

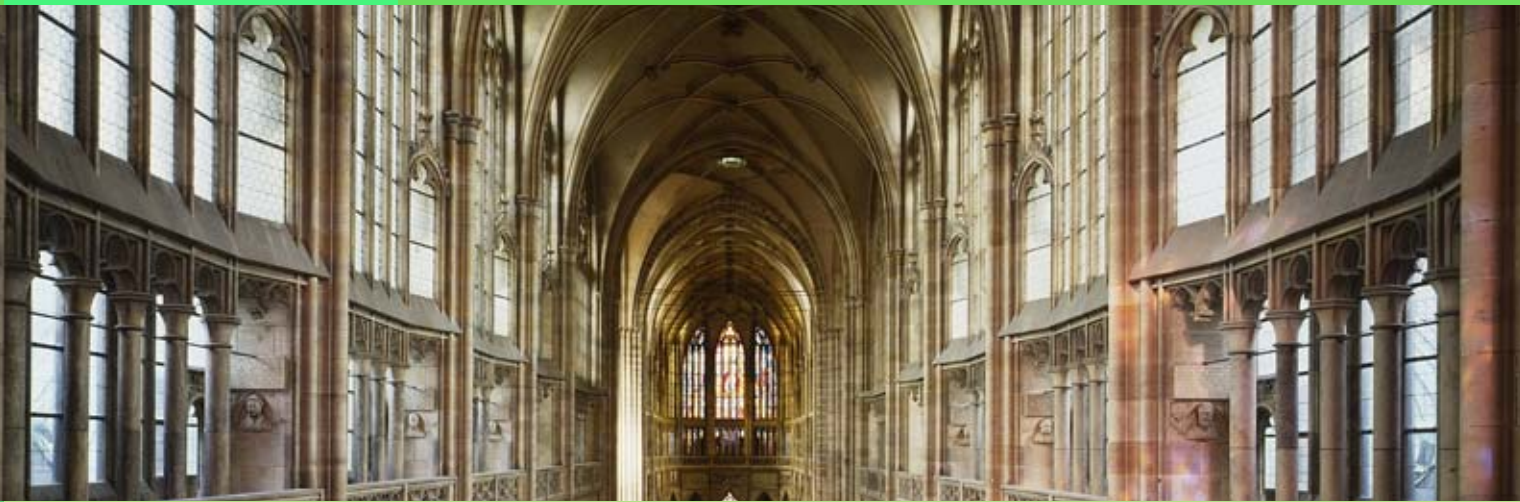


Deadline for Early Registration

16th World Federation of Tourist Guide Association Convention

JANUARY 26 - 30, 2015

Prague, Czech Republic



St Vitus's Cathedral, Prague

Deadline for Early Registration

Take the advantage of the early bird registration rates for the WFTGA 2015 Convention. The deadline expires on **August 31, 2014**. The registration must be submitted in writing using the registration form. It can be completed electronically online (preferably) or by email, fax, or post. The registration form can be downloaded at <http://www.wftga2015.org/registration/>.

committee the details of the convention program. The Prague convention will offer a wide range of lectures, workshops, discussions, visits, and excursions. There will be several new topics, such as guiding on Segways and bicycles, interpreting difficult heritages, and Prague German literature. Moreover, there will be training for river cruises. For the program schedule, visit <http://www.wftga2015.org/convention/convention-at-glance>.

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Oneworld[®], the premier global airline alliance of Airberlin, American Airlines, British Airways, Cathay Pacific Airways, Finnair, Iberia, Japan Airlines, LAN Airlines, Malaysia Airlines, Qantas, Qatar Airways, Royal Jordanian, and S7 Airlines, provides participants and their companions travelling to the WFTGA 2015 Convention in Prague flight discounts up to 15% of fares. More at: www.oneworld.com/events



Felicitas Wressnig and Stanislav Voleman in Prague. Photo: Hubert Palan

The Convention Program at Glance

WFTGA president, Felicitas Wressnig, visited Prague in late May. She discussed with the host organising

oneworld events.



Prague's Top Monument

Prague's most identifiable icon is the Astronomical Clock of the Old Town Hall on Old Town Square. All the trade routes that ran through Prague met in the Old Town Square. Here, merchants from near and far displayed their wares, and it was around the marketplace that the first settlers made their home. In 1338, the Old Town of Prague bought one merchant's house in the middle of square for the Town Hall. Later, the town purchased neighbouring shops and built a tower. The Astronomical Clock first



was installed on the tower in 1410. The upper face, called the „sphere,“ shows the time in 24 arabic numerals, counting from sunset to sunset, and in two sets of twelve roman numerals. The month appears by the signs of the zodiac, and the curved lines tell the phase of the moon and the position of the planets. Four small figures stand on either side of the sphere: Vanity, with a mirror; Avarice, with a money bag; Death, with an hour-glass and funeral bell; and a Turk, with his turban. The lower face is a „calendarium,“ with the Old Town coat of arms in its center and the signs of the zodiac and months on its perimeter. Every hour, the automata comes to life: Death raises his hour-glass and rings the funeral bell, twelve Apostles pass by the narrow windows, the Turk shakes his head, the Miser gloats over his gold, the vain man gazes at his mirror, and finally, the cock crows.

