NYU Prague Trips
Spring 2015 Semester

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

- Karlovy Vary, February 13-14
- Fasank, February 14-15
- Český Krumlov, February 20-21
- Plzeň: European Capital of Culture February 20-21
- Industrial Ostrava, February 27-28
- Sumava “Snow Shoes”, March 14-15
- Moravia & Caves I March 20-21
- Moravia & Caves II March 28-29
- Political Prisoners Trip, April 17-18

CULTURAL IMMERSION TRIPS

- Beskydy, February 27-28
- Ostrava - Romany Settlements, March 20-21
- Volunteering Trip, March 20-22
- Hlinsko Homestays- Life in a Czech Village, April 24-25

DAY TRIPS

- Dresden, February 20
- Liberec, March 6
- Terezín, March 13
- Kutná Hora, March 14
- Karlstejn, March 22
- Blatna and Caves, April 19
- Sněžka hike, April 24
- Nachod, April 26
- Ceske stredohori, May 1
How to sign up for
NYU Prague trips

How many trips can I sign up for?
- You can sign up for **ONE overnight trip** and **ONE day trip**. You may also sign up on the waiting list for ONE overnight and ONE day trip.
- If you’re taking Modern Jewish History, the Terezín trip is **mandatory** and you are already signed up for the trip and it does not count as one of your day trips (for other students it counts).

When can I sign up for trips?
- You must sign up for trips online **Thursday, January 29th, from 8am-9:15am**. You will be e mailed links where you can sign up
- After Friday, you can sign up with Sarah in person if there are spaces available
- **Sign ups for ALL TRIPS are closed 8 days before the trip takes place.**

Waiting lists
- On Wednesday, February 4th, students on waiting lists will be put into trips if there is space.
- When you’re given a spot on a trip from the waiting list, you will be informed by e mail. You will THEN pay a 500kč deposit (exact amount only) for the trip to Sarah.
- You **do not** have to pay a deposit when they sign up on a waiting list.

Deposits
- You can only sign up for a trip if you pay a 500kč deposit. **This is returned to you on the trip. IT IS NOT RETURNED IF YOU DO NOT GO ON THE TRIP** except in cases of illness or family emergency.
- Deposits must be paid on Friday, January 30th, 12:30-1:15pm in Destinova and Toyen classrooms (Richtruv dum). **If you don’t pay the deposit you will lose your spot on the trip!**
- **BRING 500kč FOR EACH TRIP AS WE CANNOT GIVE CHANGE.** You will receive a receipt for your deposit. You must save this as your deposit will be returned in exchange for the receipt!
- You do not have to pay a deposit for a spot on the waiting list.
- Once you sign up for a trip and put down your 500kč deposit, if you want to cancel your spot on the trip, **you can only get the deposit back if someone can replace you on the trip!** It is your responsibility to find a replacement. If you can’t go on a trip, first contact Sarah and she will notify students on the waiting list that there is a spot open. If there are no responses, you must speak to your peers about replacing you. If no replacement is found, you do not get the deposit back.
  - If you let us know far enough in advance (at least 8 days), you can **switch the deposit to another open trip (a replacement must still be found)**, but you **CANNOT JUST GET IT BACK.**
- **No guests are permitted on any trips.** If there are disciplinary problems, you will be prohibited from attending NYU Prague trips.
OVERNIGHT TRIPS

Karlovy Vary
February 13-14th
Organizer: Paja
(limit 20 students)

The incarnation of spa elegance, imposing colonnades, exclusive spa buildings and a wonderful layout in the heart of a forested valley. That is Karlovy Vary. The best known town in the world renowned West Bohemian Spa Triangle, in which some of the most famous figures in European artistic and cultural life have enjoyed treatment, is today the second most visited spot in the Czech Republic.

