



Press release

PRAGUE, 1 April 2023

Thanks to Správa železnic's care, Fanta building is regaining its former splendour

Opening of the renovated premises in the historic Fanta building at Prague Main Station is approaching. Správa železnic is completing the restoration of the interiors of the Art Nouveau building, work on which began in autumn 2021. The premises, which are being restored to their original appearance under the conservationists supervision, were opened to the public today in an extraordinary way. The construction work will be completed in the summer and, once the building is given the final approval, the renovated halls are expected to be fully open in the autumn. For all the latest news, information about the lease and the history of the building, visit the new fantovabudova.cz website.

The reconstruction of the extensive premises of the Art Nouveau Fanta building is divided into two stages. The constructors first focused on the cultural halls on the ground floor of the northern part of the building and the adjacent spaces on the adjoining floors.

Restoration work and painting is currently underway in the corridor, in the Fanta and Column Hall, and the installation of lights is almost complete. The parquet flooring is being laid in the Fanta Hall and the scaffolding in the Column Hall is being dismantled. In the ground floor café, the ceiling is already finished and preparatory work has begun for the construction of the staircase to the underground floor. New tiles are being laid in the corridor and the reinforced concrete slabs for the escalator are being concreted.

An interesting find for the restorers was the uncovering of the gilded state emblem of the First Republic, which was under layers of other non-original paint. Its story remains a mystery; it was probably intended to greet T. G. Masaryk as the first president upon his arrival from exile after the declaration of an independent Czechoslovakia in October 1918.

"Within the framework of Správa železnic's investment plans, large station buildings, which are an example of the building skills of our predecessors, have already come to the fore. We want to pass on this heritage to future generations. Participants of today's tours in the Fanta building can see that even restoring the original appearance of the interior does not have to be in conflict with the offer of 21st century travel comfort," said Minister of Transport Martin Kupka.

The renovated premises will house the Foyer Café, the multifunctional Fanta Hall designed for cultural and societal events and the Column Hall used as a business lounge. The Fanta Hall will be managed by Správa železnic and used for holding cultural events for the public and rentals for festive purposes.

The café and business lounge operator will emerge out of a concession procedure. The aim is to find a partner who will breathe new life into the space together with Správa železnic. *"We expect the tenant of the Café and the Column Hall to provide all visitors with perfect service in the form of quality catering services, to help revive these unique spaces and to bring them back to the centre of the action,"* explains Jiří Svoboda, Director General of Správa železnic.

The remaining part of the interior of the historic building will also be renovated as part of the next phase of the reconstruction. The estimated investment costs for both phases amount to CZK 779 million.

Správa železnic is currently restoring several listed railway station buildings. In addition to the Fanta building at Prague Main Station, there are also valuable historical buildings in České Budějovice, Pilsen and Teplice. The reconstruction of the check-in hall in Pardubice, which is a unique example of post-war architecture, will soon be in full swing.