Our walking tour of Prague on the first convention day includes also the Astronomical Clock.

Czech Spas

Since medieval times, spring waters were the cure for illnesses. The belief in the curative powers of mineral waters goes back even to prehistoric times. Such practices have been popular, especially in Europe and Japan. From the eighteenth century onwards, **Karlsbad** or **Karlovy Vary** in the Czech Republic achieved world fame as a meeting place for emperors, kings, tsars, politicians, financiers, and

artists. The history of the spa began with Charles IV, who gave the place his name. A legend describes how the emperor discovered the steaming springs one day when his hounds were hunting a fine stag. At the beginning, the only use of the hot springs was for bathing. Assistants lowered the patients into the hot water for ten or more hours. Usually, the skin split open, which was the aim of the therapy. According to medical opinion at the time, the water flushed the illness out of the body through the opened skin. The sixteenth century saw the introduction of drinking



chalybeate spring water. Around 1750, the drinking cure became prevalent, and patients had to partake between 50 and 60 cups (7 to 9 litres) of water each day. It was still a long way from modern therapeutic methods. The town developed rapidly around the first spa houses. As the number of visitors constantly increased, those offering accommodations decided to keep lists of their guests. Later, the lists were published. The city expended a great deal of effort on the guests' entertainment. Lavish balls, concerts, theatre performances, and torchlight processions took place. The German writer, Goethe, who visited



The pool, Esplanade Hotel, Marienbad. Photo: Esplanade Hotel

Karlsbad 13 times, knew of „no more pleasant or more comfortable stay.“

No less famous was **Marienbad** or **Marianske Lazne**, the most recent of the great West Bohemian spas. Established in 1812, it soon achieved a worldwide reputation. The city erected magnificent hotels, luxury shops, and colonnades around the spa parks. The well-established Esplanade Spa and Golf Resort is a fine Belle Epoque hotel. Marienbad's cold mineral springs of various compositions and the mud, rich in iron sulphate, are cures for ailments of the stomach, intestines, gall bladder, kidneys, bladder, skin, respiratory tract, and nerves. Marienbad was a favourite resort of King Edward VII, and such well-known individuals as Napoleon III, Chopin, Wagner, Gogol, Twain, and Freud were on the guest list. In May 1916, the Prague writer and lawyer, Franz Kafka, wrote from Marienbad to his girlfriend, Felice Bauer: „Karlsbad is quite nice, but Marienbad is incredibly beautiful. I should have followed that instinct earlier, which told me the fattest people are also the wisest. You can lose weight anywhere without paying tribute to any spring, but you can only ramble through forests such as these here. Though I must say that, at present, the beauty of the countryside is heightened by the peace and solitude and the receptivity of all living and lifeless things; and the dreary, windy weather hardly diminishes the beauty.“ (Letters to Felice, Vintage Classics)

The Karlsbad region is associated with the production



Pilsen - European Capital of Culture 2015

In 1985, former actress Melina Mercouri, then Greece's Minister of Culture, and her French counterpart, Jack Lang, came up with the idea of designating an annual Capital of Culture to highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures, history, and values. The European Union designates for one calendar year two selected cities as the European Capital of Culture. Pilsen or Plzen, the fourth largest city in the Czech Republic, has been selected as the European Capital of Culture for the year 2015. The city will host 650 special events, including art exhibitions, live theater, concerts, and especially the New Circus. The most famous product of the city is Pilsner Urquell, brewed in a local brewery since 1842. The brewery operates a visitor center and offers several tours. They employ up to 80 local guides and several bus drivers. The tour includes a visit to the exhibition, modern brewhouses, bottling plant, and historic brewery cellars, where you can taste unfiltered and unpasteurized Pilsner Urquell on tap straight from oak lager barrels (only visitors over the age of 18).

A visit to Pilsen and beer tasting is included in the WFTGA 2015 post-convention tour.



Dates to Remember:

Friday, 23 January - Sunday, 25 January 2015:
3-day Pre-Convention Tour to Moravia

Monday, 26 January - Friday, 30 January 2015:
WFTGA Convention in Prague

Friday, 30 January - Tuesday, 3 February 2015:
5-day Post-Convention Tour to Marienbad

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of luxury glass and porcelain. Moser glassworks is the leading brand for handmade crystal table sets, art design, and glass engraving. The Moser Museum and Visitor Centre maps over 150 years of the glasswork's history and shows products from the oldest examples of glass work to contemporary collections as well as their famous owners.

Experience the unique atmosphere of a traditional health spa resort and discover the beauty of the glass craft during our post-convention tour.