Prague: Green Spaces

Gardens, Parks & Natural retreats
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Pictogram annotation

- Wheelchair accessible
- Running
- Cycling
- Playground
- Nature trail
- The approximate walking time
- Local landmark
- Picnic site with firepit
- Local restaurant
- Entrance fee
- Lookout point

Photo on the cover: View from Petřínské sady park to the Prague Castle
Stromovka – Royal governor’s summer house in the background
The Palace Gardens beneath Prague Castle
Even a casual glance at a map of Prague reveals the extent to which greenery of various types forms a striking and integral feature of the city. Woods, parks and gardens currently cover some 20% of the city’s area. Moreover, in a recent comparative analysis* of the extent of greenery in fifty major agglomerations, our capital city was ranked the greenest metropolis in the world. In short, outdoor spaces have the green light in Prague.

Five good reasons to head for the outdoors in Prague:

1) Expanse and diversity

Greenery makes up about one fifth of Prague, making it one of the greenest cities worldwide. The diversity of its green spaces is just as impressive; they range from expansive woodlands, through large park complexes to smaller orchards to walled-in historical gardens. The choice is yours.

2) History and the arts

Prague’s natural sites offer more than just peace and relaxation; they commonly hide treasures to discover. Your outdoor explorations will often come with a cultural bonus – a stately home, museum, villa, a lookout point, folly, fountain, statue or possibly just an information panel or a nature trail.

3) Sport and events

Prague’s woodlands, parks and gardens are naturally popular with sports-minded outdoor enthusiasts and athletes, especially runners. Many cultural and social events also take place in among Prague’s leafy nooks, be they festivals of all kinds, concerts, theatre performances, celebrations, exhibitions, or culinary events.

4) Kids and fun

The city’s green spaces are indeed kid-friendly and make an ideal destination for family trips, picnics, and walks. Well worth a mention are plentiful playgrounds, jungle gyms, rope courses, mini zoos, and more.

5) Accessibility and connections

This aspect is one of Prague’s strongest points. Densely close-knit, Prague’s green zones often join up one to another. You also don’t need to go very far to reach a green zone or spend hours travelling outside the city. Much of Prague’s greenery is in or near the city centre. And if you do decide to head further out, accessibility is excellent and the public transit reliable and safe.

* 2018 Green Cities Index, by the Dutch agency TravelBird, travelbird.nl
Historical Gardens

Have yourself a Royal picnic right beneath the Castle. In the upper Deer moat, away from crowds of tourists, in the former ‘bearkeepers’ cottage, you can rent some comfortable blankets and enjoy an alfresco feast with your friends within sight of the Castle itself. The picnic meadow is close to ‘Masaryk’s lookout point’ and offers unusual views of the Castle and surroundings.

You would be hard-pressed to match Prague’s historical gardens and their special charm anywhere else in Europe. Surrounded by architectural treasures from many historical periods they have been cherished retreats for centuries. Nowadays, many of these gardens serve as popular and vibrant cultural venues and meeting places.

Prague Castle Gardens
(Zahrady Pražského hradu)

📍 Pražský hrad, Prague 1 – Hradčany  🌐 www.hrad.cz
🕒 daily 10:00–18:00 (April–October)
🚅 access: 🚃 A (to Malostranská) and then 🚃 about 7 minutes on foot up the Old Castle Steps, 🚃 22 & 23 (to Pražský hrad), 🚃 12, 15, 20, 22 & 23 (to Malostranské náměstí) and 🚃 about 13 minutes a walk up Nerudova street

A cluster of gardens great and small, encircling our most famous landmark. Among the south-facing ‘Southern Gardens’ (Jižní zahrady), the ‘Paradise’ (Rajská) and ‘On the Ramparts’ (Na Valech) gardens are open to the public. Their current shape is true to their original 1920s layout, conceived for Czechoslovakia’s first President, T. G. Masaryk, by the Slovenian architectural visionary Jože Plečnik as part of his grand remodelling plan for Prague Castle. Plečnik built the gardens as two connected but distinct spaces. In the process, he removed a tall defensive wall shielding the Na Valech garden from the city, thereby opening up grand vistas and symbolically connecting the Castle with the city below. Plečnik dotted the gardens with sculptural elements, lookouts and gazebos, some of which were intended as private working retreats for President Masaryk; the latter, however, soon had the gardens opened to the public.

Among the gardens’ architectural highlights are the Bull Staircase leading down from the courtyard outside St Vitus Cathedral into the gardens, the charming ‘Small Belvedere’ lookout with a paved floor whose pattern mimics the Bohemian ‘kolache’ pastries, and the ‘Moravian bastion’, a onetime working and gathering retreat especially beloved by Masaryk.

The Royal Garden (Královská zahrada) is the most popular and historically the most prized of all the Castle gardens. It is accessible in the summer season via the western gates from U Prašného mostu street or from the north near the Queen Anne’s Summer House. Founded in 1534 by Ferdinand I of Habsburg to Italian
The current layout follows its English re-styling from the mid-19th century. The local architectural gems are a popular tourist attraction. There's the Letohrádek královny Anny ('Queen Anne’s Summer House'), a splendid Renaissance building, with the sgraffito-covered Mičovna ('Ball Game Hall') building nearby. The icing on the cake is the Singing Fountain, a cast-iron masterpiece from the second half of the 16th century.

