

**The Olive Odysseys**

**​Croatia & the Dalmatian Coast**

By Land & By Sea

with Prague & Budapest

September 3-15 2018

**Day One September 3**

Prague, Czech Republic

*We will meet in our centrally located hotel right in the center of Prague, the heart of Bohemia. Called the ‘city of 100 spires’ this preserved capital is also the home of colorful churches, baroque buildings and a medieval clock. All this awaits us in the beautifully preserved capital of the Czech Republic.*

*We will start with an orientation walk of Prague, which includes Wenceslas Square, St. Vitus Cathedral, and Prague Castle.*

*Join us after our walk for a welcome drink and introductions. Later we will walk to dinner for delicious Bohemian food and the finest beer!*

*​Orientation walk of Prague/ Introductions & welcome drink/ Dinner together/ Overnight Prague/*[*UNESCO World Heritage Site (the Historic Centre of Prague)*](http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/616)*.*

Wenceslas Square is a transcendent enclave of Prague, the capital of currently Czech Republic, formerly Czechoslovakia and originally the old kingdom of Bohemia. Wenceslas Square was established in 1348 by order of the Holy Emperor Charles IV. Soon after, the square became the natural axis of the New Town of Prague: its original function was to house a market for buying and selling horses. That was also its original name before becoming Wenceslas Square when, in the 19th century, an equestrian statue of Saint Wenceslas was installed in its upper part. Today this corner of the city, around 750 meters long, is a sizzling meeting point in Prague’s newer town, full of cafes, hotels, restaurants, souvenir shops and pubs.

St. Vitus Cathedral is the largest gothic church in Prague and is located within the Prague Castle complex, just on top of the hill by the Vltava River. Its construction spanned several architects and nearly 600 years, starting on 1344 and until 1929. The silhouette of the cathedral, as seen from Charles’ bridge, is one of Prague’s most iconic views. Its access doors on the west side are adorned with a Judgment Day mosaic made with more than a million pieces of crystal and shards. This two-tower cathedral, where many Bohemian and Holy Roman Empire kings, princes and rulers were crowned (as well as buried), also hosts St. Wenceslas Chapel, one of its most outstanding rooms with Renaissance and Baroque elements. This chapel displays a famous door with seven locks, although it is generally off limits for visitors. The nave and the vaults of St. Vitus Cathedral, designed by its main architect Peter Parler, inspired many other late gothic style cathedrals and buildings across Europe.

*Hrad*, the official name of Prague Castle, is a huge complex that surpasses the traditional notion of ‘castle’ as a fortification. Considered the largest ancient castle in the world, Prague Castle is a 750,000 square feet small city, most of it within a walled enclosure, and it houses several government buildings, administrative centers, museums, exhibition halls, and up to five religious buildings including St. Vitus Cathedral. There are also restaurants, cafes and shops. *Hrad* used to be the Bohemian king’s residence back in the 9th century, but it has undergone many changes over the course of centuries. It currently hosts the Czech Republic’s Presidential residence. Changing of the guards’ ceremony still takes place nowadays by the Royal Palace, and its southern gardens grant the visitor with a panorama of Prague’s old town.

September 3 & 4 **Prague, Czech Republic** Savic- renamed the Dominican https://www.dominicanhotel.cz/

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