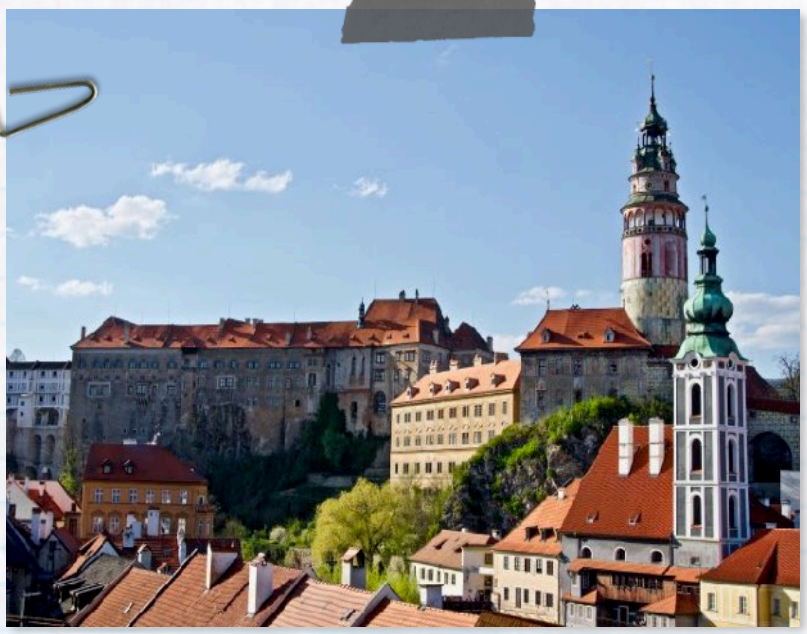
CZECH REPUBLIC



Czech Transit

We left early in the morning from our German hilltop not knowing what to expect. The heights and narrow roads of our wonderings did not eventuate. Instead the journey into the Czech Republic was via gently sloped terrain that was dappled in light and covered in the light green foliage of silver birch and other undefined species. A little stream seemed to gurgle beside us the whole way. Large open areas seemed to be waiting for the snow like an old actress waiting for her make-up artist. It was very pleasant. We had to wind around to find a road that would take us over the border. Once across we encountered much better roads and similar, but less "perfect" brush strokes.

Most of the 300 or so kilometres was via secondary roads, through rolling country with regularly spaced small villages. Further south there were masses of small lakes dotting the countryside. One city of note was Carlsbad. We only drove through but the buildings we saw from our van were fabulous. It was/is apparently a spa town of great note. We were sorry we could not stop. The Czech language is impossible to try to pronounce - too many "z's" and far too few vowels.

LONG VEHICLE Didn't know if this was some foreign language or English gone wrong.

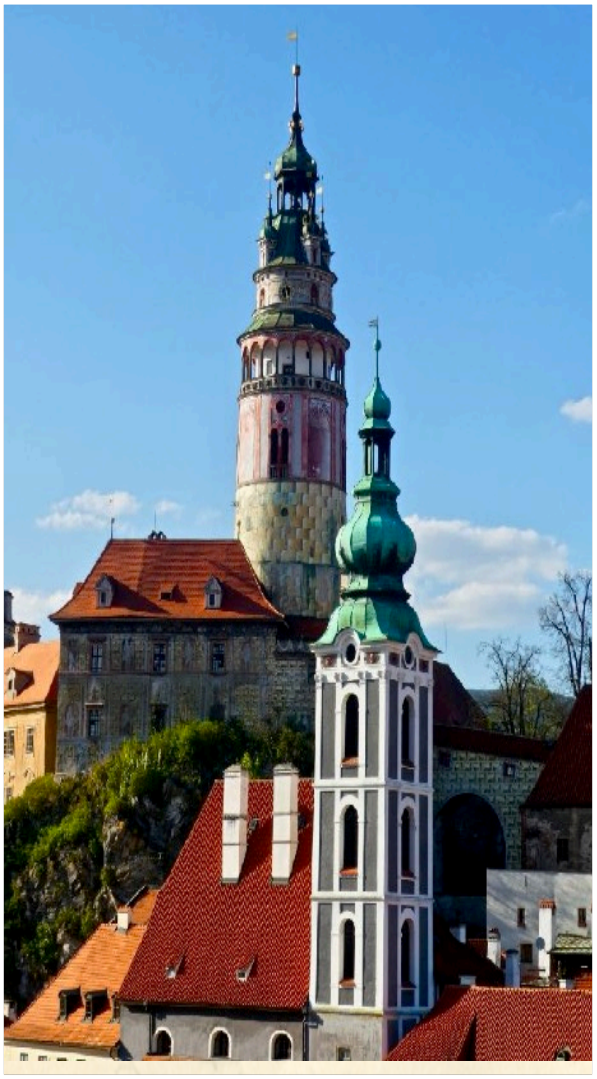
WINDOW LADY Saw this woman sitting in the sun in the window contemplating life.

