St. Nicholas Church (Malá Strana)

The **Church of Saint Nicholas** (Czech: *Kostel svatého Mikuláše*) is a Baroque church in the Lesser Town of Prague. It was built between 1704-1755 on the site where formerly a Gothic church from the 13th century stood, which was also dedicated to Saint Nicholas.

1 History

The original Gothic Parish church of Saint Nicholas stood on the site of the present church which dated from the 13th century. In the second half of the 17th century the Jesuits decided to build a new church designed by Giovanni Domenico Orsi. A partial impression of the original planned appearance of the church at the time the Jesuits chose the initial plans by Giovanni Domenico Orsi in 1673 and laid the foundation stone is provided by the Chapel of St Barbara, which was built first so that mass could be celebrated. The church was built in two stages during the 18th century. From 1703 till 1711 the west façade, the choir, the Chapels of St Barbara and St Anne were built.

The new plans involved an intricate geometrical system of interconnected cylinders with a central dome above the transept. The massive nave with side chapels and an undulating vault based on a system of intersecting ellipsoids was apparently built by Christoph Dientzenhofer. The pillars between the wide spans of the arcade supporting the triforium were meant to maximize the dynamic effect of the church. The chancel and its characteristic copper cupola were built in 1737-1752, this time using plans by Christoph's son, Kilian Ignaz Dientzenhofer.

In 1752, after the death Dientzehofer in 1751, the construction of the church tower was completed. During the years the church continued to expand its interior beauty. Following the abolition of the Jesuit Order by Pope Clement XIV, St Nicholas became the main parish church of the Lesser Town in 1775.

During the communist era the church tower was used as an observatory for State Security since from the tower it was possible to keep watch on the American and Yugoslav embassies respectively and the access route to the West German embassy.

2 Decoration

It has been described as "the most impressive example of Prague Baroque"[1] and "without doubt the greatest Baroque church in Prague and the Dientzenhofers' supreme achievement".[2]

Interior of the dome

The church excels not only in the architecture, but also in the decoration, mainly with the frescos by Jan Lukas Kracker and a fresco inside the 70 m high dome by František Xaver Palko. The interior is further decorated with sculptures by František Ignác Platzer. The Baroque organ has over 4,000 pipes up to six metres in length and was played by Mozart in 1787. Mozart's spectacular masterpiece, Mass in C, was first performed in the Church of Saint Nicholas shortly after his visit.[3][4]

The 79 m tall belfry is directly connected with the church's massive dome. The belfry with great panoramic view, was unlike the church completed in Rococo forms in 1751-1756 by Anselmo Lurago.

3 Services

The parish church celebrates a weekly mass every Sunday at 8.30pm.

- Panoramic view taken from Petřín
- Front entrance
- Interior of the church
- Ceiling fresco depicting the Apotheosis of St. Nicholas

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[1] Neil Wilson, Mark Baker. *Prague*. 9th edition. Lonely Planet, 2010. ISBN 9781741796681. Page 9.

[2] Jack Messenger, Brigitte Lee. *Prague*. 5th edition. New Holland Publishers, 2008. Page 51.

[3] Norman Davies, *Europe: A History, A Panorama of Europe, East and West, From the Ice-Age to the Cold War, From the Urals to Gibraltar* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998), 671.

[4] According to his widow, Constanze, Mozart loved the architecture of Prague, with its Baroque churches like St. Nicholas - he likewise praised the Orchestra of Prague, calling it his very “own”, and was adored by the citizens of Prague. Constanze remarked that, “the Prague public admired and worshiped him wholeheartedly; this consoled Mozart for some of the slights he had received in Salzburg and Vienna.” See: Heinz Gärtner, *Constanze Mozart: After the Requiem*, trans. Reinhard G. Pauly (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1991), 67.

5 External links

- Prague Experience: St. Nicholas Church Lesser Town Square in Prague

Coordinates: 50°5′16.39″N 14°24′11.58″E / 50.0878861°N 14.4032167°E

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Nerudova Street - a picturesque way to the Prague Castle

This picturesque street connects the Lesser Town with the **Prague Castle**. It is a part of the **Royal Way** – the way of the coronation parades in the past. You can see many of the original Prague house symbols in the Nerudova Street: for example, “the Golden Lion”, “the Golden Horseshoe” or “the Black Eagle”.

