through people who hand out flyers in the street – some of these concerts are OK, but some may turn out to be a disappointment. Make sure you know exactly where the concert will be held – if you are told just 'the Municipal House', don't expect the magnificent Smetana Hall, as it may well be in one of the smaller concert halls.

conducted the premiere of *Don Giovanni* on 29 October 1787. A touristy version is staged here by the Opera Mozart company each summer; the rest of the year sees various opera, ballet and drama productions. The theatre is equipped for the hearing-impaired and has wheelchair access (wheelchair bookings can be made up to five days in advance); the box office is around the corner in the Kolowrat Palace.

### MOZART MUSEUM Map p138

**Muzeum Mozarta**; ☎ 257 318 461; www.bertramka.com; Vila Bertramka, Mozartova 169, Smíchov; museum 110Kč, concert tickets 390-450Kč; ☎ 4, 7, 9, 10

Mozart stayed in the Vila Bertramka during his visits to Prague. It now houses a **museum** (p139), which serves as a charming venue for classical concerts held in the salon and garden from April to October. You can



buy tickets at the museum cash desk, or through BTL or Ticketpro.

### NATIONAL THEATRE Map pp108–9

Národní divadlo; ☎ 224 901 377; [www.narodni-divadlo.cz](http://www.narodni-divadlo.cz); Národní třída 2, Nové Město; tickets 100-2000Kč; ☎ box office 10am–6pm; M Národní Třída

The glorious, golden-roofed centrepiece of the Czech National Revival, the much-loved National Theatre provided a stage for the re-emergence of Czech culture in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Today you'll find traditional opera, drama and ballet by the likes of Smetana, Shakespeare and Tchaikovsky sharing the programme, alongside more modern works by composers and playwrights such as Philip Glass and John Osborne.

### PRAGUE STATE OPERA Map pp108–9

Státní opera Praha; ☎ 224 227 266; [www.opera.cz](http://www.opera.cz); Wilsonova 4, Nové Město; opera tickets 100-1200Kč, ballet tickets 100-900Kč; ☎ box office 10am–5.30pm Mon–Fri, 10am–noon & 1-5.30pm Sat & Sun; M Muzeum

The impressive neo-rococo home of the Prague State Opera provides a glorious setting for performances of opera and ballet. An annual Verdi festival takes place here in August and September, and less conventional shows, such as Leoncavallo's rarely staged version of *La Bohème*, are also performed here.

### SMETANA HALL Map pp88–9

Smetanova síň; ☎ 220 002 101; [www.obecnidum.cz](http://www.obecnidum.cz); náměstí Republiky 5, Staré Město; tickets 250-600Kč; ☎ box office 10am–6pm; M Náměstí Republiky

Smetana Hall, centrepiece of the stunning Municipal House (Obecní dům; p99), is the city's largest concert hall with seating for 1200. This is the home venue of the Prague Symphony Orchestra (Symfonický orchestr hlavního města Prahy), and also stages performances of folk dance and music.

## FILM

Prague has more than 30 cinemas, some showing first-run Western films, some showing Czech films, and including several excellent arthouse cinemas. For cinema listings check the 'Night & Day' section of the *Prague Post* or [www.prague.tv](http://www.prague.tv).

Most films are screened in their original language with Czech subtitles (*české titulky*), but Hollywood blockbusters are often dubbed into Czech (*dabing*); look for the labels 'tit' or 'dab' on cinema listings. Czech-language films with English subtitles are listed as having *anglický titulky*.

### BIO OKO Map pp132–3

Okó Cinema; ☎ 233 382 606; [www.biooko.net](http://www.biooko.net); Františka Křížka 15, Holešovice; tickets 100Kč; ☎ 1, 5, 8, 12, 14, 15, 17, 25, 26

This repertory cinema shows a varied programme of underground films, selections from film festivals, documentaries, big-budget movies, and classics from around the world. Most films are shown in the original language (not necessarily English), with Czech subtitles. Check the website for the latest film showings.

