

# baltic

# outlook

JULY 2014

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inflight magazine

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Cycling, football and  
Chopin

Culinary calendar  
The gastronomic  
world's Eiffel  
Towers, Big Bens  
and Coliseums

Falling in love  
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Untamed  
Athens





Sun Terraces

J Ū R M A L A

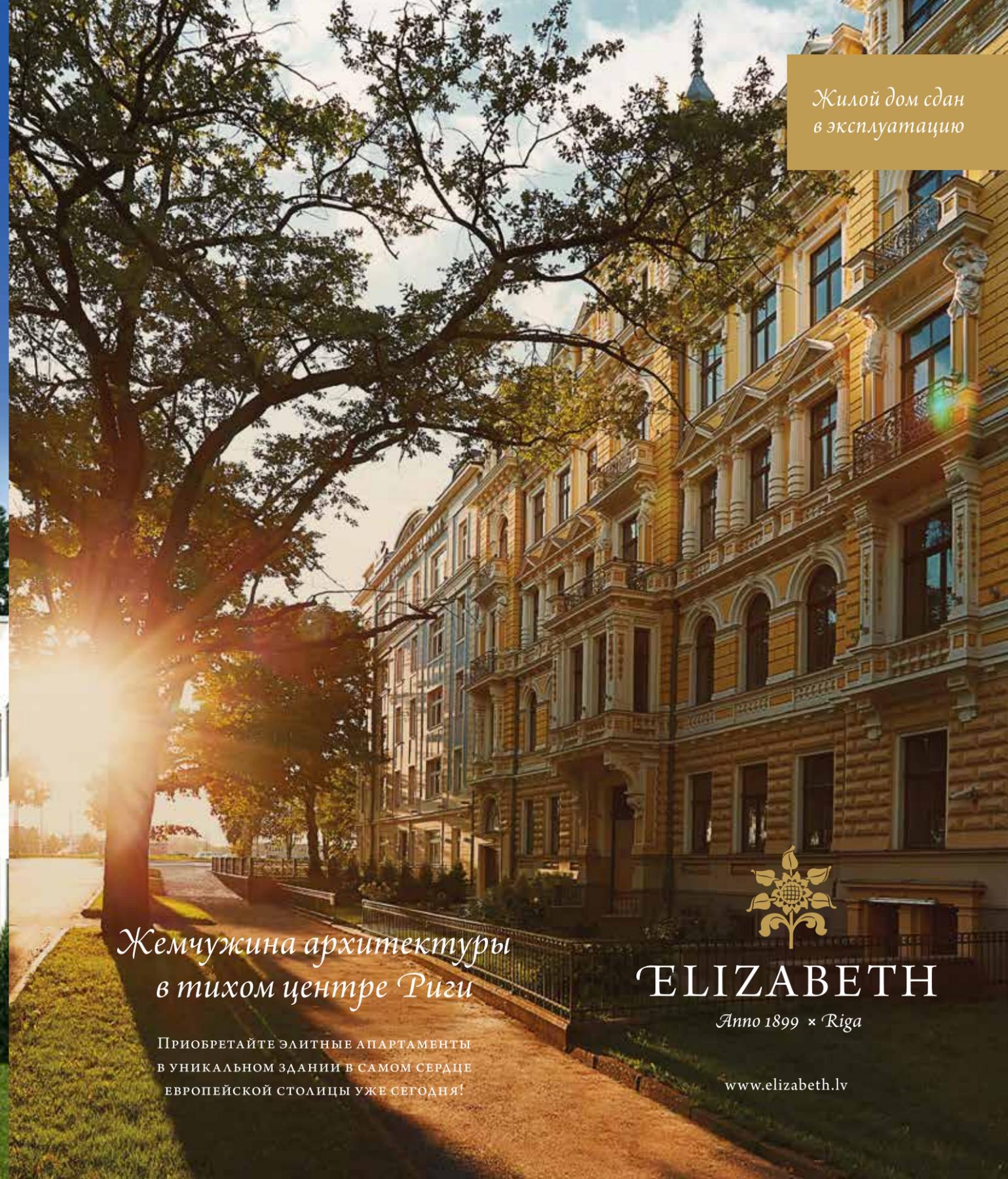
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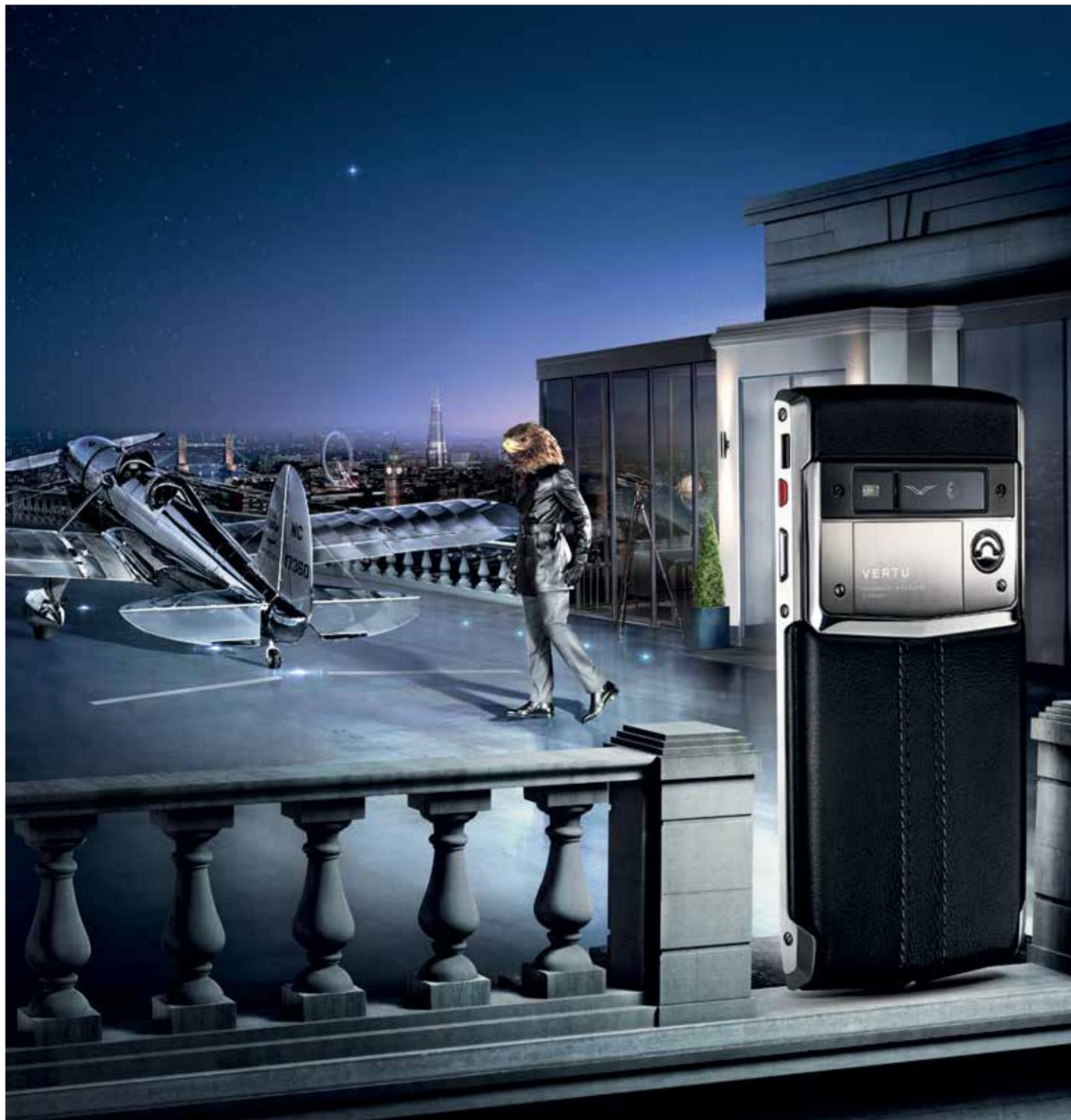
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Martin Alexander Gauss  
Chief Executive Officer *airBaltic*

Dear Customer,

July is a very special month. The Baltic region – the home for our airline – bathes in warmth and sunlight almost round the clock, with just a few hours of darkness setting in. Everyone is out in the street cafés, on the beaches, or taking part in some kind of outdoor activity. A myriad of cultural events has literally walked into the parks, open-air stages and new creative quarters, especially in Riga, which is a European Capital of Culture for 2014. Outdoor music is definitely a highlight among all of the events taking place in the region. Tens of thousands of singers and dancers will perform in the Song and Dance Celebrations in Tallinn and in the World Choir Games in Riga. Then add internationally recognised festivals, city celebrations, shows, concerts and performances, and your calendar of activities is densely packed. On our side, we are delighted to have increased flight frequencies on our most popular routes, and to serve the hundreds of thousands of visitors arriving to these events from all over the world.

We have also given careful consideration to your holiday escapes further south. Our summer schedule features cities on the Mediterranean, Black Sea and Caspian coasts. As we have discontinued flying on a few routes with somewhat lower demand, aircraft have become available for additional warm-weather destinations, such as Palma de Mallorca off the Spanish coast, and Varna and Burgas on the shores of the Black Sea. We have also improved our schedules to such destinations as Athens, Malta, Larnaca in Cyprus and Olbia in Sardinia.

Did you know that *airBaltic* is introducing iPads to its pilots so as to replace their heavy flight bags, which contain paper flight details, manuals, navigation and reference materials? This will save about 2 million pages of paper every year once the project has been rolled out completely.

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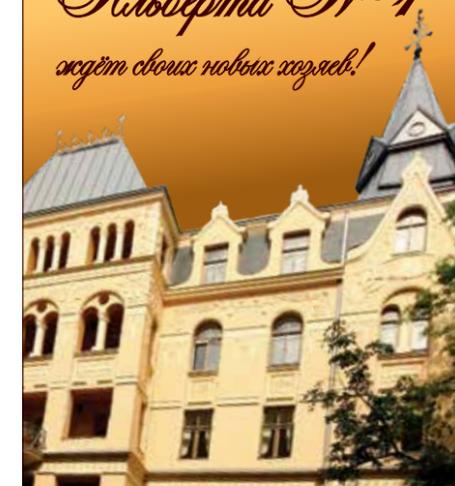


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# JULY

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Stockholm

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Уже этим летом в Латвии, в Юрмале, на первой линии моря, в центре «золотой мили» откроет двери жилой квартал, уникальный по своей сути. Всего полтора часа полета от шумной Москвы и вы в своем загородном доме в Европе. Здесь только лучшее: от прогулочных велосипедов с логотипом LEGEND., дизайнерских холлов и безупречного сервиса, до частного пляжа, изысканного ресторана и собственного спа-комплекса с бассейном.

Латвия – спокойная, изысканная европейская страна, с комфортным общением на русском языке, замечательной экологией, культурой, вкусной едой и качественным образованием. Страна с особым притяжением, умиротворяющая и вдохновляющая.

Ее жемчужина – курортный город Юрмала славится мягким приморским климатом, целебным воздухом соснового бора, белоснежным песком пляжей, минеральными водами и лечебными грязями.

Квартал LEGEND. формируют три многоквартирных жилых дома: Villa Churchill, Villa Herburn, Villa Dietrich, частная вилла - Villa Hemingway, клубный дом с рестораном - Villa Tiffany и инфраструктура, не имеющая аналогов на балтийском побережье. Перед архитектором квартала была поставлена задача в архитектурных образах и формах передать неординарность легендарных личностей XX века. При этом LEGEND. – не реплики архитектурных стилей, а сплав характерных акцентов и деталей, прочитанных в новом, современном ключе.

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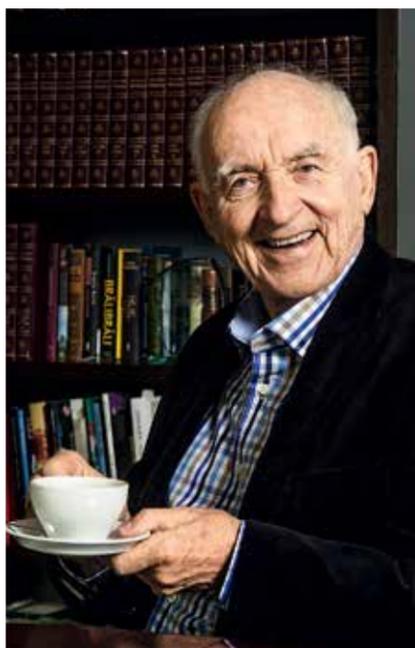
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# Pleasure of travelling

A famous 20<sup>th</sup>-century geographer, John Kirtland Wright, fused his scientific interest of exploring unknown lands (*terrae incognitae*) on Earth with the search for uncharted territories within each human being. According to this eminent scholar, the famous sirens' voices in Homer's *Odyssey* not only beckon to strange faraway isles, but also to the exploration of one's inner geography. That seems like a sensible turn for this science. Except for the oceans, the great Age of Exploration is practically over. Individual worlds remain unknown, aside from those that poets, writers and artists choose to reveal.

As a professional geographer, I have been inspired by Wright's ideas. Regarding travel, I like both moving around and staying put in one place. I have taken long wilderness trips with pack and tent along mountain ridges in Western Canada and the U.S. as well as "back-country" voyages on lakes and rivers by kayak and canoe. Campfire conversations have always been a major part of these journeys, satisfying my atavistic cravings for the Stone Age.

Contrary to the pleasures of movement, certain cities invite long sojourns. For me, "going native" in a city district, immersing myself in local rhythms and meeting people is more important than seeking the



## THE FIRST CUP OF STRONG BLACK COFFEE SATISFIED MY DREAMS OF BOHEMIAN PARIS

requisite sights. This pattern was established during my first visit to Paris as a doctoral candidate. Instead of devoting a great deal of time to the city's architectural marvels,

TEXT BY EDMUNDS VALDEMARS BUNKŠE, PROFESSOR EMERITUS AND GEOGRAPHER | PHOTO BY GATIS GIERTS, F64 | PHOTO SESSION AT THE HOTEL BERGS, BERGA BAZARS, RIGA

I spent my undergraduate years avidly reading the writers of the Lost Generation. Thus, Ernest Hemingway, Francis Scott Fitzgerald, Erich Maria Remarque and others filled me with a romantic longing to get a better feel for the city's *Quartier latin*.

I started my explorations at a tiny café that was just around the corner from the famous *Shakespeare and Company* bookstore at Kilometre Zero. Right away, the very first cup of strong black coffee in an earthenware cup satisfied my dreams of Bohemian Paris. The café became the centre of my forays into the city, along with the Notre Dame Cathedral looming across the Seine. I quickly made friends.

We lived in a world encircled by the *Jardin du Luxembourg*, *Place des Vosges* and *Les Halles* market, where excellent, thick French onion soup could be had at three in the morning. We paid visits to the Louvre, where the *Winged Victory* statue greeted us at the head of the stairs. Distant glimpses of the Eiffel Tower were enough for me at first. Only on my third visit to Paris did I venture near it, when I was teaching Roland Barthes' interpretation of the monument's semiotic significance. Like Hemingway, I began to write journals in cafés, and then I continued to write them anywhere I happened to be. This has become a lifelong habit. **BO**



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# Shining pearl of Nice

TEXT BY ZANE NIKODEMUSA  
PUBLICITY PHOTO

**Which is the most unique and prominent hotel in France? No contest. For almost a century, the Hotel Negresco in Nice has been the holiday destination of choice for film stars, millionaires and royalty.**



Fly to Nice with airBaltic from €89 ONE WAY

**Le** Negresco – one of the most memorable landmark hotels in France – has always attracted a crowd. For most visitors, a photo with the famously dressed hotel employees will have to be enough, but for others who can afford it, a chance to stay at one of the most unique hotels in the world is not to be missed. Queen Elizabeth II, Frank Sinatra, Ernest Hemingway, Edith Piaf, Gina Lollobrigida and Michael Jackson have all slept there. Romy Schneider and Alain Delon pursued a tumultuous love affair in its confines.

Le Negresco was built in 1912 by Henri Negresco, the son of a Romanian innkeeper. As director of the Municipal Casino in Nice, he had the idea to build a sumptuous hotel of quality that would attract the wealthiest of clients. At the time, the hotel was regarded as a wonder of modernity, equipped with early vacuum cleaners and a pneumatic tube system to distribute letters to each room.

Opening its doors in January of 1913, the grand palace of the Riviera made a profit of 800,000 gold francs in its first year

of operations. However, Negresco faced a downturn in his affairs when the First World War broke out, not long after he opened his business. The hotel was converted to a hospital. By the end of the war, the number of wealthy visitors to the Riviera had dropped off to the point that the hotel was in severe financial difficulty. Seized by creditors, the Negresco was sold to a Belgian company.

## EDITH PIAF, GINA LOLLOBRIGIDA AND MICHAEL JACKSON HAVE ALL SLEPT THERE

Over the years, the hotel experienced its ups and downs, and in 1957 it was sold to the Augier family. Jeanne Augier reinvigorated the hotel with luxurious decorations and furnishings, including an outstanding art collection and rooms with mink bedspreads. She ignored the 1950s rule book about browns, greens and Bordeaux reds, bringing in the brightest colours, silk wall hangings, period furniture,

art and artists. Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dalí were regular guests.

Madame Augier ran the Negresco for more than 50 years. Having batted off numerous purchase attempts in recent years from the likes of the Sultan of Brunei and, allegedly, Bill Gates (“You’re not rich enough,” she replied), Madame Augier established an endowment fund in 2009 to run the Negresco and ensure its continued independence. Last year, the Hôtel Negresco celebrated its 100-year anniversary as well as Augier’s 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Yes, at first glance the Negresco might look like a typical luxury five-star hotel with a Michelin-starred restaurant, rooms with a view of the sea and a private beach. But in fact, the Negresco goes further. With art at its heart, it has a rare mission to fulfil in the hospitality trade. It is filled with museum-worthy French art and enfold guests in 400 years of French culture. The bedrooms, corridors and public areas are sumptuous, with treasures from Louis XIII’s reign through to Niki de Saint Phalle’s bulbous beauties.

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### SPOTLIGHT ON SUMMER

Five things that you should do in Latvia in July

- Live out every Latvian's dream of renting a summer vacation home by the sea. We took a liking to the contemporary version of rest in the countryside at the *Sipoli* design home in Bernāti ([www.sipolihome.lv](http://www.sipolihome.lv)).
- Catch a concert or two during the *Riga Rhythms* music festival from July 2-5, with the focus this year on female jazz singers.
- Experience the wonderful sight and fragrant smell of lindens in bloom.
- Take part in sea and fishermen's festivals, which have been taking place since 1936 during the second weekend of July, at cities and villages all along the Latvian coastline.
- Taste crayfish caught in Latvia's rivers and lakes.



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### ON THIS MONTH'S MENU

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

THE TREND:



**Music** *The Sound Poets* are a Latvian band that is often compared to several world-famous artists. Nevertheless, they have kept their own unique, emotionally intelligent pop-rock style. *Reaching for the Light* is the English version of their debut album. The band's music is energetic and emotionally charged, leaving a vivid and long-lasting impression.

#### Design

Latvian-based *Velo Sock* has created a stylish cover that cyclists can slip over their bicycle's tires, pedals and chains to prevent mud and sand from spreading all over their homes. When the sock gets dirty, shake it out and place it in the washing machine before air-drying. [www.velosock.com](http://www.velosock.com)



### FESTIVAL SEASON

If you male office workers are starting to feel that the tie around your neck has become too tight, and if you office ladies have become tired of wearing high-heeled shoes, then perhaps it's time to regain some *joie de vivre* at one of the many music festivals taking place in Europe this summer. Although a number of big-name European festivals such as *Rock Werchter* in Belgium and *Roskilde* in Denmark are already sold out, one cosy (the number of spectators doesn't exceed 30,000) and critically acclaimed summer music festival is still accessible. This year, *Positivus*, the largest music festival in the Baltics, is taking place in the northern Latvian town of Salacgrīva from July 18-20. The music is always good, the atmosphere is invariably great, and the beach is stunningly beautiful, as is the backdrop of the fragrant coastal pine forest. [www.positivusfestival.com](http://www.positivusfestival.com)



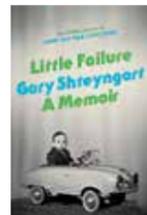
TEXT BY ZANE NIKODEMUSA AND ROGER NORUM  
PUBLICITY PHOTOS

### READING LIST



**Martin Parr and Val Williams, Martin Parr** (EUR 79.95, [www.phaidon.com](http://www.phaidon.com))

Documentary photographer Parr paints poignant images of everyday British life in a book that is filled with insight, brilliance and humour. This comprehensive monograph has just been reissued by *Phaidon* in a new edition, with previously unpublished works and extensive interviews with Parr on his role as an artist, theorist, neighbour and accomplished observer of the world.



**Gary Shteyngart, Little Failure** (EUR 12.95, [www.penguin.com](http://www.penguin.com))

Beloved American author Shteyngart has finally turned his pen towards himself in this hilarious and moving memoir of growing up in the last days of Leningrad. Having followed his emigré family to the U.S. in the 1980s, he shows us more than just what it's like to be an immigrant: he writes about what it means to cope with the struggle to belong – something that Shteyngart has accomplished brilliantly, at least in the literary world – and, ultimately, the struggle of being alive.

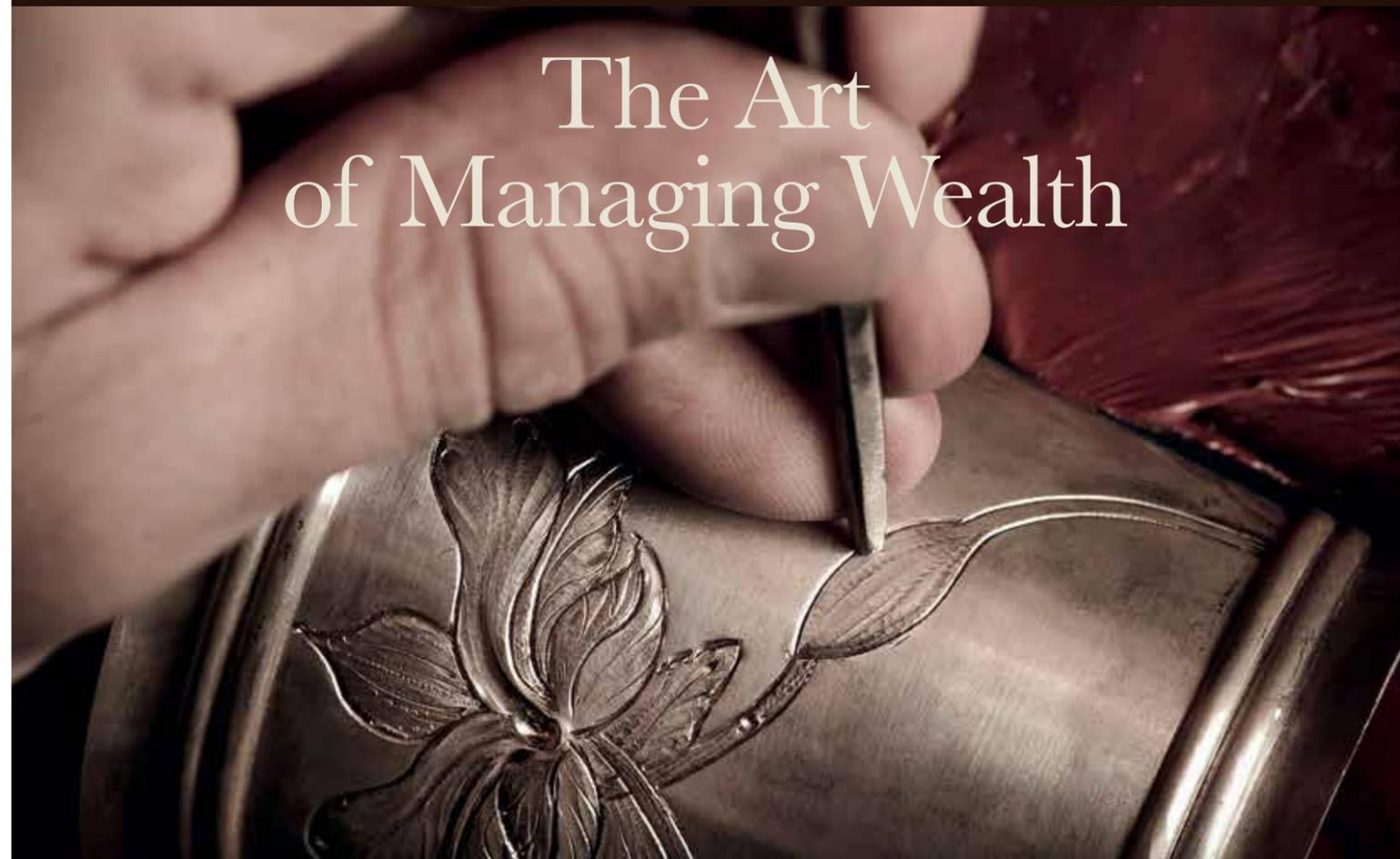


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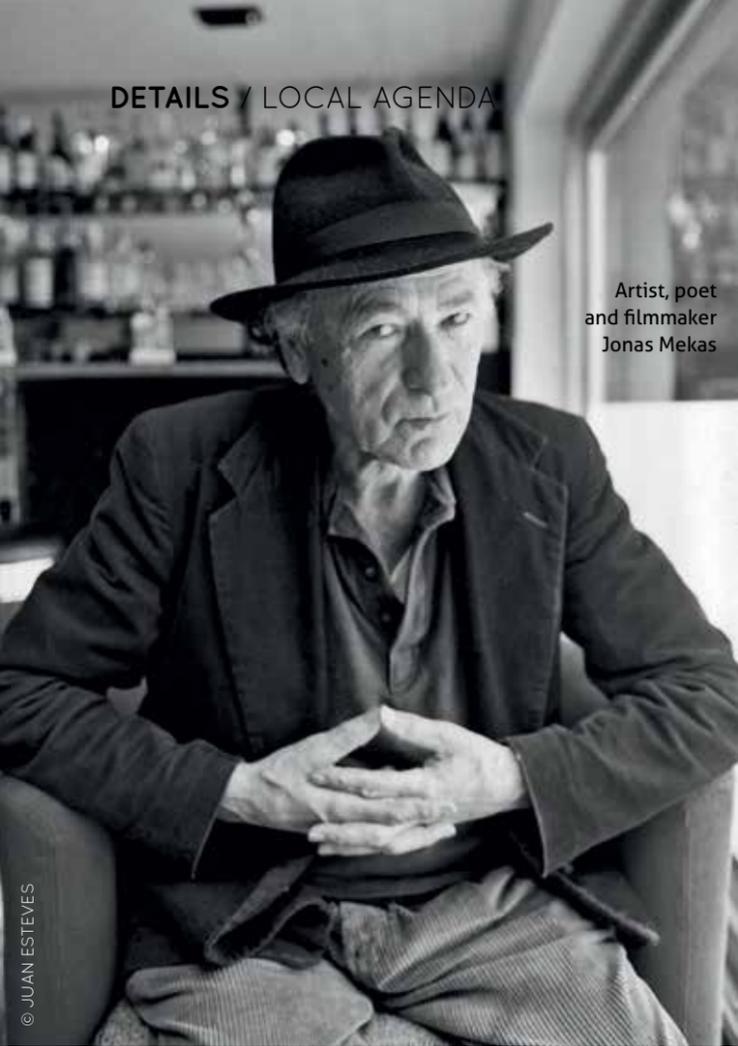
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Artist, poet and filmmaker  
Jonas Mekas

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TEXT BY ZANE NIKODEMUSA  
PUBLICITY PHOTOS

## JULY 2014



© KASPARS GARDA

### *Born in Riga* concert

Square by the Latvian National  
Opera, Riga  
July 6

Aleksandrs Antoņenko and Egils Siliņš, pianist Vestards Šimkus, composer Raimonds Pauls, as well as the *Latvija* State Academic Choir conducted by Māris Sirmāis, the *Kremerata Baltica* chamber orchestra and an orchestra specially assembled for this concert, uniting musicians who play in Latvian and other European orchestras. The repertoire will include music by Richard Wagner, Peter Tchaikovsky, Giuseppe Verdi, Giacomo Puccini, Arturs Maskats and other outstanding composers from Latvia and abroad.

Tickets at [www.bilesuserviss.lv](http://www.bilesuserviss.lv)  
Price: EUR 10–100  
Aspazijas bulvāris 3, Riga

*Born in Riga* is one of the most glamorous musical events during Riga's tenure as a European Capital of Culture, and it will take place outside the Latvian National Opera on a specially constructed open-air stage. The concert will be broadcast live on TV in several European countries and will feature classical music stars who were born in Riga, such as world-famous opera singers Maija Kovaļevska, Inese Galante,

### *Cēsis Art Festival* Cēsis July 11 – August 9

The city of Cēsis has long played an important role in Latvia's cultural development, and its international prominence has risen in recent years thanks to a number of annual events. One of these is the Cēsis Art Festival, which is taking place for the eighth time. This year, the spotlight is on Lithuanian-American artist, poet and filmmaker Jonas Mekas, who is often referred to

as the godfather of American avant-garde cinema. Throughout the course of the festival, the Cēsis Exhibition Hall will also be hosting an exhibition by classic Latvian painter Maija Tabaka. In addition, works by other well-known artists that were displayed in the Latvian pavilion at the Venice Art Biennale will be shown. And finally, a number of open-air film screenings and various musical performances will be held.

More information at  
① [www.cesufestivals.lv](http://www.cesufestivals.lv)



### *Comedy Club in* *Jūrmala*

July 31-August 3

On two of the best stages in Jūrmala. Guests of the *Week of high humour* will be entertained by progressive comedians Garik Martirosyan, Pavel Volya, Timur Batrudinov, Garik "bulldog" Harlamov and other regulars of the *Comedy Club*, along with stars

from the best shows of the *THT* TV channel. The comedy party in Jūrmala will be held in a non-stop regime: each day will begin with a concert-filming for a special program at the famous *Dzintari* concert hall. After the concerts, each day will end with an exclusive afterparty and visitors will have the opportunity hang out with the comedy stars at the *Havana Club*.

① [www.comedyweek.org](http://www.comedyweek.org)

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World Choir Games  
Riga  
July 9 - 19

The World Choir Games are in effect the world's largest choir music festival. This year, Riga will be hosting 20,000 singers from 480 choirs in 60 countries and five continents. The games bring together choirs of numerous nationalities and musical styles in a friendly competition that has occurred every two years since the year 2000. Over the course of 11 days, competitions in 29 categories, along with master classes

and seminars, as well as special concerts and other events will take place at various Riga concert halls and parks. A two-hour parade with the choir participants will also be held in the Riga city centre. In addition, the programme will be supplemented with concerts by *The Real Group* vocal ensemble from Sweden and *The King's Singers* from Great Britain.

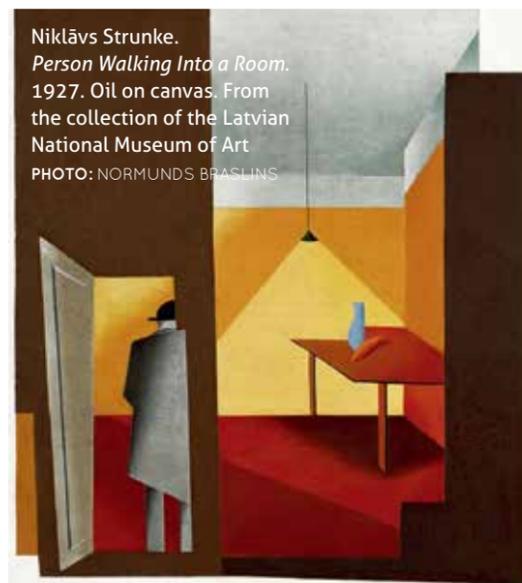
More information at [www.singriga.lv](http://www.singriga.lv) and [www.interkultur.com](http://www.interkultur.com).  
Tickets at [www.bilesuparadize.lv](http://www.bilesuparadize.lv).

### Masterpieces of Latvian Painting. Late 19<sup>th</sup> – mid-20<sup>th</sup> century

Art Museum Riga Bourse, Riga  
July 5 – August 24

This exhibition of paintings by some of Latvia's best-known artists will leave no viewer indifferent. The highly regarded painters address such themes as nature, historical events, daily life and people whom they have observed, in works that remain relevant several decades after their creation. The exhibition will feature about 50 of the most outstanding works by classics of several generations, including Jūlijs Feders, Vilhelms Purvītis, Janis Rozentāls, Jēkabs Kazaks, Ģederts Eliass, Uga Skulme, Leo Svemps, Jānis Tidemanis and Kārlis Padegs. The assemblage of this many masterpieces by such a large number of Latvian classic painters in one exhibition hall is a rare and unique event.

More information at [www.lnmm.lv](http://www.lnmm.lv)  
Doma laukums 6, Riga



Niklāvs Strunke.  
*Person Walking Into a Room.*  
1927. Oil on canvas. From the collection of the Latvian National Museum of Art  
PHOTO: NORMUNDS BRASLINS



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TEXT BY ANETE UGAINE  
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## Baroque gem regains its former glory

The fifty-year restoration of one of Latvia's most outstanding architectural monuments – Rundāle Palace – has finally come to a close.



Imants Lancmanis, the director of the Rundāle Palace Museum

On a warm day in May, VIPs from Latvia and abroad gathered with restoration workers and museum staff to mark the end of a lengthy and arduous project that had lasted half a century – the restoration of the ornate Rundāle Palace, which is now 278 years old.

One of the oldest restoration workers, now 86, came all the way from

St. Petersburg, Russia, to attend the event, which concluded with a fireworks display and a special performance of the opera *Cyrus and Cassandana* by Franz Adam Veichtner (1741-1822), a Konzertmeister to the court of Courland.

There were lots of happy and moved guests at the celebrations, but one of the happiest of all was Imants Lancmanis, a painter, art historian and long-time director of Rundāle Palace. It was he who initiated the restoration of the stately Baroque edifice 50 years ago. To many, that seemed like a utopic idea, given the poor state of the palace, which had suffered tremendously as the result of two world wars and numerous regime changes. However, dreams can and do come true, even if they take years to fulfil. Now the former summer residence of Ernst Johann von Biron (1737-1772), the Duke of Courland, looks much as it did when it was built more than two-and-a-half centuries ago, complete with a faultlessly

refurbished interior.

As palace director Lancmanis recounts, the past five decades have been fraught with all kinds of difficulties and obstacles, yet the renovation works have been an intensely personal process for him. In fact, although the palace belongs to the state, it has come to be inexorably linked with Lancmanis and his family. Lancmanis' wife, Ieva, has stood faithfully by his side and has also devoted several decades of her life to refurbishing the palace as a painter and restorer. The same can be said of Lancmanis' sister, Lauma, who is now responsible for overseeing the palace's enchanting rose garden.

There are legendary stories about how, at the beginning of the renovations, Lancmanis and his colleagues slept on thin mattresses on the floor of the cold and dilapidated Baroque colossus, sautéed onions in red wine over portable stoves and cooked edible snails that roam through

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the palace grounds in the summertime. Incidentally, most of the interior objects in the palace were personally bought by Lancmanis and his family members or work colleagues at auctions or antique shops. Perhaps that is why for many visitors, the huge ornate palace manages to feel warm and welcoming rather than coolly aristocratic. A tour of the complex led by Lancmanis himself is a real treat. He knows the story of every object on display, and his sister Lauma has personally tended to every rose in the palace's vast garden.

Today it is clear that five decades of toil have been well worth the effort. Having finally regained its former glory, the unique architectural monument at Rundāle compares in splendour with similar palaces in Potsdam (Germany), St. Petersburg (Russia) and even Versailles (France). According to Lancmanis, the rapid pace of the restoration works in recent years was made possible thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Boris and Inara Teterev Foundation.

Built from 1736-1740 as a summer residence for the Duke of Courland, Rundāle Palace was designed by famous Italian architect Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli, who also designed the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, Jelgava Palace and other notable structures for the Russian court. The imposing Baroque structure stood out prominently on the flat plains of Zemgale, a symbol of the duke's power and glory, with well-kept garden pathways stretching outward into infinity.

The bulk of the palace's interior décor was made from 1765-1768 by sculptors Johann Michael Graff of Berlin and Italian painters

Francesco Martini and Carlo Zucchi of St. Petersburg. Many objects dating from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century also adorn the palace's numerous rooms. One of the most valuable is a commode by famous French cabinet-maker Jean-Henri Riesener, who created exclusive furniture pieces for French king Louis XVI, his wife Marie Antoinette and other prominent aristocrats. Usually, the pieces that Riesener made were one-of-a-kind, as is the case with the commode at Rundāle, which the palace museum purchased in 1977 for 4500 Russian rubles in Leningrad, as St. Petersburg was known at the time. Nowadays, Riesener-made furniture fetches incredibly high prices in the antique market, with some pieces being sold in recent years for millions of euros.

Aside from the representation halls and apartments of the duke and duchess, visitors can also view regularly changing exhibitions. And, of course, the elegant French park – also designed by Rastrelli – is home to the largest historical rose garden in northeastern Europe, along with a green amphitheatre, ornamental parterres and water fountain. During the summer months, the park hosts the annual Garden Festival, the Early Music Festival and recitals of classical music. July is a particularly special month at Rundāle Palace, for that is when the roses in the park break out in full bloom. The park's overseers have already managed to collect about 2,500 different species and more than 12,000 individual rose plants, which spread outward from the palace in living carpets of colour. **BO**

[www.rundale.net](http://www.rundale.net)



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 Irving Penn, Resonance  
 Palazzo Grassi  
 Until December 31

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Shoe with CHOC-heel, silk. Christian Dior, created by Roger Vivier, 1959

**Christian Dior - Shoes**  
 Created by Roger Vivier  
 Deutsches Ledermuseum  
 Until November 2

A must-see for shoe fetishists, this exhibition offers a colourful account of the successful cooperation between two geniuses – Roger Vivier and Christian Dior – at a time when such lowly concepts as “wearability” and “functionality” were deemed to be practically obscene. Innovative shoe designer Roger Vivier began his career in the 1930s, seeing shoes as sculptures whose lines could always be improved a bit. He drew inspiration from a wide variety of sources, including objects on display at the Louvre and Prado

museums, exotic trips abroad and historical events. Vivier made use of a great number of materials for his creations, from airy chiffon and bright patent leather to intricate embroidery and applications. The designer's main experimental platform was shoe heels, of which the best-known is the inwardly bent “comma heel” or *Virgule*, created in 1963. Among other things, Vivier was the only shoe designer whose name was allowed to appear alongside Christian Dior's on the latter's brand-name shoes. Now visitors will be able to view over 100 pairs of shoes that Vivier designed for the Dior fashion house.