The Royal Garden is separated from Prague Castle by the Deer moat (Jelení příkop), a deep natural ravine with its own stream, the Brusnice. During the reign of Emperor Rudolf II, it served as a game reserve for deer hunting (hence the name). These days, the gulley makes for a memorable outing along the northern edge of Prague Castle, with something to offer modern architecture lovers, too; the 84-metre tunnel under the Powder bridge, by the acclaimed architect Josef Pleskot. The passageway connecting the lower and the upper part of the moat is elliptical in section and its dark red brick tiles create a cozy mood.

A different kind of greenery grows among the gardens of Prague Castle in the St Wenceslas vineyard, whose orderly rows crest the hilltop above the Old Castle Steps. Legend has it that this is the oldest vineyard in Bohemia, established and personally cultivated by the patron of the Czech Lands, Prince Wenceslas. The dominant local landmark is the neoclassical Villa Richter, known for its restaurants. It is worth mentioning that this is the only place where you can sample the limited edition wines from St Wenceslas vineyard. For added value, you get some incomparable views of the Old Town, the Lesser Town and the Queen Anne’s Summer House.
The Palace Gardens beneath Prague Castle
(Palácové zahrady pod Pražským hradem)

Valdštejnská 14, Prague 1 – Lesser Town
www.palacove-zahrady.cz
daily 10:00–18:00 (April, October) and 10:00–19:00 (May–September)
access: A (to Malostranská)

Five interconnected terraced gardens (the Ledebourg, Small and Large Pálffy, Kolovrat and Small Fürstenberg gardens) form a distinctive natural architectural complex on the southern slopes of Hradčany Hill. The cascading composition with its adjacent palaces and pavilions is covered with smaller-scale garden fixtures, added over the years from the end of the 17th century to the present. To walk through the gardens is to meander pleasantly among the various fountains, gazebos, loggias, gloriettas, balustrade terraces and pergolas, daydreaming in a maze of mysterious recesses, passages and stairways. The winsome atmosphere is underscored by one of the most beautiful views of the city, especially into the Lesser Town. You can access the gardens from Valdštejnská street via the Kolovratské nádvoří courtyard. Access from above via the Castle is closed until further notice. The photograph is on the pages 2 and 3.

Wallenstein Garden
(Valdštejnská zahrada)

Letenská, Prague 1 – Lesser Town
www.senat.cz
Mon–Fri 7:30–18:00, Sat–Sun 10:00–18:00 (April, May, October),
Mon–Fri 7:30–19:00 and Sat–Sun 10:00–19:00 (June–September)
access: A (to Malostranská)

One of the most striking ‘greening schemes’ of Czech early Baroque dates from around the building of the Wallenstein Palace (1623–1629). The garden design follows ancient tradition and is the second largest of its kind in the metropolis, surpassed only by the gardens of Prague Castle. Visitors’ eyes are at once captivated by a magnificent edifice, boasting a monumental three-arch portico, the Sala Terrena. Its decoration is inspired by Greek and Roman mythology; there is also an artificial Grotto with its stalagmites, stalactites and a fountain. The dominant feature on the east side of the garden is a pond with its artificial island and a statue of Hercules. The geometrically laid-out garden is complemented by three fine fountains and captivating copies of statues by the Dutch sculptor Adrian de Vries (the originals were looted by Swedish troops in 1648). The majestic atmosphere of the gardens is underscored by free-ranging white peacocks, darlings of avid photographers from near and far. In the summer the complex often hosts musical performances.
Vojanovy sady park

📍 U Lužického semináře 17, Prague 1 – Lesser Town
🌐 www.prague.eu
⏰ daily 8:00–16:00 (December, January), daily 8:00–17:00 (February, March, October, November) and daily 8:00–19:00 (April–September)
appa access: ✅ A (to Malostranská) and 🚌 2, 12, 15, 18, 20, 22 & 23 (to Malostranská)

Hidden behind a whitewashed wall running the length of a cobbled street lies a surprisingly expansive and charmingly meandering garden. Its history goes back to the middle ages when this open space belonged to the Bishop’s court; indeed, some historians consider it to be Prague’s oldest garden. Its grounds comprise an English park, an orchard and a monastery garden with a raised balustrade terrace, pergola, and central fountain. While there are also three baroque chapels and a wall sundial with a rare 17th century fresco, most visitors come here not for the architecture but for the garden’s calm, almost dreamlike atmosphere created by aged fruit trees, magnolias, and the buzzing of bees emerging from carved wooden beehives located in one corner of the park. The garden is at its most beautiful in the spring when its magnolias and fruit trees bloom.