### KINO AERO Map pp126–7

☎ 271 771 349; [www.kinoaero.cz](http://www.kinoaero.cz); Biskupcova 31, Žižkov; tickets 40-100Kč; ☎ 5, 9, 10, 16, 19

The Aero is Prague's best-loved arthouse cinema, with themed programmes, retrospectives and unusual films, often in English or with English subtitles. This is the place to catch reruns of classics from *Smrt v Benátkách* (Death in Venice) to *Život Briana* (The Life of Brian). The same managers run a similar venue in the city centre, **Kino Světozor** (below).

### KINO MAT Map pp108–9

☎ 224 915 765; [www.mat.cz](http://www.mat.cz); Karlovo náměstí 19, Nové Město; tickets 99Kč; M Karlovo Náměstí

A former film and TV studio's private screening room (there are only 40 seats), Kino Mat is now a hip arthouse cinema where film buffs sip espressos in the celluloid-decorated downstairs bar while discussing the use of visual metaphor in *Citizen Kane*. The programme includes the latest Czech films (with English subtitles) and the latest European films (with Czech ones).

### KINO SVĚTOZOR Map pp108–9

☎ 224 946 824; [www.kinosvetozor.cz](http://www.kinosvetozor.cz); Vodičkova 41, Nové Město; tickets 60-110Kč; M Můstek

The Světozor is under the same management as Kino Aero but is more central, and has the same emphasis on classic cinema

## PRAGUE SPRING

First held in 1946, the Prague Spring (Pražské jaro) international music festival is the Czech Republic's best-known annual cultural event. It begins on 12 May, the anniversary of composer Bedřich Smetana's death, with a procession from his grave at Vyšehrad (p117) to the Municipal House (p99), and a performance there of his patriotic song cycle *Má vlast* (My Homeland). The festival runs until 3 June, and the beautiful concert venues are as big a drawcard as the music.

Tickets can be obtained through the official **Prague Spring Box Office** (Map pp88–9; ☎ 227 059 234; www.festival.cz; Náměstí Jana Palacha, Staré Město; ☎ 10am–6pm Mon–Fri) in the Rudolfinum, or from any branch of Ticketpro (see the boxed text, p199).

If you want a guaranteed seat at a Prague Spring concert try to book it by mid-March at the latest, though a few seats may still be available as late as the end of May.

and arthouse films screened in their original language – everything from *Battleship Potemkin* and *Casablanca* to *Annie Hall* and *Motorcycle Diaries*.

### PALACE CINEMAS Map pp108–9

☎ 257 181 212; www.palacecinemas.cz; Slovanský dům, Na Příkopě 22, Nové Město; tickets 169Kč; 📍 Náměstí Republiky

Housed in the posh Slovanský dům shopping centre, this is central Prague's main popcorn palace – a modern 10-screen multiplex showing first-run Hollywood films (mostly in English). There's also a 12-screen multiplex on the top floor of the huge **Nový Smíchov** (Map p138; Plzeňská 8, Smíchov; 📍 Anděl) shopping centre.

## THEATRE

Most Czech drama is, not surprisingly, performed in Czech, which rather diminishes its appeal to non-Czech-speakers. However, there are some English-language productions, and many predominantly visual shows at which language is not a barrier.

Prague is famous for its black-light theatre – occasionally called just 'black theatre' – a hybrid of mime, drama, dance and special effects in which live actors wearing fluorescent costumes do their thing in front of a black backdrop lit only by ultraviolet light (it's a growth industry in Prague, with at least half a dozen venues). An even older Czech tradition is puppetry, and the city has several marionette shows on offer.

### CELETNÁ THEATRE Map pp88–9

Divadlo v Celetné; ☎ 222 326 843; www.divadlo.celetne.cz; Celetná 17, Staré Město; tickets 160–350Kč; ☎ box office 10am–7.30pm Mon–Fri, 2–7.30pm Sat & Sun; 📍 Náměstí Republiky

The Divadlo v Celetné, in a courtyard between Celetná and Štupartská, stages mainly Czech drama, both old and new, some foreign plays (including Shakespeare and Tom Stoppard) translated into Czech, and the occasional opera production by the students of the Prague Conservatory.

