

International Music Festivals

“Prague Spring” “Janáček May Ostrava”



In the 19th and early 20th century, Bohemia possessed a significant cultural centre—Prague. All the creative forces of the arts had gathered here. Of all the fine arts, for the Czech lands, music has earned the most glory. Our programme does not only wish to introduce Prague to you as the most important musical centre of Czech Republic, but also to the musical life in the Eastern part of the country—Moravia. We will visit places associated with the life of Leoš Janáček, the famous Czech composer of the late 19th century.

Day 1

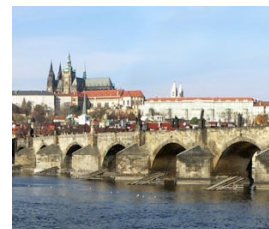
Arrival to Prague; lodging followed by a dinner at the hotel or a select restaurant followed by a walk through the illuminated city.

Day 2



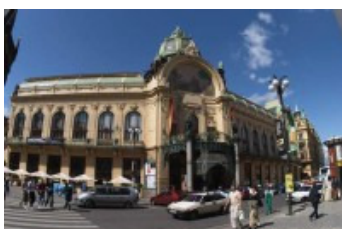
In the afternoon, we will visit **Prague Castle** (*Pražský hrad*), the largest ancient castle in the world and official seat of Czech rulers. We continue to **St. Vitus Cathedral** (*Chrám Sv. Víta*), the **Old Royal Palace** (*Starý Královský palác*) and picturesque **Golden Lane** (*Zlatá ulička*). Our stroll ends in the beautiful Baroque gardens close to Prague Castle, offering a superb view of the city while we enjoy a light meal.

Our steps lead us to a stone bridge, named **Charles Bridge** (*Karlův most*) since 1870. On the other side of the bridge we find the Bedřich Smetana Museum (*muzeum Smetany*) with its small and impressive gallery. Return to hotel. Individual dinner.



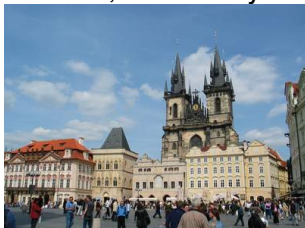
In the evening, a concert within the International Music Festival **Prague Spring**.

Day 3



After breakfast, departure to **Vyšehrad**—the seat of the first King of Bohemia in the 11th century. In the cemetery adjacent to the church lie buried many of Prague's great artists, scribes, musicians and politicians. Most notable are the graves of Dvořák, Smetana, and Mucha. Return to the city centre.

Our walk begins at the **Municipal House** (*Obecní dům*), a unique example of Art Nouveau architecture. The building was erected on the former site of the Royal Court. At the heart of Municipal House today is the most beautiful concert hall in Prague—the Smetana Hall, home to the Prague Philharmonic and where, in memory of B. Smetana (May 12), the annual Spring Music Festival begins.



By way of Wenceslas Square (*Václavské náměstí*) and the Estates Theatre (*Stavovské divadlo*) (premiere of *Don Giovanni* 1787) we reach the **Old Town Square** (*Staroměstské náměstí*) surrounded by historical buildings, such as the Old Town City Hall with its famous Astronomical Clock and numerous churches, houses, and palaces of various architectural styles.

Light meal prior to departure to our hotel, dinner in an elegant restaurant, and a **Prague Spring** concert.



"Since the year 1946, the International Prague Spring Music Festival has been the most significant musical event in the Czech Republic. Its tradition is linked to the message of its founder, the legendary Czech conductor Rafael Kubelík. In their compositions, all these personages promoted respect for freedom and an uncompromising artistic standard."

Roman Bělor, Director of the Prague Spring International Music Festival



Day 4

After breakfast, departure to **Brno** and lodging. City sightseeing. First a visit to **Špilberk Castle** above Brno. The castle was founded in 1270 by the Czech king Přemysl Otakar II and rebuilt in the 17th century into a formidable Baroque fort and later into a prison complex labelled "the prison of the nations."



Sightseeing of the Gothic **Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul** (*Dóm sv. Petra*)—the city's most important sacred building situated on the grounds of the presumed former site of the castle. From here we go to the **Vegetable Market** (*Zelný trh*), the secular centre of the old town with the dominant **Parnas fountain** (*Kašna Parnas*). The **Reduta Theatre** (*Národní divadlo*) is the oldest theatre building in Brno (1670).

The oldest secular building of Brno is the 13th century **Old Town Hall** (*Stará radnice*) with a portal designed by the renowned architect Anton Pilgram. Continuing, we take a view of St. James' Church (*kostel Sv. Jakuba*) (1220) and a Jesuit church, the most beautiful Baroque church in the town.

In the afternoon, a visit to the **Leoš Janáček Museum**. This small museum with a modern exposition is situated in the summerhouse, next to the former organ school where the composer lived from 1910 to 1928. Besides Janáček's study with his piano, we will take a tour of a modern exposition and listen to passages from a few of Janáček's compositions.



Dinner. Individual programme.

Day 5

Morning departure to **Olomouc**, one of the oldest and most beautiful cities in Moravia. In early times, it was a very important centre of Catholicism and named Moravian Salzburg.

