

# Newsletter

## For Foreign Offices



Český Krumlov



### Trade news

Hotels & Restaurants  
Transport  
Data and Research

### Product news

Cities & Regions  
Culture

### Corporate news

News from the Czech  
Tourist Authority



## IKA Culinary Olympics

After a four-year break, the IKA Culinary Olympics will take place once again in Stuttgart (2.–7. 2. 2024). The longest-running, largest and most diverse international culinary contest on earth will see the national team of cooks and confectioners of the AKC ČR (junior and senior categories) fighting for the top positions. On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> of February, the first discipline is called the Restaurant of Nations (110 portions, 3 courses). Captain Patrik Bečvář, head chef at the Hotel Královka and holder of numerous awards (2<sup>nd</sup> place at the Bocuse d'Or, Chef of the Year, medal from the IKA Culinary Olympics and the World Cup in Luxembourg etc) will lead the team into battle at the IKA Culinary Olympics. Czech Specials is once again a proud partner of the event.

Source: Czech Association of Chefs and Pastry Chefs

## Ibis Styles Debuts in the Heart of the Wallachia Region

The first Ibis Styles hotel in Czechia is opening for tourists and business travellers. The design marries traditional styling with modern comforts, and the hotel offers a wonderful experience in the sub-alpine town of Rožnov pod Radhoštěm. The Ibis Styles Rožnov pod Radhoštěm occupies a renovated late modernist building and boasts 88 comfortable rooms, a restaurant with a pleasant terrace and a cosy lobby bar. The hotel also offers other facilities for relaxation and activities. These include covered and outdoor swimming pools, a children's playground, a relaxation centre (sauna, massage, hydrotherapy and electrotherapy) and sports facilities (minigolf, tennis court, skittles, table tennis). The hotel boasts six meeting rooms with a total capacity of up to 350 people.

Source: ČTK/Protext



## New General Director at Hotel Hilton Prague

In January the Hotel Hilton Prague announced a change at the top. Michael Specking who had led the Prague hotel for 17 years has retired and his position has been taken by Ryan Gauci. He is no stranger to the Hilton Prague – for three years he served as hotel manager and played a part in a major renovation project and strategic changes at the hotel. From June 2021, he successfully headed up the Hilton Rijeka Costabella Beach Resort & Spa in Croatia which he also opened.

Source: Hotel Hilton Prague

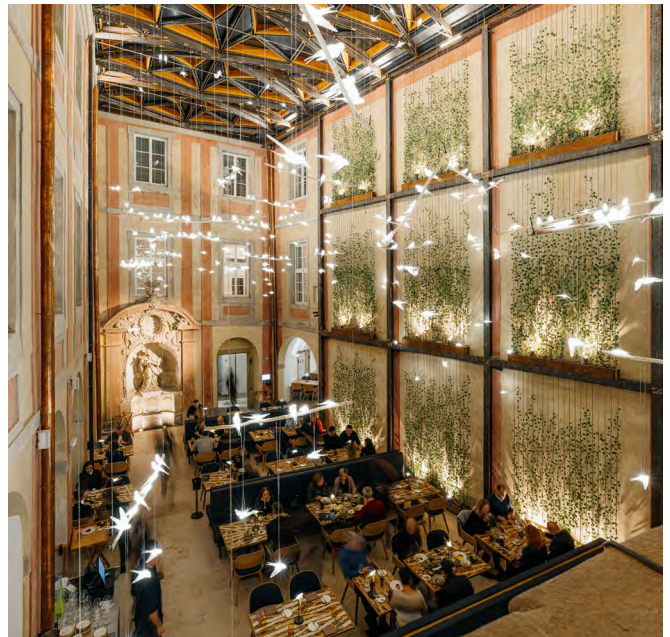




## Restaurant 420

Within the House at the Red Fox on Prague's Old Town Square, co-owners of the Michelin-listed restaurant Field Radek Kašpárek and Miroslav Nosek have opened a new restaurant called 420, the name coming from the Czech Republic's international dialling code. Headed by Radek Kašpárek and head chef Marek Kominek, the concept here is modern Czech cuisine that surprises many with its boldness and humour. „Our aim is to move traditional Czech food in a new direction. We are experimenting and testing how far we can go in order to bring the Old Town Square high-quality gastronomy for locals, Czech visitors to Prague, foodies and international tourists,“ states Kašpárek.

