

JUNE /
JULY 2021
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Inflight magazine

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outlook

SANTORINI

A MODERN-DAY GREEK
ODYSSEY

MALLORCA'S HIDDEN
SECRETS

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HOFT, new building façade.

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HOFT is a combination of historical architecture, nature, technology and art. An absolutely unique hovering oasis is positioned over the carefully preserved and restored historical façade like a glass showcase built for design objects. HOFT is located at the very heart of Riga's Quiet Centre, at the most picturesque intersection of the Art Nouveau, on the crossroads of Strēlnieku and Alberta streets. Compilation of eco-architecture approach, implementation of sustainable design principles and high-quality art presence makes this project a perfect investment with increasing value over the years.

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The main hall of Philosophers Residence.

PHILOSOPHY IS THE ART OF LIVING

The Philosophers Residence is an inspiration for future residents to pursue their own philosophy of life and make their own choices. To achieve that, masterpieces of renowned writers are located in the libraries of the main lobbies, encouraging quotes are portrayed on the walls, and the territory is filled with spaces for meditative rest and active leisure spots – basketball and sports grounds, ping-pong and Novuss terraces.

A core feature of the project are the spacious terraces in each apartment that offer breathtaking views of the skyline of Riga Old Town.

WWW.PHRESIDENCE.LV



The main façade of Villa Milia.

CONNECTION BETWEEN GENERATIONS AND TIMES

Villa Milia is a contemporary interpretation of the famous Villa Benyamina, dedicated to the esteemed Press Queen Emilia Benyamin – one of the very first female entrepreneurs in Latvia. In memory of the great people that made their life stories and historical contributions a part of the city, the country and, indeed, the world; people for whom the words: «I'm doing it for my country!» were not just an empty phrase. These are the important things that we pass down to future generations: not to compromise in choosing between either beauty or quality, between good infrastructure or privacy. With all of the comforts of modern technology, Villa Milia is the perfect place for those who aspire to and expect nothing but excellence in everything.

WWW.VILLAMILIA.LV



We have launched a dozen brand-new destinations for a total of 90 routes

MARTIN ALEXANDER GAUSS
Chief Executive Officer, airBaltic

Dear guests of airBaltic,
Welcome on board our aircraft! Summer has most certainly arrived, and for many who have received their Covid-19 vaccines it comes with a return of several freedoms, including safe travel within the European Union.

As always, our job is to offer the best connectivity to and from the Baltics, which this summer includes a special highlight on a diverse and safe portfolio of sunny leisure destinations. We have launched a dozen brand-new destinations for a total of 90 routes, including 25 different destinations in the Mediterranean countries alone.

At the same time, we continue to offer the highest level of Covid-19 safety. We are maintaining all of the health and safety precautions we introduced in 2020. In addition, we've offered all of our staff to receive their Covid-19 vaccinations at the workplace. By the end of May already more than 70% of airBaltic staff had received their first Covid-19 vaccine.

airBaltic has been known as one of the most innovative airlines in the world. Back in 2014, we were the first to accept Bitcoin payments, too. Recently we expanded the selection of cryptocurrencies that can be used to book our flights and took the next step by becoming the first airline globally to issue non-fungible tokens (NFTs).

For our limited collector NFTs, we've created digital pieces of artwork showcasing an individual Airbus A220-300 as well as artwork featuring the most beloved Latvian cities, including Kuldīga, Cēsis, and others. This campaign is dedicated to promote tourism in Latvia, a country still undiscovered by many.

Hope to see you on an airBaltic flight again soon!



Yours,
Martin Alexander Gauss



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baltic outlook

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Please follow all of the safety measures and restrictions at each *airBaltic* destination, and stay updated on what, if any, actions are required upon returning from them. Also, before attending any event, confirm the time and place as well as any special conditions that may apply. Some photos in this magazine may be only of an informative nature.

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LOCATION. QUALITY. SECURITY.



* The International School of Latvia, the Exupéry International School, Kings College Latvia, and local municipal schools Babīte Secondary School and Babīte Music School.



Le Jardin des Muses (Pinki) – a village of ten homes and a club house with a common area, with one entry gate and separate exit gates that form a secure area which kids can enjoy and be safe in. The living community was built with the most modern, internationally accepted living standards and features concierge service and 24-hour security patrols. Architect – Dipl. Lic. Ing. Architect Martin Edler von Schiffer

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Words by Zane Nikodemusa
Publicity photos

The ultimate checklist

Gauja National Park in Latvia



MUSIC

Tango passion

Latvian-born, Madrid-based accordionist Ksenija Sidorova is renowned for virtuoso performances that have helped reposition an instrument often unfairly associated with small-town street performers as a serious force in classical music. This year marks the centenary of the birth of the Argentinian composer and master of the tango Astor Piazzolla, an anniversary celebrated by Sidorova on her new album, *Piazzolla Reflections*. It is said that ‘the tango is a way of living – a way of feeling and a way of thinking.’

Listen to this album and you'll understand that iconic statement.
ksenijasidorova.com



DESIGN

Bringing nature in

Nature is very much on our minds in 2021, because we want our planet to be a healthier and cleaner place to live. Accordingly, the urban jungle trend continues to grow in popularity as more and more homeowners learn about the benefits of living with plants. Add some rattan, linen, jute, and timber to bring a handcrafted, artisanal feel to your space that will remind you of the natural world. And instead of giving flowers, consider something a bit more unusual and exotic, for example, a terrarium. These miniature realms created by the Latvian company *Dzīvotne* thrive even under the care of the botanically challenged.
dzivotne.lv



EVENT

Dinner with a view

The *Skudras Metropole* performance and event venue is a pioneer on the Latvian scene for unique dining experiences. Its dinner sessions delight guests not only with their meticulously planned scenarios and inspiring locations (old manor parks, botanical gardens, even wild beaches) but also with the dizzying technologies appearing at and around the dinner table. One of this partnership's projects, called *Spoguļnamiņš* (Mirror House), featured a unique accommodation suspended above a river and went on to win several international awards. This summer, too, *Skudras Metropole* is organising some surprising outdoor dinner venues in Latvia. Be sure to book ahead!
nepieradinatasnaktsmitnes.lv

FLY IN A HOT-AIR BALLOON

Experienced travellers confess that a vacation in the Baltics leaves them charmed by the natural environment of these countries. The Baltic region truly stands out with the fact that its nature is diverse and also little touched by human hands, so make sure to explore the opportunities these countries provide in terms of nature tourism.

One of the most beautiful ways to get acquainted with the natural environment of the Baltics is via hot-air balloon. Flights are usually conducted early in the morning, when a picturesque fog still covers the ground, or in the evening, a few hours before sunset. These times of day also happen to be best for seeing animals in the wild and unforgettable plays of light and shadow on the landscape. Remember to bring along a camera in order to capture the magical scenes!

Words by Zane Nikodemusa
Publicity photos and by iStock



RIGA JURMALA MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Riga Jūrmala Music Festival launched its inaugural season in 2019 to international acclaim. This year, the world's leading symphony orchestras and conductors will again anchor each weekend of the festival from July until September, offering a range of symphonic concerts and recitals featuring leading stars and up-and-coming young talent. Festival concerts will take place at architectural gems in Riga and Jūrmala: the Latvian National Opera, the Great Guild Hall, and the most in-demand location of the summer season, Dzintari Concert Hall.
riga-jurmala.com

MIDSUMMER IN THE CITY

June in Latvia is all about Midsummer – white nights, birds singing at midnight, and wildflower meadows in full bloom! This magical season culminates on Midsummer's Eve (June 23–24). The celebrations include a great many ancient practices, including decorating the home with ferns, fragrant grasses, and freshly picked flowers; singing special solstice songs; lighting bonfires; and preparing traditional foods. At this time of year, nature's fullness and magic can be felt even in the capital city. Not only do Riga's parks exude the intoxicating aroma of summer, but the city streets and squares are also decorated with stylised flowers, meadow grasses, and wreaths made of oak leaves and flowers.

Did you know?

There's no better place for a chess game than the open-air stage at Vērmanes Garden Park, which has hosted avid chess players for decades. Watch the veterans play, and take part in the competition yourself.
liveriga.com



ROADGAMES

The *Roadgames* adventure and orienteering app is a great find for those who are curious and love outdoor activities. By completing various tasks, you can also get to know different parts of Riga. How to play? Download the app, select a game, do the challenges individually or in a team, and compete. The tasks and challenges will take you to places you never knew existed and thus sharpen your attention to detail.
roadgames.com

Quote of the month

Everything good, everything magical, happens between the months of June and August.

Jenny Han, an American author of young adult fiction and children's fiction. May her quote serve as inspiration when seeking out new and exciting experiences this summer.

RIGA
June / July 2021



Porcelain vase by the Skuja Braden creative tandem.

PURVĪTIS PRIZE 2021 EXHIBITION

Awarded every two years, the Purvītis Prize is Latvia's largest and most prestigious award in visual art. The Latvian National Museum of Art is currently hosting an exhibition featuring work by the finalists for this year's prize. It's a vivid collection of paintings, porcelain, installations, and video art! Check the website for any pandemic-related changes to the exhibition schedule.
lnmm.lv





TALLINN

Did you know?

The sea is a key ingredient in Tallinn's natural appeal. From a medieval centre of trade to tsarist stronghold, the city's history and local culture have been greatly influenced by its advantageous geographical position.

visittallinn.ee



UP ALL NIGHT: LOOKING CLOSELY AT RAVE CULTURE

With the *Up All Night: Looking Closely at Rave Culture* exhibition, Kumu Art Museum offers an exciting look at one of the most compelling musical communities of the 1990s. The impacts of rave culture have spread beyond the sphere of dance music and have reached visual culture in the form of various subcultural manifestations. The exhibition deals with this powerful phenomenon by displaying works from the meccas of the heyday of rave – England and Belgium – and provides an insight into rave culture today at the *Berghain* nightclub in Berlin as well as many other locations.

kumu.ekm.ee



MEDIEVAL DAYS

Medieval Days is one of the most important annual events in Tallinn and lets visitors experience the atmosphere of the flourishing Hanseatic era. A large medieval market is set up in Town Hall Square with merchants and workshops, while musicians and dancers from near and far take the stage. A medieval procession opens the event and is followed by a variety of workshops, excursions, and theatre performances. This year, Medieval Days will hopefully take place on July 8–11, depending on government restrictions related to the pandemic.

OPEN HOUSE TALLINN

Open House is an international initiative that gives you a sneak peek behind the doors of buildings that are otherwise closed or partially closed to the public. This year's event in Tallinn takes place on July 10–11. On this weekend, buildings open to the public to tell their fascinating stories. The tours are free of charge, and the event is open to all. If you're not in Tallinn on those days, take a look at the list of involved buildings anyway to learn a bit about architecture and design in the Estonian capital.

openhousetallinn.ee



Helene Schmitz.
Thinking Like a Mountain.

HELENE SCHMITZ EXHIBITION

Thinking Like a Mountain by Swedish photographer Helene Schmitz awaits visitors at Fotografiska Tallinn until July 25. Schmitz is one of Sweden's most successful photographic artists internationally, and these large-scale pictures let viewers experience her contemplations of the changing world. Like a poet of natural sciences, she reaches straight into the viewer with her observations on passings and states in change. The exhibition is accompanied by an audio guide based on a conversation with the photographer herself.

fotografiska.com/tallinn



VILNIUS

STREET THEATRE FESTIVAL

The international Spot Festival will be held from July 8–11 in the streets, parks, and squares of Vilnius. Come and watch how contemporary street theatre has turned the city's conventional spaces into places to play. Choreographed performances, concerts, and contemporary theatre performances will introduce you to a different side of the Lithuanian capital's Old Town.

menuspaustuve.lt

Did you know?

Altana Hill, which is one of the highest hills in Vilnius, got its name from a garden feature called an *altana*, which still stands here today. It was built by Vilnius native Melanija Dluska around 1933 and provided shelter to the exotic plants grown by her husband.

govilnius.lt



VILNIUS FESTIVAL

Vilnius Festival is one of the most prestigious, solid, and versatile classical music events in Lithuania and a major summer destination for music lovers. Although its primary interest is in presenting classical music, the festival also promotes contemporary Lithuanian music by commissioning new large-scale works and offers a platform for jazz and musical theatre as well. This year the festival takes place June 2–20. It's like a true dessert for aesthetes and music fans!

vilniusfestivals.lt



VILNIUS COLLECTOR CLUB FLEA MARKET

Many travellers believe that a flea market is a design-concept experience instead of just a vintage treasure hunt. But whichever opinion you hold, you'll definitely find a unique experience at the Vilnius Collector Club flea market, which takes place every Saturday morning at the *Karolina Hotel*. It's perfect if you don't have a lot of time. And don't hesitate to bargain with the vendors, who also happen to be interesting conversation partners.

clubvilnius.lt



Andrzej Wróblewski.
The Beach. 1955.
Starak Family
Foundation
collection.

A DIFFICULT AGE: SZAPOCZNIKOW – WAJDA – WRÓBLEWSKI

This exhibition is the largest and most ambitious MO Museum project to date, involving 25 foreign museums, galleries, and private collections. It presents the work of Poland's most prominent and widely acclaimed post-war artists: film director Andrzej Wajda (1926–2016), conceptual sculptor Alina Szapocznikow (1926–1973), and painter Andrzej Wróblewski (1927–1957). The exhibition's main theme explores the adolescent experiences endured by these three artists – all of whom were born in the same period and lost a parent early in life – and the impact these events had on their work. It's a must-see for every art lover, but do remember to check the museum's website for opening times when planning your visit.

mo.lt



© Archivio Mario De Biasi / courtesy Admira, Milano



Photo by Francesco Galli © La Biennale di Venezia



Words by Olga Dolina
Publicity photos



Casa dei Tre Oci presents **Mario De Biasi: Photographs 1947-2003**, a grand retrospective of the famed Italian photographer and storyteller (treoci.org; until January 9, 2022). From a neorealist amateur photographer who captured on film the devastation of the post-war 1950s and the national desire for rebirth, De Biasi eventually built a career as both a photojournalist for *Epoca* magazine and as a sublime artist. He covered great historical events and exotic travels, investigated five continents, photographed freezing Siberian landscapes and tongues of lava flowing from an erupting Etna, and captured scenes of everyday life, human nature, and anonymous faces. De Biasi also created portraits of powerful characters and celebrities such as Sophia Loren, Brigitte Bardot, Federico Fellini, and Maria Callas, all of which are on display at the Casa dei Tre Oci.

With 112 participants from 46 countries, the **Biennale Architettura 2021** – the 17th International Architecture Exhibition (labiennale.org; until November 21) – kicks off across Venice and its main venues: the Giardini, Arsenale, and Forte Marghera. The exhibition's theme, 'How will we live together?', speaks for itself. It reflects and aims to respond to the challenges that contemporary architecture and the world are facing. Among various highlights is the participation of *Studio Other Spaces*, led by renowned artist Olafur Eliasson and architect Sebastian Behmann. The biennale also intersects with the 15th International Festival of Contemporary Dance, curated by famous choreographer Wayne McGregor. Dancers will present choreographic excerpts inspired by materials and themes from the architecture exhibition.

Il Palazzo Experimental, a new boutique hotel facing the blue waters of the Giudecca Canal, invites guests for a stay in the artsy Dorsoduro district (Fondamenta Zattere Al Ponte Lungo, Dorsoduro 1412; palazzoexperimental.com; prices from EUR 341). The gripping interior of this 32-room property was designed by Dorothee Meilichzon. The Renaissance-era palace blends playful contemporary details with Venetian elements such as Scarpa marble terrazzo flooring, arched motifs, sombre carved woods, and a Venetian-inspired colour palette of terracotta, sky blue, pale yellow, silvery grey, and cream. The oasis-like secret garden provides welcoming repose along with the *Experimental Cocktail Club* bar. Filled with marble accents and antique mirrors, it was designed by the bright star of modern Italian design Cristina Celestino.

New residential quarter



A developer with strong roots

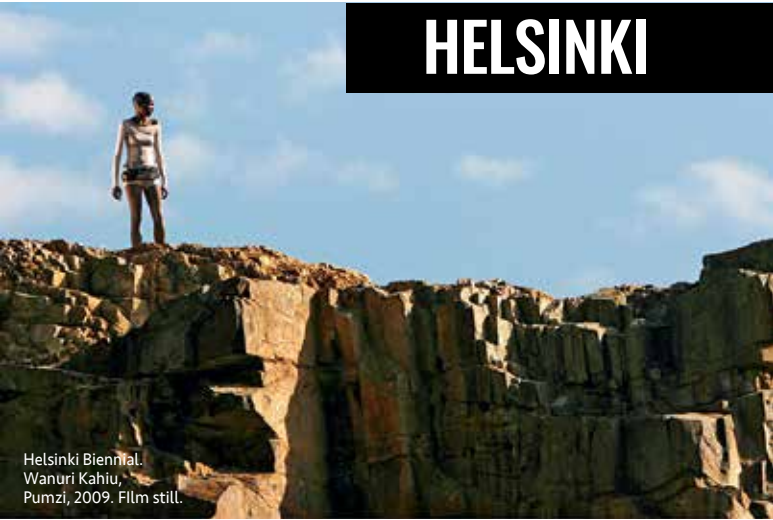
Vastint Latvia is one of the leading real estate developers in Latvia. Since 2003, the company has excelled in the management of portfolio properties and the development of commercial real estate, including residential development and sales.

Vastint Latvia is part of the Vastint Group — an international real estate organisation with more than 30 years experience in Europe.

VASTINT
www.vastint.eu



Photo by Camilla Bloom, Torikortteit



Courtesy of the Artist



© Design Museum's Image Archive



This summer the capital welcomes its first **Helsinki Biennial** of contemporary art, which takes place on charming and secluded Vallisaari Island, a former military zone in the Helsinki archipelago that has been turned into an island of art (helsinkibiennaali.fi; June 12 until September 26). Under the title ‘The Same Sea’, the exhibition presents 40 international artists from all over the world, including new works by such acclaimed names as Katharina Grosse and Paweł Althamer. Almost one third of the works of art are displayed outdoors along trails, thus creating a unique fusion between art and maritime nature and engaging the audience with the island’s history and biodiversity. The rest is exhibited inside historical gunpowder cellars and old residential buildings as well as a variety of spaces on the mainland. The biennial also reflects on time and change, boundaries and identities, interconnections and empathy.

Design Museum Helsinki is currently hosting **Iittala – Kaleidoscope: From Nature to Culture** (Korkeavuorenkatu 23; designmuseum.fi; until September 19). The exhibition is dedicated to the 140-year history of the iconic Finnish glass and tableware brand, which can be found in nearly every Finnish home. After exploring the archives and more than 10,000 items from the museum’s collection, the exhibition’s curators – architect Florencia Colombo and industrial designer Ville Kokkonen – brought together the company’s history and the development of Finnish society. The event is built around 30 themes with gripping stories of people, objects, and techniques as well as ideas about local nature and concepts of beauty.

Last summer, Helsinki treated gourmets to an open-air food court at the central Senate Square. This year, the picturesque setting of Kasarmitori Square is being turned into the spacious **Kasarmitori summer terrace**, which will feature 12 pop-up restaurants offering exciting culinary experiences and seasonal delicacies (kasarmitorinkesa.hel.fi; until August 15). Global flavours from Mexico to Asia and from the Nordic region to the Middle East will be available all day long, from breakfast until late evening. In line with the urban charm of the Kasarmitori area, the terrace’s unifying ‘urban allotment garden’ concept will be spiced up with artistic and maritime touches. The outdoor summer terrace is expected to open on Helsinki Day on 12 June.



◀ Varvara Stepanova, No title (collage with cars), 1930. IVAM, Institut Valencià d' Art Modern, Generalitat.



Voltereta Bienvenido a Manhattan restaurant



Palacio Santa Clara, Autograph Collection Hotel

The **Mechanical and Technical Imaginaries** exhibition brings together nearly 300 works by world-renowned artists from the IVAM institute of modern art collection (Guillem de Castro, 118; until October 17; ivam.es). They’re united by the theme of imaginary creations and technical mechanisms accompanying the industrial and scientific culture of their time. Revolutionary achievements of the past two centuries were and continue to be reimagined in various artistic practices: collage art, geometric abstraction, photography, installations, video art. Technological inventions have even inspired artists to turn their studios into experimental laboratories. Spread across ten thematic rooms, the exhibition highlights work by Alexander Calder, Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, Francis Picabia, László Moholy-Nagy, Gustavs Klucis, Bernd and Hilla Becher, and a variety of local and contemporary artists.

Voltereta Bienvenido a Manhattan restaurant is an interactive experience that takes diners on a secret journey (Calle Isabel la Católica 11; volteretarestaurante.com). Its concept was inspired by the dazzling atmosphere of 1920s New York City, an era of dry law and clandestine speakeasies selling illegal alcohol. These venues were usually camouflaged by various façades, just as the new *Voltereta* is hidden behind a book and record store. Customers are first invited to take a quiz, to which they respond via laser object detection sensors. Based on their answers, a video-mapping experience is then created with a unique combination of colours, speeds, light, and sound for a one-of-a-kind visual story. The actual restaurant features jazzy rhythms, a great setting, and a Manhattan-inspired menu.

A new property of the *Marriott Autograph Collection*, the **Hotel Palacio Santa Clara**, entices with old-time nostalgia and modernista spirit (Calle Pascual y Genis 22; marriott.com; prices from EUR 90). The building was designed in the Catalan style by renowned local architect Francisco Javier Goerlich in 1916. With preserved original features, the interiors reflect the historic architectural style in lush curved lines, harmonious organic motifs, and rich textures. The hotel occupies nine floors and 60 rooms and is located in the heart of the city centre near the lively Carrer Colón shopping artery and the verdant Turia Gardens. The *Santa Clara* offers a cosy outdoor swimming pool surrounded by orange trees and with views of the picturesque skyline, as well as the rooftop *Dome Bar* with exotic wallpapers and signature cocktails.

Words by **Līga Valko**
Publicity photos and by *F64*



MY JŪRMALA

Tina Graudiņa is currently one of Latvia's 'hottest' athletes. So far, her best accomplishments have been qualifying for the Tokyo Olympic Games, becoming the European Champion in 2019, and winning the U.S. national collegiate championship this year.

The 23-year-old beach volleyball player has lived her whole life in the beachside spa city of Jūrmala, which is located just a 20-minute drive from Riga, the Latvian capital. Graudiņa believes that her love for beach volleyball was inspired by living so near to the Baltic Sea and regularly visiting its beautiful beaches with her family. Right now, Graudiņa is studying political science at the University of Southern California and playing beach volleyball for the school's team while simultaneously representing Latvia on the international stage. We sat down with her to hear about some of her favourite places in Jūrmala.



Fly to
Riga
from
€29
one way

Lielupes Grīvas Pļavas Nature Reserve

This place is very special because it's so different from the rest of Jūrmala, which is mostly defined by the beach. Here, however, the beautiful meadows next to the Lielupe River let you feel like you've been transported deep into the countryside. Graudiņa likes to take a walk here when she needs a break from the beach.



Ragakāpa Nature Park

In this magical park, you walk through a beautiful pine forest only to suddenly step out onto the beach. Then walk a few minutes to the right, and you encounter the Lielupe River entering the sea, which is quite a spectacular view and impresses visitors with the power of nature.



Jomas iela

Although this central street is the most popular location in Jūrmala, Graudiņa loves it because of Dzintari Forest Park, which is located at one end of the street and offers many opportunities for active leisure. At the other end of the street, the Majori train station is unique for being so close to the water, which makes for an enticing view when the train arrives. Last but not least, Jomas iela also hosts many cafés, stores, and boutiques.



Bicycling from Dzintari to Melluži

Graudiņa admires the historical architecture of this area and the atmosphere of families enjoying summer. Bicycling is one of the best modes of transportation in Jūrmala. On your way back, you can bike along the seashore.

July 16 - September 5

RIGA JUR MALA

MUSIC FESTIVAL

MUSIC
IS IN OUR
NATURE!

20
21

BOOK WITH
CONFIDENCE!

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Tbilisi IN 24 HOURS

Words by Olga Dolina
Publicity photos and
by *iStock*

This city is ready
to share its recipe
for charisma and
teach you how to
love every aspect
of life.



WHERE TO DINE

The *Shavi Lomi*, or Black Lion, restaurant is filled with the vigour, charisma, and passion of the Georgian character. The restaurant's name and the massive mural of the lion that adorns the artsy, green garden is an homage to Niko Pirosmani, a key figure in Georgian primitive art. Chef Meriko Gubeladze, who is a revolutionary on the Georgian food scene, has ruled in the *Shavi Lomi* kitchen since 2011 and gracefully mixes improvised ingredients and vivid, modern solutions.

28 Zurab Kvividze St.



Photo by Nick Panashvili

WHY NOT

The six-hour off-the-beaten-track Brutalist tour is designed for urban explorers who are particularly keen on Modernist and Brutalist architecture. The tour's highlights include 1970s residential housing blocks with vertigo-inducing sky bridges, a Soviet Constructivist gem known as 'Georgian Tetris' (actually a series of peculiar overlapping rectangles that form the Bank of Georgia headquarters), and the monumental national symbol called the Chronicle of Georgia.

brutaltours.com

CLASSICS NOT TO MISS

The town of Mtskheta awaits discovery only 20 kilometres northwest of Tbilisi. Established in the 5th century BCE, Christianity was proclaimed the official religion here in 337 CE. Mtskheta is crowned by three UNESCO-listed monuments that embody Georgian medieval Christian architecture. Among them is the 6th-century Jvari Monastery, whose appearance has hardly changed since its founding. It sits atop a cliff and creates a harmonious dialogue between architecture and nature.



© Shavi Lomi

WHERE TO STAY

When visiting Georgia, staying overnight or choosing a longer escapist retreat up in the mountains is a must. The latest newcomer to the design-meets-culture *Adjara Group's* accommodation collection is *Rooms Hotel Kokhta*. Embraced by wilderness, greenery, and breathtaking mountain peaks, the hotel's concept was inspired by its location at the Bakuriani Ski Resort and majestic nature. Rooms are furnished with locally designed and produced furniture, sculptural works of art, and organic materials such as weathered wood, stone, and clay. Prices from EUR 79. Kokhta-Mitarbi Resort, Bakuriani; roomshotels.com



WHERE TO SHOP

Wine Factory No. 1 enriches the laid-back and bohemian side of Tbilisi with a creative mix of modern shops, food courts, art spaces, inviting open-air nooks, and the charming atmosphere of a centuries-old location. An actual wine factory operated here from 1896 until the 1980s, and several years ago the complex was carefully restored to become a magnet for gastronomy, fashion, and culture enthusiasts.