The Vrtba Garden (Vrtbovská zahrada)

📍 Karmelitská 25, Prague 1 – Lesser Town 🌐 www.vrtbovska.cz
⏰ daily 10:00–18:00 (April–October)
appa access: 🚌 12, 15, 20, 22 & 23 (to Hellichova)

This terraced garden is a showcase of outdoor aesthetics. It is one of the most beautiful Baroque garden schemes, dating from around 1720, designed by the Czech architect František Maxmilián Kaňka. It is not exceptionally large, but its greatness lies in the originality of its architectural design, its unregimented sloping elements and its artistic features. These come courtesy of Matyáš Bernard Braun, who provided the ornamental sculptures, and Václav Vavřinec Reiner, who painted the Sala Terrena interior.

The stately beauty of the Vrtba garden makes it a popular venue for all manner of social and cultural events, from weddings and garden parties to seminars. If you want to enjoy a truly one-of-a-kind view of Prague Castle and the Lesser Town, be sure to climb all the way to the crowning garden terraces.
Franciscan Garden
*Františkánská zahrada*

📍 Jungmannovo náměstí, Prague 1 – New Town  🌐 www.prague.eu

⏰ daily 7:00–22:00 (April–October) and 8:00–19:00 (November–March)

♿️ access: 🚐 A (to Můstek)

15 mins

This lovely natural oasis romantically tucked in behind city blocks has since the 1950s been a welcome refuge from the hubbub of Wenceslas Square and neighbouring streets. Formerly the monastery grounds adjacent to the Church of Our Lady of the Snows, it is today dotted with plenty of bench seats, in the summer overarched by rose blossom. The park also has a playground, a fountain, a gazebo and a host of interesting statues. Rounding off the composition are fruit trees and herbaceous borders. Access is from Jungmannovo plaza, the Alfa mall (from Wenceslas Square) and Světozor cinema (from Vodičkova street) and via passages from Palackého, Jungmannova and Vodičkova streets. (Note the garden’s two ornate iron gates decorated with modern artistic depictions of biblical stories and scenes from the life of St Agnes of Bohemia.)

St Agnes Convent Garden

📍 U Milosrdných 17, Prague 1 – Old Town  🌐 www.ngprague.cz

⏰ Sun–Thu 10:00–22:00, Fri and Sat 10:00–24:00 (April–September) and daily 10:00–18:00 (October–March)

♿️ access: 🚐 17 or 🚐 207 (to Právnická fakulta)

30 mins

This freely accessible and recently rejuvenated garden surrounding the St Agnes convent (home to the Prague National Gallery’s medieval art collections) features nearly two dozen modern sculptures by contemporary Czech artists. The historical spiritual setting (the oldest Gothic building in the Czech Republic) makes for an undeniably unique sense of place. Every summer the gardens come alive with musical, theatrical and entertainment programmes for adults and families with children. You can, of course, combine relaxing in the sculptural garden with a tour of the convent (both free) or include its permanent exhibition of Bohemian and Central European medieval art. The exhibits on show rank among the Czech Republic’s most prized national treasures.
You would be hard-pressed to find a better place for spiritual contemplation than the gardens of the Břevnov Monastery, sometimes called Markétská. The historical setting is excellent – the magnificent Baroque cloister and the monumental Church of St Margaret make a most impressive sight. The complex is divided into a lower part (the monastery), open during the day, and the upper orchard garden, open to visits at any time. The Baroque gardens initiative in the lea of the Brusnice brook came from none other than the famous architect duo of Christoph and Kilian Ignaz Dientzenhofer.

The overall composition neatly encompasses some notable buildings, especially the Vojtěška pavilion and the recently renovated Orangery. Albeit quite satiated on spiritual experiences, if you succumb to the more mundane pangs of hunger and thirst, do visit the Monastery Tavern, where you can also sample the locally brewed full-bodied beer.
Parks and Orchards

Prague’s parks and orchards are perfect for recharging your batteries after an often-challenging tour of Prague’s many sights, or merely for a perfect afternoon with a blanket, picnic basket, and a book.

Petřínské sady park

📍 Prague 1 – Lesser Town, Prague 5 – Smíchov  🌐 www.prague.eu

全年开放

アクセス: 納維列 (between Újezd – Petřín Hill), 🚄9, 12, 15 & 20 (to Švandovo divadlo) or 🚄22 & 23 (to Pohořelec and about 8 minutes on foot via Strahovská street)

The unmissable green cloak covering Petřín hill comprises seven interconnected spaces of diverse size and character. Especially in the spring, it is just the place for (not only) romantically inclined visitors, drawn to the blossoming trees and beautiful vistas. The rich flora and great variety of local attractions make it an appealing area to visit, easily filling an entire day if you include the Petřín lookout tower and mirror maze and/or the Strahov Monastery with its fabulous library and picture gallery. Flower lovers will delight in the Rose Garden at Petřín's summit or in the harder-to-find, but even more lovely walled flower garden (Květnice) near the observatory and planetarium.

