

Celebrate '08 • July Vestnik Project

This project earns a maximum one point in the SPJST Youth Clubs Merit Points System. Mail completed project no later than **August 15, 2008** to:
SPJST Youth Program c/o SPJST Home Office • P.O. Box 100 • Temple, Texas 76503

Name _____ Age _____ Lodge _____

Exploring the World's Largest Castle

With more than 2000 castle sites, the Czech Republic is a castle lover's dream. Why? Because it was located at the heart of Europe and served as a major crossroads for trade and as well as a center of cultural influence. According to the *Guinness Book of Records*, Prague Castle, located in Prague, *of course* — is the largest castle in the world. Covering 18-acres and lying at the heart of the city, the buildings within the grounds are home to some of the Czech Republic's most precious works of art.

Prague Castle was built on the site of an old Slavic settlement on a hill overlooking the Vltava River around the year 880 AD. A wooden fortress originally marked the site. Over the years, the fortress grew larger and larger with the wooden buildings replaced by stone structures. By 1135, most of the buildings were made of stone, and the Czech Kings had made

the castle their home.

Over the centuries, Prague Castle continued to grow. Important additions included a huge Gothic cathedral of Saint Vitus, palaces, courtyards, shooting range, gardens, museums, and the present-day government offices of the Czech Republic. Elsewhere around the castle are the "Golden Lane," a series of small, colorful shops that originally served as housing for the palace guards; a great hall that looks like it hasn't changed in 500 years; and a Czech art museum. There is also a toy museum, which really has nothing to do with the castle, but contains some very interesting old and new toys.

Today, construction and alterations continue to be made at Prague Castle. The castle serves as the official residence of the President of the Czech Republic and the city's number one tourist attraction.. Many exhibitions, concerts, and theatre performances are also held at the castle.

Prague Castle is that city's number one tourist attraction and it's easy to see why! Fill in the blanks in order to make the statements correct.

1. Prague Castle covers _____ acres.
2. The castle overlooks the _____ River.
3. By the year 1135, most of the castle buildings were made of _____ .
4. One of the important early additions to Prague Castle was the Gothic cathedral of _____ .
5. Today, Prague Castle includes the government offices of the _____ .

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Image: <http://www.crazyabout home.com>