

the Bohemian

state of mind



CONSULATE GENERAL
of the Czech Republic

monthly newsletter • Toronto Canada

- 100 000 Bohemians in Canada
- Gift to Orphans
- Czechs on Democracy Index
- In Memory of Eda Ottova

Bohemians: The term used to designate residents of the former Kingdom of Bohemia, (comprising Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia) located in today's Czech Republic. However, in modern usage, the term "bohemian" can describe any person who lives a life in which art, self-expression and no regard for conventional rules of behavior are the highest values.



February 2011

Events Calendar

February 5

**St. Wenceslaus
Parish Ball**

St. Wenceslaus Church
496 Gladstone Ave, Toronto

February 6

**Masquerade Party
for Kids**

St. Wenceslaus Church
Tel: 905-838-2541
Hanajurasek@yahoo.ca

February 11

Skicross World Cup

Collingwood
With World Champion
Tomas Kraus
www.bluemountain.ca

February 12

All You Need Is Love

G. Grosman Trio & Guests
Prague Restaurant
450 Scarborough Golf Cl.Rd.
Tel: 416-289-0283
www.georgegrosman.com

continued on next pg.



Dear Bohemians

– by Consul General Richard Krpac

It is the end of January – and if your strong will has carried you this far with the New Year's resolutions regarding safe eating and drinking habits (and perhaps even regular gym visits), we admire you to no end...But please, realize there are consequences to any unwise decisions – with too much of healthy

lifestyle, the year 2011 might be one of the most boring years for you and, especially, those around you – us!

Please, take pity on us... and note that the right time for The Real New Year's Resolutions is Now. After four weeks of lunches made of spinach mixed with lettuce, let's turn our green cheeks red and smiling

continued on pg. 3

Event Highlight

– All You Need Is Love

As George Grosman, one of the best Toronto jazz musicians humbly acknowledges the origins of his motivation to learn guitar was not the art itself: "When I learned the opening chord to 'A Hard Day's Night' I realized that here was a shortcut to meeting girls that I just had to pursue". Back then he was twelve, later found his jazz and swing bearings and became full time musician – performing, writing and recording in Canada, U.S., Czechoslovakia, Israel, the U.K. and Iceland.



February 12th Valentine concert of George Grosman and his friends at the Prague Restaurant in Masaryktown is titled "All You Need Is Love". Obviously, George's band will perform mostly love songs, including "My Funny Valentine". As a small Valentine's Day gift, each visitor will get a CD called "Off The Floor" with classic jazz and swing tunes and a few original compositions.

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Events Calendar cont'd

February 26

Winter Games

Horseshoe Valley

Info: Hana Jurasek

Tel: 905-838-2541

Hanajurasek@yahoo.ca

February 27

Kapralova Quartet

St. Wenceslaus Church

496 Gladstone Ave, Toronto

www.nocturnesinthecity.com



Happy
Valentine's
Day
to all
bohemians
at-heart

Consular Window

– 100 000 Bohemians in Canada

According to the 2006 Canadian census, there are 79,910 Canadians of full or partial Czech descent, 50,860 Canadians of full or partial Slovak descent and 33,540 Canadians claimed the Czechoslovakian descent. Czech presence in Canada can be traced back to the times of Canadian Confederation, the early stage of modern Canadian history. Czech immigration to Canada can be divided into four phases: 1880–1914, 1919–39, 1945–89, and 1990-present days.

The first two phases between the years 1880 and 1914 and between years 1919 and 1939 were dominated by strong economic incentives for immigration. During the first phase after the year 1880, many Czechs began immigrating to Canada drawn by plentiful and inexpensive land and attracted by pleasing resettlement plans sponsored by the Canadian government. After the World War I, the stable and industrialized economy of the new Czechoslovakia, the availability of work, and a good standard of living made emigration less attractive. There was a marked change in the profile of Czech immigrants but the field of agriculture still remained drawing to Czech immigrants. Based on the 1931 census, there were approximately 30,000 residents from Czechoslovakia in Canada.

