

BUDDY SYSTEM



UNIVERZITA HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ

April 2007

VISIT OF HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ

Brown line / stands (historic centre of the city)

The tour starts at the Information Centre on Velké Square, follows to the staircase on Kozinka, past former brewery back to the square and then past the baroque Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary to the renowned Gočár's Staircase. From Malé Square the tour continues past Liska's Evangelical Church to Žižka's Gardens and through the park back to Klicpera's Theatre. The lanes of the old town will lead you to the City Music Hall, former Bishop's seminary with the Chapel of St. John of Nepomuk. From here the Zielger Street will take you to Svatojánské Square where the tour ends.

1. White Tower

The renaissance bell tower, completed in 1589, used to serve as the city's fire tower and watchtower. Its name is related to the material used - white stone.

The Augustin bell in the tower is the second biggest bell in Bohemia only after the Zikmund bell in Prague. It was cast already in 1509 by Ondřej Žáček, a bell founder from Hradec Králové and before it was installed in the bell tower, it had been hanged on a wooden stand at St. Kliment's Church near the foundations of the tower. It weighs ten tonnes and has more than two meters in diameter. On special occasions and fairs, more than eight men had to ring the bell.



The original astronomical clock by clockmaker Vavřinec from 1591 was replaced by Josef Božek's device by from 1829. The modern electrical device held on to the unusual system of timekeeping where the longer minute hand shows hours and shorter hour hand minutes. The tower is 71.5 metres high.

2. Cathedral of the Holy Spirit

The gothic brick building of the Church of the Holy Spirit ranks among the major historic sights of the town. It was established by Queen Eliška Rejčka in 1307. In 1424, Jan Žižka of Trocnov, major military leader of the Hussite movement, was temporarily buried here. When the diocese was established in 1664, the church became a cathedral. Between 1864 and 1874 the church got its neogothic appearance. The towers were renovated in 1901.



The cathedral is fifty-six meters long and thirty-three meters high. On the central bolt of the organ loft there is the oldest depiction of the city's coat of arms from 1463. A late gothic triptych from 1494 is placed on the neogothic altar. The tin baptismal font from 1406 is also of great value. The relief of four Evangelists on the sand stone pulpit is an early work of a renowned Czech sculptor J. V. Myslbek.

3. Marian Plague Column

The dominant landmark of Velké Square is the nearly twenty meters high baroque Marian column, which was built in remembrance of that fact that the city and its population was spared from the plague epidemic in 1716. The column was probably erected by the architect and sculptor G. B. Bulla and its origin dates back to 1717.

The sandstone column is topped with a statue of the Virgin Mary. On the pedestal there are sculptures of St. Anne, St. Ivan, St. Charles Borromeo and St. John of Nepomuk, St. Wenceslaus, St. Joseph, St. Sebastian and St. Lawrence. In the two niches there are sculptures of St. John of Nepomuk and St. Rosalia. For the first time, the new coat of arms of Hradec Králové was depicted here. It is a lion carrying letter G (Gradec). On the pedestal, there is also a relief of St. Francis Xavier and St. Rosalia.



4. Gallery of Modern Art

The gallery of modern art is found in an Art Nouveau building by architect Osvald Polívka from 1912. For the range and quality of its art collections the gallery ranks among the most prestigious galleries in the Czech Republic. The decoration of the building includes statues by Ladislav Šaloun, a major figure of the Art Nouveau style in the Czech Republic.

The exposition focuses on modern 20th-century art, and the works of Bohumil Kubišta, Jan Zrzavý, Josef Váchal, Jan Preisler, Jindřich Štyrský, Toyen, František Muzika, Josef Šíma, Václav Špála and Josef Čapek. The second half of the 20th century is represented by the works of Mikuláš Medek and Jiří Kolář, and the statues of Olbram Zoubek. The gallery regularly organises temporary exhibitions with accompanying events.



5. Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary

The baroque Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was built by the Jesuits between 1654 and 1666 according to the project of the Italian architect Carlo Lurago. In 1762, it was extensively damaged by fire. The only parts of the original decoration that remained preserved are the frescos in St. Ignatius's Chapel and the painting Glorification of St. Ignatius of Loyola by Petr Brandl (around 1730). The altar painting of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary by Kristián Noldinger and other decoration was realised only after 1765. In the church, there is also a valuable organ, the oldest one in Hradec Králové. It is a two-manual baroque instrument from 1765, constructed by Josef Streussel (1732 - 1776), an organ maker from Kralice. The church towers were built only in 1857. The interiors were rebuilt several times, while the largest reconstruction took place at the beginning of the 20th century and in 1941 - 1945.



6. Gočár's Staircase

The staircase Na Kropáče is an early work of Czech modern architecture which had no artistic parallel at the time it was built (1909 - 1910). It is named after its author, architect Josef Gočár, who had to deal with a demanding urbanistic challenge - to close the vacant space after the elevated tank Kropáčka that had been pulled down. The architect approached this typical utility work with extraordinary sense for composition and material used, and thus shifted the development of Czech modern architecture.



