

PRAGUE, 2 December 2023

Fanta building is in full glory again and will open to public this weekend

This weekend, Správa železnic festively opens the reconstructed premises of the historic Fanta building at Prague Main Station. The Art Nouveau interiors have blossomed under the hands of builders and restorers and have regained their original splendour. Next year, regular guided tours for the wide public will begin to take place here. A café, for which Správa železnic looks for an operator now, will also open. The Grand halls will be used for cultural and social events.

Tours for invited guests and employees of Správa železnic have been prepared for Saturday. On Sunday, the renovated premises will open to the public. Due to the ongoing Advent season, everything will take place in a pre-Christmas spirit. A decorated Christmas tree is set up and carols will be presented live.

The Art Nouveau Fanta building was built between 1901 and 1909. Until 1977 it served as the main passenger check-in area of the entire main station. It bears its name after the architect Josef Fanta, who was the author of its design.

The interior works followed the reconstruction of the facade, which took place between 2019 and 2022. The builders then focused on the interiors in the northern part of the listed building, which include several cultural halls. The builders now have last finishing works to do as part of the approval proceedings.

"Prague Main Station is more than just a railway station. At the same time, it is an important transfer hub, a modern shopping gallery and now, thanks to the completion of the historical premises of the Fanta building, it is also becoming a representative community centre. We are thus restoring the importance it had in the past," says Minister of Transport Martin Kupka.

The works included the repair and restoration of the Fanta Hall, the Column Hall, the corridor, the café and the VIP Lounge according to Josef Fanta's original design. The builders also connected the historic halls to the northern underpass by an escalator. A new commercial retail unit was then created adjacent to the lower floor of the café.

The paintings and relief decorations were also restored, the windows and doors were refurbished and last but not least, the gilded emblem of the First Republic, which was located in the Fanta Hall under layers of other non-original coatings, was subjected to a restoration survey. It was probably created after the proclamation of independent Czechoslovakia in October 1918 to honour the arrival of President T. G. Masaryk from exile.

And what will be the new utilisation of the renovated premises? The two-storey Foyer Café will partly serve as a café accessible from the central part of the station and from Platform 1. As the name implies, it will be the entrance foyer to the Fanta building's halls, where the reception, cloakroom and lavatories will also be located.

The Fanta Hall will be used as the main venue for cultural and social events, not only organised by Správa železnic, but also by other interested parties. The Column Hall will serve as a business lounge. A lounge for a maximum of 12 people will also be available to interested parties. All details are available on the website fantovabudova.cz.

"But we are far from finished at the main station. The second stage of the construction is ahead of us, during which the southern part of the Fanta building and its upper floors will be renovated. As part of the joint project 'Nový hlavák' (New main station), we will then perform reconstruction of the new check-in hall and revitalisation of the surrounding area," says Jiří Svoboda, Director General of Správa železnic.