

# baltic

JANUARY 2014

## outlook

airBaltic  
inflight magazine

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The new trend:  
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## Abu Dhabi –

the desert gazelle with  
a contemporary scope



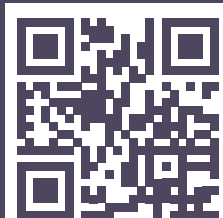
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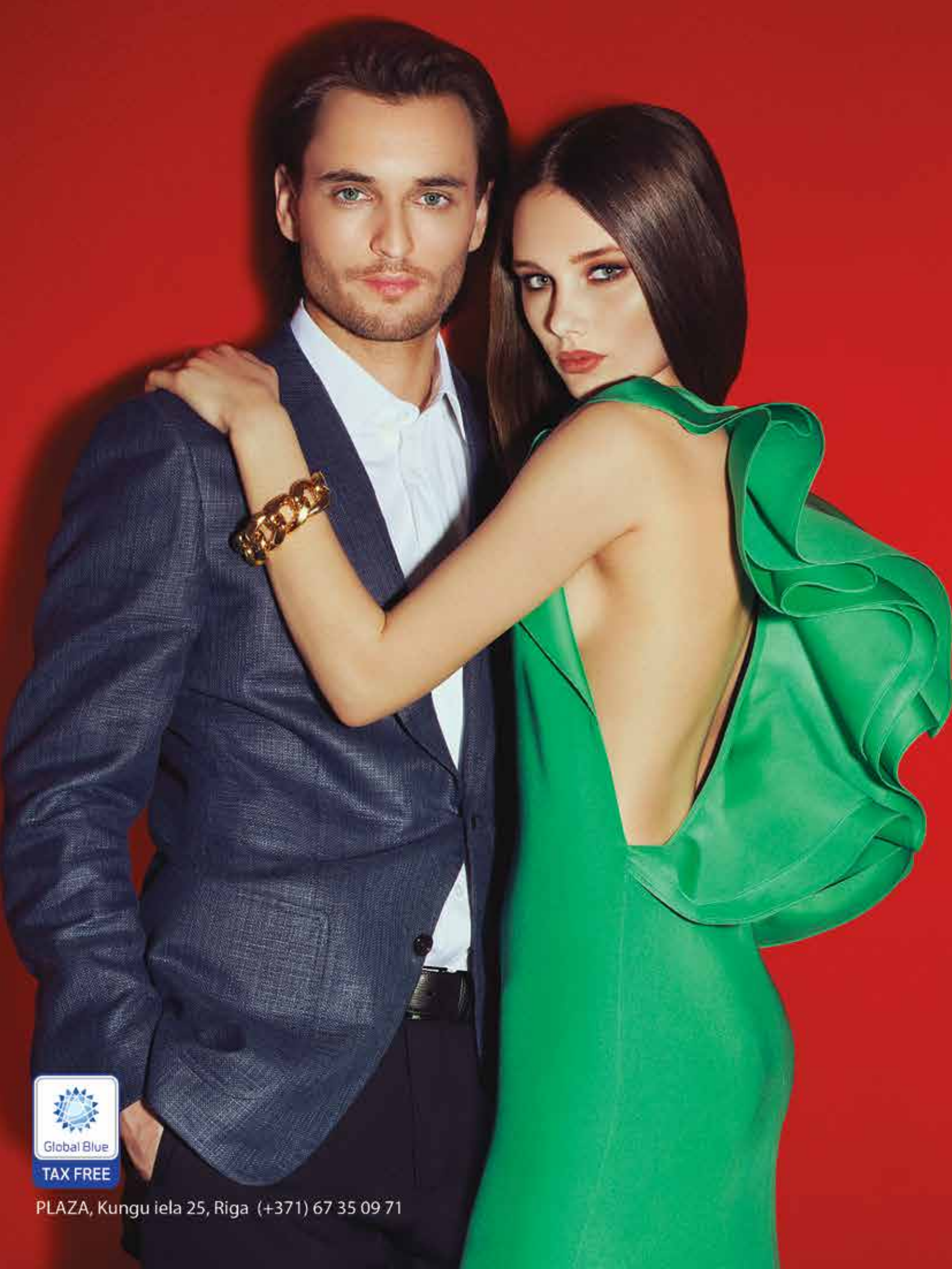
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Martin Alexander Gauss  
CEO of airBaltic

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2014 is also a key milestone for *airBaltic*. Our ReShape business turnaround programme has been a success story, and we are ahead of our own targets for achieving profitability this year. Yes, it is true that our remarkable results have been obtained against the backdrop of deep cuts in both our fleet size and in the total amount that we fly. We also had to revise our route map. However, these sacrifices have been counterbalanced by the gains of a more modern fleet, significantly higher efficiency in the utilisation of our aircraft, and better service on high-demand routes. All of this is contributing to *airBaltic's* long-term sustainability and places us in a

more favourable position to achieve our plan towards 2022 and beyond.

In another important milestone, Latvia adopted the euro as its currency on January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. We look forward to the positive effects of the single European currency, and hope that it will reinforce Latvia's economy, which has been the fastest-growing in the EU for eight consecutive quarters. Furthermore, the city of our home base – Riga – is a European Capital of Culture in 2014. We believe that in becoming a cultural epicentre of Europe and in hosting hundreds of special events, Riga will inspire millions of visitors, who will be able to enjoy Latvian music, fine arts, cinema, pop culture, museum exhibitions and other events – each trying to outclass the other in diversity to attract more attention.

Did you know that on a single day, such as on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, the global aviation industry serves an average of 8.5 million passengers, compared to just one traveller a hundred years earlier?

Thank you for flying *airBaltic*!

Yours,  
Martin Alexander Gauss





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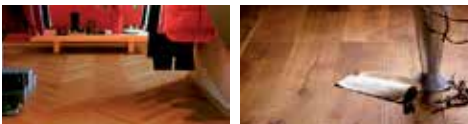


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# Mountain charm

January has always been my favourite month for skiing in the Rocky Mountains of North America. I relish the winter there. The sun may warm you for a bit in the shelter of a mountain chalet, but the cold and the wind make the slopes seem particularly rugged. When you rub your frozen fingers by the fireplace in the chimney, they hurt excruciatingly and your face feels like it's burning. If you are a romantic, then you might feel a certain kinship with great polar explorers such as Roald Amundsen and Ernest Shackleton.

For me, skiing in the Rockies during January was love at first sight. I was in my fourth year of architectural studies. I enjoyed the mountain experience so much that I decided to drop out of school during the spring term and become a ski bum in Aspen, Colorado. When I first visited, the town still showed signs of its former silver mining history. Being a ski bum was quite easy at the time. I landed a job driving cabs for the *Little Percent Taxi Company*, complete with a place to sleep in the attic above the office, a tiny salary and good tips. This was enough for me to buy food, beer and lift tickets.

The routine was two days at work, a third day on stand-by and the fourth day all on my own, with a "fleet" that consisted of a



AUSTRIAN SKI INSTRUCTORS  
YELLED AT WELL-CLAD LADIES:  
"UP IN ZE BUTT, DOWN IN  
ZE KNEES!"

small limousine, a regular car and a jeep. The best drives were either the long run to Denver, which included crossing two mountain passes, or the jeep runs to pick up those who had skied down to the back side of Aspen Mountain. One time I was thrilled to see the Austrian Olympic medal winners Toni Sailer and Anderl Molterer weaving down with grace through the waist-deep powder.

Aspen was a real skier's town in those days. A single-seat lift took you most of the way up the mountain, followed by a much shorter ride on a two-seater to the Round House. During the first portion of the long ride upward, I was occasionally entertained by Austrian ski instructors yelling at well-clad ladies: "Up in ze butt, down in ze knees!" Since I didn't make enough money for skiing lessons, I initially learned the sport by falling at every turn.

Driving passengers into town made me feel important, as I answered the inevitable questions about snow and weather conditions. However, it was not much fun taking the "wounded" back the other way. Those were times of mainly wooden skis and horrid bindings, so broken bones were frequent. My saddest case was a frail but delightful old lady, who had been very excited about skiing on the mountain. The next afternoon she was waiting for my cab, heartbroken, her leg in a cast. "My children will never let me ski again!" she lamented.

Yes, Aspen once was a skier's paradise. Today it is perhaps better known for its marble and copper palaces, bankers and oil sheiks. That being said, there are still some fine skiing places in the Rockies. BO





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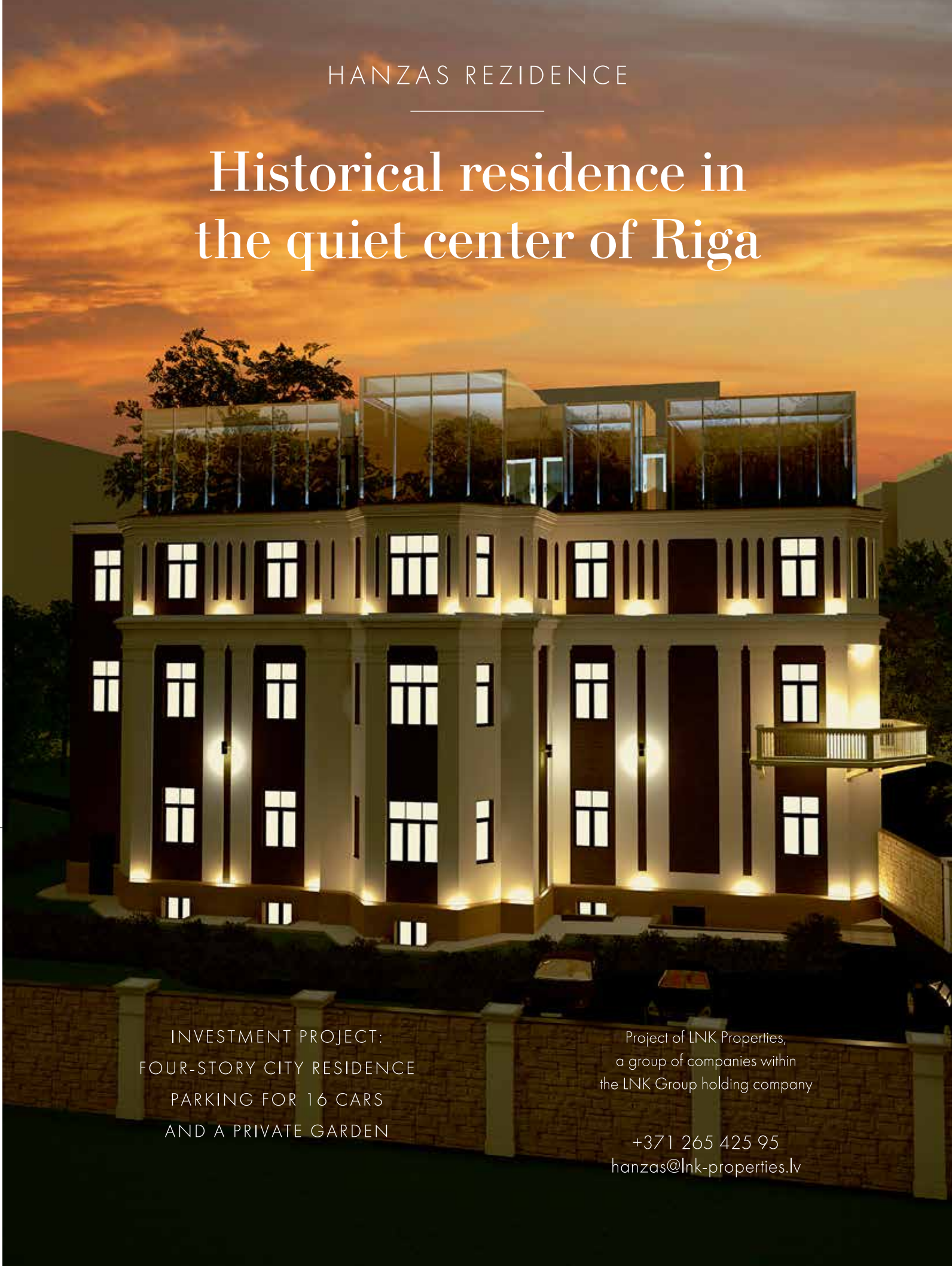
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# A symbiosis

## of art and nature in Oslo

Open Book by Diane Maclean

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**Thanks** to a whole pleiade of brilliant initiatives in various fields of art, Norway's capital city has become a top destination for cultural tourists.

In 2012, for example, the Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art opened its doors to the public. Designed by Italian architect Renzo Piano, the museum is located in the refurbished former dock territory of the Tjuvholmen peninsula, which also houses a large number of art galleries.

The Ekeberg sculpture park (Ekebergparken) is another prominent addition to Oslo's cultural landscape that came into being in 2013. The park is open round the clock and can be found on Ekeberg Hill, the place that inspired famous Norwegian artist Edvard Munch to paint his legendary painting *The Scream*. At one time, the hill was a public park frequented by goats set to pasture, but the area became neglected during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Now the park has regained its former glory, with 31 sculptures by famous old masters and new contemporary artists spread out on its 26-hectare territory.

Among the works in the sculpture park are *Eva* by Auguste Rodin and Louise Bourgeois' famous sculpture *The Couple*, consisting of two aluminium figures hanging between two huge pine trees. Here, in the quiet, peaceful setting of the park, it seems like the embracing couple will remain united together for eternity.

The Ekeberg sculpture park is the brainchild of Norwegian billionaire entrepreneur and art collector Christian Ringnes, who harboured the dream of setting up the unique exhibition space for nearly a decade. Ringnes is the chairman of the board and largest shareholder of two real estate companies. Through a foundation that he set up, he also owns one of the largest private collections of art in Norway, including works by Auguste Rodin, Richard Hudson, Salvador Dalí and Marc Quinn.

"It's all about giving something back to Oslo, a city that I love and that has given me the opportunity for a wonderful life and a great professional career," said Ringnes when I met him at the sculpture park in 2013.

### THE SCULPTURES IN EKEBERG PARK ARE NOT RINGNES' ONLY GIFT TO OSLO

Some of the sculptures in the park are from Ringnes' private collection, others are acquisitions, while still others were created specially to be displayed in the park. The choice of sculptures to be displayed was entrusted to an arts council set up by the C. Ludens Ringnes Foundation and the City of Oslo. Eventually, the park is to be graced by 50 to 55 works, with one sculpture per year being added over the next 15 years.

"I think that will be enough. When you walk around here, you will notice that every sculpture really has a space of its own. Installing too many works would be counterproductive, as the sculptures would interfere visually with each other," says Ringnes.

It is precisely the feeling that every work of art has a space of its own that turns a walk through this park into an enchanting voyage, because you don't know what awaits you around the next corner of the winding footpath. The park is a unique symbiosis of art and nature and is a wonderful source of inspiration at any time of the year! **BO**



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## SPOTLIGHT ON WINTER

### Five things that you should do in Latvia in January

- Enjoy the quiet countryside, snow-covered manor park and rejuvenating spa procedures at the *Annas Hotel* design hotel ([www.annashotel.lv](http://www.annashotel.lv)).
- Watch the winter round of the *FIA European Rally Championship*, which will take place from January 31 to February 2 along the snow- and ice-covered roads of Liepāja and Kuldīga districts.

- Open the winter kiteboarding season on the frozen lakes and snow-covered hills of Latvia's central Vidzeme region.
- Prepare and then enjoy a tasty gourmet dinner together with skilled master chefs at places such as the *Miele Gallery Riga* or the *Viesistaba Vintage* teaching and leisure space.
- Visit one or more of Latvia's most beautiful towns, including Cēsis, Alūksne, Kuldīga and Talsi.

## READING LIST



### A Delicious Life: New Food Entrepreneurs by Robert Klanten, Sven Ehmann and Marie Le Fort (EUR 38, [www.gestalten.com](http://www.gestalten.com))

This title looks into the passionate taste-makers at the forefront of the alternative food movement and shows what makes them tick, including organic farming, fusion cooking, foodzines, gourmet food trucks and unique restaurants. A great compendium for foodies, foodists, kitchen snobs and anyone who loves a good meal.



### 20<sup>th</sup>-Century World Architecture: The Phaidon Atlas (EUR 144, [www.phaidon.com](http://www.phaidon.com))

A colossal 824 pages of detailed imagery (with 5,000+ photographs and illustrations!) and detailed, engaged writing about the last century's most astounding buildings. Hefty and culture-rich, surely this is THE book gift, whether for architecture aficionados or people with large coffee tables.



### Beauty

It's not that there aren't enough nail polish brands to get excited about already, but when *Balmain* launches a Nail Couture Collection, you take note. This limited-edition collection has classic scarlet, black and nude polishes alongside a matte top coat, all packaged into an elegant gift box. Exclusively available at [www.thisisbeautymart.com](http://www.thisisbeautymart.com).

## ON THIS MONTH'S MENU



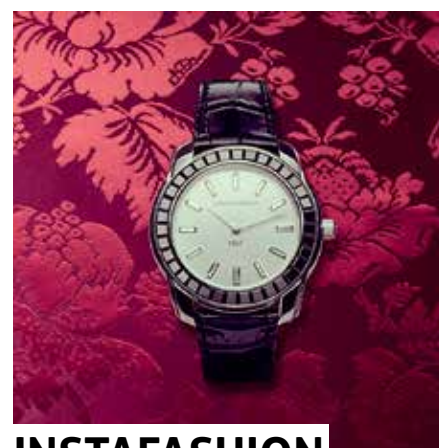
Celebrate life in all its splendour with some tips by *Baltic Outlook*

### Music

Sick of Robin Thicke? Tired of Miley Cyrus? Here is a band that's putting real music back onto the charts. English trio *London Grammar* has been causing a real stir with its epic yet incredibly intimate debut EP *Hey Now*.

### Design

The Latvian *MUCA* brand is known for tasteful items made of recycled oak barrels. They can be used as decorative elements to create a special ambience in your home or as practical table items for everyday and special occasions. Price: around EUR 60 at the Christmas Popup store on Kaļķu iela 3 in Riga.



### INSTAFASHION Dolce & Gabbana [instagram.com/dolceandgabbana](http://instagram.com/dolceandgabbana)

## Outstanding acoustics

Professional musicians all seem to agree that *GORS* is the concert hall with the best acoustics in Latvia. Opened last year in the eastern Latvian city of Rēzekne, *GORS* has quickly made a name for itself and this month will be hosting a number of prominent guests, including the *Sinfonietta Rīga* chamber orchestra, the *Orthodox Singers* (*Pravoslavniye Pevchiye*) men's choir from Moscow and ethno jazz diva Mayra Andrade, who hails from Cabo Verde. Regardless of which performance you choose to attend, it is also worth touring Latgale region, one of the most picturesque parts of the country. More information at [www.latgalesgors.lv](http://www.latgalesgors.lv).



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# Simple Minds concert



## Palladium concert hall, Riga January 26

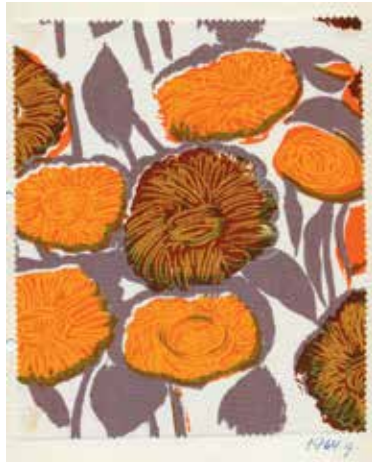
One of the UK's most successful music groups, *Simple Minds*, has embarked on a *Greatest Hits Live* tour of Europe to mark its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and Riga will be the band's only stop in the Baltics. The group first gained commercial success during the 1980s, together

with such legendary groups as *The Cure*, *The Psychedelic Furs*, *Joy Division* and *New Order*. Hailing from Glasgow, Scotland, the band continues to pack stadiums and other venues all across the world.

Tickets at [www.bilesuserviss.lv](http://www.bilesuserviss.lv).  
Price: EUR 46.95 – 85.37  
Marijas iela 21

# JANUARY 2014

## Exhibition *On the Track of Great Life. Graphic Language of the 1960s in Latvia* Museum of Decorative Arts and Design, Riga / Until February 2



Ērika Itnere (1925–2011). Sample of printed cloth. 1965. Cotton. Private collection. Scanned image

This exhibition gives viewers the opportunity to see Latvian-made items from the 1960s and to explore the aesthetic ideals of that period. These ideals were influenced by the continued development of light industry and advances in technology, including space travel. This was a time when Latvian designers and artists worked together with manufacturers and scientists to create high-quality and artistically pleasing consumer goods that met the demands of mass production, world standards and the latest fashion trends.

More information at [www.lnmm.lv](http://www.lnmm.lv).  
Skārņu iela 10/20

# Theatre performances directed by Alvis Hermanis

## Riga Film Studio (*Rīgas Kinostudija*) January 25, 26, 30 and 31, February 1, 19:00

To celebrate Riga's status as a European Capital of Culture for the year 2014, the *forte forte* contemporary theatre programme is showcasing performances by some of Europe's best directors all year long. The first week of events will be dedicated to Alvis Hermanis, the artistic director of the New Riga Theatre, and to his successful shows in Western Europe. On

January 25 and 26, the Munich Chamber Theatre (*Münchner Kammerspiele*) will perform *Late Neighbours*, based on the works of Isaac Bashevis Singer, while on January 30 and 31 and February 1, the *Vienna Burgtheatre* will put on a showing of *Fathers* by Andreas Erdmann, with the participation of Latvian actors Gundars Āboliņš and Juris Baratiņskis.

Tickets at [www.bilesuparadize.lv](http://www.bilesuparadize.lv).  
Price: EUR 28.46  
Šmerļa iela 3



A scene from the play *Fathers*

# Richard Wagner's *Rienzi*, the Last of the Tribunes

## Latvian National Opera, Riga January 19, 21

German opera composer Richard Wagner began work on his third opera, *Rienzi*, while living in Riga. It was his first success and propelled him to further stardom. This new production emphasizes the composer's connection with Riga and will launch Riga's year as a European Capital of Culture. The lavish show will be graced by the presence of various prominent solo artists and will also feature electronic music by new Latvian sound artist Voldemārs Johansons as well as costumes designed by the internationally acclaimed Latvian designer duo MAREUNROLS.

