

# What's hot in...? Prague

## THE EVENT

Not only is 2018 the centenary of Czechoslovakia's birth (expect a host of celebrations, from art exhibits to live concerts), it's also 200 years since Prague's iconic National Museum opened. Shuttered since mid-2011 for a £60m renovation, the Neo-Renaissance building that looms over Wenceslas Square will reopen in October with a major exhibition on the country's

often-turbulent history, from Kingdom of Bohemia highs to Nazi and Communist lows ([nm.cz](http://nm.cz); £8.60).

## THE DISTRICT

Prague's newest up-and-coming neighbourhood is Holešovice, a few kilometres upriver from the Old Town. Visit the former meatpacking district for artisan coffee shops (including Bitcoin-only Paralení Polis; [paralenipolis.cz](http://paralenipolis.cz)), fine-dining restaurants (try Asian-fusion favourite SaSaZu; [sasazu.com/en](http://sasazu.com/en)) and modern art galleries (such as the airship-topped DOX Centre for Contemporary Art; [dox.cz/](http://dox.cz/)

en; pictured) — and, at weekends, Prague's coolest fashion market, Mint: Pop Up Hall 13 ([mintmarket.cz](http://mintmarket.cz)).

## THE HOTEL

In a city of medieval bridges, Gothic churches and Baroque squares, the recent arrival of Modernist Hotel Sax was a real breath of fresh air. On a side street below the castle, this great-value stay is a shrine to 20th-century pop culture, complete with vintage furniture and offbeat wallpaper. Best bit? Its rooftop spa, with majestic city views ([hotelsax.cz](http://hotelsax.cz); doubles from £58, B&B).

## THE RESTAURANT

Low-key-luxe newcomer Field has redrawn the boundaries of Bohemian fare with its Scandi-twisted, high-end Czech cuisine. Decor is minimalism incarnate — beige walls, wooden floors and unadorned tables — but look up to see the street art projected onto the ceiling. Dishes such as heifer with kohlrabi and shallots, and suckling pig with beetroot and mead, are saucy, but delicate ([fieldrestaurant.cz/en](http://fieldrestaurant.cz/en); mains about £20).

## THE TREND

Prague's dining scene has really raised its game in the last few years. The city has always guaranteed a hearty, low-cost goulash or sausage, but quality new options include high-end vegan diner Etnosvět ([etnosvet.cz/en](http://etnosvet.cz/en)), best-of-the-hipster-coffee-shops Cafefin ([cafefinvpraze.com](http://cafefinvpraze.com)), and farm-to-fork butchers, including Maso a Kobliha — 'meat and doughnuts' ([masoakobliha.cz](http://masoakobliha.cz)).



## HOT SPOTLIGHT LOCATION VACATIONS

New cinematic versions of kids' classics this year will have you itching to explore the real thing. Get in the groove for the latest *Jungle Book* film (out in October) at India's Tiger Trails Jungle Lodge; its new private conservancy will cut red tape and make spotting Shere Khan easier ([tigertrailstadoba.com](http://tigertrailstadoba.com); doubles from £140, full board). Closer to home, *Peter Rabbit*, out in March, will push more fans to Beatrix Potter's Lake District house, Hill Top ([nationaltrust.org.uk/hill-top](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/hill-top); £10.40), while a new *Robin Hood* movie, starring Jamie Foxx and Dornan, is out in September. Follow them to Sherwood Forest for the August Robin Hood festival, or to Nottingham for the October Robin Hood Pageant ([nottinghamshire.gov.uk](http://nottinghamshire.gov.uk); free).

## Hot for 2018

### MOSCOW

**Because:** Russia is sprucing itself up ready to host football's World Cup in June and July — not least in the capital, where Red Square just turned a bit greener.

**Fill me in:** Russia hopes to outshine its own Sochi Winter Olympics spectacular of 2014, and has built 11 smart new stadiums — including biggies in Moscow, St Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, Sochi and Volgograd. (The red-carpet treatment for fans with tickets includes free train travel between World Cup host cities.) In Moscow, the hideous Soviet-era Rossiya Hotel that once sat next to Red Square has been flattened to make way for riverside Zaryadye Park, the first public park to be built in

Moscow in 50 years. You'll enjoy the scent of spruce on winding paths through 13 hectares that represent Russia's tundra, steppe, forest and wetlands. Instant Instagramability comes from the boomerang-shaped 'floating bridge' levitating over the river. Facelifted in time for the footie, Moscow's boulevards and monolithic buildings are looking mightier than ever, but it's down side streets you'll find the real confidence. These days, glitzy boutiques line up alongside impressive, diverse places to dine — such as the Siberian restaurant Expedition ([expedicia-restaurant.ru](http://expedicia-restaurant.ru); mains about £17), where you can sit amid oversized polar bears and an antique helicopter to try *pelmeni* (Russian ravioli) filled with Kamchatka crab.

**Get there this year:** BA ([ba.com](http://ba.com)) has a four-night break, staying at the four-star Novotel Moscow Centre, from £535pp, room only, including return flights from Heathrow.

