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the best of



# HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ



MCU



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**The Rock for People Festival** is one of the largest music festivals in Central Europe. Since 2007 it has been regularly held in June or July at the former military airport in Hradec Králové. More information on page 63 and at: [rockforpeople.cz](http://rockforpeople.cz)



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# HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ

## the best of

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*Hradec Králové is renowned for its sensitive combination of historical and modern architecture – Baroque Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and Gočár's Staircase.*

## HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ



**Publisher:** Vydavatelství MCU s. r. o.

Chvalšinská 242, 381 01 Český Krumlov



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**Technical editor:** Radek Eliášek

**Texts:** Statutory City of Hradec Králové,  
Vydavatelství MCU – Jan Eliášek (responsible editor)

**Translation:** Bryce Belcher

**Photo:** archive of the Statutory City of Hradec Králové – Jaroslav Horák, Ondřej Littera,  
Zdeněk Puš, Robert Průcha, Lukáš Taneček, archive of the Vydavatelství MCU, Libor Sváček  
**Map:** city archive

**Typesetting, graphic design:** Vydavatelství MCU – Pavel Dvořák, Jan Eliášek

**Expert consultation:** Milena Březinová

**Advertising:** Emil Fedoš

**www.VisitHradecKralove.cz website management:** info@mcumedia.cz

1st edition, Český Krumlov 2024, 72 pages

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Published in cooperation with the Municipality of Hradec Králové.



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ISBN 978-80-7339-369-4

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The unmistakable symbols of Hradec Králové –  
Cathedral of the Holy Spirit and the White Tower.

## Welcome to Hradec Králové,

the city of **Bohemian queens** at the confluence of the **Elbe and Orlice Rivers**, a city of greenery, a city with a unique **urban concept** and important architectural **monuments**. Hradec Králové is one of the largest and most important cities in the Czech Republic. It is the main **metropolis of eastern Bohemia** and a regional seat, home to state institutions, important companies, museums, galleries, theaters, and other cultural and sports organizations. It is also a **university town**, home to seven faculties of three universities.

A distinguishing characteristic of Hradec Králové is its broad spectrum of architectural styles and is often referred to as a **“textbook of architecture”**. It offers experiences, entertainment, and knowledge; the doors of its museums, galleries, theaters, and concert halls are open for those seeking culture and art. For parents with children, the city offers interactive exhibitions, outdoor and indoor playgrounds, and sports facilities. Its greenery, forests, and the banks of



*The **double-tailed lion** is the basic symbol of the city's emblem and appears on its oldest surviving seal from 1362. Hradec Králové started using the **letter G** in the shield even before 1400. The two emblems merged over the years, and the town has been using the emblem in its present form since the beginning of the 18th century with the strict description: “A red shield with a left-looking silver two-tailed lion with a golden crown, a golden tongue and golden teeth and claws, holding a golden letter G in its front paws”.*

the Elbe and Orlice Rivers attract outdoor enthusiasts. All of this comes together to offer visitors and tourists, wherever you're from, a feeling of ease. Just ask the locals of Hradec Králové why they love to call this city home.

**Come explore and let us welcome you!**



The lion will accompany you almost every step of the way in our Hradec (see page 29).

## BRIEF HISTORY

The **confluence of the Elbe and Orlice Rivers** was inhabited in prehistoric times, as evidenced by finds from the time of prehistory, ancient Rome, and Slavic hillforts. The first written mention of Hradec Králové as a town is in the charter of King Přemysl Otakar I **from 1225**, thus proving that Hradec is one of the oldest towns in Bohemia.

At the beginning of the 14th century, Hradec Králové became a **royal dowry town**. Royal dowry towns were an important source of income as well as a refuge for Bohemian queens. Two queens, **Elizabeth Richeza** and **Elizabeth of Pomerania**, made their mark on the history of Hradec Králové. Elizabeth Richeza (1288–1335) was married to King Wenceslas II and Rudolph of Habsburg. After Rudolph's death, she moved to Hradec Králové then spent the last years of her life in Brno. The construction of the Gothic Church of the Holy Spirit, later upgraded to a cathedral, was one of Elizabeth Richeza's initiatives. Elizabeth



Busts of **Queens Elizabeth Richeza** (left) and **Elizabeth of Pomerania** are located in the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit.

of Pomerania (1346/1347–1393) was the fourth wife of the Czech king and Roman Emperor Charles IV of Luxembourg. Legend holds that Elizabeth was able to straighten horseshoes. After the death of Charles IV, she took refuge in Hradec Králové.

During the **Renaissance**, when both local and foreign craftsmen worked in Hradec Králové, the second dominant feature of the square was created, the **White Tower**. The town continued to develop with the arrival of the Jesuits. The **Baroque** style is represented in Hradec Králové, for example, by the Bishop's Residence and the Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, and there is also a Marian Plague Column. During the reigns of **Maria Theresa** and **Joseph II**, the town was converted into a military fortress due to its strategic location.

After the unsuccessful **battle at nearby Chlum** on 3 July 1866, the fortress was

### Did you know...?

*Hradec Králové was a dowry town of Bohemian queens. These towns served as facilities and a source of income for the wives of the rulers. They also supplied the royal table with selected foodstuffs. For example, Jaroměř supplied salmon, Mělník wine, Nový Bydžov crayfish, and Hradec Králové provided pheasants.*



**Elizabeth Richeza** on a picture from the Zbraslav Chronicle.



The Cathedral of the Holy Spirit – Queen's Antechamber.



Detail of the sculptural decoration of the **Marian Column in the Great Square**. The Baroque column was built in 1714–17 as a thanksgiving for averting a plague. The plinths in the foreground bear the figures of St. John of Nepomuk and St. Sebastian. The oldest depiction of the new town emblem, a relief of a lion holding the letter G, is also preserved on the column.

closed. The demolition of the walls allowed further development and the construction of the modern town.

The mayor **František Ulrich** (1859–1939) had the greatest influence on the development of **modern Hradec Králové**. His work on a good regulation plan allowed for the creation of a unique modern center. The historic core has been a city conservation area since 1962 and is surrounded by equally important modern architecture of the first half of the 20th century. The appearance of the city today was mostly influenced by two important Czech architects.

**Professor Jan Kotěra** (1871–1923) designed several important buildings, of which the Museum of East Bohemia from 1909–1912 is considered the most magnificent. His pupil, **Professor Josef Gočár** (1880–1945), continued his building activities according to modern principles of regulation and urbanism. The V Lipkách school building complex and Gočár's Staircase are well known. The city's urbanism, excellent architectural works, concept of its master plan, and its high level of services have attracted many admirers, experts, and lay visitors to the city, and Hradec Králové has rightly earned the nickname "**Salon of the Republic**".



The White Tower, the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, terraces under the Canon Houses.

#### Did you know...?

In 1424, the Hussite warrior **Jan Žižka of Trocnov** was buried in the Church of the Holy Spirit for the first time (but only temporarily before he was moved to Čáslav).

station with the "Hučák" Bridge designed by the architect Sander. Fňouk's Garages and Liska's city spa with its unique plate wave are also interesting.

But the modern city is not only the work of architects Kotěra and Gočár. Among the most beautiful buildings in Hradec Králové is the **city's hydroelectric power**

**New architectural works** are still being created in the city today, such as the modern Public Transport Terminal and the Study and Research Library.



The modern **Study and Research Library** was inaugurated in 2008.



**Did you know...?**

The clock on the **White Tower** is hard to overlook — the hands measure time unusually in that the small one shows minutes and the large one shows hours.

## HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ HIGHLIGHTS

As the pages of this guide will reveal, there is a lot to see and experience in Hradec Králové, so you'll likely have to decide "what to skip". Hopefully, this list of Hradec Králové's highlights will make your decision easier.

### ▶ CATHEDRAL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Originally a church, then after the foundation of the bishopric in 1664 it was elevated to a cathedral. The Gothic brick building was founded by Queen Elizabeth Richeza in 1308. In 1864–1874 the building was rebuilt in Neo-Gothic style, then the towers were modified in 1901. The cathedral is 56 m long, and the nave is 33 m high. The oldest depiction of the town's coat of arms from 1463 is on the center of the chancel.

[www.dekanstvihk.cz](http://www.dekanstvihk.cz)

### ▶ WHITE TOWER

With a height of 72 m, the Renaissance landmark of the town offers a unique view of the entire town and the surrounding area. On the way to the gallery, you'll pass the Augustin Bell (the third largest in the Czech Republic), original clock machinery by Josef Božek, and a unique glass model of the White Tower in a scale of 1:20.

See page 15.

[www.bilavez.cz](http://www.bilavez.cz)

### ▶ MUSEUM OF EAST BOHEMIA

The monumental museum building, now a national cultural monument, was built according to a plan by architect Jan Kotěra in 1909–1912. The permanent multimedia exhibition of the history of the city of Hradec Králové "Paths of the City" includes three thematic routes: the Path to the City of Bohemian Queens, the Path to the Fortress, and To the Salon of the Republic.

[www.muzeumhk.cz](http://www.muzeumhk.cz)



*Museum of East Bohemia.*

### ▶ GALLERY OF MODERN ART

The Gallery's collections mainly trace the development of Czech modern art from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries to the present. Throughout the year, the gallery hosts lectures, guided tours, and other accompanying programs. Even the late Art Nouveau building itself is a worthwhile exhibit.

[www.galeriehk.cz](http://www.galeriehk.cz)

### ▶ BONO PUBLICO STAIRCASE

This 37-meter-long covered Empire style staircase connects Komenský Street and the Great Square. Sophisticated lighting and an optional sound system showcasing compositions by Czech masters make passing through it even more pleasant. Adjacent to the staircase are the park-like terraces of Karel Otčenášek. The stairs are oak, and its name "Bono Publico" means "public good".



*Staircase Bono Publico.*





The **Elbe Power Station**, otherwise known as **Hučák**, was connected to the power grid on 12 February 1910 at 2 p.m. That same evening, it ceremonially lit the arc lamps in the Great Square.

### ▶ HUČÁK SMALL HYDROELECTRIC POWER PLANT

This unique Art Nouveau power plant building designed by František Sander has been supplying electricity to its surroundings since 1910. Its information center features interactive exhibits, a laboratory with experiments, and virtual reality instruments which engagingly present the principles of using alternative energy sources – water, wind, sun, biomass, and geothermal energy.