There are many points from which to explore Petřín the funicular tram being one of the most popular. But one of the most rewarding, if physically demanding, routes begins in the Kinsky Garden (Kinského zahrada), which covers Petřín's southernmost part (tram stop: Švandovo divadlo). From here, enter through a gate and walk uphill past a meadow crowned with a grand villa (now housing the National Museum’s ethnography exhibits), then passing a lake with a waterfall, a charming wooden church transported here in 1929 from Ukraine, and continue up and northward towards the Castle. There are many well-paved paths running parallel along the hillside, each offering different but always rewarding views. Continue walking in a northerly direction; once you pass through an opening in the Hunger Wall, the panorama of the Lesser and Old Town will eventually reveal itself like a mirage on your right, with the Prague Castle looming ahead.
Letná park (Letenské sady)

📍 Prague 7 – Holešovice  🌐 www.prague.eu
⏰ year-round
🚶‍♂️ access: 🚌 1, 8, 12, 25 & 26 (to Letenské náměstí or Sparta) and 🚌 15 & 17 (to Čechův most and then 🚶‍♂️ about 15 minutes on foot up the hill)

This second largest Prague park was founded on the edge of the Letná slope in the last quarter of the 19th century. It soon became a well-visited place of recreation. Helping to make the park so popular (then and now) has been its prime location, with many captivating vistas of the river and the city. Letná park is appealing not just for walks, cultural events (which are often held here) and socializing in the massively popular beer garden, but it’s a favourite for sports, too. Joggers and in-line skaters appreciate the high-quality asphalt track, bike lovers the cycle path across the park, families with children enjoy the playgrounds, and our four-legged friends can rush around the dog run. Among others, you can find a sports equipment rental in the park.

The plateau at the base of the metronome – the unofficial emblem of Letná – is popular with skateboarders, while pétanque players get together near the neo-Renaissance Letenský zámeček mansion. The beer garden with its marvellous view is a major social hub all summer long. Only a stone’s throw from here are two important cultural institutions – the National Technical Museum and the National Museum of Agriculture.

The Prague metronome, also known as the Time Machine, has stood in Letná park since 1991, where a monstrous Stalin monument used to be. This unusual kinetic sculpture by Czech artist Vratislav Novák’s represents the relentless passage of time and is a cautionary reminder of times past.
The Royal Game Preserve (Královská obora) – Stromovka

- Prague 7 – Bubeneč  www.prague.eu
- year-round
- access: C (to Nádraží Holešovice and then about 15 minutes on foot) or 6, 12 & 17 (to Výstaviště Holešovice)

A picturesque oasis of peace and relaxation, an island of greenery in the midst of a noisy metropolis, Prague’s largest and most beloved park: that’s Stromovka. Recently revitalised, its green expanse dotted with ponds and streams, flowerbeds and groves, Stromovka attracts a whole host of visitors the year round. Here you will find Bohemian hipsters, courting couples, joggers, in-line skaters and cyclists, families with children or dog lovers.

The dominant feature of the park is the romantic building of the Royal governor’s summer house, whose history dates back to the middle ages. Another significant building in Stromovka is the Šlechta restaurant, initially a Royal hall dating from 1689–1691, currently undergoing a complete refurbishment and due to reopen in 2019. Also interesting is the so-called Rudolph’s water tunnel from the 17th century – a technological marvel of its time, supplying water to the local ponds. For edification, do visit the eastern end of the park, where you’ll find the Planetarium and the Marold panoramic painting of the Battle of Lipany.

Riegrovy sady park

- Prague 2 – Vinohrady  www.prague.eu
- year-round
- access: 11 & 13 (to Vinohradská tržnice) and then about 4 minutes walk along Budečská street or 135 (to Na Smetance)

This park, over a century old, was established by combining the sloped local vineyards and gardens. For today’s visitors it has many cosy nooks to offer, set among groves and meadows, with offbeat vistas of Prague. In the upper section, you’ll find a spacious beer garden, shaded by chestnut trees. As for historical buildings, the neo-classical lookout tower called Mlékárna (‘The Dairy’) dating from the 1820s, is now remodelled as a restaurant. The lower section of the park is anchored by the impressive statue of the Czech politician František Ladislav Rieger, after whom the park is named.
The grounds of the “Grébovka” villa, also known under the name Havlíčkovy sady, comprise the park itself plus a renewed vineyard, first established in the 14th century under the patronage of Emperor Charles IV. The park is inspired by the Italian Renaissance and planted with dozens of domestic and exotic trees; its varied landscape features include a fountain, water cascade, pond, and a host of statues, as well as an alluring artificial cave, or grotto. This green retreat was built in the second half of the 19th century by Prague industrialist Moritz Gröbe, who also put up several notable buildings on the grounds. Firstly, there’s the two-storey neo-Renaissance villa, which these days serves as an occasional venue for cultural events. Then there are the former pavilion (now the garden café) and the distinctive wooden vineyard gazebo, where you can enjoy wine from the vineyard growing directly below.
The Vyšehrad parks
(Vyšehradské, Karlachovy a Štulcovy sady)

📍 Prague 2 – Vyšehrad 🌍 www.praha-vysehrad.cz

Ο year-round (Vyšehrad buildings have their own opening hours)

