

## TRULY HISTORICAL TOWNS

in South Bohemia





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in South Bohemia

Towns are like people.

Some are proud, imposing and beautifully clothed, others have patched-up but clean clothes, while some find clothes irrelevant because they are busy dealing with other fundamental issues of their existence.

We found pleasant, happy and troubled towns.

The most pleasant ones are hidden between groves and fields, by ponds or in deep forests. Their inhabitants also have different dispositions: in some towns the residents all came to the town after WW II, in other towns people have been living in humble conditions for generations, while some towns have the painful history of being in the border zone.

But they are all beautiful in some way.

And they are definitely worth visiting.

The Association of Historical Settlements of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia popularizes and promotes historical settlements and their monuments and participates in the preparation of standards related to their protection. It seeks and uses financial resources for their renovation and reinforces public opinion



about the importance of the heritage fund with regard to the development of tourism. It promotes historical settlements and their monuments through participation in social, cultural and educational events and competitions and organizes conferences and seminars on current topics.

Last but not least, it supports the economy and employment in the given regions. It passes on examples of good practice in individual towns and cooperates with institutions that have similar goals and are interested in our country's historical image and traditions.



# (ESKÉ BUDÉ)OVI(E - a famous town of beer and culture



In 1251, Přemysl Otakar II decided to establish a centre of royal power and he laid out a rectangular city plan (with a central square of 133 m) at an important ford. The town was actually founded in 1265 and was very quickly settled by traders and craftsmen who formed the core of the prosperous town. The Black Tower with 225 stairs, the Cathedral of St. Nicholas and many Renaissance and Baroque houses with arcades, passages and narrow streets heading in all directions are located in

the area near the square with the Samson Fountain located on it. The Masné krámy Restaurant, which was renovated in 2007 and which still has the ancient butcher's stations, is also located nearby.

The first horse-drawn railway was built connecting České Budějovice to Linz., The Hardtmuth entrepreneurs founded a pencil factory in Vienna at the end of the 18th century and subsequently moved it to České Budějovice. Its products are now exported all over the world.

The Budějovický Budvar Brewery was founded in 1895, even though the tradition of beer brewing dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Some world-famous restaurants (such as the Schweizerhaus in Vienna) buy Budějovický Budvar exclusively.

Modern architecture is represented by a functionalist villa located near the Long Bridge, which was built by Miroslav Zátka, an entrepreneur. The town's centre is intersected by Na Sadech Avenue where visitors can appreciate the sculptural group called Humanoids, which beautifies the beginning of Lanna Avenue leading to the railway station. Lanna's shipyard was opened in the town's centre in 2011 and this completed the first stage of making the Vltava River navigable between České Budějovice and Hluboká nad Vltavou and on to Týn nad Vltavou.

www.budejce.cz



## Tourist region BUDĚJOVI(KO\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## Did you know that...

there used to be a medieval pillory for punishing dishonest craftsmen on the site where Samson Fountain now stands?



#### Natives and notables:

**Přemysl Otakar II (about 1233–1278)** – the Czech king called "the Iron and Golden King," the founder of the town, the most powerful ruler in Europe at the time; he died in the Battle of the Marchfeld.

**Vojtěch Lanna (1805–1866)** – an entrepreneur, industrialist and builder; he was a major shareholder in the České Budějovice – Linz horse-drawn railway, whose operation was leased to him from 1835–1846. He traded in the timber industry, participated in the development of Kladno coalmines and realized a number of water and railway construction projects. He is a co-founder of the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague.





# OUL LID:

A cultural city also has important cultural institutions. České Budějovice is the seat of the South Bohemian Theatre, which has four ensembles: drama, opera, ballet and the Small Theatre. Individual ensembles also perform in other parts of the region; for instance the Revolving Auditorium at Český Krumlov falls under this theatre. The city is also home to the South Bohemian Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra, with its newly remodelled concert hall.

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#### Tourist region (ESKÝ KRUMLOV REGION S

## (ESKÝ KRVMLOV - a town of many faces





The name of the town of Krumlov comes from the German term "krumme Aue," which is translated as "crooked meadow." The name was derived from the natural topography of the town: it lies along the S-curved meanders of the Vltava River. Český Krumlov was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as a world cultural site in 1992.