The Munich Pact, followed by the rapid partition and annexation of Czech lands by Nazi Germany and subsequent closure of the borders made direct emigration virtually impossible between March 1939 and May 1945. Czech and Slovak immigrants who arrived to Canada during the third phase between 1945 and 1989 were mostly political refugees, who left their homeland to avoid both the economic turmoil of post-World

War II reconstruction and the subsequent Communist regime which was established in 1948.

The 1951 Canadian census recorded 63,959 Czechs and Slovaks in Canada. An estimated 21,000 Czechs and Slovaks entered Canada as refugees between 1968 and 1969 after a devastating and extremely destructive surprise invasion by Soviet troops in 1968. They were followed by thousands of others who came in the seventies and eighties before the communism collapsed in 1989.

Since the early nineties we witnessed to the new era of immigration from the Czech Republic to Canada. The immigration is neither motivated by poverty and lack of working opportunities nor by fear from political persecution. This modern immigration, though not big in numbers, is driven by the complexity of present world and needs of global economy.

Own chapter in the history of the Czech immigration to Canada has been written by members of Roma minority. During two waves of 1996 – 1997 and 2008 – 2009 more than four thousands of Czech Roma entered Canada and sought for political asylum. Many of them, especially those from the second wave have returned back to the Czech Republic.

References: Multicultural Canada
<http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca>



Direct Flights Canada – Prague are back!

As we learned from Andrew Pirowski, Senior Executive of Panorama Travel & Tours Ltd., starting this May, travelers can again enjoy direct flight between Ontario and Prague. Air Italy Polska plans to fly more than 500 passengers every week between the city of Prague and Hamilton. Flights depart Hamilton every Friday and Prague every Saturday, starting May 27, 2011.

Bookings are available online, at www.FlyCentralEurope.com or through your nearest travel agent. The roundtrip prices start at just \$799. For more information, contact: Panorama Travel & Tours Ltd. at 1-866-682-5819.



The World's Best Booze – and Where to Drink It

Lonely Planet knows the world. And they apparently know their drinks too, as they chose Czech Absinth and Becherovka over Pernod and Jagermeister. Here is the list of “The world’s best booze” according to Lonely Planet:



1. Sake (Japan)
2. Guinness (Ireland)
3. Beer (Belgium)
4. Absinth (Czech Republic)
5. Burgundy wine (France)
6. Caipiroska (Brazil)
7. Becherovka (Czech Republic)
8. George Dickel Tennessee Whisky (USA)
9. Tequila (Mexico)
10. Vodka (Poland)

For the full article, please go to: www.lonelyplanet.com/mexico/travel-tips-and-articles/76114

Dear Bohemians *(continued from pg. 1)*

again – let’s all grill our first pork knee of the year. And let’s smother those juicy knuckle parts with the one Austrian invention that really deserves Nobel prize – that yummy mustard from the city of Krems.

And while we are at it, let’s make even better New Year’s resolution – let’s try all the drinks on the Top Ten of International Booze, as suggested by The Lonely Planet (see the full article above). Yes, at

first, we were surprised not to find Pilsner Urquell on the list. But, later we realized, it would probably not be fair had Bohemians won three places among the top ten. With Becherovka and Absinth already in, that leaves only eight places for the rest of the world....

Na zdraví and All the Best to Bohemians in 2011!

In memory of Eda Ottova

(April 2, 1931 – December 10, 2010)

– by Josef Cermak

*A man died, and because he was great,
the world staggered as a boat,
when the swimmer jumps from it to the shore.*

– Karel Toman, on Lenin's death

Such is the connectedness of everything with everything else in this world, that the first words that crossed my mind, when I heard of Eda Ottova's death, were the verses Toman wrote on the death of Lenin, the man who stood at the start of the destructive whirlwind, which in the last century swept through Europe, leaving behind death and havoc and scattered dreams of millions. The dreams of the generation born in the Masaryk republic. The dreams of the Jaros and Otta families. That whirlwind, which – at its beginning such a large part of the European intellectuals welcomed as a noble experiment with man's destiny.

