

Czech Republic - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs Culture

Nicole Rosenleaf Ritter

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#1223682 in eBooks 2006-09-01 2006-09-01 File Name: B004BJ11G8 | File size: 61.Mb

Nicole Rosenleaf Ritter : Czech Republic - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs Culture before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Czech Republic - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs Culture:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Good insights but combined with dangerous mistakes and prejudice
By Michal Pulda
First, I must point out that I am Czech, which inevitably brings two things: I know in detail specifics of Czech soul, and of course I carry with myself (as this book does) slightly biased looking at the matter. Especially because I'm in a second part of my twentieths and virtually don't know how the life used to be during the communist era, which unfortunately negatively affected the older generation. Nevertheless, I spent a lot of time abroad

and I have a lot of foreign friends (in Prague and elsewhere), so I think that I can look at the whole matter with a certain amount of detachment. The book attempts to analyze the specifics of Czech culture and soul, in which --to some extent-- it succeeds. However, especially the first three or four parts of the book are a dangerous mix of excellent points, errors and prejudices. The author spent in the Czech Republic about four years and it seems to me that she often didn't get to the heart of the matter (in understanding the Czechs) and remained only on the surface. Likewise, (especially in the penultimate section of the book) she puts her mind on only one experience, which backfired several times. Generalization is a dangerous thing. In many cases where I disagree with the book, my age is to blame. Simply put, the young generation that never knew the communism (i.e. 25 years or less), is quite different from my parents' generation. We are more optimistic (i.e. to the question "How are you?" we regularly answer "Well.", which is in contrary to the book), we are not obsessed with titles (again in contrary to the book), we don't mind when others have more/better things (in contrary to the book)... Just to name a few of examples I had on the top of my mind. Although, some mistakes I found in the book fall within the competence of the author. I can think of some of them: * "Desire to support Czech culture manifests itself in the dubbing of nearly all programs on Czech television." - This is a habit carried over from the past (communism), which we unfortunately didn't get rid of (yet). I hope it will come soon. * "Czech law states that one vacation should be at least two weeks in length." - I've never heard of such a thing, nor experienced it with my parents or relatives. * "Birthdays are celebrated on a smaller scale than name days." - On the contrary. * "A money belt worn under your clothes is the best way to carry cash, credit cards, and identity documentation." - Sure, Prague is a very popular city among tourists which unfortunately attracts gangs of pickpockets (as well as any other overcrowded city full of tourists do). However, the Czech Republic is one of the safest countries in the world. Try to google for "Global Peace Index". All in all, I recommend the book because it contains many good insights. However, the author herself emphasizes the role of the book as a mean of eliminating prejudice, so do not take the content too dogmatically. If you're not sure, ask some Czech. :-)

Common sense can tell you as well. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent guide! Anyone contemplating travel should invest in one ...By Peter J. Chudoba

Excellent guide! Anyone contemplating travel should invest in one of these books first. There are many things we do out of habit and take for granted. Unfortunately, these efforts can often backfire in another country. For instance, if you're invited over for dinner in the Czech Republic, you don't ask (once you've arrived), "Is there anything I can do to help?" To them, this implies that the hostess is inept. Make your visit to another country more enjoyable. Buy one of these guides!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Basic introduction to Czech culture

By Amy Price

This book is mostly written for short term tourists or travelers to the Czech Republic. If you want basic information about the country, it's history, people, and culture; this book is for you. Don't expect to learn everything about the Czechs, as this book just gives you the basic rundown, not going too in depth into any particular subject. Some of the information is more "common sense" than anything (regarding travel safety advice). However, I do recommend this book as a good first read to introduce yourself to the Czech Republic. I learned a lot.

Culture Smart! provides essential information on attitudes, beliefs and behavior in different countries, ensuring that you arrive at your destination aware of basic manners, common courtesies, and sensitive issues. These concise guides tell you what to expect, how to behave, and how to establish a rapport with your hosts. This inside knowledge will enable you to steer clear of embarrassing gaffes and mistakes, feel confident in unfamiliar situations, and develop trust, friendships, and successful business relationships. Culture Smart! offers illuminating insights into the culture and society of a particular country. It will help you to turn your visit-whether on business or for pleasure-into a memorable and enriching experience. Contents include * customs, values, and traditions * historical, religious, and political background * life at home * leisure, social, and cultural life * eating and drinking * do's, don'ts, and taboos * business practices * communication, spoken and unspoken

"Culture Smart! has come to the rescue of hapless travellers." —Sunday Times Travel