

# the Bohemian

state of mind



CONSULATE GENERAL  
of the Czech Republic

monthly newsletter for Bohemians by birth and bohemians at heart



March 2011

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## Events Calendar

**March 6@2:30 pm**  
**Sokol Toronto**  
**Annual meeting**  
St. Wenceslaus Church  
Info: 905-838-2541

**March 6@4:30 pm**  
**T.G. Masaryk**  
**Birthday**  
**Anniversary**  
St. Wenceslaus Church  
Info: 416-439-4354

**March 6@5:30 pm**  
**Milan Richter –**  
**Portrait**  
Mistery Dinner Theatre  
2026 Yonge Street, Toronto

**March 6@8:00 pm**  
**Inside Hana's**  
**Suitcase**  
CBC TV station  
www.cbc.ca

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## Dear Bohemians

– by Consul General Richard Krpac

*... not the end, not the end, just remember, that death is not the end...* For many years I have not heard that song. I almost completely forgot it ever existed. But then, suddenly, a couple of weeks ago, the Nick Cave rendition of an old Bob Dylan song started to hum in my head. It was on a gloomy, snowy Sunday

in the middle of February, and I received a phone call with bad, really bad news. Only three days later the song became even louder, after I had learned that yet another good friend has left this world.

But then, slowly but persistently, a completely different song started to take over. Satchmo, the jazz genius from New Orleans,

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## The Google Art Project

Google Maps gave us a birds-eye view of our streets and homes from the high above. Google Street View went even further and gave us pedestrian like view of our homes. But Google did not stop at the front doors, at least not at the front doors of the world's most acclaimed museums and galleries, as they have recently launched the Google Art Project.

Thanks to Google's desire to transfer our world on PC screen, you can now see every detail of Rembrandt, Goya, Bosh, Rodin or

Van Gogh's best paintings and sculptures by visiting the Tate Gallery in London, Hermitage in St. Petersburg, Palace of Versailles, The Museum of Modern Art in New York or Uffizi Gallery in Florence without leaving the sofa in your living room.

Seventeen of the most famous world museums and galleries were selected to

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## Events Calendar cont'd

### March 11@8:00 pm Vitezslava Kapralova Partita for Piano and Strings & Art by Pavla Quinn

Glenn Gould Studio  
250 Front St. W., Toronto  
www.sinfoniatoronto.com

### March 12, 3–6 pm Blanka Rohn – Life Celebration

St. Wenceslaus Church  
496 Gladstone Ave, Toronto

### March 12@6:00 pm Venison Feast

Restaurant Cascada  
755 Queensway E., Mississauga  
Info: 905-812-5503

### March 27@2:30 pm The Devil and Kate – Canadian Première

St. Lawrence Centre  
for the Arts  
www.stlc.com

### March 27@5:00 pm Peter Stoll – Clarinet

St. Wenceslaus Church  
www.nocturnesinthecity.com

## Dear Bohemians (continued from pg. 1)

came with his *What a Wonderful World*. A sentimental song, that, if sung by anybody else, would taste like sweet candy covered with honey. But Satchmo, a child of the streets, who suffered more than his share in a racially divided world, had deep scars made by life on his soul and in his heart. You need those scars for the words “and I think to myself, what a Wonderful World” to come out of your mouth and not sound ridiculous – as there is no doubt the world *is* wonderful. But it is definitely not candy covered in honey. Sweet and full of hope, yes – on one side – but definitely bitter and mixed with sorrow on the other, exactly as Louis Armstrong (Satchmo) sings about it.

There are people who make this world much better, sometimes even wonderful. They usually keep the bitter parts to themselves and give all they can to us. Satchmo is one of them. Pavel and Blanka are the other two. This issue of *the Bohemian State of Mind* is humbly dedicated to their memory.

Yours  
Richard Krpac



Pavel Kral, born on February 18, 1937, died on February 6, 2011.

Sent for ten years to a communist jail as a twenty year old. Came out with a big smile on his face, describing the whole experience as the real university of his life, with the

Louis Armstrong: *What a Wonderful World*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SzJY96m3lkg>

Nick Cave & Kylie Minogue: *The Death is not the End*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Am1kJM823Vk&feature=fvsv>

best teachers - the strong, the wise and the courageous who were locked-up with him.

