

AUGUST
2020
airBaltic
Inflight magazine

baltic

outlook

TALLINN

TALLINN
THE COSY CAPITAL

SUMMER ON THE
DANISH ISLANDS

RIGA'S GREAT OUTDOORS

DUBLIN'S POINT OF VIEW

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We plan to offer
69 routes from all three
Baltic capitals already by
the end of this month

MARTIN ALEXANDER GAUSS
Chief Executive Officer, *airBaltic*

Dear guests of *airBaltic*,
We've been back in the skies for more than two months now and continue to follow a variety of additional safety measures to protect our passengers and employees.

Each week we carry a growing number of passengers and are receiving new reservations. We're resuming more flights on a wider range of destinations to better serve our customers, and we plan to offer 69 routes from all three Baltic capitals already by the end of this month. With this, we're exceeding the targets we set out in our adjusted business plan a few months ago. Our cautious approach of slowly adding aircraft and destinations is working. It's also proving how essential travel is to so many of us.

Last month we secured financing from our main shareholder, the Latvian state, for *airBaltic* to be able to overcome the economic crisis caused by

the coronavirus. With the new equity investment of 250 million euros, we're executing our new Destination 2025 CLEAN business plan, which still focuses on providing the best connectivity to and from the Baltics and flying 50 *Airbus A220-300* aircraft in 2025. This investment will facilitate the successful growth of *airBaltic*, leading to an IPO in the future.

The recent months have also shifted our thinking. We've simplified our product and our operations while maintaining our core operational principles of safety, punctuality, and service. Our new ticket types launched in July provide additional flexibility to all passengers. In addition, the discussion about sustainability will soon return in the media, and *airBaltic* remains committed to becoming an even greener airline, flying a fleet of only the most efficient *Airbus A220-300* aircraft.

For our travellers to be able to plan future trips, we've already published our schedule for the upcoming winter and summer seasons, meaning that many of our flights up until October 2021 can already be booked now. Still, be sure to follow us on social media to not miss new travel opportunities that are yet to be announced.

Hope to see you on an *airBaltic* flight again soon!



Yours,
Martin Alexander Gauss



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page 58



page 58

- 6 **Calendar**
August 2020
- 12 **Cities of the Month** Paris, Düsseldorf
- 16 **Live Riga**
The great outdoors in the city
- 18 **Urban Icons**
Blue treasure of Amsterdam
- 20 **My Favourite Place** Berlin according to Anna-Catharina Gebbers
- 22 **Zurich** in 24 hours
- 24 **En Route**
Classical music in the palaces of Latvia
- 26 **Point of View**
Dublin according to Fred Kelly
- 28 **Style**
For a weekend in Madrid



page 6



page 52

9

SNAPSHOTS

from the lives of our flight attendants

page 81

- 30 **Design** Āraiši Lake Fortress Museum in Latvia
- 32 **Trend** Navigating travel experiences
- 34 **Gadgets**
Hotel upgrades
- 36 **Food** Where to have a sip of good beer?
- 38 **Your Next Destination**
Tallinn – the cosy capital
- 46 **Interview**
Anastasia Blokhina, the executive director of RIBOCA
- 52 **Travel**
Summer on the Danish Islands
- 58 **Travel** Iceland bucket list
- 74 **airBaltic** News

baltic outlook

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Please follow all of the safety measures and restrictions at each *airBaltic* destination, and stay updated on what, if any, actions are required upon returning from them. Also, before going to any event, make sure that the dates, location, or conditions have not changed. Some photos in this magazine may be only of an informative nature.

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MORE THAN ITALIAN

LAVAZZA

TORINO, ITALIA, 1895

Words by Zane Nikodemusa
Publicity photos

The ultimate August checklist



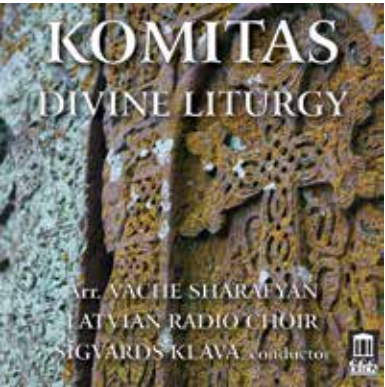
The Baltic Sea coast in Kurzeme

Photo by Janis Bauris @LIAA

LIFE BY THE SEA

In August, life in Latvia takes place by the sea. Even people who don't have vacation time planned for this month often head to the nearest beach for an evening swim and to watch the sunset. Those who do take a longer time off in August tend to dive into the seaside fishing villages to enjoy the simple life, which always includes long walks along the beach and smoked fish for dinner.

For those who love nature that's a bit wilder, the Baltic coast along the western edge of Latvia's Kurzeme region is quite the discovery. The steepest part of that coast, which in some places measures up to 20 metres high, stretches for several dozen kilometres along the shoreline and is most dramatic at Jūrkalne, a popular local spot for paragliding and kiteboarding. Kurzeme's beaches are also the best place to look for amber. According to people living along the coast, small pieces of amber are most often washed out of the sea together with seaweed following a strong wind and rough waves.



MUSIC

Divine sound

The internationally acclaimed Latvian Radio Choir, which experts say can superbly perform the broadest range of repertoire, is a unique musical ensemble in the world of choral music. The choir has performed at many prestigious classical music festivals, including the BBC Proms, and at iconic concert halls around the world. In July, in collaboration with the *Delos* record label, it released a recording of the Divine Liturgy, a masterpiece written in the early 20th century by the outstanding Armenian composer Komitas Vardapet. A wonderful addition for collectors of excellent recordings!

radiokoris.lv



DESIGN

Beauty in the details

When the orchards are full of fruit and the market tables laden with the new harvest, it's time to look for dishes in which to serve such wonderful produce. For several years already, Baltic design magazines have named *Laima Ceramics* as their favourite local brand. Ceramicist Laima Grigone and her team produce handmade porcelain, stoneware, and wood-fired clay tableware in her studio in beautiful rural Latvia. Tours of the studio and demonstrations of the ceramic process are also available.

laimaceramics.com



FASHION

Nordic elegance

Anna Led's signature style is immediately recognisable: natural materials, impeccable cut, Nordic elegance. Founded in 2000, it's one of the most iconic contemporary fashion brands in the Baltics. Latvian fashion artist Anna Ledskalniņa, whose creative style elegantly combines contemporary fashion trends, high-tech fabrics, and also traditions and ethnic elements of the Baltic region, is the driving force behind *Anna Led*. The brand's latest collection is named *Nordic Riviera*.

annaled.com

It's a blessing to have my own green oasis of peace and quiet just one step outside – the ideal place to clear my mind and think over the events of the day.

Feels familiar?

This photo was taken at

 **Magdelēnas kvartāls**

Words by Zane Nikodemusa
Publicity photos and by iStock

August 2020 / RIGA

RIGA INTERNATIONAL BIENNIAL OF CONTEMPORARY ART

August 20 – September 13

With the motto ‘and suddenly it all blossoms’, the 2nd Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art (RIBOCA) will spread across 200,000 square metres of Andrejsala, a former industrial port in Riga, which will become the setting for a feature-length film shot during the exhibition. Existing as something between a ruin and a construction site, embodying faded dreams and present reality, the project will transform the site into a unique experience that acknowledges the limitations and possibilities of today. The first edition of RIBOCA, in 2018, was highly praised by many influential international lifestyle media.

rigabiennial.com



Photo by Pēteris Viksna

RIGA JURMALA MUSIC FESTIVAL'S MUSICAL EVENINGS

August 14–16

While this year's festival has been cancelled, audiences can nevertheless hear the planned repertoire in a series of open-air broadcasts of recordings played on summer evenings in Riga's parks, streets, and industrial areas. Presented in a highly creative way, the music seems to emanate from the surroundings. Visitors are welcome to bring along a picnic basket, although refreshments are also available at a specially crafted snack bar.

riga-jurmala.com



RIGA MOTOR MUSEUM

Throughout August

If you want to take a break from the hot weather, dive into the Riga Motor Museum, which recently underwent an extensive renovation. It hosts the largest collection of antique motor vehicles in the Baltics. The exhibition is organised in the form of an exciting interactive story about unique vehicles, notable persons, and significant events in the history of the automotive industry, complemented by modern multimedia technologies. It promises an exciting day for all!

motormuzejs.lv

Did you know?

Ask any local, and they'll tell you that the best place for catching a magnificent sunset is Andrejosta. This industrially charming and tranquil port area is located just a ten-minute walk from Riga's Old Town.

liveriga.com

OPEN-AIR MUSIC

Throughout August



Various neighbourhoods of Riga host open-air concerts on summer evenings. On Tuesday evenings, head to Kalnciema

Quarter, where the stage sits in a courtyard surrounded by charming wooden buildings. On Wednesdays, music-lovers meet in Bergs Bazaar, one of the city's architectural gems. The courtyard serves as an outdoor terrace for several great restaurants, and the concerts most often feature jazz, blues, funk, and world music. Some very cool open-air concerts also take place in the courtyard of the C. C. von Stritzky Villa, a favourite hipster setting.

Quote of the month

‘Champagne is one of the elegant extras in life.’

Charles Dickens, English novelist, whose quote can inspire one to check out the annual Riga Bubble Parade on Saturday, August 8, in the courtyard and garden of the Art Academy of Latvia. It's the biggest parade of champagnes and sparkling wines in the Baltics.

rigawinechampagne.lv



JŪRMALA

HAVE FUN ON THE COURT

Throughout August

Jūrmala offers many great sporting activities, but tennis has always occupied a special position in this resort city. Among the several high-level tennis courts here, one sports complex is most definitely worth a visit. After an extensive reconstruction, the Lielupe Tennis Centre reopened in December of last year and is now considered the most modern tennis centre in the Baltics. In fact, this iconic place was first reported on in the media as far back as 1932.

tenisslielupe.lv



TRY

INLINE ROLLERSKATING

Throughout August

In the summer, Majori Sports Hall turns into an inline rollerskating arena. The special rink is open all week long and also offers skate rental. Remember, skating is an effective full body workout! According to the Roller Skating Association International, it utilises every muscle in the body and burns anywhere from 350 to 600 calories per hour.

visitjurmala.lv

ENJOY THE ARCHITECTURE

Throughout August

For years, Jūrmala has been known not only for its healing resources but also for its historical architecture. Many of the buildings in the city are protected as historical landmarks. They represent a whole range of styles, from Art Nouveau, national romanticism, and classical architecture to modernism and Soviet functionalism. Discover hidden gems of Jūrmala's architecture on a bicycle tour – routes can be found at visitjurmala.lv.



Photo by Rēnis Holmanis © LIAA



Did you know?

The sandy beach stretching for 24 kilometres along the seashore is one of Jūrmala's most valuable assets.

visitjurmala.lv

GRAND OPENING OF THE FINALE

Until September 13

Gints Gabrāns is an internationally recognised Latvian contemporary artist whose work extends into the fields of science and the latest technologies. This, his most recent solo exhibition, was highly anticipated on the Latvian cultural scene and has already been nominated for the Purvītis Prize, the country's largest and most prestigious visual arts award. See *Grand Opening of the Finale* at Art Station Dubulti, the only modern art space in Europe located in a functioning railway station.

[FB/artstationdubulti](https://www.facebook.com/artstationdubulti)



POP-UP BEACH

Throughout August

Now you can take a beach vacation in the very centre of Vilnius – Lukiškės Square has been transformed into a pop-up beach! Open Beach is a real summer oasis with soft white sand, sun loungers, and a volleyball court. Roaring sea waves broadcast on a big screen make the atmosphere a little more realistic. In the evenings, the beach turns into a cinema showing films under the stars. govilnius.lt

Did you know?

Vilnius University is a true treasure trove for history-lovers and has 13 different courtyards in various shapes and sizes. govilnius.lt



JONAS MEKAS EXHIBITION

Until August 16

Lithuanian poet and avantgarde filmmaker Jonas Mekas (1922–2019) enjoyed incredible encounters with the art world and stars of pop culture. The *Mekas Winks Better* exhibition at the MO Museum features New York culture of the 1960s and 70s and includes such prominent figures as Yoko Ono, John Lennon, Andy Warhol, and Elvis Presley. These icons were not captured by Mekas' camera purposefully but simply as part of New York's overall cultural context. mo.lt



VELOMARATHON VILNIUS

August 23

Whether you're a pro cyclist or this is your only ride this year, the traditional Velomaratonas invites all out onto the streets of Vilnius. The exceptional route stretches through the very heart of the Old Town and is adapted to three different participant groups: children, amateurs, and professionals. It's a great way to get the family or a group of friends together! ikivelomaratonas.lt

VILNIUS

VISIT FILM LOCATIONS

Throughout August

The capital of Lithuania is becoming an increasingly popular shooting destination among filmmakers globally. The biggest foreign production shooting in Vilnius before the pandemic was the *Netflix* series *Stranger Things*. Other hit shows have also been shot in Vilnius in recent years, including *War and Peace*, *Chernobyl*, *Catherine the Great*, *Young Wallander*, and *Tokyo Trial*. Some of these picturesque settings are readily available to the public, and special guided tours can also be arranged. govilnius.lt



TURN BERRIES INTO DESSERT

Throughout August

Foods that incorporate berries became popular in the early 20th century, when women learned to make various jams and preserves in home economics courses and schools. This culinary heritage has been passed down from generation to generation, and that's why you'll still find a variety of foods containing berries served in Estonian homes and cafés. Even *kama*, a very common Estonian dessert, is topped with a layer of seasonal berries. The main ingredients in kama are wheat, rye, barley, oat, and pea flour.



HAVE AN ADVENTURE

Throughout August

The forested Pirita Beach area, just 15 minutes from the city centre, is home to Pirita Adventure Park, where visitors get their thrills high up in the trees. As they cross rope bridges and overcome various obstacles, they can conquer seven different trails of varying difficulty. The Beach Trail offers great views of the sea and the Old Town skyline. The estimated time for completion of all the trails is two and a half hours. There's also a kids' park with two trails suitable for two- to six-year-olds. piritaseikluspark.ee



A DAY AT THE GOLF COURSE

Throughout August

Are you looking for something to do while on holiday? How about golf? This sport provides a stimulating mental challenge combined with a healthy walk in pleasant surroundings and can be played by people of all ages and abilities. Although Estonia is not yet a popular European golfing destination, it does have several high-quality courses, for example, the Estonian Golf and Country Club, located just 25 minutes from Tallinn's city centre. For several years now, *Golf World* magazine has listed it among the top 100 golf courses in Continental Europe. egcc.ee

TALLINN

Did you know?

Paljassaare Peninsula is the best place for birdwatching in Tallinn. Two hundred and twenty-three bird species, 85 of which are protected, have been seen here. visittallinn.ee

TALLINN MUSIC WEEK

August 26–30

Tallinn Music Week is one of the biggest indoor music festivals in the Baltic and Nordic regions. It presents a line-up of around 200 artists from Estonia and abroad, representing various musical genres. In addition to the main festival programme, which takes place in the most important clubs and concert venues of Tallinn, the events also let visitors explore lesser-known parts of town. tmw.ee



Words by Olga Dolina
Publicity photos

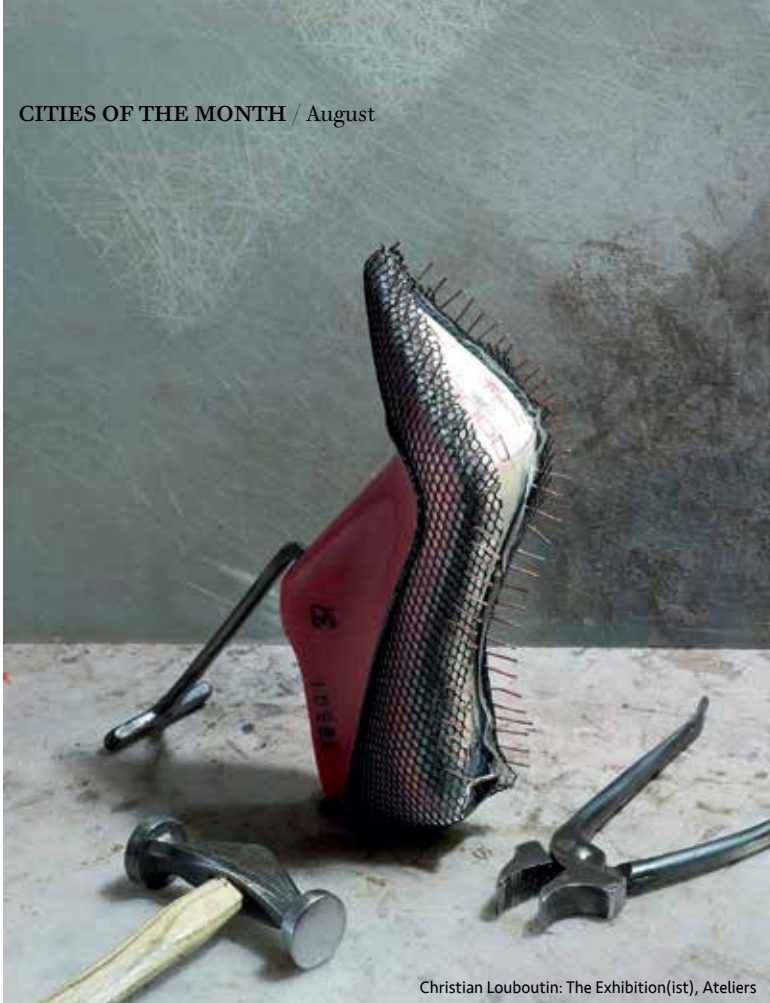


Christian Louboutin: The Exhibition(ist) invites visitors to explore the boundless creativity of the world-famous footwear designer and fashion trendsetter (293, Avenue Daumesnil; lexposition.christianlouboutin.com; until January 3, 2021). The exhibition is set behind the ornamented walls of the Art Deco-styled Palais de la Porte Dorée. This venue played an inspirational role in Louboutin's life. The metallic leather *Maquereau* shoe, one of his first creations, was a nod to the palace's tropical aquarium, while the venue's sign forbidding visitors to wear high heels inspired the iconic *Pigalle* pumps with their red-lacquered soles. In ten chapters, the exhibition mirrors the versatile universe of Louboutin's flamboyant creations influenced by the decorative richness of various cultures. Alongside signature models such as the flesh-coloured *Nudes* series, it displays a variety of artistic pieces and exclusive collaborations with leading craftsmen as well as multidisciplinary artwork made by his fellow artists David Lynch, Lisa Reihana, Whitaker Malem, Blanca Li, and others.

The third largest park in Paris, the Parc de la Villette, is hosting open-air evenings with large outdoor cinema screenings. **Cinéma en plein air 2020** marks its 30th edition with the theme 'Grandeur Nature' (Prairie du Triangle; 211, Avenue Jean Jaurès; lavillette.com; until August 23). This year's programme features selected contemporary classics with a focus on the power of landscapes, which often play a leading role alongside the main protagonists. Sky and the sea, fields and mountains, epic panoramas and distant horizons are reflected in iconic work by such starry directors as Terrence Malick, Jane Campion, Jacques Audiard, and Peter Jackson. Come nightfall (around 10 pm), the screenings in their original language begin: Ridley Scott's road movie *Thelma and Louise* will be shown on August 7, Alfred Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* on August 9, Sydney Pollack's *Out of Africa* on August 16, and *Arizona Dream* by Emir Kusturica on August 21. Entry is free of charge, with obligatory registration on the website. Comfy deckchairs are available for rent, and spectators are welcome to bring their own picnics to enjoy prior to the film.

Located in the five-star hotel of the same name, **Nolinski** restaurant allures with historical escapism and the moody, opulent glam of the central Opéra district (16, Avenue de L'Opéra; nolinskiparis.com). The interior created by designer John Whelan artfully blends Art Deco features (in a nod to the building's façade) with warm hues and furnishings reminiscent of the 1970s. The ambience recalls the bohemian flair of classic Parisian bistros with their mirrored wall panels and rich, period-inspired finishing materials. The muted colours let the yellow marble tabletops shine, but the central mirrored column steals the show. Contemporary cosmopolitan cuisine with Mediterranean twists and rich flavours, colours, and textures is served under the guidance of Chef Philip Chronopoulos, who uses raw food, spices, and seafood to create cuisine that's never boring.

© Philippe Garcia



Christian Louboutin: The Exhibition(ist), Ateliers

Cinéma en plein air



PARIS

© Bertrand Desprez

© Guillaume de Laubier



Nolinski restaurant



UNLOCK THE BALTIC TASTE!

With a blush of Black Currant

crosskeysgin.com



Alcohol consumption has a negative effect! Selling, purchasing and handing over to an under-age person are prohibited!



Known for its captivating modern architecture, the Düsseldorf cityscape welcomes **Kö-Bogen II**, a new commercial and office building in the heart of the Hofgarten district that strikes the imagination with the largest green façade in Europe (Gustaf-Gründgens-Platz 1). Designed by *Ingenhoven Architects*, it's wrapped in eight kilometres of hornbeam hedges and clad with more than 30,000 plants. A picture-perfect location for some memorable photo shots, the building unites two of the city's icons of post-war modernism: the Dreischeibenhaus skyscraper and the sinuous Schauspielhaus theatre with its adjoining park. This architecture-meets-land composition consciously responds to climate change and presents a friendly, people-oriented landscape that also reduces urban heat and CO₂ impact. Kö-Bogen II's green slopes frame a triangular pavilion with restaurants, shops, and a recreational area.

The **Peter Lindbergh: Untold Stories** exhibition at the Kunstpalast celebrates the legacy of one of the greatest photographers of the past generation (Ehrenhof 4-5; kunstpalast.de; until September 27). An icon of black-and-white fashion photography, German-born Peter Lindbergh (1944–2019) passed away last September but managed to curate the exhibition himself. The collection of 140 photographs selected over the past two years represents a time frame from the early 1980s to the present day. A master of the portrait and location, it was in Düsseldorf that Lindbergh's professional career kicked off. His famous cover for the January 1990 issue of *British Vogue* became the symbol of the 'Big Five' supermodel era. Lindbergh repeatedly captured the beauty of Linda Evangelista, Naomi Campbell, Claudia Schiffer, Cindy Crawford, Christy Turlington, and other female superstars in a series of sharp and distinctive shoots filled with physical spontaneity and emotional bareness. The Kunstpalast exhibition includes commissions for leading magazines such as *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Interview*, and *Rolling Stone*.

