

# North Moravia



To lazily pay heed to the reputation endured by North Moravia, you'd assume (wrongly) that the region is a shabby grab bag of industry and mining, all isolated by the tyranny of distance from the interest and influence of faraway Prague. And while some areas do retain a distinct grittiness, there's simply too much of interest to give the region the travellers' cold shoulder.

The glorious cityscape of Olomouc (possibly Central Europe's most underrated), hosts an urbane population inspired by a lively influx of students. Thanks to a profound lack of tourists, Olomouc provides the truest sense of what Prague would be like without the crowds: in a word, fabulous. Contrasting with the city's lively present and future is a fascinating and ancient ecclesiastical history that is unmissable.

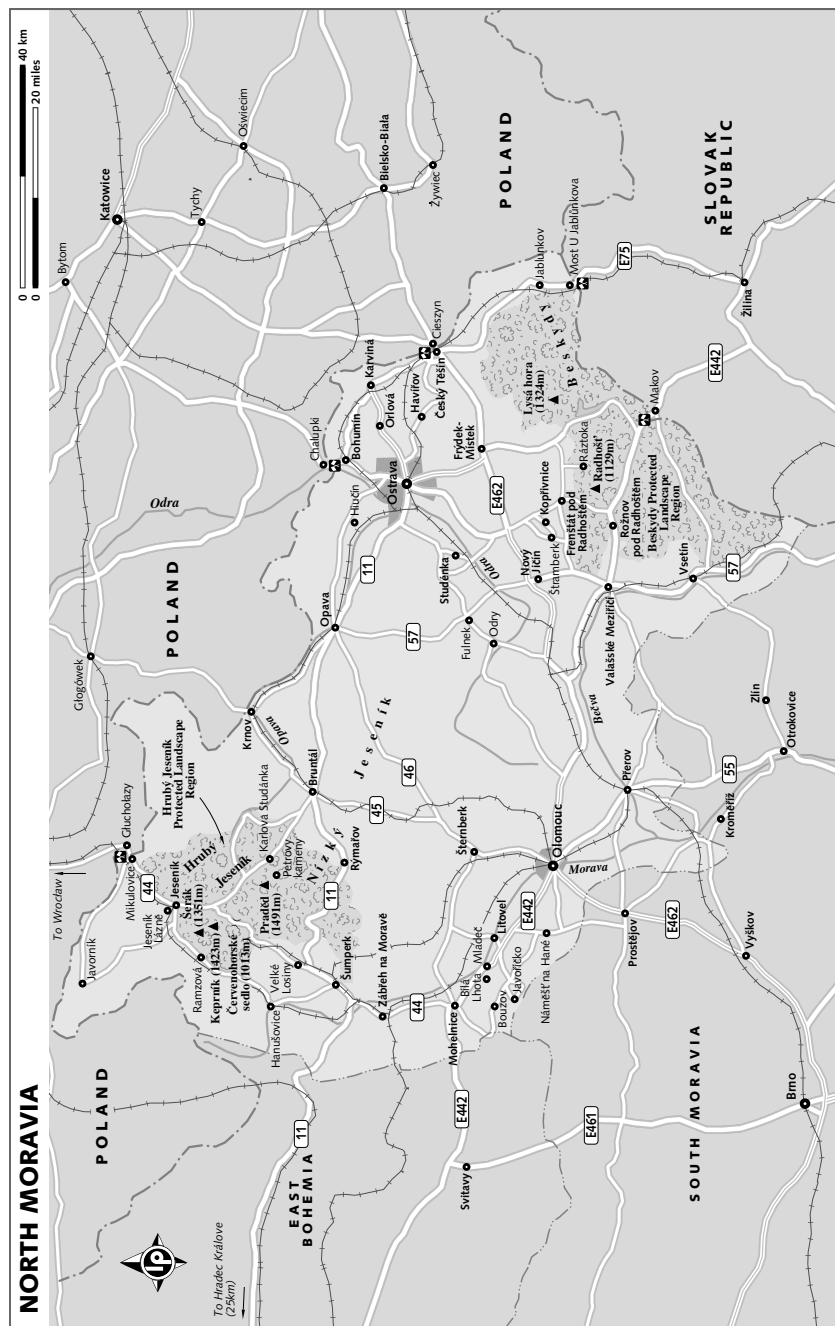
In the looming northern steel town of Ostrava a proud industrial heritage is being reborn with the energy of the 21st century. On the weekend crowds gather in one of the country's biggest party scenes, which can get a tad crazy – who says Moravians are reserved? There's more celebration of industry at the fascinating Tatra museum in Kopřivnice.

Outside of the cosmopolitan 'double-O' axis of Ostrava and Olomouc, the rugged Jeseník Mountains (Nízký Jeseník) bordering Poland contain pretty spa towns and some fine opportunities for hiking, cycling and cross-country skiing. The terrain is lower in the Beskydy mountains bordering Slovakia, but there's nothing second-fiddle about the traditional architecture and interesting Wallachian culture surrounding Štramberk and Rožnov pod Radhoštěm.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Admire the stunning **Holy Trinity column** (p271) in Olomouc, the country's most underrated city
- Catch the quirky midday display of Olomouc's proletarian **astronomical clock** (p269)
- Discover the rustic past amid the traditional wooden buildings of **Štramberk** (p280) and Rožnov pod Radhoštěm's **Wallachian open-air museum** (p289)
- Party hard in the raucous bars and clubs of Ostrava's notorious **Stodolní ulice** (p279)
- Relax and recharge in the delightfully wooded spa town of **Jeseník Lázně** (p275)





## OLOMOUC

pop 105,000

As countless tourists embrace the overt charms of Prague and Český Krumlov, Olomouc (*Olla*-moats) exudes a subdued appeal, emerging as the travellers' equivalent of a special restaurant that is your own little secret. An old town square rivaling that in Prague for scale and beauty, combines with the youthful vivacity of a modern student town amid the graceful campus of the country's second oldest university. Some of Moravia's most impressive religious structures play host to a thrilling history, and a youthful population looks to the future with a quiet confidence. And, with tourist numbers at a mere trickle, Olomouc is one of the Czech Republic's best-value cities.

### History

Legend has it that Olomouc was founded by Julius Caesar. It later became a major seat of administrative power when Moravia and Bohemia were united in the 11th century, then a bishopric in 1063. Olomouc has the bearing of a capital city, and was the Moravian capital from the 12th century until it was occupied and looted by Swedish troops between 1642 and 1650. It has been the seat of the metropolitan archbishop of Moravia since 1777. Industrialisation passed it by until well into the 20th century.

### Orientation

The main train station (*hlavní nádraží*) is 2km east of the old town, over the Morava river and its tributary the Bystrice (take tram 1, 2, 5 or 6 heading west). The bus station is 1km further east (take tram 4 or 5).

The old town is around the two linked squares of Horní (Upper) and Dolní (Lower) náměstí. The eastern part of the old town, with the Přemysl palace and the university, lies along narrow Ostružnická and třída 1.máje.

### Information

#### BOOKSHOPS

**Tycho** (☎ 585 225 095; Ostružnická 3) A good source of maps.

#### EMERGENCY

**Foreigners' police** (Cizinecká policie; ☎ 585 223 333; Smetanova 14) In the police building, near the train station.

### INTERNET ACCESS

Both of these options provide internet and Skype at 1Kč per minute.

**ISiC Net** (třída 1 Máje 12; ☎ 8am-10pm Mon-Fri, 10am-10am Sat & Sun) 50% discount for student card-holders.

**Internet U Martina** (Ostružnická 29; ☎ 9am-midnight)

### MEDICAL SERVICES

**Hospital** (Nemocnice; ☎ 585 851 111; Pavlova 6) South of the centre, on tram routes 1, 4 and 6.

### MONEY

**Česká spořitelna** (Horní nám 17) ATM and exchange counter.

**KB** (třída Svobody) ATM and exchange counter.

**ČSOB** (Dolní nám 28-9)

### POST

**Main post office** (Nám Republiky) There is another branch on Horní nám.

### TOURIST INFORMATION

*Beristo* is a free bi-monthly events guide available in bars and clubs. It's in Czech, but the club and cinema listings are useful. *DDD* magazine is similar and available from bookshops for 10Kč.

**Main tourist information office** (Olomoucká informační služba; www.olomouc-tourism.cz) town hall (☎ 585 513 385; Horní nám; ☎ 9am-7pm); train station (☎ 585 785 620; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri) Sells maps and makes accommodation bookings. Both branches sell the Olomouc Card (3/5 days 160/340Kč), which includes free entry to sights and discounts at hotels. If you're only staying a few days, you may not get value from the card.