Tickets at [www.bilesuparadize.lv](http://www.bilesuparadize.lv).  
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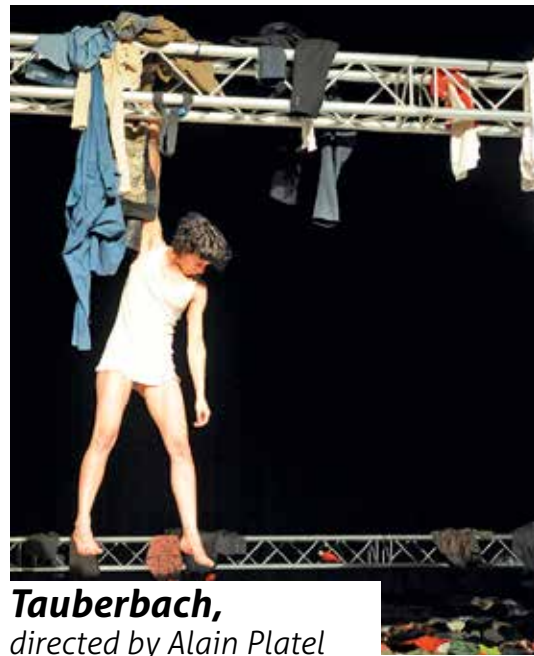
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# Munich



**Tauberbach,**  
directed by Alain Platel

## Münchner Kammerspiele January and February

Alain Platel is one of the most unusual contemporary choreographers and theatre directors and is among the best-known in Europe. The Belgian's greatest strength lies in his ability to open up the characters who live on his stages through various forms of improvisation.

Platel's latest work involves a collaboration between *les ballets C de la B*, the modern ballet troupe that he founded in Ghent in 1984, and outstanding Dutch actress Elsie de Brauw. *Tauberbach* draws its inspiration from *Estamira*, a documentary film by Marcos Prado about a woman who lives in a garbage dump. The central

theme of this new work centres on maintaining one's self-respect while living in dire conditions.

Another source of inspiration for the work is composer Artur Zmijewski's project *Tauber Bach*, in which deaf singers perform music compositions by Johann Sebastian Bach. "Those who hear this music for the first time are deeply shocked," says Platel. "You almost can't call it singing. It sounds more like moaning or crying. And you can only faintly detect the sounds of Bach in this music. However, in the mind of the deaf singer, these are all real notes," he explains. Premiering in Munich, *Tauberbach* will also be shown in other European cities this year.

Maximilianstraße 26-28  
① [www.muenchner-kammerspiele.de](http://www.muenchner-kammerspiele.de)

# Helsinki

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## Henrik Vibskov

### Design Museum

January 24 – May 11

Helsinki's Design Museum is starting off the year with a real burst of energy in the form of a personal exhibition by Danish fashion wunderkind Henrik Vibskov. Having recently marked his first decade on the fashion scene, Vibskov is one of the brightest names on the global fashion map. He is also the only Scandinavian fashion designer to demonstrate his menswear collections on the official designer list at Paris Fashion Week and has been doing so each year since 2003.

Vibskov's creations stand out with their bright colours, striking graphic elements and innovative silhouettes in what could be seen as a mix of street style and avant-garde fashion.

Vibskov feels like a fish in the water when he merges the boundaries between seemingly different media, creating conceptually new items in the process. This is manifestly evident at the Helsinki exhibition, which features the designer's newest works as well as those from his solo exhibition *Neck Plus Ultra*, which was shown in Copenhagen and Paris last year. The name is a play of words derived from the Latin motto *nec plus ultra* ("nothing further beyond") and focuses on the neck as a part of the human anatomy. Various neck-shaped objects are playfully arranged in a surreal fashion, as in the *Stiff Neck Chamber*, where bird's necks look down from the ceiling.

Korkeavuorenkatu 23  
① [www.designmuseum.fi](http://www.designmuseum.fi)



© ALASTAIR PHILIP WIPER

## Dance Machines – From Léger to Kraftwerk

### Moderna Museet

January 22 – April 27

The first exhibition of 2014 at the *Moderna Museet* deals with people and their relationship with machines. This subject has been explored for more than four decades by the world famous German electronic music group *Kraftwerk*. As a bridge between our current time and the beginning of modernism a century ago, *Kraftwerk* will present a 3-D video installation named *12345678*, which the group created in 2013, thus initiating a dialogue with drawings, paintings and moving pictures from the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. During that tumultuous period, Fernand Léger, Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia and other artists felt so inspired by Henry Ford's inspired by the conveyor belts introduced by Henry Ford and other forms of mass production that they began to portray human bodies as machines. The opening of the exhibition will be complemented by two *Kraftwerk* concerts at Stockholm's *Cirkus* arena on January 21 and 22.

Skeppsholmen  
① [www.modernamuseet.se](http://www.modernamuseet.se)

# Stockholm

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Kraftwerk, 3-D video installation *12345678*, Autobahn, 2013

  
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Tacita Dean  
SMK

**January 17 – May 18**  
Although British visual artist Tacita Dean (1965) is best known for her videos and films, she also excels in the graphic arts, which are the focus of this exhibition at the National Gallery of Denmark in Copenhagen (*Statens Museum for Kunst - SMK*). Dean first gained fame as a member of the Young British Artists group (YBA), together with the Chapman brothers, Gary Hume, Tracey Emin, Damien Hirst and others. Nowadays these “young”

artists have little in common, aside from the fact that they made their first major exhibitions together in the 1990s and each has gone their own way. In her print works, Dean explores a recurring motif in her art: the relationship between memory and reality. She is fascinated by that which no longer exists and, interestingly, she has managed to film a number of preminent artists shortly before their deaths, including American abstract expressionist Cy Twombly.

Sølvgade 48-50  
www.smk.dk

Brussels

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Leoš Janáček’s *Jenufa*,  
directed by Alvis Hermanis  
La Monnaie

**January 21 – February 7**  
Latvian theatre director Alvis Hermanis says that in order for a play or an opera to ring true, one has to find the key that opens it to a wider audience. For a long time, Hermanis has been looking for and finding these keys in the time and place where these works were first created. Most recently, Hermanis has sought the key to Leoš Janáček’s opera *Jenufa* in the curved lines of Art Nouveau works and in the culture of *fin-de-siècle* Europe.  
Czech composer Leoš Janáček (1854-1928) sought to convey a form of expression for a reality that 19<sup>th</sup>-century operas didn’t adequately transmit, at least not in his opinion. As Janáček often said, he was looking for “windows to the soul”. Consequently, Janáček left the academic milieu and began to visit the Moravian villages of his native land, listening to the simple folk songs that were still sung by the local inhabitants. The works that Janáček subsequently produced were extremely laconic, tempting interpreters of his music to “fix up” his sparse music scores and add some extra notes.

Place de la Monnaie  
www.lamonnaie.be

Copenhagen



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Tacita Dean, Dead Budgie Project, 2002



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Little Black Book

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Hungary's capital city draws various types of travellers, including those who want to get a taste of history as well as those who appreciate modern, contemporary vibes. Here are five spots that every visitor to Budapest should consider seeing.



Hotels Brody House

Budapest's artistically bohemian atmosphere is perhaps best enjoyed at the city's small design hotels. For example, the intimate and creative ambience at *Brody House* will make guests feel like the members of a privileged club. The hotel is located in the former parliament building, and its interior has been specially created to avoid the impression of perfectionism. *Brody House* regularly hosts various thematic events, which is why over the course of a single evening you might first find yourself attending a literary gathering and then looking at an exhibition of contemporary artworks.

Bródy Sándor útca 10  
www.brodyhouse.com



Restaurants Callas Café and Restaurant

Going out for a meal is essential in a city whose café culture has been compared to that of Paris. The

*Callas Café and Restaurant* stands out with an ornate Art Deco dining hall, heavy industrial chandeliers, marble walls and an excellent bistro atmosphere. You'll want to linger for a while, enjoy life and sink into those comfortable leather sofas. Order a glass of *Bollinger* champagne while you're there, as the restaurant is an official partner of the reputed champagne producer, and try out some fine Hungarian dishes. Since the establishment is located on the central *Andrássy útca*, you may be tempted to go shopping before or after your meal.

Andrássy útca 20  
www.callascafe.hu

Museums House of Terror (Terror Háza)

This building has a sombre air about it, as it houses a museum dedicated to the victims of the fascist and communist regimes that ruled Hungary at various times during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The edifice obtained its current appearance in 2002, when architect and designer Attila F. Kovács added an eye-catching

metal roof overhang to the exterior. When the sunlight shines through the letter-shaped holes of the overhang, the word *Terror* appears onto the walls of the building. The museum has become a prominent feature on the face of the city, with the near magnetic power of drawing both locals and visitors alike to see it.

Andrássy útca 60  
www.terrorhaza.hu



Entertainment Ruin pubs

Budapest's ruin pubs provide a sharp contrast to the neat and tidy streets of the city's Old Town. A whole slew of them have been opened in abandoned and decrepit buildings, making for a surreal atmosphere and drawing various creative souls. *Szimpla Kert* (Kazinczy útca 14) is one of the few legendary ruin pubs that has remained in the same place for years. Generally, such establishments remain open until someone buys the building and evicts them. Not to worry, though. The ruin pubs soon reopen in another abandoned building, with the information of their new location being spread by word of mouth. The atmosphere in these places is truly unique.

www.szimpla.hu  
www.ruinpubs.com



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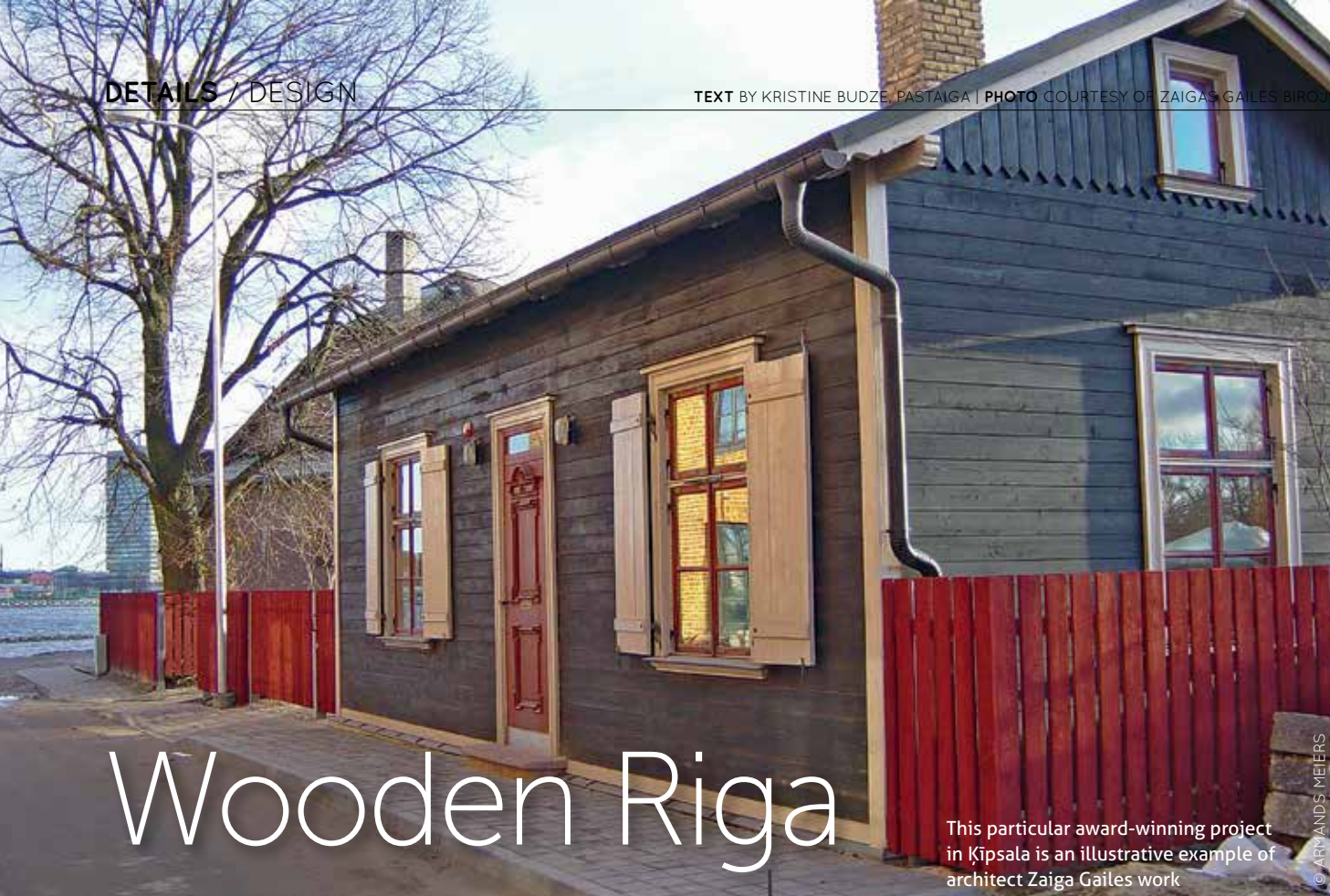
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# Wooden Riga

This particular award-winning project in Ķīpsala is an illustrative example of architect Zaiga Gailes work

© ARMANDS MEIERS

As more and more old wooden buildings receive facelifts in Riga, they are becoming increasingly prominent on the city's architectural landscape. Some of the finest restored examples can be seen in Pārdaugava, Ķīpsala and other outlying neighbourhoods of the city.

About a century ago, most of the edifices in Riga were made out of wood, as was the case in other northern European cities. Many of these buildings were gradually replaced by stone structures, particularly in the Old Town and other central districts. However, a surprisingly large number of

wooden buildings still remain, forming a part of Riga's distinct look and character.

Even today, some wooden houses can be found in the centre of the city, where large apartment blocks and other stone edifices rose up in quick succession at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Squeezed in among a sea of multi-storey stone buildings, these small wooden homes are a throwback to another era and add to the uniqueness of Latvia's capital city. The fact that they are still standing is due to various twists of fate, as Riga's city planners had foreseen the large-scale construction of stone structures all across the city centre. That is why the greatest concentration of wooden buildings is in other parts of Riga. Many are former apartment houses for manual labourers or small family residences, while others were built as stately manor homes.

The majority of Riga's wooden buildings were frozen in time during the Soviet occupation of the country, which lasted until 1991. Due to a lack of funding and general indifference, the buildings' appearance hardly changed, ensuring that elements of their original décor remain preserved to this day. However, since these edifices were poorly maintained, they assumed an increasingly neglected appearance.

Architect Zaiga Gaile has played a large part in changing people's perception of Riga's wooden buildings, which are gradually being turned from forlorn and neglected homes into tastefully remodelled mansions, testifying to their new owners' wealth and taste. The architect lives and works in Ķīpsala, a former fishermen's town just across the Daugava River from Riga's Old Town. At first, she and her team worked on a number of the neighbourhood's existing buildings. Later, she directed the careful dismantling of wooden houses in other parts of the city.

Among the buildings that have been restored by Zaiga Gaile and her team is the Philosophers' House, a tiny wooden abode that once served as a fisherman's smokehouse. It had been in a state of disrepair for years, its roof caved in, before Gaile had it renewed and refurbished it with modern 21<sup>st</sup>-century trappings. Restoring and modernizing old wooden buildings has been a hallmark of Gaile's approach and this particular award-winning project is an illustrative example of her work. Thanks to her and other people's efforts, Riga's old wooden buildings are receiving a new life, with the active participation of a new generation of creative architects. **BO**



Interior of the Philosopher's house

  
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# Shades of purple

Prepare for a purple and pink-tinged saturation! *Pantone*, a renowned arbiter of hues, has announced *Radiant Orchid* as the Colour of the Year for 2014. It is a rich jewel tone that's described as a "surprisingly versatile shade". Here are our stylists' picks to inspire you



- 1/ *Una Vita* bag, EUR 110.98 at *Klase*
- 2/ *Aristocrat Kids* tulle skirt, EUR 36.99 at *Klase*
- 3/ *Rotas ar garšu* brooch, EUR 68.29 at *Klase*
- 4/ *Una Vita* clutch purse, EUR 42.68 at *Klase*
- 5/ *ina's* bow tie, EUR 36.99 at *SISTERS*
- 6/ *JODO* leather notepad, EUR 15.65 at *Klase*
- 7/ *Una Vita* bag, EUR 106.70 at *Klase*
- 8/ *Ginta Sičeva* clutch purse, EUR 93.99 at *Taste Latvia*
- 9/ *Cherry Picking* string lights, EUR 49 at *SISTERS*

Addresses in Riga: *Taste Latvia* at the *Galerija Centrs*, Audēju iela 16; *Klase* at *Elizabetes iela* 85a; *SISTERS* at the *Spīze* shopping complex, *Lielirbes iela* 29.

Prices are listed solely for information purposes

A PASSION  
TO DREAM



ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION MAY HAVE ADVERSE EFFECTS





Talented and energetic, Laima is devoted to traditional Latvian folk music, while taking the kokle to new levels of improvisation. She has rocked her electric kokle on the *Eirodziesma* show and performed alongside break dancers. She has also had jam sessions with musicians in Sweden playing Scandinavian traditional music.

Laima says that Latvian folk music has been a way for her to find out more about herself and her roots since her childhood, when she first heard the kokle and when she decided that she wanted to master it, before it was cool to do so. She eventually got a small ethnographic kokle and played it at home while studying at music school, gradually writing up a diary of sounds and expressing herself through the kokle's music. Laima has been inspired by the Latvian folk rock band *Ilgi* and the folk metal band *Skyforger* from an early age, while listening to various other types of music in between, including Beethoven's symphonies.

While studying ethnomusicology at the Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, she complemented her education by participating in an exchange program and learning new playing techniques at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland. In 2011, Laima became the first musician from Latvia to be included in the WOMEX Showcase, an international networking platform for the world music industry.

The increasingly popular musician has taken part in the Sacred Music Festival in Uppsala, Sweden, the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival in Germany and many other events. She has also performed alongside other well-known artists and academic ensembles. One of the most widely recognized is the *Sinfonietta Riga* chamber orchestra, led by outstanding conductor Normunds Šnē. Now Laima is reuniting with the renowned orchestra for a concert performance named *Sinfonietta Riga and Laima Jansone*, which will take place on January 31. This collaboration will be made even more special by the participation of ethno singer Biruta Ozoliņa and contemporary dancer Krišjānis Sants. **BO**  
 ① [www.laimajansone.com](http://www.laimajansone.com)

# Silver strings

Kokle player  
Laima Jansone

The kokle, a traditional Latvian instrument of the zither family, has no longer been considered outmoded for quite some time, and even less so after the release of Laima Jansone's first CD *Sidrabs* (the Latvian word for "silver") in 2011. Laima quickly gained a name for herself by showing the kokle in a new light and is now preparing for a concert together with the *Sinfonietta Riga* chamber orchestra at the end of this month.



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# Shareconomy



Pietro Torrigiani Malaspina  
and his wife Maddalena  
Fossombroni

Is your home or summer house too large for you to use it on your own? Do you love your city and do you like to show visitors around? Could you use a little extra cash? If so, then you are the perfect host for websites like *airbnb*, *wimdu* or *9flats*

**Italian** lawyer Pietro's answer was a clear "Si!" to all of the above, with the added fact that he lives in the Castello di Fosdinovo, a fairytale castle nestled on a beautiful hill that overlooks the Mediterranean coast in the northern part of Tuscany. Relaxed and friendly, Pietro would fit perfectly in a Woody Allen movie and happens to be the Duke of Malaspina.

His family once ruled large parts of northern Italy, but nowadays the lawyer wouldn't be able to afford the costs of keeping the castle without his guests.

"Shareconomy" (sharing economy) is the fastest growing part of the travel industry, bringing private hosts and paying guests together. Pietro is one of more than 300,000 hosts on *airbnb*, the market leader. The basic idea isn't new. In many countries, private hosts have rented out rooms to travellers for ages, and websites like *homeaway* have been offering holiday rentals for more than 10 years.

The difference between the websites is similar to the difference in using a Mac or a PC. *airbnb*, which works as a role model, matches travellers with people renting out a place to sleep for a fee. *Couchsurfing* is a free hospitality website, where guests and hosts can rate each other. *airbnb* combines these aspects, making booking at *airbnb* both fast and safe.

The trend has reached travellers of all ages

and types. It's no longer reduced to students and young professionals. More and more users are looking for really special vacation spots, which include airplanes, windmills, tree houses and genuine landmark buildings.

John uses the websites as a guest. The retired businessman from upstate New York undertook a European trip to 26 different places.

## THE TREND HAS REACHED TRAVELLERS OF ALL AGES AND TYPES

Travelling from Spain to Estonia, he stayed only with *airbnb*-listed hosts. "They are willing to open up their homes and

entrust them to strangers. I think that makes these people a different breed," says John, for whom meeting the hosts was the most interesting part of the journey. Only one or two places were a bit disappointing.

Not everybody is happy about the new trend. The hotel industry certainly isn't. Shareconomy websites have already reached a larger market share than the Hilton Group of hotels. Tax offices fear that many hosts don't declare their extra money. But then again, a study shows that shareconomy guests spent over 100 million euro in Berlin alone last year. They stayed an average of four nights longer than hotel guests and spent double the money. For hosts like Pietro, it's not just the money that counts. He appreciates the fact that "*airbnb* guests know how to get around in foreign countries. They are easy-going and love authentic places off the beaten track." **BO**



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2014



< Head coach Ted Nolan and his assistant Thomas Coolen at the world ice hockey championship game between Latvia and France in Helsinki in 2013

# Tiny country hopes to triumph among titans

Whenever the Latvian national team plays a game, you will be sure to hear the words *Latvija! Latvija!* thundering across the arena. Latvia's hockey fans are known throughout the world for their good-humoured and boisterous antics

That is because Latvia is a country where hockey binds the athletes together with their fans and where hockey unites all the people. As a nation with less than 2 million people, Latvia will be among the elite group of only 12 countries that are fielding hockey teams at the upcoming Winter Olympic Games in Sochi. This will be the fourth time in a row that the Latvian hockey team is represented at the Olympics. The first time was in Salt Lake City in 2002.

The 25 Latvian hockey players heading for Sochi in February make up about half of Latvia's Olympic team. While they are hoping to achieve good results for their country, the fact that they are taking part at all is an achievement in itself. The qualifying tournaments before each Olympics are harsh and give a preview of what's to come when small countries cross swords with the world's hockey powerhouses.

Ice hockey has been the number one sport in Latvia for decades. The enthusiasm is not so much about the results that Latvia's team obtains internationally, but more about the universal popularity of hockey among the general public. It is not just hardened sports fans who take an interest. The names of the players on Latvia's national team are known by the members of practically every household in the country.

Two years ago, the Latvian Ice Hockey Federation celebrated its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Between 1932 and 1940, when Latvia lost its independence, the Latvian national hockey team participated in more than 25 international hockey games. After the Second World War, Latvia played an important role in the development of hockey in the Soviet Union. It is said that Latvian players taught Russians how to play hockey, because at the time, bandy or ball hockey was the main type of hockey played in Russia.

Nevertheless, hockey experienced a decline in Latvia that lasted about two decades, until Viktor Tikhonov – the legendary hockey coach who later worked with such hockey powerhouses as CSKA Moscow – started working with the Dinamo Riga team. Until his arrival, the Latvian team had been relegated to the lowly third division in the Soviet hockey championships and had never made it to the top.