[www.cez.cz/hucak](http://www.cez.cz/hucak)

### ▶ OBSERVATORY AND PLANETARIUM

This modern digital planetarium close by the observatory resembles a UFO saucer. State-of-the-art technology puts the universe almost within your reach. The planetarium also includes the interactive exhibitions “Microworld – Macroworld” and “Energy – Forms and Transformations”. Two educational trails, the Planetary and Galactic trails, start in front of the observatory. See page 31.

[www.astrohk.cz](http://www.astrohk.cz)

### ▶ PETROF MUSEUM

The museum of this world-famous musical instrument manufacturer features unique pieces of piano craftsmanship that the company has produced during its nearly 160-year history. You can even try out the unique pianos, pianos, harmoniums, and self-playing instruments.

[www.muzeumpetrof.cz](http://www.muzeumpetrof.cz)

### ▶ CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS

This 17th century church was bought by the city of Hradec Králové in 1935 from the eastern Slovak village of Malá Poľana. It was inaugurated in 1935 in the beautiful surroundings of the Jirásek Gardens as a memorial to the fallen in the First World War. See page 33.

[www.kostelstavetehomikulase.cz](http://www.kostelstavetehomikulase.cz)

### ▶ CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN MARY

The Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary on the Great Square is a single-nave building with paired side chapels and a richly decorated facade with two side



**Did you know...?**

The interior of the **Ambrož Church** will soon feature the Hradec Králové glockenspiel. When completed, it will have 50 bells and will be the largest bell instrument in the Czech Republic.

towers. The Jesuits began construction of the church according to a design by Carlo Lurago in 1652, and the two towers were erected in 1661. After fires and historical tragedies, only the bell dedicated to the Virgin Mary in the west tower adjacent to the former Jesuit college has survived.

[www.kostelphk.cz](http://www.kostelphk.cz)

### ▶ AMBROŽ CHURCH

The functionalist complex of the Ambrož Community Church of the Czechoslovak Hussite Church (1926-1928) designed by architect Josef Gočár is an excellent example of an urban composition built on an unusual triangular building plot. Its shape resembles a ship, which is no coincidence. It was inspired by the form of ocean liners of the time.

[www.csshk.cz](http://www.csshk.cz)



**Our TIP**

## WHITE TOWER

The Renaissance White Tower is the highest landmark of the town (72 m). It received its name from the bright color of the Horice sandstone from which it is built. The tower houses a unique **glass model of the tower** in a scale of 1:20 with an interactive tour using modern audiovisual elements. You can inspect the **Augustin Bell** (the 3rd largest in the Czech Republic) and the original **clockwork**. The **gallery** treats visitors with a unique view of Hradec Králové as well as the distant peaks of the Krkonoše and Orlické Mountains.

This Renaissance monument offers unique experiences during the year in addition to the classic tours. You can experience **sunrise** from the White Tower, **night tours**, the **ringing of the Augustin Bell**, the bell-ringing ceremony, and seasonal tours linked to traditions or enlivened by costumed characters.



[www.bilavez.cz](http://www.bilavez.cz)



Did you know...?

*Prof. Jan Kotěra often designed interior design and furniture sets. His work on funerary architecture and designs for electric cars and railway carriages are also significant.*

## PROMINENT ARCHITECTS

Quality modern architecture requires enlightened builders and specifiers. Such was the mayor of Hradec Králové **JUDr. František Ulrich** (1859–1939). It was mainly thanks to him that the talents of the leading architects of the Art Nouveau and interwar avant-garde periods could be fully developed in Hradec Králové. Let's take a closer look at two important personalities whose work significantly shaped the face of the city – Jan Kotěra and Josef Gočár.

### **JAN KOTĚRA** (1871–1923)

Kotěra's architectural expression gradually evolved from the Art Nouveau architecture of the early phase in 1898–1905, which he gradually stripped of decorative elements, to the peak period in 1906–1912 marked by modernism (**the museum in Hradec Králové**) to the Neoclassicism of the late period in 1913–1923. Kotěra reflected the current development of architecture in his work and transformed everything into his own unique style. He collaborated with a number of artists. In Hradec Králové, one encounters realizations from all phases of the architect's work, including his

culminating work – the museum building. Although Jan Kotěra was not the only one who created and influenced the modern architecture and urban planning of the city, his pre-war works sketched the main contours of the future "**Salon of the Republic**".

### **JOSEF GOČÁR** (1880–1945)

This architect, urban planner, publicist, and professor at the Academy of Fine Arts is one of our most important architects. One of his first projects, an Art Nouveau facade of tenement houses in Hradec Králové, foreshadowed his future long-term work in this city. He is the author of the **regulatory plan** of Hradec Králové as well as the author of important buildings that gradually fulfilled the vision of the plan. This is how the modern public space of the developing city was created (Ulrich Square, the buildings on the right bank of the Elbe, etc.). Josef Gočár's architectural work evolved from Art Nouveau, Cubism, and brick Czech architectural modernism to functionalism and constructivism.

The work of Josef Gočár and other architects (Jan Kotěra, Otakar Liska, the Rejchl brothers, and others) made Hradec Králové, without exaggeration, a "**textbook of architecture in the open air**". These buildings are also a showcase of the tumultuous progress of building in the first half of the 20th century from a structural point of view.



Josef Gočár



*The staircase designed by Josef Gočár has connected the Great Square with Komenský Street since 1910. For its time, it was a very bold entry of modern architecture into the historic buildings (Baroque Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in the background).*



University of Hradec Králové.

## HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ – A UNIVERSITY TOWN

For centuries, Hradec Králové has been (and still is) a natural center of spiritual life, culture, and education in East Bohemia. The history of education here goes back deep into the Middle Ages with the **Latin parochial school**; it was founded in 1362 (only 14 years after Charles University in Prague) and was the forerunner of the famous Hradec Králové Grammar School. Many eminent personalities studied or taught there and at other schools, e.g. the mathematician and astronomer, professor of Charles University Stanislav Vydra, historian Václav Vladivoj Tomek, and one of the creators of the Czech national revival, the Catholic priest Josef Liboslav Ziegler. Others include playwrights V. K. Klicpera and J. K. Tyl, poets K. J. Erben, Václav Hanka, and the author of the Czech national anthem František Škroup, writers Alois Jirásek and Karel Čapek, politician Alois Rašín, and of course Dr. František Ulrich, the legendary mayor of Hradec Králové. It was during his time that the idea of establishing the University of Hradec Králové was born.

The local tradition of **medical studies** is outstanding – in 1945 a branch of the Prague Faculty of Medicine of Charles University was established here, and after 1948 it became the seat of several other universities – the Military Medical



**Did you know...?**

The modern **campus** of the University of Hradec Králové, a few steps from the historic city center, is a meeting place for thousands of young people, both domestic and foreign. In addition to **lecture halls**, seminar and computer rooms, there is a **university library**, a script shop, and an **art gallery** as well as **relaxation zones**, cafeterias, and other places to unwind.



*The campus of Charles University in Hradec Králové is a joint project of the Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Pharmacy of Charles University in Hradec Králové. The **MEPHARED Education and Research Centre** is expected to be used by approximately 3,600 students upon completion.*

Academy in 1951, the Faculty of Pedagogy (Pedagogical Institute from 1959), and the Faculty of Pharmacy in 1969. In 2015, Charles University inaugurated the first of the **new campus buildings**. The Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Pharmacy of Charles University use the new premises in a five-storey building near the University Hospital.

**Church education** also had a high level and prestige here. At the beginning of the 20th century, the first university of its type was established in Hradec Králové in terms of quality and length of studies.

The changes after 1989 finally contributed to the establishment of the **University of Hradec Králové** (in 2000). A **new campus** is currently being built on the left bank of the Orlice River, and a modern research library was completed in 2008.



**Did you know...?**

*One university is located in Hradec Králové while others have their branches here*

- University of Hradec Králové
- Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Medicine in Hradec Králové
- Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Pharmacy in Hradec Králové
- University of Defense in Brno, Faculty of Military Medicine

**Our TIP**

Route No. II, Salon of the Republic and Route No. III, Fortress

You can take a walk around Hradec Králové on one of the four **walking routes** aimed at architecture fans, or along one of the **thematic routes**. You will be guided by orientation stands in the appropriate color, such as these in front of **Museum of East Bohemia**. Maps and other information are available at the information center.

**CITY TOUR**

You can explore the most interesting and most important of the architecture of Hradec Králové through marked walking tours, each of which will comfortably guide you through a specific period of the city's construction.



[www.hradeckralove.org/prochazky](http://www.hradeckralove.org/prochazky)

**I. "HISTORIC CITY"**

The walking tour maps the city's building period from the Gothic period to the 19th century, and there are **13 information stands** with interesting information. Book about an hour and a half for this walk.

1/ **Town Hall (White Tower)** 2/ **John Paul Square** 3/ **Former Brewery**  
4/ **Bono Publico Staircase** 5/ **Jesuit College** 6/ **Gallery of Modern Art**  
7/ **Small Square** 8/ **Mýtská Street**  
9/ **Monument to L. J. Pospíšil**  
10/ **Žižka Gardens** 11/ **Klicpera Theater**  
12/ **Na Hradě** 13/ **St. John's Square**



Route I, Historical City

**Canon Houses** (Great Square): originally Renaissance houses rebuilt in Baroque style. The author of the reconstruction is most often considered to be **Jan Blažej Santini-Aichel**.



Route I, Historical City

**The Small Square** in the historical center is connected to the Great Square. The former **New Town Hall** was built as a classical reconstruction of older Renaissance buildings.



Route I, Historical City

**The Klicpera Theater** was opened in 1885 and has been a professional ensemble since 1949. It was named after the playwright **Václav Kliment Klicpera**, who was a professor at the town's grammar school.



Route No. II, Salon of the Republic

**Masaryk Square:** an intimate public space designed by **Josef Gočár** in the 1920s together with the corner building of the former Anglo-Czechoslovak Bank (1922–23). The facade consists of elements with a stylized **letter M** – a unique background for the **monument to T. G. Masaryk**, created by sculptor **Otto Gutfreund**. Most of the residential buildings on the south side of the square (1920s) were designed by architect **Oldřich Liska**. The dominant building on the square is the former Trade House (1912), designed by architect **Vladimír Fultner**.