Colourful house symbols in Prague

The origin of Prague **house symbols** goes back to the middle ages. It is mentioned for the first time in documents from the 14 th century. Its purpose was not just to embellish a house, but also to improve the orientation: there were no house numbers at the time. The house symbols are mostly colorful sculptures on the frontage of the building, representing animals, figures or various objects. The most house symbols were made in Prague during the Baroque era.

The house symbols often indicate the profession of the original owner. In the Nerudova Street there is a house “**At the Three Violins**“ (No.12), where families of violinists used to live, or “**At the Golden Cup**“ (No.16), where a goldsmith lived in the 17 th century.

Palaces in Nerudova Street

There are also some beautiful Baroque palaces in the Nerudova Street. The **Morzin Palace** (No. 5) is decorated with moors´ statues and other allegoric works by F. M. Brokoff. The **Thun-Hohenstein Palace** (No. 20) has a portal with two eagles spreading their wings – a symbol of the noble family of Kolovrat. The **Bretfeld Palace** (No. 33) is where splendid balls used to take place in the 18 th century and there were personalities such as W. A. Mozart or Giacomo Casanova among guests there.

Each house has its own story

The street is called Nerudova because of the Czech writer Jan Neruda, who used to live in the house “**At the Two Suns**“ (No. 47) in the 19 th century and whose book *Tales from the Lesser Town* was inspired by the inhabitants of the street.

The house “**At the Golden Lion**“ (No. 32) is a place, where you can see an apothecary museum.

There is a legend connected with the house “**At the Three Black Eagles**“ (No. 44). An old miserly woman used to live there, and she didn´t want anybody to inherit her possessions. She tried to set the house on fire before she died, but failed to really damage it. Nowadays, people living in the house can hear her in the night, walking around with keys jingling in her hand and checking her possessions.

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Prague Castle

Prague Castle (Czech: *Pražský hrad*) is a castle complex in Prague, Czech Republic, dating from the 9th century. It is the official residence of the President of the Czech Republic. The castle was a seat of power for kings of Bohemia, Holy Roman emperors, and presidents of Czechoslovakia. The Bohemian Crown Jewels are kept within a hidden room inside it.

According to the Guinness Book of Records, Prague Castle is the largest ancient castle in the world,[1] occupying an area of almost 70,000 m^2, at about 570 meters in length and an average of about 130 meters wide.

Vladislav Hall

1 History

Prague Castle in 1607

Prague Castle in 1870

Changing of the Guards

Changing of the Guards (2016)

1.1 Přemyslid fort

The history of the castle began in 870 when its first walled building, the Church of the Virgin Mary, was built. The Basilica of Saint George and the Basilica of St. Vitus were founded under the reign of Vratislaus I, Duke of Bohemia and his son St. Wenceslas in the first half of the 10th century.

The first convent in Bohemia was founded in the castle, next to the church of St. George. A Romanesque palace was erected here during the 12th century.

1.2 Medieval castle

King Ottokar II of Bohemia improved fortifications and rebuilt the royal palace for the purposes of representation and housing. In the 14th century, under the reign of Charles IV the royal palace was rebuilt in Gothic style and the castle fortifications were strengthened. In place of rotunda and basilica of St. Vitus began building of a vast Gothic church, that were completed almost six centuries later.

During the Hussite Wars and the following decades, the castle was not inhabited. In 1485, King Ladislaus II Jagello began to rebuild the castle. The massive Vladislav Hall (built by Benedikt Rejt) was added to the Royal Palace. New defence towers were also built on the north side of the castle.

A large fire in 1541 destroyed large parts of the castle. Under the Habsburgs, some new buildings in Renaissance style were added. Ferdinand I built the Belvedere as a summer palace for his wife Anne. Rudolph II used Prague Castle as his main residence. He founded the northern wing of the palace, with the Spanish Hall, where his precious art collections were exhibited.

The Second Prague defenestration in 1618 began the Bohemian Revolt. During the subsequent wars, the Castle was damaged and dilapidated. Many works from the collection of Rudolph II were looted by Swedes in 1648, in the Battle of Prague (1648) which was the final act of the Thirty Years' War.

The last major rebuilding of the castle was carried out by Empress Maria Theresa in the second half of the 18th century. Following his abdication in 1848, and the succession of his nephew, Franz Joseph, to the throne, the former emperor, Ferdinand I, made Prague Castle his home.