### TRAVEL AGENCIES

**Čedok** (☎ 582 228 831; Nám Národních Hrdinů 4;

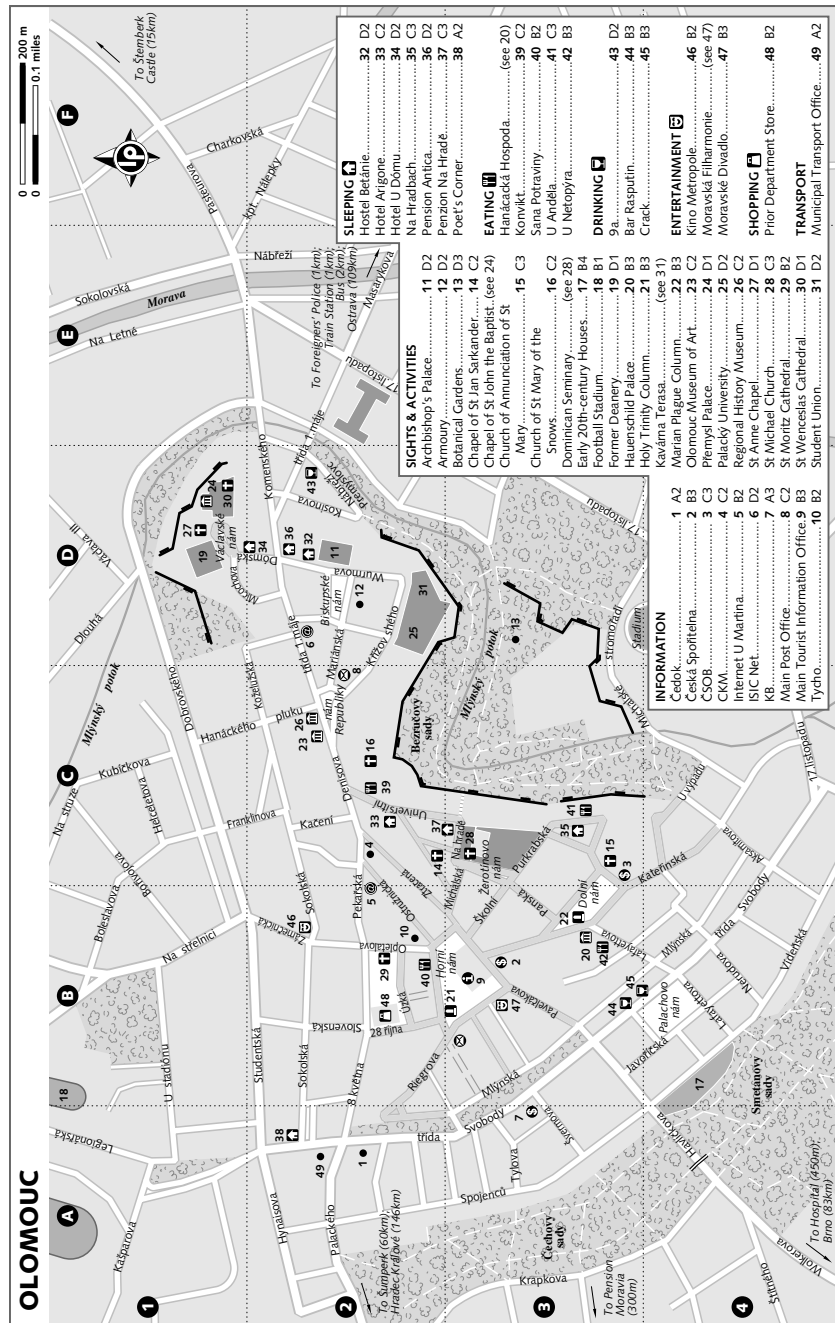
☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) Books train, plane and bus tickets and helps with accommodation.

**CKM** (☎ 585 222 148; www.ckmolomouc.cz; Denisova 4; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri) Books travel tickets, sells ISiC and HI cards, and advises on budget accommodation.

### Sights & Activities

#### HORNÍ NÁMĚSTÍ & AROUND

The splendid, polymorphous **town hall** (*radnice*) in the middle of the square was built in 1378, though its present architectural style and needlelike **tower** (věž; admission 15Kč; ☎ tours 11am & 3pm Mar-Oct) date from 1607. Note the **oriel window** of the 15th-century chapel on the south side and don't miss the **astronomical clock** on the north side, remodelled in communist



style so that each hour is announced by ideologically pure workers instead of pious saints. The best display is at midday.

Across the square, **Holy Trinity column** (Sousoší Nejsvětější trojice) is impossible to miss. A baroque mélange of gold and grey, its monumental form is reminiscent of the Buddhist shrine of Borobudur in Indonesia. Built between 1716 and 1754 to a design by V Render, a local sculptor, it is supposedly the biggest single baroque sculpture in Central Europe. On most days a delightful nun will explain to you the meaning of the interior sculptures in a variety of languages. In 2000, the column was awarded an inscription on Unesco's World Heritage list.

Surrounded by a jaw-dropping roll call of historic façades, the square also contains two of the city's six baroque fountains. The **Hercules fountain** (Herkulova kašna) dates from 1688 and features the muscular Greek hero standing astride a pit of writhing serpents. To the east of the town hall, the **Caesar fountain** (Caeserova kašna) was built in 1724 and is Olomouc's biggest. During the communist era the Roman emperor straddling his horse was crowned with a single red star; proof that the Nazis were not the only totalitarian regime to co-opt the essence of ancient Rome.

Olomouc's tradition of building fountains was continued in 2002 when a seventh fountain was erected in Horní nám featuring turtles and a rampant dolphin. A few rascally locals claim that rubbing the head of the turtle nearest the Holy Trinity column will bring you good luck. Try it and see.

Down Opletalova is Olomouc's original parish church, the vast **St Moritz cathedral** (chrám sv Mořice). Thoroughly Gothic, it was built between 1412 and 1540. The western tower is a remnant of its 13th-century predecessor. The cathedral's amazing island of peace is shattered every September with an International Organ Festival (the cathedral's own organ is Moravia's mightiest).

#### DOLNÍ NÁMĚSTÍ & AROUND

The 1661 **church of Annunciation of St Mary** (kostel Zvěstování Panny Marie) stands out with its beautifully sober interior. Its antithesis is the opulent 16th-century Renaissance confection, the **Hauenschild palace** (not open to the public). The square also sports its own **Marian plague column** (Mariánský morový sloup), and baroque **fountains** dedicated to Neptune and Jupiter.

Picturesque lanes thread northeast from Dolní nám to Žerotínovo nám, named after the Žerotíns, a landowning family who set Velké Losiny's gruesome 17th-century witch trials in motion (see p276). Here you'll find the green-domed landmark of **St Michael church** (kostel sv Michala), with its robust baroque interior. Among the furnishings is a rare painting of a pregnant Virgin Mary. Wrapped around the entire block is an active **Dominican seminary** (Dominikánský klášter).

Nearby is the tiny round **chapel of St Jan Sarkander** (kaple sv Jana Sarkandra; ☎ 10am-noon & 1-5pm), named after a local priest who died under torture in 1620 for refusing to divulge false confessions. It's built on the site of the jail where he died, part of which is preserved in the cellar.

#### NÁMĚSTÍ REPUBLIKY & AROUND

The original Jesuit college complex, founded in 1573, stretches along Universitní and into Nám Republiky. It includes the baroque **church of St Mary of the Snows** (kostel Panny Marie Sněžné), which is full of fine frescoes.

Across the road is the **Olomouc museum of art** (Olomoucký muzeum umění; ☎ 585 514 111; Denisova 47; adult/concession 20/10Kč, Wed free; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun), an excellent gallery with changing displays of 20th-century Czech paintings and sculpture, plus shows of contemporary artists. Upstairs is the musical theatre (p273) which still hosts regular performances.

Next door in a former convent, is the **Regional History museum** (Vlastivědné muzeum; ☎ 585 515 111; www.vmo.cz; nám Republiky 5; adult/concession 40/20Kč, Wed free; ☎ 9am-6pm Tue-Sun Apr-Sep, 10am-5pm Wed-Sun Oct-Mar) with historical, geographical and zoological displays.

Escape the mad traffic on třída 1.máje and head up Křížovského, past the 17th-century canons' residences that now house part of **Palacký University** (Universita Palackého). The **kavárna** (café) at the student union is good for a coffee break.

Around the corner in Biskupské nám is the **Archbishop's palace** (Arcibiskupský palác), completed in 1685, which is not so much interesting as merely huge. The monolith on the south side of the square is a former **armoury** (1711).

#### PŘEMYSL PALACE & ST WENCESLAS CATHEDRAL

In the peaceful, pocket-sized Václavské nám, in the northeast corner of the old centre are

the most venerable of Olomouc's historical buildings.

Originally a Romanesque basilica, consecrated in 1131, the **St Wenceslas cathedral** (dóm sv Václava) was rebuilt several times before being thoroughly 'neo-Gothicised' inside and out in the 1880s.