Route No. II, Salon of the Republic

**Gočár's Schools:** the grounds of the former Rašín State Gymnasium (1925–1927, now the J. K. Tyl Gymnasium) were built according to **Josef Gočár's design**. The monumental corner facade is highlighted by a **bronze statue of Victory** (1928) by **Jan Štursa**. The modern complex of municipal and burgher schools, including a kindergarten (1927–1928), also designed by **Josef Gočár**, was one of the most modern in the country at the time for its generous conception, internal layout, and furnishings. The western wing of the school complex was built at the end of the 1950s according to the project of **Václav Rohlíček**.



Route No. III, Fortress

In the second half of the 18th century, the town was transformed into a large **Baroque fortress** (the most modern in the Austrian monarchy), but it lost its strategic importance in 1866 after the Battle of Hradec Králové and the fortress was closed down. The original fortifications were gradually removed and only remnants such as this gate in the castle wall have survived to this day.

## ▶ II. "SALON OF THE REPUBLIC"

This route is devoted to the period of important building development of the town in the first half of the 20th century. **Eleven information stands** will highlight the buildings of architects Kotěra, Gočár, Liska, and others. The walk will take approximately two hours.

- 1/ Museum of East Bohemia
- 2/ Smetana Embankment
- 3/ Svoboda Square
- 4/ Masaryk Square
- 5/ Ulrich Square
- 6/ Ambrož Church
- 7/ Gočár School
- 8/ Elbe Power Station
- 9/ Confluence of Elbe and Orlice Rivers
- 10/ Jirásek Gardens
- 11/ U Grandu

## ▶ III. "FORTRESS"

This route is aimed at those interested in military and military construction in the Baroque period. The fortress fragments in the city are mapped out by **11 information stops**; you will need at least two and a half hours for this walk.

- 1/ Museum of East Bohemia
- 2/ Tyl Embankment
- 3/ Jirásek Gardens
- 4/ Komenského
- 5/ U Přívozu
- 6/ Brněnská
- 7/ Jana Koziny
- 8/ Mýtská
- 9/ Třída ČSA
- 10/ Šimek Garden
- 11/ Adalbertinum



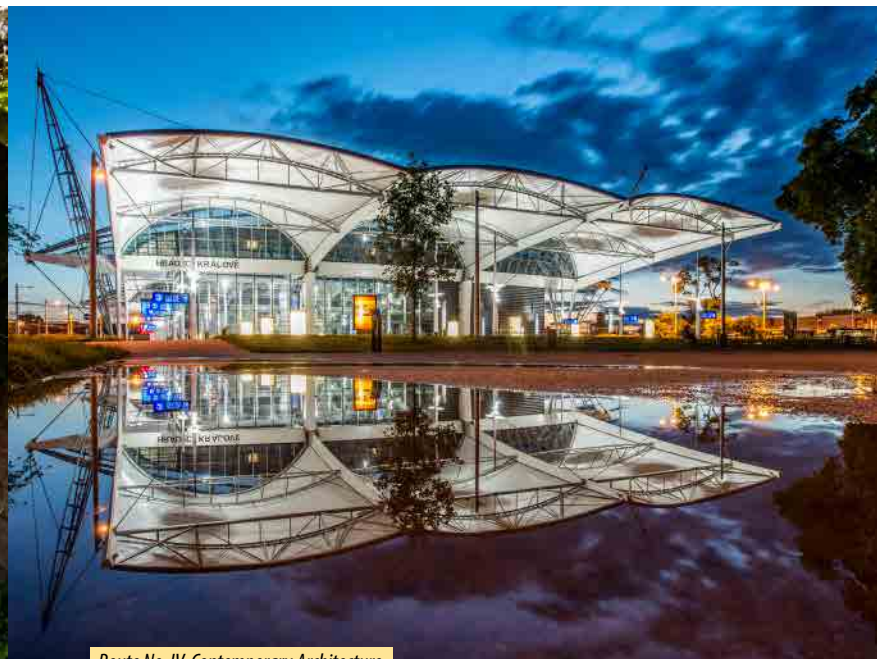
Route No. IV, Contemporary Architecture

The **terraces of Karel Otčenášek** are part of the belt around the historic core. Originally a medieval fortification, today the terraces serve as a relaxation zone.



Route No. IV, Contemporary Architecture

**Riegr Square** – the area in front of the **train station** has undergone extensive renovation, which was designed simultaneously with the new **Public Transport Terminal**.



Route No. IV, Contemporary Architecture

Public transport terminal.

#### ▶ **IV. “CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE”**

This walking route demonstrates how Hradec Králové is worthy of its nickname “the textbook of architecture” thanks to the buildings from the last decades. These are often awarded the title “Building of the Year”. **Twelve information stands** will give you an idea of the most interesting things that have been built in the city in recent years. You will need at least three hours of your time and comfortable shoes.

**1/ Elbe Embankment and Sculptors’ Embankment 2/ Administration Centre 3/ Footbridge over the Orlice River 4/ Study and Research Library 5/ Terraces of Karel Otčenášek 6/ Reconstruction of the White Tower and the Bono Publico Staircase 7/ “Theater Square” 8/ Reconstruction of Šimek Gardens 9/ Aldis Zone 10/ Public Transport Terminal 11/ Riegr Square 12/ October 28 Square**

#### Did you know...?

The **public transport terminal** was completed in 2008 and in many respects represents the best of contemporary architecture in the entire region (authors of the project are Patrik Kotas, Jan Štípek, and Jaromír Chmelík).



Route No. IV, Contemporary Architecture

**Elbe embankment** – in 2012, a walkway was created at the river’s surface by modifying a more than 100-year-old concrete pier. An outdoor **gallery of sandstone sculptures** has enlivened the space above the embankment.



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18. **Chapel of St. John of Nepomuk**
19. **Klicpera Theater** (pp. 21, 57)
20. **Hradec Králové Philharmonic Orchestra** (p. 58)
21. **City Spa – Aquacentrum** (p. 44)
22. **Aldis Congressional Center** (p. 68)





**Did you know...?**

The monumental entrance facade of the **Museum of East Bohemia** is decorated with mysterious seven-meter high sculptures by Stanislav and Vojtěch Sucharda (the allegorical figures represent Industry, holding a statue of a boy symbolizing the city, and History).



We can start our walk *In the Footsteps of the Lions of Hradec* on the Great Square in front of the historic **City Hall**. Its facade is decorated with a **metal sculpture of a Bohemian lion**, with the coat of arms with the **city lion** under the windows and the **letter G** (Gradec) next to it.

## THEMATIC WALKS

**For those who want to get to know the city of Hradec Králové in all its architectural contexts, other thematic walking tours have been prepared. An overview of all the walks can be found on the website: [www.hradeckralove.org/prochazky](http://www.hradeckralove.org/prochazky) or in the brochure available at the information center.**

### IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE LIONS OF HRADEC

(Big and Little Lion Trail)

Why was the figure of the lion so widely used in the past to decorate many architectural buildings and public spaces in Hradec Králové? Many lion motifs are related to the coincidence of the original royal symbol (then a national symbol after the establishment of the Republic in 1918) and the old heraldic city emblem. In the past, the city of Hradec Králové used a lion looking to the left (as on the national emblem) and the capital letter G (based

on the original name of the city, Gradec). Contrary to heraldic rules, the lion was turned to the right so that it could hold the letter G in its paws. In the streets of the city you can see the lion in various materials and techniques (sandstone, metal, sgraffito, painting) and in various representations (statues, sphinxes, reliefs, or mere heads).

### **BRIDGES OF HRADEC**

Hradec Králové is a city at the confluence of the Elbe and Orlice Rivers. Walking



*Detail of the facade of the museum – a lion holding the letter G.*



Footbridge over the Orlice River, in the background the CPP arena.

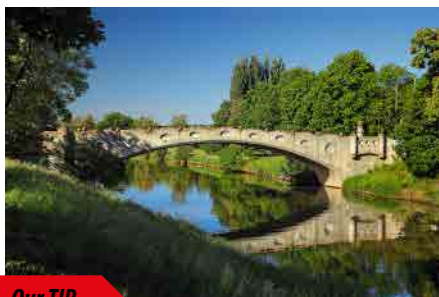
along the embankments, you can admire unique **paddle steamers**, waterfront promenades often enlivened by social events, **bridges of various architectural styles**, walking corridors on the embankments, and the segmental weir nicknamed “Hučák”.



Footbridge in the Šimek Garden.

### HISTORICAL SCHOOLS

School buildings are among the symbols of the development of Hradec Králové after “liberation from the grip of the Baroque fortifications”. While the fortress was still in existence, the city indicated the direction of its efforts with the inscription “Hail to youth and flourishing of science” in the building of the Real Gymnasium in 1874. The builders of the school buildings over the next nearly 90 years became state and religious organizations, but the city always provided them with significant support.



**Our TIP**

“**Kameňák**” Road bridge on Pláčky – Art Nouveau reinforced concrete bridge built 1912–1913. The 26 km long **Hradec Králové – Kuks cycling trail**, which is part of the long-distance **Elbe Trail cycling route**, starts on the left bank.



**Did you know...?**

This **clockwork** is visible during a visit to the **White Tower**, where it is part of the exhibition (see page 15). It was created by the mechanic and watchmaker **Josef Božek** and replaced the original machine from 1591 in **1829**. Today, the clock on the tower is powered by an electric motor.

### THE CLOCKS OF HRADEC

If you like **clockworks**, **dials**, and **sundials**, take a walk around to view the clocks of Hradec. This stroll will take you to interesting places in the city center, and if you feel up to it and have the time, you can also take it to the outskirts.

### TOWERS AND TURRETS IN HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ

Towers and turrets are **distinctive landmarks** of the city and individual buildings. Towers that did not belong to individual churches were mostly owned by the municipality. In the past, they served various purposes. For example, they were part of the fortifications – as watchtowers, they were used to announce fires by sounding the bugle, to announce the time, some were customs houses at the entrance to the city, some were used as bell towers, warehouses or water reservoirs, and some were even used as prisons.

### PLANETARY AND GALACTIC PATHWAY

The paths start in Nový Hradec Králové at the observatory building and take you through the landscape around the city. Both trails were prepared by the Observatory and Planetarium in cooperation with the Astronomical Society in Hradec Králové. The Galactic Trail depicts eleven of the most famous celestial objects in our **Milky Way galaxy**.

[www.astrohk.cz](http://www.astrohk.cz)



Observatory and Planetarium in Hradec Králové.



Confluence of the Elbe and Orlice Rivers.

