

what's next, ubm?

Andaz Prague

ubm is bringing the glamour
of the Habsburg Monarchy back to Prague

The most sustainable way to build is not to build (anything new) at all.



MARTINA MALÝ-GÄRTNER, COO



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Prague – The golden city. Absolute poetry. Where they spoke the finest German in the Empire. Even a few decades of communism couldn't cast their shadow on the flair of imperial times.

Prague – The golden city. Its title reminds us of the alchemists' ardent quest for gold made out of straw and non-precious metals using transmutation experiments. Nowhere else was this practised so earnestly – apart from in fairy tales, perhaps. Even today, in Prague myths and fairy tales are ever-present.

Prague – The golden city. Andaz Prague acts like a kaleidoscope in giving a new, sophisticated platform to the many facets of Prague's history, including its famous glass artworks.

It seems almost logical for UBM in Vienna to have worked with a key industrial player from Austria in its mission to awaken the Sugar Palace (as it is popularly known) from its slumber, after it stood empty for so many years. The former home of the Insurance Association for the once so affluent sugar industry has been painstakingly adapted to restore not just the flair of the monarchy to this over 100-year-old, neoclassical building, but also all the other elements that make Prague such a fascinating city. After all, the most sustainable way to build is not to build (anything new) at all!

We wish you sweet dreams in what we hope you will find a successful reinterpretation by the Hyatt Group and UBM. And we trust that Andaz Prague will make you feel like an imperial sovereign, and that your stay will be like a fairy tale come true.



2020



2022

Myths and sweet dreams

The new Andaz in Prague is a treasure chest packed full with legends. Developed by UBM, the listed hotel building is a historic jewel in itself.





Hardly any other city is as steeped in myths and legends as Prague. According to one legend, the city was founded when the wise prophetess Libuše fell into a trance and saw a beautiful city in woodlands on the banks of the Moldava, where a man and his son were building the wooden threshold for their new house. This legend is also responsible for the city's name, as "práh" is the Czech word for threshold.



Helped by eggs and astrology

As a world-famous landmark, Prague's Charles Bridge also supplies ample material for storytelling. For instance, it is supposed to have been built with an exceptionally large number of eggs. Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV himself ordered his subjects to bring eggs and milk to the construction site with the aim of making the mortar especially resilient. On the advice of the royal astrologist, the foundation stone is said to have been laid

at precisely 5.31 a.m. on 9th July in 1357. There was a definite intention here, specifically to create a sequence of odd numbers in ascending and descending order: 1-3-5-7-9-7-5-3-1. And it is even more significant that the number 9 is in the middle as it is regarded as a symbol of perfection and creation. In any case, the year when the foundation stone was laid is historically proven. Everything else is the stuff of fantasy and speculation.

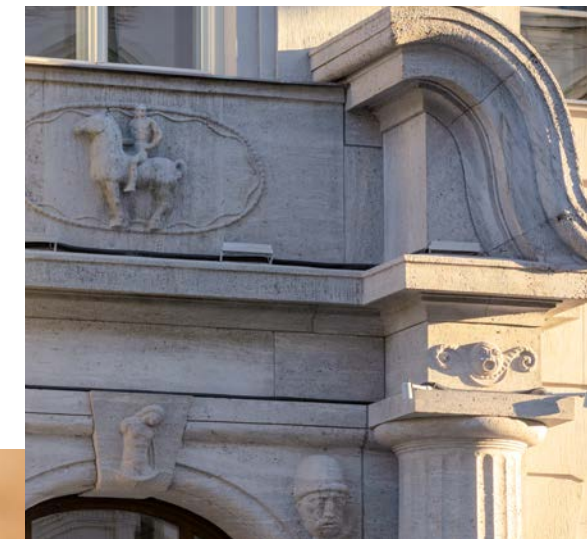


Myths and legends were worked into the design of Andaz Prague.





However, such legends are more than just amusing anecdotes. There is no doubt that they are part of the Czech identity and are integral to life in Prague. Property developer UBM has therefore used myths and legends as a leitmotif throughout the design of this hotel project in the Czech capital. When you walk along the hallways and look around the rooms in Andaz Prague, you keep coming across a lion's head or a sword that look as though they are literally "growing" out of the walls. The lion is on the Czech coat of arms, whereas the sword belongs to the knight Bruncvík. But that's an entirely different story.



The Empire's secret commercial capital

In addition to Vienna and Budapest, Prague played a key role for the Habsburg monarchy as both its industrial powerhouse and also a meeting place for intellectual bohemians.



