TOUR CODE

XGC

ADVENTURESABROAD

BOHEMIA & MORAVIA RAMBLER

A Walking Tour from Vienna to Prague

14 days

Updated 06/01/2013

Day 1 *Arrival in Vienna*

Today we arrive in Vienna, Austria, and transfer to our modest, charming, central hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure to catch the spirit of the "City of the Waltz".

Overnight in Vienna. Meal plan: Dinner, if required.

Day 2 *Vienna: City Tour*

Walking about downtown Vienna is an absolute pleasure. The Innere Stadt, in particular, is best explored on foot. Our morning walk takes us through some of the most well-trodden tourist routes in Vienna. We will take local transport to the Staatsoper, the premiere opera and classical music venue in Vienna, and possibly the world. From here we walk, heading north on Kartner Strasse, a pedestrian-only walkway of shops, trees, cafes and buildings of historical and cultural interest. Instantly recognizable along this walk is the Gothic, glorious Stephansdom (St Stephen's Cathedral). This is the geographical and emotional heart of the city. Our stroll down Graben St. takes us past Neo-Classical architectural masterpieces; then we turn onto Kohlmarket and head to Michaelerplatz and its array of architectural sites. We visit the Hofburg chambers, thus getting a view of this enormous Imperial Palace from both inside and outside. Today our provided meal is lunch, to give everyone the opportunity to enjoy their evening at leisure, perhaps to attend one of the many beautiful concert venues, or even take in an opera.

After lunch together, we will take the public transport to view a stunning example of modern architecture created by the famous Viennese artist Hundertwasser, the KunstHausWien (Art House Vienna). We will finish off at the Stadtpark (City Park), which opened in 1862. Many of Vienna‘s great composers are honoured with statues in the park and it is a great place to stroll or relax.

Overnight in Vienna. Meal plan: Breakfast and lunch.

Day 3 *Vienna, Austria - Lednice-Valtice, Czech Republic & The Greenway Corridor*

Vienna was the showpiece of the all-conquering Habsburg dynasty, which controlled much of Europe for over 600 years. Despite the ravages of time, its cultural gems endure: monumental edifices line the city centre, world-class museums burst with historical and artistic treasures, and internationally established orchestras perform in lavish concert halls.This morning we take a walk through the manicured gardens of the Schonbrunn Palace and enjoy the view from the Gloriet overlook. This enormous Baroque palace was built to accommodate Empress Maria Theresia and her large family. Today, the park and its enclosed historic Zoological garden are enjoyed by joggers, walkers and families with children.Early afternoon we will board our van and start off towards the Czech border. In less than two hours we will arrive in Valtice, Czech Republic and check into our hotel. There will be enough time to start our exploration of this UNESCO World Heritage site by a warm-up walk followed by a hearty dinner in a local traditional restaurant.Total walking: 8 km / 5 miles.

Overnight in Valtice. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 4 *Valtice - Lednice Area*

Once the domain of the Liechtenstein Princes, this 200 sq. km designed landscape is among the largest in Europe. It was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996 for its unique composition of romantic parks complemented by two chateaux and other architectural monuments.

Our day will start with a tour of the Baroque Valtice chateau, the former main family seat of the Liechtensteins. From there we will walk all the way to Lednice through woods and vineyards, past ponds, and horse farms. A visit to the Tudor Gothic Lednice chateau, its unique greenhouse and surrounding park will wrap up our walking part of the day.

Total walking: 15 km / 9.4 miles

Overnight in Valtice. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 5 *Pavlov - Mikulov - Vranov nad Dyji*

After checking-out of our hotel we will take the van to the foot of the Palava Hills and start our day's hike in the charming wine-making village of Pavlov. The rolling landscape, reminiscent of Italy in the limestone cliffs of the Palava Biosphere Reserve, is famous for its rare steppe flora.

We will hike the entire length of the reserve and follow an instructional trail past two ruined castles before ending up in the town of Mikulov, a South Moravian jewel with a rich Christian and Jewish history. In late afternoon we will transfer by van to Vranov nad Dyji.

Total walking: 15 km / 9 miles

Overnight in Vranov nad Dyji. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 6 *Vranov nad Dyji - Cizov - Hardegg - Slavonice/Telc*

After a hearty breakfast and checking-out you can check out the breath-taking view of the Vranov castle from the river bank. That's where we will walk up to visit the beautifully restored interior chambers. Then we will transfer by van to a village of Cizov located within the National Park Podyji that forms the border between Czech Republic and Austria. Where there used to be the Iron Curtain (and we will see the last remnant of it), today there is a popular foot path and a border crossing to get us to Hardegg, a little Austrian town with a big castle. After returning to Cizov we will continue to Telc and get settled for the next two nights in our charming hotel.

Total walking: 15 km / 9 miles

Overnight in Telc or Slavonice. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 7 *Telc Area*

You will need all of this day's morning to really take in Telc. Its historical core surrounded by ponds from all sides is another World Heritage Site protected by UNESCO. We will visit the Renaissance chateau; linger on the square and

enjoy this beautiful medieval space. You can explore the many little shops and cafes in the arcades or walk round the ponds.

After lunch we will take a half-day walk in the vicinity of Telc: there are many options of well-marked trails through beautiful countryside where our destination can be a ruined castle, a pilgrimage church or an interesting instructional trail.