1 Vasil Petriashvili St.



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... TO POMPEII

A spectacular witness to Roman civilisation



Words by Ilze Vitola
Photos by iStock



Mount Vesuvius looms over the ruins of Pompeii, Europe's most compelling archaeological site, reminding all of the destruction of this once-thriving city. Sitting on the Bay of Naples in the region of Campania, Pompeii (Pompei in Italian) was established around the 9th–8th century BCE by an Italic people known as the Osci, but it soon became governed by the Greeks and, for a short time, by the Etruscans. The adjacent Sarno River and the volcanic soil fuelled rapid agricultural development. In the 5th century BCE, the city became part of Samnite territory and experienced an incredible expansion. That was terminated by the Romans, who conquered southern Italy, including the Samnite area and Pompeii. From then on, Pompeii has been strongly linked with the Romans.

Owing to the Sarno River, Pompeii became a crucial trade point, exporting its natural bounties all across the Roman Empire. The population increased, as did the standard of living. During the 1st century CE, the city had it all – from basilicas to amphitheatres, public fountains, bathhouses, taverns, shops, and bakeries.

But the city's heyday came to a tragic end. The first hint of looming disaster appeared in 62 CE, when a violent earthquake overwhelmed Pompeii, destroying many houses. While still recovering from this calamity, Mount Vesuvius woke up. On August 24 (although the exact date is still disputed) in the year 79 CE, the volcano spewed strong showers of ash, lapilli, and lava on the surrounding area. The city was buried, along with the elegant houses and elaborate villas that lined its paved streets.

Pompeii's ruins were first discovered in 1594 by the architect Domenico Fontana, who stumbled upon them when digging a canal. News about the ruins spread across Europe, and the site was soon frequented by treasure seekers. Organised archaeological excavation began in the 19th century. Archaeologists even uncovered jars of preserved fruit and loaves of bread. The discovery process continues today. Last year saw the House of Lovers (Casa degli Amanti) open again after being closed to the public for decades. Other highlights include the 90-room Villa of the Mysteries (Villa dei Misteri), the oldest Roman amphitheatre, bath complexes, and more. Located just a 35-minute train ride from Naples, Pompeii is well worth the trip, and not just for history buffs.

pompeionline.net

LIGHT UP THE PARTY

COCKTAILS WITH RIGA BLACK BALSAM



ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION HAS A NEGATIVE EFFECT. SELLING, PURCHASING
AND HANDING OVER TO AN UNDER-AGE PERSON ARE PROHIBITED.

Style by Ieva Čečina
Publicity photos and
courtesy of F64

Summer in the countryside



Lēnas Manor in Nīkrāce administrative parish, which was once a hunting lodge and weekend retreat for local aristocrats.

Lazy days and long, warm evenings. Peace and quiet. The proximity of nature letting us appreciate the beauty of simple things and simply enjoy life here and now.



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*Max Mara
Weekend*,
EUR 309



Cotton hat with
floral motif,
& *Other Stories*,
EUR 29



Sunglasses,
Marella,
EUR 127



Oriental
necklace,
*Max Mara
Weekend*,
EUR 85



Striped cotton bag,
& *Other Stories*, EUR 69



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Home*, EUR 34.99



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Bloomingville,
EUR 485

Words by Lana Jūra
Photo by *iStock*

Discover Sicilian Baroque

At the foot of Mount Etna and facing the Ionian Sea lies the city of Catania, a Sicilian monument to rich history, strong personality, and beautiful Baroque architecture.

Catania, a UNESCO World Heritage site, has served as the cradle to several civilisations. The pages of its cultural history have been written by the Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Normans, Spanish, and others who over the centuries have dressed this city in ornateness. Here, even the Baroque style speaks a particularly extravagant architectural language.

Motifs of the refined, decorative Baroque style arrived in Sicily in the early 17th century, a few decades later than in Rome and other large cities of continental Italy. However, the local development of the style received a strong and unexpected impulse in the form of the devastating Val di Noto earthquake of 1693, which destroyed hundreds of Sicilian villages and cities, including Catania.

After that catastrophe, the city rose anew from the ruins. A great majority of the Baroque heritage that survives to the present day – churches, palaces, residences – are the result of the massive post-earthquake reconstruction. By the first half of the 18th century, as the pace of construction began to slow, a new form of the Sicilian Baroque style had emerged. Taking inspiration from Sicilian traditions, many local architects had begun to personalise their work, saturating it with even more decorative elements.

Artistically, Sicilian Baroque is dominated by a wealth of masks, angels, floral motifs, ornate columns and balconies, intricate wrought iron elements, and grandiose ceremonial staircases. The typical construction material is natural lava stone, whose grey-black tones lend themselves well to dynamic, playful compositions of light and shadow, as any careful observer can see throughout Catania.

Fly to
Catania
from
€169
roundtrip



HERE ARE SOME OF THE CITY'S MOST IMPORTANT SITES

Palazzo Biscari

This is the first majestic star of Sicilian Baroque to greet visitors who arrive in the city's historical centre from the sea. The grandiose, ornately decorated private palazzo was completed in 1763 by patron of the arts and archaeologist Prince of Biscari V, Ignazio Paternò-Castello. The guide who leads your tour through the palazzo may very well be a descendant of the hospitable Biscari family, which still manages the property. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was once a guest here, and in 2008 Coldplay filmed its music video for 'Violet Hill' here as well. Via Museo Biscari, 10; palazzobiscari.it

Via Crociferi

The Baroque heart of Catania beats loudest along the Via Crociferi, one of the oldest streets in the city's historical centre. It boasts a unique collection of 18th-century Baroque architecture, including a number of sacred buildings: the Chiesa di San Benedetto, the Chiesa di San Francesco Borgia, the Chiesa di San Giuliano, and the Chiesa di San Camillo as well as the Collegio dei Gesuiti and Villa Cerami, which houses the University of Catania Law Department. This vivid street has fascinated many cinema directors who have immortalised it in film, such as Franco Zeffirelli in the drama *Storia di una capinera* (Sparrow) and Mauro Bolognini in *Il bell'Antonio* starring Marcello Mastroianni and Claudia Cardinale. Via Crociferi

Palazzo Gravina-Cruyllas

This historical structure sits on San Francesco d'Assisi Square just a few steps from the Via Crociferi. The Baroque-style building with a typical dark façade was built in the 17th century on the remains of an ancient building destroyed by the earthquake. Over the centuries it has undergone significant renovations and modifications, and today it is regarded as a mirror of architectural transformation. Because this is the birthplace of the Italian composer Vincenzo Bellini, known as the Swan of Catania and the composer of the opera *Norma*, a museum in his honour has been installed in the building. Since 1994, the palace also has a museum devoted to the work of the renowned sculptor Emilio Greco. Piazza San Francesco d'Assisi, 3



The Sustainability Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai

Creating the future

Dubai Expo –
a new world in
the desert

Words by *Olga Dolina*
Photo by *Shutterstock*

‘Connecting Minds, Creating the Future’ is the leading theme of the long-awaited Expo 2020 Dubai, a world fair celebrating human achievements, diverse cultures, unique architecture, and inspiring innovations.

The history of world fairs, which emerged to showcase the industrial achievements of nations, began with the Great Exhibition in London in 1851. An initiative of Prince Albert, it marked the sweeping development of design, technology, culture, education, trade, and public relations. The tradition continues today, with World Expos held every five years. They’ve unveiled some of the greatest achievements in various fields, from the telephone to *Heinz* ketchup. Above all, the expos have always stood out with groundbreaking architecture: the Crystal Palace in London, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Atomium in Brussels. With its ambitious architectural and technological scale, Expo 2020 Dubai continues and surpasses this tradition.

Expo 2020 will inhabit a vast area the size of 613 football fields, divided into three thematic districts: Opportunity, Sustainability, and Mobility. More than 90 uniquely designed pavilions will be presented by the world’s leading architects and designers, and after

the expo 80% of the materials used in their construction will be reused to build permanent structures in the new District 2020. Al Wasl Dome, the expo’s grand central point, features a voluminous cupola with the largest 360-degree projection surface in the world. British architect Asif Khan designed the expo’s three huge yet seemingly weightless entry portals. Their woven carbon-fibre form resembles *mashrabiya*, a traditional element in Islamic design, thus reflecting the expo spirit of traditions highlighted by technologies.

The pavilion representing the hosting United Arab Emirates was designed by Santiago Calatrava, its wing-like shape inspired by the national symbol, the falcon. *BIG* and Bjarke Ingels created the Opportunity Pavilion with a flat roof, arched underside, and plant-filled courtyard. The Mobility Pavilion, with the world’s largest passenger lift, was designed by *Foster+Partners* in the impressive shape of a clover leaf. *Grimshaw Architects* presents the Sustainability Pavilion as a series of imposing cosmic satellite-dish structures. But in spite of this breathtaking imagination and scope, they all tell the same story: it’s worth exploring the horizons that drive human progress.

October 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022; expo2020dubai.com



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The era of well-being

The pandemic has thrown our work-life balance into disarray. What can we expect coming out the other side?

Words by
James Taylor
Photo courtesy of
Michael Danielsen

For years now, well-being has been a growing trend across industries. From travel to the workplace, people are becoming increasingly aware that taking care of our well-being is one of the most important things we can do. But at the beginning of 2020, the pandemic threw our worlds into chaos, upending our work-life balance. It looked like the effect on our mental health would be dire – but more than a year in, how have we been doing?

‘As soon as the lockdowns began, everyone was talking about how people were going to suffer, how they had to stay at home and couldn’t go to work. It was like people were being sentenced to imprisonment, having to spend all this extra time with their families. Which is a really strange way to look at it,’ says Danish psychologist Michael Danielsen. ‘Like a lot of places, I think Denmark tends to favour extroverts rather than introverts. If you’re an introvert, however, this situation suits you quite well.’

Danielsen is the chief psychologist and co-founder of the Wellbeing Institute, an organisation based in Copenhagen that works with companies to improve the well-being of their employees. Working as a psychologist throughout the pandemic, he has seen firsthand how it has affected us – and for introverts, it has been a blessing in disguise. ‘I’ve talked to so many people who have told me that they never realised that they didn’t have to be so busy all the time and are actually accomplishing more thanks to the decrease in distractions.’

Danielsen is not minimising the effects this pandemic has had or saying that people haven’t felt restricted, because they have. Instead, the pandemic has

given us an opportunity to find out more about how we interact with the world around us.

‘Whether you’re an introvert or an extrovert, the pandemic has highlighted the differences in our preferences,’ says Danielsen. While many introverts have thrived, extroverts have struggled. But for both groups, the awareness of well-being has increased as mental health experts across the world have repeated the same advice: ‘Be kind to yourself, give yourself a break.’

As the debate about remote work, wellbeing, and mental health swirls around us, looking to strike a balance that’s suitable for all, Danielsen reminds us of our biases as well: ‘More than half the people employed in Denmark are blue-collar workers who have been working as usual this entire time. It’s something I’ve become more aware of throughout the pandemic, that we tend to only talk about a certain group of people.’

It’s an important point to note as we move toward the end of the pandemic. Awareness of what well-being means for us as individuals has been enhanced by the pandemic, but the broader discussion should include all people: introverts, extroverts, doers, thinkers, and feelers; those whose work-life balance will change, and those whose won’t.

But will this growing awareness of well-being affect the way we travel as well? Danielsen comments: ‘I think we will see a decrease in very hectic and planned activities, the need to be doing something all the time. People will tend to travel for shorter periods. The weekend getaway to Rome, Paris, or London won’t be cancelled anytime soon.’

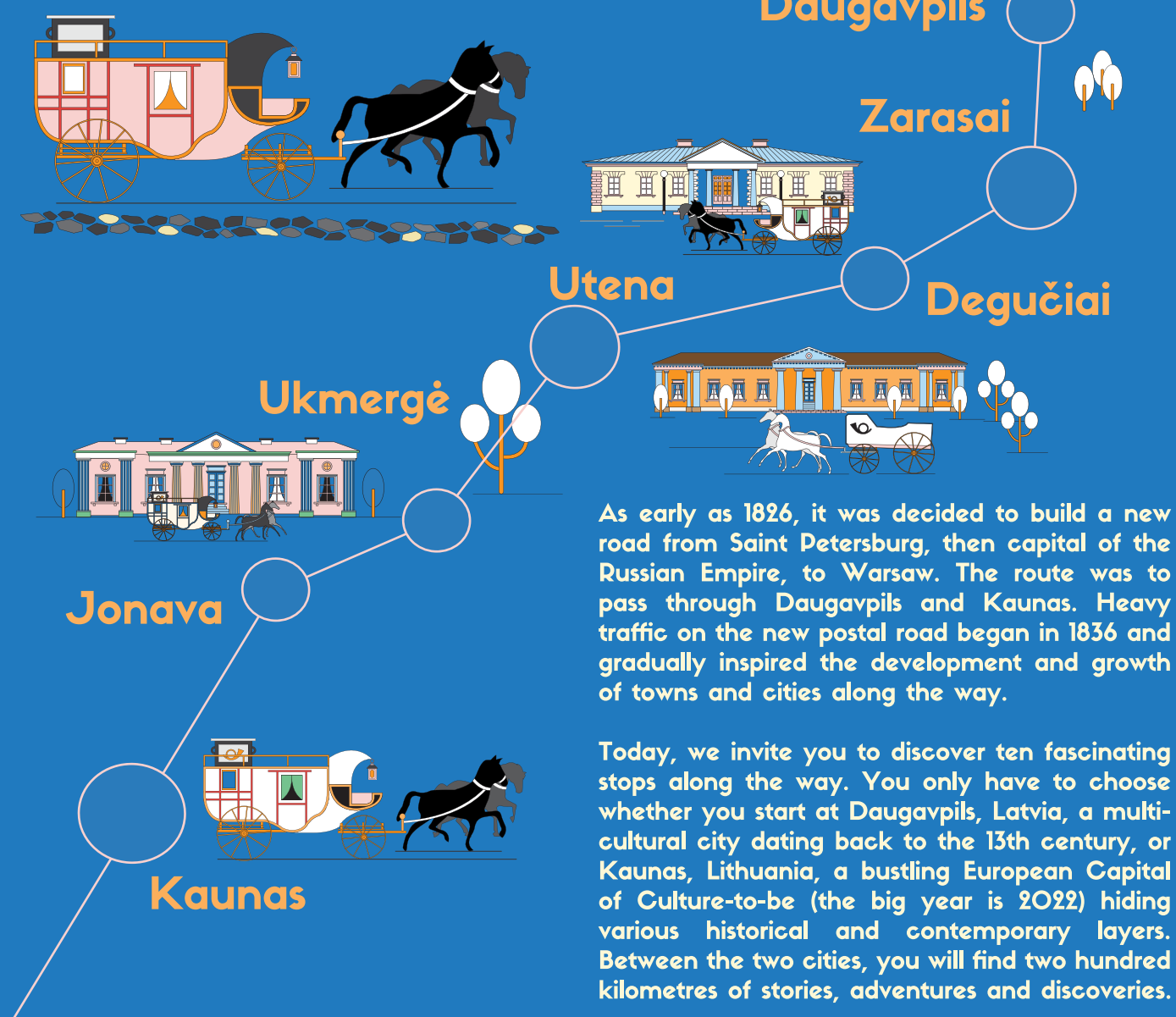


Michael Danielsen

is the chief psychologist and co-founder of the Wellbeing Institute in Copenhagen. The organisation works with employers around the country, doing training courses to help employees find joy in what they do at work. An experienced manager and a chief psychologist of the Psychiatric Foundation, he’s one of Denmark’s leading experts when it comes to well-being in the workplace.

AN IDEA FOR A TRIP:

FROM KAUNAS TO DAUGAVPILS BY THE OLD POSTAL ROUTE



Project "Cross-border Increase in Regional Cultural Heritage Tourism (CIRCUIT)" No. LL326 is funded under the Interreg V-A Latvia-Lithuania Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020.

The aim of the project is to promote cross-border tourism in Lithuania and Latvia by preserving cultural heritage and publicizing tourism services.

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Into nature

Be it hiking, camping, or climbing, here are some cool gadgets that will come in handy during your adventure.



EXPLORATION GAME

Geocaching

It's a little hard to describe exactly what geocaching is. It's a game, it's an adventure, and it has a social networking twist as well. But once you start, it's hard to stop. The thrill of finding secret messages, exploring the world, and placing challenges for other users becomes an obsession. And you can do it anywhere in the world.

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Words by Viesturs Kundziņš
Publicity photos

HAND GUIDE

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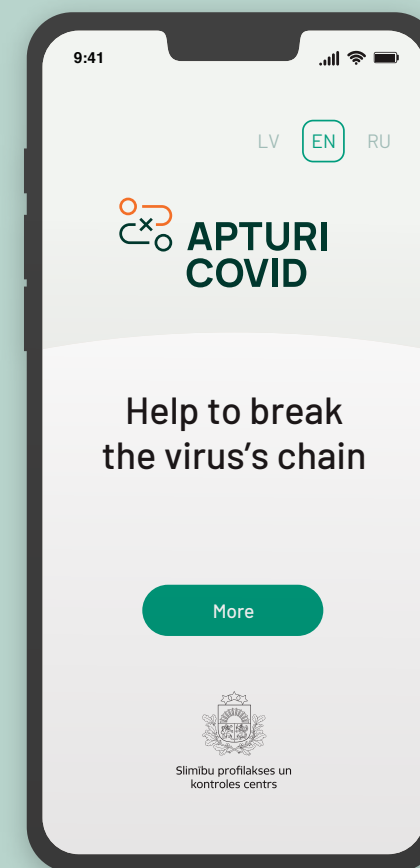
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Life by the sea

Escape the stress of the city and enjoy seasonal seafood with an amazing view to match.



Northern seafood at Sjømagasinet restaurant in Oslo.

The continent of Europe is surrounded by the Atlantic and Arctic oceans and the North, Black, Mediterranean, and Baltic seas, each of which is subdivided into smaller seas and straits. These waters supply the continent with the freshest sea morsels, which are the perfect ingredient for a balmy summer evening.

The North Sea touches the coasts of the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Germany and even reaches as far as Scotland. The sea has led Norway to become the globe’s second-largest seafood exporter, spoiling the world with top-quality mussels, shellfish, Arctic cod, salmon, and more, which, thanks to the clear, cold waters, grow more slowly here and preserve their freshness longer. Traditional Norwegian seafood meals include smoked salmon, gravlax, king crab, and smoked Arctic char. The North Sea, or Noordzee, also plays a crucial role in Dutch cuisine, proven by the numerous herring stalls peppered around Dutch cities and the *kibbeling* (cod pieces fried in batter) that satisfy the country’s sun-flushed beachgoers.

The Mediterranean diet, regarded as one of the healthiest in the world, would, naturally, be impossible without the Mediterranean Sea. Of course, the freshest of Mediterranean seafood can be found in the coastal cities, from a hearty fish stew (*suquet de peix*) in Barcelona to *spaghetti alle vongole* in Naples.

The best way to enjoy marine foods is by gazing at the waters they come from. But the harsh reality is that many coastal spots tend to rely on the virtue of their serene locations and not so much on the quality and innovation of their dishes. We’ve found a few restaurants that have both: the catch and the scenery.

The best way to enjoy marine foods is by gazing at the waters they come from

Words by Ilze Vitola
Publicity photo

RESTAURANTS WORTH TRAVELLING FOR

Agua in Barcelona

This breezy, elegant restaurant is located right on the beach of La Barceloneta, the city’s bustling beach area. Alongside an expensive view of the coastline, the restaurant offers several fresh seafood dishes (including an exceptional seafood paella for two) without pretension or extortion. Although rooted in the Mediterranean diet, the restaurant also dishes up delicate meat and veggie plates. Passeig Marítim de la Barceloneta, 30; restauranteargua.com

Il Transatlantico in Naples

This smart seafood restaurant is located on a peninsula just steps from the Castel dell’Ovo. The spacious terrace and large windows of this establishment open onto the waterfront, offering diners exquisite Neapolitan seafood dishes along with a spectacular view. Via Luculliana, 15; transatlanticonapoli.com

Sjømagasinet in Oslo

Sitting on the waterfront in Oslofjord, *Sjømagasinet* is a temple of seasonal and sustainable Northern seafood. The venue features a restaurant, wine bar, seafood bar, and deli so you can choose the format that best suits your occasion. Almost all of the mains served in the restaurant are charcoal-grilled. Tjuvholmen allé 14; sjomagasinet.no

HARD
SELTZER
BY
Moskovskaya
VODKA



EXPLOSIVELY
refreshing

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION HAS A NEGATIVE EFFECT.
SELLING, PURCHASING AND HANDING OVER TO AN
UNDER-AGE PERSON ARE PROHIBITED.

Words and photos by
Felicity Byrnes
Illustration by Agnese Tauriga

A MODERN-DAY ODYSSEY



On a scorching Wednesday afternoon, we wind our way through the blazing-white hamlet of Marpissa on Paros, a tiny village of 100 slumbering post-lunch locals. Not an eddy stirs; it's so quiet and still the only thrum on the air is the rat-a-tat-tat of a weaving loom, indicating we're closing in on our mark. That, and a small sign proclaiming 'Mrs. Marigoula', is how we find this artisan's unlikely outpost, weaving on a 150-year-old loom rugs that are shipped all over the world. She has no website, is in no brochure, but the local grapevine criss-crossing the island like a silky web will funnel you here – if you ask the right people.

Inside Mrs. Marigoula's whitewashed house, it's an oasis of calm. Soothing zephyrs kiss and tickle through the open windows, framing the island of Ios lying like a sun-drunk cat on the horizon. Over a 16th-century door, a lace curtain flicks up its hem like a can-can dancer, the floor polished smooth from 400 years of Mrs. Marigoula's ancestors' infinite footsteps. 'My family has lived in this house for twenty generations,' she explains over the hypnotic movements of her loom. She pauses, gesturing at the walls. 'They're all here,' she smiles, 'everyone,' which explains the almost tangible energy, itself a plaited tapestry of lifetimes and legacies of invisible love.



Pretty as a picture. In Naoussa, follow the paths to the water for the best in dining and sunset views.



Twilight in Naoussa before the people come out to play in the maze-like streets.



A curtain flutters in the cool oasis of Mrs. Marigoula's home in Marpissa.



A bird's-eye view from the mast of the Yin Yang Concept while sailing Paros.

For a stitch in time we're Greek, a part of this lazy afternoon tableau of sweet, simple life

IT'S EASY TO BELIEVE THERE'S A TOUCH OF MAGIC AFOOT IN A COUNTRY WREATHED IN MYTHS AND LEGENDS. Just finding Mrs. Marigoula seems a miracle and is a trip highlight on a modern-day four-island odyssey packed with high points that sizzle like Zeus' thunderbolts. She greets visitors warmly, sharing stories about her ancestors escaping pirates through a secret door in the fireplace (Barbarossa ravaged these shores), her grandmother being paid for weavings in fish, and a trading ancestor's 200-year-old crystal from Turkey, which is proudly displayed in her home.

Mrs. Marigoula's wares are soft as Jason's fabled golden fleece. The wool is procured from her brother's farm, left to soak in the ocean for a night, followed by a shampoo, and spun into yarn by her mother. As my children feast on homemade cookies and explore her spotless three-room house, I choose a rug among the cushions and bags for sale (she also does custom creations with your own selected colours), aware that in every strand is something priceless – Greek hospitality.

Ah, Paros. Looking at my itinerary, which would feature Santorini next, I was kind of feeling sorry for Paros. I mean, she was destined to be the support

act before the main star takes the stage. How could she possibly compete with the supermodel looks of the Cyclades poster-girl island, or the *chic bijou* of Antiparos, or the swaggering size of Naxos, the Cyclades' largest island? And then... she packs an underdog punch, a total knockout with glorious beaches, one of the prettiest *Choras* ("Towns") in the Cyclades, family friendly beach clubs with kids on the prowl, and a community that stuns with its interlinked connections.

The next night, we luck into eating at one of the best seafood restaurants on Paros, *Halaris Fish Tavern* in the enchanting fishing village of Piso Livadi. From a waterside table, we stretch feet out over the marina as the kids go inside to investigate the 'fish drawer' revealing the catch of the day bathing on ice. The fish flits from boat (the owner's husband is a fisherman) to plate via The Drawer – a lottery of the sea world that day.

As they return with fish-y tales, I notice it. A cushion. A cushion whose duck-egg blue, fuchsia, and oyster hues could be the sister to my rug at home. I question the owner, and sure enough, it's a Mrs. Marigoula creation. Not only are the cushion and my rug related, but Mrs. Marigoula and the owner are sisters. She also grew up in the small house in Marpissa, and we discuss the crystal, the ancestor pictures adorning the walls, and the fireplace escape hatch. 'You've been to my house!' laughs the owner of the *Halaris Fish Tavern*. Likewise, we dine at the brand-new *Taberna Agyra* in Drios and purchase olive oil made by the women's

uncle. The following day, we take a cooking class, and not just *any* cooking class. We're honoured to be the first customers of a new venture by Achilleas, a former restaurateur and the owner of the chic *Flora Apartments* who, it transpires, made the olive oil. Now Achilleas offers cooking classes to guests of their boutique property. So, as a family we learn to make a dish called 'hidden lamb', adding vegetables and herbs from the garden to the lamb before snorkelling at the property's private beach while the meal roasts, and then returning to feast on the porch. We clink glasses in our still-wet swimmers, and for a stitch in time we're Greek, a part of this lazy afternoon tableau of sweet, simple life.

But who made the meticulous rock walls in Achilleas' garden? Well, that would be Captain Nikos, a former cruise-ship captain who has returned to his Paros roots and bought a rare mini clipper. We impersonate salty sea dogs aboard the *Yin Yang Concept*, visiting pirate caves and deserted beaches, our sails bolstered by a gentle *meltemi* wind that has sent Greeks on adventures for thousands of years.

ALMOST EVERYONE WHO VISITS PAROS ENDS UP IN NAOUSSA, a town with a maze of paved stones, where falling bougainvillea flowers litter the walkways like bridal rose petals, visitors splurge, and cats recline royally on doorsteps. It's easy to wonder if this pedestrian town, though charming, is perhaps a caricature of itself. But then you catch an echo of how Naoussa used to be, clinging on like a life raft in a sea of tourists. In this case, my husband spies

a door slightly ajar, a 17th-century church wedged between two buzzing restaurants. It's a blink-and-you-miss it moment for most passing by unawares. We enter and the interior is silent, punctuated with the glow of candles and heavy with the smell of incense. Footsteps away from the happy hubbub of diners, we enjoy a cloistered moment, a brief connection to an older Greece. And this is a fact with the Cyclades: gems like this pop up regularly, pliantly rewarding even the most delicate dig beneath the surface.