### IMAGE THEATRE Map pp88–9

Divadlo Image; ☎ 222 314 448; www.image.theatre.cz; Pařížská 4, Staré Město; tickets 480Kč; ☎ box office 9am–8pm; 📍 Staroměstská

Founded in 1989, this company uses creative black-light theatre along with pantomime, modern dance and video – not to mention liberal doses of slapstick – to tell its stories. The staging can be very effective, but the atmosphere is often dictated by audience reaction.

### LATERNA MAGIKA Map pp108–9

☎ 224 931 482; www.laterna.cz; Nova Scéna, Národní třída 4, Nové Město; tickets adult/child 680/300Kč; ☎ box office 10am–8pm Mon–Sat; 📍 Národní Třída

Laterna Magika has been wowing audiences, both at home and abroad, ever since its first cutting-edge multimedia show caused a stir at the 1958 Brussels World Fair. Its imaginative blend of live dance, opera, music and projected images continues to pull in the crowds. Nová Scéna, the futuristic glass-block building next to the National Theatre, has been home to Laterna Magika since it moved here from its birthplace in the basement of the Adria Palace in the mid-1970s. Some agencies (which charge 735Kč a ticket) may tell you it's booked out, but you can often bag a leftover seat at the box office on the day before a performance, or a no-show seat half an hour before the show starts.

**MINOR THEATRE** Map pp108–9

Divadlo Minor; ☎ 222 231 351; [www.minor.cz](http://www.minor.cz); Vodíčková 6, Nové Město; tickets 80–200Kč; ☎ box office 10am–1.30pm & 2.30–8pm Mon–Fri, 11am–6pm Sat & Sun; 🚻 Karlovo náměstí

Divadlo Minor is a wheelchair-accessible children's theatre that offers a fun mix of puppets, clown shows and pantomime. There are performances (in Czech) at 9.30am Monday to Friday and at 6pm or 7.30pm Tuesday to Thursday, and you can usually get a ticket at the door before the show.

**NATIONAL MARIONETTE THEATRE**

Map pp88–9

Národní divadlo marionet; ☎ 224 819 323; [www.mozart.cz](http://www.mozart.cz); Žatecká 1, Staré Město; tickets adult/child 590/490Kč; ☎ box office 10am–8pm; 🚻 Staroměstská

Loudly touted as the longest-running classical marionette show in the city – it has been performed almost continuously since 1991 – *Don Giovanni* is a life-sized puppet version of the Mozart opera that has spawned several imitations around town. Younger kids' attention might begin to wander fairly early on during this two-hour show.

**REDUTA THEATRE** Map pp108–9

Divadlo Reduta; ☎ 257 921 835; [www.blacktheatresnec.cz](http://www.blacktheatresnec.cz); Národní třída 20, Nové Město; tickets adult/child 590/490Kč; ☎ box office 3–7pm Mon–Fri; 🚻 Národní Třída

The Reduta Theatre is home to the Black Theatre of Jiří Srnec, who was a founding member of Prague's original black-light theatre back in the early 1960s. Today the company's productions include versions of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Peter Pan*, and a compilation of the best of black theatre from the early days.

**SPEJBL & HURVÍNEK THEATRE**

Map pp132–3

Divadlo Spejbla a Hurvínek; ☎ 224 316 784; [www.spejbl-hurvinek.cz](http://www.spejbl-hurvinek.cz); Dejvická 38, Dejvice; tickets 50–90Kč; ☎ box office 10am–2pm & 3–6pm Tue–Fri, 1–5pm Sat & Sun; 🚻 Dejvická

Created in 1930 by puppeteer Josef Skupa, Spejbl and Hurvínek are the Czech marionette equivalents of Punch and Judy, although they are father and son rather than husband and wife. The shows are in the Czech language, but most can be followed whatever language you speak.