Pride of place goes to the remnants of the early 12th-century **Přemysl palace** (Přemyslovský palác; adult/concession 20/10Kč; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun Apr-Sep), originally built for Bishop Jindřich Zdík. A detailed English text walks you through a cloister with 15th- and 16th-century frescoes on the original walls up to the archaeological centrepiece, the bishops' rooms with their Romanesque walls and windows (rediscovered in 1867), and artistry unequalled elsewhere in the Czech Republic, even in Prague castle. Downstairs, surviving 16th-century frescoes in the **chapel of St John the Baptist** (kaple sv Jana Křtitele), completed in 1262, include angels with instruments of torture (a sign of ecclesiastical approval?).

To the left of the palace is the **St Anne chapel** (kaple sv Anny), and beyond that are the long, yellow walls of the **former deanery** where Wenceslas III, the last of the Přemysl line, was mysteriously assassinated in 1306. This building is now part of Palacký University.

#### OTHER ATTRACTIONS

In the southwest of town on Vídeňská are four wonderfully fanciful **early 20th-century houses**. Similar houses are dotted nearby on the edge of **Smetanovy sady**, one of the large parks that enclose the historical centre to the west and east.

A staircase at the rear of St Michael church on the southern end of Universitni leads through the walls of the old town to **Bezručovy sady**, a pretty park wrapped around the meandering Mlýnský potok. The **botanical gardens** (botanická zahrada; adult/concession 30/20Kč; ☎ 9.30am-5pm) are across the river further to the east.

#### Sleeping

The tourist information office and CKM can help you with advice on private and hotel rooms.

#### BUDGET

**Poet's Corner** (☎ 777 570 730; www.hostelolomouc.com; 3rd fl, Sokolská 1; dm/tw 300/800Kč) Aussie owner Greg is a wealth of local information at this exceptionally friendly and well-run hostel – even if he thinks the dark chocolate pie from Café 87 is better than their white chocolate pie. Bicycles can be hired for 100Kč per day.

**Hostel Betánie** (☎ 585 233 860; hostel.olomouc@charita.cz; Wurmova 5; s/d 350/450Kč; (P)) Near the university this church-run hostel has a funky café and clean rooms with shared facilities. With a slightly monastic air, it's not a party place, but is friendly and welcoming.

#### MIDRANGE

**Pension Moravia** (☎ 585 416 403; www.pension-moravia.com; s/d 500/800Kč; (P)) A 10-minute walk from the town centre, this *pension* provides good value in a quiet residential street without the potential parking hassles of the old town. If you arrive by public transport, catch bus 19 from the railway station to the Dvořákova stop.

**Na Hradbach** (☎ 585 233 243; nahradbach@quick.cz; Hrnčířská 3; s/d 600/800Kč) On one of Olomouc's prettiest streets sits probably the best value *pension*, with two of the town's finest restaurants across the lane. We strongly recommend booking ahead.

**Pension Antica** (☎ 731 560 264; www.pension.antica.cz; Wurmova 1; s/d incl breakfast from 800/1600Kč to 1200/2000Kč; (P)) Warning: if you're travelling by yourself, don't read this. If you're looking for a romantic stay in a quietly romantic city, read on. With antique furniture, crisp white duvets and oriental rugs covering polished wood floors, there's every chance you won't leave these stunning apartments long enough to enjoy the easy-going Renaissance charm of Olomouc.

**Hotel u Dómu** (☎ 585 220 502; hotel\_u\_domu@email.cz; Dómská 4; s/d incl breakfast 1200/1600Kč; (P)) In a quiet street amid the age-old shadows of St Wenceslas cathedral, this boutique-style hotel has comfortable rooms and authentically charming décor.

**Penzion Na Hradě** (☎ 585 203 231; www.penzion.nahrade.cz; Michalská 4; s/d 1590/1690; (P)) Tucked away in the robust silhouette of St Michael church, this new designer *pension* has sleek, cool rooms and professional service creating a contemporary ambience in the heart of the old town.

**Hotel Arigone** (☎ 585 232 350; www.arigone.web.tiscali.cz; Universitni 20; s/d incl breakfast 1690/1900Kč) Wooden beams, parquet floors and skylights combine in a charming lane in the closest place Olomouc has to a romantic, boutique hotel. A few picturesque doors down they also run a cosy wine bar.

#### Eating

**Café 87** (Denisova 87; chocolate pie 30Kč, coffee 25 Kč; ☎ 7.30am-8pm) Locals flock to this arty, sunny café beside the Olomouc Museum of Art for great coffee and their special recipe chocolate pie. You be the judge – dark chocolate or white chocolate? Across Olomouc the debate continues.

**Hanáčacká Hospoda** (☎ 582 237 186; Dolní nám 38; mains 70-100Kč) Just when you're finally getting to grips with a Czech menu, this incredibly popular spot lists everything in the local Haná dialect. It's worth persevering though because the Moravian meals are robust, tasty and supreme value.

**U Netopýra** (☎ 776 735 534; Lafayetteova 6; pizza 80Kč) Use sonar at 'the place of the bat' to find a spot

in the labyrinth of nooks and crannies, then switch to your sense of taste to appreciate the good thin crust pizza and well-priced beer.

**Konvík** (☎ 585 631 486; Universitni 3; mains 130-200Kč; ☎ 9am-midnight Mon-Fri, 10am-11pm Sat & Sun) Here you have two choices: dine in the spacious restaurant and sunny terrace on the walls of the old town, or head inside to the Konvík Bar for more raucous student-fuelled fun.

**U Anděla** (☎ 585 228 755; Hrnčířská 10; mains 130-395Kč) After you order, wander round and look at the fascinating memorabilia displayed in every nook and cranny. Don't be too long though because the service is prompt and the Moravian food very good.

**Sana Potraviny** (Horní nám 9) This is the main-square supermarket.

#### Drinking

**9a** (Nábřeží Přemyslovců 9; ☎ noon-midnight Mon-Fri, noon-3pm Sat & Sun) Light and dark wood and bricks combine in a spot that's a cut above other, grungier, student bars. Try your hand (and feet) on the climbing wall.

**Crack** (☎ 585 208 428; Mlýnská 4) The eclectic seating arrangement in this bar includes old sofas, church pews and old theatre seats. It's not particularly Irish, but it is reliably warm and comfy.

**Bar Rasputin** (Mlýnská) This place is hard to find behind the Crack, but worth seeking out for the slightly louche Russian ambience.

#### Entertainment

**Moravské Divadlo** (☎ 585 223 531; www.moravskedi.vadlo.cz, in Czech; Horní nám 22) The town theatre puts on plenty of shows.

**Moravská Filharmonie** (☎ 585 206 520; www.mfo.cz, in Czech; Horní nám 23) The local orchestra presents regular concerts.

**Kino Metropole** (☎ 585 222 466; Sokolská 25) This is one of many cinemas in Olomouc.

**Musical theatre** (Hudební divadlo; ☎ 585 223 565; www.divadlohudby.cz, Czech only) This theatre still operates today and is upstairs from the Olomouc museum of art (p271).

#### Getting There & Away

From Ostrava to Olomouc there are regular buses (120Kč, two hours) and fast trains (130Kč, 1½ hours). From Brno, there are about 15 buses (60Kč, 1¼ hours) and five direct fast trains (120Kč, 1½ hours) each day. The fast train connections from Prague (294Kč, 3¼ hours) depart from Praha hlavní nádraží.

#### FIVE THINGS THAT WILL GROW ON YOU

After living in Olomouc for a few years, Australian Greg Chandler appreciates the idiosyncrasies of life in the Czech Republic.

- 'I love the felt slippers worn over your shoes to protect the floors of the museum. They reduce noise and also add a little physical adventure to your visit.'
- 'Even big, tough guys in leather jackets are happy to stroll around with little cones of strawberry ice-cream – all year round.'
- 'The ticket system in bars and restaurants shows the owners trust you, and saves you fighting your way to the bar every time you want a drink.'
- 'When the water truck sprays the streets on a hot day, everyone has to scatter – grandmothers with shopping, babies in prams and tourists gazing skywards.'
- 'Over-attentive museum stewards (usually women) always like to be in the same room as you. If you show a special interest in the exhibits, you'll have a friend for life.'

First-class SuperCity Pendolino trains run from Praha-Holešovice (500Kč, 2¼ hours) to Olomouc and from here on to Ostrava (340Sk, one hour).

From Bratislava in Slovakia you'll need to change at Brno.

### Getting Around

Bus tickets cost 6/12Kč and last for 40/60 minutes. You can buy them from *tabák* (kiosk) and newsstands or from the yellow machines at some stops.

A 24-hour transport pass (*denní jízdenka*) is available for 26Kč from the **municipal transport office** (DPMO; cnr Legionářská & Palackého; ☎ 6am-6pm Mon-Fri, 7am-1pm Sat) and from the main bus station.