Frankfurter Str. 86  
 ① www.ledermuseum.de

IN ASSOCIATION WITH WWW.ANOTHERTRAVELGUIDE.COM  
 PUBLICITY PHOTOS AND BY ALAMY

For the first time, the *Palazzo Grassi* museum is according its space to photographic art, in a retrospective devoted to the career of outstanding American photographer Irving Penn (1917–2009). Of the exhibition's 130 photographs dating from the late 1940s to the early 1980s, some are being shown to the public for the first time. A number of motifs that preoccupied Penn throughout his lifetime – such as the notion of time and the frailty of life – are evident at this showing. Among the most famous exemplars are works from his small trades series, which Penn photographed in the 1950s and which depict people practicing professions that the photographer felt were dying

out, including newspaper boys, street vendors, carpet sellers and chimney sweeps. Also on display are Penn's legendary portraits of celebrities, including Pablo Picasso, Marcel Duchamp, Marlene Dietrich and Truman Capote. A special section features still lifes, which the photographer was passionate about. Incidentally, the first Penn photograph to be published was a still life. It appeared on the cover of the October 1943 edition of the American *Vogue* magazine. Despite Penn's subsequent cooperation with a host of other media and commercial clients, he remained a faithful contributor to *Vogue* until his death in 2009.

Campo San Samuele 3231  
 ① www.palazzograssi.it



Courtesy of The David Bowie Archive

© VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

**Berlin**

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**David Bowie**  
 Martin-Gropius-Bau  
 Until August 10

Those who missed David Bowie's exhibition at London's Victoria and Albert Museum last year can now see it at the *Martin-Gropius-Bau* in Berlin. What's more, this showing features 60 additional artefacts that illustrate Bowie's ties with the German capital. Bowie lived in Berlin for two productive years, from 1976 to 1978, at a time when the city was still divided by the infamous Berlin Wall. Among the musician's favourite haunts was the *Brücke* Museum, where paintings by German expressionist

classic Erich Heckel inspired Bowie's pose on the cover of the album *Heroes*. Another exposition highlight is Bowie's previously unpublished correspondence with Marlene Dietrich, with whom he starred in the 1978 film *Just a Gigolo*. Since Dietrich filmed her scenes in Paris and Bowie filmed his in Berlin, the two never actually met. Bowie remains a living legend and enigmatic figure at the age of 67. Like his former alter ego Ziggy Stardust, he can turn any of his appearances into a best-selling event, regardless of where it takes place.

Niederkirchnerstraße 7  
 ① www.davidbowie-berlin.de/en



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*ImPulsTanz international dance festival*  
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Vienna's *ImPulsTanz* is one of the largest and most noteworthy modern dance festivals in Europe. Founded in 1984, it stands out with a repertoire that is fascinating for both the performers and the audience alike. This festival will feature the world premiere of *John*, a performance stemming from conversations with 50 men who recount stories about their lives, sex and personal struggles. The work has been choreographed by 1980s legend Lloyd Newson and will be presented by the London-based *DV8 Physical Theatre*. Another highlight is an unusual South African rendition of Peter Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*, which addresses gender roles in modern-day society and homophobia. And, of course, aside from showcasing performances by legendary and exotic artists, *ImPulsTanz* also offers a comprehensive insight into current modern dance trends.

www.impulstanz.com



Alain Platel / Les Ballets C de la B & Münchner Kammerspiele



Cindy Sherman, *Untitled (Lucy), 1975/2001*

Brussels

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*Summer of Photography 2014*  
BOZAR  
June 18 - August 31

This summer's photography biennale is the fifth to be held at BOZAR, Brussels' Centre for Fine Arts, with the emphasis this year on gender relations and the issue of equality. The central exhibition is titled *Woman* and features 450 works by 29 female artists who represented the feminist avant-garde from the 1970s. Among them are Cindy Sherman, Lili Dujourie and Renate Bertlmann. Hailing from North America and Europe, these photographers helped to change the way in which women are depicted in photographs. The biennale's other major exhibition is named *Where We're At!* and demonstrates how women from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific Ocean countries have treated women's issues. A number of discussions on sexual equality and questions of identity are also on the programme.

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RĪGA | 2014

EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

# Daugavgrīva, the wall-less museum

**The hidden Riga gem harbours a beautiful historic fortress and white sand beaches.**

TEXT BY AGRA LIEGE  
PHOTO BY LAURIS VIKSNE, F64

Latvia's coastline is known for its unspoiled natural beauty and beaches of fine, white sand, which also grace the shores of Daugavgrīva

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**As** a European Capital of Culture for 2014, Riga is determined to present its hidden gems to the rest of the world, and perhaps to its locals as well. Many Rigans are blissfully unaware of the treasures in Daugavgrīva (meaning "estuary of the Daugava"), a picturesque island in northwestern Riga.

The *Society of Bolderāja* has long been working towards the preservation of the most significant heritage object in this area, the Daugavgrīva Fortress, which has become a cultural hub in connection with the *Riga 2014* activities. In May, the fortress hosted the play *On a White Horse*, which was first performed in 1916 and which spoke of artists and war. Another performance is due in September, along with literary readings. Forming an impressive six-point star pattern from above, the formerly closed-off fortress can now be visited daily.

There are quite a few things to do and see in the Daugavgrīva and neighbouring Bolderāja areas. The aforementioned group of activists has created the *Daugavgrīva Guides Network*, under which guides take visitors out for excursions, lectures and performances dealing with the local history and culture, allowing visitors to "see" the place on a deeper level than just with their two eyes. Everyone is also welcome to take part in monthly hikes and bike rides, which have been given the name *The Wall-less Museum*. Within this initiative, local experts take visitors along hidden routes to see the fortifications, waterways and local flora. The area's magic lies in the fact that it's very close and accessible to city dwellers, but once you're there, you feel light years away from the busy streets. The Seaside Nature Park incorporates both the Daugavgrīva Nature Reserve and the uninhabited Island of Love. There are also two beautiful Blue Flag beaches at Vakarbulji and Daugavgrīva, complete with attractions, playgrounds and lovely bathing areas as well as a magnificent view of the Daugavgrīva Lighthouse.

The historical wooden buildings in Bolderāja bring one back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and this year, sculpture gardens and other attractions are highlighting this part of Riga as a previously little-known destination that is well worth a detour. **BO**

[www.riga2014.org](http://www.riga2014.org)

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TEXT BY ANNA ILTNERE  
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**Little Black Book**

**Jūrmala,**  
*the most beautiful seaside  
resort in Latvia*



▲ **Park: Dzintari Forest Park  
(Dzintaru mežaparks)**

The Dzintari Forest Park is one of the most noteworthy outdoor public areas to have been refurbished in Latvia during the past few years. The 13-hectare green space is located right in the Jūrmala city centre, near the intersection of Jomas and Tirgoņu iela. The park's greatest asset is its stately stand of 200-year-old pine trees, with the installation of all man-made features taking this natural backdrop into account. The park's infrastructure is evenly spread throughout its territory and includes a raised wooden pathway for convenient strolls among the pines. There are numerous opportunities for active leisure, including bicycle and rollerblading paths as well as the most modern skateparks, streetball courts and children's playgrounds in Latvia. During the winter months, a lit cross-country skiing course is installed on the grounds.

The more adventurous visitors can climb a 36-metre observation tower, which feels like it is slightly swaying at the topmost observation terrace. Those who prefer to relax can lounge in *Konstantin Grcic's* famous *Chair One* chairs. The park also hosts a number of cafés, sports equipment rental points and public toilets. It operates only during the daytime hours and is closed at night-time.

Dzintari district of Jūrmala,  
near Jomas and Tirgoņu streets.  
① <http://www.latvia.travel/en/sight/dzintari-forest-park>

▼ **Grill bar: Lighthouse**

For the past couple of years, Jomas iela has been home to a relative newcomer, the *Lighthouse* grill bar, which is open all year round and not just during the summer season. While most of the eating establishments on this street specialise in either European, Slavic or Oriental cuisine, *Lighthouse* offers a Nordic feel, particularly in its interior design, followed by classical and well-known European foods.

Jomas iela 63, Majori  
① [www.lighthousegrill.lv](http://www.lighthousegrill.lv)



► **Pizza: Red Bus**

Located at the corner of Jomas iela – the main pedestrian artery in the heart of Jūrmala – this authentic red double-decker bus is hard to miss. Thirty years ago, it began service as a school bus in London, but now it serves as the home to one of the best pizzerias in town. The first floor of the bus houses a kitchen and sales counter, while the second floor is equipped with small tables and chairs that can seat 30. While the tiny space can get cramped when the establishment is full, this dining spot boasts an atmosphere like no other in Latvia. An adjacent summer terrace also operates during the summer months.

Tirgoņu iela 21, Majori  
① [www.redbus.lv](http://www.redbus.lv)

◀ **Nature walk: Footbridge in the Great Ķemeri Moorland (Lielais Ķemeri tīrelis)**

The wooden footbridge in the Ķemeri National Park offers a unique vantage point for viewing the natural scenery of the Great Ķemeri Moorland, one of the largest moss-covered swamps on the Latvian seacoast. Located at the western edge of the city of Jūrmala, it is about an hour's drive from Riga. The moorland covers about 5000 hectares and is approximately 8000 years old. Its labyrinth of small, sausage-shaped lakes and marsh pools provides an unusual backdrop that can be enjoyed in short or longer walks along the wooden pathway, which is shaped like a figure 8 and extends for three kilometres into the unspoiled wilderness.

① [www.kemerunacionalaisparks.lv](http://www.kemerunacionalaisparks.lv)



▲ **Hotel: Lighthouse**

The owners of the *Lighthouse* hotel call it "a slice of paradise", and one can't blame them for doing so, given that the hotel is located right at the edge of the sea. Each of the hotel's 11 guest rooms is individually decorated in the style of a particular world country or Latvian region, while the rest of the interior reminds one of a ship. Every evening, the lobby is transformed into a communal ship's cabin, where the hotel guests gather for a traditional evening tea. Taking into account the hotel's exclusive location by the sea and the fact that the rooms are more like small apartments equipped with kitchens, the price for an overnight stay is quite steep, ranging from EUR 300 to 1000, depending on the season.

Gulbenes iela 1, Dzintari  
① [www.lighthousejurmala.lv](http://www.lighthousejurmala.lv)



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## Linen's aristocratic nature

TEXT BY KRISTINE BUDZE, PASTAIGA  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF STUDIO NATURALS,  
© KARLINA VITOLINA



**Linen is a traditional textile that Latvians have worn extensively for many centuries. However, thanks to its long history of use, the material has become associated with numerous stereotypes and clichés, as with tulips in Holland and the Eiffel Tower in France.**

**In** Latvia, many linen items carry references to the material's ethnographic background, with stylised folk ornaments that hark back to a nostalgic past and may not adequately fit into the wardrobes and interiors of modern-day urban dwellers.

However, the advent of *Studio Naturals* 15 years ago has worked wonders to change Latvians' preconceptions of linen and its applications. Over the years, textile artist and company founder Laima Kaugure has uncovered previously neglected facets of this versatile material, revealing that linen fits well into aristocratic and urban settings and that it can be manufactured in a variety of elegant shades. Having brought previously unknown facets of linen's versatile nature to the fore, Kaugure has also made it easier to look upon ethnographic linen items without preconceived stereotypes.

To this day, Kaugure continues to boldly experiment with different weaving techniques. The looms in her workshop produce linen fabrics that can be as thin and transparent as silk or as rough and thick as wool. Gradually, she has gotten people to look at linen as a modern material and to appreciate it in a new light. Now hardly anyone in Latvia doubts that first-rate linen items can also be pleasant and comfortable to use in a 21<sup>st</sup>-century setting, while attesting to the refined taste of their owner.

Despite *Studio Naturals'* commercial success, every product that comes from the company workshop continues to be laboriously woven by hand. According to Kaugure, linen suits free-spirited individuals who appreciate natural materials. She also says that linen looks best when naturally creased through normal use by its wearer, as this is when the material's aristocratic nature stands out to the fullest.

While *Studio Naturals* is widely known for its linen scarves, bed sheets and covers, curtains, tablecloths and napkins, it has also been making small clothing collections in recent years. So far, the company has produced only a limited amount of tried-and-true clothing designs, which are available in a variety of textures and tones. That is because linen is a capricious material that dictates its own rules and cannot be as easily fashioned into elegant clothing items as other more pliable fabrics.

Kaugure has a long list of local architects with whom she cooperates, providing them with both ready-to-use and specially made linen curtains, bedware and other accessories for newly designed interiors.

During the past few years, *Studio Naturals'* fame has also spread beyond Latvia's borders, with a number of the company's linen objects being incorporated into household item collections by *Armani Casa* and *Calvin Klein*. **BO**



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STYLE BY KATRINA REMESA-VANAGA  
PHOTOS BY LAURIS VIKSNA, F64

Polo shirt, EUR 89.90, Tommy Hilfiger  
Scarf, EUR 37.95, Massimo Dutti  
Jacket, EUR 49.95, Zara  
Hat, EUR 64.90, Marc O'Polo  
Travel wallet, EUR 79.95, Massimo Dutti  
Watch, Seiko, EUR 289, Laiks  
Polo shirt, EUR 32.95, Massimo Dutti  
Shorts, EUR 39.95, Zara  
Shoes, EUR 99.95, Massimo Dutti

Polo shirt, EUR 89.90, Tommy Hilfiger  
Hat, EUR 16.95, Zara  
Shoes, EUR 85.94, Massimo Dutti  
Watch, Seiko, EUR 245, Laiks  
Shorts, EUR 45.95, Massimo Dutti  
Sunglasses, Polo Ralph Lauren, EUR 222, Optika Italiana

Shoes, EUR 39.95, Zara

Shoes, EUR 79.95, Zara

Shoes, EUR 99.90, Tommy Hilfiger

Shoes, EUR 99.95, Massimo Dutti

Store addresses in Riga: Marc O'Polo, Massimo Dutti, Tommy Hilfiger, Laiks: Galerija Centrs shopping centre, Audēju iela 16; Optika Italiana: Galleria Riga shopping centre, Dzimumu iela 67; Zara: Terbatas iela 30

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# Heading for the world's top five

Estonian kitesurfer Kristiin Oja

TEXT BY ELINA RUKA  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF KRISTIIN OJA



**D**on't be fooled by the colourful photos of sun and surf in the Facebook page of Kristiin Oja (28). For her, kitesurfing isn't a pastime to practice while on vacation at an exotic beach – it is a full-time occupation.

Oja currently ranks seventh among the world's top female kitesurfers. "The hardest thing is to perform well in all conditions, as the water and wind are never the same. It takes a lot of practice and skill to do your best tricks in any situation," she says.

The talented athlete began her sports career at the age of 12, when she developed a passion for snowboarding. However, since that sport can only be practiced in the wintertime, Oja also decided to try her hand at kitesurfing, which she found to be even more exhilarating. In 2008, she began to train seriously, with the goal of becoming one of the top five freestyle riders in the world. Currently she spends at least three hours per day on her board and regularly takes part in international competitions.

"My motivation is love for the sport. Landing a new trick is the best feeling ever. I have been really competitive all of my life. I always want to progress, and competition is a good way to push yourself," she says.

In order to fulfil her dream of travelling across the world as a professional kitesurfer, Oja quit her job as a marketing manager at an IT company and immersed herself in the sport.

However, finding sponsors to fund her participation in the PKRA World Tour presented an additional challenge. Oja decided not to let the lack of money deter her and to participate in as many legs of the tour as her limited finances would allow. A chance meeting with fellow kitesurfer Annelous Lammerts from the Netherlands, who was in the same predicament, led both athletes to team up and create a video project named *Gypsies on Tour*. The project's regular video updates feature reports on each leg of the competition, while providing insights into the world of professional kitesurfing.

The equipment for this extreme sport

is far from cheap, which presents a major impediment for otherwise talented youths to advance and improve their skills. That hurdle aside, kitesurfing can be enjoyed until a ripe old age. For example, Jacques Pourbaix of Belgium learned to kitesurf at the age of 70 and was still practicing the sport at the age of 80.

Oja says that all kitesurfers love the water, wind, sun and freedom that this sport provides, and that while snowboarding and wakeboarding are more popular sports, the kitesurfing community is steadily growing. Oja is also a certified kitesurfing instructor and says that she enjoys teaching young kitesurfing enthusiasts. "It's nice to give your knowledge to others of something you feel really passionate about," she says.

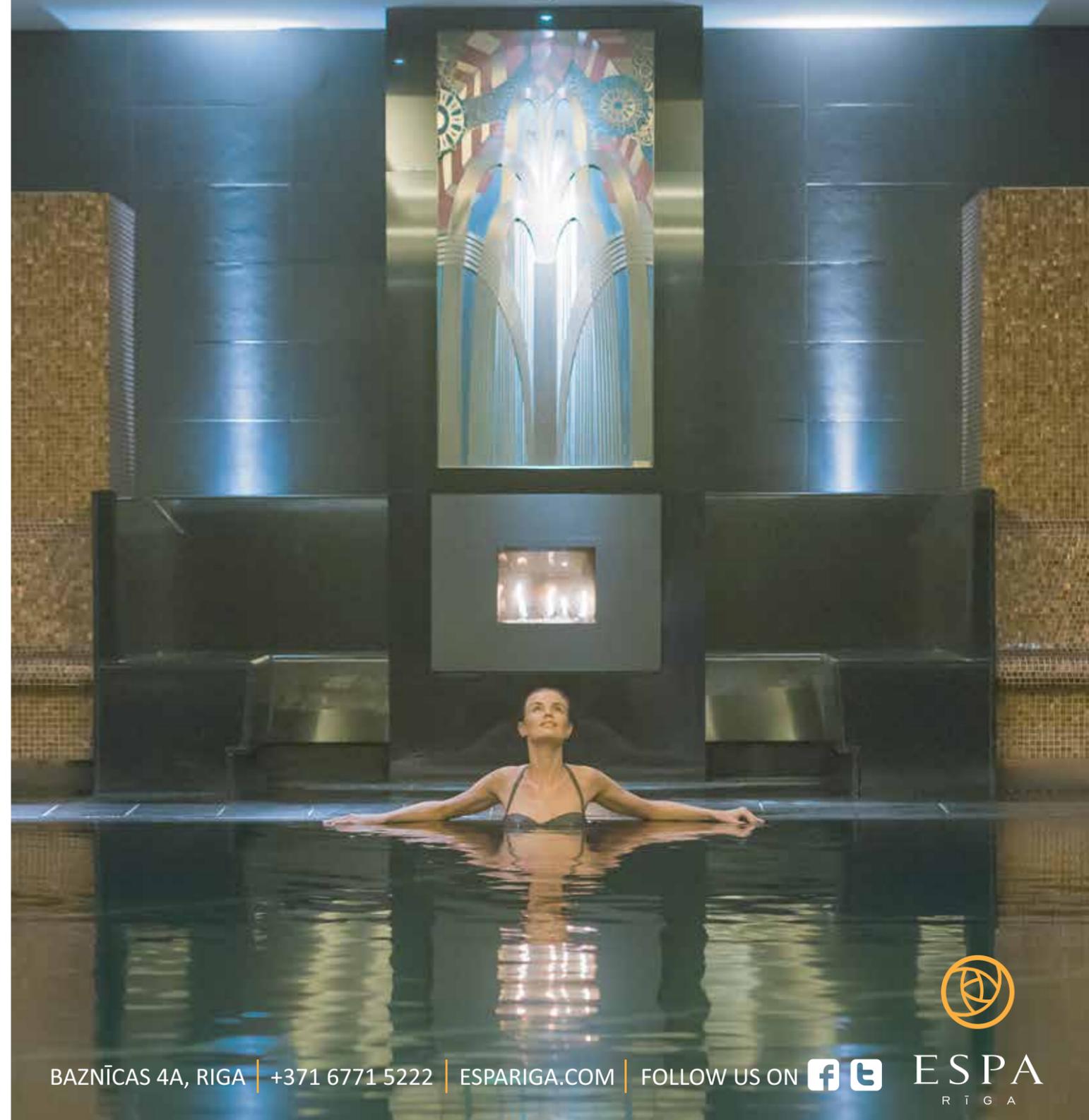
However, during the next few months, Oja will be concentrating on the World Cup competitions, making use of every moment when the wind blows at the right speed and in the right direction. **BO**

[kristiinoja.wordpress.com](http://kristiinoja.wordpress.com)

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TEXT BY AGRA LIEGE  
PUBLICITY PHOTO

## You are what you do

“It runs in the family,” says Toms Ērenpreiss, the great grandson of the brother of Gustavs Ērenpreiss, who founded the famous Latvian bicycle manufacturer *GEO* – *Gustavs Ērenpreiss Original* in 1927. Toms’ own grandfather was a lathe operator and his father was a mechanic, but Toms, much like his more distant relative Gustavs, has been drawn to bicycles.

“There is a magic about them,” he says. And you believe him, for you see the spark in his eyes when he says it. “A bicycle requires no engine, no additional energy source of any kind – only your own pedal power.”

Back in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Gustavs Ērenpreiss laboured at a workshop until it was disassembled during the First World War. Later, he founded *GEO*, which operated successfully during Latvia’s first period of independence and produced over 200,000 bicycles.

Between 1938 and 1940, the company manufactured close to 40,000 bicycles per year. During the Soviet occupation, Gustavs lost his company and emigrated abroad. The company was nationalised, renamed *Red Star* and reoriented to motorbike production.

However, Gustavs’ legacy remained alive and well, as the high-quality bicycles that *GEO* had produced continued to be ridden throughout the Soviet era, shaming many a production line of Soviet bicycles created after Ērenpreiss’ time.

Mechanics was an ever-present field throughout Toms’ childhood, when he helped out his father and tried his hand at his own little projects. Then, when Toms was a teenager, he decided to make his own bike. His dad got him an old bicycle frame, and the rest is history. Soon Toms was building bicycles for his friends, and then friends of friends. That led to the idea of setting up his own workshop. Nine years ago, Toms started restoring bicycles

professionally, and two years ago, he put out his first line of *Ērenpreiss* bicycles.

Toms is glad that he started with the restoration trade. Learning about the minute details of bicycles allowed him to create a truly unique design of new *GEO* bikes that have proven to be an inspiration, both in terms of style and in the conviction that every bicycle should serve its owner for decades rather than couple of seasons.

*Gustav* and *Tom* form the line of *Ērenpreiss* bicycle models for men, while *Greta* and *Paula* are for women. *Paula Burgundy* is the latest addition (2013) to the women’s range, sporting five gears (very appropriate for export to hilly Switzerland or Germany) and an enchanting chameleon colour, which appears bright red in sunlight, dark and rich in the shade, and nearly black at dusk. Thanks to the drive of one enterprising young man, the retro tradition in bicycles has been revived and lives on in top-of-the-line *Ērenpreiss* models.

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# Lavender fields

TEXT BY KOREN HELBIG  
PHOTO BY KEEBON TAN

During the peak lavender season from mid-July to mid-August, a brilliant carpet of blooming purple flowers covers much of southern Europe.



Lavender fields at Aix-en-Provence in the south of France

The soft lilac flush and sweet floral aroma of lavender has soothed, healed and delighted mankind for ages, and never more so than in summer, when fields across the Mediterranean coastline burst into spectacular bloom.

In ancient times, Egyptians used lavender to mummify their pharaohs and to perfume their own skin. The Romans also held lavender in high esteem, using its gentle oil to clean and scent their baths, beds, clothes and even their hair. This is allegedly why the Romans gave lavender its Latin root name *lavare*, which means "to wash".

Lavender likely spread into other parts of Europe around 600 BC and gained a holy reputation during London's Great Plague of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when it was suggested that a bunch of lavender fastened to each wrist would protect the wearer against the deadly disease. The herb, which is actually a part of the mint family, also features in the Bible under its previously used name *spikenard*, which comes from the Greek name for lavender, *naardus*, named after the Syrian city of Naarda.

The sweet-smelling plant was favoured by royalty across Europe, which may have fuelled its popularity among common folk. Today, many people continue to be drawn by the beautiful aroma and soft-hued colours of lavender, and there may be a medical reason for this. A number of small studies have reported that essential oil of lavender may be beneficial for a variety of

## OFTEN YOU CAN SMELL THE FIELDS BEFORE YOU SEE THEM

conditions, including insomnia, hair loss, anxiety, stress and postoperative pain. The oil is also being studied for its antibacterial and antiviral properties.

Lavender fields in Europe generally bloom from mid-June to mid-August, depending on the area and local weather conditions, with fields usually harvested from July to September. Often you can smell the fields before you see them and hear the air buzzing with the drone of drowsy bumblebees.

The rolling fields of Provence in southeastern France are among the world's most famous, where vast quantities of essential oils are produced each year. The region is a traveller's delight, with fragrant fields surrounding quaint cobbled-stoned villages not far from spectacular coastlines.

Many visitors stop at Senanque Abbey, in a wild valley just north of Gordes, for a picture-postcard view of lush lavender fields rolling right up to the door of the medieval 12<sup>th</sup>-century edifice. Hiring a car or joining a bus tour are the best ways to see all that Provence has to offer.

Lesser known are the Bulgarian lavender lands of the Rose Valley, just south of the Balkan Mountains, and particularly the city of Kazanlak. This area is also known for its rose oil extraction, one of the country's most widely recognisable national symbols. Lavender fields are springing up across the United Kingdom as well, with farms scattered across Scotland and England. Several are located not far from London, such as Castle Farm in north Kent, which offers tours, wreath-making workshops, aromatherapy massages and food-tastings throughout July. **BO**

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# Sweet and silky strawberry sorbet

*A perfect summer dessert*

RECIPE, STYLE AND PHOTO BY  
ZANE JANSONE, WWW.GATAVOZA.LV

**Important**  
Adding the liqueur to  
the sorbet will make it  
softer and smoother.

## Ingredients

(serves 4)  
0.5 kg strawberries  
130 g sugar  
1 lemon, juice and rind  
1 tbsp. Cointreau liqueur

## Preparation

Blend the strawberries and strain through a sieve. Add lemon juice, finely grated rind, liqueur and sugar. Mix until the sugar has dissolved. Then use either an ice cream machine in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, or place the strawberry mix into a stainless steel or other cold-resistant vessel and put into the freezer. Mix every hour with a whisk or fork. The sorbet will be ready in 4-5 hours.



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ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION MAY HAVE ADVERSE EFFECTS



TEXT BY TREVOR BAKER  
PHOTO BY PAUL WINCH FURNESS

## London's underground dining revolution

Meet Kerstin Rodgers, better known as her culinary alter ego Ms Marmite Lover, the mother of London's underground dining revolution.

Kilburn in northwest London is not the first place you'd think of when looking for the city's coolest restaurants. It's best known for Irish pubs, live music and being surrounded by much posher places like West Hampstead and Maida Vale. Nevertheless, this is where Kerstin Rodgers decided to set up what would become one of the city's most influential establishments, the *Underground Restaurant*.

With no money and no backing, there was just one place where she felt she could open a restaurant: her own living room. Since the day in 2008 when Rodgers announced on her blog [msmarmitelover.com](http://msmarmitelover.com) that she was opening a "pop-up" restaurant in her home, her idea has been copied across London, the UK and around the world. It has been much more successful than she'd ever imagined.

"I got press interest from all over the world," she says now.

In theory, the idea of opening up your home and inviting paying guests to try your food is nothing new. In many poor countries, this is absolutely normal.

"I had been to Cuba and some *paladares* (private restaurants) there," she says, "and thought that I'd like to do this in London."

However, six years later, Rodgers admits to being a little disillusioned with what she helped to create.

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"A lot of the tricks that I brought into the supper club are now being applied by high street restaurants," she says. "Themed menus. Booking and paying for your tickets in advance. Large sharing tables."

This commercial exploitation of something that had started out as small-scale and idealistic is nothing new. As a footnote, Rodgers worked as a rock photographer in her teens for the weekly UK music paper *NME*, getting to know such bands as *Madness*. Indeed, keyboard player Mike Barson wrote the hit song *My Girl* about her, after they had an argument on the phone.

"I still remember that phone conversation," she laughs. "It was one of those phone calls where I was trying to communicate with him and he was saying nothing. He was the ultimate taciturn boyfriend."

Now, as she looks for new ways to keep the *Underground Restaurant* buzz going, Rodgers has rediscovered her love of music. One recent innovation has been listening clubs. Rodgers chooses an album, most recently Carole King's *Tapestry*, and invites people to come round, have dinner and listen.

"I had a hi-fi worth 150 grand here last night," she enthuses. "My friend runs a hi-fi shop and so we borrowed it. When he played Nina Simone on it the first time, it felt like she was right in the room."

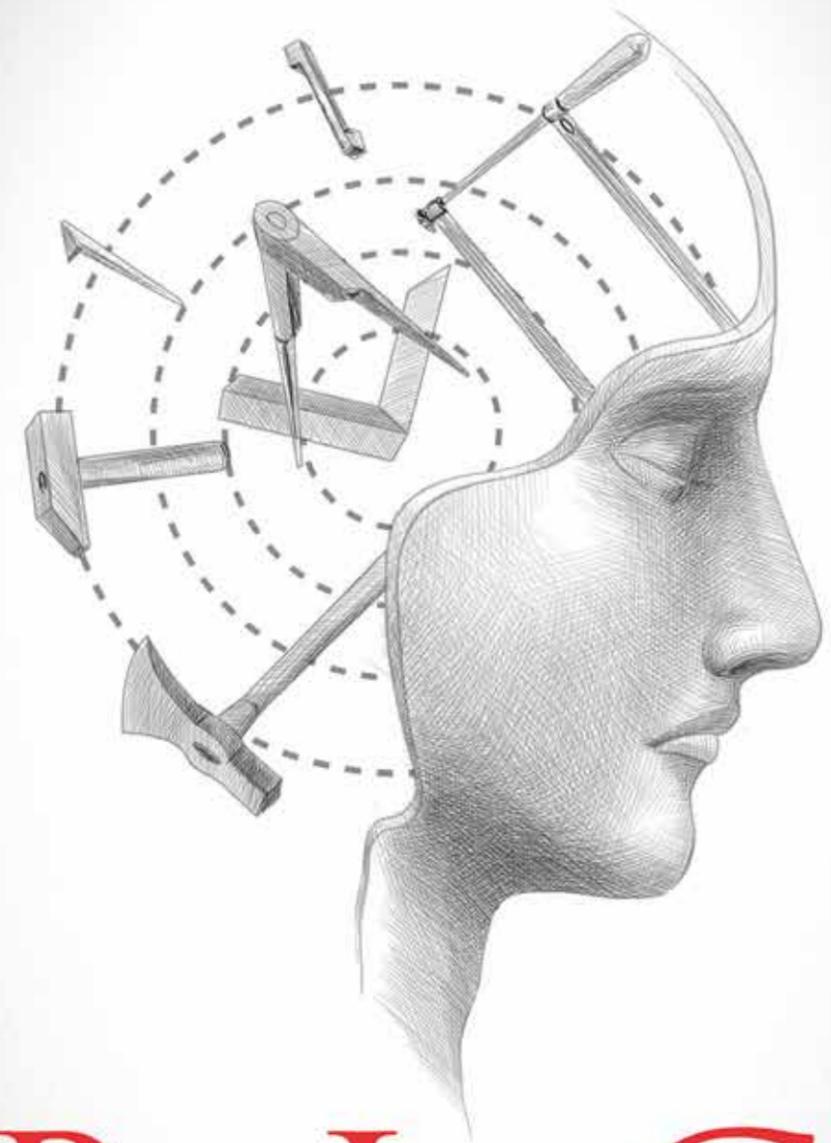
Another new idea is the Secret Garden Club, in which a friend teaches gardening tips while she cooks. In

**A LOT OF THE TRICKS THAT I BROUGHT INTO THE SUPPER CLUB ARE NOW BEING APPLIED BY HIGH STREET RESTAURANTS**

August, Rodgers will be celebrating the British love of tea with a new book *Secret Teas* and a series of tea parties. Underneath all of this, though, is the punk ethic that she started out with at *NME*.

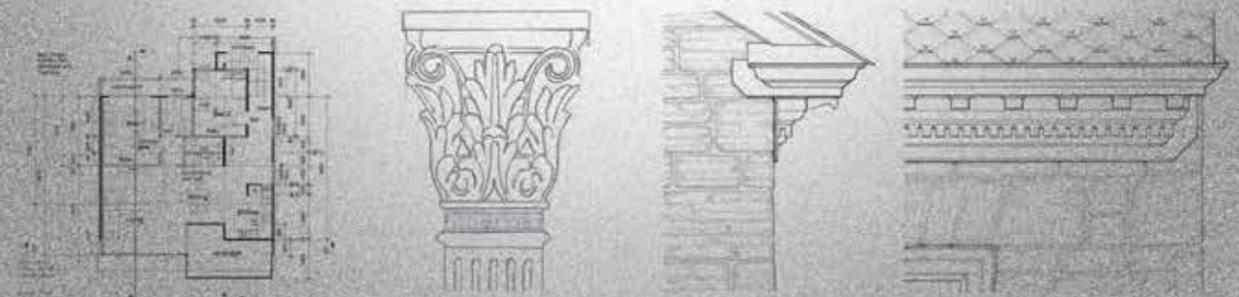
"A lot of opportunists saw supper clubs as a way to make some money, but didn't really believe in them," she says. "I thought of supper clubs as a people's movement and as a way for women who are stuck at home with the kids to make some money. The important thing, though, is that you have to love what you do. It's a lot of work to cook for people. There's not much money in it, but I really love cooking." BO

www.msmarmitelover.com



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СТРОИТЕЛЬСТВО И РЕСТАВРАЦИЯ



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# Untamed Athens

TEXT BY UNA MEISTERE, WWW.ANOTHERTRAVELGUIDE.COM  
PHOTOS BY AINARS ERGLIS

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View of the Parthenon from the new Acropolis Museum



Parthenon Gallery of the New Acropolis Museum



Plaka neighbourhood

“When I recently told someone at an Amsterdam bar that I’m Greek, I heard the whole panoply of stereotypes: that we Greeks are lazy and that we’re sinking all of Europe with our southern attitude towards life,” says an acquaintance of mine as we eat lunch together in Athens. He’s a Greek IT specialist who has lived in Germany for a large part of his life. “Actually, those of us who have jobs work incessantly – often twelve hours a day, seven days a week.” We are having lunch at *Café Avissinia* in the Monastiraki neighbourhood, which is known for its flea markets. There is one such market outside the café’s door. The bargaining has quieted down a bit by lunchtime on a Sunday, but the market is still active.

On the lower level of the café, the piano and accordion duo are being replaced by one musician after another. Local families are gathering and passionately singing along, and plates are even being shattered every once in a while. Outside, the name of the café is written in Greek script, from which the Cyrillic alphabet used by the Russians and other Slavic peoples originated. The boudoir-like interior of *Café Avissinia* is saturated with paintings from the owner’s collection. There are so many artworks that there’s hardly an empty space on the wall, which makes the place seem like it’s been here forever. A spectacular view of the cradle of European civilisation – the Acropolis – can be seen from the second storey windows, and above that is a rooftop terrace.

In the Greek manner, we have been enjoying our lunch for two hours already. There is no lack of wine nor food, but the main thing is conversation. For example, I learn that Greeks never mix meat and fish at one meal – it’s just not done. And, despite the seemingly healthy foods (after all, everything grows marvellously here in the south), rates of heart illnesses and cholesterol levels are relatively high. That’s because Greeks like to eat very late, especially in the summers, when it’s so hot that no one feels like eating before nine or ten in the evening. But work begins at eight or nine the next morning. And on top of that, laughs my acquaintance, Greeks are also romantics.

As we leave *Café Avissinia*, evening is already drawing near. But following a good lunch, a real Greek heads to a cake shop. Nearby is the *Trano Pastry Shop* – a small kiosk where the cakes are made right in front of the customers’ eyes. It seems that such a place

can only be found in Athens. The café-kiosk is located right by the street, with towers of cakes lining its windows. All you have to do is decide whether you want yours filled with fresh white cream or chocolate cream. On top of that comes a healthy dose of honey, chocolate and sugar.

“Kefi,” laugh my friends as they enjoy the sweet sin. *Kefi* is a Greek word that means happiness, passion, enjoyment of life...something similar to the French *joie de vivre* or Turkish *keyifli*. Among other things, *kefi* also includes the aforementioned ritual of breaking plates in Greek taverns.

### Capital of eclecticism

It’s hard to describe Athens as a beautiful city in the classic sense of the word. The architecture is eclectic, giving the impression that it is developing chaotically and is supervised by no one. In addition, there’s a wild spirit of anarchism here. Graffiti is everywhere, turning the façades of nearly every house into a canvas. The cafés are full of people, and the steep, cobbled, crowded streets of the Plaka neighbourhood at the city’s heart resemble a busy anthill. The people sitting and drinking wine are mostly locals, not tourists. It seems that Athens is bursting at the seams with energy.

In between it all, another demonstration is taking place nearby, and the hotel concierge tells us that we would be better off finding a different restaurant for dinner, because it may be difficult to get to the one we had planned on visiting due to the demonstration. Nevertheless, the city magazine *Athens Insider* states that Greece is expecting a record number of tourists this year: 18.3 million. One of the “hooks” may be the movie *The Two Faces of January*, released this spring, which promises to have the same effect on Athens’ tourism map as *The Talented Mr. Ripley* had on the hiking paths of Italy. The work by Iranian-born director Hossein Amini seems perfectly made for such purposes. *January* is a thriller set in the 1960s, starring Kirsten Dunst, Viggo Mortensen and Oscar Isaac. Dunst and Mortensen play a glamorous American couple dressed in white linen (not shorts and tennis shoes), who arrive in Athens to see the Acropolis. There they meet a tour guide and, of course, the plot takes a number of unexpected turns. The scenes take place against a background of the Acropolis and the Parthenon bathed in golden light. There are no crowds of sun-withered

tourists nor reconstruction scaffolding in sight; just the reflection of Ancient Greece’s ideal of absolute beauty, which triumphs in all its glory.

But Athens doesn’t rest only on the laurels of its history. The long-awaited National Museum of Contemporary Art (EMST), located in the former *Fix* beer brewery, is expected to finally open this autumn. The building itself is an icon of its time – an example of post-war modernism designed by Takis Zenetos, a well-known Greek architect in the 1960s and 1970s. It stood empty for a long time, and so the project also carries a symbolic meaning.