**ŠVANDOVO DIVADLO NA SMÍCHOVĚ**

Map p138

Švandovo Theatre in Smíchov; ☎ 257 318 666; [www.svandovodivadlo.cz](http://www.svandovodivadlo.cz); Stefanikova 57; tickets 150–300Kč; ☎ box office 11am–7pm Mon–Fri, 5–7pm Sat & Sun; 🚻 6, 9, 12, 20

This experimental theatre space, performing Czech and international dramatic works, is unique for its commitment to staging 'English-friendly' performances, by which they mean English-language theatre or with English subtitles. It also hosts occasional live music and dance, as well as regular 'Stage Talks', unscripted discussions with noted personalities. A couple of years ago, one featured Václav Havel and Lou Reed.

**TA FANTASTIKA** Map pp88–9

☎ 222 221 366; [www.tafantastika.cz](http://www.tafantastika.cz); Karlova 8, Staré Město; tickets 350–650Kč; ☎ box office 11am–9.30pm; 🚻 Staroměstská

Established in New York in 1981 by Czech émigré Petr Kratochvíl, Ta Fantastika moved to Prague in 1989. The theatre produces black-light theatre based on classic literature and legends such as *Alice in Wonderland*, *Excalibur*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Joan of Arc*.

**THEATRE ON THE BALUSTRADE**

Map pp88–9

Divadlo Na Zbradlí; ☎ 222 868 868; [www.nazabradli.cz](http://www.nazabradli.cz); Anenské náměstí 5, Staré Město; tickets 90–300Kč; ☎ box office 2–4pm & 4.30–7pm Mon–Fri, 2hr before show starts Sat & Sun; 🚻 17, 18

The theatre where Václav Havel honed his skills as a playwright four decades ago is now the city's main venue for serious Czech-language drama, including works by a range of foreign playwrights translated into Czech.

## SPORTS & ACTIVITIES

### top picks

- **Cycling along the Vltava** (p206)
- **Hiking in Stromovka** (p206)
- **AXA Arena** (p209)
- **Stadión Eden** (p209)
- **Czech Lawn Tennis Club** (p209)
- **Divoká Šárka** (p208)
- **Cybex Health Club** (p206)

# SPORTS & ACTIVITIES

The Czechs have always been keen on sports and outdoor activities, and Prague's extensive green spaces – from the former royal hunting grounds of Stromovka to the riverside parks and islands strung along the Vltava – offer plenty of opportunity for exercise. Although hiking, swimming and ice hockey are the traditional favourites, recent years have seen a steady increase in the numbers of cyclists in the city as bike lanes and dedicated cycle trails have been introduced.

Golf was never a high priority during the communist era, but the emergence of a class of young professionals with money to burn has seen a growth of interest in more exclusive outdoor pursuits, including the construction of a championship golf course at Karlštejn (p230).

## HEALTH & FITNESS

There has been a move away from the sweaty gyms and weight rooms of the past towards a new generation of spas and health clubs, where the goal is pampering rather than fitness. Most are associated with top-end hotels – check out <http://prague.tv/prague/health/spas> for a list.

## GYMS & SPAS

The luxurious **Cybex Health Club & Spa** (Map pp126–7; ☎ 224 842 375; [www.cybexprg.cz](http://www.cybexprg.cz); Pobřežní 1, Nové Město; ☎ 6am–10pm Mon–Fri, 7am–10pm Sat & Sun; ♿ Florenc) in the Hotel Hilton charges 900Kč for a day pass, which gives access to the gym, pool, sauna, Jacuzzi and steam room, and 1200Kč for a half-hour massage.

If you're looking for a workout, you can use the *posilovna* (weights room) at the **Sport-centrum YMCA** (Map p106; ☎ 224 875 811; Na Poříčí 12, Nové Město; ☎ 6.30am–9.30pm Mon–Fri, 10am–8.30pm Sat & Sun) for 120Kč per hour. There's also the centrally located **Fitness Týn** (Map pp88–9; ☎ 224 808 295; Týnská 19, Staré Město; ☎ 7am–9pm Mon–Fri, 10am–8pm Sat & Sun), which charges 95Kč (75Kč for ISIC holders) for use of the weights room, and 200Kč for a half-hour massage.