Immigrated to Canada in 1980 and for the next thirty years he kept on giving to his audience - behind the helm and on the stage of the New Czech Theatre.

Blanka Rohn, born on September 15, 1930, died on February 8, 2011.

Blanka embodied the pre-war Czechoslovakia of Masaryk in many aspects – manners and character of time long gone, classy, yet spontaneous and happy, hard-working and tough as nails. With her mantra “you can tell people the harshest truths, but you should do it with a smile and class”, she did not shy away from standing up against injustice anywhere and against anybody as she worked tirelessly for Bohemians in Canada for more than fifty years.



## Consular Window Four brave ones:

Josef Hynek, Josef Svaton, Karel Wolfe and Frantisek Tesar

I have never been sure to what extent I could see myself as the master of my destiny, and to what extent I should see my life as the result of forces mostly beyond my control (parents, appearance, talents, health). Although everything we do is influenced by circumstances outside ourselves, there are decisions, which are markedly an expression of our most essential "I". For example, to join an army during the war. In our narrowing circles I know only very few, who made that decision. Three of them - Josef Hynek, Josef Svaton and Karel Wolfe received from the hands of the Czech Consul General in Toronto a decoration, the Cross for Merit of the Minister of Defence, III. Class. They are a splendid group of last Mohicans.

Josef Svaton served for several years in the Army right after graduation from the Military Academy. After the country was occupied by the Germans, he joined the newly formed Czechoslovak army in France, and later in England. He bravely participated – as a battalion commander – in the fighting around Dunkerque and other places. He married Elsie, an Englishwoman who served in the naval service for women and took her to his homeland. But, after communist regime took over and life of those fighting with western powers became difficult, Josef and Elsie along with their young daughter Anna left for England and subsequently for Canada.

The family soon bought a farm and Josef worked for de Havilland company and later as a statistician



for the Ministry of Forests and Farms. In the 1990s he was promoted to the rank of colonel, ret of the Czech Army. When asked how they managed to enjoy such a wonderful relationship even after seventy years of marriage, Mrs. Svaton replied: "We promised it not only to ourselves, but also to God."

Josef Hynek volunteered to help defend his country in 1938. After assignments with an antiaircraft unit in Prague, Josefov, Uzhorod and Olomouc and subsequent occupation of his country he followed his family to Canada.

In 1941 he was not allowed to join the Czechoslovak army in Great Britain for being married with children. Therefore he spent the war as an instructor of thousands of Canadians in the training stations. In 1999 he was, by the order of the Czech minister of defense, promoted to the rank of colonel, ret.

In later years, he wrote a splendid one-sentence history of the First World War Czechoslovak legions: "It is worthwhile to note, that the Czechoslovak armies of the First World War, composed of the Czechs, who for 300 years lived under the rule of the Habsburg dynasty and the Slovaks, who for 1,000 years have been under the heel of the Hungarian Lords, were able to organize, outside their own country, an army, which marched across the Russian Empire, sailed the Pacific, the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans, the East China and Mediterranean seas, and moved right across the U.S.A. and Canada – a feat no other

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## Consular Window *(continued from pg. 3)*

army of any other nation has ever accomplished.”

The youngest of the decorated men is Karel Wolfe, who joined the Czechoslovak army in France and later in England, where he served, for a time, in a unit guarding President Benes. He served in the 1st Czechoslovak armoured division, going all the way from Dunkerque to Pilsen. In the early 1950 he fled to Canada. After 1990 Karel Wolfe was promoted to the rank of colonel, ret., decorated by



Karel Wolfe with Consul General Richard Krpac

Czechoslovak War Cross (Cs. valecny kriz) and a medal for bravery (Medaile za chrabrost).

And now a few words about the non-decorated (at this occasion) František Tesar. This is the way, Frantisek described his military career, which began with a course for parachutists: “They went jumping, first from an air baloon and then from an airplane.

It all ended well, no injuries, only one man lost his watch, but we eventually found it. We were sent to France, where we kept in check the Germans in the occupied Dunkerque.” Frantisek Tesar is a down-to-earth man – and this is what he says about his medals: “I have about six of them, but there are not the big medals, such as the War Cross and medals of that nature.”