### AROUND OLOMOUC

#### Šternberk Castle

Fifteen kilometres north of Olomouc, **Šternberk castle** (hrad Šternberk; www.sternberk.cz; adult/concession 60/30Kč; ☎ 9am-4pm Tue-Sun May-Sep, 9am-3pm Sat & Sun Apr & Oct, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun Nov-Dec) was founded in the late 13th century by the Šternberk family. It received a Renaissance face-lift in about 1480, and its Romantic look from Duke Jan II of Liechtenstein in 1886.

Now open to the public, Šternberk castle's historical interiors range from Gothic to baroque.

The castle is 300m up the hill from Šternberk's main square, Hlavní náměstí. The real landmark here is the **parish church of the Annunciation of Our Lord** (farní kostel Zvěstování Páně) on the way up to the castle. In contrast to its bombastic baroque façade, the interior is spacious, sparsely furnished and topped with fine murals.

### GETTING THERE & AWAY

You can get to/from Olomouc by bus (15Kč, 20 minutes) or train (22Kč, 20 minutes).

#### Bouzov Castle

The impressive pile of **Bouzov castle** (☎ 585 346 201; www.hrad-bouzov.cz, in Czech; ☎ 9am-4pm Tue-Sun May-Sep, 9am-3pm Sat & Sun Apr & Oct) was the seat of the Grand Masters of the Order of Teutonic Knights from 1799 to 1939. The oldest parts date from the 14th century, but it was renovated in neo-Gothic style between 1895 and 1910. The order was abolished in 1939 and the castle was occupied and looted by the Nazis during WWII.

The restored apartments include the Grand Master's Bedroom and office, the Hunter's Hall and the huge basement kitchens kitted out with the latest labour-saving devices of the early 20th century. The magnificent Knights' Hall has elaborate woodcarvings and a barrel-vaulted wooden ceiling decorated with the sun and the stars. The sculptures of St George and a jousting knight symbolise the spiritual and material aspects of the order.

Choose from the 30-minute 'classic' tour (adult/concession 80/40Kč), which takes in the main sights, or one of two longer (up to two hours) tours (adult/concession 140/70Kč). Tours are in Czech so ask for an English text.

### GETTING THERE & AWAY

There are two buses daily Monday to Friday from Olomouc to Bouzov (48Kč, one hour, 10 minutes), but only one bus returning in the opposite direction.

#### Javoříčko Caves

From Bouzov castle it's a 5km walk south on a blue-marked trail, (or you can take the occasional local bus), to Javoříčko and the impressive local underground attraction, the **Javoříčko caves** (Javoříčské jeskyně; adult/concession 60/30Kč; ☎ 9am-3pm Tue-Sun Apr-Oct).

You can either stay the night (there are basic hotels in Šternberk and near the caves) or continue northeast on a scenic red-marked trail for 8km to Bílá Lhota. Another 4km on are the smaller **Mladeč caves** (Mladečské jeskyně) at Mladeč, and a further 5km on is Litovel.

## JESENÍKY MOUNTAINS

The twin ranges that make up the Jeseník Mountains (Nízky Jeseník) also mark the boundaries of one of the Czech Republic's forgotten spaces. The rugged Hrubý Jeseník rise in the northwest corner of the region to Moravia's highest summit, Praděd (1491m). On a clear day (and with a good pair of binoculars) you can see both the Krkonoše of East Bohemia and the Tatras of Central Slovakia from its peak.

The surrounding Hrubý Jeseník Protected Landscape Region (Chráněná krajinná oblast Hrubý Jeseník) is home to deer and wild boar.

The Hrubý Jeseník have been developed for winter skiing and ski touring, but there are also plenty of walking opportunities. A town of particular historical interest is Velké Losiny, the site of blood-chilling witch trials during the 17th century. Both Velké Losiny and Jeseník Lázně on the other side of the mountains are Moravian spa centres.

### HRUBÝ JESENÍK

Šumperk, Velké Losiny, Ramzová and Jeseník are all convenient bases. The **information centre** (informační centrum; ☎ 584 498 155; www.jeseniky.net; Masarykovo nám 167; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat Jun-Aug, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri Sep-May) in Jeseník can help with transport, accommodation and activities information. The map to have is *Kartografie Praha's Jeseníky – turistická mapa* (No 19).

### Sights & Activities

This is a great area for cross-country skiing and walking, and trails abound. From **Červenohorské sedlo**, a 1013m pass on the Šumperk–Jeseník road that frequent buses pass by all day, there's a 10km trek southeast on a seriously strenuous red-marked trail to **Praděd** and on to **Petrovy kameny** (Peter's stones). Praděd has a 162m transmitter tower with a restaurant in it.

Alternatively, from Červenohorské sedlo take the red ridge-trail west to **Šerák** (1351m) via Červená hora and Kepník (1423m). There, a year-round **cable car** descends to Ramzová (or you can walk down on the red trail), which has buses and local trains back to Šumperk. This is an easy overnight trip, with *boudy* (huts) at Červenohorské sedlo and on Serák.

When you're finished walking, head to **Jeseník Lázně** perched haughtily above the market town of Jeseník. Jeseník Lázně was established as a Moravian alternative to the Bohemian spa scene in the 19th century by local farmer Vincent Priessnitz. Today the pretty spa town cascades down a pine-studded slope and is a low-key contrast to the glamour (albeit with a small 'g') of Bohemian spa centres such as Karlovy Vary and Mariánské Lázně. Priessnitz established cold water 'hydrotherapy' in Jeseník Lázně, and the interesting **museum Vincent Priessnitz** (☎ 584 411 633; Priessnitzova 175; adult/concession 20/10Kč; ☎ 12.30-5pm Tue-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun) details the occasionally bizarre procedures in an eye-opening series of 19th-century lithographs. Pretty **walks** traverse the surrounding slopes, which are dotted with memorials from grateful spa patients.

More contemporary are the soothing healing sessions that use salt crystals from the Dead Sea and the Himalayas at the **Solvita salt cave** (☎ 584 452 579; www.solvita.cz; Přesnitzova 12/299; per person 130Kč; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat & Sun). Deckchairs and soothing new-age beats are mandatory.

### Sleeping

There's private rooms and *pensions* in every town and village. Šumperk, Velké Losiny, Ramzová and Jeseník have plenty of accommodation possibilities. High-country camping is restricted, but there are lots of mountain chalets. The following listings are in spectacular locations.

**Sporthotel Kursovni** (☎ 583 779 003; www.praded-sporthotel.cz; s/d incl breakfast 440/800Kč; (P)) Just east of the summit of Praděd, this has similar rooms to Horský Hotel Červenohorské sedlo, but in a more remote setting.

**Pension Slezský Dům** (☎ 584 413 704; www.slezskydum.cz; Lipovská 630; s/d incl breakfast 490/980Kč; (P)) The loft rooms are especially cosy in this chalet-style place in Jeseník.

**Horský Hotel Červenohorské sedlo** (☎ 583 295 101; www.hotel-cervenohorskesedlo.cz, in Czech; s/d incl breakfast 500/100Kč; (P)) At the top of the pass on the Šumperk–Jeseník road, enjoy the great views and a good massage after a long walk in the surrounding mountains.

**Priessnitz Spa Health Resort** (☎ 584 491 266; www.priessnitz.cz; Priessnitzova 12; s/d 600/1200Kč) In Jeseník Lázně, this resort has four different spa hotels in various parts of town. Including accommodation, treatments begin at 1200Kč per day.

### Getting There & Away

There are two buses a day from Olomouc to Šumperk (50Kč, 1¼ hours) and half a dozen from Ostrava (110Kč, three hours). At least two run daily from Brno to Šumperk (100Kč, 2¾ hours), with one going on to Ramzová (45Kč, 3¾ hours).

From Olomouc there are six daily fast trains to Šumperk (76Kč, one hour) and many slower ones, most continuing to Ramzová. Five daily express trains run from Prague to Šumperk (260Kč, four hours) with local connections from there.

### Getting Around

There are only five daily buses (fewer on the weekend) running between Šumperk and

### THE BOBLÍG INQUISITION

During the 17th and 18th centuries North Moravia was swept by a wave of religious hysteria that makes the Salem witch hunts, happening in the USA at the same time, look like a Sunday outing.

In 1678 the Žerotíns hired František Boblíg to undertake the role of inquisitor to eradicate what they perceived to be ungodly and superstitious practices.

The inquisitor fulfilled his commission with zeal. Over the course of 15 years he accused scores of people, mostly women, of witchcraft; many of whom met a grizzly end at the stake. When nobles in Šumperk grew critical of the amount of property that Boblíg and his 'judges' were confiscating, he accused them of devilish sympathies as well.

Almost 15 years after they had started, the Žerotíns were persuaded by King Leopold I to take steps to end the persecutions, and the murderous Boblíg was forced to retire. He died of natural causes at an advanced age and was never held to account for the purges.