[Find out more >](#)



## New Hotel Active Stadium in Lovosice

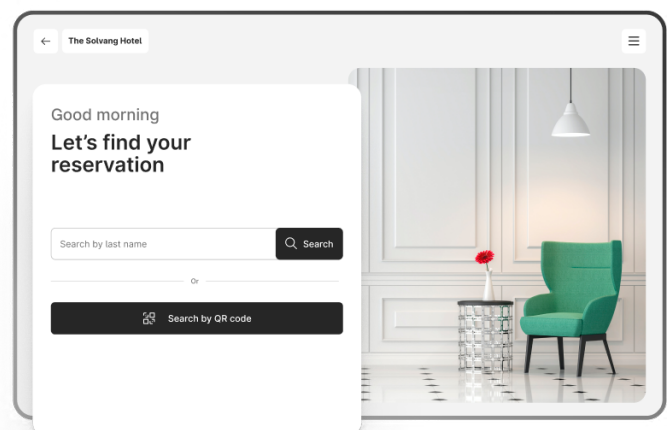
An erstwhile dormitory at the sports stadium in Lovosice has been turned into a modern hotel called Active Stadium. The hotel opened in January and offers 23 modern „Family a Sport“ apartments, as well as 14 singles and Business-standard doubles. The total capacity is 115 beds. All rooms are equipped with TV, telephone, ensuite bathrooms containing a bath or shower and WC, cosmetics and tea/coffee making facilities. The family apartments also boast modern kitchenettes. A breakfast buffet is included and there's also a meeting room for 25 people, a bistro and a gym.

Source: Central Bohemian Uplands

## New Mews Reception Kiosks

The Czech scaleup Mews, a leading provider of cloud services in the hospitality sector, has introduced a new generation of kiosks for hotels. These can shorten check-in and check-out times for hotel guests by a third and bring a hotel thousands of dollars more in revenue. These intuitive and simplified kiosks can process guests quicker and even issue keys. Guests can also purchase items and services through them. This shortens the time guests spend at reception by a minute. Kiosks can be used for check-in and check-out, by guests themselves or by staff. Linking up Mews terminals with kiosks that simplify the whole process and make it much more efficient, can bring around 19% more successful payments.

Source: Mews



## Smartwings Fly the Prague-Athens Route

Smartwings are to expand their destination network for summer 2024 with a third new flight. On 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2024, the airline will launch scheduled services between Prague and Athens. Smartwings will fly to the Greek capital twice a week, on Mondays and Fridays. Athens is the 13<sup>th</sup> destination in Greece that Smartwings will serve during the validity of the summer 2024 timetable.

[Find out more >](#)



## Smartwings Receives Ninth Boeing 737 MAX

The airline Smartwings expanded its fleet in December when it added another new Boeing 737-8 MAX. This is the ninth aircraft of this type to join the Smartwings fleet. Smartwings should also take delivery of another four 737 MAXes this year. The airline uses this type of aircraft configured to take 189 passengers for longer hauls such as to Dubai, Ras Al Khaimah, the Canary Islands, Salalah, Muscat and Cabo Verde.

Source: Smartwings

## Prague Airport Expand Food Retail

This January, a total of 14 new food outlets opened at Prague Airport. They represent 11 gastro concepts covering an area of 1,300 m<sup>2</sup>. Passengers will find new retail options at both Terminal 1 and Terminal 2. These are operated by Lagardère Travel Retail, a company that won the Prague Airport concession last spring. New outlets to open for the first time in the Czech Republic at Prague's Václav Havel Airport include the fresh bistro Nattoo and the Italian concept Bottega Prosecco Bar & Restaurant. One Czech brand to be represented in the new line-up is the popular Bageterie Boulevard. These food outlets have increased the number of sales points at Prague Airport to 85, 36 of which are food concessions. This year Prague Airport is planning a new walk-through duty free zone at Terminal 2 which will be located immediately after security.

Source: Prague Airport







## Qatar Airways: Return of the Dreamliners on the Doha – Prague Route

A more comfortable travel experience and more capacity – these are the main pluses of the Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner that will return to service between Prague and the capital of Qatar, Doha. Qatar Airways will use a plane with a capacity of 254 seats which flew between the cities before the Covid-19 pandemic. The reinstatement of wide-bodied aircraft means that the overall capacity on this attractive route will increase by 44%. The Dreamliner will depart Prague daily at 14:55, while on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays a second service will still use an Airbus A320.