Thanks to its unique architecture, it is one of Europe's most beautiful spas. Over the centuries a spa town has developed here whose fame has surpassed the borders of Bohemia, with Karlovy Vary becoming synonymous with charm and social standing. It has welcomed such figures as Goethe, Beethoven, Gogol, Paganini, Casanova, and Mozart, along with dozens of heads of state, while in recent times it has hosted many movie stars thanks to its film festival, which is one of Europe's most important. Come and get a spa treatment (be sure to book in advance!), munch on the famous local spa wafers, and see what all the fuss is about.
Fašank
February 14-15th
Organizer: Tyna
(Limit 20 students)

Fašank (read “fashank”)
- the Carnival trip -

Winter time is the time of reviving folk traditions connected to a Christian calendar of events. It has been associated with an official celebration of eating and dancing before a long fasting of Easter (from Italian meaning carne vale = meat away). This festival, called Fašank, is one of the few events with religious roots that are still celebrated in the Czech Republic. There are colourful local festivities in many locations in Southern Moravia performed with local customs dating back to the past. We will visit the center of these – the pronounced town of Strání. We will join the parade and enjoy the carnival with locals. Come for this trip to experience an unforgettable part of Czech folklore and especially music. Don't miss trying local food specialities and hot drinks to warm up during the celebrations!
**Plzeň**
February 20-21\textsuperscript{st}
Organizer: Simon
(Limit 20 students)

**Plzeň - 2015 capital of European Culture**
A couple hours west from Prague lies great city of Plzeň. It is known for it is world famous brewery. Yes, we will have a tour in the brewery, you can also expect a small tour under the city in its very old catacombs. On top of that Plzeň is a European culture capital of year 2015 and it is organizing a festival of lights - very popular event, which “brightens the city in the gloomiest days of the year”.
Český Krumlov ➔
February 20-21st
Organizer: Edita
(limit 25 students)

A small, beautifully preserved historic town located in the foothills of the Šumava Mountains in Southern Bohemia, Český Krumlov is often described as the “pearl of Central Europe.” The town played an important role in medieval and Renaissance Bohemia, but was more or less forgotten – and development halted – since that time. The town has experienced a revival since the Velvet Revolution, becoming one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Czech Republic.

The Vltava River winds its way through the center, and a Renaissance castle – the second largest in the Czech Republic, with one of Europe’s few preserved Baroque Theatres – perches on top of the town. We’ll visit the Castle, take a tour of the town, go bowling, and eat in one of Český Krumlov’s traditional pubs.

Hluboká Castle ➔
The next day we’ll take the bus to Hluboka Nad Vltavou... it’s like from a fairy tale. This trip is not to be missed!
“The Black City”
OSTRAVA!!!
February 27-28\textsuperscript{th}
Organizer: Kuba
(Limit 20 students)

We will head east, almost as far east as the country goes. Ostrava is the third largest city of the Czech Republic and the most industrial region of the country. The city was largely influenced by more than 200 years of black coal mining and heavy industry. The biggest steel producers of the country are still located in the region. The industrial facilities within the city however, were closed in 1990s and are now transformed into centers of culture, entertainment and museums of technology. We’re going to get hard hats on and see underground as well as towers. And even more.
Snowshoes Trip
March 14-15th
Organizer: Veronika
(Limit 20 students)

Where? The Bohemian Forest (in Czech: Šumava) is a low mountain range extending from South Bohemia in the Czech Republic to Austria and Germany. Together it creates the largest Middle European forested area and is also called the 'Green Roof of Europe'.

Why? Because of its uniqueness on a European scale the Šumava National Park was declared a UNESCO 'Biosphere Reserve'. It is home to many endangered animals and plants. Some of them are true rarities in the Czech Republic which you can see only here.

The rounded hills of the Šumava National Park offer an ideal vantage point for distant views of the surrounding countryside. In good visibility you can even see as far as the distant Alps.

What? We are going to discover the beauty of the Šumava National Park by hiking (approx. 7 miles). Because it is very snowy there we are going to use Snow Shoes (are to be distributed to you). After a short introduction of snowshoeing we will set out on the trip. Snowshoeing is fun, you will see! :-)

![Snowshoes Trip Image]
Moravia & Caves I & II
March 20-21\textsuperscript{st}
Organizer: Betty

March 28-29\textsuperscript{th}
Organizer: Tereza
(Limit 22 students each trip)

First day we will tour the center of Brno with a local guide. Brno is second biggest town in Czech Republic and is known for its young culture with stylish hipster cafés and bistros. We'll visit the Capuchin Monastery where you can enter the wonderfully creepy Crypt; home to the mummies of monks laid to rest there. A truly unique experience! We will also see the Ossuary of St. James’ Church. In the both places you can see the unique and mysterious atmosphere of the maze of medieval corridors and cellars.