On October 28, 2010, (it was a wet and cold day) a few weeks before his 96th birthday, Frantisek stood more than an hour at attention and practically without a movement (together with a man I consider the greatest Sokol of his generation, Jan Waldauf) in front of the Ontario Parliament, at the occasion of hoisting the Czech flag to honour Czech Independence Day. And just prior to Christmas, he treated his visitors to wonderful Christmas cookies which he had personally baked.

—*Courtesy of Josef Cermak*



## The Google Art Project *(continued from pg. 1)*

participate in the Google Art Project. Among them is the Museum Kampa in Prague which has a collection of European Modern Art by such artists as Frantisek Kupka and Otto Gutfreund.

Google’s “Street View” technology enables you to move around the museum’s galleries, allows you to select works of art that interest you, navigate through interactive floor plans and learn more about the museum, discover featured artworks at high resolu-

tion and use the custom viewer to zoom into paintings. Expanding the info panel allows you to read more about an artwork, find more works by that artist and watch related YouTube video. “Create the Artwork Collection” feature allows you to save specific views of any of the 1,000 + works of art and build your own personalised collection. Comments can be added to each painting and the whole collection can then be shared with friends and family.

For more info, visit: <http://www.googleartproject.com/> and <http://www.museumkampa.cz/>

## The Best Hotel on the Planet is in Prague



same time, there is always room to get even better in the future.”

Golden Well is only a small hotel in the Lesser Town in Prague which is not a part of any big hotel chains. There are only twelve rooms and most clients stay there on special occasions such as weddings or engagements.

Guests appreciate the location of the hotel that is directly next to the Prague Castle walls. As we learned from Marcus Bernardini, a Toronto physician who has just returned from Prague. “We loved staying at The Golden Well. The proximity of the Prague Castle and exceptional service made us feel like true guests of the Czech king.”

Guests also like the quality of service provided by the local personnel who, among other things, offer a ‘pillow menu’. Guests can choose from seven different kinds of pillows and also decide upon the way their bed will be made. Another treat provided by the hotel’s staff is special desserts made by the chef, which are served after dinner.

As Petra Daliborova says, “It shows that a good idea and good personalized service can compete with large chain hotels.”

The users of TripAdvisor\* web server chose Prague’s hotel Golden Well (U Zlate studne) as the best luxury hotel in the world.

“We are very, very happy about this award”, says Petra Daliborova, the PR Manager of Golden Well Hotel, “at the

The hotel, which received the award as the best luxury hotel in the world last year in the same survey, also has a rich history dating back to the 16th century. Rooms are decorated in the Richelieu style. Prices range from 254 to 700 euro a night.

Guests also praise the meals served there. The restaurant Golden Well Terrace even appeared in second place in the restaurant category of the TripAdvisor survey. Surprisingly, no US hotel made it into the top hotels. While Europe has six hotels in the top ten, Africa, the Caribbean, South America and Asia have only one each.

*\*TripAdvisor is the world’s largest travel community where you can get real information, advice, and opinions from millions of travelers to plan and take your perfect trip. TripAdvisor-branded sites alone make up the largest travel community in the world, with more than 40 million unique monthly visitors, 20 million members, and over 40 million reviews and opinions*



<http://www.tourism-review.com/prague-offers-the-best-hotel-on-the-planet-news2581>

## Event Highlight

### The Devil and Kate

Kate Moss is well-known in the modeling industry for many things beside her obvious beauty – mostly for arrogant behaviour and scornful attitude – especially towards young lads, who are not good enough for her to dance with...

But today we do not want to spread more rumours about Kate Moss. We want to talk about the Kate created by Antonin Dvorak.

In comparison to Kate Moss, Dvorak's Kate is a sweet little girl in a red riding hood... or is she(?) ...let's try that again:

Dvorak's Kate is known in her village for many things beside her obvious beauty - mostly for arrogant behaviour and scornful attitude towards young lads, who are not good enough for her to dance



with....she would rather dance with the devil himself. To her calling, the devil – Marbuel- shows up...

