

Beer World: Prague

Budget travel king ADRIAN BELL continues his mission to show Darlington drinkers that good beer can be enjoyed overseas, in our DD series on short-break destinations.



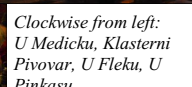
IS PRAGUE as beautiful as they say? Yes it is, with lots of old buildings, a river and a castle on top of a hill.

As for beer, the Czechs invented pilsner and the brews from here have more taste than other lagers, particularly when unpasteurised from a 'tankova' pub. In a traditional pub the service is by a glum waiter; just sit down and he'll bring you beer until you tell him to stop.

U Pinkasu is a tankova pub for Pilsner Urquell, near the bottom of Wenceslas Square. **U Medvidku** is a traditional tankova pub for Budvar: keep right as you enter for the traditional beer hall, which also does good meals. They have a brewpub at the back with beers at 5.2% and 12.8% abv.

A must-visit brewpub pub is **U Fleku** (www.ufleku.cz) which brews its own dark lager. It is double the price of beer elsewhere (£2 for 0.4l) but is worth it. A tip: don't accept the becherovka liqueur - it is £3 a shot.

Other micro-breweries include: **Klasterni Pivovar**, at a monastery near the castle (two beers). **Novomestsky Pivovar** is a restaurant in the new town also making two beers. **Pivovarsky Dum**, is a pub-restaurant in the new town specialising in unusual flavoured beers, like coffee and nettle, and serves very good food. **U Bulovsky/Richter Brewery** is a bit out of town and makes pils and German and English-style specials. Find more pubs worth a visit on my website: www.adrianbell.co.uk.



Clockwise from left:
U Medicku, Klasterni
Pivovar, U Fleku, U
Pinkasu

Prague photos: Adrian Bell

DETAILS, DETAILS:

Food... Traditional Czech food consists of meat and dumplings, but it's not as unhealthy as you might think. The dumplings are unlike our suet dumplings, they come in two main types: bread dumplings, which are like large slices of not-quite-cooked bread, and potato dumplings - smaller and sometimes containing bacon.

Sights... Prague Castle (including St Vitus Cathedral), the Old Town Clock, Tyn Church, Charles Bridge, Petrin Hill, Wenceslas Square. Details can be found on www.prague-guide.co.uk.

Accommodation... Botel Racek is a different kind of place to stay - it's a boat moored on the river Vltava. Other options can be found on www.wshttravel.com.

Travel... easyJet from Newcastle, about £85. Then bus 119 to its terminus, then metro line A to the city centre. Prague has three metro lines and also trams which run all night: transfer ticket 85p, single 60p. Tip: don't use a taxi!

Guide... Good Beer Guide Prague & the Czech Republic, Evan Rail, CAMRA £10.99.

*See page 15 for another Darlington CAMRA man's view of Prague's pub.