The statistics, however, are quite appalling: a mere 16% of Greeks are said to visit museums. Compare this with, for example, Norway, where this figure is 80%. When I later ask Dimitris Daskalopoulos, a businessman, the president of the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises and one of the most influential Greek art collectors, how this is possible in a country with such deep traditions of culture, he responds:

“It’s because we’ve taken our cultural heritage for granted. We were great achievers historically – in art and creativity, in philosophy and democracy – but we are now living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And if we want to live better and prosper in our own time, we have to create the circumstances for it in this century. For me, culture is fundamentally important in this process. Especially given the fact that we have such a great history, which is embedded deep in our souls.”

In 2013, Daskalopoulos created the non-profit cultural organisation *NEON* (from the Greek word for “new”), whose goal is

to support and encourage contemporary art in Greece, and especially Athens. One of the organisation’s most recent projects was *The Thousand Doors* contemporary art exhibition at the Gennadius Library, a beautiful Neoclassical-style building in the very centre of Athens. The exhibition was set up both inside the library and outside in its garden. Using Greek history as its inspiration, it offered contemporary interpretations of history to both locals and guest artists from abroad.

“Years from now, I see this city as having many institutions and public spaces adorned with contemporary art. And I hope to be able to say that I had something to do with it, that I pushed it forward,” says Daskalopoulos.

Right now in Athens, the annual Hellenic Festival is in full swing. Traditionally, this festival lasts for the three months of summer: June, July and August. Combining under one roof the Athens Festival and the Epidaurus Festival, it is one of the most powerful cultural events in the world, not only in size but also in the quality of its programming and its choice of artists.

One of the main festival venues is the Epidaurus Theatre, an open-air amphitheatre with views of the magnificent mountains around it. Built in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, it is one of the most beautiful theatres in the world. Here, the ancient Greek tragedies were performed soon after being written in front of audiences of 14,000 people. Even though the Epidaurus Theatre was built for large audiences, its acoustics are remarkable. To this day, a viewer sitting in the last row is able to hear

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View of Athens from the Acropolis

every word spoken on stage. It is true, however, that the serious financial crisis and economic situation in Greece has influenced the festival programme both last year and this year. The international programme has been significantly decreased, and this year the festival is focusing mostly on local Greek talent.

### Searching for the lost Athens

"Because of its geographical location, Greece has experienced many difficult periods over its history, and that has also greatly influenced the demand for culture. In recent years, we can again feel attempts to get back on our feet, but much has been lost. The Turks were here for 400 years, then the First and Second World Wars. For many centuries, while Europe experienced rebirths of culture – the Enlightenment, the Renaissance, etc. – nothing was happening in Greece. The German-born Bauhaus style never reached Greece, either. We've missed many important steps along the way, and we need time to regain what's been lost. The crisis has thrown many of us backwards, too; we are too busy trying to make ends meet. We are used to a much simpler life, not such pressure as there is now," says Vassiliki Theodorakidi-Mamona, one of the best-known Greek jewellery artists, whose self-defined mission is to popularise Greek culture worldwide. Her gallery, which combines history and the present day in extravagant synergy and should actually be described as a small museum, is located in the very heart of Athens, in the Plaka neighbourhood.

Mamona has recently returned from an exhibition in Hong Kong and apologises for the chaos at her gallery; some of her jewellery is still in Hong Kong. A petite woman, she is dressed in a beige cashmere sweater, pants and black boots. She is seemingly simple, but electrifies the air as she crosses the room. Mamona has long, shiny, coal-black hair and a classically Greek charisma. She is descended from an old family of Greek aristocrats who owned a silk monopoly in the Byzantine era. The family, however, suffered greatly during the Turkish invasion and lost most of its property. The family's former coat-of-arms now serves as the logo for Mamona's company, and the artist says she's had the mission of popularising Greek culture ever since she was a child. She has always considered history to be art, and she tries to bring it into the present day through her jewellery.



New Hotel

"Each person has a particular role in the world. The only way to get over the situation in which we find ourselves today (not only a financial, but also a spiritual crisis) is to find the values and symbols that we've lost over time. There are many wonderful places in Athens, but unfortunately Athenians themselves have not cared for them sufficiently. Each neighbourhood has its own history. Many of them are very old, and sometimes it's sad to realise that you're walking in a quite ugly city, which could actually be very beautiful. Modern Athens is static. In a way, the city is afraid of being innovative, afraid of gaining a new breath of air. It mostly tries to imitate trends from abroad and implement things that have already been tested elsewhere, which is very sad, especially considering that Athens was once a place where trends were born, where art and culture were truly innovative. We had many art schools, unique methodologies that were used for years. The Parthenon was a very innovative project for its time as well – an embodiment of ideal beauty. Back then, Athenians were not afraid of radical ideas or forms of expression that were out of the ordinary. Nowadays, this desire to be innovative, this desire to become familiar with new things, no longer exists in Athens," says Mamona.

When Mamona and I later take a short walk to her favourite places in the vicinity, we visit *Metamatic:taf*, which is an art gallery, bar, café and nightclub. In a way, it can also be called the new heart of Athens, a platform for creative ideas and initiatives, even the most unreasonable and irrational.

Since 2009, *Metamatic:taf* has been located in a run-down building in the Monastiraki neighbourhood, which bubbles with energy seven days a week. With exhibitions, concerts, literary readings, theatre and dance performances, *Metamatic:taf* serves as both a cultural centre and a meeting place. The main door is quite decayed, and from the outside it looks as if the building might fall down any day. The real action takes place in the courtyard, which is hidden from the neighbours' view (and the sun) by a cloth roof, while the exhibitions are displayed in the rooms. One exhibition has just opened, another is being taken down, and it seems that *Metamatic:taf* is like a living organism, always in constant motion.

### A hotel like a sculpture

Another person actively guiding the cultural life of Athens is Greek businessman and patron of the arts Dakis Joannou, who, among other things, also owns the YES! chain of boutique hotels. The best known YES! hotels in Athens are *Semiramis*, designed by Karim Rashid, and the *New Hotel*, which opened just two years ago and was designed by the Brazilian architectural firm *Campagna Brothers*. I met Joannou in his office in the Maroussi district of Athens to interview him for *Arterritory Conversations with Collectors*, a new publication out this spring containing eleven interviews with leading European art collectors. He told me that his ambition with both of the above-mentioned hotel projects was to entrust the hotels' images to designers who had never before worked with architecture.



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“Their task was to create a hotel as a self-sufficient object.” Essentially, a work of art. *Semiramis* is located in the greenest part of Athens, the residential district of Kifissia, which is 15 km or a 40-minute taxi ride from the centre of the city. Rashid was in charge of everything, from the architecture to the interior design, from designing chairs and tables to the guests’ slippers. The hotel’s colour palette embodies the designer’s signature style, with bright pinks, oranges, greens and yellows. The interior features all of his classic furniture designs, from *Wavelength* sofas to *Swing* chairs. Here, Rashid has played with colours, technologies, materials and textures as if they were toy building blocks.

The Brazilian duo *Campagna Brothers*, on the other hand, first declined the extravagant offer to design a hotel, and it took Joannou quite a while to convince them to agree to the project. The *New Hotel* is located in the very centre of Athens, in the Plaka neighbourhood, in a 1950s-era building that was already once a hotel. Architecture students from Athens’ University of Thessaly also participated in the project. The creative team was given complete freedom, and the result is in one sense like a sculpture.

“When I first saw it, I was completely delighted.” And here one can only agree with Joannou. The *New Hotel* is an irrational concentrate of ideas, details and emotions. Some of the furniture and decorative installations were made from the previous hotel’s furniture. Door frames, drawers and handles all nailed together in a seemingly chaotic rhythm...these layers of the past lead the guest to believe that each blink of the eye is the beginning of a new page in a novel that one simply cannot manage to finish reading in the few nights one spends in this hotel. Even textiles from the previous hotel have found their way into some of the design objects, for example, covering chair backrests as if they were extravagant *Comme des Garçons* dresses. The lamps, chairs and bathroom sinks, which resemble cut gemstones, were made according to sketches by *Campagna Brothers* and the architecture students.

Three themes run through the hotel, inspired by Greek history and traditions. The walls in the *Karagiozis* rooms are decorated with the traditional Greek shadow puppet character named *Karagiozis*. It is believed that the Greeks adopted the character from the Ottoman culture, which was dominating the Balkan peninsula at a time when the Italian and Flemish renaissances were

flourishing in the rest of Europe. Other rooms in the *New Hotel* offer interpretations of the ancient Greek legend of the “evil eye”, with amulets on the walls to ward it off. Such amulets are often given to newborns to protect them from *matiasma*, or the evil eye.

The third theme offers a journey within a journey – a return to Ancient Greece in the form of historical postcards. Every nuance of the interior design has been contemplated, and yet there is an unbelievable balance between the explosion of ideas and functionality at the *New Hotel*, which makes a stay there a truly unique experience. The *New Hotel* also has a rooftop bar with a bookshelf full of art books. The walls of the bar are decorated with provocative images from *Toilettepaper*, a publication by Italian artist, contemporary art hooligan and anarchist Maurizio Cattelan. And in the distance is the Acropolis.

The *Athenaeum InterContinental* is another branch of Joannou’s hotel empire. The *Athenaeum* is not only a hotel, but also a space for popularising Greek art. Joannou says that the collection was begun along with the hotel and now contains approximately 4,000 works of art. They are located throughout the hotel: in the lobby, guest rooms, hallways, restaurant, etc. Back in 1983, Joannou established the DESTE Foundation for Contemporary Art, a non-profit organisation that organises exhibitions and publications with the goal of popularising both known and unknown artists.

“I’ve always been interested in art, and it was important for me to be involved in a dialogue with the processes of contemporary art,” he says. Since 2006, DESTE has been based in a former stocking factory. The foundation does not have a permanent collection and is open only during exhibitions. Therefore the current exhibition

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of German photographer Juergen Teller's work, titled *Macho* (until October 29), is a wonderful opportunity to visit DESTE.

In 2009, the foundation opened an affiliate in a former slaughterhouse on the island of Hydra called DESTE Project Space Slaughterhouse. Every summer, it invites individual artists or artists' groups to create special projects and serves as a space for contemporary art exhibitions. Slaughterhouse has collaborated with Urs Fischer, Matthew Barney, Maurizio Cattelan, Doug Aitken and others. This summer it will feature Polish sculptor Paweł Althamer (through September 29).

Another project by the DESTE Foundation, *destefashioncollection*, can be seen this summer at the Benaki Museum. The project focuses on the subtle boundary between fashion and art, with the exhibition presenting fashion as a language, as an intermediary and as a bridge between the cultural processes of our time.

"Fashion is not art. Fashion is fashion. There is no other description for it. But what interests me about it is its ability to serve as a bridge between various expressions of culture (art, cinema, music, poetry)," says Joannou. The idea began in 2007, when separate capsule collections were created within the framework of the DESTE Foundation for Contemporary Art. The creators of these collections (artists, poets, directors, etc.) actually work as curators, choosing five objects from the current year in fashion and integrating them into their art.

"You connect them in some way, but you still have a clear line: this here is fashion, and this here is art. But you connect them, because the one draws from the other. In this case, the art draws from fashion," explains Joannou. Of course, almost every artist has stepped over these boundaries in his or her own way, thereby making the process even more intriguing. For example, Juergen Teller chose vintage items instead of clothing from new collections. Helmut Lang, on the other hand, chose chairs from the first row of his most recent fashion show to interpret the season's trends, hence the name of his installation – *First Row*. *destefashioncollection* was opened for public viewing for the first time in 2012 in the storefront windows of *Barneys* department store in New York, and all eight exhibitions that have taken place since then can be seen at the Benaki Museum this summer.

### Anarchists and the fish market

Later, as I wander the steep streets of Athens' Kolonaki neighbourhood, I turn into a small, basement-level shop called *Number 3*. Among the avant-garde clothing brands I also find items by the Japanese *Comme des Garçons*. The owner of the store and I begin talking, and before long our conversation has turned to the *New Hotel* and Joannou.

"He's a real visionary. A person with a fascinating energy," says the owner with true Athenian pride. Kolonaki, which is located on the southwest slopes of Mount Lycabettus, is the most glamorous of

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Athens' neighbourhoods and also home to most of its luxury stores. On another small, steep street a little further away I find *Papadakis*, a favourite restaurant of local politicians and businesspeople. Sitting outside on its terrace is a bit like being in an open-air movie theatre. As you sit under the shade of the surrounding trees you watch the daily scenes all around you, up and down the hill, each one more interesting than the previous. Just like the last time I was here, six years ago, the waitress warns me to not leave my telephone on the table and to watch my purse, because you never know who might be passing by. In that sense, nothing has changed, although unlike many other places in Athens, it seems this neighbourhood has not been touched by the crisis one bit.

To the east, Kolonaki borders the anarchistic neighbourhood of Exarchia. This neighbourhood once had a reputation so extreme that some embassies even warned their citizens to avoid it. That's all in the past now, but an anarchistic spirit can still be felt on Exarchia's streets. There's more graffiti on the walls and the tone of life is completely different here. Many college students (the University of Athens is nearby), immigrants and families from various social strata live in Exarchia, all combining in colourful commotion, along with second-hand shops, CD-sellers, roaming dogs, nightclubs and bars. The cafés are full of youths and people from a wide variety of subcultures, and the prices are at least three times lower than in neighbouring Kolonaki. Exarchia

Square is the centre of the neighbourhood. From here the small, narrow streets branch out in every direction, full of all sorts of shops and cafés. Here and there I sense marijuana in the air, but it could just as well be the gin of free thinking that has escaped its bottle.

It is often said that the true heart of any city is its market. Athens has several markets, but the most legendary is the Agora fish market on Athinas Street. Bargaining begins early in the morning, when the men try to out-yell each other with their horn-like voices. Some of the sellers' stands have been here for generations, with families selling the freshest that the Aegean Sea has to offer. Aromas, smells and stench combine to create an elusive bouquet, and the floors are regularly rinsed off with buckets of water.

The Agora market is located in the Monastiraki neighbourhood; its glass-roofed Neoclassical-style building was opened in 1886. In all, the market has over 100 meat stands and 150 fish stands. You may find several generations of a single family behind some of the stands, others are operated by newly-arrived immigrants. In other words, the market is a microcosm of this city of millions. Each day the market is visited by approximately 30,000 people, both tourists and locals, both rich and poor. This is the real place to see Athens in motion, churning and seething with the energies of the city's various cultures, electrifying each who arrives in the city.

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### INSIDER'S VIEW

## Where to find the soul of Athens

Vassiliki Theodorakidi-Mamona



Vassiliki Theodorakidi-Mamona is one of the best-known jewellery artists in Greece. She was born into an old aristocratic family that traces its roots back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The family once owned a silk monopoly on the ancient Silk Road, and the family's coat of arms now serves as

the logo for her jewellery company. Vassiliki's gallery, the *Thyreos Vassiliki Art and Culture House*, is located right in the heart of Athens, in the Plaka neighbourhood. The gallery is not only a small and unusual museum, but also a true repository of culture. Here, Vassiliki's own jewellery

can be found next to the king of Macedonia's armour and historical artefacts – both originals and replicas – from various regions of Greece.

Vassiliki believes that everything has a meaning and a mission, and she sees her own mission as promoting Greek art and culture worldwide. One of her instruments is unique jewellery that reflects a synergy of the past and the present. She calls her creations small sculptures, through which she tries to embody the essence of Greek culture in the present day. In any case, few people are likely to be more qualified to reveal where the true soul of Athens can be found.

### What do you love most about living in Athens?

Living in Athens can be challenging, yet surprising. What I really love most, being in one of the largest metropolitan areas of Europe, is the chance to experience the deeply carved footprint of time in every step you take. A temporal and cultural amalgam unfolds before your eyes, while you become an observer of the mixture of the past with the future, the East with the West. Walking in one of the central pedestrian areas of the city, one can view the most famous world brands, fancy shop windows and modern cafés, while just a little further you find yourself lost in the colours and sounds of an Oriental-like bazaar, full of scents and tastes coming from an era when such cultural interactions were prominent in cosmopolitan Athens. All of this right under the imposing Acropolis, which keeps reminding us that

the true origins of this city are found in the sophisticated simplicity and unexcelled elegance of a Doric column.

### Could you name your five favourite restaurants and cafés in Athens? Why are they your favourites?

That's a difficult question. There are many spots in the city where you can indulge yourself, no matter what mood you're in. A sunny Sunday afternoon and a nostalgic walk in the pedestrian areas of the old city can end perfectly at the *Avissinia* restaurant, where the retro atmosphere, the light live music (that can sometimes turn really vigorous, with dancing and plate-smashing) and the stunning view give you all the energy you need for the new week.

On a more cultural-mood-day one can visit *Gazarte*, a multiplex art house where you can enjoy your wine in the company of a nice book or movie, or taste a variety of

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dishes in the relaxing green rooftop garden among the alternative industrial buildings at Gazi Technopolis.

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On the other hand, when the mood commands a more mysterious, less cosmopolitan spirit, then the *Faust* bar-theatre, with its home-like interior architecture, underground decorations and alternative theatrical performances, is definitely a stomping ground not to miss.

Last but not least, the café of the brand new Acropolis Museum, in the heart of the ancient city of Athens and offering a direct view of the sacred hill, perfectly combines a contemporary building with the historical feeling of the surrounding area.

### What is the biggest stereotype about Athens? Is it or is it not true?

At a time when Athens is going through a period of European – and maybe international – crisis, stereotypes and exaggerations are produced mainly for internal consumption. One of those that I personally encountered many times in dealing with foreigners and tourists coming to Athens for the first time, was their insecurity and fear regarding bank liquidity and street criminality. They had been so brainwashed by the news (which in some cases presented Athens as a Third World city of terror) that some of them actually believed they would not be able to find cash at the ATMs or walk safely in the streets in the afternoon! It was quite difficult to convince them of the opposite, but after staying in the city for a couple of days, reality spoke for itself.

It's true that Athens has been deeply affected by the crisis. Many stores have had to shut down and the unemployment rate has increased, but in no case has the situation been as described above. Bank stability was never actually a problem for everyday life, criminality is definitely lower than in many other famous European capitals, and the feeling that you get when walking in this city is totally different than the way it's presented in the world's yellow press.

What a visitor will face when visiting Athens are sunny days with cafés full of young people, classy restaurants waiting to reveal the tasty secrets of Greek cuisine, and night bars where you can feel the pulse of a city that never sleeps. Nobody can deprive Athens of what it has had for hundreds of years: bright sun, centuries of culture, good food and *kefi* (an untranslatable Greek word for joy and enthusiasm).

### How do you characterise the true Athenian people?

Hospitable and compassionate, open-hearted and witty, deeply democratic yet sometimes stubborn and rebellious, and in some cases arrogant due to their long cultural heritage.

### What should one definitely do to feel the pulse of Athens in all of its diversity?

The best way to feel the pulse of a city is by trying to sense the everyday aspects of ordinary people's lives. Apart from the usual visitors' routes, the museums, the Acropolis and all of the fancy tourist sights, try to discover the lesser-known parts of Athens. Use the public transportation, go out to small coffee places and taverns that are not listed on any website or tourist guide, get in contact with the locals in neighbourhoods away from the central city lights, listen to them, share their thoughts and way of life, even try to speak their native language. At the end of the day, you'll be surprised at how many friends you can make.

### What is the most special place for you in Athens?

I love visiting Pnyx Hill, where you can have a great view of the city, especially at dawn. Sitting on the same rocks where great men and philosophers gathered thousands of years ago, discussing and making decisions for their society, makes me reminisce about the glory of the past and ponder the hopes of tomorrow. Thinking about the fact that the fundamental challenges we are dealing with now as humans – poverty, justice and freedom – haven't actually changed a lot since very old times, it gets really intriguing for me to be a part of the meltdown of time. **BO**

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## Dreams need to be fulfilled

Latvian opera singer Kristine Opolais

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There is a pair of black high-heeled shoes in our office, on the shelf between the magazines, books, postcards and notebooks. When someone asks us whose they are, we say they belong to Kristine Opolais. We photographed her three years ago, but she jumped around so much in the shoes the stylist had brought, that the store refused to take them back. That's just one of many little stories from the world of magazine production. But now those beautiful shoes have a permanent spot on our shelf and their value keeps increasing.

We first met Opolais after the Riga premiere of *Eugene Onegin*, which had just followed in the success of Antonín Dvořák's *Rusalka* at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich. That had been a scandalous show. As the lead, Opolais had to spend nearly half of her time on stage in a tank full of water. It was a brave move and, according to critics, perhaps the best performance of Opolais' career at that time. She was evidently happy. That's what happens when one sees the fruit of one's work, when success is inspiring and a sign that all one needs to do is continue.

Opolais and I meet again on a Sunday evening in London. I wait for her by the stage door of the Royal Opera House, where a bunch of stage employees are also standing around. I'm afraid that I'll start smelling of their cigarette smoke; it is so thick and all-encompassing that I cannot get away from it. But their conversations are so *thick* and colourful! Soon I don't even want to distance myself from them. I sit down on the windowsill and notice a champagne bottle next to a huge pile of paper on another windowsill across the street.

Suddenly one of the gentlemen starts speaking in French, and another answers him in the same language. Then I hear a legend about Napoleon's soldiers and an ape dressed in soldier's clothing. I feel good and begin laughing. I'd gladly join in their conversation, and experience a slightly bittersweet feeling about this place in London, Covent Garden. This might be actually the very heart of the city, because right here around 600 AD is where the centre of a trading town called Lundenwic developed. Now Covent Garden is mostly associated with a former fruit and vegetable market, which is now a popular shopping and tourist site and a place you'll always hear some classical pieces played by students or failed singers and musicians. Most likely they'd prefer to be playing in the fancy opera house across the street rather than in the market.

The Royal Opera House was constructed in 1732 and is often referred to as simply Covent Garden. The area is full of theatres, cafés, restaurants and venues for all kinds of performances. If you want to hear a good old British stand-up comedy, then Covent Garden is the right place. I also learned that during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, this place was a well-known red-light district, attracting notable prostitutes. Descriptions of them and where to find their services were provided by *Harris' List of Covent Garden Ladies*, the "essential guide and accessory for any serious gentlemen of pleasure". That was 300 years ago. How things change....

Finally I see Opolais and approach her. She is currently preparing for the premiere of Giacomo Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, in which she is singing the lead role. The opera has not been performed in Covent Garden for 30 years. Now it returns as a long-awaited event under the musical direction of maestro Antonio Pappano and producer Jonathan Kent. Opolais will be singing

***SHE WAS EVIDENTLY HAPPY. THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE SEES THE FRUIT OF ONE'S WORK, WHEN SUCCESS IS INSPIRING AND A SIGN THAT ALL ONE NEEDS TO DO IS CONTINUE***

together with German tenor Jonas Kaufmann, one of the finest tenors in the world. The opera is about a girl who, on her way to the convent, meets the young student Des Grieux. They fall in love and run away to Paris, but when an elderly gentleman named Geronte offers Manon a life of wealth and luxury, she changes her mind. Manon dies in a desert in Louisiana, where she is sent as punishment after being accused of stealing jewels from Geronte. Des Grieux manages to arrive there on the same ship, and Manon dies in his arms after he returns from an unsuccessful attempt to find water.

Director Kent admits that singing *Manon Lescaut* "is a huge challenge for a singer. It moves from a sort of innocence to somebody who is seduced by money and luxury, and then pays a terrible price for that". Both Kent and Pappano are confident that Opolais will manage this challenge marvellously.

Since our last meeting in Riga, Opolais' life has changed in the most unimaginable way. She takes me to a quiet courtyard in Covent Garden that she discovered while taking a walk with her daughter. "Let's go here so that I don't have to shout across a table," she laughs.



Together with  
Jonas Kaufmann / Manon Lescaut

## ONE OF THE BRIGHTEST MOMENTS IN OPOLAIS' CAREER WAS HER DEBUT IN TWO MAIN ROLES AND IN TWO PREMIERES WITHIN 18 HOURS OF EACH OTHER

She says that the biggest event in her life in recent years has been the birth of her daughter. "Everything changed for me after Adriana Anna was born. I've heard some people say that it's no big change, but for me everything has changed. My priorities and values have changed. No matter what I do or what decisions I make, I always remember that I have a daughter. She is my biggest treasure."

During this time, Opolais has also married fellow Latvian Andris Nelsons, one of the most talented and recognised conductors in the world, who is currently the musical director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. "He had already been calling me his wife for three years before we got married, and everywhere I went people said, 'Ah, you're the wife of Andris Nelsons!' But I had to explain, 'Sorry, no, not yet!' But that's not right!" laughs Opolais. "Why was he calling me his wife if I wasn't? So, if he was going to be calling me that, then it might as well be for real!"

We order a light supper and eat. Opolais sins with chips and mayo. I have a glass of wine, while Opolais orders a latte...several of them. But the latte grows cold in her cup as she laughs and talks. When it gets chilly outside, we bundle up in blankets. "It was clear to me from the very beginning that Andris is a serious person," she says. "He does not like changes in his life; change is difficult for him. He even goes to one and the same restaurant and orders one and the same meal. But he is very versatile and vivid in his music, so I think that's what he gives himself to totally."

One of the brightest moments in Opolais' career (as well as in the history of New York's Metropolitan Opera) was her debut in two main roles and in two premieres within 18 hours of each other in April of this year. She sang the part of Cho Cho San in Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* in the evening and went to bed at five in the morning. Then she was woken a few hours later by a call from the opera's general manager Peter Gelb, who asked her to replace a singer who had fallen ill. Opolais was to sing the role of Mimi in Puccini's *La bohème* that very same day. "That's impossible," she said sternly and hung up the phone, but a moment later she was on the phone with Gelb again and agreed to sing the role. "I don't know why I did it," she says. No one at the Met had ever done that before, and it was a big event in the history of the entire opera world.

**Remember, the last time that we met was after the production of *Rusalka* in Munich and *Eugene Onegin* in Riga. Now we meet before *Manon Lescaut* under the direction of Antonia Pappano.**

Yes, my career took off in a new direction after *Rusalka*. As they say, many doors opened, almost literally, because that production brought me a great deal of popularity. I think such a moment arrives for any artist who is moving in the right direction – the moment when doors open and you are in demand. Whether you can maintain that level is another thing. In addition, it was risky for me to have a child during that period; it wasn't a good time in terms of my career. Usually one has a child at a time when nothing serious has been done yet, or after contracts have been signed several years in advance and people are anxiously waiting for you to return. I was lucky. Interest in me increased after *Rusalka* and I received many offers. I had already signed several contracts and everything fell into place. I was 31 years old, and I think that's also a very good time to have a child, even though many of my colleagues think about children only around the age of 40. How should I say it? We opera singers are very healthy. (Laughs.) For example, I cannot afford to party or drink. The more work I have, the less free time I have for that. Recently, after a rehearsal, I agreed to go out for dinner with my colleagues Jonas Kaufmann and Christopher Maltman. "Yes, let's go, definitely!" But then Jonas added very professionally, "But we must think about what we're

  
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going to drink, because tomorrow morning we have our first rehearsal with the orchestra." If you're singing at this level, you need to be thinking about what you're doing, because it can influence your vocals. Alcohol doesn't do us any good, not even a little bit!

**Then it's a good thing that I didn't offer you a glass of wine!**

(Laughs.) Well, I'm a normal, living person and I'd really love to, but I can't. A time and a place will come for it. After the premiere; then there will be a celebration. But now I need to concentrate on work.

**What does it feel like when you realise that things are really beginning to happen?**

Hmm, interesting... I've stopped thinking about that, although earlier I concentrated on it very much. I concentrated on how I was doing, what was going well, what wasn't going so well. But now, after the birth of my daughter, I've relaxed. The offers keep coming in, but we say "no" and "no". One must definitely learn how to say no. One must learn how to divide one's time, and right now I want to spend as much time as possible with my child. If I accepted every offer, then I'd be working non-stop. I've chosen my favourite opera houses – London, the Metropolitan in New York, Munich and also Vienna – which I feel closest to and with which I already have very concrete plans. Speaking of Vienna, though, I lack a system that would allow me to delve deeper and rehearse more, because the orchestra in Vienna is very busy and there are very few rehearsals with the orchestra there. But I like Vienna, because the biggest opera fans in the world live there. When you leave your house – most of us singers live right next to the opera house – there are always people who have found your address and are waiting for you to get an autograph and take a picture with you. Whether you like it or not,

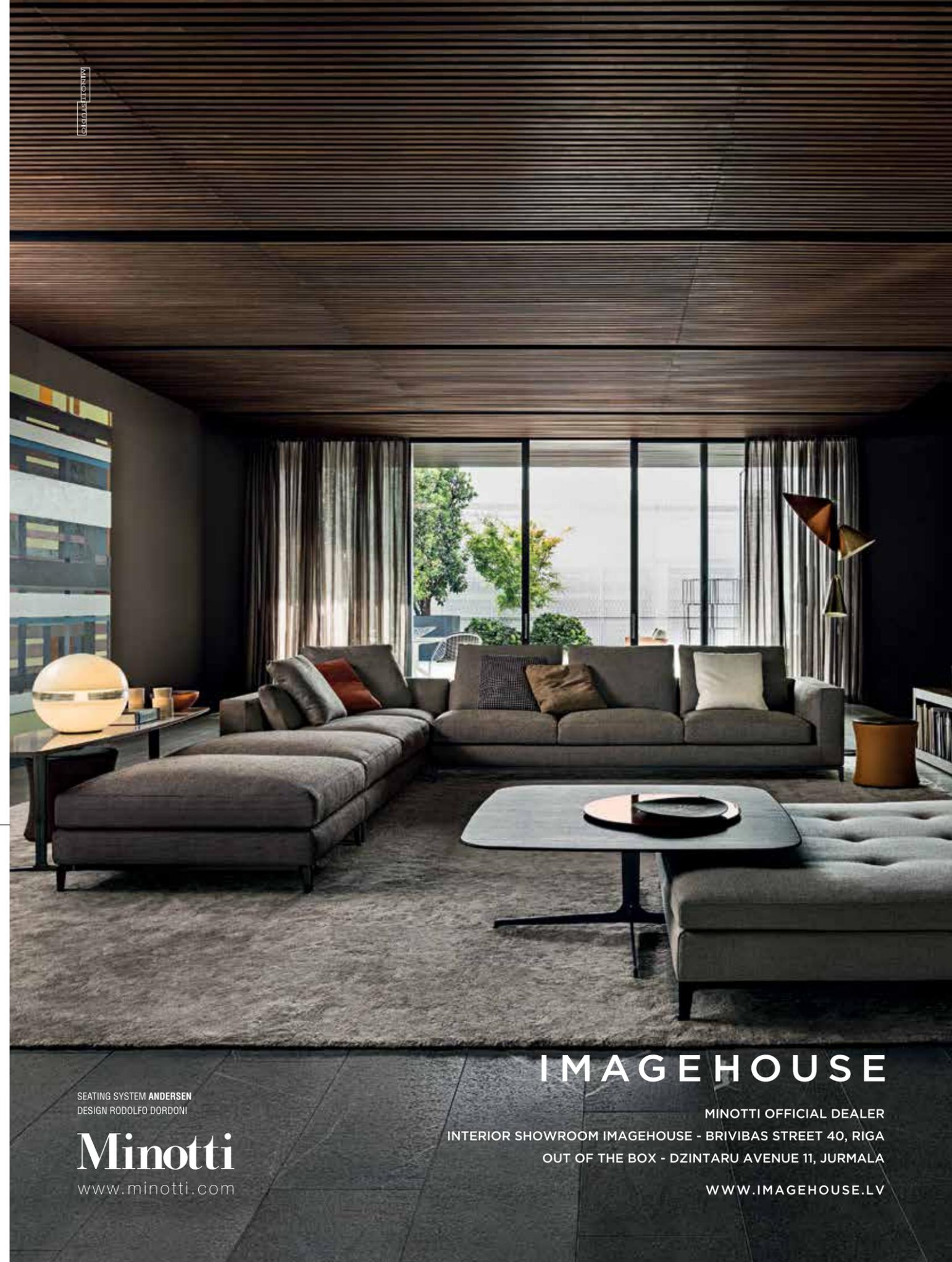
you always need to dress well and do your hair, because these pictures end up on the Internet, on Facebook, and of course everyone wants to look good! So you can't ever slack off in Vienna.

**It sounds similar to being a pop star.**

Oh, yes. In Vienna, of course, opera and classical music is regarded very highly and loved more than anywhere else. After *Rusalka*, I became known in Munich as well. People called me Rusalka: "Hey, that's Rusalka over there!" I had no other name. That was a powerful, even scandalous production.

So, if you ask me to remember at what point I knew things had taken off...I don't know. The first inkling, of course, was after *Rusalka*, because the reviews were very good and I also received *Gramophone's* Artist of the Year award. But the birth of my child has completely rearranged my mind. I don't think about these things so much. I enjoy what I do, which it's not just my profession; it's my life. And I still feel like everything is still ahead of me! As my agent says, he no longer calls anyone; he just receives calls. It's good that the future is planned. I have a clear idea of what I need to do, what I need to learn. That gives me a sense of peace. On the other hand, it's a little strange, because one can never know what will happen tomorrow. I don't sign my own contracts. I usually receive them electronically. I look them over, and then I ask my agency to sign them. I never delve into them too deeply. My profession is my life. I go where it leads me, and I don't believe I can regulate this feeling with the help of contracts.

Likewise, there are things that can never be planned or written into a contract. For example, what happened to me in New York. Something like that cannot be planned, although I know people who try to do just that, who plan each step and know very clearly how to guide their careers, how to guide themselves,



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## OUTLOOK / INTERVIEW

who spend each moment doing what needs to be done. That would bore me. I couldn't do this job in such a way. I rely on the benevolence of fate, because actually I didn't choose this career. I didn't even want to become a singer; it was handed to me by God. And I even feel that someone is guiding me and giving me strength and sometimes even lifting me up and leading me through difficult situations. Or else providing me with situations that seem completely unreasonable, even impossible...and also helping me to overcome them.

### How was it in New York, debuting in two parts in a matter of 24 hours?

Well, first I said a strict "no". But I don't know what happened to me afterwards or what made me call back and say "yes". My mind had switched off at that point. I went out on stage and was surprised to see cameras; I had forgotten that the performance was going to be broadcast to movie theatres across the world. I had a feeling of watching myself from the sidelines; I felt mildly hypnotised. I remember having to be at the opera already at ten in the morning, because I didn't have a costume. They had to literally sew a costume in a few hours' time, because the show began at one in the afternoon. But the most interesting thing is what the Metropolitan Opera's general manager Peter Gelb told me after the show. I still get shivers down my spine when I think about it.

We met in Gelb's office, and he said he had to tell me how things had gone that morning. At first he had called my agents, but none of them had answered the phone so early in the morning, at seven o'clock. They were all still asleep. The *Madame Butterfly* premiere had taken place the previous evening, and I had only fallen asleep at around five in the morning. Gelb found the number for my apartment telephone at the theatre, because I had turned off the sound on my mobile phone. My apartment telephone kept ringing and I woke up quite angry. I didn't understand how the phone could keep ringing like that. In addition, I needed to get out of bed and go to the living room, because I don't keep that phone in the bedroom. At first I thought it was a joke. When I heard Gelb's voice, I thought it was a dream.

I had only slept for a couple of hours, because it's very hard for me to fall asleep after a performance. Especially if I've had to die on stage. Also, the heartier the applause, the bigger the adrenaline rush – ovations really lift a performer up. The adrenaline doesn't let you calm down. We give off energy from ourselves while we're on stage, and the audience returns it to us during an ovation. We receive the energy back. It's an unbelievable exchange of energy, and besides, I'm an emotional person, so that makes it even harder for me.

The first question I asked Gelb was, "What time is it?" 7:30 a.m. He asked me to sing Mimi, and I said no, of course, no. He sincerely apologised for calling so early, said he understood, apologised again and said thank you for yesterday. Gelb later told me that he had already decided to hang up the phone when I finally answered it. It was kind of like in a movie.... That's why he later said to me, "I think it was destiny." While we were talking during his unexpected call, he was kind of lingering on the phone. How could he not understand that it was impossible? I hadn't sung the part in a whole year, I wasn't familiar with either the production or my

partners, it was impossible! He also later admitted that he had tried to kill time on the phone, because he had not lost hope that I might agree after all, because he very much wanted me to sing the part.

I called him back five minutes later. I was definitely not thinking about the fact that this would be the first time in the history of opera that a singer would sing two main parts in 18 hours. I did very many interviews after *La bohème*. Americans like this sort of thing very much, making history and producing a lot of excitement; that's not so characteristic of Europeans. Americans know how to promote themselves very well. Sometimes they overdo it a bit, but we'll just call that one of their weaknesses. And when they asked me how I did it, I had no answer, because I really don't remember. Someone was standing by me.

I had died on stage two days in a row. Cho Cho San in *Madame Butterfly* dies as the result of harakiri, and Mimi dies of tuberculosis. I felt lifeless for a couple of days afterwards. I slept at home, almost unconscious. I was so weak I couldn't even walk. My agent called every once in a while to ask how I was feeling. I had given so much of myself, and I needed time to recuperate. I still needed to sing four more *Madame Butterfly* shows.

Now I feel that I have been given this profession for a reason. I must do something with it, I must say something with it. I kept thinking that the show wouldn't turn out well, but I was simply flabbergasted by the way in which the audience received the performance and by the show's success. The opera house went crazy, almost like at a rock concert! I really am very self-critical. Even Antonio Pappano, who is one of the best conductors of our time, recently said to me at a *Manon Lescaut* rehearsal, "Who has put the idea into your head that there's something wrong with your voice? Show me this person!" And so I thought

## OUTLOOK / INTERVIEW

to myself, "If even Pappano says everything's alright, then maybe it really is, after all." Actually, I've received a lot of unprofessional criticism in my own home town, Riga, especially at the beginning of my career, and that has unfortunately left its mark. But when the members of the audience are so excited that they're practically breaking the opera house chairs, as was the case in New York, then these are my real reviews. Audiences are my best critics. They don't lie for one minute; they're incapable of doing so. And then I can ignore what's written in the papers the next day.

But I do hope and even pray to never lose this feeling of surprise regarding the audience in the opera hall, regarding their applause. I very much hope to never become accustomed to the applause. I think it's tragic if a performer goes out on stage expecting something like that, thinking that he or she deserves the applause and success. An actor must always be hungry, starving. Not literally, but we can never be 100% satisfied. And that's why my colleagues are sometimes surprised at my reaction. I cry, I laugh, I am unable to believe what's happening in the audience. Because I really do feel surprised at the audience's reaction.