This was also the time when Latvian hockey superstar Helmut Balderis made his appearance on the scene. Starting his professional career with Dinamo Riga at the age of 16 in 1968, he became the most valuable player of the Soviet hockey league in 1977. Two Latvian goaltenders, Vitali Samoilov and Artūrs Irbe, joined Balderis in the league during the late 1980s. In 1990, Irbe was named the best goaltender at the 1990 Ice Hockey World Championship.

After Latvia had regained its independence in 1991, the Latvian Ice Hockey Federation was officially reinstated and could again join the International Ice Hockey Federation. This represented a new beginning for hockey in Latvia. Starting off in the lower Division 3, the Latvian team fought its way up during the next six years, until it attained a place in the strongest Division 1, where it has remained ever since. The Latvian team achieved its best results at the Ice Hockey World Championships in 1997 and 2004, coming in 7<sup>th</sup> both times.

This time round, the Latvian team is being led by its head coach of two years, Theodore "Ted" Nolan, a former NHL left-winger who hails from the Ojibwe First Nations of Canada. Nolan coached the Buffalo Sabres for three years and was the

National Hockey League's top coach in 1997, receiving the prestigious Jack Adams Award for his efforts. Now he is back in Buffalo again as the Sabres' interim head coach.

Although Nolan does in a way represent Canada – the birthplace of hockey and a traditional superpower in the sport – he has not positioned himself as a know-it-all stranger but has worked on understanding the psychology of his new team to generate respectable results. He sees parallels between the Latvians' history of subjugation at the hands of foreign countries and that of his own Ojibwe nation. Both people have known the despair of trying to maintain their culture and language in unfavourable circumstances. More than just a sports discipline, hockey has been with the Latvian nation through good times and bad, permitting Latvians to keep their heads up and remain proud of their achievements.

Latvia has some of the most active and possibly the loudest hockey fans in the world. They tirelessly follow the national team and support it wherever it plays. When the Latvian team plays at home and wins a game, fans pay a visit to the embassy of the opposing team's home country and lay flowers at its gate. This unusual tradition is not just a dance of victory but also a display of respect for the competitor.

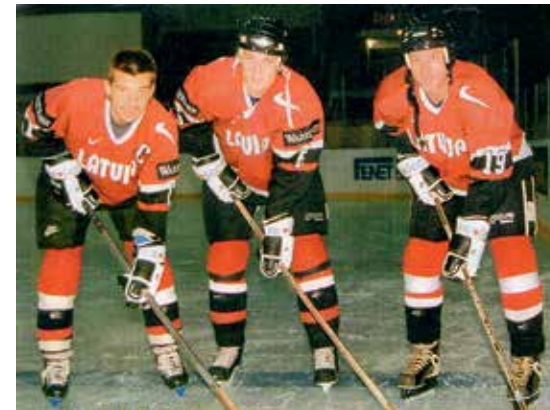
Behind what could be seen as merely decent results, such as 7<sup>th</sup> place in the Ice Hockey World Championships, are smaller stories of success, like the time when the Latvian team beat its Swedish and Swiss competitors during the world championship in Bern in 2009. Now, once again, the country is looking forward to see its hockey heroes make history at the Olympics in Sochi. Among younger players such as Mārtiņš Karsums, Miķelis Rēdlihs and Kaspars Daugaviņš, we will most likely be seeing Sandis Ozoliņš, a previous NHL star who won the Stanley Cup in 1996 as a member of the Colorado Avalanche. He remains a hockey phenomenon to this day, at the venerable age of 41. As the Olympic Games get under way, Latvians are sure to be glued to their TV screens, united in the spirit of sport and in their support for their national hockey team. **BO**



Latvian hockey great Harijs Vītoliņš and veteran NHL goalkeeper Artūrs Irbe at the Ice Hockey World Championship in Sweden in 2005.



Arvīds Reķis vs. Russian hockey star Ilya Kovalchuk at the Olympic Games in Vancouver in 2008.



Oļegs Znaroks, the previous head coach of the Latvian national team (2006-2011), Stanley Cup winner Sandis Ozoliņš and legendary hockey veteran Helmut Balderis.





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# The New Finnish Cuisine

While Denmark's New Nordic Cuisine has dominated recent foodie gossip, something has also been stirring in the forests of nearby Finland



© MARITA HAUKEMAA

Eel à la restaurant *Chef & Sommelier*



© EERO KOKKO

Salmon à la restaurant *Grotesk*

The country's natural larder is now being put to superb use in traditionally-flavoured yet novel ways. The epicentre of the country's culinary revival is in the newly-renovated Abattoir area of Helsinki, an old slaughterhouse complex built in 1933 that is now being reborn as a space with restaurants, urban gardens and pop-up food stalls. Enthusiastic citizens are mobilizing here, sampling local delicacies and exchanging ideas.

The Abattoir is also important for Helsinki's Food Culture Strategy ([www.helsinkifoodism.com](http://www.helsinkifoodism.com)), which aims to promote various aspects of food culture throughout the city. Last year, an event to close *Meatless October* – where the virtues of vegetables were widely promoted – was held in the *Kellohalli* restaurant, which also had a hand in the famous *Restaurant Day*. A Finnish brainchild, this annual event sees hundreds of people become restaurateurs for a day, without the need for certificates and licences, selling food from house windows, bike baskets and stalls.

"We haven't forced things at all. They develop really nicely if you have a good

idea in Helsinki," says Ville Relanger, project manager at Food Culture Strategy. And there have been lots of good ideas lately. For example, the restaurants *Nokka*, *A21* and *Olo* all transform the fruits of Finland's forests into garden-fresh dishes with Willy Wonka-type innovation. Reindeer, a historic staple, can be found on seasonal menus (Finnish ingredients always mirror the calendar), coming in many different forms that include sausages and cured carpaccio.

Reframing classic fare with a contemporary edge, the 75-year-old restaurant *Lasipalatsi* offers a range of fantastic dishes,

including slow-cooked reindeer shank and berries, cep risotto and *Vorschmack*, a minced-meat dish of supposedly Polish origin and a favourite of Finnish wartime leader C.G.E Mannerheim. The sea buckthorn, which grows on the surrounding coastline and outlying islands, is made into a delicious aperitif that visitors should definitely taste. For more information on the Finnish capital's thriving food scene, check out [www.visithelsinki.fi](http://www.visithelsinki.fi) and [www.visitfinland.com](http://www.visitfinland.com). **BO**

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# Abu Dhabi:

the desert gazelle with a  
contemporary scope

Abu Dhabi, the capital and second largest city of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), is 119 km or one-and-a-half hour's drive from Dubai, the latter being a true oasis of superfluity and opulence. Abu Dhabi feels so different, however; greener and more authentic than Dubai, with a more leisurely lifestyle. The Abu Dhabi emirate shares a land border with Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Oman. It also has a 700-km-long sea border, while the city itself is located on a T-shaped island protruding into the Persian Gulf. With about 100 million barrels of oil reserves, Abu Dhabi is the richest among the seven UAE emirates

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Capital Gate is one of the tallest buildings in the city and features an 18° incline



In 3000 BC, the territory of the present-day UAE was partly inhabited by nomadic tribes. Abu Dhabi, literally meaning “the father of the gazelle”, was formed in 1791, when Bedouins found a freshwater spring by the Persian Gulf. Being just a small village, it initially depended on fishing, camels, dates and pearls. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the region was thrown into severe crisis by the booming Japanese cultured pearl industry, which decreased demand for natural pearls.

Yet in 1962, when oil was discovered, the situation quickly changed, with oil exports bringing Abu Dhabi billions of dollars a year in revenue. Sheikh Zayed (1918 - 2004), the first president of the United Arab Emirates, played a key role in Abu Dhabi’s development. Thanks to his vision and strategically smart investments in production, infrastructure and agriculture, Abu Dhabi experienced rapid economic growth. The sheik’s passion was bringing to Abu Dhabi the very best that the world had achieved so far.

While neighbouring Dubai features grand entertainment and shopping centres, Abu Dhabi is world-renowned for its Saadiyat Island project and high aspirations of becoming a global cultural hub. The Saadiyat Island Cultural District is to house the Frank Gehry-designed Abu Dhabi Guggenheim Museum, the Zaha Hadid Performing Arts Centre, the Maritime Museum by Tadao Ando and a branch of the Louvre Museum designed by starchitect Jean Nouvel. Located just 500 metres from the shore, Saadiyat is a natural island and also an important turtle nesting ground.

Even though the recent economic crisis also affected Abu Dhabi and the Saadiyat project experienced several unexpected turns of events – including anger regarding working conditions for the workers involved, which caused missed deadlines and almost resulted in an artists’ boycott – the vision of the island project has never been questioned, and its ambition has not diminished one bit. The project no longer resembles a mirage in the desert, especially since French minister of culture Aurélie Filippetti recently announced that the Louvre Abu Dhabi – estimated to have cost 653 million USD to build – will open on December 2, 2015. The concrete façade of the museum, already referred to as “the Louvre in the sand”, will be finished at the beginning of this year.

Sandy beach at the Emirates Palace Hotel



Last summer, an exhibition titled *Birth of a Museum* and dedicated to the future Louvre collection was held at the *Manarat Al Saadiyat* centre, which is currently the cultural heart of the developing island. The exhibition contained 150 works of art, including paintings by Pablo Picasso, Édouard Manet and René Magritte. The French Louvre and the Abi Dhabi Louvre have signed a ten-year contract, according to which four large exhibitions will take place at the new museum every year.

As the manager of the Louvre Abu Dhabi told *Abu Dhabi Time Out*, “this is an original project born of two symbols: the Louvre as a symbol of culture, openness and education, and Abu Dhabi as a crossroads between the East and West.”

## Abu Dhabi was just a small village, it initially depended on fishing, camels, dates and pearls

Even though the Louvre Abu Dhabi will be able to borrow about 300 pieces of art from its Parisian “mother”, many of the works for its future exhibitions have been and continue to be specially bought. In any case, once the Saadiyat Island project is finished, it will be the first place in the world to display works by such famous contemporary architects as Jean Nouvel, Frank Gehry, Lord Norman Foster and Zaha Hadid all together in one place. One of Abu Dhabi’s most prestigious art galleries, the Salwa Zeidan Gallery, also recently moved to Saadiyat Island, thereby becoming the first private art gallery on the island.

Of course, giant cultural institutions are only one side of the Saadiyat Island Cultural District. The island is to become a self-sufficient lifestyle territory, with not only prominent exhibitions, but also beautiful beaches that cater to another sort of hedonistic pleasure. The island’s public beach was opened already last March. Saadiyat Island covers 27 square kilometres and may one day be home to an estimated 145,600 residents, as well as educational institutions.

Yacht racing in Abu Dhabi



### A symbol of tradition and modernity

Saadiyat Island is not Abu Dhabi’s only ambitious project. The impressive Sheikh Zayed Mosque – the third largest in the world – has also become a symbol of sorts and a manifestation of the scale of the emirate’s development. Arriving in the city, it is impossible to miss the dazzling white building against the background of the blue sky, its magnificent dome reflecting onto the serene surface of an artificial lake. The mosque is a man-made marvel endowed with a divine, almost incredible beauty.

The project was initiated by the late Sheikh Zayed and construction began in 1998. The mosque first opened its doors only in December of 2007, with the sheikh’s sons continuing the project after his death in 2004. The mosque is located on a small hillock and covers a stunning 22,000 square metres. Built of white marble, it features four 107-metre-high minarets and 82 different-sized domes. The 1048 columns outside and 96 inside are all encrusted with gemstones and semi-precious stones (lapis lazuli, red agate, amethyst, abalone shell, mother of pearl), every detail and floral motif being of the finest handwork.

A floral design covers the whole marble floor of the mosque as well as the columns and is – unlike traditional Islamic art – inspired by real flowers. It is said that the sheikh’s passion was green gardens and that he wished to also see them here. The mosque’s main prayer room features seven crystal chandeliers measuring 10x10 metres and weighing nine tonnes, as well as the largest hand-woven Persian carpet in the

world. Measuring 6000 square metres, the carpet was made by 1300 Iranian women and its estimated value is over 8.5 million USD. The carpet weighs 35 tonnes and contains 2,268,000 hand-tied knots. Due to the immense size of the finished carpet, it would not have been possible to transport it to Abu Dhabi. So, although the carpet was begun in the weavers’ native city of Mashhad, Iran, it was finished on site in the mosque.

Estimated construction costs for the mosque reach 2.167 billion dirhams, and the building has achieved three entries into the Guinness Book of World Records for the largest carpet, the largest crystal chandelier and the largest dome of its kind. The mosque is open to non-Muslim visitors and thousands of people visit it every week, but women are required to cover their heads upon entering. No bare legs and arms are allowed, either. Surrounded by stately columns, the mosque’s white marble courtyard is almost blinding in its glimmering whiteness. The building is lit up in the evenings, with the lighting scheme changing according to the phases of the moon: dark blue when the moon is waning and white when the moon is full.

### Hotel extravagances

Continuing with world records, Abu Dhabi is also the home of one of the most extravagant hotel projects of all time: the *Emirates Palace Hotel*. Opened in 2005, it seems like a sand-coloured castle rising up from the desert. Especially at night, with a huge fountain splashing at its threshold, the hotel resembles a scene from



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Al Ittihad Square



Al-Ittihad Square and its symbolic sculptures is also worth a visit. Six gigantic figures set amidst the urban jungle of skyscrapers glisten in the bright sunshine

Arabian fairytales. In terms of costs (3 billion USD), the *Emirates Palace Hotel* is one of the most expensive hotel projects ever. It boasts 1002 *Swarovski* crystal chandeliers (the largest weighing 2.5 tonnes), as well as 114 domes covered in glistening glass-tile mosaics, gold and marble imported from 13 countries. The staff of over 2000 people speaks 50 languages. About 12,000 people have been involved in the construction of the hotel, and the distance between the two farthest wings measures one kilometre, easily turning a morning walk from your room to breakfast into a moderate amount of daily physical activity.

The *Emirates Palace Hotel* also boasts 1.3 kilometres of white sandy beach, 8000 trees growing on its huge territory and a 42-metre-wide atrium that is topped by the world's largest hotel dome, which is finished in silver and gold glass mosaic tiles. A total of 775 plasma TVs have been installed in the guest rooms. A few years ago, the hotel became famous for having one of the world's most expensive Christmas trees, valued at approximately 11 million USD. Among the decorations were 181 diamonds, pearls, emeralds, sapphires and other precious stones.

Owned by the state (meaning the sheikh's family), the *Emirates Palace Hotel* is operated by the Kempinski hotel chain. However, despite its seeming extravagances, the mirage-like castle surrounds its guests with an amazing feel of authenticity. The *Emirates Palace Hotel* is not a traditional hotel in the usual sense of the word. Currently, it functions as an important venue for Abu Dhabi's cultural and social life, hosting festivals, concerts and art exhibitions with the participation of world-famous guest artists.

Abu Dhabi's first art fair took place here and turned the hotel's property into a sculpture garden. The *Emirates Palace Hotel* has also contributed significantly to popularising the emerging Saadiyat

Al Ain Oasis



Island Cultural District and Abu Dhabi's *Formula One* race track. One of the greatest values and unique features of the hotel is possibly that, while staying here and enjoying the view of the sea from your apartment terrace, your own personal butler and luxury befitting a sheikh, you also feel literally at a crossroads of cultures. This is a pleasant aftertaste that does not fade away, unlike at the other "five-star mirages" that are popping up in Abu Dhabi and neighbouring Dubai like mushrooms after the rain.

In any case, Abu Dhabi does not lack grand hotels, such as the *Viceroy*, whose bright wave-like "skin" is made of 5096 polished diamond-shaped steel panels and whose windows face the *Formula One* race track. Or the *Park Hyatt Saadiyat* in the Cultural District, which is located right next to the island's 18-hole golf course and beach. The *Hyatt Capital Gate* in central Abu Dhabi is also impressive – a sort of Abu Dhabi Tower of Pisa, or glass skyscraper that inclines 18 degrees westward.

### Ferrari and 4x4s in the desert

Unlike Dubai, where no one seems to walk on foot any more, Abu Dhabi boasts a 9-kilometre-long beachside bikeway and promenade that is much favoured by local families going out for weekend picnics. This gives the metropolis a very human feel, despite its tendency towards ambition. Also, do not miss an opportunity to visit the local fish market with its authentic, still unpolished flavour. The market counters are brimming with all sorts of sea creatures, and you can choose shrimp or fish and have it grilled on the spot.

Al-Ittihad Square and its symbolic sculptures is also worth a visit. Six gigantic figures – including a phial for rose-water, a coffee pot, a cannon and a watch tower – set amidst the urban jungle of skyscrapers glisten in the bright sunshine. On Fridays, numerous believers flow to the nearby mosque, leaving the neighbouring streets almost empty. Only a muezzin's penetrating voice echoes there, giving a surreal feeling.

The way in which tradition lives side by side with an unconcealed desire to demonstrate the profound changes that have taken place in the country seems quite natural in Abu

Exploring the desert sand dunes by four-wheeled "camel"



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Fish market

Dhabi. It's like a desert mirage that has turned into reality. The world's first *Ferrari* amusement park was opened in Abu Dhabi in 2010. The park covers an impressive 86,000 square metres and offers 20 *Ferrari*-inspired attractions, including several nerve-tickling amusement rides. The park is located on Yas Island, and its main feature is a gigantic roof construction inspired by the classic *Ferrari* silhouette, which is decorated with – of course! – the biggest *Ferrari* logo ever made. The perimeter of the roof measures over two kilometres and is supported by a steel construction weighing 12,370 tonnes.

One of the most exciting rides is the *Formula Rossa* rollercoaster, the fastest in the world. It can reach 100 km/h in five seconds with a maximum speed of 240 km/h. The park also has a reproduction of the famous Maranello factory, where visitors can learn all about the creation of *Ferrari* cars, while the more adrenaline-seeking among them can even try out racecar simulators that are used to train *Ferrari* racing teams.

However, one of the most wonderful features of Abu Dhabi is the opportunity to escape the 21<sup>st</sup> century when it's all become too much and head for the silence of the desert. As British traveller Wilfred Thesiger wrote in the book *Arabian Sands* in 1959: "It was very still with the silence which we have driven from our world." The *Rub' al Khali*, or Empty Quarter, begins on the outskirts of Abu Dhabi,

spreads for 650,000 square kilometres and is the largest sand desert in the world.

There are not many places in the world with sand dunes as magnificently tall as they are in the Liwa Desert, where some of the dunes reach a height of 25 metres. The sand is soft and warm – the kind that you just want to sink into and let flow through your fingers. And there's nothing else as far as the eye can see, just majestic orange sand dunes and blue sky. No trees, no bushes, only endless open space that erases all footprints as if they were the insignificant dust of a temporary life. When the sun sets, the landscape turns reddish-yellow and the stars sparkle like mad.

Among the main attractions of the UAE and Abu Dhabi are desert safaris. The adrenaline that accompanies a slide down a sand dune in a jeep ought to be experienced at least once in a lifetime. One suggestion, however: if you wish to enjoy this experience by yourself, then reserve a private tour ahead of time. Otherwise, you may well find yourself in a group of a hundred tourists corralled into a sand enclosure, then sent all together to a touristy Bedouin camp. The true freedom and mystery of the desert begins once you are away from the crowd, the white-clad 4x4 driver has turned off the key in the ignition and has sat down next to his four-wheeled "camel", and you simply listen and merge with the silence that seems to suddenly have become so close and real that you can even reach out and touch it.

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Jessica Seraphim

Insider's view

# "Abu Dhabi belongs to everyone"

Jessica Seraphim is an artist who works with glass. She is French, but grew up in Abu Dhabi. Even though she now creates her artwork – which includes jewellery and interior design objects – in France, she still considers Abu Dhabi to be her second home and one of her main sources of inspiration.

"As my family and my heart is in the UAE (United Arab Emirates), I often come back and participate in exhibitions or craft fairs." Seraphim had a solo exhibition in Abu Dhabi's *Art Hub* just this autumn, and she also recently opened a workshop there "in order to practice fusing, spun glass, enamelling or other fascinating techniques, depending on the mood of the day."

## What do you love most about Abu Dhabi?

I love the fact that one weekend you can go shopping in the city, eat at good restaurants, catch a movie and have a drink and a *shisha* in a coffee shop, while the next weekend you can go camping and stargazing in the desert (the red sand desert is my favourite) or go scuba diving in some pretty awesome sites. It's like having two lifestyles in the same place.

## Is there anything that you hate about Abu Dhabi?

The traffic jams. The 1.5 hours that it takes to get from Abu Dhabi to Dubai is hard enough, but add the traffic on top of this and it can become a real nightmare! Even in the city, the traffic can drive you nuts and a lot of people are reckless with their driving speed. Looking for a parking space can also take ages.

## What are your most vivid memories about your childhood in Abu Dhabi?

Walking with my parents along the now "old" Corniche, which, by the way, is really beautiful now since it has been renovated. I used to race my sister from one strange fountain to the next, and our favourite was the huge *Volcano*, which doesn't exist anymore.

## Ice-skating on Family Day with music and lights, like a small floor show.

Visiting the Abu Dhabi *souk*, where everything could be found: colourful spices, gold, knick-knacks and gadgets for kids. Going to the desert for the weekend, barbecues at night, searching for shooting stars in the sky, exploring the *wadis* during the daytime, swimming in the small natural pools of the oases, counting the camels on the road, etc.

## Describe your perfect day in the city.

You wake up and enjoy one of the many places where you can have brunch, such as a late breakfast buffet in one of the amazing restaurants that feature food from all over the world; or a more quaint and cosy Lebanese coffee shop, or even just take a small *menaich* on the go (a sort of Middle Eastern sandwich with cheese, meat or a mixture of thyme and olive oil). Then you head to *Heritage Village* to have a nice start with history. Then you go to the beach and relax on the Corniche (or the new beach in Saadiyat) for a few hours, or have a stroll in a cool shopping centre when the sun is still high and beating down upon the city. Then a brisk walk on the Corniche as the sun is setting and the evening freshness cools the city down. And then a *shawarma* (a wonderful Lebanese sandwich) and a fruit cocktail to end the day.

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**How do you characterise Abu Dhabi's current art scene?**

The art scene is in total evolution. Galleries are visited more often these days, and the public is becoming increasingly knowledgeable. Previously, people just wanted to buy art from abroad. Now the local artists are given more opportunities and are proving up to par, with a very specific "fusion" art evolving from the rich multicultural specificity of the UAE. Nowadays, there is a truly original "Abu Dhabi art" style available. Art connoisseurs want to understand, discover, be surprised and be moved by it.