If a superstar like Santorini (don't worry, the main act is coming) is akin to a buzzing hive and Paros a gentle drum stroke, then Antiparos (only a ten-minute, ten-euro ferry ride from Paros) is a whispering heartbeat. 'I treat this like it's a community of Paros,' says Magda of the chic *Kastro Apartments*. But actually, Antiparos is a world away, that ferry ride akin to crossing the Rubicon.

FOR A START, MANY VISITORS, ENSNARED BY THE SIREN SONG OF PAROS, SIMPLY DON'T MAKE IT TO ANTIPAROS. But when you do, instead of a traditional old town, a long, sinuous pedestrian path flanked by tasteful boutiques awaits. Every day at sunset, a promenade of yacht owners takes place, the discreetly wealthy and families lured by beaches boasting water featuring periwinkle blues to faded teals and pops of ink with enough colour synchronicity to make a stylist swoon. And to score one of the newly renovated rooms at the stylish *Kastro*? Book early. Those in the know secure



It doesn't get any better than this. The warm, crystalline waters of Faneromeni Beach on Antiparos are what summer dreams are made of for mermaids big and small.



Dinner on the line at Pantelis Fish Tavern on Antiparos.



Greece is a paradise for children, and they're welcome here with open arms.

The gods are still smiling with every caress from the constant, blissful Cycladic wind

their spot a year in advance as beds on the island are limited (and don't miss *Kastro's* breakfasts dripping with local delicacies).

It's easy to see why Tom Hanks purchased a house in the hills here. Leaving town, the landscape immediately reverts to raw beauty, almost brutal in its wildness. As you head to the south of the island, where the asphalt turns to dirt, keep driving. Finally, turn off on another dirt track, and that's where you'll find sheltered, sand-fringed Faneromeni Beach, which is like a warm-water aquarium offering epic snorkelling. And ah, the colour... Diving here is like exploding into the nucleus of a multi-faceted gemstone, saturated emerald and cobalt tones easing to a heliotrope haze. It's the kind of water experience that winter dreams are made of. Is this the best beach in the Cyclades? It's a big call, but I'm saying yes.

But there's another treasure waiting after you shake off the salt. Twenty minutes down the road you'll come to St. Georgios, the only other settlement on the island. More importantly, this is the home of *Captain Pipinos*. Come hungry.

Seaside *Captain Pipinos* is an Antiparos institution, and owner Marcos quickly recognises our

seafood yen. Calamares with tentacles like sausages appear, octopus in vinegar sashays across the table, then from the wings arrives the cuttlefish (caught by Marcos' fisherman father in the *Christina*, named after his mother). Not to be outdone, the shrimp with feta, tomato, and parsley dazzles the palette with a flavour-packed pirouette. There's no pretension here, it's all about the explosions of flavour, so fresh and zesty you'll want only one thing... a repeat visit.

The clincher, apart from the fully expansive embrace of a Greek welcome, is the view across the water to the ruins of a temple dedicated to Apollo and tipped to become the most significant archaeological site of the Cyclades. Excavations have only recently begun. Cuttlefish and Apollo. Octopus and a family legacy at *Pipinos*. There's a story behind every bite in this part of the world, and you can't help but feel that the gods are still smiling with every whisper and caress from the constant, blissful Cycladic wind.

WHERE TO NEXT, YOU SAY? HOLD ON TO YOUR AQUATIC CHARIOT, THIS ODYSSEY IS HEADING TO (DRUM ROLL) AN ISLAND THAT NEEDS NO INTRODUCTION: SANTORINI. For many people, Greece *is* Santorini. And it's celebrated for a reason. You've seen the postcards, but nothing prepares one for the smouldering blue and bruised grey of ocean and cliffs, the devastating beauty and sense of *drama* of this distinctive isle.

Arriving by sea, it appears to tremble on the horizon, theatrical caldera precipices plummeting

into the Aegean and sugar-cube houses hanging on like an unstable snow cornice. Viewed from the caldera (west) side of the island, it's this suspension of gravity that gives the island movement, the premonition that at any moment it may tear asunder like the volcanic explosion that created it – a blast so powerful that Santorini ash has been found as far as Canada – and morph into a heaving, breathing beast. And pre Covid, that's what Santorini had become, a seabed-tethered Minotaur. Despite its earthshaking reputation, this is still a small island of only 16,000 residents, with no more than two dozen police at peak season, limited waste and medical facilities (it only recently gained a hospital), and three million visitors in 2019 pushing resources beyond limits. And then... Covid wanted to join the party.

Mayor Antonis Sigalas had a preview of the potential health crisis when Chinese New Year bookings cancelled. Then, watching the pandemic inch towards the isle, 'we closed the island, and we closed it quickly,' he says, slamming access corridors closed. And for the first time since the 1960s, Santorini took a breath.

Even when the island re-opened on July 15, 2020, it remained closed to cruise ships. Previously, up to six ships would drop anchor daily, disgorging an extra 20,000 visitors. Here was a chance for Sigalas to reshape a more sustainable Santorini. 'We were already aware of the problems and had been developing plans and solutions,' he says. 'The pandemic didn't change what we already had

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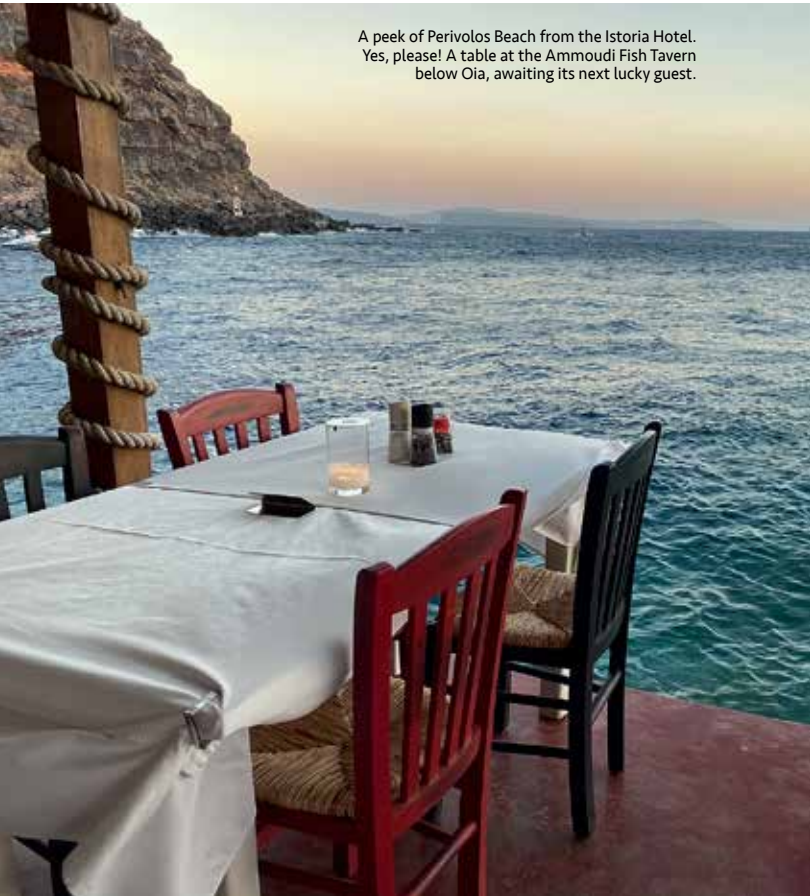
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Megalochori on Santorini is a favourite village for locals seeking some time out.



A subtle nod to Megalochori's seafaring past. Before tourism, all things maritime ruled the island's rhythm.



A peek of Perivolos Beach from the Istoría Hotel. Yes, please! A table at the Ammoudi Fish Tavern below Oia, awaiting its next lucky guest.

Santorini enchants effortlessly, but there are a few tricks to know

in place, but it may have created some room to continue that planning.’ This year, visitors will find the Plastic Free Santorini initiative, a new airport, a new port, and new roads being developed. ‘This is a new era for tourism, not only on Santorini,’ says Lefteris of the *Blue Shades of Greece* bespoke tour company. But while divulging his local haunts, he explains that the problem was guests swarming to all the same places, at the same time. ‘Visitors think Santorini is just the caldera, but last year people stayed longer and discovered that there’s so much more here.’ Instead of island hopping from Santorini’s well-connected port, the trend was to stay a week instead of just three days. They started to explore the south side of the island as well.

This is where we head, to the inland town of Pyrgos built atop a hill riddled with tunnels – former escape routes from pirates (those pirates were a persistent, pesky bunch, and violent). In an alcove, a musician plucks a Greek bouzouki, his soft tune wafting like sound bubbles towards vignettes of daily life: drying laundry, a *yiayia* drinking coffee on her doorstep, cats winding sinuously through alleyways. This is a shy side of Santorini many miss, along with a stroll to the top that reveals a sweeping island vista

best enjoyed with an Aperol Spritz at *Franco’s Café*. But Lefteris has saved his favourite village for last. Just five minutes away and bedecked in a riot of apricot, cerise, and magenta bougainvillea all clamouring for attention, Megalochori is a throwback to Santorini’s halcyon simpler days. ‘Especially during a busy year,’ he muses as we meander with my young daughters hoisted atop shoulders, ‘this is where I come to hear the birds sing.’

Indeed, there is the soundtrack of melodic bird chirp and – silence. Where is everyone? Don’t they know this is also one of the flattest villages on the island?! A wander here is best punctuated by a pause at the recently opened *Alisachni* wine bar/gallery/restaurant. Peruse art followed by a Greek pie stuffed with local greens and a local drop. Or go to the source and visit the family-run Gavalas winery, also in Megalochori.

SANTORINI IS GREECE’S BIGGEST WINE DESTINATION. The drink has coursed through the island’s veins since antiquity (traces were found at the archaeological site of Akrotiri, buried under the volcanic eruption that sank half the island 3600 years ago) and is Greece’s top destination for wine tourism. Within an area of only 76.19 square kilometres, there are at least 18 wineries, which embrace a rare vinification process featuring ground-based vines forming a basket with the grapes growing in the centre, protecting them from the blustering Aegean winds.

While swilling, sniffing, and sipping in the peaceful, lush courtyard of Domaine Sigalas located a few minutes from Oia, I learn that the volcanic soils here are not only resistant to the Phylloxera virus that wiped out most grape vines in Europe, but they also produce unique Aidini, Assyrtiko, and Athiri (white) as well as Mandilaria and Mavrotragano (red) wines. A tipple-by-tipple excursion of the entire island, including rare wine varieties from Greek antiquity, is possible at the *Homeric Wine Café* in the Symposium music and mythology cultural centre. Or explore organic wines at Hatzidakis Winery tucked away in Pyrgos.

Santorini enchants effortlessly, but there are a few tricks to know. For example, book a table at *Ammoudi Fish Tavern*, and time your descent to dinner from the famed (and swamped) vantage point of Oia Castle as the sun sinks in the west. Within ten metres of the 300 stone steps down to Ammoudi Bay you’ll find solitude, with the reward of a stellar dinner at the bottom. Visit Akrotiri, the ‘Minoan Pompeii’ of the Cyclades (although it predates Pompeii by 1500 years), in the cool hour before closing – the undercover archaeological site including three-storey houses is fascinating but sweltering at midday.

And do walk the caldera, where every footstep reveals a new vista (Imerovigli is the caldera’s highest point with spectacular views). Lastly? While sunset is an intense blast of tangerine hues, sunrise wakers are rewarded with a shrimp-coloured sun slowly floating over the lavender Aegean wrapped in gentle dawn light. Set the alarm.

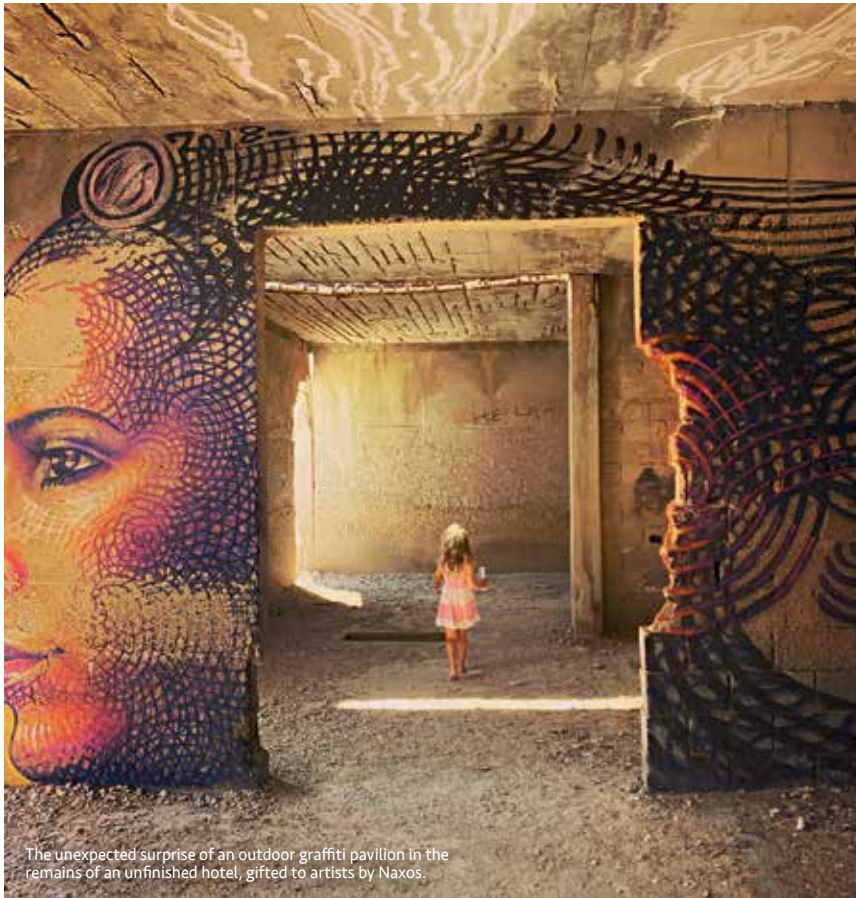
But when in the Cyclades, Poseidon’s call dominates, and all swirls towards the water. While some swim off the black beach at Perivolos (with the *Istoria Hotel*’s sunbed service by a former *Noma* chef), others do what Greeks have done for thousands of years – sail.

IF THERE’S ONE EXPERIENCE TO SPLURGE ON, IT’S A DAY WITH THE Renieris Santorini Sailing Centre. Captain Eleftherios explains the history of the island as we pass Akrotiri Lighthouse, Red Beach, and nose onto a private mooring at Nea Kameni island at the centre of Santorini’s caldera. The caldera may seem calm, but the volcano has not been silenced. Nea Kameni is a live volcanic site that grows annually and is monitored daily. It’s been dormant since 1950, having erupted eight times in 1900 years.

Under a sun burning like a copper eye in a flawless sky, the sea a dazzling sapphire blue, it’s a day in which time pauses. There are no crowds here, ever, just the sizzle of fresh fish as sailor Petros barbeques on the catamaran’s aft. Pool noodles miraculously appear, and my four- and five-year-olds launch off the boat while I float, my mind lazily considering Santorini-as-lost-civilisation-of-Atlantis theories. If we were more time rich, we’d continue further west to Thirasia, the caldera island with few inhabitants and negligible tourism, so far from the tourist track that most don’t even know it exists.

Instead, my children succumb to a fresh-air-and-saltwater stupor, heads nodding on Petros’ shoulder

The Naxian Collection features traditional Cycladic architecture soaked in chic, simple luxe.



The unexpected surprise of an outdoor graffiti pavilion in the remains of an unfinished hotel, gifted to artists by Naxos.



In the garden, Leni helps Julianna's granddaughter pick tomatoes.

The white villas sit like small, whitewashed anchors tethering ground and sky together

as he carefully carries my precious cargo down to a cabin. Perfectly at peace, I pause on deck as we return to Santorini, chatting to Captain Eleftherios, a lifelong Santorine, about this new era of tourism.

‘I don’t know if Santorini will change,’ he says thoughtfully. ‘But *we* have changed, and the tourists have changed in response to the way we interact and behave.’ The way we travel has also changed. ‘I think people have looked again at their priorities and are more mindful. We’re travelling again for meaning, with purpose, not for selfies. There’s more joy in things we used to take for granted, such as personal interaction and an appreciation for being in the moment.’

It’s tempting to drop anchor on Santorini, permanently. But one more island awaits – Naxos. And just when I’ve succumbed to Santorini’s seduction, and have begun to hold a torch for Paros and Antiparos, Naxos ultimately steals my heart.

NAXOS IS NOT ONLY THE LARGEST OF THE CYCLADIC ISLANDS BUT ALSO THE GREENEST, OVERBURDENED WITH A BOUNTY INCLUDING MOUNTAINS, LUSH VEGETATION, GUSHING STREAMS, AND

PRISTINE BEACHES. But perhaps the reason Naxos is hurled to the top of our island hierarchy is due to the welcome we receive, and the fact that we’re staying at the *Naxian Collection*.

The *Naxian Collection* is a handful of villas based on sustainable principles, most with private pools, where sophistication, barefoot luxury, and sustainability flow together and dance in a merry marriage. Our two-storey villa sprouts up as if an extension of the nearby boulder field and is surrounded by soft, lush, pesticide-free lawns the colour of a shamrock.

‘There’s a special type of light here,’ a worker comments, and she’s right. At midday it’s brutalist and perfect for cutting the edges of the villa houses. At sunset it’s soft. But at all times the light has a transparency and ‘height’, for lack of a better word. Under the sun’s ceaseless arc, the white Cycladic villas sit like small, static, whitewashed anchors tethering ground and sky together.

The property is also full of surprises, from little things (my husband picks a fig growing outside and adds it to my morning yoghurt) to larger things, like the enormous organic garden whose produce dictates the daily menu. We discover this during a cooking course with Julianna, the mother of Maria, who owns the *Naxian Collection* together with her husband, Yannis. Another surprise: when the late, great Anthony Bourdain came to Naxos to plunder its secrets of turbo-charged flavours, he chose Julianna as his palate navigator. Cooking with her is available to

hotel guests as a special insider experience – and it’s a family affair.

The adventures start a two-minute stroll from our doorstep, Julianna’s nine-year-old granddaughter leading the way. There’s a beautifully groomed yet eclectic cast of characters: watermelons the size of small hippos, baby zucchinis, towering sunflowers, white eggplants, and over 15 types of tomatoes, many gifted by friends and family. ‘These are my tomatoes,’ croons gardener Nikos like a proud father. He’s grafting them here from his own village garden, explaining that many of the garden’s vegetables ‘go back’, using his hand to indicate eternity. Almost everyone here grows their own vegetables; if not, it’s debatable whether you’re truly Naxian.

Naxos is like a bottomless bottle that keeps on pouring. There’s the newly renovated Temple of Demeter, a 6th-century BCE sanctuary dedicated to the goddess of the harvest and fertility and a forerunner of the Parthenon by 100 years. It’s a perfect stop while visiting the mountain villages and discovering the stone houses, medieval towers, folk museums, and shaded little squares where village elders spend long afternoons twirling rosaries and reminiscing.

On a day travelling to Hawaii Beach (which gives Faneromeni stiff competition in the beauty department), we stumble across a graffiti park situated in an abandoned hotel gifted to international graffiti artists as an outdoor exhibition space. For wind-sport lovers, there’s the *Flisvos Sportclub Naxos*. While experienced windsurfers convene and

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NATASSA KOKKINO

ou is a Greek jeweller who divides her time between Athens and Mykonos, designing and making creative one-off pieces and bespoke items. You can find her at her inspiring shop, *AdamaStone*, on Mykonos and at [@adamastone_mykonos](#).

Tell us about your perfect day on Mykonos. My perfect day is a busy day at the shop. But because I love sports, particularly tennis, I would begin a perfect day off by playing tennis at the Mykonos Tennis Club in Chora – mornings are better because it’s less windy. After that I would definitely spend some time at the beach. On Mykonos, and the Cyclades in general, things change a lot depending on the wind. More protected places are preferable on windy days, such as the Super Paradise, Kalafatis, and Lia beaches.

I love spending time at the *Jackie O’* beach bar. In my opinion, it’s the best location, but I also enjoy the vibe there. On the beach I can relax, but a party is always an option on Mykonos. At sunset, *Scorpios* hosts some of the best parties. Last but not least, I’d enjoy dinner at one of the many restaurants in Chora and stroll around the streets. To me, it’s the town that makes this island unique – different people from all around the world in this tiny little place.

Does the island influence your designs in any way? Sure! I mostly work with gemstones, and all my pieces have them as the epicentre. The light here is so bright and the background so white, and that makes the stones look quite different. The conditions here are perfect. Also, I enjoy the challenge of trying to match a gem to represent the multiple hues of blue and green of the sea water. I could talk endlessly about this!

What do visitors usually miss when they’re here? A place that visitors maybe overlook is the archaeological site on Delos. It’s a small island just 15 minutes by ferry from Mykonos, and I strongly advise a visit there. Approaching the island, you already feel its energy, and walking through the ancient town and learning what an important place this small area used to be is quite overwhelming in a positive sense.

When is the best time to visit Mykonos? I’d say June and late September, when the weather is lovely, warm, and less windy. All the places are already or still open, so there’s no worry that you’re missing all the fun. Most importantly, the island isn’t crowded at those times, and experiences such as dining in restaurants are more relaxed.

Why has Mykonos captured your heart? Overall, Mykonos is a beautiful island. I’m amazed that almost every single beach here could be ranked the top beach on any other island. Also, the island is very small and easily accessible. There’s something here for everyone: big beach bar-restaurants with full service, high-quality accommodations, and gourmet restaurants but also quiet little tavernas and lonely beaches such as Fokos and Agios Sostis. The town of Chora is very well taken care of, and many consider it a beautiful example of Cycladic architecture. Interestingly, in summer on Mykonos you can feel like you’re in the thick of the action, but also like you’re somewhere completely remote. This duality is appealing and hard to find elsewhere.

shoosh out to catch the full brunt of the meltemi winds, beginners head to the little windsurf nursery in a sheltered bay with gentle, enthusiastic instructors. The best bit? The club’s boho chic restaurant, which quickly becomes my favourite spot on the island. It’s a place to rest with feet in sand and eyes on the windsurfing spectacle while eating a nutritious poké bowl.

All action (if you want it) happens in Naxos Town, the most confusing of labyrinths. It would be no surprise if visitors are still in there from last summer, trying to divine their way out. It’s slightly gritty but, compared to Naoussa, the real deal – a living, beating old town, perfect in its imperfection. This is also where you’ll find a small Naxian marble statue of Ariadne from Greek mythology, looking balefully towards Athens and the departing ship of Theseus as he sails away from her during their journey from Crete. The fact that he lifted anchor stealthily while she was asleep is perhaps the ancient form of a breakup by text. Classy. Or have we misinterpreted Ariadne’s expression? There are two sides to the story, advises a local archaeologist, wagging a finger. Maybe Theseus ditched Ariadne. The other rumour is that she fell in love with Dionysius and they ran away together, causing Theseus to leave Naxos heartbroken. So, rather than being a victim of unrequited love, maybe her blank eyes and slightly downturned mouth are saying, ‘Hmm, sorry about that.’

Apart from upgrading from her mortal boyfriend to a god, no one could blame Ariadne for deciding to stay on Naxos. As locals joke, ‘the door is always open’, referring to the Potara gate, the symbol of Naxos, the giant six-metre marble doorway of a dismantled temple to Apollo built around 530 BCE. Any true odyssey requires an unexpected element: come for Santorini (and you must), extend your journey to Paros and Antiparos, but you may find that the mythological twist in your plot means that you’ll actually return for an entirely different island, such as Naxos.

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Athina Studios and Suites, Naxos
Situating on Plaka Beach, one of the prettiest beaches on Naxos, this is the quieter end of the island, yet it’s surrounded by great restaurants, including the suites’ own *Yucca*. Every room is different, with stylish Cycladic suites, spacious apartments, and sophisticated, beachy studios. Highlights include the pool and organic vegetable garden. Plaka Beach, Naxos, 843 00 [studiosathina.gr](#)

Captain’s Rocks Hotel, Paros
The owners of this hotel bend over backwards to offer island tips, and just below is a windsurfing school with a soft sand beach. Rooms are spacious and comfortable with lovely gardens and a large pool. The town of Drios is nearby and is a relatively undiscovered part of the island. Chrisi Akti, Paros, 844 00 [captainsrocks.gr](#)

Flisvos Seaside Studios and Apartments, Naxos
If you like to have all you need for a holiday within a radius of ten metres, throw down your towel at these uber-chic apartments run by a Dutch couple. It’s just a hop and a skip to the beach, and the Flisvos windsurfing school and restaurant are practically on the doorstep. Aristidi Protapapadaki, Naxos, 843 00 [flisvos-sportclub.com/stay](#)

WHERE TO EAT
Lefkes, Santorini
Lefkes is a standout (but under the radar) in tiny Finikia just a few minutes from Oia. Its rooftop terrace is the place to gorge on island specialties such as sun-dried cherry tomatoes, fava beans, capers, and white eggplant. Don’t miss the moussaka croquettes with feta mousse. Finikia, Santorini, 847 02 [lefk.es.gr](#)

Taberna Agyra, Paros
This is the charming new kid on the block, run by a young couple with a passion for Greek food with an imaginative twist. Located down a side street, it’s an area best known to locals rather than visitors and only a short drive from the *Flora Apartments*. Drios, Paros, 844 00 [FB/Taberna Agyra Paros](#)

Pantelis Fish Tavern, Antiparos
Part of the waterfront *Sunday Hotel*, this is a family-friendly outdoor-

meal jackpot (the hotel is named after the owner’s young daughter). While the freshest seafood is prepared, kids can wander around and watch the fish. Local lobster is the star of the show here. Antiparos Port, 840 07 [sundayhotelantiparos.gr](#)

Tortuga, Naxos
When you see the boho chic exterior that could be a Mediterranean *Soho House*, it’s no surprise that Maria from the *Naxian Collection* has curated the interiors here. Located on the beachfront, this is ultra-casual, barefoot luxe with an inventive menu including lobster burrata and sea bass ceviche. Naxos, Plaka, 843 00 [FB/tortuganaxos](#)

WHERE TO SHOP
Naxia Gi
This is the perfect excuse to visit the town of Halki and buy a souvenir small enough to fit into any suitcase. There’s not only honey from Naxos and other parts of Greece but also 65 types of spices, teas, local fruits, beeswax cream, and bee propolis. Naxos, Halki, 843 02 [naxiagh.gr](#)

Zali Boutique
With boutiques featuring global brands, Antiparos caters well to the yachting clientele. A prime example is *Zali Boutique* with its stylish island wear, featuring Katerina Makriyianni statement jewellery and the boutique’s own handmade *Zali* sandals. Chora, Antiparos, 840 07 [FB/Zali Antiparos](#)

Atlantis Books
This is one for the bookworms. *Atlantis* is a store with books in many languages, including rare antiquarian books and collectors’ first editions. Located on the main marble street of Oia, it has the ambience of an ancient library, down to the little handwritten reviews attached to some of the books. The shop’s best-kept secret is the small rooftop deck. Nomikos Street, Oia, 847 02 [atlantisbooks.org](#)

DON’T MISS
DiscoverGreece
For independent travel with the best advice, *DiscoverGreece* is the go-to resource. The consumer arm of *Marketing Greece*, it’s heavy on experiential aspects and a mine of inspiration. Find it with the *Insta* hashtag #DiscoverGreece. [DiscoverGreece.com](#)

Blue Shades of Greece
Lefteris Karipidis offers tours in his luxury air-conditioned and water-stocked minivan. His niche? Offering a deep-dive, locals-only experience. At Akrotiri, historian Eugenia Liodaki (+30 693 7583965) offers spellbinding tours that make the ruins come alive. [blueshadesofsantorini.com](#) Yin Yang Concept Sailing
Discover secret beaches, hidden spots, and crystal-clear waters around Paros aboard a unique yacht. With Captain Nikos’ hospitality and insider knowledge of the waterways, this is the experience of a lifetime. [yinyangconcept.com](#) **bo**

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OF THE HOUSE



Māra Lāce, the director of the Latvian National Museum of Art, talks to *Baltic Outlook* about one of the most iconic periods in Baltic art and the modern energy she brings to the historic museum.