7. District Court

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8. City Music Hall

At present, the former Bishop's seminary with the Church of St. John of Nepomuk is used as the City Music Hall. It is found on the place where the king's castle stood until 1423. It was the seat of Bohemian queens Eliška Rejčka and Eliška Pomořanská. The church and the seminary were built in 1709 - 1714 by master builder V. Schneider. The ground plan of the baroque church is in the shape of a Latin cross. The interiors were decorated by wall paintings by the monks of the Prague Emauzy Monastery in 1887.



Grey line / stands (modern part of the city)

It starts at the Museum of Eastern Bohemia, continues across Tyrš Bridge to the former Novák's Garages, along the riverbank downstream the Labe River to Svoboda Square. From here, the tour leads through the pedestrian zone to Masaryk Square, and then to Ulrich Square. Going past Priest Ambrož's Congregation it continues to Tyl's Riverbank with Gočár's school buildings. Across the river, past Sander's power station at the Labe River the tour brings you to Jirásek's Gardens to the place where Labe and Orlice come together. In the gardens the tour goes past the Eastern Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas and the remains of the military fortification. The walk ends at the old Adalbertinum in the avenue Československé armády.

9. Museum of Eastern Bohemia

The monumental building of the museum on the city's riverbank was realised according to the project of the architect Jan Kotěra in 1909 - 1912. It became the symbol of the oncoming period of Czech modernism. Major Czech artists such as the sculptor Vojtěch Sucharda, painters František Kysela and Jan Preisler participated in the decoration of the museum.

For its undoubted architectonic and artistic qualities the museum was designated a listed building - the only one in Hradec Králové.

Two models of Hradec Králové may be of particular interest to the visitors of the museum. So-called Žaloudek's model shows the city at the time when it still was a military stronghold. The model from 2000 was designed in the model laboratory of the Faculty of Architecture in Prague.



The vast collections of the museum include for example a decorated belt from the 15th century, which the legend ascribes to Eliška Pomořanská, or the remains of a mammoth in the archaeological collections. The part of the exhibitions related to technology shows for example the old automobile Start, one of the last models produced in Hradec Králové. In fact, the museum itself is a magnificent architectonic work of art. The collections introducing the work of Jan Kotěra and Hradec Králové, so-called "Salon of the Republic", rank among the real jewels of the museum.

10. City Spa - Aquacentrum

The City Spa on Eliščino nábřeží (Eliška's riverbank) belongs to the best works of architect Oldřich Liska. The functionalist construction was built in 1933. With its thirty-meter swimming pool and simulated waves the spa became the most modern indoor pool in the Czech Republic.

The building is a part of the urban collection of buildings on the Labe riverbank which includes the building of Commercial Bank (architect J. Rejchl, 1933) or the Sokol Hall by architect M. Babuška. In the right wing of the Sokol Hall Hradec Králové Philharmonic is based. Between 1997 and 1999, a complete reconstruction of the City Spa was carried out, the spa was enlarged and the aquapark with many attractions was built.



11. Novák's Garages

The palace of garages by engineer Novák, Hradec Králové's pioneer of car industry is an example of flawless cooperation of the architect and the builder. The palace was built in 1932. The revolutionary conception of this monumental construction with a hundred and fifty parking places was designed by the architect Josef Fňouk. The six-metre broad spiral ramp that passes through the centre of the building constitutes the dominant feature of the palace. On the roof it is covered by a marked cupola. The descendants of engineer Novák renovated the building according to the original project and it now serves the same purpose as before.



12. Masaryk Square

After Ulrich Square, Masaryk Square, situated among blocks of houses away from the traffic, is the second most important open space in the modern part of Hradec Králové. It has a triangular plan and the facade of constructions by Josef Gočár (1922) at its northwest end form the characteristic feature of the square. In 1926, the monument of president T. G. Masaryk by Otto Gutfreund, renowned Czech sculptor, was placed in front of this dominant architectonic setting. Thus the square became a place for peaceful contemplation as well. In 2002, the square became a part of the pedestrian zone that starts at Bařka Square and runs through the adjacent Čelakovský and Švehla streets. Walking through the pedestrian zone, you may admire many other interesting buildings such as the dwelling house by architect V. Fultner (1912), former Carda's bakery by architect B. Waigant (1912) or the house of the Nevyhoštěný Company by architect O. Liska (1914).



13. Ulrich Square

According to the regulation plan, Ulrich Square was supposed to become the modern centre of the city. Architect Josef Gočár laid out its urbanistic and architectonic composition and designed monumental rectangular space.