**What should one definitely do to catch the vibe of Abu Dhabi in all its diversity?**

I believe that to understand Abu Dhabi, you must first grasp its past as well as its incredible pace of development. I would suggest starting by visiting a few museums to learn how the city and the emirate is transforming. In case you do not have the time for museums, at least look at a few pictures of Abu Dhabi from 1950, 1960, 1970, etc. I would then visit a shopping centre or just walk along the Corniche at sundown, where you can see people of all nationalities, all faiths and all backgrounds just enjoying the weather and walking by the sea with their families.

Watch and prepare to be amazed. This is what the new-generation artists integrate into their art. And then, discover the plan for the future: the vision of Abu Dhabi with

the *Louvre*, the *Guggenheim*, Masdar City, the universities. At the pace that Abu Dhabi is evolving, this is not a faraway vision. It is tomorrow.

**Could you name your favorite art galleries in Abu Dhabi?**

Abu Dhabi *Art Hub* in Mussafah, *Manarat Al Saadiyat*, Salwa Zeidan Gallery, Ghaf Art Gallery.

**Could you name your five favourite restaurants/café's in Abu Dhabi?**

*Lebanese Flower* is the best Lebanese restaurant I have EVER been to, whether you want a big lunch/dinner with friends and eat a lot of different dishes or just want some tasty sandwiches to go (*shawarmas* are my favourite). Their fruit cocktails are simply art!!!

As an unassuming small family restaurant, the *Red Castle* is my favourite Chinese place. Its selection of dishes and flavours are really worth getting lost to find it!

*Trader Vic's* is my favorite Polynesian restaurant and I love the décor, which is, I admit, a little posh. Their finger food is to die for.

*India Palace* is my favourite Indian restaurant with some surprising recipes that will make you eat spices even if you usually try to avoid them. Their menu is as well-stocked for vegetarians as it is for non-vegetarians. Non-vegetarians can have a delicious vegetarian meal without even realising it!

For Friday buffets, which are a tradition

in Abu Dhabi, I would select *Viceroy* on Yas Island as well as the *Ritz-Carlton*. I recommend a loooong nap afterwards.

**What is the biggest stereotype about Abu Dhabi? And why is it or is it not true?**

Abu Dhabi is only for rich snobs who want to go to the Arabic Las Vegas. This annoys me no end because, yes, I love shopping, but this does not define Abu Dhabi. Abu Dhabi has got a whole "natural" side if you like exploring, whether you like adventure or not: 4x4 drives, the desert, animal natural reserves, the mountains not so far away, diving, swimming, etc. . . . Abu Dhabi has a rich culture and history. It is characterised by its multiculturalism and welcoming people from everywhere.

**Can you tell us a secret about Abu Dhabi?**

I can even tell you two secrets. Do not stick to the most Western, posh or chic places. You have to check out less popular places because they are interesting, too (for example, *Hamdan Centre*, souks, the Iranian Market and so on). Do not be appalled by posh places, go everywhere and also try to check out events where there is traditional stuff such as camel races, Saluki beauty competitions, etc. Abu Dhabi belongs to everyone – not only to UAE nationals but also to expatriates from all over the world as well as to tourists. The combination of all of these is making Abu Dhabi what it is, a fusion of all, for all. **BO**

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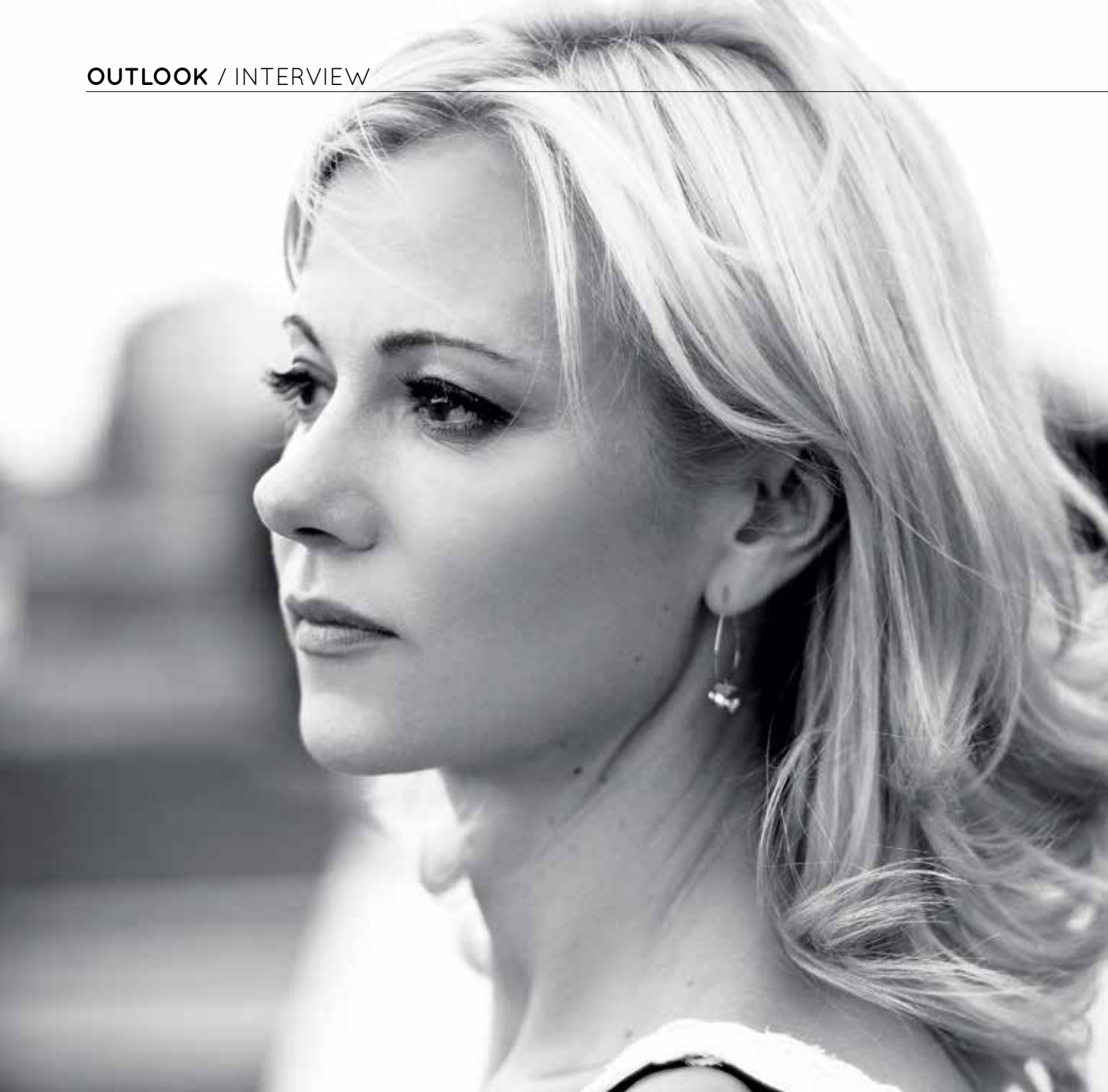
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# Raw life

TEXT BY ANDA JANSONE,  
WWW.ANDASSTUFF.WORDPRESS.LV  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF SARMA MELNGAILIS

Sarma Melngailis' charisma can be sensed just by looking at her photos. She is an entrepreneur with Latvian roots who has been able to live the American Dream. Her raw food restaurant *Pure Food and Wine* is regularly included in the top rankings of respectable publications, her name has become synonymous with a healthy lifestyle in New York and she has got two cookbooks to her credit. However, the most important thing is that Sarma does what she really loves, and from the heart

## How would you explain the differences between raw foodism, veganism and vegetarianism?

Vegetarians don't eat meat, but still consume eggs and dairy products. Vegans don't eat anything of animal origin, so no dairy foods or eggs for them. Some vegans even abstain from buying leather and other animal-derived products. Raw foodism means following a vegan lifestyle, but also not cooking one's food, at least not heating it above 47 degrees Celsius. One eats only raw, plant-based foods because that is the most natural diet. Not cooking the food preserves its nutritional value to the maximum extent, along with the enzymes that help to digest the food.

## What got you into raw foodism?

Over ten years ago, a friend took me to a small raw food café and explained the philosophy behind eating this way. He was in his early 60s, yet looked so vibrant and healthy. I decided to try raw foodism as an experiment. I assumed that it would be difficult and that I would be craving hamburgers and bread. Instead, after just a couple of days, I felt amazing. I had lots of energy and felt like a fog had lifted, I felt more clear. I started to read everything that I could about eating raw, both in books and on the Internet. It was all logical and seemed to make sense, so the experiment became permanent.

## How rigorously do you consider yourself to be a raw food consumer or a vegan? Do you allow yourself to deviate at times?

Yes, absolutely. In the beginning, I rarely deviated, but now I'm much more relaxed. I enjoy some foods that are difficult to eat raw but that are still healthy, like baked sweet potatoes. When I'm travelling or with other people or going to restaurants, I'm not as strict about having to stay raw. I try to order vegan, but if the best I can do is a squash soup that's made with chicken stock, then I will still eat it.

In addition, my father started a company here in New York that makes *rupjmaize* [dark Latvian rye bread – ed.], and he's always giving me big loaves. So, of course, I have to eat that sometimes! My favourite way to eat it is with coconut butter and salt (which tastes a lot like regular butter!) or with almond butter and salt, or with avocado and lime and salt. Finally, if someone's grandmother offered me a cookie that was made with butter, I wouldn't refuse. However, when

I'm at home on my own or at my restaurant, I usually eat raw.

## Your chain is called *One Lucky Duck*. Is this name in honour of the fact that some ducks have the fortune of remaining uneaten?

When I decided to build the website and store, I wanted my brand to be featured on the cookies and snacks that we make, and I wanted my juice bars to bear my brand's name. I wanted something that sounded fun and that people could remember. I also wanted a logo that would be easy to recognize. We have three beautiful photographs of ducks on the wall



at my restaurant, so I thought of ducks, and yes, of course, a lucky duck is one that doesn't get eaten!

## In social networking sites, you oppose the consumption of meat quite harshly. What do you answer to those who say: "I can't have a meal without meat"?

Everyone can have a meal without meat. My father recently told me that he went a full day without any meat and that he felt much better than usual. I'm hoping that he'll continue to shift towards eating less and less meat. My strongest objection is with the source of most meat, namely, huge factories. I think people who eat this meat should be required to watch some of the undercover videos taken at these places, so that they see where this "food" comes from. If they





Everything served at Sarma's restaurant, opened in 2004, is vegan, organic, and raw



The Pure Food and Wine restaurant also has a summer garden

still want to eat it after that, then fine, but at the very least they should know what they are eating and what kinds of enterprises they are supporting when they buy their meat.

**What is the biggest prejudice that you have heard about raw foodism?**

People think that raw food is boring and simply salad, and that raw foodists are skinny and malnourished. However, that's not the case at all. People also think that you must be hungry all the time eating only raw food, but it's actually the opposite. You're much less hungry, as you're feeding your body maximum nutrition, versus the "empty calories" of many foods that are on the market.

**Your restaurant *Pure Food and Wine* regularly gets in the lists of top restaurants in New York. You look fantastic and you are a successful businesswoman. Do you feel like you are living the American Dream?**

Things aren't always as they seem. I'm extremely proud of my business, of my employees and of what we have accomplished together. This all makes me very happy. So yes, that part of my life is a dream come true. But getting this far is much more difficult than people imagine and has required a lot of sacrifices on my part. I don't live as well as people think I do! My priority is to protect and expand the business, but that comes at a certain cost.

**Is it easy for a woman to run a business in New York?**

I don't think it's more difficult than for a man, at least not for me. I've always worked in business areas that are dominated by men, so it doesn't feel unusual. I do have to say that sometimes I've been treated differently by men with a lot of power and money. Some of them have said that they are interested in my business and perhaps in investing or collaborating, but then it turns out that they're really interested in something more. So, that kind of situation can be difficult to navigate.

**What are the biggest challenges that you face on a daily basis?**

The most difficult thing is how to prioritize my work. There are many different aspects to the business and so many things are going on at once. What should I work on first and what can wait? When should I neglect things so that I can focus on

the larger picture? How should I continue developing the business? I'd like to have more resources so that I can work less on the day-to-day affairs and focus more on the creative part of the business as well as on its overall growth.

**What else would you like to achieve?**

I want to be listed on *Fortune* magazine's annual list of the "100 Best Companies To Work For". That's a very specific goal of mine.

**Your book *Raw Food, Real World*, which came out several years ago in the US, was recently published in Latvia. What has changed in your life since the book's release?**

That first book was published in 2005, and yes, very much has changed since then. I opened the restaurant with a partner who is featured in the book, but we split apart even before the book was published. It was a difficult time, and it was scary at first for me to run the restaurant by myself, while simultaneously launching my [www.oneluckyduck.com](http://www.oneluckyduck.com) website. I've learned a lot since then.

**I admit that after reading the book, I have become a breakfast smoothie fan, and my blender has now become an irreplaceable kitchen appliance. What is your ideal breakfast recipe?**

Fresh coconut water, papaya and strawberries with a spoonful of coconut oil, a pinch of both salt and vanilla, and a touch of raw sweetener. However, sometimes I want something to chew on, so I make chia pudding, adding raw cacao bean pieces, goji

berries and some of my *One Lucky Duck* raw cereal. It's like a crunchy breakfast porridge and keeps me full all morning.

**You seem to have a glow about you, and you look like you are in perfect shape. How much of that do you attribute to food, sports and positive thinking?**

It's probably mostly food and exercise. I do try to think

**I want to be listed on Fortune magazine's annual list of the "100 Best Companies To Work For"**

positively and would like to practice more yoga and meditation. I don't do any yoga right now and so far I haven't been very good at meditating. I could certainly improve in the area of stress by reducing some taxing day-to-day activities.

**Do you consider New York to be your home?**

I do consider New York to be my home. I've been here for about 20 years. I can't imagine living anywhere else. I love being in Riga as well and lived there for three months a long time ago, when I was in college. Last summer was my first trip back in over 20 years. I hope to return this coming summer for a longer visit!

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WP CONSTRUCTION





Chocolate and vanilla cream moon pie from *One Lucky Duck*

I don't want to be inconvenient if someone is hosting me, so I eat the best that I can without offending anybody

**Tell us about your Latvian roots.**

My father was born in Latvia, but my mother is not Latvian. My older sister and I went to Latvian school on Saturdays in Boston. We also spent our summers at a Latvian camp. My grandmother lived with us when we were very young. She later moved to her own place but still lived nearby until she died. After my parents split up when I was young, my mother said that I didn't have to continue with Latvian school on Saturdays. Of course, at that age I didn't want to go, and so over the following years, when I spent less time with my father, I lost most of my Latvian-speaking abilities. During the three months that I lived in Riga, I worked for my cousin Nils Melngailis and stayed at my sister's place, who lived in the Latvian capital for four years. Then much of the language came back, but it was still difficult.

**Have you inherited your love of cooking from your mother, who was a chef?**

Yes, I think so. In addition, she liked to watch the classic cooking shows on TV and I also took a liking to them. Later in college, when I was studying finance, I subscribed to all of the food magazines and preferred reading those to the *Wall Street Journal*.

**They say that each nationality has its favourite flavours. What kind of food do you choose to eat when visiting Latvia and what, in turn, do you enjoy when living in the US?**

Well, of course, I'm partial to vegetables and fresh foods, no matter where I am. In Latvian recipes

dill is used much more frequently than it is here, so I like that. I certainly like the diversity of foods in the US. There are so many different types of food and they are very easy to obtain.

**How do you change your eating habits when travelling from one point of the world to another?**

I'm most flexible about what I eat when I'm travelling. I eat fresh fruits and vegetables as much as I can, but I also like to try new foods. I don't want to be inconvenient if someone is hosting me, so I eat the best that I can without offending anybody. The one thing that I miss the most when travelling is fresh, organic green juice. My body craves it. Luckily, there is a raw food restaurant in Riga where I can go to get that juice!

**Which airports are the friendliest to those who are trying to live a healthy lifestyle?**

I haven't travelled too much, since most of my work is here in New York. However, before leaving Riga last summer I was early for my flight. I noticed that there was plenty of fresh food in the airport restaurant, more than at most airport eating establishments. I also spent time in the Helsinki airport and was able to find fresh fruit to eat there. Most airports don't have organic food because it's expensive, but again, I do the best that I can.

**Which places in the world have left particularly strong impressions in your memory?**

I have travelled twice to Istanbul and it's one of my favourite cities. Everyone was really nice and the city has the kind of energy that I like. The cities that I prefer can also depend on whether I'm there on my own or have hosts. When you are being hosted, it's different because you get to experience the city not as a tourist but more as someone who lives there. I also really liked Tokyo, but that's a bit of an intimidating city. I would worry about getting stuck there alone!

**If you had a ticket to any destination, which one would you choose?**

I think I would choose Italy first, because for some reason I have not yet been there.

**What are your favourite restaurants abroad?**

There was a very small restaurant in Turkey in the town of Bodrum, it was right on the water, and it was serving freshly caught fish. I ate fish on that occasion, which I don't usually do. The restaurant also had lots of fresh greens and great vegetables. Of course, I don't recall its name. In Riga I love the *Raw Garden* (Skolas iela 12) and am grateful that it's introducing Latvians to raw food. It's also a place that I can go to get my fix of green juice!

**Unlike other healthy lifestyle restaurants, your restaurant has a wine menu. Why so?**

I don't see anything unhealthy about wine unless, of course,

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Chocolate and coconut bars



The red-themed interior and wood-panelled walls at Pure Food and Wine were designed by the owner herself



one drinks in excess. I feel better when I don't drink, but like most people, I like to drink wine at restaurants. Many people come to us for celebrations, anniversaries and even engagements. These kinds of celebrations don't feel the same without a glass of sparkling wine. In my opinion, any place that's not simply a daytime café should serve wine. Our wine is mostly organic or biodynamic. It might not necessarily be labelled organic, but we carefully choose wineries that use only natural practices, and we have a great wine list! Wine, of course, is a raw drink. We also make fresh cocktails using organic sake. Although technically sake isn't raw, it comes quite close and it makes great cocktails. We added two organic beers to the menu, even though beer is not raw, but many people ask for it. I love beer, too. Finally, it would be near impossible to survive as a restaurant of my size in New York without a wine list, as the margins on wine are much better than the margins on food.

**Do you have any guilty pleasures that you would like to share with us?**  
Good question. Probably the unhealthy food that I find hardest to resist is movie theatre popcorn. It's so unhealthy, but the smell drives me crazy. I don't go to the movies very often at all, but when I do it's hard to sit there with the fragrant smell of popcorn all around me. If someone I'm with buys popcorn, then I'll eat some. At home I like to make air-popped popcorn (organic, of course).

I put macadamia oil on it, and plenty of salt.

**You publish a lot of pictures together with your dog Leon. Is he always with you? Does he follow you to work and to the food shops?**

Unfortunately, New York has strict regulations about bringing dogs into stores and particularly any place with food. I wish that would change. Otherwise, Leon is with me as much as possible. We have a production facility in Brooklyn where we make all of our packaged *One Lucky Duck* snacks and from where we ship all of our online orders. When I drive to Brooklyn, I always take Leon with me, although he stays on the office side and not where we make the food! In nice weather I also like to meet people outdoors, so then Leon can come with me. And of course, he's always with me at my office.

**Has your dog taught you anything at an emotional level?**

Yes, he's helped me to be more open, and my heart is definitely more filled with love on a daily basis. I've also learned so much more about how animals feel and relate to the world. This has inspired me to be more involved in animal rights causes.

**Do you have any hobbies?**  
There are many hobbies that I would like to do, but I don't have much extra time. Most of the time I'm working, or I'm so tired that I can only sit on the couch and watch something on TV. One thing I love to do is sketch clothing. One day I'd love to design some clothing





Интерьер - салон MODULS предлагает подарки, которые без слов рассказывают о приближении рождественских праздников, напоминают о достижениях и свершениях, угадывают Ваши сокровенные желания, пробуждают большие надежды и теплые воспоминания об уютном доме.







I'd like more freedom to do what I want with my business and with my time

for women, things I would like to wear myself.

**What qualities do you most value in the people around you?**

Reliability. If you say that you will do something, then you should do it. I also like people who have a positive and optimistic outlook and who want to do things to help the world.

**What would you need in order to be able to call yourself completely happy?**

More freedom. That would be hard to explain here, but I'd like more freedom to do what I want with my business and with my time. I'd like to be completely independent.

**Is there a story, an adventure or a sentence that has completely changed your life?**

The dinner that I had with the friend who took me to a raw café changed my whole life. I was very reluctant to go, and I thought that the food would be terrible. But that

one dinner changed my whole perspective and my trajectory in work. Raw plant food became the focus of my work and my life.

**What is the most beautiful experience that you have ever had?**

My last boyfriend was from Colorado, and we sometimes went there to go visit his family and friends. One time we drove up to the very top of Aspen Mountain. Even though it was summer, the weather was so cold that we had to dress as if it was freezing winter. The sky was full of stars, like nothing I'd ever seen before. You can't see many stars in New York. At the summit of that mountain, the stars felt so close and nothing else mattered. All of my problems and worries seemed so insignificant. We lay down in the grass, even though it was freezing cold, and stared up into the sky. The sight was so beautiful and overwhelming that I began to cry. **BO**



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TEXT BY TREVOR BAKER  
PHOTO BY JASON HAWKES

# Bird's eye view

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As one of the world's most respected aerial photographers, Jason Hawkes has taken thousands of pictures of London from above. Now, with the city changing at an unprecedented pace, he's busier than ever

## King's Cross St. Pancras

"I really like the dome of the tube station. If you look at it up close, then it's just a pattern and you don't know what you're looking at. That's what London is like to me, a series of patterns. I've still never been inside the new King's Cross station or half of these places. I only know what they look like from the air!"

"I'm not that comfortable with heights," he admits, despite the fact that for more than 20 years, Jason's job has involved hanging out of the open door of a helicopter, hundreds of metres up, with a heavy camera in his hands. However, when you see the pictures that he has taken, you can understand why he puts up with a bit of vertigo. Although he has shot pictures all over the world – from New York to Barcelona and from Dubai to the West Coast of Scotland – his speciality is London. Jason's work has become a fascinating record of a city in rapid flux.

"I did a book about ten years ago that was called *London Then And Now*," he says. "We looked at pictures that had been taken in 1921 from the air, and I copied them to see how much the city had changed. Some places, like the Docklands, had become unrecognizable. You couldn't tell what you were looking at. It could have been a different city. A few years ago, I sold pictures that were five years old without even thinking about it, whereas now I don't sell pictures that are more than three or four months old. When people ask me about certain pictures on my website, I have to tell them things like: 'That picture is a year old and is already quite dated.'"