The new **Ruby Leni Hotel** is located in central Düsseldorf near the busy Königsallee shopping area and the Rhine River (Jahnstraße 3; ruby-hotels.com; prices from EUR 65). Constructed in 1904, the building originally served as a hotel but later housed a theatre, which explains the vivid mid-century theatrical references in the new interior. The hotel's philosophy sticks to laid-back comfort enhanced by character and soul. The 170 guest rooms include resident rooms for longer stays, loft rooms, and even cosier 'nest' rooms measuring only 14–16 square metres. The technologically advanced property offers personal tablets equipped with a Düsseldorf city guide and self-check-in system. In keeping with the creative spirit of the neighbourhood, the hotel's bar hosts regular concerts, while the trendy communal spaces provide an inviting atmosphere for socialising.



Kate



Think outside the box. Concentrate inside. O-Telpa.

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Sometimes we all need a quiet place for working, exchanging ideas, or making video conferences and phone calls. Especially when working in open-plan offices.

O-Telpa is a preassembled piece of furniture, so all you have to do is put it in place and plug it in. Ventilation, lighting, and power connections are included! O-Telpa comes with a choice of furniture, such as seats and tables. The glass back panel creates a pleasant feeling of spaciousness, while the soft acoustic interior walls and ceiling ensure a perfect sound environment.

Just shut the door behind you – and think in peace.

Designed and produced by KATE. O-Telpa provides a work space that is compact, creative and networked, all at an affordable price. **As shown above, single person pod EUR 3771- excl. VAT, 4 person pod EUR 5603- excl. VAT.**

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Words by Ilze Vītola
Publicity photo

The great outdoors in Riga

Surrounded by lush forests, with the coastline just a stone's throw away, and featuring plentiful green nooks, Riga offers a wealth of outdoor adventures.

The mighty Daugava River that traverses Riga provides not only spectacular views of the sunset and romantic walks along its banks but also lots of opportunities for water sports. Rent a kayak or SUP board in the Andrejosta port area and explore the river and adjoining canal snaking through the city centre to experience Riga from a different perspective. For the dare-devils, the river also accommodates the Riga Wake windsurfing park. It sits on Lucavsala, a green oasis of an island in the middle of the Daugava River. Lucavsala also boasts a beach with all the necessary amenities to take a refreshing plunge. But if swimming in the Baltic Sea sounds more alluring, wide arcs of sandy beach lie just half an hour's drive away – in Bolderāja and Daugavgrīva to the west, and Vecāķi to the east.

Hop on a bicycle, find a cycling lane, and pedal down to Mežaparks, the city's leafiest neighbourhood, which is surrounded by a pine forest. Next to the Riga Zoo is a rental shop where you can rent roller skates – one of the favourite summertime activities for young city dwellers. Or climb the ropes and tall pine trees and do some monkeying around at the Mežakaķis adventure park. Another reason to spend a day in Mežaparks is Ķīšezers Lake, which has a great beach and is also favoured by wakeboarders.

But the green side of Riga can also be enjoyed calmly. Swing by one of Riga's many public gardens, such as Ziedoņdārzs with its charming fountain or spacious Kronvalds Park. Lie down on the grass, soak up some vitamin D, and enjoy a treat from the ice-cream vendor hiding beneath the blue umbrella. As for more serious admirers of flora, the Botanical Garden of the University of Latvia sits on the left side of the river, in the Pārdaugava area of Riga. Sprawling over 15 hectares and with plants in bloom throughout the year, a walk in the garden is a pleasure for the eyes as well as the nose.



DID YOU KNOW?

THE LIGHTHOUSE at the end of the Mangālsala jetty greets every ship that sails from the Baltic Sea into the Daugava River. The pier is a great place for a picturesque, albeit sometimes windy, amble.

There are two beautiful parks on the left bank of the Daugava River: **ARKĀDIJAS PARK** with the lively little Mārupite River swirling through it, and the adjacent Māras Garden with scenic Māras Pond as its centerpiece.

THE WOODEN OUTDOOR stage in Vērmāne Garden is a gathering place for local chess players.

VIESTURDĀRZS Park has its own triumphal arch, the Alexander Gate, built to commemorate the victory of Tsar Alexander I of Russia over Napoleon in 1812.

Until the collapse of the Soviet Union,

DAUGAVGRĪVA FORTRESS was a no-go zone. But today the unique fortress welcomes visitors on the weekends and hosts the annual Komēta culture festival.



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Design Lifestyles Living Off Grid



Living off grid is to climb out of society's box, to design an independent life that is truly one's own. Only by unplugging from the system and the usual grind, can we become free. But freedom is not for the faint of heart. To gain it, you have to think for yourself and take a brave step towards the unknown.

The first self-proclaimed citizen of the world, the ancient Greek philosopher Diogenes, gave up society's customs and led an independent life of austerity, finding shelter in a barrel. He urged his contemporaries to return to the simplicity of nature, and this call has gained new meaning

today. A lot has changed since Diogenes' time, and we no longer have to live in a barrel to live off grid. **Vitra's micro home Diogene**, designed by Renzo Piano, showcases design and architecture solutions that let us live sustainably without giving up comfort and quality.

At xcelsior we are always striving for freedom. For us, independence means to rely on our own experience, to find our own inspiration and to shape our own environment. Those who value freedom just as we do, will find sustainable design solutions at **xcelsior design showrooms in Riga and Vilnius** for a truly original life.



Blue treasure

The top spot for beer and that perfect *Instagram* shot in Amsterdam

Idling along the canalside may seem like the prime way to relax in the Dutch capital, but step into one of Amsterdam's verdant parks and you'll immediately understand why locals prefer hanging out in the city's public gardens. There are more than 30 parks in Amsterdam, and in the warm months of the year they're bursting with greenery and people spread out on the grass, basking in the sun or enjoying a picnic.

The largest and most popular park is Vondelpark. Named after the 17th-century Dutch poet Joost van den Vondel, the park includes scenic lakes, a fragrant rose garden, and several restaurants and cafés. The most famous of these is *Blauwe Theehuis*, or the Blue Teahouse, named after its blue accents and saucer-like shape. The building was erected in 1937 on the premises of a former teahouse that had burned down a year before. It was designed by the Dutch architects and brothers Herman Ambrosius Jan Baanders and Jan Baanders, who reimaged the

teahouse in a strong Nieuwe Bouwen style – the Dutch answer to Bauhaus. The windows, doors, and pillars on this circular modernist construction made of concrete, steel, and glass are painted bright blue. The octagonal shape means that the building has no front or back and is completely open to the park.

After undergoing a meticulous restoration, the Blue Teahouse reopened in 2019, now as a bar of the famous beer brewers *Brouwerij't IJ*. It was carefully redesigned by *Studio Modijefsky*, which has mastered the tricky art of paying homage to historic properties while keeping their style contemporary and fresh. Retaining the tea house's original charms – as befits a national monument – and with an extensive outdoor seating area, it has become a prime place for a *borrel*, the Dutch after-work gathering with drinks and snacks.

Our suggestion: after enjoying a few local beers, set out in search of Picasso's sculpture *The Fish*, which is hidden in one of the corners of the park.



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VILLEROY-BOCH.LV

Words by Ilze Vitola
Publicity photos and
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Photo by Michael Mann

MY BERLIN

Born in Hamburg, curator **Anna-Catharina Gebbers** moved to Berlin in 2001. In 2015 she began working at the Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, the contemporary art museum of the Berlin National Gallery. Her subject of interest is emerging contemporary artists: 'There are so many fantastic galleries and small projects with outstanding programmes in Berlin that I wouldn't dare to highlight just a few of them!' Here are some of Gebbers' favourite places in the city.



Photo by Daniel Faró



© Nam June Paik Estate

Nam June Paik, *I Never Read Wittgenstein (I Never Understood Wittgenstein)*, 1997, exhibition view from *Hello World: Revision einer Sammlung*, Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin, 2018.



Kin Dee

This is one of my favourite places to eat in Berlin, because it serves the most delicious Thai food in the city. The meals are made using mainly regional ingredients. In 2019 the restaurant earned its first *Michelin* star. What makes it even more special is the contemporary art works by Rirkrit Tiravanija and others covering the walls. Lützowstraße 81; kindeeb Berlin.com

Brücke Museum

A largely undiscovered artistic gem of Berlin, this museum is governed by the young and talented curator Lisa Marei Schmidt. Another reason to visit is the building, which was conceived by the famous architect Werner Düttmann, and its idyllic garden. Nearby there's also the Museum Europäischer Kulturen, which has a programme worth a peek. Bussardsteig 9; bruecke-museum.de

Tiergarten

Whenever I have a chance, I include this park in my route. It delivers instant refreshment and happiness. In the late 17th century, Elector Friedrich III ordered an 'enjoyable park for the people' to be built on the former hunting grounds. The park is filled with statues commemorating famous luminaries as well as animals.

Nationalgalerie at Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart

This is one of the five outposts of Berlin's National Gallery. As of September 2020, it will showcase the *Magical Soup* exhibition, which I'll be curating. Sweeping across 2000 square metres, the show will feature key works by media artists from the Nationalgalerie collection alongside creations by the artistic stars of tomorrow. Invalidenstraße 50-51



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Zurich IN 24 HOURS



Zurich has a unique mix of a well-preserved Old Town and restless modern life, all with a magnificent view of the snowy Swiss Alps. Here are some places you shouldn't miss.

WHERE TO STAY

Hotel Alex Lake Zürich is located directly on the lakefront, only 20 minutes from the city centre. This boutique hotel offers 44 contemporary studios and penthouses to enjoy the life of lakeside luxury. There's also an adjoining restaurant serving local produce with a Mediterranean touch and a wellness area with a sauna, steam bath, pool, and spa treatments. Prices from EUR 319. Seestrasse 182, Thalwil | campbellgrayhotels.com



WHERE TO DINE

The Peruvian-Japanese *La Muña* restaurant has taken over the attic of the *Hotel La Réserve Eden au Lac Zurich*. The restaurant's chef, Tomoko Gunji Hangartner, serves enticingly light and healthy meals such as sea bass ceviche, black cod marinated in miso, and grilled vegan gyozas. Those who've been there agree that the magnificent 360° view of the historical centre, the lake, and the Swiss Alps is but a cherry on top. Utoquai 45 | lareserve-zurich.com



WHERE TO SHOP

With its Bahnhofstrasse pedestrian street, Zurich is genuinely a world-class shopping destination. Here, directly next to Paradeplatz, you'll find the famous *Confiserie Sprüngli* café and chocolate boutique, known as a pioneer in the world of Swiss chocolate. For more than 180 years *Sprüngli* has offered handmade pralines, truffles, and other classics adhering to all-time favourite recipes of generations past. Bahnhofstrasse 21 | spruengli.ch

WHY NOT

For a picturesque green space in Zurich, visit the Botanischer Garten of the University of Zurich. Situated in historic Zurich, the botanic garden is great for a morning stroll and gives instant peace and serenity to those who love nature and Mediterranean vibes. With thousands of different species planted in the garden and the tropical greenhouse, there's always something in bloom. Zollikerstrasse 107 | bg.uzh.ch

A CLASSIC NOT TO MISS

Schipfe is one of the oldest quarters in Zurich. In the Middle Ages it welcomed boats filled with gold, silk, and other essential merchandise. The quarter's name comes from the word *schupfen* ('to push' in English), used by fishermen to describe the way they took boats to and from the riverside. Today, this idyllic spot along the Limmat River is great for a stroll and shopping for custom, quality products from small artisan shops and boutiques.



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Words by Olga Dolina
Photo by Shutterstock

Bounding melodies

An exclusive cycle of concerts invites both live and online spectators to celebrate the unifying force of classical music and outstanding historical architecture in the company of world-famous Latvian opera stars and prominent guest musicians.

Kopā (meaning ‘together’ in Latvian) is a new project bridging music and architecture, history and the arts, talent and its admirers. Daina Markova – a musicologist, experienced opera broadcast manager, and head organiser of *Kopā* – initially intended the cycle of online concerts as an act of support for musicians during this unfortunate pause in their professional work. But as small numbers of spectators were eventually allowed to attend public events, the online format was teamed with in-person performances. As it turns out, the acoustic qualities of a hall are often better when it’s not filled to the brim with people, when the sound has more space for its graceful flow. Online video streaming is available for audiences worldwide.

Besides musical delights, the project also aims to stimulate activity among small businesses, highlight local tourism, and rediscover the potential of historical halls in the most beautiful Latvian palaces and castles. No matter how outstanding the performer and how grand the composed masterpiece, they only fully unleash their best qualities in the presence of listeners. The atmosphere of centuries-old architecture gives extra value to those musical moments.

In August, baritone Jānis Apeinis will perform with charming French soprano Perrine Madoeuf, treating the audience to arias and duets from operas by Verdi, Gounod, Donizetti, Leoncavallo, and Giordano. Beloved Latvian soprano Sonora Vaice will perform some magical arias by Mozart and Handel in a solo concert at Jelgava Palace. The powerful, burnished timbre of German bass Andreas Bauer Kanabas will fill the opulent Neo-Gothic walls of the Small Guild in the heart of Riga’s Old Town. Each artist also assumes the role of a guide, linking the audience with the history and context of the concert venue. FB/ Koncertu cikls ‘Kopā’
Tickets at bilesuparadize.lv



Jelgava palace, the largest Baroque-style palace in the Baltic states

WHERE TO LISTEN TO MUSIC IN LATVIA’S PALACES

House of the Blackheads

The House of the Blackheads, one of the Old Town’s most photographed landmarks, was built in 1334. Over the course of seven centuries it was the site of many glorious events and dazzling feasts hosted by its patrons – unmarried merchants, craftsmen, and traders belonging to the Brotherhood of Blackheads (the name honoured their patron, Saint Maurice, who was usually depicted as a black, armed soldier). But bombing during the Second World War devastated the building. Rebuilt from scratch in the late 1990s, the Dutch renaissance-styled edifice houses a museum, exhibition, and concert venue. The ornate atmosphere of its Celebration Hall, with its terrace overlooking Town Hall Square, is tailor-made for performances of heart-piercing opera arias. Perrine Madoeuf and Jānis Apeinis, August 14, 8 pm
Rātslaukums 7, Riga

Jelgava Palace

Latvia is proud to be the home of two palaces designed by the prominent master of Baroque architecture Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli. While Rundāle Palace may be more famous, Jelgava Palace overlooking the Lielupe River served as the main residence of the Dukes of Courland. In the late 18th century, this, the largest Baroque palace in the Baltic states, hosted the notorious Italian adventurer Alessandro Cagliostro and provided refuge to King Louis XVIII of France. The king’s retinue even tried to recreate the court life of Versailles at Jelgava. The palace suffered damage in both world wars, and since 1939 it has served academic and educational purposes. Even though the original interiors are gone, the beautiful façade has been restored. The layering of modern times gives the palace’s opulent shell a sense of reality, while a concert held in the Grand Hall gives a rare opportunity to see the palace’s interior and become acquainted with its unusual history. Sonora Vaice with piano accompaniment by Mārtiņš Zilberts, August 27, 8 pm
Lielā iela 2, Jelgava

Small Guild

The Guild of St. John, a united brotherhood of master craftsmen, was founded in 1352 and existed until 1939. Its headquarters, the postcard-like Neo-Gothic building we see today, was designed by leading city architect Johann Daniel Felsko in 1866. Facing the Large Guild – the home stage of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra – the refined Small Guild seems like an eclectic jewellery box. Its interior features noble woodwork and colourful stained glass windows depicting senior members of the guild, resulting in a mysterious, ceremonial atmosphere. Illuminated by massive brass chandeliers, the concert will take place in the small hall where the brotherhood held meetings, inaugurations, and festive dinners. Over the centuries, the guild and its building have symbolised the spirit of cooperation, citizenship, and unity between crafts, arts, and culture. That tradition continues to the present day. Andreas Bauer Kanabas with piano accompaniment by Mārtiņš Zilberts, September 17, 7 pm
Amatu iela 5, Riga

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Point of view

Where to go in Dublin, according to influencer Fred Kelly



My secret spot

‘My secret shot or spot for travellers visiting the city is the science museum building at Trinity College. When you walk in, the beautiful, high, mosaic-tiled ceiling and stunning dual staircase take your breath away. You’ll most definitely be able to capture an *Instagram*-worthy shot here. Note, however, that it’s only open on weekdays. While on the grounds of Trinity, you may also visit the Long Room library. It’s no longer much of a secret, but wow – it’s one of the most beautiful libraries in the world. The smell of 100,000 books and the sheer size of the room really will get you. It’s magnificent! Note that there’s a small charge to enter the library.’

Words by Līga Vaļko
Photos courtesy of Fred Kelly



Fred Kelly

instagram.com/rawdublin
Number of followers: 34.9k

Fred Kelly is the man behind the *Instagram* account of Raw Dublin. He accidentally fell into photography in 2016, when the surprise gift of a tripod led him on a journey into the unknown. Since then, Kelly’s utmost love and affection for photography have only grown. He shoots in all sorts of styles, from creative and street to mobile and aerial. Recently, Kelly transformed his photography hobby into a full-time job, having lost his regular nine-to-five job due to the impact of the coronavirus on the economy. The streets of Dublin are his favourite to document, and he believes that visitors will enjoy them, too.



Howth Cliff Walk

Other locations to check out:

- Anne’s Lane near Grafton Street is one of Kelly’s absolute favourite locations to shoot. Umbrellas cover an entire section of the lane, and it’s one of the most *Instagrammed* places in the city.
- Howth Cliff Walk is right on the edge of the city and surrounded by water. Were it not for the tiny piece of land joining it to the mainland, Howth would be an island. The views from the cliff walk are some of the best in the city.



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What could provide more summertime inspiration than a weekend in Madrid, Europe's party capital? The city has regal architecture, exquisite art, and exciting nightlife that beats to the rhythm of flamenco. The dress code here is bright and lively clothing by Spanish fashion brands.

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Stepping into the explorer's world

The brand-new interactive exposition at Āraiši Lake Fortress Archaeological Park offers a unique journey into the past filled with curiosity, discovery, and good design.

Words by Olga Dolina
Publicity photo

Embraced by lakes and forests, Āraiši invites visitors to explore the lifestyle and building traditions of the ancient Latgians. The only reconstruction of its kind in Europe, it depicts a residential settlement from the 9th–10th century CE as well as some remarkable Stone and Bronze Age dwellings. Located about an hour's drive from Riga near the town of Cēsis, a must-visit summer cultural destination in itself, in July the Āraiši Lake Fortress Archaeological Park inaugurated its newly built visitors' centre and exposition designed by *H2E*, a leading Latvian design studio.

This picturesque area of Latvia is entwined with legends about flying lakes and sunken castles. As it turns out, these legends have a grain of truth. Meitu Island on Āraiši Lake has preserved the remains of 14 ancient buildings that were brought to life again using ethnographic parallels and replicas of ancient tools. The main driving force behind those discoveries was the visionary Latvian archeologist Jānis Apals (1930–2011). A pioneer of hydro-archaeology, he performed several underwater expeditions here in the 1960s and 70s. As a result, 151 wooden buildings, about a hundred thousand fragments of pottery, and 3700 artefacts were brought up from the depths of the lake. The idea of dreaming big, believing in legends, and

working relentlessly in order to turn ideas into reality – plus Apals' almost Jacques Cousteau-like approach – forms the backbone of the new permanent exposition.

The award-winning visitors' centre, designed by *Arteks* architects, provides a stylish wooden frame for *H2E*'s intriguing and experimental multi-layered exposition design, which interactively reflects the underwater archeology theme in a space filled with fascinating detail. The artefacts are not displayed in classic vitrines but in metal barrels that resemble wells. The tools that Apals used in his work are interpreted in new formats: looking glasses to read reflected writing; information plates that can be turned and opened; Apals' original sketches on millimetre paper supplemented with new, detailed drawings. The overall colour scheme reflects the lake and excavations, with warm, brownish tones of wood, clay, and earth contrasting with vertically hung blue ribbons that symbolise the lake's deep waters and gently guide visitors through a memorable narrative of Āraiši's history. An animated film illustrates old tales of flying lakes, while enigmatic underwater sound effects encourage both adults and children to step into the shoes of the explorer and discover the researcher spirit within themselves.

araisi.com

Photo by Ansis Starke © Design Studio H2E



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Navigating travel experiences

What do today's travellers actually want?

Words by Olga Dolina
Publicity photo

Three centuries ago, each guest who entered the flamboyant Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna was personally greeted and shown around. Nowadays, with annual number of visitors to the Habsburg dynasty's summer residence exceeding five million in 2018, this kind of approach seems rather impossible. Schönbrunn is currently developing a new information design project that will help visitors experience the site most efficiently. As information design expert Martin Foessleitner explains: 'We're working in three main directions: reducing the clutter of signs, helping people who get lost return safely, and reducing stress by providing better planning parameters in regard to time and place, clear naming, categories, and building and information hierarchy. We aim to increase the joy of being in and discovering Schönbrunn, and especially its gardens, for tourists, locals, workers, and residents alike.'

The main tools of this job are information structure and systematics, psychology, system sciences and graphics, technology, anthropology, and business calculations – all of which are needed to understand context. 'The latest trends in the field are a combination of navigation with *dynamic content* and the artificial intelligence that follows traveller's coordinates – my smart tickets know where I am and what I've done,' says Foessleitner.

He stresses that the main requirement for a modern-day traveller is punctuality. But this often goes hand in hand with unexpected surprises, 'little goodies', or small extras that turn up during a planned schedule, or a site that offers something more than just a conventional visit. 'The best friend of modern travellers is predictability, while any kind of delays are seen as the enemy. However, sometimes getting slightly lost, or even a cancellation, is

what everybody loves,' continues Foessleitner. Above all, *omotenashi*, a Japanese way of selfless hospitality is gaining popularity all over the world. The main principle behind this philosophy is to predict the unspoken demands of a client, who is treated like a dear guest, and provide pleasant yet unobtrusive high-quality service.

According to Foessleitner, real-time information is mandatory, as is a feeling and understanding of time. A traveller needs to be provided with choices, but not too many. Also, all experiences should be framed in clear and simple design structures. 'Nice, well-designed experiences really matter. *Motel One* is an excellent example,' he says. The rooms in this German budget hotel chain all follow a standardised, modern design, but each hotel attracts guests with the catchy, regionally themed design of its lounge zones and breakfast room.

The tourism industry has been severely affected by the recent crisis. The main challenges cultural destinations are facing when organising tourist flows are flexibility in scaling and making maximum use of spaces, which must all be quickly adaptable to changing circumstances. And yet, Foessleitner sees these changes positively: 'It might be that we will focus less on quantity but more on quality, on deeper and more intense experiences. Not just a day trip to Paris, but a whole weekend. Not five pairs of sneakers, but two good ones. Not four half-day meetings a year, but one weekend meeting. Not 60 friends, but one real good buddy. Historical sites will stay the same, so visitors and operators have to adapt. After all, it is the site that is the focus of attention, the thing that must be respected and appreciated in order to maintain its legacy and mission.'