[Find out more >](#)

## Martin Kučera – New Board Member at Prague Airport

Since January, the board of Prague Airport has had five members. The selection process saw Martin Kučera emerge as the successful candidate. With his appointment to the board his existing position as executive director of flight operations ceases to exist. His competencies will include operations and security, both of these agendas passing from the chairman of the board who will still be responsible for airport business development, quality and safety processes, communication, the legal department and corporate governance.

[Find out more >](#)



## Changes to Motorway Vignettes

Tourists arriving in Czechia by car should be aware of several changes to the motorway vignette system. From March of 2024 drivers will be able to purchase a one-day e-vignette for CZK 200. Also, the cost of existing types will see changes: the thirty-day vignette has come down in price to CZK 430, the ten-day vignette will cost CZK 270, but a year permit will now come in at CZK 2300. The fine for using a section of motorway where drivers need a vignette without one is CZK 5,000 on the spot CZK 20,000 through legal proceedings.

[Find out more >](#)





## Traffic at Prague's Václav Havel Airport on the Increase

Last year, Prague's Václav Havel Airport saw 13,828,137 passengers passing through its doors, a year-on-year increase of 29%. Passengers were able to travel to long-haul destinations such as Seoul, Taipei and many exotic holiday destinations. In total the airport offers 167 destinations, over 30 new or reinstated routes and 69 airlines. In 2024, Prague Airport is expected to handle 15.5 million passengers travelling to over 170 destinations with extra flights to over 30 places.

[Find out more >](#)

## České dráhy add 8.5 km of new carriages for 2024

Rolling stock producers will supply České dráhy with almost 140 new carriages and locomotives in 2024. If you put all of these new carriages end to end in a single train, it would be 8.5 km long. This is the distance from Bohumín to Ostrava or Kolín to Velký Osek.

[Find out more >](#)



## New Timetable for Leo Express

From 10<sup>th</sup> of December Leo Express trains will run to a new timetable. The company has reinstated the popular evening service from Ostrava to Prague and introduced a new train from Prague to Kolín, Pardubice and Ústí nad Orlicí. The journey time has also been shortened between Prague and Cracow by a whole hour, and there's a new halt in Poland at Osvětim for the museum. According to the new timetable, Leo Express will link Prague and Ústí nad Orlicí eight times a day and Prague with Pardubice, Přerov, Olomouc and Ostrava seven times a day. Back to Prague from Ostrava there are eight services daily. Leo Express also run between Prešov and Košice twice a day where passengers can change onto coaches to Ukraine. In December, a new Leo Express service also began running between Bratislava and Komárno. Each day Leo Express runs almost 100 services on this Slovak route.

Source: Leo Express





## Visitor Numbers in Accommodation Facilities between January and September of 2023



In the first three quarters of last year, accommodation facilities in Czechia were used by almost 2.3 million more guests than in the same period of 2022. From 1<sup>st</sup> of January to 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2023, they welcomed around 17.4 million tourists. The year before, this figure was around 15.1 million. Almost 10.2 million guests were domestic tourists, 7.2 million were from abroad. As far as the league table of nearby source countries is concerned, there was no real change when compared to 2022. In first place were visitors from Germany with a year-on-year increase of around 32%. They were followed by Slovaks and Poles. Other figures from the top five neighbouring countries also showed increases. The biggest growth came from Italy with numbers rising by over half. In the first three quarters of 2023 Ukraine (197,751 tourists) and Austria (187,190) came before Italy. As far as more distant markets are concerned, in the first three quarters of 2023 the biggest increase was seen among Americans with a year-on-year rise of 32%. They were followed by visitors from Korea.

Source: CzechTourism

## Hotels in Czechia: Share of Domestic and Foreign Guests almost the Same

Almost the same number of guests from abroad as from Czechia stayed at hotels in the country last November. These are the findings of the Institute of Tourism with figures based on data from the Czech Statistical Office. Some 587,517 foreigners stayed at hotels in Czechia, while the number of domestic visitors came in at 559 337. This gives a total number of 1,146,854 guests which, when compared to November 2022, is an increase of 15%. Compared to November 2019, before the Covid-19 pandemic, there were only 2% fewer tourists.

