



*Living in*  
**PRAGUE**

THE VERTO EXPERIENCE  
LOCATION GUIDE



VERTOEDUCATION.ORG



# *Living in* **PRAGUE**

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# Life in *Prague!*



Prague is among the TOP 10 cities for students worldwide. There are over 50,000 international students currently studying in the Czech Republic! When you're not knee deep in conversation with new friends from all over the world, you'll find yourself in one of hundreds of coffee shops sipping an artistic latte while admiring the city's many castles – views straight out of a fairy tale!

## What will *Prague* be like?

Prague is known for its diverse architecture and museums. It's a city rich in history and culture and has become a favorite destination for travelers due to its centralized location and affordability. Prague is home to just over one million people, many of those being expats and students. It's a very safe and walkable city where you'll enjoy a balance of "city" and "green" life, due to the many parks sprinkled throughout the city. In fact, Prague is one of the "greenest" urban areas in Europe with over 200 parks!

## Languages: *Czech & English*

Because of Prague's diverse population of expats, you don't have to worry too much about the language. English is spoken in most places and parts of the city, but it's always appreciated when you use a friendly phrase like "dobry den!" [doh-BREE-den] = hello/good day! or "dekuji!" [DYEH-koo-we] = thank you!



# *Your* Experiential Classroom



While you are here, you will be immersed in the life of the city – and use it as your classroom! You will be offered chances to visit sites not known to the average tourist and will have the opportunity to attend lectures and events which will engage you in vital and contemporary issues such as multiculturalism, immigration, and identity. Take every chance to open your mind to new people, new ideas and new cultures!

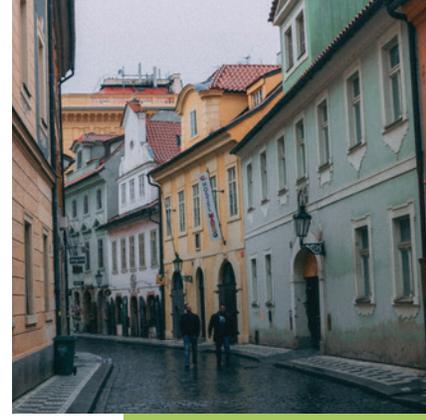
## Where to Call *Home*

Your housing will be walking distance to your classes. Keep in mind that in Prague, living spaces tend to be smaller than what you may be used to in the U.S.. You'll have your own wardrobe in a shared space with roommates, so be mindful when packing! Sharing a living space with new people will draw you to form some of your closest bonds – be ready to balance shower times to dishwashing duties, but also get the popcorn ready for common area movie nights!

Prague is considered one of the world's best cities for expat life. There are hundreds of cafes, restaurants, and over 70 museums. As one of the most affordable European cities, Prague encourages students to explore the city by offering discounts for transportation, restaurants, museums, and more.



# Boroughs & Neighborhoods *in Prague*



- Prague is full of beautiful and historic buildings, and you'll also see lots of new construction around the city to accommodate the growing population. Prague is divided into 22 different districts– that's 22 different neighborhoods to explore! Districts 1-10 are the most popular and where you can easily explore on foot or by using public transport. Each one has its own vibe, quirks, and personality, and it will be a fun opportunity for you to get to know some of them! You'll be living and attending classes in Prague 2 – right in the center! Neighborhoods in Prague are anchors for identity and social connection. Your Student Life Coordinator will help you to navigate life in these neighborhoods and support you in developing your own Prague identity.
- An area that you will spend much of your time in is Vinohrady - a higher-end, very safe and residential area which is home to numerous restaurants, cafes, and parks. Vinohrady means “vineyards” in Czech as it was covered in vineyards during the 14th century. It's also home to some of the most beautiful parks and gardens in the whole of Prague.
- Vinohrady is well known for its truly picturesque square called Namesti Miru or “Peace Square”, where towards the peak of early winter and springtime you'll be able to visit and experience the famous Christmas Markets in November or Easter Market in April. At Namesti Miru you can also catch the metro or tram, enjoy an outdoor art exhibition, impromptu musical performance, or have a picnic with friends in one of the most beautiful parks in the whole of Prague.