The next day we will explore the famous Macocha Abyss, which is more than 138m deep and is the biggest gorge of its kind in Central Europe. Our tour will continue with boat tour inside the caves where we will see unique stalactites, stalagmites and columns.
Join us for a guided trip around the former forced labor camps for political prisoners of the Stalinist era (1950s). We will have the chance to visit the former uranium ore facility (the Red Tower of Death) where uranium was mined, processed and exported to Soviet Russia under very difficult labor and living conditions.

We will be given an introduction to the communist repressive system after 1948, show trials and life stories of Czechoslovak political prisoners.

The journey to the former labor camps of the Stalinism leads us to the area of a beautiful nature on the border to Germany where are to find the relics of the Czech history.

Our guide is an expert on oral history who tells us the real life stories of political prisoners who survived jailing in the 1950s in the Jachymov district.
CULTURAL IMMERSION TRIPS

***These trips do not count as an overnight trip

Ostrava & the Romany

March 20-21
Organizer: Filip
(limit 10 students)

The purpose of this trip is to learn more about the life and culture of the Roma people, also known as Gypsies, one of the most significant minorities in the Czech Republic. In a very unusual anthropological journey, we visit homes of Roma families and learn first hand from these families how they perceive their place in Czech society. According to various non-governmental organizations, the Roma in the former Eastern Bloc, including in the Czech Republic, endure endemic discrimination and many have had a difficult time integrating into the majority culture. When we meet them in Ostrava, the third largest city in the Czech Republic not far from the Polish border, they openly discuss discrimination, drug use, their music and values, unemployment, education and all of the obstacles and also successes they feel they have experienced. The Roma have been the subject of much journalistic chest-thumping since the end of the communist regime due to the social and economic difficulties many faced in the aftermath of 1989. We will hear special background lectures from the association that has brought Roma and non-Roma together in Ostrava in myriad ways, particularly through housing. Other discussions include the fight of Roma women against forced sterilization and efforts to integrate Roma in schools.

When visiting Ostrava, the third largest city in the Czech Republic we won't miss its industrial beauty. We’ll have a brief city tour and visit of the Lower Area of Vítkovice.

The Vítkovice mining area is a national monument, a European cultural heritage site and a serious candidate for UNESCO-listed status. It’s the only place in Europe where the entire iron production process took place at one single site and where the facilities have been preserved. It is located right at the heart of Ostrava. The view of this labyrinth of iron towers, pipes and conduits creates bizarre forms and leaves a weird and wonderful impression on most.
Volunteering Trip
March 20-22nd
*this is 2 nights
Organizer: Tyna
(Limit 10 students)

A unique community house for people with handicaps: helping out Benediktus

Benediktus is a home to an extended family of clients with a light mental or physical handicap and their assistants. The organization has a daily care center in Chotěboř and about 20 km further away, in a small village of Modletin, they run a community house for about 10 clients. There you can find small farm animals in the yard behind the main building, different workshop rooms of crafts typical for the region, delicious homemade cuisine and one of the friendliest atmospheres that can be found in the community houses in the Czech Republic.

You can expect a weekend of work on the general maintenance, chopping and storing firewood, some garden work and small reconstructions in some of their 4 buildings.

You’ll get to meet the NGOs founders, friendly staff and clients, get to know about the organization and its achievements and you might become a temporary member of Benediktus musical band. Also you will get a chance to discover what’s unique about minds that tick to a different beat. We’ll be staying in the main community house and we’ll share two rooms with wooden floors covered with mattresses.

Benediktus (www.benediktus.org) is located in Modletín, a small village some 150 kms East of Prague.