### In Riga, you first sang in the opera choir, and you do not have an academic education.

I don't. My first teacher was Andrejs Žagars, the former director of the Latvian National Opera. He's the one who noticed me and helped to reveal my talent. I didn't even know that I had something like that in me, such a talent or skills. But he noticed it. He immersed himself in me and helped me to open up, even though we had a very difficult relationship at the beginning; Andrejs can be quite acerbic. I am very grateful to him. I have a teacher in Amsterdam and I visit her as often as I can, and I will continue to study as long as I continue performing. We definitely go through every new part I

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get. We recently went through all of my old parts that had been learned incorrectly and cleaned them up; a 25-year-old girl cannot sing *Madame Butterfly* correctly by forcing it. That was wrong and unwise, the things that I did in Riga. However, I am endlessly grateful for that time, for the process and the experience. I've sung some crazy parts! But they've given me knowledge that still helps me today.

Among other things, it's really a physical feeling that tells you that something isn't right. And the voice. If

you cannot talk after a show, or even after the first act, then that's the first sign that things aren't going well. I've experienced this, too. Everybody goes through it in order to understand what's the best and most appropriate for each of us.

I have lots of "life baggage". I've had all sorts of experiences outside of the theatre, too, and not all of them good. I didn't grow up in a family where things were always rosy and there was always enough of everything. Sometimes we had money and sometimes we didn't have any money, or even enough food. But I learned to survive. That's why I know what it means to be in dangerous situations, to walk on a tightrope. Maybe that's why I'm able to appreciate the good things and always remember the people who have stood by me when I needed them most. People who were good to me when I was still a complete nobody, when I was a singer in the opera choir. There's a time to give and a time to receive. I believe that.

I've taken a very unusual route. I do not have an academic education because I was not accepted for a scholarship at the Academy of Music; the only way I could study was by paying my own way. I learned everything I needed to learn by singing in the opera choir for a couple of years. I think one needs to be truly obsessed in order to achieve anything, and that's what I was like. I studied parts throughout the nights. And I've still never sung some of those parts yet! (*Laughs.*) I got the music at the opera library, and then I listened to recordings and studied. I just wanted to! I really, really wanted to! I studied those parts thinking that it would definitely help me some day. And I dreamed about that a great deal. But I knew that dreaming wasn't enough, that dreams need to be fulfilled, and that I needed to get up and do something myself, because no one has become a millionaire just by dreaming about it. You need to move forward! You need to do things, and

  
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you also need to take risks. And then while you're in the middle of the process, you sometimes even forget what you dreamed about and what you wanted to achieve. And when you finally get there, then it's, "Oh, God! What shall I do now?!" Because your goals have already changed and you finally receive the thing you have dreamed about. I believe in an order to the world like that.

### Is it true that you didn't even want to become an opera singer?

Yes, it's true. I wanted to be a singer – I liked rock and pop music – and then at one point I wanted to be an actress. Tina Turner, Madonna – those were my favourites! I sang their songs and pretended I was on stage. I was a bit crazy! I associated myself with the stage, but I never imagined part of my life would be associated with this screaming, as I once perceived the opera. (Laughs.) It was my mother who pushed me. She was a big influence in my life, and I didn't dare disobey her. She had heard me sing, had heard the timbre of my voice, and she declared that I would go and study. She had once been a professional singer herself; she had wanted to sing in the opera but hadn't. She still had good relationships with her former teachers and, seeing as her own dreams hadn't been fulfilled, she sent me!

We argued a lot, because I definitely did not want to go learn opera singing, but she made me. And so every Tuesday I took the 8 am bus from Rēzekne to the capital city, Riga, which is an approximately 240-km drive. Good Lord! I gave up, then I began again. I applied to the Academy of Music, but I was not accepted into the "budget group" on account of the solfeggio test. A girl named Vanda was accepted in my place. How I cried! But later I realised that there's an interesting thing about life. If something unfair happens to you, you later receive a reward twice the size. I began studying in the "payment group", but I ran out of money and could not finish my education. So I began singing in the opera choir. Luckily, the choir director at the time accepted me into the soprano group and put me in the front rows. I sat in the wings during every opera rehearsal and listened. Outstanding guest musicians came to Riga; I listened to them and studied. I observed their every move. People said all sorts of things about me; they thought I had lost my mind. That crazy girl, she comes and sits in the wings! But I didn't care. Now that crazy girl is sitting in London! (Laughs.) She is sitting there, talking with you and singing the main part in *Manon Lescaut* together with Jonas Kaufmann! (Laughs.) That's life!

### And now lots of people want to be your friends because of your stardom.

I see that as a natural side effect of the whole process, but I never consider those people to be real friends. Just the same, I always need to keep in mind that I cannot fully trust my colleagues, either. Not completely. I need to be open, but.... It's a very delicate thing. One needs to be careful when expressing criticism or instructing. You should never instruct a colleague on stage, because that just leads to problems later. (Laughs.) We receive hints or suggestions all the time, and if we read them correctly and heed them, then everything is fine. It's impossible to learn to be a good artist – God either endows you with this talent or He doesn't. But whether you

develop this talent or not, whether someone notices it and helps you, that's another thing.

### How has opera changed in recent years?

Opera changes, times change, people change. Many trends in general have changed. For example, people are increasingly interested in their health and living a healthy lifestyle, and to a certain extent this can also be noticed in opera, because opera audiences also want to see beautiful people. If we're talking about singers, then we're seeing a lot of young, very technical singers, but I think the opera lacks artists and personalities. No one can teach you how to become a personality. I have the feeling that we're being evaluated more and more on how we look, but, if a singer can't handle a part, then his or her appearance isn't going to help. Then you either tell that person "thank you", or else they've already worn themselves out so much that they no longer have a voice to sing with. The whole package is important. And it's called the "whole package", too. That sounds cheap, but it means that a singer has it all: the looks, the talent, the voice. Almost like in cinema. But divas – unjustified hysterics and fireworks – are no longer in fashion.

Unfortunately, there are fairly big problems in opera with direction. Singers are pushed off into the corner, and there aren't many directors left who really listen to the singers. That doesn't mean the singers should be directing (although we may often wish to do so), but there's no room on the stage for perversions that don't justify the music. And I don't think the situation is going to change for the better that soon. It's going to continue as long as singers continue to take part in such productions, as long as singers (whose names all operas feed off of, because their names sell expensive tickets) don't take a stand and say they're not willing to participate in productions like that. We're currently

living in an era of directors. By the same token, it's not correct to say that singing is the main thing in opera. No, it's called opera theatre, and it therefore also involves elements of theatre. That's the difference between a concert and an opera.

It's true, though, that I do enjoy working with recognised directors. It gives me lots of experience as an artist, and it's also important for me to balance my performances as a singer and as an actress. I get bored on stage without the acting and theatre aspects. The problems I developed working with certain directors were because I was not given a challenge when I was asked to do something. When a director believes in a singer, then it's possible to do very much! Much more than if I feel I have to constantly prove that I'm not just, pardon my choice of words, a stupid singer. On the other hand, I also don't like it when someone says to me, "I really wanted to work with you; you always have so many ideas! You can do everything!" I say, "No, no, no, no! That's a mistake! I want you to drive me!" I say that all the time.

### Opera is brutal, isn't it?

You know, I'd say that ballet is even more brutal, because dancers' careers are even shorter. In addition, opera singers can also often teach. I could never teach vocals or technical skills, though, because I'm not a very technical singer myself. I could teach how to interpret a role, how to present oneself in this role. When I sing, my heart sings! If I don't feel anything or if I have poor partners, then I sing worse, too. I'm not very stable; I'm very dependent on circumstances.

There are very many good singers, good artists, but I've come to understand that we are each unique, and no one else sings the way I do. That's my advantage.

### Do you enjoy the rehearsal process?

Of course, it's tiring, and the closer to the premiere, the



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more tiring the process becomes. Psychologically tiring, too. Because all of us are expecting something, hoping for something – the conductor, the director, all of us colleagues. And that’s the time when you constantly have to give, give, give from yourself. But we receive energy from the audience. That’s why premieres are often not the best performances. I’d even say they’re the worst, because people are nervous, the stress level is immense, and all together that makes for a heavy atmosphere. But I enjoyed the rehearsals for *Manon Lescaut*, especially because of Antonio Pappano. He’s one of the best interpreters of Puccini. I enjoyed working with Jonathan Kent, who is also one of the best directors today. He usually does very classical productions, but this *Manon Lescaut* is a very modern show. It’s a challenge for him, too. Risky, but interesting.

He changed his initial vision as soon as he found out that Jonas Kaufmann and I would be singing the main roles. Singing together with Kaufmann – that’s a new experience for me, too. I had never done that before, and it really is a very special occasion. Sometimes when you meet a star, you can very well understand the meaning of good PR. But when I met Jonas, it was immediately clear to me why he’s the best tenor in the world. Firstly, he’s not only technically very strong;

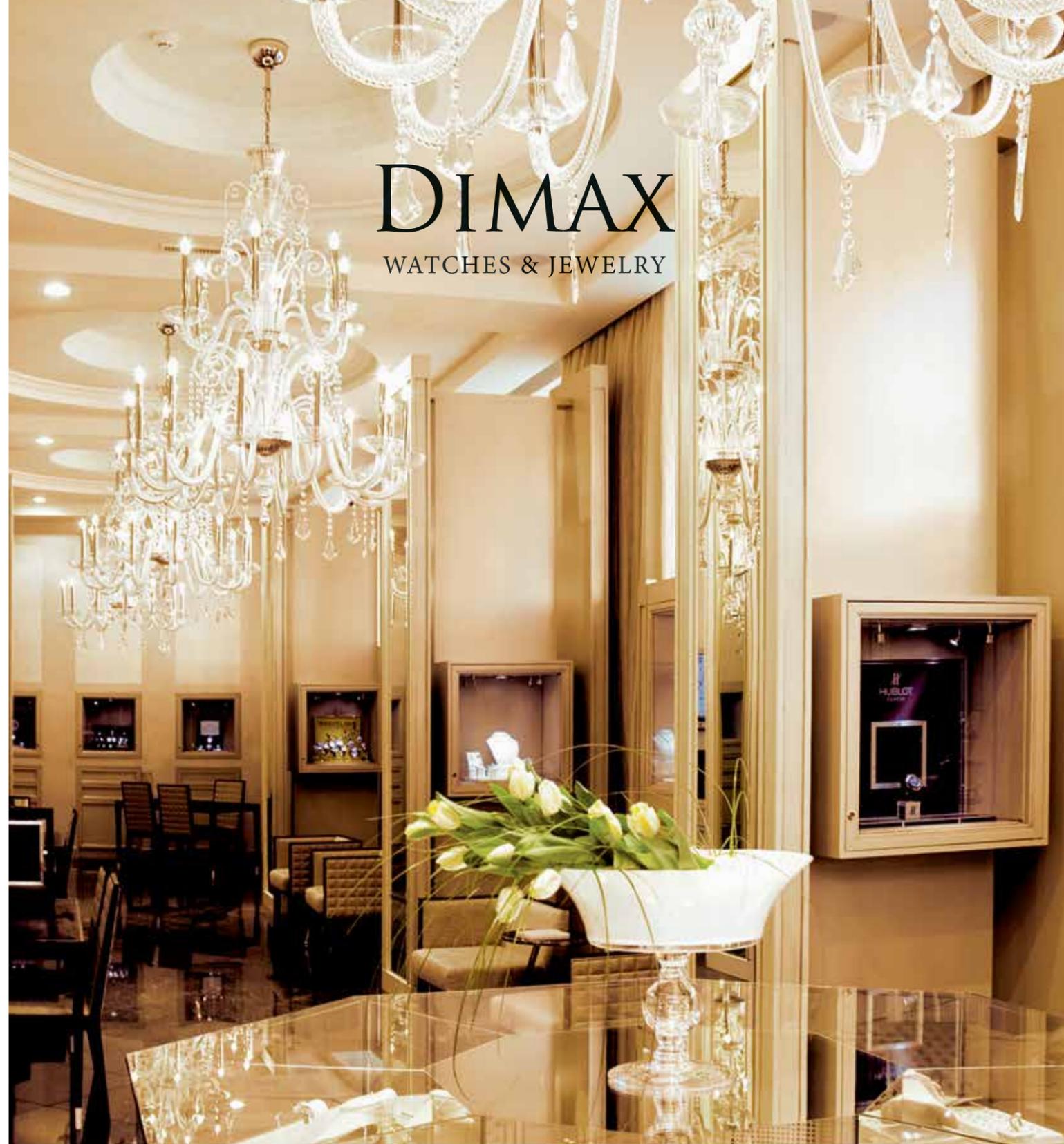
he’s also very musical. He can sing in any style, in any language, any composer. That’s why I have twice the joy, but also twice the responsibility. We often work together, separately from the others. He’s an outstanding tenor and an outstanding master. He’s at once a partner and a teacher; you can learn an awful lot from Kaufmann. We have chemistry and we look very good together, too, so I think the show will be good! (*Laughs.*) We’ll be singing this same opera at the Metropolitan in New York, too, but a different staging of it.

*Manon Lescaut* is usually sung by mature women. Vocally, it’s a very difficult part, very dramatic. The opera is a sad love story, and director Kent wants to remind audiences that Manon is only 17 years old; she’s not an experienced woman. I am comparatively quite young, and I really feel it when we’re working! Everyone pampers me, everyone wants to help; they buy me ice cream and coffee, they ask me how I’m doing. I feel fantastic!

Of course, the rehearsal process is also physically difficult, and one needs to take care of one’s health. Jonas does a ton of yoga; maybe I should ask him to show me a few moves. I found a swimming pool near here, so I guess I’ll be going to the pool to relax my muscles. I could just as well go for a massage, but there’s just one problem – I don’t have the time. When I get home in the evening after a long day of rehearsals, all I want to do is lie down on the couch and put my feet up. Because I give 100% of myself in rehearsals, too. How else can I get into a part? Some clever people say you should never give it your fullest during rehearsals, that you shouldn’t sing to your fullest ability, but I can’t do that! I need to understand what it’s like already during rehearsals. Otherwise how will I know whether I can last the whole show? It’s not right to always have your guard up.

**Will you get a vacation this summer?**

Yes, and I’m looking forward to it very much! Last summer I was working, on tour, and I didn’t get to see my daughter. But this year after my shows in London, I’ll be going to Munich to sing in two festival shows, and Adriana Anna will be with me there. In September I need to sing in Vienna with Piotr Beczala, and my daughter will be there with me, too. We’ll also be in Lucerne for a week, where my husband will be conducting concerts, and there my daughter and I will relax. Later in the autumn I’ll be returning to New York, but then I’ll leave her with a nanny or my mother. It’s good for her to spend time at home, too, not just in airplanes. The morning after my last show in New York I’ll be flying to Stockholm, where Andris and I will both be performing at the Nobel Prize Award Ceremony. But I’ll be in the role of mother all summer long, and I want to enjoy it to the fullest. Adriana Anna is changing every day, and I want to be with her. **BO**



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# Diverse Mallorca

**Mallorca has been busy catching up with Ibiza as a chic holiday spot, and it can definitely surprise you. Discover the cultural and active tourism attractions on this Balearic island!**

TEXT BY DAVID CAWLEY  
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Consider Mallorca for a moment. Are you thinking of an affordable, popular holiday island with sunny, sandy beaches and a famous 24-hour party scene? You'd be right! But there is much, much more to this 75 km by 100 km Mediterranean getaway. For such a small place, the island is also rich in art, music and literature, not to mention a lengthy swashbuckling history.

Perhaps that's why for the past 200 years the island has also been a magnet for rich, famous and creative types. Not here to soak up the sun, bask on the beaches and party all night long, this long list of notables spends its time inland among some of the most picturesque and striking scenery in Europe.

Further back in time, there were other visitors, too, albeit ones with aggressive conquest and nefarious deeds in mind. They came to plunder Mallorca's natural resources, take advantage of its strategic position and generally stay well beyond their welcome. However, they did leave a lasting historic legacy that stretches back more than 5,000 years. But more on them later.

## Cycling tourism

Perhaps also less known is the fact that the island has a strong cycling pedigree and is a regular destination for high-profile professionals preparing for the Tour de France. Both the U.S. Postal Service team and Britain's Team Sky regularly arrive in the southwestern region of Calvia and take to the Tramuntana Mountains for their winter training. In their wake, dedicated amateurs have started coming, too, and those with high fitness levels head to these same forested peaks to follow in the tracks of their professional heroes.

Recognising the value of cycling tourism, a number of hotels in the region are now offering hire-stations so that everyday tourists can rent themselves a bike and set off to explore the island. And this is not just for lean, lycra-clad enthusiasts. Calvia is also ideal for those who wouldn't know a mountain bike from a penny-farthing and perhaps haven't even mounted a saddle for years.

Various bike shapes, sizes and styles are available to rent. All are state-of-the-art and would cost upwards of EUR 3,000 if bought in a shop. Luckily, hire prices here start from EUR 18 for half a day. Cycling tour guides are available, too, and cost from EUR 25 per person for a group of four. Based at the *Viva Palma Nova Hotel* in Palma Nova, Juan Carlos is one such expert. Quietly confident and charming, Carlos is quite used to dealing with visitors whose cycling experience ranges

Following in the trail of professional cyclists through the Tramuntana Mountains



**MANY** PEOPLE OWN BIKES, AND DRIVERS KNOW THAT IT COULD BE THEIR SISTER OR WIFE IN FRONT OF THEM ON A BIKE

from never-been-on-a-bike to lean and fit Bradley Wiggins wannabes.

For simply exploring the local area, there's a choice of gentle 20-km routes weaving along pine forest trails. These lead to coastal tracks and picturesque bays known only to the locals, such as El Mago and Portals Vells. If that is still too much, then one can also cycle along the paved promenade of modern Palma Nova, perhaps stopping to admire the sleek, lust-inducing yachts moored at the marina of Puerto Portals.

Cycling has long been popular as a means of transport on the island. Generations of Mallorcans have opted to travel by bike, and consequently traffic on the roads is much friendlier to cyclists than in other places. As Juan Carlos points out: "Many people own bikes, and drivers know that it could be their sister or wife in front of them on a bike. So islanders are much more cycle-tolerant than elsewhere."

Those less inclined to take to a saddle, but who still want to get deeper into Mallorca's interior, can take one of the many remote way-marked hiking trails.



The GR221 hiking trail, a six-hour route through ancient settlements and dry-stone terraces

Route GR221 is one such trail. There, you hike for six hours along a dry river bed past abandoned, stone vine terraces, ancient limestone settlements and a palatial 1000-year-old hacienda. The whole area is a designated nature reserve, covers 14 million square metres and is looked after by just one man, Biel Salom.

This rugged, gap-toothed man of the mountains is not only responsible for maintaining the trails and historic monuments; he and his wife also look after abandoned donkeys, which they employ as eco-friendly grass- and weed-trimmers. Here, high up in the mountains, away from the resorts and roads, the dull, gentle chime of the bells hung around their necks is the only sound to be heard. Like all indigenous Mallorcans, Salom speaks the local dialect, a unique mix of Catalan, Spanish and French.

### History and football

For much of the local population, the history of the island didn't really begin until the Catalans from the Spanish mainland and southern France reclaimed their island back from the North African Moors during the 13th century. However, the island's colourful history actually goes back much further than this. Due to its strategic Mediterranean location, Mallorca has been coveted and conquered by a long list of foreign and mostly unwelcome powers that have helped to shape the island's

landscape and heritage. It's fair to say that for thousands of years Mallorca didn't have a moment's peace.

Evidence of human habitation on the island dates back over 3,000 years, with some historians arguing that there were settlements even before that. All generally agree that the first inhabitants were from a Talaiotic culture, similar to the ones found on other Balearic islands. Remnants of their talaiots, or prehistoric, Bronze-Age stone megaliths and necropolises, can still be seen at Ses Païsses and Son Real to the north of the island. The latter is a particularly beautiful spot overlooking the sea.

Around the 8th century BC, the Phoenicians from the Middle East set up trading posts on Mallorca. It's claimed that they named the archipelago Balearides, which we now know as the Balearics, after the vicious and effective sling used by the Talaiotics, who weren't always that welcoming to these new and strange, albeit more advanced people. Some 300 years later came the Carthaginians from North Africa.

Then, in 123 BC from the direction of southern France, galleons filled with mighty Roman warriors appeared on the northern Mediterranean horizon. The Romans landed, claimed the island for the empire and began to exploit the island's rich reserves of salt and olives. They also christened the island with the name we



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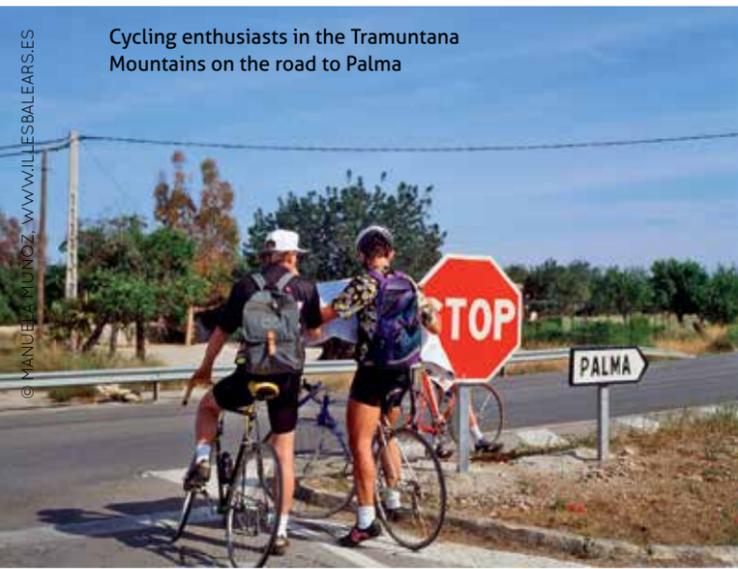
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Cycling enthusiasts in the Tramuntana Mountains on the road to Palma



Spanish artist Joan Miró's works and studio can be seen in a dedicated museum just outside Palma



The Talaiotic necropolis at Son Real is about 5,000 years old

know now – Maiorica – which means “the larger one” in Latin, as opposed to Minorca, “the smaller one”. For the next 400 years, Mallorca was ruled from Rome until the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD, when the vast empire began to crumble and the Eastern European Vandals came knocking at Mallorca’s door.

Next, it was the turn of the North African Berbers (or Moors). From the 8<sup>th</sup> century onwards, they repeatedly raided the island, arguing that it was being used as a base for pirates to attack their own ships. In 902, they conquered Mallorca and stayed until the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when they were finally defeated by troops from Spanish Catalonia.

It is from these Catalonians

recall the island’s rich and turbulent past. Looming over it all is the imposing La Seu cathedral, which was built over a mediaeval mosque. The city is not too big and not too small, and it is full of eclectic architectural styles lining its narrow cobbled streets.

Fashionistas will enjoy the designer shopping along the Avinguda Jaime III, Passeig d’es Born and Plaça Chopin, while those in search of hip nightlife head to the funky student district of Santa Catalina. Culture vultures will be impressed by the paintings hung in the Es Baluard Contemporary Art Museum, while the Juan March Foundation displays more works by vanguard Spanish

**ASK MOST MALLORCANS TODAY WHICH FOOTBALL TEAM THEY SUPPORT, AND CHANCES ARE THAT IT WILL BE FC BARCELONA**

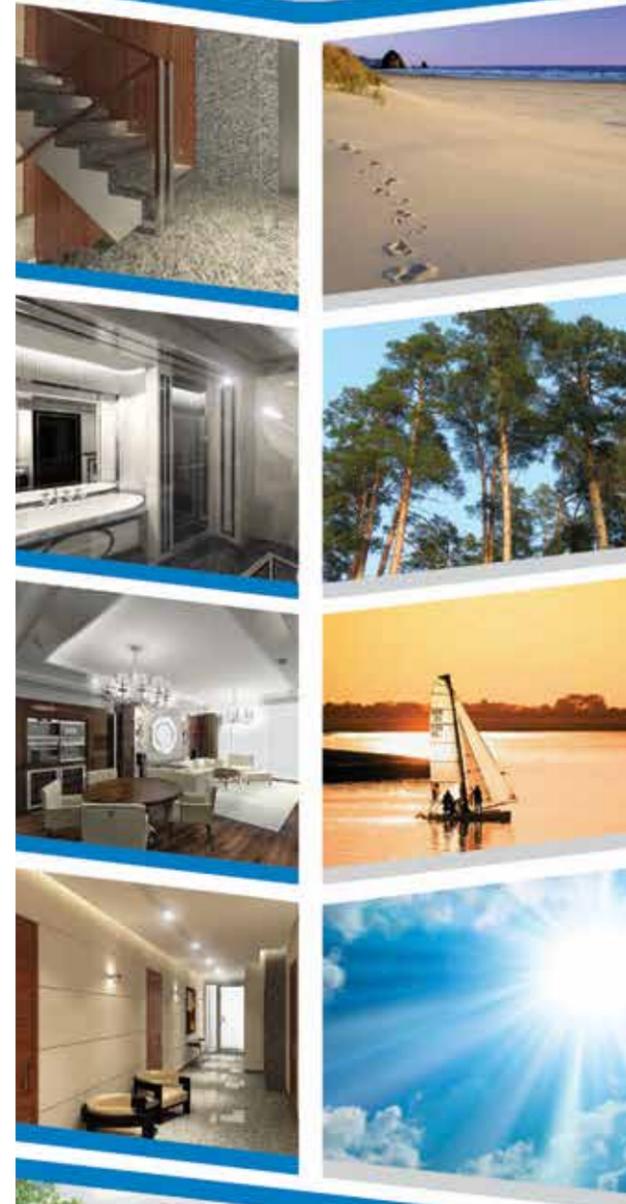
that 21<sup>st</sup>-century park ranger Biel Salom and his fellow islanders inherited the unusual dialect and strong Catalanian loyalty. Ask most Mallorcans today which football team they support, and chances are that it will be *FC Barcelona*, the team of those proud Catalanian flag-bearers over on the mainland, rather than the lower-placed but more local team of *RCD Mallorca*.

**Chopin in Mallorca**

The local football stadium is situated in the island’s capital, Palma de Mallorca. It’s a small picturesque city wrapped in battlements that

artists. Before his death in 1983, Spanish surrealist artist Joan Miró spent his later years living on the island. In tribute to the man, the sleek, contemporary Pilar and Joan Miró Foundation Museum was built just outside the city centre to display his paintings and sculptures.

A century before Miró’s death, Polish composer Frédéric Chopin spent some creatively prolific time on the island as well. In need of rest and an escape from cold, grey Parisian skies, he and Aurore Dupin (his enigmatic, cigar-smoking, trouser-wearing mistress and famed writer, who published under the *nom de plume* of



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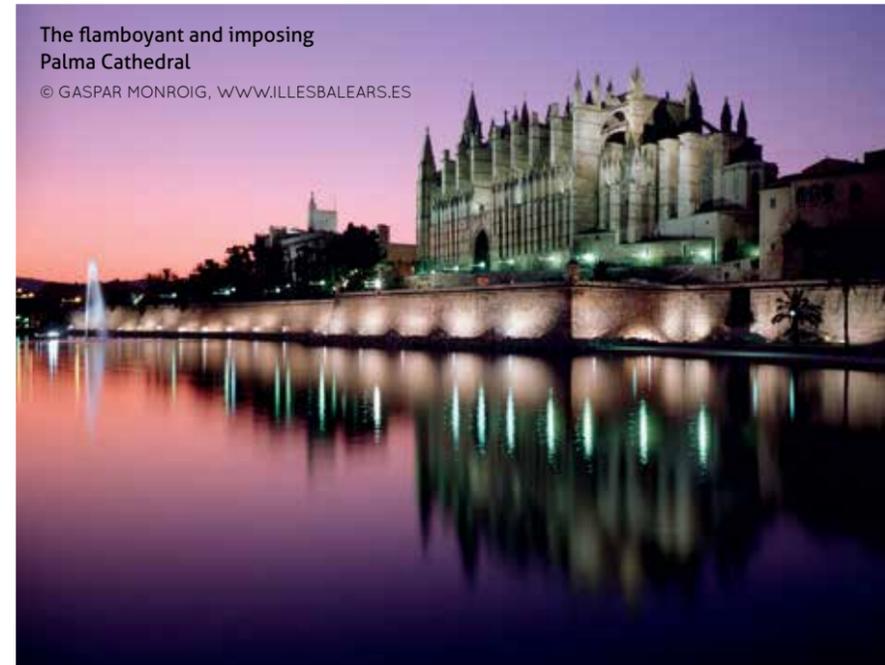
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## MALLORCA HAS LONG BEEN A MAGNET FOR THE CREATIVE, THE RICH AND THE FAMOUS

George Sand) travelled to Mallorca and rented a palatial villa near the island's capital. In a letter sent to a friend, he described their setting:

"The sky is like turquoise, the sea azure, the mountains like emeralds, the air like in heaven. Sunny during the day, it's hot and everyone dresses lightly. At night, guitars and singing can be heard at all hours."

Chopin's reference to the music was actually a complaint, as both he and Dupin struggled to sleep at night because of the noise. On the other hand, their bohemian lifestyle wasn't going down too well with their traditional, religious neighbours either. Not only were they not married, they didn't go to church and seemed just plain offensive to the locals, whom Dupin referred to as "monkeys". With things turning sour for everyone, Chopin, his mistress and her two children were soon forced to make a hasty escape inland, taking up rooms at a mediaeval monastery in the remote town of Valldemossa. Here, despite failing health and unseasonably wet weather, Chopin wrote some of his most popular works, including his *Prelude in D flat major* (better-known as *Raindrop*). From the capital, it takes around 25 minutes by car to make a pilgrimage to this charming, flower-filled town. Chopin's

monastic retreat is now partially open as a museum and comes with a pretty café garden where one can have a nice lunch.

### Aura of celebrities

Mallorca has long been a magnet for the creative, the rich and the famous. Film star Michael Douglas has a home in Port Valldemossa, while just a little further up the west coast the picture-book mountain village of Deià boasts the home and burial place of *I, Claudius* author Robert Graves. More recently, both Richard Branson and Andrew Lloyd Webber have taken villas there.

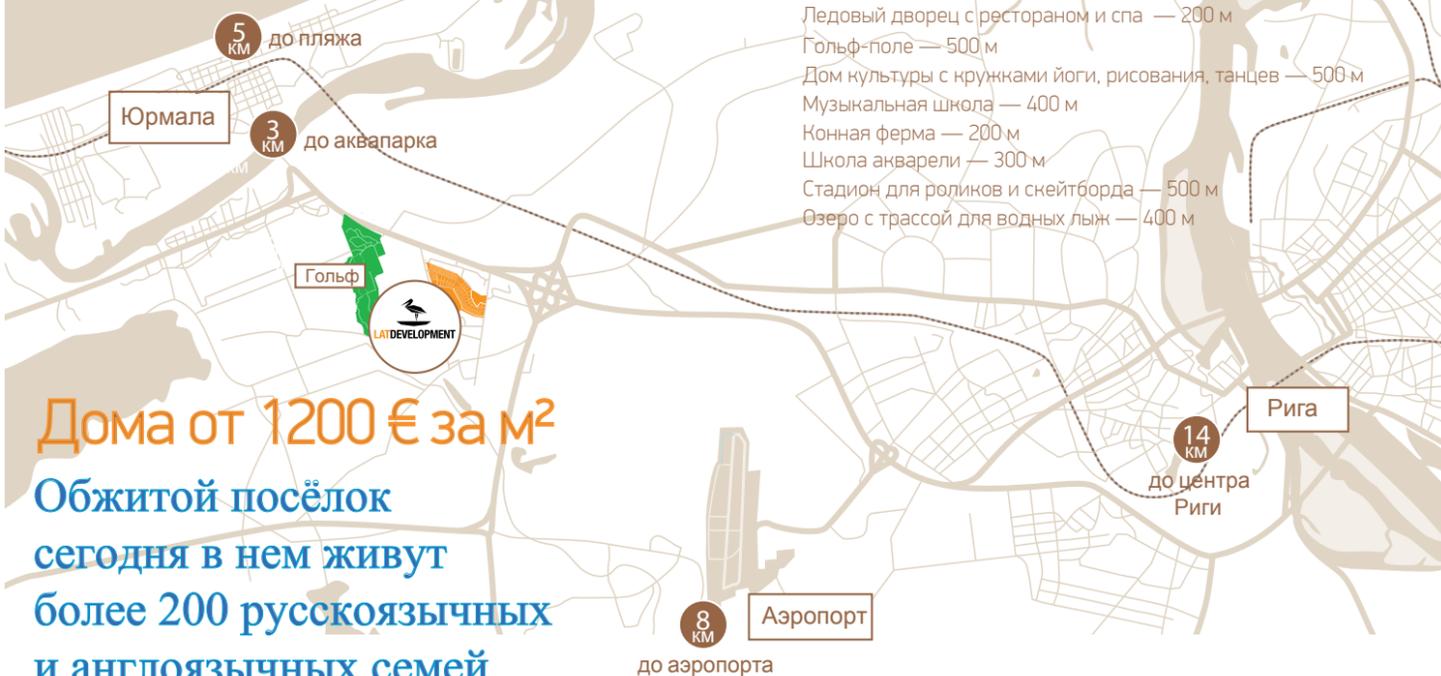
However, there are not many places for visitors to stay the night in Deià. For those who fancy palatial, celebrity-endorsed luxury, *La Residencia Hotel* has hosted Hollywood A-listers Gwyneth Paltrow, Harrison Ford and Pierce Brosnan as its guests. Another place with a celebrity aura from an earlier era is the elegant *Hotel Formentor*, where between the 1930s and 1950s luminaries such as Winston Churchill, Peter Ustinov, Grace Kelly and Charlie Chaplin spent some of their holiday time.

Those not overly impressed by the lives of the rich and famous can still find plenty of serene hidden-away villages without the hint of a celebrity connection. Pollença,

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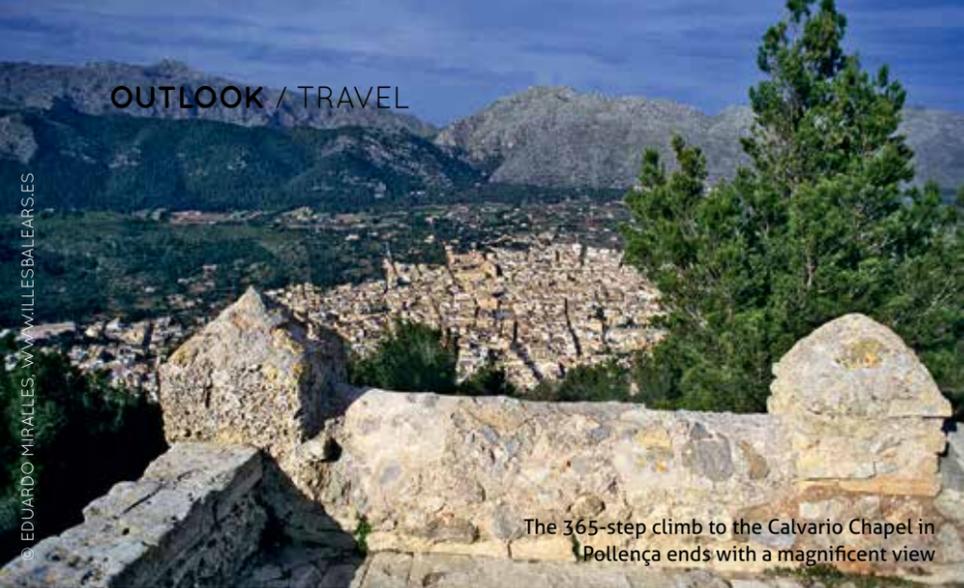
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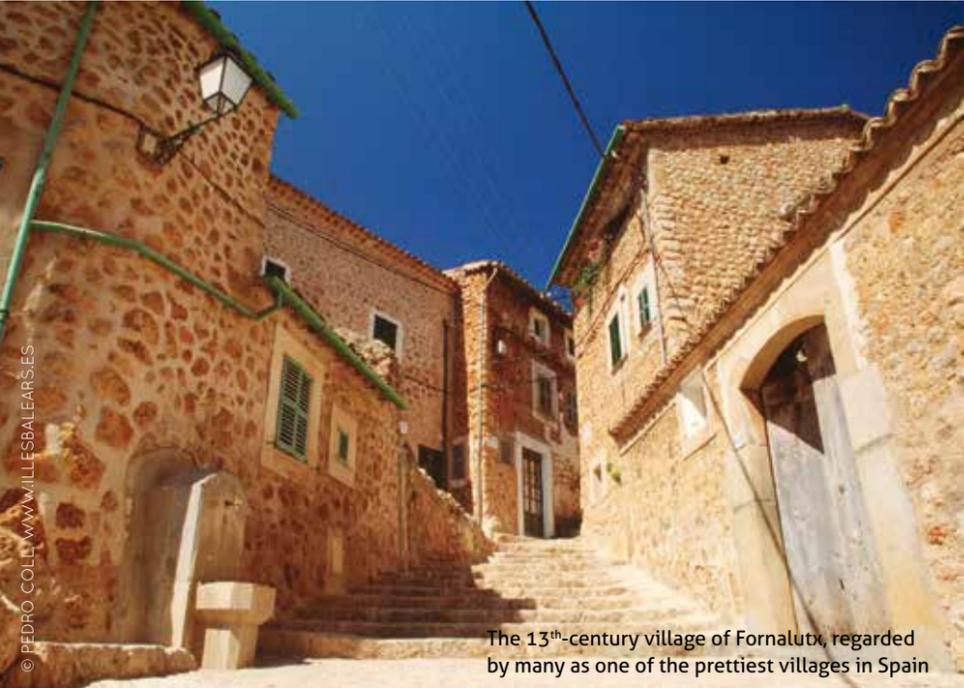
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The 365-step climb to the Calvario Chapel in Pollença ends with a magnificent view



The 13<sup>th</sup>-century village of Fornalutx, regarded by many as one of the prettiest villages in Spain

not the port, but the stately little town built inland to avoid marauding pirates, has yet to succumb to the weight of tourism. A climb up the ancient 365 steps (one for each day of the year) to the Calvario Chapel provides some breathtaking country and coastal views. After this hike, the restaurants and bars back in town provide authentic and hearty Mallorcan dishes of local lamb, cod, squid and mussels.