# The Pros of Living *in Prague*



- **Affordability.** Compared to other major European cities, Prague's cost of living is extremely reasonable, especially for students!
- **Prague is stunning.** The vast majority of Prague's original architecture, castles, and monuments are still standing today. While you're taking a walk along the Vltava River, catch great views of the famous Prague Castle or Charles Bridge. Every district of Prague has its own charm and you'll have fun exploring them all!
- **Fantastic food from all over the world!** Did you know that the Czech Republic has one of the largest Vietnamese communities in the world outside of Vietnam? You will find Vietnamese restaurants throughout the city as well as various other types of cuisines. From Armenian to Uzbeki food, Prague has you covered. In Vinohrady alone, you can find French, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, Mexican, American, Georgian, Turkish food and much more!
- **Dietary restriction friendly.** By Czech law, establishments serving food must list the dietary ingredients in the menu. If you don't see them, just ask your server and they'll be happy to share it with you. Vegan and vegetarian food options are also plentiful! You can even find two excellent Vegan restaurants located on the same street as your Study Center.
- **Prague is a transport and international hub.** If you're obsessed with travel, then you will be happy to live in Prague. Its airport, bus terminal, and main train station all connect you easily to the rest of Europe. Tickets are often cheaper for students, so make sure to have your student ID card ready when purchasing tickets.
- **There's always something to do.** Generally speaking, Czechs spend a lot of time outdoors, regardless of the temperature. In warmer weather, you will always be able to find a farmers or crafts market and outdoor concerts or movies. When the weather gets colder, try one of the many pop-up skating rinks or Christmas markets throughout the city! It also has so many interesting museums (most of them are free or reduced entry for students), art galleries, workshops, excursions, and more!



# Packing for your *Experience*

Here are some helpful tips for smart packing as part of your experience:



- **Don't pack more than you can carry.** You may have heard this before, but it becomes a reality when you arrive and need to carry your suitcases.
- **Be selective in what you pack.** The more you pack, the less personal space you will have in your room.
- **Bring warm clothes.** Whether you're studying in Prague for the fall or spring semester, you will experience winter! It can get very cold, but not very snowy. Please make sure to pack a warm coat and hat!
- **Pack good walking shoes.** You'll be grateful after a day of exploring the cobblestone streets and hills of Prague!
- **Changing US Dollars to Czech Koruna.** You may wish to change a little money (maybe \$100 USD) into Czech Koruna (CZK) before you leave the US so you have some cash on arrival for travel if you need it. Euros are not accepted in the Czech Republic! There are ATMs at the arrival area of the airport, but ensure that your PIN is only four digits. Please note that you will not be able to put USD into your bank account while you are here - so keep that in mind when bringing cash.
- **Inform your bank of travels.** Prague is extremely "contactless" friendly and cards and Apple Pay are widely preferred and accepted at the majority of locations. Just make sure you inform your bank you'll be living in the Czech Republic and traveling Europe before you arrive!
- **"Unlock" your phone with your current cell provider.** This will allow you to purchase a Czech SIM card and plan with your Verto Prague staff during on-site orientation—purchasing a monthly student plan will give you access to unlimited data, calling, and messaging throughout the European Union. Verto Prague staff will also help you close out your plan at the end of the semester. You will not be able to use a Czech SIM card without having done this prior to your arrival.



# *Your Arrival* and Orientation

The Verto Prague team will support you from arrival to becoming familiar with Prague living. Our staff will greet you at the airport, with pre-arranged transport to your accommodation. Your first week in Prague will include a detailed orientation into the semester ahead, a tour of your local area, health and safety information, how to use public transportation, programming activities, academic expectations, and community events. This orientation will help you to meet the challenges of living in a new culture. Verto Prague staff are also here to support you throughout your experience, and to help you adjust as you learn and grow! You'll be amazed by how much you've grown by the end of the experience. Immerse yourself fully into Prague life and culture – it has much to teach you!



# Getting Around *in Prague*

There are SO many options for getting around Prague that are both easy and efficient to navigate. As part of your experience, you'll be provided with a semester-long public transport pass – allowing you to travel around the city by metro, tram, or bus during your time in Prague. Make sure you always keep it with you to avoid a hefty fine by the controller if you are onboard without your pass.