Words by Agnese Čivle
Publicity photos and by Gatis Gierts

Inspired by historical forms and expressing the self-confidence of an elegant metropolis, the Latvian National Museum of Art stands on Riga's ring of boulevards. The impressive Historicism-style structure built in 1905 specifically as an art museum – the first such building in the Baltics – houses Latvia's most important art museum. Its collection reflects two centuries of Latvian art history, but the museum also has a permanent exposition of contemporary art focusing on the second half of the 20th century as well as a variety of temporary exhibitions, including that of the Purvitis Prize nominees. Latvia's most significant prize in visual arts will be awarded for the seventh time this summer.

Like the museum itself, the leading person behind this institution is also majestic and instils reverence but is at the same time also open and inviting. It is precisely she, Māra Lāce, who has managed to change the museum's role in Latvia. Under her leadership it has become a light, pleasant, living and breathing environment in which to draw inspiration and understand that art does not contain only one single message carved in stone – instead, art is linked with all that is current in society and in every individual's own world.

Lāce has been the director of the Latvian National Museum of Art since 2001. She is also a member of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and several decision-making institutions related to Latvian culture and visual art. Lāce has received significant awards for her many years of work in developing the national art and museum sector and popularising the image of Latvia abroad.

But Lāce's appearance and image are just as striking. Her immaculately sliced bob and elegant jewellery make her instantly recognisable and also serve as a message that any conversation with her is bound to be interesting.

Do you have a favourite or special place in the Latvian National Museum of Art?

Yes, there's a place in the museum that really inspires and stimulates me, but it also comforts and calms me down. It's the pure white Cupola Hall on the attic level. Because the wooden structure in this space is designed as a so-called hanging cupola, it sways a little bit. It feels almost like a living organism. It's really an impressive space.

Before the major restoration and reconstruction of the museum in 2016, this space was completely neglected and empty as well as difficult to access. It was inhabited only by Riga's pigeons. I was interested in opening this part of

There's a place in the museum that really inspires and stimulates me

the museum to the public, and the only ones who really responded to this idea were the Lithuanian architects [the *Processoffice* and *Andrius Skiežgelas Architecture* firms – Ed.]. In the end, the idea was realised, and I must admit it was worth it.

Five years after the reconstructed museum reopened, the Cupola Hall is still the space that interests people the most. At first it was intended as a recreation space, as a venue for events or experimental projects. But it has also evolved into an exhibition space. Various types of shows can be presented there very well, but one must always keep in mind the scale and the fact that the materials that enter this room must not compete with the room itself.

Of course, I have the privilege that I can spend time alone in the Cupola Hall and simply enjoy its spirit. I love that it's so self-sufficient, and that it's white.



Culture is so strong and powerful that it can give any building a new identity

Naturally, the restoration and reconstruction of the museum are wonderful. But did the building also lose something in the process? Was anything wiped away that maybe should not have been? Although I think that the reconstruction maintained a fairly good balance between the historical building and its new underground space, the rooms did lose a bit of their mystique, their mystery. Those dark hallways in the staff section of the museum... Now we're very white and transparent, in the truest sense of the word, because a lot of glass was used in the reconstruction. As I walk down the hallway, I can see all of the employees.

When the former museum director, art historian Ināra Ņefedova, visited the renovated museum after it reopened, she said everything looks fantastic, but it's no longer what it was before. The museum now has a different spirit. But I believe that's exactly what the museum needed – a new spirit.

From the very beginning, this building has been intended as a home for art. Unlike, for example, the Musée d'Orsay building in Paris, which originally functioned as a railway station and then a mailing centre, until it was finally transformed into the museum we know today. When you visit museums, do you think about the historical context of the buildings and how their cultural content coexists with the structure's history?

Yes, definitely. I'm one of those people who's interested in buildings, their architecture and their history. Around the world, museums are housed in buildings built specially for holding and displaying art as well as in buildings that have only later been adapted to that purpose. As our social and economic needs change, big factories, for example, may

cease production and close but then later be used specifically for cultural purposes. It happens all the time, and what I want to say is that culture is so strong and powerful that it can give any building a new identity.

Even here in our Latvian National Museum of Art system, the name of the Riga Bourse art museum refers to that building's past. The ornate structure was built specifically as a bourse and was formerly accessible only to the financial elite, but nowadays the power of art has replaced the power of money there. However, one must admit that the building's original function is deeply ingrained in its architecture, so sometimes the spaces are difficult to adapt to the needs of art. The museum needs to put in a lot of thought and work to make the exhibitions there successful.

What are your three favourite museum experiences abroad?

Museum employees have the unfortunate habit of constantly walking through museums. Four or five museums a day is considered normal. But one of my most lasting impressions was in 1995, when I visited the United States for the first time. In Minneapolis, the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, designed by Frank Gehry, stands on the banks of the Mississippi River like a bright tin can. I looked at it from the outside and wondered how in the world one could fit exhibition spaces in a building like that. But when I went inside, I realised that everything was very well thought out. There's a reason why people say that art museums are the new churches – we can liken the building of contemporary art museums today to the building of cathedrals in the past.

I'd also like to mention the Estonian National Museum in Tartu, a new building that opened in 2016. It was built with no European Union financing, only with money from the Estonian state, and the project was realised with extreme respect and piety towards the country's historical heritage. Although the exposition is sometimes criticised for being overloaded with too many items, it has nevertheless been created with great self-confidence and pride.

As a traditional, classic museum, I think the National Gallery in London is absolutely perfect – not only in terms of size and layout, but also due to the fact that every work of art in the exposition is an absolute masterpiece. It's a true parade of masterpieces!

When you visit museums, are you able to distance yourself from your job and look at them through the eyes of a 'simple visitor'?

No, unfortunately not. I have to admit that professional ridiculousness takes the upper hand (*laughs*). I look at how the spaces are lighted, how the safety systems are installed, how the expositions are arranged. Unfortunately, I can't escape my profession.

There are a number of films that revolve around the theme of museums, from magical nights spent inside museums to the mysterious disappearances of artwork. With your background and knowledge about the behind-the-scenes workings of museums, how do you view such stories?

A museum is a closed – and, in a way, also mysterious – environment that is never fully revealed to others. In that sense, it's very well suited to gripping, exciting storylines. But to be honest, museum films sometimes annoy me. The intrigue is artificially developed, because no one is allowed to stay overnight in a museum and mummies, as we know, do not come back to life (*laughs*). Instead, I prefer the film where Mr. Bean, played by actor Rowan Atkinson, brings the so-called *Whistler's Mother* painting to the United States. That film really made me laugh; its foolishness and comic quality speaks to me. In certain scenes it also contains quite a bit of truth.

The Wild Souls: Symbolism in the Art of the Baltic States exhibition recently closed at the Latvian National Museum of Art. This initiative of your museum travelled to the Musée d'Orsay in Paris in 2018. However, due to the pandemic it was unfortunately shown in Latvia for only a short time. What did this exhibition mean to you, emotionally?

Emotionally, it meant very much to me. If anything is capable of intensifying emotion and feelings to the highest degree, then it was definitely this exhibition. One of its most important aspects was that it brought together in one place artwork from the same period from Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, letting viewers compare works and styles. This was something that hadn't really been done before. Of course, also significant was the fact that it was shown at the Musée d'Orsay, one of the leading museums in the world.





Latvian artists are an independent breed

So how does the art of this period (1890s–1930s) in the three Baltic states differ, and what are the similarities?

It's united by the fact that this distinctly professional, competent, and masterly art of a national nature was being created in each of the three Baltic states in the same time period – the late 19th century and early 20th century. The general worldview and emphasis on landscape, and the way that landscape motifs are used to address a great variety of other things, are also similar in the art from all three countries. Differences can be found in religious affiliation and the language of colour, which is probably linked to that affiliation as well.

How do you think Baltic art fits into the 'frame' of European symbolism? How does it differ from it? The exhibition at the Musée d'Orsay showed that it fits very well, very organically. The difference may be in that we're more grounded, more realistic. The mystery of symbolism isn't as characteristic for us as it is, for example, in German culture.

Which Latvian artist paints landscapes exactly the way that you feel them?

For me, it's Johans Valters (Johann Walter-Kurau). He was very poetic, and I really enjoy the delicate 'painterly language' of his work. In Latvian art, he's considered an unparalleled colourist.

The art of Janis Rozentāls is very clear and understandable. When you look at his *Vasara pie upes* (Summer by the River, 1913) or *Agrais pavasaris Kurzemē* (Early Spring in Kurzeme, 1909), you feel like you're right there in the painting, like you've become a part of it. Vilhelms Purvītis, on the other hand, places the viewer outside the canvas, in the role of observer, not participant. He did landscape paintings as symbols of national identity.

It's summer again. Which work of art best represents your own idea of a summer idyll? Perhaps Rozentāls' *Ganu meitas dziesma* (The Shepherd Girl's Song, 1898). By the way, an exhibition of his work, titled *Janis Rozentāls: The Dance of Life*, is currently on show until September 5 at the Kumu Art Museum in Tallinn, Estonia.

This summer, the Latvian National Museum of Art is hosting an important exhibition of contemporary art featuring the work of the Purvītis Prize nominees. The prize is awarded biennially for most outstanding work in Latvian professional visual arts. What's the contemporary art scene been like in Latvia in recent years?

The artists selected for the exhibition are very diverse, as is their work – the pieces don't necessarily fit very well with each other. It's a very multifaceted exhibition. It's also unique for including a work of art whose idea was developed back to the 1970s but only came to fruition in 2020, when it became a highlight of RIBOCA2, the 2nd Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art. It's a kinetic object by Valdis Celms that, despite originating more than 40 years ago, is quite current. In fact, it's timeless.

Ceramics, created by the Skuja Braden artist collaboration, have appeared for the first time among the Purvītis Prize nominees. This material has up until now been associated more with the field of applied arts, but now it's appearing in contemporary art as well. This year we also have a quite processual work of art, executed by Elina Vitola and Ieva Kraule-Kūna. I'm really curious to see how it will all fit together in the museum, because it will be

shown not only in the Large Hall but several other spaces throughout the museum as well.

Continuing the theme of contemporary art, the museum made a very big purchase of artwork last year. Most of the art it acquired is by artists who began their careers at the beginning of the 21st century and have contributed to today's diverse Latvian art scene. It's art that tells about society and the spirit of an era. What's this story like? The commission created specially for this procurement of art carefully evaluated art processes over the past 30 years as well as the museum's collection in order to understand where were the weak points that we ought to strengthen through these purchases. It came up with a list of about 107 artists. In general, Latvian artists are an independent breed. They tend to be quite closed within their own problems and issues, based in their own experiences, and don't try to be very socially active.

Isn't that kind of risky, that our art doesn't react very much to what's going on in the world?

As the Latvian painter Boriss Bērziņš said, 'I am what I am.' Of course, current social themes do show up in Latvian art, but on the whole, the Latvian artist is quiet.

How would you recommend people approach contemporary art if they haven't had much prior experience with it?

I'd tell them to spend time looking. Contemporary art demands that the viewer think along. But that's the hardest thing to do, because people often don't want to think.

Is there art that you yourself don't fully understand? Art that you feel some sort of resistance to?

Yes, there is. I find it extremely difficult to understand electronic art. I've honestly admitted that I don't understand it! I appreciate that it's important and needed, but I myself am unable to truly approach it. I guess I need materiality – something that's more tangible and visible.

Generation Z, for its part, feels very comfortable with everything electronic. They've grown up in a digital world. But what is this generation like as museum goers? I think they're one of the most terrific museum audiences! They seem to very actively and energetically perceive and consume contemporary art in particular.

I suppose the museum has to reckon with a very active and dynamic audience, with people who are keen on being in direct communication with works of art, actively taking pictures and videos, generating memes and other internet content. If the museum is ready to give, this audience will respond energetically and give back generously. Yes, that's why we follow along with what's happening on *Instagram* and other social media. If only to understand in which places museum goers like to take pictures. We need to make the museum alive, dynamic, and friendly to this audience.



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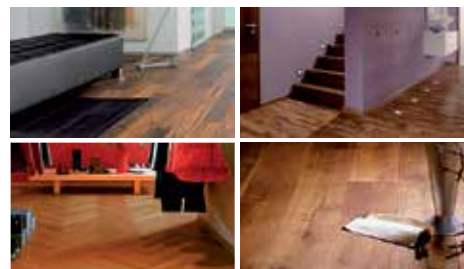
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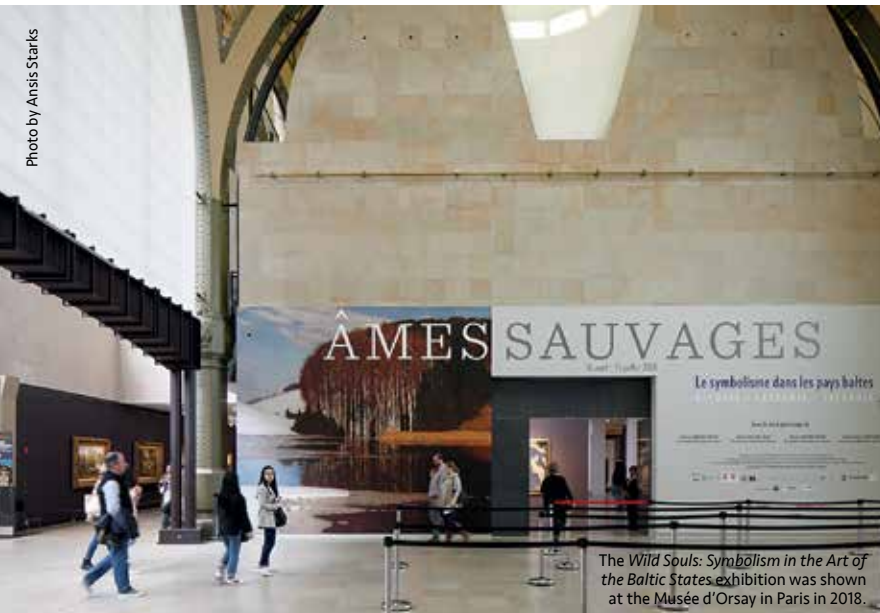
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Sometimes the presence of a work of art can be too energetically powerful

It seems like the museum that will open after the pandemic will no longer be the museum it was when it closed. What effect will the protracted epidemiological security measures and restrictions have had on the experience of visiting the museum? The museum will change noticeably. If in recent years we talked a lot about accessibility, openness, and support for museum goers at various levels, then I think now we'll be forced to take some steps backwards. Various safety measures and restrictions will be a priority. Likewise, all sorts of digital and technologically inspired products will enter the museum within a short time period. They'll play a major role in our educational programmes.

What will the museum goer be like after this drawn-out digital oversaturation and plethora of virtual exhibition tours? I believe nothing can take the place of an original work of art and experiencing it in person. That was demonstrated by the Baltic Symbolism project. People came to see the exhibition and were very satisfied; they needed this in-person experience. The importance of visiting a museum in person will remain. But how many people will be willing to actually open the museum door, to what extent will the fear have remained – that's another question. And also, when will tourism resume fully?

You've participated in forming the Latvian Culture Canon list. The visual arts section of that list features artists who are no longer alive. Who among the currently active artists do you think deserves to be added to the list of 99 Latvian cultural treasures? If we expanded the list to include living artists, we could definitely add Aija Zariņa. Her work from the 1980s until the present day is contemporary, engaging, and powerful in all aspects. Also Maija Tabaka and her figural painting. And Kristaps Ģelzis, whose every work of art and the idea expressed in it exudes an aura of greatness.

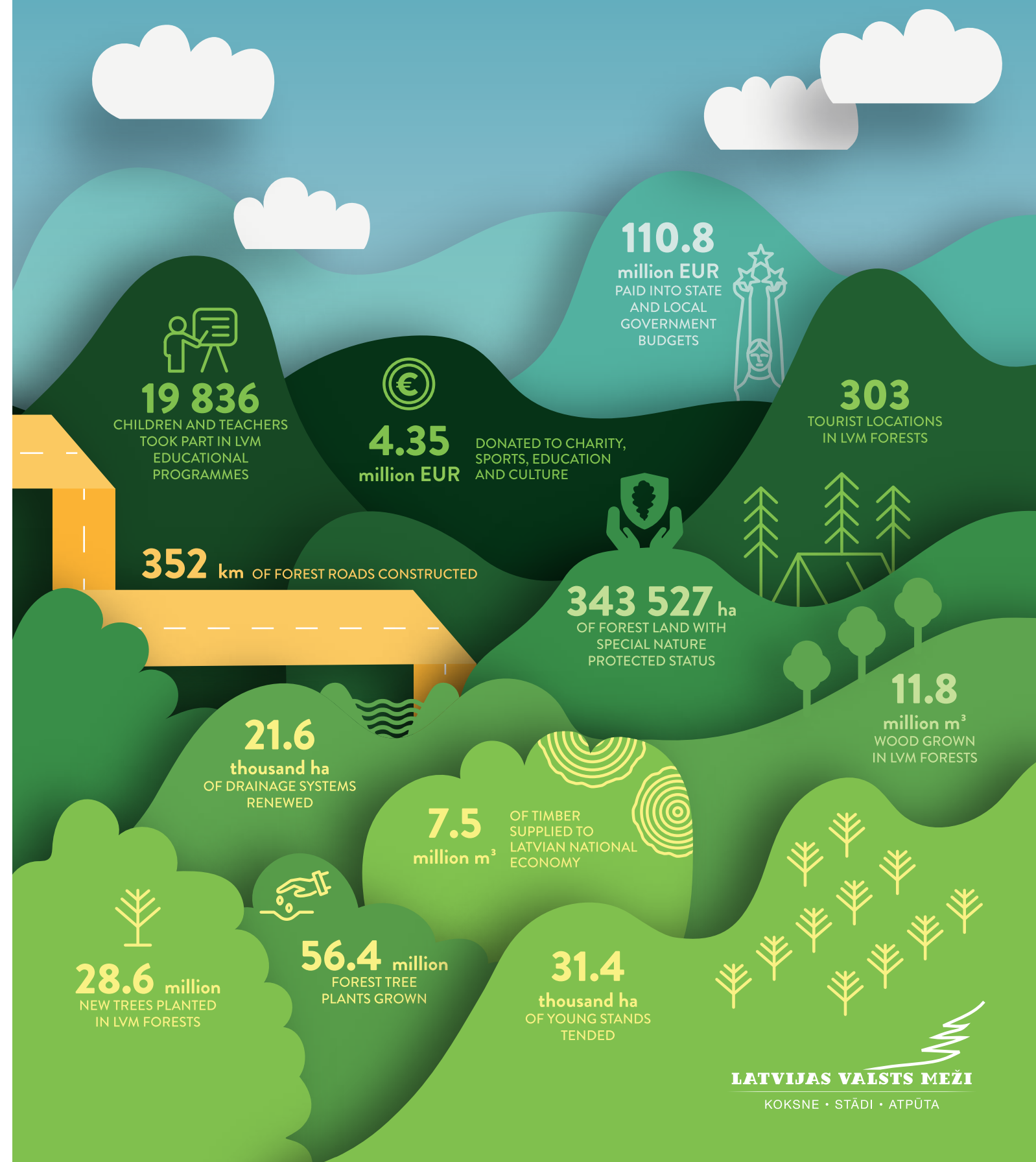
Which three treasures in the Culture Canon would you recommend people become acquainted with for an essence of Latvian culture?

First of all, Vilhelms Purvītis, who was one of the founders of the national school of Latvian painting. We'll be celebrating the 150th anniversary of his birth next year. In terms of modernism, Niklāvs Strunke and his painting *Cilvēks, kas ieiet istabā* (Man Entering a Room, 1927), which is an absolute masterpiece. And also Egons Spuris and his photography series *Proletarian Districts of Riga: Late 19th, Early 20th Centuries* from the 1970s-80s.

Is there any work of art from the museum collection that you'd like to have in your own home as an inexhaustible source of inspiration or a reminder of something? No, very definitely not. Because artwork needs to be where it needs to be. Besides, sometimes the presence of a work of art can be too energetically powerful.

Do you believe in that sort of energy? I don't feel it. But I believe it exists. **bo**

“LATVIAN STATE FORESTS” (LVM) RESULTS IN 2020



Words by Olga Dolina
Publicity photos and courtesy of *airBaltic*

NFTs – the future is now

NFTs, or non-fungible tokens, are quickly gaining popularity in the digital crypto world. They’re shaking the dust off of familiar art forms and rethinking senses of ownership and belonging. *airBaltic* has put this innovation onto its radar and become the world’s first airline to issue its own NFTs.



◀◀ The Kuldīga NFT is *airBaltic*’s first edition and the first NFT ever issued by an airline.

◀ *airBaltic*’s second edition of NFTs is dedicated to the town of Cēsis.

A first-edition limited collection of NFTs (non-fungible tokens) – images depicting the *Airbus A220-300* with its individual registration number and pieces of art dedicated to the Latvian towns of Kuldīga and Cēsis – will serve as a tourism campaign for Latvian towns and cities, which are still undiscovered destinations for many. From now on, favourite towns and cities in Latvia will be represented on pieces of digital art issued by *airBaltic*. One hundred unique collectibles of the Kuldīga NFT are already available on the *OpenSea* marketplace for a fixed price of 0.05 Ether (ETH) each. Ten collectibles of the Cēsis NFT are available for 0.01 Ether each.

As Martin Gauss, Chief Executive Officer of *airBaltic*, points out, blockchain technology has proven itself to be here for the long term. After being the first airline to accept *Bitcoin* as a form of payment, offering NFTs is the next step for the

airline in blockchain technology. ‘NFTs are not only used for digital art transactions; they may also be expanded to tickets for concerts and other unique one-time items, including airline tickets. The issue of limited collector NFTs will serve as a tourism campaign for Latvian towns and cities, which are certainly still an undiscovered destination for many,’ says Gauss.

To begin with, switch your focus from reality to the digital world as something that clearly exists but cannot be physically touched. Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) are a type of cryptocurrency, or crypto asset. They stand for pieces of digital or crypto art, songs, stickers, or animated GIFs – anything audiovisual and virtual. Each token contains unique data and serves as proof of authenticity. Non-fungible is a synonym for something unique and one-of-a-kind, something that, unlike cryptocurrency, cannot be substituted by exactly the same thing. For instance,

Da Vinci’s *Mona Lisa* and Van Gogh’s *The Starry Night* are both masterpieces and unique in their artistic value; they’re incomparable and therefore non-fungible.

NFTs are used for trading and keeping track of the ownership of digital files via the Ethereum blockchain, which is an explorer service and cryptocurrency wallet similar to Bitcoin. The currency is called Ether. There are several marketplaces for NFTs, including *OpenSea*, *Rarible*, *Mintbase*, *Nifty Gateway*, and others.

In terms of the amount of visual information, platforms where NFTs are exhibited and traded can be compared to huge supermarkets, similar to the ones depicted in the iconic photographs created by Andreas Gursky. Some of the tokens are sold in the thousands and millions. The *Nyan Cat*, an iconic cat meme that was turned into a one-of-a-kind piece of crypto art, sold for nearly 600,000 dollars.

The world’s leading auction houses have already stepped into the game, thus legitimising the importance of NFTs. *Christie’s*, known for the most significant art deals of the past few centuries, recently sold its first NFT – a collage by notorious American artist Beeple, titled *Everydays: The First 5000 Days*, for 69 million dollars.

Towns and cities in Latvia will be represented on pieces of digital art issued by *airBaltic*

Jack Dorsey, the co-founder and CEO of *Twitter*, sold his first tweet, *Just setting up my twttr*, which he made in 2006, for almost three million dollars. It doesn’t matter that the tweet was publicly available this whole time; it eventually became a piece of history, a sort of collectable item. A logical question arises when you realise that, after a click on the ‘save as’ button, most digital objects can be enjoyed for free. This can be compared with a painting displayed in a gallery while dozens of reproductions on postcards are sold in the museum shop. This is the point at which the issue of ownership and belonging arises.

Via ownership, an NFT actually brings an immaterial piece one step closer to physical reality. Yes, the work of art or piece of music can be viewed, listened to, even replicated and transformed online by anyone unlimited times, but there’s only one owner of any particular digital token. Buying an NFT means becoming the only holder of the original... just like grand patrons of the arts have done for centuries. They purchased a painting and exhibited it in a museum so that the public could enjoy it as well.

Meanwhile, the boundaries of the term ‘art’ are becoming broader and disputes about what is considered a work of art are becoming fiercer. There’s

tons of visual digital content produced every minute in the world. In some cases, NFT is the only way this content can be monetised and marked with a sign of ownership. Some artists use NFTs as a supplement to their physical works. Moreover, it’s now becoming easier and quicker for them to sell their artwork without intermediaries and regardless of location.



Jerry Saltz, who is one of today’s most influential art critics, energetically debates on the topic of NFTs. On the one hand, he criticises the shallow approach of most ‘artists’, calling some pieces ‘screensaver collages that took less time to make than to look at’. On the other hand, in his article for *Vulture* titled ‘Think of NFTs as a brush’, Saltz predicts that ‘someday, there may be a Francis Bacon of NFTs’ and invites people to consider the technology as a medium or tool the same as a ballpoint pen or camera. In response to this new art reality, Saltz made his own work of art in which he combined his 10,000 *Instagram* posts into one image.

Crypto art is progressing rapidly. The NFT phenomenon is growing in its potential, evolving aesthetic qualities and marking a new chapter in both digital and art history. Both NFTs issued by *airBaltic* are available on the *OpenSea* platform.