Was Lenin great? Perhaps in the eyes of the disinherited masses of the old regime, for whom Lenin wrote roles of the founders of paradise on earth and whom he endowed with Pharaohs' powers. Possibly in the eyes of historians who measure greatness by the extent of change in the manner of ruling and the number of vanquished enemies. And perhaps also in the eyes of the poets, dreaming about a paradise on earth, until they wake up, and the reality they see around them, is much uglier than the reality they wanted to escape.

Was Eda (Eduska) Ottova a great human being? The last couple of weeks, I was dallying with a persistent question: what is the noblest human quality, defining more sharply than anything else that which

is most valuable in us. I made to myself several propositions. I suggested courage: John Hus in Kostnice, Winston Churchill (or Douglas MacArthur) mocking death in the middle of a battle, the parachutists, who assassinated Heydrich, the defiance of Karel Hasler, Milada Horakova at her trial...I suggested loyalty. I suggested self-sacrifice. In the end, I came to a virtue quite unglamorous, stuck somewhere in an old cabinet, never displayed

to visitors: the ability to refuse to nourish in oneself hatred, no matter how odious were the crimes committed against us, our loved ones, our homeland, no matter that we were trashed into the mud, spat on, that our dearest were hanged...I occasionally suspected this modest, seemingly ordinary virtue even

before it defined itself in my soul. We find it in the bible, in the commandment to love even one's enemies. In the message Hus sent to his countrymen back home; it resided in the heart of St. Francis of Assisi and radiated from Milada Horakova in that most likely most dishonorable trial in our history. But all of these had either lived in different times or outside my circle of acquaintances. Eda Ottova is a different story. I knew her fairly well, particularly in the last couple of years. And it was Eduska who – in my view – most strongly reflected that seemingly ordinary virtue not to allow even the most brutal, hyenous acts to breed hatred in her heart...

The full text of article at: <http://czechfolks.com/plus/2010/12/18/josef-cermak-pohar-horkosti-pro-edu-ottovou-2-dubna-1931-10-prosince-2010/>

Courtesy of Josef Cermak and Czechfolks.com



Eda, shortly after her release in 1961

Nice Gift

for the Czech Republic's 18th birthday

The Czech Republic was born exactly 18 years ago, on January 1, 1993 after peaceful dissolution of Czechoslovakia. Only few years before that, communist Czechoslovakia was still a Stalinist stronghold. Its Politburo was full of elderly but dedicated apparatchiks, carefully chosen and appointed in 1969 by Brezhnev to prevent another Prague Spring. They were neither feared nor respected by people. But brutal Warsaw pact lesson of 1968 was still in vivid memory. With notable exception of few dozens openly dissenting

voices around generation. Many Czechs are frustrated with the way Czech democracy works. As goes the saying, often we don't see the forest for the trees.

It is helpful to find somebody who has the ability to see the forest. The Economist Intelligence Unit, affiliated with the conservative English weekly The Economist, has put together a research called 2010 Index of Democracy. Based on sixty indicators divided in categories such as electoral process, civil liberties, the functioning of government etc., countries are placed within one of four types of regimes: full democracies, flawed democracies, hybrid regimes, and authoritarian regimes.

Voices around Vaclav Havel, the majority of population was in a state that could possibly be called a political hibernation. Free and fair elections were only on paper, civic society or free press was nonexistent and life looked sick, grey and dull.

Despite all the real or perceived deficiencies, the Czech Republic has its place among the world's best democracies. At least according to The Economist Intelligence Unit, which placed the Czech Republic 16th. While France (31st) sadly dropped from the category of full democracies to flawed democracies, the Czech Republic scored enough points to be placed just ahead of the United States (17) and United Kingdom (19) and only seven places behind Canada (9).

