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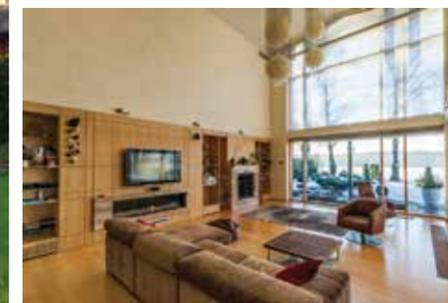
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Chief Executive Officer *airBaltic*

Dear Customer,

The Baltic Sea region is in our focus. Not only is *airBaltic* the official carrier of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, flying thousands of people to Riga, Latvia; it has also substantially reinforced connections between airports in the Baltic Sea region and the rest of the world.

airBaltic already connects Riga with various European and Eastern capitals. Recently we began offering new direct links from neighbouring Vilnius, Lithuania, and Tallinn, Estonia, with such major hubs as Amsterdam, Paris, Berlin and Vienna. These are home airports for our code-share partners *KLM*, *Air France*, *airberlin* and *Austrian Airlines*, respectively, opening up hundreds of new flight connections to the Asia-Pacific region, Africa, the Americas and more.

The new connectivity of Estonia and Lithuania, in combination with the same cities served from Riga, generates business and leisure opportunities that did not exist before, facilitating travel between the

Baltic and other regions, attracting additional travellers and creating new jobs. We have further improved our service and schedules from airports around the Baltic Sea – including Stockholm, Gothenburg, Copenhagen, Aalborg and Heringsdorf – for the benefit of both business people and holiday-makers.

As the travel markets in the region of the CIS countries weaken and aircraft capacity frees up, we have opened new excellent routes to Pisa, Rhodes, Thessaloniki and Dubrovnik for summer escapes in the Mediterranean, while a number of popular destinations return to our schedules: Malta, Palma de Mallorca, Athens, Chisinau, Nice, Olbia, Bari, Venice, Rijeka and Burgas.

Did you know that *airBaltic* was the world's first airline to accept Bitcoin as payment for flight tickets? We recently added *PayPal* to the list of payment options on our airBaltic.com website.

Thank you for flying *airBaltic* and have a great trip!

Yours,
Martin Alexander Gauss



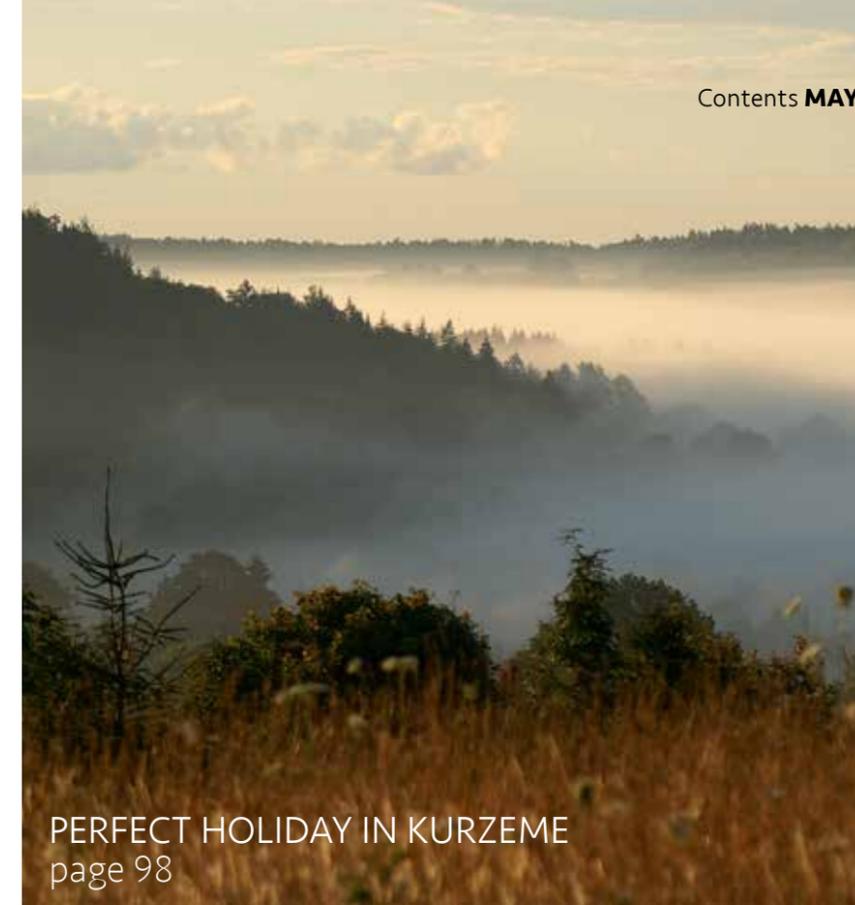
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Contents **MAY**

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS



TREVOR BAKER

Like chalk and cheese? (p. 76)

Career: I had my first article (a gig review for the British music magazine *Melody Maker*) published in February of 1999. Ten years later, I decided that I was getting too old to write about rock music, so I came to Spain for a few months and started writing about food and travel. I have been living in between London and the Costa Blanca ever since.