The first written mention of the actual town comes from a deed by Jindřich I of Rožmberk dating from 1309. The town and the castle enjoyed the greatest

prosperity during the rule of the Rožmberk family, but the most famous are the last Rožmberk family members, especially Vilém and Petr Vok Rožmberk. The dominant feature of the town is the original Gothic castle, which was owned by the Rožmberk family from 1302 (this is when the Krumlov branch of the Vítkovec family died out). Today it

consists of 40 buildings surrounding several courtyards, a large castle complex built later on and a landscaped castle garden.

In 1555, Vilém joined the previously separate districts: Latrán and Old Town. The last member of the family, Petr Vok of Rožmberk, was forced to cede Krumlov to Emperor Rudolf II in 1601 as payment for his debts. Emperor Rudolf II placed his illegitimate son Don Julius d'Austria in Krumlov for a short period of time. There is a legend about his dissolute life and the horrible murder of his lover Markéta Pichlerová. For his actions, mad Julius, who suffered from schizophrenia, was imprisoned in the castle where he also died. But all this has been forgotten and one of the restaurants below the castle is named after him.

The town's enclosed historical centre was affected by the great flood in 2002, which damaged a large part of the centre. No one expected that the water would rise to over 7 meters and would cause damages worth many millions of Czech Crowns.

#### www.ckrumlov.info





## OMA Lybe

In the newly opened triple monastery in a meander of the river below the castle, visitors can see the complexes of two monasteries of the Minorites and the Poor Clares monastery. Interesting craft workshops and fairs are held in the monastery courtyard.



## Did you know that...\_

Josef Adam of Schwarzenberg had the castle theatre dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century rebuilt in the Baroque style in 1765–1766 and that it has been preserved in this condition, including the original parts, to this day? There is nothing else like it in the world and only the Swedish Royal Theatre in Drottningholm near Stockholm from 1766 is comparable.



### Natives and notables:

**Egon Schiele (1890–1918)** – an Austrian expressionist painter who lived in Krumlov in a garden house with his mistress Wally Neuzil. His best-known paintings depict Wally and the theme of the town. The local Egon Schiele Art Centre is an internationally recognized gallery today.

Josef Seidel (1859–1935) – a photographer of the Šumava Mountains, who spent almost his entire life in Český Krumlov. He became the head of a unique studio in 1888. The Seidel Photo Studio is now an indoor tourist attraction of worldwide importance in the town.







The town of Jindřichův Hradec is one of the rarest historical settlements that, even today, reminds visitors of the past glory of its inhabitants. The Lords of Hradec, the Slavata family and the Czernin family, were one of the most prominent dynasties in the Czech Kingdom and brought fame to Jindřichův Hradec not only in Bohemia but also abroad. Thanks to its historical wealth, Jindřichův Hradec received the prestigious "Historical Town of 2007" award.

The origins of the town are associated with a Slavic settlement in a convenient location on the promontory over the Nežárka River and Hamerský Stream. The first written record of Hradec dates from 1220 when the Jindřichův Hradec domain was owned by Jindřich I, the founder of the Lords of Hradec who had a Gothic castle built on the site of the former settlement. The town that is named after Jindřich I was built in the outer bailey of the castle in the middle of the 13th century. The

first mention of the present name of the town dates from 1410. The coat of arms of the Lords of Hradec was a golden rose on a blue field. The privilege of King Vladislav II dating from 1483, represented by two gold royal lions and the letter W with a crown, was added to the coat of arms and has become Jindřichův Hradec's emblem.

The town's dominant feature is a large pond called Vajgar, in the middle of which there is an artificially created island built in 1858–1860 by Count Jaromír Evžen Černín for his beloved wife Karolína.

Another dominant feature of Jindřichův Hradec is the state castle and chateau complex, which is the third largest monument in the Czech Republic. The monumental complex of buildings was declared a national cultural monument in 1996.

The 20-meter-high stone sculptural group of the Holy Trinity is the dominant feature of the town's centre, Náměstí Míru, a square surrounded by Renaissance houses. Langr House decorated with sgraffiti and the Old Town Hall are also worth seeing.

