



# Day Trips from Prague

## Karlštejn Castle p181

Visiting the Czech Republic's most famous castle, perched on a hilltop like a fairy-tale fortress, is the most popular day trip from Prague.

## Konopiště Chateau p183

The former country retreat of Archduke Franz Ferdinand (whose assassination sparked WWI) offers a fascinating insight into its aristocratic owner.

## Kutná Hora p184

Built on the riches generated by silver mining, Kutná Hora once rivalled Prague in importance, and still boasts a treasure house of historical monuments.

## Mělník p186

The Lobkowicz family chateau and its tiny, but historic, vineyard are the focus of Bohemia's modest winegrowing region.

## Terezín p188

This grim 18th-century fortress served as a concentration camp during WWII, and is today a moving museum to the horrors of the Holocaust.



## TOP SIGHT KARLŠTEJN CASTLE

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**Rising above the village of Karlštejn, 30km southwest of Prague, Karlštejn Castle is rightly one of the top attractions in the Czech Republic. This fairy-tale medieval fortress is in such good shape that it wouldn't look out of place on Disney World's Main Street. Unfortunately, the crowds that throng its courtyards come in theme-park proportions too – in summer it's mobbed with visitors, ice-cream vendors and souvenir stalls.**

Thankfully, the peaceful surrounding countryside offers views of Karlštejn's stunning exterior that rival anything you'll see on the inside. If at all possible, visit midweek or out of season, and avoid the queues at the castle ticket office by purchasing your tickets in advance via the link on the castle's website.

**Karlštejn Information Centre** (Informační centrum Karlštejn; ☎311 681 370; [www.karlstejnsko.cz](http://www.karlstejnsko.cz); Pension Vinice, Karlštejn 334; ☀8am-8pm) is across the road from the main car park.

### History

Perched high on a crag overlooking the Berounka River, Karlštejn was born of a grand pedigree, starting life in 1348 as a hideaway for the crown jewels and treasury of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV. Run by an appointed burgrave, the castle was surrounded by a network of landowning knight-vassals, who came to the castle's aid whenever enemies moved against it.

Karlštejn again sheltered the Bohemian and the Holy Roman Empire crown jewels during the Hussite Wars of the early 15th century, but fell into disrepair as its defences became

### DON'T MISS...

- ◆ Chapel of the Holy Cross
- ◆ Knight's Hall
- ◆ Charles IV's Bed-chamber
- ◆ Audience Hall
- ◆ Jewel House
- ◆ Views from the Great Tower

### PRACTICALITIES

- ◆ Hrad Karlštejn
- ◆ ☎311 681 617
- ◆ [www.hradkarlstejn.cz](http://www.hradkarlstejn.cz)
- ◆ ☀9am-6.30pm Jul & Aug, 9.30am-5.30pm Tue-Sun May, Jun & Sep, to 5pm Apr, to 4.30pm Oct, to 4pm Mar, reduced hours Sat & Sun only Dec-Feb