

Prague astronomical clock („Orloj“)

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Sightseeing tour around Prague

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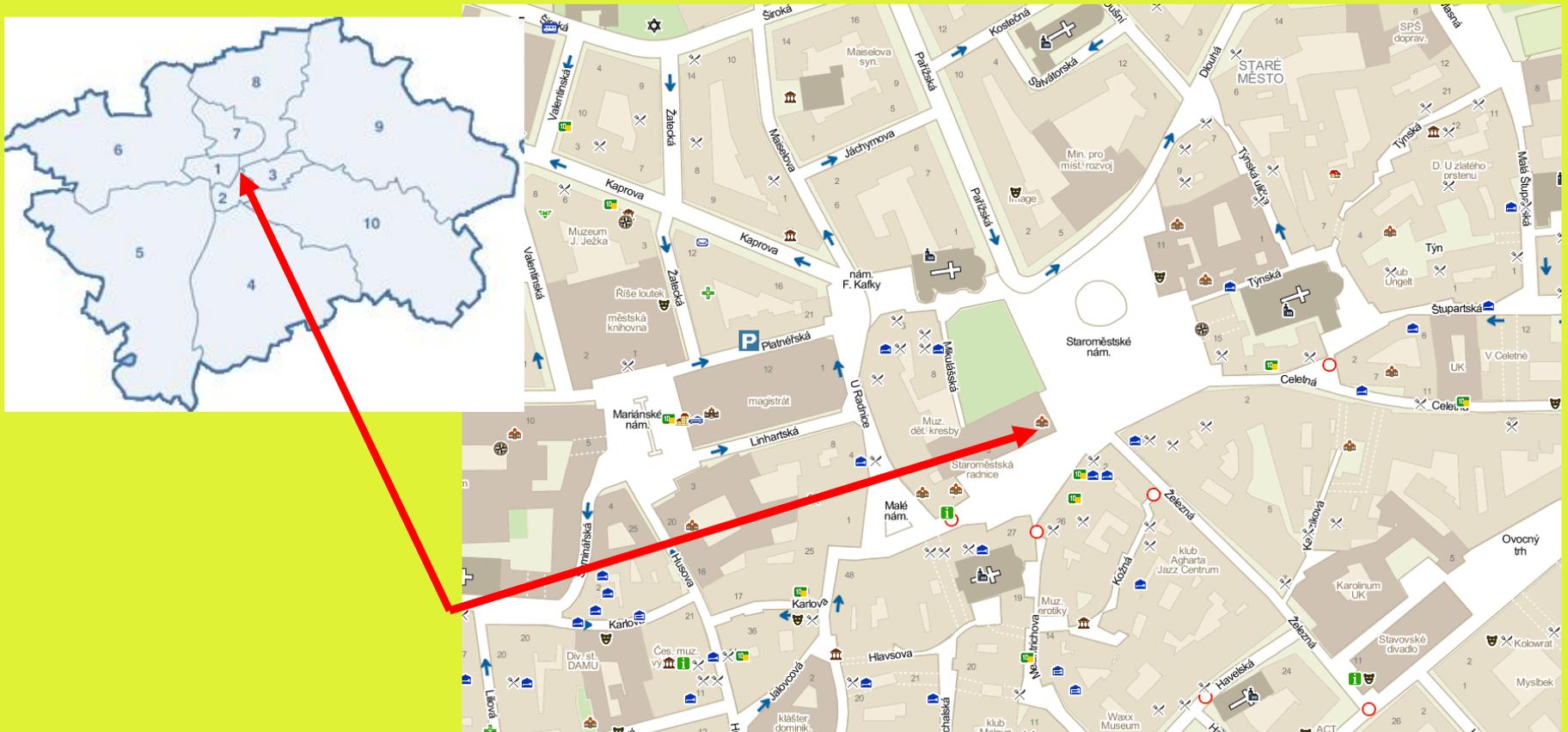
Basic information

- medieval astronomical clock located in Prague
- it is composed of three main components:
 - the astronomical dial
 - "The Walk of the Apostles,"
 - and a calendar dial
- one of the oldest European clocks of its kind
- famous touristic attraction