## ACTIVITIES

Summer or winter, rain or shine, Prague is packed with places where you can work off the beer-and-dumpling calorie rush – from hiking and biking trails to swimming pools, skate parks and ice rinks.

## HIKING

The Czech Republic is covered with a network of waymarked hiking trails, colour-coded and clearly marked on a range of excellent

1:50 000 and 1:25 000 hiking maps (*turistické mapy*). Prague has its share of trails – the Klub Českých Turistů (Czech Hiking Club) 1:50,000 map sheet 36, *Okolí Prahy-západ* (Prague & Around, West) covers the best hiking in and around the city, including Beroun and Karlštejn.

For easy walks of an hour or two, you can head for the big parks and nature reserves – Stromovka in the north (see Walking Tour, p134), Prokopské údolí in the southwest, and Michelský les and Kunratický les in the south-east – or follow the riverbank trails north from Prague Zoo to the little ferry at Roztoky, and return to the city by train.

A more challenging day hike, which takes in a visit to **Karlštejn Castle** (p230), begins at the town of Beroun to the southwest of the city. From Beroun train station follow a red-marked trail east for 6km to the Monastery of St John under the Rock (Klášter sv Jan pod Skálou), situated in a spectacular limestone gorge. From here, continue on the red trail through wooded hills for another 8km to Karlštejn, where you can catch another train back to the city centre. Allow five hours from Beroun to Karlštejn.

## CYCLING

Prague has a long way to go before it's a cycling town comparable with big cities in Germany, or even Vienna. Nevertheless, there's a group of hard-core cyclists at work promoting things like commuter cycling, extending bike paths and raising driver awareness. Their efforts are starting to bear fruit. Prague now has a relatively complete, if disjointed, network of bike paths – signposted in yellow – that crisscross the city centre and fan out in all directions. Recreational cyclists will probably be content just to putz around on one of the tours offered by the

bike rental companies (p251). More serious cyclists should consider buying a good map, hiring a bike and hitting the outlying trails for a day or two.

Arguably the best cycling trails lead off to the north following the Vltava River in the direction of Germany. Someday, the Prague–Dresden run will be the stuff of cycling legend, but for now there are still significant gaps in the route. That said, the path northward along the river is nearly complete as far as the town of Kralupy nad Vltavou (20km from Prague; it's possible to return by rail), from where you can continue on back roads to **Mělník** (p233). There are plenty of bridges and ferries to take you back and forth across the river, and some really great trails leading inland along the way. From the centre of Prague, start off at Čechův most (the bridge over the Vltava by the Intercontinental Hotel), ride across the bridge and up the hill to Letná. From there, follow the signs to Stromovka and on to Prague Zoo. The riverside trail continues northward from the zoo.

Most large bookstores stock cycling maps (*cykloturistická mapa*). One of the best is the 2008 edition Freytag & Berndt *Praha a Okolí* (Prague & Surroundings; 1:75 000), which costs about 100Kč. Another good choice for the northwestern section of the city is *Z prahy na kole, Severozapad* (Around Prague by Bike, Northwest; 1:65 000) for about 65Kč. Remember to pack water and sunscreen and always watch out for cars. Czech drivers, inexplicably, are rabidly anti-cyclist.

There are several useful websites:

**Cyklojizdy** ([www.cyklojizdy.cz](http://www.cyklojizdy.cz)) Mostly in Czech, with an English summary – portal that organises the twice-yearly (spring and autumn) Critical Mass rides to raise cycling awareness.

**Grant's Prague Bike Blog** (<http://praguebikeblog.blogspot.com>) An American expat's weekly cycling exploits, with great ride ideas, maps and photos.

**Greenways** ([www.pragueviennagreenways.org](http://www.pragueviennagreenways.org)) Details of a 250-mile cycle trail linking Prague and Vienna.

**Prague City Hall** (<http://doprava.praha-mesto.cz>) The city's public transport portal with a nice section in English on bike trails and rules for cyclists.

