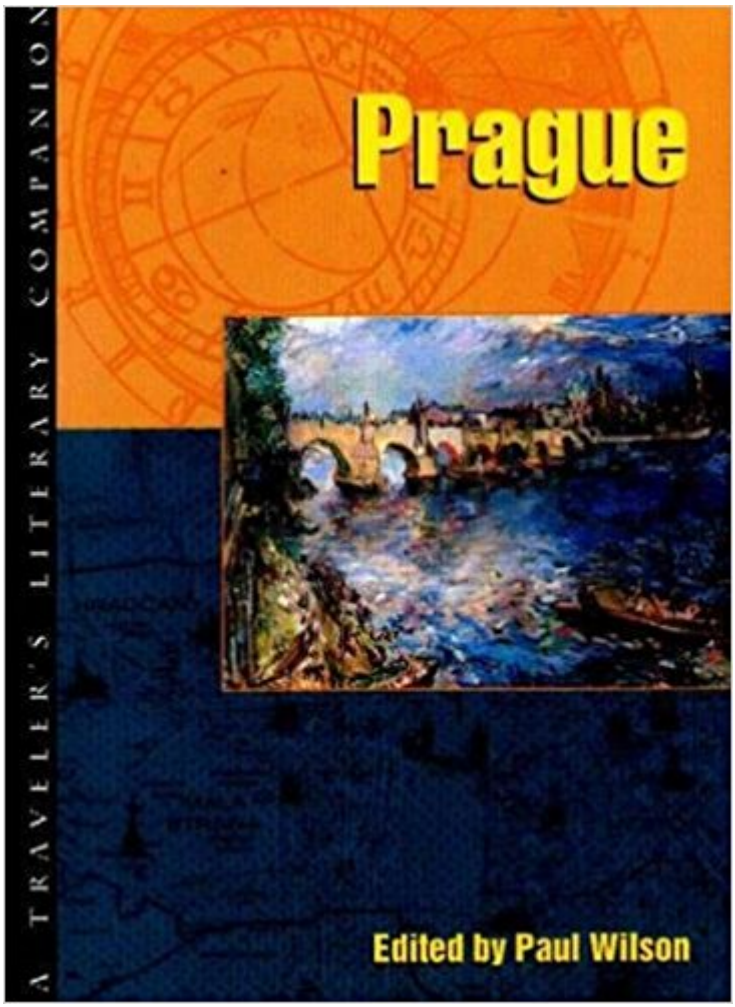
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Prague: A Traveler's Literary Companion (Traveler's Literary Companions)



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Synopsis

Travel to one of the most beautiful cities in the world in the company of its finest writers. Walk the mysterious nighttime streets of Prague with Franz Kafka and Jaroslav Hasek, eavesdrop on intimate conversations in restaurants and lively beer halls with Karel Capek and Bohumil Hrabal, listen to jazz in stylish nightclubs with Josef Skvorecky. The stories in this volume — many of which appear in English for the first time — will take you on a personal odyssey through the city's stormy past to its dynamic present. For the traveler who wishes to experience something of its essence, Prague illuminates the heart and soul of a great city. Contributors include Michal Ajvaz, Karel Capek, Ivan Divis, Jaroslav Hasek, Daniela Hodrova, Bohumil Hrabal, Alois Jirasek, Franz Kafka, Jiri Karasek ze Lvovic, Egon Erwin Kisch, Ivan Klima, Jiri Kovtun, Frantisek Langer, Gustav Meyrink, Jan Neruda, Karel Pecka, Ota Pavel, Josef Skvorecky, Jindriska Smetanova, Jachym Topol, and Jiri Weil.

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Customer Reviews

The city of Prague has inspired a lot of fine literature, and Paul Wilson has done the English-speaking world a vast favor by compiling this anthology of 23 Prague stories. There are classics by the likes of Franz Kafka, Jan Neruda, and Ivan Klima, and lesser-known works making their English-translation debuts. There are autobiographical pieces, fiction, legend, stories from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, tales from the Soviet regime, and contemporary pieces from the Czech

Republic. Ivan Klima’s epilogue is titled "The Spirit of Prague," and after reviewing Prague’s history--cultural and political--he concludes that paradox is at Prague’s heart, and irony and ridicule are its primary tools. Both devices are employed deftly throughout Wilson’s anthology, providing clever, lyrical, and moving snippets of Prague’s complex reality.

Novelist Ivan Klima explains in "The Spirit of Prague" that his native city has inspired people’s creativity by the blending of three cultures that lived side by side for decades, even centuries: Czech, German and Jewish. It is also a city in which "the best people in the country were often imprisoned, tortured or executed." Czech writers deal with such injustices with a subversive sense of humor. It shines in Bohumil Hrabal’s description of "The Hotel Pariz," Josef Skvorecky’s rendition of President Clinton’s sax playing at the Reduta jazz club, Egon Erwin Kisch’s "The Case of the Washerwoman," and Jaroslav Hasek’s sendup of The Society of Teetotalers. To see human comedy in the midst of great suffering allowed the spirit of Prague to prevail, and that is the genius of the authors presented here. These 24 stories, arranged by the areas of the city they illuminate, are a literary banquet for readers who already know and love "the city of a hundred spires." As such, they are designed, according to editor Wilson, to reveal "a deeper truth about the psyche of the people of Prague than perhaps direct description could." Also included are biographies of contributors and translators and a historical chronology of Prague. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

It gave me a really good sense of the mood of the city expressed by eloquent writers.

I read this throughout my stay in Prague, and it was the perfect companion to help illustrate the already enchanting character of the city, and now when I re-read these stories (that are either hard or impossible to find translated into English from any other source) I almost feel like I am in that beautiful city again. Highly recommended, especially before or during a trip to Prague

Loved this to read while in Prague. It is a sampling of writers who were either from the Czech Republic, or are writing about it. It was fun to read while there....the book is divided into areas of the city. Each night we read a couple of stories from the areas we were in or were going to the next day. Fun.

Just wonderful! This compact collection of short pieces set in Prague and written by Czech authors

is better than a travel guide to the city. The stories were written at various times during history, when Prague was part of old Bohemia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, during Nazi occupation, and finally Soviet occupation. I can't wait to go there and see the place where it all happened.

This book gave me a unique feel for Prague. There are some good literary stories and some that give you background about Prague's history and stories. I read some before & some during my stay. The synopsis of the history at the back is also very useful; too bad I didn't see it until I finished the book!

This is a terrific way to taste authentic Prague through the eyes of her writers. History, geography, human emotions, and excitement all come together in short stories or excerpts. It's a small book, so you can tuck it in to your coat pocket and read it on the plane on the way over.

An uneven, but overall entertaining, collection. I'll reread some of the stories now that I have seen where thy take place in Prague.

Great way to get a feel for the place prior to a visit.

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