Martin Foessleitner

is the founder and managing director of *hi-pe.at*, a Vienna-based applied information design agency. Since 1999, it has been developing universal design for municipalities, industrial enterprises, and non-profit organisations. With ten years of management experience at a global Japanese digital imaging company, Foessleitner now shares his knowledge at various European educational institutions, including Sigmund Freud University Vienna and the Art Academy of Latvia. He is also a board member at *designaustria* and a jury member for the European Design Awards. He is currently working on new information design for Schönbrunn Palace.



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Take a sip

Over the past few years, the craft beer and brewpub trend has grown more and more popular in Europe.



Photo by Renee Altrov

Today’s consumers are constantly seeking unique experiences. That and an endless curiosity for knowing how products are made, an endeavour to become experts on certain things, and the desire to support small, local manufacturers have all benefitted the booming craft beer brewpub scene.

By brewing beer on the premises of, for example, an open-kitchen restaurant, a brewpub lets visitors get a peek at how the resulting product is made. Brewpubs are usually part of a craft brewery or microbrewery that produces small amounts of beer, is independently owned, and is defined by the high quality and innovative flavours of its beverage. Born in the 1970s in the United States, microbrewing is having a moment in Europe as well, outplaying some of the traditional pubs with its added value. Brewpubs have become a popular place to meet up with friends, play board games, and ponder the flavours hidden at the bottom of the glass. Is it chocolate? Is there a hint of peanut butter? But state-of-art beer flavours are just one of the lures of brewpubs. To make matters merrier, they commonly also offer some tasty morsels to nibble on while enjoying the beer.

Brewpubs are usually part of a craft brewery or microbrewery

Words by Ilze Vītola
Publicity photo

BREW PUBS WORTH A VISIT

Alķīmiķis in Riga

This sleek gastropub-cum-microbrewery always has eight types of beer on tap, four of which change with the season. Thus, in summer, swing by for a refreshing glass of something light and fruity. *Alķīmiķis* also has a considerable food menu featuring a variety of salads, burgers, soups, and, of course, traditional beer snacks with a local flair, such as garlic bread. A word of warning – the garlic bread is addictive, but don’t kiss anyone afterwards!

Lāčplēša iela 12; FB/AlkimikisAlus

Põhjala Tap Room in Tallinn

Situated in the recently revamped shipyard area of Noblessner, this hoppy establishment features a brewery and taproom with 24 taps with the freshest *Põhjala* IPAs flowing out of them. And while taprooms do not usually offer food, this one is an exception. Expect finger-lickin’ Texas-style barbecue. And if a tour around the adjacent brewery is not enough, you can also rent out the on-site sauna. Tours take place daily, but booking in advance is mandatory. Peetri 5; pohjalabeer.com

Brouwerij Troost in Amsterdam

Although it currently has four locations in the Dutch capital, head to the original brewery site in a former monastery in De Pijp, a hip and happening neighbourhood. With an aspiration to create a craft beer for everyone, from hops connoisseurs to people who have no clue what IPA means, here you can find countless types of beer, take a guided tour to see where the magic happens, and enjoy a bite to eat. The menu features all the classic pub cravings, including local ones, such as *bitterballen*. In addition, most of the dishes can be made without meat. brouwerijtroost.nl

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Words and photos by Ilze Vītola
Illustration by Agnese Tauriņa

TALLINN

THE COSY CAPITAL



‘DON’T WASTE YOUR TIME OR TIME WILL WASTE YOU’ – this is what I’m told by graffiti on a wall in Tallinn’s Old Town. Was it there a year ago, when I last visited the city, I wonder?

Everybody talks about the joy of discovering new places. But what about the comfort of visiting a familiar place? You already know what you want to see and do; you don’t have to visit something just because some travel blogger has acknowledged it as noteworthy. Returning to a familiar city is like meeting an old friend you haven’t seen for ages. You know why you like this person, so no small-talk is needed; you just want to enjoy the most genuine conversations you can in the short time that you have together. This is also a friend you’re proud to have because of the surprises and inspiration they keep on delivering.

A short walk later, I’m standing in front of a colossal red lantern in the Noblessner area of Tallinn. If I had a nickel for every time I’ve seen these lanterns on my *Instagram* feed! Indeed, the Baltic ‘travel bubble’ worked like a charm this season. Benches and boat-shaped flower beds, a neat wooden dock leading to the rows of yachts gently rocking on the water, café tables scattered about nearby... It’s incredible to imagine that only a couple of years ago this whole area was still filled with rubble and rusty marine constructions.

The Noblessner area was established in 1912, when two businessmen from Saint Petersburg, Emanuel Nobel (a nephew of Alfred Nobel) and Arthur Lessner, decided to build a submarine shipyard here. They named it by combining their surnames, and it became the prime dockyard in Imperial Russia. Submarine production in Noblessner ended after Estonia gained independence in 1918, but ships continued to be built here, with the last boat assembled in August 2018. This means that the area was a no-entry zone up until then. I meet Ann Virkus, the head of special projects at Noblessner and the representative of *BLRT Grupp*, the shipbuilding company that currently owns the space. A light-haired woman in *Ray-Ban Wayfarer* shades, a grey blazer, and cutting-edge white *Dr. Martens* boots, Virkus truly mirrors the hipness of Noblessner. She tells me that the first stage of development is only being finished now, and two more stages will follow. Most of the edifices are protected under the local heritage protection law, which means loads of paperwork and renovation that respects the buildings’ origins.

The largest of the historical buildings in this area, the Noblessner Foundry, was the first to gain the public’s attention. In 2009, well before the revival of this area, the famous Estonian conductor Tõnu Kaljuste was searching for a concert venue and discovered the spectacular acoustics of the foundry. For this concert – a performance of Lera Auerbach’s



The streets of Old Tallinn are full of surprises.

Kai means ‘dock’ in Estonian, and the marina sits right in front of the entrance to the Kai Art Centre

masterpiece *Russian Requiem* – the audience of a thousand people were transported to the foundry by sea, because that was the only way to reach Noblessner at the time. Today, the foundry has been turned into the Proto Invention Factory, a perfect place for families to spend quality time together. But the exceptional acoustics can still be marvelled at on the other side of the building in the Nobel Hall event venue, which hosts frequent concerts.

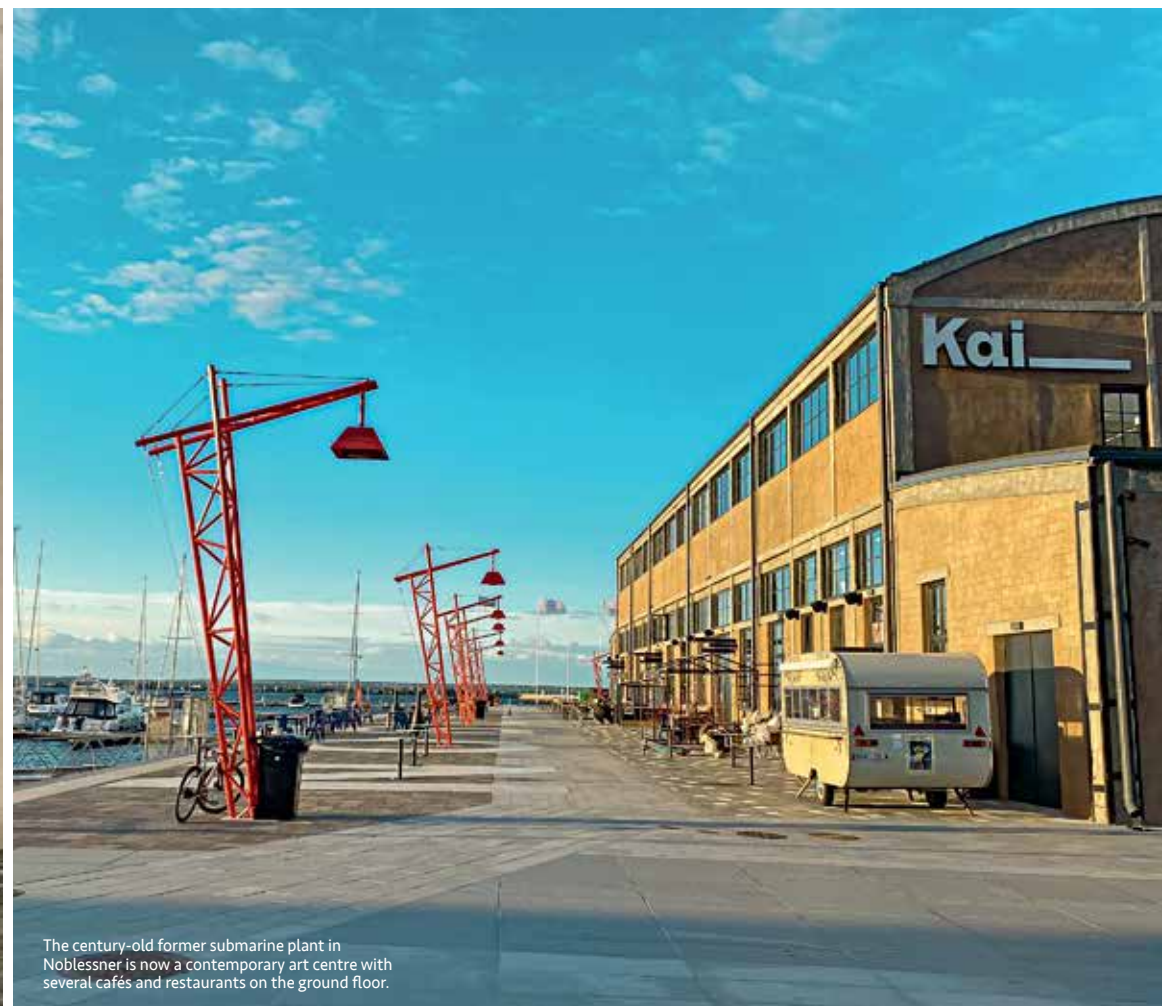
Today the weather is blustery, and with each gust of wind I notice the smell of fresh paint. As we walk around, Virkus occasionally raises her arm to point to a building, indicating which ones will be finished this September. One of them is a charming red-brick building that used to be a heating house. Virkus also lets me peek into the other side of the building that houses the *Põhjala Brewery*. The view takes my breath away – it’s a big open space filled with debris and light streaming in from the glass ceiling. Virkus calls out: ‘Wouldn’t it be cool to make a culture venue here?’

Ambling around the area, I notice several photoshoots going on. A bride and groom even arrive at one point. Virkus tells me that Noblessner is like

catnip for photographers and movie directors. The round pedestrian tunnel is especially favoured by rap musicians because it gleams in the dark, resembling an entrance to a spaceship.

With commercial space on the first floor and apartments on the upper levels, as well as vast pedestrian zones, the idea here is to create a welcoming space for everyone to take a leisurely stroll and spend time in the cafés, whose number keeps on growing. The reaction of locals has been one of instant love. ‘On the weekends it’s so lively here, like a festival!’ says Virkus. Naturally, Noblessner is right on the seafront – another draw no one can resist. And the regular community meetings held by the residents endow Noblessner with community spirit. You can feel the camaraderie in how the residents talk about each other. ‘The pastries by *Suhkruingel* are out of this world, and *Kaif* has the best cocktails,’ says Karin Laansoo, the artistic director of the Kai Art Centre, as she talks enthusiastically about Kai’s neighbours and gives me a tour around the art centre.

OPENED IN OCTOBER 2019, THE KAI ART CENTRE HAS BECOME THE PRINCIPAL CONTEMPORARY ART ADDRESS IN THE CITY and is governed by the Estonian Contemporary Art Development Centre (ECADC). Featuring a spacious exhibition area and a small movie theatre, Kai occupies the second floor of the century-old former Noblessner submarine plant, currently the liveliest building in the area.



The century-old former submarine plant in Noblessner is now a contemporary art centre with several cafés and restaurants on the ground floor.



The up-and-coming Põhjala Tehas creative hub.

The gleaming white exhibition space is filled with vivid, fantasy-like, large-scale works of art. It’s the *Love Song Sing Along (Once Again With Feeling!)* exhibition by the lauded Estonian artist duo of Kris Lemsalu Malone and Kyp Malone Lemsalu. A completely different show had been intended for this summer, but the recent crisis left its mark and, as Laansoo confesses, it was actually a blessing in disguise, because this is their ‘hottest exhibition yet’. The show by the Brooklyn-based couple is an extended version of their exhibition at the KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin, which was, in turn, cut short. Low-key guitar sounds fill the white space – that’s the trademark of Kyp, who usually creates the soundscape.

Kai means ‘dock’ in Estonian, and the marina sits right in front of the entrance to the Kai Art Centre. An unassuming white construction in a sail-like shape floats among the boats. It’s an installation by Estonian artist Marianne Jõgi, and, according to neuroscientific research, being inside the structure induces relaxation and wellbeing. As we sit inside the boat-like work of art swaying gently in the breeze, Laansoo outlines her theory that the creative spirit of the Estonian capital prevails in the northern part of the city. After all, several creative projects are currently flourishing on this side of town.

One of those creative projects is Põhjala Tehas. Meaning ‘Nordic factory’, it’s a sprawling 15-hectare space on the industrial outskirts of the city otherwise known as the Kopli neighbourhood. The former Soviet rubber factory has now been given a new lease of life by local fashion designers and other creatives. Ruts Vakulenko, the event booking manager at Põhjala Tehas calls it a community culture centre. Despite maintaining a low profile, the Põhjala factory is open to the public, and anyone can come and have a look at the up-and-



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Fika is a cosy café hidden in Telliskivi serving coffee, divine homespun pastries, and sourdough breads.



During the warm months, this courtyard in Rotermann frequently hosts outdoor events.

It wouldn't come as a surprise to see Tallinn at the top of the upcoming World Happiness Report

coming creative hub that's already buzzing with creative studios and several cafés and bars.

When it's time to go our separate ways, I ask Laansoo – who has long lived in New York City and now lives between there and the Estonian capital – how she feels being in Tallinn right now. She smiles and replies, 'It's the best place to be!' Indeed, as I look around, Tallinners are defying the never-smiling, conversation-defying vibe Northerners are infamous for. It wouldn't come as a surprise to see Tallinn at the top of the upcoming World Happiness Report.

The atmosphere is also cheery at the *Lore* bistro, one of Kai's lower-level neighbours. A smiley waiter quickly finds me a place to sit, and within a blink of an eye I'm having a glass of *Lore's* house cider, *Nuki Craft Cider*. Minutes later, the creator of the cider himself accompanies me. Kristjan Peäske is an award-winning sommelier and the restaurant's manager. '*Lore* is a relaxing place where one doesn't need to take oneself too seriously. Just enjoy the food and the company. It's not fine dining – it's fun dining!' he instructs me. The gregarious man with stylish eyewear embodies that idea perfectly. 'When you go

out to have dinner with friends, you don't want to think too much; you just want to enjoy each other's company and try new, exciting flavours – a bit of this, a bit of that. It's no fun when everyone's preoccupied only with their own plates.'

Inspired by Mediterranean cuisine, where food-sharing is par for the course, the joy of sharing meals is at the heart of *Lore*. In Estonian culture, eating is usually not a social activity. But *Lore* and its community table (a rarity in Estonia) was set to change that. However, current health and safety measures have taken away *Lore's* sharing concept; the restaurant now has a temporary menu without sharing plates. Before, Tallinners flocked here for the '*Umami* experience', which included guests informing the staff about what they don't eat and the waiters bringing out ever new plates to share, creating a happy commotion of small plates – just like you'd have at a dinner party at a friend's house.

Another thing that sets *Lore* apart from its peers, which are mostly dressed in Scandinavian minimalism, is the interior by fashion designer Marit Ilison. With deep-purple wall seating, mirrored walls, a forest-green tiled fireplace, industrial details, original concrete walls, and tiled floors, the aura is warm yet chic. Peäske is a food industry veteran. He and *Lore's* chef Janno Lepik are also the founders of the *Leib* and *Umami* restaurants, so I feel tempted to inquire about the city's food scene. Peäske surmises that the native restaurants and chefs are finally emboldened to experiment with new concepts and highlight the local food culture and



Stalker's Passage in the Rotermann quarter, named after Tarkovsky's movie *Stalker*.

its murky past, rather than trying to imitate world-famous Nordic cuisine institutions. 'Going out to eat in Tallinn is better than ever,' he tells me.

As I exit *Lore*, I'm stunned by the scene that's in front of me: a peach-coloured sky melting into the water and people crowding the wooden dock to enjoy the spectacle. After all, it's said that this is the best place in the city to watch the sunset.

On my way back to the city centre, I wander the tranquil streets of the Kalamaja neighbourhood. As colourful as a rainbow, the wooden buildings have doors in contrasting colours and are decorated with hanging flowerpots. It's easy to fall under the spell of Kalamaja's charm.

AS MY STICKY FINGERS TEAR ANOTHER CHUNK FROM THE CARDAMOM BUN, I MAKE A DEAL WITH MYSELF THAT I WON'T COME TO Röst BEFORE HEADING TO THE AIRPORT.

When gorging on the baked goods from *Röst*, it seems like nothing else in the world matters...and even the flight home can wait. Occupying a tiny corner of the former flour mill in the state-of-art Rotermann quarter, this Scandinavian-inspired café has become a synonym for going for a coffee in Tallinn. The café's outdoor seating is situated in Stalker's Passage, the alley named after Andrei Tarkovsky's 1979 sci-fi movie *Stalker*.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Rotermann quarter was the nerve centre of the city's manufacturing sector. But world wars and the ruinous Soviet regime left the quarter derelict. Following years of painstaking renovation, today the grain mill, boiler plant, and other former factory



ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IS HARMFUL TO ONE'S HEALTH. THE SALE, SUPPLY AND PROCUREMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES TO MINORS ARE AGAINST THE LAW.



The sweetest of Telliskivi's residents, *La Muu* makes its ice cream from organic ingredients.

buildings look better than ever and mingle with new, cutting-edge buildings, together creating a harmonious urban ecosystem.

As expected, my cardamom-spiced pit stop puts me a bit behind schedule. Luckily, as befits any proper e-capital, e-scooters are ten a penny on the streets. Nabbing a ride, I head to the Piritä district. On my way, I pass through the Kadriorg district to say a quick hello to the stately Kadriorg Castle, which recently celebrated its 302nd anniversary.

The leafy Piritä neighbourhood reminds one that Tallinn is, after all, a seaside city and that you're never really far from nature in Estonia. In fact, I saw a picture in the local news media of a moose taking a late-night swim at Piritä Beach. On weekends, this area brims with families enjoying the comforts of nature's lap. Joggers on the Piritä promenade, for their part, keep alive the legacy of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games, during which Piritä hosted the sailing disciplines. In preparation for this occasion, more than 50 building projects – including the television tower, port terminal, *Hotel Olümpia*, and Tallinn Airport – were completed in order to update the city's infrastructure for a global-scale competition. July 20 of this year marked exactly 40 years since Estonian sailor Vaiko Vooremaa lit the flame of the XXII Olympic Games here.

The weather is cloudy, and the calm seawater reflects the skies. The scene brings to mind *Spiegel im Spiegel* (*Mirror in the Mirror*) by the legendary Estonian composer Arvo Pärt. I decide that I cannot waste the opportunity of making this moment even more movie-like, so I take out my *AirPods*, open *Spotify*, and listen to the composition. Goosebumps take over my body already with the first chords, and I experience a scene that deserves the Academy Award for Best Cinematography.



A beguiling doorway on a residential house in the Kalamaja neighbourhood.

IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TO TELLISKIVI CREATIVE CITY, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN IN TALLINN AT ALL.

Youngsters walk around and take photos in front of the vivid wall murals; a couple with a golden retriever enjoy a beer on the terrace of the *Pudel* beer bar; children play around the gigantic Rubik's Cube; and art aficionados come in and out of the Fotografiska photography museum. One year has passed since the last time I was here, but it feels like nothing has changed. On the other hand, it wouldn't be a creative district if it didn't evolve. And that's when I notice the small backyard hosting cultural events behind Fotografiska, a newly opened location of the *Kopli Couture* vintage mecca, and, of course, a new mural – Andy Warhol by the street-art wizard Plan B.

A year ago, it seemed that every restaurant in Tallinn worth its salt was making cider; now they're trying their hand at making ice cream. But I decide to visit an established household name that never fails me. Founded in 2012 by two friends, *La Muu* runs a café-laboratory hidden in Telliskivi. It offers a dizzying array of flavours ranging from vegan specialties to ones featuring the distinct, genuine taste of milk from the Metsavenna Farm. There's even a flavour for when you can't decide what kind of refreshment to have, whether a cold beer or a scoop of ice cream – *Valmiermütša* beer ice cream. Boy, I'd come to Tallinn just for a scoop of that!

This time, however, I go for a couple of scoops of raspberry-prosecco and salted caramel ice cream in a cone, say 'Tere' to the other patrons savouring ice cream on the bench in the middle of Telliskivi, and take a seat among them. Now I get what Karin Laansoo from the Kai Art Centre means when she calls Tallinn 'cosy'. Tallinn may be Europe's e-capital, but it has the soul of a small town.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

WHERE TO STAY
Bob W Telliskivi

Authentic home meets boutique hotel in the suites at *Bob W*. The place is locally designed and features well-equipped kitchens, but there's also professional cleaning and hotel linens. These suites are inspired by the Telliskivi neighbourhood's industrial charm and is decked out with local design. Telliskivi 49 bobw.co

Centennial Hotel

A comfy and elegant stay in the centre of Tallinn that was established in honour of the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia. The well-appointed suites are dressed in Nordic minimalism, and the sumptuous breakfast buffet provides a great reason to get out of bed in the morning. Endla 15 centennialhoteltallinn.com

WHERE TO SHOP
Nordic Design Home

Walking into the showroom of this store located on the second floor of the lush Saarineni Maja, which also houses the Ministry of Culture, is like entering the townhouse apartment of your dreams. It's a painstakingly curated selection of furniture, textiles, lighting, and tableware by Nordic design brands that will give you plenty of inspiration for furnishing your own home. Parnu mnt. 10 nordicdesignhome.ee

Nudist Winery

The newest addition to Telliskivi is a shop during the day and a bar at night and on weekends. *Nudist* is famous for its eye-catching design and flavourful sparkling wines and ciders. Apart from sampling and buying a few varieties, a tour around the winery is also available. Telliskivi 60M nudistdrink.com

Shishi

This is the flagship store of the world-famous Norwegian-Estonian joint venture. The *Shishi* brand is defined by its glitzy and festive decorations, including vases, candles, and flower pots. Summertime is the best time to pick up Christmas decorations at this outlet! Peetri 3 shishi.ee

WHERE TO EAT
Salt

Situated in a basement in the Kadriorg district of Tallinn, this small restaurant feels like a hidden gastronomical gem. The menu features a creative fusion of cuisines that caters to the palates of well-travelled guests. Vase 14 saltrestaoran.ee

Noa Chef's Hall

Recognised as the best restaurant in Estonia in 2020 by the *White Guide Baltic*, *Noa Chef's Hall* is the intimate addition to the adjacent *Noa* restaurant, where head chefs Tõnis Siigur and Orm Oja prepare the nine- and eleven-course omnivore tasting menus right in front of guests' eyes. It's fine dining at its best. Ranna tee 3 nch.ee

DON'T MISS
Hall

Tallinn's answer to *Berghain*, this is a spacious paradise for techno and electronic music buffs that often hosts internationally renowned DJs. This summer, *Hall* has also introduced a garden café serving excellent pizza and generous glasses of wine. Peetri 6 FB/ halltallinn

Fotografiska Tallinn

Opened last year, Fotografiska Tallinn is an outpost of the Stockholm-based photography centre. There are always several shows on display here. One of the current exhibits, a retrospective of work by the musician-photographer Bryan Adams, will be on show until August 31. Fotografiska also has a café that serves superb breakfasts and a sophisticated zero-waste restaurant with a stellar view over the city. Telliskivi 60a/8 fotografiska.com/tallinn



What's the music scene like in Tallinn?