MALLORCA'S HIDDEN SECRETS

Mallorca is known as one of Europe’s busiest summer playgrounds, but away from the beach clubs and fancy yachts, there’s another side to this Mediterranean beauty. With a renewed push towards sustainable tourism, *Baltic Outlook* discovered what that means for this island paradise.

Words by Kat Barber
Publicity photos by Kat Barber,
iStock, and *Shutterstock*



The Sa Calobra road, nicknamed ‘the snake’, has over 50 tight hairpin bends, making it a bucket-list ride for hardcore cyclists.

Exploring the island on two wheels is a great way to get around like a local

As with many of Europe’s popular tourist destinations, the Covid-19 storm has been long and relentless on Mallorca. It’s left a number of shuttered hotels and businesses in its wake as well as a renewed perspective on what the largest Balearic island has to offer. And it turns out that when you peel back the glossy exterior, what’s left hiding underneath is pretty special.

Long before the pandemic, the government of the Balearic Islands (covering Mallorca, Menorca, Ibiza, and Formentera) realised that they could use their booming tourism industry as a force for good. This resulted in a more sustainable approach to tourism with a focus on protecting the environment, encouraging year-round tourism to boost jobs, and promoting local culture and history.

Upon checking into any hotel or guest house in Mallorca, tourists are hit with a tourist tax ranging from EUR 0.25 to 4.00 per night. This ‘sustainable tourism tax’ has already generated over 269 million euros for 62 different projects since its inception in 2016.

From vehicles to rebuilding old city walls, the types of projects supported vary greatly. But the one thing they all have in common is that ‘the first and most important purpose is the protection, preservation, and recovery of the environment’. In a place where the natural environment is the biggest drawcard, this seems like a smart move.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Around April, the Palma de Mallorca airport starts filling up with oversized cardboard boxes wielded by thick-calved cyclists. Cycling has become a mainstay on Mallorca, with the cooler weather and fewer crowds in spring and autumn attracting cyclists from around the world. Many hotels offer dedicated cycling packages, expansive bike storage rooms, and spas to loosen up tight muscles at the end of a long day on the saddle.

Many are drawn here by the beast that is Sa Calobra. Nicknamed ‘the snake’, this infamous road designed by Spanish engineer Antonio Parietti in the 1930s has over 50 tight hairpin bends, a silky smooth road surface, and incredible views, making it a bucket-list ride for hardcore cyclists who love a challenge.

Even if you prefer a more relaxed bike ride, exploring the island on two wheels is a great way to get around like a local. In Palma, the cycle lane on the promenade straddling Palma Bay is perfect for a leisurely cruise. Rent a bicycle at one of the many small bike shops along Avenida Gabriel de Roca,



The most spectacular trails are found in the Serra de Tramuntana, the wild mountain range that crowns the northern shores of the island.

then pick a direction. Heading westwards towards Magaluf takes you along the posh coves of Portals Nous and Cala Nova with plenty of sidewalk cafés to grab a coffee or ice cream along the way. This ride is fairly flat with just a few small hills to get the legs pumping. Most of the ride is almost entirely bike path, with only small sections on the road.

Head off in the opposite direction past the dominating Cathedral of Santa Maria, and you’ll join a flat bike path for an easy 30-kilometre out-and-back ride that’s perfect for families or leisurely riders. The *BiciPalma* public bike sharing scheme has bike docks throughout the city, making it another easy option for short rides around the city centre. With



In Palma, the cycle lane on the promenade straddling Palma Bay is perfect for a leisurely ride.



The most iconic hiking route in Mallorca, the Ruta de Pedra en Sec, or ‘dry stone route’, consists of 168 kilometres of signposted trails.



Many country roads meander past old farms.

plans in place for even more dedicated bike lanes and routes, cycling plays a big part in Mallorca’s sustainable future.

In the north of the island, another laid-back bike ride loops along the Bay of Pollença. Start in Port de Pollença and follow the curved bay towards Alcúdia. The historic town is undergoing a facelift, with its medieval wall being rebuilt to its former glory thanks to funding from the sustainable tourism tax. The wall holds a special significance for the locals, who received the honour of Most Loyal City thanks to their efforts during a 1521 battle. Stroll the wall’s one-kilometre-long perimeter and enjoy views over the patchwork of tiled rooftops, pretty alleyways lined with potted ferns, dancing kites in the Bay of Pollença, and swaying palm trees.

If you want to venture further afield, renting an e-vehicle is a smart choice. Many car rental companies are growing their fleets of e-vehicles, with incentives such as access to free charging stations and free parking for all e-vehicles across the island helping visitors make the switch. Six fast-charging stations that promise to charge your vehicle



Enjoy a wine tasting and tapas plate with freshly made bread and locally produced olive oil

to 80% in just 30 minutes are spread throughout Mallorca. Positioned strategically, they enable drivers to complete a lap of the island and recharge along the way. Download the *eCAR* app to check locations and book a charging time. With more and more e-charging docks popping up in hotels, parking garages, and petrol stations, the hope is that the whisper-quiet, eco-friendly alternative will become the vehicle of choice for road-trippers.

SCENIC HIKING

The most iconic hiking route in Mallorca, the Ruta de Pedra en Sec, or ‘dry stone route’, consists of 168 kilometres of signposted trails along the island’s craggy western coast. The route follows old cobbled paths originally built to link the villages and estates dotted throughout the UNESCO World Heritage Site-listed Serra de Tramuntana mountain range. The sustainable tourism tax has enabled the restoration of many of the stonewall terraces and paths as well as the setting up of new signage along the route.

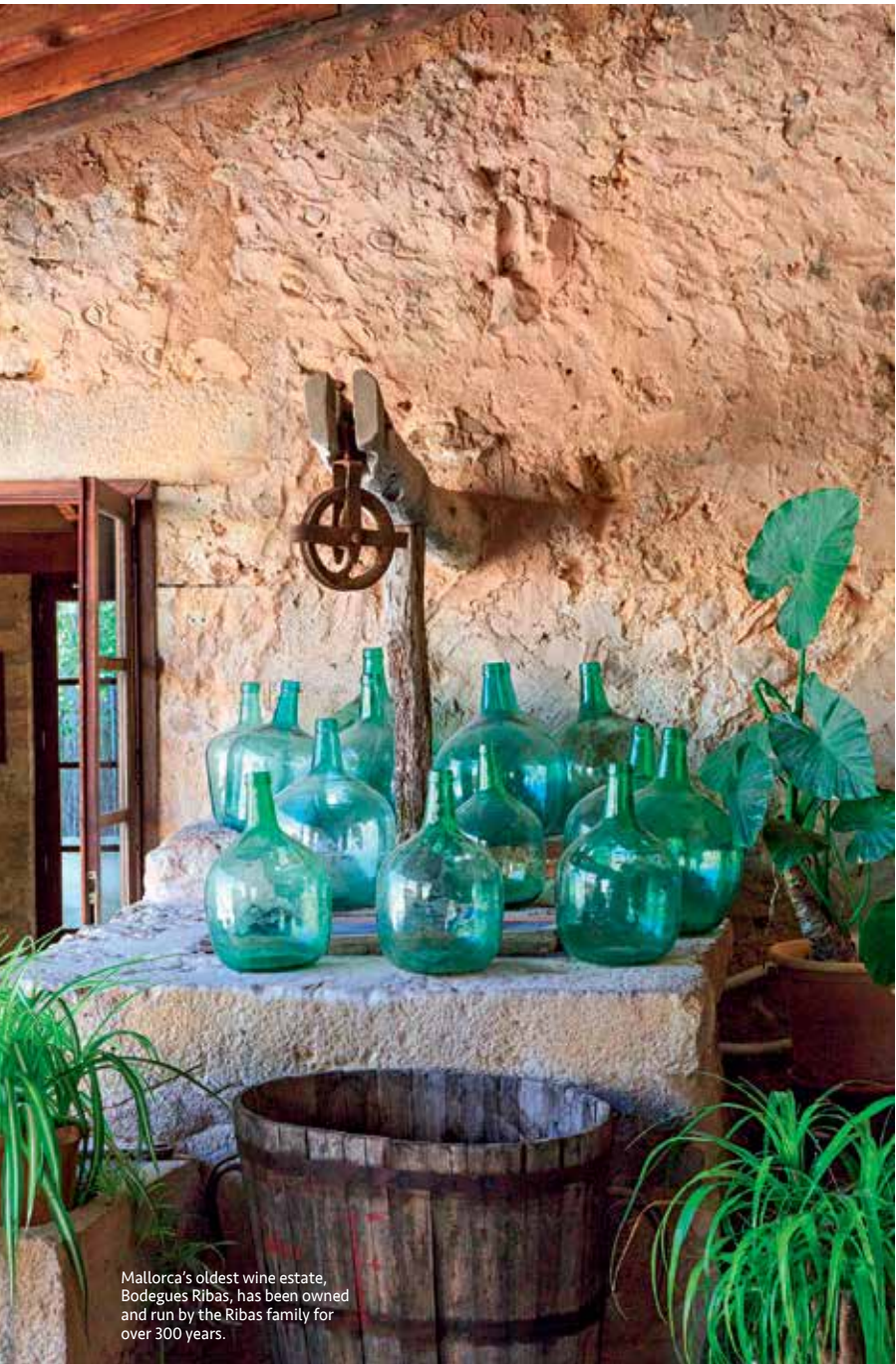
Restorers are following the traditional stone-wall technique employed by highly skilled craftsmen for centuries. Every stone is carefully selected according

to size and shape, and the small spaces between the stones allow rainwater to run through the gaps. Such stone walls can be seen on footpaths, roads, walls, and terraces for agricultural land and canals for mountain streams. In fact, there are around 20,000 kilometres of dry-stone walls in the Serra de Tramuntana area alone.

Hiking here is more scenic than strenuous, with a never-ending vista of breathtaking views of the rugged coastline and tiny coves to one side, and olive groves, pine forests, and expansive estates on the other.

Spring and autumn offer perfect hiking weather, with the promise of a refreshing dip on offer at the end of a warm day. Intrepid hikers can tackle the entire route over eight days, and locally run hostels called *refugios* offer an affordable and friendly place to rest your head and fill your stomach before you set off again the next morning. Book in advance at www.caib.es to guarantee a bed.

If you’re pressed for time, a day hike along the section between the Can Boi and Muleta refuges is a great option. This roughly ten-kilometre route takes you through the charming town of Deià to the former telegraph station of Muleta, which reveals impressive views over the bay of Port de Sóller. Keep walking down to the port for a lunch break or paddle in the deep, circular bay. From there, you can hop aboard the vintage tram that runs between the beach and the timeless town of Sóller to round out the excursion.



WINE AND DINE

Mallorca boasts some of Spain’s best wines, many of which you’ve probably never tried because few of them are exported. Instead, you’ll need to make the journey to the island to sample a drop from any of the 33 local cellars.

Wine was traditionally a big business in Mallorca until the appearance of the vine-eating phylloxera louse and resulting disease in the late 19th century, which caused havoc on the island’s wine production. As agriculture gave way to tourism, winemaking took a back seat. Seventy-five thousand acres of vines covered the island in 1891. Today, that figure sits at around 2500 acres, and the rising price of land



makes it seem unlikely that number will rise. But this tight-knit industry is experiencing a revival thanks to new organic methods and a renewed focus on producing local wines using native grape varieties.

The majority of the 2500 acres lie in the foothills of the Serra de Tramuntana, in two denominations of origin: Binissalem and Pla i Llevant. An easy hour’s drive north from Palma through dusty old villages, olive groves, and medieval monasteries and you’ll quickly forget you’re on an island.

A good place to start is at Bodegues Ribas in Consell. Mallorca’s oldest wine estate has been owned and run by the Ribas family for over 300 years. Sticklers for tradition, the family still handpicks all their grapes to ensure the highest quality. They also take pride in recovering native grape varieties from the island, such as Gargollasa, a red variety that was practically extinguished but is now used to complement other more popular varieties. While you sip on the rich, elegant reds and velvety, creamy whites, take a look at the impressive 18th-century Ribas home, which has been lovingly preserved, along with its original barrel cellar and winemaking warehouse.

Ten minutes down the road, Bodegas Biniagual’s motto is ‘good wine is made on the fields, not in the winery’. Everything from their production process to harvesting technique follows traditional, organic methods native to the area. Stop in and enjoy a wine tasting and tapas plate with freshly made bread and locally produced olive oil. As well as the winery,



The beach at Sa Calobra is one of the most secluded spots on the island.

You'll be greeted by the brightest and clearest turquoise water you've ever seen

the sprawling rural estate has 14 stone houses for employees, a chapel, a vinoteca, and a working farm that grows almonds and olives, seasonal fruits such as lemons and clementines, and 500 sheep.

Continue the road trip to *Ca na Toneta*, one of the island's most celebrated restaurants. *Condé Nast Traveler* magazine included *Ca na Toneta* in its 2016 list of 'the 207 greatest restaurants around the globe, according to those who eat, cook, and travel for a living'. It received this accolade thanks to unfussy recipes that highlight great produce while also reviving native ingredients that are out of favour with other chefs.

The six-course seasonal degustation menu at *Ca na Toneta* follows the '0 km' concept, aiming to procure all of its produce from as close as possible and thus reducing its carbon footprint. On top of that, you won't find any single-use plastics in the kitchen, since a ban was put in place with the aim to reduce overall waste on all the Balearic Islands by 20% by 2030.

Round out your trip by stopping in at *Sullerica*, a cosy brewpub for hops lovers. Although beer holds less historical importance here than wine, brewers

are banding together to grow the craft beer scene on the island. Inventive brewers wanted to create a beer that honours their hometown of Sóller. The result, aptly named *Sullerica*, is infused with an orange blossom scent reminiscent of the floral orange that fills the air each spring. Kick back with a tasting paddle and soak up the simple joy of spring in Mallorca.

Back in Palma, the *Andana* restaurant, housed in what was Mallorca's original railway station, is another champion of the 0 km concept. The one-year-old establishment has already drawn a loyal following thanks to its seasonal menu using local ingredients from *Michelin*-starred chef Maca de Castro's own garden and a wine list celebrating local wines. Don't leave without trying a Mallorcan *coca* – a crispy olive oil flatbread topped with seasonal vegetables. The Portera squid, spice-infused whole cauliflower head, and tahini-drizzled eggplant are also sure to impress. A table on the warm terrace is the perfect place to slow down away from the hurried shoppers and busy streets of the nearby Old Town.

HIDDEN BEACHES

If you dream of escaping the crowds, whiling away the day with a good book, the sun warming your face and clear blue water to cool off in, head to Mallorca's wild coast.

Nestled behind the village of Llucalcari is the secluded little bay of Es Canyaret. Here you can enjoy a swim in the tiny pebbly cove or paddle in the



From Llucalcari village you can access a hidden rocky bay with crystal clear waters

shallow rock pools. The bay even has a small mud fountain that appears after heavy rain, so scrub away your stress and then dive into the crystal blue sea. The hike in is an adventure in itself. Start at Deià and follow the coast until you see the handmade wooden *playa* sign tacked to a tree. Your effort will be rewarded with your very own slice of untouched Mallorca to call your own for the day.

Further along the coast is one of the most secluded spots on the island. The beach of Sa Calobra sits at



The hotspots of the kitesurfing scene are found in the north of the island.



Cap de Formentor offers one of the best sunset vantage points on the entire island.

the mouth of the Torrent de Pareis canyon. There are only two ways in: by road or sea. If you choose to visit by road, you'll battle 50 hairpin bends, tour buses, cyclists, and narrow passageways down the steep mountain road towards the bay. Alternatively, a much easier and less stomach-churning arrival is on board a boat tour from Sóller.

Either way, upon arriving you'll be greeted by the brightest and clearest turquoise water you've ever seen as well as sandy beaches free of umbrellas and kiosks. The stunning surrounds are made even more remarkable with the backdrop of the canyon gorge disappearing behind the beach. This is the place to explore if you want a unique beach day without the crowds.

Where the Mediterranean meets the mountains in the north is Cap de Formentor. Known locally as the meeting point of the four winds, this slim peninsula feels gusts from the Spanish mainland, the European Alps, North Africa, and the Atlantic Ocean. These harsh conditions have left a lasting impression on the rock and cliff faces, offering some of the most dramatic scenery on the island and creating appealing nesting places for seabirds in the craggy rocks.

It also offers one of the best sunset vantage points on the entire island, drawing lovers and families keen to imprint the colourful ombré sky in their memory forever. Perched at the furthestmost point and 210 metres above sea level, the Cap de Formentor lighthouse is a cosy spot to pull up a pew for nature's show. The road in – another infamous journey from the father of hairpin bends Mr. Parietti – can get extremely busy in the summer months, so opt to take the bus from Port de Sóller and let the driver earn the EUR 3.10 trip fare. **bo**

Words by Ilze Pole
Photos courtesy of Orijus Gasanovas,
Zane Mengote, Keili Sūkijainen,
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FROM THE EMBASSY OF *airBaltic*

For several years now, *airBaltic* has been inviting bloggers and influencers to become ambassadors for the airline and introduce its new destinations to their followers by fully embracing the local experiences. We've also invited them to become ambassadors of their own countries and share what they love most about where they live.



Orijus Gasanovas,
from Lithuania
@orijusg



Signe Mengote,
from Latvia
@signemengote



Keili Sūkijainen,
from Estonia
@keilis



Gasanovas' favourite neighbourhood in Vilnius
It's the Užupis district, which is like a separate artists' republic in the heart of Vilnius. Painters, sculptors, musicians, and other artists have been living there for decades. Thanks to them, the streets of Užupis have become like an outdoor art gallery. Every time I walk there, I discover something new. I like how it's constantly changing and evolving. There are also a lot of cosy cafés and restaurants in the area.

For relaxation
I was recently impressed by the freshly renovated Paliesiaus Manor near Ignalina. It has not only a hotel and restaurant but also a spa, a health clinic, and a concert hall. I've noticed that Scandinavians love this destination; they come here to relax and spend some time in nature. A lot of people are surprised to find out that many classical music stars come to perform here. I suggest tasting the amazing cinnamon buns at the local bakery as well.

Nature spot to visit in Lithuania
To me, the most beautiful place in Lithuania is Nida, a town on the Curonian Spit on the Baltic Sea coast. It's beautiful at any time of the year, but the best time to visit is summer. I recommend taking a bike with you or renting one on the spot. I'd also suggest going on a boat trip, seeing the impressive dunes of Nida, and tasting some smoked fish at the local fishermen's restaurants. The best way to get to Nida is by airplane. Fly to Palanga Airport and take a bus or car from there.

A favourite beach
Between Palanga and Šventoji – two of the most popular seaside resort towns in Lithuania – lies Kūnigiškės, a small neighbourhood of private homes. I love the beach near it because it's wide, clean, and very calm. Those looking for more privacy will enjoy it. The best way to get there is on a bike from Palanga. Alternatively, it's only a ten-minute drive or so by car from Palanga.



ORIJUS GASANOVAS is a travel journalist who contributes regularly to *Delfi.lt*, Lithuania's biggest news website. He has also created and hosts his own travel show, *Orijaus Kelionės* (Orijus Travels).

Gasanovas has been partnering with *airBaltic* for four years now and is glad to call himself *airBaltic's* ambassador in Lithuania. He checks out *airBaltic's* destinations every month and talks about them on his *Instagram* account. But he also likes to talk about his own country, Lithuania. 'To those unfamiliar with my country, I first tell them that it's a kingdom of woods and lakes. Our cities are small but very beautiful, with charming historical districts.' Gasanovas also takes pride in telling the story of how Lithuania regained its independence from the Soviet Union: 'We're a very united nation. We did not have guns to do a revolution, so we did a singing revolution, which was also a type of resistance and achieved Lithuanian independence.'



On top of that
Visit the new Paupys Market, which has already become a beloved place in Vilnius. Not only does the market look amazing; it also hosts a variety of food vendors so you can try out different delicious cuisines. It's located in Paupys, one of the most charming new neighbourhoods in the city.
Another must in the summer is flying in a hot-air balloon over Vilnius. Lots of visitors and locals fly out early, early in the morning, when it's still dark, to watch the city wake up. We do love flying!

SIGNE MENGOTE is a journalist who has found a passion in blogging and photography. She has been an ambassador for *airBaltic* for two years now. Travelling and exploring new places with her husband plays a big role in her life.

Mengote tells about the rich natural environment of Latvia: the beautiful coastline, the gorgeous beaches, the green forests and meadows, the clear lakes and rivers. ‘What I love most about my country is that, no matter how different we might be, we always come together in difficult times. I’m so proud of my parents, grandparents, and ancestors who fought for our country and our freedom. They’re the reason we have this beautiful country by the sea.’



Mengote’s favourite neighbourhood in Riga

I really love to wander around the Quiet Centre. Alberta iela and Elizabetes iela have the most incredible Art Nouveau buildings. This neighbourhood is very calm, quiet, and just perfect for evening strolls. Have a coffee or a glass of wine in one of the small cafés there.

Nature spot in Latvia to visit

I really love the old fishing villages of Jūrkalne and Ulmale on the western coast of Latvia. Last year, my husband and I went to Pāvilosta, which is nearby, to celebrate our wedding anniversary. On our way to the hotel, from Jūrkalne to Pāvilosta, in the middle of the meadow we

FROM LATVIA



spotted... swings! A path led to the swings, and just a bit further down we found a small, perfect beach. If you wish to visit this area, which is well known for its steep coast, the best way to get there is to rent a car.

For relaxation

Mazmežotne Manor is such a beautiful place by the Lielupe River! Sit on the terrace and enjoy your morning coffee together with a wonderful view of the river. Many newlyweds choose to hold their wedding reception at this manor, and I can see why. It’s so well kept, the atmosphere is amazing, and the location itself is very pretty and unique. The manor offers a spa, sauna, and restaurant. Another manor house, Mežotne, is located right across the river. It, too, offers lodging and a restaurant.

A favourite beach

I grew up in Jūrmala, a well-known seaside resort near Riga. In the early 19th century, it was just a row of fishing villages along the Gulf of Riga coast; it was declared a city only in 1920. The beaches here can get quite busy on summer days, but in autumn and winter you can enjoy peaceful walks along the water. The best way to get there is to hop on a train from central Riga and get off at the Majori or Dubulti stations. Keep in mind, however, that the trains to Jūrmala can get pretty crowded on hot summer days. You can also take a taxi.

On top of that

I definitely recommend visiting Kuldīga, one of my favourite towns in Latvia. Beautiful architecture, cosy cafés, and the widest waterfall in Europe. Located on the Venta River, the waterfall is 100–110 metres wide. Stop at *Rezidence Kafe Venta* for a piece of delicious cake, have a coffee on the terrace, and enjoy the view!

I also suggest visiting Rundāle Palace, an amazing Baroque masterpiece located about an hour’s drive south of Riga. We always take our guests from abroad there.

FROM ESTONIA



Sükijainen’s favourite spot in Tallinn

I love Haven Kakumäe and Port Noblessner. I really like the fact that Estonia, and Tallinn as well, is surrounded by water. There are quite a few harbours where you can find nice cafés and restaurants to have lunch. Haven Kakumäe is quieter and more relaxed, but on the weekends it hosts some cool open-air concerts. Noblessner, on the other hand, is a big hit right now. I suggest renting an electric scooter downtown and riding all the way to Noblessner.

For relaxation

For me, Taagepera Castle is one of the most unique manor houses in Estonia. It was mentioned for the first time in historical documents dating back to the 16th century, but the current mansion house reflecting the Art Nouveau style was built in 1907. The newly renovated castle complex is a unique, culturally significant area that now includes a 1930s-style hotel, an à la carte restaurant, a luxurious spa (Wagenküll Spa), and sports and recreation facilities. Situated near the town of Tõrva in Valga County, it takes about 2.5 hours to get there from Tallinn. I’d recommend renting a car, because getting there is an experience in and of itself.

While there, I suggest taking a small detour to Võru County and looking for the *Ruup* forest megaphones. They’re an installation consisting of three impressive wooden megaphones through which the sounds of nature can be listened to in an amplified manner.

Nature spot to visit in Estonia

Visiting a bog is a huge *must* in Estonia. Go for a hike, swim, picnic, sunrise, or just a Sunday walk. It’s so great to see nature in its own, unbothered habitat. When visiting Kakerdaja Bog, I recommend also taking a walk in Kõrvemaa Nature Park. Both of them are located in Järva County, approximately a 50-minute car ride from Tallinn Airport.

A favourite beach

Pärnu Beach steals the show for sure. It wouldn’t be a proper Estonian summer without visiting



KEILI SÜKIJAINEN is a TV presenter and, as she jokes, a part-time travel addict thanks to *airBaltic*. She once posted a picture of herself in Paris, tagging *airBaltic*, after which the airline’s social media team approached her offering to become an ambassador for *airBaltic*. Sükijainen has travelled a lot, seeing as she started modelling when she was 13 and lived in different places all over the world. But she found her true calling while studying journalism.

‘Estonia is very tech savvy,’ Sükijainen says. ‘*TransferWise* (now *Wise*), *Bolt*, and *Skype* were all founded by Estonians. Fun fact: we have the most unicorns per capita. Also, the most supermodels. For example, Carmen Kass and Karmen Pedaru are both Estonian.’ Sükijainen also loves the fact that it’s possible to do almost everything in Estonia via smart phone, whether it’s starting a company or doing taxes.



Pärnu, our summer capital. With outdoor concerts, cold cocktails, and beautiful, happy people, you’ll definitely love it! Pärnu is a short 1.5-hour drive from Tallinn Airport. Another option is visiting the villages of Pühajärve in southern Estonia or Lohusalu near Tallinn.

On top of that

Visit Tartu in July. The local municipality makes Vabaduse Puistee a car-free street and opens it up to street-food vendors. Tartu is one of the oldest cities in Estonia and home of the University of Tartu, founded back in 1632.

Camp on the coast of one of Estonia’s many islands. If you choose Kihnu Island, maybe you’ll meet the legendary folk singer Kihnu Virve!

The real Denmark

Jutland, locals will tell you, is the real Denmark – home to the country’s best beaches, biggest amusement park, and most heartfelt welcome.



Skallingen. Hiking in sunrise

In England, they speak of a north-south divide. In Denmark, the divide is west-east. Jutland, Denmark’s biggest chunk of land, is two stretches of water and a world away from Zealand and Copenhagen. Much like the north of England, Jutland is friendlier, franker, simpler, and more hardy. For many Danes, Jutland is the ‘real’ Denmark.

Locals will also tell you that Jutland has everything Copenhagen has, plus a whole lot more. In Jutland there are more hills, more lakes, and more forests. There is the distinctive light and landscape that inspired the greatest Scandinavian painters. Jutland’s west coast has Denmark’s most spectacular beaches, including the Wadden Sea that stretches down to Germany and the Netherlands. Further inland, Jutland has zoos, theme parks, historic market towns, and major university cities.

