



Early Bird Registration Extended

16th World Federation of Tourist Guide Association Convention

JANUARY 26 - 30, 2015

Prague, Czech Republic



Vltava river and the National Theatre in Prague

Early Bird Registration Extended

The WFTGA Executive Board and the 2015 Prague organising committee have come upon unexpected and extraordinary opportunities for the 2015 convention, and they need a little extra time to develop and incorporate these recently presented ideas.

This is good news for everyone, since many members also could use a little extra time to complete their registration. For one time only, we are extending the Early Bird registration deadline. The 2015 convention Early Bird discount will be in effect through Friday, 20 September 2014.

To see all the registration rates, go to the dedicated convention website at www.wftga2015.org, scroll to the bottom of the home page, and click on the REGISTRATION tab. Organize all your information before beginning your registration, and have your credit card handy if that will be your form of payment. Be sure to first have a copy of your Tourist Guide ID/License on file to upload onto the registration form.

We are eager to announce the latest additions to the program, so check the WFTGA and convention websites regularly in the coming days.

One-Day-Cruise Guide Training

The cruise industry and their guests have special demands due to safety requirements and because 50 percent of those who take yet another cruise. These return guests are looking for new experiences and discoveries. Guiding guests from large cruisers and smaller river ships requires a

special set of skills. Whisper System's wireless devices enable you to work with large groups in crowded places. Tour escorts and interpreters are our partners and need special attention. The course will cover such questions as how we should deal with shopping stops and still follow our code of conduct. Finally, the course covers how to best present any given destination.

After our convention in Prague, the WFTGA Training Committee will offer a one-day-cruise guide training on 31 January 2015, from 9:00 to 16:00, in the Esplanade Spa Hotel, Mariánské Lázně (Czech Republic). The course fee is 80 EUR per person and includes material, breaks, lunch, and certificates.

Licensed Tourist Guides (scanned copy of the



Cruise ship

tourist guide license is required) can register by email at training@wftga.org until 31 October 2014. The course is certificated by WFTGA and Progress International Ltd.

Our Guest Speakers

The WFTGA 2015 convention program will introduce two excellent researchers and university professors as keynote speakers. **Dr. Cornelia Szabó-Knotik**, associate professor at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna (Austria), will deliver a lecture titled "Bach to Africa, Mozart to Egypt: Classical Music, Commerce, the Media. How Universal is the Musical Universe?" The lecture covers a range of examples in contemporary arts as well as world music. "The Phenomenon of Baroque" is the title of the presentation by



Franz Kafka memorial by sculptor Jaroslav Róna

Dr. Daniel E. Miller, professor at the University of West Florida in Pensacola (USA). A specialist in Czech and Slovak history, Dr. Miller will describe the various features of Baroque architecture with a special focus on Prague and the Czech Republic.

Prague's German-speaking Writers

A century ago, Prague was home to a group of German-speaking writers who lived side-by-side with Czechs in a Czech-speaking world. A German-speaking elite was common in the cities of Austria-Hungary, which until 1918, included Prague and Bohemia. By 1900, German also had become an important language in global science, literature, and business. The American inventor, Thomas Edison, even reportedly learned German in order to read the latest German chemistry books. The foundation of nation-states across the region, especially after 1945, led to local languages, like Czech, rapidly eclipsing German. However, the Prague German writers significantly affected world literature. Today, the best-known Prague writer is Franz Kafka, who was born to a Jewish middle-class family in 1883, attended the Prague University, and received a law degree. Later, Kafka worked for an insurance company. Most of Kafka's works, like *The Trial* or *The Castle* were published after his

death. Kafka was not the only German-speaking author of the period. Several others were in the same circle: the critic, Max Brod; the novelist and playwright, Franz Werfel; the journalist, Egon Erwin Kisch; the novelist, Gustav Meyrink; and the poet, Rainer Maria Rilke. Our convention program on Thursday includes a block of optional lectures, workshops, and visits in different languages. The convention host has prepared a special lecture on German literature in Prague for German-speaking participants.

Art Workshop

If you have seen native folk art, you know the importance of glass beads. Sewn onto fabrics, clothes, and ceremonial items, beads are a feature of native clothing world wide. Originally, native artists used shells, coral, stones, metals, wood, animal bones, and quills for art and for decorating clothing, but when Europeans appeared with glass beads, native people were mesmerized with glass beads, which became a major trade staple for centuries. In medieval Europe, Venice was famous for making glass beads, but by the fifteenth century, the Venetians began employing cheap Bohemian laborers, many of whom brought Venetian methods back to Bohemia, the historic name for the western part of the present Czech Republic. Over time, Bohemian glass makers came to rival those in Venice, and they developed their own methods and styles. The Czech Republic still manufactures Bohemian glass beads and glass Christmas tree decorations. WFTGA convention participants will have an opportunity to attend an optional Glass Art Workshop where they can make their own glass jewel.