## Hire

**City Bike** (Map pp88–9; ☎ 776 180 284; [www.citybike-prague.com](http://www.citybike-prague.com); Královodvorská 5, Staré Město; 4/8hr 400/500Kč; 🕒 9am–7pm Apr–Oct; 📍 Náměstí Republiky) Rental includes helmet, padlock and map.

**Praha Bike** (Map pp88–9; ☎ 732 388 880; [www.prahabike.cz](http://www.prahabike.cz); Dlouhá 24, Staré Město; 4/8hr 380/520Kč; 🕒 9am–7pm 15 Mar–15 Nov; 📍 5, 8, 14) Hires out good, new bikes with lock, helmet and map, plus free luggage storage. Also offers student discounts and group bike tours (also see p251).

## GOLF

The Czech Republic is one of the undiscovered gems of European golf, with new, high-quality courses springing up all over the place – the country has gone from having three 18-hole courses in 1990 to no fewer than 70 in 2008. There are a couple of nine-hole courses within the city boundary, but the nearest championship course is at Karlštejn. For more information, see [www.czechgolfguide.com](http://www.czechgolfguide.com).

### GOLF CLUB PRAHA Map pp58–9

☎ 257 216 584; [www.gcp.cz](http://www.gcp.cz); Plzeňská 401/2, Motol; green fees (nine holes) Mon–Fri 400–500Kč, Sat, Sun & hols 600Kč; 🕒 7am–dusk; 📍 7, 9, 10

Duffers will be happy to know that Prague has a nine-hole golf course, complete with driving range and chipping and putting greens, behind the Hotel Golf in the western suburbs; you can hire a set of clubs for 500Kč. Take tram 7, 9 or 10 west to the Hotel Golf stop, and follow the trail across the course to the clubhouse.

### GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB off map pp58–9

☎ 244 460 435; [www.hodkovicky.cz](http://www.hodkovicky.cz); Vltavanů 982, Hodkovičky; green fees (nine holes) Mon–Fri 600Kč, Sat & Sun 800Kč, driving range per 50 balls 100Kč; 🕒 golf course 8am–7pm, driving range 7am–9pm; 📍 3, 17, 21

Way out on the southern edge of the city, this place also offers a nine-hole course, a driving range and chipping and putting greens. Take tram 3, 17 or 21 south to the Černý kůň stop, and walk west towards the river on V Náklič for 100m (follow the signs for Hostel Boathouse), then turn down the first right immediately after passing under the railway bridge.

### KARLŠTEJN GOLF COURSE

☎ 311 604 999; [www.karlstejn-golf.cz](http://www.karlstejn-golf.cz); Běleč 272, Líteň; green fees Mon–Fri 2000Kč, Sat, Sun & hols 3000Kč; 🕒 7am–9pm May–Aug, 8am–7pm Sep, 8am–6pm Apr & Oct

The closest 18-hole facility to Prague is this prestigious championship course

overlooking **Karlštejn Castle** (p230), southwest of the city. It's 4km south of Karlštejn village, on the southern side of the Berounka River.

## RUNNING

The **Prague International Marathon** (Pražský mezinárodní maraton; ☎ 224 919 209; www.pim.cz; Záhořanského 3, 120 00 Praha 2), established in 1989, is held annually in mid- to late May. It's considered to be one of the world's top 10 city marathons, and attracted 4517 entrants in 2008. There's also a half-marathon, held in late March. If you'd like to compete, you can register online or obtain entry forms from the website. The registration fee is €60.

## SKATING

With ice hockey probably the country's most popular spectator sport, it's no surprise that the Czechs are skate-mad. In winter, when the mercury drops below zero, sections of parks are sprayed with water and turned into makeshift ice rinks. In summer, ice skates are replaced with inline skates and street hockey takes over, while the park trails and riverside cycle tracks are taken over by whole families of rollerbladers.