Jutland, in fact, has everything – including West Denmark’s international airport, Billund Airport, with direct routes all around Europe, and to Riga as well.

LEGOLAND

LEGOLAND® Billund Resort, the famous toy’s associated theme park in Billund, is far more than a model village. It is an entire resort that offers adventures for the whole family on land, on water, and in the air.

Still, however much you enjoy the *LEGO®* aquarium Atlantis and the many exhilarating rides and rollercoasters, *LEGOLAND®* is all about the model brick universe that is Miniland. Be warned: if it’s the rides you’re here for, you may need more than a day – especially with Covid-19 safety measures in place (legoland.dk).

At *LEGOLAND’s* *LEGO®* Museum, serious enthusiasts can see how the plastic *LEGO®* bricks have evolved over the years since they were first manufactured in 1949. For those who would rather dip their toe in the water, the separate *LEGO®* House in Billund is well worth a visit – it’s a celebration of learning through play (legohouse.com).

IDYLLIC TOWNS AND BIG CITIES

Some of the most charming small cities in Denmark can be found a short distance from Billund. One is Ribe, the oldest town in the country and, according to some, the oldest town in the whole of Scandinavia.

Ribe is dominated by a Romanesque cathedral that sits proudly in the town’s dominant central square. The town has a quaint harbour, an active cultural life, and excellent bars and restaurants (the best of which is *Porsborgs* directly

facing the cathedral’s east end). This is a quiet but deeply atmospheric town, perfect for a relaxing, low-key weekend away scattered with walking and exploring. For a true medieval Ribe experience, complete with authentic sloping floors and doorways, stay at the *Hotel Dagmar* overlooking the cathedral.

Architecture aficionados will love the seaport cities of Kolding and Vejle. Kolding is home to the Trapholt Museum, while Vejle boasts an Instagram friendly waterfront. In Vejle, the local highlight is also the new restaurant *Lyst*, which offers new Nordic cuisine in a stunning setting - Fjordenhus, an architectural wonder designed by Danish - Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson and the jewel in the crown of Vejle’s revamped waterfront. Check out equally spectacular wave-shaped residential building Bølgen.

Billund is the nearest international airport to Denmark’s zippy second city of Aarhus – a centre for art, culture, education, and outstanding Danish cuisine. The city’s new tram network and colossal Dokkl waterfront library (the biggest library in Scandinavia) have injected it with a new energy. Its nickname, ‘the city of smiles’, certainly rings true. Must-sees include Jutland’s flagship contemporary art museum ARoS (aros.dk), Dokkl (dokkl.dk), and the city’s beautiful botanical garden, which is open day and night all year round. The all-organic restaurant *L’Estragon* has an eclectic and excellently prepared menu (lestragon.dk).

In the other direction, the west-coast city of Esbjerg has become known as Denmark’s ‘energy city’. Esbjerg has transformed itself in recent years, opening a new pedestrian walkway (Landgangen) all along the waterfront that leads into the city centre and also taking strollers past the spectacular sculpture *Man Meets the Sea*. More importantly, Esbjerg is the perfect base from which to explore the Wadden Sea.

WILD WEST COAST

From Esbjerg, a short ferry ride takes you to the island of Fanø, whose entire 16-kilometre-long west coast consists of one huge beach – the most famous and spectacular in the whole of Denmark. Fanø forms part of the Wadden Sea National Park, a continuous system of UNESCO-protected intertidal sand and mudflats whose stunning white dunes stretch right down to the European mainland.

The Wadden Sea Centre, not far from Ribe, reveals all about the coast, its wildlife, and natural features through interactive exhibitions, lectures, and guided tours of the area (vadehavscntret.dk). But the sea is also accessible from many more west Jutland towns and beaches. Hjerting Beach outside Esbjerg offers beautiful views over Ho Bay and good swimming spots, including long piers into deeper water for use at low tide. Nearby Sjelborg Beach is a little wilder and good for bracing walks.

In a region famous for its white sand, why not visit the town actually named for it? Hvide Sande (‘White Sand’) is a small town located bang in the middle of the Holmsland Dunes, around an artificial canal linking the Ringkøbing Fjord to the North Sea. Climb up the nearby lighthouse at Lyngvig Fyr to see the lie of the land.

Hvide Sande is a mecca for watersports – with surfing and kite-surfing lessons offered to beginners (westwind.dk) – but boasts excellent shopping, restaurants, and plenty of distinctive accommodation, too. Get yourself a table at the renowned *Kommandobroen* eatery, and watch the sky turn from blue to orange and back to blue again as the sun sets (bygrantland.dk). visitdenmark.com



Ribe



Isbjerg. Aarhus Architecture



Wadden Sea

Words by Andrew Mellor

Photos courtesy of Visit Denmark

Words by Olga Dolina
Photos by Fernando Guerra/FG+SG and Extrastudio

THE RED HOUSE



A century-old former winery in the Mediterranean paradise of Portugal has been converted into a family abode. *Baltic Outlook* explores its preserved and upgraded architecture, oasis-like orange grove, and minimalist living spaces.

Embraced by picturesque vineyards and olive and cork groves, the small village of Azeitão lies at the foot of the Arrábida Mountains between Lisbon and the port city of Setúbal. The area is known for spectacular palatial estates and some of Portugal's finest wines, such as the famous Moscatel. Azeitão is also known for its special delicacies, including egg and sugar pie and creamy sheep's milk cheese.

Once a winery but now the Casa Vermelha, or Red House, this structure was built in the early 20th century by the grandparents of its current residents. Adapted by Lisbon-based architects *Extrastudio* to modern-day living, traces of the original architecture are still found, for instance, in the nine-metre-high ceiling in the entrance hall. Despite its location in close proximity to the neighbouring homes, the imposing appearance of this house's façade and the gripping aura of its garden lends it a secluded and very personal ambience.

►► The interior merges with the exterior via a 14-metre-long window along the wall facing the garden. This creates a unified space that exudes the vivid poetry of southern living. On hot summer nights, the sliding windows of the living room are opened to join the space with the outdoors.

► Recalling the spirit of the old winery, reddish lime mortar with a rough texture and uneven pigmentation makes a bold aesthetic statement on the façade. The appearance changes depending on weather conditions and looks almost black when it rains. All existing materials from the winery were either preserved or upcycled. For example, the old timber roof was turned into a circle-shaped deck and old stone became window sills.

▼ The pure white, light-reflecting interior with rooflights, a porthole window, and long mirrored walls creates an illusion of infinite, endless space. The clear, minimalist design of the house is balanced with an informal ambience in which private and public needs are equally cherished.





◀ The private zones on the upper floors flank the façades, thus allowing the ground floor to have double- and even triple-height spaces.



◀ The 360-square-metre house closely adjoins its neighbours at one corner of the plot, and therefore the architects inserted an extra courtyard to let natural light enter the darkest interior areas. Pale concrete flooring is used throughout the house to reflect the light and cool the house on hot days.



▲ The Mediterranean flair is highlighted by the imposing black-bottomed swimming pool that reflects the sky. The jewel of the fragrant garden, the pool is raised above the ground and resembles an elegant rural irrigation tank. Constructed with no visible edges, swimming here feels like floating through infinity. **bo**



Photo by Iris Kivisalu and the project authors

THE SMART DRESS

PLAYING WITH YOUR MIND

A research project involving technology, fabrics, and art has shown that smart textiles can help us gain control over our bodies.

‘We believe that we have this one body, but it’s actually changing all the time,’ says Spanish human-computer interaction scientist Ana Tajadura-Jiménez. For many years, she has been studying how to alter people’s perception of themselves and has worked with people who are physically inactive or in pain. ‘I’m trying to make people feel like they have a different body!’ she explains. For instance, if someone feels they are not capable of walking for an hour, she may be able to change that.

Making people feel like they have a different body sounds intriguing, but how is that possible? Tajadura-Jiménez suggests it can be done by altering the senses. She realised this idea together with two Estonian scientists: interactive textile designer-researcher Kristi Kuusk and Aleksander Väljamäe. Funded by ‘Vertigo’, a project under the Starts initiative of the European Commission, the one-year-long

initiative brought together scientists from three different fields: art, technology, and science.

‘It was a transdisciplinary project that brought in different angles and took scientists out of their comfort zones to create something new,’ says Väljamäe, who saw vibrating textile as an interesting new communication channel. As an associate professor of textile design at the Estonian Academy of Arts, Kuusk had worked with vibrations on the body before, so the team focused on that. They wanted to create patterns with lines of vibrations that would create, for instance, the sensation of growing.

The scientists built on the knowledge they already had. They learned which body parts are more sensitive to quivers and how far from each other the motions would have to be to create a sense of continuity. They attached tiny vibrating motors between two layers of textile at the centre of the back, on the upper



Photo courtesy of xx

Tiny motors were attached to the back of the dress and wrapped around the arm.

back, and around the arm. The vibrations moved in different directions, either away or towards the centre of the body. Six different motion patterns were tested.

The participants of the study assessed their emotional state, body sensations, and sensations of materiality before the experiment and after experiencing each different pattern. Did they feel happy, or maybe frightened? How light or heavy did they feel? Which elements did they identify with: air, water, cotton, sand, oil, wood, or rocks?

Some participants said that the pattern of vibrations starting from the centre of the back and moving outwards made them feel like air. Others said they felt relaxed and like water. In contrast, patterns moving inwards made people feel heavy or out of control. Different patterns also induced different material associations. Some made the people feel more like clouds, others more like water or rocks.

In the second prototype, the participants touched textiles with three different vibrating patterns resembling water, clouds, and rocks. The results of the study were incredibly clear and showed that it is possible to change how people perceive themselves by reprogramming what they wear. People can feel hard as rocks or light as air with a press of a button.

The team continues to work together, for the moment, on two other projects: ‘Magic OutFit’ and the EU-funded ‘BodyInTransit’.

Haptic technologies and e-clothes have been moving forward with baby steps. In 2002, *Cute Circuit*, the world’s first wearable-technology fashion brand, released the *Hug Shirt*, which allows users to hug each other from a distance. Scientists around the world are also working on clothes that can support psychotherapy. The Estonian roboticist Indrek Must is working on a wearable robot made of textile. The better-known *Teslasuit* collects real-time data about the user’s body and tracks their position and movements.

Even though various body-enhancing smart clothes are entering the market, their possibilities are still largely unexplored. The ‘Magic Lining’ project with its vibrating dress shows just how much more potential there is. ‘Imagine if this dress were connected to your calendar,’ Kuusk wonders. ‘It would know when you’re having a job interview and boost you with confidence on that day. Or it would make you more focused when you work and help you calm down when it’s getting late.’

Kuusk, who grew up running around her parents’ sewing factory, is interested in sustainable smart textiles. She thinks the invention could also be friendly to the environment. We would simply not need that many clothes for our different needs if we could reprogramme what we wear. For Kuusk, the smart dress is like an extra layer of skin that takes care of its user. Not only physically but also emotionally.

researchinestonia.eu

Researcher-designer Kristi Kuusk teaches textile design at the Estonian Academy of Arts.



Photo courtesy of Kristi Kuusk



KING'S COLLEGE THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF LATVIA

For over half a century, King's College schools have been providing children with the best-quality education both within the United Kingdom and abroad. Since opening its doors in Latvia in 2017, the school has focused on academic excellence whilst keeping in mind that students' achievements also depend on their emotional wellbeing and an inspiring learning environment.

students and their families within these areas.

The new campus building includes more primary school classrooms, allowing for two form entry in each year group, as well as specialist secondary school classrooms. There are fully equipped science laboratories, performance spaces, music and art rooms, computing spaces, and an additional library and study centre.

The development of high-quality sporting facilities goes hand in hand with the vision of becoming a leading school for sporting achievement in Latvia. New facilities include two indoor swimming pools, a dance room, and two all-weather sports pitches to allow for the playing of football, tennis, basketball, and netball even in the winter months. The physical education teachers and swimming coaches will work with the children throughout the school day and after school in a variety of extra-curricular classes. King's College, The British School of Latvia is the only international school in Latvia with sporting facilities of this level.

The youngest students have newly built classrooms with direct access to the outdoors, where a dedicated playground and garden area is located. The opportunity to enjoy fresh air and recharge during the school day is an

important part of the British curriculum, and outside learning is an essential aspect of life at King's College Latvia as it allows the students to be curious, creative, and investigative.

Over the past year, the school staff has gone the extra mile to make sure that the students have been in school as often as possible. Despite the fact that much learning has had to be conducted remotely, the school is now ready to restart the new school year with in-person learning. The teachers have developed a thorough recovery curriculum that will support all students back to full-time in-person learning. This programme is designed to not only focus on academic learning but, equally important, it also takes into account the social and emotional support that will be needed after such a long time learning remotely.

'King's College has adapted every step of the way to maintain academic excellence and continues to use innovative teaching techniques and technology to provide students with the best learning experience and an individual approach,' emphasises Mrs. Adele Stanford, Headteacher of King's College, The British School of Latvia. With over 25 years of experience working in the world of education, she remains passionate about creating an environment that meets the needs of all learners and develops students academically, socially, and emotionally.

King's College is proud that its teaching staff like to stay in Latvia for a long period of time, allowing them to form strong, stable relationships with the students. The careful recruitment process contributes to the stability of the team and ensures that all teaching professionals are knowledgeable, motivated, and highly skilled native English speakers. All of the group's schools are accredited by the British government, and most of the graduates continue their studies at the top universities in the United Kingdom, North America, and Europe and pursue fulfilling careers all over the world.

When asked what she is most proud of, Headteacher Mrs. Adele Stanford answers without hesitation: 'My pride comes from the moments when I take a step back and look at the students interacting with each other and working together. I am humbled by their amazing resilience, their ability to adapt to changing situations, and the positivity with which they embrace challenges. Our school provides a unique educational environment that puts our students and their families at the heart of all we do. I am thrilled that now we are able to offer our learners the best facilities of any school in Latvia. I am proud to be leading The British School of Latvia at such an exciting time in the development of the school.'

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Publicity photos



TSI's graduating class of 2019

TRANSPORT AND TELECOMMUNICATION INSTITUTE

EDUCATION IS YOUR CHANCE TO BECOME A LEADER

The Transport and Telecommunication Institute (TSI) is a modern university of applied science in Latvia with one hundred years of history. Over the years, it has educated many aviation experts, and still today students from various corners of the world come specifically to Riga to be trained in the fields of aviation transport and aviation management. But that's not all. TSI offers 16 different academic study programmes, including computer science, a specialty that is very much in demand nowadays by employers. For those interested in innovation across a variety of fields, TSI is the place to be for study and growth.

TSI chairwoman of the board Prof. Irina Yatskiv points out that the on-going pandemic has changed the education system and the ways in which knowledge is transferred and acquired: 'Over the past year, the education system has become so digital as never before. We are also becoming much more flexible in the teaching process – not in the quality of education but rather in the ways in which this quality is maintained and offered to students so that they can fully enjoy the learning process, no matter the current circumstances.'

It is precisely for this reason that TSI is enthusiastically thinking about the growth of its students by offering them various programmes that are unique in Latvia. One of these is the double-degree programme in computer science with a particular focus on artificial intelligence. According to vice-rector for academics and research Prof. Mihail Savrasov, this is truly a unique programme that is realised in collaboration with the University of the West of England. Over a period of four years, students not only earn degrees from both universities but also gain invaluable experience. We therefore invite everyone who is curious about artificial intelligence and who would like to earn a globally recognised diploma to join this study programme and enjoy a new level of education.

'The study process in this programme is implemented according to the British standard, which means more group work and individual projects,' says Prof. Savrasov. 'Teaching staff from both institutions also evaluate the students' results. As a result, students get to study at a British university right here in Latvia. Although the cost of the

double-degree programme is about twice that of the other undergraduate programmes at TSI, the cost is nowhere near the amount that students would have to pay if studying in the United Kingdom itself. In addition, as a part of our social responsibility initiative, we offer reduced tuition fees for especially talented students.'

In its aim to become the leading private technical university in the Baltic Sea region, one of TSI's most important goals is international cooperation. The international environment is one of the school's core values. Consequently, it's no surprise that students from more than 35 countries around the world, including Sweden and even Peru, study at the university in pursuit of an excellent education in IT, logistics, aviation, and other fields. In large part, this is possible because all of the study programmes are available in both the Latvian and English languages.

The management and teaching staff at TSI are also international. The university has long hosted guest lecturers from various countries, and this spring a new dean of the Engineering Faculty joined the institute – Prof. Emmanuel Merchán from Mexico, who not only has extensive international experience but also a special vision for the digital transformation of education. 'It's important for us to be internationally visible. An international team also benefits our students by broadening their horizons and, more generally, the ways in which we learn,' says Prof. Yatskiv.

Digitalisation and personalisation are key words for the study process at TSI. This is also confirmed by the Master Plus offer developed by the university. This is a modern and innovative approach to a master's programme that offers in-depth knowledge and a personal mentor in the student's chosen study programme. Unlike traditional approaches, Master Plus gives students the opportunity to receive individual consultations with and advice from a mentor with professional experience and knowledge.

One of those mentors is Dr. Ioseb Gabelaia, a guest lecturer from Georgia. In teaching a course on design thinking for strategic innovation, he highlights practical knowledge and especially appreciates the '4 Cs': critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication. 'Master Plus differs from the usual master's study programmes,' he says. 'It's important for us to maintain a practical approach throughout the learning process. Students will need to be able to solve a variety of different problems and situations not only as students but also later in their careers. This means that it's not me as a teacher who finds solutions to specific problems but the students themselves. I think there's no better word for students than "learners". My favourite expression is "picking the brain", and the first thing I usually say to students is that I will pick their brains as much as possible.' One can also study sustainable business development and analysis and improvement of logistics processes within the Master Plus offer.

'For some people education is a lifestyle, but for others it's an opportunity to obtain the lifestyle they want. After graduating, many of our students are employed by such internationally recognised companies as *Google*, *Accenture*, and even *TikTok* as well as in the aviation and logistics sectors all across the world. That only confirms the fact that education is your chance to be a leader,' concludes Prof. Yatskiv.



The robotics lab



Dr. Ioseb Gabelaia, Prof. Mihail Savrasov, Prof. Irina Yatskiv



Learning the basics of aviation

www.tsi.lv



TSIpage



tsi_university

Transport and
Telecommunication
Institute (TSI)

Photos by iStock

WELCOME ABOARD airBaltic



The village of Atrani on Italy's famous Amalfi Coast

NEW DESTINATIONS THIS SUMMER FROM RIGA

This summer season we're offering new connections between Riga and Greece, Spain, Italy, and the United Kingdom.

Italy is the place to taste delicious dishes and explore beautiful villages and epic beaches. Take a picture in front of the world-famous leaning tower in **Pisa** and enjoy a holiday in picturesque Tuscany. Fly there starting July 2, with flights operating two days per week.

Naples, the third-largest city in Italy, is a fantastic starting point for a trip along the picturesque Amalfi Coast. Enjoy breathtaking views from Mount Vesuvius, discover the secrets of Pompeii, and treat yourself to renowned Italian cuisine. Flights will start on June 4 and run two times per week.

In addition to these new destinations, fly also to other cities in Italy: **Rome, Milan, Venice, Catania** in Sicily, and **Olbia** in Sardinia.

Soak up the vibrant Mediterranean atmosphere in Greece. Enjoy the ultimate holiday cocktail of **Santorini** and **Heraklion**, which are some of the most desirable destinations in the world. Fly to Santorini once a week starting June 5 and to Heraklion two times per week from May 15.

If you've been dreaming of warm winds and sand between your toes, take a Saturday flight to **Corfu** beginning June 12 or head to **Kos** on a twice-weekly flight starting from July 3.

With these new additions, *airBaltic* will now have a total of seven direct flight

destinations in Greece. Fly also to **Athens, Rhodes, and Thessaloniki**.

Spain's third-largest city has so much to offer: world-class restaurants, stunning beaches, and a rich cultural heritage. Fly to **Valencia** two times per week from July 1.

If you're interested in exploring more of Spain, fly to **Barcelona, Madrid, Malaga, Palma de Mallorca, or Tenerife**.

The Scottish capital, **Edinburgh**, is a centre of culture and the arts. Flights begin on June 4 and operate two times per week. We also continue to offer convenient connections between Riga and **London, Aberdeen, and Manchester** in the United Kingdom.

INCREASED CHECKED BAGGAGE WEIGHT ALLOWANCE

To provide even better service to our passengers, we've increased the checked baggage weight allowance on *airBaltic* flights. **Now you can pack up to 25 kilograms in your checked bag, which is an increase of three kilograms.**

The weight allowance has also been increased to 25 kilograms for sports equipment. For a bicycle, the weight allowance is even higher – 25 kilograms.

If you book GREEN Plus or GREEN Classic tickets, one checked bag is included in your ticket. For Business class passengers – two checked bags and sports equipment.

When booking a GREEN ticket, you can add checked baggage at an additional fee starting from EUR 14.99 per bag per direction. Checked baggage fees can vary depending on the selected route and flight duration.



A view of the city of Candelaria in Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain

NEW DESTINATIONS THIS AUTUMN FROM RIGA

This autumn you can prolong the summer with some great new holiday spots easily accessible via direct flights from Riga.

On September 1 we will open a new flight between Riga and **Dubai**, which is the most populous city in the United Arab Emirates. Flights will operate four times per week.

Consider visiting Expo Dubai from October 22. A celebration of culture and innovation, it's a once-in-a-lifetime event

to explore the achievements of the United Arab Emirates and other nations around the world.

With year-round sunshine, **Tenerife** is the largest of the seven Canary Islands. Hiking in Teide National Park, watching dolphins from a kayak or whales from a boat, enjoying black-sand beaches, and playing golf are just some of the many activities on the island. Flights will operate three times a week starting September 2.



A narrow street in the Old Town of Nice

NEW DESTINATIONS FROM TALLINN

We are happy to announce two new direct flight routes from Tallinn this summer.

New flights began on May 1 to the third largest city in Germany – **Munich**. These flights operate three times per week.

Nice is a great place to enjoy life and take in the beauty of the gardens and the sea. Flights to Nice begin on June 2 and run twice a week, making France more reachable from Tallinn.

airBaltic currently offers direct flights from Tallinn to **Amsterdam, Berlin, Copenhagen, London, Brussels, Malaga, Paris, Vilnius, Oslo, and Stockholm** as well as connections to many other destinations via Riga.

airBaltic – THE WORLD'S FIRST AIRLINE TO ISSUE NFTS ON OPENSEA

After being the first airline to accept Bitcoin as a form of payment, offering non-fungible tokens (NFTs) is the next step for us in blockchain technology.

As of April, we have become the world's first airline to issue limited collector NFTs. The artwork showcases an individual *Airbus* aircraft with its registration as well as the most beloved Latvian cities.

In honour of Latvia's centenary in 2018, *airBaltic* invited everyone to vote for their favourite towns and cities in Latvia. The company's *Airbus A220-300* aircraft were then named after the towns and cities. Starting with Kuldīga, the locations are now also represented on the works of digital art issued by *airBaltic*.

The first NFT featured Kuldīga, which is the heart of Latvia's westernmost region of Kurzeme. For the second issue, *airBaltic* has chosen to create a work of digital art featuring another beloved Latvian place, the picturesque medieval town of Cēsis.

The issuance of the limited NFTs serves as a tourism campaign for Latvian towns and cities, which for many people are certainly still undiscovered destinations.

Both of our NFTs have been issued on the *OpenSea* marketplace.

Your health and well-being are our top priority

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



BEFORE THE FLIGHT

Only travel if you are in good health. Your body temperature will be measured at the airport, and you will be allowed on board only if it does not exceed 37.8°C.

Check in and order your inflight meal and other services online to minimise physical contact.



AT THE AIRPORT

Wear a protective face mask during the whole trip – from the moment you enter the terminal until you walk out of the airport at your destination. Children under six years of age and people with certain medical conditions are exempt from wearing face masks.

Try to keep your distance from other people and use the hand disinfectants available throughout the airport.

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

BOARDING

To minimise physical contact between passengers, boarding starts from the rear part of the aircraft. Self-scan your boarding pass and show your travel document to the boarding agent.

As long as there are enough free seats, we try to leave an empty seat next to each passenger. If this is not possible for all passengers, families and groups are seated together. Please be aware that last-minute seat changes may apply due to distancing reasons.

ON BOARD

During the whole flight face masks must be worn by all passengers and our crew, which also wears protective gloves.

Choose food and drinks from the disposable menu cards that the cabin crew hand out to Economy class passengers. Meal service is included with Business class tickets. All meals are prepared and packed separately in our kitchen under strict hygiene standards. Payment is possible by card only.

CLEAN AIR INSIDE THE CABIN



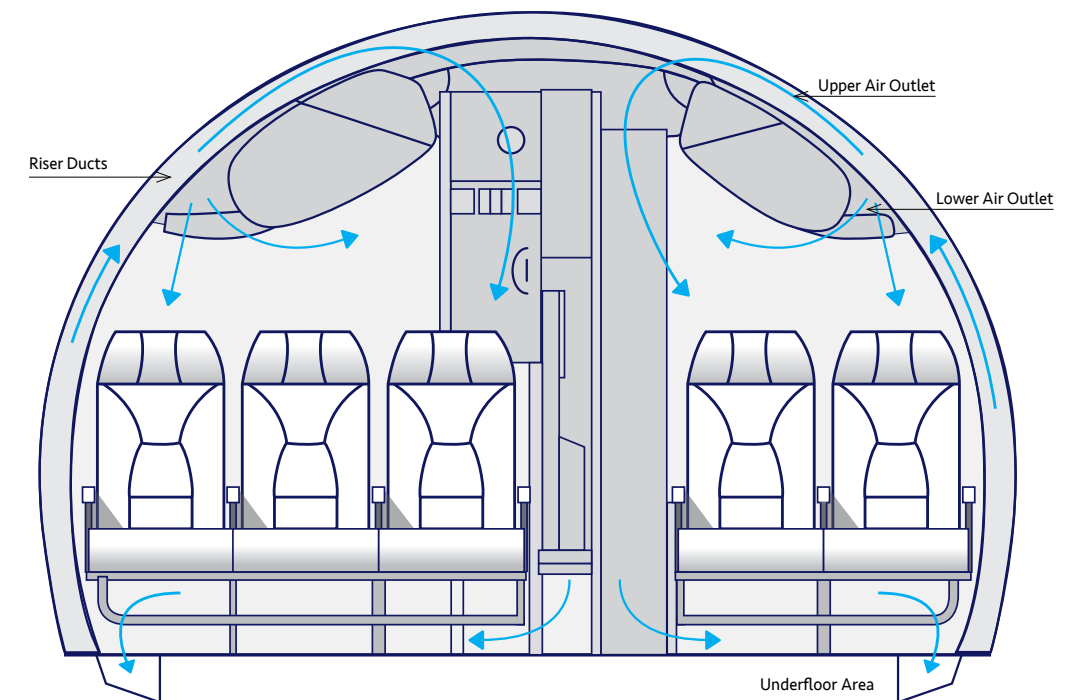
Our *Airbus A220-300* aircraft are equipped with a modern environmental control system using HEPA filters to eliminate all viruses and bacteria. Airflow is routed down towards the floor, thus minimising air transmission amongst passengers.

