

# Happy Czech Holidays



Rituals, songs, food, and stories remain an anchor of Czech heritage despite the multitude of changes to everyday life that occur with each generation. Holiday traditions carry us through bleak, dark Winter into fresh and hopeful Spring. We celebrate throughout both blazing, glorious Summer and golden, bountiful Autumn. This exhibit highlights traditional Czech holidays like masopust, Easter, and Christmas, as well as the feast days of various saints like Martin, Barbara, Nicholas, and Lucie.

#### First Panel:

“Cloudy Hromnice makes the farmer happy.” This panel begins with Hromnice and its correlation with Groundhog Day. Both are related to weather prediction and the length of the winter season. Masopust is also discussed here, from costumes to food and everything in between. This celebration is called Carnival, Mardi Gras, and Fašiangy in some other countries.

#### Second Panel:

This panel tells of the Easter season. Mořena or Old Mother Winter, Ugly Wednesday, Green Thursday, and Good Friday lead up to White Saturday when Czechs prepare for Easter Sunday and Easter Monday. These two days see church services, traditional foods, and ancient practices.

#### Third Panel:

The “Merry Month of May” includes many different holidays and festivals. The month is rung in with the Burning of the Witches and putting up Maypoles. There are also processions of ‘Little Queens’ and a student festival called Majáles. One of the largest and most well-known events in May is the Ride of

the Kings. It has been celebrated for over 200 years and has become a widely recognized symbol of Czech culture.

#### Fourth Panel:

November is a month of many holidays and celebrations in the Czech Republic. It begins with All Saints Day, which commemorates all saints, instead of only the canonized. This leads right into All Souls Day or the Czech Day of the Dead. Souls that have passed away are remembered and celebrated at this time with decorative wreaths and candles. November is also a month of events based on agriculture, such as haymaking, harvest, grape harvest, and Thanksgiving. St. Martin’s Day is also described in this panel.

#### Fifth Panel:

This panel pays homage to the December holidays in the Czech Republic. Advent, St. Barbara’s Day, St. Nicholas Day, and St. Lucie each have a place here. A discussion of grand nativity scenes is also included. These nativities have not just the expected players, but also villagers, musicians, farm animals of all kinds, and townsfolk.

#### Sixth Panel:

The final panel is all about Christmas, from the origins of the Christmas tree to traditional foods and practices on Christmas Eve. Christmas Day and St. Stephen’s Day are described, as well as January’s Three Kings Day.

# Happy Czech Holidays



## Exhibit Rental Information

Happy Czech Holidays is comprised of six retractable panels that take viewers through many of the holidays throughout the year, beginning with February and ending with December/January.

### Exhibit Contains:

- 6 panels that retract into a metal base (opened like a roller shade), each housed in a black zippered bag. The opened panels are each 36 x 72 inches in size.
- 1 pole folded in half for each panel (in bag with panel)
- All panels fit into one box (15 inches long, 15 inches wide, 48 inches tall)
- Box weighs approximately 80 lbs

### Space Requirements:

- 21 linear feet (allowing for 6 inches between each panel). This figure is based upon all six panels being set up in a row, but they can be in any configuration within a space.

### Time:

- Duration of exhibit is negotiable

### Security:

- Periodic checks of exhibit area
- Open to the public only while there is an attendant in the building

## Procedures for Booking:

Shipping costs to and from the venue must be paid for by the borrower. The NCSML Traveling Exhibit Coordinator will ship via FedEx and include return shipping labels. The borrower will be billed by the NCSML Finance Director after the exhibit's return to NCSML.

## Setting up the Exhibit:

- Remove panel (rolled up in metal case) and pole from bag
- Place metal case on floor with hole for pole as the back
- Unfold pole and insert one into the other at the center point (where the elastic connects the two pieces)
- Insert pole into hole with flat end as top
- Pull up on panel to unroll it
- Attach top edge of panel to flat top on pole

The NCSML traveling exhibition program is generously supported by American Czech Association, Los Angeles and American Sokol Los Angeles.

## Questions about this exhibit?

### Contact:

Tricia Bender  
Artifact Collections Manager / Traveling  
Exhibits Coordinator  
☎ 319-362-8500 ext. 201  
✉ [tbender@ncsml.org](mailto:tbender@ncsml.org)

# Happy Czech Holidays