Visit to **Archbishop's Palace** built by Bishop Karl II von Liechtenstein-Castelcorn between the years 1664-1674. Tour through the historical halls where you will be fascinated by the beautiful magnificent

Reception Salon. It was in the Throne Hall on December 2, 1848 that Austrian Emperor Ferdinand V Dobrotivý declined the crown for the benefit of his nephew Franz Josef I.



In the Upper Square (*Horní náměstí*) you can admire an astrological clock from the 15th century and, especially, a 36 metre high plague pillar. It is the largest and most beautiful Baroque monument in Czech Republic, listed in the UNESCO registry since 2000. In the year 1754, this **Holy Trinity Column** (*sloup Nejsvětější Trojice*) was blessed in the presence of Maria

Theresa and Františka Lotrinského.

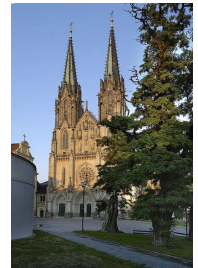
One of the highlights of the visit is an organ performance given by Prof. Antonín Schindler in the **Church of St. Moritz** (*kostel Sv. Mořice*). Professor Schindler was organist and custodian of St. Moritz since 1945 and had the organ undergo expensive renovation. This Baroque instrument has 2,311 pipes...it is the “queen among the organs in Moravia” and the largest in the country, built by Michael Engler of Vratislav (Wroclaw) in 1745.



“Every year in September, for the past 40 years, the Moravian Philharmonic of Olomouc organizes the “International Organ Festival.” Known organists from around the whole world perform on this exquisite Engler’s organ in the church of St. Moritz. It’s my pleasure that I can regularly personally welcome all lovers of organ and guests of the travel agency Horatia in the cultural and musical city of Olomouc.”

Prof. Antonín Schindler, President MVFO

In the centre of the city we will enjoy the beautiful unique Group of Baroque fountains (*Soubor barokních kašen*) and further on to Princely Hill where stands yet another dominant structure of Olomouc—the **St. Wenceslas Cathedral** (*Dóm Sv. Václava*) built as a roman basilica in the 12th century.



Departure to **Ostrava**, lodging. Dinner and departure to the Ostrava House of Culture (*Dům kultury města Ostravy*) built from 1956-1961 in neo-classic style.

19.30 – Opening concert of the International Music Festival “Janáček May.”



Day 6

Sightseeing of the city of **Ostrava** after breakfast. Ostrava was founded by Bishop Bruno from Schaumburg as a Moravian border fortress and became the most significant industrial town in the country. Banker Samuel Rothschild built a coal mine and next to it a railway and was very successful in coal and steel production.



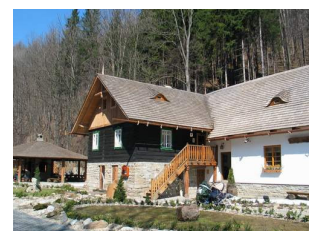
The oldest preserved monuments of the city are St. Wenceslas Church (*kostel Sv. Václava*) dating from the 14th century and the Old Town Hall (*Stará radnice*) built in the 17th century. We will then visit a neo-Baroque theatre—the **Antonín Dvořák Theatre**, earlier called the German Theatre and built in 1906-1907 upon what used to be a coal mine.

Next we will see the impressive **New City Hall** (*Nová radnice*) with its 65 metre-high tower and lookout terrace. The town hall was built between the years 1925-30. It is the largest complex of town halls in Czech Republic. Also in Ostrava, there is the Cathedral of the Divine Saviour (*kostel Sv. Spasitele*)— the second largest Moravian church built from 1883-1889.



Then we move on to the urban neighbourhood **Poruba**, where we can view a building complex of residential architecture in the socialist style of the 50s and 60s (“Socialist Historicism”). Of historical significance are the blocks **Little Towers** (*Věžičky*) and **Arch** (*Oblouk*).

Departure to **Kozlovice**, to the Walachian hamlet called **Na mlýně** (*At the Mill*). You may enjoy a lunch **at U mlynářky** (*At the Miller’s Wife*), a very rustic restaurant built in the year 1581. Leoš Janáček was often the guest of the mill’s owner. The mill provided Janáček with inspiration while composing his famous opera **Její pastorkyňa** (*Jenůfa*).



After lunch, departure to **Hukvaldy**. Dominating the countryside are the ruins of the fort Hukvaldy which date from the 13th century. The fort was the seat of the bishops of Olomouc and belongs among the most famous monuments not only in Moravia but in the whole Czech Republic. The Moravian music composer **Leoš Janáček** was born under the mountains of this small town of Hukvaldy in 1854 (died in Ostrava, 1928). Moravian folk music was the source of inspiration during the composer’s early creative years, just as was folk poetry and village life. The opera **Její pastorkyňa** ended this particular “folk era.”



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Next, a school in which the father of **Leoš Janáček** was a teacher and where the composer was born, followed by a visit to the **Leoš Janáček Monument**. From 1921 Janáček lived in this house and, at the end of our tour, we can see a statue of Liška (fox) Bystrouška—a favorite among tourists.

Return to Ostrava. Free time. At night, you may enjoy a second concert of the music festival.



Day 7

Breakfast and departure.