[Find out more >](#)



## Omio Statistics Confirm a Rise in Interest in Prague

One of the largest sellers of public transport tickets and flights in Europe, Omio has created a list of the ten most popular European cities this winter season. This has been put together based on the number of booked tickets. Comparing the summer league table to the winter one, Paris saw the biggest jump, from fifth to second place. Unlike in the summer months, Berlin makes the winter table, as does the ever-popular Vienna, with Prague following just behind. Last year, Prague was in ninth place whereas this year it took sixth.

Source: Omio



## Central Bohemian Region



### Gold Exhibition in Jílové

A new Gold Exhibition is opening in late June at the Regional Museum in Jílové u Prahy. „Having just undergone renovation, this grand space allows visitors to see gold from here and around the world from many different angles. This modern exhibition promises to be an interactive spectacle. The first person visitors will encounter on entering the exhibition is Edward Kelley. They can take a peek into an alchemist’s workshop and enhanced reality enables them to see the figure comes to life as he performs his secret experiments. You can walk through a gold mine where there are examples of gold extracted from the mines here in Jílové as well as pieces from around the world,“ states Václav Švenda, council member responsible for culture, protection of monuments and tourism in the Central Bohemia Region.

Source: Central Bohemia Tourist Board

### Glamping in Lavander Valley

This June, a new campsite for eco-glamping, campervans and tents will open its doors. The new facility „Under Three Holy Mounts“ lies in a Lavander Valley and is spread along limestone lakes that have curative effects on the body due to the high mineral content found in the Barrandien geopark. The three peaks in question are Plešivec, Svatý Jan pod Skalou and Kotýz. The eco-camp offers ten glamping pods where the focus is on spa care using local organic herbs, minerals and water that can all be found on site. In addition to a herb garden there are holistic procedures and packages available. The surrounding area is great for walks and cycle trips to the castles of Central Bohemia and other tourist attractions.

Source: Central Bohemian Tourist Board



## Ústí Region



### The Central Bohemian Uplands Regional Product – Newly Awarded Certificates

For the first time in the Central Bohemian Uplands a certificate has been awarded to an accommodation provider – three cottages offering wellness services in Horní Chobolice under the Geltschberg brand. Another new certified product is Mopr wine from the Pod Radobýlem Winery. Another product worth experiencing is the newly certified Natural wines from the Central Bohemian Uplands made by one Mr Stejskal, or new flavours of juice and cider from the local Kauboy company.

Source: Central Bohemian Uplands



## South Bohemian Region



### Travelcon Theme for this Year

The next edition of Travelcon, the largest Czech professional travel trade conference, will be held by the Tourism Authority of South Bohemia (JCCR) and promises a packed programme and participation by key players in the tourism industry. Taking place on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2024, Travelcon will have as its main theme „What the neighbours do better“ which will present new insights into the travel industry inspired by practices and successful strategies employed by our neighbours Poland, Germany, Austria and Slovakia. „The Travelcon conference provides a unique platform for sharing knowledge and bringing together tourism industry professionals. We firmly believe that the discussions and experience brought from neighbouring countries will provide inspiration to innovate and improvements in our own tourist industry,“ stated the head of the JCCR Petr Soukup.

Source: Tourism Authority of South Bohemia

### Český Krumlov Opens Port 1560

A long and challenging reconstruction project has transformed the building of the estate brewery in Český Krumlov into a new cultural centre called Port 1560. Here you'll discover an exhibition called Life. Work. Art. Dreams. Each of the sections is located in a dedicated part of the building which once served in the beer brewing process or had a historically significant role. Varna, Hvozd, Palace. They are locations that were for a long time hidden to both locals and visitors to the town.

[Find out more >](#)



## Vysočina Region



### Santini and the Vysočina Region

One of the most popular forms of travel is visiting places associated with famous personalities. Czechia has many a personalities and magical attractions to offer. For instance, take the architect Jan Blažej Santini-Aichel, who died 300 years ago last December. The Vysočina Region is closely associated with Santini. On a journey to discover Santini, tourists should certainly not miss the Church of St John of Nepomuk in Žďár nad Sázavou, but there are many other structures in the region designed by this phenomenal talent you can visit.