It's very vibrant, inspiring, and has an intriguing alternative edge to it. People looking for a techno venue should go to *Hall*, while lovers of more niche electronic music should swing by the *Plastik* record store. One of my personal favourites is *Sveta Bar*, which very skillfully combines different genres, generations, and nationalities and also serves terrific cocktails. Of course, there's also a long tradition of folk and classical music, which can be enjoyed at churches and traditional concert houses.

How would you describe the locals?

A bit sceptical at first, but very kind and outgoing. They're always up for new adventures and staying out for just a little bit longer.

What's the best way to enjoy summertime in Tallinn?

The means of transport should be a bicycle,

Where do you like to go out in Tallinn and also grab a bite to eat?

My absolute favourite place this summer is the *Plastik* record store's outdoor summer courtyard, situated on Kopli, a leafy street northwest of the Old Town. You can easily spend a couple of hours there. They also serve food such as kimchi fries and veggie bowls until two in the morning. **bo**



WHEN CREATIVE SPARKS FLY

Words by Agnese Čivle
Publicity photos

Throughout her impressive career in the field of contemporary art, Anastasia Blokhina has found it important to fight snobbish attitudes and white cubes. Ever true to her principles, she is currently directing her passion and dedication towards the organisation of the Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art (RIBOCA). Although it may seem difficult for a new art biennial to be noticed given the recent glut of such events, the first edition of RIBOCA, as well as the strong team behind it, nevertheless received plenty of positive attention internationally.

With the motto ‘and suddenly it all blossoms’, the 2nd Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art (RIBOCA) will open on August 20. Initially planned to open in mid-May, force majeure conditions compelled the internationally recognised project to adapt. Almost prophetically, the theme of the exhibition – announced long before the pandemic reared its head – appeals to transformation in a situation when one kind of world has come to an end.

The end of a familiar world arrived sooner than expected, and it tested the resilience of even some of the strongest leaders in the world. The executive director of RIBOCA, Saint Petersburg-born Anastasia Blokhina, was likewise forced to make strategically complex decisions that encompassed everything from pure emotion to stark rationality.

Blokhina studied journalism and communication at Saint Petersburg State University and worked first as a cultural journalist and later as the director of external communications for the Erarta Museum of Contemporary Art in Saint Petersburg and its international network of galleries. She then became the director of the Yay Gallery in Baku, which is part of the Yarat Foundation, helping to organise exhibitions in India, Italy, Russia, France, and the United Arab Emirates. With Yarat (which means ‘to create’ in Azerbaijani), she also worked on the ultra-sensorial *Union of Fire and Water* exhibition for the 56th Venice Biennale. It presented the views of two artists regarding the historical relationship between Venice and Baku and took place, very significantly, in the Palazzo Barbaro, the former owner of which travelled to Azerbaijan in the 15th century and devoted a number of literary works to the country.

Blokhina has lived and worked in Riga for several years now. Together with Agniya Mirgorodskaya, the founding director of the Riga Biennial Foundation and commissioner of RIBOCA, they realised a long-held dream of establishing an institution that would act as a barometer of current social, political, and economic issues filtered through artistic practices. Blokhina’s international experience in project management, external relations, and work with artists – along with the professionalism and strength of the rest of the team – ensured that the first edition of RIBOCA, in 2018, was noticed and written about by not only the most prestigious global art media but also many other influential international lifestyle media. It’s now time for RIBOCA’s second act.

You were born and raised in Saint Petersburg. How and to what extent has the city’s cultural context influenced your personality and development?

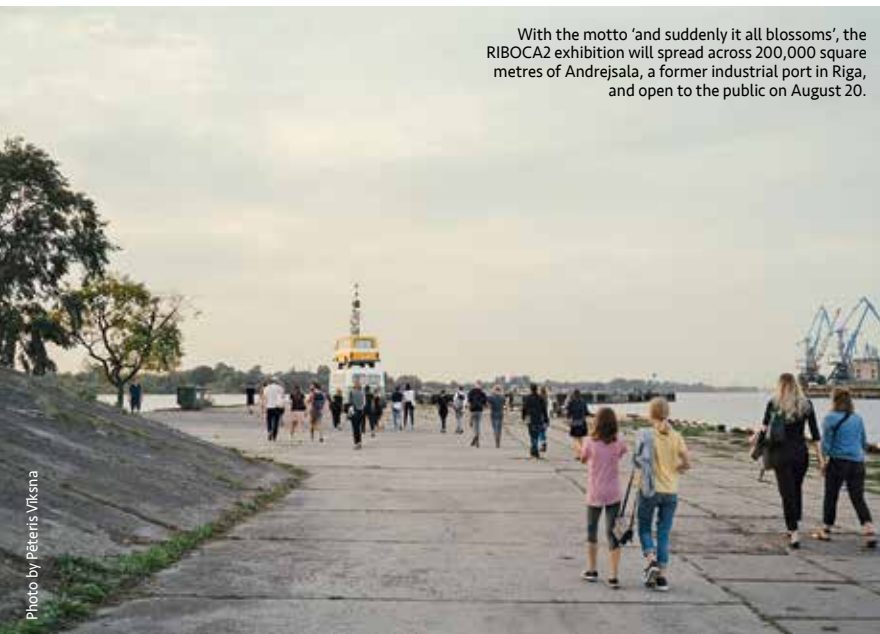
Without any doubt, I think that I ended up in the cultural sector only because I was born and raised in Saint Petersburg. I’ve travelled half the world, I’ve been to many places, but I haven’t found a city anywhere that’s as beautiful as Saint Petersburg. It’s amazing in terms of everything: architecture, history, culture, people, and the special relationship people establish with this city.

As a child and throughout my years at school and university, I spent a lot of time in the Hermitage, the Russian Museum, the Mariinsky Theatre, and the Pushkin, Pavlovsk, and Peterhof suburbs of Saint Petersburg. Only now that I’m away from it all do I understand what a luxury it was to have instant access to such masterpieces of world heritage. Being able to visit Rembrandt’s *The Return of the Prodigal Son* or walk between Antonio Canova statues any time I wished.

When I was seven years old, I had a season ticket to the Saint Petersburg State Capella, which I visited twice a week. It offered an educational programme for children consisting of a selection of fairly light classical music, such as works by Prokofiev and Tchaikovsky. So classical music became my daily routine, and when someone asks me how I came to like classical music, I have to admit that, actually, it wasn’t my choice. It’s something I’m used to; it’s like learning a language in childhood. Now when I visit the city, I always try to go to Philharmonic Hall or the Capella at least once. And the best thing is that both institutions have exceptional programmes daily, and sometimes it’s even hard to choose which one to go to.

What else comes to mind when you think of Saint Petersburg?

Another special thing is to be born in the capital of Russian ballet. In Saint Petersburg, even if it isn’t the stars performing – for example, if it’s the second cast or third cast performing – it’s still good. They’re all good. Ballet is probably what I enjoy the most. When tourist season starts in May, it’s only *Swan Lake* on all of the stages until September. But the rest of the year you can have, for example, Valery Gergiev conducting every other night. And you know that the intermission will never be just 15 minutes long, because it’s



With the motto 'and suddenly it all blossoms', the RIBOCA2 exhibition will spread across 200,000 square metres of Andrejsala, a former industrial port in Riga, and open to the public on August 20.



Andris Eglītis and Katrīna Neiburga. *The Nest*. 2018, RIBOCA1

It's art made by artists who breathe the same air, read the same books, watch the same news as us

rumoured that Gergiev does not come back on stage before he's played a game of chess. So, it takes what it takes, and meanwhile you might bump into Ulyana Lopatkina or Diana Vishneva in the café. It's an atmosphere that I haven't felt anywhere else.

This city defined my development as a person, as a personality. I think even my perception of life is defined by this city, because we're pretty big fatalists in Saint Petersburg – it's in our blood. We observe changes in history without losing our connection to culture and the things that matter, without putting too much energy into what we consider to be not so important.

There have also been very nice developments in the gastronomy scene in Saint Petersburg over the

past decade. We have the best restaurants – not only within Russia but on the global level as well. Everything Dmitry Blinov (of the *Duo* restaurant group) does is exceptional. One of his restaurants, *Harvest*, made it on the list of top 100 restaurants in the world, for example.

And our bar-hopping tradition is worthy of a separate mention. Wander around certain areas of Saint Petersburg where there are clusters of bars, and suddenly you might find yourself at a poetry reading, or someone might be playing the piano. There's a jazz bar called *The Hat* where a lot of really good musicians participate in jam sessions. There's the *Dead Poets* bar, which organises poetry slams. The *El Copitas* speakeasy devoted to Mexican culture made it on the list of the world's 50 best bars. It's run by a very charismatic team of bartenders who keep surprising guests with new cocktails based on tequila and mezcal served in a hidden courtyard of a residential building in the city centre.

I always say you cannot love this city 'because of' – you can only truly love it 'in spite of'. Even though there's way less money and jobs in Saint Petersburg than in Moscow, and the weather is horrible most days of the year due to the city having been built on swampland, I still think it's the most beautiful place in the world.

Do you remember the moment when art first came into your life...to stay?

I remember the moment very clearly. I had studied journalism and communication at Saint Petersburg State University and graduated with honours. I was working for the Russian branch of *Time Out* magazine and was doing an interview with the director of the Erarta Museum of Contemporary Art, which was about to open in Saint Petersburg.

Ten or 15 minutes into our conversation, the director offered me a job. They were building up a team and needed someone to run their press office. That was the exact moment that contemporary art came into my life. It was exactly ten years ago, and I ended up staying at the museum for four years. By the time I left, I was its head of external communications.

About a year before that, however, I was in London for a friend's wedding and stayed there for a week or two. It was my first time in London, and I was just strolling around and decided to go to Tate Modern. I was really, really mesmerised by the permanent exposition there. And I know exactly which work I enjoyed first; in fact, I still have it on my cell phone screen – Bruce Nauman's *Violins Violence Silence*. I found it so moving that I ended up just standing

there, staring at it. That was a moment when I really felt something towards contemporary art. And then the job offer came, and all the pieces of the puzzle suddenly came together.

What's your own definition of contemporary art? What makes a work of art contemporary?

The main thing is that contemporary art is art that's being created now, at this particular moment, and it deals with matters that preoccupy the artists themselves and also us, whether it's 'black lives matter', climate change, Covid-19, or whatever. It's art made by artists who breathe the same air, read the same books, watch the same news as us – people you might pass on the street on any given day. And their practice is so vast that everyone can find something that speaks directly to him or her. Artists have a different angle of looking at the world, and the research that's conducted for contemporary art projects can vary from microbiology to the forgotten pages of the history of a small village. It's a great source of learning and inspiration. Personally, contemporary art is something that moves me – both aesthetically and conceptually.

Which work of art has moved you lately?

One piece that really impressed me last year was made by Turkish artist and musician Cevdet Ere. His work *Bergama Stereo* was exhibited at the Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin. In this site-specific installation, Ere reconstructed the Pergamon Altar, the famous Hellenistic edifice. He made it from black plywood and a sound system, and he interpreted the original altar's famous frieze depicting giants and gods as a 54-channel composition that contemplated the sounds of the ancient city of Pergamon. It was a great example of an outstanding concept, exceptional production, and great installation.

Who are three artists whose work you'd love to have in your own art collection?

One of my favourite artists ever is Adrián Villar Rojas. I was over the moon when he participated in the first edition of RIBOCA. I'd love to have his work somewhere, but he makes large-scale sculptures, so I might need a really big garden for that. But I'm also very much into paintings, and one of the artists I wanted to have and finally got is Latvian artist Andris Eglītis. The third one would be another of my all-time favourites, William Kentridge, whom I consider one of the most important artists of our lifetime. To have a work of graphic art by him would be a dream, and I'm always on the hunt for Whitechapel editions, waiting for my chance.



Andris Eglītis. *RNP2S*. 2018, RIBOCA1



Installation view of William Kentridge: *Thick Time* at Whitechapel Gallery, London. 2016.



Tobias Zielony. From the series *Maskirovka*. 2017, RIBOCA1



My daily routine is about thinking. Thinking, thinking, thinking...

You have experience working in galleries in different cities worldwide. What factors influence cultural consumption and how people engage with art?

Infrastructure is very, very important. But even more important is education, which helps integrate art into a person's culture and daily lifestyle. In London, in New York, in Berlin, art is integrated into the city, and one can find a lot of public art commissions, encounter art every day, and have a gallery in one's own neighbourhood and a museum just 15 minutes away. Opening hours and accessibility are also important. Mediation is important, because contemporary art needs to be mediated; it needs someone who invites us into a dialogue with it.

In regard to post-Soviet countries and Russia, I'd say that we still have a long way to go. We still need education, we need infrastructure; but the main focus needs to be on education. Artists in these regions have a very unique take on everything. Contemporary art is often associated with the 'white cube', snobbish people, and a pile of rubbish in a corner that you're supposed to admire. But that's not what contemporary art is about, and this is what we're trying to achieve with the mediation at RIBOCA.

You introduce yourself as a cultural producer. How does this title reflect your life, your lifestyle? What does it mean on a more personal level?

First of all, it means I'm always at work – even on holidays, the first places I go to are galleries and museums. But above all, I'm a very happy person who has the unique opportunity to learn something

new every day and talk to people who see the world in a completely different way.

My daily routine is about thinking. Thinking, thinking, thinking... Of course, like every manager, I have *Excel* spreadsheets, I have budgets, I have staff issues, but it's all topped with a nice portion of thought-provoking matters. Every two years, the biennial introduces a completely different topic, a different way of thinking, new venues to use, new artists to research and produce art with. We're now interviewing curators for the third edition of RIBOCA. There are five candidates, and I can see that each one's take on the biennial would be completely different from the path taken by Rebecca (Rebecca Lamarche-Vadel, the chief curator of RIBOCA2) or Katerina (Katerina Gregos, the chief curator of RIBOCA1).

More and more cities around the world are hosting art biennials. How does RIBOCA differ from the others?

First, it's been made with a lot of love and passion, and it's being made because of the interest in the Baltic scene and a desire to make something interesting and different. The fact that RIBOCA is privately funded gives us quite a lot of freedom in terms of doing things the way we prefer. This grows out of a sincere interest to show Riga and to show it to the artists in a unique way, introducing the city and its art scene from very different angles. We have an international team, so everyone has his or her own take on things. Chief curator Rebecca Lamarche-Vadel is French, our public programme curator Sofia Lemos is Portuguese, designer Manuel Bürger comes from Germany, architects Roland Reemaa and Laura Linsi are from Estonia, and our organising team consists of Russians and Latvians. When you mix all this together, you get a really interesting cocktail of how everyone sees the city, the country, and the context.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, RIBOCA2 had to be reimaged, transformed, and postponed. Can you elaborate more on the decisions you had to make and what visitors can expect?

Now that we're opening to the public on August 20, it's much easier to talk about it! When the pandemic struck, we were two months away from the opening, which meant we were almost completely ready. That moment was heartbreaking – it was a week of sleepless nights during which we tried to find a solution to the fact that the project we had been working on for two years could not be realised as initially planned.

We had commitments to the artists, to the visitors, to the team – we couldn't just shut everything down and throw everyone out on the

street. Also, probably the most important thing is that this year we have 85% new commissions, and almost all of the works of art are being produced in Latvia, so all of it was almost ready. Cutting things off wouldn't have changed anything.

Of course, we discussed opening a year later, but not for too long, because the whole concept of this exhibition is about how we might live together in a world that's collapsing. So we decided to make a movie and turn the show into a film set. Rebecca Lamarche-Vadel invited Latvian director Dāvis Simanis to create a film together, and this is what we'll be doing from August 20 to September 13. Visitors will be able to explore the exhibition and witness the process of the film being shot. If everything goes well, we're going to have three weeks of the exhibition, which is exactly the amount of time we need for shooting, and then we're going to have a movie that will be released in early 2021 at one of the international film festivals.

An important highlight of this edition of RIBOCA was a series of talks and conversations with outstanding thinkers, researchers, and writers from various fields. What will happen to that? We decided to host this public programme, which is curated by Rebecca Lamarche-Vadel and Sofia Lemos, online. All of these excellent speakers had already agreed to participate, so we're making a video version of the programme, with brilliant thinkers like Tobias Rees, Michael Marder, Federico Campagna, and many others giving online lectures every Thursday on our website. Not a lot of their talks are accessible online, so this is a great opportunity for us to make an amazing archive of these weird times that I'm sure will be useful for quite some time to come.

What turning points did the crisis bring to art itself? What are artists talking about nowadays? Artists are the ones whom we can learn from during the pandemic and after it. They're used to being one-on-one with themselves, working in their studios, spending time with themselves, working without a daily routine. It's very interesting to observe the new formats artists are exploring: online studio visits, performances, documentation of the new Covid-reality. I think the effect of the pandemic will be researched and talked about in many artistic projects in the near future.

At the beginning of this conversation, I asked you about the city you were born in. Now I'd like to turn to Latvia – the place where you're now based. How do you feel about it?

Riga is a place that moves me deeply. As someone who grew up in a big city, I'm often asked how I feel living in a smaller city. I'm absolutely in love with

the architecture here – from the picturesque Art Nouveau buildings on Alberta iela to the modernist Daile Theatre, from the red bricks and pavements of the Old City to the industrial sights of Andrejsala and the former *Boļševička* textile factory. Another thing is the distances, which are so convenient that you don't waste too much time on commuting. In summer I always bike around the city wherever I need to go. Not to mention that the white-sand beaches of Jūrmala are just a 20-minute drive away. The food here is exceptional. Fresh produce from the farm at almost every supermarket is indeed a rare thing these days in other parts of the world. One of my other passions is the restaurants – the choice and quality in Riga is excellent, and I especially enjoy it when Latvian chefs experiment with local products, such as Mārtiņš Sirmaiš at the *Trīs Pavāri* restaurant.

Latvia's passion for classical music is also well maintained. The Latvian National Opera is great, especially the recent production of Francis Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. And the Riga Jūrmala Music Festival offers the world's best orchestras every summer. There are a lot of very talented artists and a vibrant cultural scene in Riga. I try not to miss any of the exhibitions at the Latvian National Museum of Art or Kim? Contemporary Art Centre.

What are Latvians really like?

In my four years in Riga, I've made a lot of new Latvian friends. One of the things that amazes me most about them is their relationship with nature. Being so close to, conscious of, and careful towards nature, and being so respectful of the old traditions – it really is amazing. Like Jāņi, the summer solstice celebration, with all the flower picking and making of garlands, swimming, awaiting the sunrise at 4:30 am, and all the singing and bonfires.

Every time I go somewhere in Latvia, it's super well maintained and very clean – all the walking paths with boardwalks and wooden stairs in the woods, all the national parks, the seaside. I admire Latvians for what they do for nature, how they preserve it, how they care about it.

Another thing that inspires me very much is the local talent for singing. When we celebrated the birthday of one of my friends, there was a really big pile of us – about 70 people – and someone proposed singing 'Daudz baltu dieniņu', the Latvian 'Happy Birthday' song. So then suddenly, in the middle of the night, everyone broke into song, and they sounded like a choir that had been rehearsing together for years! I now understand why half of the best composers and opera singers in the world come from Latvia.

Overall, Latvia and Riga have everything I need for a great life, so I'm already working on RIBOCA3 coming in 2022. **bo**

Photo by Semyo Balceriski, courtesy of Destination Bornholm



Words by Andrew Mellor
Publicity photos, by *Alamy*,
iStock and *Shutterstock*

SUMMER ON THE DANISH ISLANDS

Denmark’s compact size and unusual geography makes it perfect for island hopping – or just choosing one and staying put. Here’s a list of the four best Danish islands within easy reach of Copenhagen.

How’s your 2020 going? Does the idea of escaping to an almost-deserted island sound good? Thought so. An island getaway offers not just isolation from the chaos of a troubled world. It brings with it the feeling of retreat into safety. Even better when the island in question appears to be entirely unchanged by time and completely uncontaminated by globalisation. Denmark’s easily accessible network of islands offers all those things and more.

The country might not have as many islands as Finland and Sweden, but those it does have are a well-kept secret (there are over 400, in fact). Much of Denmark consists of islands. The city of Copenhagen sits on the island of Zealand, its airport on the island of Amager. East of the second city, Aarhus, almost all of Denmark sits on an extended archipelago, which means there are plenty more islands to choose from.

Of the 403 named islands belonging to Denmark, more than 300 are not even inhabited. Among the rest you’ll find islands small enough to provide an idyll but big enough to stimulate your interests, intellect, and taste buds. You can walk for miles in these self-contained worlds without seeing a single other human being while visiting buzzing, critically acclaimed restaurants and smart boutiques just an hour later. All four islands on our list are easily accessible from Copenhagen Airport, which is served by *airBaltic* flights.



◀ A small harbour on Bornholm Island
◀◀ Dueodde Lighthouse

BORNHOLM

Danes are unspeakably proud of the picturesque island of Bornholm, their little gem in the Baltic Sea. They're particularly chuffed that it lies closer to Sweden (and Poland) than Denmark and that it encompasses a world of wildlife and scenery that contrasts starkly to that of the mainland, including rocky cliffs, distinctive round churches (*rundkirke*), and medieval fortress ruins.

