

## Tour Central Europe

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# 2017 European Wellness & Spa Tour: The Czech Republic

with Frank Fristensky, Durango, CO, Lisa Nielsen, Durango, CO and Mike Zeman, Prague, CR

**Departure:** Thursday, May 18 2017\*

*\*From your point of departure in the USA for Prague.*

**Pick-up:** Friday, May 19, Prague's Vaclav Havel Airport (PRG)

**Returning:** Wednesday, May 31, 2017 from Prague.

**This special tour has been designed with these important considerations on our minds:**

1. Reduced traveling days between places and more comfort.
2. Enjoying historic spa-towns, their offerings and other activities for more days.
3. Convenient day trips without moving from hotel to hotel.
4. Spectacular itinerary that combines spa-towns, villages, castles, country site, music, history, shopping and culinary experiences in a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere.

### **Tour Highlights:**

Historic and extravagant Prague • bike tour to the Karlstejn Castle • Karlovy Vary, a picturesque hot springs town • hiking expeditions in Krusne Hory (Ore Mountains) • world's first beer health spa in Chodova Plana • Jachymov, uranium mines and spa • Kasperske Hory, Bohemian Forest's natural healing area • evening performance at Kasperk Castle • nature hike along the Vydra River and in the Sumava Forest • Lipno Lake, outdoor activities at the largest lake in the country • historic Cesky Krumlov • in and outdoor activities at the Resort Santa Kristina • special fitness activities with Lisa • Czech native speaking guide, Frank • and many more.

**The Czech Republic** is a country of fairytale castles, forests and fishponds, music and art, medieval spa-towns and Renaissance chateaux. There is a rich heritage to explore – unravel Czech history and you will get a deeper understanding of Europe as a whole. And at the center of it is Prague (Praha), one of the most beautiful and cultured cities in the world.

**Journey to Czech Spa-Wellness!** This special trip is for those who would like to explore and experience the unique nature and history of one of Europe's oldest spa's tradition, the Czech Republic. This tiny country is located in the heart of Europe. As native of this country, Frank selected a few of the leading and behind the scene spa establishments in the western part of the Czech Republic. The tour will also take you in the mountains, forests and to the lakes to experience the outdoors alias the natural fresh air "spas."

Traveling for your health can combine feeling good with great destination. Spas have been popular in Europe for centuries. They were usually founded around natural mineral and thermal springs; the waters were used both for drinking cures and for bathing and topical applications. It was discovered early on that natural mineral waters had beneficial health properties, and their use (as well as the use of mineral mud, peat, mineral salts, radon water, and related products) continues to this day, in medicine as well as cosmetics and body care.

Czech spas are well-respected; they have long-standing tradition stretching back several centuries and illustrious history of more than thirty spas across the country, hundreds of springs possessing curative properties and rich mud deposits – all of this makes Czech Republic one of the world's spa superpowers.

They are mostly situated in beautiful natural valley settings surrounded by forest and rolling hills. The spa towns include spa colonnades with gracious and historic spa establishments along the way. Coffee shops, galleries, concert halls, hiking trails, beautiful parks and, of course, native culinary art will round your tour experience.

## **DAY 1**

After arriving in **Prague (Praha** in Czech) (1, 100,000 pop.), we check into our hotel. Depending on our arrival, there might be time on your own. It is amazing what 25 years of freedom can do. Prague has always been historic. Now it is fun too. No place in Europe has become so popular so quickly. And for good reasons: Prague, the only Eastern European capital to escape the bombs of the last century's wars, is one of Europe's best-preserved cities. It is filled with sumptuous Art Nouveau facades, offers great musical entertainment, galleries, amazing museums and restaurants, and brews the best beer in Europe (perhaps in the World).

*Overnight in Prague*

## **DAY 2**

### **Prague Day.**

This morning we tour Prague with a local guide. We explore the Hradcany (the Prague Castle) district, home of the distinctive castle towering above the Vltava River. The castle today is the seat of the president of the Czech Republic. We stroll down along the Golden Lane, with its picturesque artisans' cottages. We cross the famous Charles Bridge into the Old Town Square with its Astronomical Clock Tower. We also walk along the Vltava River, passing by the National Theater and visit the Jewish Quarter.

The remainder of the day is free to continue exploring this enchanting city on your own.

A celebration dinner with musical entertainment.