NA PŘÍKOPĚ STREET IN PRAGUE
FROM THE CORNER OF
WENCESLAS SQUARE, C.1900

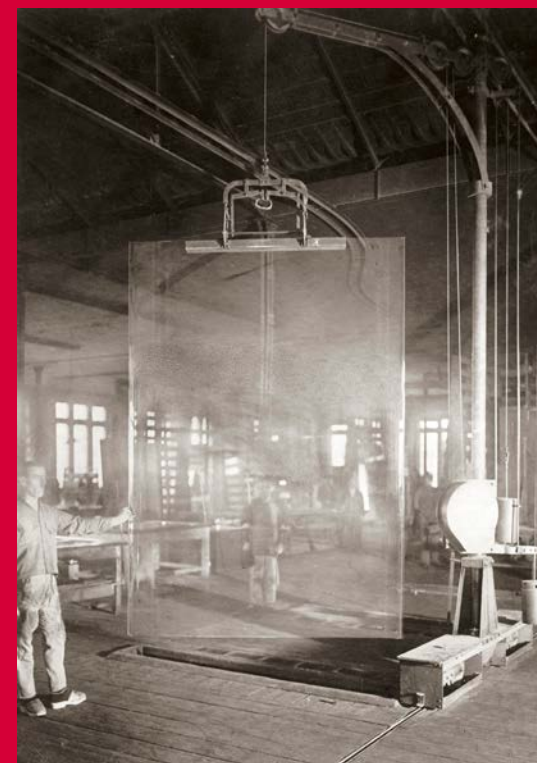
As the third-largest city after Vienna and Budapest, Prague was hugely significant for the Habsburg monarchy. Like Vienna, it was an intellectual hotspot and also a melting pot of different ethnic groups. But quite unlike Vienna, it was a powerful centre of industry as well. Its substantial coal and ore deposits, its modern textile, metal and glass industry and also its sugar refineries made Bohemia the commercial

capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Until the year 1918, many building projects were named after the Habsburgs, such as the Emperor Ferdinand Northern Railway which was Bohemia's first railway line. Its construction had been proposed by Ferdinand I, who was Emperor of Austria and King of Bohemia from 1835 to 1848, and his lounge car was also made in Bohemia. Prague's main station was called

"Emperor Franz Josef Railway Station" until 1918. Although Prague was the smallest of the monarchy's three major cities, it was no less important than the others. On the one hand, it boasted a magnificent past. In the days when Vienna was still a pleasant small town, Prague was already at the peak of its fame as the imperial capital and the city where the Emperor resided. "Prague is among the

few cities on Europe's political map in the late Middle Ages with evidence of functioning as a metropolis," analyses Prof. Elisabeth Lichtenberger. "Prague's heyday as the metropolis of Central Europe in the Middle Ages was followed by Vienna's ascent as the imperial metropolis of the Habsburg monarchy." On the other hand, Prague's self-confidence also rested on its pioneering economic role in 19th-century Europe. "Compared to most other nationalities in the Habsburg monarchy, the Czechs enjoyed an above-average socioeconomic and cultural standard," says historian Martin Mutschlechner. "Around 1900 the Czechs were considered the most highly developed nation in Europe without their own national state."

Although Vienna was clearly the centre of political power, Prague was definitely its competitor as the intellectual "headquarters". Franz Kafka, Rainer Maria Rilke, Franz Werfel, Egon Erwin Kisch, to name but a few – around the year 1900 Prague was a hothouse where especially German-language writers liked to meet and discuss. The breeding grounds for this development were not just the Jewish origin of many authors, but also the ongoing discussions between Germans and Czechs regarding linguistic supremacy.



TRADITIONAL
CZECH GLASSMAKING
A FOURCAULT DRAWING
MACHINE IN TEPLICE PLATE
GLASS FACTORY, C.1910

JULIUS (GYULA) MEINL
WAS THE LARGEST
PURVEYOR OF COLONIAL
GOODS IN THE AUSTRO-
HUNGARIAN EMPIRE.
GROCERY STORE IN
BUDAPEST, C.1900



FRANZENSRING IN VIENNA
NOW KNOWN AS
UNIVERSITÄTSRING, C.1895

This cultural heritage has been nurtured by Prague, and the work is still continuing today. The historic city centre has been inscribed on the UNESCO World

Heritage List, and in 2000 Prague was the European Capital of Culture. For these and many other reasons, it welcomes over nine million tourists per year.



RAINER MARIA RILKE
IN HIS STUDY, C.1905

Around 1900 the Czechs were considered the most highly developed nation in Europe without their own national state.





Overflowing with treasure

In any case, the hotel is a treasure chest that is continuously expecting to be discovered and deciphered. Intrepid adventurers have all they need inside the hotel, although it would be a shame not to step outside for a while because Prague has so much to offer. Even the hotel building is history in itself.