FLAWLESS BALCONY I'm imagining stepping out of the door onto the balcony and falling into the river - no floor for some reason. Weird.

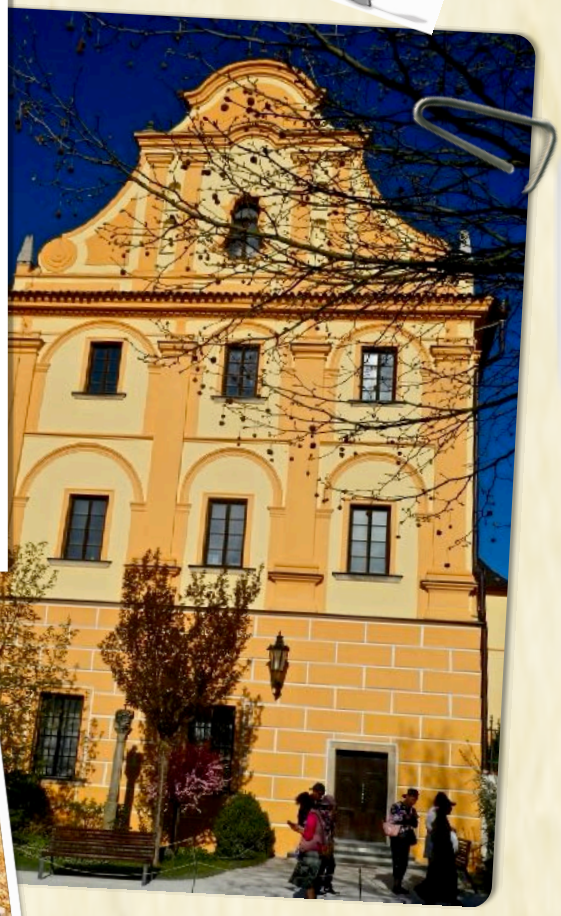
Czech mate …….