1.3 Presidential residence

In 1918, the castle became the seat of the president of the new Czechoslovak Republic T.G. Masaryk. The New Royal Palace and the gardens were renovated by Slovenian architect Jože Plečnik. In this period the St Vitus Cathedral was finished (on September 28, 1929). Renovations continued in 1936 under Plečnik's successor Pavel Janák.

On March 15, 1939, shortly after the Nazi Germany forced Czech President Emil Hacha (who suffered a heart attack during the negotiations) to hand his nation over to the Germans, Adolf Hitler spent a night in the Prague Castle, "proudly surveying his new possession."[2] During the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia in World War II, Prague Castle became the headquarters of Reinhard Heydrich, the Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia. He was said to have placed the Bohemian crown on his head; old legends say an usurper who places the crown on his head is doomed to die within a year.[3] Less than a year after assuming power, on May 27, 1942, Heydrich was attacked during Operation Anthropoid, by British-trained Slovak and Czech soldiers while on his way to the Castle, and died of his wounds (which became infected) a week later.[4]

After the liberation of Czechoslovakia and the coup in 1948, the Castle housed the offices of the communist Czechoslovak government. After Czechoslovakia split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the castle became the seat of the Head of State of the new Czech Republic. Similar to what Masaryk did with Plečnik, president Václav Havel commissioned Bořek Šípek to be the architect of post-communism Prague Castle's necessary improvements, in particular of the facelift of the castle's gallery of paintings.

2 Architectural styles of Prague Castle

The castle buildings represent virtually every architectural style of the last millennium. Prague Castle includes Gothic St Vitus Cathedral, Romanesque Basilica of St. George, a monastery and several palaces, gardens and defense towers. Most of the castle areas are open to tourists. The castle houses several museums, including the National Gallery collection of Bohemian baroque and mannerism art, exhibition dedicated to Czech history, Toy Museum and the picture gallery of Prague Castle, based on the collection of Rudolph II. The Summer

Saint Vitus Cathedral

Conclusion of the cathedral (1344-1349)

Shakespeare Festival regularly takes place in the courtyard of Burgrave Palace.

The neighborhood around Prague Castle is called Hradčany.

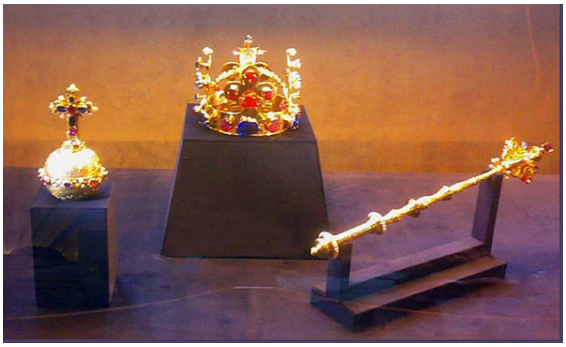
2.1 Churches

- Katedrála svatého Víta, Václava a Vojtěcha (St. Vitus Cathedral)
- Bazilika svatého Jiří (St. George's Basilica, Prague) and Klášter svatého Jiří (St. George's Convent, Prague), it is the oldest surviving church building within Prague Castle.
- Chrám Všech svatých (All Saints Church)
- Kaple svatého Kříže (Holy Cross Chapel)

2.2 Palaces

- Starý královský palác (Old Royal Palace)

Basilica of St George



The Czech Crown Jewels are the fourth oldest in Europe

- Letohrádek královny Anny (Belvedere or Royal Summer Palace)
- Lobkovický palác (Lobkowicz Palace, not to be confused with the German embassy in Malá Strana)
- Nový královský palác (New Royal Palace)

2.3 Halls

- Sloupová síň (Column Hall)
- Španělský sál (Spanish Hall), Rudolfova galerie (Rudolph's Gallery) and Rothmayerův sál (Rothmayer's Hall)
- Vladislavský sál (Vladislav Hall)

2.4 Other buildings

- Daliborka (Dalibor Tower)
- Prašná věž or Mihulka (Powder Tower or Mihulka)
- Zlatá ulička (Golden Lane)
- Purkrabství (Supreme Burgrave's House)
- Míčovna (Ball Game Hall)

- Jízdárna Pražského hradu (Riding School)
- Staré proboštství (Old Provost Residence)
- Mockerovy domy (New Provost Residence)

2.5 Gardens

Svatováclavská vinice (St. Wenceslas' Vineyard) on east

- Královská zahrada (Royal Garden)
- Zahrada Na terase Jízdárny (Riding School Terrace Garden)
- Zahrada Na Baště (The Garden on the Bastion)
- Jižní zahrady (South Gardens)
  - Rajská zahrada (Paradise Garden)
  - Zahrada Na Valech (Garden on the Ramparts)
  - Hartigovská zahrada (The Hartig Garden)
- Jelení příkop (Deer Moat)

3 In popular culture

Prague Castle is the location in the second level of *Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb* video game.