## A CITY OF GREEN

Those who visit this regional city for the first time will certainly be surprised by the pleasant environment which is characterized by the blending of lush greenery with architecture. During your walks, you'll find relaxation areas, terraces, many parks with water areas, playgrounds, cycle paths, and landscaped banks of the Elbe and Orlice Rivers. The thematic walks "Through the Parks and Gardens of Hradec Králové" and "Trails in the City Forests" are aimed at exploring the city's greenery.

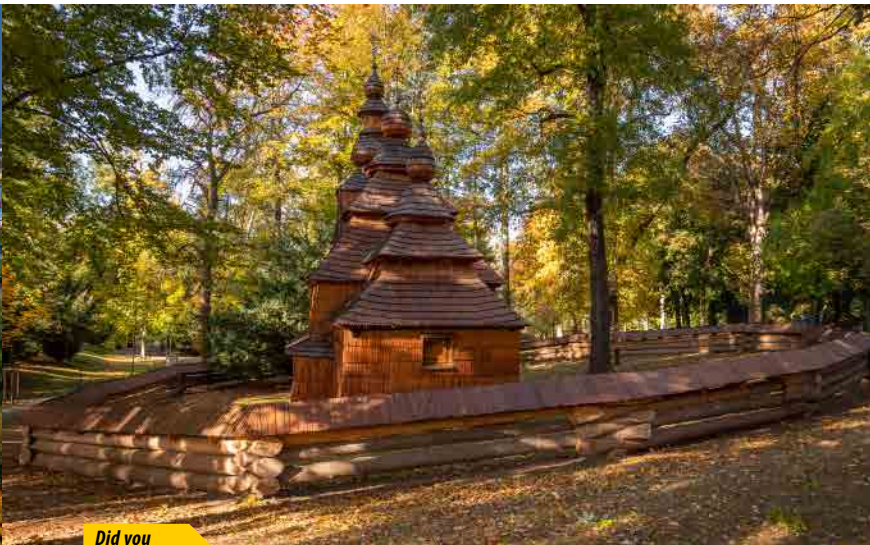
### PARKS AND GARDENS

The symbol of the urban layout of Hradec Králové is the scheme of the regulatory plan of the architect Josef Gočár from 1926–28 with the characteristic blending of green wedges into the development. At this time, most of the city's parks had already been established. The establishment of the first non-public park, now the **Jirásek Gardens**, for officers at the confluence of the Elbe and Orlice Rivers was due to the war of 1866, which

eventually brought about the final demise of the Baroque fortress. The establishment of public greenery is linked to the activities of a beautification movement which dates back to the 1860s. In 1886, the **first public park was founded – Vonešovy sady, or the Voneš Gardens.**

### Jirásek Gardens

The Jirásek Gardens are described as the most beautiful park in the city. They have a magical location at the confluence of the Elbe and Orlice Rivers and are a combination of a natural **English park** and perfectly landscaped areas modelled on **French gardening**. This was originally created as an officer's park. Here you will find a **rosarium** and an **allegorical sculpture of the confluence of the Elbe and the Orlice** by Josef Škoda from 1934. The park is also home to the wooden Orthodox **Church of St. Nicholas**, which originally came from Transcarpathian Ukraine and was transported here in the first half of the 20th century. The remains of Joseph's fortress, known as the "poterna" (a 2 m high postern tunnel connecting the central part of the gardens with the rosarium) and the remains of the shooting



Did you know...?

The **wooden church of St. Nicholas** from the beginning of the 17th century is a "little traveler". It originally stood in the village of Habura near Medzilaborce in eastern Slovakia. In 1740 it was sold and moved to nearby Mala Polana. In 1935 it was transported from Slovakia to Hradec Králové and placed in **Jirásek Gardens** as a memorial to the fallen of the First World War.

casemates can also be found in the gardens. This is also home to the **Florist School**, which was originally a restoration pavilion built according to the plans of J. Rejchl in 1933. Near the main entrance there is a **monument** from 1922 by B. Lizner, which commemorates Jirásek's

novel "Brotherhood". Young visitors can enjoy the local **playground**. The Jirásek Gardens can be reached either through the main gate from the ice rink (from Komenský Avenue) or through the side gate from the Sandera Electricity Plant.



Jirásek Gardens in bloom.



The **Jirásek Gardens** are located at the confluence of the Elbe and Orlice Rivers. They date back to 1867–68 and interestingly, they were originally non-public, as they served as an officer's park.

### **Žižka Gardens**

This park is dominated by a **statue of Jan Žižka of Trocnov** from 1971. It is situated under the northern terraces directly below the historic core and has an area of 3.5 hectares. The gardens were established in 1905–1906 and were built on the site of an original **military training ground**. Another distinctive feature is the **circular fountain** in the central part of the park. The character of the park is close to that of French gardens, with the carefully tended flower areas enhancing this impression.

At the eastern end of the gardens there is a **bronze statue of Jan Ladislav Pospíšil**, a prominent Hradec Králové official who, as the inscription on the pedestal reminds us, “freed the city from the shackles of the castle walls”. The author of the monument, unveiled in 1933, is Josef Škoda. It was on this very spot that the demolition of the walls of the Josefov Fortress was inaugurated in 1884.

### **Šimek Gardens**

This, the largest park in Hradec Králové, has an area of 18 hectares and was designed by **J. Gočár** in **1925**. It is arranged as an English park with **artificial ponds**. Its southern border is made up by the remains of the fortress extensions. The gardens have an interesting history; during the Depression, for example, this park was compared to Prague's Hunger Wall, because the unemployed worked here to qualify for financial support. The name of the gardens has changed several times throughout history and the current name commemorates **Karel Šimek**, who was killed near the park 9 days before the end of World War II while destroying telephone lines for a German garrison. After an **extensive reconstruction** (2012–2013, designed by Ing. arch. Pavel Zadrobílek), a pleasant place for walks and active recreation has been created. Children can enjoy two playgrounds, those interested can ride in-line skates, and you can enjoy a bit of adrenaline in the Skate Park.

### **Suk Gardens**

Near the main station there is a pleasant piece of green space with orchard landscaping.



The **Šimek Gardens** are beautified by the viewing piers built over the pond.

### **Kubišta Gardens**

A pleasant little park bordered by Pospíšilova třída and Hradební and Víta Nejedlého streets.

### **Pohádka Park**

This originally neglected garden of the University of Hradec Králové building (Šafaříkova Street) was rebuilt according

to the designs of P. Součková and F. Čurda in 2001. The architects used the original mature trees, which they supplemented with additional park planting, creating a small (approx. 4,000 m<sup>2</sup>) green oasis between the buildings, which serves as a **playground** and a **relaxing park**.



The **Šimek Gardens** underwent extensive reconstruction in 2012–13.



Stops on the *Fairytales Trail*.

### URBAN FORESTS

The city of Hradec Králové acquired the forests in 1307 as a gift from the Roman King Albrecht. Over the centuries, it has increased its area and today it owns 3,850 hectares. These “**green lungs of the city**” offer leisure, relaxation, and plenty of entertainment. You can choose from **nature** and **fairytales trails**, routes of varying difficulty for **cyclists**, **in-line skaters**, **hikers**, and **horseback riders**, game preserves, a playground stylized as a knights’ stronghold, and **public fireplaces** with barbecue facilities. There is also a **forest gym**, a **rope park**, gazebos, benches, and tables for moments of relaxation, and groomed trails for **cross-country skiers** in winter. In summer, enjoy **swimming** at the Silver Pond or Biřička. **All this close to the city and easily accessible!**



#### Our TIP

#### Forest Running Trail

*This 800 m long circuit was created for those who love running in the fresh air and is also gentle on the joints. The comfortable soft surface is made up of a layer of natural wood chips covered with fine sawdust. There are two sections of the trail, 50 and 100 meters long. It is for runners only and is run in one direction. Would you like to try this specialty inspired by Finnish running tracks? The trail can be found by the Hradečnice forest path about 200 m from the forest cemetery.*



The **water trail** leads around the Hradec Králové ponds.

### Fairytales Trail

A trail full of stories that hide many lessons and secrets of the forest. The trail is approximately **2.5 km** long and winds its way from Mazur’s Cottage and ends at **Výskyt Pond**. Visitors gradually get acquainted with the fairytales and characters of the artist and writer **Marta Pohnerová**, such as the dragon Větvička, the magician Šišule, and the blueberry fairy. The individual fairy tales on the panels are accompanied by figures carved by a local carver. At the beginning and end of the trail there is a **public fireplace**.

### Water Trail

This easy trail, about 2 km long, starts on the dam of the **Biřička Pond** and ends on the shore of the **Datlík Pond**. The stories of **water goblins**, **devils**, **talking fish**, and other fairytale creatures by artist and writer Marta Pohnerová are set in the picturesque nature of the Hradec Králové ponds. At the beginning of the trail by the Biřička Pond you can use the **public fireplace**.



Carved statues of fairytale creatures await the youngest visitors.



Autumn pond catch.



Public fireplace.



Knights' Fortress children's park.

### **“Functions of the Forest” Nature Trail**

This trail is designed to introduce visitors to the functions of the forest unit and inform them that the forest produces not only wood and fruit but has many important functions that we are often not even aware of. The trail leads past the **Černá stráň Nature Monument** and ends at the Podzásepská forest path, a short distance from the Mazur Cottage.



There are also valuable protected areas and natural monuments in the Urban Forest.

### **Silhouette Trail**

On this 500 m long trail, you can try to recognize the **birds native to Czech nature** by their silhouettes, and you can also become acquainted with the animals living in the Urban Forests. At the first panel, download the Forest of Knowledge app and scan the QR codes next to the bird silhouettes to get information about each species or listen to their songs.



*Wild animal preserves are popular and feature fallow deer, mouflon and wild boar, wild horses, and buffalo.*

### **Dead Wood Nature Trail**

Learn about dead wood, its importance in nature, what organisms are bound to it, and what role it plays in the development of certain species of animals and plants. The trail passes directly through the Sítovka natural monument, which can be found on the yellow trail near the Na Olšíně Pond. You can also descend to the trail from

the Podzásepská forest path, which leads from the asphalt road Hradečnice to the Mazur Cottage.



The asphalt circuit is 10.5 km long.

### **In the Footsteps of Nature Trail**

This trail introduces visitors to selected animals living in local forests and interesting facts on ecological topics. It leads through the woods from the back of the Silver Pond campsite and leads to the U Pytláka refreshment center. The route is **1 km** long and is suitable for strollers. You can use the Forest World mobile app on the trail.

