

Why Prague?

My answer is simple. Almost six years ago, I found a job opportunity through a friend and decided to move to Prague in order to experience life in Europe.

At the beginning, it was not easy, especially coming from a warm country in all senses; arriving to a -10C winter without knowing anyone and not speaking the language was quite a cultural shock. No smiling people on the streets, no kindness among shop assistants or other service people. It seemed an unhappy country to me. On the other hand, the magic of this beautiful city always fascinated me and still does today.



The Czech culture and mentality

At the beginning I really felt like I didn't belong here. But as soon as I started getting acquainted with the expat community at work, I felt like I was not the only "alien" in the city. Going out for beer in the summer seemed to be the favorite sport in town. I just simply started to adore Prague and its lifestyle. However, I realized that limiting myself to the expat community world was not "the real Czech life." Everybody was constantly arriving and leaving a few years later, so I was constantly meeting new friends and saying goodbye to old ones. This is the common mistake most of the expats make, as they do not feel welcome by the Czechs, they respond with indifference and abandon efforts to get to know them.

In my case, I decided to go against the flow and find the positive things in the Czech mentality. The result has been positive; most of my closest friends are Czechs and I have to say that without exception, all of them are decent, intelligent people. It was not easy to approach them; somehow Czechs do not trust easy smiles and are suspicious of overfriendly behavior. They ask themselves: what does he want from me? No physical contact was the rule, which was alien and even frustrating for someone from my Latino cultural background (not shaking hands with guys, no hello kisses to girls). I learned that Czechs just need their time to getting comfortable with you, and as soon as they know you can be reliable, they will really open and value your friendship. Learning communicative Czech (even if most foreigners will never master it) is a big plus for getting integrated to the society. Do not give up; Czechs are really nice people, I can assure you of that.

Working and living in the heart of Europe

Acquiring a working visa is a headache that we all have to go through; Do not expect English speakers or a friendly attitude at the foreign police, it will just not happen.

My jobs here in Prague started in recruiting and selection, followed by telesales and cold calling; and I just recently finished working for an event management company specializing in academic trips for MBA schools. I can say that Czech Republic has given me the chance to develop as a person and as a professional. My next step is to work for myself and start running a business related to the food industry. A few years ago, I registered a Czech company here and now it is time to start running it.

Prague has become my second home. I so much enjoy the life here, and it has the perfect size, a location in the heart of Europe that makes it easy to travel most places in Europe, a delicious cuisine, the most beautiful towns, country side and the best of all a group of very loyal friends whom I now consider part of my family! What else you can you ask for?

Mexican and Czech cultures are massively different, and at the start, that was a constant cultural frustration. But in the end, I would not trade my experience in this country for anything.