It is also mentioned in the video game *Assassin's Creed IV Black Flag* as a hidden file found in a hacked computer at Abstergo Entertainment.

4 See also

- Kohl's Fountain
- Matthias Gate
- Obelisk (Prague Castle)
- Statue of Saint George, Prague Castle

5 Notes

[1] Guinness Book of Records entry on Pražský hrad

[2] Klaus Fischer, *Nazi Germany: A New History* (New York: Continuum, 1995), p. 433.

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St. Vitus Cathedral

For the cathedral in Rijeka, Croatia, see St. Vitus Cathedral in Rijeka.

The **Metropolitan Cathedral of Saints Vitus, Wenceslaus and Adalbert** (Czech: *metropolitní katedrála svatého Víta, Václava a Vojtěcha*) is a Roman Catholic metropolitan cathedral in Prague, the seat of the Archbishop of Prague. Up to 1997, the cathedral was dedicated only to Saint Vitus, and is still commonly named only as **St. Vitus Cathedral**.

This cathedral is an excellent example of Gothic architecture and is the biggest and most important church in the country. Located within Prague Castle and containing the tombs of many Bohemian kings and Holy Roman Emperors, the cathedral is under the ownership of the Czech government as part of the Prague Castle complex.[1] Cathedral dimensions are 124 × 60 meters, the main tower is 96.5 meters high, front towers 82 m, arch height 33.2 m.[2]

1 Origins

The current cathedral is the third of a series of religious buildings at the site, all dedicated to St. Vitus. The first church was an early Romanesque rotunda founded by Wenceslaus I, Duke of Bohemia in 930. This patron saint was chosen because Wenceslaus had acquired a holy relic – the arm of St. Vitus – from Emperor Henry I. It is also possible that Wenceslaus, wanting to convert his subjects to Christianity more easily, chose a saint whose name (*Svatý Vít* in Czech) sounds very much like the name of Slavic solar deity Svantevit. Two religious populations, the increasing Christian and decreasing pagan community, lived simultaneously in Prague castle at least until the 11th century.

In the year 1060, as the bishopric of Prague was founded, prince Spytihněv II embarked on building a more spacious church, as it became clear the existing rotunda was too small to accommodate the faithful. A much larger and more representative romanesque basilica was built in its spot. Though still not completely reconstructed, most experts agree it was a triple-aisled basilica with two choirs and a pair of towers connected to the western transept. The design of the cathedral nods to Romanesque architecture of the Holy Roman Empire, most notably to the abbey church in Hildesheim and the Speyer Cathedral. The southern apse of the rotunda was incorporated into the eastern transept of the new church because it housed the tomb of St. Wenceslaus, who had by now become the patron saint of the Czech princes. A bishop's mansion was also built south of the new church, and was considerably enlarged and extended in the mid 12th-century.

2 The Gothic Cathedral

Interior of St. Vitus Cathedral

The present-day Gothic Cathedral was founded on 21 November 1344, when the Prague bishopric was raised to an archbishopric. The foundation stone for the new building was laid by King John of Bohemia.[3] Its patrons were the chapter of cathedral (led by a Dean), the Archbishop Arnost of Pardubice, and, above all, Charles IV, King of Bohemia and a soon-to-be Holy Roman Emperor, who intended the new cathedral to be a coronation church, family crypt, treasury for the most precious relics of the kingdom, and the last resting place cum pilgrimage site of patron saint Wenceslaus. The first master builder was a Frenchman Matthias of Arras, summoned from the papal palace in Avignon. Matthias designed the overall layout of the building as, basically, an import of French Gothic: a triple-naved basilica with flying buttresses, short transept, five-bayed choir and decagon apse with ambulatory and radiating chapels. However, he lived to build only the easternmost parts of the choir: the arcades and the ambulatory. The slender verticality of Late French Gothic and clear, almost rigid respect of proportions distinguish his work today.

