

Suggestions for Trips from Tomio Okamura



Charismatic, amiable and always decent – that is Tokyo native Tomio Okamura, who is proud to call himself Czech anywhere in the world. He has been greatly honoured by a personal audience with the Japanese Emperor, symbolically connecting the Czech Republic and Japanese Empire. No wonder, since his travel agency brings over 100,000 foreign tourists to the Czechland every year.

He has never hidden his opinions, though they are not always complimentary. For this reason we, a magazine supporting domestic tourism, were interested in his view of the potential, quality and importance of domestic tourism during the global crisis.

"Last year, for the first time, Czechs spent more than half of their holidays abroad. This has been a long-term trend where the CR has failed to keep its holiday-makers in its own regions. There are several reasons for it: e.g. while Italians have their Mozzarella or Parma Ham, here 20 years after the revolution the pull of local gastronomic specialties is still missing. The potential of gingerbread and Olomouc curd cheese hasn't been exploited.

(more at www.kampocesku.cz)

Let me ask you another question. Can you give our readers your tip for a trip in this country? *"I'll try to give a less stereotypical tip – my favourite spot. My mum comes from the Moravian town of Bystřice pod Hostýnem, at the edge of the Valašsko Region, known mainly for its huge pilgrimage basilica on Hostýn Peak. I have always liked walking along tourist paths there, passing natural springs and castle ruins on my way, having a swim in Rusava or picking raspberries as I journeyed. But for those who find Moravia too distant I have another secret tip. It is a place where I sometimes escape to from Prague at night. It is a hill called Nedvězí (in the Kokořínsko area) which is known among locals for its incredible panoramic views. You can park right at the foot of it and then it will take you just five minutes to walk up to the top. I spread my blanket on the ground, lay on my back, look up and suddenly I become a part of the entire universe, dreaming, thinking and being happy".*

Thank you for the interview.

Luděk Sládek

Finally It Has Happened!

The foundation meeting of the Orlické Mountains and Podorlicko Foothills organisation took place in Letohrad on Apr. 21. Its task is promoting tourism in this area. It was founded by 21 entities of the Hradec Králové and Pardubice Regions. Petr Fiala, Letohrad Mayor, was appointed as the Chairman, and Miroslav Richter, Rychnov n. Kněžnou Deputy Mayor, as the Vice-chairman.

This significant event was attended by more than 70 representatives from professional, political and public life. Personally, I am pleased about this activity, which could put the tourist area of the Orlické Mountains and Podorlicko Foothills on the same level as regions, such as Czech Paradise, Šumava or Slovácko. The

contract has been signed and foundations laid. Now, it is just up to the people. So let us wish for capable, hard-working managers, creative members and needed partners while allowing these a few months honeymoon period. They will cope, you'll see.

Luděk Sládek



Vamberk "I"

Vamberk, a small town at the foot of the Orlické Mountains, inherently connected with its famous bobbin lace production, has finally seen the opening of its new information centre.

If you decide to pay a visit to Vamberk, do not forget that each exploration of a town thus far unknown to you starts directly in the information centre. Here you can find various tips for sightseeing in the town, trips around the vicinity and other important information, for exam-

ple about the unique exposition of historical and present day lace production, which is staged in the local Museum of Lace. So if you set out for the Podorlicko Foothills, make sure you include Vamberk in your itinerary.

-lgs-

