


Czech etiquette

- ◆ **Shake hands to welcome your counterpart. A firm handshake is viewed as a sign of honesty and openness. It is not unusual for family members and very close friends to kiss on the cheek.**
- ◆ **Usually it is the woman or the older, or the more distinguished man, who offers a handshake first.**
- ◆ **Maintain eye contact. This is perceived as a sign of honesty and trustworthiness.**
- ◆ **Always arrive on time, even for dinner - punctuality is viewed as a sign of reliability and responsibility.**

- ◆ **Lunch is the main meal during the day. Supper is usually much smaller and lighter.**
 - ◆ **Calling somebody their first name has a special meaning. It is a sign of friendship. It should first be offered by the woman or the older or the more respected man.**
 - ◆ **When visiting somebody's home, bring a small gift. Flowers or chocolates for the lady of the house are also very appropriate.**
 - ◆ **It is commonly expected for guests to remove their shoes upon entering the host's home.**
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- ◆ **Smoking should be requested first. Ask your host's permission, before lighting a cigarette.**
- ◆ **Interrupting a conversation is considered rude and impolite.**
- ◆ **In the theatre you have to pass facing the sitting people**
- ◆ **Men are the first to enter a restaurant.**

Daily schedule

- ◆ Traditionally, Czechs are early risers. Shops open at 7 am and offices at 8.
- ◆ On the other end of the day, everything (except big supermarkets) closes down early. Shops close between 5 and 7 pm and offices even earlier.
- ◆ Restaurants and most pubs close between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m. Some bars close later and some stay open through the night.
- ◆ Theatre performances start between 7 and 8.

- ◆ School starts at 8 but some classes may start earlier.
- ◆ The Czech calendar starts the week with Monday. The work-week ends in a weekend. Many Czechs leave the city to spend the weekend at their summer house or cottage called *chata* or *chalupa*.
- ◆ Gardening is a common pastime and many families grow most of their vegetables. Even city dwellers may have a small garden on the edge of the town.

Addressing people

- ◆ TY – VY ty chodíš, vy chodíte
- ◆ Pan /paní / slečna
- ◆ Pane Nováku, paní Nováková, slečno Nováková

Using academic titles

Pane doktore, paní doktorko, pane docente, paní docentko

Pane inženýre, paní inženýrko

Gestures and Body Language

- ◆ Czechs are not great gesticulators.
- ◆ Common gestures:
 - ◆ Shrugging shoulders = *I don't know* or *I don't care*.
 - ◆ Pointing with your finger at your forehead or temple = *You are stupid*.
 - ◆ Holding thumbs in a closed fist = *luck wishing*.
 - ◆ Thumbs up = *good*; thumbs down = *bad*.
 - ◆ Smiles

Smiles

- ◆ Czechs do not smile much at people they do not know.
- ◆ It is not a sign of unfriendliness, it is simply not expected.
- ◆ Conversely, if you smile at people without a reason, they will be surprised.
- ◆ Foreigners may think that Czechs are worried.

Counting on fingers

- ◆ The Czech system
- ◆ Start with the thumb,
- ◆ continue with the index finger, etc.

Discussion questions

- ◆ **Compare addressing people in Czech culture to addressing in your home culture**
- ◆ **What are typical gestures in your culture?**
- ◆ **Is there much handshaking, hugging and kissing?**