After Matthias' death in 1352, a new master builder took over the cathedral workshop. This was Peter Parler, at

that time only 23 years old and son of the architect of the Heilig-Kreuz-Münster in Schwäbisch Gmünd. Parler at first only worked according to the plans left by his predecessor, building the sacristy on the north side of the choir and the chapel on the south. Once he finished all that Matthias left unfinished, he continued according to his own ideas. Parler's bold and innovative design brought in a unique new synthesis of Gothic elements in architecture. This is best exemplified in the vaults he designed for the choir. The so-called Parler's vaults or net-vaults have double (not single, as in classic High Gothic groin vaults) diagonal ribs that span the width of the choir-bay. The crossing pairs of ribs create a net-like construction (hence the name), which considerably strengthens the vault. They also give a lively ornamentation to the ceiling, as the interlocking vaulted bays create a dynamic zigzag pattern down the length of the cathedral.

A view from south: the main tower and the Golden Gate. The uncompleted gothic main tower was finished as baroque by Nikolaus Pacassi.

While Matthias of Arras was schooled as a geometer, thus putting an emphasis on rigid systems of proportions and clear, mathematical compositions in his design, Parler was trained as a sculptor and woodcarver. He treated architecture as a sculpture, almost as if playing with structural forms in stone. Aside from his rather bold vaults, the peculiarities of his work can also be seen in the design of pillars (with classic, bell-shaped columns which were almost forgotten by High Gothic), the ingenious dome vault of new St Wenceslaus chapel, the undulating clerestory walls, the original window tracery (no two of his windows are the same, the ornamentation is always different) and the blind tracery panels of the buttresses. Architectural sculpture was given a considerable role while Parler was in charge of construction, as can be seen in the corbels, the passageway lintels, and, particularly, in the busts on the triforium, which depict faces of the royal family, saints, Prague bishops, and the two master builders, including Parler himself.

Work on the cathedral, however, proceeded rather slowly, because in the meantime the Emperor commissioned Parler with many other projects, such as the construction of the new Charles Bridge in Prague and many churches throughout the Czech realm. By 1397, when Peter Parler died, only the choir and parts of the transept were finished.

View of the Cathedral and Prague Castle, above the river Vltava.

After Peter Parler's death in 1399 his sons, Wenzel Parler and particularly Johannes Parler, continued his work; they in turn were succeeded by a certain Master Petrilk, who by all accounts was also a member of Parler's workshop. Under these three masters, the transept and the great tower on its south side were finished. So was the gable which connects the tower with the south transept. Nicknamed 'Golden Gate' (likely because of the golden mosaic of Last Judgment depicted on it), it is through this portal that the kings entered the cathedral for coronation ceremonies.

The entire building process came to a halt with the beginning of Hussite War in the first half of 15th century. The war brought an end to the workshop that operated steadily over for almost a century, and the furnishings of cathedral, dozens of pictures and sculptures, suffered heavily from the ravages of Hussite iconoclasm. As if this was not enough, a great fire in 1541 considerably damaged the cathedral.

2.1 St. Wenceslas Chapel

Perhaps the most outstanding place in the cathedral is the Chapel of St. Wenceslas, where the relics of the saint are kept. The room was built by Peter Parler between 1344 and 1364 and has a ribbed vault. The lower part of the walls are wonderfully decorated with over 1300

St. Wenceslas Chapel

semi-precious stones and paintings about the Passion of Christ dating from the original decoration of the chapel in 1372–1373. The upper part of the walls have paintings about the life of St Wenceslas, created by the Master of the Litoměřice Altarpiece between 1506 and 1509. In the middle of the wall there is a Gothic statue of St. Wenceslas created by Jindrich Parler (Peter's nephew) in 1373. The Chapel is not open to the public, but it can be viewed from the doorways.
A small door with seven locks, in the south-western corner of the chapel, leads to the Crown Chamber containing the Czech Crown Jewels, which are displayed to the public only once every (circa) eight years.

3 Renaissance and Baroque

Through most of the following centuries, the cathedral stood only half-finished. It was built up to the great tower and a transept, which was closed by a provisional wall. In the place of a three-aisled nave-to-be-built, a timber-roofed construction stood, and services were held separately there from the interior of the choir. Several attempts to continue the work on cathedral were mostly unsuccessful. In the latter half of 15th century, king Vladislav Jagiellon commissioned the great Renaissance-Gothic architect Benedict Ried to continue the work on the cathedral, but almost as soon as the work began, it was cut short because of lack of funds. Later attempts to finish the cathedral only brought some Renaissance and Baroque elements into the Gothic building, most notably the obviously different Baroque spire of the south tower and the great organ in the northern wing of transept.