📍 access: 🌍 C (to Vyšehrad) and then 🇨🇿 about 7 minutes walk

 предусмотрено 🌍 2, 3, 7, 17 & 21 or ferry P5 (to Výtoň) and 🇨🇿 about 10 minutes walk, or 🌍 7, 14, 18 & 24 (to Albertov) and 🇨🇿 about 9 minutes walk

Three interconnected city parks, on the grounds of the Vyšehrad fort – the other Prague castle. The distinctive atmosphere of these green spaces is underscored by more than just the buildings that have sprung up here from the 10th century; this legendary site is truly shrouded in the mists of time. It also offers a plethora of charming views of the city and the Vltava river. The largest of the parks Vyšehradské sady is home to four imposing statues depicting scenes from Czech mythology; the impression is complemented by the graceful lines of recently revitalized vineyards, on the south side above the river.

In Karlachovy sady you can try to unravel the riddle of the mysterious Devil’s column, whose origin and purpose still confound the experts. Pride of place in Štulcovy sady goes undoubtedly to a copy of the 17th-century equestrian statue of St Wenceslas that stood at the top end of Wenceslas Square until replaced by the present monument in 1879. The impressive neo-Gothic Basilica of Sts Peter and Paul is the crowning glory of this ‘triple park’ composition.

To soak up the spirit of Vyšehrad, take a leisurely stroll along the entire perimeter of its walls, stopping to enjoy the extraordinary views of the Nusle Valley and, on the southern side, the neighbourhoods of Podoli and Braník along the majestic course of the Vltava.
Park Folimanka and zahrada Ztracenka gardens

📍 Prague 2 – New Town ⬇️ www.prague.eu

🔒 park Folimanka – freely accessible year-round

 اللازمة Ztracenka – daily 8:00–20:00 (May–September) and daily 8:00–18:00 (October–April)

_access: 7, 14 & 24 (to Albertov) and then 👣 about 10 minutes walk via Horská street to the Ztracenka and Folimanka

A surprisingly large green expanse on the borders of Vinohrady, Nusle and the New Town. The park is bounded by a walled section of the Botič stream on one side, and opposite, by the terraced slope of the former vineyards, topped with medieval walls. The central, flatter section has undergone a thorough renovation, with playgrounds, a sports complex, a refreshments kiosk and other features. If you take a stroll into the Folimanka, you need not confine yourself to its reaches – to the north the park connects with other smaller green zones and the Ztracenka in particular.

Its name (‘the lost one’) is telling, because it really is hidden away from crowds, on the slopes between Karlov and Albertov. This once neglected and overgrown spot of greenery was turned into a beautiful park in Italian garden architecture style in 2010. Situated on the slopes, it has allowed the creation of distinctive brick terraces, laced with a network of paths, complemented by modern fittings and a number of newly planted trees and flowers. The exceptional vista of Prague is a nice bonus.

Sacré Coeur park

📍 Prague 5 – Smíchov ⬇️ www.prague.eu

🔒 year-round

_access: 4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16, 20 & 21 or 123, 167 & 191 (to Anděl), then 👣 about 9 minutes walk through the Nový Smíchov shopping mall

Small in size, but a very compelling park, spread out on a hill near the Anděl metro station. It covers the former vineyard and garden of the Church of the Lord Jesus convent. On the convent site now stands the neo-Gothic Chapel of the Sacré Coeur, which its owners use for secular purposes. The park is a great place for its smallest visitors, who can run about on several playgrounds or visit the mini zoo, where they can see kangaroos, ponies, a llama, parrots, crocodiles, iguanas or little monkeys in the tropical terrarium. From the hilltop, the view is of Smíchov and downtown Prague on the right bank of the Vltava river. The park can be reached from Drtinova street or via a bridge directly from the first floor of the Nový Smíchov shopping mall.
Ladronka park

Prague 6 – Břevnov  www.prague.eu

year-round

access:  22 & 25 or  164, 168, 180 & 191 (to Vypich)

A marvellous combination of a park and a sports-leisure complex. The place got its name from the manor house still standing on the site, which had been built as a busy roadside inn amidst thriving vineyards by a 17th-century Italian aristocrat. Today Ladronka is a particular favourite of in-line skaters, as it boasts the longest illuminated in-line track in Prague (4.2 km). You may rent sports equipment here as well. The Ladronka building itself has been refurbished as a cultural and social centre and a restaurant. In the vicinity of the manor you can enjoy a modern playground, as well as beach volleyball and pétanque courts. Every year the park also hosts one of the leading leisure-time festivals in Central Europe – the Ladronkafest.

Obora Hvězda game park

Prague 6 – Břevnov  www.prague.eu

year-round

access:  22 & 25 or  164 (to Obora Hvězda)

This extensive wooded park has three dominant avenues that converge to the Renaissance summerhouse, on its unique six-pointed star ground plan. It used to serve the recreational coursing and hunting of Prague’s 16th-century nobility and burghers; today is a large leisure zone, used by Praguers and out-of-towners for relaxation, walking, jogging, cycling, dog-walking, and in winter even cross-country skiing. The game park has an interesting nature trail, describing the local fauna, flora and history, including the circumstances of the fateful Battle of White Mountain (1620) fought hereabouts. Families with children can feel right at home – there are several playgrounds, two picnic areas with firepits, and in high season the summer house opens a cafe with light refreshments and hosts exhibitions and concerts.
It has been said that palace parks are like brilliant necklaces adorning the necks of stately homes. The metaphor says it all, so much so that other paraphrases would be superfluous.

