

information

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MANDARIN ORIENTAL, PRAGUE: HISTORY

Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group opened its Prague property on 12 September 2006. This project marries the legendary hospitality of Mandarin Oriental with the inimitable charm that has made Prague one of Europe's foremost travel destinations.

Prague's splendid architecture, some of it dating back a thousand years, is the city's most distinctive feature. From the noble austerity of Romanesque rotundas to soaring Gothic towers, from airy Renaissance arcades to dramatic Baroque cupolas, from sinuous Art Nouveau facades to the streamlined geometry of Art Deco and Cubism, its patchwork of styles is both exhilarating and unforgettable. Add the storybook skyline, dramatic vistas, a river spanned by a necklace of bridges and you know why the city has become a favourite of discerning travellers worldwide.

Nestled in a peaceful section of the ancient neighbourhood of Malá Strana (Little Quarter) on the left bank, the 99-room Mandarin Oriental, Prague occupies a complex whose origins date back to the 14th century. Part-Renaissance, part-Baroque and part-modern, the hotel's distinctive set of buildings represents over six centuries of architecture. Formerly a Dominican monastery, the structure incorporates a large part of the outer wall of St. Mary Magdalene, one of the oldest churches in Prague that was built on the site around 1330.

With the expertise of renowned architectural studio, Dům a Město Architects, as well as the advice of architectural consultant, Otakar Dvořák, AIA, Mandarin Oriental, Prague retains and highlights its distinguished heritage; carefully-preserved architectural features such as vaulted ceilings, archways and original staircases are sensitively complemented with subtly opulent oriental touches, resulting in a hotel as unique as the city itself.

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The rebuilding process was carried out under close supervision of the Conservation Authority, reporting directly to the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, incidentally, located just across the street from the hotel. All construction work was scrutinized by the Conservation Authority archaeologists, in order to protect any artefacts of historical significance that were uncovered. The most important of these artefacts and architectural details were recorded by the National Monuments Institute and are now placed on display throughout the hotel. The most striking find was the remains of a Gothic church, uncovered during the renovation and rebuilding process of the Spa. These have now been preserved under a glass floor showcasing the hotel's strong ties to Czech history and culture.

In 2007, the hotel was awarded the prestigious "Building of the Year" award presented annually by the Czech government and professional organisations. The hotel was singled out for its especially sensitive and creative approach to reviving and adapting its historical architecture to new use as a luxury hotel.

The location of the hotel was specifically chosen for its peaceful atmosphere, close to the river, only minutes away from the 650-year-old Charles Bridge and a short walk to the immensely popular and historic Old Town Square. Guests can meander through the cobbled streets marvelling at the romantic scenery, strolling through galleries and resting at lovely cafés, or taking in some of the very best of the city's vibrant restaurants and night scenes. In this select location, guests are surrounded by palaces, gardens and towers of old Prague, under the ever-watchful presence of Prague Castle.

In 2015, the hotel introduced a new interior designed by British design studio Black Sheep. The conceptualisation and refurbishment of the food and beverage outlets and lobby areas were an exceptional opportunity to showcase the historic underpinnings of the site. The new design pays homage to the building's unique historical background by creating solemn moments and respectfully adding contemporary touches for a new sense of arrival and guest experience.

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