### PŮJČOVNA BRUSLÍ MIAMI Map pp132–3

Miami Skate Rental; ☎ 731 281 571;  
Nad Stolou 1, Holešovice; skate rental per hr 80Kč;  
☎ 9am–9pm May–Sep, noon–9pm Oct, 2–8pm Apr;  
🕒 1, 8, 15, 25, 26

A great way to spend a summer's day: you can rent inline skates from this place (they speak a bit of English), which is close to the National Technical Museum, then head off to explore the extensive skating trails in Letná Gardens before enjoying a cold one at the Letná beer garden (p187).

### ŠTVANICE STADIUM Map pp132–3

Zimní stadión Štvanice; ☎ 233 378 327; Ostrov Štvanice 1125, Holešovice; adult/child under 7yr 70/20Kč; ☎ public skating 2.30–4pm Mon & Wed, 3–5pm Tue, Thu & Fri; 🕒 3, 26

This is the oldest ice-hockey stadium in Central Europe – Czechoslovakia's first ice-hockey match on artificial ice was played here in 1931. It provides public skating sessions as well as hosting ice-hockey and roller-hockey games in season. Skate hire costs 80Kč.

## SWIMMING

### DIVOKÁ ŠÁRKA Map pp58–9

Evropská; 🕒 20, 26

Prague summers can be hot, and at week-ends many locals escape the heat by heading for the open-air swimming at **Divoká Šárka** (also see p130). There's a large lake with a sandy beach and grassy area for sunbathing, plus volleyball and table tennis facilities (admission 70Kč). Further down the valley you'll find a stream-fed open-air swimming pool (admission 50Kč); both lake and pool can be a bit chilly, even in high summer.

### PODOLÍ SWIMMING POOL Map pp58–9

Plavecký stadión Podolí; ☎ 241 433 952; Podolská 74, Podolí; admission per 1½/3hr 80/125Kč, child under 13yr half-price; ☎ 6am–9.45pm; 🕒 3, 16, 17, 21

There are more swimming and tanning opportunities at this huge swimming complex with Olympic-sized pools, both indoor and outdoor, and plenty of sunbathing space (best to bring footwear for the grotty showers, though). To get there, take the tram to the Kublov stop; from there it's a further five-minute walk south.

## SPECTATOR SPORT

Those widescreen TVs perched ubiquitously on pub walls and newsstands groaning under the weight of sports magazines give the game away: the Czechs are avid sports fans. From soccer to ice hockey, rarely a weekend goes by without some sporting showdown providing fertile ground for an in-depth, post-match analysis – in the pub, of course.

## FOOTBALL

Football is a national passion in the Czech Republic. The national team performs well in international competitions, having won the European Championship in 1976 (as Czechoslovakia), and reached the final in 1996 and the semifinal in 2004. Sadly, it crashed out in the first round of the 2006 World Cup in Germany, but bounced back to be ranked sixth in the world by FIFA in the run-up to Euro 2008, a ranking that seemed over-optimistic when the Czechs failed to reach the quarter-finals. Home international matches are played at Slavia Praha's brand new, 21,000-seat Stadión Eden in eastern Prague, which opened in May 2008.

Prague's two big football clubs, SK Slavia Praha and AC Sparta Praha, are both leading contenders in the national *fotbal* (football) league. Two other Prague-based teams – **FC Bohemians** (Map pp58–9; ☎ 271 721 459; www.bohemians1905.cz; Vršovická 31, Vinohrady; 📍 4, 22) and **FK Viktoria Žižkov** (Map pp126–7; ☎ 221 423 427; www.fkvz.cz; Seifertova, Žižkov; 📍 5, 9, 26) – attract fervent local support. The season runs from August to December and February to June, and matches are mostly played on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

### AXA ARENA Map pp132–3

☎ 296 111 400; www.sparta.cz; Milady Horákové 98, Bubeneč; 📍 1, 8, 15, 25, 26

The all-seater AXA Arena, with a capacity of 20,854, is the home ground of Sparta Praha – winners of the Czech football league in 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2007, and of the Czech National Cup in 2004, 2006 and 2007. The club was founded in 1893.