You will need: good shoes and clothes that are warm and that you don’t mind getting dirty. We can provide sleeping bags with a clean lining; you can bring a sleeping bag of your own if you have one.
Beskydy Mountains hiking trip and Czech high school visit
February 27-28th
Organizer: Susan
(limit 15 students)

Frýdek-Místek is a small city of 70,000 habitants situated near the beautiful Beskydy Mountains in eastern Moravia (the very east of the CZ). On this trip we will first go to a Czech high school, where you will assist a class and will be able to see the environment the young Czechs study in. A program in company of the students will follow. You will be also staying in their families for the night. The second day we will go for a hike to the lovely mountains, where we will be able to taste some local cuisine in one of the pubs (which are an inherent part of all the Czech mountains). This region is very different from Prague, as it has a long industrial past. By going on this trip you will have the possibility to see the way Czechs outside of Prague live and you will experience the variety of this beautiful country.
Hlinsko
April 24-25\textsuperscript{th}
Organizer: Susan
(limit 12 students)

Finally, a chance to really get to know Czech young people by staying in their homes! This small town trip is all about connecting with high school students in Hlinsko, 120 kilometers from Prague in Eastern Bohemia.

In this town of 10,000 people we spend a day at an elite high school where we are hosted by students ages 16 to 19 and their very special teacher, Lada Kusa, who is from Hlinsko and is one of the leading English-language instructors in the region. At the school we learn about the similarities and differences between Czech and American education and about how the kids see issues like racism, sex and politics. They even put on a play for you about life in the Czech Republic! You will learn about small town Czech life by experiencing it firsthand -- you will stay in the home of one of the students and enjoy their hospitality, including a home-cooked meal! This is a fantastic cultural exchange that many students claim is the highlight of their semester because it is their best chance of really learning about Czech home life. After dinner we go to a local pub and you can play darts, pool and learn what young Hlinskites do for fun. Many students and the hosts then try out the disco where, I warn you, 1980s Slovak hits are de riguer!
DAY TRIPS

**Dresden**

February 20th
Organizer: Tyna
(limit 20 students)

This is a unique opportunity on a NYU trip for you to cross the Czech border and visit Dresden, the capital city of the Free State of Saxony in Germany. It is situated in a valley on the River Elbe. Although Dresden is often said to be a Baroque city, its architecture is influenced by more than one style.

Other eras of importance are the Renaissance and Historism, as well as the contemporary styles of Modernism and Postmodernism. On our trip we will take advantage of the cultural heritage and besides an interesting tour covering the history of the city until nowadas, we will visit some of the well-known museum (such as Zwinger Gallery). There will also be some free time to stroll around on your own and enjoy the beauties on a promenade along Elbe river.
Liberec
March 6th
Organizer: Susan
(limit 20 students)

Located in the north of the country on the Lusatian Neisse and surrounded by the Jizera Mountains and Ještěd-Kozákov Ridge, it is the fifth-largest city in the Czech Republic. Settled by German and Flemish migrants since the 14th century until their expulsion after World War II, Liberec was once home to a thriving textile industry and hence nicknamed the "Manchester of Bohemia". For many Czechs, Liberec is mostly associated with the city's dominant Ještěd Tower.

Join us on this trip and explore beautiful historical city Liberec and one of the highest places in Czech Republic – Jested Mountain. In the morning we will have adrenalin experience on bobsleigh track then we will have little tour in Liberec. Cable car will take us up on the mountain where the TV tower designed by famous Czech architect Karel Hubacek is situated. After the tour of TV tower we will watch beautiful sunset.
**Terezín**

March 13\(^{th}\)
Organizer: Susan
(limit 30 students)

“A grave among graves, who can tell it apart, time has long swept away the dead faces. Testimonies, so evil and terrible to the heart, we took with us to these dark rotting places. Only the night and the howl of the wind will sit on graves’ corners, only a patch of grass, a bitterweed before May bears some flowers…”

*(Jaroslav Seifert – To the Dead)*

Terezín was a transit camp and Jewish Ghetto during World War II. It was used as a propaganda tool by the Nazis, who showed Terezín to the international Red Cross to prove that they were treating Jews humanely. Most inmates of Terezín were eventually sent to Auschwitz, and only a tiny percentage survived. The trip will be led by Mr. Toman Brod, Terezín survivor.