The last five years have seen a spectacular building boom in London's financial district, popularly known as The City. The arrival of The Shard, the tallest building in Europe when it was completed last year, has completely changed the London skyline, and other new buildings are arriving as well. They act like a barometer of The City's financial health. Apparently, it's booming once again. "I've seen enormous building projects start and then stop and then start again once the economy has improved. One of my clients owns a massive amount of buildings in London and is hurrying to finish all of his offices, because he thinks that things are picking up again."

Since The Shard was finished in the summer, it's become one of the most popular images for Jason's clients, who are mainly building developers. The Shard also provides an interesting challenge, being one of the few buildings in London that is actually taller than the height he usually flies in his helicopter.

"The other week I was taking pictures of The Shard with a wide angle lens and I knew I was quite close, but when I took the camera away from my eye, I said 'Woooah!' and moved quickly back inside from the

edge of the helicopter. It's a weird feeling to realise how close you are."

Last year's Olympic Games were even better for business. Jason's pictures were in such high demand when the stadium was being built that he even inadvertently caused the closing of the airspace over the site.

"The airspace was supposed to be closed six weeks before the games started, for security reasons, but before that, I kept being approached by various agencies. They were calling me up every day. One day, I got some pictures of nurses pushing giant beds during a practise session for the opening ceremony. The photos were all over the web in about ten minutes and in *The Daily Mail*. It was amazing!

"The organisers were so angry that they got the airspace closed down even earlier. It was really embarrassing. The guy who organises the flying permits is an old friend of mine and I thought that he might be able to help me, so I phoned him up and he said: 'You stupid idiot, it was your fault!' Luckily, after a couple of days they relented and reopened the airspace, because they had so many complaints."

In the end, though, no matter how much London changes, it's the more familiar monuments that still make the greatest impression, from above as well as from below.

"Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament look absolutely stunning from above. There's so much



more detail on them. With the old buildings, you can zoom in as much as you want and you just find more and more detail. There's always more to see," Jason says with enthusiasm.

Jason Hawkes' aerial photography books *London From The Air* and *London At Night* are available from Merrell Publishers.



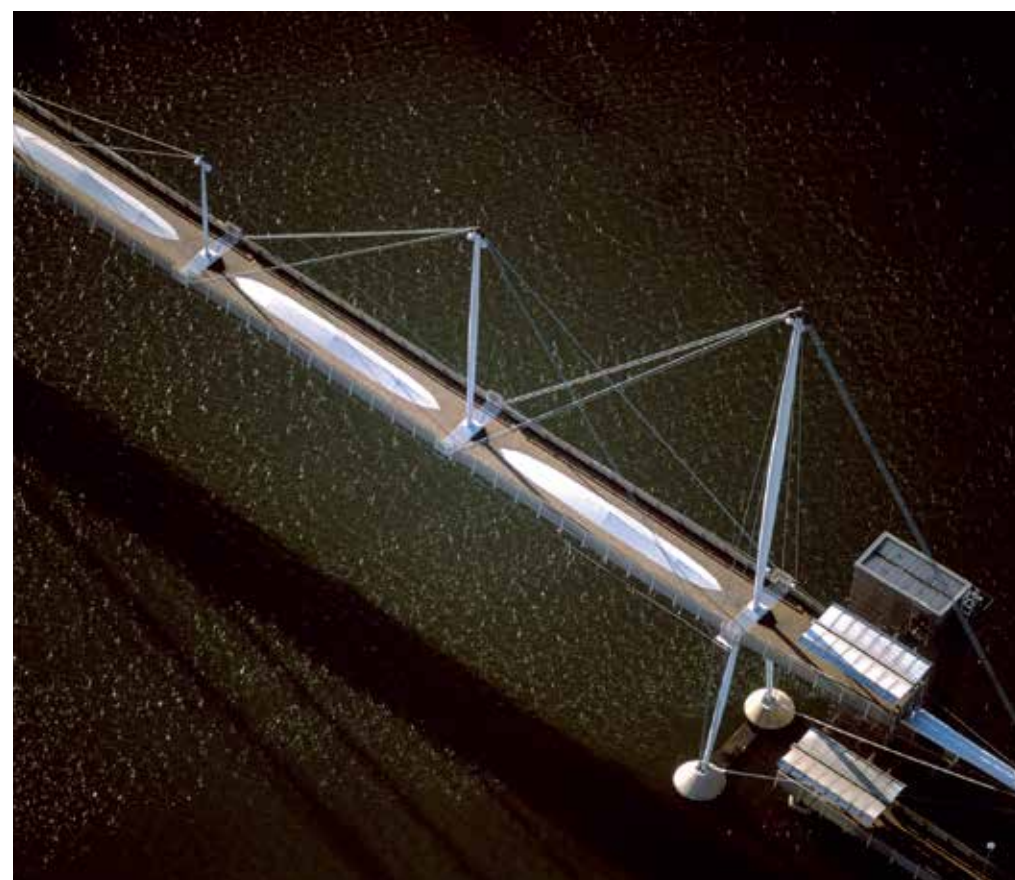


### London Eye

"The London Eye has become an icon as much as any of the older buildings, and I love to photograph it. I was flown around by a guy who used to work at the Air Ambulance, which is allowed to fly anywhere and at any height. When he was with me, he still seemed to think that he was in the Air Ambulance and we flew at about the same height as the Eye."

### Tower Bridge

"This was just before the Olympics, so that's why you see the strange lighting on the bridge, which was sponsored by somebody. The bridge looks like it belongs in Las Vegas!"



### London at Night

"During the last couple of years, I've noticed that they are turning the lights off more often in The City. Three years ago, if you took pictures at 11PM when almost everyone had gone home, most of the lights hadn't been turned off. But this summer, they were a bit more ecologically friendly."

### Footbridge

"I spent ages waiting for somebody to walk across the bridge, thinking: 'This is going to cost me a fortune!' The bridge is normally used quite a lot, but when I was there, nobody crossed it."







**Canary Wharf**  
"This is a really difficult place to photograph at dusk, because the City Airport is just behind it and it gets really busy at that time. You have to wait over at the other side of the river and they say: 'OK, we've got our next landing in five minutes.' That leaves you 30 seconds to come in, take the picture and then bugger off again."



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# In (non) conversation: Banksy

TEXT BY SAM MEJIAS AND ROGER NORUM  
PHOTOS CORBIS / SCANPIX

Graffiti artist Banksy's *Kate Moss* on display in 2013

**A genius.** A vandal. A rabble-rouser. An idealist. A sellout. A political leader. A game-player. A storyteller. A prophet. Banksy, a street artist from southwest England, appears to embody all of these guises in his ongoing quest to rewrite the rules of popular art. His stencilled public guerrilla artworks are spread on walls and surfaces all over the UK and in far-flung global destinations, including Australia, Jamaica, Canada and the USA. His work can even be found on the West Bank barrier separating Israelis and Palestinians. Banksy's pieces have sold for hundreds of thousands of euros, with celebrity collectors such as Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie and Christina Aguilera being among the buyers. He is arguably the most famous – or infamous – artist alive today.

Writing something about Banksy is no small task, given that his true identity remains a mystery. In an era overrun with hypermedia, twitter selfies and digital revelations, Banksy has somehow managed to maintain an aura of flippant omnipresence – simultaneously everywhere, yet ghostlike in his hidden celebrity. He is the art world's anonymous man of the moment. Banksy's rise to prominence over the past two decades has been fascinating and enigmatic. His antics have challenged the way that we usually think about art, commerce, public spaces and meaning-making in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Here is a look into the ever-expanding mythology of an artist who continues to make cultural and financial waves in the modern art world.

## Beginnings

Banksy's successful efforts to remain anonymous only tug at the question even more: Who *is* he? The little that is publicly known about him has been pieced together from the accounts of friends and peers he has worked with. Although there are conflicting accounts about key elements of his identity (his name might be Robin Banks, or possibly Robin Gunnigham, or something else entirely), several oft-repeated 'facts' swirl about: he was born in 1973 or 1974 in Bristol; his father was a photocopier technician; he trained to become a butcher but found himself becoming involved with the street art movement in Bristol in the early 1990s.

While learning the craft of freehand graffiti art as a teenager, Banksy used aerosol spray cans to 'tag' or 'bomb' surfaces throughout Bristol, mimicking the increasingly popular techniques developed in New York

City in the late 1970s and early 1980s. There, graffiti artists spent hours creating intricate paintings on the sides of subway cars, hoping that their artwork would travel on the trains across the far corners of the city, increasing their status and credibility.

As in NYC, Bristol's burgeoning graffiti scene attracted the ire of the local government, which viewed this practice as vandalism and attempted to eradicate it. After hiding under a garbage truck one night to elude capture from the police, the 18-year-old Banksy had an epiphany. A stencil etched onto the side of the truck gave him an idea that would in one stroke save time and create a wider platform for his work. Banksy began



Another artwork by Banksy. 2013

to create his drawings at home, stencil them and then quickly spray them in public places. This meant that he could spend far less time in risky situations on the street and more easily avoid detection by the police. Although Banksy wasn't the first street artist to use stencils – the Parisian artist Blek le Rat is widely credited with starting the stencil graffiti movement in 1981 – he has been the one to bring it to notoriety.

## His works

Banksy is indisputably the street art movement's most famous protagonist. Using the streets as a canvas to plant pointed, poignant messages about the nature of surveillance, control, consumption and power in modern society, he has been described as a witty and crude sensationalist. Still, many argue that he is in fact a revolutionary, and Banksy himself has suggested as much:





An example of the graffiti art that Banksy has painted in the West Bank city of Bethlehem

## Stencils have an extra history. They've been used to start revolutions and to stop wars

"All graffiti is low-level dissent, but stencils have an extra history. They've been used to start revolutions and to stop wars," he was once quoted as saying.

Banksy's heightened presence on the art scene began around 2000, after he moved to London. There, his stencils made their mark on the city's streets, particularly in the now-trendy neighbourhood of Hackney. As his style and methods gained attention, he began to exhibit his works in art galleries. His first international exhibition, entitled *Existencilism*, was held in 2002 in Los Angeles. This was soon followed in 2003 by the London exhibition *Turf Wars*, a controversial event held in a secret East London warehouse location.

Among the items on display were painted cows, which led to vitriolic protests by animal rights activists.

In 2005, Random House published a book of compiled photographs along with commentary on many of Banksy's street pieces. Entitled *Wall And Piece*, it was the clearest yet statement of Banksy's opposition to the perceived corporation-driven lifestyle.

"Graffiti is only dangerous in the minds of three types of people: politicians, advertising executives and graffiti writers," he wrote in the book. "Those who truly deface our neighbourhoods are the companies that scrawl their giant slogans across buildings and buses, trying to make us feel inadequate unless we buy their stuff. They expect to be able to shout their message in your face from every available surface, but you're never allowed to answer back. Well, they started this fight and the wall is the weapon of choice to hit them back."

Everything that Banksy does seems to be imbued with a deliberate sense of political activism, as even the act of creating his book is questioned in its first pages. The words "Copyright is for losers" (accompanied by a trademark sign next to it, in true subversive form) are immediately followed by the disclaimer: "Against his better judgment, Banksy has asserted his right to be identified as the author of this work."

Such a critique on the structured commodification of ideas (e.g. the copyright system) in modern society is at once playful and insistent, foreshadowing the political activism displayed throughout the book. The table of contents gives us a neat summary of the key visual themes that one can see in a typical Banksy work: monkeys, cops, rats and cows, in various states of action or reflection.

In 2005, Banksy journeyed to the West Bank to create works on the Israeli-built barrier in Bethlehem. There, he stencilled nine pieces that depicted whimsical and striking images, such as a girl being carried over the wall by a bouquet of balloons, a soldier checking a donkey's identification card, and a young girl in a pink dress frisking a soldier in military fatigues. The audacity and political resonance of the images juxtaposed against an intractable Middle East conflict lifted Banksy's profile even further as his guerrilla art tactics became global news.

A year later, in 2006, his international moment arrived with the staging of a second Los Angeles exhibit, *Barely Legal*. A wildly successful opening and the inclusion in the exhibition of a gigantic, pink-painted elephant – meant to symbolise the unspoken scourge of global poverty – predictably drew protests from animal rights groups and further stoked Banksy's bad boy image in the art world.

Over the next few years, his provocative exhibits and performances increased his profile still further and made him become a global star. His 2010 documentary

film *Exit Through The Gift Shop*, which was nominated for an Academy Award, was a fascinating portrait of the development of the underground street art movement at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as well as a brilliant exposé of the art world's fickle, illusory and often arbitrary tastes.

### A revolutionary in disguise?

Banksy is a profoundly political artist, as virtually all of his public performances, creations and words reflect an anti-capitalist and anti-government agenda. A populist, poet and preacher, Banksy aims to provoke reflection on various 21<sup>st</sup>-century problems, such as finding hope in an age of war, government surveillance, corporate greed and global inequality. His messages are often hilarious, tawdry and tongue-in-cheek.

Banksy's images range from a vivid and disturbing wall painting of an Abu Ghraib prisoner kneeling in a bright orange prison jumpsuit and black hood, to an intentionally-shocking image of two male police officers sharing a passionate kiss, to what is perhaps his most iconic image: a masked protestor cocking his arm to violently throw a colourful bouquet of flowers. He frequently fuses iconic imagery with subversive messages, such as a stencil of the Mona Lisa and her serene non-smile holding a rocket launcher and wearing headphones, or a urinating Buckingham Palace guard.

His prodigious use of slogans and puns such *Mind the Crap*, which he stencilled outside the entrance to the Tate Gallery, or a massive banner hung on a bridge in central London reading *Another Crap Advert*, indict the status quo. Banksy's art forces viewers to question their assumptions and stereotypes. On one wall, he drew a dark and scary-looking faceless male figure wearing a hoodie and lounging against a wall. Above the man's head are the words *Tourist Information*.

After 2006, Banksy's works began selling for serious amounts of money. Recently, a sculpture crafted from an iconic British red telephone booth sold for EUR 450,000. Banksy acknowledges the strange nature of his success as an anti-capitalist artist in a capitalist art market: "I love the way that capitalism finds a place even for its enemies. It's definitely boom time in the discontent industry."

### Recent works

Banksy's latest project, a "residency on the streets of New York" entitled *Better Out Than In*, saw the creation of a new work in a new location for each day of October 2013. In a recent interview with the *Village Voice*, Banksy said that the show was meant to free street art from its perceived prison in a prohibitively costly and high-priced art market. He writes: "I know street art can feel increasingly like the marketing wing of an art career, so I wanted to make some art without the price tag attached. There's no gallery show or book or film. It's pointless. Which hopefully means something."

The recently concluded month-long "residency" included stencils and street sculptures as well as video and live performance art. In one piece, Banksy converted an empty white delivery truck into an idyllic pastoral diorama with lush greenery and a waterfall. On another day, Banksy set up a table to sell his own works outside of Central Park and priced each picture at USD 60, a fraction of their



Boarded up shop in a rough area of Liverpool, with graffiti by Banksy



Graffiti art on a wall in the Westwood area of Los Angeles



A piece of street art by Banksy in Los Angeles



Cans Festival. London. 2008



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## OUTLOOK / ART



Artwork by Banksy on  
a wall in London

The fact that Banksy has found a way to survive as an artist in today's fragile economic climate is a feat in itself

value in the current art market. The booth was largely ignored and sold only USD 420 worth of art.

During his stay in New York, Banksy purchased an old landscape painting from a Housing Works charity shop, painted an image of a Nazi soldier taking in the landscape, and then donated the work back to the shop to sell as a Banksy original in what could be called an act of reclamation and political altruism.

### Next moves

Even though – or perhaps because – he is the most famous working street artist in the world, Banksy's art is often destroyed, whether by government officials, property owners or even fellow members of the graffiti art community who have issues with Banksy's popularity and success.

Banksy's willingness to continue violating the law so as to create political art in public spaces only serves to further underscore his gleefully revolutionary stance. He constantly criticises the system, yet his paintings and carefully cultivated agitprop mystique have also led him to profit from that very same system.

In one sense, the fact that Banksy has found a way to survive as an artist in today's fragile economic climate is a feat in itself. However, his detractors say that due to his status and wealth, Banksy is no longer an authentic and credible member of the street art subculture and therefore is ill-placed to offer critiques of the status quo.

Kyri Patsalides, a London-based artist and musician who founded the R2 Records ([www.r2records.com](http://www.r2records.com)) production house and label in 1999, has been close to Banksy's work since the early days. He even lives around the corner from one of Banksy's most famous pieces.

As Kyri puts it: "Banksy is primarily about ideas, messages and methods, and although he came up outside of the establishment, it would be hard to argue that he's not become part of it. I doubt that he makes a penny off all the copies of his work sold at many a market stall, but I'm sure he's done OK out of being an artist, and for that, hats off."

While the notion that Banksy is losing his affiliation to the subculture from which he emerged might be a problem for his populist rhetoric and persona, it might also be seen as a sign of his genius. Like



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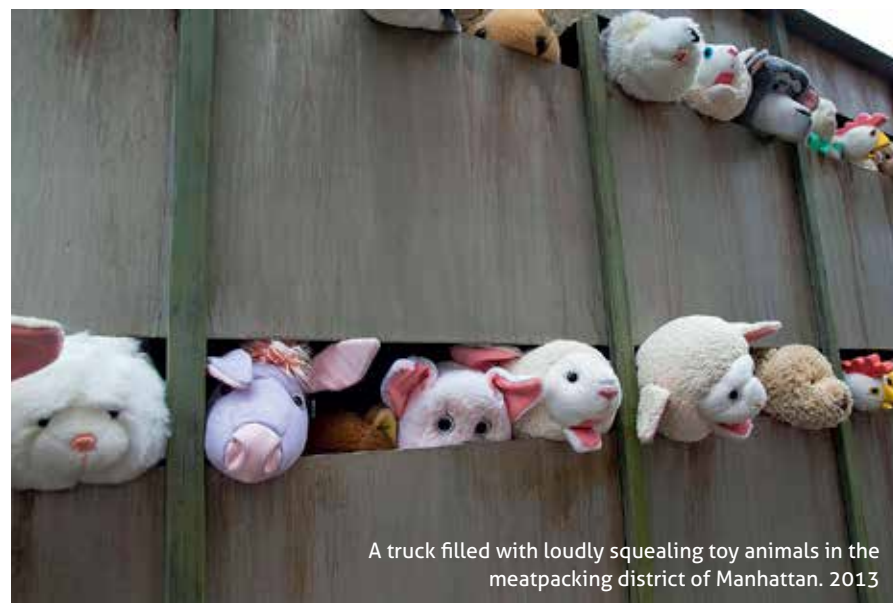
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## OUTLOOK / ART



A truck filled with loudly squealing toy animals in the meatpacking district of Manhattan. 2013

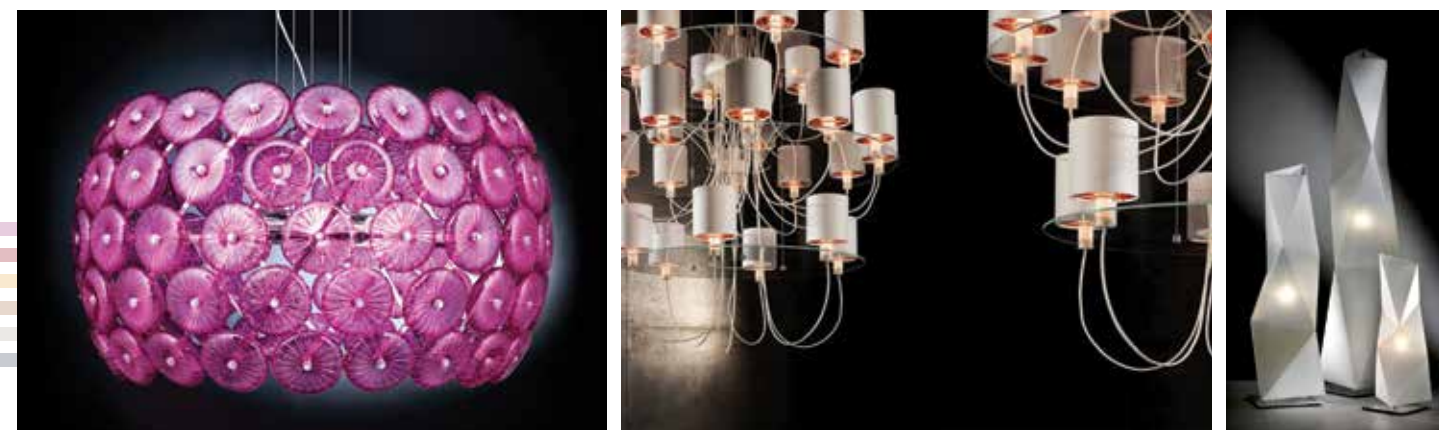


Local city councillor Nilgun Canver protesting against the sale of a Banksy work in North London. The work was removed from this site and sold for more than GBP 750,000

The biggest questions on everyone's mind, though, are: Who is this guy? How does he manage to evade capture and being unmasked?

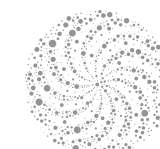
any good artist, Banksy makes people ask questions: What entitles someone to voice a revolution? Can artists be political activists and at the same time profit from their own production? Must a true revolutionary stay hidden? The biggest questions on everyone's mind, though, are: Who is this guy? How does he manage to evade capture and being unmasked? And will he stay anonymous forever?

In the meantime, Banksy continues to turn our ideas about society, legitimacy and art on their head, while compelling us to re-examine our relationship with rules and laws. As he puts it: "The greatest crimes in the world are not committed by people breaking the rules, but by people following the rules. It's people who follow orders that drop bombs and massacre villages." **BO**



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GAISMAS MAĢIJA



TEXT BY FLORIAN MAAß  
PUBLICITY PHOTOS AND BY IEVA JURKELE

# Down the slopes – relaxed or Harakiri-style



The winter sports season is running in full swing, and you're still sitting at home? Well, the time has come to book your fun-filled days in the snow. Do you like aristocratic settings, or do you prefer urban-style environments together with Ibiza-style parties? Do you want to spend the best days of the year with your loved ones, or are you simply looking for an ultimate thrill on the slopes? We present the best resorts for each taste and need

## Snow fun, harakiri-style

"Hau di runter" ("throw yourself down") commands a sign at the top of the Harakiri slope. There are situations in life when thinking too hard doesn't help, and standing at the abyss of the Harakiri and looking down is one of them. The slope's 78-degree incline makes even the coolest extreme skier's knees quiver. Once you're on the way down, there is no stopping or turning back. If you lose control and continue the ride on parts of your body other than your feet, then don't expect to stop before reaching the valley. One way or another, it will certainly be a ride to remember.