*“Prague doesn’t let go.
Of either one of us.
This old lady has claws.”*

FRANZ KAFKA *in a letter to Oskar Pollak*



PRAGUE

A centre of European literature

“Prague doesn’t let go. Of either one of us. This old lady has claws. You have to get used to it, or ... we would have to set fire to it on two sides, at the Vyšehrad and at the Hradčany, then we would be able to escape. Perhaps you’ll give it some thought until Carnival.”

FRANZ KAFKA wrote this in a letter to his former schoolfriend Oskar Pollak in 1902.

Kafka was not the only famous writer in the city. In the early 20th century, RAINER MARIA



RILKE, FRANZ WERFEL, EGON ERWIN KISCH, “Schwejk” author JAROSLAV HAŠEK and MAX BROD – to name only the most famous – transformed Prague into a centre of European literature. The

author Hermann Kesten described this generation as follows: “They all took delight in the extravagant, bizarre and alien. In their eyes, the whole world looked like Prague and Prague looked like the whole world.”



PRAGUE

Myths and prophecies

Prague is almost second to none when it comes to the defining role played by myths and legends. It begins with the story of the city's founding. Legend has it that a beautiful city in woodlands near the Moldova appeared to the wise PROPHETESS LIBUŠE in a vision, where a man and his son were building the wooden threshold for their new house. This was the site where Prague now stands. The threshold is considered a symbol of respect, and even kings and princes had to ask permission to enter somebody else's house.

The lion on the Czech coat of arms refers to the KNIGHT BRUNCVÍK, whose statue is also found at Charles Bridge. Bruncvík went out into the world and saved the life of a lion by killing the lion's opponent, a monstrous dragon. Out of thanks, the lion joined up with Bruncvík to protect him. While on his travels, Bruncvík was also given a sword with magical powers which would defeat any number of opponents whenever required.



PRAGUE

How the city became golden

There are several explanations for Prague's byname – the "GOLDEN CITY". On the one hand, the Holy Roman Emperor and German King Charles IV (1316–1378) covered the towers of PRAGUE CASTLE in gold. On the other, Emperor Rudolf II (1552–1612) brought many scientists to Prague as their patron, including TYCHO BRAHE and JOHANNES KEPLER, who were the founders of modern astronomy. His dedication to their cause was not entirely selfless: alchemists such as GIORDANO BRUNO and JOHN DEE were expected to help with making gold out of various metals.





The building is actually an irregular pentagonal structure with two inner courtyards which dominates the scene on two streets and the square opposite it. And the hotel has an impressive history. It was originally constructed between 1912 and 1916 for the Sugar Industry Insurance Association, as the sugar industry was a very important and profitable economic sector at the time. The status of the “sugar barons” was comparable with that of modern-day internet entrepreneurs and digital businesses. Later on, the building housed the Ministry of Nutrition, and after that the Czech Postal Savings Bank. The hotel bathrooms are fitted with “vault doors” as a link with this part of its past.

Palace history BUILT ON SUGAR



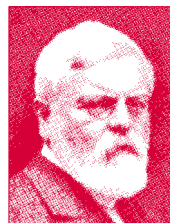
The SUGAR PALACE in the centre of Prague owes its name to its first main tenant: the SUGAR INDUSTRY INSURANCE ASSOCIATION. The sugar sector was hugely important on the European continent during the 19th century, and it owed its burgeoning prosperity primarily to NAPOLEON’S BLOCKADE of British maritime trade routes. This made importing sugar from Latin America virtually impossible. Instead of producing the “SWEET GOLD” from sugar cane, as had been done for centuries, this lucrative sweetener was now obtained from sugar beet, which could be cultivated

in Europe. In 1802, the first sugar beet factory was built in Konary (German: Cunern), a town located in a region of south-western Poland that used to belong to Germany. This industry quickly became an important and profitable business that produced a number of “SUGAR BARONS”.

This prosperity also benefited service providers such as the Sugar Industry Insurance Association – they moved into the new building in Prague’s city centre immediately after its completion in 1916. But the name Sugar Palace is something of a misnomer. The insurers initially only used the first floor for their offices. There were shops on the ground floor and LUXURY APARTMENTS on the upper floors. Over the decades, though, more and more apartments were converted into offices to accommodate the growing needs of the insurers. When the CZECHOSLOVAK MINISTRY OF NUTRITION moved into the building during the 1950s, extensive remodelling was required. Since 1993 the building has been partly listed as a historic monument. Some alterations have been reversed, including replacing modern doors with copies of the originals. The building was last used by the CZECH POSTAL SAVINGS BANK.