### **Asphalt Circuit**

This route leading through beautiful nature is suitable for inline skaters. It is **10.5 km** long and has many resting places and refreshments. Beginners can use the 0.8 km long training route.

### **Hippo Trail from Zděná bouda**

This horse trail is about **7 km** long and includes the Knights' Fortress and the ponds Češík and Kříž. The Hippo Trail is marked in the terrain by yellow plates with a pictogram of a rider on horseback and on the hiking map by a red dotted line. In addition to the above-mentioned path, there is also a large trail recommended for horse riders along the southern and eastern border of the Urban Forests. The trail is indicated on the hiking map by a red dotted line and in the field by the letters HP on the trees.

### **Routes for wheelchair users**

**The blue trail is 3 km long**; starts at the terminus of bus No. 9 at the Forest Cemetery, leads to the crossroads in Vlčí jáme, from there it continues to another crossroads U Dvou Šraňků, where it turns to the pond Výskyt. **The red trail is 11 km long**; it leads from the terminus of buses 1 and 2 at Nové Hradec Králové, through Přemyslova Street, over the footbridge over the R 35 road to the crossroads at Vlčí jáma, where it turns to Svinar and from there it continues to Výskyt pond. On the **Urban Forests hiking map**, the routes are marked with an **orange dashed line**.



Forest gym.



Rich sgraffito decoration and a statue of Elizabeth of Pomerania on the facade of **Viktor Weinhengst's apartment house**, completed in 1899 (310 Eliščíno nábřeží).

## EXPERIENCE TOURS

**You can explore the city on foot or by bike, but also comfortably from the deck of a sightseeing steamboat or from the seat of a tourist train. The website of the Tourist Information Centre lists a number of guided thematic tours. You will also learn how history has changed the names of streets and squares. And if watching the world around you isn't enough, you can go back to the Middle Ages and trace the now extinct sacral buildings. Some experiential tours are seasonal, so we recommend checking the website listed above for operations.**

### **Guided Tours of the City**

The calendar of events of the Tourist Information Centre lists a range of guided tours to choose from throughout the year. Some of them are led by a tourist guide while others are prepared for you by individual institutions and experts. It is up to you whether you choose a classic

sightseeing tour or prefer a thematic tour with an experience. Follow the offer on [www.hkinfo.cz](http://www.hkinfo.cz)

### **Elbe Steamer Circles**

A nearly one-hour sightseeing cruise on the steamboats Hradec, Queen Eliška, Mayor Ulrich, and Pirate Sailing Boat, which are moored on the right bank of the Elbe opposite the Municipal Spa (Aquacentrum) presents you with an original river view of Hradec's landmarks and romantic corners of the Elbe banks. More information and reservations at [www.paroplavbahk.cz](http://www.paroplavbahk.cz)

### **Historical Transformation of the City**

The names of some streets and squares changed frequently during the 19th and 20th centuries. The route of the city's transformation has a total of 19 stops, all of which are marked on the map. For more information and to download the map, please visit

[www.hradeckralove.org/prochazky](http://www.hradeckralove.org/prochazky)







*Flošna Bathing and Wellness.*

## TIPS FOR FAMILIES WITH KIDS

### “Gustik invites every kid to Hradec!”

Parents with children can enjoy interactive exhibitions, outdoor and indoor playgrounds, and sports facilities. Gustik, the lion cub from Hradec Králové, brings tried and tested tips on where to go with children in and around Hradec Králové.

[www.gustik.cz](http://www.gustik.cz)



*Gustik the lion cub.*

## SWIMMING OPTIONS

### Aquacentrum City Spa

In operation since 1933 and was the most modern indoor swimming pool in former Czechoslovakia, mainly thanks to the unique system of plate waves from the Kolben Daněk factory. This technical monument is still functional after its conversion into an aqua center. You can use the swimming pool, water slide, relaxation pools, massage jets, sauna, solarium, and massages. The spa is also connected to the neighboring 50-meter swimming pool.

[www.snhk.cz](http://www.snhk.cz)

### Flošna Swimming and Wellness

Named after the outpost located near it. In summer, you can use the outdoor heated pools with attractions. A wellness studio with several types of saunas, steam cabins, hydrotherapy, relaxation zone, solarium and massages is open all year round. You can also use the gym and enjoy a good meal in the local restaurant with bowling.

[www.snhk.cz](http://www.snhk.cz)



### Our TIP

Interactive exhibition offered by the **Hučák Information Centre**. It is located in the attractive premises of the Art Nouveau power plant. Come and have fun learning how electricity is produced from renewable resources!

[www.cez.cz/cs/o-cez/infocentra](http://www.cez.cz/cs/o-cez/infocentra)



### Our TIP

Families with children can get to know Hradec Králové and its surroundings with **Gustik the lion cub**. Find lots of tips for great fun here:

[www.gustik.cz](http://www.gustik.cz)





*Paddlers on the Orlice River.*

### **Silver Pond**

For those who enjoy natural swimming, the water area close by the Urban Forest is an obvious choice. Various water attractions and a rope park are on offer. If you would like to spend more time here and get to know more about the Urban Forest and more, use the services of the local **campsite**, which also offers accommodation in **cabins** and **caravans**. [www.stribnrybnik.cz](http://www.stribnrybnik.cz)

### **Sandpits (Písníky)**

Nearby the city there are several sandpits created after mining. Thanks to the sandy subsoil and beaches, they offer pleasant and clean swimming and fishing opportunities. The Správcická sandpit is also known for the possibility of riding scooters and motorboats. The "Cablewakepark" has been built on the Plačická sandpit. The Opatovice sandpit is a popular nudist swimming area. [www.cablewakepark.cz](http://www.cablewakepark.cz)  
[www.spravcakhk.cz](http://www.spravcakhk.cz)



*Silver Pond (Stříbrný rybník).*



*Cyclists like to use the trails in the **Urban Forest**, which is just outside the city.*

## **BICYCLE TRIPS**

**Hradec Králové and its surroundings are ideal for cyclists, mainly thanks to the flat terrain. Children and seniors alike will enjoy cycling here.**

### **Hradec Králové Urban Forests**

The forests are crisscrossed with many marked cycle paths. You can get a tourist map of the Urban Forests at the Tourist Information Centre, at the Silver Pond

campsite, or download it on the web. See page 36. [www.mestske-lesy.cz](http://www.mestske-lesy.cz)

### **Cycle Path Hradec Králové – Kuks**

This long-distance cycle route No. 2 (Elbe Cycle Route) runs 1,270 km from the source of the Elbe to the North Sea. From Hradec Králové, a comfortable cycling route leads to the Baroque **complex of Kuks** at the



*Rides along the embankment of the Orlice River are popular.*



**Kuks** is one of the most important monuments of the Czech Baroque. It is accessible from Hradec Králové by a cycle path along the Elbe River (26 km, 2 hours).

foothills of the Krkonoše Mountains. The Kuks Hospital is a unique Baroque complex of a former spa, a hospital with the Holy Trinity Church and an original pharmacy, founded at the end of the 17th century by František Antonín Špork. The route starts at the Stone Bridge at Pláčky (see page 36) and on the way you can visit the Chapel of the Epiphany in Smiřice (see page 52), a Baroque building with a unique interior completed around 1711. Also worth a visit is the **Josefov** Fortress from the 18th century, one of the most extensive underground defenses in Europe. Don't miss the lapidarium with original sculptures by M. B. Braun.

In the opposite direction, you can reach Vysoká nad Labem from Hradec Králové along the cycle path, from where you can continue to the **Kunětická hora Castle**.  
[www.labska-stezka.cz](http://www.labska-stezka.cz)



**Kuks Hospital** – the impressive facade of a Baroque monument that bears the handwriting of such personalities as architect Giovanni Batista Alliprandi and sculptor **Matthias Bernard Braun**.



A frequent destination for cyclists is the **"Battery of the Dead" Memorial** at Chlum, where one of the heaviest battles of the Battle of Hradec Králové took place on 3 July 1866 – more on page 54.

### **Archaeocycle Route**

One of the main attractions of the Hradec Králové region is the **Archaeopark of Prehistory in Věstary** (see page 51). However, there are also important archaeological sites in other parts of Hradec Králové. You can get to know them on the educational **Archaeocycle Route**. It starts in Hradec Králové near the ice rink and ends at the railway station in Smiřice. It is 25 km long and you can take it in either direction. You can connect to the Elbe Cycle Route and complete the whole circuit. On the route you will find 14 infotables with maps, reconstructions, and artefacts in important archaeological sites in Hradec Králové. The outdoor exhibition of the Archaeopark presents examples of prehistoric buildings. The indoor exposition consists of parts of the underground, life, and spiritual world of prehistoric people and also introduces the methods of archaeological work.

[www.archeoparkvsestary.cz](http://www.archeoparkvsestary.cz)

### **Chlum 1866 Nature Trails**

The area around Chlum is interwoven with nature trails and recommended cycling routes with information boards that will introduce you to interesting places and circumstances of the Battle of Königgrätz as well as monuments and memorials that were created in memory of those who gave their lives here. From Hradec Králové you can take the **educational trail "Battle of Hradec Králové on 3 July 1866 – Retreat of the Austrian Army"**. The trail starts on the embankment of the Elbe opposite the Museum of East Bohemia and ends after **18 km** below Chlum. There are **11 stops** mapping the movement of the Austrian troops. This is followed by other educational trails, such as to the War Museum at Chlum. For more information about the battle, see page 54.



The Hrádek u Nechanic Castle is located 15 km west of Hradec Králové.

## TRIPS AROUND THE AREA

The surroundings of this regional capital are home to other sights that are definitely worth seeing. Those who enjoy truly ancient history will be delighted with the **Věstary Archaeopark**. Baroque lovers can enjoy such gems as the **Karlova Koruna Chateau in Chlumec nad Cidlinou**, the **chateau chapel of the Epiphany in Smiřice**, or the **Kuks complex**. Unfortunately, even bloody events are part of our history and one of the biggest battles in Czech history, the Battle of Königgrätz, can be remembered in Chlum. If you prefer romance, then you'll be delighted with the **Hrádek u Nechanic Castle**, which is a frequent backdrop for films and fairytales.