### STADIÓN EDEN Map pp58–9

Stadión Eden; ☎ 257 213 290; www.slavia.cz; www.stadioneden.cz; Vladivostocká, Vršovice; 📍 6, 7, 22, 23, 24

This brand-new stadium is home to SK Slavia Praha, founded in 1892 – one of the oldest sporting clubs in continental Europe and an honorary member of England's Football Association. Czech National Cup winner in 1997, 1999 and 2002, Slavia holds an unusual record – the design of its distinctive red-and-white strip has remained unchanged since 1896.

## ICE HOCKEY

It's a toss-up whether football or ice hockey inspires more passion in the hearts of Prague sports fans, but hockey probably wins. The Czech national team has been rampant in the last decade, winning the World Championship three years running (1999 to 2001) and taking the title again in 2005; it reached the final in 2006 but lost to Sweden. It also won Olympic gold in 1998 by defeating the mighty Russians in the final.

Prague's two big hockey teams are HC Sparta Praha and HC Slavia Praha, both of which compete in the 14-team national league. Promising young players are often lured away by the promise of big money in North America's Canadian Hockey League, and there is a sizeable Czech contingent in the NHL.

Sparta plays at the huge, modern T-Mobile Aréna at Výstaviště in Holešovice, and Slavia Praha at O2 Arena; games are fast and furious, and the atmosphere can be electrifying – it's well worth making the effort to see a game. The season runs from September to early April.

### O2 ARENA Map pp58–9

☎ 266 212 111; www.sazkaarena.com, www.hc-slavia.cz; Ocelářská 2, Vysočany; 📍 Českomoravská

The O2 Arena is Prague's biggest multipurpose venue, and home rink of HC Slavia Praha, Czech Extraliga champions in 2008. It can accommodate up to 18,000 spectators, and is used to host sporting events, rock concerts, exhibitions and other major events as well as hockey games.

### T-MOBILE ARÉNA Map pp132–3

☎ 266 727 443; www.hcsparta.cz; Za Elektrámou 419, Výstaviště, Holešovice; 📍 5, 12, 14, 15, 17

You can see HC Sparta Praha – Czech Extraliga champions 2006 and 2007 – play at the 13,000-capacity T-Mobile Aréna beside the Exhibition Grounds in Holešovice.

## TENNIS

Tennis is another sport in which the Czechs have excelled, having produced world-class players such as Jan Kodeš, Ivan Lendl, Petr Korda, Hana Mandlíková, Jana Novotná, Cyril Suk and up-and-coming star Nicole Pietrangeli. Plus, of course, very probably the finest female tennis player ever, Martina Navrátilová.

In May the 8000-seat centre court at the Czech Lawn Tennis Club on Štvanice Island hosts the **Prague Open** (www.pragueopen.cz), a WTA competition that was established in 2001 in the hope of luring international tennis talent back to the Czech capital (Prague no longer hosts the Czech Open, which is now held at Prostějov). In 2005 the Prague Open was joined by a women's WTA tournament, which runs concurrently.

### CZECH LAWN TENNIS CLUB Map pp132–3

Český Lawn-Tennis Klub; ☎ 222 316 317; www.cltk.cz; Ostrov Štvanice 38, Holešovice; match tickets 100-150Kč; 📍 3, 26

Founded in 1893, this is the oldest and most prestigious tennis club in the country (despite the name, all its courts are clay),



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and it was here that Ivan Lendl and Martina Navratilova learned their craft.

## HORSE RACING

**PRAGUE RACECOURSE** off map pp58–9

Velká Chuchle závodistiště Praha; ☎ 257 941 431;  
www.velka-chuchle.cz; Radotínská 69, Velká  
Chuchle; adult/child under 18yr 100Kč/free;  
🚗 129, 172, 243, 244, 255

If you fancy a flutter on the ponies, check out the *dostihy* (horse racing) scene at this racecourse on the southern edge of the city. There are races run every Sunday from April to October – check the website for more information and the full racing calendar. You can get to the racecourse by taking the bus from Smíchovské Nádraží metro station.

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