Bornholm was the original Danish holiday destination and established trends that many smaller islands have followed, luring visitors in with high-quality cuisine and reinvigorated traditional crafts. Copenhageners are particularly keen on visiting Bornholm, so much so that since 2011 Denmark's annual *folkmodet* political symposium has been held here. But don't worry about being overrun by suit-wearing politicians; for the rest of the year, Bornholm is quiet (if not sleepy) and rural enough for your phone to lose its signal. Paradise.



TOP SPOTS: However you arrive on Bornholm, you'll probably disembark at Rønne, the island's metropolis (population 13,000). It's a lovable harbour town of quiet, cobbled streets, half-timbered houses, and walled gardens. Locals proudly display porcelain figures in their windows and won't mind you peering through to admire them.

Nature lovers should head north to Hammer, where the Hammershus Castle ruins stand proud on a cliff overlooking the Baltic Sea. Around the coast to the northeast are the famous Sanctuary Cliffs (Helligdomsklipperne), where a stretch of coastline is dramatically clustered with cliffs and caves. Bornholm's excellent art museum is easily reachable in nearby Gudhjem – itself a village worth exploring – and features local works as well as changing international exhibitions. This summer's exhibition, for example, focuses on the Danish painter Claus Johansen.

Bornholm is home to Denmark's only truly breathtaking waterfall, situated in the Døndalen rift valley, and it's well worth a walk through the atmospheric forest to find it. Dueodde Beach is the island's most famous, with sand so fine it's used to make egg timers. The water is clear and shallow, while wooden walkways make access across

the dunes quick and easy. A trip to the Dueodde lighthouse offers stunning views from the island's southernmost tip.

WHERE TO EAT: Bornholm has become a culinary hotspot in the past few years. Its most famous restaurant is the *Michelin*-starred *Kadeau* situated in Aakirkeby, the brainchild of Rasmus Kofoed, who developed the three-*Michelin*-starred *Geranium* in Copenhagen. The menu is distinctly New Nordic: minimal, seasonal, and locally sourced. Nestled in the Almindingen forest you'll find *Christianshøjkrøen*, a traditional Danish inn serving the obligatory open sandwiches (*smørrebrød*) with a touch of class. It has been named Denmark's 'Lunch Restaurant of the Year'.

You can't visit Bornholm without sampling the products of one of the island's smokehouses. *Nordbornholms Røgeri* is a family-run example in Allinge. All the fish on the menu is smoked for five hours, with no artificial additives. The running buffet includes the legendary 'Sol over Gudhjem' (Sun over Gudhjem): smoked fish with an egg on top.

WHERE TO STAY: All chic and laid-back but with dramatic views, *Stammershalle Badehotel* is a classic, mid-20th-century seaside hotel overlooking the cliffs just north of Gudhjem (Sdr. Strandvej 128). At the ultra-sustainable *Hotel GSH* (Green Solution House) in Rønne, you can bed down in smart surroundings with a clean conscience; the details of the hotel's sustainable functionality are spelled-out in a foyer exhibition (Strandvejen 79). For something more rustic and charming, book a private room at *Svaneke Gæstehus* right next to the beautiful church in the village of Svaneke (search via *Airbnb*).

GETTING THERE: Bornholm is easily accessible from Copenhagen Airport, either via direct flights to Rønne (35 minutes) or on a bus and ferry connection via Ystad (approx. 3 hours). bornholm.info



◀ Small motor boats at Langøre Harbour on Samsø
▼ Vesborg Fyr on the southwestern tip of Samsø Island

SAMSØ

This island emerges elegantly from the Kattegat Sea dividing northern Denmark from southern Sweden, at a latitude that some say makes it the sunniest place in Denmark. You could say it resembles a flatter, calmer Bornholm. Many in the hospitality industry head here for late summer breaks away from it all – among them Paul Cunningham, chef at the *Michelin*-starred *Kirkeby Kro* in western Jutland.

No wonder, as Samsø is often referred to as the garden of Denmark. It's a verdant patch of green that provides the rest of the country with fresh produce, most famously Samsø potatoes. If harvested at precisely the right moment in May, the flavour of these potatoes is said to be so good that it borders on the addictive. A good way to sample them is in *kartoffelmad*, the traditional Danish open sandwich with a potato-themed twist.

Samsø is divided by a heath, with gently rolling hills to the north and flatter landscapes to the south that are perfect for cycling. If you don't feel like straddling a bicycle the whole time, the more traditional transportation method of horse and covered wagon is offered to visitors (pensionhotel.dk). Even better, walk. The areas around Stavns Fjord in the north or Brattingsborg Forest (the 'beach forest') in the south are popular with hikers. The latter is filled with the aroma of the wild garlic that covers the ground in a carpet of white.

TOP SPOTS: The port town of Ballen is a good base from which to explore Samsø. It has plenty of hotels and restaurants, gorgeous beaches, and a large marina. Tranebjerg is the island's capital and commercial centre, with a good range of shops and restaurants and a cinema. For village charm, head to Nordby, which boasts an abundance of preserved half-timbered farmhouses and a charming belltower, maypole, and pond.

At the southwest corner of the island is the resort of Vesborg Fyr, which forms part of the Brattingsborg Estate. If you can manage the steps, its lighthouse offers views to Jutland, Fyn, and Zealand (Denmark's three biggest land masses) and, if you're lucky, of porpoises frolicking in the Kattegat Sea.

WHERE TO EAT: *Skipperly* in Ballen serves top-quality, traditional Danish food just 20 metres from the water but right in the town's bustling heart (try the sumptuous seafood platter). At the *Ilse Made* restaurant overlooking the sea north of Kolby Kås, Kasper Gaard creates delicious, simple dishes based on the island's own produce.

WHERE TO STAY: Accommodation on Samsø mostly consists of inns and small hotels. Kasper Gaard's restaurant cited above forms part of the exclusive, adults-only *Hotellet ved Kilden* (Vesterløkken 16). *Ballen Badehotel* (Aavej 21) is a local institution dating back to 1928, while *Strandlyst* (Strandvejen 12) is a more secluded alternative. In Tranebjerg, *Flinchs Hotel and Restaurant* (Langgade 23) is smart and charming. *Feriepartner Sasmsø* offers an assortment of holiday homes across the island for rent (feriepartner.dk).

GETTING THERE: Train direct from Copenhagen Airport to Kalundborg (approx. 2 hours); ferry to Ballen (75 minutes). visitsamsoe.dk





◀ A harbour on Ærø Island

▼ Beachouses on a beach near Ærøskøbing

ÆRØ

A fairytale island in the south of the country nestling in calm waters between large blocks of land. Known for its fast and efficient organisation of weddings, Ærø has become a favourite marriage destination for Danes and visitors alike. Tight regulation caps the number of holiday homes on islands such as this one, which lends them the air of real working districts rather than holiday destinations. That is certainly true of Ærø. For all its charms, the seafaring traditions of this island are still noticeable, particularly in the capital Ærøskøbing with its working harbour and rough-around-the-edges feel.

Otherwise, Ærøskøbing is a dream, with cosy squares, houses adorned with flowers, and Denmark's best-preserved medieval streets. Here urban sophistication meets rustic charm, with chic, high-end boutiques sitting alongside bars built for hard drinking long into the night. The town has been described as 'hygge in miniature' – a reference to the Danish concept of cosiness and simple pleasures.

Ærø is a perfect size: a slender strip of 90 square kilometres and home to 6000 islanders who operate at a considerably slower speed than the rest of Denmark. What they don't compromise on is quality, whether it's food, textiles, produce, or the island's own distinctive whisky and beer.



TOP SPOTS: Ærøskøbing is a must-see, so it's handy that the ferry from Svendborg drops you here. It has a charming church, the island's main museum, clearly marked footpaths for hiking or walking, and a handful of quality cafés and restaurants (stop off at the tourist office by the harbour to collect a folder with a complete guide to the town and its buildings). From mid-May, the Night Watchman tours take visitors on an informative promenade around the town, leaving from Town Square (Torvet) at 9 pm. It's a great way to immerse yourself in the island's history. The town's brewery also offers tastings and tours.

Be sure to visit Vester Strand, a beach that offers excellent swimming and a chance to snap the iconic row of colourful beach huts, some available for hire. Down in Marstal, the island's biggest town, you can taste Ærø's maritime DNA at the Maritime Museum, where guides tell stories about their own families, or at the working harbour with its tall ships, fisherman's nets, yachts, and skiffs. This is a good place to start fishing, kayaking, or biking trips. The village of Søby dominates the island's northerly tip and is a delight. It hosts the Søbygaard branch of the Ærø Museum, located inside an impressive 16th-century manor house.

WHERE TO EAT: Down on Ærøskøbing harbour, *Røgeri* (Smokehouse) sells fresh smoked fish all day long – don't miss the whole smoked trout with bread. The newly reopened *Café Ærø* is a cool spot for everything from coffee and pastries in the daytime to pre-dinner cocktails at night, and it positions you conveniently for *Restaurant Mumm*, Ærøskøbing's most bankable eatery. In Marstal, *Den Lille Cafe* and *Den Gamle Vingaard* offer plenty of atmosphere and good food, but be sure to book in advance.

WHERE TO STAY: *På Torvet* sits on Ærøskøbing's main square (Torvet 7) and is a charming café and hotel with accommodation surrounding a cute courtyard. It also serves a distinctive and delicious breakfast. *Arnfeldt Hotel and Restaurant* (Smedegade 33) is a notch up in terms of luxury. *Udsigten Marstal* (Rolighedsvej 1A) sits right on the water, adjacent to its own private beach.

GETTING THERE: Train from Copenhagen to Svendborg (approx. 2 hours); ferries leave on the hour to Ærøskøbing (80 minutes). visitaeroe.com



◀ The landscape of Fanø island

▼ The town of Nordby on Fanø

FANØ

This island sits off Denmark's west coast just 12 minutes by ferry from the city of Esbjerg. But it feels a lot further from civilisation than that. The island forms part of the Wadden Sea National Park, a UNESCO-protected continuous system of intertidal sand and mudflats. At 16 kilometres long, the entire west side of Fanø is a huge beach – the most famous and attractive in the whole of Denmark. It has become a mecca for watersports enthusiasts (although many prefer Søren Jessens Sand on the northern spit) while remaining hugely popular with families and more laid-back beachgoers at the same time. If you're lucky, you might stumble upon some of the precious amber that's often washed up on the shore.

Fanø occupies a special place in Denmark's national psyche – it's seen as the domain of sailors, folk songs, and legends as well as the home of the country's first international seaside resort. The island's natural ecosystem is a little different from that of the rest of Denmark, with an abundance of foxes, hedgehogs, roebucks, hares, and rabbits. During the Second World War, it formed part of the Atlantic Wall operation that saw the occupying Germans build 300 concrete bunkers along the beach.

At either end of Fanø are its two main settlements: Nordby to the north and Sønderho to the south. Both offer cobblestone streets, chic boutiques, and cutesy cafés, but Sønderho has the edge for charm. There are museums in both towns testifying to the island's rich maritime history, including the golden age of shipbuilding two centuries ago that produced over 1000 vessels.



TOP SPOTS: Fanø revolves around its extraordinary white-sand beach. The best area for swimming is between Rindby Strand and Fanø Bad, where the beach is at its widest. Football, volleyball, kite flying, picnics, and barbecues are all encouraged here. Large groups of seals often appear on the sandbanks, but the best way to see them is to book an official tour into the banks accessible at low tides, such as Galgerev.

Sønderho is home to the top attractions, which include Hannes Hus – the preserved house of a 19th-century sea captain. Fanø Kunstmuseum has a permanent exhibition of local works (plenty of atmospheric depiction of the sea included), but a real must-see is Sønderho Church, with its highly unusual design, blue box pews, and proliferation of model ships hanging from the ceiling (a tradition in Danish coastal churches). Local tour guide Robert Peel often appears spontaneously and offers a tour; under no circumstances should you turn him down. Nature lovers will enjoy a trip to one of the island's traditional bird traps, or *fuglekøje*, which were in operation until they were outlawed in 1931. These days, birds are baited into the same area for ornithologists to

view, but they are free to fly away again. Gamle Fuglekøje in Sønderho offers free admission and occasional tours (soenderho-gl-fuglekoeje.dk).

WHERE TO EAT: *Ambassaden* in Nordby, run by Pia and Mads Lindquist, is fast becoming a Fanø institution with its delectable fish-based menu. It opens for lunch and dinner. *Sønderho Kro* offers contemporary New Nordic style cuisine with an emphasis on local produce and wild fauna. *Rudbecks Ost & Deli* is a great spot for lighter snacks as well as vegan and vegetarian food and is open for breakfast, lunch, and brunch (Hovedgaden 90).

WHERE TO STAY: The hotel at *Sønderho Kro* (Kropladsen 11) offers unparalleled views over the marshes towards the Wadden Sea, while *Kellers Badehus* (Strandvej 48) is an elegant seaside hotel in a plain but comfortable Nordic style. Many opt to rent cottages on the island, which is best done through the *Danibo* agency (danibo.dk).

GETTING THERE: Train from Copenhagen to Esbjerg (approx. 3 hours); ferry to Nordby (12 minutes). visitfanoe.dk **bo**

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Words by **James Taylor**
Photos by *iStock, Panorama Glass*
Lodge and from publicity materials

ICELAND

BUCKET LIST

A guide to the must-have experiences in one of the most scenic countries on earth



Seljalandsfoss is one of the most breathtaking waterfalls in southern Iceland.

Iceland is a country ripe for adventure. From the ancient glaciers and brooding volcanoes to black sand beaches and verdant valleys, the nature here is elemental, raw, and powerful. Mix that in with the locals’ Viking heritage, endless summer days, northern lights in the winter, and you’ve got yourself one outstanding destination. Hike, drive, sleep, swim, eat, discover, and do – here are seven essential Icelandic experiences.

HIKE THE FIVE-DAY TRAIL

No trip to Iceland is complete without getting out into all that nature for a hike. Luckily, it just so happens that the country is home to one of the best multi-day treks in the world: the Laugavegur Trail. Taking in the elemental and volcanic highlands of southern Iceland, for five days hikers trek through some of the country’s most captivating landscapes. Beginning in the highland oasis of Landmannalaugar, known for its colourful rhyolite mountains, the trail leads south through steaming geothermal valleys, across charging glacial rivers, and through desolate Arctic desert. In every direction the views are to die for: volcanoes and glaciers, waterfalls and river, colourful green set against steely black. The trail finishes in the hidden valley of Thórssmörk, another hiker’s paradise. Nestled in the glacial valleys to the north of the Eyjafjallajökull glacier, this spot is consistently ranked as one of the best areas for hikers in the entire country and the perfect ending point for the Laugavegur Trail.

But for the enthusiastic adventurers who want an added challenge, it’s common to tack another day onto the trek and cross over Fimmvörðuháls Pass. This high mountain pass separates Thórssmörk from the small village of Skógar in the south, conveniently located directly on the ring road. One of Iceland’s more gruelling day hikes, the trail leads directly between the Eyjafjallajökull and Mýrdalsjökull glaciers. Getting up close and personal with these icy giants is an experience you won’t forget, and it’s the perfect little addition to the Laugavegur Trail.

laugavegur.is



The intense colours, breathtaking scenery, and pure air of the Laugavegur trail make for a truly unforgettable Icelandic hiking adventure.



Stark, wild, and beautiful, Iceland's Arctic Coast Way is an off-the-beaten-track gem.

TAKE A ROAD TRIP

Travelling Iceland by car is the most essential experience you can have. It's a country ready-made for road trips, a country best enjoyed by leaving the city in the rear-view mirror and admiring those incredible landscapes from behind the wheel. And while many road trippers will plan to loop around the ring road, savvy travellers have turned to another tourist route recently opened: the Arctic Coast Way. Taking in over 900 kilometres of the northern Icelandic coastline, the scenery here is incredible. If you're after a journey

that will leave you breathless, this is it. This is Iceland at its very best.

Beginning in the small town of Hvammstangi and ending in Bakkafjörður, along the route you'll pass sweeping black sand beaches filled with driftwood, craggy mountains wreathed in mists, windswept peninsulas, lounging seals, and screeching birds. Warm, colourful, and cosy fishing villages are strung along the sub-Arctic coastline, filled with friendly locals and even better cuisine. Highlights along the route include stopping by Akureyri,

Iceland's capital in the north, going whale watching in Húsavík, and ducking into Jökulsárgljúfur Nature Reserve, an area shaped by volcanoes and glacial floods. The official route also takes in a clutch of tiny islands off the coast, including Grímsey, Iceland's only territory that crosses over into the Arctic Circle. Roads along the way are rough, but it's that adventurous spirit that makes this journey unforgettable. arcticcoastway.is

SLEEP UNDER THE SKY

Thanks to its northerly latitude, Iceland experiences a dazzling array of light conditions that are incredible to witness. From the long, searing sunsets and hazy grey nights during summer, to the cold shimmer of the northern lights in the winter, the sky plays a big part in the enchanting atmosphere across the country and is one of its most magnetic attractions. Now there's an accommodation option that lets you enjoy all the brilliance of an Icelandic sky from the comfort of a luxurious bed – that place is the *Panorama Glass Lodge*.

Located in Hvalfjörður just north of Reykjavik, this cottage is perched in front of one incredible vista. The immediate beauty of the fjord is incredible; rugged mountains, wild heaths, and the stillness of the fjord all come together in a grand



To lose oneself in the grandeur of the night sky is to be connected to the world at large.



Panorama Glass Lodge offers a unique holiday that's truly out of the ordinary.

spectacle of Icelandic nature. And all of it can be admired from the *Panorama Glass Lodge*, because yes, you guessed it – the walls and ceiling of the bedroom are made entirely of windows. Whether there's a gorgeous summer sunset, a clear view of starry skies, or the dancing northern lights, all of it can be enjoyed from the comfort of the cosy cottage. On top of that, it features all the luxurious amenities you could want, and there's even a hot tub outside. It doesn't get better than this. It's without a doubt one of the country's most unique accommodation options and the best way to experience Iceland's ever-changing sky. panoramaglasslodge.com

SOAK UP GEOTHERMAL ENERGY

Located over two tectonic plates and a hot spot in Earth's mantle, Iceland is one of the most

volcanically active countries on our planet. Magma simmers away just beneath the surface, and in addition to causing an occasional volcanic eruption, it also heats up a large amount of water as it comes bubbling to the surface. This water is piped straight to homes, used to produce energy, and in some cases also fills a luxurious hot spring. Soaking in one of these hot springs is a must-do, especially if the weather takes a turn for the worse.

You'll find plenty of hot springs across the country, ranging from naturally formed rock pools in the middle of nature to sprawling, man-made complexes. But it's the latest arrival on the scene that is a perfect blend of the two: Vök Baths. Built out over Lake Urriðavatn just outside Egilsstaðir in eastern Iceland, these are the first and only series of floating pools in the country. Surrounded by incredible



Vök Baths harnesses geothermal power to create a unique bathing experience with amazing views of the lake and surrounding area.



One of the most popular snacks in Iceland is dried fish. Make sure you try this local food!

scenery, the pools let you feel as if you're just floating on the lake – it's sublime. Locals in the area first discovered the hot springs after noticing that ice never forms over a select few areas of the lake. A series of hot springs bubbles up from the bottom of the lake and prevents the ice from forming, and it's these that have now been harnessed to fill the pools at Vök. In addition to the two floating pools out on the lake, there are two more hot pools on the shore, a pool bar, a steam room, and a cold tunnel equipped with a mist tunnel inside. Don't forget the

luxury, either; the restaurant inside serves up delicious dishes, all prepared with local and sustainable ingredients. The entire experience is serene and a great way to enjoy the natural wonders found in Iceland.
vok-baths.is

FEAST ON FRESH SEAFOOD

Forget the rotten shark – Iceland's cuisine has come a long way since the tough Settlement era. And as a seafaring nation, there's no better place to tuck into some fresh seafood. From fresh fish and chips to

lobster soups, there's seemingly no end to the delicious dishes you can sample. For the real deal, the small town of Grindavík on the Reykjanes Peninsula is a hot spot for everything seafood. This charming little fishing village has been a prized fishing station ever since Iceland was settled. Today, life goes on like it probably always has. Every day the port is busy with the comings and goings of the local fisherman, and a pleasant fishy smell wafts throughout the streets. It's a comforting place to spend a day.

One small café and restaurant in the town constantly draws in the tourists and locals alike: Bryggjan. Perched directly on the harbour, this atmospheric little place started out as just the café, which served up some of the best lobster soup in the country. Now the premises have expanded, and a large dining room overlooks the net-making factory next door, giving this place a unique vibe found nowhere else. The restaurant also brought with it an extended menu that includes classic Icelandic seafood dishes such as *plokkfiskur* (a traditional fish stew), *saltfiskur* (salted cod), open-faced sandwiches, and other favourites, including herring, shrimp, and smoked salmon. For a hearty fisherman's meal, this is the spot.
bryggjan.com

DISCOVER CULTURE AND NIGHTLIFE

Reykjavik, the northernmost capital city in the world, is the epicentre of culture and nightlife in Iceland. With friendly locals, great food, and lively music, comedy, and theatre scenes, this is a small city that punches well above its weight when it comes to culture. It's easy to discover both over a few days in the city, but this August it's going to be even easier thanks to the biggest event on the city's cultural calendar: Culture Night. Typically taking place on just one day, this year visitors are in for a treat with the festival spread out over ten days, from August 13 to 23. The festival is one big celebration of Icelandic culture and features all kinds of entertainment, such as pop-up street performances, live music, museum exhibitions, and even outdoor raves. Day and night, no matter where you wander in Reykjavik, you'll find something happening – it's one of the best times to be in the city and a great way to interact with the locals. The festival culminates with a magnificent fireworks show over the harbour that's not to be missed.

On weekends, experiencing a bit of the Reykjavik nightlife is also one of the best experiences you can have in the city.



Harpa Concert Hall and Conference Centre in Reykjavik takes inspiration from the northern lights and Iceland's dramatic scenery.