The Canadian première will take place on March 27th 2011 at 2:30 pm at the Lawrence Centre for the Arts. Presented by Opera in Concert, featuring Marion Newman as Kate and Giles Tomkins as Marbuel.

[www.operainconcert.com](http://www.operainconcert.com) or [www.stlc.com](http://www.stlc.com)

## Antonin Kubalek (1935 - 2011)



Antonin Kubalek, the most gifted Czech pianist of his generation, died on January 19, 2011

He left Czechoslovakia for Canada in 1968. Shortly after his arrival he established himself as a soloist with the Toronto Symphony and taught at The Royal Conservatory Music. He was regularly featured on CBC radio. Glenn Gould heard Kubalek on CBC Radio and was so impressed with his talent, that he produced Kubalek's performance of *The Second Piano Sonata* by Erich Wolfgang Korngold. Executive Director of The Glenn Gould Foundation Brian Levine much later noted that "this was the only time Gould ever did this for another pianist."

As one of the finest interpreters of the music of Johannes Brahms and Robert Schumann, Kubalek

also had an affinity for the music of his homeland, especially the composers Antonin Dvorak, Josef Suk, Bedrich Smetana and Leos Janacek. With playing that has become synonymous with "perfection of style, precision and beauty of sound and interpretation" he belonged among the most prominent pianists in North America.

The Bohemian community in Canada is sadly stripped of yet another incredible musical talent. In recent years, three other talents have passed away: opera singer and actor Jan Rubes, composer Oskar Morawetz and a bohemian, not by birth but in heart, Canadian Opera Company Artistic and General Director Richard Bradshaw.

Antonin Kubalek is survived by his second wife, Patricia, and daughter, Karolina, who is pursuing piano studies in Prague. A musical memorial service will likely be organized in the spring.

Sources: The Canadian Encyclopedia "The Glenn Gould Monthly": January 2009, The Glenn Gould Foundation  
<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=U1ARTU0001891>

## Info Goulash

### BRONZE MEDAL FOR TOMAS KRAUS IN COLLINGWOOD

Tomas Kraus, the two-time ski cross world champion and four-time World Cup winner took bronze in the 2011 World Cup race held at Blue Mountain Ski Resort, two hours north of Toronto. Ski cross is not a sport for softies, as Tomas proves in this You Tube video:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVo79D\\_lppk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVo79D_lppk)

### CZECHS CLOSE SECOND IN ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

The world drank the equivalent of 6.1 litres of pure alcohol per person in 2005, according to a report from the World Health Organisation published on February 11th. The biggest boozers are mostly found in Europe and in the former Soviet states. Moldovans are the most bibulous, getting through 18.2 litres each, nearly 2 litres more than the Czechs in second place. More info at:

[http://www.economist.com/blogs/daily-chart/2011/02/daily\\_chart\\_global\\_alcohol\\_consumption?page=4&fsrc=scn%2Ffb%2Fwl%2Fmc%2Fdrinkinghabits](http://www.economist.com/blogs/daily-chart/2011/02/daily_chart_global_alcohol_consumption?page=4&fsrc=scn%2Ffb%2Fwl%2Fmc%2Fdrinkinghabits)

### MILOS BEER ON DRAFT IN TORONTO

Prague Restaurant at Masaryktown has added MILOS beer to its selection of drafts. MILOS beer is an authentic Czech beer recognized for its delicious and unique taste of traditionally produced Czech pilsner type beer. More info at:

[www.milosbeer.com](http://www.milosbeer.com)

### TOMAS KABERLE'S TIME AS A TORONTO MAPLE LEAF HAS COME TO AN END

After 12 seasons in blue and white, the Maple Leafs have traded the veteran defenceman to the Boston Bruins in exchange for prospect centre Joe Colborne,

the Bruins' first-round pick in 2011 and a conditional second-round draft pick in 2012. Kaberle signed off on the deal by waiving his no-trade clause. Kaberle, 32, has been a mainstay on the Leafs' blue line for the past decade and is the second-highest scoring defenceman in team history behind Borje Salming - with 83 goals and 437 assists in 878 games. Kaberle led the Leafs in assists this season with 35 and he is third in blocked shots with 100.