Who would think this possible one generation ago, in the middle of that sickly looking old swamp called communist Czechoslovakia...and, what a nice gift for the Czech Republic's 18th birthday.

Yours
Richard Krpac

P.S. The cynics among us can't help but suspect that the Economist Intelligence Unit joined the B-day party and enjoyed Czech beer or Becherovka a little too much.☺

More at:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy_Index



Exhibit at the
Museum of
Communism,
Prague

Fast forward to 2011 and see Czech cities bustling with energy and entrepreneurship. Prague is more beautiful than ever and civic society is quickly and firmly gaining its foothold. With European Union, OECD and NATO spreading their umbrellas over Central Europe, Czechs have never been safer and more well off than now. Yet, somehow, with all those changes happening right in front of our eyes, we have no time to appreciate how much the life in our corner of the world improved over the course one

From Toronto with Love

– Czech Orphans Receive a Generous Gift

Dr. Richarda Russ is a lady with an old world charm, enviable energy and kind heart. Her Polish Orphans Charity collected \$ 5,000.00 for Czech orphans during single evening in April 2010 – the Winter Ball organized under the auspices of the Czech Consul General last year. The Ball was a huge success and our Consulate was proud to offer resources to the organizing team not only before but also after the ball.

After months of researching for the right orphanage and surprisingly complicated international bank transaction, the gift was received just before the Christmas by SOS Children Village in Chvalčov in Moravia. As stated by its director Mr. Cyril Maliňák “... after all the obstacles endured, it couldn't have been a better Christmas present ...”

Canadian money will be put in benefit of 37 children currently living in the village. Some children require special needs program or therapy that is

crucial to overcome abuse or learning disabilities. The finances will be used for example to cover fees for Art School, piano lessons and hypotherapy for girls who suffer from emotional deprivation, or a ski week for 20 children during their March break.

This year Dr. Richarda Russ and her Polish Orphans Charity is again organizing her Ball Polognia, which takes place on April 30, 2011. Richard Krpac, the Czech Consul General, has already agreed to become patron of the Ball and major part of the proceeds will again go to the Czech Republic. All Bohemians are more than welcome.

More information on www.polishorphans.com



The Bohemian Journey – Prague a Feast for the Eyes

– by Pam Davies, QMI Agency



face scrubbed -- a refurbished Prague is bursting with pride.

Shedding decades of oppression, the Czech Republic has undergone a brilliant renaissance since the fall of Communism 21 years ago. Almost frozen in time like Sleeping Beauty, its capital city has re-emerged almost unscathed from the war years, and today -- with its

This pride is evident even in the oddest of places, including a cooking school. Affiliated with the Prague Culinary Institute, chef Roman Vanek sheds light on how the heart of the Czech people -- their passions, vital culture and traditions symbolized by their food culture -- survived stagnation during the Communist years. Since regaining independence, there has been a revival of traditional cuisine.

Vanek says while it's easy to find classic recipes on the internet, it's the culinary techniques taught at the institute that are most important in this country of sauces and dumplings. And you'd miss a fun and

continued on pg. 7

The Bohemian Journey *(continued from pg. 6)*



entertaining few hours during which cooking talents are helped along by few sips of Slivovice, a Moravian plum brandy. "Here we use the lard for the flavour," chef Vaclav Fric says.

We watch, almost gagging, as classic dishes are prepared with liberal amounts of beef, pig and duck lard (our charming chef assured us duck has no cholesterol) added casually and regularly. Despite our Western low-fat mantra spinning out of

control, there is no denying it, whether it's the lard or not, traditional Czech cuisine is exceptional. Fric's signature dish, and his choice for guests, is roasted duck with red cabbage and potato dumpling. My favourite was simple and tangy Kulajda, or Lost Egg Soup. Add a Pilsner Urquell and the meal is complete.