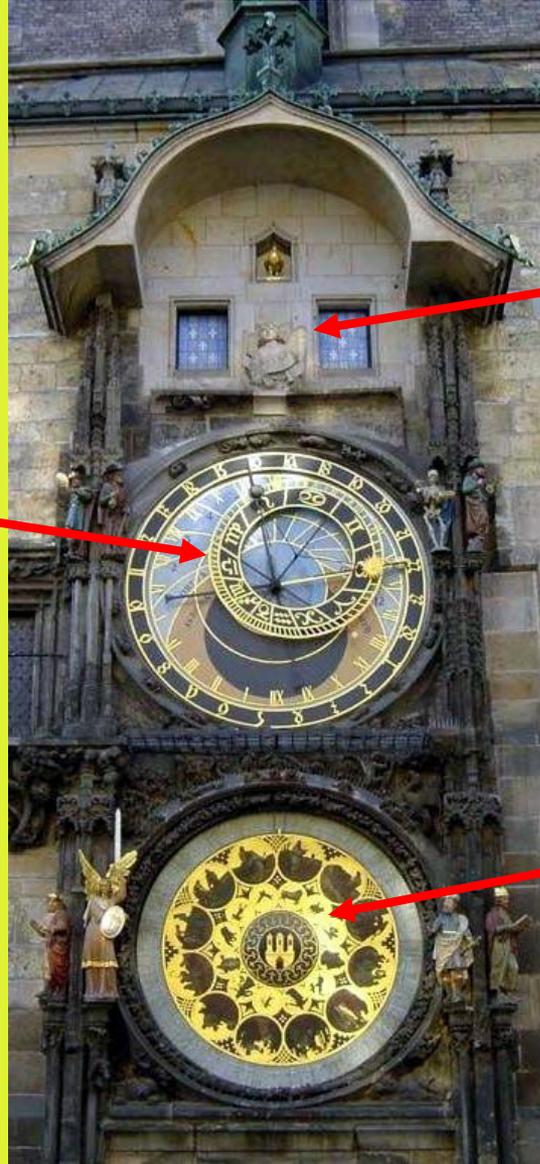


Location

- Old Town Square, centre of Prague



Description



the astronomical dial, representing the position of the Sun and Moon in the sky and displaying various astronomical details

"The Walk of the Apostles", a clockwork hourly show of figures of the Apostles and other moving sculptures

calendar dial with medallions representing the months

History

- 1410 – the oldest part – the mechanical clock and astronomical dial
- 1490 – the calendar dial was added
- 17th century – moving statues were added
- 1866 – the figures of the Apostles were added
- May 8, 1945 – heavy damage during the Prague Uprising, the wooden sculptures burned, the Orloj started working again in 1948
- the Orloj stopped working many times and was repaired many times

The legend

- the Orloj was constructed by clockmaster Hanuš
- Old Town Councilors burned out his eyes
- so that he would not be able to build another such instrument elsewhere
- he broke down the clock, and no one was able to repair it for the next hundred years



The walk of Apostles

- The Apostles come out of the windows in the upper part of the Orloj
- St. Paul appears first holding a sword and a book
- St. Thomas follows carrying a spear
- St. Juda Tadeus holds a book in his left hand
- St. Simon follows holding a saw
- St. Bartholomew appears with a book
- St. Barnabas (Nathael) follows carrying a papyrus
- St. Peter with a key
- St. Mathew is next with an axe
- St. John can be seen castigating a snake
- St. Andrew with a cross
- St. Philip with another cross
- St. Jacob with a tool for working flax



The sculptures

- another sculptures on Orloj:
 - The Death represented by a skeleton pulls the bell cord
 - The Turk shaking his head
 - The Miser holding his bag of gold
 - The Vanity admiring himself in a mirror
 - The four figures at the top, in the medieval times were seen as the four menacing elements for the city of Prague. These have moving parts although they themselves remain where they stand all the time

- A chronicler
- An Angel
- An Astronomer
- A Philosopher



The calendar

- on the bottom part of the Orloj with month symbols painted by Josef Manes in 1805
- the Orloj as an astronomical clock – represent the course of the sun and stars just like the real thing
- it was necessary to keep a clock correct, comparing them with other clocks
- the best way to do this was according to the sun clock measurements - the sun dials
- in fact there were two sun dials on both sides of the location of the Orloj clock





Thank you for your attention