<http://www.tsn.ca/nhl/story/?id=354402>



### CZECHS FURTHEST FROM POVERTY AMONG THE EU NATIONS

According to the German Statistical Office, the Czech Republic has the lowest proportion of people at risk-of-poverty in the entire European Union with 8.6 percent of the population affected. In the whole EU it is 16.3 percent and for example in Germany, 15.5 percent of the population. The worst situation is in Latvia, where 25 percent of the population is living in poverty. Latvians are followed by Romanians, Bulgarians, Lithuanians and Estonians, and from the original EU member countries, by the Greeks and the Spaniards, where poverty affects approximately one fifth of the population. According to EU Statistics, the poverty level is defined as earning 60 percent of average net income. It is in the Czech € 4,377 which represents 106 109 crowns.

[http://www.lidovky.cz/statistika-v-cesku-je-nejmene-chudych-z-eu-fg8-/ln\\_noviny.asp?c=A110127\\_000074\\_ln\\_noviny\\_sko&klic=241020&mes=110127\\_0](http://www.lidovky.cz/statistika-v-cesku-je-nejmene-chudych-z-eu-fg8-/ln_noviny.asp?c=A110127_000074_ln_noviny_sko&klic=241020&mes=110127_0)

## The Bohemian Journey

— Rafting through European History

— By Alan Parker, QMI Agency

ROZMBERK, Czech Republic — As our motley crew wrestled one of Petr Putzer's inflatable rafts down the rocky river bank at Vyssi Brod, the Vltava River stretched before us, winding northward through 400 km and thousands of years of Bohemian enchantment.

Rising in the dark mountains of the Bohemian Forest — the Sumava — behind us, the river would take us — if we let it — through the entire Kingdom of Bohemia past the fairytale castle seat of the Rozmberk dynasty, through the medieval, UNESCO-protected city of Cesky Krumlov (which later became their capital) and the more modern city of Ceske Budejovice (home of the real Budweiser beer), under the magnificence of Prague's Charles Bridge and finally deliver us into the conjoined might of the River Elbe 35 km north of Prague.

But we weren't going that far. Our destination was Rozmberk nad Vltavou, only 10 km away yet still a three-hour adventure of white water, blissful Bohemian countryside and, rounding the final bend of our journey, a stunning view of Rozmberk Castle — a gothic fortress and Renaissance palace with baroque architectural stylings and a town dating to the 13th century at its feet.

But let's start at the beginning. The very name Bohemia resonates with romance and excitement, adventure and mystery. And so it should: Bohemia is the very heart of central Europe, a fertile crucible of rolling landscapes and majestic medieval towns encircled by chains of protective mountains. But the mountains have never stopped hordes of invaders — from Huns and Habsburgs to Nazis and Soviets — rolling in to occupy the rich Bohemian basin.

Because of the central role (both culturally and

militarily) Bohemia has played in much of Europe's history, it is not surprising that Bohemia is a land of castles — with more castles than any other

country in Europe by almost every measuring stick. These range from imposing and impregnable mountain fortresses to grand chateaux and fanciful Baroque palaces to Prague Castle, the magnificent seat of Czech government looking down in all its Holy Roman Empire majesty on the old town of Praha (Prague) across the Vltava River.

The ancient Romans were the ones who dubbed the region Boiohaemum — land of the Boii, a Celtic tribe inhabiting the area when the Roman legions marched in. So the whole romantic notion of "Bohemia" — from the Bohemian artists of 19th-century Paris to Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody — is as much a mythical creation as Brigadoon. And yet ... and yet ... Bohemia does exist. And when you are there, paddling down the Vltava past 13th-century monasteries and farms that have been cultivated for a millennium under the shadow of the Sumava forests, you know you are in Bohemia and nowhere else in the world.

I was part of a group of two dozen travellers who entered the waters of the Vltava in a small flotilla of inflatable six-person rafts on an early-summer morning. After about an hour and a half on the river, our small armada pulled into the quiet, wooded riverbank where, lo and behold, a rough but very welcome rustic cafe awaited us with cold bottles of



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## Steamwhistle vs. Creemore

North America's beer market does not compare favorably to the one in the Czech Republic. To an orthodox European beer aficionado it seems that aggressive marketing is behind the driving wheel in the US and Canadian markets, while quality of the beer takes a back seat. Kudos to the marketing teams that succeed in persuading the target audience to drink gallons of beer by making self declarations of royal status, inventing nonsensical categories such as "drinkability" or adding unnecessary perks such as beer stored in a "cold-activated can".