The lifestyle of our grandparents can be recalled in the **Podorlice Open-Air Museum in Krňovice** or on the **Šrámek farm in Piletice**. Don't forget to visit the unique **Třebchovice Museum of Nativity Scenes** with its unique

mechanical Probošt Nativity Scene. In **Nový Bydžov**, admire the neo-Gothic city hall or the **Stuchlík Toy Museum**. [www.hradecko.eu](http://www.hradecko.eu)

Approximate arrival times from Hradec Králové are given for each destination.

### Chlum – Monument to the 1866 Battle of Königgrätz

(about 15 minutes)

The memory of thousands of fallen soldiers is commemorated by nearly five hundred monuments scattered around the battlefield. Educational trails run through the battlefield area, and a museum in Chlum and a seasonal information center are open. Every year in early July, commemorative events with battle demonstrations are held here. See page 54.

### Museum of the War of 1866 at Chlum

(about 15 minutes)

See page 54.



Kunětická hora Castle is located 20 km south of Hradec Králové.

### Hrádek u Nechanic

(about 20 minutes)

This village is famous for its nearby castle, built by Count František Arnošt Harrach in 1839–1854 in **English Romantic Gothic style**. The two-winged building with a two-storey battlemented tower is surrounded by a castle park (today a **golf course**). The interiors are richly furnished, and the castle is the scene of many interesting events and is known from films and fairy tales. Enjoy a visit to the Christmas decorated interiors or one of the classical music concerts in its beautiful interiors. Nearby Nechanice is the birthplace of the important politician **Alois Rašín**.

[www.zamek-hradekunechanic.cz](http://www.zamek-hradekunechanic.cz)

### Věstary

(about 15 minutes)

The main attraction of the village is the **Archaeopark**, which includes a museum with an indoor three-storey exhibition with a model of the prehistoric landscape and a lecture hall. In the outdoor part you can admire the structures from the Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age under the open sky. During regular weekend events, you can try out some of the prehistoric

activities. There is also an indoor swimming pool in the village.

[www.archeoparkvestary.cz](http://www.archeoparkvestary.cz)  
[www.vsestary-obec.cz](http://www.vsestary-obec.cz)

### Kunětická hora Castle

(about 20 minutes)

The majestic castle (locals familiarly call it "**Kuňka**") is located on the hilltop near Pardubice, from where it dominates the landscape of the Elbe River region and is clearly visible from the castle's viewpoints.

[www.hrad-kunetickahora.cz/en](http://www.hrad-kunetickahora.cz/en)

### Kuks

(about 25 minutes)

This Baroque complex was built in 1692–1724 by Count **František Antonín Špork** as a spa with a hospital. Although it did not serve its original purpose for very long, Kuks has left us an extraordinary wealth of High Baroque architecture, especially the sculptural decoration from the workshop of Matthias Bernard Braun. See page 48.

[www.hospital-kuks.cz](http://www.hospital-kuks.cz)



*Baroque fortress Josefov was built during the reign of Joseph II, at the same time as the massive fortifications of Hradec Králové.*

### **Josefov (Jaroměř)**

(about 25 minutes)

This fortress city was built together with Terezín (in the Ústí nad Labem region) by order of Joseph II in the 1880-90s to defend the new northern border of the Habsburg monarchy.

[www.pevnostjosefov.cz](http://www.pevnostjosefov.cz)

### **Třebechovice pod Orebem**

(about 20 minutes)

This small city at the confluence of the Orlice and Dědina rivers is famous for the **Třebechovice Museum of Nativity Scenes**, whose most famous exhibit is the Probošt Moving Nativity Scene. This unique work was created by Josef Probošt, Josef Kapucián, and Josef Friml, who carved 2000 figures, trees, and pieces of architecture for over 40 years. The scene is a national cultural monument and has its home in a newly built museum building.

[www.betlem.cz](http://www.betlem.cz)

[www.trebechovice.cz](http://www.trebechovice.cz)

### **Krňovice Open-Air Museum**

(about 20 minutes)

Since 2002, an open-air museum reminiscent of the **folk village architecture of eastern Bohemia** has been built on the outskirts of Třebechovice pod Orebem, in the village of Krňovice. The local buildings have functional equipment and you can see, for example, bread baking in the oven, forging of iron objects, grain milling, and some historical agricultural machinery. Domestic animals live here, and the museum is also used as a venue for weddings and various social events.

[www.krnovice.cz](http://www.krnovice.cz)

### **Smiřice**

(about 20 minutes)

Among our leading Baroque monuments is the **chateau chapel of the Epiphany** in Smiřice. Its authorship is attributed to Christoph Dientzenhofer (it was built in 1699–1711). The magnificent Baroque interior is decorated with paintings by Jan Jakub Steinfels and **Petr Brandl**,



*Karlova Koruna Castle in Chlumec nad Cidlinou has an impressive and unusual ground plan, which makes it one of the most remarkable buildings of the High Baroque period.*

an important Baroque artist whose masterpiece **“Adoration of the Three Kings”** from 1727 adorns the Smiřice altar. The chapel, unlike the main castle building, is accessible to the public. There is an information center in the opposite Dvorana building. The Smiřice railway station in the form of a hunting lodge also deserves attention, as it is one of the most beautiful railway stations in the Czech Republic.

[www.kaple.smirice.cz](http://www.kaple.smirice.cz)

[www.smirice.cz](http://www.smirice.cz)

### **Chlumec nad Cidlinou**

(about 30 minutes)

This town is known as the birthplace of playwright **Václav Kliment Klicpera** and also because of an unsuccessful peasant uprising, hence the Czech phrase “they ended up like the peasants at Chlumec”. The dominant feature of the city is the **baroque castle Karlova Koruna** from 1721–1723, the residence of František Ferdinand Kinský. It was built by architect František Maxmilián Kaňka according to

the design of Jan Blažej Santini-Aichl. The Loreto building now houses the Municipal Museum. The FAJNPARK area with parts such as Dinoprales, Hopsálkov, Zvířátkov, and others is ideal for children.

[www.kinsky-dal-borgo.cz](http://www.kinsky-dal-borgo.cz)

[www.chlumecnc.cz](http://www.chlumecnc.cz)

[www.fajnpark.cz](http://www.fajnpark.cz)

### **Vysoká nad Labem**

(about 15 minutes)

The outskirts of the village is home to the **Milíř lookout tower**. This unique structure made of wood and steel stands at an altitude of 284.5 m and measures 31 meters, while the viewing platform is 27 m high and you have to climb 144 steps to reach it. You will be rewarded with a view of the highest buildings of Hradec Králové, Koliba, Kunětická hora, and Chlum. If the weather is clear, you can also see the Krkonoše, Orlické, and Železné Mountains. Refreshments are available at the base of the tower.

[www.vysoka-nad-labem.cz/rozhledna-milir](http://www.vysoka-nad-labem.cz/rozhledna-milir)



On the anniversary days of the battle, battlefield demonstrations, commemorative and commemorative events. [www.koniggratz1866.eu](http://www.koniggratz1866.eu)

## THE BATTLE OF KÖNIGGRÄTZ

Also known as the Battle of Hradec Králové, it was fought between the Austro-Saxon and Prussian armies on **3 July 1866** and was the largest field battle ever fought in the territory of the present-day Czech Republic – more than **454,000 men** took part. Of these, 52,000 were wounded or killed and 7,000 horses were killed. The winner of the bloody encounter was Prussia, led by King William I and Chief of the General Staff Helmut von Moltke.

From a historical point of view, the crushing defeat of Austria marked a turning point in the geopolitical map of Europe at the time, where Prussia's importance as a European power increased (in 1871 the process of German unification culminated and **King William I of Prussia** was elected German Emperor). The military defeat of the Habsburg monarchy gave rise to the **Austro-Hungarian Empire** a year after the peace, whose national problems and disputes over the broader organization



Did you know...?

The complex also includes a pseudo-Gothic **ossarium** made of Horice sandstone with a granite sarcophagus. Every year, on the anniversary of the battle, the skeletal remains of soldiers found during the year on the battlefield are placed in the ossarium.



Did you know...?



Who would guess that the Austrian army had rocket weapons or that it was able to eavesdrop on Prussian field lines? However, it was of no use to Austria in the end, since Prussian weaponry and strategy were more modern and effective. An important role was played by the **Prussian cartridge rifles** of Nikolaus Dreyse, known as **needle-gun rifles**, which, although in many parameters lagging behind the Austrian **predecessors**, allowed up to 3 times faster reloading and this proved to be decisive.

of the empire heralded the formation of Czechoslovakia in 1918. At the same time, the Civil War was taking place on the North American continent, and both conflicts coincided to bring new technologies in the field of military science – the **telegraph**, the use of **railways**, and advances in **military medicine**.

### MUSEUM OF THE WAR OF 1866

Near the village of Chlum you will find a modern exhibition of the **Museum of the War of 1866**, which is a department of the Museum of East Bohemia in Hradec Králové. It brings visitors closer to the biggest battle on the Czech territory and offers **exhibitions featuring armament and equipment of the Prussian and Austrian armies** (infantry, cavalry, artillery). You will see cannon models and different Austrian and Prussian rifles. The exhibition uses period press and the memories of direct participants of the battle and the local population. There is also a cinema room. The museum

operates the **Chlum lookout tower** in the immediate vicinity. The site includes an **information center**, and a red and yellow hiking trail passes by the building, as well as the Chlum Central Battlefield nature trail. The museum is complemented by **480 monuments**, which were created from the 1870s onwards and form the largest collection of funerary architecture in the Czech Republic.



### MUSEUM OF THE WAR OF 1866

Connections: **by train** (Všestary stop, 4 km), **bus** (Všestary, Chlum – church, 1 km), **car** (parking at the museum) or **bike** (see nature trails page 49). [www.muzeumhk.cz/muzeum-valky-1866](http://www.muzeumhk.cz/muzeum-valky-1866)



Since 1958, the **Drak Theater** has not only brought joy to small and large audiences, but has also spread the famous traditions of Czech puppetry all over the world.



**Did you know...?**

The **Labyrinth of the Drak Theater** is located in the former Theresian Barracks, which is connected to the Drak Theater by a glass bridge. Visitors can see the permanent exhibition „The Story of the Dragon 1958–2018“, which tells the history of the theater. There are also exhibitions and workshops as well as a playroom with theater simulators.



Foyer of the **Klicpera Theater**.

## THEATRES, MUSEUMS, GALLERIES, LIBRARIES, CINEMAS

### Klicpera Theater

A professional drama company has been operating in the city since 1949, while the Klicpera Theater was founded more than 130 years ago and has been awarded Theater of the Year of the Czech Republic four times. It is also the organizer of two theater festivals.