## OSTRAVA

pop 310,000

The Czech Republic's third-largest city is one of the country's most dynamic urban centres, arguably evolving even more quickly than faraway Prague. Inextricably linked with the gargantuan Vitkovice steelworks, which closed in 1998 after 170 years dominating Ostrava's smoggy smokestack skyline, the city is now reinventing its industrial heritage to become a centre of high-tech and service industries. Its proud industrial past is not forgotten, and Vitkovice has been nominated for a place on Unesco's World Heritage List (see p278).

The environmental damage resulting from decades of heavy industry is now receding and Ostrava's modern cityscape is peppered with parks, ironically making it one of the greenest cities in the country. After decades of suffocating under the aching monotony of heavy industry, a more enterprising and energetic Ostrava is emerging, and nowhere is the city's renewed verve more evident than in its booming bar and nightclub scene.

### Orientation

Ostrava is BIG, but only the central part on the west bank of the river is of interest to travellers.

Most trains use the main station, Ostrava hlavní nádraží, from where it's 2.5km south on Nádražní to the centre (take tram 2 or 8). The small Ostrava-střed train station and the main bus station are about 1km southwest of the centre; catch tram 1, 2 or 14 going north from Vítkovická in front of the bus station.

Jeseník, via Velké Losiny and Červenohorské sedlo. Direct train connections are not much better, with only four daily trains between Šumperk and Jeseník, via Ramzová, taking two hours. The indirect trains on this line are more frequent but require at least one change, usually at Hanušovice. Regular buses travel the 2km from Jeseník to Lázně Jeseník (15Kč, 10 minutes).

### VELKÉ LOSINY

Today a minor spa town, from 1496 to 1802 Velké Losiny was the seat of the powerful Žerotín family. A factory (with a small museum) established here by the family still produces handmade paper.

### Sights

The striking, U-shaped lakeside **Žerotín chateau** (zámek; adult/concession 40/20Kč, English text 40Kč; ☎ 9am-noon & 1-5pm Tue-Sun May-Aug, 9am-noon & 1-4pm Tue-Sun Sep, 9am-noon & 1-4pm Sat & Sun Apr & Oct) is one of Moravia's best preserved Renaissance properties. The group tour in Czech (there's an English text) takes in empire furniture and a 16th-century tiled stove, as well as portraits of the Žerotíns and paintings collected by them. It avoids the actual room – the grotesquely named Hall of Justice – where the infamous witch trials took place (see above), and goes into little detail about them.

### Getting There & Away

For information on getting to Šumperk, see p275. From there, Velké Losiny is a 15-minute train ride, with about eight departures a day. The chateau is about 1km southwest on a green-marked path from the train station.

### Information BOOKSHOPS

**Knihkupectví Librex** (☎ 596 117 676; Smetanovo nám; ☎ 9am-7pm) Five floors of books, a café and internet access, including wi-fi.

### EMERGENCY

**Foreigners' police office** (Úřadovna cizinecké policie; ☎ 596 141 111; Ostrčilova 4) Two hundred metres north of the new town hall.

### INTERNET ACCESS

@**Internet Café** (☎ 596 113 456; Škrupova 10; ☎ 9am-10pm Sun-Thu, 9am-3am Fri & Sat)

### MEDICAL SERVICES

**Hospital** (nemocnice; ☎ 596 191 111; Hornopolní) Five hundred metres west of the town centre.

### MONEY

There are banks across town.

**ČSOB** (Nádražní 10) Has an ATM and exchange counter.

### POST

**Main post office** (Dvořákova) Three blocks northeast of Nádražní. There's also a 24-hour branch at Wattova 1046.

### TOURIST INFORMATION

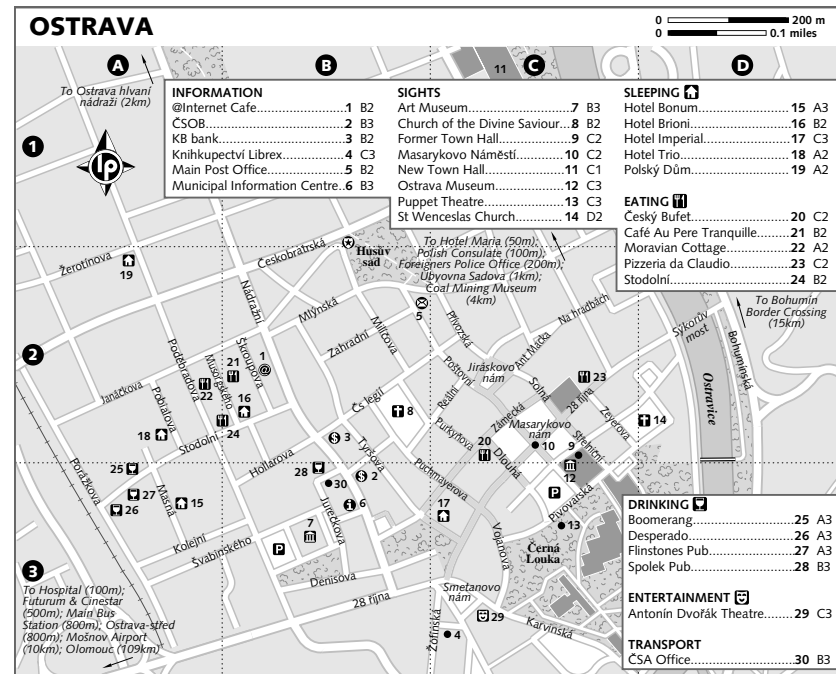
*Stodolní Noviny* is a free monthly magazine listing nightlife.

**Municipal information centre** (Městské informační centrum, MIC; www.ostravainfo.cz) Main office (☎ 596 123 913; Nádražní 7/686; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat); Ostrava hlavní nádraží (☎ 596 136 218; ☎ 7am-8.30pm Mon-Fri, 7am-3pm Sat, 1pm-8.30pm Sun); new town hall (☎ 599 443 096; ☎ 9am-5pm) This helpful information centre also books accommodation.

### Sights

In this metropolitan monument to modernity, the oldest public building is the **former town hall** (stará radnice) on Masarykovo nám. Inside is the small **Ostrava museum** (Ostravské muzeum; ☎ 596 123 760; adult/concession 30/20Kč; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat, 1-5pm Sun Oct-May, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat Jun-Sep) with exhibitions on regional natural history and archaeology, including the 20,000-year-old tiny statue of Petřkovičká Venus.

Nearby on Pivovarská is one of Ostrava's newest public buildings, the **puppet theatre** (divadlo loutek; ☎ 596 114 884; Pivovarská 5), which sports five giant sculpted puppets around the



## OSTRAVA'S BID FOR WORLD HERITAGE STATUS

Most sites inscribed to Unesco's World Heritage List are centuries old but the efforts of a few proud residents of Ostrava seem set to break the mould. Recognising the city's unique industrial history, in 2001 Ostrava's Heritage Council joined with the Ministry of Culture in Prague to successfully lobby Unesco to accept the city's looming steelworks on the 'Tentative' list for World Heritage recognition. In the words of Unesco, 'Ostrava's industrial complexes are unique in the international context since they comprise, in a single locality, coal mines, coking plants and blast furnaces.' High praise indeed and when a decision is reached in 2010, the foreboding steeltown skylines of Ostrava may be protected along with similar sites such as the mining landscape of Cornwall and West Devon, and Sewell mining town in Chile; all inscribed to World Heritage status in 2006.

entrance – Punch, the King, the Queen, the Angel and the Devil – all looking remarkably like pieces from the world's largest chess set.

To the east on Kostelní nám is the elegant **St Wenceslas church** (kostel sv Václav). The late-Gothic building has a baroque façade on Romanesque foundations. Two blocks eastwards from Nádražní, on Československých legií, is a neo-Renaissance basilica, the parish **church of the Divine Saviour** (chrám Božského Spasitele), dating from 1889.

Ostrava's **art museum** (dům umění; ☎ 596 112 566; Jurečkova 9; adult/concession 60/25Kč; ☎ 10am-1pm & 1.30-6pm Tue-Sat) has a modest collection of 20th-century Czech art and temporary exhibitions.

The **new town hall** (nové radnice; ☎ 596 283 096; Sokolská), 10 minutes' walk north from the town centre, was built between 1929 and 1930. The four statues on the front symbolise the former preoccupations of Ostrava – mining, commerce, science and metallurgy. Find the lift in the lobby (up the stairs ahead and on the right) and go to the top of the 85.6m-tall **clock tower** (věž; adult/concession 20/10Kč; ☎ 10am-7pm Apr-Oct, 10am-5pm Nov-Mar) for an excellent, and surprisingly green, view of the city.

## COAL MINING MUSEUM

The **Coal Mining museum** (Hornické muzeum; ☎ 596 131 803; www.muzeumokd.cz; adult/concession 80/40Kč; ☎ 9am-6pm, last entry 4pm), at Pod Landekem on the north edge of town, is a preserved late 19th-century colliery on the site of Anselm pit. The buildings house exhibits on the history of mining in North Moravia, and you can don a hard hat and descend to the old coal face. There's also an industrial archaeological trail in the surrounding grounds.