*Overnight in Prague*

(B-L-D)

## **DAY 3**

### **Karlstejn Castle Bicycle Tour.**

Following breakfast, we will depart for a bike rental center in Prague. From there, we will embark on a leisure ride to one of the most impressive castle's in the Czech Republic, the Karlstejn Castle. This ride is about 20 miles. The tour is mostly on cycle tracks with virtually no traffic. This enchanting route follows the meandering river so there are almost no hills to climb. There will be several typical and truly authentic small Czech pubs and country restaurants on the way to Karlstejn Castle. There will be an optional visit of the castle or explore the romantic village bellow the castle. Later in the afternoon, we will take a train back to Prague

*Overnight in Prague*

(B-D)

## DAY 4

### **Karlovy Vary Day.**

We travel west to **Karlovy Vary** (52,000 pop.), a world famous hot springs town. Karlovy Vary is quite literally built on water. There are 15 hot springs housed in or near five colonnades along the Tepla River. The legend has it that Karlovy Vary's hot springs were stumbled upon by pure chance. They were discovered by a dog, which fell into the first of the town's springs while out on a hunting trip with Emperor Charles IV. The town soon became a magnet for European aristocrats. The opulent 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century grandiose architecture forms a two-sided colonnade along the river Tepla that runs through the middle of town. A local guide gives us a tour. We will take a hike in the forest above the town with some historical stops along the way. Later, you may be ready to experience some of the spa's procedures or stroll the promenade, shop the many interesting stores, and visit the Grand Hotel Pupp where the majority of the movie "The Last Holiday" with Queen Latifa was filmed.

*Overnight in Karlovy Vary*

(B-L)

## DAY 5

### **Krusne Hory (Ore Mountains) and Jachymov Day.**

This morning, we will travel for about one hour due north in the region of **Krusne Hory**, specifically to the mountain village of **Bozi Dar** (God's Present), the highest town in central Europe and located at the foot of Mount Klinovec (4100 feet) near the German border. The 360 degrees view is spectacular. There many beautiful nature hikes available for us to choose from. In the afternoon, we will depart (about 20 minutes) to the spa town of **Jachymov**, where the first radon spa in the world was established. In addition to the Jachymov Spa, we will experience an educational trail called "Jachymov hell," remanding of mines and prisoner's camps used mainly in the 50'.

Upon return to Karlovy Vary there will be time at leisure.

*Overnight in Karlovy Vary*

(B-D)

## **DAY 6**

### **Chodova Plana Day.**

Have you ever taken a bath in a beer? You may do so today. Say what you will about the healing properties of mud baths, saunas, or lavender-scented candles, but soaking in a stainless-steel tub filled with Czech beer will put your body and soul at ease. The beer spa is located in a small village (Chodova Plana) near the German border within a family owned brewery (Chodovar).

The nicely renovated cellars boasts seven large Victorian bath where you can immerse in a warm bath mixture of mineral water and dark beer enriched by active beer yeast and mix of dry, crushed herbs, including hops. You can also experience a special beer massage. That's where you may say: "Cheer to your health."

After some relaxation time and experiencing the real beer in the pub, we will depart back to Karlovy Vary.

There will be time at leisure.

*Overnight in Karlovy Vary*

(B-D)

## **DAY 7**

### **Kasperske Hory and Kasperk Castle Day.**

This morning we are going to travel to **Sumava**, in the Southwest region of the country. The National Park Sumava is one of the most beautiful regions in the Czech Republic. It borders to the south with the Bavarian Forest Nation Park in Germany. We will settle down in the spa hotel Park Hotel Tosch in the idyllic small town of Kasperske Hory, located just on the edge of the Sumava National Park. This town has glorious history and became famous thanks to the mined gold. It was already occupied by the Celts about 600 years ago.

The town is dominated by the monumental well preserved castle Kasperk sitting on the rock spit above the Otava River. It is the highest situated royal castle in Bohemia.

The Park Hotel's project "The Sumava Spa" is quite rare and unique in the entire Czech Republic. Special balneo-therapeutical treatments combined with the natural power of the surrounding mountains and its clean air will provide for an unforgettable wellness experience.

*Overinght in Kasperske Hory*

(B-L)

## DAY 8

### **Sumava (Bohemian Forest) Day.**

The forest is comprised of heavily forested mountains with an average elevation of 2400 to 4200 feet. As a border region, it has had a complicated history. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was literally part of the Iron Curtain, and large areas were stripped of human occupation. These unique circumstances led to the preservation of nature and forest ecosystems relatively unspoiled by human activity.