Using public transportation in Prague may be a new skill for you to develop, but will soon become a part of your everyday life. There are only 3 metro lines (A/green, B/yellow, C/red) and the tram is the most popular way to travel around the city. Using public transport is actually a good place to observe Czech “privateness” – note how quiet people tend to be and how eye contact is avoided, even in rush hour.

You will also find it extremely easy to walk around Prague. From the Study Center, you can be in the center of Prague in 15-20 minutes by foot! Prague has night hours for public transport from 12:00am - 4:30am, but during these hours it is more common to use car services like Uber or Bolt. They are much cheaper than in the US and are regularly used by Czechs and expats alike!



# *Diversity* in Prague



## Ethnicities

By taking the time to understand the Czech Republic's history involving conformity and communism, it will truly deepen your appreciation for how far this country has come. The Czech Republic is considered to be ethnically homogenous, but you will see that Prague and other urban areas of the country are becoming more and more racially diverse. The country remains largely white with the largest ethnic groups consisting of populations from Slovakia, Ukraine, and Poland, while the Roma and Vietnamese communities are the largest groups of non-white minorities. Prague Verto staff is committed to making sure that participants feel safe, supported, and included during their time in Prague.

## LGBTQIA+

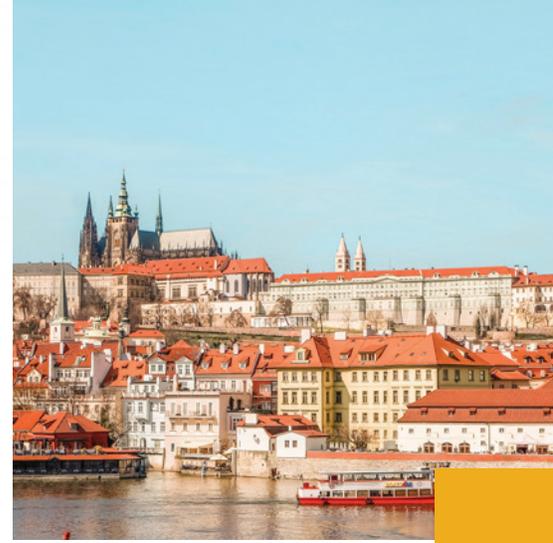
For members of the LGBTQIA+ community, Prague is considered generally a safe place that has also evolved significantly over the years. There are places and resources where you can meet and connect with others regardless of age, orientation, or identity. Prague Pride, which happens every August, has established itself as one of the largest Pride celebrations in Europe. Throughout the city you will also often find workshops, discussions, support groups, and other activities to explore.

## Religion

There is no official religion in the Czech Republic and it considers itself a predominantly secular nation. You have the freedom to express your own beliefs and religion, and you can find places of worship such as mosques, synagogues, churches, and temples throughout the city.



# Budget *Guidelines*



During your Prague experience, you will purchase your own groceries, cleaning, and personal supplies. You have access to a fully equipped kitchen to prepare meals, and don't forget the array of cafes and restaurants at your disposal.

Based on information from participants on previous semesters, the average cost of groceries and dining out was \$50-100 (USD) per week, with the average meal out costing \$10-20 (USD). Social activities cost \$20-\$50 (USD) per week, personal expenses (clothes, home goods, souvenirs) are an average of \$50 (USD) per week, and (optional) independent travel can cost anywhere between \$60-\$250 (USD) per week. Costs may be different than you're used to and they can certainly add up quickly if you're not careful. Your Student Life Coordinators will be able to help you with creating a budget to ensure that you're able to live within your means during your time abroad.

## *Your* Academic Center

You can easily walk from your residence hall to class at the Academic Center, which is located at the University of New York in Prague (UNYP). UNYP is a well-known private university in Prague. It was established in 1998 in cooperation with the State University of New York at New Paltz and Empire State College, both part of the State University of New York. Your classes, provided by our Academic Provider, will all be held in one building and you'll have access to all of UNYP's facilities and resources like classrooms, meeting spaces, and their library.

The UNYP community is tight-knit and well connected to other universities and activities throughout Prague. Your experience will be like any other Prague student, and the Academic Center and neighborhood will quickly become a home away from home; where you can chat with staff, take your classes and socialize with other participants or students from UNYP.



If you have any other questions, don't hesitate to reach out to your Student Onboarding Advisor.

*We can't wait to welcome you to **Prague!***



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