To get there, take tram 12 from Nádražní to Sad Boženy Němcové, then change to bus 52 or 56, getting out at Hornické muzeum.

## Festivals

**Colours of Ostrava** (www.colours.cz; admission 650Kč) This is an annual four-day music festival held mid- to late July. The best of Czech bands and DJs are represented and there is a significant focus on world music. Past headliners have included Robert Plant and Salif Keita.

## Sleeping

The tourist information office books hotels and private rooms. Accommodation prices are high compared to other parts of North Moravia and, with a large population of itinerant workers, Ostrava's hostels tend to be rough and ready.

**Ubyovna Sadová** (☎ 596 118 369; Sadová 12; dm per person 250Kč; ☎) This hostel, 1.5km north of the town centre, is your best budget bet in Ostrava. It's on Sadová, which runs off Sokolská.

**Hotel Maria** (☎ 596 110 676; Přívozká 23; www.hotel-maria.cz; s/d incl breakfast 780/980Kč) Quickly fading three stars, but Hotel Maria is good value in the big city.

**Polský Dům** (☎ 596 122 001; www.polskydum.cz; Poděbradova 53; s/d incl breakfast 850/1250Kč; ☎) The charmingly fading Art Nouveau ambience is not matched in the slightly dowdy rooms, but friendly service and a quiet location still give the 'Polish House' two big ticks.

**Hotel Trio** (☎ 596 111 427; www.hotel-trio.cz; Pobalova 10; s/d incl breakfast 970/1340Kč) Floral bedclothes and chrome furniture are a strange mix, but the Trio is a good central option where you can recharge for another big night on Stodolní.

**Hotel Brioni** (☎ 599 500 500; www.hotelbrioni.cz; Stodolní 8; s/d incl breakfast 1280/1600Kč) With wi-fi internet in every room and a trendy bar downstairs, the revamped Brioni targets a younger crowd in town for the nocturnal delights right outside on Stodolní.

**Hotel Bonum** (☎ 596 114 050; www.t-bonum.cz; Masná 6; s/d incl breakfast 1380/1980Kč) On a quieter side street, the Bonum blends comfortable attic rooms with an Egyptian restaurant featuring a mini-Sphinx – somehow it all hangs together nicely.

**Hotel Imperial** (☎ 599 099 099; www.imperial.cz; Tyršova 6; s/d incl breakfast 2000/300Kč; ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎) One hundred years of heritage is hard to spot as Ostrava's flashiest hotel has morphed into a very comfortable, if slightly prim, spot with all amenities and a business focus.

## Eating

In Ostrava eating often plays second fiddle to drinking and dancing, but if you look hard enough there are a few gems.

**Café Au Pere Tranquille** (☎ 595 136 715; Musoržského 839/8; crepes 100Kč; ☎ 7am-11pm Mon-Fri, 10am-11pm Sat, 2pm-11pm Sun) Healthy sweet and savoury crepes and salads are served at this French-style bistro just off Stodolní. It's popular for breakfasts too, proving there's more to Stodolní than nightlife.

**Pizzeria da Claudio** (☎ 603 708 138; Masarykovo nám 13; pizza 100Kč) The service can be a bit slack (the result of a big night out on Stodolní we're picking), but it's worth waiting for the wood-fired pizza with generous toppings.

**Moravian Cottage** (Moravská Chalupa; ☎ 596 234 937; Musoržského 9; mains 110-220Kč; ☎ Mon-Sat) Locals pack this spot for home-style Moravian cooking and a good selection of Moravian wine.

Also recommended:

**Český Bufet** (cnr Zámecká & Masarykovo nám; ☎ 7am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 7am-1pm Sat) For cheap and cheerful buffet eats.

**Stodolní** (snacks 70Kč; ☎ from 7pm Fri & Sat) Tasty barbecued chicken sandwiches and sausages from kerbside vendors.

## Drinking

Head to Stodolní where you'll find more than 60 pubs and clubs. A few locals reckon that the street's lost its grungy indie heritage, but it's now more popular than ever. The trend is towards dance-oriented clubs and bars with a shrinking range of identikit beats. Friday and Saturday nights are almost uncomfortably hectic. Try the following places for something a bit different.

**Desperado** (☎ 596 121 365; cnr Stodolní 31) The original bar on Stodolní is still one of the best. Lots of Mexican iconography and 30 different tequilas draw a wider age range

than the bass-thumping shoeboxes elsewhere on the strip.

**Flintstones Pub** (☎ 602 150 652; Stodolní 20; ☎ 5pm-4am Wed-Sat) When a bar is named after a classic 1960s cartoon it would be foolish to expect too much in the way of sophistication. The décor is a rustic approximation of Fred Flintstone's own abode, and the atmosphere is played strictly for laughs – you're guaranteed loads of fun, and a bona fide yabba dabba doozy.

**Boomerang** (☎ 608 707 717; Stodolní 22; ☎ 10pm-4am Wed-Sat) This club features an eclectic mix of live music and DJs.

**Spolek Pub** (cnr Nádražní & Jurečkova) More traditional and relaxed than the heaving masses on Stodolní, the Spolek's relaxed garden bar is essential during spring and summer.

## Entertainment

**Cinestar** (☎ 595 699 999; Novinářská) This multiplex cinema is in the Futurum shopping centre, west of the town centre.

**Antonín Dvořák theatre** (☎ 595 151 111; Smetanovo nám 1) The newly constructed Antonín Dvořák Theatre hosts opera, ballet and plays.

## Getting There & Away

**ČSA** (☎ 596 123 164; www.csa.cz; Jurečkova 20) has daily flights between Prague and **Ostrava Mošnov Airport** (OSR; ☎ 597 471 136; www.airport-ostava.cz) from 2350Kč return.

**Trains** (train station info ☎ 972 762 555) are the easiest way to get between Ostrava and the other big cities. Regular fast trains run to Prague (484Kč, 4½ hours), Brno (204Kč, 2¾ hours) and Olomouc (130Kč, 1¼ hours).

**SuperCity Pendolino trains** (www.scpendolino.cz), a 1st class-only service launched in 2005, runs to Ostrava from Praha-Holešovice (600Kč, 3½ hours) through Olomouc (340Sk, one hour).

**Buses** (bus station info ☎ 596 633 751) to these destinations take marginally longer but are also around half the price.

It's 15km from central Ostrava to the Polish border crossing at Bohumín, linking to Katowice. Buses (15Kč, 25 minutes) and trains (16Kč, 10 minutes) make the run.

At Ostrava hlavní nádraží you can also catch one of dozens of fast trains passing each day from Prague and Brno to the border.

There are also fast trains and buses from Ostrava to the border crossing at Český Těšín (40Kč, one hour), continuing to Kraków.

## Getting Around

Mošnov airport is 10km southwest of the centre. Bus 33 runs infrequently to the airport (25 minutes) daily.

The same tickets are used for all of Ostrava's buses, trolleybuses and trams. Buy them in the main train station, at MIC, newsagents and from the orange machines at some stops. They cost 8Kč for 15 minutes, 12Kč for 45 minutes and 32Kč for 24 hours.

## WESTERN BESKYDY

Nomadic sheep-farmers, the Vlachs, moved into this region in the 15th century giving their name to Wallachia (Valašsko in Czech), the area they came to occupy. By the 18th century the Vlachs had largely been absorbed into the Hapsburg Empire, but they retained their rural traditions, including the carved timber architecture best seen in the *skansens* of Rožnov pod Radhoštěm.

The Beskydy hills themselves, peaking with Lysá hora (1324m), are popular for walking and winter sports. The map to have is the *Kartografie Praha's Beskydy No 42* (1:100,000) trail map.

## ŠTRAMBERK

With gabled wooden cottages cascading down the slopes of Bílá hora (White mountain), the tiny village of Štramberk is a pristine slice of Wallachia. The aromas of wood smoke and pine infuse the air, and the ruined cliff-top castle delivers fine views across the surrounding valleys. With a pretty main square and a fine restored Municipal Brewery, Štramberk gets especially busy on summer weekends, so try for a mid-week appointment with one of the country's most enchanting villages.

## Information

The **Municipal information centre** (Městské informační centrum; ☎ 556 812 085; www.stramberk.cz; ☎ 9am-noon & 12.30-5pm Tue-Sun Apr-Sep, 9am-noon & 12.30-4pm Tue-Sun Oct-Mar) is in the Zdeňka Buriana Museum just below the main square and has internet access for 1Kč per minute.

## Sights

The path up Bílá hora from north of the village square passes through a stone gate inscribed 'Cuius Regio – Eius Religio – 1111' (whose place – his place). On the slopes are the remains of

the Gothic **castle walls**, and at the peak you can climb 166 steps to the top of the **tower** (Trúba; adult/concession 20/10Kč; ☎ 9am-5pm Tue-Sun Apr-Nov, 9am-5pm Sat & Sun Dec-Mar) for vertiginous views.