LATVIAN NATIONAL
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Imt 



The relatively small downtown area is jam-packed with bars, cafés, and restaurants, most of which stay open very late on Fridays and Saturdays. Whether you're looking to dance, catch some live local music, or just relax with a beer or glass of wine, there's something for everybody here. cultureinight.is

EXPLORE THE ICE CAVES

One of the most unforgettable experiences you can have in Iceland is to explore the ice caves underneath its many glaciers. These shifting ice caps are remnants of the last ice age and are behind a lot of the incredible Icelandic landscapes you'll explore throughout the country. Eruptions under the ice release raging floods, carving out deep canyons; retreating glacier tongues reveal lagoons, lush valleys, and jagged mountains; and rivers running from the glaciers charge off cliffs as spectacular waterfalls. Almost everything in Iceland is somehow related to glaciers, and experiencing them on your trip is one of the best ways to get in touch with the country and the people who

call it home. Joining a tour into the ice caves is an essential experience to have in Iceland.

The foundations of these ice caves form during the summer, when warmer temperatures melt the ice on the surface of the glacier. This meltwater channels its way through crevasses, cracks, and gullies, leading towards the bottom of the glacier. As it collects and flows through the ice, the water carves out caves as it seeks to escape. Come winter, this water freezes over enough so that the caves are accessible with guided tours. Traditionally, the season for visiting ice caves is between November and April. During this time, the most exciting and beautiful ice caves are found underneath Vatnajökull, the largest glacier in Europe. However, there's one ice cave that's accessible year-round: the one underneath the Katla volcano, which is easily accessed on a tour from Vík. Being inside the caves is an incredible experience – there are no sounds except the constant creaking of the glacier around you and the slow dripping of water. It's powerful, humbling, and absolutely an essential Iceland experience. **bo**

Liepāja



Publicity photos

Visit Latvia to enjoy
A BEACH with the world's
finest and whitest sand

It's easy to enjoy the crunch of fine, white sand on Liepāja's beach – the pride of the city – while keeping one foot planted in the energetic centre of town.

There's an eternal fascination to the combination of unspoiled beach and urban comfort in Liepāja that no one can resist – from the tsars of the Russian Empire in the 19th century to modern-day vacationers from neighbouring countries. The beach in Liepāja averages 50 to 80 metres wide and stretches for eight kilometres right next to the city on Latvia's southwestern coast. It's no surprise, then, that finding a quieter corner of one's own poses no difficulty. At the same time, you're sure to find an oasis of a café here and there to get a refreshing drink before settling in to watch the sunset. From fiery orange to pastel pink, it's no secret that the sunsets along Latvia's western coast are breathtaking. No camera filters needed.

In order to protect the natural environment as well as preserve an exclusive recreation area for the city's inhabitants, the seashore here has been granted protected status. Covering more than 50 hectares, Seaside Park lies right on the other side of the dunes and features many grand old trees, paths, gardens, a children's playground, and more. Each summer, as swimming season begins, the Blue Flag is raised over Liepāja's beach, thereby confirming the high quality of its water, environment, and facilities.

The beach in Liepāja can be enjoyed by all – it's the only beach in Latvia adapted to the needs of people with impaired sight and/or mobility. The bathing area is equipped with special audio buoys for the visually impaired, a wheelchair so that people with reduced mobility can take a swim, and a comfortable and wide footpath leading from the rescue station to the water. There's even a room for parents to tend to their very young children.

Fly to
Liepāja
from
€15
one way



Nor is the beach off limits to four-legged visitors. If they are kept on a leash, dogs are welcome on Liepāja's seashore outside of the official swimming areas. Strolling for kilometres along the sea and looking for small, bright pieces of amber washed out of the water is a form of meditation that anybody can try. But there are also plenty of activities here for people whose idea of relaxation involves new challenges and an increased heart rate. The untamed sea and windy nature of this shore – as a result of which Liepāja is often referred to as 'the city of wind' or 'the city where the wind is born' – are a perfect recipe for kitesurfing and windsurfing. For rougher waters, more experienced athletes head to the beach in the Karosta district of the city.

However, that's not the only reason for going to Karosta. The Northern Breakwater and Northern Forts, left over from the time when this part of town was a military fortress, are only a few of the mighty and imposing remains from this era of Liepāja's history now giving the area a somewhat mythical aura. The Karosta district was closed to the general public until the mid-1990s. liepaja.travel

HOW CAN YOU HELP THE PLANET?

Estonian biologists are worried about one of the most threatening issues on this planet – biodiversity loss.

Publicity photos

A foggy bog in Estonia

Photo credit by Anne Ader

‘If I were to return to the exact same forest I visited in the 1980s, I would now hear 25 percent fewer birds singing compared to back then,’ says Aveliina Helm, a senior research fellow at the University of Tartu and one of Estonia’s best-known biologists.

Our forests, parks, and grasslands are becoming quiet and disappearing. Why does it matter? Helm says that, besides just simply being sad, we don’t really know what it will do to the planet if we continue wiping out species at the current rate. What we do know, however, is that our clean water and air depend on biodiversity.

We depend on insects, birds, plants, and animals more than we realise. Will we have enough fertile soil, clean water, and clean air without them? Will apple cores or fallen leaves decay properly in nature and turn into soil for the future? Will vegetables and fruit still grow?

‘A big part of the ecosystem functions underground, in the invisible world,’ explains Helm. ‘If we keep hammering on this very complex and delicate engine, it’s not going to end well.’ In short, we should be just as worried about biodiversity loss as we should be about climate change.

If climate change seems difficult to tackle for a single human being, then biodiversity is a very local phenomenon. Anyone can get their fingers dirty and do their part to reduce biodiversity loss. Grow flowers or tomatoes on the balcony, or replace a rocky patch of land with flowers and grass. Urban gardens on balconies, terraces, roofs, and in yards are actually nature’s hotspots in cities, says Helm. They’re great places for biodiversity and, luckily, it’s becoming increasingly popular to do urban farming. ‘Everyone’s nature conservation’, as Helm calls it. And it’s a noble thing to do, because the lives of little creatures depend on these small patches of nature.

There is no one solution

The idea of being a nature-loving nation has fooled Estonians into believing that the country’s flora and fauna are protected. However, as in most places around the world, this is a myth. And it’s just another myth that Helm is trying to bust.

Take planting trees, for instance.

A study from last summer revealed that planting trees is by far the best solution to climate change. It concluded that



Photo by Karl Ander Adami

An Estonian forest



Photo credit pixabay.com

White-backed woodpeckers prefer forests with a high percentage of dead trees and fallen timber.



Photo by Andres Tannus

increasing forest areas is overwhelmingly the most cost-effective way to draw carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. No other technological or scientific proposal comes even close to it. Thus, many organisations all over the world mobilised and started planting trees. Even American president Donald Trump spoke about planting a trillion trees.

So, it seemed that the problem was finally solved. Let’s take down trees and keep planting new ones! But according to Helm, things are not that simple. Simply planting new trees anywhere endangers many species that can only survive in grasslands, bogs, or wild, old-growth forests.

For instance, white-backed woodpeckers prefer forests with a high percentage of dead trees and fallen timber. Butterflies and ladybugs live in grasslands and cannot survive in forests or large, single-crop fields.

‘We’re playing God on this planet. But do we have the right to do that?’ asks Helm. researchinestonia.eu

HELM’S ADVICE FOR BEGINNER NATURE CONSERVATIONISTS:

1. Be lazier! Don’t overly organise your surroundings. Not everything needs to be covered with asphalt, not the whole lawn needs to be mowed. Some trees can remain fallen, some bushes can be allowed to grow, and some mown grass can be left on the ground. Use a scythe instead of a lawn mower – it’s quieter and is good exercise.
2. Grow your own food on your balcony, in your garden, or even on the roof of your building.
3. Learn to recognise different species. Don’t be fooled by the colour green – if there are only two to three different species represented, it’s still a very poor landscape, despite being green.
4. Big, single-crop fields are one of the most harmful landscapes. To make them more diverse, create smaller fields with patches of more diverse landscapes in between. Those patches could include longer grass and bushes. Ladybugs and spiders that help to pollinate crops or eat pests don’t live on the crop itself, but nearby. For instance, ladybugs eat greenflies, but they only venture about 200 metres into a field from around its edges. Spiders also venture only 200–300 metres into a field.

Publicity photos



RSU – UNIVERSITY EDUCATION BEYOND BORDERS

Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU) is one of the most reputed and highest-ranked universities in the Baltics. Here, students can find a variety of programmes in healthcare and the social sciences taught in English, from undergraduate studies right through to the PhD level.

According to the *Kantar* market research company, for several years, Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU) has had the best reputation among Latvia's colleges and universities. The university has received not only the highest ranking among universities in Latvia but also international recognition. It has gained the highest ranking in research and science in Latvia (SCImago Institutions Ranking 2020) and has been listed in a global study by the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, which assesses universities against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

Prof. Dr. Peter E. Goretzki of the globally renowned and prestigious Charité university hospital in Berlin and a guest professor at RSU, says: 'I have had the opportunity to see RSU growing in stature and influence over the decades. The growth has been incredible, and RSU has established a stellar reputation in Germany. RSU is a success story, and it must continue on its path. This will undeniably make RSU one of the best universities in the Baltics and beyond.'

There is no doubt that RSU has one of the best settings for international students. Its location in the beautiful capital city of Riga, which is also the biggest city in the Baltics, makes an excellent base

for students from across Europe and Central Asia. Hannah Katharina Schöberl, the president of the International Student Association at RSU says, 'Riga is a city with great potential that, in my opinion, has developed into one of the most beautiful capitals of Europe. It's green and innovative, while also treasuring the vintage vibes in the central district of the city.'

Riga has all of the advantages of a European metropolis, including great cultural life, public transit, and airport connections. The city is a major hub for international air traffic, and the proximity of the airport to the campus is advantageous, providing students with easy access to the increasingly connected world. Most European countries, including Germany, Sweden, and Norway, are only a couple of hours away by plane.

RSU Rector Prof. Aigars Pētersons says: 'RSU is international in outlook and open to the world. Given the fact that Latvia is one of the safest places to live during the pandemic, RSU is very well placed to build upon its strengths on the European and international level. We believe that bringing together students of different nationalities and backgrounds is a great way to enrich a study and cultural environment.'

Twenty-first-century education has become global and comes in many different shapes and sizes. RSU offers 12 programmes taught in English: ten healthcare programmes and two programmes in social sciences (e.g., the bachelor's programme in International Business and Start-up Entrepreneurship and the master's programme in International Governance and Diplomacy). In addition, RSU provides a strong research foundation and a range of extracurricular activities, from sports to culture and music.

Every year, RSU enrolls approximately 500 students from around the world in healthcare and social science programmes. Schöberl continues, 'For 30 years now, Rīga Stradiņš University has been providing the opportunity to study in an international environment. More than 2300 international students (a fourth of the total student body) from 53 different countries are currently enrolled. It has been a great pleasure to study medicine in this environment, with leading professors and doctors in Latvia, at a university that's open to working with its students.'

The faculty is the university's main strength and is made up of both local and international professors, all speaking and teaching in English. RSU is frequently listed among the leading institutions that provide high-quality medical study programmes. New 2.0 study programmes in healthcare have been worked out following the best practices of European universities, meaning that students earn an internationally recognised diploma and can opt to do a year of study in their home country or abroad at one of the 200 Erasmus+ partner universities.

Over the years, RSU has focused on student-centred learning, and it is recognised by the PASCL project of the European Students' Union. RSU has developed a personalised approach to learning in small groups and low student-to-teacher ratios. For example, in the dentistry programme, educators work with groups containing no more than eight students. In other programmes, the number of students per group does not exceed twelve, ensuring that each student receives the full attention of his or her educators.

During the current crisis, all courses are taught remotely, offering e-studies platforms, *Zoom* lectures, classes, tests, and problem-solving online with faculty management and even additional tools for coping with stress, if necessary. The university will resume onsite learning and practical training on campus as soon as possible. RSU is dedicated to providing a holistic environment that incorporates interactive learning technologies. Simulations and practical skills training ensure that medical students not only learn the theoretical principles but also experience the day-to-day reality of working at healthcare facilities. For example, RSU's Theatrum Anatomicum remains one of the few in Europe and offers cadavers as well as 3D anatomy visualisation. Students also have access to leading national hospitals and one of the most advanced pre-clinical dentistry training centres in northern Europe. RSU is proud to offer training in its unique Medical Education Technology Centre, where students can work with modern simulator technologies.

Apart from that, RSU provides study placements at various international hospitals for students who speak the language of the respective country. The university has partnered with hospitals in Germany, Italy, and Israel (e.g., Helios Klinikum Berlin-Buch in Germany, Ziv Medical Centre in Israel, and



Ospedale di Bolzano in Italy) and plans to open branches in the Nordic countries.

If you think RSU is a good fit for you as a student, you can still apply for the autumn intake for the bachelor's programme in International Business and Start-up Entrepreneurship and the master's programme in International Governance and Diplomacy until August 14, 2020. For those interested in another programme, applications for the winter intake (classes starting February 2021) will be accepted starting September 1.

rsu.lv



**RĪGA STRADIŅŠ
UNIVERSITY**



Publicity photos

IKOS OLIVIA

an unforgettable
gastronomy experience

Mediterranean cuisine with hints of Scandinavian flavour

For already more than half a year *Ikos Olivia* restaurant has been welcoming Rigans and guests to the city with a combination of Mediterranean and Northern traditions and foods that are not available anywhere else in Latvia.

In creating the menu, the team at *Ikos Olivia* has taken inspiration from French, Italian, Greek, and Spanish gastronomic traditions, and has also included hints of Asian flavours and combined everything with the chef's own passion for experimental cuisine. However, the team always pays the most attention to the ingredients they use – they must be not only seasonal but also clean and organically grown. 'Fresh produce and ingredients are the most important

thing. They must be not only correctly grown, obtained, and delivered but also be processed correctly in our kitchen,' says the chef. 'Therefore our task is to find produce and meats of excellent quality, prepare them with respect, and serve them in an agreeable setting. In addition, it's important for us to give thought to each ingredient, from the fish and meat all the way to the mushrooms and berries, which are, for example, gathered in the forests of northern Finland. If each of the ingredients in a dish is of the highest quality, then the meal is truly delicious and enjoyable.'

Ikos Olivia is distinct not only for its high-quality produce and unique flavours and manner of preparation, but also for



Address:
Krišjāņa Valdemāra
iela 25, Rīga
Open:
Mon-Fri 13.00–23.00
Sat-Sun 12.00–23.00
Phone: +371 27 338 866
ikosolivia.lv

its general philosophy. Each food on the menu has a story of its own. The main menu highlights fish and seafood: the Mediterranean turbot is from the French coast, where it is raised on an organic fish farm, while the North Sea cod is caught in the Barents Sea and the shrimp are supplied from Canada. The swordfish comes from the Atlantic Ocean and sometimes takes more than 20 hours to be delivered to the restaurant. *Ikos Olivia* is the only restaurant in Latvia to have been granted an official catch quota for bluefin tuna, leading its restaurant team to create a unique concept for Riga – a tuna menu.

The *Ikos Olivia* team has also kept meat lovers in mind. Most of its meats come from Ireland because in addition to having been quality meat producers for many generations, the Irish are also able to ensure that the meat delivered to the restaurant is organically grown, tender, juicy, and full of flavour.

The dessert menu at *Ikos Olivia* is not large, but each of the dishes contains refined, nuanced flavours that might even recall childhood. One of the favourite desserts at the restaurant is the caramelised Brunost, or cheese cream with cloudberries from the Arctic – guests call it an absolute masterpiece. Another highlight is the chocolate brownie with black garlic and lingonberry sauce, which once again confirms the chef's tendency to not shy away from experimenting with various flavours and manners of preparation. It is precisely for this reason that the menu at *Ikos Olivia* often features fermented products made on site at the restaurant, including nuts, egg yolks, and kombucha, which features in several sauces.

Ikos Olivia is located in a two-storey wooden building dating to the 19th century in the heart of Riga's Art Nouveau district. The restaurant has taken care not only with its gastronomic offer but also its visual image. Naturally, the exterior attracts attention, but so does the well-considered interior with its subtle colours, brick walls, velvet, copper, wood, and the romance of an attic space. Because *Ikos Olivia* can accommodate up to 100 guests, the restaurant's unforced informal atmosphere is ideal for meetings with friends and romantic dinners as well as for business meetings and larger celebrations.



FISH HOUSE Brasserie de luxe

A casual gourmet
experience

Publicity photos and
by Dmitrijs Sulžics (*F&A*)



Riga has long deserved
a restaurant for lovers of
fish and seafood at which
everything served truly falls
under the definition of ‘haute
cuisine’ – as it is at *Fish House
Brasserie de Luxe*.

Fish House Brasserie de Luxe stands out
with its concept of casual gourmet dining
with an atmosphere reminiscent of a
French brasserie, which is precisely why it
has been able to win the hearts of Rigans
within its first year and is now one of the
city’s top new restaurants.

Fish House is a family affair, in essence
having become the embassy of the
Abdulmuslimovs and their love of excellent
food and family values. ‘We welcome
people spending a part of their day at our
restaurant – whether it is to just enjoy a
cup of tea or coffee while working on their
laptop, or having a full dining experience
for lunch or dinner. We want to show our
guests that casual can be special,’ says
Mansur Abdulmuslimov, the restaurant’s
manager. People clearly appreciate the
laid-back ambiance of *Fish House*, and
perhaps that is why it’s a place where
people connect with each other, from
savvy businesspeople and politicians to hip
artists and adventurous tourists. They are
all united in their quest to experience (and
then, more often than not, re-experience)
the superb culinary journey whipped up by
Fish House’s head chef, Jānis Zvirbulis.

Executive chef Jānis Zvirbulis has
created the menu based on his motto
of ‘quality without compromise’. Using
modern cooking techniques and the
finest-quality products, Zvirbulis creates
a symphony of flavour, all the while
honouring the cultural heritage of haute

cuisine and respecting the authenticity of
natural flavours.

The master chef of *Fish House* has
studied cooking at the world’s culinary
mecca – the Institut Paul Bocuse in
Lyon – which explains his devotion to
French cuisine. He subsequently perfected
his skills working alongside legendary
masters of the culinary arts at some of the
finest French restaurants, including the
Michelin-starred *La Table des Blots*.

Zvirbulis is an innovator, fond of
discovering and combining various flavours
that may at first elicit bewilderment, but
these sorts of successful experiments
are exactly why the restaurant’s guests
return again and again, praising the chef’s
nontraditional yet sensational flavour
combinations. ‘Every ingredient that we
use at *Fish House* is worth its weight in
gold. We have our own view of the world,
and we wish to pass that on to our guests
through the food that we create,’ explains
Zvirbulis. The chef and his team also
put that experimental spirit and skills
to good use over the past few months by
adapting the menu to the recent situation,
during which the restaurant was unable
to receive some of its regular shipments.
Although *Fish House* was closed to guests
for more than a month, the restaurant’s
team nevertheless prepared meals for
guests to pick up and enjoy at home. And
many were the connoisseurs of good food
who took advantage of this ‘directly from



Contacts:
Skolas iela 29, Riga
www.fishhouse.lv
info@fishhouse.lv
+371 2649 7777
Instagram:
[@fishhousebrasserie](https://www.instagram.com/fishhousebrasserie)

Opening hours:
Sun–Mon: Closed
Tue–Fri: 12.00–22.30
Sat: 10.00–22.30

the *Fish House* kitchen to your dinner
table’ opportunity.

Although *Fish House* is decidedly a
seafood restaurant, a few excellent meat
dishes are on offer as well. This season,
guests can try the following creations by
Chef Zvirbulis: venison steak Wellington and
North Sea halibut. The dessert menu that
Zvirbulis has created is also nothing to scoff
at, with such delightful treats as chocolate
soufflé and lemon meringue tart.

Fish House has succeeded in finding the
key to its customers’ taste buds, leading
it to become a favourite spot for romantic
dinners, business lunches, and relaxed
breakfasts with friends. In fact, Riga insiders
know that on Saturdays from 10.00 to 14.00
Fish House is the place to go for the most
refined and delicious à la carte breakfast in
the city – the twelve different organic egg
dishes that Zvirbulis serves leave no room
for doubt. For many, a Saturday morning in
Riga is incomplete if it doesn’t include going
out for breakfast at *Fish House*. This season
the menu features several new organic egg
dishes with duck, as well as rye pancakes.

Everyone knows that wine is a perfect
partner for seafood, and in charge of this
aspect at *Fish House* is Gatis Pridāns,
the restaurant’s head sommelier and
host. Pridāns is well known in Riga for
having worked at several of the city’s top
restaurants renowned for their wine and
champagne service, and he has made sure
that *Fish House* rises above the rest not only



in terms of food, but with its drinks menu as
well. You’ll find no other place in Riga serving
all-natural, additive-free Radikon biodynamic
wine, and Pridāns’ selection of top-notch
champagnes is impressive, to say the least,
including such winemakers as Henri Giraud,
Drappier, and Pommery. By the same
token, Pridāns’ wine list also features some
more affordable but rare white wines from
Burgundy. ‘We listen to our guests and their
wishes, which is why we also have a broad
selection of wines that can be ordered by the
glass. At *Fish House*, we welcome everyone
who wishes to enjoy a glass of fine wine,
regardless if they wish to accompany it with
a meal from our excellent menu or not,’
explains Pridāns.

Summer is champagne season, which
sparkles at all kinds of celebrations held at
Fish House. Whether a birthday party or
an event with business partners, the team
at *Fish House* provides the finest service,
the tastiest meals, and the most pleasant
atmosphere. If your meeting is intended as a
tête-à-tête, a glass of first-rate champagne on
Fish House’s terrace may be the perfect way
to set the mood.

Fish House can accommodate 36 guests,
which is why it strongly encourages making
a reservation for an evening meal if you want
to be sure of getting a table. And don’t be
surprised if you see a famous face or two –
Fish House’s excellent food and reasonable
prices have been discovered by more than a
few celebrities.

Sommelier Gatis Pridāns



Photos by iStock and courtesy of airBaltic

WELCOME ABOARD airBaltic



ENJOY NEW CONNECTIONS VIA ICELAND

airBaltic has signed a codeshare agreement with *Icelandair* that will allow both airlines to sell flight tickets jointly throughout their networks and offer passengers more options for travelling.

airBaltic flies to **Reykjavik** four times per week. Now our customers can conveniently connect via Reykjavik further to North America and purchase tickets for the whole journey on the *airBaltic* website.

At the same time, *Icelandair* passengers can now book tickets to a number of *airBaltic* destinations in the Baltics and beyond.

ABU DHABI AND SKI DESTINATIONS RETURN FOR WINTER

airBaltic has announced its winter flight schedule, which comes into force on October 25. As every year, also this winter passengers will be able to escape the cold and fly to **Abu Dhabi**. Flights between Riga and Abu Dhabi will operate four times per week with one-way ticket prices starting from EUR 159 €.