**Students in the Jewish History class are required to go on this trip and must sign up. If you are in this class, this is an additional trip and doesn’t count as one of the day trips you can sign up for.**
Kutná Hora
March 14\textsuperscript{th}
Organizer: Aja
(limit 25 students)

Located about an hour from Prague, Kutná Hora was once famous for its silver mines and was one of the richest towns in the Czech lands. The city built a cathedral to rival that of St. Vitus in Prague, as well as many other beautiful buildings. When the mines were emptied, the town was forgotten and the beautiful medieval and Renaissance architecture preserved. The town is on the UNESCO list of heritage sites, and also famous for its macabre bone church - a gothic church which was decorated by a creative priest in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century with sculptures made from human bones. Truly bizarre. One of the Czech Republic's most popular tourist destinations.
**Karlstejn Castle hike**
March 22\textsuperscript{nd}
Organizer: Betty
(limit 20 students)

We would like to invite you to join our trip and discover the beauties of Czech history, Czech culture, Czech nature, and also Czech cuisine! After about an hour-long train ride from Prague we will walk through a picturesque landscape to see three famous quarries (Big and Small America, Mexico) also known from several Western movies. Our hike will be around 13 km long (8 miles) so we ask you to dress accordingly. Proper shoes are a must!

We will then continue walking in order to reach Karlštejn – a Gothic castle above Berounka River constructed on a huge lime stone rock, one of the most visited castles in Central Bohemia. It was built by Czech King and Roman Emperor, Charles IV between years 1348-1367. We will have a tour of the castle during which we will admire the Grand Tower, Burgrave´s Palace at the main courtyard, Imperial Palace, Chapel of the Holy Rood (with an unique collection of 129 painted panels made by Master Theodoric in the 1360’s), Emperor´s Palace, Knight´s Hall and many other impressive places.
Blatná and Caves
April 19th
Organizer: Tereza
(Limit 20 students)

Come with us to the beautiful Koněprusy caves less than an hour away from Prague. The caves originate in 400-million-year-old Devon calcite rocks, consist of three levels up to 70 m deep under the ground-level, and are over 2 km long. The accessible part is 620 m long. The caves can boast of unique opal-bearing decorations, as well as numerous paleontological excavations, documenting the history of Earth Nature of the past 1.5 million years. For those who are interested, we can take a quick browse for fossilized trilobites and ammonites.

After we've explored the caves, we will take an hour's drive to the fairytale-like chateau Blatná which was built in the 15th century. Standing in the midst of a huge park, it mirrors in the waters of a surrounding pond. The park includes a fallow-deer reserve where it is possible to walk among these and feed them.
Sněžka Hike
April 24th
Organizer: Tyna
(limit 15 students)

A day hike to the highest mountain of the Czech Republic Sněžka (1602m) situated on the east side of Giant Mountains – Krkonoše directly on the border with Poland. Due to its position it has an unforgettable view of the Giant Mountains scenery, distant Czech and Polish lands.

On its top you can find several buildings including the highest post office in the Czech Republic from where you can send postcards with original stamp. The trip may be physically difficult and good clothes (let’s not be surprised by cold and rainy weather) and good shoes are necessary (the average temperature on the top at the end of september is 4°C – 39 °F ).
Nachod Fortress
April 26th
Organizer: Simon
(limit 20 students)

This interwar era underground complex is located on the borders with Poland in the northern part of Czech republic in Orlicke Mountains. It was build to halt German potential invasion at the borders. It hasn’t been used for that purpose at all... however you will experience how Czechoslovak soldiers lived in there and how they guarded the borders.

Expect a small hike and beauties of former Sudetenland.

*Please note: this is perhaps not the right trip for claustrophobic people!
Ceske stredohori
“Volcano Trip”
May 1st
Organizer: Kuba
(Limit 15 students)

Come for this trip to spend a day in nature and see the beauties of the Central Bohemian Uplands – a mountain range North of Prague, known for its volcanic origin. We will climb up the highest mountain of the region Milešovka, which can be seen from a large distance thanks to its typical cone shape. On our way back we will visit one of the most interesting cities of the region, and explore its historical center along with the main landmark – the Libochovice Castle.
Tips for travelling

Websites 4 traveling in Czech republic and Europe:

www.studentagency.eu
www.orangeways.com
www.idos.cz (also in english)
http://en.cd.cz/
couchsurfing.com
http://www.gomio.com/

comercial sites with useful info:
wsaeurope.com
bus2alps.com

cheap airlines within Europe:
www.wizzair.com
www.ryanair.com
www.easyjet.com