On the village square is **museum Štramberk** (☎ 556 701 156; adult/concession 20/10Kč; ☎ 9am-noon & 1-5pm Tue-Sun) which has exhibits of local archaeology, folk furniture and art. South of the square is the interesting **museum Zdeňka Buriana** (☎ 556 852 240; adult/concession 20/10Kč; ☎ 9am-noon & 12.30-5pm Tue-Sun Apr-Sep, 9am-noon & 12.30-4pm Tue-Sun Oct-Mar), which commemorates the locally born painter, who chose Stone Age people as his subjects.

On the southern edge of the square, Štramberk's **Municipal Brewery** (Městský Pivovar; ☎ 556 813 710; www.truba.cz) has recently reopened after more than 150 years. You can visit the stone cellars and try their light and dark unfiltered Truba beers on the terrace overlooking the square. The brewery also has an excellent restaurant with bar snacks and full meals.

Further south is the entrance to the **national gardens of Kotouč** (národní sad na Kotouči). It was here, in the **Šipka cave** (jeskyně Šipka), that archaeologist KJ Maška found the jawbone of a Neanderthal child in 1880. The discovery became the inspiration for Zdeněk Burian's paintings.

## Sleeping & Eating

**Penzión Stará Skola** (☎ 556 852 697; www.penzi.onstaraskola.cz; s/d incl breakfast 460/920Kč; 📍) By the church on the square, the rooms in Štramberk's old school house are comfortable, but the real attraction is the spacious garden around the back.

**Hotel Šipka** (☎ 556 852 181; www.hotelsipka.cz; s/d incl breakfast 750/1280Kč; 📍) The dark wooden furniture is a little glum, but you can't beat the top location (also enjoyed by the restaurant) overlooking the square.

**Penzion Jaroňkova Pekárana** (☎ 556 808 843; jaronek@smira-print.cz; Náměstí 7; apartments from 1800Kč; 📍) In a former bakery beside the brewery are two relaxed apartments above a vaulted wine cellar. Brekky is freshly baked croissants and coffee. Bring along a loved one for the romantic ambience.

While you're in town, try **Štramberké uši** (Štramberk ears) – conical ginger biscuits with honey and spices, usually served with cream. According to legend, the ears originally belonged to unfortunate Tatar prisoners-of-war.

(Continued on page 289)

(Continued from page 280)

## Getting There & Away

Nový Jičín is a stop for most Olomouc–Ostrava buses, and from there local buses run twice a day to Štramberk (15Kč, 20 minutes). However, the most enjoyable way to get here is on foot through the hills – 8km on a red-marked trail from Nový Jičín město train station, or across the river from Nový Jičín horní nádraží station.

## KOPŘIVNICE

A short bus ride from Štramberk lies the industrial town of Kopřivnice, famed for its transport museum. Today it's mostly known as the home of the vehicle manufacturer Tatra, which produces large trucks.

The popular **Tatra Technical museum** (Technické muzeum Tatra; ☎ 656 821 415; www.tatra.infomorava.cz; Záhumenní 369; adult/concession 70/40Kč; ☎ 9am-5pm Tue-Sun May-Sep, 9am-4pm Oct-Apr) is housed in purpose-built premises – you can't miss the red locomotive outside. For fans of old cars, trucks and trains, the Tatra factory has a dazzling display of its prized vehicles, including a replica of its first car, the 'Präsident' (1897). The company originally specialised in passenger cars and trucks, but during the later days of communist rule most production shifted to trucks and over-the-top Cold War limousines for use by diplomats. Don't miss the fan propelled V855 air sledge, or the Tatra 87 that Czech adventurers Hanzelka and Zikmund drove 63,000km through 48 countries from 1947 to 1950 (all without a Lonely Planet guidebook). Excellent video kiosks provide words and pictures in several languages.

There are regular buses to Štramberk (10Kč, 10 minutes).

## ROŽNOV POD RADHOŠTĚM

Rožnov pod Radhoštěm (Rožnov-under-Radhoš) first became renowned for its *skansen*, or open-air museum, in 1925, when traditional wooden architecture was brought piece by piece from around the Beskydy region. When rebuilt in a spacious riverside park the exhibits caused an immediate stir, and decades later their presence has transformed Rožnov into a bustling resort town.

The tourist and accommodation crush is amplified by a heavy schedule of contrived 'folk events', which change the face of the quiet provincial town during summer week-

ends. Stay overnight though, and arrive at the *skansen* after an early breakfast and you'll have largely unimpeded viewing.

More modern Wallachian culture, albeit with a Southern US accent, is on display around July 4 every year when Texans of Czech descent roll into Rožnov for a week-long Independence Day jamboree, complete with barbecues, a rodeo and belly loads of Radegast beer. Don't even think about finding a hotel room at that time. Folk festivals such as the Easter Traditions or the folk song and dance festival (held on the first weekend of July) are quieter. See www.vmp.cz for full details of annual events at the *skansen*.

## Orientation

From the adjacent train and bus stations it's a 400m walk east across the river to the main square, Masarykovo náměstí. The *skansen* is about another 800m east on Palackého.

## Information

The extremely helpful **Wallachian kingdom information centre** (Informační centrum Valašského království; ☎ 571 655 196; www.roznov.cz, in Czech; Palackého 484; ☎ 8.30am-6pm May-Sep, 9am-3pm Mon-Fri Oct-Apr) provides information about local attractions, transport and accommodation. Ask them about scoring a Wallachian Kingdom passport (see p291).

**Česká spořitelna** (cnr Masarykovo nám & Lázeňská) and **ČSOB** (Nerudova 2201) both have ATMs and exchange counters. You can access the internet at **Planet Internet** (☎ 571 629 217; Na Zahradách; ☎ Mon-Fri 9am-9pm, 11am-9pm Sat & Sun). Go around the back and up the stairs.

## Sights & Activities

### WALLACHIAN OPEN-AIR MUSEUM

Made up of three separate *skansens*, the **Wallachian open-air museum** (Valašské muzeum v přírodě; ☎ 571 757 111; www.vmp.cz) is an impressive effort to keep a grip on the region's architectural and cultural past. Multilingual maps and inventories of the buildings are available at the entrances.

The biggest and best of the three *skansens* is the **Wallachian village** (Valašská dědina; adult/concession 60/30Kč; ☎ 9am-5pm May-Aug, 10am-5pm Sep), which climbs right up the hillside to a ridge boasting exceptional views. It's a good attempt at reconstructing an entire shepherds' village, right down to the orchards and livestock, which are still raised using traditional methods.



The **Wooden hamlet** (Dřevěné městečko; adult/concession 50/25Kč; ☎ 9am-5pm Apr-Sep, 9am-5pm Tue-Sun Jan & Oct, 9am-4pm Sat-Sun Dec) is the most fun, with its Wallachian-style *hospoda* (pub) where you can actually get a beer and a good Moravian meal. Other highlights are a pretty church from the village of Větrkovice and a collection of wooden beehives decorated with smirking faces. It is closed from 3 November to 5 December and during Christmas and New Year.

The **Mill valley** (Mlýnská dolina; adult/concession 50/25Kč; ☎ 9am-5pm May-Aug, 10am-5pm Sep) is a fascinating collection of water-driven mills with a working smithy and miller.

A **combined ticket** (adult/concession 120/60Kč) for all three attractions is also available.

### WALKING UP RADHOŠŤ

It's 5.5km on a red-marked trail from the Wooden hamlet museum past Rožnov camp site and up to Černá hora (885m), then 2.5km up the ridge to fine views from Radhošť (1129m).

From there it's 3.5km on a blue trail to a saddle below Tanečnice peak. On the way you pass a little wooden church and a stone statue of a pre-Christian mountain spirit

called Radegast (after whom the local beer is named). From Tanečnice a year-round chairlift descends to Ráztoka, where you can catch a bus back to Rožnov pod Radhoštěm (15 minutes).

### Sleeping

**Camping Rožnov** (☎ 571 648 001; www.camproznov.cz; tent/bungalow per person 105/275Kč; P) This attractive family site is 1km east of the museum.

**Domov Mládeže Při Szeš** (☎ 571 651 248; Zemědělská 500; per person 260Kč; P) In a grey tower behind the train station, this dormitory is about the cheapest place in town. Good luck finding the receptionist though.

**Horský Hotel Radegast** (☎ 556 835 130; www.hotelradegast.cz; per person incl breakfast 370Kč) Near Radhošť, this chalet is best for those wanting to wake up breathing crisp mountain air.