[www.klicperovodivadlo.cz](http://www.klicperovodivadlo.cz)

### The Dragon (Drak) Theater and Labyrinth

This puppet theater was founded in 1958 and is now a world-famous theater with a professional company. It is also the umbrella of the Labyrinth Theater, which is an interactive museum with a theater laboratory. There is a repertoire for children and adults to choose from, and the range of performances is complemented by interesting concerts. The phenomenon of puppetry (recognized by UNESCO in 2016) has a long tradition in East Bohemia. Matěj Kopecký, a famous

puppeteer and revivalist, was born in nearby Libčany in 1775.

[www.draktheatre.cz](http://www.draktheatre.cz)

### Adalbertinum

This pseudo-Baroque style building was completed in 1897. Today it is a venue for concerts, theater performances, balls, dance classes, and other social events.

[www.adalbertinum.cz](http://www.adalbertinum.cz)



Adalbertinum.



View from the terrace of the **Gallery of Modern Art**.



*Hradec Králové Philharmonic.*

### **Hradec Králové City Library**

The history of the city library dates back to 1894. Today, it is a public library with a universal library collection that also provides services to the hearing and visually impaired. Since 2013 it has been operating in the building of the Centre for Lifelong Learning, which was built by converting the original Vertex factory according to the architectural design of **David Vávra**, who functionally and modernly adapted the library premises, including the roof and designed a pleasant café. The **whale on the roof** is a distinctive feature.  
[www.knihovnahk.cz](http://www.knihovnahk.cz)



*Hradec Králové City Library.*

### **Study and Research Library in Hradec Králové**

Its new building near Gočár's tannery school (now a mechanical engineering school) was awarded the Building of the Year 2009. It has an original **"X" shaped floor plan**, and its overall architectural design (among others, the building shell made of cast concrete perforated and lightened by round windows, generously conceived vestibule, etc.) is very original and successfully follows the tradition of the "Salon of the Republic" in Hradec Králové. A café and a gallery serve visitors in the "legs" of the building.  
[www.svkhk.cz](http://www.svkhk.cz)

### **Hradec Králové Philharmonic Orchestra**

A professional musical ensemble founded in 1978 which performs on the domestic scene in the Philharmonic Hall on Eliščina nábřeží as well as on major European stages. It is a regular participant of classical music festivals (e.g. Litomyšl's Smetana). An important festival of contemporary classical music is the **Musical Forum**, always held at the end of November and

the beginning of December at the Hradec Králové Philharmonic, which is broadcast live by Czech Radio Vltava. See page 65.  
[www.fhk.cz](http://www.fhk.cz)

### **Bio Central**

The last **classic cinema** in Hradec Králové focuses on quality film and art production. You can also enjoy an unforgettable experience of theater, opera, or ballet performances. It also hosts interesting festivals and prides itself on its quality technical equipment.  
[www.biocentral.cz](http://www.biocentral.cz)

### **Cinestar Multicinema**

A typical multiplex cinema located in the Futurum Shopping Centre. You can choose from a range of commercial and artistic works in both 2D and 3D format. You can even enjoy traditional "American" refreshments while watching the screening. The cinema also hosts social events and festivals.  
[www.cinestar.cz](http://www.cinestar.cz)

### **Summer cinema Šírák**

Films run from June to September in **all weather conditions**. Viewers can rent warm blankets or umbrellas, and there's even a popular summer pub on site. The cinema screens contemporary films and also focuses on art films. Apart from films, there are also interesting concerts, sports broadcasts, and the Na jednom břehu **music festival**.  
[www.letnikonosirak.cz](http://www.letnikonosirak.cz)



Inside the **Study and Research Library** (Building of the Year 2009).





Concert on the Small Square.

## REGULAR ANNUAL EVENTS

Plan your visit to Hradec Králové, and come enjoy the city when it comes to life.  
[www.calendariumregina.cz](http://www.calendariumregina.cz)

### Regions International Theater Festival (June)

This largest theater show in the Czech Republic attracts a huge number of theatergoers to Hradec Králové every year and introduces a wide range of projects and theater productions of various styles and genres to the general and professional public. Thanks to the Open Air Programme, the streets and corners of the old city come alive outside the permanent stages.  
[www.divadloevropskychregionu.cz](http://www.divadloevropskychregionu.cz)  
[www.festivalregiony.cz](http://www.festivalregiony.cz)

### Anniversary of the 1866 Battle of Königgrätz (July)

The purpose of these commemorative events on the battle of the Prusso-Austrian War of 1866 is to bring the historical events to the general public, to honor the memory of the fallen, and to remind them that Hradec Králové in 1866 was where and when a moment of history changed the history of Europe. The highlight of the event is the reenactment of battle scenes. See page 54.

[www.muzeumhk.cz](http://www.muzeumhk.cz)  
[www.koniggratz1866.eu](http://www.koniggratz1866.eu)



Anniversary of the Battle of Königgrätz.



Did you know...?

During the **Regions International Theater Festival in June** and autumn's **Waiting for Wenceslas** (a festival of small theaters), the streets and nooks of the city come to life as part of the Open Air Programme in addition to the permanent stages. The foyer of the **Klicpera Theater** houses art exhibitions.



**Jazz Goes to Town** – every year, top musicians from all over the world meet in Hradec Králové for a traditional jazz festival.



For many enthusiasts, the "RFP" is the most anticipated event of the summer.

#### **Rock for People (June)**

One of the largest and oldest summer open-air music festivals in the Czech Republic brings every year stars and discoveries of the international and domestic music scene from the diverse scene of rock music. Indie, punk, metal, and other genres are all represented, as well as a rich supporting program with workshops, discussions, and theater performances. Three days of great fun and exceptional experiences.

**[www.rockforpeople.cz](http://www.rockforpeople.cz)**

#### **Queen Elizabeth Festival (September)**

The city traditionally welcomes Queen Elizabeth Richeza within its walls, in whose honor a spectacular show is held. The historic center comes to life with medieval crafts, parades, jousting, medieval games and entertainments, a parade of comedians, jugglers, and other artisans. There is also a folk-craft fair. The celebrations conclude with an evening concert and a fire show with pyro effects.

**[www.slavnostikralovnyelisky.cz](http://www.slavnostikralovnyelisky.cz)**



Queen Elizabeth Festival.

#### **Jazz goes to Town (October)**

A prestigious music showcase that brings jazz in all its forms to the music halls and less usual places in Hradec Králové over five days in October. The festival presents top domestic and foreign artists, new jazz projects, and emerging musicians side by side.

**[www.jggt.cz](http://www.jggt.cz)**



*Ceramics on the riverbank.*



*Steam engines on the riverbank.*

### **Music Forum Hradec Králové (October-November)**

The festival is organized by the Hradec Králové Philharmonic in cooperation with Czech Radio Vltava. Its aim is to create a representative panorama of works from the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. The festival has already earned its place on the Czech music scene and is becoming increasingly well-known abroad. Thanks to its appeal and high performance level, its concerts are broadcast live by Czech Radio or taken over by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) for its network. The dramaturgy is based mainly on orchestral and large-scale works by contemporary world composers. Music is combined with modern technology.

[www.fhk.cz](http://www.fhk.cz)  
[www.hfhk.cz](http://www.hfhk.cz)

### **The Hradec Králové Riverside (year-round)**

As a unique element of the city's architecture, the embankments of the Elbe River create a meeting place for lovers of culture and experience, debating friends and loving souls. You can stroll to the sound of saxophones at the "**Jazzmen's Quay**", try out forgotten crafts at the "**Craftsmen's Quay**", meet lovers of good food and drink at the "**Gourmet Quay**"



*Steam engines on the riverbank.*



*Gourmet Quay.*



*Gourmet Quay.*

or the Farmers' Markets. Athletes will find something to keep themselves busy as well.

[www.nabrezihk.cz](http://www.nabrezihk.cz)



Gočár's Staircase cycling race.

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The city has a dense network of **bus and trolleybus public transport lines**. Transport is also provided by **night bus lines**. You can buy discounted **day or weekly tickets**. Tickets can be purchased at the city transport company's **ticket offices**, at the Tourist Information Centre, from the driver, or through your phone. The transport hub for bus transport is the **public transport terminal**, whose unique design makes it unmissable. It serves both public transport and long-distance transport. The nearby train station can be reached from the terminal by free public transport buses and trolleybuses. [www.dpmhk.cz](http://www.dpmhk.cz)



### WHERE TO GO SHOPPING?

Hradec Králové offers many **shops, boutiques**, and shopping centers. Boutiques and shops in the city center can be found on the Great and Small Squares, and there is also a greater concentration of them in the pedestrian zone – Batka Square, Čelakovského Street, Masaryk Square, and Švehlova Street. **Supermarkets and shopping centers** are mainly located near the second city ring road and on the roads leading out of the city.



Paddling training on the Orlice River.



Did you know...?

The **football stadium** has undergone a complete reconstruction, which was completed in 2023. The project has preserved the typical form of the original lighting – the so-called “**lollipop**”. The masts are 55 m high and the diameter of the lighting panels is 10.5 m. The **multifunctional arena** has a capacity of **9,300 spectators**.

### WHERE TO GO FOR SPORTS?

Hradec Králové is a regular participant in the highest competitions in **basketball, volleyball, field hockey, rugby, water polo**, and many other sports, and of course also in the most popular ones – **football** and **ice hockey**.

The football club **FC Hradec Králové** (nicknamed Votroci) plays its matches in the modern **Multifunctional Arena** in Malšovice. The biggest success in the club's history is the **league title** in the 1959/60 season.

The hockey club **HC Mountfield HK** plays in the ČPP Arena with a capacity of 6,890 spectators. In the most successful season ever, 2022/23, the hockey players won **2nd place** in the highest national competition.

If you're looking for opportunities for active sports, you'll certainly find many opportunities in Hradec. There are **sports and fitness centers**, you can play

**billiards, bowling, or skittles**. In the summer months, you can refresh yourself at one of the **swimming pools** (see page 44 for more information). You can rent sports equipment (paddleboards, boats, bicycles) at one of the **rental shops**.