South along the MA-10 through the Tramuntana Mountains is another hidden gem. Fornalutx is a captivating hillside town that dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Surrounded by terraces of orange groves, it is regarded as one of the most beautiful in the whole of Spain. Another place where few tourists tend to tread is the whitewashed town of Calvia. The rustic, candle-lit *Restaurant Meson Ca'n Torrat* is owned and run by a former professional bullfighter, and the place is filled with the owner's own toreador memorabilia. It is also famed for its hearty, signature dish of suckling pig roasted on an open fire. Here, you feel light years away from the modern resorts with their pounding nightclubs, fast-food restaurants and packed beaches, all of which have played a big part in shaping the island's reputation abroad.



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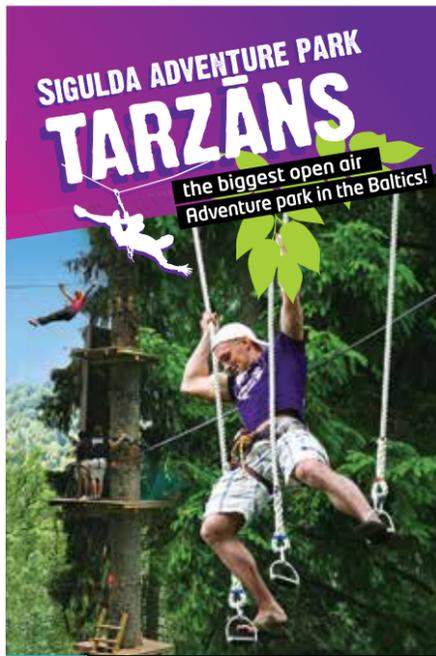
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Like Chopin, people have been visiting Mallorca to escape the northern European weather and enjoy the warm island life since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first regular steamship service from the mainland started in 1837, bringing in a small group of rich and curious travellers and taking away shipments of island wines and almonds. This was a prosperous period that became known as "gold fever".

However, that was just the beginning. With the advent of affordable package holidays by air during the 1960s, the island's once sleepy military airbase soon needed to expand to cope with waves of holidaymakers pouring in to the glamorous, newly-built resorts of El Arenal, Cala Major and Alcúdia. These days, Palma de Mallorca's refurbished airport is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest in all of Spain, handling 12 million party-goers and beach-lovers every year. Lately, increasing numbers have also been drawn to explore

the island's mountain landscapes and charming slow-paced villages.

Now, as was the case two centuries ago, the best time to visit the island interior is during the cooler months of spring. The landscape is greener, the countryside is filled with the scent of rosemary, and the pink-blossoming almond trees are at their colourful best. For cyclists, the quieter months also mean that there is less traffic on the roads.

History, culture, cycling and hiking adventures together with a whole lot of charm plus, of course, the famous beaches and nightlife make Mallorca an attractive destination. Whatever the time of year, Mallorca has long had plenty to offer to both tourists and invaders. **BO**

For more information on the island, see [www.visitmallorca.com](http://www.visitmallorca.com).  
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# Pastoral beauty

TEXT BY AGRA LIEGE  
PUBLICITY PHOTOS

Switzerland's mountain regions combine breathtaking views with cultural and historical gems

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You hear a lot about the Jungfrau region in Switzerland being an outstanding holiday destination. At its centre, between the Alpine lakes of Brienzsee and Thunersee, lies the town of Interlaken. It is the platform from which the famous *Jungfrau joch*, the highest railway station in Europe at 3454 metres above sea level, can be

accessed. The *Jungfraubahn* railway service will take you there through a 7.3-kilometre-long railway tunnel that starts in Interlaken.

You also hear about not having to be ashamed for being a tourist in Interlaken, as that's what the place exists for. But of course, a visit to Switzerland should encompass more than merely the Alps, chocolate

and cheese. Move a notch to the right on the map and you've got the Haslital region, home to the town of Meiringen, which is surrounded by places that exhibit not only outstanding beauty but also exciting stories and histories. Look, walk, climb and listen – and let Haslital tell you a little more about Switzerland than meets the eye.

## Historical legacy

Set your home base in Meiringen, which has some nice little hotels in close proximity to the train station, and you've got easy access to a number of musts. One of these is the Swiss Open-Air Museum in Ballenberg. Take a 10-minute train ride from Meiringen to the nearby lakeside town Brienz, and transfer to a bus that will quickly take you to the Ballenberg museum gate.



The Open-Air Museum is essentially a depository for the rural architecture of Switzerland. The 100+ historical buildings are true collection pieces, and the museum is designed to demonstrate how Swiss people lived in the past. A guide is a must, because without a guide lots of exciting facts that form the bigger picture would simply be lost. This year's annual theme is focusing on the role of traditional crafts, and a lot of teaching is going on in the museum this summer. It's not just the craftsmen who are imbuing the museum with a special presence; there are also over 200 rural



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OUTLOOK / TRAVEL



animals to be found on the territory, along with thriving vegetable gardens.

The buildings are grouped together amid the meadows, fields and woods of the vast territory, depending on the region and architectural style in which they were built. All of the houses were dismantled in different regions of the country and put back together within the museum territory. As you enter the museum, the first building that you'll see is a Swiss chalet dating from 1872. Not a farmhouse like all the others, it once belonged to the owner of a wool factory, and its being here is no coincidence. The building is a partial copy of farmhouses characteristic to mountain regions in Bernese Oberlands at the time. Aware of the fact that the value of old

buildings was dwindling, the man who commissioned the chalet was acting on the wish to preserve certain aspects of the past, which is exactly what the people behind this museum are doing.

The oldest building in the museum dates back over 700 years, while the largest and most expensive one cost 3.5 million francs to relocate. The interiors of the houses are also representative of their respective periods, and the household items within them can be seen and touched. Even traditional crafts like bread-baking or basket-weaving are done within the buildings.

A walk through the different houses reveals a lot about the differing social conventions in the country. How the



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Waterfall in the Rosentau Valley

rich treated the poor, or how elderly parents had to go about securing their care through written contracts with their adult children is all revealed within the walls of the wonderfully preserved houses.

After spending a good part of the day in the Swiss Open-Air Museum, you might not be so keen on continuing your journey, but a magnificently beautiful detour can be taken nevertheless. When you return to Brienz by bus, the *Lötschberg* paddle steamer is waiting right there at the harbour, a minute's walk from the bus stop. It will take you on a ride from Brienz to Interlaken on Lake Brienz (Brienzersee). The ride is breathtaking to no end, offering the sights of mountain massifs enveloping the lake everywhere you cast your sights. The scenery is ever-changing, as the steamer stops to take on passengers in a handful of smaller harbours along the way, thus letting those on board have a peek at the teeny little villages. The paddle steamer lets everyone off in Interlaken, and if your feet have slightly recovered by now, then you can take a stroll in the renowned tourist town as well.

#### Natural beauty with comfort

The Rosenlauer valley in Haslital had a crucial role to play in the development of mountaineering in Switzerland. In the mid-1800s, geologists from around the world were taking an interest in the rock constitution of the mountains, since the higher parts looked different from the base parts. The only people with experience in what would later be called "mountaineering" were local hunters and farmers, because the latter took their cattle up the mountains to feed during the summer months. Thus, scientists asked these mountain savvies to guide them into the mountains and show the safest routes.

Soon afterwards, mountaineering turned into a tourist activity, largely thanks to the world's best-known name in travel, Thomas Cook. He began his international travel company in 1841, and from its humble beginnings developed a whole new operation devoted to helping fellow Britons see the world. Cook first set foot in Switzerland in 1863, bringing along around 60 tourists, and from then on their numbers grew exponentially.



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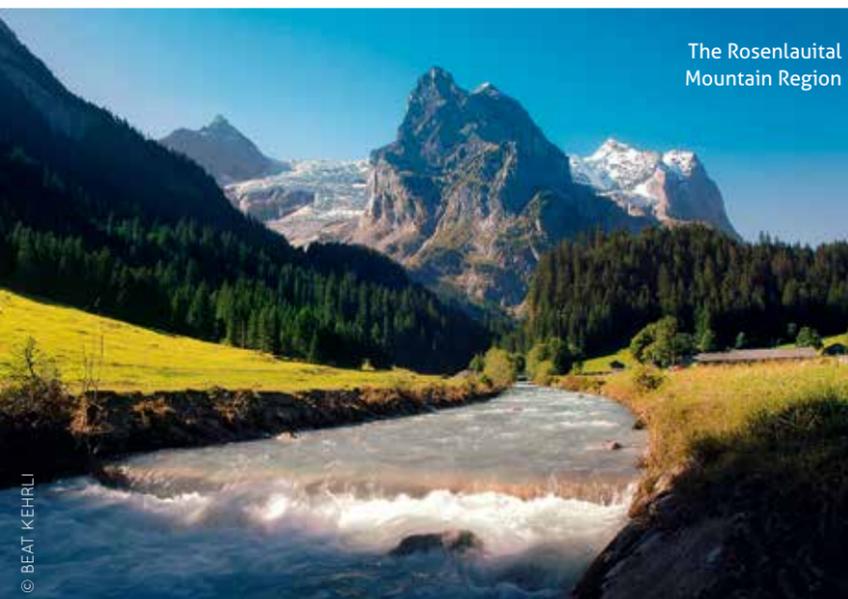
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The Rosenlualt Mountain Region

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In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century a massive number of hotels were built in the Rosenlualt Valley area and mountain guiding as a profession became all the rage. One of the first and certainly the most famous among them was Meiringen-born Melchior Anderegg, known as the King of the Guides and the first to ascend many a prominent mountain peak.

From Meiringen as a starting point, the Rosenlualt Valley can be easily reached by car or bus in 30 to 45 minutes. Some of the vast number of sightseeing and hiking spots are included in a specially designed route named *On Goethe's Trail*, referencing the habits of

the world-famous German poet. On this route you can visit Schwarzwaldalp, Hochmoor, Gletscherschlucht (Glacier Gorge) and more.

Likewise, the famous Glacier Gorge can be accessed from a well-marked trail that you'll find when you arrive at the heart of the Rosenlualt Valley. It is a relatively short climb, starting in a hilly forest and then leading through narrow rocky tunnels and up steep stone stairs, circling powerful streams that thunder down Glacier Gorge. There is something to be said about the beauty of contained water that seems to respect its confines. The water comes from the glacier that formed these cliffs over a vast period of time and turned them into veritable artworks.

In close vicinity are two hotels/restaurants – *Chalet Hotel Schwarzwaldalp* and *Hotel Rosenlualt*. The hike up to *Chalet Hotel Schwarzwaldalp* is about 30 minutes, if you start from the place where you began the ascent of Glacier Gorge. The walk is fairly flat, and the view that beckons once you've sat yourself at a table outside is marvellous. You're in a valley surrounded by dreamy mountain peaks everywhere you look, with some lit up by sunlight and some half-hidden in the clouds.

*Hotel Rosenlualt*, situated much lower in the valley, offers a bit of a historical air. It is one of the few remaining establishments from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when mountain tourism reached its peak, and is correspondingly elegant and slow-paced. According to legend, the water in the stream that runs just behind the hotel has healing properties. Many years ago, a farmer noticed a sickly goat repeatedly drinking from this stream until it was healed of its ailment. The farmer then brought his wife, who was suffering from arthritis, and had her bathe in the water. The miracle happened again. In any case, they claim that the water from this stream is also served at the *Hotel Rosenlualt* restaurant.

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**DURING** A HIKE IN THE NEARBY MOUNTAINS, CONAN DOYLE DISCOVERED THE REICHENBACH FALLS, WHICH HE DECIDED WOULD BE THE PLACE FOR HOLMES' DEMISE

A rather different experience is offered by simple mountain huts, which can be rented and which are mostly shared by travellers hiking in the Rosenlaur Valley. There are quite a few of these huts, including the Engelhorn hut not far from Glacier Gorge and the Dossen hut high in the mountains near the Dossenhorn, at 3138 metres above sea level.

### Holmes... Sherlock Holmes

Meiringen is obsessed with Sherlock Holmes. The story goes that Arthur Conan Doyle, the father of the world-famous "man who never lived", had grown tired of Holmes and of the fact that nobody was paying attention to his other literary efforts. In 1893, he toured Switzerland with his wife and ended up in Meiringen, where they stayed at the *Park Hotel*. During a hike in the nearby mountains, Conan Doyle discovered Reichenbach Falls, which he decided would be the place for Holmes' demise. In his short story *The Final Problem*, Doyle describes the famous detective's final hand-to-hand combat with his career-long arch enemy Professor Moriarty on the edge of Reichenbach Falls. In the end, both men fall to their deaths, or so it seems. This unexpected turn of events gave rise to a storm of protest by the author's readers, who eventually pressured him to give in and resurrect Holmes. In any case,

Reichenbach Falls continues to be visited by Holmes pilgrims from around the world.

The hiking route built around the splendid Reichenbach Falls offers an unworldly view of rare beauty. Some of that perhaps gets overlooked by Holmes' most dedicated fans, including members of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London. Once every couple of years (the last visit took place in 2012), a fair number of the society members arrive in Meiringen fully dressed in Victorian clothing. At the end of their stay, they visit Reichenbach Falls and play out the "tragic" scene of Holmes' demise so accurately that even model dolls impersonating Holmes and Moriarty are thrown over the edge of the cliff.

Meiringen has accordingly responded to the trend. There is a Sherlock Holmes Museum in a little church in the town centre (right next to the *Park Hotel* where Conan Doyle stayed), with a cellar room turned into Holmes' living room. A statue of Holmes stands outside the museum, while *Sherlock Holmes Hotel* can be found a bit further down the main road. There is even a Baker Street with a pub named *Sherlock* on it. Dead or alive, the imaginary Holmes is fittingly celebrated in Switzerland.

### Hiking paradise

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**OUTLOOK / TRAVEL**



The hike around Lake Gelmer takes around 3.5 hours



The Gelmerbahn funicular

nearby Grimsel area, which you can reach from Meiringen by car or by bus in 30 to 45 minutes. The Grimsel and Susten mountain area is now occupied by the KWO, a hydropower company that makes “green energy”. It has created eight storage lakes and built nine power plants, all of them inside the mountains. Lake Grimsel was the first to be created back in 1925, along with the first of the power plants, while Lake Gelmer, the only one of the lakes that can be accessed by visitors, was created shortly after, in 1927.

The hike up from the valley to Lake Gelmer is not for those who prefer “walks in the park”. Parts of the trail are steep rocky stairs that curl around the edges of the mountain, and parts are just a rocky and muddy dirt road. However, the view from the top is worth every step. The hike around Lake Gelmer alone takes around 3.5 hours and is sure to clear your mind of all worldly troubles. The serenity of the sunrays sparkling on the milky green

surface of the still water and surrounding hills is like something out of a fairytale.

Next to the lake, the Gelmerbahn funicular has its starting point. It is the steepest funicular in Europe, with a gradient of 106%, and should you dare take a ride, it will bring you to the longest and highest suspension bridge in the Alps. The bridge hangs across a wide gorge and presents those crossing it with a splendid view of Thrift Glacier. The valley is an example of a perfectly functional partnership between nature and technology, as the power plant can produce energy for 1.2 million people in an unspoiled environment.

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TEXT BY JOLANTA SENELE  
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# Culinary calendar

Like the geographic world, the gastronomic world also has its Eiffel Towers, Big Bens and Colosseums. Here are 12 European treats for each month of the year.

## 1

January

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### Austria *Tiroler Speck*

In some languages, the word *Speck* is associated with pure white pork fat, but Tyrolean *Speck* isn't anything like that at all. It is more like smoked prosciutto and served in thin slices. Available throughout Austria, Tyrolean *Speck* has been made since at least the 14<sup>th</sup> century and is now a trademarked product with PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) status. In other words, this particular form of raw ham must be made in Tyrol to be identified as *Tiroler Speck*. It stands out in its class in the same way as *Sachertorte* does among cakes.

Perhaps that is due to the crisp mountain air in which the ham is dried for more than 20 weeks, or to the cold-smoking of the meat with beech and ash wood, or to the mixture of spices with which the ham is cured. While the precise composition of the spices remains a secret at each production place, ingredients such as juniper berries, bay leaves and rosemary are commonly mentioned. Tyrolean *Speck* doesn't need any company and can be eaten on its own, but if you also fancy something similar, then try some *Tiroler speckknödel* or ham dumplings, which are made with dried white bread – a wholesome and filling food during one of the coldest winter months.

## 2

February

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### Turin, Italy *Bicerin*

Who would have thought that gourmets could reach seventh heaven by drinking

from a small rounded glass of brown-coloured liquid? Oh, great Roman gods, I implore you: stand by the unsuspecting visitors who step into the *Caffè al Bicerin* – one of Turin's best and oldest cafés – on a crisp February morning and who, driven by curiosity, order a drink named after the said establishment! It is said that German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche and Italian composer Giacomo Puccini regularly drank and practically worshipped this ordinary-looking coffee. Although the recipe of *Bicerin* is as closely guarded as that of *Coca-Cola*, the ingredients for this cold-weather cocktail are straightforward: pour in some espresso coffee, add a layer of liquefied homemade chocolate, and top with a cool blanket of dairy cream. While *Bicerin* is also available at other cafés in Turin, try it out for the first time at *Caffè al Bicerin*, from where the drink is said to have originated two centuries ago. However, bear in mind that the café is closed on Wednesdays and throughout the month of August.

**3**  
**March**  
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**Czech Republic**  
**Medovnik**

The Czechs like to say that you have not really lived until you have tasted *medovnik*. In simple terms, *medovnik* is a honey cake, but that is where the simplicity ends, as *medovnik* is not a dish that can be whipped up in a flash. It can consist of ten different layers, each of which is covered with whipped cream or condensed milk or sour cream. Then the cake must sit in the fridge for several hours to let the flavours set in. Unlike other desserts, *medovnik* is a cake whose composition is not immediately apparent from its appearance. Although the word *med* means "honey" in Czech, the cake doesn't taste like honey, nor is it a biscuit cake (as one might think from its appearance), nor is it moist, nor is it dry. However, one thing is clear – those who taste it are bound to be hooked.



**4**

**Germany**  
**White asparagus**

Regarding asparagus, the world is divided into two fronts – those who eat it white and those who eat it green. Germany falls into the white camp. There, *Spargelzeit* or *Spargelsaison* is a special gastronomic event that lasts for at least two months and traditionally ends on June 24. For those who are unfamiliar with this spring vegetable, white and green asparagus are actually one and the same, except for the

**April**  
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fact that green asparagus has been exposed to sunlight while growing, but white asparagus has seen no sunlight at all. White asparagus is specially grown in raised beds that are covered with black sheets. Expert gourmands will tell you that white asparagus has a much more nutty and earthy taste as well as a more velvety consistency than its green counterpart. To get used to its particular taste, we recommend starting with simple dishes like white asparagus in butter sauce and then moving on to more elaborate creations like white asparagus soup.

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5

May

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### Latvia Cold soup

Although Latvians aren't the only people entitled to lay a claim to cold soup as their national dish, we will risk saying that Latvian cold soup is the most prominent of the lot. Although visually Latvian cold soup may look far from appetising, that is compensated for by its unique taste. The main ingredients of Latvian cold soup are kefir (a fermented milk product similar to yoghurt), fresh cucumbers, hard-boiled eggs and red beets, to which a hefty portion of spring onions and dill is added. Oh, yes, we can already hear people screaming that a Latvian cold soup also requires boiled potatoes! And that in place of kefir, the soup must be prepared with water, and then sour cream should be mixed into it! Yes indeed, so many passions aroused around one hellishly pink and refreshing spring soup!



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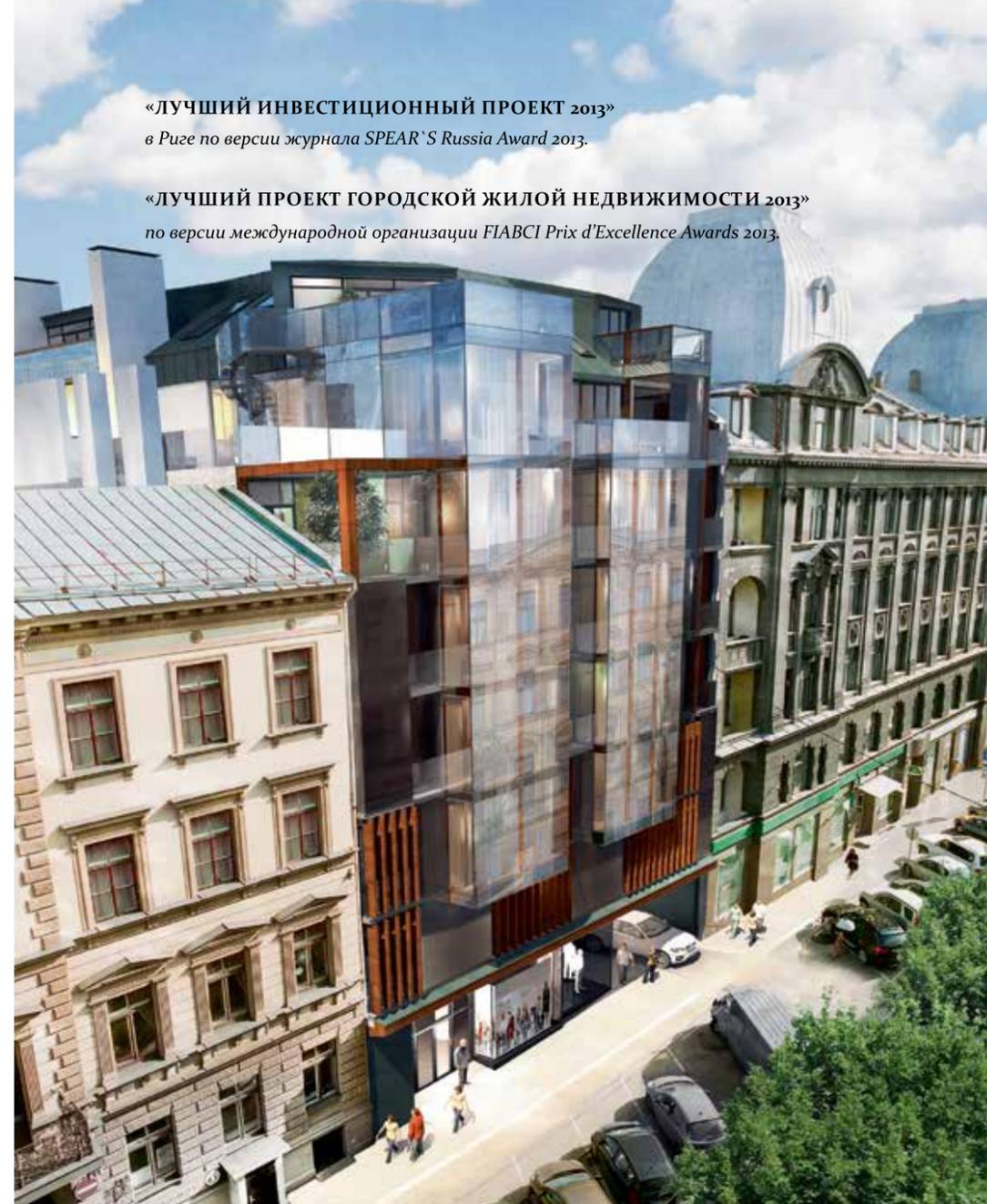
6

June

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### Spain Boquerón

You have already been to Spain and you don't know what *boquerón* is? Well, then, you must fly back there soon! But before you return, remember that *boquerón* is extremely addictive. Yes, this tiny fish, which some call a white anchovy, can truly generate a gastronomic addiction. The best time to enjoy it is from April until July, in either fried or marinated form. In the area around Madrid, you will usually find these little fish marinated in vinegar, with an added dash of olive oil, garlic and parsley. Further south in Andalusia, the anchovies are often quickly fried in very hot olive oil. But what a taste! However you choose to eat it, this innocuous sea creature tastes scandalously great!



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7

July

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Greece

### Malagousia

We wouldn't be talking about *Malagousia* today if not for the determination of a stubborn Greek winemaker. *Malagousia* is possibly the oldest surviving variety of Greek grapes and was close to extinction at the beginning of the 1980s. It was brought back from the brink by Vangelis Gerovassiliou, whose winery makes some of the best wine from this grape variety. However, it remains fairly difficult to find good *Malagousia*, and the wine is usually pretty expensive. First of all, that's because this type of grape vine is capricious and hard to control, leading some winegrowers

to call it a "terrifying" variety. Secondly, *Malagousia* needs to grow in a specific type of soil, and thirdly, it requires the right climatic conditions: not too much sun, and not too little either. However, if the demands of this fussy Greek mistress are met, then the wine that she gives forth is worth the toil and trouble. Some compare it to a new *Riesling*, while others detect similarities with *Viognier*. Contrary to most Greek wines, *Malagousia* is intensely aromatic and full-flavoured, with traces of citrus, peppermint and fresh basil in the bouquet – truly one of the most enchanting and unique wines from this Mediterranean country.

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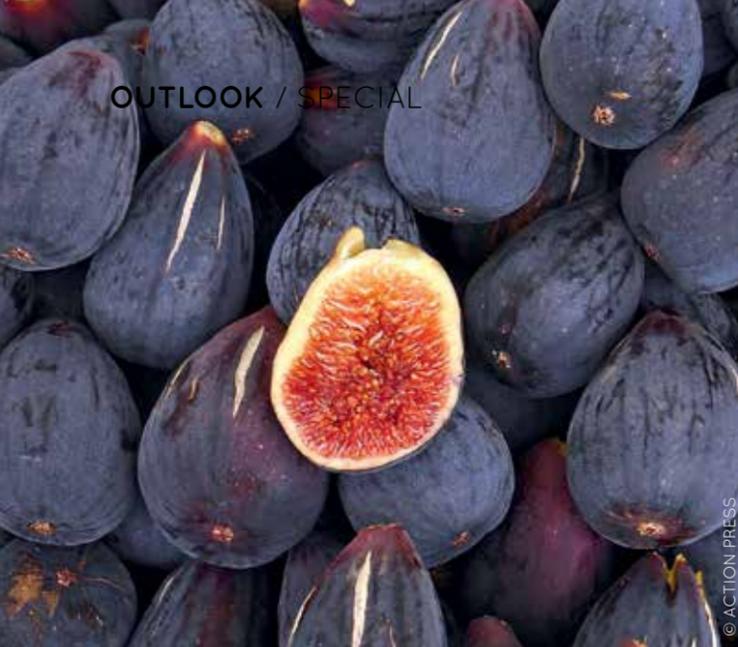
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8

August

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**Aydin province, Turkey Figs**

Aydin is to figs what Bordeaux is to wine, and figs have grown in the foothills of this fertile Turkish province since ancient times. Located about 100 km southeast of Izmir, Aydin Province produces most of Turkey's figs – a noteworthy fact, considering that Turkey is the largest exporter of this fruit in the world. Not only are there oodles of figs in this region, they also taste practically

divine. Large and sinfully sweet, they can be eaten both in dried form (most people who live outside of the Mediterranean countries eat them in this manner) or fresh from the tree. During the month of August, when the first fruits have ripened, figs can be bought from roadside sellers along with olives, pomegranates and grapes. Budget travellers can also collect the odd exemplar for free, as fallen figs can always be found at the base of these trees during the fruit season.

9

September

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**Great Britain Cheese**

When we think of cheese, we usually think of France. It turns out that while the French produce about 400 types of cheese, their British neighbours make more than 700. And no, we are not referring to 700 different types of Cheddar. It is hard to pick a particular favourite, as just about all types of locally made cheese can be found in this country. Take Cornish blue, which has been rated as the best blue cheese in the world, or the renowned Stichelton blue cheese, which

is made with unpasteurised milk, or the soft and aromatic Stinking Bishop. Some varieties, such as Cheshire cheese, go back several centuries, while others, such as Cornish Yarg, are much more recent and worth a taste. In other words, although Great Britain is most commonly associated with Cheddar cheese (and most notably West Country Farmhouse Cheddar), it also hosts a huge variety of other great cheeses to discover. Don't look for the best cheeses at a supermarket, though. The best place to find top-rated British cheeses is at a cheesemonger's.

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**10**  
**October**  
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**Nancy, France**  
*Bergamotes de Nancy*

A French treat that few outsiders know about, this light, translucent, amber-coloured candy is made by heating sugar over an open flame and adding essence of bergamot, a small citrus fruit. The sweet-and-sour product is then cut into squares and packaged. *Bergamotes de Nancy* candies were first made back in 1850 and were widely regarded outside of France as well. However, now they are mainly a low-key local specialty with PGI status. The candy is traditionally packaged in a metal tin illustrated with landmarks from the city of Nancy, as could be seen in the film *Amélie* (2001), in which the protagonist finds an old *Bergamotes de Nancy* tin filled with childhood mementos from a former inhabitant of her apartment. Thus begin her adventures, and hopefully yours as well.



**11**  
**Copenhagen, Denmark**  
*Hot dogs*

Copenhagen is home to some of the world's best restaurants as well as the best...hot dogs. Well, that's what the specialists say, including Americans, and if Americans say so, then they know what they're talking about! It's not as if the hot dog stands or *pølsevogns* have recently appeared out of the blue. They have a long history in Copenhagen that goes back to the 1920s, when they began popping up on the city streets like mushrooms after a storm. At one point there were over a thousand of them, but now only about 100 are left. Two in particular

**November**  
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are worth noting: 1) *Harry's Place* at the edge of the Nørrebro district has been selling hot dogs for more than 50 years. Known for its 150-gramme *Børge* mega-sausage, the stand has had many fans, including two Danish prime ministers. 2) *Den økologiske pølsemand*, or *Døp* for short, lies in Copenhagen's inner centre and is one of the few hot dog stands in the world where everything on sale is organic, starting from the sausages and ending with the fried onion garnish. Whatever variety you choose, you'll have to forget about ordering a soft drink with your hot dog if you want to eat like the locals. True Danes have their hot dogs together with chocolate milk, either cold or heated.

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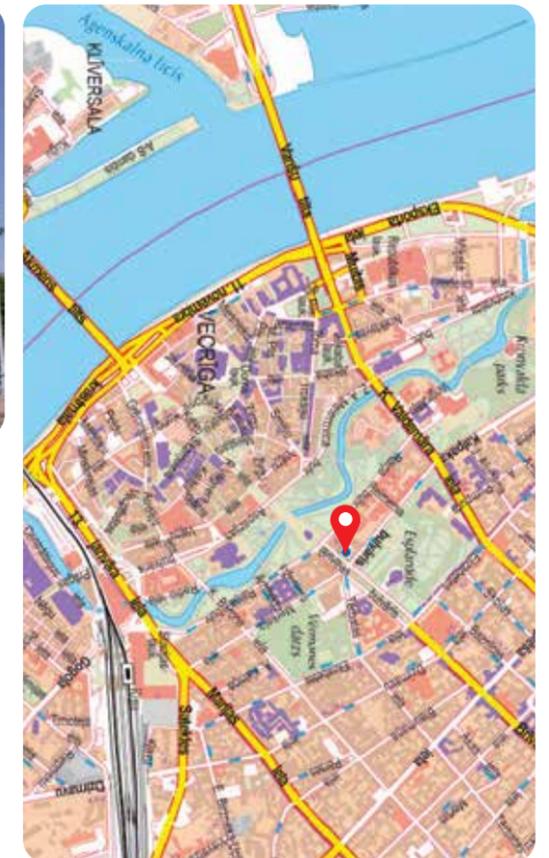


**Netherlands**  
*Poffertjes*

While “obsessed” is perhaps too strong of a word, the Dutch certainly are fond of bread-like foods. True, their bread is nothing to write home about, their crepes are unremarkable, and their national pastries are so national that you have to be a bona fide Dutch nationalist to really like them. However, it is a completely different story with *poffertjes*. These are pancakes, but not just any pancakes. They are small and puffy and “taste just like home”, if one can use that expression. Although some travel guides say that *poffertjes* are made of buckwheat flour, 99% of the time they will be made of regular wheat flour. And although the traditional way to eat them is with butter and icing sugar, they are tastier if you substitute the latter with *stroop*, a viscous caramelised sugar syrup. At the end of the year, *poffertjes* can be bought at stands in many a town square, together with two other Yuletide specialties: *oliebollen* (round dumplings fried in oil) and *appelflappen* (flat triangular pastries with apple filling fried in oil).

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# Eat, drink and fall in love with Stockholm

One of the most beautiful cities in Europe is also a top destination for gourmet travellers, and just an hour away from Riga by direct flight. We gathered some top places for you to try this summer. Enjoy your trip!

TEXT BY SANTA KRISTIANA ZAMUELE  
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## High Life

Seduced by champagne and a luxurious interior

### ► Grand Hotel Cadier Bar

This is the most elegant and cosmopolitan bar of the city, a favourite place of both business people and rock stars. The bar is named after Régis Cadier, the French chef and founder of the hotel. This beautiful locale is perfect for an *à la carte* breakfast or an afternoon or evening drink. Its classy interior, palatial ceilings and ornate chandeliers are complemented by comfortable sofas to sink into. The menu offers tasty snacks and some serious dishes as well. The foie gras mousse is absolutely stunning, especially when paired with the *Pol Roger* Vintage Rosé champagne.

*Cadier Bar* is always alive and sparkling, with people mingling and champagne flowing. Along with its aforementioned assets, it also has a fantastic waterfront view of the Royal Palace and Gamla Stan, Stockholm's Old Town. The wine



list is impressive and so is the service. Special attention is devoted to afternoon tea, where the long waiting list for weekends means that you should stop by on a weekday or book ahead. A top choice for spending the afternoon talking with your mom or a good friend and enjoying the assortment of sandwiches, pastries and scones, which are topped off with lime curd, whipped butter and cream, along with a variety of homemade jams. And of course, a perfectly chilled glass of champagne is a must!

**Insider's tip:** Come here anytime of the day to get an instant "glam up" or when you feel like you deserve a special treat. Book a session in the spa as well. If you have some time to spare, then it's absolutely worth it.

Address: Södra Blasieholmshamnen 8  
① [www.grandhotel.se](http://www.grandhotel.se)

### ► Berns Asiatiska

A long-famous central Stockholm location that first opened its doors way back in 1863. A bohemian crowd from the past hangs out with a very modern crowd from today. The spacious venue looks like a Parisian art pavilion and has quite a luxurious interior. The opulent drawing room, filled with enormous chandeliers and plush furnishings, houses one of the best Asian restaurants in the city. Order the menu of the day (which serves some of the most delicious rolls I have ever tasted) with a glass of champagne or Japanese tea. *Berns* is a must-see place, since it also has a boutique hotel and night club (August Strindberg wrote *The Red Room* there). Plus, it's the venue for *MB Stockholm Fashion Week*.



**Insider's tip:** When done with your lunch, try the famous dessert buffet and indulge.

Address: Berzelii Park  
① [www.berns.se](http://www.berns.se)

## A gastronomic paradises in the Old Town

**Stockholm's Old Town is a foodie hotspot. Find some of the most interesting new places in the city just a block or two off the tourist trail.**



### ◀ ▲ Tweed

This is definitely the most stylish cocktail bar in Stockholm. If you enjoy drinking classic cocktails in Chesterfield armchairs, then this is the only place in town where you can book a table just for that purpose. To quote the bar, "It is always twice as good to drink comfortably." *Tweed* is known for the best selection of Cuban cigars in Stockholm, loads of

classic cocktails and a garden that is always open for a smoke. The superb decadent burger will fix you immediately if you get hungry. The location is a great starting point before you head out for more nightlife at other locations.  
**Insider's tip:** Order a Manhattan or a Negroni, which are the bar's specialties, anytime.  
**Address:** Lilla Nygatan 5  
 ⓘ [www.tweedbar.se](http://www.tweedbar.se)

### The Burgundy

This is one of the few wine bars in the world that specializes exclusively in Burgundy wines, with prices that are very reasonable. The bar opens at 3 PM and the best time to visit is in the early evening, before it gets crowded. Ask the sommelier for a recommendation and be ready for an extraordinarily fine wine, along with "simple stuff" to eat like duck liver. The bar is located in a cosy library-like room with comfortable wine-coloured velvet chairs and dim lights. Impress yourself and your companions!  
**Insider's tip:** The selection from the cellar has a very low markup, with more than 2100 fine wines on the list and more than 20 by the glass. Take advantage of the situation!  
**Address:** Yxmedsgränd 12  
 ⓘ [www.theburgundy.se](http://www.theburgundy.se)



Djuret cutting board

### The Flying Elk

Known as the living room (or back pocket) of the two-Michelin-starred *Restaurant Frantzén*, *The Flying Elk* is an Old Town gastropub with the best traditions of Swedish cuisine and a hint of British pub culture. It has a laid-back atmosphere and cosy interior, with the main long table located right in front of the bar and wine bottles placed inside the table for you to choose from. *The Flying Elk* also offers a serious list of beer to go with your meal.

**Insider's tip:** The best fish and chips in Stockholm. Another great thing is the crowd – diverse, fun and never boring.

**Address:** Mälartorget  
 ⓘ [www.theflyingelk.se](http://www.theflyingelk.se)



### ◀ Djuret

Meat lovers, this place is for you! Sit down, relax and choose a small, medium or large meal, which is based on a different animal every month, such as a local cow, baby goat or even a horse. Pair this with the wine of the month, which is normally based on classic regions such as Bordeaux, Burgundy or Barolo. Keep in mind that this place has the biggest wine cellar around. The food is simple and tastes delicious. The interior reminds one of a rural hunter's house with regal carpets and paintings of forest scenes and meat cuts. Have a look around: what did the patrons sitting at the table next to you order? It definitely looks good!

**Insider's tip:** Be brave and try something that you normally would not. The chef clearly knows what he is doing!  
**Address:** Lilla Nygatan 5  
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## OUTLOOK / TRAVEL

### Trends and the city

**Modernity meets tranquillity. Trendy meeting places for Stockholm hipsters and urbanists**



#### ◀▲ B.A.R.

If it is a bit late for dinner but you are starving, then this is a great place to visit. Fresh lobster grilled directly from the aquarium (you can select which one) and paired with Austrian and German whites, decent champagne or house beer does the trick. This locale is always crowded, but it's easy to squeeze in and find a spot at the bar counter or share a table with locals. The crowd is young and loud and the music is very hip (singers like Nancy Sinatra and modern vibes change back-to-back). **Insider's tip:** Take a starter as well. The selection of fresh seafood snacks is one of the best in the city.