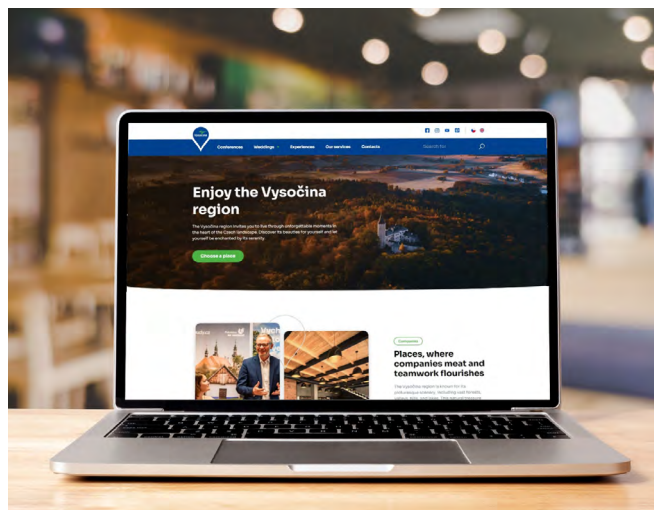
[Find out more >](#)



## Vysočina Convention Bureau Has New Website

Vysočina Convention Bureau launched a new website, the aim of which is to showcase the diversity and depth of what the region has to offer, and not only when it comes to the number of conference locations but also incentives. The website also offers the possibility to bring event organisers and service providers together as well as presenting what services the Highlands Convention Bureau can offer.

[Find out more >](#)



## Pardubice Region



## Smetana Anniversary Draws Visitors to Litomyšl

This year, 2<sup>nd</sup> of March will see the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of one of the most prominent of Czech composers, Bedřich Smetana. It's expected that more people than usual will travel to mark this event and not only to Litomyšl, his home town, but other places in the Pardubice Region, too. „Places associated with Smetana, such as our very own Litomyšl, are popular tourist destinations where one can experience the life and work of this composer firsthand. Although the town is best known for its Renaissance chateau with its unique sgraffito decoration, which was inscribed on the UNESCO list in 1999, it is possible to follow there the footsteps of Bedřich Smetana to many corners,“ says Director of Destination East Bohemia Alena Horáková.

[Find out more >](#)

## Dolní Morava and its 3.7 km-long ski slope

The Dolní Morava mountain resort launched the winter season with an attractive new feature – one of the longest ski slopes in Czechia. This is 3.7 km of uninterrupted slope from Slamník to U Slona. Another new feature is the family slope called Vyhliďková which provides the ideal conditions for skiing with children. Heaps of fun also await little ones at the new Kids Fun Club at the bottom of the main slope where kids can take a break from skiing.

[Find out more >](#)





## Hradec Králové Region



### Join a Geologist for a Trip to the Mines of Jestřebí Mountains

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> of March, adventurous tourists and those with an interest in mining history can head to the Broumovsko area for a trip into the mines of the Jestřebí Mountains in the company of a geologist. This more than 12 km-long walk heads out from Radvanice onto the ridge of the Jestřebí range to the former mining village of Paseka with its well-preserved Renaissance cottages. On the southern slopes participants will pass buildings and equipment once used in the mine and descend into a unique geological feature called the „Bunker“ located near Malé Svatoňovice. They then continue to the adit of an unfinished mine called Kateřina, then along a way of the cross which ends at the Chapel of the Holy Tomb with its fossilized wood decoration. On the former mine railway they then climb to the erstwhile Holy Trinity Mine, descending back to Radvanice down the rugged northern slope of the Jestřebí range.

Source: Region Broumovsko

## South Moravian Region

### New Bridleways in the Moravian Karst Area

University enterprise Masaryk Forest in Křtiny (ŠLP) has drawn up a contract with the stables around Babice nad Svitavou and Řícmanice on the use of forestry tracks. These have officially become marked bridleways and now there is a total of 28 km of trails that were created in cooperation with the ŠLP and local stables. A coloured square symbol as used by the Czech Hiking Club was chosen to mark the bridleways in the forests. The main route is marked in red.

Source: Mendel University in Brno



### Winter Tourists Warm Up in Caves

The winter season offers visitors to the caves of the Moravian Karst Area two benefits. Firstly they can avoid the summer crowds, and thanks to a stable temperature of 8°C, they can actually get warm! Over the winter the Punkevní Caves, Výпустek Cave and the Sloupsko-šošůvské Caves are open and feature special torchlight tours.