Coronation of King Ferdinand V of Bohemia in 1836

4 Completion in 19th and 20th century

In 1844 Václav Pešina, an energetic St. Vitus canon, together with Neo-Gothic architect Josef Kranner presented a program for renovation and completion of the great cathedral at the gathering of German architects in Prague. The same year a society under the full name "Union for Completion of the Cathedral of St Vitus in Prague" was formed, whose aim was to repair, complete and get rid of "everything mutilated and stylistically inimical". Josef Kranner was heading what was mostly repair work from 1861 to 1866, getting rid of Baroque decorations deemed unnecessary and restoring the interior. In 1870 the foundations of the new nave were finally laid, and in 1873, after Kramer's death, architect Josef Mocker took over the reconstruction. It was he who designed the west facade in a typical classic Gothic manner with two towers, and the same design was adopted, after his death, by the third and final architect of restoration, Kamil Hilbert.

In the 1920s the sculptor Vojtěch Sucharda worked on the facade, and the famous Czech Art Nouveau painter Alfons Mucha decorated the new windows in the north part of nave. The Rose Window was designed by Frantisek Kysela in 1925-7. This Rose Window above the portal depicts scenes from the biblical story of creation. By the time of St Wenceslas jubilee in 1929, the St Vitus cathedral was finally finished, nearly 600 years after it was begun. Despite the fact that entire western half of Cathedral is a Neo-Gothic addition, much of the design

and elements developed by Peter Parler were used in the restoration, giving the Cathedral as a whole a harmonious, unified look.

5 Influence

East end of the cathedral (1349)

The Cathedral of St. Vitus had a tremendous influence on the development of Late Gothic style characteristic for Central Europe. Members of Parler workshop, and indeed, the Parler clan (both of which were established at the building site of St. Vitus) designed numerous churches and buildings across Central Europe. More notable examples include Stephansdom cathedral in Vienna, Strasbourg Cathedral, Church of St. Marko in Zagreb and the Church of St. Barbara in Kutna Hora, also in Czech Republic. Regional Gothic styles of Slovenia, northern Croatia, Austria, Czech Republic, and southern Germany were all heavily influenced by Parler design.

Of particular interest are Parler's net vaults. The Late Gothic of Central Europe is characterised by ornate and extraordinary vaulting, a practice which was started by Parler's development of his own vaulting system for the choir of St. Vitus cathedral. Another regional Gothic style also displays amazing ingenuity and ornamentation in the design of vaults, the Perpendicular Style of English Gothic. A question remains of what was influenced by what. Some British art and architecture historians suspected that Peter Parler might have travelled to England at some point in his life, studying the great English Gothic cathedrals, which then inspired his work on St Vitus. However, taking into account that the Perpendicular style and the use of truly extravagant vaults in English Gothic began at the very end of 14th century, it is also quite possible that it was St Vitus Cathedral of Prague that influenced the development of English Gothic.[4]

6 Newest history

In 1997, with 1000th anniversary of Saint Voitechus death, the patrocinium (dedication) of the church was re-extended to Saint Wenceslaus and Saint Adalbert. The previous Romanesque basilica had this triple patrocinium to the main Bohemian patrons since 1038 when relics of Saint Adalbert were placed here.

In 1954, a government decree entrusted the whole Prague Castle into ownership of "all Czechoslovak people" and into administration of the President's Office. Past the Velvet Revolution, since 1992, several petitions by church subjects were filed requiring to find which subject is really the owner. After 14 years, in June 2006, The City Court in Prague decided that the 1954 decree didn't change the ownership of the cathedral and the owner is the Metropolitan Chapter at Saint Vitus. In September 2006, the President's Office had passed the administration to the Metropolitan Chapter. However, in February 2007, the Supreme Court in Prague cancelled the decision of the City Court and returned the case to the common court. In September 2007, the District Court of Praha 7 decided that the cathedral is owned by the Czech Republic, this decision was confirmed by the City Court in Prague and the Constitutional Court rejected the appeal of the Metropolitan Chapter. The Metropolitan Chapter wanted to file a complaint to the European Court for Human Rights. However, the interior equipment of the cathedral is unquestionably owned by the church subject.

In May 2010, the new Prague Archbishop Dominik Duka and the state president Václav Klaus together declared that they don't want to continue with court conflicts. They constituted that the 7 persons who are traditionally holders of the keys of the Saint Wenceslaus Chamber with the Bohemian Crown Jewels become also a board to coordinate and organize administration and use of the cathedral. However, controversy about ownership of some related canonry houses continues.

