

Maturita Card 38: Cities in the Czech Republic **Bridge**

● What can you tell me about Prague?

Prague is the capital of / the largest city in the Czech Republic. There are about 1.2 million people in Prague. It is the fourteenth largest city in the European Union. In addition to being the political centre, Prague is also an important business / economic / cultural centre for the Czech Republic. Prague was an important centre in the past, too. During the reign of Charles IV, it was the capital of the Holy Roman Empire. Under the reign of Rudolf II, it was the centre of the Hapsburg monarchy. As it was not seriously damaged in either the First or Second World Wars, it is a beautiful city that has an amazing variety of architecture / building styles ranging from Gothic to modern.

● What are some important landmarks in Prague?

Prague has many historical and cultural landmarks / monuments. One of the most famous buildings is Prague Castle. The castle was built in the ninth century. It has been redesigned many times. The castle has been both the main and holiday residence for various monarchs. Today, it is the seat of the Czech president. Vyšehrad is the location of the first settlement in the city. Charles Bridge was built in 1357 and later decorated with baroque statues. The astronomical clock in the Old Town Square is also famous / world-renowned. The clock shows the time as well as the positions of the sun and moon relative to the astrological / zodiac signs. For nature lovers Prague has many green spaces with walking / biking paths, like Divoká Šárka and Stromovka.

● What museums or galleries are there in the capital?

The National Museum displays / exhibits / has natural, scientific and historical collections. It has / owns almost 14 million items. The Rudolfinum was opened in 1885 and is home to the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. It is also one of the main venues for the Prague Spring international music festival. The building is named in honour of / after Rudolf, the Crown Prince of Austria, and also houses the Rudolfinum Gallery, which exhibits mainly / mostly contemporary art. The National Gallery is a state-owned art gallery with many different locations. The National Technical Museum in Prague has a large collection of artifacts related to / that show the history of technology in the Czech Republic.

● What else can you do in Prague?

There are many popular festivals and events all year round / throughout the year in Prague. United Islands is a three-day, open-air / outdoor music festival that

takes place in June. Music for every taste can be heard in cultural centres / clubs / open spaces and parks. The Prague Spring international music festival is an annual showcase / outlet for extraordinary local and international performing artists, symphony orchestras and chamber music ensembles. The Prague Marathon takes place in May and has runners / competitors from 55 different countries. It covers 42.195 kilometres and takes participants through the historical centre of the city. In December both the Old Town Square and St. Wenceslas Square host Christmas markets, with lots of gifts, food, drink and entertainment.

● What are some other important cities in the Czech Republic? Why are they important?

Brno is the second largest city in the Czech Republic. It is the largest city in Moravia and the capital of the South Moravian Region. It was once known as / called the "Manchester of Moravia" because of its early industrialization. The Czech Republic's second largest university is found there. Famous landmarks include the Špilberk Castle, established in the 13th century, the gothic St. Peter and Paul's Cathedral, and Tugendhat Villa, a functionalist villa from the beginning of the 20th century. Ostrava is the country's next largest city and is a former industrial and coal-mining centre. Nowadays you can visit technical landmarks, such as Lower Vítkovice Area and the Michal Mine. In the summer the city hosts the popular Colours of Ostrava music festival. Olomouc was historically one of the most important cities in Moravia. You can see the 18th-century Holy Trinity Column, a UNESCO World Heritage site, there. Plzeň is famous as the birthplace / home of Pilsner beer. It is the second largest city in Bohemia. Karlovy Vary, also known as Carlsbad, is a well-known spa town that many famous people have visited. Nowadays it hosts an international film festival. Zlín is home to the Bata shoe company and is known for being a well-planned city. The famous Czech car brand Škoda is produced in Mladá Boleslav. Pardubice is the home of Czech gingerbread and the annual Velká pardubická steeplechase horse race.

● What are some famous tourist attractions and in which cities are they located?

Ještěd Tower is located outside the city of Liberec. The Otakar Přemysl II Square, found in Česká Budějovice, is one of the largest town squares in the country. The Konopiště castle is located near the town of Benešov. Český Krumlov is a UNESCO protected town. Visiting it is like stepping back in time. In Kutná Hora you can see the "bone church" and the magnificent Gothic St. Barbara's Church.

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