[Find out more >](#)



## Olomouc Region

### Scheduled Winter Tours at the Na Špičáku Cave

At the start of the year, the Na Špičáku Cave launched tours scheduled for set times. Tours of the marble labyrinth run each Thursday at three given times – 10 am, 12 pm and 2 pm. The guides trialled these tours last year and as they were met with relatively high interest the, decision was taken to continue with them. „We now manage the whole trip in a single day,“ adds director Andrea Švubová, also taking into account the fact that bats hibernate at this time. „What’s more, the places where the overwhelming majority of the animals hibernate aren’t on the tour route. So we shouldn’t disturb them at all during their winter sleep,“ she says.

Source: Olomouc Region Tourist Authority



## Moravian-Silesian Region



### New Blue-Dye Souvenirs

A new product devised by the town of Frýdek-Místek called In search of textile factories reveals some fascinating things about the textile industry, which not only had a huge influence on the town’s architecture but many aspects of life there, too. Visitors learn about the traditions associated with the textile industry in the town and the wider region, see places linked to the production of textiles and clothing visit production facilities and even try old traditional methods of material printing. Now they can also buy souvenirs with traditional blue-dye motifs such as place mats, saucers and bags of various kinds.

[Find out more >](#)

## Zlín Region

### Gateway to Pustevny

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> of January saw the opening of a building called the Gateway to the Pustevny in Prostřední Bečva. This low, modern structure serves as an information centre and public conveniences, and from the viewing area there are panoramas of the heart of the Beskydy Mountains. The building has a grass roof and during construction only materials were used that reflect the character of the region and that will last in the challenging conditions at Pustevny – timber, glass and stone. The building is glass on two sides actually serves as a gateway at the end of the only access road from Prostřední Bečva to Pustevny. The entire area is paved with stone and there is even a turning circle for buses.

Source: Prostřední Bečva





## Travel Trade Conference in the Zlín Region

On February 27 the Tourism in the Zlín Region conference will take place at the Congress and Culture Centre of the Otrokovičká Beseda. The event will be organised by the East Moravian Tourist Authority (CCRVM). The aim is to examine the development of the tourist industry in the region, emerging trends, visitor requirements and the issues facing tourism business owners. „As a significant sector in the region is made up of spa stays in Luhačovice and the surrounding area, part of the program will be dedicated to the spa industry. I am very happy that Martin Plachý, vice president of the European Spas Association, has accepted our invitation to attend.“ Announced the head of the CCRVM Zuzana Vojtová. „We will also be discussing the economic importance of the tourist industry, the benefits of destination management, new marketing trends and new features from across the region,“ added Mrs Vojtová. The event will also include workshops where participants can express their views on preparations being made for the CCRVM strategy.

Source: East Moravian Tourist Authority



## Product news

## Culture



## Traditional Glassmaking Listed by UNESCO

The reputation and quality of Czech glass has received international recognition. Czech handmade glass production was added to UNESCO's list of intangible heritage in December. „Glassmaking is an important industry especially in the Liberec and Zlín Regions and also in the Vysočina Region. It is also a topic for which people travel to Czechia from all over the world, and I believe that thanks to today's inscription on the UNESCO list, there will be even more,“ stated the head of CzechTourism, František Reismüller, adding: „Czech glass is of interest not only to tourists from Europe, who could, for example, see Crystal Valley on the main news of French TV channel TF1, it is also attractive for guests from Asia, who since March of this year can get to us better thanks to the direct flight between Prague and Seoul. Details about domestic glassmaking in all corners of Czechia, including what is new in the given sector, can also be found on our portal Kudy z nudy.“

[Find out more >](#)