#### www.jh.cz





#### Natives and notables:

Adam Václav Michna of Otradovice (1600–1676) – an organist and music and singing teacher. Everyone knows his Christmas carol *Chtic, aby spal* (Wanting Him to Sleep), which has become popular.

Tomáš Krýza (1838–1918) – a native of Jindřichův Hradec and hosiery maker; it took him over 60 years to create the world's largest mechanical nativity scene containing 1,398 human and animal figures. You can admire his nativity scene in the Museum of Jindřichův Hradec.



# Tourist region (ESKÁ KANADA 🙎

 $\_$ Did you know that... $\_$ 

...a power plant designed by František Křižík and built inside the castle mill was put into operation in 1888, which makes Jindřichův Hradec the first town to be lit, right after Prague? The Křižík hydroelectric power station is still operational and the entire building is a national cultural monument.

... tapestry has its tradition in Jindřichův Hradec and tapestries are still made and restored in Jindřichův Hradec?

... the 15<sup>th</sup> east meridian passes through the town, but its marking at the corner of the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is not accurate? The meridian does pass through Jindřichův Hradec, but much closer to Nežárka River.



# om tip:

The former Jesuit College, the current seat of the Museum of Photography and Modern Visual Media, is the site of unique ceiling frescos of an autopsy, which is all the more interesting because the Jesuits were forbidden to perform autopsies on the human body.

#### \_\_\_\_\_Tourist region PÍSE(KO-BLATENSKO

## PISEK - a royal town on the Otava River





This settlement was founded on the site of gold-bearing sand and slowly expanded and turned into a village and subsequently into a royal estate, and finally into a town with a castle founded by Wenceslas I. A mint was established in Písek at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and was subsequently moved to Kutná Hora., A salthouse and the largest grain warehouse in Bohemia were established in the town during the reign of Charles IV.

Písek supported the Hussites during the Hussite Wars and was probably the first Czech town with the famous Hussite vats for people to hand over their valuables.

The town experienced its greatest boom in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when it acquired the royal castle and many Renaissance houses were built.

The town's greatest treasure is the oldest stone bridge in the Czech Republic, which is registered as a National Cultural Site and is even older than Charles Bridge in Prague. It also used to be called the Old Bridge or the Deer Bridge because a deer unexpectedly crossed it first.

Písek has two parallel squares and the town centre gives the impression of a compact unit. The lower square (Big Square) houses a large Town Hall with two towers. The Town Hall was built in the Baroque style in

1740–1767 and there is a passage in the front façade, which leads to the castle courtyard. The royal castle originally had four wings, but it burnt down in 1532 and so some parts of the buildings were replaced. The west wing houses the Prácheň Museum, which received the honorary "European Museum of the Year" award from the European Council in 1996. The Malt House, currently the largest playroom for children and families in Europe, is located nearby.

Many houses in the historical part of the town were rebuilt in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and embellished with Empire style or historicizing facades. The paintings on the Otava Hotel were created using Mikoláš Aleš's pasteboards as a model.

The town's architecture also includes villas designed by architects Janák, Jurkovič and Koula and a modern footbridge designed by architect Josef Pleskot, a native of Písek, which spans the Otava River by St. Wenceslas and is used by pedestrians and tourists.

Sand is still a crucial element for Písek, which is why you can see sand sculptures and artworks along the river. Giant sand sculptures are created next to the Stone Bridge every year, a tradition that began in 2007. The vernissage of this exhibition takes place during the Sandbox event in the middle of May. The open-air gallery is then open to the general public for free usually until autumn, depending on the condition of the sculptures.

www.mesto-pisek.cz





## अपार निर्माण

In the chapter titled "Švejk's Budejovice Anabasis," the main character sets out on foot from Tábor to České Budějovice and his journey ends in Písek. Try to complete his journey based on the travel guide available to tourists in the town.



### Tourist region PÍSE(KO-BLATENSKO\_\_\_\_\_\_

#### Natives and notables:

**Fráňa Šrámek (1877–1952)** – he is practically synonymous with the town; he studied at the local grammar school and lived in the house called U Koulí near the bridge and the river. He left the town in 1894 and never came back. He refused invitations or responded to them with poems.

