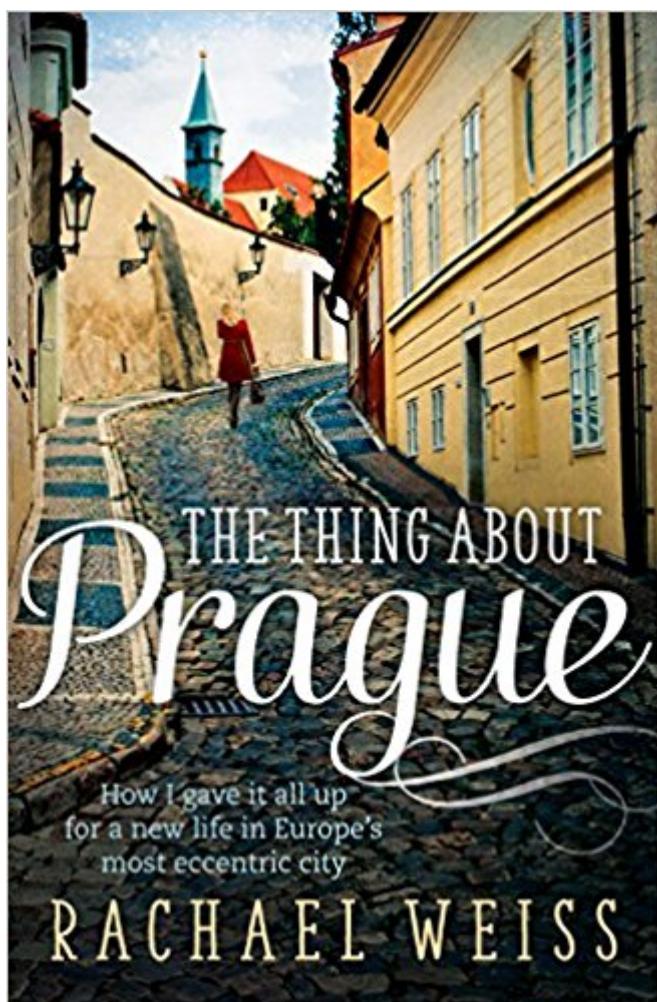


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# The Thing About Prague: How I Gave It All Up For A New Life In Europe's Most Eccentric City



## **Synopsis**

A smart and funny travel memoir about the highs and lows of trying to establish a life in a place that values beer and potatoes above everything else. Freewheeling Rachael Weiss gave up her life in Australia to move to Prague, her ancestral home, intending to live there for the rest of her life. In fact, she lasted there for three years before visa restrictions and disillusionment caused her to leave the country. Even though she is at times exasperated by the petty bureaucracy and customs of a country that values beer and potatoes above everything else, and even though she is frustrated by her attempts to master a very difficult language (only spoken by 10 million people), her efforts to engage both socially and romantically with the locals are wonderfully funny. Social embarrassment and mortification rub shoulders with the kind of bureaucratic absurdity that inspired Kafka in former times. This surprising and generous memoir is full of warmth and Rachael's unstoppable sociability.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Rachael Weiss is the author of *Me, Myself & Prague*.

Who hasn't dreamt of starting afresh, new country, new friends but been too scared to try it? Rachael describes a journey from Australia to Prague. She leaves behind her only dependent a cat and travels to her ancestral home. Expectations are high for a life of creativity, fun and lack of responsibility. She realizes she needs friends, a job, a reason to be relevant to the community and a life partner. The background of Prague, the hiking, the Spanish Synagogue, the night culture the

Charles bridge on the longest day as the sun rises are all beautifully described. The bureaucracy, the focus on carefully stamped documents the behavior of real estate agents all provide a contrast to what we are accustomed to. The book is very readable can provide a map of what is involved in starting afresh but also does not over romanticize the dream. I think anyone who has dreamt of a fresh start or been a tourist in Prague will enjoy reading this memoir.

I loved this book! Laughed out loud quite a few times, which doesn't happen that often with most books. I really felt that the writer is giving us a good look at how many of us feel when confronted with loneliness, especially when we are supposed to be having the time of our lives (living in a beautiful city, pursuing your dreams....). And she is giving us a look that isn't masked by ego. So the book mostly has a lighthearted tone and is a very easy enjoyable read, but that extra undercurrent of emotion, really makes it worthwhile!

Rachael Weiss's second book about Prague is a really entertaining read. It is a travel memoir full of fantastic personalities and interesting insights. I particularly liked the hilarious tales of her working life in Prague. Weiss portrays the bureaucratic nightmare of working permits and residency applications in the Czech republic with style and humour. There are some really interesting episodes about her Czech friends and family also. I especially liked her vibrant and funny account of her time with the Spanish Synagogue community. It is exceptionally original writing and educational too. I will certainly read it before another trip to Czech Republic. Brilliant read!

Loved this book. And the authors feeat sense, of humor and adventure. I've been to Prague several times and was familiar with most of the places, so it meant a lot more to me. I'm mostly at the University of South Bohemia, so wasn't aware of the large ex-pat community. Hated to see the adventure end!

If you have ever spent some time in Prague, this book will be entertaining for you!

No problems to report.

I thought the story was a little uneven. In parts quite stilted, and then suddenly there was swearing and quite explicit sexual content. Some of the descriptions of the Synagogue were somewhat tedious. It seemed to end quite abruptly, and it would have been nice to know a little more of her life

in England, unless of course that will be another book!

At the age of 41, and experiencing something of a mid life crisis, writer Rachael Weiss decided to leave behind her life in Australia and move permanently to Prague, lured by the thought of "cobbled streets, midnight-blue evenings, snowflakes and cheap beer". In the end she would last three years and the book charts her journey from giddy adoration for all things Prague to disenchantment with the communist bureaucracy, unfriendly locals and her inability to find a well paying job. Weiss has a chatty writing style and a gift for anecdotes. The first half of the book is particularly strong. It catapults the reader into the Czech capital and is frequently amusing. Gradually over the second half of the book Weiss becomes a little - dare I say it? - whiney and I got tired of hearing about her frustrated libido. But overall the book strikes a good a balance between a travelogue and a personal memoir and it definitely had me longing to revisit Prague. If you've enjoyed this book, I recommend Penelope Green's trilogy about living in Italy (start with [When in Rome: Chasing la dolce vita](#)) and also Sarah Turnbull's story about moving to Paris: [\[I understand that Weiss is now living in Dublin and I hope that there will eventually be a book about her experiences there! She's a fun writer.](#)

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