

Lights! Camera! Prague!

Lights! Camera! Prague!, a new map of the film locations in Prague, is the Czech city's answer to Los Angeles's back lot tour. And once you land at the Prague–Ruzyne International airport, it's already begun. The tarmac your 767 bounces onto is the same surface James Bond and Carlos skid across, fighting for control of a fuel truck. Inside, it's hard to imagine Bond chasing Carlos through the small and convincingly Miami airport in **Casino Royale**, but it is.



Beyond the walls of the Adidas outlet in the Adria Arcade on the edge of Old Town is a beautiful and bustling courtyard. The benches that line it are full of locals with no particular place to go. The menacing black and red gates are the only hint that the building could be creepy enough to appear in the horror–thriller **Hannibal Rising**.

Locals and tourists alike scurry around the halls of Lucerna Palace under the blue glow of the stained glass window. Balls and concerts are still held in the Palace's ballroom, where the key scenes of an academy award–winning **La Vie En Rose** were filmed. Aside from the ballroom and the cinema settings, Lucerna is worth visiting just to see David Cerny's reply to the famous equestrian statue in Wenceslas Square: a hanging statue of the king sitting on the belly of a dead, upside–down horse with its tongue hanging out.

After his team is killed in **Mission: Impossible**, Tom Cruise flees into the “you can't miss it” bright yellow Hotel Evropa in airy Wenceslas Square. The Hotel's café was the set for a scene in this year's drama, **Faubourg 26**.



Weaving your way up the cobblestone of the Square will end up at the idyllic National Museum. The lobby served as the U.S. embassy in Mission: Impossible as well as the lobby of James and Vesper's Venice hotel where they kiss for the last time in Casino Royale. The Museum also stands in as an opera

house in horror–thriller **The Omen** and a school in **From Hell**, starring Heather Graham and Johnny Depp.

Most of the above film locations can be seen on one of the three walks the map lays out for you. The first walk goes through Hradcany, Mala Strana and Prague Castle, the second through Old Town and the third through the busy Wenceslas Square. The walk goes surprisingly quickly if you use the map. The Czech Film Commission issued the map this year so that visitors can retrace the steps of stars and hopefully picture the scene as it was filmed. The map is a challenge to get hold of, as the commission did not print many copies.



The easiest way to get hold of one is to call the Film Commission and request to pick up a free map at the Czech Film Center, located in a dark building in an ally beside Tesco department store at the Narodni trida metro stop. If you are a film buff and have the time to call the Center and request a copy be left at the front desk with your name on it, the map is worth the effort. The whole project was financially supported by the City of Prague.

By Anne Jones

<http://www.praha.eu>

<http://cestovnuruch.praha-mesto.cz>

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