Thankfully, in every desert there is an oasis and there are two lush oases in Southern Ontario – micro-breweries Steam Whistle and Creemore. Both of them have an interesting Czech connection that will



be revealed in the next issue of *The Bohemian State of Mind*.

For now we would like to hear from you, dear Bohemians. In your opinion, which beer is the real king of the beers? And, by the way, how do you like Creemore and Steam Whistle? Let us know by replying to [toronto@embassy.mzv.cz](mailto:toronto@embassy.mzv.cz)

## The Bohemian Journey *(continued from pg. 8)*

Czech beer and snacks to take the edge off late morning hunger. Sipping a sharp, crisp lager and stretching cramped legs while basking in early summer sun on a bucolic Bohemian riverbank has to be one of the most satisfying experiences in the world.

Then it was back on the river for the second half of our journey — and an incredible, enchanting ending to the raft trip. As we rounded the last bend in the Vltava before our destination of Rozmberk nad Vltavou, the rolling, forested hills on our right rose more steeply from the river. And there it was — the castle of the lords of Rozmberk, rulers of much of South Bohemia for 10 generations.

Below the castle and across the river is the village of Rozmberk Nad Vltavou, unbelievably quaint, ancient and untouched by tourist mobs. There are several small restaurants and pensions if you choose to stay the night, but one place you cannot miss is an old stone and wood building beside the river —

Hotel U Martina.

At long wooden tables on the sunny patio or in the vaulted dining rooms, you will feast with locals and fellow travellers on the finest meats and vegetables, prepared and served in traditional fashion, that South Bohemia has to offer. You can't go wrong with the roast pork, dumplings and sauerkraut. It's the quintessential Bohemian country inn, an experience that cannot be missed.

And after the perfect raft ride and luncheon feast, the cold, golden Czech beer flows long and leisurely through a Bohemian summer afternoon like the Vltava flows through the romance and beauty of the Bohemian countryside.

Courtesy of Toronto Sun

For more visit

<http://www.torontosun.com/travel/europe/2010/05/28/14173876.html>

## Czech Republic Travel Tips

for March 2011



### ANCIENT CZECH LEGENDS

05/10/2010 - 06/07/2011 - The National Museum has prepared an exhibition from the oldest period of Czech legends. Figures from old

myths come to life right in front of the visitor's eyes. It starts with the great forefather Cech and ends with Hostivit, the legendary father of Borivoj, the first historically documented Premyslid.

[www.nm.cz](http://www.nm.cz)

### THE ART AND CRAFT OF THE WATCHMAKER

– PRAGUE'S ASTRONOMICAL CLOCK CELEBRATES 600!

05/02/2011 - 29/03/2011 - The largest exhibition devoted to the watchmaker's craft development in the Czech Republic and Europe. Unique in World's exhibition is the culmination of the six hundredth anniversary celebration of Prague's Astronomical clock. Come see and admire the famous trademarks such as IWC, Girard-Perregaux, Zenith, Officine Panerai, Armin Strom and far-out TAG Heuer.

[www.600letorloje.cz](http://www.600letorloje.cz)



### MORAVIAN SILESIA BORDERLANDS AT THE TIME OF JOHN OF LUXEMBURG

15/12/2010 - 01/04/2011 - Exhibition devoted to the Luxembourgs takes place in the Ostrava Museum and features the early 14th century with a special emphasis on John of Luxembourg.

[www.janlucemburskyostrava.cz](http://www.janlucemburskyostrava.cz)



### THE ICE-AGE GIANTS

05/03/2011 - 30/06/2011 - The exhibition of prehistoric animals from Ice Age includes life-size models of the animals. You can see them in the Prague exhibition area Vtstaviste, in the Holesovice district.

[www.giganti.cz](http://www.giganti.cz)

For more visit [www.czechtourism.com](http://www.czechtourism.com) or [www.kudyznudy.cz](http://www.kudyznudy.cz)

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