The most sustainable way to build is not to build at all, and this fits perfectly into UBM's ambitious strategy of turning special buildings into something really special. The redesign of this historic building was certainly a challenge: the facade and marble staircases had to be preserved, and the courtyards were integrated into the hotel. As a result, some corner rooms have their own little winter gardens. That in itself is something very special. The original windows were carefully restored in order to maintain the historic character of the property. And most of the old wood panelling has remained intact.



ARCHITECT 1:
THEODOR FISCHER (1862–1938) was a German architect, urban planner and university lecturer. Together with Josef Zascche, he was responsible for building the Sugar Palace between 1912 and 1916. Representatives of the "Stuttgart School" that was active in the Weimar Republic regarded Fischer as their "spiritual father". After the First World War he designed several high-rise buildings for Munich.



ARCHITECT 2:
JOSEF ZASCHE (1871–1957) was a German-Bohemian Jugendstil and modernist architect who was active in the first half of the 20th century in Bohemia, especially in Prague. In 1945 he was interned and his estate destroyed. Following many years of obscurity, he is now regarded as one of the most significant German architects from the pre- and interwar period in the Czech Republic.



*“My Praguers
understand me.”*

These words by **WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART** reflect his close connection with Prague. The Estates Theatre in Prague hosted the premiere of Mozart's opera "Don Giovanni" in 1787. And his Symphony No. 38 in D major is also known as his Prague Symphony.



The tourist as an explorer

And so the Andaz Prague developed by UBM is also a visible sign of how the approach to tourism and travel has changed. For many decades, tourists were especially looking for a safe, clean and comfortable environment. But in the meantime they have become explorers who are turning away from nondescript lodgings with no sense of history, and are instead searching for authentic experiences and activities, becoming directly engaged with their location of choice.

Incidentally, during repair work to Charles Bridge in 2007 scientists from Prague's University of Chemistry and Technology took samples from the bridge's foundations for research purposes. The findings were surprising: the mortar did indeed contain a large proportion of protein-based binder, which could be egg white. This confirms that there is an element of truth to the legend that eggs were used in the construction of Charles Bridge – which is after all one of the oldest surviving stone bridges in Europe together with the one in Regensburg. You could even say it has a solid foundation.



Once inside, the guests don't just sit around in an impersonal, nondescript lobby. Instead, they can use any one of three comfortable and cosy "living rooms", with each room having its own special theme. One room resembles the famous library at Strahov Monastery, while another features a glass installation suspended from the ceiling that welcomes visitors on their arrival and also forms a connection with the Czech Republic's glassmaking tradition. The third room is dedicated to the alchemists who were brought to Prague by Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II to "transform" various metals into gold, although their attempts were unsuccessful. In short, this is a hotel that reflects its local history and culture. The voyage of discovery continues in the restaurant, where traditional Czech cuisine is reinterpreted with a modern touch. In the bar, guests can enjoy Pioneer beer by Žatec. This local brewery is named after the town that is also home to the Czech Hop Research Institute. Another speciality is the alcohol-free Sparkling Tea created by sommelier Jacob Kocemba during his time at the Danish gourmet restaurant Noma. The drink is not exactly local, but it is definitely innovative as an aperitif. It all fits in pretty nicely with the global/local style.



“They all took delight in the extravagant, bizarre and alien. In their eyes, the whole world looked like Prague and Prague looked like the whole world.”

HERMANN KESTEN c.1900

Local becomes global – and vice versa

The new 175-room hotel is the ideal addition to the strategy pursued by the international Hyatt Group. As a design-focused lifestyle luxury hotel, the Andaz brand “stands for the unconventional, surprising, exceptional,” says hotel manager Doris Hecht, “a hotel as a melting pot, where local becomes global and global becomes local.” How is this possible? The restaurant and bar can be entered straight from the street, which means you don’t have to walk through the hotel to enjoy what is on offer there. In addition, superior events aim to entice the people of Prague to come inside the hotel to experience what is on offer.



ANDAZ

The Hindi word for “personal style”

ANDAZ has been created by the renowned Hyatt Group as a design-oriented lifestyle hotel brand in the luxury segment. INDIVIDUAL, EXTRAORDINARY, SURPRISING, INSPIRED by local culture and history – this is the DNA of its hotels, with as many as twenty-five now spread around the world. HYATT HOTELS CORPORATION, based in Chicago, is a leading global hospitality company with 20 brands. The company’s portfolio includes more than 1,150 hotel and all-inclusive properties in 70 countries across six continents (as of 31 December 2021). Hyatt’s declared purpose is “to care for people so they can be their best”. Besides Andaz, the famous Hyatt brands include Park Hyatt, Grand Hyatt, Hyatt Regency, Thompson Hotels, Miraval and Caption.





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smart.
and more.**

A N *d* A Z | PRAGUE

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