We will also continue flights to many other sunny destinations in winter, such as **Larnaca, Malaga, Barcelona, Lisbon, Madrid, Rome, and Nice**.

In December, we will open flights to several popular ski destinations. We will be flying from Riga to **Geneva, Verona, and Salzburg** and from Tallinn to Salzburg. Book your tickets for a ski holiday now, starting from EUR 75 € one-way.

FLIGHTS TO 49 DESTINATIONS THIS SUMMER

After resuming our regular flight operations in May, we are gradually adding more flights every week.

We're offering direct flights from Riga, Tallinn, and Vilnius to all of Europe's major metropolises as well as popular holiday spots in the Mediterranean.

A few more routes will join our schedule in August for a total of 49 destinations accessible by direct flight from Riga, 12 destinations from Tallinn, and 10 destinations from Vilnius.

All the flights are available for booking on the *airBaltic* website and at travel agencies.



NEW DIRECT FLIGHTS FROM VILNIUS

This summer *airBaltic* is opening four new direct flight connections from its base in Vilnius.

In May, new flights began between Vilnius and **Oslo** twice per week. One-way ticket prices to Oslo start from EUR 39 €.

In June, flights to **Dublin** joined the network. Dublin is served twice a week with ticket prices starting from EUR 59 € one way.

In July, new flights were opened from Vilnius to **London** and **Dubrovnik**, one of the most popular holiday spots in Croatia. Flights to London operate three times per week with ticket prices starting from EUR 29 € one way. Dubrovnik is flown twice per week, and tickets are available starting from EUR 55 € one way. In total, *airBaltic* offers direct flights from Vilnius to 10 destinations.



NEW TICKET TYPES ON *airBaltic* FLIGHTS

Since July, whenever you reserve an *airBaltic* flight, you can choose from four different ticket types depending on your needs and wishes: GREEN, GREEN plus, GREEN classic and BUSINESS.

The biggest news is that now the date can be changed for all tickets. This will give our guests extra flexibility and security when planning their trips.

Check out the chart to see what services are included in each ticket type, and choose the one that's best for you.

	GREEN	GREEN plus only on airBaltic.com	GREEN classic	BUSINESS
	The simplest ticket for the lowest price – with the option of changing the flight date.	A great price that includes checked baggage and the option of flexibility. Plus regular discountson different ancillary services.	A smart choice! The most important services plus greater flexibility in changing or cancelling the flight.	Our proven value – enjoy plenty of benefits, sophisticated service and total flexibility.
CABIN BAGGAGE	✓	✓	✓	✓
CHECKED BAGGAGE	from EUR 14.99	✓	✓	✓
SEAT RESERVATION	from EUR 4.99	from EUR 4.99	✓	✓
DATE CHANGE*	EUR 50 per direction	EUR 50 per direction	✓	✓
REFUND	✗ **	✗ **	EUR 50 per direction, or EUR 25 per direction, if you choose a refund in the form of a gift voucher	✓
NAME CHANGE*	✗ **	✗ **	EUR 70 per ticket	✓
MEAL	from EUR 9.99	from EUR 9.99	from EUR 9.99	✓
AIRPORT CHECK-IN	EUR 14.99	EUR 14.99	✓	✓
FAST TRACK	✗	✗	✗	✓
BUSINESS LOUNGE	✗	✗	✗	✓
<i>airBaltic Club</i> ***	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent + 50 bonus <i>pins</i>	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent + 100 bonus <i>pins</i>	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent + 200 bonus <i>pins</i>

* Fare difference may apply.
** A Flight Cancellation option and Name Change option can be added to your tickets by making the reservation on airBaltic.com.
*** The number of *pins* earned per each Euro spent on ticket depends on the tier level within the *airBaltic Club*.

Fly one of the world's greenest aircraft, the Airbus A220-300

Think green
Fly green



20% less
CO₂ emissions

50% less
noise

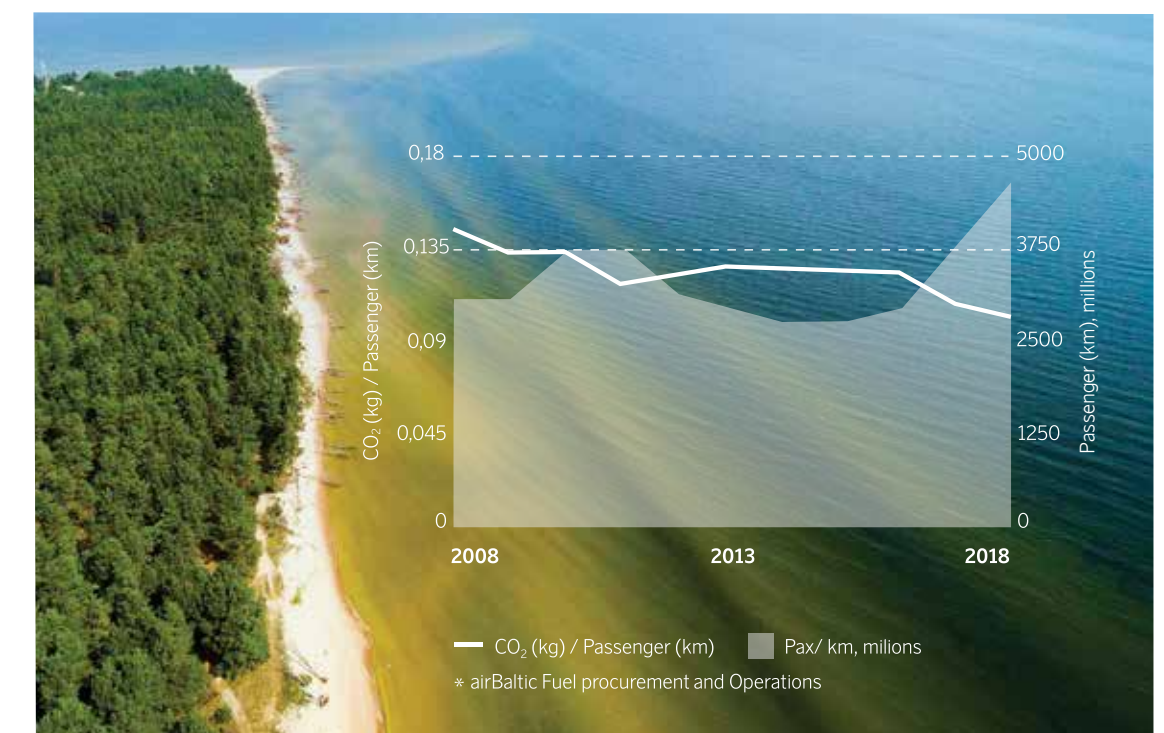
50% less
NO_x emissions

airBaltic

Green by nature

Our home is the Baltics – a region rich in forests and long coastlines – which is why we cherish our natural treasures and wish to preserve the beauty of our land. As a young and ambitious company, we can afford to be flexible and are proud of heading towards becoming the greenest airline in Europe. Decreased fuel consumption, quieter engines and improved flight efficiency and precision can have a global impact, and these are goals that we work towards every day. Our fleet is rapidly and continually undergoing modernisation, and now it consists of only the world's greenest commercial aircraft – the Airbus A220-300.

Since 2008 our CO₂ per passenger kilometre has decreased by **33%**



Lower CO₂ emissions

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our time. Air travel connects people all over the world and is crucial to the global economy, but it does have an impact on the environment. However, airlines can make notable improvements. In fact, we are proud that through modernisation of the fleet and optimisation of landing procedures, we have been able to reduce the amount of carbon emissions released per passenger km flown by 33% compared to 2008.

*Compared to previous generation narrow-body aircraft with the same seating capacity



Where to fly to next?

Līva Ozoliņa, *airBaltic*'s Scheduling and Slots manager, and Mantas Vrubliauskas, the airline's Network Development manager, tell *Baltic Outlook* what it takes to create a whole new flight network after the coronavirus crisis hit the industry in March.

In early spring you were both busy working on this summer's flight schedule, which promised to be the most extensive in *airBaltic*'s history.

Līva: As per our usual timelines, we finalised the summer 2020 schedule already in February. We had opened new destinations and continued the airline's growth, but when the coronavirus crisis hit, we had to cancel all our flights as of March 17, when our government made a decision to tighten security measures and suspended international air traffic. Seeing our planning system empty, without any flights planned on our aircraft, was the strangest feeling I've had since I began working at *airBaltic* ten years ago.

Mantas: The summer season was just about to start, and it was meant to be a record-breaking one, but then in just one day we had to cancel everything. I still vividly remember the beginning of March, when the situation was very uncertain and changing very quickly. It felt like an avalanche – at first we cancelled all our flights to Italy, then Israel...

When it came to rebuilding the network, there were still so many unknowns. Where did you start from?

Mantas: Simply put, we all sat down around a table and took out a blank sheet of paper. That's literally what we did. But I think it was a good thing, starting from scratch. Of course, there was a certain frame we had to operate within, because it all depended on governments giving us permission – meaning, we could only fly

Words by Ilze Pole

Photo by Vladislavs Proškins (*F64*)

where we were allowed to fly. But first we wanted to connect the Baltic states again, so the Riga–Vilnius, Riga–Tallinn, and Tallinn–Vilnius routes were the first to open. Then we needed to make sure we had access to a few major hubs, such as the Amsterdam and Frankfurt airports, so that people had at least some opportunities to travel, to get home, to not remain stuck somewhere.

While we were doing repatriation flights, we noticed a few other destinations with high demand, for example, Oslo. This strongly suggested we should include them in our network as well and launch them as soon as possible. These flights were full from day one.

How did *airBaltic*'s decision to continue flying with a single-type fleet impact the network development plans?

Līva: Quite significantly, actually. One thing is that operating only one type of aircraft reduces the operational complexity. With the advantages of having probably one of the youngest and greenest fleets in Europe, we could reduce flight sector length and increase offered seat capacity on some routes. Even though we currently have fewer aircraft in operation, we can offer more seats for flights. Another very important factor that affected the network development plans, but isn't so much related to aircraft type as such, is additional aircraft disinfection, which we needed to plan for to keep our passengers safe. We increased all of our ground times to one hour to make sure we have enough time for these new, additional procedures.

Mantas: We were preparing for the transition to a single-type *A220* fleet in 2023. The *Airbus A220* is one of the most efficient and sustainable aircraft in its class. On any given route, it allows us to offer more seats at a lower cost, so naturally we wanted to have as many *A220*s on as many routes as possible.

Līva: We focused on what we could put together within this frame and how we could grow it. And to find the right balance

as well. Meaning that there weren't too many flights – as we're using bigger planes with more seats in them – but at the same time to schedule the flights in a way that they were still convenient for our passengers, because the demand was still there and people needed to travel.

So, *airBaltic*'s first flight, on May 18, was to Frankfurt?

Mantas: The first one was actually from Tallinn to Amsterdam. It took off just a few minutes before the Riga–Frankfurt flight (*laughs*). The feeling was really great! After a couple of months of not knowing what was going to happen, planning, and replanning, we finally had the feeling that from here on out we can only go further and higher.

The next step was to add holiday destinations. That was a big learning curve for us as well, because our initial plan was to add them to our network later in the summer. In April, when we made the initial plan, no one had any idea of where it would be possible to fly to in June or July. But we soon saw that the demand for holiday destinations was quite high, and we advanced the launch of our most popular holiday routes. Now our summer destinations are actually doing very well, especially Greece and Spain.

Līva: Our gradual growth plan depended mostly on local regulations regarding where and when we were allowed to fly, as well as on the Covid-19 ratio of cases per 100,000 people. If the ratio exceeds 25, then we cannot fly to that destination anymore. We monitor the situation every day, and we have to make quick decisions about whether we can restart a route or even perhaps cancel one that we've already started if the Covid-19 ratio is growing.

Mantas: But we managed to launch four new routes this summer from Vilnius: to London, Dublin, Oslo, and Dubrovnik. In this new reality, we expected business demand to be stagnant, at least in the short term, and so we decided to focus on serving these new routes to places where many Lithuanians live and work. It's actually working very well! We made that decision quite spontaneously, but it was definitely the right one. Also, we were one of the first ones to launch such flights, as some competing airlines completely dropped them.

One of *airBaltic*'s goals was to offer flights as soon as possible. So was there competition with other airlines about who was going to start flying first?

Mantas: We were the first airline to launch flights from Riga. Also in Tallinn and Vilnius we started with a significantly larger selection of routes than any other airline. I think this crisis has showcased that we are truly the leading airline in the Baltic states, seeing as we did everything we could to re-establish the most vital connections to, from, and within the Baltic states from day one.

Līva: Somewhere in the back of our minds we had this idea that we cannot wait too long, in order to ensure that there will still be demand and traffic. We have to offer people the opportunity to travel. When they have that, then demand will start to grow again. People are already a bit hesitant about travelling and flying as such, and seeing that there are no flight offers and routes are closed only strengthens that feeling. So we had to build up our schedule and be present in order to bring back and revitalise safe travelling.

What are the most important things you've learned during this time?

Mantas: I think the biggest challenge for us at the beginning was the unknown. We usually spend a lot of time analysing

passenger demand and our route performance and then base our decisions on forecasts and business cases. But here we were faced with a situation in which it was impossible to quantify the demand, and, even worse, it was impossible to know which countries would be deemed safe to fly to and when. We therefore had to learn to think completely outside of the box and make quick decisions even when full information was not available.

What trends do you see within the industry now?

Mantas: The health and safety of passengers and crew has become the most important topic. Every airport we speak to has invested heavily in safety, security, and hygiene and is taking all the necessary health precautions. But there's also a feeling of a new beginning, because the whole industry is reinventing itself to become safer, more efficient, and sustainable in the long run.

Līva: Overall, everyone in the aviation community was very supportive of each other over the recent months. All the e-mails ended with the words 'keep safe', 'hope you're all well'. Because we really felt that, no matter which country we were in, everybody was in the same situation, and everybody was ready to support you and go that extra mile to help you. It was really nice.

We have to offer people the opportunity to travel

It was good to see that our partners and colleagues within the industry understood that no one – neither the airlines nor the airports – was able to make long-term decisions or long-term schedules. Because everything could change in a day if a new regulation came into place. I felt that everybody understood that it was nobody's fault if you had to change your plans.

Is it easier to get better slot times now?

Līva: The situation currently isn't as constrained as it was before, but there are still capacity reductions from the airports because they're maybe shortening their operational hours, reducing staff due to cost saving, or implementing new health check or precaution procedures, which then reduces the availability of slots. But we're managing pretty well.

Mantas: Previously, our process was that already by January we were putting the last touches on our schedule for the upcoming summer. Then we didn't touch it anymore, and the flights took place as planned. But now we're changing the schedule every week. Some destinations get pushed back, some are moved forward. That's the reality of the moment.

That's the new reality.

Līva: And the key to that is to just keep on adjusting to the new situation. To be flexible. Because if you try to follow the old patterns, you very soon realise that they simply don't work in the current situation. You have to create new procedures, new everything to keep going. It definitely hasn't been easy, especially because in the beginning we also tried to rely on some of our usual, previous ways of doing things. In a way, you have to 'break' yourself and go on creating new patterns. Because the old ones are not relevant anymore.

Words by Ilze Pole
Photo by Ģirts Ozoliņš (F64)

Pilots out of their office

Baltic Outlook introduces you to some of the most important people at *airBaltic* – its flight crew members, who have some of the most interesting hobbies.

HOBBY

Gints' father is an electrician, and there were always pieces of wire, rolls of electrical cable, soldering irons, and other tools and materials lying around their home. So naturally, as a child, Gints had lots of opportunities to experiment with electricity. At school, he joined the electronics club and remained active in it until graduation. He gradually also developed an interest in sound or, more precisely, speakers and amplifiers.

'We'd make speaker boxes out of plywood and put speakers in them, we made amplifiers by following diagrams – we did everything ourselves,' remembers Gints. Still today, he and his friends get together to work on various audio projects. Ten years ago, they even considered starting their own business and producing acoustic equipment. But that would have required lots of investment and time, and, seeing as they were all already quite busy with their regular jobs, the idea never came to fruition.

'People get such a charge of energy when they hear truly great sound!' says Gints. The speaker in this photograph is store-bought, but Gints and his friends still work on speaker design, how to choose and find the best amplifier, and so on. 'Back when we were still making our own amplifiers, the main thing was that they produced sound, and the louder the better! Now loudness isn't the most important thing,' he continues. 'Sure, there are speakers that can produce window-breaking sound waves, but the art is in feeling that vibe and high-quality sound even when it's played very quietly.'

According to Gints, the quality of sound has no boundaries, just like each person's sense of hearing is slightly different: 'And all of that together constitutes this never fully resolvable concept of "performance" and constant striving for improvement.'

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Gints' first memory linked to his dream of becoming a pilot goes back to Space Day in kindergarten. There were posters on the walls of cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin standing in uniform next to an airplane. 'That picture inspired me, and I wished I could be like him,' says Gints. 'That feeling stayed with me, although it was a long time before I actually took any action in that direction.'

A second moment of inspiration came when six-year-old Gints flew from Liepāja to Riga with his grandfather. 'The speeding up and takeoff were unforgettable, as were the views from the window,' he remembers.

Gints has a master's degree in electronics and telecommunications from Riga Technical University and worked in the field of IT before becoming a pilot.

In fact, fulfilling his dream of becoming a pilot coincided with the birth of his child. 'When our son was born, I thought a lot about what exciting things about myself I would eventually be able to tell him. That I wanted to become a pilot, but didn't? As a result, I immediately applied to the ANS Training Centre to get my private pilot licence.' Gints earned his commercial pilot licence at the ERIVA Flight School in Riga, and the whole process – combined with working full time and family life with a young child – took four years.

Gints began working at *airBaltic* six years ago flying the *Dash Q400* aircraft as a first officer. He became a captain on this same type of aircraft earlier this year, but now he's flying one of the greenest aircraft in the world as a senior first officer. 'My education definitely helps me in this job, understanding the technical construction and processes that go on in airplanes. But what I enjoy most is the preparation we do for flights and the responsibility that's entrusted in the pilots as we sit in an airplane high above the ground. It creates a special kind of synergy between the flight crew and passengers.'

Words by Ilze Pole / Photos from the personal archives of Arta Graudiņa, Madara Brigzne, and Gatis Stanga

Let's take a look at where our flight attendants love to travel and at the fascinating hobbies and talents that they have!

1/ Cabin crew team leader ARTA GRAUDIŅA often flew from Helsinki to Riga and back while studying international business administration in Finland through the Erasmus programme. She observed the cabin crew every time and thought to herself that this was a job she really ought to give a try herself. 'And I've been here now for 11 years!' she says.

2/ At a restaurant while on holiday on the island of Rhodes. Arta loves Greece and tries to visit the country every year. 'But the world is big and beautiful, and that's why we try to travel a lot,' she admits.

3/ Baking became one of Arta's hobbies after a baby joined their family and she had some extra time for new experiments. She still bakes a scrumptious cake at least a couple of times a month.

4/ GATIS STANGA began working for *airBaltic* 14 years ago. A friend of his was already working for the airline and suggested Gatis try out being a flight attendant. Although he had never before imagined working in aviation, he's now a cabin standard specialist.

5/ Gatis works with other departments at *airBaltic* as well as with the Latvian CAA to implement various changes in cabin crew procedures and apply international regulations to daily cabin crew operations. But he also continues flying as a senior cabin crew member.

9

SNAPSHOTS from the lives of our flight attendants

6/ This photo was taken in Nourméa, New Caledonia. Gatis loves the sun and warm weather, so all of his favourite *airBaltic* destinations are south of Riga.

7/ MADARA BRIGZNE started working for *airBaltic* in 2007. She had

Our cabin crew is always there for you!

heard an advertisement on the radio that the airline was hiring flight attendants, and, encouraged by her family, she applied. A year later, she had already become a senior cabin crew member. Madara eventually became a line trainer, and since March of this year she's a junior cabin crew team leader.

8/ In their free time, Madara and her colleagues took bicycle trips almost every day. 'Another really great thing is that we cabin crew members can also spend time together outside the airplane,' she says.

9/ No, sewing is not one of Madara's hobbies. But she does enjoy helping her friend, who owns a clothing store, when a model is needed to show off a new dress.



Gints Zvirbulis (39),
Senior First Officer on *Airbus A220-300*
aircraft, from Latvia

Your health and well-being are our top priority



BEFORE THE FLIGHT

Only travel if you are in good health. Your body temperature will be measured at the airport, and you will be allowed on board only if it does not exceed 37.8°C. Check in and order your inflight meal and other services online to minimise physical contact.



AT THE AIRPORT

Wear a protective face mask during the whole trip – from the moment you enter the terminal until you walk out of the airport at your destination. Children under six years of age and people with certain medical conditions are exempted from wearing face masks. Try to keep your distance from other people and use the hand disinfectants available throughout the airport.

To minimise the potential spread of viruses, we have introduced new health measures on board and at airports. We kindly ask you to act responsibly and follow the new rules, because only together can we ensure that travel is safe and healthy.

Check-in and bag drop counters are equipped with protective barriers. All airport staff wear protective face masks and gloves.

BOARDING

To minimise physical contact between passengers, boarding starts from the rear part of the aircraft. Self-scan your boarding pass and show your travel document to the boarding agent. As long as there are enough free seats, we try to leave an empty seat next to each passenger. If this is not possible for all passengers, families and groups are seated together. Please be aware that last-minute seat changes may apply due to distancing reasons.

ON BOARD

Our crew wear protective face masks and gloves during the whole flight. Each passenger also receives a complimentary protective mask and disinfecting wipes in order to be able to change his or her mask after the inflight meal. Choose food and drinks from the disposable menu cards that the cabin crew hand out to Economy class passengers. Meal service is included with Business class tickets. All meals are prepared and packed separately in our

kitchen under strict hygiene standards. Payment is possible by card only.



CLEAN AIR INSIDE THE CABIN

Our *Airbus A220-300* aircraft are equipped with a modern environmental control system using HEPA filters to eliminate all viruses and bacteria. Airflow is routed down towards the floor, thus minimising air transmission amongst passengers.