The surrounding area is suitable for **cycling** or **inline skating**. You can take a **balloon ride** or even try your luck at **skydiving**. **Horseback riding** is offered by riding clubs. In winter, try the groomed **cross-country skiing trails** in the Municipal Forest (see page 36). You can play tennis, table tennis, **squash**, or **badminton** all year round. You can also try one of the largest **climbing walls** in the country (600 m<sup>2</sup>).

This list cannot be exhaustive, of course – all the necessary information can be found in the **information center**. See page 72.



**Our TIP**

*The hall of the Aldis Congressional Centre has a capacity of 1,230 seats.*

## CONGRESSIONAL TOURISM

The Hradec Králové Region offers quality facilities for congress, exhibition, and incentive tourism (MICE – Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, Exhibitions). Naturally, the regional capital as a **congress city** holds an important position in the whole region. This is boosted by easy accessibility from Prague and the offer of quality accommodation, halls with sufficient capacity and equipment, and other tourism services.

### Aldis Congressional Centre

The building (opened in 1993) is located on the left bank of the Elbe, next to the city spa and the Philharmonic Hall. In this pleasant environment, representative cultural, professional, and social events such as congresses, symposia, exhibitions, fairs, business and contract meetings, conventions, theater performances, concerts, and balls are held. There are halls of various sizes, lounges, and foyers with a maximum usable exhibition area of **5,000 m<sup>2</sup>**. Of course, state-of-the-art conference technology, catering services, and accompanying cultural, sports, and social programs are also available.  
[www.aldis.cz](http://www.aldis.cz)

### EA Hotel Aldis and Tereziánský Dvůr

The **EA Hotel Tereziánský Dvůr** is located in the former Nálepke Barracks building, while the **EA Hotel Aldis** is located in a new building near the Aldis Congressional Centre which opened in 2022. Both hotels, which belong to the EuroAgentur hotel chain, have congress halls and lounges, wellness facilities, and more than 180 rooms in total.  
[www.hotelaldis.cz](http://www.hotelaldis.cz)  
[www.hotelterezianskyydvur.com](http://www.hotelterezianskyydvur.com)

**Did you know...?**

*In 2016, the Hradec Králové Regional Convention and Incentive Tourism Bureau (HKRCB) was established in Hradec Králové. The aim of the bureau is a unified presentation of all entities in the Hradec Králové Region that offer facilities for congress, exhibition, and incentive tourism.*



[www.micehregion.com](http://www.micehregion.com)

### Petrof Gallery

You can organize a conference, ball, or cultural event for up to **500 people** in the **former Petrof production hall**. In 2018, the conversion project was awarded the title of **Building of the Year** of the Hradec Králové Region and gave rise to a unique space with the signature of this traditional family company. A café for the public was also created within the premises.  
[www.petrofgallery.cz](http://www.petrofgallery.cz)

### Hotel Grand

Czechoslovak President **T. G. Masaryk** liked to visit one of the first modern Czech hotels. He was fond of bringing his visitors to Hradec Králové and boasted of the Salon of the Republic of Europe. The local congress hall can now seat up to **90 people** who will enjoy a conference in the historic center of the city.  
[www.grandhk.cz](http://www.grandhk.cz)

### Adalbertinum

The Neo-Renaissance style of the Adalbertina brings a certain grandeur to this center of culture, society, and education that many history buffs will appreciate. Organizers of social events will appreciate the variability of the building, which has **5 halls and lounges**, the largest of which can accommodate **more than 400 people**.  
[www.adalbertinum.cz](http://www.adalbertinum.cz)

### Cihelna Cultural and Training Centre

The adapted premises of the former brickworks offer seven meeting rooms. The outdoor spaces are also attractive, especially for garden parties.  
[www.centrumdragogiky.cz](http://www.centrumdragogiky.cz)

### Park Golf

The resort offers beautiful outdoor spaces and the facilities of a **golf course**, which is suitable, for example, for “team bonding”. The indoor facilities offer capacity for up to **80 people**.  
[www.parkgolf.cz](http://www.parkgolf.cz)



*Congress Hall of EA Hotel Tereziánský Dvůr.*



*Petrof Gallery.*



*Cihelna Cultural and Training Centre.*

### Hotel New Adalbertinum

Originally a Baroque Jesuit college, it is located right on the Great Square in the city center and is an ideal venue for congresses of all types. The conference facilities are also suitable for social and educational events, balls, banquets, or corporate presentations.  
[www.noveadalbertinum.cz](http://www.noveadalbertinum.cz)

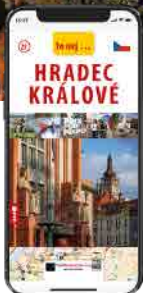


Visit [HradecKralove.cz](http://HradecKralove.cz)

SCAN ME



FREE GUIDEBOOK



News, calendar of events, accommodation, food and drink, trips, tips for families with children, and much more.



Our TIP



## TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

*Full service for visitors to Hradec Králové and its surroundings.*

- **TOURIST INFORMATION**
- **REGULARLY UPDATED CALENDAR OF EVENTS**
- **ARRANGING GUIDED TOURS FOR GROUPS BY PRIOR RESERVATION**
- **PRE-SALE OF TICKETS FOR CULTURAL AND SPORTING EVENTS**
- **TRANSPORT COMPANY SERVICES**
- **OFFER OF PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS**
- **FAMILY FRIENDLY LOCATION**
- **SALE OF SOUVENIRS**
- **SUTERÉN MULTIFUNCTIONAL GALLERY**
- **CERTIFIED PLACE CYCLISTS WELCOME**

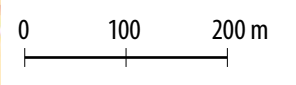
**Eliščino nábřeží 626** (near the Museum of East Bohemia), 500 03 Hradec Králové

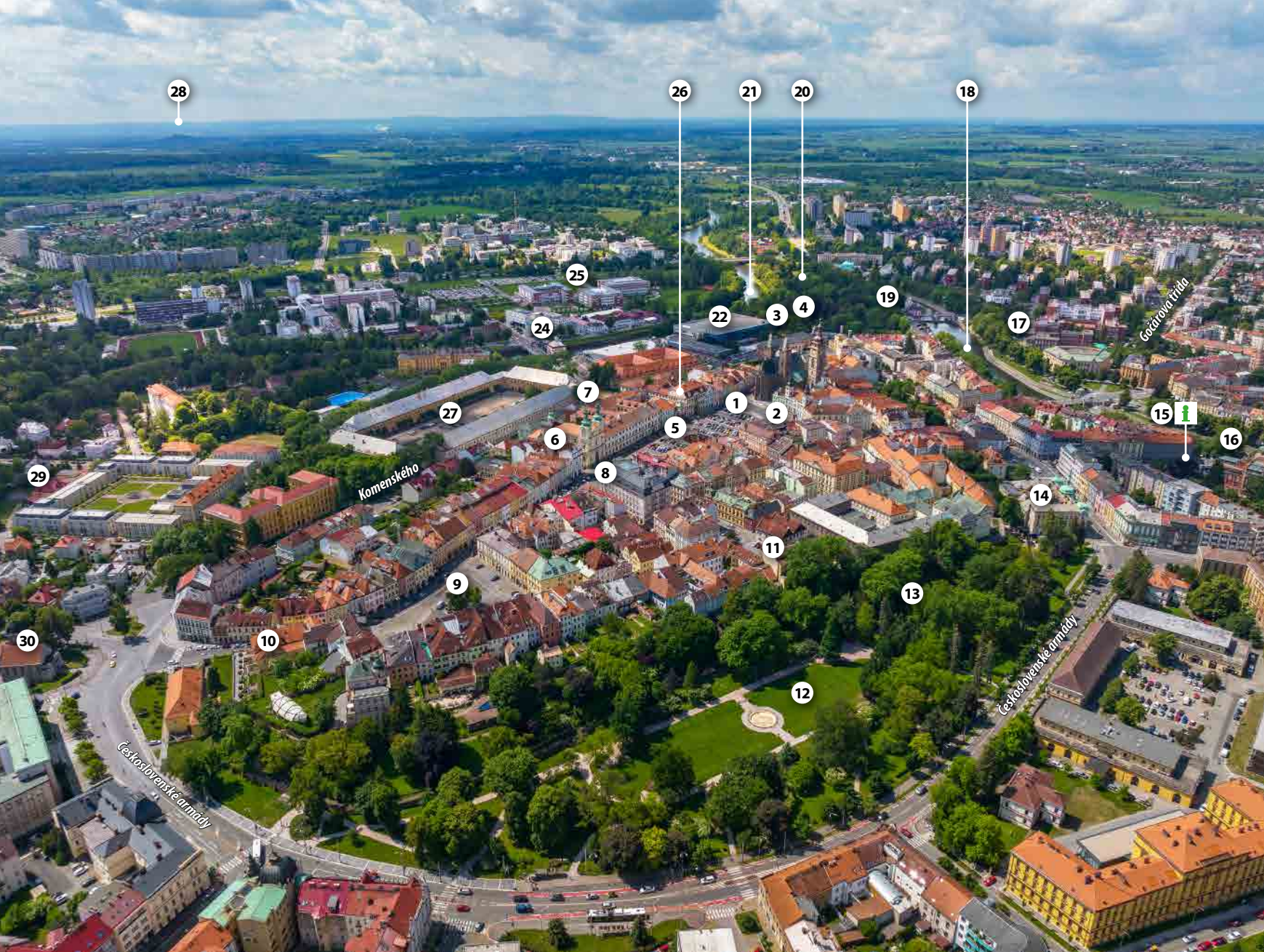
☎ +420 727 827 947 ✉ [info@hkinfo.cz](mailto:info@hkinfo.cz)

🌐 [www.hkinfo.cz](http://www.hkinfo.cz) 📌 [fb.me/infhradec](https://fb.me/infhradec)

📷 [www.instagram.com/hradeckralove\\_info/](https://www.instagram.com/hradeckralove_info/)







- |                                                        |                                        |                                          |
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| 3. Cathedral of the Holy Spirit (p. 10)                | 13. Monument to Jan Žižka              | 24. Study and Research Library (p. 58)   |
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|                                                        | 21. Orlice River before the confluence |                                          |

[www.hradeckralove.org](http://www.hradeckralove.org)  
[www.hkinfo.cz](http://www.hkinfo.cz)  
[www.hradecko.eu](http://www.hradecko.eu)  
[www.hkregion.cz](http://www.hkregion.cz)  
[www.visithradeckralove.cz](http://www.visithradeckralove.cz)



www.mcumedia.cz