7 Services

Regular religious services in the Cathedral are:

- Sunday 08:30 Mass, 10:00 Mass (celebrated in Latin every last Sunday of the month) and 17:00 Vespers (not during July to September)
- Monday 07:00 Mass
- Tuesday 07:00 Mass
- Wednesday 07:00 Mass
- Thursday 07:00 Mass
- Friday 07:00 Mass, 18:00 Mass
- Saturday 07:00 Mass

Confessions: (Czech and English)

- Sunday 09:30 – 10:00
- Friday 17:30 – 17:50

8 Further reading

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9 See also

- Czech Gothic architecture
- St. George's Basilica, Prague
- Treasury of St. Vitus Cathedral

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[2] Katedrála svatého Víta (Gotický metropolitní chrám svatého Víta, Vojtěcha a Václava)

[3] "St. Vitus Cathedral". *Prague castle*. Retrieved 2016-05-17.

[4] P. Zatloukal, "Architecture of the 19th Century", vol. 5 of "Ten centuries of architecture" series, Prague Castle Administration & DaDa, a.s., Prague 2001, ISBN 80-86161-41-2 (English version)

11 External links

- Website of the cathedral (en, cz)
- Archdiocese of Prague (Official Website)
- Information from the Prague Castle administration site
- Photographs
- Church Art including Bath and St Vitus Cathedral
- St. Vitus Cathedral picture gallery at Remains.se

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St. George's Basilica, Prague

St. George's Basilica (Czech: *Bazilika Sv. Jiří*) is the oldest surviving church building within Prague Castle, Prague, Czech Republic. The basilica was founded by Vratislaus I of Bohemia in 920. It is dedicated to Saint George.

The basilica was substantially enlarged in 973 with the addition of the Benedictine St. George's Abbey. It was rebuilt following a major fire in 1142. The Baroque façade dates from the late 17th century. A Gothic style chapel dedicated to Ludmila of Bohemia holds the tomb of the saint. The shrines of Vratislav and Boleslaus II of Bohemia are also in the basilica. The abbess of this community had the right to crown the Bohemian queens consort.

The building now houses the 19th century Bohemian Art Collection of National Gallery in Prague. It also serves as a concert hall.[1]

1 Burials

- Vratislaus I, Duke of Bohemia

2 Gallery

- View from the Prague Cathedral in 1867
- View from the Cathedral in 2005
- Basilica - eastern side
- View inside - Christ - 1947 By OH Hajek
- Floor plan from 1856
- Interior view of the apse

3 See also

- St. Vitus Cathedral
- National Gallery in Prague

4 External links

- Basilica of Saint George - Prague-wiki
- http://www.pragueexperience.com/places.asp?PlaceID=1115

5 References

[1] The Tombs of Saints at Prague Castle

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Memorial to the Victims of Communism

For the American monument see Victims of Communism Memorial; for the proposed Canadian monument see Memorial to the Victims of Communism (Ottawa)

Memorial to the victims of Communism

The Memorial to the victims of Communism (Czech: *Pomník obětem komunismu*) is a series of statues in Prague commemorating the victims of the communist era between 1948 and 1989. It is located at the base of Petřín hill, Újezd street in the Malá Strana or the Lesser Town area.

It was unveiled on the 22 May 2002, twelve years after the fall of communism, and is the work of Czech sculptor Olbram Zoubek and architects Jan Kerel and Zdeněk Holzel. It was supported by the local council and Confederation of Political Prisoners (KPV).

It shows seven bronze figures descending a flight of stairs. The statues appear more "decayed" the further away they are from you - losing limbs and their bodies breaking open. It symbolises how political prisoners were affected by Communism.

There is also a bronze strip that runs along the centre of the memorial, showing estimated numbers of those impacted by communism:

- 205,486 arrested
- 170,938 forced into exile
- 4,500 died in prison
- 327 shot trying to escape
- 248 executed

The bronze plaque nearby reads:

> "The memorial to the victims of communism is dedicated to all victims not only those who were jailed or executed but also those whose lives were ruined by totalitarian despotism"

1 Controversy

Prior to the memorial being unveiled, there were reports in the local media about an apparent political row over who should attend the ceremony.[1] President Václav Havel, a leading dissident in the communist era was not invited until the last minute, and then declined to attend.

