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Baroque Fun at Prague's Carnevale

BY JACY MEYER FEBRUARY 25, 2011 6:00 AM 3



Archiv Carnevale Praha/Triglaw Corp. At the Crystal Ball during Carnevale Praha.

The romance and mystery of a masked ball, Baroque soirées, frolicking in the streets — it must be Carnival time in Prague. [Carnevale Praha](#), 12 heady days of glam and mystique, begins on Feb. 25. Two fancy dress balls, a mask parade, Baroque music concerts, a children's party and a food festival are just a few of the activities designed to liven up the gray winter of the city.

Carnevale Praha was the brainchild of Zlatuse J. Muller, originally a photographer and set designer, and her husband, an architect and designer. The tradition of carnival in Bohemia dates back to medieval times and it was this history and a love of Baroque that inspired the Mullers to reignite carnival in Prague.

The two highlights of the festival are two masked ball: the Bellaria and the Crystal Ball, the festival's big closing event. For those who don't like fancy dress, the traditional opening of the city to Carnevale takes place on Old Town Square on Feb. 26. Each day from Feb. 26 to March 8, at Old Town Square at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., a variety of programs will be held.

"We take pride in the ordinary events, but the new focus is on the complex Baroque festivities," Ms. Muller said. "The combination of music, dance and theater."

There are five evenings of Baroque soirées featuring music and dance from 17th- and 18th-century European courts, held in the elaborate [Clam-Gallas Palace](#) (Husova 20).

Carnevale Praha is also partnering with some local restaurants to offer special menus as part of their "Cuisine d'Alchimiste."

Carnevale tickets can be purchased [online](#); for more information there will be an information center set up at Colloredo-Mannsfeld Palace (Karlova 2; 42-220-514-239). Costumes and masks are available to buy or rent at the Carnevale Salon located at Clam-Gallas Palace.

"Everyone who loves a carnival, or anyone who admires great music, great dancing and good food," Ms. Muller said. "In short, anyone who loves life."

An all-inclusive ticket for the Crystal Ball is 7,200 korunas (about \$400); an after-dinner, entertainment-only ticket is 3,600 korunas (about \$200). Concert tickets for the Bellaria are 660 korunas

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