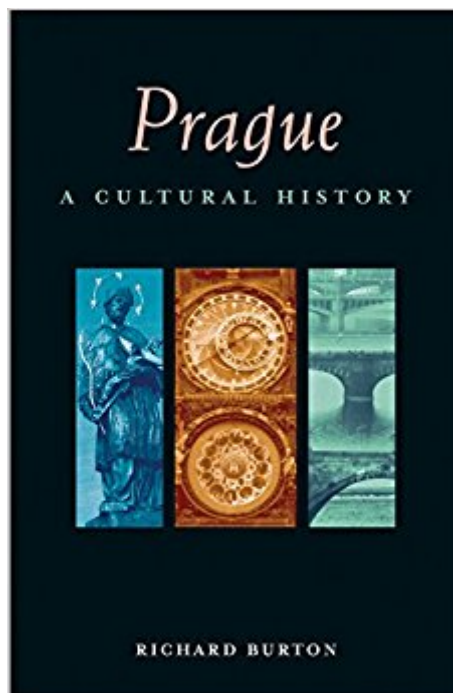




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Prague: A Cultural History (Interlink Cultural Histories) (Cities Of The Imagination)



Synopsis

Located at the very center of Europe, Prague has been on the frontline of international political, intellectual, religious, and cultural conflicts for more than six centuries. Invaded and occupied by the Habsburgs, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Nazis, and then Communist Russia, the city's identity is shaped by a long experience of foreign domination and a strong sense of martyrdom. A treasure house of Gothic, baroque, and modernist architecture, Prague is also a city of icons and symbols: statues, saints and signs reveal a turbulent history of religious and cultural conflict. As Kafka's nightmare city and home of the Good Soldier Švejk, the Czech capital also produced two of the twentieth century's emblematic writers. Richard Burton explores this metropolis of theatrical allusion, in which politics and drama have always been intertwined. His interpretation of the city's cultural past and present encompasses opera and rock music, puppetry and cinema, surrealism and socialist realism. Looking at Prague's world-famous landmarks and lesser-known sites, his reading of the city through its writing and iconography is both perceptive and challenging.* THE CITY OF ARTISTS AND WRITERS: The Castle and Kafka, Hašek and Kundera; music from Smetana to the Plastic People of the Universe; modernism and cubism; political theater and the playwright-president Václav Havel.* THE CITY OF TYRANNY AND RESISTANCE: Jan Hus and anti-Catholic revolt; subjugation and the rise of Czech nationalism; Germans, Czechs and Jews; "Prague Spring" 1968, Charter 77 and the "Velvet Revolution" of November 1989.* THE CITY OF MAGIC, MURDER, AND MYTH: Medieval alchemy and astrology; the myth of the Golem, the ghetto and anti-Semitism; living puppets, robots, and a tradition of defenestration.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Richard Burton was formerly Professor of French and Francophone Studies at Sussex University. He first visited Prague in 1970 and has recently relocated to France.

My wife and I will be spending 10 days in Prague in April. When I travel I like to read historical and cultural literature about the location before I arrive. It gives me more information than guide books can provide improving the experience. In preparation, based on the reviews above, I read this book. The reviews are understated. This book deserves six stars! It is about the best book I have read about any city I have travelled to. I've gained an insight in to the places and peoples of Prague that will enrich our trip.

We bought this book because we were going to Prague. But this book exceeded our expectations because it is not only that it explains Prague, it makes you understand it. It teaches you how people thought at some points in history, and even helps you understand their literature and art . Love it

Very thorough. A valuable reference, although a bit much to just sit and read.

Interesting and it did portray the Prague of Art, Architecture, Music, Literature that I was looking for but rather a slow go.

good book

This unusual book covers Prague from a geographical perspective but does so much more through the addition of literature, politics, architecture, music, and the arts. I was amazed by the depth of this book and planned on contacting the author to express my appreciation. Unfortunately, he has passed on to my great disappointment.

much interesting information but difficult to use while in Prague.

Excellent, well-written book about one of the great cities of the world. Orderly, logical structure for the first-time visitor as well as for those who visit Prague often or live there. Not only a good writer

but an accurate, non-revisionist historian. A pleasure to read and to share with others.

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