The view on the slope is amazing. Not that you'd have the time or the nerves to appreciate it. Everybody who completes the trip down gets a diploma, and if it's a Friday, then you will bring home a photo of

yourself skiing Harakiri-style. The Austrian resort of Mayrhofen is a haven for advanced skiers or snowboarders, offering thrills galore. The slopes, especially at the top, are tough to handle for novices. If blue or red slopes bore you to death, but going down in fresh powder snow on unprepared steep terrain makes you happy, then Mayrhofen is the best choice for this season. With the success of free-ride skis, snowboarding seems to be on the decline for advanced winter sports fans. Telemark skis made of very light material are making a comeback, and ski tours with a final downhill freeride are the thing to do this winter.

If surviving the Harakiri makes you feel like flying, then head to the best snow park in the Alps. *Vans Penken Park* in

**Weblink:** [www.mayrhofen.at](http://www.mayrhofen.at)  
**Ski pass:** 47 EUR per day  
**Hotel:** The *White Lounge* igloo hotel is definitely the coolest place to stay  
**Restaurant:** The *Pilzstube Mountain Hut*  
**Après-ski:** The *Harakiri Bar*, at the bottom of the infamous Harakiri slope

the heart of the Zillertal Valley is one of Europe's largest and best-designed skiing areas. You can easily jump 25 metres high over the ramp.

Mayrhofen offers terrain for all kinds of snow-related action, from classic carvings to freeride and freestyle options. Lots of unprepared ski slopes with mogul skiing opportunities – along with the year-round resort at the Hintertux Glacier around the corner – make Mayrhofen an ideal place for free skiers. That being said, there is a slope here

for everybody, and the 159 kilometres of pistes across the Ahorn and Penken mountains are hard to beat.

Another adventure lies just below your feet when you climb down the ice into the Hintertux Glacier Nature Ice Palace. Equipped with a helmet, harness and safety loops, you will enter a magnificent hall of ice that shimmers in all shades of blue, since that is the only colour reflected by ice.

After a long, adventure-filled day, you might want to let the world – or at least the nice girl or guy sitting next to you at the bar – know about it. With 32 ski lodges and even more bars, the après-ski life is legendary and highly diverse. At an après-ski evening in Mayrhofen, your conversations won't be about shopping.

Some of the best DJs and music groups arrive in April for the annual snowbombing festival, headlined by big-beat pioneers *The Prodigy* this year. Next door, club legends like *Fatboy Slim*, *Pendulum*, *Liam Baley*, *The Milk* and over 100 other big names will warm up the glacier. Mayrhofen is a tough competitor for nearby Ischgl as the best party location in the Alps. The *Ice Bar*, *Sports Lounge*, *Brückenstadl*, *Harakiri Bar*, *Movie Bar* and *Happy End* are among the top places to see and be seen this season.

Fancy a true adventure in the form of a romantic night in an igloo? Then the *White Lounge* igloo hotel is the place for you. For those who prefer less crowded conditions, the Italian village of Alagna presents an alternative. No fancy clubs and no nothing, apart from beautiful mountains and plenty of powdery snow for the best free-ride experience. A popular destination for heli-skiing.







### Ibiza on ice

If you like the winter fun, but also yearn for Ibiza-style party vibes, then the Austrian resort of Ischgl is the place to go. Both locals and visitors swear that après-ski partying was invented here. The Top of the Mountain concerts make many cities envious, and the Chefs' Star Cup brings some of the best European cooks together for a culinary competition.

It's astonishing how this small village of 1,600 people manages to create such an urban lifestyle vibe. Here you can enjoy not only the coolest sounds of resident DJs and the latest in molecular cuisine, but also the best of contemporary architecture. The new design *Hotel Zhero*, designed by starchitect Manfred Jager, is a polished mix of glass, wood and stone – discreetly integrated into the natural surroundings, while setting a design statement at the same time.

From the top of the *Fimbabahn* or Silvretta cable car you can ski down a short slope to the lounge-style *Alpenhaus* bar, another example of contemporary wooden architecture. Relax and have a drink or good meal while enjoying the panoramic view of the Silvretta and Verwall Alps. One floor is for "members only".

Having fun is serious business in the party capital of the Alps. The atmosphere is lively and in some places it can get rowdy,

as during the collective singalongs of rather simplistic Schlager trash. But don't worry, there are still a lot of rather decent clubs to visit. Paris Hilton loves to party at the *Pacha* (a subsidiary of the Ibiza-based club), and so do urban partygoers from all over Europe. Another stylish hangout is *Fire and Ice*.

Some performances by famous pop stars attract 10 times the village's number of inhabitants. This season's opening concert featured *Nickelback*, and Robbie Williams will perform on May 3.

No less impressive is the range of restaurants in the small village. The restaurant of the *Hotel Homann* in nearby Samnaun has been awarded with two *Michelin* stars and 18 *Gault Millau* points. A true convergence of stars occurs during the annual Chefs' Star Cup. Chef-of-the-century Eckart Witzigmann will be the judge this year.

However, let's not forget about the skiing. With 238 kilometres of pistes, a perfect infrastructure consisting of 44 cable cars and lifts, and snow guaranteed until May, the surroundings of Ischgl are among the best places for winter fun. Eleven black slopes attract the more advanced skiers and snowboarders. The opening of the Piz Val Gronda aerial tramway this season leads to new free-ride slopes. The two gigantic fun parks – together they make Europe's biggest – at the Silvretta Arena

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Après-ski partying in Ischgl



The Restaurant Alpenhaus in Ischgl, Austria

**Weblink:** [www.ischgl.com](http://www.ischgl.com).

**Ski pass:** From end of January, a ski pass at Ischgl/Samnaun costs 43.50 EUR per day

**Hotel:** The *Hotel Zhero* combines groundbreaking architecture and local Austrian authenticity

**Restaurant:** The restaurant at the *Hotel Homann*

**Après-ski:** Everywhere. *Pacha* and *Coyote Ugly* are the best-known locales. *Free Ride* is a hangout for skiing instructors and locals

offer halfpipes, rails and quarterpipes. On the cross-border slopes you can sneak into Switzerland for a ride, while the 7-kilometre-long floodlit toboggan run is the most sporty part of the nightlife.

It's hard to say if the *Coyote Ugly* girls or the stunning peaks of the Verwall, Samnaun and Silvretta mountain ranges attract the most visitors. In any case, Ischgl is certainly the place to be for urban winter sport fans who care about optimal après ski partying no less than about the condition of the slopes.

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## OUTLOOK / TRAVEL



< The *Hotel Chesa Grischuna* in Klosters, Switzerland

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**Hotel:** The *Chesa Grischuna*. Stay there in Hollywood style and have a look at the guest book

**Restaurant:** The Michelin-star-awarded *Walserstube*

**Après-ski:** The *Chesa Bar* and *Casa Antica*

### Hollywood on the rocks

"Skis are the most capricious things on Earth. One day you cannot go wrong with them. On another, with the same weather and the same snow, you cannot go right," wrote Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in an 1884 edition of *Strand* magazine after a visit to Klosters. This rustic hideaway in the Engadin region of the Alps was the first ski resort in Switzerland, and upper-class visitors from England were the first foreign guests. Nearby Davos was home to the first T-bar lift in the world. However, it seems that the tourism managers in Klosters decided long ago that they had enough of innovations. The place has maintained an unpretentious old-school charm with a strongly British accent.

Today, Klosters attracts more aristocrats and VIPs than most major cities, despite the fact that not much seems to be on offer for them at first sight. Many of the town's inhabitants are still farmers. You won't find a single 5-star hotel, or any flagship stores by *Gucci* or *Prada*. Klosters isn't loud, fancy or trendy. It's just a nice place with a high quality of service, beautiful mountains and a relaxed, yet sophisticated attitude. The only bars worth mentioning are the *Casa Antica* and the *Chesa Bar*. However, the real meeting place for the rich and famous is the local co-op supermarket. Amazingly, even the notorious tabloid paparazzi are rarely seen here. That's probably the main reason why Klosters is so popular among the royals, the rich and the famous.

The media attention that Lady Diana brought to town in the 1980s was resented by many of its 3,900 inhabitants and their

guests, but that died down long ago and Prince Charles is still a frequent visitor. The cable car to the Gotschnagrat is named *Prince of Wales* in his honour, and Klosters is a place where he can meet his royal Dutch and Norwegian counterparts on the slopes.

Not that Klosters didn't have any experience with celebrities before. During the 1950s, Klosters was nicknamed *Hollywood on the Rocks*. Screen stars Paul Newman, Gregory Peck, Yul Brynner, Lauren Bacall and Greta Garbo appreciated its rustic charm. Writers Truman Capote and Thomas Mann were regular guests. Gene Kelly danced on the table in the bar of the *Hotel Chesa Grischuna*, which remains the place to be. René Zellweger, Bono and John Irving have been among the more recent prominent visitors.

Let's not forget that the *Parsenn Klosters* resort offers some of the best winter sports conditions, including one of the longest runs in Europe, the 12-kilometre-long slope from Weissfluhgipfel to Küblis. In total, there are 320 kilometres of snow-covered pistes and 59 transport systems in the area. The most attractive means of transport might be the old Rhaetian Railway. Over 384 kilometres of tracks bend around curves, wind through tunnels and cross spectacular viaducts and passes to end up at Klosters.

Of course, the price level at the few restaurants is rather royal, just like the hotel rates. But – psst! A pizza and kebab take-away and delivery can be found at the railway station. Don't worry about being seen there, as discretion is a national virtue.



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### Dumplings with parmesan

Nothing compares to spending the winter holidays with your family, and Italy's South Tyrol region is the perfect place for this, especially when going down the slopes isn't the only thing on your mind. The Merano area offers 300 sunny days per year and beautiful mountains in a mild climate. In March, apple and magnolia trees bloom amid the palm trees in the valley, but you can still go skiing further up in the hills.

Meran 2000 is one of the best resorts for beginners, returning visitors and children, as well as for those who just want to enjoy the fantastic view. To the right are the majestic crown-like summits of the Tessa group of mountains. To the left are the Dolomites. Ahead is a view of the Adige Valley and Merano further below. Coniferous trees grace both sides of the slope down from Pivigna to Falzleben, which is winter fun at its best. And you don't have to worry about the little ones, who will be kept occupied at Lucki's *Kinderland*. You can also treat them to an outing on the 3-kilometre-long sledding trail, or on Italy's longest Alpine bob toboggan ride.

Schenna, a charming holiday village nestled between apple trees and vineyards

**Weblinks:** [www.schenna.com](http://www.schenna.com), [www.schnalstal.com](http://www.schnalstal.com), [www.meran2000.com](http://www.meran2000.com)

**Ski pass:** Val Senales 41 EUR, Meran 2000 37 EUR, special offers for families

**Hotel:** Das Weinmesser in Schenna.

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**Restaurant:** Thurnerhof in the Schenna Castle offers tasty regional cuisine, cosy traditional wood-panelled dining rooms and the oldest traditional kitchen room of South Tyrol, dating back to 1454

**Après-ski:** The Bella Vista hut in Val Senales at 2900 metres

on a slope overlooking Merano and the Adige Valley, is a wonderful place to stay. It stretches from 600 to 2000 metres in altitude and offers perfect snowshoe trails. A free ski shuttle bus takes you from the village to the Meran 2000 lifts. The countless of Meran also lives nearby, in a beautiful castle dating from 1330. All of the hotels are run by locals, including the stylish and cosy *Der Weinmesser*, which centres on the delicious wines of the region, offering vinotherapy and wine-tasting courses. The



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The quaint village of Schenna near Merano, Italy



Break time in Schnalstal, Italy

trail along a small river from the family vineyard down to Merano is just amazing. The village of Trautmannsdorf along the way was a favourite of Austrian empress Sisi (1837-1898).

The people of South Tyrol are hospitable by nature, with Bavarian, Tyrolian and Italian influences complementing each other perfectly. The combination of German-style organisation and Tyrolian charm together with a Mediterranean lifestyle and fondness for children makes families feel right at home here. The public transport system is great, as are the espresso coffees, while dumplings with Parmesan cheese provide an example of the harmonious blending of cultures.

Don't worry about rainy days here, as there aren't very many. The *Therme Meran* is probably the best spa in the mountains, and most of the beautiful castles in the vicinity are open to the public. Merano, with its beautiful old buildings, beckons one for a leisurely stroll or a shopping tour.

If you are more serious about skiing, then the nearby *Val Sennales* (or *Schnalstal*) ski resort – where the ancient mummy Ötzi was found in 1991 – offers a variety of slopes, including some for free riders. The latest trend is to ski on telemark or wooden free skis. The 8-kilometre-long ride down from Hochjochferner is just beautiful, and Olympic champion Dominik Paris sometimes practices here. Due to the glacier, the snow lasts until end of May, with the *Gentlemenriders Snowpark* offering an impressive ramp.

In contrast to most large alpine resorts, both *Val Senales* and *Meran 2000* have a cosy feel to them. All of the ski huts are family-run, with freshly prepared meals and no self-service. **BO**



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## Driven: the Opel Insignia Country Tourer

Those who need space and the ability to go off-road – but who don't like the idea of driving an SUV – have a new option: the *Opel Insignia Country Tourer*

It's based on the recently revised *Insignia Sports Tourer*, but gets tougher exterior styling, a 20-mm higher ride and a clever four-wheel-drive system. A two-wheel drive version will join the range later next year.

One can choose from three engines: a 163- or 195-hp 2.0-litre diesel, and a 250-hp 2.0-litre petrol. There are manual or automatic transmissions, but the more powerful engines are automatic only.

### What's it like to drive?

We drove the 163 hp diesel, which is likely to account for a lot of the *Insignia Country Tourer* sales.

It's a strong, flexible engine that pulls eagerly from low revs. That's a good thing, too, because it can become noisy when worked hard and there's some vibration transmitted through the pedals and steering wheel. Although the diesel engine settles down on the motorway, road noise does make its way into the cabin – especially over coarse surfaces – and the manual gearbox is also notchy.

The six-speed automatic gearbox is better, allowing the diesel's considerable torque to do its job rather than changing down too early when accelerating. The *Country Tourer* has the same steering as other *Insignias*, so things are a little vague at low speeds, but the weight arrives consistently through high-speed corners.

Our test cars were fitted with standard 18-inch alloys. That setup gives a firm but reasonably well-controlled ride that's rarely uncomfortable. There's plenty of traction both on and off the road, thanks to the *Tourer's* advanced four-wheel drive system, and despite being taller than the regular *Insignia*, the body lean in bends isn't too bad.



The Insignia Country Tourer is cheaper than its main rivals

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Opel's Flexride system is included, and by selecting 'Sport' you're able to stiffen the suspension, weight up the steering and increase throttle response. Alternatively, selecting 'Tour' softens everything for a more comfortable journey.

### What's it like inside?

The new model is no different from any other *Insignia Sports Tourer*, which means that while the boot is a good shape and size at 540 litres, it's much shallower than in other models and less practical. The rear seats fold flat easily, though.

The front has a wide range of wheel and seat adjustments for the driver, as well as plenty of head- and legroom. The sports seats give plenty of support, too. Although a couple of six-footers will fit comfortably in the back of the *Tourer*, over-the-shoulder visibility is still an issue, due to a small rear screen and thick rear pillars. However, standard rear parking sensors should help. Speaking of standard equipment, it really is generous.

The previous *Insignia's* dashboard used to be plastered with poorly labelled buttons, making it difficult to find the one you wanted at a glance. Models



with satellite navigation now get a large touch-screen interface, through which you also control the stereo and your phone. It's easy enough to move between the various menus. Some commands, however, require you to drag your finger across the screen, which is not easy to do with any accuracy when you're on the move. Opel clearly realises this, because it also provides voice control, a scroll knob and a laptop-style touchpad. Nevertheless, while the voice control and scroll knob are helpful, the touchpad seemed a bit too fiddly for us.

### Should I buy one?

At a 26 890 euro starting price, the *Insignia Country Tourer* is practically unbeatable compared to rivals, given the nice set of equipment, design, quality and decent off-roading ability. You should also try the *VW Passat Alltrack*. It's a bit larger, has a more practical boot and will be worth more than the Opel after three years. Unfortunately, it is way more expensive.

That being said, unless you really can't bear the thought of driving an SUV, we'd recommend also trying the *Mazda CX-5*, *Toyota RAV4* and *Honda CR-V*. They are all spacious cars that will cope just as well with tricky surfaces. **BO**

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This award-winning wireless video monitor turns your mobile device into the ultimate personal panopticon, allowing you to check on your toddler, teen or Yorkshire terrier from anywhere in the world. Powered by 30 invisible infrared LEDs, it offers a viewing distance of 10 metres and a 60° (horizontal) by 45° (vertical) viewing angle. The camera connects directly to your home network, providing night vision video and audio at 30 fps (640 x 480). The app couldn't be easier to use and the picture quality is super sharp.

EUR | [www.babyping.com](http://www.babyping.com) / [www.homemonitor.me](http://www.homemonitor.me)



### August Smart Lock

The future is here. Envisioned by San Francisco-based tech designer Yves Béhar, this cylindrical, battery-powered anodised aluminium case device fits over a door's existing deadbolt and syncs with the user's smartphone. Bluetooth technology senses when your phone is approaching the door, unlocking it automatically – or you can open the door remotely with your phone from anywhere in the world. You can also give access codes to others for specific times and dates.

150 EUR | [www.august.com](http://www.august.com)



### iShower

Whatever happened to shower radios? Well, finally, here's one that has kept up with the times. This Bluetooth-enabled water-resistant speaker (with a range of 200 feet) lets you listen clearly to your favourite tracks, playlists and internet radio stations while you're lathering up. Has track play/pause/skip buttons, and you can pair up to five devices. Takes three AA batteries, which will last for 15 hours of continuous use. Mounts easily on tiled walls.

105 EUR | [www.ishowerinc.com](http://www.ishowerinc.com)



### DoorBot

Crowdfunder-funded startup Edison Junior has come up with this hot, ingenious new product, which lets you see who is at your door on your smartphone or tablet. Thanks to live streaming video and audio, you can speak to your visitors from anywhere in the world (and with the Lockitron option, either let them into your home or tell them to buzz off). Runs on an internal rechargeable battery that lasts for a year, can be wired right through your doorbell, and has night vision, too.

150 EUR | [www.getdoorbot.com](http://www.getdoorbot.com)





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# Jūrmala

invites you to start a new and healthy lifestyle



January is the perfect time to start implementing those New Year's resolutions. For most people, these have to do with improving one's physical health and attaining a greater sense of internal harmony. If you are in that category, then you are in luck, as there is hardly a better place for fortifying the mind and body than Latvia's legendary resort town of Jūrmala



www.tourism.jurmala.lv

## How to get there

15 minutes by taxi from the Riga International Airport.  
30 minutes by train or minibus from the Riga Central Station to Majori Station (Jūrmala city centre).

Jūrmala's beautiful natural environment is practically enough in itself to induce one to spend time outdoors. Many visitors enjoy healthy and pleasant walks along the white sandy beach and breathing in the fresh, ionized sea air, which is rendered even more fragrant by the coastal pine forests. The experienced professionals at Jūrmala's resort hotels, spas and rehabilitation centres have created a whole array of effective treatments for those who wish to improve their physical and emotional state of well-being. These revitalizing health and wellness programmes can be undertaken over a weekend or even during the course of an entire week.

Of course, any new commitment requires time, and old habits are not always easy to change. Accordingly, the best place for beginning a new and healthier lifestyle is in a location with the appropriate conditions and with the friendly assistance of qualified professionals.

Jūrmala has been one of the leading health centres in the Baltic Sea region for more than a century, and last year the city was officially accorded health resort status by the Latvian government. Jūrmala's mineral water springs, healing medicinal mud and other natural resources – combined with the extensive experience of the resort's health professionals and advanced tourist infrastructure – make this resort a perfect destination for those who wish to regain a sense of internal harmony as well as look and feel great. **BO**

### » The Amber SPA Boutique invites you to regain your internal harmony with its *Back to Balance* programme.

*Take the time in an ideal location to restore your inner harmony and physical energy*

This package for 5 days and 4 nights includes:  
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gourmet Breakfast Buffet at the MyLife restaurant;  
airport transfers;  
entrance to the swimming pool, gym, traditional Russian banya, studio classes (aerobics, pilates, dance, yoga classes, aqua aerobics) and table tennis (ping-pong) area;  
harmonizing Amber Glow ritual in the Amber Wellness Spa. Includes a hydro massage bath, peeling, body wrap and facial massage;  
purifying traditional Russian banya ritual. Includes a besom massage, soap massage and a full body honey wrap, along with the enjoyment of homemade herbal tea, cranberry juice and light snacks.

This offer is valid until 30.04.2014 and can be booked for EUR 720 per person or EUR 1200 for two persons.

For reservations and enquiries, please contact the hotel by phone: (+371) 67755330 or by e-mail: peteris@amberspahotel.lv.  
www.amberspahotel.lv

### » The Baltic Beach Hotel invites you to strengthen your health with its *Be Healthy\_7* week-long programme.

*Health-strengthening week by the seaside in Jūrmala*

This package for 7 days and 6 nights includes:  
a spa programme for one person (two doctor's consultations and the elaboration of an individual programme, together with spa treatments worth 315 EUR in accordance with the doctor's programme. More than 400 different treatments available.);  
accommodation in a Superior room;  
entrance to the swimming pool with heated seawater, along with a sauna and gym visit once per day in the sports centre;  
generous breakfast buffet; lunch or dinner (6x);  
guarded parking lot.

This offer is valid from 06.01. until 20.06.2014 and from 20.08. until 26.12.2014. The price is EUR 946 per person or EUR 1490 for two persons.

For reservations and enquiries, please contact the hotel by phone: (+371) 67771400 or by e-mail: res@balticbeach.lv.  
www.balticbeach.lv



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### » The Hotel Jūrmala SPA invites you to take care of your back with its *Healthy Back Programme 2014*.

*Stress, a lack of physical activity and working in a sitting position can all cause tension and pain in your muscles. This special programme will help you to relieve your muscles from tension and your back from pain*

This package for 8 days and 7 nights includes:  
accommodation in a Standard or Superior room;  
daily breakfast buffet in the Jūrmala restaurant;  
dinner (7x);  
daily entrance to the saunas and pools of the Wellness Oasis centre;  
water aerobics or gym daily;  
Spa treatments per person: electrotherapy (2x), pearl bath, therapeutic *Pranamat Eco* massage mat (2x), classical full body massage (2x), medical massage (2x), *Alma Salus* massage, foot massage, local buckwheat massage, neck area massage; exotic mountain wax warm-up (2x); salt cave.

This offer is valid until 31.12.2014 and the price per person in a Standard room starts at EUR 989.60.