Address: Blasieholmsgatan 4A  
① www.restaurangbar.se



#### ▲ Farang

This place focuses on Southeast Asian food with Vietnamese and Thai traditions in a very glamorous way. *Farang* is located in a downtown building that used to house the Stockholm electricity company (*Elektricitetsverk*). The first impression when entering from the street is that you will end up in a small place with a few tables, but after you step in you find yourself in a cocktail bar followed by a huge restaurant with several halls, a modern interior, dim lights, an open kitchen and a big-city vibe.

If you come on a Friday night, then it almost feels like a scene from *Sex and the City* – full of people sipping cocktails and laughing freely. A DJ provides the best party mix and beautiful

Scandinavian girls run around serving the tables, which often host more than 10 people, since guests love to come here with their friends and have fun dining together. *Farang* is famous for its cocktails. The list of drinks is very long indeed, leaving you slightly confused about what to choose. If you decide to get a bottle of wine instead, then go for a white Hungarian. The match with the Asian food is incredible. Make sure to try some dessert as well.

**Insider's tip:** Come here for lunch if you want to have a meal at a lower price than the evening dinner. If you come for dinner, then take a six-course taster to make the most of your experience (the meal is quite filling).

Address: Tulegatan 7  
① www.farang.se

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OUTLOOK 7 TRAVEL



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▲ Pubologi

A trendy gastro pub that is very popular in Stockholm at the moment. *Pubologi* offers a casual setting with upscale food and a fine drink menu. Stockholm can be very pricey, but here you will get a set five-course meal for around 500 kronor. The food is super tasty and the

service is very friendly. The wine list is reasonable and you will also find interesting beer and sake offers to pair with the food. Fine dining brought to an affordable level can be surprisingly good and exciting! In 2014, *Pubologi* was awarded a Bib Gourmand by the *Michelin Guide* for the third year in a row. This is an award that is given

to restaurants that serve good food at moderate prices.  
**Insider's tip:** Come here to experience some new flavours and don't be afraid to try sake pairings instead of wine.  
 Address: Stora Nygatan 20  
 ① www.pubologi.se

Speceriet

The smaller sibling of the famous *Gastrologik* restaurant, this place has also gained widespread popularity, specialising in perfectly prepared local and seasonal food at very reasonable prices. The small room has only 20 seats available (making it easy to end up sitting at a long table with locals and making new friends) and there is no possibility to make a reservation, so the only way to get your seat and meal is to arrive at 5 PM sharp, when the doors open.  
**Insider's tip:** Order reindeer heart kebab to start with, and don't forget to order a divine homemade crumble cake with vanilla ice cream for dessert.  
 Address: Artillerigatan 14  
 ① www.speceriet.se

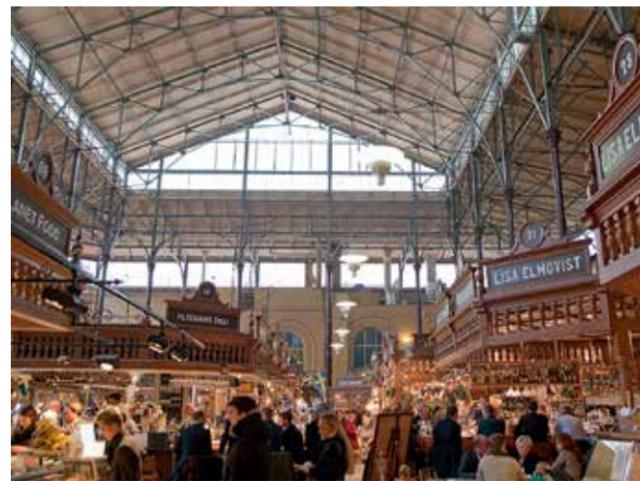
*The Swedish way*

**A cuisine based on Swedish ingredients and natural taste**

► Östermalmshallen markethall and Lisa Elmqvist

This historic market hall is located in a building that dates back to 1888 and is home to cafés, restaurants, artisanal bakeries, meat and seafood counters, cheese stands, fruit and vegetable shops, and many other tasty things. The best place to experience Swedish seafood is the *Lisa Elmqvist* restaurant, which was

opened in the early 1920s by a fisherman's daughter. Her cooking skills were of such a high standard that customers kept coming back, and even today, almost 100 years later, the fourth generation of the Elmqvist family continues to deliver only the best.  
**Insider's tip:** Order *Rimmad Lax* traditional smoked salmon with creamed potatoes or *Toast Skagen* with *Löjrom*.  
 Address: Östermalmstorg  
 ① www.ostermalmshallen.se



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Matsalen restaurant

▲ ▼ Matsalen and Matbaren

"With a Swedish identity on a regional platform, I create my cuisine, which is open for local as well as global ingredients and influences. A cuisine based on natural produce and natural taste – natural cuisine," says chef Mathias Dahlgren, who is in charge of both places and is the only Swedish chef to win the *Bocuse d'Or* (the *Concours mondial de la cuisine*, *World Cooking Contest*). Visiting his restaurants is an adventure and pure enjoyment in

terms of the gastronomic experience. *Matbaren* is a must-see for design lovers, too.

**Insider's tip:** *Matsalen* is a two-star *Michelin* upscale restaurant, while *Matbaren* has one *Michelin* star in a more relaxed atmosphere. Book in advance for the experience of the finest gastronomy delivered by Sweden's most talented chef.

Address: Södra Blasieholmshamnen 8  
 ① [www.mathiasdahlgren.com](http://www.mathiasdahlgren.com)

Prinsen

This restaurant has history embedded in its walls. It has been a favourite place for celebrities, artists, actors and the Who's Who of the Swedish intelligentsia since 1897.

Located only a two-minute walk from Stureplan and close to all of the major shopping spots, it is a perfect lunch place before having a look at the latest from *Prada* or *Chanel*. *Prinsen* is a place to experience the elegance of the old times and comfort food at the highest level. The cuisine is traditional Swedish (try the meatballs) with some French inspiration, and the wine list has lots of reasonably priced Napa Valley bottles.

**Insider's tip:** Order *Wallenbergare* with mashed potatoes and homemade lingonberry jam.

Address: Mäster Samuelsgatan 4  
 ① [www.restaurangprinsen.eu](http://www.restaurangprinsen.eu)



Swedish coolness

▼ Eriks Vinbar and Gondolen

*Eriks Vinbar* is at ground level in the same building as the fancy restaurant *Eriks Gondolen* (from which you have a view over all of Stockholm) and its interior reminds one of a relaxed living room. If you love wine and casual conversations, then go to *Eriks Vinbar*, where you can get the finest wines from Burgundy, Tuscany, Bordeaux and elsewhere by the glass and at a very fair price. The champagne is also offered by the glass, but you never know the offer of the day before you come to the bar. It can be a good vintage of *Dom Perignon*, a stylish glass of *Jacques-Selosse*, a classic *Bollinger RD* or a pure pleasure *Diebolt Valois Fleur de Passion*; be ready for a surprise!



Gondolen restaurant

When you go upstairs to *Gondolens*, there is a high risk that you will become emotional, since the view is breathtaking. Not to worry, the bartenders know what they are doing and you will be brought back to balance in no time, shaken or stirred.

**Insider's tip:** Come in the afternoon, as the bar is closed during the first part of the day. Always ask for the day's special so as not to miss out on some wonderful wines. Note that they have two serving sizes, the small one being 5 cl, so that you can taste a lot of different wines if you want.

Address: Stadsgården 6  
 ① [www.eriks.se](http://www.eriks.se)



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## OUTLOOK / TRAVEL



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### Summer wind

**Elegant and relaxed summer oases. Life can be perfect!**

#### Terrace at the Grand Hotel

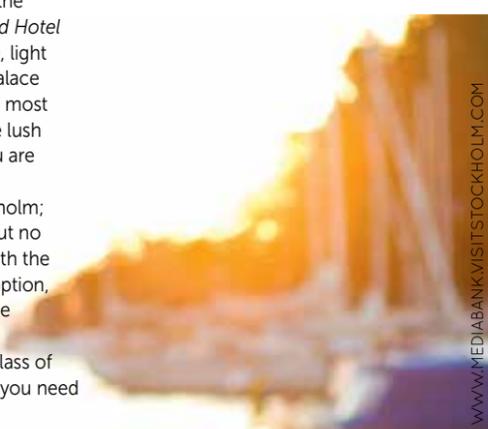
The most fancy outside terrace in the city, the Mediterranean-inspired terrace at the *Grand Hotel* is ideal for enjoying the sun, a glass of wine, light food and a spectacular view of the Royal Palace and waterfront. This place also features the most exclusive chairs from *Svenskt Tenn*, and the lush citrus and olive trees let you forget that you are actually in a Nordic city.

The weather is always changing in Stockholm; here is the sun, and here comes the rain! But no worries, sitting outside and having lunch with the most influential crowd in the city is a safe option, as the bartender has a remote control of the convertible roof in his hands at all times.

**Insider's tip:** Stop by on a sunny day for a glass of house rosé and a light snack. What else do you need when you have such a fine view?

Address: Södra Blasieholmshamnen 8  
① [www.grandhotel.se](http://www.grandhotel.se)

There are many places in the centre of Stockholm to escape from the bustle of the city. Walking along the lakeside of Norr Mälärstrand, for example, you'll find the idyllic Mälarpaviljongen



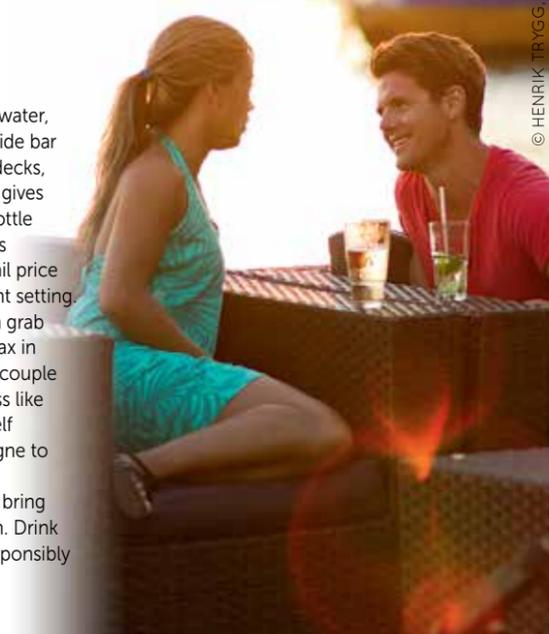
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#### Loopen

If you are looking for a drink by the water, then head to this chilled-out waterside bar and restaurant. The line of floating decks, cosy wooden tables and palm trees gives an instant feeling of the Riviera. A bottle of *Bollinger* house champagne costs 500 kronor, which is almost the retail price for enjoyment in a perfect waterfront setting. If you are not into champagne, then grab a beer and shrimp sandwich and relax in the sun. Be ready for the fact that a couple of hours in the nice weather will pass like 20 minutes, and you will find yourself ordering the next bottle of champagne to stay and watch the sunset.

**Insider's tip:** If you visit by day, then bring along some protection from the sun. Drink as much champagne as you can responsibly handle, for it's a bargain!

Address: Hornstulls strand 6  
① [www.loopen.se](http://www.loopen.se)



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### Portofino – the subtle frame for your perfect experience

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.



### Portofino – изысканное место яркого гастрономического приключения!

Portofino – красочный, изысканный ресторан – пример настоящего гостеприимства. Команда Portofino – мастера поварского искусства и обслуживания, знающие, насколько значимо доверие гостей. Это тот ресторан, в который возвращаются и на следующий день, и через продолжительное время. Portofino предлагает классическую итальянскую кухню, которая продуманно приспособлена к местным гастрономическим традициям, ее способны оценить настоящие гурманы. Истинное удовольствие кроется в деталях особой атмосферы, которая дарит возможность по-настоящему насладиться моментом.

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## Driven: the Peugeot RCZ R

The Peugeot RCZ R, which debuted a few months ago at the Geneva Motor Show, is the company's most powerful production car ever, conceived to go up against not just fast coupes, but also the best hot hatches.



**T**he turbocharged 1.6-litre petrol that already appears in the RCZ range has received a raft of revisions to increase power to 270 hp. The R also has stiffer, lowered suspension, upgraded brakes and a limited-slip differential.

On the outside, you'll find a matt black roof, bespoke 19-inch alloys, dual chrome exhaust tailpipes and a large boot spoiler.

The upgrades don't come cheap, though. Starting from 39,430 euros, the RCZ R costs a whopping 8,000 euros more than a top-spec 200-hp model.

### What's it like to drive?

With a power hike of almost 40% over the regular RCZ, it's no surprise to discover that the R has the pace to match the fastest hot hatches. Overtaking is a moment's work, and at legal speeds you'll still have plenty of power in reserve. The gearbox has longer gearing than other RCZs, too, which means that 100 km/h is possible in second gear.

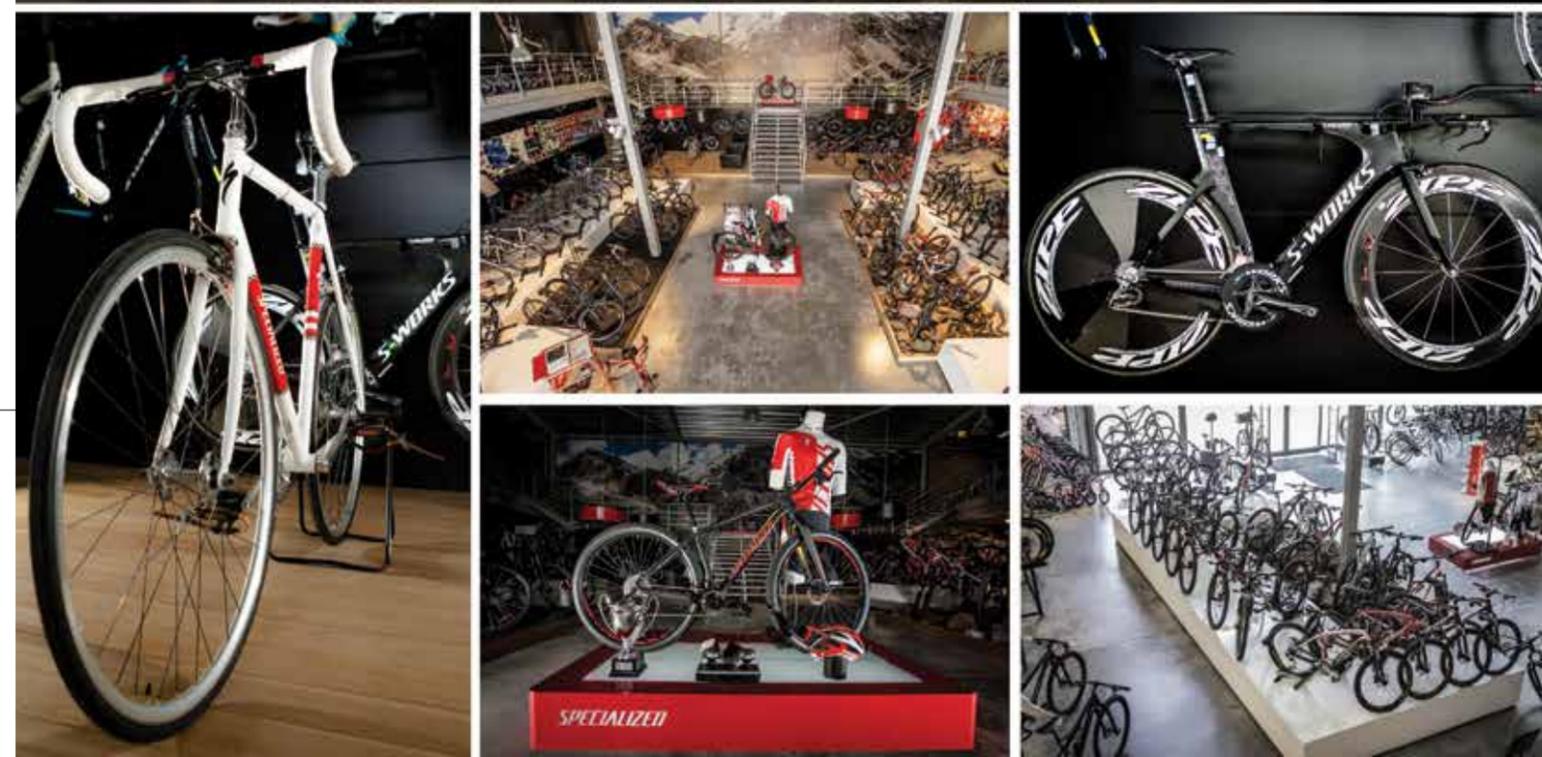
Unfortunately, the car is not as fun as it should be. The gearshift is heavy and notchy, which makes changing gears more of a chore than it need be. The engine also tends to lose revs quite slowly, so you have the choice of either changing gear quickly or shifting



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## CARS

smoothly – you can't do both at the same time.

One of the most significant changes is the addition of a limited-slip differential, which distributes the 330 Nm of torque between the front wheels, and gives the *RCZ R* strong traction and stability. Accelerate hard out of a corner on a smooth road and you'll be amazed at how resolutely the *Peugeot* sticks to your chosen line.

Things aren't quite so impressive on uneven surfaces, though, where the front wheels seem determined to follow every

car, but then so it should for the extra that it costs.

There's plenty of adjustment in the steering wheel and in the supportive seats, and the equipment list is comprehensive; Bluetooth, sat-nav, climate control, rear parking sensors, automatic wipers and xenon headlights are all standard. In fact, just about the only options that you can add are an upgraded sound system and front parking sensors.

All-round visibility isn't great, but is little worse than in other coupes in this class.



rut and camber in the road, tugging the steering wheel left and then right as you try to feed in the power.

The driving experience is slightly tainted by the vague-feeling controls; the steering is rather numb, the accelerator pedal is a very long-travel affair, while the brakes, although effective, need more initial bite.

The ride is firm, but no more so than in the *Renaultsport Mégane Cup*. The *R* feels stiff, but not uncomfortable, and actually feels more supple than the standard *RCZ*, which crashes over bumps and ruts.

In a car like this, you probably don't want a quiet engine, and that's a good thing, because the *RCZ R* revs with a fantastic noise up to the limiter.

### What's it like inside?

The red stitching, leather-and-Alcantara sports seats and metal gear lever make the *R* feel even more special than the standard

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There are no changes to cabin space or function, so you get the same tiny rear seats that are only suitable for kids or emergencies. Still, there is a decent-sized boot, and the rear seats fold flat to make the load bay even bigger.

### Should I buy one?

The *Peugeot RCZ R* has plenty going for it, but it's just a little too pricey to recommend over more rounded rivals.

The *Renaultsport Mégane* is as fast and as good to drive. The *Audi TT* has a classier cabin and will probably hold onto its value better. Then, of course, there's the *BMW M235i*, which is quicker than the *RCZ R* and more fun to drive. **BO**



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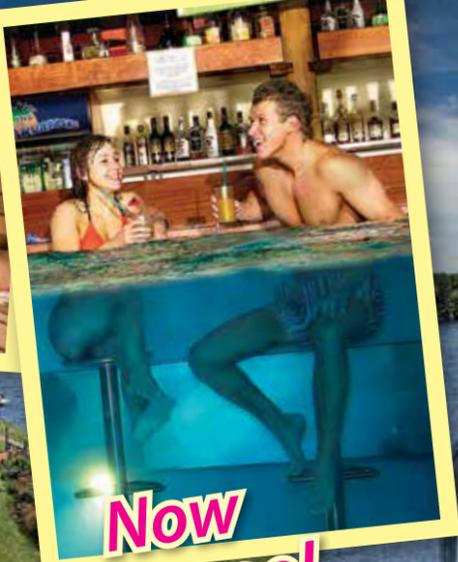
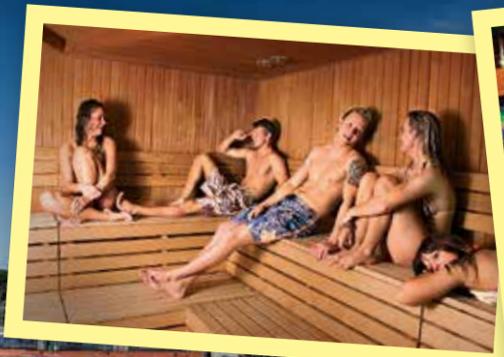
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# Eternal summer of Jūrmala

Usually people think that eternal summer can only be in hot countries. But you can enjoy many joys of recreation also where sun shines just 150 days a year and winter frosts sometimes reach 30 degrees below zero. Rain, and snow, and wind — all that is outside, but inside of Livu Aquapark, Jurmala, everything reminds you of delights of tropical health resorts even in winter.

**Now new pool and unique attraction!**



Usually people think that eternal summer can only be in hot countries. But you can enjoy many joys of recreation also where sun shines just 150 days a year and winter frosts sometimes reach 30 degrees below zero. Rain, and snow, and wind — all that is outside, but inside of Livu Aquapark, Jurmala, everything reminds you of delights of tropical health resorts even in winter.

The first thing everybody sees when approaching Jurmala from the side of Riga, is the odd structure on the bank of River Lielupe. Airplanes flying up to Riga International Airport also reveal view of sophisticated web of entwined motley pipes, which create remarkable architectonic form. To some it reminds road interchanges, to others — bundle of wires magnified a thousand times. But in fact it is favourite modern place of recreation for many people — Livu Aquapark.

It's the biggest in the Northern Europe and is open the whole year round. There are 40 different rides and amusements on the three floors of Livu Aquapark, in summer they are supplemented by another dozen and an outdoor beach. Modern sophisticated equipment for those was ordered in Canada, Germany and Sweden.

To ensure safety and guarantee pleasure of amazing recreation to visitors, young people are on duty in aquapark, who are always ready to explain policy of the place or ensure everyone follow it... and no keys on ribbon — buying a ticket, each visitor gets a bracelet with chip — it is locker key, as well as data pool for paying for food, drinks, massage and multiple other services when you leave aquapark. The rest is included in ticket price.

Water recreation always attracts people, especially if water is warm and clean.

Livu Aquapark, occupying area of almost a hectare, combines three functional zones for people of different age and temperament.

Active amusements, e. g., slides and diving, are located on upper floors.

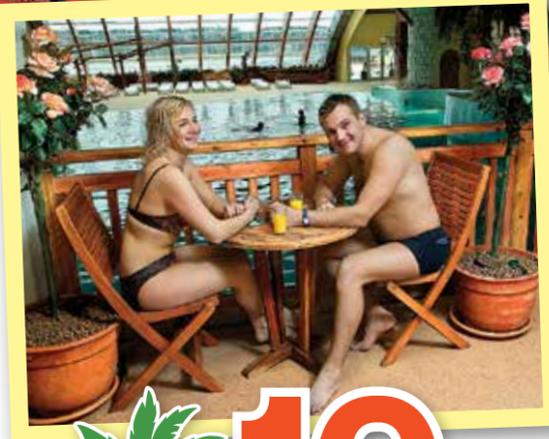
This is where Tornado ride, third biggest in the world and the only European amusement of such type, is located.

Few aquaparks in rich countries can offer its visitors twenty amusements of varied complexity for riding down in boats or without them, for extreme fans and kids alike.

Heart of Livu Aquapark is Paradise Beach at wave pool. From one side of it lies Captain Kid Land, from another — Spa Resort, place for relaxation admirers.

Have no doubt — Livu Aquapark is the place where you will quickly be in good mood. Because by organizing trip to this Kingdom of Eternal Summer for yourself, your kids or your friends, you actually organize great holiday for your family.

This can give you optimism, confidence and goodwill — things you lack sometimes for everything to be the way it ought to be. Don't miss the opportunity to visit Livu Aquapark, where summer doesn't end even in winter, when you come to Latvia.



**LIVU AKVAPARKS 10 years!**



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## ACCENTS OF DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

**Captain Kid Land**  
It's a true paradise for kids. The central object is impressive pirate ship with water cannons and slides. Walk over Lemon Bridge, Banana Bridge and pen-

dant Rope Bridge. Through the cave around Captain Kid Land meanders Orinoco River. In summer it is twice as long and flows outside. Every two minutes Land and river are washed away by huge five meter high waterfall.

**Paradise Beach**  
Try to forget about European landscapes you crossed while driving here, and imagine that you relax in luxury hotel-park somewhere on distant ocean is-

land. Almost the whole territory of the Paradise Beach is occupied by the wave pool. Artificial wave generation system is even capable of creating "storms" with water crests of up to 1.5 m height. Pool floor is sloping.

Lighthouse towers above the pool. Walk up, and impressive view of almost the whole territory aquapark will open.



**SPA**  
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Although this device is technically a wireless Bluetooth aptX speaker and not a full-fledged radio, we couldn't resist including this gorgeous little system – one of those home audio products that keep you guessing whether it's high-end tech gear or high-minded modernist furniture. Luckily, it's both, standing out as much for its old-school materials (rosewood/bamboo) and bulging, trapezoidal design as for its well-balanced sound output. Features USB mini and USB micro charging connectors. Also available as the V5AP, which uses AirPlay.

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Квартиры класса люкс в элитном жилом доме "IMPERIAL RESIDENCE", который представляет собой архитектурный памятник культурным традициям эклектики XIX века, легендарного архитектора К.И. Фелско. Развитая инфраструктура, удобный доступ как к главным дорогам города, так и к общественным услугам, является дополнительной добавленной стоимостью при выборе квартиры в этом здании. В 2013 году проведена полная реконструкция здания, сохранив все декоративные элементы (колонны, молдинги, карнизы). Дом реконструирован в клубном стиле - на каждом этаже находится по одной квартире. Квартиры предлагаются с полной отделкой. Для отделки квартиры использовались отделочные материалы самого высокого класса.

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Дом семейных традиций "Кристиан" занимается восстановлением истории рода, комплексным изучением и развитием семейных традиций. Компания убеждена в том, что изучение истории своей семьи и сохранение в поколениях памяти о предках – их внешности, привычках, поступках – помогает формированию личности человека, его характера и поступков, его отношения к жизни.

Знания об истории своей семьи – это бесценный дар, которым, к сожалению, обладают не все. Уходят старшие поколения, и, кажется, что уже никогда не узнать, чему улыбался родной человек на выцветшей фотографии... Дом семейных традиций "Кристиан" готов прийти Вам на помощь, обеспечив поддержку лучших профессионалов в области генеалогии и исторического

поиска, чтобы и Вы смогли узнать историю своего рода.

Алла Неверова, управляющая фитнес-клубом World Class Триумф (Москва), начала задумываться о генеалогическом исследовании своей семьи, когда стали уходить сначала бабушки-дедушки, потом родители, и воспользовалась услугами команды Дома семейных традиций "Кристиан". "Выяснилось, что брат моего родного дедушки, которого всегда считали пропавшим без вести, погиб 3 января 1943 года, – говорит Алла. – Для семьи это было очень важно, так как без вести пропавший в то время считался чуть ли не предателем. Жаль, дедушки не узнали об этом". Зато об этом будут знать следующие поколения семьи – альбом с фотографиями и результатами проведенной генеалогической экспертизы станет главным подарком к 30-летию сына.



Алла Неверова



Алла с бабушкой и дедушкой



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**Veikali Rīgā:**

Matīsa 20, t/p „Alfa”, t/c „Spice”,  
t/c „Domina”, t/c „Mols”;

**Daugavpilī:** Rīgas 38;

Liepājā: F. Brīvzemnieka 33,  
Ventspilī: t/c „Tobago”.

**OUTLOOK / GADGETS**

**Cardboard Radio and iPod Speaker  
Sound advice for tree-huggers**

You couldn't get more eco-friendly listening if you tried. This handy portable FM radio is made out of folded recycled cardboard. While its nine watts of output won't exactly power Glastonbury, that's more than enough for a BBQ-and-beer party with a few friends. Perhaps best of all, its appearance can be customised to your heart's content: just colour on the surface with marker or pen as you heart desires. Powered by four AAA batteries or a DC adapter (neither included).

EUR 31 | www.nigelsecstore.com



**Geneva Sound System XS DAB+**

**Your own personal Gsus**

Much more than a travelling bedside alarm clock – with an old-style LED display at that – this baby streams sound over Bluetooth and offers its own FM and DAB+ internal sound sources. The mids and highs will make your bedside table sound better than ever, with sub-80Hz bass rounding out the output. Housed in a sturdy, stylish, flip-open leatherette clamshell case. Comes in red, white or black.

EUR 199 | www.genevalab.com



**Tivoli Model Three BT**

**Elegant dialling**

This now-classic, ever-stylish radio has just been updated with Bluetooth, making it a choice for audiophiles who've a hankering for both the modern and the retro. Built into a natural wood cabinet, the Three brings back those sensitive analogue tuning dials that we all miss, and Tivoli's outstanding sound needs no introduction. Features alarm and sleep functions; also available with an extra dual alarm-speaker (EUR 139) for true stereo sound.

EUR 289 | www.tivoliaudio.com



**Geneva WorldRadio DAB+  
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Remember that massive, hulking world-band radio receiver that loomed on your grandfather's workbench? Well, it's back, and it has since progressed in leaps and bounds. The WorldRadio's brushed metal finish has a digital colour display with touch controls, while tuning in digital FM and DAB+ radio, as well as Bluetooth streaming. The excellent sound output is really something to reckon with, and rechargeable batteries provide more than five hours of power on a full charge. Comes in black, red and silver metallic colours, with a 3.5-mm line input.

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## Spice – a shopping paradise between Heaven and Earth



Iveta Lāce, director of Spice shopping mall,  
Dress by Sonita Pāvuliņa

**Great food, quality fashion and enjoyment for all the senses are the secrets behind the success of the Spice shopping complex in Riga, one of the largest in Latvia. Spice is a mere five-minute drive from the Riga airport and only 10 minutes from the city centre.**

Regardless of whether you are on your way to or from Riga airport, or if your flight leaves in a few hours and you have some time to spare, or if you are visiting Latvia on vacation, or if you are travelling on business, it is worth paying a visit to the Spice shopping complex for some enjoyable shopping. Spice is the place where you will find the widest array of international and local clothing brands in Latvia at dozens of stores to suit all tastes – from designer fashion to casual clothing, for both adults and children.

Earlier this year, one of the world's most popular clothing brands, H&M, opened a store in the Spice shopping complex. Also this spring, the elegant British Debenhams brand opened its first and only retail store in Latvia. Other quality fashion brands that have opened new stores at Spice include Weekend MaxMara, Pierre Cardin, Liu Jo and Armani Jeans as well as the Reserved concept store.

However, there is another feature that distinguishes Spice from other shopping centres in Latvia and in Europe. That is the presence of fashionable clothing by Latvian designers. As Iveta Lāce, the director of the

Spice shopping complex has noted, "clothes by Latvian designers have a special feel to them. They stand out and attract people who want something unique."

Fine examples of Latvian fashion can be found at the Taste Latvia and Nóló concept stores. Nóló is a vivid and quaint Latvian brand with a high level of experience and rich traditions in the production of women's clothing. The brand caters to modern young women looking for a sophisticated style, excellent quality and value for money.

Taste Latvia, for its part, retails the latest clothing items and accessories for adults and children by such established Latvian designers as Natālija Jansone, Aleksandrs Pavlovs, Keita, Salt, Recycled.lv, Narciss, One Wolf, Paiya, QooQoo, Baiba Ripa and Sonita Pāvuliņa. It also sells home design and style accessories by Latvian brands like Munio Candela, An&Angel, Felt Style and Purpurs.

Also at Spice, the Mini Mode children's clothing store offers stylish clothing made in Latvia for newborns, toddlers and kids up to the age of 10. The clothes are made of natural fabrics like cotton, wool and linen.

Latvia is famous for its green and environmentally friendly lifestyle, as reflected in the natural cosmetics by the Latvian brand Mādara, which are available in the store of the same name. Mādara cosmetics contain organically certified natural extracts from plants growing in the Baltic region and possessing the unique intensity of various active substances.

Make sure to also stop by Stenders, known as the Gardener of Feelings. Stenders is a Latvian brand inspired by the nature of northern Europe; it is an expert in the manufacture of soaps, shampoos and cosmetic products for bath and body care.

The chocolates and sweets by Latvia's legendary Laima confectioner will delight your taste buds, as will the hand-made chocolates by Emils Gustavs Chocolate.

Aside from the aforementioned Latvian brands, Spice is also home to a whole range of leading fashion brand stores, including Massimo Dutti, Tommy Hilfiger, United Colors of Benetton, PENNYBLACK, ALDO, Next, Zara, iBlues, MAX&Co, Marella, Ivo Nikkolo, Timberland, Nike, Desigual, Marc Cain, Hogg, Ecco, Thomass Sabo, Gerry Weber and women'ssecret.

A good place for a lunch or dinner break at Spice is the popular Lido restaurant/cafe, which features Latvian and other dishes. Spice is home to



Max Mara Weekend

a wide choice of other cafés and restaurants as well, including the Oriental-style Gan Bei or Kabuki and raw food at Raw Garden. Modern European food can be enjoyed at the Kuk Buk restaurant in the Jānis Roze bookstore. And for fast-food addicts, Spice also hosts a McDonald's restaurant.

On weekends, a Latvian farmers' market abounds with freshly picked strawberries, new potatoes and other rural delicacies brought to the capital city by farmers from all over the country.

Right across the parking lot from Spice is Spice Home, the largest shopping centre in the Baltics to specialise in items for the home, including household goods, interior accessories, lighting and electronics. You will find Latvian-made furniture at the Nakts Mēbeles and Čiekurs stores as well as lighting fixtures and furniture created by Baltic designers at 4 Room.

If you go shopping at Spice together with your children, then they will be in for a treat at Lido Playland (Lido Rotalzeme), the largest children's playground in the Baltics. Spice also hosts a whole range of stores specialising in children's clothing, toys and gifts.

Don't miss the opportunity to shop at Spice! **BO**



Debenhams



Taste Latvia/Henn, Zara, Next, Tiger, Accessorize, Optica Italiana/RayBan



Pierre Cardin



KukBuk

**Opening hours**  
Spice: daily 10:00-22:00  
Spice Home: daily 10:00-21:00  
Sunday 10:00-20:00

**RIMI Hypermarket:**  
daily 9:00-23:00  
Farmers' market: Friday and Sunday 12:00-19:00  
Saturday 10:00-19:00  
[www.spice.lv](http://www.spice.lv) | [www.spicehome.lv](http://www.spicehome.lv)

# QUEEN – a new office chair

Modern.  
High-quality.  
Ergonomic.

## KATE

Nicgales iela 18a  
Rīga, Latvia  
www.kate.lv



The KATE furniture store in Riga is proud to present its new QUEEN office chair, which the store's designers have created in cooperation with the leading chair manufacturers *Interstuhl* and *KGS*. The end product is outstanding from both an aesthetic and functional point of view and is available at an affordable price. The chair's design features clean lines, precision and a "polished diamond" effect, forsaking outdated or ambiguous forms. Great importance has been placed on the chair's visual appeal and on generating the impression that the chair's seat and backrest are joined as a single unit, thanks to the fact that the parts linking these two sections cannot be seen.

The chair's perfect ergonomics ensure optimal sitting comfort, regardless of the user's height and build. In order to arrive at the best ergonomic solution, a test was conducted, with several chairs of similar construction and technical parameters presented for evaluation. The goal was to establish people's first impressions of each chair, as often a buyer's choice is based on his or her initial feelings. If a person feels good right away, then the chair's ergonomics are likely to ensure long-term comfort. The QUEEN chair was evaluated most highly in these tests, based on its characteristic features. Among the features:

**The chair is offered only with a synchronised mechanism.** Depending on the chair model, one can select different angles and positions of the backrest's incline. Both of the QUEEN chair base models have been designed for an eight-hour work day at the desk. They are outstandingly functional and ergonomic.

**The slant of the seat's front edge has been designed to ensure that the blood vessels of the thighs are not constricted.** When the user is seated, the pressure of

### BOTH OF THE QUEEN CHAIR BASE MODELS HAVE BEEN DESIGNED FOR AN EIGHT-HOUR WORK DAY AT THE DESK

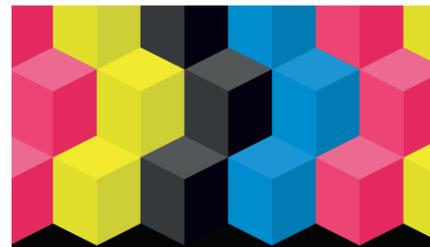
the body weight on the thighs is evenly distributed, ensuring free blood circulation to the legs. A chair with this type of seat is appropriate for long working hours and, with a proper seating posture, has a positive effect on the user's health in the long term. The QUEEN 008 model offers the additional option of adjusting the seat, ensuring both maximum comfort and an ergonomically correct sitting position, regardless of the user's physical anatomy.

**The height of the chair's backrest can be adjusted,** ensuring that the chair can be adapted for people of different sizes.

**The height of the chair's armrests can be regulated.** The armrests can also be moved forward and backward and turned inward or outward, permitting users to set their own optimal armrest positions. Furthermore, the armrest coverings are made of a soft, elastic and pleasant-feeling material. The chair can be complemented with a headrest for even greater comfort and a slicker appearance. Both the height and angle of the headrest can be adjusted.

**The chair's wheels are covered with a soft layer of rubber and equipped with a security braking system** to prevent the chair from accidentally rolling away, which can occur on slightly slanted floors. The brakes turn on automatically when the chair is not in use, ensuring that it does not roll away. The brake mechanism is de-activated as soon as someone sits in the chair, permitting the wheels to be used in a normal manner.

QUEEN chairs can also be upholstered with a wide variety of materials, as specified by the client. Buyers can choose between the economical model (QUEEN 003) and the comfort model (QUEEN 008). The base models have a wide range of setup opportunities, and the addition of client-requested extra features ensures that each buyer leaves the store with a superbly designed chair that has been tailored to suit his or her individual needs. What's more, the chair will look smart, right in tune with current design trends. **BO**



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www.magnolica-shop.com

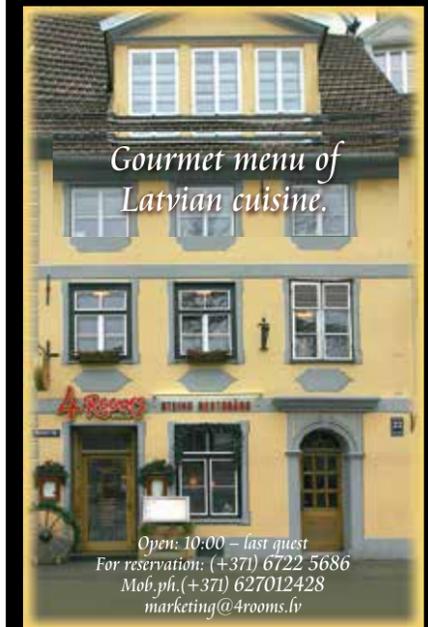
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Queens is a British pub and restaurant with a gorgeous Victorian atmosphere and delicious food. More than 18 draught beers to choose from, including local and imported brands, a wide range of steaks, burgers and other meat dishes.