AIRCRAFT DISINFECTION

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

The science behind keeping cabin air clean

Words by Līga Vaļko



According to a recent survey by the International Air Transport Association (IATA), 37% of passengers are concerned about breathing the air on an airplane. Because there is a lack of knowledge about how air is filtered and supplied in aircraft, most consider it a threat. But with its modern environmental control system, *airBaltic* has set a high standard for minimising the potential of spreading viruses.

The *Airbus A220-300* fleet is equipped with cutting-edge technologies, making flying as worry-free as possible. For the production of *Airbus A220-300* aircraft, the manufacturer has used a cabin air recirculation system and High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters that provide better performance compared to those used in any other type of public transportation.

Cabin air is continuously replenished with fresh air from the moment the aircraft engines or auxiliary power unit is turned on. The air is collected from outside the aircraft through the engine. For your comfort and wellbeing, it is mixed with filtered air from the cabin. The ratio between filtered air and fresh air from outside is 25:75, which sets a high benchmark among jetliners used by other carriers across Europe.

75% of the fresh air is taken from the engine compressor and passed through the air cycle machine at a temperature well above 100°C to ensure aseptic air quality. The rest of the cabin air consists of the HEPA-filtered and recirculated cabin air. The HEPA filters

are very effective at trapping microscopic particles as small as bacteria and viruses when the air passes through the system. In such conditions, airborne pathogens from the cabin air are captured and eliminated with 99.99% efficiency, making our aircraft cabin air exceptionally clean.

Inside the passenger cabin, the airflow is supplied from above the overhead compartment and flows directed towards the floor, eliminating airflow along the cabin and minimising lateral air transmission amongst passenger rows. According to IATA, the air circulation in planes is many times better than in classrooms, supermarkets, conference rooms, and offices. In fact, the risk associated with viruses on jets is probably lower than in any other confined space thanks to next-generation cabin air filtration systems equipped with HEPA filters.

In addition to the modern environmental control system, other preliminary steps also help to ensure a safe environment inside *airBaltic* aircraft. 'We are taking care to keep our passengers and aircraft safe while travelling. The airline has introduced measures following the recommendations of the local government and healthcare agencies, the aircraft manufacturer, and IATA,' says Lauris Miķelsons, VP Compliance and Safety at *airBaltic*.

'*airBaltic* is doing its utmost, and the team comes together to ensure safe flights for travellers and the crew,' concludes Miķelsons.

Words by Ieva Šmite

Photo by Ģirts Ozoliņš (*F&A*)



ALEKSANDRS ŽEŅĻENKO,
licensed B1 category technician

About all things **technical**

airBaltic's technical department is one of the largest departments at the airline. It comprises the aircraft maintenance staff as well as other departments ensuring full aircraft technical maintenance services. The main responsibility of the technicians is to perform planned, regular aircraft maintenance according to the manufacturer's guidelines as well as respond to all flight crew reports regarding detected faults. Aleksandrs Žeņļenko joined the *airBaltic* team of technicians six years ago, following an internship with the airline, and is now a licensed technician.

What are the things you like most about your job?

I've always been interested in all kinds of technical things. I've helped my parents do repairs around the house, and when I bought my first car, I did all the repairs on it myself. The same goes for my bicycle. I used to do BMX racing and spent a lot of time on my bicycle at the local skate park in Daugavpils, which is my native city. I would do all sorts of tricks, my bike would sometimes break, and then I'd fix and improve it myself. In school, I was good at physics and math, and eventually I came to the realisation that I enjoy working with technical things. And that's why I really like my job, because it also deals with technical things.

The other thing I like about my job is that it's different every day. Aircraft maintenance is divided into line maintenance checks and the more extensive C checks. We never know what we'll encounter during the line checks. For example, the aircraft arrives and we've received the call to do a check, but we don't know exactly what we'll need to do or where a problem might appear. But we need to understand the situation quickly and act on it. Every once in a while we might discover an unexpected issue that demands a more in-depth look at the systems and a search for the right solution. The aircraft tells us where it 'hurts', in which system, but we nevertheless have to find exactly where the problem is. It's kind of like a doctor making a diagnosis. But I like that part of the job as well – the examination and investigation, the studying and learning. I wouldn't enjoy an office job; I like to be able to move around.

Tell us about a typical day at work for you.

We work in shifts: four days of work and then four days off. Our night shifts involve two nights and two days. Of course, we may also be called in to work on a day off if an unexpected situation arises or the airline needs extra technicians. We do most of our major work during the night, because the airplanes are in the hangar at night. During the day they're out flying. Day shifts are more about being on call and available for unexpected situations. We're also responsible for fixing the coffee machines on the airplanes, not just the engines (*laughs*).

What were those three months like last spring when most aircraft were grounded?

You might imagine that we were out of work during that time, but that wasn't the case. Just because an airplane is grounded doesn't mean that it doesn't need to be checked and serviced. If it's standing outside on the apron, it's subject to the weather conditions – rain, wind, etc. Water and moisture might seep in and lead to corrosion, which might not be noticeable from the outside; sometimes corrosion can only be found by taking apart the engine. So we need to do preservation work.

At the beginning of the lockdown, we fired up the airplane engines once a week, because we didn't know how long they'd be grounded. When it became clear that it was going to be longer than just a couple of weeks, we put the airplanes in storage. But even so, we were constantly doing various checks on them to make sure that being grounded wasn't causing any damage to the aircraft. You can't just leave an airplane sit without checking up on it.

How closely do you work with the cabin crew?

We meet with the pilots after a flight if they've reported any faults in the systems. They tell us what they liked or did not like during the flight, and we discuss it. But when everything's fine, we usually just wave and say hi to each other (*laughs*).

How did you end up at *airBaltic*?

By chance! When I was in school, I didn't have a specific interest in aviation, nor is anyone in my family linked with aviation. But when I applied to the university, I did so together with a friend of mine whose father was a helicopter pilot. He really wanted to get into the aviation transport programme at Riga Technical University (RTU). I thought that sounded quite interesting, and that's how I ended up at RTU. We later learned that we could do our internship at *airBaltic*. We were invited to interviews, and ten students from our class were accepted as interns at the airline.

The internship lasted six months. We worked the night shifts and helped the technicians. We performed some of the jobs together with the technicians, too. Six months later I was invited to a job

interview at *airBaltic*. That was actually very fast, because internships can sometimes last for a year or two. To become a technician, my degree from RTU wasn't enough. I needed to pass modules exams and receive the corresponding certificates. The process is similar to what a pilot goes through, passing modules to receive certificates and then, at the end, a pilot licence. In addition, they need to train for a specific aircraft type in order to be able to fly it. The system for technicians is pretty similar, but it's longer.

I could tell by the engine's sound that it was our own *Airbus A220-300*

What aircraft types have you worked on?

I've spent most of my career working on the *Boeing 737-300*, and also a little bit on the *Dash 8 Q400*. But now, after working on our new *Airbus A220-300*, I really wouldn't want to return to the other aircraft types. Even though we laugh that the new aircraft initially had their share of 'childhood illnesses' – all of which we've dealt with successfully – from a technical aspect they're wonderful. Over these past few years that *airBaltic* has had the *Airbus A220-300* in its fleet, even the manufacturer has taken into account our suggestions and has gradually also improved on them.

Can you tell whether everything's OK with an airplane engine just by the sound of it?

Basically, yes! (*Laughs*) This past winter, my son and I were in the forest getting a Christmas tree, and an airplane flew over us. It was a cloudy day, so we couldn't see it, but I could tell by the sound that it was our own *Airbus A220-300*. I could even tell that it had just taken off and that the thrust had already been reduced.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I don't do BMX anymore, because I injured both of my knees while racing. I've had a couple of surgeries and everything seems alright now, but I've bid farewell to BMX. My wife and I both have

mountain bikes that we enjoy riding. We also like to do photography. But I spend most of my time off with our four-year-old son and settling into the new home that we recently moved into.

In your opinion, what should a good technician be like? What traits and qualities are necessary?

The first two requirements are definitely a sense of attention and responsibility. Because we do a variety of checks and inspections and look for potential problems before they become problems, it's very important that a technician be attentive and sharp-eyed. But a technician also needs a strong sense of responsibility and must try to do every single job to the highest standard of quality. Because, of course, safety stands above all. Technicians also need to act strictly in accordance with all documents and guidelines and take into account all of the details outlined in them.

A third thing is probably having a love for technical things. I don't really know how to put it in a single word, but a technician needs to like their work.

The ability to understand people and work with others is also a good quality to have. We work in teams, the fleet is large, we are a lot of technicians, and we need to be able to work together with everyone, because the composition of our teams changes. We have to communicate with lots of different people, we need to help one another, we have to exchange ideas, give advice, and also listen to our colleagues' suggestions.

Do you have a suggestions for people interested in becoming aircraft technicians?

Definitely don't be intimidated – give it a try! When you start an internship, you realise quite quickly whether you like this kind of work or not. The main thing is to arrive and give it a try, to see whether this job is for you. Because it's only when we actually do something that we discover and understand whether something comes naturally to us or not. Also, we learn whether we're willing to take on such responsibility or whether we'd rather do a more peaceful, relaxing kind of work. But the main thing is to try it.

Above all is a desire to do this kind of work. If you have the desire, you'll strive to do it; and if you strive, you'll succeed.

Words by Ilze Pole
Photo by Vladislavs Proskins (F64)

Pilots out of their office

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



Gillian Haarloo (34), captain on *Airbus A220-300* aircraft, from the Netherlands

HOBBY

‘I baked it this morning!’ That was almost the first thing Gillian Haarloo said when we met at the photo studio, showing me a freshly baked pizza.

Later, over a slice of that same pizza, Gillian said that his hobby of cooking and pizza baking developed when he moved to Latvia ten years ago. ‘It was my first real experience of living alone, and I had to figure out what I was going to cook, including how to make my favourite thing – pizza,’ he explains. ‘I started to read about it and asked my Italian colleague, who had joined *airBaltic* at the same time I did, for some tips. Back home in the Netherlands, I could buy a box with all of the necessary ingredients, and there would be a recipe printed on it, too. Even different types of spices would come with it. Here, I saw that it was more common for people to go to the market or the shop and buy the individual basic products: flour, yeast, a piece of meat, which is not pre-cut. So I was kind of forced into learning how to cook,’ Gillian laughs.

The first time Gillian made a pizza, he thought it turned out very good. So the next time, he invited some friends over to try his pizza. ‘Next thing I knew, I became known as the pizza guy at *airBaltic*,’ he laughs.

Three years ago Gillian visited *airBaltic*’s new destination of Naples, which is where pizza originated, and took part in a day-long workshop at an approved Neapolitan pizzeria. ‘I learned how to make pizza according to their rules and what’s important in the process of making it. I got very excited about this, and when I returned to Latvia, I bought myself a proper pizza oven, a wood-fired oven, and put it on the terrace of my apartment. For a long time I had been making pizza in a normal oven, but I quickly found out that it needs to be baked on stone, because the hot stone is actually what bakes it from the bottom.’

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

‘I like to connect it with the fact that my parents are originally from Suriname, which was once a colony of the Netherlands,’ Gillian begins his story about becoming a pilot. ‘Because my family is split between the Netherlands and South America, we flew to Suriname many times during my childhood. Most often we flew there on *Boeing 747* jumbo jets, and the flight itself was the most exciting thing for me to look forward to on those trips.’

‘At that time, it was still allowed to go into the cockpit, and on each single flight to Suriname I sat in the cockpit for as long as I could. They couldn’t get rid of me!’ Gillian laughs. ‘All the switches and lights made a great impression on me, and I remember at some point starting to tell my parents that one day when I grew up, I would fly them to Suriname.’

That became Gillian’s goal, and he never wavered from it. Throughout his time at school, he knew he would become a pilot, and everything he did was subordinated to that goal. Six months after finishing high school, he enrolled in flight school.

‘My job here at *airBaltic* is my second one as a pilot, although I can’t really count my first job – as soon as I finished my training, the airline went bankrupt due to the consequences of the 2008 financial crisis. I applied to several companies after finishing flight school, and unfortunately the one flying to Suriname did not accept me (*laughs*). But this is my eleventh year at *airBaltic*.’

Gillian is also a type pilot supervisor and works as an instructor for topics such as crew resource management, technical knowledge, and security, which are additional jobs he began after joining the company.

Words by Ieva Šmite
Photos from the personal archives of Aliksandr Kuryla, Mikus Zvirbulis, and Lauris Pumpurs

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

1/ Aliksandr Kuryla began working for *airBaltic* a couple of years ago, after graduating from Moscow State Technical University of Civil Aviation and gaining his first work experience at a local maintenance company. He applied for a job at *airBaltic* because he had great memories of Latvia, which he had visited often as a child.

2/ This photo was taken three years ago in Israel. Aliksandr says his favourite destination is anywhere his girlfriend is with him.

3/ Aliksandr began playing ice hockey 14 years ago and did so whenever possible before the pandemic.

4/ Mikus Zvirbulis, BI technician, began working at *airBaltic* as a student mechanic exactly seven years ago. At the time, he was a third-year student at Riga Technical University. Mikus in San Diego in 2018. Surfing is not one of his regular hobbies, but he enjoys engaging in athletic activities in various places around the world.

5/ On the Cecili Nature Trail in 2020, which offers hiking together with huskies. ‘Some day I’d like to have a dog of my own that I could run with or do other activities together,’ Mikus says.

6/ It will soon be one year since **Lauris Pumpurs** began working at



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SNAPSHOTS

from the lives of our technicians

Interested in working for *airBaltic*? Find information about the latest vacancies at careers.airbaltic.com

airBalticTechnics
General Aviation Services

airBaltic. He was recommended for the job by a friend. Seeing as Lauris already had work experience with composite materials, the airline’s offer seemed very interesting and corresponded with his skills.

7/ This picture was taken on Mount Ngauruhoe, a volcano in New Zealand, where Lauris worked and travelled for a year and a half. Lauris likes to climb mountains and volcanoes in order to then fly down from them. In fact, as a passionate paragliding pilot, all of his travel destinations are related to flying.

8/ Lauris paragliding right here in Latvia, in an accuracy landing competition. Although he began paragliding ten years ago, he has made model aircraft since he was in the 5th grade, winning awards in European and global aeromodelling championships.

airBaltic's sustainable development goals

Since launching the Sustainability Development Goals calendar in October 2020, *airBaltic* continues to actively work on reaching the set goals.

SUSTAINABILITY CALENDAR

 <p>OCTOBER SDG 16 UN DAY: UNITED NATIONS DAY (24TH OCTOBER)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS"</p>	 <p>NOVEMBER SDG 12 UN WEEK: INTERNATIONAL WEEK OF SCIENCE AND PEACE (6TH –12TH NOVEMBER)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION"</p>	 <p>DECEMBER SDG 9 UN DAY: INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION DAY (7TH DECEMBER)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE"</p>	 <p>JANUARY SDG 8 UN DAY: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION (24TH JANUARY)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH"</p>
 <p>FEBRUARY SDG 16 UN WEEK: WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK (FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS"</p>	 <p>MARCH SDG 13 UN DAY: WORLD WILD-LIFE DAY (3RD MARCH)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "CLIMATE ACTION"</p>	 <p>APRIL SDG 8 UN DAY: WORLD HEALTH DAY (7TH APRIL)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH"</p>	 <p>MAY SDG 13 UN DAY: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LIGHT [UNESCO] (16TH MAY)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "CLIMATE ACTION"</p>
 <p>JUNE SDG 13 UN DAY: WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY (5TH JUNE)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "CLIMATE ACTION"</p>	 <p>JULY SDG 12 UN DAY: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FRIENDSHIP (30TH JULY)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION"</p>	 <p>AUGUST SDG 16 UN DAY: WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY (19TH AUGUST)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS"</p>	 <p>SEPTEMBER SDG 9 UN DAY: WORLD TOURISM DAY (27TH SEPTEMBER)</p> <p>—MONTH OF "INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE"</p>

The present situation has strengthened the company's brand values and inspired it to revise its vision, mission, and core values. After carrying out a survey of *airBaltic*'s customers, colleagues, partners, and opinion leaders, *airBaltic* came to the conclusion that its revised brand values are to deliver, to care, and to grow.

In addition to this, at the beginning of this year, the management of *airBaltic* came up with a materiality matrix, which prioritised sustainability as one of the main goals of the company. This encouraged *airBaltic* to explore in detail 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations. Even though *airBaltic* contributes to all of the SDGs, it has decided to focus on the five goals

that are most relevant for its business: decent work and economic growth; industry innovation and infrastructure; responsible consumption and production; climate action; and peace, justice, and strong institutions.

This has also encouraged the company to go further with various creative solutions related to sustainability and corporate responsibility. Therefore, starting October 2020 and for a period of one year, *airBaltic* will highlight and contribute to resolving an issue related to one of the five selected SDGs. Each month *airBaltic* will set a goal in connection with one of the five SDGs and dedicate one specific day or week in that month to implement this particular goal.

Achieved goals in April and May

April at *airBaltic* was the month of Decent Work and Economic Growth, with a focus on developing employee's skills and helping the airline grow. May, in turn, was the month of Climate Action as all employees were invited to take part in the *AWorld* campaign on climate change – because every small action matters, and the more people start to change their daily habits to more sustainable ones, the more positive an impact they will have on the earth.

ALFA – BUILDING A COACHING CULTURE

As the *airBaltic* Leaders for Future (ALFA) programme continues to develop, in April it introduced the next element of its development strategy, namely, building a coaching culture with an aim to improve personal and business performance for employees accordingly. The new programme will start in June. The essence of coaching is to unlock people's potential in order to maximise their performance. Developing a strong coaching culture and mindset within an organisation helps to foster behaviour that can be used as a means of communicating, managing, and guiding others. It also stimulates an environment that values learning and the development of employees, which is essential for the growth of a company. Coaching culture positively affects a company's strategic objectives, which leads to improved business results.

TAKING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

In May, the month of Climate Action, *airBaltic* invited all its employees to download the *AWorld* mobile app developed by the United Nations, which allows users to choose and track a set of sustainable habits and see the impact they are making. Employees were encouraged to track their habits, set goals for new habits, and implement them in their daily lives by making the shift to a more sustainable lifestyle. The app can also be used to take educational journeys, engage in group challenges, get inspiring tips, and take quizzes, all geared toward living more sustainably. Every action



matters! By changing our habits, by taking small steps one by one, it's possible to make a big change.
site.aworld.org

STUDENTS GRADUATE FROM THE airBaltic PILOT ACADEMY

After starting their studies in November 2018, two students have graduated from *airBaltic*'s Pilot Academy, receiving a commercial pilot license after completion of the full-time airline transport pilot programme. Because practical training was not allowed for portions of 2020, their studies took longer than the planned 18 months. In the meantime, already the ninth group of new students has begun their professional pilot studies. In all, there are now 73 active students at *airBaltic*'s Pilot Academy, more than ten percent of whom are female.

airBaltic TO TAKE OVER ITS PASSENGER HANDLING AT RIGA AIRPORT

Beginning in January 2022, *airBaltic* will perform its own passenger handling duties at Riga Airport with its own staff. The airline is now successfully revising its products and services to focus on delivering its core brand values, which include a strong focus on all passenger touchpoints. Passenger service improvement at Riga Airport is part of the airline's cost improvement programme, which will simplify its business and operations. In addition, this enables *airBaltic* to re-employ part of its former workforce. At the same time, RIX Ground Handling will provide ramp-handling duties for *airBaltic* as of January 2022.

WELLNESS WEDNESDAY AT airBaltic

In January, *airBaltic* launched the Wellness Wednesday project in order to encourage employees to take better care of their mental and physical health during and after working hours. The airline continued the project in April and May, offering detailed information and suggestions on topics such as stress awareness, 'Inspire a Smile!', breathing, physical activity, the importance of taking breaks, laughter as the best medicine, and digital well-being. These are important topics, because people are spending more time at home now as they work remotely and have changed their previous routines. The above-mentioned activities and suggestions help reduce the risk of stress and increase productivity. For example, micro-breaks, lunchtime breaks, and longer breaks have all been shown to have a positive effect on well-being and productivity as well as to boost performance.

Smiles are incredibly powerful as well, because they infuse more positivity in our daily lives. Indeed, a smile is the symbol that has been rated with the highest positive emotional content. Smiling not only helps boost one's immune system, it also decreases stress levels and may even help relieve pain. But most of all, smiling lifts the spirit, lightens the mood, and increases positive thoughts. Therefore, *airBaltic* also invites its clients, passengers, partners, and everyone to be more positive, smile more, and take care of their mental and physical health by exchanging some of their old habits for new, more sustainable ones.

Same loyalty programme, more benefits!



airBaltic Club is our loyalty programme, where you can earn points and collect stamps while travelling and receive various rewards.

airBaltic Club has digital loyalty cards which members are able to download to their mobile wallets – Wallet app on iOS devices or Passbook app on Android devices, and use the digital card to collect points. Scan your card during the payment process to collect points for onboard purchases while flying with airBaltic or for Riga International long-term airport parking. If you are a holder of Executive or VIP status, use your digital card for Fast Track and Business Lounge access in airports.

EARN POINTS WITH *airBaltic* AND PARTNERS

The *airBaltic Club* currency is points. You can earn points every time you fly *airBaltic* or use the services of other travel partners.

- ➔ Up to three points per each euro spent on *airBaltic* tickets and extra services.
- ➔ One point for each euro spent while shopping on board.
- ➔ With *Booking.com*, *Rentalcars.com*, long-term parking at Riga International airport and other partners.

SPEND POINTS ON FLIGHTS AND OTHER PRIZES

Use points to book flights to more than 70 destinations as well as *airBaltic* gift cards, baggage vouchers, and other rewards. Check out your *airBaltic pins* account balance and choose your prize.

Flights to/from Riga	The Baltics	Scandinavia, Poland, Belarus	Central and Eastern Europe	Western and Southern Europe	Asia and the Middle East
In Economy class	3300 points	5000 points	7500 points	10 500 points	16 000 points
In Business class	11 800 points	20 000 points	30 000 points	34 000 points	45 000 points
Upgrade to Business class	6500 points	9000 points	12 000 points	15 000 points	19 000 points

Heavy cabin baggage	1650 points
<i>airBaltic</i> gift cards	from 4167 points



Earn a free flight faster with the stamp card!

If you travel at least five times per year, you can easily earn a free flight with *airBaltic Club*. But there are also great rewards for those who travel less. All you need to do is start collecting stamps.

COLLECT STAMPS THROUGH THE APP

To collect stamps, you must be a member of the *airBaltic Club* loyalty programme.

You will receive a stamp for each one-way flight booked on the *airBaltic* website. These stamps can earn you valuable prizes such as baggage vouchers, flight discounts, bonus points and a free ticket.

BENEFITS OF JOINING THE STAMP CARD

- ➔ Choose your favourite seat for free on your next flight after joining.
- ➔ Receive a baggage voucher after your first return flight.
- ➔ Get a free ticket* when you complete five return flights.

To start collecting stamps, download or update the *airBaltic pins* app on your smart device and tap the *Stampcard* icon.

THREE MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

If you collect 24 stamps and finish your stamp card over the course of one year, you will reach the *airBaltic Club* Executive level. If you take at least 60 one-way flights within a year, you will earn *airBaltic Club* VIP status. The Executive and VIP status allows you to enjoy special privileges when travelling.

More information at airbalticclub.com



DOWNLOAD THE *airBaltic pins* APP



*After five round trips you will receive 7000 points, which can be used to book a ticket for a flight operated by *airBaltic*. Airport taxes not included. Special conditions apply.



TICKET TYPES ON *airBaltic* FLIGHTS

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

The date can be changed for all tickets. This gives our guests extra flexibility and security when planning their trips.
Check out the chart to see what services are included in each ticket type, and choose the one that’s best for you.