Whenever I told people about my upcoming visit to Prague, without fail all praised its unblemished beauty, labelling it Europe's most magnificent city. Now I'm the one extolling the magnetism of this opulent, unspoiled city. Enriched by street after street of grandeur, it seems everything was built for royalty -- from apartment buildings with curved intricate balconies to ancient structures such as Prague Castle -- a magnificent, mini village begun in 870 -- to the Charles Bridge, built in 1357 for the country's most beloved king, Charles IV.

We took an evening stroll over this piece of history past its grand baroque statues spaced along its promenade, lit only by moonlight. Sensing the

essence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in this cultural capital of opera, concert halls, theatres and museums, compels you to dress in deference to its majestic splendour. But leave your high heels at home as cobblestones adorn every walking surface.

Prague's past is condensed into walkable strolls. It's an architectural rush that mixes beautifully from art nouveau, such as Lucerna Arcade, to 19th century Wenceslas Square, where anti-communist uprisings took place. Within minutes of this grand promenade of shops, cafes and restaurants, is the Powder

Tower -- the Gothic city gate, which separates New Town (just not as old as Old Town) and Old Town. Follow the crowd for a short distance and you'll see the Old Town Square's Gothic astronomical clock in action on the hour (the best view is from the top of the U Prince Hotel). The oldest part of this 600-year-old clock dates to 1410.

The grandeur never stops. Even the main train station is an art nouveau gem. I can recall very few new buildings but one that stands out is The Dancing House, a cheeky Frank Gehry creation that mimics Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.

Kitty-corner to that, you can indulge in exquisite dining with a priceless view on the Vltava River onboard the Botel Matylda. At Municipal House, another splendid example of art nouveau, we ate at its sidewalk cafe, ogling the beauty in our midst before visiting an exceptional Alphonse Mucha exhibit there. Born in 1860, the Czech artist was a passionate nationalist, who once stated: "I prefer being a picture-maker for ordinary people, rather than becoming a maker of Art for Art's Sake." There is also a Mucha Museum in Prague.



The Bohemian Journey *(continued from pg. 7)*

Our guide -- Georgina Vokrouhlikova from Prague Europe Tours -- said she didn't learn anything about renowned author and Prague native Franz Kafka when she was growing up during the Communist regime. But there is a Kafka Museum in Prague and the author is buried in the Jewish Quarter. Prague's Jewish population was once the

largest in Europe and the remarkable Old Jewish Cemetery dates back to the 15th century. Fortunately city's historic synagogues survived both wartime occupation by the Nazis -- who planned to turn them into museums -- and the Communist regime...

Courtesy of *Toronto Sun*

For more visit <http://www.torontosun.com/travel/europe/2010/11/25/16314571.html>

Czech Republic Travel Tips for February 2011



BOHEMIAN CARNIVAL

26/02/2011 - 08/03/2011- The main part of the carnival festival is a show of staged allegories and parades of carnival masks through the centre of Prague. Bohemian Carnevale ties into the historic stage allegory festivals held in the Czech lands, whose tradition goes back to Medieval times.

www.carnevale.cz

OLOMOUC BAROQUE: CREATIVE CULTURAL YEARS 1620–1780

02/12/2010 – 27/03/2011 - This is a prestigious exhibition in Olomouc whose goal is to present the history, particularly the creative culture, of the town and region of Olomouc during the Baroque period.

The exhibition will be topped off by a rich programme – narrated tours, workshops, concerts, films, meetings, and lectures. www.olmuart.cz

PRAGUE OUTING RESTAURANTS

– 22/09/2010 – 22/05/2011

The Museum of the Capital City of Prague presents a collection of photographs, postcards, films, and preserved items from restaurants and favourite day trips of the inhabitants of Prague. People took day trips to e.g. the Vltava Islands, to Stromovka to the „Šlechtovka“, took a steamboat to Štechovice, or hiked to the Radio restaurant. www.muzeumprahy.cz



For more visit www.czechtourism.com or www.kudyznudy.cz