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*We hope that you will be able to enjoy a marvellous summer holiday, be it at the beach by the sea, on an exciting trip or simply at home in your garden. However, if you have a couple of days to spare, then consider a relaxing procedure at Taka Spa, one of the most acclaimed spas in Riga.*

*Taka Spa has earned many international acknowledgements and was included in the Taschen and New York Times travel guide 36 Hours: 125 Weekends in Europe. Therefore, even if you have only 36 hours to spend in Riga, a visit to Taka Spa is well worth the trip and will not leave you disappointed.*

1

## Celebration of the power of human touch



4



3



5



2



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### 1/ We are for each other

This new *Taka Spa* ritual is specifically meant for two people – for older and younger couples (including expectant mothers and fathers), or for mothers and daughters, or for two close friends, or any combination of people who wish to relax and enjoy a wonderful massage together. *Taka Spa* has accorded a special room for enjoying the peace, quiet and intimacy of this distinctive ritual. A couple massage can be a celebration and exploration of the power of human touch. When you share the experience as a mother and daughter, as sisters or as close friends, you express your personal appreciation for the other person and how grateful you are to have them in your life.

### 2/ Gift cards

*Taka Spa* gift cards make a perfect gift for newlyweds, who can use them to enjoy the new *Taka Spa* ritual *We are for each other*. Couples will undergo a cleansing experience in the *Taka Spa* pool and saunas with a lime and ginger sea salt scrub along with an *Elemis* foot massage, *Elemis Taster* facial, and *Elemis* aromatic back massage. All this is rounded off with a cup of tea, healthy snacks, warm conversation and a glass of wine (3 hours, with a special discount for *Baltic Outlook* readers – EUR 197 (instead of EUR 235) in July and August).

### 3/ New manicure and pedicure procedures

In response to the requests of its clients, starting from July, *Taka Spa* is also offering a manicure, a classical and a medical pedicure maintaining healthy-looking hands and feet and for addressing various types of skin and nail problems. Throughout the month of July, *Taka Spa* is marking the advent of this new addition by offering a free glass of sparkling wine to go with your pedicure!

### 4/ Elemis frangipani monoi salt scrub

This luxurious salt scrub melts on contact with the skin to leave it beautifully soft and nourished. Mineral-rich salts and hibiscus cleanse and exfoliate, while an infusion of exotic Tahitian monoi oil and frangipani flowers seals in moisture. One of this scrub's best properties is that it doesn't rub out the summer tan that you have been working so hard to build up.

### 5/ Elemis skin-nourishing body lotion

Summer is the time for this body lotion of light consistency to nourish your skin. Concentrated milk protein, soothing oat kernel and nourishing camellia, macadamia and jojoba oils replenish dry skin while softening and balancing its pH. Perfect after a shower or bath. **BO**



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## Freedom of movement with Sixt

Europe's leading car-rental and leasing company Sixt is the official Riga 2014 car-rental partner. It is providing cars for the organisers of one of this year's most noteworthy cultural events and is ensuring the transfer of VIPs to the most prominent Riga 2014 performances.

"Sixt's main task is to give everyone the opportunity to be at the epicentre of the main European cultural events under Riga 2014. We are making sure that together with Sixt, anyone can comfortably enjoy the vast array of concerts and other performances, both in the Riga city centre and outside of it," says Arnis Jaudzems, the director of Sixt in the Baltic countries.

However, if you also wish to make a trip out to the countryside and take a break from the events in Riga, then you will find the right car for your needs at any of 13 Sixt car rental branches in Latvia. All kinds of models are available, from small and economical city cars to large 4x4 SUVs as well as business and luxury class models. To make sure that its clients receive the best possible service, Sixt regularly supplements its fleet of cars. As a result, the average age of the company's rental cars does not surpass six months. Sixt is also an environmentally conscious enterprise that supports a "green" lifestyle. Hence, the

average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of the company's new cars does not exceed 120 g/km.

One of Sixt's greatest advantages is its convenient network of car rental branches. Sixt cars can be obtained at the largest airports in the Baltic countries – Riga, Vilnius, Tallinn, Tartu, Kaunas and Palanga as well as at various city branches, including Jūrmala, Ventspils, Liepāja and Daugavpils.

"Our network is large because there are so many beautiful and interesting places to see in Latvia. For example, the Mark Rothko Arts Centre in Daugavpils is a world-class museum, where one can see several works by this world-famous painter in his native city. Those who want to experience something more unusual can visit the military port in Liepāja, which is home to a unique fortress and fortification network. Fans of classical destinations will appreciate the ornate Baroque architecture of Rundāle Palace near Bauska," says Jaudzems.

Those who wish to take the opportunity to visit all three Baltic countries in one trip can make use of a special option – one-way rental, under which they can pick up their car in one city and drop it off in another. For more information about this and other Sixt services, visit [www.sixt.lv](http://www.sixt.lv).



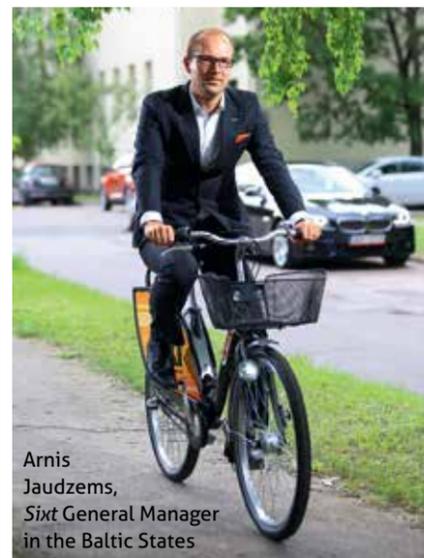
PHOTOS FROM PUBLICITY MATERIALS AND BY LAURIS VIKSNE, F64



## Bicycle rental

Sixt is the only bicycle sharing company in Riga and Jūrmala to operate a bicycle-sharing system at more than 20 rental points.

"If you want to take a bicycle ride from Riga to Jūrmala, for example, and if you get tired or if the weather turns bad, then you can conveniently leave your bike in Jūrmala and take the train or taxi back to Riga. Riding by bicycle is also one of the best ways to get to know Riga better. Aside from the regular routes in Old Riga, the Quiet Centre and the Central Market, I also recommend seeing the graffiti works that were made during the international street art festival *Blank Canvas*. One of them is named *Sun, Thunder, Daugava* – the largest work of street art in the Baltic countries. It can be seen at Tallinas iela 46," says Jaudzems.



Arnis Jaudzems, Sixt General Manager in the Baltic States

Renting a bicycle at Sixt is a good way to practice "green" thinking and see the city in an environmentally friendly manner. On top of that, it is not expensive, costing only EUR 0.90 per half-hour, or EUR 9 per day. For added convenience, Sixt has introduced a convenient bicycle rental registration system with the *Nextbike* mobile application. One can register by phone (+371) 67676780 or through the Internet at [www.sixt.lv/velo](http://www.sixt.lv/velo).

Payment can be made by credit card. **BO**



*Primus inter pares....*

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*Majorenhoff*  
 RESTORĀNS



# Majorenhoff

More meat, more treats

PHOTOS FROM PUBLICITY MATERIALS  
 AND BY ANDREJS TERENTJEVS, F64



Jūrmala thrives when the summer season fully kicks in. The sandy beach, the full cultural calendar and the lively social scene on the streets of the modest-sized town allows it to steal the limelight and become the true summer holiday capital of Latvia.

Speaking of streets, one of them buzzes more actively than most. Jomas iela is the oldest and most central street in Jūrmala. During the summer, it attracts almost as many people as the beaches, and that's saying something. While many cafés, bars and restaurants on Jomas iela have only recently woken up from their long winter slumber, at *Majorenhoff*, which

sits close to the beginning of the famous street, things have not stood still all year round.

Of course, the restaurant has indeed expanded its activities for the season by opening up a lovely terrace. Part of the terrace is in front of the building with a view of the pedestrian-only street, while the other part lies nestled in the yard between buildings, offering an intimate atmosphere for those warm summer nights (they also hand out duvets when the weather gets cooler). Rather than an awakening, the summer season at *Majorenhoff* is a fun change, with upgrades to the seasonal menu and more.

The menu is in the skilful hands of talented and

high-aiming head chef Konstantin Grinov, who nevertheless mentions joint team efforts in every sentence that he utters. While he obviously does play first fiddle, what happens here is a symphony performed by an orchestra rather than a one-man-show. The team brainstorms, tastes new dishes together and decides upon the best and most fitting flavours. Grinov likes a buzz and a jolly atmosphere, and perhaps that's why *Majorenhoff* does not go quiet during the quitter off-season.

The chef is not secretive about his creative method either. He respects classic flavours and clients' favourites, but he also trusts his own taste buds and talks to his friends. Grinov has a lot of them in this line of work, and he loves exchanging ideas with other chefs when gastronomy-travelling abroad, bringing new vibes back home. He has also trained and worked in Italy for four years and speaks fluent Italian, of course, but is adamant about practicing his profession in his home country.

"There are not so many really good chefs, you know," Grinov sighs. "One can't just leave! Someone has to work and do a *real* good job!" and he's back to smiling straight away.

The positively charged chef likes to experiment, starting out with one single product. Then he adds complements to it, like he recently did with a crocodile meat dish. Oh, it's not on the menu just yet, but it was a lucky strike for those who were there on the day that he tried it out and served it as the special of the day!

As for Grinov's new summer hits, one meaty treat consists of premium class steaks from Ireland – *Côte de bœuf* and *Tomahawk* – both served with *Jack Daniels* and grill sauce. This is a grand carnivore experience. With a 35-centimetre piece of bone sticking out of it, the *Tomahawk* dish brings to mind thoughts about dragging the

mammoth to the cave. On a softer note, *Majorenhoff* never fails in its role as an expert purveyor of wines, and thus an appropriate bouquet is suggested to complement even this rough, no-nonsense offer.

As for summery fresh dishes, tartare is on its way to becoming a *Majorenhoff* hit this season. This tartare comes in the form of tuna, beef and even ostrich! And, since we're already on the meaty path, one cannot fail to mention Grinov's passion for wild game. This time round, it is top-quality moose meat right from New Zealand. Likewise, he speaks equally highly of one of his latest purchases from Spain, the *jamón ibérico* or black Iberian pig, whose meat is considered ecologically pure and unspoilt, as these pigs feed almost exclusively on acorns. Let's see if you can spot the difference!

Oh, and one more thing. It is not uncommon for people to say things like: "This is the only place in town where..." In many cases, that is actually true for *Majorenhoff*. Grinov travels, explores, learns and brings back such unusual ideas and products that his personal culinary map is truly laid with pins of *the-only-in-town's*. Take the likes of parrotfish, which has swum elegantly right into this summer's menu.

To a certain extent, Italy seems to have maintained its status as Grinov's culinary Mecca. He trusts its wines, prosciutto, mouth-watering olives and other foods. Italy also receives its tribute through the extensive pizza menu, which sports new additions this summer, such as the *Salame Picanti* covered generously in cherry tomatoes and rucola, *Quattro Carni* (joining, at last, the *Quattro Formaggi*) and *Jalapeño*, another hot number; hot as the middle of summer, hot as *Majorenhoff* throughout the whole year. **BO**

# More than just sushi

Having become a market leader in casual dining sushi concepts, the Planeta Sushi branch in Riga's Old Town has decided to raise its profile. This spring, the Planeta Riga restaurant emerged wearing a new identity – more grown-up and elegant – and serving more than just sushi.

PHOTOS BY ANDREJS TERENTJEVS, F64



The carefully crafted menu offers top-quality products, including exciting new dishes that are not served at any other restaurant in the city. Nevertheless, to the relief of regular customers, popular favourites have not been forsaken. They may, however, be presented in a more sophisticated manner, with attractive additions such as artisanal crockery.

Planeta Riga combines contemporary Japanese preparation and presentation techniques to deliver exceptional dishes, such as sushi, sashimi, maki, lunch bento, ramen and the likes of sea bass served with edamame puree, to name a few – all set in a stylish interior with a vibrant ambience and served by a knowledgeable and passionate team.

If you have visited this Planeta before the most recent changes, then the atmosphere upon entering the premises will now seem calmer and a bit more serious, but still light and cosier than ever. In other words, the pace has slowed down somewhat, and one would feel hard-pressed to jump up and leave right after a quick lunch.

What makes heading out even more difficult is the lovely summer terrace, with its comfortable furniture and lounge-like feel. It might reel you in for the better part of a sunny evening, inducing you to get lost in a friendly conversation over refreshing cocktails or while enjoying a steaming cup of exclusive tea.

The menu itself is crafted in accordance with the higher standards of presentation. Hence, the lack of descriptive photos (which often characterise low-end take-away establishments) invites guests to delve into the description of the dishes and increase their knowledge about Oriental cuisine. The new menu encourages guests to share their dishes and thus to try out a greater variety of dainties, making for an all the more enjoyable dining experience.

The new *tapas* section in the menu exemplifies this sharing culture. Originally a concept of Spanish cuisine, *tapas* are

made at Planeta in a refreshing Oriental style. Among the wide variety of seafood mini-sets is the “halibut cube”, or halibut served with soybean sprouts, coriander, chilli pepper and wasabiko caviar. The “sake tartar” consists of salmon tartar with fresh ginger and cress-salad leaves, while the “launge ika” joins squid with carrots, spiral-fried potatoes, oyster sauce, sake and spring onions.

The starters section now boasts “dim sum moriawase”, or bite-sized portions of seafood, meat, vegetables and mushrooms. That is because the chefs of Planeta visited a dim sum master chef in Moscow, who taught them how to perfect the technique of preparation.

Ramen, the traditional Japanese soup-like noodle dish, is not only new to this menu; Planeta is also the only place in Riga where true-to-tradition ramen can be tasted. Try one with specifically prepared sliced tjatsu pork, citrus vinegar, nori and nitamago egg.

Another product that has found its place in many of the new dishes is edamame beans. They're served boiled for starters, tasting simply perfect. Then there is the edamame cream soup with tempura shrimp and tom yum paste. Finally, edamame puree is served as a side to various main dishes – a pleasant novelty in the mash department.

Of course, the sushi have not been forgotten and even parade under an array of impressive names, including famous Japanese manga artists and film directors like Hiroshi Tomihari, Mariko Mori and Koji Ishikawa.

The mouth-watering menu aside, an immediate visual appeal comes from the beautiful and unique crockery created by artist Bārbala Gulbe. It contributes greatly to the elegant and unforgettable experience at Planeta. Thus, whether you come for the authenticity, tradition and expertise, or just to relax, share and enjoy, Planeta is ready to serve you and your companions. **BO**



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 from Tirgoņu iela)  
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PHOTOS FROM PUBLICITY MATERIALS AND BY ANDREJS TERENTJEVS, F64



## Aqua Luna

a symbiosis of food and design



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Riga's inhabitants like to live life to its fullest and appreciate great cuisine in a relaxed city atmosphere. In the year that has passed since *Aqua Luna* opened its doors, the restaurant has become one of the most popular meeting places for Rigans and their guests.

*Aqua Luna* is located at the edge of the Daugava River in Andrejsala, a unique part of the city that is experiencing a momentous transformation. For over 100 years, Andrejsala was an industrial zone with a cargo port, railway network, warehouses and other storage facilities. The area was recently refurbished and regained a new life with its marina and creative industry centre. Andrejsala now houses a number of popular restaurants and night clubs as well as the offices of successful designers, architects, artists and advertising specialists.

It is amid this creative ambience and contrast-filled scene that you will find the elegant *Aqua Luna* restaurant, bar and lounge. The owners sought to create a place to escape from the hubbub of Riga without leaving the city centre and in which they themselves would want to hang out. The result is an ideal place for enjoying superb cuisine, drinking fine wine in the company of friends, having business discussions in a relaxed atmosphere, listening to positive music and experiencing unforgettable romantic evenings. The nearby waters of the Daugava River, which extend out from the edge of the restaurant terrace, add a special mystique, particularly when they reflect the moonlight on warm summer evenings.

The modern restaurant building stands out among its surroundings in Andrejsala and is known as the White Swan among locals. The exterior wooden façade, along with the modern, functional and unobtrusive interior, have garnered the praise of many design critics. Last year, the restaurant received Latvia's highest architectural award in the category of Interior Design of Public Buildings. The building and its interior are the brainchild of Zane Tetere, one of the most active and successful young Latvian architects, in collaboration with the *OpenAD* architectural bureau that she helps to run. Natural materials were used as much as possible in the interior, and most of the tasteful furniture was made by local craftsmen.

The numerous house plants and potted herbs, along with the division of the restaurant into several seating segments, contribute to a cosy and laid-back atmosphere. A place has been arranged for everything, including an intimate corner with a modern fireplace and smartly set tables, as well as the requisite space for DJs and live musicians. During the warmer months, one can also dine on the spacious terrace and relax in its lounge area. From there, a wonderful panorama of the yacht marina, the steeples of the Old Town, Vanšu Bridge and the city's modern office buildings spread out in full view. And don't forget to have a taste of the strawberries that have been grown in special plant boxes on the terrace.

Adding to the stylish interior and pleasant atmosphere are the outstanding culinary creations by head chef Gints Aizupietis, whose specialty is European-style dishes with Asian accents. Here, French and

Italian culinary schools also mix with local traditions, a combination that is sure to satisfy both conservative diners and adventurous experimenters. So far this summer, the Irish *Black Angus* fillet steak, which acquires a smoky flavour after being cured for 28 days, has proven to be a smashing success. The grilled scallop with pickled white radish, seaweed salad and sesame sauce is also next to divine. And to celebrate a truly special event, try the Mottra black caviar with condiments of your choice. Other seasonal favourites include the rhubarb crème brûlée, warm Peking duck salad and raspberry Napoleon cake. Aside from an extensive choice of wines and exotic cocktails, *Aqua Luna's* drink list also includes many interesting non-alcoholic beverages, including sparkling sodas that are prepared on the spot.

Head chef Gints Aizupietis has a solid background behind him, which he gained through years of experience at restaurants in Denmark, France, Lithuania, Estonia, Sweden and the U.S. as well as at a *Michelin*-starred restaurant in England. In Latvia he has cooked at restaurants of the *Reval* chain of hotels (now *Radisson Blu*), where he picked up on some additional Scandinavian influences.

Another thing worth noting is that Aizupietis set up *Aqua Luna's* selection of main dishes in cooperation with Belgian chef Kenny Bernaerts, who has worked at various *Michelin*-starred restaurants in Europe, including *Comme chez soi* in Brussels and *Royal Hospital Road* in London. Bernaerts has also been a host on the popular *Master Chef* TV show.

"The synergy of our cooperation resulted in the amazingly delicious menu at *Aqua Luna*. We understood that we have a similar culinary philosophy as well as a shared cooking and serving style," says Aizupietis.

*Aqua Luna* has also gained widespread acclaim for the music that it plays. From Sunday to Thursday, you will hear carefully selected jazz, soul and funk music in the background, while Fridays and Saturdays are a time for summer party evenings with soulful house and nu-disco music by top-notch DJs.

*Aqua Luna* is a wonderful spot for leisurely late breakfasts, business lunches, romantic dinners and festive nights out with friends or colleagues. The establishment's refined and tasty dishes, extensive wine list, wide choice of cocktails, light desserts and original appetisers – combined with great music in a contemporary and cosy interior – make *Aqua Luna* a very special Riga restaurant. **BO**





## Dinner in the Sky – leave the cares of the world far down below

Just when it seems that nothing else can surprise you, you learn of the chance to enjoy a meal by a Michelin-starred chef... 50 metres above the ground.

PUBLICITY PHOTO

**D**inners in the Sky have taken place all over the world, and regardless of which city one chooses for a meal in the air, one is in for a special summer treat prepared by an expert chef. As you gaze down onto the sights below, securely harnessed in the safety of your table seat, you will be let in on some of the chef's trade secrets for a fine dining experience, along with tips on where to buy the best cooking ingredients.

Specially built into a platform that is raised by a crane, the *Dinner in the Sky* table can seat 22 guests, who can opt to spend between 20 minutes and one hour dining with a bird's-eye view of their surroundings. Aside from dinner, one can also choose from four other options: breakfast, lunch, cocktails or champagne and starters, to

the tune of live music by talented musicians. In each city where a *Dinner in the Sky* takes place, the platform is raised in a location that offers an unparalleled view of the sights, highlighting one or another of the city's assets, such as stately historical buildings or a beautiful sunset into the sea.

*Dinner in the Sky* usually takes place in each city for no more than three to five days per year, which is why it is advisable to make reservations in advance. Those who have a fear of heights need not worry about their safety, as this is an aspect to which *Dinner in the Sky* places the utmost importance. All guests are briefed on the appropriate safety procedures and are securely latched into their dining chairs with *airBaltic* seat belts before being hoisted upwards.

Euphoria, lightness and an intense feeling of happiness are the most common terms used by guests who have experienced a *Dinner in the Sky*. The great company, fantastic view and excellent food ensure that all guests can put any fear of heights aside and let themselves enjoy a meal beyond compare. *Dinner in the Sky* is perfect for a unique gastronomic outing with friends, work colleagues and business partners or a romantic evening with a special someone. What better way to experience something unusual and spoil oneself with a dinner of a lifetime, way up off the ground, with the cares of the world left far down below. **BO**

More *Dinners in the Sky* will be taking place this year in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Finland. Reservations can be made through [www.dinnerinthesky.lv](http://www.dinnerinthesky.lv).



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## Composing for himself



**W**hat do Chris Norman, Janet Jackson, Alain Delon, Montserrat Caballé, Nikita Mikhalkov, U.S. senator John McCain and the whole Boney M. crew have in common? They have all been served by Roberts Smilga, the head chef at the 1221 restaurant in Riga. An *enfant terrible* in the world of cooking, he considers himself to be an artist of sorts.

While trying to ensure that his clients feel at ease, Smilga doesn't shy from nudging them out of their comfort zone either. Take the horse steak, for example, which led the parade of new dishes on offer for the summer season. While it was surely met by incredulity and disdain by some patrons, its popularity skyrocketed at the restaurant. The same can be said for the less controversial but still unusual cow's tail stew and pigeon.

"It seems that I haven't had a miss with any of these," Smilga admits modestly.

Step by step, the ordinary and the common are being replaced at 1221 by new and daring foods that can be hard to come by. Always eager to experiment, Smilga is currently looking into the possibilities offered by African dishes. Therefore, don't be surprised to see an antelope steak on the menu soon.

"I wouldn't have it delivered just to be made *à la lettonne*. No, one needs to bring the local tradition along with each dish," he says.

Smilga has noticed that composers and artists become more daring as they mature, and he says that he is no exception.

"Things that until then they had done for the public, they now do for themselves, they play around," he smiles. "They still care, but they don't care desperately. They practice their craft as much for themselves as for others, and somehow, that's when the best results are achieved. And there comes the freedom." **BO**

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# Эксклюзивное и доступное жилье в Юрмале и Риге



DUBULTU RESIDENCE



Строительство комплекса велось, учитывая уникальное расположение проекта в дунной зоне города-курорта, с использованием современных технологий и эксклюзивных материалов, отделка натуральным камнем, алюминиевые стеклопакеты.



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## Restaurants, bars and cafés

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### Il Cibo del Papa, Riga Italian summer

The religious-sounding name of this restaurant (*Il Cibo del Papa* in Italian means "Food of the Pope") should not fool you, for the offer here is anything but ascetic. Or, perhaps the name is meant to imply that the wine and bread at this restaurant is good enough even for the very Pope's taste buds? That will most likely remain an open question, but along the same lines, one of the closed-off areas of the restaurant, available for private parties, is sporting a reproduction of good old Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* on its walls – tacky to no end, but consistent with the establishment's religious theme...

*Il Cibo del Papa* is situated on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of the *Galleria Riga* shopping centre and has put its roots down quickly. It's almost as if it simply replaced the name and a couple of decorations from the previous restaurant that inhabited the same premises and stopped existing in January...what was its name, do you remember? There are plenty of customers, though, and the lovely

expanded terrace can seat up to 100 sunset-watchers. The scenery, including the most eye-catching spots of the central part of the city, is almost worth the climb, or rather the excruciating ride up the numerous sections of escalator. Of course, one can also take the elevator.

The "Pope's kitchen" seems to wake up only after noon (more like five hours after noon), but that is not uncommon for restaurants in shopping centres. Still, they haven't lost hope and are offering a business lunch between 12 noon and 5 PM. You're allowed to combine whichever two courses you please (like starter and dessert, main and dessert, starter and main, and so on) for EUR 3.84 to EUR 5.55 tops, but for that reason, the business lunch lacks the classiness and complexity of the regular menu, which is quite decent, if not a bit overwhelming.

If you didn't gather the origin of the cuisine from the restaurant name, then the menu more than clarifies things. *Il Cibo* has it all, including pasta, pizza, risotto, and tiramisu for dessert. The choice of fish dishes is pleasing



and includes oven-baked black cod in lobster sauce with truffle puree and asparagus, as well as grilled tuna with green pea puree, grilled pepper, mussels and olives. Seafood can also be found in a number of soups, such as the hearty lobster bisque with crayfish tails, scallops and mussels.

With the interior set in mock Italian style, there is also a proper stage for live music, which is played every night of the week. Naturally, things heat up a bit more during weekends. Worth a try, perhaps?

Address: Dzirnau iela 67, 7<sup>th</sup> floor  
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Sun-Thu: 10:00-23:00  
Fri-Sat: 10:00-1:00  
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National cuisine – cold and hot buffets. Folk costumes, local music, magnificent interiors. Delicious national brewery and patisserie. The largest LIDO leisure centre also features entertainment for the whole family on weekends, including an amusement park, live music every evening in the restaurant and pub from 7 PM, a delicatessen shop, and take-away food.

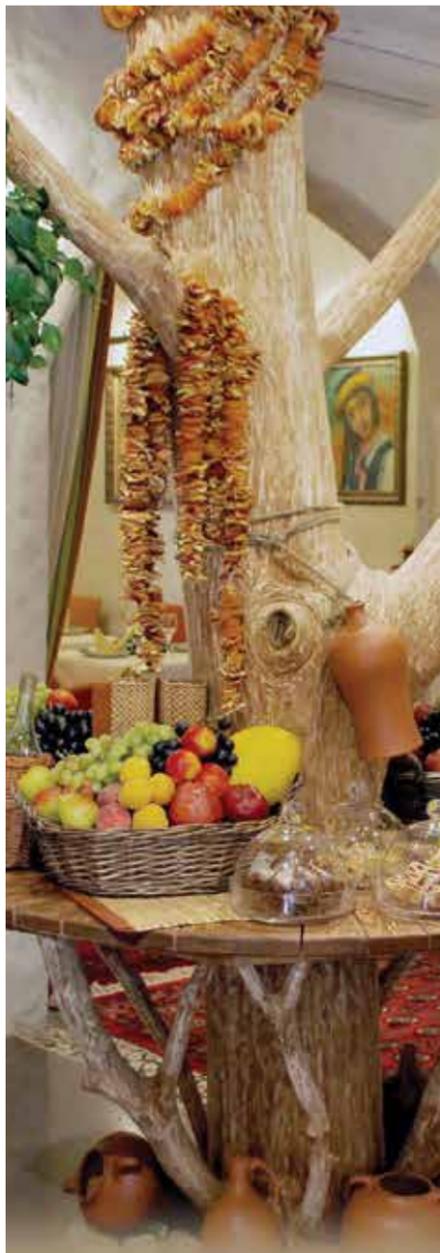


Ask at tourist information centres or hotels for directions to the nearest LIDO catering centre. The largest ones are:

- LIDO leisure centre:** Krasta Street 76, reservations: +371 67 700 000
- LIDO Spice:** "Lielirbes Street 29, Shopping Centre "Spice"
- LIDO Airport:** Riga International Airport, departures area, 2nd floor
- LIDO DOMINA:** Ieriku Street 3, "Domina Shopping" Centre
- LIDO Summer Terrace:** Jurmala, Pilsonu street 14/16



www.lido.lv



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until the last customer.

FOOD&DRINK



**Kombucha, Riga  
Nutritionist's dream**

*Kombucha* is a lightly fermented drink created from the symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast in sweetened black tea. The drink is said to contain many health-promoting qualities, and hence the new *Kombucha* restaurant on the corner of Lāčplēša and Čaka streets. The establishment in Riga is actually a cross between a restaurant and a health studio and has gathered quite a following of health-conscious visitors during its few months of existence. The restaurant has also given this traditional drink a new life, growing the *Kombucha* culture on site and serving it in luscious juicy mixes, both at the restaurant and at *Kalnciema Kwartāls* farmer's market in Pārdaugava.

Drinks aside, this really is "the place" for those attempting a healthy lifestyle while juggling a million other errands. Plus, the service is quick. The whole

menu has been created in collaboration with a nutritionist working at the health studio, and the owners have instructed the waiters on the general rules of nutrition, enabling them to offer sound recommendations.

*Kombucha* does breakfast from 8:30 AM (a special treat to those who've attended the 6:30 bikram yoga class in the yoga studio nearby... yup, that's one healthy neighbourhood!), putting emphasis on fresh juice mixes (like pomegranate and fennel) and smoothies, while leaving one the option to order hearty dishes like wholemeal pancakes with jam. Contrary to what one might think, the establishment is neither vegan nor vegetarian, although the chef will gladly adjust the meals to suit specific dietary requirements. What perhaps contributes to the vegetarian feel is that they play a lot with veggies and superfoods, an approach ordinarily taken by no-meat gourmet spots. Here, you will find your share

of quinoa, bulgur, chia seeds and more.

Before (or after) you plunge into your meal, you can visit a physiotherapist for an electrical muscle stimulation treatment or enjoy one of the many types of procedures available downstairs such as aroma therapy, or a hot stone massage, or perhaps a Thai massage performed by a genuine Thai specialist. That option should be quite something, since the room is specially equipped with a construction on the ceiling for the masseuse to hold on to while walking on your back. They've made sure that this can all be done quickly, just in case you have an extra hour to spare during your lunch break. Tempting, isn't it?

Address: Lāčplēša iela 52/54  
Open: Mon-Wed: 8:30-22:00  
Thu-Fri: 8:30-23:00  
Sat: 12:00-22:00  
Sun: 16:00-21:00  
www.kombucharestorans.lv



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**RIX**



WHAT TIME DOES THE PLANE ARRIVE FROM LONDON?

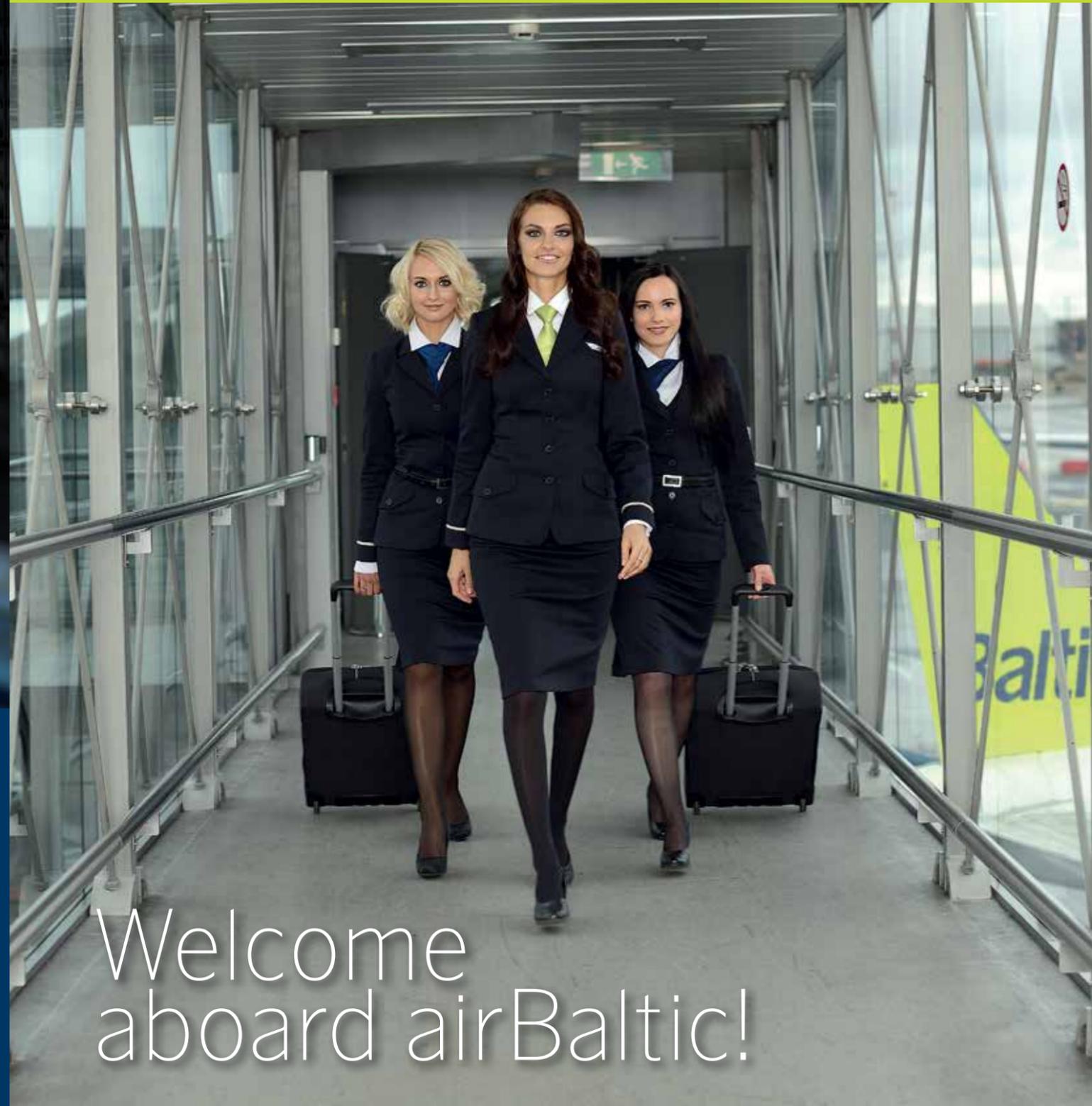
11:23	LONDON	BA1302	5	ARRIVED
11:23	BERLIN	117422	3	ARRIVED
12:18	DUBLIN	BF5355	2	ESTIMATED
12:38	WARSAW	VA3174	1	APPROACHING

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168 airBaltic news / 170 Behind the scenes / 172 Stories / 173 Meals / 174 PINS  
179 Fleet / 180 Flight schedule / 181 Partners / 182 Flights / 184 Contacts

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Jūrmala, Latvia

## IN BRIEF

- 1/ Jūrmala, the summer capital of the Baltics
- 2/ Summer Event Guide from *airBaltic*
- 3/ Pre-order your meal up to 24 hours before your flight
- 4/ *airBaltic* Payment Card – your best travel partner
- 5/ The perfect gift for fulfilling travel dreams

### 1/ Jūrmala, the summer capital of the Baltics

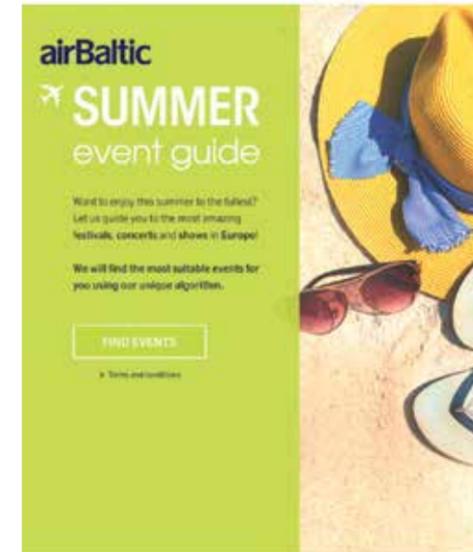
Riga is a true pearl on the Baltic Sea, a metropolis that captivates travellers with its unforgettable aura. It is a vibrant and classy city, and this year Riga is also the European Capital of Culture 2014, with numerous noteworthy events taking place all year long. Just 20 minutes west of Riga is Jūrmala, the largest seaside resort in the Baltics and a popular location for international conferences. Jūrmala is also famous for its unique natural resources, which include therapeutic thermal waters, peat mud, pine forests and a healthy maritime climate, all of which make Jūrmala a perfect spa and relaxation getaway.

In July, Jūrmala becomes the summer capital of the Baltics, hosting international concerts and shows at the newly renovated Dzintari Concert Hall until the end of September. Fly to Riga 2014 at prices starting from EUR 39.



### 2/ Summer Event Guide from *airBaltic*

Summer has arrived in full swing, and to make sure that you do not miss the best events and parties this season, we have created a unique Summer Event Guide that highlights the most amazing festivals, concerts and shows in Europe – the best places where *airBaltic* can fly you to. Check the Summer Event Guide on our Facebook page, where you can find the most suitable events for your tastes, based on your likes and preferences.



Find the Summer Event Guide and follow us at [www.facebook.com/airBaltic](http://www.facebook.com/airBaltic)

### 3/ Pre-order your meal up to 24 hours before your flight



Enhance your *airBaltic* experience with a tasty inflight meal, which you can now order up to 24 hours before your departure. Take the unique opportunity to select and customise your inflight meal from a wide array of options. *airBaltic* is also now offering Celebration Services for surprising a friend, special someone, business partner or relative in the sky. Create a memorable moment above the clouds – pre-order flowers, cakes or champagne for delivery to your selected passenger during a flight, and include a signed card with a personal message. What's more, you don't necessarily have to be on the flight, just know his or her flight number to order the inflight surprise.

You can place your orders through [www.airBalticMeal.com](http://www.airBalticMeal.com) up to 24 hours prior to the planned departure. Payments must be made online.

### 4/ *airBaltic* Payment Card – your best travel partner

The *airBaltic* Payment Card is a prepaid card that can be loaded with funds and used online, over the telephone, in shops and at ATMs worldwide. It offers all the benefits of a Visa card, along with the added advantage of collecting PINS with every purchase. The beauty of the *airBaltic* Payment Card is that you only spend the money that you load onto the card. You can then use it for personal or corporate purchases either in stores or online. The card also has a secure online account management facility that gives access to funds anytime, both day and night. Applying for an *airBaltic* Payment Card is simple: just prove your identity and address; no credit checks are required. In addition, you will save EUR 5.99 on each flight booking made at [www.airbaltic.com](http://www.airbaltic.com).