Adolf Heyduk (1835–1923) – a drawing and penmanship teacher who lived in Písek from 1860. When his fame as a writer was slowly declining, he enjoyed going to local wine bars and pharmacies for herbal liqueurs and in the belief that they all were pleased to see him he never paid for his purchases. You can now visit the Art Nouveau apartment of this poet.

**Kateřina Neumannová (1973)** – the Olympic gold medal winner in cross-country skiing in the Winter Olympic Games in Turin 2006, a sports official. She has loved sports since her childhood; her mother was a physical education and biology teacher in Písek.



## .Did you know that...\_

Písek was the first town in the Czech Republic to acquire permanent public electric lighting? František Křižík lit up the town centre on 23 June 1887 and the councillors then purchased this innovation from him.

#### PRA(HATI(E - a town on the Golden Path





The historical town of Prachatice, also called the "gateway to the heart of the Šumava Mountains" or the "pearl on the Golden Path," was founded at the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. The historical core of the town, which was declared a town heritage reservation in 1981, consists of a ring of double city walls (which were needed due to frequent raids) and Renaissance houses on the square and in adjacent streets. The town received the "Historical Town of 2002" award.

Prachatice was granted the right to store salt in 1382, which meant that other towns had to buy salt from Prachatice and this made the town very prosperous. It was the Habsburgs who ordered salt to be imported from Austria and the famed Golden Path was closed. However, the town's economy was supported by the activities of traders with packhorses (German: Säumers) who worked at the request of the nobility, for many years. You can find out more about them in the interactive exhibition in the municipal museum. Thanks to the Golden Path, Prachatice became a royal town and flourished with wealth and splendid houses, the original beauty of many of which has been preserved. The square is decorated with a fountain

with the statue of Justice and a modern sculpture of an ancient bicycle.

The most prominent Renaissance monument is the Old Town Hall decorated using the chiaroscuro technique. The paintings below the roof ledge depict the eight human virtues: patience, caution, love, justice, faith, hope, bravery and temperance. The new Town Hall dates back to 1903 and is decorated with oblong sgraffiti under the windows depicting a packhorse caravan on the way from Passau to Prachatice. A statue of the patroness of the town of Prachatice is set in a niche, and the facade is also decorated with statues of a merchant and a landsknecht.

The so-called Golden Path intersected the southern part of Bohemia and the Danube Region from the Middle Ages and had three basic branches: one branch passed through Prachatice, another through Vimperk and the third one through Kašperské hory to Passau, terminating in Salzburg. It was an example of communication that brought life to the vast regions of neighbouring medieval states: the Bishopric of Passau and the Bohemian Kingdom. It was used not only to transport commodities but also brought the ideas and culture of colonists who settled and brought life to the inhospitable border forests.

It is worth seeing the interactive exhibition of the Golden Path in Renaissance House No. 10 in the Prachatice Museum, which also includes engravings by Jaques Callot that show the hardship of the Thirty Years' War.

#### www.prachatice.eu



## Did you know that....

according to legend, there is an imprint of the face of young Jan Hus in the rock close to Husinec? When returning from school to Staré Prachatice, he used to sit under a rock in the valley of Blanice River, which is now the Husinec Dam Reservoir.



### Natives and notables:

Jan Hus (1370–1415) – a medieval reformer, a Catholic priest and preacher, a university rector; he went to school in Prachatice and lived in a small room on the first floor of the house, which is now the municipal library (today's Husova Street).

Jan Nepomuk Neumann (1811–1860) – a Prachatice native who became the second American saint in 1977. He went on a mission to the USA and had 80 churches and over 100 parish schools built in Baltimore. He is considered the founder of American Catholic education. He visited his native Prachatice for several days in 1855.





## Our tipe

Climb up the observation tower, which is part of the Late Gothic Church of St. James the Great on Kostelní náměstí between Velké náměstí and the Lower (Písek) Gate. The gate is open daily from June to September.

## TÁBOR – a town with Hussite history





The town of Tábor was created in a very unique way: it was settled by Hussites from nearby villages, mainly from Sezimovo Ústí, over the course of one year. The town immediately formed its own army and spiritual and secular administration.