We will hike about 2.5 miles along the Vydra River in the Sumava Forest, eventually explore deeper into the forest.

*Overnight in Kasperske Hory*

(B-D)

## DAY 9

### **Lipno nad Vltavou - Outdoor Day.**

This morning, we will travel through the Sumava NP area and along the **Lipno Lake** to the recreational village of Lipno nad Vltavou. The Lipno Lake is the largest water area in the Czech republic and was built in the 50' on the upper reaches of the Vltava River. The lake and its surroundings are one of the most popular recreational areas of all sorts in the country. Various activities will be selected upon arrival there.

Later this afternoon, we will be heading about one hour north to a small ancient city in the South Bohemian Region, **Cesky Krumlov** which is one of the country's UNESCO World Heritage Preservation Sites. Construction of the town and the castle began in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century at a ford in the Vltava River. The core of the old town, full of preserved medieval history and architecture is within a horseshoe bend of the river. We will spend an medieval evening in this picturesque town, especially blossoming in the evening street lights.

*Overnight in Cesky Krumlov*

(B-D)

## **DAY 10 and 11**

### **Svata Katerina Resort (Saint Catharine Resort).**

This morning, we will travel due east to the unique and hidden in the countryside resort of Svata Katerina, located on the border between Bohemia and Moravia in coniferous forests is considered one of the most beautiful and most cozy places of the Czech-Moravian Highlands. There is no car traffic, peace and quiet, just the murmur of trees, undulating in the wind. Set in several acres of green pastures and forests it offers plenty of outdoor and indoor activities...what about ice-plunge pool? Also varieties of European massages and treatments, saunas and steam baths in the calming wellness area and many possibilities for exercising in the nature will fulfill our two days spend here. You will enjoy the favorable local conditions, which are based on high altitude clean air, dry soil, revitalizing and energizing forest air in a truly lovely and romantic atmosphere.

*Overnight (two nights)in Svata Katerina*

*(2 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 1 dinner)*

## **DAY 12**

### **Prague Day.**

This morning, we will depart for our travel back to Prague (about 2 hours driving time). Upon checking in our hotel there will be time at leisure.

In the evening we will say goodbye to our adventures and time spent together by a farewell dinner.

*Overnight in Prague*

*(B-D)*

## **DAY 13**

### **Departure Day.**

This morning, we transfer to the Prague's airport for our return flights to the USA.

*(B)*

## **TOUR SPECIFICATIONS:**

We will be traveling in a private air-conditioned small bus and staying in nice country/spa places with the usual comfort. The tour price includes all accommodations with **all** breakfasts, **5** lunches, **8** dinners (beverages are not included), all land transportation, transfer from/to the airport (only on tour's arriving and departing days), tickets for all planned events, local guides where needed, services of Tour Central Europe's Tour Directors, and special events. *Round trip airfare from your point of departure is not included. Also, not included are personal wellness/therapy treatments.*

- \* **All land arrangements as described above:**
  - **Double room occupancy:       \$3,785.00/person**
  - **Single room occupancy:       \$4,285.00**
  
- \* **The prices are based on a minimum of 10 travelers. We reserve the right to cancel the tour due to an insufficient number of travelers.**
  
- \* **Limited space reservation of 12 travelers on first come, first serve basis.**
  
- \* **Deposit of \$700.00 per traveler is due with registration. This will secure your spot.**
  
- \* **We would like to suggest arranging your own round trip air travel from your hometown to and from Prague (PRG)). Please contact us first prior to finalizing your reservation. If you are not able to make your own travel plans we can assist you.**
  
- \* **In order to get full benefit of this trip, adequate physical conditioning is recommended due to a good amount of walking, hiking/biking and exercising. If you require assistance getting around, this tour may not be appropriate for you. Please contact us prior making decision to discuss it further.**
  
- \* **We are strongly recommending to purchase a travel insurance to protect yourself and your investment in case you have to cancel or interrupt this tour. In order to provide you with the most effective coverage, the policy exclusion for "Pre-Existing Conditions" will be waived if you purchase a plan within 14 days of making your initial deposit payment for your trip. Please let us help you with securing your travel insurance.**
  
- \* **Please consult the "Reservations" and "Terms & Conditions/Travel Insurance" sections for more detailed information.**

*(If there is still space available, late registration is possible).*