Průhonice park

- **Obec Průhonice**  [www.pruhonickypark.cz](http://www.pruhonickypark.cz)
- **Access:**  🏢 (to Opatov) and 📅363 & 385 (to Průhonice)

A short bus ride outside Prague city limits is all it takes to reach this extensive landscaped park on the southeastern outskirts of Prague. Picturesque and romantic (and thus a favourite of couples as well as filmmakers), the park was founded in 1885 by count Silva-Tarouca and has been on the UNESCO World Heritage list since 2012. The main walking trail around the Botič stream valley meanders around three ponds, oxbow lakes and backwater leas full of wildflowers. If you were to follow all the twists and turns, you would be on a forty kilometre walk, all of it on newly paved surfaces. Along the way, you can admire the arboretum with its wealth of domestic and exotic species and the huge collection of rhododendrons. Towering over this perfect symbiosis of a park and natural countryside is a romantic château, originally a medieval castle. The park is lovely to visit anytime but especially stunning in the spring when its rhododendrons erupt in a frenzy of colour.

Ctěnice château estate grounds

- **Bohdanečská 259/1, Prague 9 – Vinoř**  [www.muzeumprahy.cz](http://www.muzeumprahy.cz)
- **Access:**  🏢 (to Letňany) and 📅185 & 302 (to Ctěnice)

This peerlessly preserved medieval castle and working estate lies on the northeastern edge of the city. The whole complex of buildings has been remodelled over time to suit the period, in the Renaissance and later the Baroque style, and along with it, a charming park abutting its northern and eastern side. It currently takes the guise of a landscape, with an avenue of fruit trees along it. The park makes clever use of a flowing stream as part of the composition, straddled by a few small bridges and walkways. In the northeastern part stands a new gazebo, a popular venue for wedding ceremonies, and behind it a seasonal château garden.
centre. Families with kids will appreciate the smaller playground at the park entrance, the exquisite restaurant and the frequent exhibitions aimed at the château’s youngest visitors.

**Troja château garden**

* (Trojská zámecká zahrada)

- **Location:** U Trojského zámku 1, Prague 7 – Troja  
- **Website:** [www.ghmp.cz](http://www.ghmp.cz)
- **Opening Hours:** Tue–Sun 10:00–19:00 and Fri 13:00–19:00 (April–October)
- **Access:** C (to Nádraží Holešovice) and 112 (to Zoologická zahrada)

One of Prague’s loveliest gardens enveloping the Troja château since the end of the 17th century. The eye-catching axial disposition and geometric precision make unexpected lines of sight appear throughout the grounds. Architecturally speaking, this is a typical Baroque garden in the French style laid out in three sections on two levels. It features a number of statues, rare decorative terracotta vases, pergolas, smaller fountains and a modern water feature fountain. The eastern part has an orchard with a hornbeam and water-hazard labyrinth. Several times a year Troja château garden also hosts various cultural and gastronomic events. The château itself, with its exceptional fresco decoration and showcased artworks, is definitely not to be missed.
The Islands of the metropolis are like green necklace beads along the Vltava. They are an enticing, vibrant territory to visit, with leisure and relaxation zones that by the summer turn into large open-air communities.

Kampa park

📍 Prague 1 – Lesser Town 🌐 www.prague.eu
 sö year-round
📍 access: 9, 12, 15, 20, 22 & 23 (to Újezd) and then 4 minutes walk along Říční street

Prague would not be Prague without its Kampa. This island between the main flow of the Vltava river and its Čertovka arm is one of the most picturesque places in the metropolis and ranks among the most impressive urban islands in Europe. This comes down to not just its attractive location on the banks of the Lesser Town, but also its quaint, almost fairytale atmosphere that seems to emanate from every wall of its ancient houses, mills and palaces, with the arches of Charles Bridge romantically straddling the island to the north. The south lawns are widely used for cultural and social events of all kinds, for picnics or just relaxing.

No art lover should miss the renowned Museum Kampa, in the former Sova’s Mills, with a collection of works by the pioneer of abstract art, František Kupka, and more; also noteworthy is the Werich villa with its exhibition on the life and work of this Czech cultural icon.
**Střelecký ostrov ‘Shooters’ island**

- Prague 1 – Old Town [www.prague.eu](http://www.prague.eu)
- Year-round
- Access: 2, 9, 17, 18, 22 & 23 (to Národní divadlo) and then walk about 5 minutes along the Most Legií bridge.

A quiet spot in the very heart of the city, hidden in the shade of ancient trees and the Most Legií bridge, attracting visitors with its relaxed atmosphere and unusual views of the city.