For reservations and enquiries, please contact the hotel by phone: (+371) 67784415 or by e-mail: booking@hoteljurmala.lv.  
www.hoteljurmala.lv

### » The Jaunkēmeri Resort and Rehabilitation Centre invites you to revive your health.

*A health-strengthening and preventive programme that strengthens the immunity and that has been set up by the specialists of the centre*

This package for 7 days and 6 nights includes:  
accommodation;  
special diet menu;  
medical and Ayurvedic consultation and recommendations;  
daily phytotherapy and physiotherapy or yoga session;  
physical therapy (5x);  
mineral water baths and access to the pool (4x);  
mud applications, heart-training gym sessions and salt therapy (3x);  
classical massages (2x);  
session with a psychologist;  
*Jaunkēmeri* healing mineral water treatment.

This offer is valid until 31.05.2014 and the price is EUR 400 per person in a twin room or EUR 503 per person in a single room.

For reservations and enquiries, please contact the centre by phone: (+371) 67734403 or by e-mail: marketing@jaunkemeri.lv.  
www.jaunkemeri.lv





Since opening in 2010, the *Galleria Riga* has found its place in the hearts of Riga's residents and visitors as a convenient shopping centre, which also happens to provide opportunities for relaxation and entertainment

The *Galleria Rīga* is located in a thriving business area in the centre of the Latvian capital. A wide variety of shops line the seven storeys of the building, providing visitors with a broad selection of items. Here you'll find necessities for both daily life and celebrations.

At the *Galleria Riga* you can purchase items by such famous labels as *iBLUES*, *MAX&Co*, *Tommy Hilfinger*, *Guess*, *Stefanel*, *women'secret*, *Cortefiel*, *Springfield*, *Karen Millen*, *Oasis*, *Parfois*, *Ecco*, *Mango*, *Marella*, *Gino Rossi*, *Suitsupply*, *Baltman*, *Diesel*, *Pierre Cardin* and many more.

To better serve its customers, the shopping centre has a built-in parking garage (free parking for two hours on Sundays) and special stands for bicycles. Guests have use of free Wi-Fi and can take full advantage of *Global Blue* tax-free benefits. If you are into a healthy lifestyle, then a yoga session with an English-speaking instructor at the *Urban Yoga* studio might be just the right way to end the shopping day.

Other useful services at the *Galleria Riga* include umbrella rental for up to seven days, a post office, dry-cleaning, currency exchange and beauty salons. A favourite spot for guests to stop for a moment's rest is the centre's fountain, which offers a great view of the building's elegant architecture. **BO**



**GALLERIA RIGA shopping centre**  
Dzirnavu iela 67  
Entrances from Dzirnavu iela 67  
and Blaumaņa iela 10 (between  
Brīvības bulvāris and Tērbatas iela)  
**Information centre**  
Tel. (+371) 67307000  
info@galleriariga.lv  
www.galleriariga.lv/en



Anita Altmane

## Free stylist's services

A private stylist may sound like an unattainable dream, but now the *Galleria Riga* shopping centre is offering this service completely free of charge!

Besides working with you to create a confident image and select a new wardrobe, personal stylist Anita Altman will also save you lots of time and help you to find your way among the wide range of clothing and accessories in the shopping centre, which include both affordable mass-market products and world brands of the highest renown. Anita will ensure that you buy smart and avoid getting confused during sales, leaving fully satisfied with stylish items that suit you personally and that are a great long-term investment.

The art of looking resplendent is now available to everybody. Thanks to Anita, you no longer have to be rich or famous to look great! You can converse with the stylist in Latvian, English or Russian. The style consultations take place in a cosy atmosphere in Anita's personal reception room on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the *Galleria Riga*. Make an appointment by telephone at (+371) 27543435.



Prices are listed solely for information purposes





# World-class steakhouse

When steak is at stake, it's better to leave things to the experts. In that regard, *Steiku Haoss*, with its established history and impeccable reputation, easily serves as the ultimate destination for the hungry traveller



STEIKU HAOSS  
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(+371) 67272707  
Audēju iela 2, Riga  
(+371) 67225699  
www.steikuhaoss.lv  
twitter.com/SteikuHaoss

The witty word play is no coincidence, as the name *Steiku Haoss* is phonetically similar to the phrase *steak house*, while its direct meaning is *steak chaos*. Why so? On the one hand, this haven for carnivores is cosy and familial with its solid wooden furniture and engravings, sizzling grill and warm lighting, making it a fortress of comfort on chilly winter nights. Yet it is also young and vibrant, introducing a dash of creative

chaos when it comes to the earnest quest for meaty excellence.

*Steiku Haoss* has not acquired an excellent reputation for nothing. The guys running the show are passionate about steak, their *magnum opus*, and know exactly how to bring the best out of meat. First of all, they hold to the established truth that if you want to prepare a good steak, then you need to make friends with a first-rate

butcher. This wise precept has not let them down so far.

The restaurant chain even has its own meat processing plant, securing complete independence when it comes to setting one's own standards of quality. The same goes for *Steiku Haoss'* suppliers. They provide the restaurant with the highest quality meat from both near and far – starting with the pastures of the Baltics and Scandinavia, and ending with the meadows of more distant locations like Spain, New Zealand and Argentina. With over ten years of experience in pleasing the most demanding steak lovers, *Steiku Haoss* has shown that by paying premium prices for the best quality meat, it has already secured half of its success.

Of course, steak could not become a signature dish without the sparkling element of creative chaos added by a skilful chef. Yet you won't see any overly complicated and exotic flavour formulas here. A quintessentially simple and hearty dish like steak doesn't need to be spoiled by excessive additives, and the sufficiently generous selection of 17 types of steak will assure you of that. Take, for example, a medium-rare olive oil-matured beef tenderloin steak – a simple juicy piece of fillet with a vigorous and powerful flavour. Or select the flamboyant *Flambée* – a beef fillet steak singed in rum and served on a hot stone. Such straightforward and mighty flavours can be mouth-watering, thanks to the skilful combination of perfectly matured meat with simple and fitting ingredients. For a spiced-up dining experience, one might choose the *Cowboy Pepper* – a tender beef chop marinated in a hot jalapeño glaze and best ordered medium rare. A courtesy to those with a more delicate stomach will come in the form of *Lady* – the most tender slice of beef fillet available.

That being said, beef is not the only food

that *Steiku Haoss* offers to its meat-loving guests. One can also choose from a variety of other dishes that celebrate the great taste of meat, be it the more traditional poultry or the likes of venison and veal, not to mention succulent mains and starters prepared with fish.

The menu does vary slightly between *Steiku Haoss'* three restaurants, for each

has customized some of its more popular dishes in accordance with the wishes of its regular guests. However, the adjustments are small and the absolute classics – including the ultimate side order of oven-baked stuffed potato served with either cheese-garlic paste, green herb butter or tender penny bun sauce – will always be there, whichever of the locations you choose to visit.

Despite being a fortress of melt-in-your-mouth meaty dishes, *Steiku Haoss* has always shown a keen regard for the needs of guests who prefer lighter dishes, or those who just happen to be having a light day. The focus on quality steaks does not mean that meatless dishes are treated solely as sides. The wide selection of soups, salads and starters indicates a loving attention to vegetable flavours as well. Take the *Fiocchetti* with gorgonzola cheese, green asparagus and Brazil nuts as an example. You will find it in the menu of the restaurant on Meistaru iela, along with many more treats.

Having perfected their trade alongside the world's finest culinary masters, the chefs at *Steiku Haoss* have a firm grasp of the potential in each product, be it a tender piece of beef or venison, a tangy chunk of cheese or an intensely-flavoured seasonal root vegetable. They have spent substantial periods interning at *Noma*, the Copenhagen establishment with two Michelin stars that is considered to be one of the world's best restaurants, bringing home both innovative ideas and an even more powerful wish to deliver the absolute best. **BO**

*Steiku Haoss* is a chain of three steak restaurants with a total capacity of 500 diners (50 at Tērbatas iela, 150 at Audēju iela and 300 at Meistaru iela)





# Gourmet paradise

**As the head** chef of the 1221 restaurant in Latvia's capital city, Roberts Smilga never seems to rest. This time, new wintry flavours are brewing in his near-magical kitchen. Always mindful of the nuances in his splendid dishes, the experienced man's attentive eye has also caught sight of a largely empty niche on the Riga dining scene.

"I do not yet see restaurants focusing on the king of the season – wild game", says Smilga. He has thus decided to turn most of his attention to this atypical food – at least for the next few months – pleasing both his regular clients and visitors to the capital. Knowing how difficult it can be to obtain top quality game, he is looking into both land animals and birds, expecting to add wild boar and doe as well as partridge to the beaver and deer already on his menu.

The chef faces a dilemma when introducing new dishes into his menu. He says that even though he is

eager to try out new ideas, he still has to remember his long-standing clients, each with their own favourite dish. "At the same time, I have the feeling that they trust

me," Smilga says. "I think my customers would also enjoy taking part in my experimental journeys. Some items on the menu definitely have to stay, but the rest can be played with!"

Asked about the direction where he is going with wild game, Smilga says that even though he no longer reads for inspiration and relies on his senses when experimenting in the kitchen, there are rules about game that should not be breached. "All game goes well with sweet flavours," says Smilga. "It would make the perfect match with practically any fruit or berries, and I am

not planning to interfere with this long-standing truth!" he laughs.

Still, the new dishes will not lack Smilga's special signature details, making for surprising and wonderful meals to mark the winter festivities. **BO**

**SMILGA'S  
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WILL  
MAKE FOR  
WONDERFUL  
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THE WINTER  
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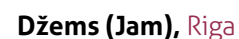
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Besides creating an enchanting atmosphere, Žigurs has surrounded himself with

*Džems/Jam* serves breakfast from 8 AM until 12 noon on weekdays, offering freshly baked bread and pastries, as well as a wide range of egg dishes, crepes, potato pancakes and hearty toast sandwiches. Business lunches are served from 12 noon until 4 PM, featuring a soup or salad and a main course for a very reasonable price. The

During our visit, it seemed that Zigurs really tries to make sure that his customers are happy. He claims that those who come in once to his establishment usually return again, and judging by what we could see, that definitely appears to be true!

 [www.dzems.lv](http://www.dzems.lv)



Address: Berga Bazars tel. 67284801  
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Portofino – it's gentry, stylish, luxurious. It's hospitality at its' finest, and Portofino's team, who are all ardent and non-compromising enthusiasts for service and food excellence, know the value of a loyal guest. Warm and welcoming, it is a place to return to, tomorrow or in a couple of years. It offers classical Italian cuisine, though thoughtfully adjusted to local dining customs, and is appreciated by those who know themselves to be true gourmets. Perfection is known to be in details, in the little things which come together to create the atmosphere, which at Portofino is so elusive that you are left to purely enjoy. This place is the subtle frame for your perfect experience.



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If you are looking to bring your body and soul into harmony, and you care about maintaining vigor and vital energy, visit the Thai Lotus professional Thai massage salons located in Riga and Jūrmala. From the moment you step off the street and into Thai Lotus, you will be made to feel very welcome by doyens of Thai masterhood — virtuosos of ancient craftsmanship who teach in the temple of Wat Pho, one of Bangkok's most respected massage schools. The Thai therapy specialists at Latvia's Thai Lotus centers have a keen sense of the individual characteristics of each person. After the first session you will notice improvements in your body, mind and soul, and you will feel a burst of energy and strength.

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Thailand's Traditions in Latvia

# THAI LOTUS

Мир Таиланда в Латвии



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## FOOD&DRINK



### La'pas, Riga

Since opening just a few months ago in October, La'pas has become a popular place for top-notch yet affordably priced business lunches. It is also a cosy and elegant dinner spot, where you will feel at home regardless of how you are dressed, be it in a business suit or jeans and sneakers. Head chef Mārtiņš Butkus, who until now had offered his culinary creations to the guests of 36.linija, is now also a co-owner of La'pas and is maintaining the dining quality that he is known for in the more laid-back setting of this new locale.

A ten-minute walk from Riga's Old Town, the restaurant is situated on the fairly quiet Skolas iela. Alongside its warmly lit, colourful and elegant dining room, a secluded and reasonably spacious banquet hall is used for private parties

and gatherings. There is even a separate club-like room with a small stage, where live jazz music will soon be playing. The restaurant crew is also planning to host fine arts evenings with improvised theatre performances.

La'pas serves a breakfast menu until 12 noon every day, offering hearty classics with a twist. Apart from traditional oatmeal with raisins, you will also find oatmeal with tomatoes and Parmesan cheese. Among the other tasty dishes on offer are potato pancakes with salmon and a chicken curry sandwich.

The main menu, representing European cuisine with a local and seasonal touch, has more varied and equally tempting dishes on it. Among them is the quintessentially Latvian herring fillet with cottage cheese and pickled onions as a starter,

which can be followed by a light chicken roulette with Philadelphia cheese as a main or a lamb chop served with mashed pumpkin. For those who fancy meatless dishes, pearl-barley risotto with beets and cheese snowballs is a good choice, as is the fried cheese with pumpkin, cashew nuts and green peas.

However, it is the desserts that are the real specialty of head chef Mārtiņš Butkus. Here he is at his most playful, creating ever new and wonderful combinations, such as carrot cake with sea buckthorn sauce or pumpkin soufflé in red wine, and more.

Address: Skolas iela 22

Opening hours:

Mon.-Thu. 9:30-21:00

Fri. 9:30-23:00

Sat. 11:00-23:00

Sun. 11:00-21:00

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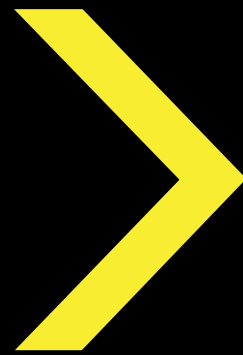
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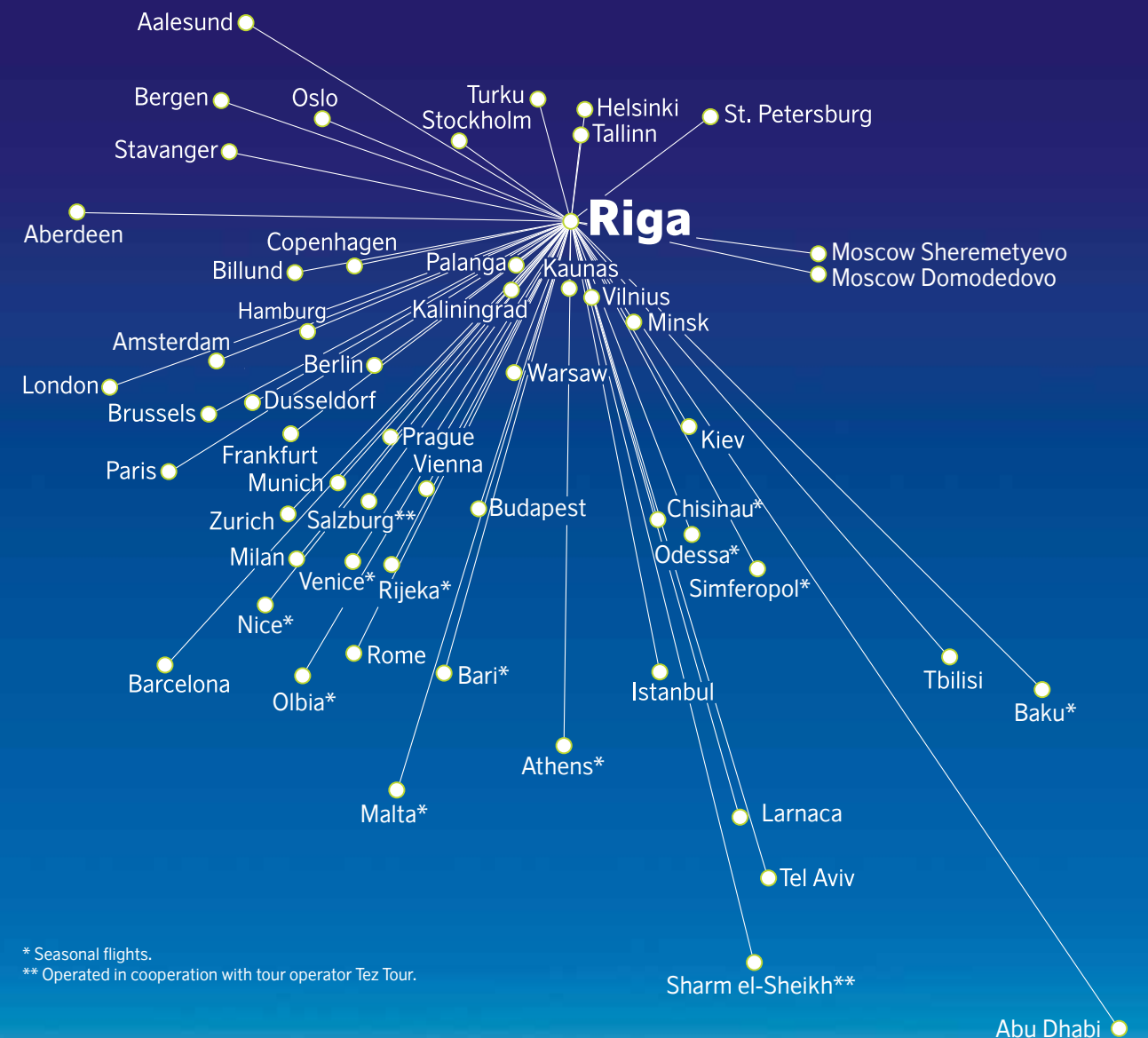


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airBaltic



## Welcome aboard airBaltic!

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Singapore

## 1/ Fly further – all across the world

Exciting destinations in Asia, Australia and Africa are now easier to reach than ever before. Thanks to *airBaltic's* co-operation with *Etihad Airways*, the whole world is practically at your doorstep. Don't miss your chance to fly to the exotic destination of your dreams!

In co-operation with *Etihad Airways*, *airBaltic* will fly you from Riga to Bangkok and back at prices that start from 405 EUR. Round trip flights to Singapore start from 455 EUR and to Manila from 475 EUR.



Salzburg

## 2/ The perfect getaway in Salzburg

Holidays in the Austrian Alps are surprisingly diverse, with skiing trails, toboggan runs, ice skating, Bavarian curling, hiking, paragliding, rafting, mountain biking, golf, tennis and much more on offer. Accommodation ranges from cosy chalets and inns to modern hotels – the choice is yours!

Check out the joint *airBaltic* and *TezTour* offers at [www.teztour.lv](http://www.teztour.lv).

## 3/ Latvia has joined the euro zone

We are delighted to announce that Latvia joined the euro zone on January 1, 2014. This means that the euro is now Latvia's official currency. You will still be able to pay for your purchases in lats at shops and other places until January 14 (inclusive), but the balance of any sum that you pay will be given to you in euros.

Find out more at [www.eiro.lv](http://www.eiro.lv).

## 4/ Advertise with us!

What could be better than showing your logo on an airplane that's travelling all around the world? *airBaltic* now presents various opportunities for your advertisement to be seen by passengers flying to more than 60 destinations worldwide. Your offer can be displayed on tray tables, on the pages of our inflight magazine, or even on the side of the aircraft itself!

For more information on the various advertising opportunities with *airBaltic*, contact [advertise@airbaltic.com](mailto:advertise@airbaltic.com).

"To travel is to live."

- Hans Christian Andersen

Every new year comes with new resolutions. If one of yours was to travel more, then here is an inspiring list of *airBaltic's* top four new attractive summer holiday destinations in 2014. Great beaches, fun party places, hot spots for summer sports enthusiasts and shoppers – all can be found at the destinations listed below.



© ESPAI D'IMATGE, TOURISME DE BARCELONA

## Barcelona

The sophisticated and trendy capital of Catalunya is a city like no other. The modern-day metropolis is home to architectural masterpieces from ages past, traditional markets and a diverse culture. Barcelona is a favourite meeting place for artists and intellectuals. It's a big city, but perfect for being discovered by walking or riding a bike, away from the metro and tourist buses. Barcelona also has an impressive nightlife. Many say that the city never sleeps. If you're up for a party, then go to such fashionable districts as El Born, the Old Town and Port Olímpic by the beach.

## Rijeka

The clear blue waters of the Adriatic Sea make Croatia a beach lover's paradise at the crossroads of Central Europe and the Balkans. The country boasts family beaches with gentle coves of pebbles or stones, well-hidden romantic spots, tidy town beaches and coastal promenades for the best parties you've ever been to. Don't forget to try out the local cuisine, which features many seafood specialties prepared in various ways.



## Larnaca

Sun, white sand and the sparkling blue Mediterranean Sea. It's hard to imagine a better place for a beach holiday, as you take in the view of the sea over a glass of good wine. Cyprus offers a fascinating underwater world to discover for snorkellers and divers. However, if you are more interested in history than sunbathing and surfing, than you're also in luck, as there are lots of ancient archaeological sites to visit. Cyprus is also widely known as the island of Aphrodite or island of love.

## Malta

From its North African and Arabic influences to its Sicilian-inspired cuisine, Malta is a true jewel on the Mediterranean. Its rich historical heritage beckons at practically every step, with unique prehistoric temples and various museums worth visiting. No holiday in Malta is complete without a visit to the beach. Although these are not as large as on other islands, they are no less charming.



The best possible offer for your perfect summer vacation is now online at [www.airbaltic.com](http://www.airbaltic.com).

## IN BRIEF

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3/ Latvia has joined the euro zone

4/ Advertise with us!





**Mārtiņš Sīlis,**  
vice president of  
revenue management

TEXT BY ILZE POLE  
PHOTO BY GATIS GIERTS, F64

# From ships to airplanes

In his previous life, so to speak, Mārtiņš Sīlis was as far away from aviation as one could imagine. After obtaining a military education, he served as a navigation officer on a coast guard patrol boat. Now, however, he heads one of the largest structures at *airBaltic* – the revenue management department

**Can you tell us a bit about your military background and career? What did you do before you started to work at *airBaltic*?**

I spent a total of nine years in the military. During the first four years, I studied at the United States Coast Guard Academy. Then I returned to serve for five years in the Latvian Coast Guard Service. That was an exciting time. We learned how to rescue people on water and, after returning to Latvia, I spent most of my time working on patrol boats and other vessels of the coast guard.

**It seems like quite a big change to go from ships to airplanes!**

Yes, you could say that. Here I was, sailing the seas with the wind blowing in my hair, but now I sit in an office on weekdays, working nine to five! (*Laughs*). That career change occurred not because I suddenly got tired of being on ships and wanted to do something that had to do with planes. Unfortunately, my state of health deteriorated and I could no longer continue serving actively in the coast guard.

I had a number of alternative career options but wasn't satisfied with those, so I started to think about how else I could use my skills and knowledge. Together with my helmsman's diploma, I also obtained a Bachelor's degree in mathematical modelling while studying in the United States. I understood numbers, I liked working with them and could calculate things pretty well in my head, so I looked for a position where I could do that.

*airBaltic* had a vacancy for an analyst in this very same department and that's how I got here. During the four years that I've been with the airline, I've worked my way up to head of the department. I think that was the right choice to make and, looking back, I have no regrets, neither about my navy service in the coast guard or about my decision to start working at *airBaltic*.