Total walking: 10 km / 6 miles

Overnight in Telc or Slavonice. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 8 *Telc / Slavonice - Landstejn - Jindrichuv Hradec*

Leaving Telc behind we will take a ride south towards Austria to a marvellous Renaissance border town of Slavonice which can rival Telc in beauty but has been a well kept secret so far. The nearby castle of Landstejn will be there for us to explore before we start our walk through a spruce forest to Nova Bystrice. There we will board the local curiosity - a little narrow-gauge train that will take us to Jindrichuv Hradec.

Total walking: 15 km / 9 miles

Overnight in Jindrichuv Hradec. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 9 *Jindrichuv Hradec - Trebon - Cesky Krumlov*

We will start our day touring the castle and old town of Jindrichuv Hradec and then continue through an idyllic countryside shaped over centuries by draining of the marshlands and digging hundreds of ponds. The walled town of Trebon that once belonged to the wealthy Rozmberk family will be our lunch stopover and the trail-head of our walk around the pond Svet, World in English. The beautifully designed instructional trail will wind back to Trebon so we can stop at the local Regent brewery and taste its excellent beverage.

In late afternoon we will arrive in Cesky Krumlov, undoubtedly the second most popular place to visit after Prague.

Total walking: 14 km / 9 miles

Overnight in Cesky Krumlov. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 10 *Cesky Krumlov*

Cesky Krumlov, the jewel of South Bohemia, was listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO for the unparalleled ensemble of Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque sites, all tucked in inside two meanders of the Vltava River. The second largest castle complex in the country contains the oldest and best preserved Baroque theatre in Europe; the Egon Schiele Art Center is another excellent feast for the eye. You can take a day off to properly savor this historical town full of amazing houses, shops, cafes and restaurants, and soak in the special medieval atmosphere.

Optional walk to Rozmberk Castle along the Vltava River. (Total walking: 12 km / 7.5 miles)

Overnight in Cesky Krumlov. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 11 *Cesky Krumlov - Prague*

In the late morning hours we will have to leave and start on our way. Before we get to Prague though, we will stop at the foot of the Klet Mountain, take a chair-lift (or hike) up to see the 360 degree sweeping view from the top of a historical tower. We will hike down through a lovely beech forest. Making our way north we will make a short stop at a beautifully preserved village of Holasovice, another UNESCO site listed for its unique folk architecture.

Evening arrival in Prague. Prague lies on the seven hills flanking the banks of the Vltava River with the most outstanding views being from Prague Castle. Sometimes it is called Prague the Golden, sometimes Prague the City of 100 Spires. It is compared with Florence and Rome in its beauty. Thomas Mann said it was one of the world's most magical cities; Goethe called it the prettiest gem in the stone crown of the world. Virtually untouched by war, its architecture is Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo, Neoclassical, Empire and Art Nouveau.

Total walking: 10 km / 6 miles

Overnight in Prague. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 12 *Prague: Prague Castle & Old Town*

Our morning sightseeing tour of Prague travels through the city centre to Prague Castle. We begin our WALKING tour near Pohorelec Square before the Cernin Palace. As we head towards the castle we will pass the following: Strahov Monastery, the Loreta, the Cappucin Monastery, and the Archbishop's Palace. Before entering the castle, we will pause by the wall for a city panorama and orientation before our 2-hour visit of the castle.

We enter into first courtyard with its famous fountain and walk over to the Chapel of the Holy Cross. We continue to the St. Vitus Cathedral and visit the choir and crypt before heading to the third courtyard. Here we enter the Old Palace from St. George Square and then continue toward the Golden Lane (Kafka's House) where we pause for a break and refreshment, and then carry on the Old Castle Steps with photo stops along the way.

We will stop at Nikolas Church before crossing the ancient Charles Bridge (Karluv Most), an artistic masterpiece famous for its vendors and artists. For over four hundred years, this work of art, built by King Charles IV in 1357, was the only link between the two halves of Prague. We admire the many sculptures as we walk across. We finish the formal part of our tour in the Old Town, an excellent spot for lunch. The afternoon is free to further explore this amazing city.

Overnight in Prague. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 13 *Prague: Old Jewish Quarter & Wenceslas Square*

Our WALKING tour today takes us to the Old Jewish Quarter and the old Town Square with its famous town bell and astronomical clock.

The Old Jewish Cemetery is an incredible sight. The second oldest in Europe, it was established in the 15th century. Burials took place from 1439 to 1787. Today there are 12,000 tombstones jammed together, leaning one on another, every one at a different angle and size, the whole creating a graphic and surreal image. We also visit the museum/memorial and the Klaus Synagogue with a permanent exhibition called "Jewish Customs and Traditions" highlighting the significance of the synagogue and Jewish festivals.

We continue to the Old Town Square. The 15th century designer of the astronomical clock located here was master

clockmaker Hanus of Ruze. According to legend, he was blinded by Prague's town councilors for fear that he would make another like it for another town; so magnificent and applauded was his creation. One day toward the end of his life, he asked a friend to lead him to his great creation. As the figure of Death tolled the hour, Hanus thrust his hand into the clock's apparatus; the clock stopped, and it was centuries before a craftsman could be found who was skilled enough to make it work. In World War II, the clock is said to have stopped again after the Nazi murder of hundreds of citizens of Prague.

We finish our walking tour at Wenceslas Square in time for lunch (your own account). The balance of the day is at leisure. Prague is famous for its concert halls: The Municipal House, Rudolfinium, Mozart Theatre, National Theatre, The State Theatre -- all of them close to the center of the city with performances almost every night. Your Tour Leader can help organize optional evening activities.

Overnight in Prague. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 14 *Departure*

Departure from Prague.

STASTNU CESTU! Meal plan: Breakfast.