The Kotnov tower, a remnant of the local castle, affords a beautiful view of the town, whose winding streets and the kitchen aromas emanating into narrow passages very much remind us of Dubrovnik in Croatia. All this is accentuated by the

town's medieval history: the names of the streets - Betlémská, Kostnická (with an excellent café called Kostnická), Husova and Žižkova and even cobblestone images of a chalice on the payements.

The central figure of the town is Jan Žižka of Trocnov, whose statue with a Hussite battlewagon stands on Žižkovo náměstí. Žižka has become a symbol of Hussite battles, but we do not know much about the rest of his life. He may have lost one of his eyes as a child and this is perhaps why he was nicknamed Žižka, which meant "one-eyed" at the time. He joined the army to fight against German knights in the Baltic area and was subsequently hired to protect the court of Wenceslas IV. It seems that he was also a highwayman and, in the hope of salvation, became involved in the Hussite movement. He was regarded as an invincible commander in Tábor.

The Hussite movement was also supported by some of the Czech nobles who believed that the Law of God could be defended by the sword. This militant slogan was adopted not only by Žižka, but also by the entire Tábor community.

Radical Hussites – the Adamites – are also associated with the town of Tábor. This sect became radicalized and soon resorted to acts of fornication. This is something that the strict military leadership could not allow. It initially expelled the Adamites from Tábor to Příběnice, then chased them out of Příběnice and burnt the captured individuals at the stake in Klokoty. The rest went to live on an island on Nežárka River, where Jan Žižka cruelly punished them by death for robbing travellers and for their way of life, and had the last ones burnt at the stake.

However, the town does not have just a Hussite history. During the Renaissance era, wealthy citizens began to build beautiful houses, such as Stárek's House, which was owned by Mikuláš Slanař in 1526 and then by the family of Hroška of Trkov. The fountain on Žižkovo náměstí is a Renaissance gem. There is a high stone column with a statue of a knight holding a golden flag in the middle of the fountain. According to experts, this is the symbol and emblem of an autonomous city and its recognition of the right of the sword. It is similar to the so-called Rolland columns that can be found in many German cities.

Of course, Tábor also has reminders of Jan Hus. Hus Park has an interesting monument and sculptural group of Jan Hus created by František Bílek, a famous Czech Art Nouveau sculptor and a native of Chýnov. The monument was built in 1928 by the Association for Erecting a Hus Monument and bears the inscription: "Reaching the truth through flames."

#### www.visittabor.eu





# Sur tips

The garth of the former monastery has recently been opened on náměstí Mikuláše z Husi. It also used to serve as a prison – visitors can still see the prison cells. It has been turned into an art gallery called Ambit. However, people still call the square "Klášterák" (Monastery).



## Natives and notables:

Oskar Nedbal (26. 3. 1874 – 24. 12. 1930) – this native of Tábor came from a musical family and he was able to make full use of his inherited gift mainly as a violin virtuoso, a conductor and composer of ballets and operettas. His appearances within the Bohemian Quartet won him great international reputation; however, it is his most famous operetta, the Polish Blood, that the Tábor Theater stages most often.

Jan Žižka of Trocnov (about 1370–1424) – a famous historical figure of the medieval Hussite movement, a commander and brilliant military strategist. He was never defeated.

Martin Šonka (1978) – an aerobatic pilot, a Red Bull Air Race World Series pilot; he lives in Tábor.



## Did you know that....

almost all the houses in the historical centre had three to four-level cellars in their rock foundations? They have been connected and are now part of the Tábor underground tour that is about 500 m long.

## Tourist region TŘEBOŇSKO S

# TŘEBOŇ – a town of scales and fish

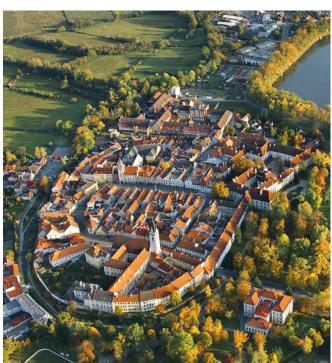




The town of Třeboň, situated next to a large pond called Svět (formerly Nevděk), was influenced by the prominent noble families who owned it, just like other South Bohemian towns. The name Třeboň most probably comes from the word "tříbit" or "třebit" (to clear land). People had to clear the land before they could settle there.