**The revenue management department is one of the largest at *airBaltic*. What exactly do you do there?**

To put it in a nutshell, we try to establish the price that people are willing to pay for plane tickets. The price of plane tickets changes all the time, and our job is to analyze the behaviour of our passengers. When do they buy their plane tickets? How long in

advance do they do so? What do they like about flying with us, and what do they not like? What services do they choose? We analyze this information and, based on the data that we obtain as well as on the demand for various services, we change the prices of our plane tickets. We also make revenue forecasts so that the airline can plan its future activities. Our department shoulders a very heavy responsibility, because we make predictions about most of the company's earnings.

**Can you tell us why the price of some plane tickets changes from day to day?**

That depends mostly on the demand for these tickets. At the same time, we closely monitor the pricing policies of our competitors and take into account the price that passengers are willing to pay for their tickets. We want to obtain maximum revenue for the company, but we have to figure out the best way to do so. Will we meet our revenue target for a flight if we sell 20 tickets at five euros apiece, or if we sell five tickets at 20 euros apiece?

We try to predict how much passengers are willing to pay for particular flights on particular days. We spend each day analyzing a lot of different variables.

We also look at the historical context, such as the prices that we charged for the same flights a year earlier. Would people be willing to pay just as much this year as they did last year? While much of the data for our predictions comes from past activity, it's also important for us to see what our competitors are doing and to take the state of the world economy into account.

**Are plane tickets still the main source of revenue in the airline industry, or have other goods and services offered**

**on flights come to take the lion's share of earnings?**

That depends on each particular airline and on the business model that it has chosen, but I would say that plane tickets and their prices are still the most important factor.

**How have passengers' ticket-buying habits changed of late?**

Compared to 2012, people are buying their tickets closer to the flight departure date. The difference isn't that big, but we have noticed it. Of course, at the department I work in, we like it best when

The ability to handle stress well. The years that I spent at sea toughened me up, although admittedly the stress that I experience here is of a completely different kind than before. The airline has concrete business targets that we try to meet, and so far we have managed to reach them. The second aspect has to do with leadership. During my studies at the academy, I was being trained to become an officer and to have people under my command on coast guard ships. My teachers were continually shaping my thinking in that direction, and that serves me well now, as the head of a department.

During my studies at the academy, I was being trained to become an officer and to have people under my command

passengers buy their plane tickets well in advance. (*Laughs*.)

We've also noticed that people are once again travelling more than they did during the economic crisis, and that they are ready to pay more to do so. Of course, everybody has their own individual perception about what is expensive, and we all have subjective limits on how much we are willing to pay for one service or another.

In addition, we see that our passengers appreciate the opportunity to buy certain extra services in accordance with their needs. Although some people go for package deals, most people buy their flight ticket first and then decide what else might be of interest to them.

**What skills from your previous experience in the navy have you found to be useful in your current position?**

**Have you ever thought of becoming a pilot?**

No, never! (*Laughs*.) When I was at the academy, I actually had the chance to choose training for the air force instead of the navy, but I knew from the start that flying wasn't for me. I prefer ships and the sea. My grandparents live in Liepāja, which is a beautiful port city. I spent all of my summers there as a child and saw lots of ships and sailors. That probably influenced me to join the navy, as the idea of joining a military structure also appealed to me. Even after leaving the navy, something of my training has still remained in my blood. One time I went out sailing on a yacht with a group of friends. It was hard for me to quit my former work mode and think of the trip as a pleasure outing rather than a job in which you have to act quickly in order to save someone who is stranded at sea. **BO**

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# Onboard menu

## Business Class

We aspire to provide individual service and an excellent dining experience on all *airBaltic* flights. Our Business Class menu features traditional and seasonal dishes, blending Latvian and international cuisine. Business Class customers enjoy a complimentary full meal tailored for the time of day when they are flying, together with carefully selected beverages.

Passengers with particular religious, health or dietary preferences may order special meals up to 24 hours before departure.

## Economy Class

Economy Class passengers can choose from our *airBaltic* café menu, which offers hot meals, sandwiches, paninis, croissants and sweet snacks, as well as a broad selection of hot and cold drinks.

## Order your meal before the flight

Make your flight experience even more exciting! Order a gourmet meal while booking your flight ticket or any time later, up to 24 hours before departure, under the Manage my booking section at [www.airbaltic.com](http://www.airbaltic.com).



# Customized pre-order meal system

Passengers who have special dietary requirements or those who want to create their own meal set can try out our new customized in-flight meal pre-order system. It allows passengers to choose from more than 70 pre-order meal options and place them onto their virtual tray. Among the dishes on offer are French-style lamb chops, Fiji tiger prawns, dietary dishes like stewed rabbit with wild rice and special meals for kids like funny pirate fish sticks. These can be chosen together with one of nine salads and one of nine types of dessert, along with a drink of your choice.

Customers can now order their inflight meal immediately upon completing their flight booking, or any other time no later than 48 hours before departure at [www.airbalticmeal.com](http://www.airbalticmeal.com). Enjoy a gourmet meal with a fantastic view from your aircraft window!



Happy Forest kids' meal:  
Fresh vegetables for children



Breakfast:  
Pancakes with fresh berries  
and jam



Seafood:  
Grilled Fiji tiger prawns  
with pasta

Ask the flight attendant for your **BalticMiles** card  
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Register your card online after the flight at [register.balticmiles.com](http://register.balticmiles.com) and **get 50 bonus Points**. Keep collecting Points for everyday things like shopping, eating out, travelling, and having fun and **spend them on flights** and other great rewards – **it's that easy!**

BalticMiles is the airBaltic frequent flyer program and the leading multipartner loyalty program in Northern and Eastern Europe.

## Fly airBaltic and collect Points

- **3 Points** for each EUR spent on a Business Class ticket
- **2 Points** for each EUR spent on an Economy Class ticket
- **1 Point** for each EUR spent on a Basic Class ticket

### Claim Points later

If you have forgotten to show your card, or maybe didn't know that you've shopped at a BalticMiles partner, BalticMiles offers you the option to retroactively claim your Points – even get Points for flights you've flown up to 30 days before becoming a member! Just contact BalticMiles Member Service and we'll sort everything out.

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- **VIP**

The more you fly, the greater the privileges, which include a free luggage allowance, no queues, reserved seats and much more to make travelling easier.

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[www.balticmiles.com](http://www.balticmiles.com)

**Applying and participating in the BalticMiles program is completely free of charge, and anyone from 2 years of age is welcome to become a BalticMiles member. A separate BalticMiles account and specially designed Young Pilot card will be created for children.**



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Ginta Pūce, Cabin Crew



Guna Veisa, Payroll Accountant



Ingūna Kanča, Senior Cabin Crew



Baiba Tiltiņa, Cabin Crew



Julianna Bebre, Ground Dispatcher

# airBaltic's new calendar is out!

**Gorgeous** stewardesses, accountants and even a first officer are on hand to welcome you with a warm smile each month of 2014. Yes, our new calendar has just come out! It has become a tradition for *airBaltic* to make an annual calendar, and who could present the company better than its own employees?

The photo shoot was a great experience for all of the participants, something different from daily work. The 12 calendar girls got to be pampered by professional hair stylists and make-up artists photographed by a professional photographer and were made to feel like real supermodels.

"It was a wonderful experience to be a part of the creative process and to work with the amazing crew that made it happen. It is always nice to wear a uniform again and feel the airport thrill in the air," said our August model Juliana, a ground dispatcher at *airBaltic*.

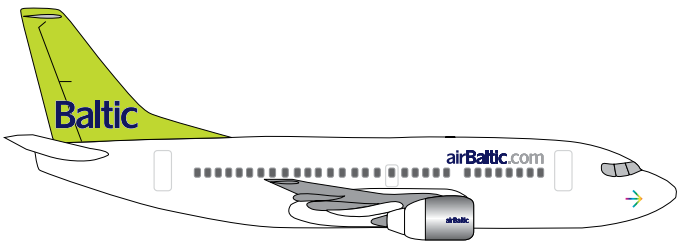
This year's pictures were all taken at the Riga airport, *airBaltic*'s home base, and the author of the images is the talented Latvian photographer Gatis Rozenfelds.

Don't miss your chance to purchase the new *airBaltic* calendar at [www.airbalticshop.com](http://www.airbalticshop.com) in either wall or desk format.



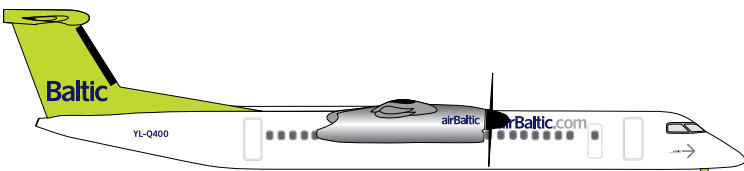
## Boeing 737-300

Number of seats	142/144/146
Max take-off weight	63 metric tons
Max payload	14.2 metric tons
Length	32.18 m
Wing span	31.22 m
Cruising speed	800 km/h
Commercial range	3500 km
Fuel consumption	3000 l/h
Engine	CFM56-3C-1



## Boeing 737-500

Number of seats	120
Max take-off weight	58 metric tons
Max payload	13.5 metric tons
Length	29.79 m
Wing span	28.9 m
Cruising speed	800 km/h
Commercial range	3500 km
Fuel consumption	3000 l/h
Engine	CFM56-3



## Q400 NextGen

Number of seats	76
Max take-off weight	29.6 metric tons
Max payload	8.6 metric tons
Length	32.83 m
Wing span	28.42 m
Cruising speed	667 km/h
Commercial range	2084 km
Fuel consumption	1074 l/h
Engine	P&W 150A

## airBaltic codeshare partners





Flights from Riga					Flights to Riga				
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival
KAUNAS					KAUNAS				
BT 041	RIX	KUN	-2--5-7	22:45 23:30	BT 042	KUN	RIX	1-3--6-	08:00 08:45
VILNIUS					VILNIUS				
BT 341	RIX	VNO	1234567	09:55 10:50	BT 350	VNO	RIX	1234567	07:50 08:45
BT 343	RIX	VNO	1234567	14:15 15:10	BT 342	VNO	RIX	1234567	11:55 12:50
BT 347	RIX	VNO	1234567	19:10 20:05	BT 344	VNO	RIX	1234567	15:40 16:35
BT 349	RIX	VNO	1234567	22:45 23:40	BT 348	VNO	RIX	1234567	20:35 21:30
PALANGA					PALANGA				
BT 033	RIX	PLQ	1-3-5-7	22:45 23:30	BT 032	PLQ	RIX	12-4-6-	08:00 08:45
TALLINN					TALLINN				
BT 311	RIX	TLL	1234567	09:50 10:45	BT 366	TLL	RIX	1234567	07:50 08:45
BT 313	RIX	TLL	1234567	14:15 15:10	BT 312	TLL	RIX	1234567	11:55 12:50
BT 363	RIX	TLL	1234567	19:05 20:00	BT 314	TLL	RIX	1234567	15:40 16:35
BT 365	RIX	TLL	1234567	22:45 23:40	BT 364	TLL	RIX	1234567	20:30 21:25
STOCKHOLM Arlanda					STOCKHOLM Arlanda				
BT 101	RIX	ARN	1234567	09:40 09:55	BT 104	ARN	RIX	123456-	06:45 09:00
BT 109	RIX	ARN	1234567	18:45 19:00	BT 102	ARN	RIX	1234567	10:25 12:40
BT 103	RIX	ARN	12345-7	22:35 22:50	BT 110	ARN	RIX	1234567	19:30 21:45
COPENHAGEN					COPENHAGEN				
BT 133	RIX	CPH	1234----	05:15 05:55	BT 134	CPH	RIX	1234----	06:25 09:00
BT 131	RIX	CPH	1234567	09:20 10:00	BT 132	CPH	RIX	1234567	10:50 13:25
BT 139	RIX	CPH	1234567	18:00 18:40	BT 140	CPH	RIX	1234567	19:15 21:50
BILLUND					BILLUND				
BT 145	RIX	BLL	1-3-5-7	22:25 23:25	BT 146	BLL	RIX	12-4-6-	06:05 08:55
OSLO					OSLO				
BT 151	RIX	OSL	123456-	09:15 10:10	BT 158	OSL	RIX	1234567	06:00 08:50
BT 153	RIX	OSL	1234567	17:10 18:05	BT 152	OSL	RIX	123456-	10:45 13:35
BT 157	RIX	OSL	1234567	22:25 23:20	BT 154	OSL	RIX	1234567	18:35 21:25
BERGEN					BERGEN				
BT 171	RIX	BGO	1-4-7	22:25 23:50	BT 172	BGO	RIX	12--5--	05:40 09:00
STAVANGER					STAVANGER				
BT 177	RIX	SVG	-2-45-7	22:25 23:45	BT 178	SVG	RIX	1-3-56-	05:45 09:00
ALESUND					ALESUND				
BT 175	RIX	AES	----5-7	13:25 14:50	BT 176	AES	RIX	----5-7	15:20 18:35
HELSINKI					HELSINKI				
BT 301	RIX	HEL	1234567	09:50 10:55	BT 330	HEL	RIX	1234567	07:50 08:50
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BT 305	RIX	HEL	1234567	19:05 20:10	BT 304	HEL	RIX	1234567	15:35 16:35
BT 329	RIX	HEL	1234567	22:35 23:40	BT 306	HEL	RIX	1234567	20:40 21:40
TURKU					TURKU				
BT 359	RIX	TKU	1-45-7	22:35 23:45	BT 360	TKU	RIX	12--56-	07:30 08:35
BERLIN Tegel					BERLIN Tegel				
BT 211	RIX	TXL	1234567	09:20 10:15	BT 212	TXL	RIX	1234567	10:45 13:35
BT 213	RIX	TXL	1234567	17:10 18:05	BT 214	TXL	RIX	1234567	18:40 21:30
HAMBURG					HAMBURG				
BT 251	RIX	HAM	-2-4----	09:30 10:35	BT 252	HAM	RIX	-2-4----	11:05 14:00
BT 255	RIX	HAM	1-----7	14:05 15:10	BT 256	HAM	RIX	1-----7	15:40 18:35
BT 253	RIX	HAM	-3-5--	17:10 18:15	BT 254	HAM	RIX	-3-5--	18:45 21:40
MUNICH					MUNICH				
BT 221	RIX	MUC	1-3-56-	09:20 11:00	BT 222	MUC	RIX	1-3-56-	11:40 15:10
BT 223	RIX	MUC	12-4567	16:00 17:40	BT 224	MUC	RIX	12-4567	18:20 21:50
FRANKFURT					FRANKFURT				
BT 243	RIX	FRA	1-3-5-7	09:30 11:15	BT 244	FRA	RIX	1-3-5-7	11:50 15:25
BT 245	RIX	FRA	-2-4-6-	15:40 17:25	BT 246	FRA	RIX	---4-6-	18:00 21:35
DUSSELDORF					DUSSELDORF				
BT 231	RIX	DUS	1--5--	09:40 11:15	BT 232	DUS	RIX	1--5--	11:45 15:15
BT 233	RIX	DUS	--3-6-	15:55 17:30	BT 234	DUS	RIX	--3-6-	18:00 21:30
VIENNA					VIENNA				
BT 431	RIX	VIE	123456-	09:50 11:15	BT 432	VIE	RIX	123456-	11:50 15:10
BT 433	RIX	VIE	12345-7	16:15 17:40	BT 434	VIE	RIX	12345-7	18:15 21:35

Flights from Riga					Flights to Riga				
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival
ZURICH					ZURICH				
BT 641	RIX	ZRH	1---5--	09:25 10:55	BT 642	ZRH	RIX	1---5--	11:35 15:10
BT 641	RIX	ZRH	-2---6-	16:15 17:45	BT 642	ZRH	RIX	-2---6-	18:20 21:55
MOSCOW Domodedovo					MOSCOW Domodedovo				
BT 418	RIX	DME	1234567	09:40 13:50	BT 419	DME	RIX	1234567	14:30 14:45
MOSCOW Sheremetyevo					MOSCOW Sheremetyevo				
BT 424	RIX	SVO	1234567	04:25 08:05	BT 425	SVO	RIX	1234567	08:45 08:35
BT 422	RIX	SVO	1234567	17:00 20:40	BT 423	SVO	RIX	1234567	21:40 21:30
ST-PETERSBURG					ST-PETERSBURG				
BT 442	RIX	LED	123456-	09:40 13:00	BT 443	LED	RIX	123456-	13:35 12:55
BT 444	RIX	LED	12345-7	18:30 21:50	BT 445	LED	RIX	12345-7	22:25 21:45
KALININGRAD					KALININGRAD				
BT 428	RIX	KGD	1-4-7	22:45 00:40+1	BT 429	KGD	RIX	12--5--	08:40 08:35
MINSK					MINSK				
BT 412	RIX	MSQ	---4-7	09:40 11:50	BT 413	MSQ	RIX	---4-7	12:30 12:40
BT 412	RIX	MSQ	1-3----	18:10 20:20	BT 413	MSQ	RIX	1-3----	21:00 21:10
KIEV Borispol					KIEV Borispol				
BT 400	RIX	KBP	1234567	09:30 11:15	BT 407	KBP	RIX	1234567	06:40 08:35
BT 404	RIX	KBP	1234567	16:40 18:30	BT 401	KBP	RIX	1234567	11:45 13:35
BT 406	RIX	KBP	1234567	22:40 00:30+1	BT 405	KBP	RIX	1234567	19:45 21:40
WARSAW					WARSAW				
BT 463	RIX	WAW	12345-7	22:25 22:55	BT 464	WAW	RIX	123456- 06:25 08:55	
PRAGUE					PRAGUE				
BT 481	RIX	PRG	1-3----	09:25 10:40	BT 482	PRG	RIX	1-3----	11:10 14:15
BT 481	RIX	PRG	---5-7	16:40 17:55	BT 482	PRG	RIX	---5-7	18:25 21:30
BUDAPEST					BUDAPEST				
BT 491	RIX	BUD	-2---6-	09:50 11:15	BT 492	BUD	RIX	-2---6-	11:45 15:00
BT 491	RIX	BUD	---4---	16:10 17:35	BT 492	BUD	RIX	---4---	18:05 21:20
BRUSSELS					BRUSSELS				
BT 601	RIX	BRU	12345--	06:30 08:25	BT 602	BRU	RIX	12345--	08:55 12:40
BT 601	RIX	BRU	-----6-	09:40 11:35	BT 602	BRU	RIX	-----6-	12:05 15:50
BT 603	RIX	BRU	-----7	15:30 17:25	BT 604	BRU	RIX	-----7	18:00 21:45
BT 603	RIX	BRU	12345--	17:25 19:20	BT 604	BRU	RIX	12345--	19:50 23:35
AMSTERDAM					AMSTERDAM				
BT 617	RIX	AMS	12456-	09:20 10:45	BT 618	AMS	RIX	123456-	11:30 14:45
BT 619	RIX	AMS	12345-7	16:30 17:55	BT 620	AMS	RIX	12345-7	18:40 21:55
LONDON Gatwick					LONDON Gatwick				
BT 651	RIX	LGW	1-34---	09:30 10:20	BT 652	LGW	RIX	1-34---	11:10 15:55
BT 653	RIX	LGW	12-4567	15:20 16:10	BT 654	LGW	RIX	12-4567	16:50 21:35
PARIS Charles de Gaulles					PARIS Charles de Gaulles				
BT 691	RIX	CDG	123456-	09:30 11:25	BT 692	CDG	RIX	123456-	12:10 15:55
BT 693	RIX	CDG	12345-7	15:20 17:15	BT 694	CDG	RIX	12345-7	18:05 21:50
ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino					ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino				
BT 631	RIX	FCO	-2-4-6-	09:25 11:30	BT 632	FCO	RIX	-2-4-6-	12:15 16:25
BT 633	RIX	FCO	1-3-5-7	14:10 16:15	BT 634	FCO	RIX	1-3-5-7	17:05 21:15
MILAN Malpensa					MILAN Malpensa				
BT 629	RIX	MXP	-2-4-6-	09:30 11:15	BT 630	MXP	RIX	-2-4-6-	11:55 15:35
BT 629	RIX	MXP	1-3-5-7	15:45 17:30	BT 630	MXP	RIX	1-3-5-7	18:10 21:50
ISTANBUL Sabiha Gokcen					ISTANBUL Sabiha Gokcen				
BT 711	RIX	SAW	--3--7	09:40 12:45	BT 712	SAW	RIX	--3--7	13:25 16:20
BT 711	RIX	SAW	-2---6-	14:45 17:50	BT 712	SAW	RIX	-2---6-	18:30 21:25
LARNACA					LARNACA				
BT 657	RIX	LCA	-----6-	15:30 19:20	BT 658	LCA	RIX	-----7	12:20 16:25
BARCELONA					BARCELONA				
BT 681	RIX	BCN	--3-6-	09:30 12:15	BT 682	BCN	RIX	--3-6-	12:55 17:35
BT 681	RIX	BCN	1-----7	13:35 16:20	BT 682	BCN	RIX	1-----7	16:55 21:35
TBILISI					TBILISI				
BT 722	RIX	TBS	---5-7	22:55 04:25+1	BT 723	TBS	RIX	1-----6	07:00 08:35
TEL AVIV					TEL AVIV				
BT 771	RIX	TLV	-2---6-	10:00 14:20	BT 772	TLV	RIX	-2---6-	16:30 21:00
ABU DHABI					ABU DHABI				
BT 795	RIX	AUH	1---5--	00:45 08:50	BT 798	AUH	RIX	--3--7	02:00 06:35
BT 797	RIX	AUH	-2---6-	15:35 23:40	BT 796	AUH	RIX	1---5--	10:00 14:35







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<b>CYPRUS</b>	
Larnaca	Larnaca International Airport Airport Ticket Office airBaltic / LGS Handling
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Prague	Vaclav Havel Prague Airport Terminal T2 Airport Ticket Office CEAS ☎ +420 220117540
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Copenhagen	Airport Copenhagen International Terminal 3 Departure Hall Airport Ticket Office SAS
<b>Billund</b>	Billund Airport Departure Hall Airport Ticket Office ☎ +45 76505205
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Lappeenranta	Lappeenranta Airport
Tampere	Airport Tampere-Pirkkala Airport Ticket Office Airpro OY
Turku	Airport Turku Airport Ticket Office Airpro OY
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Paris APG France 66 avenue des Champs Elysées Building E, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor 75008, Paris ☎ +33 153892100 airbaltic@apg.fr	Airport Charles de Gaulles Terminal 2D Airport Ticket Office Swissport Services CDG
Nice	Airport Nice Cote D'azur Terminal 1 Airport Ticket Office Lufthansa Ticket Desk
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