The island served from the 14th century as a shooting training ground (hence the name), and its history is peppered with many a strategic role in defending the Old Town. The southern part of the island hosts a restaurant building of architectural merit and public-access sports facilities. The northern half serves as a public park with several children’s playgrounds. From time to time there are festivals, concerts or open-air festivals.

**Slovanský ostrov ‘Slavic’ island**

- Prague 1 – New Town [www.prague.eu](http://www.prague.eu)
- Year-round
- Access: 2, 9, 17, 18, 22 & 23 (to Národní divadlo)

Just a few dozen yards from Střelecký Island and right under the watchful eyes of the National Theatre, in the Vltava River, bathes the banks of Slavic Island. Although its history reaches less far into the past (it was made by successive deposits of soil during the 17th century), it has a firm place in the national psyche. The island’s centrepiece is the Žofín Palace, a neo-Renaissance building built in 1836–1837 and named after the Austrian Archduchess Sophie, mother of Emperor Franz Joseph I. The showy building became the setting of the Prague Slavic Congress of 1848, and the entire island was indeed – until the construction of the Municipal House – the hub of Prague cultural and social events. Major concerts, balls and conferences continue to be held at Žofín Palace to this day.

Another couple of architecturally impressive buildings stand at the island’s southern end – the Renaissance Štítkovská water tower and the Functionalism building of the Mánes Association of Fine Artists. In other respects, this is an island like the others – a popular destination for family outings and recreational treats. Among the most popular are river rides on small rowing boats and pedalos – you’ll find no fewer than three rental companies on the island.
Most popular among Prague’s ‘green’ walks are places associated with the care and protection of rare fauna and flora. These include the zoological and botanical gardens, bringing education and edification on the natural world to a wider public, for the good of all.

**Prague Zoo (Zoologická zahrada hl. m. Prahy)**

📍 U Trojského zámku 3, Prague 7 – Troja  📺 www.zoopraha.cz
⏰ daily 9:00–17:00 (March), daily 9:00–18:00 (April, May, September, October), daily 9:00–21:00 (June–August) and daily 9:00–16:00 (November–February)
🌍 access:  🐊 (to Nádraží Holešovice) and  🚌 112 (to Zoologická zahrada), from April to October also from Rašinovo nábřeží waterfront or Čechův most bridge by steamer down the Vltava river (see  📺 www.paroplavba.cz)

The Prague Zoo is one of the most beloved destinations in the Czech Republic. Its unique location and great biodiversity make it one of the most beautiful zoological gardens in the world. Its varied terrain on the right bank of the Vltava river comprises swamplands, a steppe-like meadow, a large, steep rockface, wooded areas, and much more. An exotic walk of up to ten kilometres takes visitors through its African savannah, Gorilla pavilion, Indonesian jungle, Water world, Hippo Pavilion, Valley of the Elephants, and more. In 2015 it was rated 4th in the world in the TripAdvisor site rankings. Also very popular is the chairlift that connects the lower and upper part of the zoo, the lookout tower in the western part of the complex, and a large children’s playground with a central tower. As for events, feeding times and evening guided tours are very well attended.
Prague Botanical Garden (Botanická zahrada Praha)

- Trojská 196, Prague 7 – Troja  www.botanicka.cz
- outdoor gardens and the St Clara vineyard – daily 9:00–16:00 (November–February), daily 9:00–17:00 (March and October), daily 9:00–18:00 (April), daily 9:00–20:00 (May–August) and daily 9:00–19:00 (September); Fata Morgana greenhouse – Tue–Sun 9:00–18:00 (April–September), Tue–Sun 9:00–17:00 (March and October) and Tue–Sun 9:00–16:00 (November–February)
- access:  C (to Nádraží Holešovice) and 112 (to Zoologická zahrada), from April to October also from Rašínovo nábřeží waterfront or Čechův most bridge by steamer down the Vltava river (see  www.paroplavba.cz)

This tiny emerald gem in downtown Prague retains its original charm, its botanical history dating back to the late 19th century. In addition to an arboretum, the garden has greenhouses showing off tropica and a collection of cacti and other succulents. In the summer, the plant collection from the humid subtropics is put out in the open, grouped by the continents of the various species. Perhaps the most remarkable collection is that of Central European flora, founded back in 1904. The greater part of the grounds comprises a park, with a relaxing refugium shelter. Admission is charged only to the greenhouses the exteriors are free.