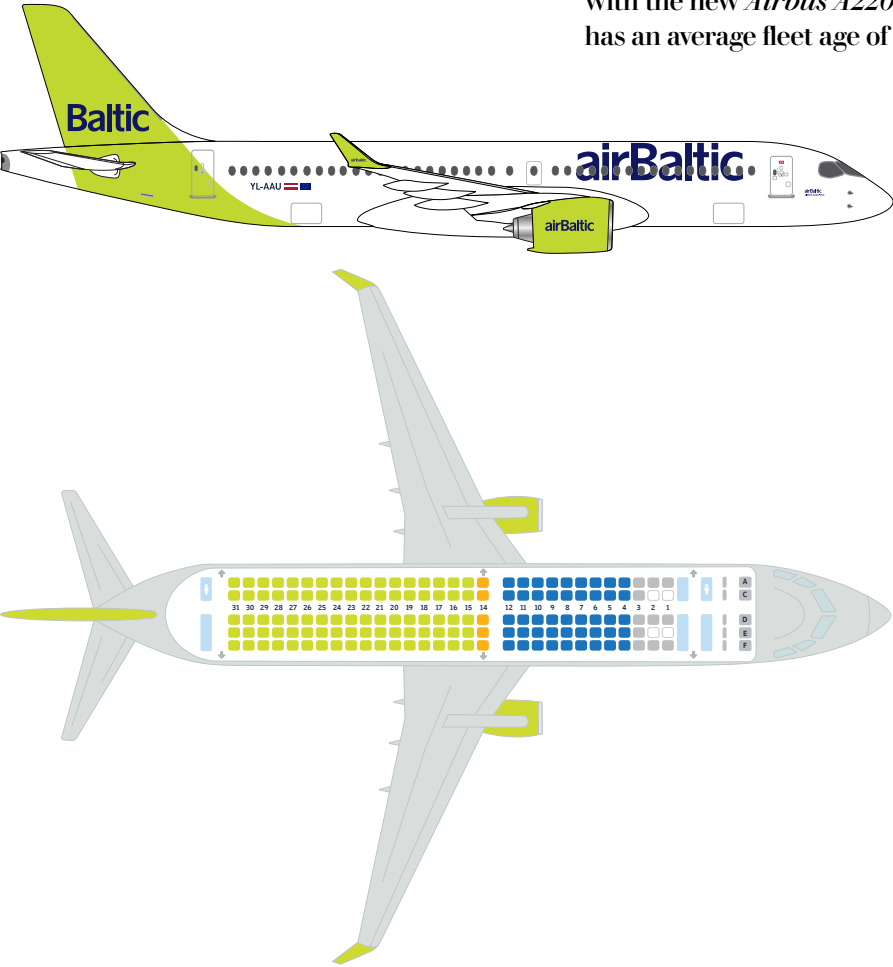
	GREEN	GREEN plus only on <i>airBaltic.com</i>	GREEN classic	BUSINESS
	The simplest ticket for the lowest price – with the option of changing the flight date.	A great price that includes checked baggage and the option of flexibility. Plus regular discounts on different ancillary services.	A smart choice! The most important services plus greater flexibility in changing or cancelling the flight.	Our proven value – enjoy plenty of benefits, sophisticated service and total flexibility.
CABIN BAGGAGE	✓	✓	✓	✓
CHECKED BAGGAGE	from EUR 14.99	✓	✓	✓
SEAT RESERVATION	from EUR 3.99	from EUR 3.99	✓	✓
DATE CHANGE*	EUR 50 per direction	EUR 50 per direction	✓	✓
REFUND	✗**	✗**	EUR 50 per direction, or EUR 25 per direction, if you choose a refund in the form of a gift voucher	✓
NAME CHANGE*	✗**	✗**	EUR 70 per ticket	✓
MEAL	from EUR 9.99	from EUR 9.99	from EUR 9.99	✓
AIRPORT CHECK-IN	EUR 14.99	EUR 14.99	✓	✓
FAST TRACK	✗	✗	✗	✓
BUSINESS LOUNGE	✗	✗	✗	✓
<i>airBaltic Club</i> ***	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent + 50 bonus <i>pins</i>	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent + 100 bonus <i>pins</i>	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent + 200 bonus <i>pins</i>

Flights from RIGA						Flights to RIGA					
Flight No	From/Till	Days	Departure	Arrival		Flight No	From/Till	Days	Departure	Arrival	
ABERDEEN /RIX-ABZ/						ABERDEEN /ABZ-RIX/					
BT 659		-2---6-	16:40	17:10		BT 660		-2---6-	17:50	22:20	
AMSTERDAM /RIX-AMS/						AMSTERDAM /AMS-RIX/					
BT 617	Till June 28	1-3456-	07:45	09:05		BT 618	Till June 28	1-3456-	10:20	13:35	
BT 617	From June 30	1234567	07:45	09:05		BT 618	From June 30	1234567	10:20	13:35	
BT 619	Till June 27	123-5-7	16:30	17:50		BT 620	Till June 27	123-5-7	18:35	21:50	
BT 619	From June 28	1234567	16:30	17:50		BT 620	From June 28	1234567	18:35	21:50	
ATHENS /RIX-ATH/						ATHENS /ATH-RIX/					
BT 611		-2---6-	07:55	11:05		BT 612		-2---6-	11:45	14:55	
BARCELONA /RIX-BCN/						BARCELONA /BCN-RIX/					
BT 681		-----7	07:30	10:10		BT 682		-----7	11:10	15:45	
BT 683		-2-4-6-	13:30	16:10		BT 684		-2-4-6-	17:10	21:45	
BERGEN /RIX-BGO/						BERGEN /BGO-RIX/					
BT 171	From July 3	-2---6-	12:55	14:00		BT 172	From July 3	-2---6-	14:40	17:35	
BERLIN Brandenburg /RIX-BER/						BERLIN Brandenburg /BER-RIX/					
BT 211	Till June 26	-2-4-6-	07:35	08:10		BT 212	Till June 26	-2-4-6-	08:50	11:25	
BT 211	From June 29	12-4567	07:35	08:10		BT 212	From June 29	12-4567	08:50	11:25	
BT 213		--3-5-7	18:15	18:50		BT 214		--3-5-7	19:30	22:05	
BILLUND /RIX-BLL/						BILLUND /BLL-RIX/					
BT 147		----5-7	13:00	13:40		BT 148		----5-7	14:20	16:55	
BRUSSELS /RIX-BRU/						BRUSSELS /BRU-RIX/					
BT 601	From July 6	-2-----	07:30	08:55		BT 602	From July 6	-2-----	09:40	13:05	
BT 603	Till June 29	-2-5-7	16:25	17:50		BT 604	Till June 29	-2-5-7	18:30	21:55	
BT 603	From July 1	1-4-5-7	16:25	17:50		BT 604	From July 1	1-4-5-7	18:30	21:55	
BUDAPEST /RIX-BUD/						BUDAPEST /BUD-RIX/					
BT 491	From June 19	-2---6-	12:40	13:35		BT 492	From June 19	-2---6-	14:15	17:15	
CATANIA /RIX-CTA/						CATANIA /CTA-RIX/					
BT 639		-----7	07:15	09:45		BT 640		-----7	10:35	14:55	
COPENHAGEN Kastrup /RIX-CPH/						COPENHAGEN Kastrup /CPH-RIX/					
BT 131		12-4-6-	07:45	08:15		BT 132		12-4-6-	08:55	11:20	
BT 139	Till July 4	--3-5-7	18:20	18:50		BT 140	Till July 4	--3-5-7	19:30	21:55	
BT 139	From July 5	1-3-5-7	18:20	18:50		BT 140	From July 5	1-3-5-7	19:30	21:55	
CORFU /RIX-CFU/ → NEW ROUTE						CORFU /CFU-RIX/ → NEW ROUTE					
BT 643	From June 12	-----6-	08:25	11:20		BT 644	From June 12	-----6-	12:20	15:20	
DUBLIN /RIX-DUB/						DUBLIN /DUB-RIX/					
BT 661		--3-5-7	07:25	08:35		BT 662		--3-5-7	09:15	14:10	
DUBROVNIK /RIX-DBV/						DUBROVNIK /DBV-RIX/					
BT 497		---4-6-	15:45	17:25		BT 498		---4-6-	18:05	21:40	
DUSSELDORF /RIX-DUS/						DUSSELDORF /DUS-RIX/					
BT 233		--3-5-7	16:25	17:40		BT 234		--3-5-7	18:25	21:30	
EDINBURGH /RIX-EDI/ → NEW ROUTE						EDINBURGH /EDI-RIX/ → NEW ROUTE					
BT 669	From June 18	1---5--	16:00	16:50		BT 670	From June 18	1---5--	17:35	22:15	
FRANKFURT /RIX-FRA/						FRANKFURT /FRA-RIX/					
BT 243		123456-	07:50	09:10		BT 244		123456-	09:50	13:00	
BT 245		--3-5-7	16:35	17:55		BT 246		--3-5-7	18:45	21:55	
GOTHENBURG Landvetter /RIX-GOT/						GOTHENBURG Landvetter /GOT-RIX/					
BT 121		-----7	12:15	12:40		BT 122		-----7	13:20	15:40	
BT 121	From June 23	-3-----	13:15	13:40		BT 122	From June 23	-3-----	14:20	16:40	
HAMBURG /RIX-HAM/						HAMBURG /HAM-RIX/					
BT 251		1-3-5-7	12:50	13:40		BT 252		1-3-5-7	14:20	17:00	
HELSINKI Vantaa /RIX-HEL/						HELSINKI Vantaa /HEL-RIX/					
BT 301	From July 1	1234567	08:05	09:05		BT 326	From July 2	1234567	05:35	06:35	
BT 303	Till June 30	12345-7	12:10	13:10		BT 302	From July 1	1234567	09:50	10:50	
BT 325	From July 1	1234567	23:20	00:20+1		BT 304	Till June 30	12345-7	13:50	14:50	
HERAKLION /RIX-HER/ → NEW ROUTE						HERAKLION /HER-RIX/ → NEW ROUTE					
BT 635		-2-----	12:00	15:35		BT 636		-2-----	16:30	20:05	
BT 635		-----6-	13:20	16:55		BT 636		-----6-	18:00	21:35	
KOS /RIX-KGS/						KOS /KGS-RIX/					
BT 593	From July 6	-2-----	13:50	17:15		BT 594	From July 6	-2-----	17:55	21:20	
BT 593	From July 3	-----6-	13:55	17:20		BT 594	From July 3	-----6-	18:00	21:25	
KYIV Boryspil /RIX-KBP/						KYIV Boryspil /KBP-RIX/					
BT 400	Till June 26	12---6-	07:20	08:55		BT 401	Till June 26	12---6-	09:40	11:20	
BT 400	From June 28	12-4-6-	07:20	08:55		BT 401	From June 28	12-4-6-	09:40	11:20	
BT 404		--3-5-7	18:20	19:55		BT 405		--3-5-7	20:40	22:20	
LARNACA /RIX-LCA/						LARNACA /LCA-RIX/					
BT 657		-2---6-	22:50	02:30+1		BT 658		-3---7	03:10	06:55	
LISBON /RIX-LIS/						LISBON /LIS-RIX/					
BT 675		-2-5--	12:50	15:25		BT 676		-2-5--	16:10	22:40	
LONDON Gatwick /RIX-LGW/						LONDON Gatwick /LGW-RIX/					
BT 651	Till June26	12---6-	07:50	08:40		BT 652	Till June26	12---6-	09:25	14:05	
BT 651	From June 28	12-4-6-	07:50	08:40		BT 652	From June 28	12-4-6-	09:25	14:05	
BT 653		--345-7	15:50	16:40		BT 654		--345-7	17:25	22:05	
LVIV /RIX-LWO/						LVIV /LWO-RIX/					
BT 408	From July 1	---4-6-	23:30	01:00+1		BT 409	From July 2	----5-7	04:55	06:30	
MADRID Adolfo Suarez Barajas /RIX-MAD/						MADRID Adolfo Suarez Barajas /MAD-RIX/					
BT 685	Till June 27	---4-7	13:00	16:10		BT 686	Till June 27	---4-7	16:50	21:55	
BT 685	From June 28	---4-7	13:00	16:10		BT 686	From June 28	---4-7	16:50	21:55	
MALAGA /RIX-AGP/						MALAGA /AGP-RIX/					
BT 677		--3-6-	12:45	16:20		BT 678		--3-6-	17:00	22:20	
MANCHESTER /RIX-MAN/ → NEW ROUTE						MANCHESTER /MAN-RIX/ → NEW ROUTE					
BT 671	From June 20	1-3-5-7	16:05	16:55		BT 672	From June 20	1-3-5-7	16:50	21:55	
MILAN Malpensa /RIX-MXP/						MILAN Malpensa /MXP-RIX/					
BT 629		1-3-5-7	08:05	09:50		BT 630		1-3-5-7	10:40	14:20	
MINSK /RIX-MSQ/						MINSK /MSQ-RIX/					
BT 412		-2-4-6-	13:20	14:20		BT 413		-2-4-6-	15:10	16:10	
MOSCOW Sheremetyevo /RIX-SVO/						MOSCOW Sheremetyevo /SVO-RIX/					
BT 424		1-4---	07:25	09:00		BT 425		1-4---	09:45	11:25	
BT 422		--3---7	18:20	19:55		BT 423		--3---7	20:40	22:20	
MUNICH /RIX-MUC/						MUNICH /MUC-RIX/					
BT 221		1-3-6-	07:40	08:50		BT 222		1-3-6-	09:30	12:35	
BT 223	Till June 27	-2-45-7	17:20	18:30		BT 224	Till June 27	-2-45-7	19:10	22:15	
BT 223	From June 28	12345-7	17:20	18:30		BT 224	From June 28	12345-7	19:10	22:15	
NAPLES /RIX-NAP/ → NEW ROUTE						NAPLES /NAP-RIX/ → NEW ROUTE					
BT 645	From June 18	1---5--	07:30	09:35		BT 646	From June 18	1---5--	10:25	14:20	
NICE /RIX-NCE/						NICE /NCE-RIX/					
BT 695	Till June 26	-2-4-6-	08:05	10:10		BT 696	Till June 26	-2-4-6-	10:50	14:45	
BT 695	From June 29	-2-456-	08:05	10:10		BT 696	From June 29	-2-456-	10:50	14:45	
ODESSA /RIX-ODS/						ODESSA /ODS-RIX/					
BT 410	Till July 4	----5-7	23:45	01:50+1		BT 411	Till July 3	1---6-	04:05	06:10	
BT 410	From July 5	1---5-7	23:45	01:50+1		BT 411	From July 5	12---6-	04:05	06:10	
OLBIA /RIX-OLB						OLBIA /OLB-RIX/					
BT 655	From June 19	-----6-	15:20	17:40		BT 656	From June 19	-----6-	18:20	22:30	
OSLO Gardermoen /RIX-OSL/						OSLO Gardermoen /OSL-RIX/					
BT 151		12-4-6-	07:55	08:35		BT 152		12-4-6-	09:15	11:45	
BT 153	Till July 4	-3-5-7	18:00	18:40		BT 154	Till July 4	-3-5-7	19:20	21:50	
BT 153	From July 5	1-3-5-7	18:00	18:40		BT 154	From July 5	1-3-5-7	19:20	21:50	
PALANGA /RIX-PLQ/						PALANGA /PLO-RIX/					
BT 033	Till June 27	12345-7	23:40	00:25+1		BT 032	Till June 26	123456-	05:40	06:25	
BT 033	From June 28	1234567	23:40	00:25+1		BT 032	From June 28	1234567	05:40	06:25	
PALMA DE MALLORCA /RIX-PMI/						PALMA DE MALLORCA /PMI-RIX/					
BT 687		-----7	07:55	10:45		BT 688		-----7	11:30	16:10	
BT 687	From July 6	-2-----	14:15	17:05		BT 688	From July 6	-2-----	17:45	22:25	
PARIS Charles de Gaulle /RIX-CDG/						PARIS Charles de Gaulle /CDG-RIX/					
BT 691		123456-	07:20	09:10		BT 692		123456-	10:05	13:50	
BT 693		-3-5-7	15:55	17:45		BT 694		-3-5-7	18:30	22:15	

The given information is subject to amendments and cancellations taken unilaterally by airBaltic.

Welcome aboard our new *Airbus A220-300*

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



Number of aircraft	26
Number of seats	145
Max take-off weight	67.6 metric tons
Max payload	16.7 metric tons
Length	38.7 m
Wing span	35.1 m
Cruising speed	870 km/h
Commercial range	4575 km
Fuel consumption	2200 l/h
Engine	PW 1521G

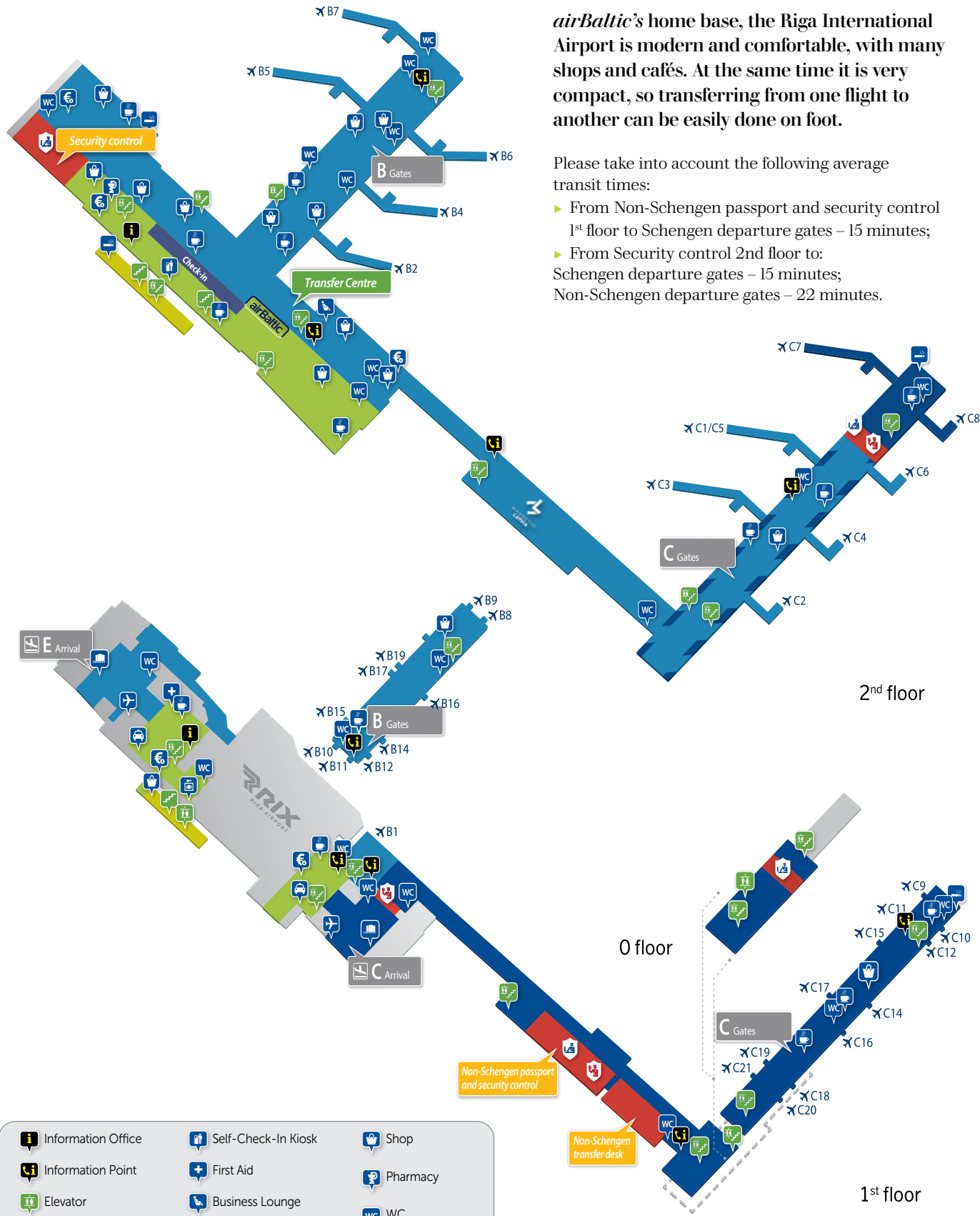
- Business class seats
- Priority seats
- Extra legroom seats
- Regular seats

Use of portable electronic devices

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

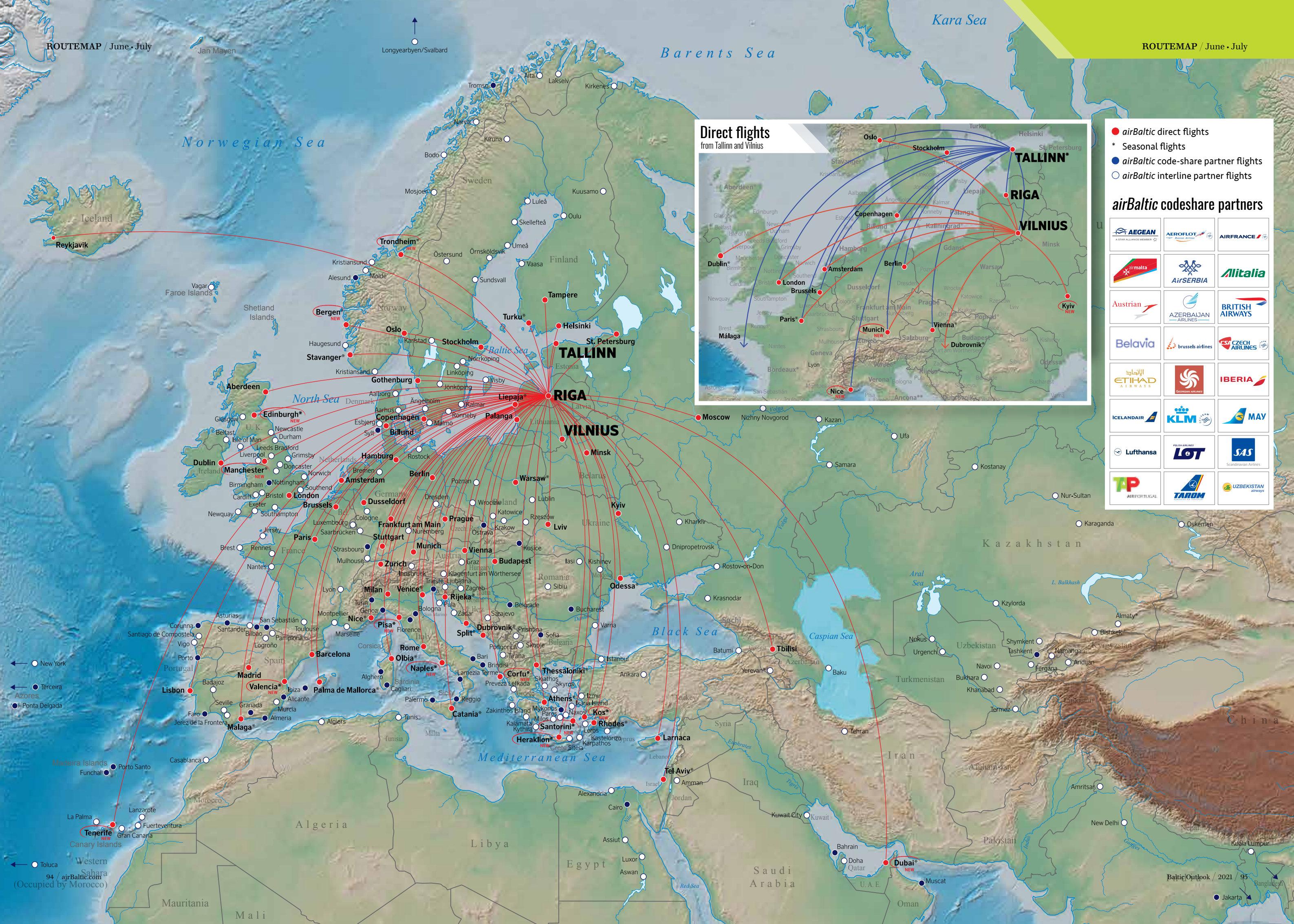
* Shall be stowed in overhead bin or under the front seat inside an appropriate bag.
In case a battery or device is damaged, hot, produces smoke, is lost, or falls into the seat structure, immediately inform the cabin crew.

Welcome to Riga International Airport



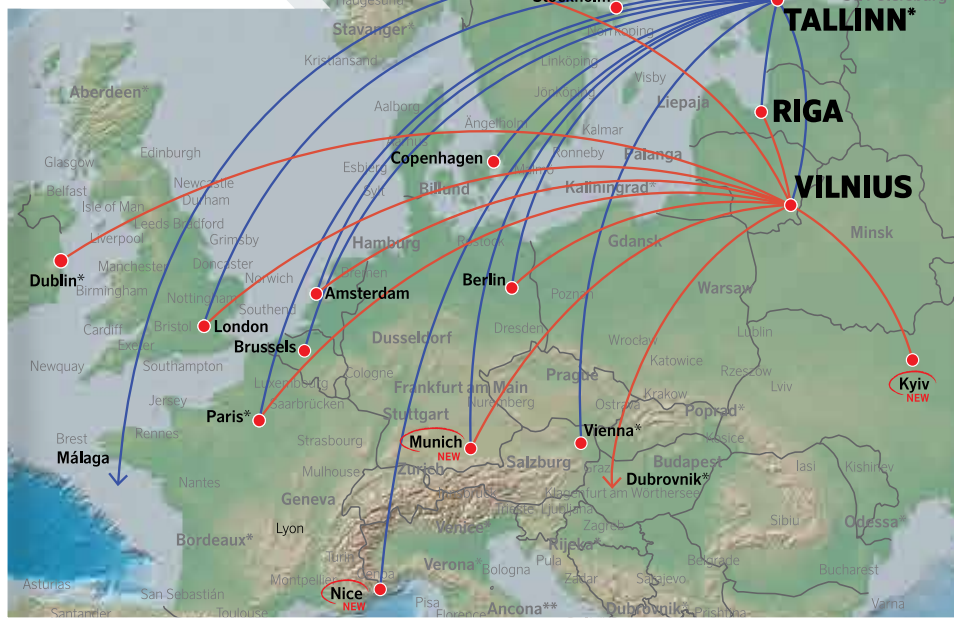
Information Office	Self-Check-In Kiosk	Shop
Information Point	First Aid	Pharmacy
Elevator	Business Lounge	WC
Elevator & Stairs	Currency Exchange	Smoking Area
Stairs	Car Rental	Passport Control
Arrival Service	Baggage Claim	Security Control
Café and Restaurant	Baggage Storage	

- Public Zone
- Non-Schengen Zone–Departure/Arrival
- Schengen Zone–Departure/Arrival



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For your peace of mind, add the option to cancel your reservation and get a full refund in the form of an *airBaltic* gift card in case your travel plans change. This service costs **EUR 19.99** per passenger per direction.

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

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



Heavy cabin baggage

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

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

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



Checked baggage

Add checked baggage if you want to take up to **25 kilograms**, including liquids over 100 ml, which are not allowed in cabin baggage. The cheapest option is to book checked baggage along with your ticket at airbaltic.com starting from **EUR 14.99**. You can also add baggage anytime later at a higher price.



Pre-order a meal

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



Reserve a seat

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

Whichever it is, you can secure your favourite seat in advance starting from **EUR 3.99**. With a reserved seat you will enjoy an additional bonus – the opportunity to **check in for your flight already five days before departure** (instead of the usual 36 hours).



Fast track in Riga

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



Special equipment

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

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



Assistance for children flying alone*

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



Travelling with pets*

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

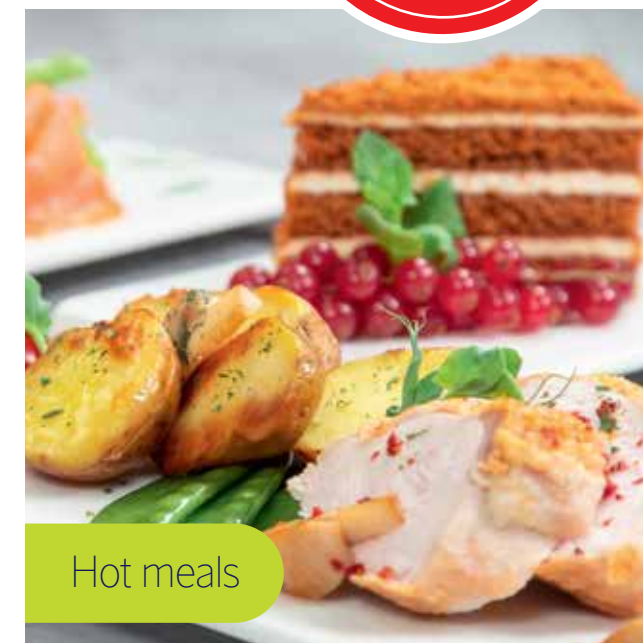


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*Compared to previous generation narrow-body aircraft with the same seating capacity