The memorial has not been universally welcomed, with some artists saying the memorial is kitsch and others critical that female figures were not included. One of the

statues was damaged during two bomb blasts in 2003, no group has admitted carrying out the attacks.[2]

2 References

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[2] "Prague monument to Communist victims damaged in explosion". Radio Prague. 2012-01-14. Retrieved 2012-09-18.

3 External links

- Information at prague.net

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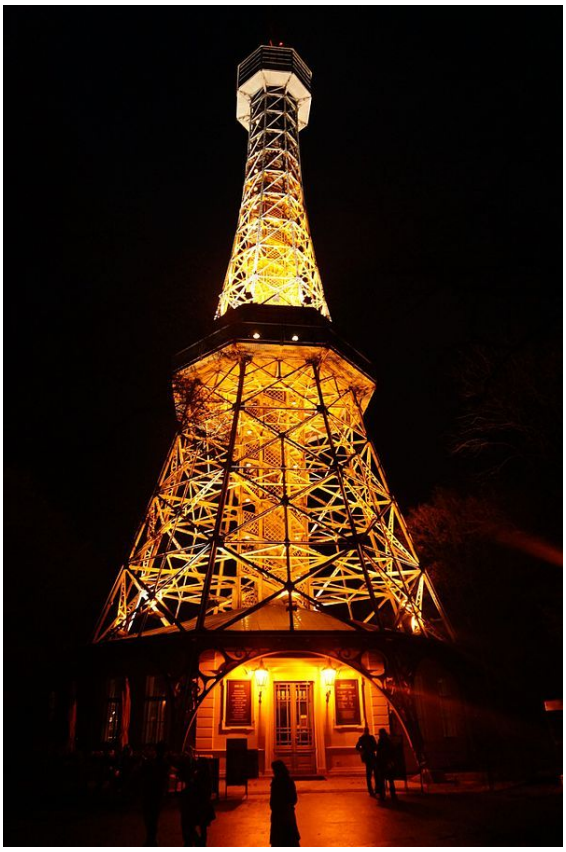
Petřín Lookout Tower

Petřín Lookout Tower



Petřín Lookout Tower at night

The **Petřín Lookout Tower** (Czech: *Petřínská rozhledna*) is a 63.5-metre-tall steel-framework tower in Prague, which strongly resembles the Eiffel Tower. The Petřínská rozhledna was built in 1891 and was used as an observation tower as well as a transmission tower. Today the Petřínská rozhledna is a major tourist attraction. The hill is roughly a half-hour walk up paths (which gets quite slippery in the snow) and the tower is a shorter but fairly tiring climb; however, the hill is served by a frequent funicular and the tower has an elevator for disabled people. In 2014 the tower was visited by more than 557,000 visitors, with foreigners accounting for over 70% of said visitors.[1]

The two observation platforms are accessible via 299 stairs in sections of 13 per flight running around the inside of the structure.

There are a gift shop and a small cafeteria on the main level. On the lowest level is a small exhibition area. One exhibition displayed Merkur Observation Towers and was held from 6 March 2013 to 30 March 2014.[2]

1 Petrinska rozhledna versus Eiffel Tower

Petřínská rozhledna is often described as small version of the Eiffel Tower. In contrast to the Eiffel Tower, Petřínská rozhledna has an octagonal, not square, cross-section. Further, it does not stand, as does the Eiffel Tower, on four columns of lattice steel. The whole area under its legs is covered with the entrance hall.

A similarity between the Eiffel Tower and Petřínská rozhledna is the design of the lowest cross beams in the form of round bones.

2 History

In 1889, members of the Club of Czech Tourists visited the world exposition in Paris and were inspired by the Eiffel Tower. They collected a sufficient amount of money and in March 1891 the building of the tower started for the General Land Centennial Exhibition. It was finished in only four months.

In 1953, a television broadcasting antenna was installed on Petřínská rozhledna, the program feed performed by a directional radio antenna. This served as Prague's main television signal provider until the opening of the Žižkov Television Tower in late 1992.

In 1999, the tower was completely renovated.

From 21st January 2013 the tower is operated by City of Prague Museum

3 See also

- List of Eiffel Tower replicas
- List of towers

4 References

[1] City of Prague Museum press release (czech only)

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- Petrinska Rozhledna at *Structurae*
- http://www.skyscraperpage.com/diagrams/?b41048
- History of Petrinska rozhledna
- Petrin Lookout 360° Virtual Panorama

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