AIRCRAFT DISINFECTION

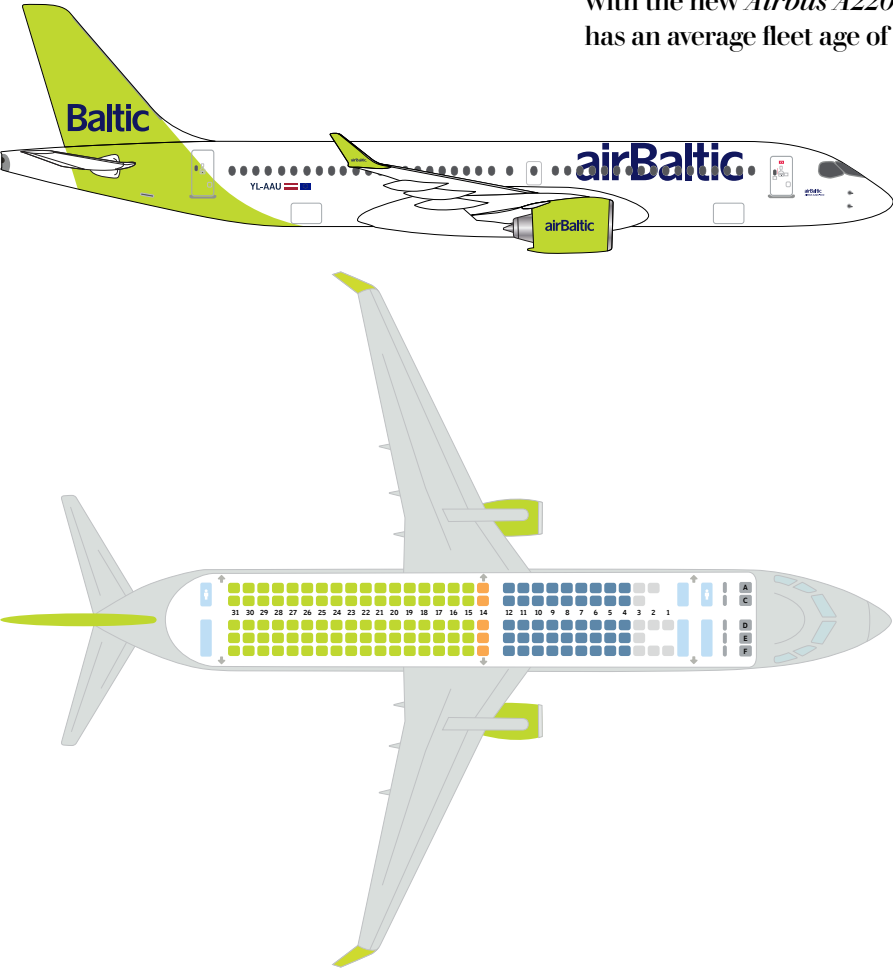
After each return flight, we carefully clean all commonly used surfaces inside the aircraft, such as armrests, backrests, meal tray tables, seatbelt latches, air and light gaspers, and other equipment. Every night we perform a more in-depth disinfection, and a full cabin disinfection is done twice a week.

Flights from RIGA							Flights to RIGA						
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival		Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival	
AMSTERDAM							AMSTERDAM						
BT 617	RIX	AMS	1234567	07:45	09:05		BT 618	AMS	RIX	1234567	10:20	13:30	
BT 619	RIX	AMS	1234567	16:30	17:50		BT 620	AMS	RIX	1234567	18:35	21:45	
ATHENS							ATHENS						
BT 611	RIX	ATH	-2---6-	08:00	11:10		BT 612	ATH	RIX	-2---6-	12:10	15:20	
BARCELONA							BARCELONA						
BT 683	RIX	BCN	-2-4-67	13:50	16:30		BT 684	BCN	RIX	-2-4-67	17:30	22:00	
BERLIN Tegel							BERLIN Tegel						
BT 213	RIX	TXL	12345-7	18:10	18:50		BT 214	TXL	RIX	12345-7	19:40	22:15	
BILLUND							BILLUND						
BT 147	RIX	BLL	1--4567	12:50	13:30		BT 148	BLL	RIX	1--4567	14:30	17:05	
BRUSSELS							BRUSSELS						
BT 603	RIX	BRU	1-345-7	16:25	17:50		BT 604	BRU	RIX	1-345-7	18:45	22:05	
BUDAPEST / From Aug 11							BUDAPEST / From Aug 11						
BT 491	RIX	BUD	-2---6-	12:30	13:30		BT 492	BUD	RIX	-2---6-	14:30	17:25	
CATANIA Fontanarossa							CATANIA Fontanarossa						
BT 639	RIX	CTA	-----7	07:15	09:45		BT 640	CTA	RIX	-----7	10:35	14:55	
COPENHAGEN							COPENHAGEN						
BT 139	RIX	CPH	1234567	18:15	18:45		BT 140	CPH	RIX	1234567	19:45	22:10	
DUBLIN							DUBLIN						
BT 661	RIX	DUB	1-3-5--	07:25	08:35		BT 662	DUB	RIX	1-3-5--	09:15	14:10	
DUBROVNIK							DUBROVNIK						
BT 497	RIX	DBV	---4---	07:05	08:45		BT 498	DBV	RIX	---4---	09:45	13:20	
BT 497	RIX	DBV	1-----	15:40	17:20		BT 498	DBV	RIX	1-----	18:20	21:55	
DUSSELDORF							DUSSELDORF						
BT 233	RIX	DUS	-2-4-7	16:25	17:40		BT 234	DUS	RIX	-2-4-7	18:40	21:45	
FRANKFURT							FRANKFURT						
BT 243	RIX	FRA	1234567	08:00	09:20		BT 244	FRA	RIX	1234567	10:00	13:10	
*GOTHENBURG							*GOTHENBURG						
BT 121	RIX	GOT	1234-6-	12:20	12:45		BT 122	GOT	RIX	1234-6-	13:45	16:05	
HAMBURG							HAMBURG						
BT 251	RIX	HAM	1234567	12:40	13:30		BT 252	HAM	RIX	1234567	14:30	17:10	
HELSINKI							HELSINKI						
BT 301	RIX	HEL	1234567	07:45	08:45		BT 326	HEL	RIX	1234567	05:30	06:30	
BT 303	RIX	HEL	-----6-	13:00	14:00		BT 302	HEL	RIX	1234567	09:45	10:45	
BT 325	RIX	HEL	1234567	23:25	00:25+1		BT 306	HEL	RIX	-----7	15:00	16:00	
*KALININGRAD							*KALININGRAD						
BT 454	RIX	KGD	1-345-7	23:30	23:25		BT 455	KGD	RIX	12-456-	04:30	06:25	
*KIEV							*KIEV						
BT 400	RIX	KBP	1234567	07:20	08:55		BT 401	KBP	RIX	1234567	09:45	11:25	
LARNACA							LARNACA						
BT 657	RIX	LCA	-2---6-	23:00	02:45+1		BT 658	LCA	RIX	--3--7	03:45	07:30	
LIEPĀJA							LIEPĀJA						
BT 019	RIX	LPX	1-3-5-7	23:40	00:20+1		BT 020	LPX	RIX	12-4-6-	05:45	06:25	
*LISBON							*LISBON						
BT 675	RIX	LIS	-2-5--	12:30	15:10		BT 676	LIS	RIX	-2-5--	16:10	22:30	
LONDON Gatwick							LONDON Gatwick						
BT 651	RIX	LGW	1-3456-	07:45	08:40		BT 652	LGW	RIX	1-3456-	09:35	14:15	
BT 653	RIX	LGW	-2-4-67	15:45	16:40		BT 654	LGW	RIX	-2-4-67	17:35	22:15	
MADRID Adolfo Suarez Barajas							MADRID Adolfo Suarez Barajas						
BT 685	RIX	MAD	---4--7	12:40	15:55		BT 686	MAD	RIX	---4--7	16:55	21:55	
MALAGA							MALAGA						
BT 677	RIX	AGP	--3--6-	12:25	16:00		BT 678	AGP	RIX	--3--6-	17:00	22:20	
MILAN Malpensa							MILAN Malpensa						
BT 629	RIX	MXP	1-----	07:55	9:40		BT 630	MXP	RIX	1-----	10:40	14:20	
BT 629	RIX	MXP	-----5--	15:55	17:40		BT 630	MXP	RIX	-----5--	18:40	22:20	
*MINSK							*MINSK						
BT 412	RIX	MSQ	1234567	14:15	15:15		BT 413	MSQ	RIX	1234567	16:15	17:15	
*MOSCOW Sheremetyevo							*MOSCOW Sheremetyevo						
BT 424	RIX	SVO	1234567	07:20	09:00		BT 425	SVO	RIX	1234567	09:45	11:30	
MUNICH							MUNICH						
BT 223	RIX	MUC	1234567	17:00	18:10		BT 224	MUC	RIX	1234567	19:15	22:20	
NICE							NICE						
BT 695	RIX	NCE	1--5--	07:30	09:35		BT 696	NCE	RIX	1--5--	10:35	14:25	
*ODESSA / From Aug 10							*ODESSA / From Aug 10						
BT 410	RIX	ODS	1-4---	23:45	01:45+1		BT 411	ODS	RIX	-2-5--	04:10	06:10	
OSLO							OSLO						
BT 151	RIX	OSL	1-3456-	07:45	08:25		BT 152	OSL	RIX	1-3456-	09:25	11:55	
BT 153	RIX	OSL	1234567	18:10	18:50		BT 154	OSL	RIX	1234567	19:50	22:20	
PALANGA							PALANGA						
BT 033	RIX	PLQ	1234567	23:40	00:25+1		BT 032	PLQ	RIX	1234567	05:40	06:25	
PARIS Charles de Gaulle							PARIS Charles de Gaulle						
BT 691	RIX	CDG	-234-67	07:20	09:10		BT 692	CDG	RIX	-234-67	10:05	13:45	
PRAGUE							PRAGUE						
BT 481	RIX	PRG	1-345-7	12:40	13:25		BT 482	PRG	RIX	1-345-7	14:25	17:10	
REYKJAVIK							REYKJAVIK						
BT 169	RIX	KEF	1-3-5-7	13:15	14:10		BT 170	KEF	RIX	1-3-5-7	15:10	21:50	
RIJEKA							RIJEKA						
BT 495	RIX	RJK	--3----	16:15	17:40		BT 496	RJK	RIX	--3----	18:40	21:55	

Flights from RIGA						Flights to RIGA					
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival
ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino						ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino					
BT 633	RIX	FCO	1---5--	14:50	16:50	BT 634	FCO	RIX	1---5--	17:50	21:45
SPLIT						SPLIT					
BT 493	RIX	SPU	----5--	08:15	09:45	BT 494	SPU	RIX	----5--	10:25	13:50
BT 493	RIX	SPU	1-----	15:55	17:25	BT 494	SPU	RIX	1-----	18:10	21:35
* STOCKHOLM Arlanda						* STOCKHOLM Arlanda					
BT 101	RIX	ARN	1234567	08:00	08:10	BT 102	ARN	RIX	1234567	09:10	11:15
STUTTGAERT / From Aug 07						STUTTGAERT / From Aug 07					
BT 261	RIX	STR	----5-7	12:10	13:30	BT 262	STR	RIX	----5-7	14:30	17:40
* ST-PETERSBURG						* ST-PETERSBURG					
BT 442	RIX	LED	1234567	07:50	09:00	BT 443	LED	RIX	1234567	10:00	11:15
TALLINN						TALLINN					
BT 311	RIX	TLL	1234567	08:30	09:20	BT 362	TLL	RIX	1234567	05:45	06:35
BT 315	RIX	TLL	1234567	14:40	15:30	BT 312	TLL	RIX	1234567	10:20	11:10
BT 361	RIX	TLL	1234567	23:15	00:05+1	BT 316	TLL	RIX	1234567	16:30	17:20
* TBILISI / From Aug 05						* TBILISI / From Aug 06					
BT 724	RIX	TBS	--3-5-7	23:05	03:30+1	BT 725	TBS	RIX	1-4-6-	04:30	07:00
TURKU						TURKU					
BT 359	RIX	TKU	1-345-7	23:30	00:35+1	BT 360	TKU	RIX	12-456-	05:25	06:25
VIENNA						VIENNA					
BT 433	RIX	VIE	1234567	16:55	17:55	BT 434	VIE	RIX	1234567	18:55	21:50
VILNIUS						VILNIUS					
BT 343	RIX	VNO	1234567	12:15	13:05	BT 350	VNO	RIX	1234567	05:45	06:35
BT 347	RIX	VNO	1234567	18:45	19:35	BT 344	VNO	RIX	1234567	14:05	14:55
BT 349	RIX	VNO	1234567	23:15	00:05+1	BT 348	VNO	RIX	1234567	20:35	21:25
WARSAW						WARSAW					
BT 461	RIX	WAW	1234567	07:55	08:15	BT 462	WAW	RIX	1234567	09:15	11:30
ZURICH						ZURICH					
BT 641	RIX	ZRH	1234567	11:50	13:20	BT 642	ZRH	RIX	1234567	14:20	17:45

Welcome aboard our new *Airbus A220-300*

We are proud to have the Europe’s youngest fleet of aircraft. All *airBaltic* flights are operated with the new *Airbus A220-300* aircraft, which has an average fleet age of 1.9 years.



Number of aircraft	22
Number of seats	145
Max take-off weight	67.6 metric tons
Max payload	16.7 metric tons
Length	38.7 m
Wing span	35.1 m
Cruising speed	870 km/h
Commercial range	4575 km
Fuel consumption	2200 l/h
Engine	PW 1521G

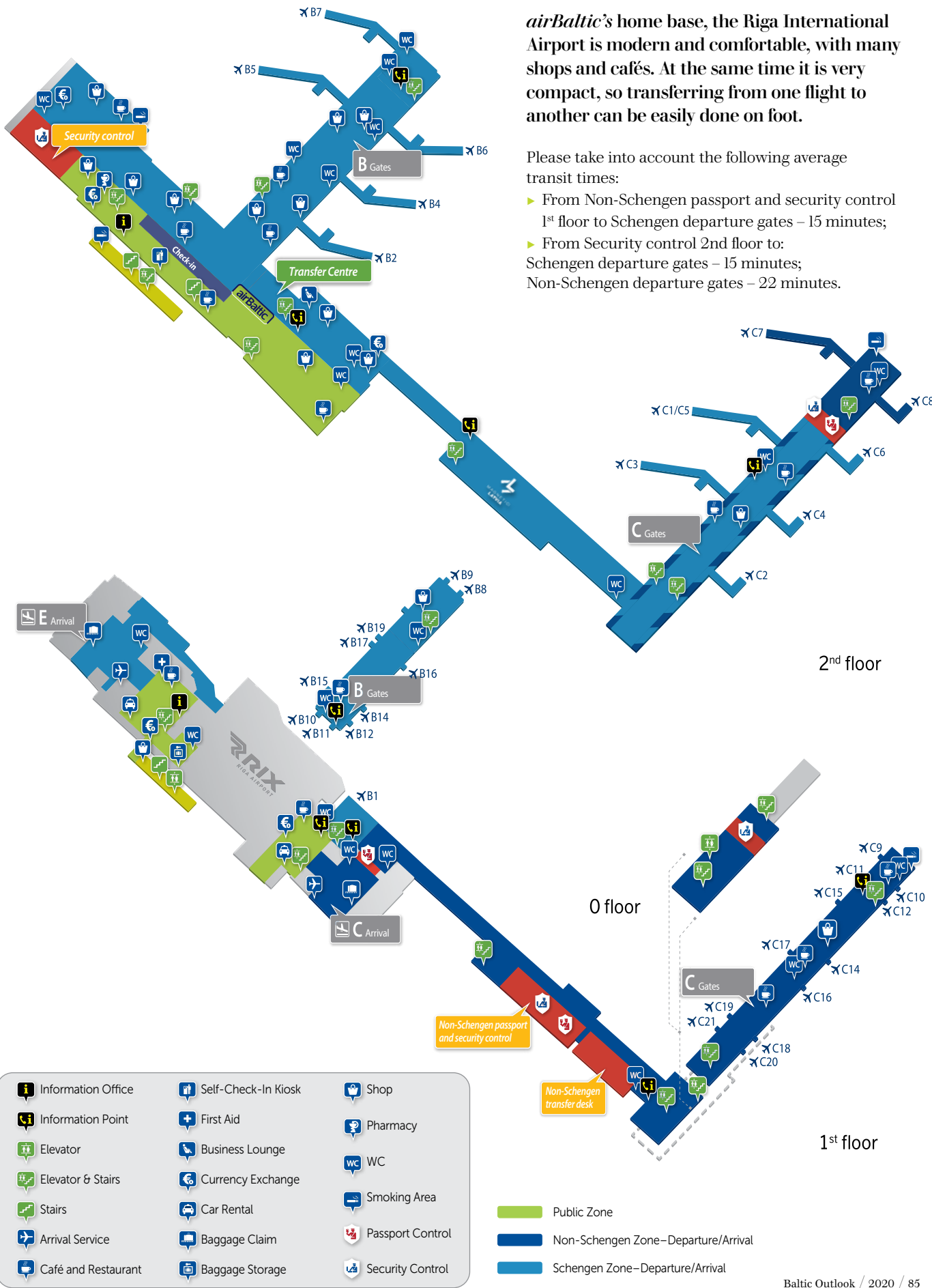
- Business class seats
- Priority seats
- Extra legroom seats
- Regular seats

Use of portable electronic devices





















	BOARDING	TAXI BEFORE TAKE-OFF	TAKE-OFF	CRUISE	APPROACH AND LANDING	TAXI AFTER LANDING
Connectivity GSM, Bluetooth, Flight Mode						
Handheld devices e.g. tablets, e-readers and mobile phones						
Heavy devices e.g. laptops and notebooks						

* Shall be stowed in overhead bin or under the front seat inside an appropriate bag.

Welcome to Riga International Airport



A map of Europe illustrating flight routes from Vilnius, Lithuania, to various European cities. The map uses color-coded lines to represent different types of flights: red lines for direct flights and blue lines for flights with one stop. Vilnius is marked with a red dot and labeled in large, bold, black capital letters. Other cities shown include London, Amsterdam, Berlin, Paris, Frankfurt, Munich, Vienna, Prague, Warsaw, Hamburg, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Tallinn, Riga, and many others. The map also shows major geographical features like the North Atlantic Ocean and the English Channel.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
|  AEGEAN
<small>A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER</small> |  AEROFLOT
<small>Russian Airlines</small> |  AIRFRANCE |
|  |  AirSERBIA |  |
| Austrian  |  AZERBAIJAN
AIRLINES |  BRITISH
AIRWAYS |
| Belavia |  brussels airlines |  CZECH
AIRLINES |
| الإتihad
ETIHAD
<small>AIRWAYS</small> |  GEORGIAN AIRLINES | IBERIA  |
|  KLM  |  MAY | <small>POLSKIE LINIE</small>
LOT |
|  SAS
<small>Scandinavian Airlines</small> |  TAP
<small>AEROPORTUGAL</small> |  TAROM |
|  UZBEKISTAN
<small>airways</small> | | |

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Heavy cabin baggage

You can take on board one cabin bag (55x40x23 cm) and one personal item (30x40x10 cm) with a total weight of eight kilograms free of charge.

However, sometimes you may need to carry more but want to avoid waiting for a checked suitcase at the baggage belt. Now you can **add an extra four kilograms to your cabin baggage for only EUR 11.99** and take a total of 12 kilograms on board.

Please note: If you purchase extra cabin baggage weight, your cabin baggage must still remain within the above-mentioned dimensions. Exceeding the allowed cabin baggage weight or size limits will cost EUR 60 at the airport.



Flight cancellation and name change options

For your peace of mind, add the option to cancel your reservation and get a full refund in the form of an *airBaltic* gift card in case your travel plans change. This service costs **EUR 24.99** per passenger per direction.

Or add the option to change the passenger name in your ticket for a fee of **EUR 7.99** per flight segment.

Both services are available only on [airBaltic.com](https://airbaltic.com) when purchasing *GREEN* or *GREEN plus* tickets.



Checked baggage

Add checked baggage if you want to take up to **20 kilograms**, including liquids over 100 ml, which are not allowed in cabin baggage. The cheapest option is to book checked baggage along with your ticket at airbaltic.com starting from **EUR 14.99**. You can also add baggage anytime later at a higher price.



Pre-order a meal

Order a meal before your flight and be among the first served on board. Choose our great value meal sets, which include a main course, dessert, and a drink starting from **EUR 9.99**. All meals are freshly prepared and packed separately under strict hygiene standards. Special vegetarian and kids' meals are also available.



Reserve a seat

Are you a window person, or do you favour more legroom? Want to avoid the middle seat or sit together with your family? Or do you want to sit in the front to be the first off the plane?

Whichever it is, you can secure your favourite seat in advance starting from **EUR 4.99**. With a reserved seat you will enjoy an additional bonus – the opportunity to **check in for your flight already five days before departure** (instead of the usual 36 hours).



Fast track in Riga

Add fast-track security check to your booking for only **EUR 9.99** and skip the security lines at Riga Airport.



Special equipment*

Whatever your hobby, you don't have to live without it during your trip. Take your bicycle, skis, or golf bag with you for **EUR 29.99**.

Guitars, cellos, and other fragile musical instruments that do not fit in cabin baggage can be transported on the seat next to the passenger if a special ticket has been purchased for their transportation.



Assistance for children flying alone*

If you are unable to accompany your children, our crew can take care of them from the time they check in to the moment when they meet a parent or guardian at the destination airport. Unaccompanied minor service costs from **EUR 60** and is available for children aged 5 to 17.



Travelling with pets*

Your furry friend can travel in the cabin if its crate fits under the seat in front of you. Larger animals are placed in the cargo hold during the flight.

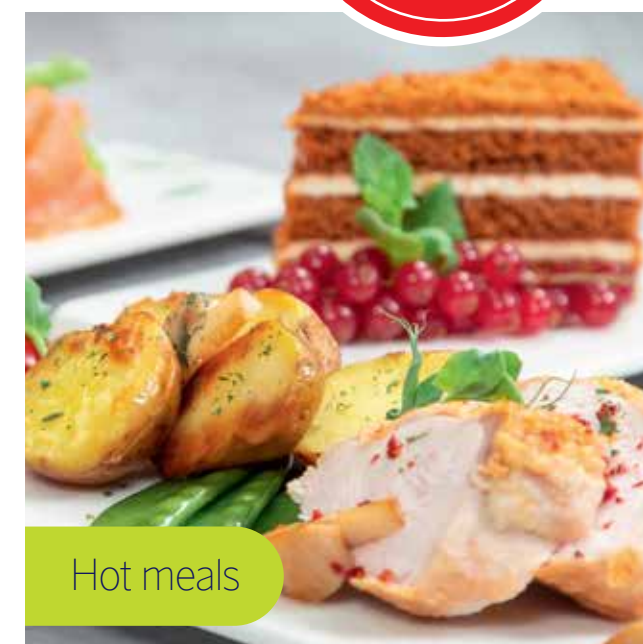


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