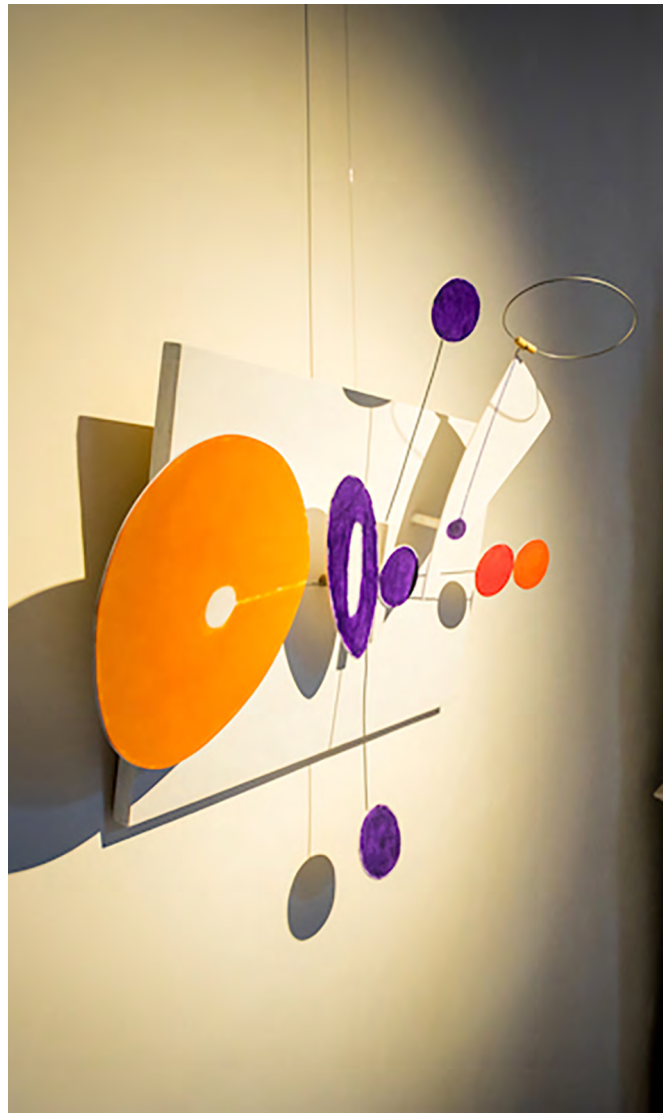


## Clam-Gallas Palace: Exhibition Marks 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Artists Association

The Artists Association is the oldest art organisation in Czechia and will celebrate 160 years since its foundation. To mark this anniversary the Prague City Museum has put together an exhibition on members of the association in the renovated Clam-Gallas palace. The exhibition entitled Freedom in Art uses over 130 works by 58 artists to trace the journey the Artists Association has taken in over a century of its existence. Visual arts from the last twenty years are represented, from classic painting to graphic art, pottery to conceptual works. The work of the Artists Association can be viewed in the exquisite Baroque spaces of the Clam-Gallas Palace. The aim is to show that the Baroque palace doesn't have to be used to only showcase Baroque art. „Modern art and the Baroque palace compliment each other and the blend works well,“ explains Ivo Macek, director of the Prague City Museum.

**Clam-Gallas Palace, Prague.**  
**Until 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024.**

[Find out more >](#)



## Lachland: World of the Post- Apocalyptic Romantic Arrives at Prague's Villa Pellé

Hyperrealistic painter, digital artists and computer games designer, creator of objects and a member of the team at Czech games developer Amanita Design, Adolf Lachman is exhibiting at Prague's Villa Pellé. The show called Lachland is the „world of the post-apocalyptic romantic inhabited by robots, other beings and hybrids of machines and animals“. The exhibition will attract those into the computer games Samorost 3 and Machinarium – the 46-year-old artist is the man behind the games' visuals. He is also the author of incredibly detailed and imaginative drawings, a painter, a sculptor and computer graphics specialist. From top to bottom the gallery has been transformed into a land of moss, rust and motors, a place where it is hard to see where the organic ends and the industrial begins and where postapocalyptic nature reigns supreme.

**Galerie Villa Pellé, Prague. Until 24<sup>th</sup> March 2024.**

Source: Galerie Villa Pellé



## Ed Sheeran Hits Hradec Králové - Twice

One of the biggest stars in the world, British singer Ed Sheeran, is returning to the Czech Republic after five years. The singer's MATHEMATICS TOUR follows on from his hugely successful US tour which saw Ed break several attendance records. His gigs in the Czech Republic – a double header of concerts on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of July 2024 – will take place at Hradec Králové's multipurpose Park 360 as part of the Rock for People event.

[Find out more >](#)



## Corporate news

## News from the Czech Tourist Authority

### What's coming up in tourism in 2024

Active tourism. The main communication theme of Czech tourism for the next two years. The key campaign of the CzechTourism agency Unexpected Wellbeing will show how to play sports, relax and unwind while travelling. It builds on the expert-appreciated original and imaginative Unexpected Traditions visual from 2023 and shifts the theme of active tourism into an unconventional form fine-tuned in cooperation with the regions. With a goal shared not only with the Ministry of Regional Development: to attract as many travellers as possible from all over the world to Czechia.

[Find out more >](#)