Regional Bus Tours

A part of the convention program includes regional bus tours on Wednesday afternoon. On the convention registration form, participants can select one of four tours. The regional bus tours are included in the convention fee. Read more at: <http://www.wftga2015.org/convention/convention-tours>.



Konopiště Castle

Tour 1 will bring you to one of the most beautiful castles in the Czech Republic, Konopiště. This exceptional castle was the summer residence of Archduke Franz Ferdinand d'Este, the heir to the Austrian throne, who was assassinated with his Czech wife, Sophie, at Sarajevo in 1914. The archduke refurbished the castle, which dates from the fourteenth century, as a hunting lodge. The interior of the chateau contains lavishly furnished rooms, reflecting the luxurious lifestyle of the last owner. The decor includes wooden Italian furniture, porcelain, tapestries, hunting trophies, historic arms, and armour. Konopiště is located in woods 45 km south of Prague and there is a 15-minute walk from the coach park to the entrance. The castle tour last an hour.

Tour 2 leads to Terezín or Theresienstadt in German. It is a Late Baroque fortress town, which became infamous during the Second World War, when it was a ghetto and transit camp for Jews. The town and fortress, which was completed in 1784, gets its name from the Austrian empress, Maria Theresa. It consists of bastions, gates, barracks, arsenals, and magazines as well as a hospital, church, headquarters, and parade ground. It has underground tunnels linking the defenses with each other and with the artillery outpost called the Little Fortress. Terezín was the biggest and most modern



Terezín

fortress of its time, but it was closed by the time of the 1866 war between Prussia and Austria. The Little Fortress continued to function as a state prison. It was there that the Serbian nationalists were imprisoned in 1914, after their assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand d'Este, which became the pretext for the First World War. In 1940, the Prague Gestapo made the Little Fortress into a prison for political opponents of the Nazis, and a year later, the Main Fortress, that is, the town, became a ghetto for several thousand European Jews. Our convention tour to Terezín includes two visits: the Museum of the Ghetto, which documents the rise of Nazism and life in Terezín, and the Little Fortress, with its prison cells and the National Cemetery. Terezín is located 60 km northwest of Prague, and the travel time is one hour.

Tour 3 is totally different from other tours. This excursion introduces you to the most significant Czech industry: automobile production. Participants will travel to Mladá Boleslav to visit Škoda, one of the oldest automobile brands in the world. Since 1991, Škoda has been a part of the Volkswagen Group. The tour includes a visit to the Škoda Auto



Nelahozeves Castle

Museum, mapping 120 years of car-making history, and a tour of the manufacturing plant. Mladá Boleslav is located 60 km northeast of Prague.

Tour 4 is organized by the invitation of Prince William Lobkowitz to visit his country residence in Nelahozeves. The Renaissance castle on the Vltava River is an example of the castello fortezza from the middle of the sixteenth century. The Communist government confiscated the castle in 1948. In 1993, the government returned the castle to the Lobkowitz family. The interior houses an exhibition *Private Spaces: A Noble Family at Home*. It illustrates in wonderful detail the lifestyle of this influential noble family in the middle of the nineteenth century. It is full of beautiful objects, displayed in the most natural way, bringing you intimately in touch with past generations and the way of life that is now long gone. Situated just below the castle is the birth house of the great Czech composer, Antonín Dvořák, whose father was a butcher. The home now is a little museum. Nelahozeves is located 35 km north of Prague.

The Convention's Optional Program

For centuries, Prague has had a reputation as the conservatory of Europe, and the sheer amount of music in the city is astonishing. Classical music, opera, jazz, rock, folk, and country are the lifeblood of Prague. There are three opera houses in Prague—the National Theater, the Estates Theater, and the State Opera. No true fan of Mozart can leave Prague without a visit to the Estates Theater, where the maestro himself conducted the première of *Don Giovanni* in October 1787. The Czech Philharmonic is the top orchestra in the city, and its home is in the Rudolfinum, one of the most beautiful concert venues in Europe. The black light theaters continue the tradition of the successful Czech black-light performance at the World Expo 1958 in Brussels. Convention participants have Wednesday night off to visit a concert or theater. You can find more information about the program and tickets at: www.wftga2015.org/convention/optional-programme.