

<p>1. Bohemia, in the western part of the Czech Republic, is a land of rolling hills and valleys, surrounded by mountains. Moravia, in the east, is very hilly.</p>		<p>2. Some of the oldest and most important land routes in Europe go right through the Czech Republic. This is one reason why it has been occupied by so many different groups over the centuries.</p>
<p>3. After World War I, the area became known as Czechoslovakia. In 1938 part of Czechoslovakia was given to Hitler, in hopes of preventing World War II. Although this didn't work, it did prevent the bombing of Prague and other historic sites.</p>		<p>4. After World War II, Czechoslovakia became a communist country and joined the Soviet Union in the Warsaw Pact. It remained under communist rule until the late 1980s.</p>
<p>5. Under communist rule, farms were not successful, so thousands of Czechs moved from the country to the cities. Today, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the population now live in the cities.</p>		<p>6. About 40% of the population is Roman Catholic, though many of them do not actively attend church.</p>

<p>7. Education has always been important to Czechs. The oldest university in central Europe is Charles University in Prague, which dates to 1348.</p>		<p>8. Education is required from age 6 to 15. After that, youth may enter vocational schools or 4 year schools that prepare them for university studies.</p>
<p>9. Most Czechs can play at least one musical instrument; the violin is one of the oldest and still most popular instruments to master as you grow up.</p>		<p>10. The Czech language has two forms: formal, written Czech that is used in the media and schools, and informal spoken Czech that has many slang expressions, as well as some German and English words.</p>
<p>11. Most schools are still controlled by the government but there are a growing number of private and religious schools.</p>		<p>12. Most Czechs live comfortably: an average Czech family has a car, a TV, a refrigerator and a washing machine.</p>

<p>13. Families are generally small. In recent years more Czechs are choosing not to have children, so there are fewer children in the country.</p>		<p>14. Czech kids enjoy many of the same things kids in the US do: computer games are popular, as is watching TV and hanging out with friends.</p>
<p>15. Pork is a favorite food, along with pickled cabbage and sliced dumplings called “knedliky.” Hot dogs are a favorite snack.</p>		<p>16. The traditional Czech Christmas dinner is carp, a kind of fish raised in large ponds. People buy live carp from sellers on the street and keep them alive in their bathtubs until Christmas day when they cook and eat them.</p>
<p>17. Tennis is a popular Czech sport. Many international tennis champions are Czech, including Ivan Lendle and Martina Navratilova.</p>		<p>18. The Prague Spring Music Festival is one of Europe’s biggest annual music events. It lasts for 3 weeks and includes all kinds of music.</p>

19. The Chrudim Puppet Festival in July attracts puppeteers from all over the world. Czechs have a long tradition of making beautiful puppets and marionettes.

20. Prague is one of Europe's most popular tourist destinations, especially in the spring and summer.