

No really appropriate books were identified focusing specifically on Slovakia. As a result, Ashley read and reviewed a book about the Czech Republic.

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Book Review/Evaluation: CultureShock! Czech Republic

CBAD 402

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If I were moving to the Czech Republic, “CultureShock! Czech Republic” by Tim Nollen would be an excellent preparation tool. The book, published by Graphic Arts Books in Portland, Oregon in 2005, was a good preparation for a short visit as well. The book offered a diverse variety of chapters that catered to different types of visits to the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic has an interesting history. Free from its former Communist reigns, the personalities, actions and ideas of the Czech people have been shaped by this transition from Communist rule to a more democratic lifestyle. The book shows how this guides what is and isn't appropriate to talk about to the Czechs and do's and don'ts to abide by. The section titled, “Czech Characteristics” explains the general character of the Czech people. The Czech Republic is considered a bridge between Eastern and Western Europe.

Czechs are a greatly cultured people but prefer not to discuss issues such as homosexuality and politics out in the open. They are greatly involved in life at the individual, personal level, and outside things that they don't want to discuss kind of go by on a don't ask, don't tell basis.

Review

A big issue I had with this book was its introduction. The first seven pages known as “First Impressions” was a good way to start the book, but shortly following this section the reader gets bogged down with a rather dry background on “History, Politics, Economics and Religion.” This book is part of the CultureShock! Series in which the books are all formatted in the same manner. A recommendation to this series would be to put this section in the book as an appendix. While it is a logical place to begin, it's not necessary to know for a visit to the Czech Republic. While the book's structure stands, I recommend reading the book out of order. While this is something I would never usually do, I found it a lot easier to get useful information from the book this way. Since it isn't a novel I let my hang-ups on this way of reading go and indulged in the Czech Republic culture.

Although this wasn't the country I completed my briefing on, a CultureShock! book on Slovakia would have greatly appreciated.