**Penzion & Restaurant El Greco** (☎ 571 657 572; www.elgreco.cz; Hradištko 285; d incl breakfast 990Kč, apt incl breakfast 1980Kč; P) There's nothing vaguely Greek about the comfortable rooms at this new place, but the *souvlaki* on the menu will stop you getting the lawyers involved for misleading advertising. It's a brisk 1km walk from

### DISCOVERING THE 'KINGDOM OF WALLACHIA'

The innovative and friendly tourist information office in Rožnov is seriously keen to increase the number of travellers to their interesting region. The kingdom has its own air force flying the official coat of arms with a rampant chicken (OK, it's one ageing Cessna), and can issue you a Wallachian Kingdom passport in seven different languages. The Wallachian flag (featuring a taller-than-tall black hat and two axes) has been flown atop the Himalayas, at Machu Picchu and even at the Panama Canal. The Kingdom of Wallachia has consular representation from Scotland to India and New Zealand, and in 1999 an entrant flying the Wallachian flag won the truck section of the Granada-Dakar rally. They've even minted their own money featuring a rock singing Queen Mother with folk music roots. Unfortunately the money is the only currency in the world backed by straw.

town north across the river to Bezručova, and then turn right Hradištko.

**Hotel AGH** (☎ 571 625 666; www.hotel-agh.cz; Cechova 142; s/d from 1200/1440Kč) Just off the main square the newest and snazziest hotel in town is also the most central, and with at least five bars and restaurants you won't get bored or hungry.

**Hotel Erolán** (☎ 571 648 014; www.erolan.cz; Horní Paseky 451; s/d incl breakfast 1390/1590Kč, bungalows with shared bathroom 1200Kč/v; P) Take your pick between the flash rooms with all mod cons (year-round) or rustic bungalows that can accommodate up to six people (June to September only).

### Eating & Drinking

There aren't too many places in town, and most are closed by 9pm.

**Grill Bar** (☎ 571 654 766; 2nd fl, Masarykovo nám 186; mains 75-160Kč) This reliable place dishes up tasty grilled platters in contemporary surrounds overlooking the square.

**Cajovna U Slunce** (☎ 608 717 488; Nádražní 187; tea & coffee 40Kč, snacks 50Kč; ☎ 11am-10pm Mon-Sat, 2-8pm Sun) Silk and rattan, pita and couscous, and more than 100 different teas and coffees create a gauzy New Age ambience (but not in an annoying Shirley MacLaine kind of way).

Also recommended:

**Restaurace Majerův Dvůr** (☎ 608 828 988; Nerudova 141; mains 80Kč; ☎ 11am-7pm Mon-Sat) Czech specialties in a garden setting.

**Albert** (Masarykovo nám) Supermarket on the main square.

**Jidelna** (Masarykovo nám; ☎ 7.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, 7.30am-noon Sat) Sandwiches and self-serve meals above the supermarket.

### Getting There & Away

Buses are usually the easiest way to get here. There are reasonably regular direct buses

from Brno (156Kč, three hours) and Olomouc (82Kč, 1 hour). To get here by train requires at least one change at Valašské Meziříčí, 13km away, which is on the Prague-Košice main railway line. The train takes 2½ hours to Brno (130Kč).

### Getting Around

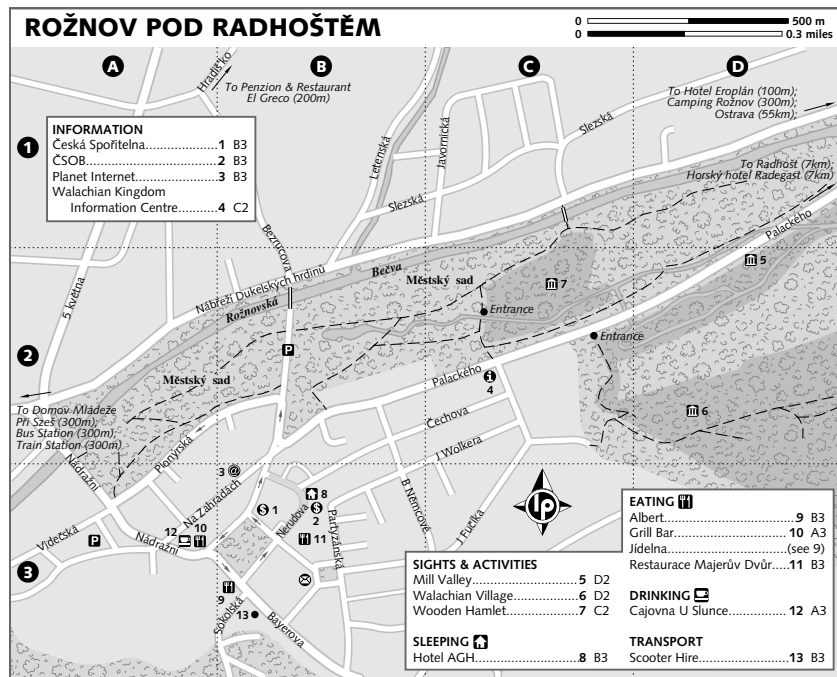
You can hire **scooters** (půjčovna skútrů; ☎ 571 620 315; Bayerova 52; per day 500Kč; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri) from a computer shop just off the main square.

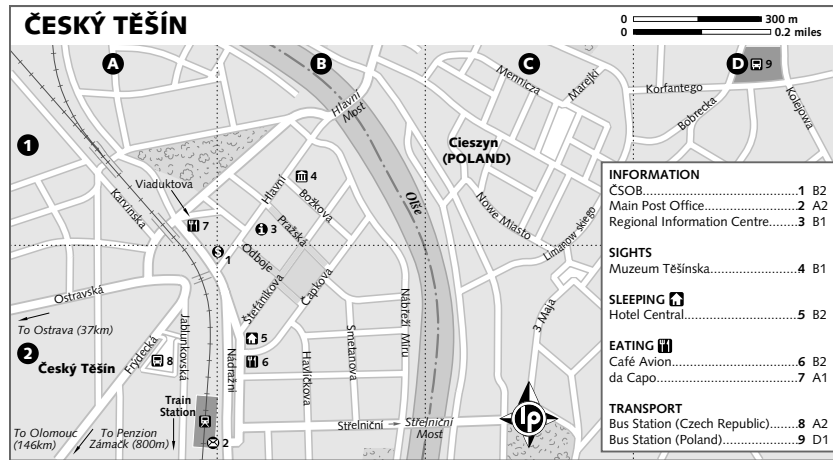
### ČESKÝ TĚŠÍN

An international border was laid through the middle of this town at the end of WWI using the natural division of the Olše river: to the west is Český Těšín in the Czech Republic, and to the east is Cieszyn in Poland. Most of the original town, and all the interesting historical sights, ended up on the Polish side (refer to Lonely Planet's *Poland* guidebook). The only reason to be here is if you have arrived from, or are off to, Poland.

The river is the border, with separate 24-hour crossings for each direction: Hlavní most (Hlavní bridge) is for entering the Czech Republic, Střelníční most for leaving. From the railway tracks on the Czech side, each bridge is about 500m along a street of the same name. Český Těšín's bus station is west of the tracks, via a pedestrian underpass or Hlavní or an automobile underpass on Viaduktova.

The **regional information centre** (regionální informační centrum; ☎ 558 711 866; itesin@grendel.cz; Hlavní 15; ☎ 8am-5pm) has plenty of information on the region. Contact the tourist information office in Polish Cieszyn on ☎ 00 48 33 852 3050. **ČSOB** (Nádražní 4) has an exchange counter and ATM, as does the post office beside the train station.





**Muzeum Těšínska** (☎ 558 710 087; Hlavní 3; adult/concession 10/5Kč; 🕒 9am-5pm Tue-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat, 1-5pm Sun) has exhibits on the history and ethnography of the region.

### Sleeping & Eating

**Hotel Central** (☎ 558 713 113; www.hotel-central.cz; Nádražní 10; s/d incl breakfast 650/1300Kč; 🚗) Loads of character, a handy location opposite the railway station, plus the Cascada Mexican restaurant downstairs make this the best place in town.

**Penzion Zámček** (☎ 558 746 015; www.sweb.cz/penzionzamecek; Jablunkovská 852; s/d 800/1200Kč) The best rooms are tucked away in the attic amid the turrets of this delightful character building. Walk south from the railway station for 800m.

**Café Avion** (Nádražní 12; coffee 30Kč; 🕒 9am-7pm Sun-Fri, 9am-9pm Sat) This trendy café opposite the railway station has miraculously been

transplanted from London or Melbourne to this remote Czech border town.

**Da Capo** (☎ 558 712 212; cnr Sokola Tupy & Vladuktova; pizza 90Kč) Good pizza and seafood are on offer at this corner restaurant that would not be out of place in Naples.

### Getting There & Away

There are seven fast trains a day to Prague (484Kč, 5½ hours), and seven to Košice (4½ hours) via Žilina (one hour) and Poprad (three hours).

Local trains run to Ostrava (60Kč, one hour) all day.

Buses also leave 12 times a day for Ostrava (40Kč, one hour), where you can change for Olomouc and other destinations. On the Polish side, there is an express bus every hour or two to Katowice, plus several per day for Kraków.