The *airBaltic* Payment Card is an excellent travel partner. Carry it wherever you go, make purchases and collect PINS. Find out more at [www.prepaidcard.airBaltic.com](http://www.prepaidcard.airBaltic.com).



### 5/ The perfect gift for fulfilling travel dreams

*airBaltic* has prepared something special for the summer season of graduations, weddings and other festive events – a gift card to fulfil the travel dreams of your friends and loved ones. Gift vouchers are available on all *airBaltic* flights and at *airBaltic* ticket offices for only EUR 35. You can also purchase gift vouchers at [www.airbaltic.com](http://www.airbaltic.com) for any desired amount. Use the travel gift e-voucher as either the sole means of payment or partial payment for a larger total sum.

Gift vouchers can be purchased at the *airBaltic* ticket office in the Riga International Airport for only EUR 35 and can be used for booking flights at [www.airbaltic.com](http://www.airbaltic.com).



Igors Rasiņš,  
expert in aircraft structural repairs  
and workshop manager at airBaltic

TEXT BY ELINA RUKA  
PHOTO BY EMILS DESJATNIKOVŠ, F64

## Preparing for a new generation of aircraft

***Igors Rasiņš's eyes light up when he talks about airBaltic's upcoming fleet of aircraft. He is one of the large team that is working on phasing in 20 new Bombardier CSeries passenger planes that are being built for airBaltic and that will gradually replace the airline's current fleet of Boeing 737s. While the delivery of the first new Bombardier plane is expected only at the end of 2015, Rasiņš is already working feverishly to ensure a smooth transition.***

### **What motivated you to study aviation and to work with aircraft?**

I have always been fascinated by technology and by the mechanics of things. I have always wanted to know what's inside a gadget and how it works. Because of this strong interest, I broke many contraptions as a child. Most of all, I was drawn to airplanes that fly high in the sky. I wanted to know how they manage to stay up in the air. That's why as soon as I finished high school, I enrolled straight away as a student at the Riga Aviation University.

### **How did you end up at airBaltic?**

I was hired by another airline company as soon as I graduated from university, but I have been at airBaltic for the past 10 years. I began working as an engineer and was responsible for managing the continuing airworthiness of Fokker 50 aircraft. Then I worked as a training manager and arranged training events for technical personnel. After that I became a workshop manager. Initially I was responsible for structural repairs to aircraft, but then I also did interior repairs and had various workshop duties such as loading batteries as well as checking and maintaining life vests and escape slides.

### **What is a typical work day like?**

As a workshop manager I have various duties to fulfil, but my main responsibility is ensuring that the components workshop has the necessary resources for conducting component-maintenance activities. I have a team of 20 workers, each of whom specialises in a particular line of work. The field of aviation is changing very rapidly. You always have to keep learning new things, as the knowledge that you gain at university will prove insufficient later. You have to keep up to date and follow the latest developments in your profession. That's not easy to do. In any case, I'm happy that every day at my job is different. You never know what will come up.

Sometimes complicated situations do arise and they have to be addressed immediately. After all, aircraft are designed to be up in the air. Our job is to repair them quickly and ensure that they are not grounded for too long.

### **Next year, airBaltic will begin to phase in its new Bombardier CSeries aircraft. What is your role in this project?**

I'm responsible for the technical aspect. The process of going through the offers of various plane manufacturers lasted a long time. Now that we have agreed with Bombardier on the technical configurations, my main job is to ensure the entry into service of these new aircraft. That involves introducing CS300 planes into our planning and record-keeping system, assigning various tasks and intervals, and working out an aircraft maintenance programme. We have to plan out all of the required tasks in advance. We are also organising the selection, procurement and delivery of spare parts, tools and equipment. However, the most important task is training the entire technical team and ensuring that it is ready to start working on the new CS300 planes once they are delivered. Last month I visited the Bombardier factory in Canada to see how the construction of the new planes is coming along. That was fascinating, for up until then I had only seen presentations and heard second-hand accounts from my colleagues. My experience had been limited to base maintenance, when an aircraft is disassembled, all of its parts are checked and the aircraft is put back together again. That is done for safety reasons, which is the most important thing in aviation. In Canada I could see how the new airBaltic planes are being built from the very start. It's satisfying moments like these that really stimulate me to continue working for the airline.

### **What are the specifications of the new Bombardier aircraft and what will airBaltic's passengers gain?**

The CS300 aircraft were deemed to be the most suitable for airBaltic's business plans, mainly because they are completely new. Bombardier is using the latest composite materials and technologies in the construction of these new planes, which means that they will be lighter. They will be equipped with the latest ultra high bypass ratio engines and consequently will use about 20% less fuel than airBaltic's current fleet of planes. That will reduce costs as well as emissions. The new planes will generate less pollution and leave a better environmental footprint. Since the latest materials are being used in the manufacture of these

aircraft, they will require less technical maintenance than the current fleet. They will be safer and their maintenance costs will be reduced by 15%. These factors will permit airBaltic to lower its ticket prices and become even more competitive. The new planes will have larger seats and windows, ensuring a more comfortable flight and a better view outside. Passengers will also be happy about the larger overhead baggage bins. Furthermore, the new planes will be four times more quiet than others in their class, a fact that those who live close to airports will appreciate.

### **What are plane passengers' main demands regarding air travel? Will the new aircraft be able to satisfy these demands?**

The main passenger demand is comfort during a flight. The new CSeries planes will be able to ensure this with a wider aisle and seats for greater comfort, more space for hand luggage in the overhead bins and larger windows that let in more natural light.

### **What has been the greatest challenge for you in the implementation of this project?**

Since this is a very large and significant project that will be implemented over the course of several years, the most important thing is planning out everything correctly and doing everything on time. The airline must be prepared for the transition to the new planes and their entry into service must be smooth. Since the CSeries planes are being made with the latest technologies and materials, my greatest challenge has been learning a lot of new things. I had to learn about geared turbofan engines, enhanced monitoring, diagnostic and troubleshooting solutions. I have to know all of these processes perfectly to ensure that the airline can operate smoothly and efficiently.

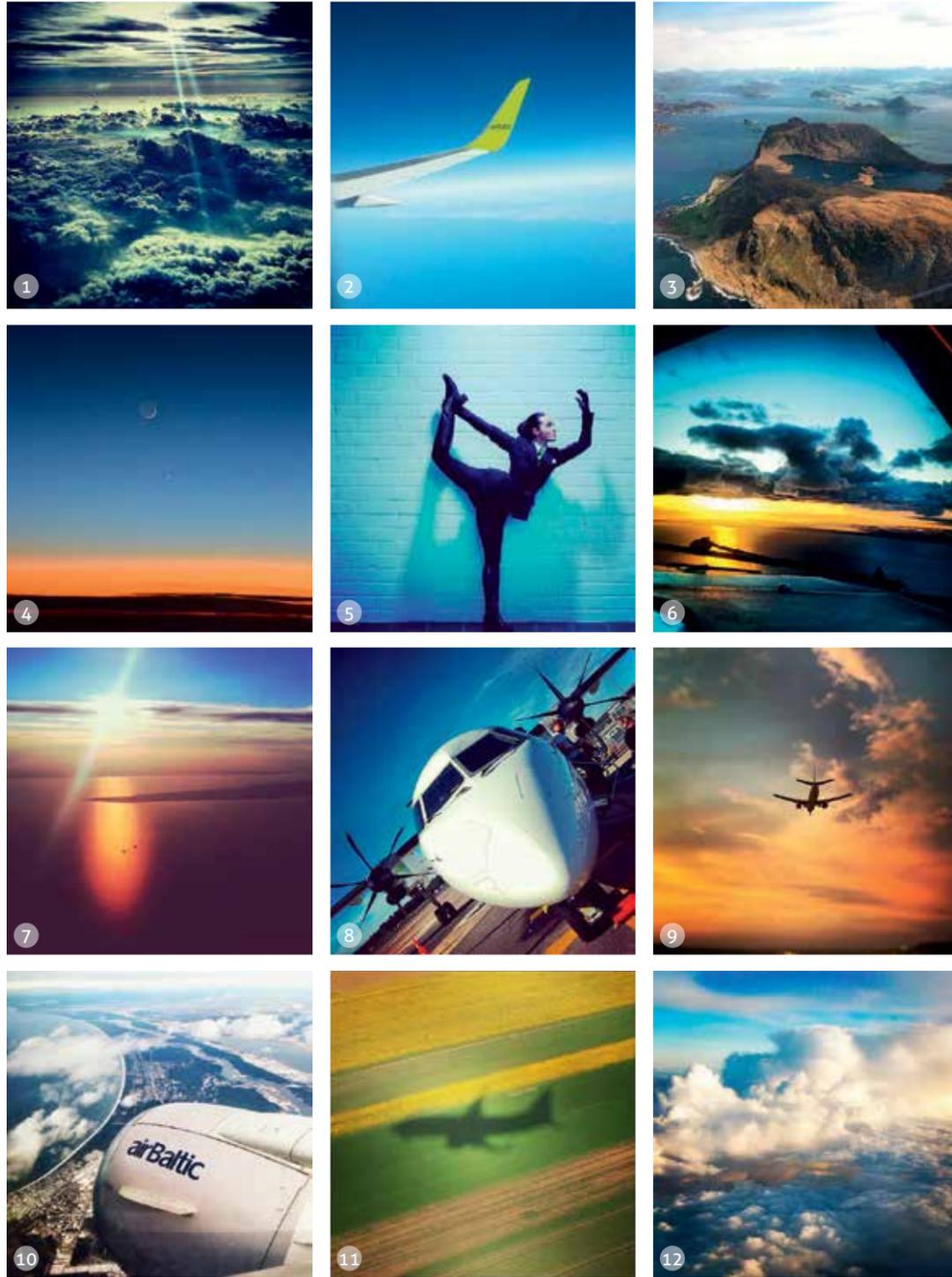
### **Do you have any hobbies?**

Fishing! After an active day at work, I really enjoy the peace and quiet of nature.

### **Do you like to travel? What has been your most exciting destination?**

Yes, of course, I enjoy travelling. My most exciting destinations are not in exotic faraway countries but less than an hour away by plane, in Finland and Sweden. As an avid fisherman, I enjoy unforgettable and exciting moments whenever I catch a big pike in these countries. I've caught some really large and fine specimens there! **BO**

# airBaltic Travellers' Social Stories



There's nothing more beautiful than being up in the sky. So why don't you share the joy of travelling and inspire others to fly! Tag your photos

with #airBaltic when posting on Instagram or Twitter, or post them to airBaltic's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/airBaltic](http://www.facebook.com/airBaltic).

Tell your travel story via beautiful images captured in the sky and on our planes! We'd love to share your story!

1 @737pilotom If you were wondering what it was looking like from above! | 2 @thedorhl On the trip home after a wonderful trip in Israel with many wonderful people! | 3 @q400driver Nice flight into Norway today (taa sala) | 4 @mlablas This is one of the reason why I became a pilot | 5 @yaluntik To the sky! | 6 @737pilotom It's worth getting up early to see the best show in the world: Nature! | 7 @aleksandra\_dullepova | 8 @genadijsz | 9 @amapilotnikolaj | 10 @marivasilyeva | 11 @grabelya | 12 @q400driver Building storms over Germany at 06:00 in the morning



## Onboard menu

### Business Class

airBaltic's menu offers light and healthy summer meals with a wide choice of recipes from all over the world. Business Class passengers can enjoy dainty appetizers and main courses like grilled turkey fillet with kiwi salsa, pesto-marinated and roasted monkfish, or fried chicken fillet with tabbouleh salad, as well as such delicious and summery desserts as lemon posset, strawberry cake, and cardamom panna cotta with lingonberry sauce.

The new breakfast menu has meals for a great start of the day, including pancakes with cheese and smoked beef, tandoori chicken breast with marinated vegetables, and omelette with grilled chicken and cream cheese. These meals are served together with an appetizer and granola or assorted fruits.

### Economy Class

Economy Class passengers can choose their onboard meal from the *airBaltic Café* menu. New summer menu offers light and healthy chicken salad with parmesan cheese, delicious hot meal, chicken tortilla with vegetables and mushrooms as well as new chicken sandwich and a variety of snacks and drinks.

Considering our customer requests beef lasagne and Scandinavian style salmon sandwich is back on offer!

### 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 meal pre-order system



Seasonal fresh vegetables



Meatballs Nest



Latvian-style chicken breasts

Passengers who want to create their own meal set or who have special dietary requirements can use our customized in-flight meal pre-order system to make combinations from more than 70 dishes on a virtual tray. You can choose from a variety of

salads or kids' menu as well as wide range of drinks. Delicious meat, seafood, dietary and special meals can be selected together with one of nine salads and nine types of dessert. Now it is possible to order your meal up to 24 hours prior your departure time at [www.airbalticmeal.com](http://www.airbalticmeal.com).



1.5 million people have already joined pins!

**About the program**

PINS is the new airBaltic loyalty program. 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.

**If you still have a BalticMiles card and haven't got your PINS card yet**

Order your PINS card at pinsforme.com or contact PINS Member Service by writing an e-mail to info@pinsforme.com. While waiting for your brand new card to arrive, you can still use your BalticMiles card which will still be accepted for the next few months.

**If you aren't a PINS program member yet**

Join the program right away – just ask a flight attendant for your card. Register your card online after the flight at register.pinsforme.com and get 10 bonus PINS.

**How to collect**

Collect PINS on airBaltic flights: 3 PINS for each EUR spent on a Business Class ticket; 2 PINS for each EUR spent on an Economy Class ticket and 1 PINS for each EUR spent on a Basic Class ticket.

Collect PINS at over 700 local, global and online partners worldwide by traveling, staying in hotels, renting cars, shopping, eating out and much more. The program also offers collecting PINS at a wide range of well-known international online shops for travel, home, sports, beauty and more.

**How to spend**

Spend PINS on airBaltic flights starting from just 4200 PINS or upgrade your ticket to Business Class from just 8000 PINS.

Also spend PINS on bus tickets, gift cards, donations, music downloads or online shopping with more than 3000 rewards available. When spending on Online Rewards, you can also use PINS in combination with money.

**Membership levels of airBaltic PINS cards**

The more you fly with airBaltic and the more PINS you collect, the higher your membership level:

- Fly 30 one way flights or collect 25 000 Status PINS within a 12 month period to reach **Executive level**.
- Fly 60 one way flights or collect 50 000 Status PINS within a 12 month period to reach **VIP level**.



New partners where to collect pins



**CITY WOKS restaurant**

CITY WOKS is a fast casual wok restaurant in the very center of Riga. Enjoy fresh and tasty food prepared just for you – eat in or take away! CITY WOKS is also the only place in Riga to offer the WOK&Wine concept.



**KOTAI noodle boutique**

KOTAI noodle boutique offers authentic Thai food in the heart of Old Riga. Authentic ingredients and professionally trained cooks ensure your food tastes exactly as it should. You can also order online and get authentic Asian noodles delivered to your home or office.



**ARONIA restaurant and art gallery**

Restaurant and art gallery ARONIA offers classical European and Mediterranean cuisine. Its interior is artistic with an air of an informal gathering – visit as a stranger, leave as a friend. The restaurant is located in one of the most beautiful Art Nouveau buildings in Riga. Head over to the restaurant Aronia and enjoy a true gastronomic adventure!



**Pierre Cardin stores**

Pierre Cardin is a well-known international name. The company's clothes are designed to highlight a man's elegance and individual personality. Supreme quality, durability, and a variety of models will satisfy even the most fastidious of customers. You will find Pierre Cardin men's business clothing stores in Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda and Riga.



**BALDESSARINI stores**

BALDESSARINI is an international fashion brand in the premium segment and achieved an outstanding position in global competition with a unique brand identity. The BALDESSARINI brand combines self-confidence with a sense of style and authenticity. BALDESSARINI separates the men from the boys.



**SPA Vilnius**

SPA Vilnius is the first modern medical and wellness SPA center in Anykščiai. Located in the haven of Anykščiai grove and Šventoji River, it includes a 4-star hotel, SPA centre with a mineral water pool, swimming pool for our youngest SPA guests, a restaurant with an outdoor terrace, children's playground and a contemporary conference hall.



## Tips for collecting



local



global



online

## Tips for spending



.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
book a flight	4 200 pins	5 300 pins	6 300 pins	11 000 pins
upgrade to business class	8 000 pins	10 000 pins	13 000 pins	16 500 pins
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	Denmark	Austria	Croatia	Azerbaijan
	Estonia	Belarus	Greece	Cyprus
	Finland	Belgium	France	Georgia
	Lithuania	Bulgaria	Italy	Israel
	Norway	Czech Republic	Spain	Malta
	Sweden	Germany	United Kingdom	
		Hungary		
		Moldova		
		Netherlands		
		Poland		
		Romania		
		Russia		
		Switzerland		
		Ukraine		

Prices are reflected for airBaltic economy class, one way flight tickets departing from Riga. Airport taxes and fees are not included, seat availability is not confirmed, restricted and subject for changes. Please read full terms and conditions at pinsforme.com



Bicester Village. A member of the Chic Outlet Shopping® Collection of Villages © Value Retail PLC 2014. \*on the recommended retail price

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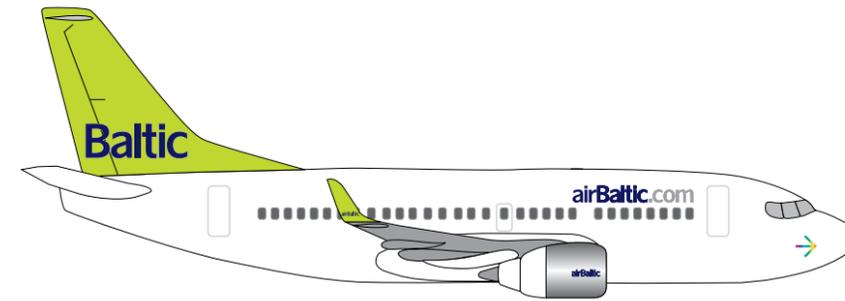
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**TEL AVIV BEACH FESTIVAL**  
 RIGA, KIPSALA BEACH

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DANCE  
FASHION  
SPORT  
TOURISM  
BUSINESS  
CULINARY

Non-stop City Tel Aviv in Riga • Wide cultural and arts program • The best folk and popular bands from Israel  
 Food and wine tastings • Educational and entertaining workshops • Sharing business experiences  
 Sports games, special demonstrations, tournaments • A grand fashion show • Dance performances and DJs till the morning

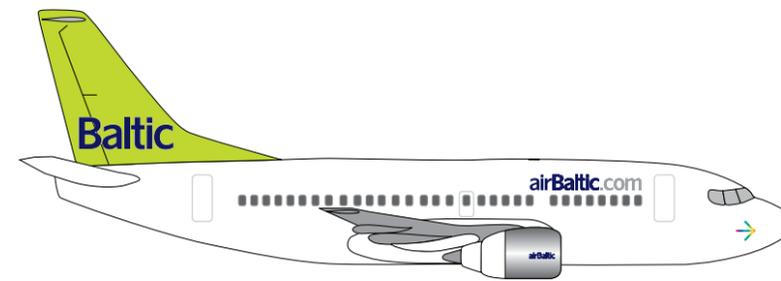
Come and celebrate life! [www.telaviv2014.riga.lv](http://www.telaviv2014.riga.lv) July 31st pre festival events

Logos: State of Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel, KULTUR.LV, RIGAS DOME, LIVE RIGA, airBaltic, Radisson, RIGA 2014, make art, TEL AVIV NONSTOP CITY, ISRAEL



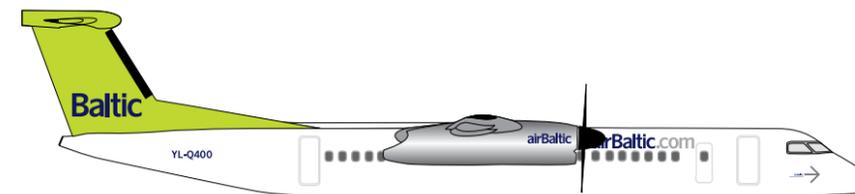
### Boeing 737-300

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 Bombardier

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
Cruising speed	667 km/h
Commercial range	2084 km
Fuel consumption	1074 l/h
Engine	P&W 150A

## NEW SERVICE!

# Fly airBaltic and enjoy FREE bus service to and from Riga airport

airBaltic Bus is a free bus service offered to airBaltic passengers travelling to or from Riga International Airport. Detailed information at [www.airBaltic.com/bus](http://www.airBaltic.com/bus)



#### → Riga

Route nr	Departs	Arrives	Departs	Arrives	Departs	Arrives	Duration
BT001	Daugavpils 03:45	Jekabpils 04:55	05:00			Riga 07:10	03:25
BT002	Tartu 03:55	Valmiera 05:45	05:50			Riga 07:30	03:35
BT004	Kaunas 03:30	Panevėžys 05:10	05:15	Bauska 06:35	06:40	Riga 07:50	04:20

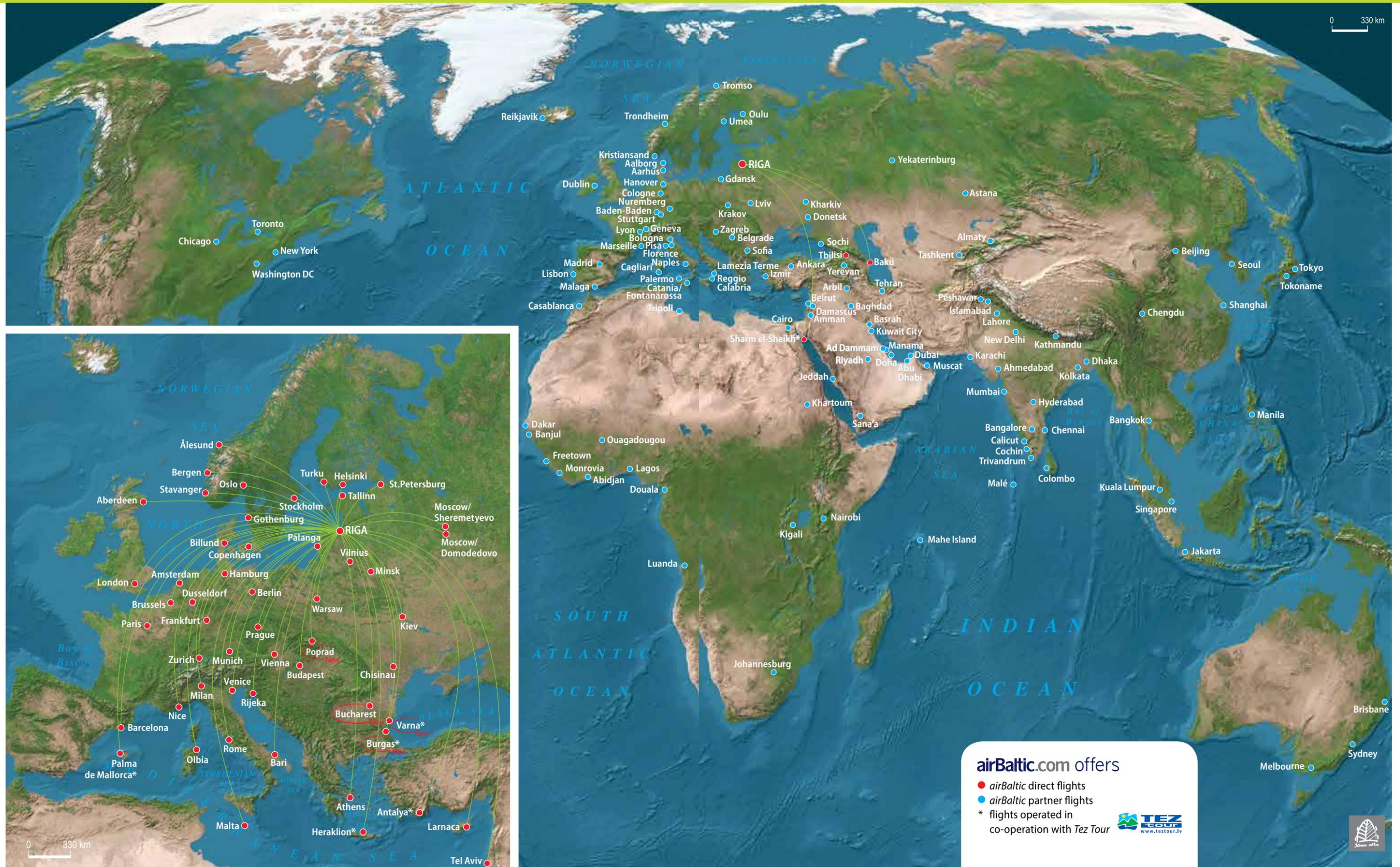
#### Riga →

Route nr	Departs	Arrives	Departs	Arrives	Departs	Arrives	Duration
BT001	Riga 23:30	Jekabpils 01:40	01:45			Daugavpils 02:55	03:25
BT002	Riga 23:20	Valmiera 01:00	01:05			Tartu 02:55	03:35
BT004	Riga 23:00	Bauska 00:10	00:15	Panevėžys 01:35	01:40	Kaunas 03:20	04:20

**airBalticBus**

Flights from Riga					Flights to Riga				
Flight No	From To	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	From To	Days	Departure	Arrival
<b>ABERDEEN Dyce</b>									
BT 659	RIX ABZ	1-4---	09:20	10:00	BT 660	ABZ RIX	1-4---	10:35	15:05
BT 659	RIX ABZ	--3--7	16:20	17:00	BT 660	ABZ RIX	--3--7	17:35	22:05
<b>ALESUND</b>									
BT 175	RIX AES	----5--	09:50	11:15	BT 176	AES RIX	----5--	11:45	15:00
BT 175	RIX AES	-----7	12:45	14:10	BT 176	AES RIX	-----7	14:40	17:55
<b>AMSTERDAM</b>									
BT 617	RIX AMS	1234567	09:10	10:35	BT 618	AMS RIX	1234567	11:20	14:35
BT 619	RIX AMS	1234567	16:35	18:00	BT 620	AMS RIX	1234567	18:45	22:00
<b>ATHENS</b>									
BT 611	RIX ATH	-23-5--	10:55	14:15	BT 612	ATH RIX	-23-5--	14:50	18:10
BT 611	RIX ATH	-----6-	14:40	18:00	BT 612	ATH RIX	-----6-	18:35	21:55
<b>BAKU</b>									
BT 732	RIX GYD	-3--7	23:05	05:00+1	BT 733	GYD RIX	1-4---	06:00	08:10
<b>BARCELONA</b>									
BT 681	RIX BCN	-23-56-	09:30	12:15	BT 682	BCN RIX	-23-56-	12:55	17:35
BT 683	RIX BCN	1-34-7	14:10	16:55	BT 684	BCN RIX	1-34-7	17:40	22:20
<b>BARI</b>									
BT 623	RIX BRI	-----7	09:30	11:25	BT 624	BRI RIX	-----7	12:00	15:55
<b>BERGEN</b>									
BT 171	RIX BGO	---4-7	22:45	00:10+1	BT 172	BGO RIX	1...5--	05:20	08:40
<b>BERLIN Tegel</b>									
BT 211	RIX TXL	12345-7	09:20	10:15	BT 212	TXL RIX	12345-7	10:45	13:35
BT 217	RIX TXL	123456-	13:10	14:05	BT 218	TXL RIX	123456-	14:35	17:25
BT 213	RIX TXL	1234567	17:55	18:50	BT 214	TXL RIX	1234567	19:25	22:15
<b>BILLUND</b>									
BT 145	RIX BLL	1234567	22:45	23:45	BT 146	BLL RIX	1234567	05:50	08:40
<b>BRUSSELS</b>									
BT 601	RIX BRU	12345--	06:05	08:00	BT 602	BRU RIX	12345--	08:30	12:15
BT 601	RIX BRU	-----6-	09:20	11:15	BT 602	BRU RIX	-----6-	11:55	15:40
BT 603	RIX BRU	-----7	15:55	17:50	BT 604	BRU RIX	-----7	18:20	22:05
BT 603	RIX BRU	1-4---	17:30	19:25	BT 604	BRU RIX	1-4---	19:50	23:35
<b>BUCHAREST</b>									
BT 503/505	RIX OTP	1-3-5-7	23:15	02:00+1	BT 504/506	OTP RIX	12-4-6-	05:40	08:30
<b>BUDAPEST</b>									
BT 491	RIX BUD	1-345-7	13:10	14:35	BT 492	BUD RIX	1-345-7	15:05	18:20
<b>BURGAS</b>									
BT 755	RIX BOJ	-----7	09:45	12:25	BT 756	BOJ RIX	-----7	13:00	15:35
BT 755	RIX BOJ	---4---	16:05	18:45	BT 756	BOJ RIX	---4---	19:20	21:55
<b>CHISINAU</b>									
BT 420	RIX KIV	-2-4-6-	12:55	15:20	BT 421	KIV RIX	-2-4-6-	15:55	18:25
<b>COPENHAGEN</b>									
BT 133	RIX CPH	1234---	06:45	07:25	BT 142	CPH RIX	--3-567	06:00	08:35
BT 131	RIX CPH	1234567	09:40	10:20	BT 134	CPH RIX	1234---	08:05	10:40
BT 139	RIX CPH	1234567	18:10	18:50	BT 132	CPH RIX	1234567	12:35	15:10
BT 141	RIX CPH	-2-456-	22:55	23:35	BT 140	CPH RIX	1234567	19:20	21:55
<b>DUSSELDORF</b>									
BT 231	RIX DUS	-2-4-67	09:45	11:25	BT 232	DUS RIX	-2-4-67	11:55	15:25
BT 233	RIX DUS	1-3--7	16:05	17:45	BT 234	DUS RIX	1-3--7	18:15	21:45
<b>FRANKFURT</b>									
BT 243	RIX FRA	1-3--7	09:30	11:15	BT 244	FRA RIX	1-3--7	11:45	15:20
BT 245	RIX FRA	-2-456-	16:15	18:00	BT 246	FRA RIX	-2-456-	18:35	22:10
<b>GOTHENBURG Landvetter</b>									
BT 121	RIX GOT	12-4-6-	22:55	23:40	BT 122	GOT RIX	-23-5-7	06:00	08:35
<b>HAMBURG</b>									
BT 251	RIX HAM	1234567	09:10	10:15	BT 252	HAM RIX	123456-	10:45	13:40
BT 253	RIX HAM	--3-5-7	17:30	18:35	BT 254	HAM RIX	--3-5-7	19:05	22:00
<b>HELSINKI</b>									
BT 301	RIX HEL	1234567	09:40	10:45	BT 326	HEL RIX	1234567	07:40	08:35
BT 303	RIX HEL	1234567	12:50	13:55	BT 302	HEL RIX	1234567	11:15	12:15
BT 305	RIX HEL	1234567	16:25	17:30	BT 304	HEL RIX	1234567	14:25	15:25
BT 307	RIX HEL	1234567	19:45	20:50	BT 306	HEL RIX	1234567	18:00	19:00
BT 325	RIX HEL	1234567	22:55	23:55	BT 308	HEL RIX	1234567	21:20	22:20
<b>KIEV Borispol</b>									
BT 400	RIX KBP	1234567	09:25	11:15	BT 401	KBP RIX	1234567	11:45	13:40
BT 404	RIX KBP	123456-	16:40	18:30	BT 405	KBP RIX	1234567	20:10	22:05
BT 404	RIX KBP	-----7	17:50	19:40					
<b>LARNACA</b>									
BT 657	RIX LCA	-2--6-	22:45	02:35+1	BT 658	LCA RIX	--3--7	04:30	08:30
<b>LONDON Gatwick</b>									
BT 651	RIX LGW	1-3-56-	09:20	10:10	BT 652	LGW RIX	1-3-56-	10:50	15:35
BT 653	RIX LGW	12-4-7	15:55	16:45	BT 654	LGW RIX	12-4--7	17:30	22:15
BT 653	RIX LGW	---5--	16:00	16:50	BT 654	LGW RIX	---5--	18:10	22:55
<b>MALTA</b>									
BT 739	RIX MLA	-----7	09:15	11:55	BT 740	MLA RIX	-----7	12:40	17:20
BT 739	RIX MLA	-2-----	13:50	16:30	BT 740	MLA RIX	-2-----	17:15	21:55
<b>MILAN Malpensa</b>									
BT 629	RIX MXP	---4-6-	09:30	11:15	BT 630	MXP RIX	---4-6-	12:00	15:40
BT 629	RIX MXP	1-3-5-7	16:00	17:45	BT 630	MXP RIX	1-3-5-7	18:30	22:10
<b>MINSK</b>									
BT 412	RIX MSQ	1-34-7	14:10	15:20	BT 413	MSQ RIX	1-34-7	15:55	17:05

Flights from Riga					Flights to Riga				
Flight No	From To	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	From To	Days	Departure	Arrival
<b>MOSCOW Domodedovo</b>									
BT 418	RIX DME	-2345--	09:30	12:15	BT 417	DME RIX	1234-67	07:10	08:20
BT 416	RIX DME	123-567	23:05	02:15+1	BT 419	DME RIX	-2345--	13:00	13:45
<b>MOSCOW Sheremetyevo</b>									
BT 424	RIX SVO	12345--	05:50	08:30	BT 425	SVO RIX	12345--	09:20	10:05
BT 424	RIX SVO	-----67	09:20	12:00	BT 425	SVO RIX	-----67	12:45	13:30
BT 422	RIX SVO	1234567	17:50	20:30	BT 423	SVO RIX	1234567	21:15	22:00
<b>MUNICH</b>									
BT 221	RIX MUC	12--56-	09:20	11:00	BT 222	MUC RIX	12--56-	11:35	15:05
BT 223	RIX MUC	1-345-7	16:35	18:15	BT 224	MUC RIX	1-345-7	18:45	22:15
<b>NICE</b>									
BT 695	RIX NCE	-----7	09:25	11:30	BT 696	NCE RIX	-----7	12:05	16:05
BT 695	RIX NCE	---4---	10:55	13:00	BT 696	NCE RIX	---4---	13:35	17:35
BT 695	RIX NCE	-2--6-	15:25	17:30	BT 696	NCE RIX	-2--6-	18:15	22:15
<b>OLBIA</b>									
BT 655	RIX OLB	---6-	09:30	11:40	BT 656	OLB RIX	---6-	12:15	16:30
BT 655	RIX OLB	-2-4---	15:00	17:10	BT 656	OLB RIX	-2-4---	17:55	22:10
<b>OSLO</b>									
BT 151	RIX OSL	123456-	09:10	10:05	BT 158	OSL RIX	1234567	05:50	08:40
BT 153	RIX OSL	1234567	18:00	18:55	BT 152	OSL RIX	123456-	10:35	13:25
BT 157	RIX OSL	1234567	22:45	23:40	BT 154	OSL RIX	1234567	19:25	22:15
<b>PALANGA</b>									
BT 033	RIX PLQ	1234567	23:30	00:15+1	BT 032	PLQ RIX	1234567	07:00	07:45
<b>PALMA DE MALLORCA</b>									
BT 687	RIX PMI	-----7	09:10	11:55	BT 688	PMI RIX	-----7	12:45	17:25
<b>PARIS Charles de Gaulles</b>									
BT 691	RIX CDG	123456-	09:05	11:00	BT 692	CDG RIX	123456-	11:55	15:40
BT 693	RIX CDG	12345-7	15:55	17:50	BT 694	CDG RIX	12345-7	18:35	22:20
<b>PRAGUE</b>									
BT 481	RIX PRG	1-3----	09:40	10:50	BT 482	PRG RIX	1-3----	11:15	14:20
BT 481	RIX PRG	---5-7	12:55	14:05	BT 482	PRG RIX	---5-7	14:35	17:40
BT 481	RIX PRG	-2-4-6-	17:15	18:25	BT 482	PRG RIX	-2-4-6-	18:50	21:55
<b>RIJEKA</b>									
BT 495	RIX RJK	-----7	10:00	11:25	BT 496	RJK RIX	-----7	12:00	15:25
BT 495	RIX RJK	---4---	16:25	17:50	BT 496	RJK RIX	---4---	18:25	21:50
<b>ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino</b>									
BT 631	RIX FCO	-2--7	09:20	11:25	BT 632	FCO RIX	-2--7	12:10	16:20
BT 633	RIX FCO	1-3-56-	15:05	17:10	BT 634	FCO RIX	1-3-56-	18:00	22:10
<b>STAVANGER</b>									
BT 177/179	RIX SVG	--34567	22:45	00:05+1	BT 178	SVG RIX	1-4567	05:25	08:40
<b>STOCKHOLM Arlanda</b>									
BT 101	RIX ARN	1234567	09:15	09:30	BT 104	ARN RIX	1234567	06:15	08:30
BT 105	RIX ARN	1234567	14:25	14:40	BT 102	ARN RIX	1234567	10:05	12:20
BT 109	RIX ARN	1234567	19:10	19:25	BT 106	ARN RIX	1234567	15:10	17:25
BT 103	RIX ARN	1234567	22:55	23:10	BT 110	ARN RIX	1234567	19:55	22:10
<b>ST-PETERSBURG</b>									
BT 442	RIX LED	123456-	09:30	11:50	BT 447	LED RIX	123-5-7	07:55	08:15
BT 444	RIX LED	12345-7	18:50	21:10	BT 443	LED RIX	123456-	12:25	12:45
BT 446	RIX LED	12-4-67	23:05	01:25+1	BT 445	LED RIX	12345-7	21:45	22:05
<b>TALLINN</b>									
BT 311	RIX TLL	1234567	09:55	10:45	BT 362	TLL RIX	1234567	07:40	08:30
BT 313	RIX TLL	1234567	13:15	14:05	BT 312	TLL RIX	1234567	11:15	12:05
BT 315	RIX TLL	1234567	16:30	17:20	BT 314	TLL RIX	1234567	14:35	15:25
BT 317	RIX TLL	1234567	20:05	20:55	BT 316	TLL RIX	1234567	17:50	18:40
BT 361	RIX TLL	1234567	22:55	23:45	BT 318	RIX TLL	1234567	21:30	22:20
<b>TURKU As of 28 July</b>									
BT 359	RIX TKU	1234---	23:15	00:25+1	BT 360	TKU RIX	-234---	07:25	08:30
<b>TBILISI</b>									
BT 722/724	RIX TBS	-23-5-7	23:05	03:35+1	BT 723/725	TBS RIX	1-34-6-	05:45	08:20
<b>TEL AVIV</b>									
BT 771	RIX TLV	--3-6-	09:35						



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<b>GERMANY</b>					
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