For centuries only a very few trade routes crossed the original marshy landscape of the Třeboň Basin with its vast forests. The first mention of a settlement dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when the small settle-

ment of Wittingau (or Vítek's meadow), according to the founder of the family Vítek of Prčice, was established on one of these routes. The town of Třeboň is situated on a unique technical work: the artificially constructed Golden Canal in a system of ponds built by Štěpánek Netolický, Jakub Krčín of Jelčany and Mikuláš Rutard of Malešov. Třeboň was granted the status of town in 1341. Třeboň was granted the so-called right of royal towns and the privilege to import salt in 1376 and 1378 respectively.



The square is surrounded by burgher houses with Renaissance and Baroque gables, which form a town heritage reservation. The most valuable buildings are the House at the White Horse and the Old Town Hall with its 31-meter-high tower, which affords a unique view of the historical town centre. Třeboň is also the home of the J. K. Tyl Theatre, which has one of the oldest curtains in the Czech Republic. Every year, famous music festivals "Třeboňská nocturna" and "Okolo Třeboně" are held in the town.

Interesting information about the construction of the system of ponds and the fishpond builder himself can be found in the beautifully restored house of Štěpánek Netolický, which also provides a beautiful gallery space.

Třeboň Square rises slightly toward a large chateau complex that ranks fourth among castles and chateaux in Bohemia in terms of size. The Renaissance entrance gate from 1607 bears the Rožmberk family's orsinian emblem with bears, a lion's head and the titles of the estate owners.

Today, the chateau and its decorations remind us more of the prominent Renaissance period when Vilém and Petr Vok, two Rožmberk brothers, had the chateau adapted to their requirements. Elements that remind us of the original Gothic castle of the Lords of Landštejn and the Lords of Rožmberk, which burnt down in 1562, can only be discovered in small details and nooks.

When Petr Vok of Rožmberk, perhaps the most prominent and best-known member of the Rožmberk family, sold Český Krumlov to pay for his debts and moved to Třeboň, he brought with him all of his art collections, his valuable library and the family archive. The archive was the only one to survive the looting during the Thirty Years' War and became the basis of an extensive archive that is kept in the chateau to this day.

After Petr Vok's death, the five-petalled rose was broken over his coffin in the church in Třeboň and the property passed into the hands of the Lords of Švamberk for several years. However, the chateau was confiscated at the beginning of the Thirty Years' War due to their disobedience towards the emperor and subsequently poorly managed by the imperial court. It was not until 1660 that new owners, counts and later on the princes of Schwarzenberg acquired the chateau and the estate. They had a high regard for the town and the landscape, perhaps because Třeboň was their first permanent property in Bohemia. They kept the memory of the Rožmberk era alive and never transformed the chateau into a representative seat. For them, the chateau was a very private place where the family regularly gathered to celebrate Christmas between 1895 and 1922. The uniqueness of the town is also accentuated by the fact that the Schwarzenbergs chose it as their final resting place. In the 19th century they had a monumental neo-Gothic tomb with a chapel and a crypt built near the place where Count Jan Adolf I was first welcomed to the newly purchased town. This is where 26 members of the Swarzenberg family rest in peace, with the exception of the wife of the first Czech Schwarzenberg, who was buried in the crypt of the Church of St. Giles.

#### www.itrebon.cz



## Our tip:

You can find the late Baroque Chapel of St. Vitus and the Pergola by St. Vitus with a statue of sinful Pergolína on the outskirts of the town. You can also see the flood bridges, familiar from fairy-tales, in nearby Stará Hlína.



## Natives and notables:

Jakub Krčín (1535–1604) – a fishpond builder who also built breweries for the nobility, farmyards, sheep pens, mills and glassworks. Krčín was a regent of the Rožmberk dominions and supposedly a harsh and merciless businessman. The "Bohemia Regent" brewery in Třeboň was named after him.



## Did you know that...\_

Jiří Hanzelka, who travelled all over the world with Miroslav Zikmund in Tatra vehicles, is buried in the immediate vicinity of the Schwarzenberg tomb?

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# Which of the South Bohemian towns do you find most AVTHENTIC?





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#### **Czech**Republic