At places where Gočár's avenue enters the square, four corner buildings which are two floors higher than the surrounding houses create symbolic gates to the square. The south end of the square is occupied by the former seat of the National Railway Headquarters by architect Gočár. Today it is the seat of the Czech Police and many other offices. The opposite end is dominated by a monumental palace, formerly the seat of factory owner Steinský-Sehnoutka (architect O. Novotný, 1929), today the seat of the bank ČSOB.



14. Priest Ambrož's Congregation of the Czechoslovak Hussite Church

Priest Ambrož's Congregation is another outstanding construction by architect Josef Gočár. During 1926 - 1929 the church with 26.5 meter high white prismatic tower was built according to his project together with the school complex on the right side of the Labe River basin. The constructionist buildings of the church are situated on a triangular estate. The main entrance with the view of the atrium and church tower is between two onestory buildings. The ambit around the atrium creates a columbarium that unites all the buildings into one complex. The constructions are concrete and the facades combine fair-faced brickwork with white plaster. Priest Ambrož's Congregation has recently gone through a thorough reconstruction, which made it possible to use the building not only for the purposes of the church, but also for cultural events, mainly art exhibitions.



15. School Complex in Lipky

Kotěra's student at the Academy of Arts, Design and Architecture architect Josef Gočár, later the professor and rector of the school, reached remarkable achievements in the area of urban planning. Many of them are found in Hradec Králové: the unique regulation plan of the city, the staircase Na Kropáčce, the adaptation of Masaryk Square and other projects. Gočár's conception of the school complex on today's Tylovo nábřeží (Tyl's riverbank) is equally remarkable.



Previously Rašín's, at present Tyl's Grammar School was built in 1925 - 1927. This complex includes the school building, gym and the headmaster's villa. In front of the entrance to the complex, there is a six-metre bronze statue of the Victor by Jan Štursa, one of the founders of Czech modern sculpture. The statue was placed here after it had been displayed at the World Exhibition in Paris so as the state symbol of the Czechoslovakia by Otto Gutfreund dated 1925 - 1927 on the south wing of the building. Next to the grammar school, Gočár placed the primary and junior high schools, at present Tylovo nábřeží (Tyl's riverbank) Primary School and a kindergarten.

16. Labe River Power Station

The Labe River power station is one of the most beautiful Art Nouveau buildings in the city. It was built in 1910 - 1912 according to the project of architect F. Sander on the place of an old weir, called Hučák. However, the construction was fully completed only after the First World War. It is a unique and still functional technical construction.

The two-wing building is dominated by a clock tower with a relief symbol of the city in the plaster. The bridge at the station is five metres wide and fifty-six metres long. On the pillars street lighting poles are placed and there are also kiosks with the facilities to control the weir. In 1996, the complete reconstruction of the power station and the bridge was completed. The construction is lighted, and they look impressive even at night.



17. Jirásek's Gardens

The gardens, originally officers' gardens at the time of the military stronghold, are situated on a triangular area bounded by the confluence of the Labe and Orlice rivers. In the gardens you will find a number of rare tree species. Numerous kinds of flowers bloom here in summer creating manifold colour variations and smelling beautifully. This is also why the park is popular with people in love.

In the gardens, there is a monument to the writer Alois Jirásek, and a sculpture by J. Škoda depicting the confluence of the Labe River with the Orlice River. You can see a number of attractions in the gardens, such as the fortification gate, and you can also visit St. Nicholas Church, which was transported here from Eastern Slovakia. It is possible to get to the park from Komenský or Křížík streets.



18. St. Nicholas Church

St. Nicholas's Church in Jirásek's Gardens is an interesting example of wooden vernacular architecture. Originally, the church was built in 1502 - 1510 in the Habura town near Mezilaborce in Eastern Slovakia. In 1740, it was sold to Malá Polana, where it was converted to a Greek-Catholic Church of St. Nicholas-the Wondermaker. In 1935, the church was purchased for Hradec Králové thanks to the efforts of Mayor Josef V. B. Pilnáček. It was renovated expensively and situated into Jirásek's Gardens. The church is surrounded by the authentic fence. In the church interiors your attention will be drawn to a well-preserved iconostas, twelve arm chandelier and other items of indoor decoration.



Other oportunities in Hradec Králové for you...

Giant Aquarium

The Envi House with a giant aquarium in the very centre of Hradec Králové offers its visitors a direct encounter with tropical environment, moments of relaxation and opportunities to do sports. The launch of this project was motivated by a passion for nature, Hradec Králové and beautiful things. After all, the name of the house - Envi - is derived from the English word 'environment'. First visitors were welcome here in 1998.



Apart from a giant aquarium with an underwater tunnel and a rainforest, the Envi House provides an opportunity to watch films on a giant screen at "Film Projection at Ray's". If you happen to be too tired after the visit of the aquarium, you can have some refreshments at the Piranha Café and watch wild piranhas at the same time. You will also find homely sporting facilities here with a ricochet court, sauna and fitness centre. Here you can relax actively and privately with your family. There is also a comfortable and stylish conference room for company parties and other meetings.