The Botanical Garden of Charles University (Botanická zahrada UK)

- Na Slupi 16, Prague 2 – New Town  www.bz-uk.cz
- exteriors – daily 10:00–18:00 (September–March), daily 10:00–19:30 (April–August); greenhouses – daily 10:00–16:00 (February–March), daily 10:00–17:00 (April–October) and daily 10:00–15:30 (November–January)
- access: 14, 18 & 24 (to Botanická zahrada)

Located on a picturesque hillside in Troja, the Prague Botanical Garden is just the place for a calming stroll or a family outing. Away from the city’s stresses, you can take in the invigorating powers of nature, in large indoor and outdoor spaces beset with 20,000 plant species. You can hide from the hot summer sun in Nordic pine groves, meditate in the Japanese garden or enjoy a perfect picnic overlooking the brightly coloured flowers in the Ornamental garden. The uniquely designed Fata Morgana glasshouse, faithfully simulating lush jungle with its exotic flora is a world apart. Elsewhere, spreading out beneath a baroque chapel is the St Clara vineyard, among the largest and oldest in Prague. In the winery cottage or on its terrace you can sample or buy local wine, made in the old way directly in the cellars below the vineyard.
Vast natural expanses of greenery are wedged into the bulging circumference of Prague’s agglomeration and are a distinctive hallmark of the metropolis. On such a walk, through deep valleys, rocky gorges and uninterrupted woodland stretches, you’d hardly believe you’re moving within the city limits.

**Divoká Šárka natural park**

*Prague 6 – Liboc*  
*www.prague.eu*  
*year-round*  
*access: 20 & 26 or 108, 119, 191 & 225 (to Divoká Šárka)*

A romantic valley in the northwest of the capital city is among the most rugged and picturesque areas within Prague and genuinely lets you forget you are – actually – still in Prague. Its territory is considered unique nationwide, from a geological, archaeological, botanical and zoological point of view. It is a landscape of steep rocks, upland plateaux, grove, meadow, and grassland habitats, dramatically sculpted by the Šárecký brook. The rugged terrain did not escape the attention of our ancestors – here, in a fitting location above the valley stood the first fortified Slavonic township of Prague, built in the 8th and 9th century. Nowadays, Divoká Šárka profits from good transport access and is a hit with cyclists, hikers, and in the summer, families with children looking to cool down in an outdoor pool or lake (Divoká Šárka conveniently features both). Marked trails traverse the valley, but a good pair of walking shoes is a must as the paths are not paved.

**Prokopské & Dalejské údolí natural parks**

*Prague 5 – Hlubočepy*  
*www.prague.eu*  
*year-round*  
*access: B (to Nové Butovice) and then about 20 minutes on foot past the Galerie Butovice shopping mall or 120 (to Drejerova) or 130 & 174 (to Reporyjské náměstí)*

The Prokopské & Dalejské údolí natural park is formed by the northernmost outcrops of the Bohemian Karst, which extends into Prague. The attractive landscape is defined by deep valleys, shaped over the millennia by local streams, with dramatic rock outcrops and some disused quarries. The rocks here are predominantly varieties of limestone, making for a rocky-steppe ecosystem and biodiverse
flora and fauna. Hence, some specially protected areas have been designated.

Both the valleys have cycle paths running along their base, numerous hiking trails and two educational nature trails. The greatest attraction, however, is a scenic trip on a cute little railway train along a boldly engineered railway line, which crosses over the valley on imposing 20 metre high viaducts (listed as a technical monument). It is nicknamed the ‘Prague Semmering’ after the Alpine track in Austria. The historical engine departs from the central train station every Saturday, Sunday and on public holidays, and finishes up at Zličín.
Kunratický les woodland

Prague 4 – Kunratice  www.prague.eu
© year-round
 acceso:  C (to Roztyly)

This almost 300 hectare (740 acres) green island in the middle of a dense urban landscape of prefabricated housing projects is a popular Prague natural retreat and one of the largest wooded complexes in the capital. Its western border is delimited by Kunratický potok/creek, whose environs are protected as a natural monument. The woodland is traversed by several marked hiking trails and cycle paths; there is also a mini-zoo, a playground, pavilions to take a break in, a great many benches, two picnic areas with a firepit and a woodland-themed nature trail.

The woodland dates back to the 14th century, along with the Nový Hrádek castle King Wenceslas IV had built here, often visited, and indeed took his last breath in, in 1419. What remains is only a romantic ruin of the once richly decorated medieval seat.

Chuchelský háj grove

Prague 5 – Velká Chuchle  www.prague.eu
© year-round
 acceso:  129, 172, 241, 244, 314 & 318 (to Malá Chuchle) and then about 10 minutes walk along the yellow route uphill or  172 (to Velká Chuchle) and about 9 minutes walk along the yellow route

A wooded region on the southwestern edge of the metropolis, on the slopes above the left bank of the Vltava river, between Velká and Malá Chuchle. Chuchelský háj is in an attempt to maintain the original groves with their abundance of rare species of flora and fauna, along with the highly prized rock-steppe plant communities, protected as a nature reserve. The dominant feature here is the Baroque church of St John of Nepomuk with a cemetery and a war memorial, and from it, an astonishing view of nearby Prague.

For public edification, there is a nature trail with fourteen stopping points, taking you on a fascinating trip through geological and human history.

Youngsters are always keen to see the mini zoo, with mouflon wild sheep, fallow and red deer, arctic foxes, lynx, ravens, goats, sheep, wild boar, eagle owls, buzzards, and other forest animals. Technical aficionados enjoy a look at Pacoldova vápenka limekiln – a preserved industrial rarity from the second half of the 19th century. The limekiln interior is currently closed for public.

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