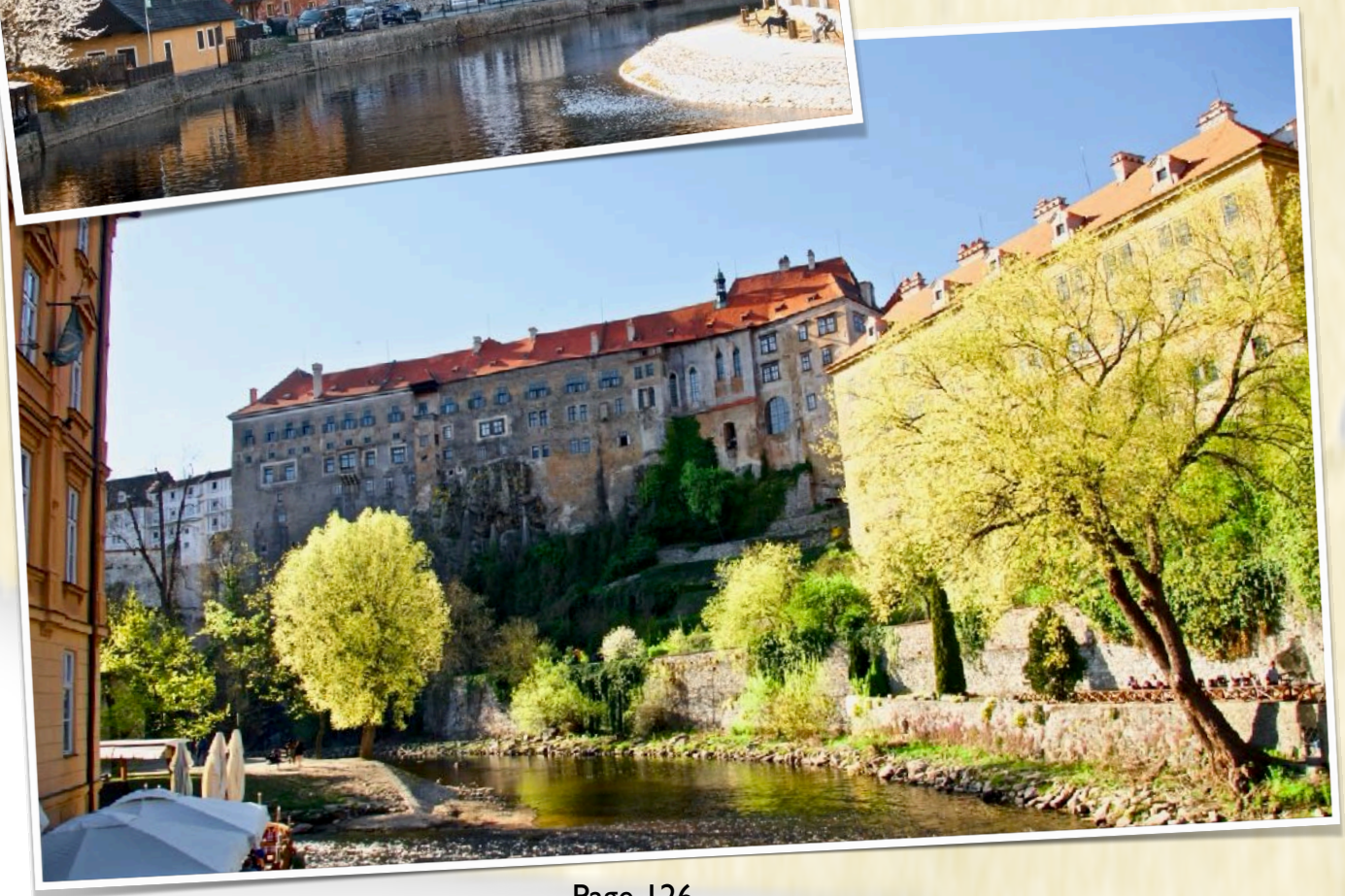
We stopped for an afternoon tea break in a quiet little village and were musing about "Wet Monday" - a crazy tradition in Poland where everyone gets squirted with water to wish them good luck for the coming year. My family surprised us the first time we visited but we never got caught out again. We finished our cuppas and just as we were about to snooze off for 15mins we were abruptly woken by a group of raucous laughing young men with long sticks. They saw Heather and all chanted for her to get out of the van. I got out to see what they were on about - they were all having obvious fun as one of the men had about a dozen bras dangling on the end of his stick. One of the guys explained in English that this was Pomlázka. - a tradition meaning good luck to women. They laughed as I took a group photo. When Heather got out of the van they pretended to hit her on the backside and chanted for her to take off her bra so they could add it to their loot. Given that Heather only has 2 bras total on this trip that was never going to happen. Strange Czech traditions indeed!!!

We arrived at our destination near the Austrian border about 4.30pm but decided to head off immediately to visit Chesky Krumlov. In 2009 we visited this "pocket rocket Prague" but could not resist a second look. After parking right in the centre we spent a delightful hour strolling the still busy cobbled streets. Wow.



PHOTOS





PHOTOS