Proud of: Learning a new language (Spanish) in my mid-30s. It was a lot harder than I thought.

Must-visit city: Madrid, for the food, the culture and because spring is the best time to visit Spain.

Life motto: "We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be." Kurt Vonnegut



ROGER NORUM

Capital markets (p. 108)

Career: I have been working as a journalist for over ten years, writing primarily about Scandinavia and food. During the several years that I spent completing my doctoral thesis in social anthropology, having another life as a journalist, travel writer and photographer was a way for me to feel engaged with and connected to the wider world.

Proud of: Having found a way to combine my interest in ethnographic research and teaching with my love for writing and travel.

Must-visit city: Berlin. The place comes completely alive in the late spring and holds a really special creative energy.

Life motto: An inspiring (if vaguely hokey) quote that has sometimes been attributed to Mark Twain: "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."



KRISTĪNE BUDŽE

Ice melted in glass (p. 48)

Career: I have been writing about architecture and design for 15 years, contributing to various lifestyle magazines and media that specialise in these fields. I am also the deputy editor of the Latvian lifestyle magazine *Pastaiga* (Walk, or Stroll) and the editor of its design section.

Proud of: I was the creator and editor of *V*X Latvian Architecture Since 1991*, the only book about Latvian contemporary architecture to be released in the English language.

Must-visit city: Architecture fans should head to Milan for *EXPO 2015*, where numerous countries display their accomplishments and architectural feats. Those who are fond of design should visit London to see the exhibition of works by nominees for this year's *Designs of the Year 2015* awards. The showing is being held all summer at the London Design Museum.

Life motto: *Omnia mea mecum porto* or "All that's mine I carry with me"

baltic Outlook

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Text by **EDMUNDS VALDEMĀRS BUNKŠE**,
professor emeritus and geographer
Photo courtesy of
EDMUNDS VALDEMĀRS BUNKŠE

Magnificent Greece

Oh, Greece! How, during this trying time, you haunt the lovers of the cultural values and scientific imagination that you have given to Western Europe! It was in Ancient Greece that the existence of the atom was first surmised. Among my first childhood memories is my mother's tale of philosophers sitting atop marble columns (how did they get down?). The story of Cyclops – the one-eyed monster hiding in a cave, patiently waiting for unwary prey – made for a frightening read!

Later, I learned that the philosophers of Ancient Greece did not sit atop columns and that they debated while strolling in the shade of stoas (long overhangs on sides of buildings for shade from the strong sun). Even when I read Nietzsche's treatises about the end of myth and God, my consciousness retained traces of Dionysian feasts and Apollonian ideas of truth and beauty, for which the pre-Socratics are so admired.



*At a conference
in Rhodes, 2013*

Three beautiful Greek women created a fine meal of seafood and wine

No matter what happens in the future, I hope that there will always be that little Orthodox chapel not far from the lofty

Acropolis, a gem of civilisation. With its tiny, open courtyard and low stone wall, the chapel attracts guitarists and other musicians as well as listeners, who add to the casual, easy-going atmosphere in Athens. Very close by is a small café, where the Savvatiano grape in Retsina wine blends so well with the music.

I dream of returning to the isles of Lesbos and Limnos, with their little fishing harbours and brightly painted wooden fishing boats, away from the surreal mega-yachts moored at other Greek islands. Most of all, I wish to return to a modest local restaurant by the fishing harbour of the Island of Rhodes, where three young and beautiful Greek women, together with the chef, created a fine meal of seafood and wine that lasted several hours. Each subsequent course was better than the one before. The whole, slow ritual was unique and gave me a pleasure that I shall always treasure. Oh, Greece, do well! **BO**



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SPOTLIGHT ON THE SPRING

Five things that you should do in Latvia in May

- 1/ Take part in the annual *Riga Marathon* (or other shorter races within the programme; May 17; rigasmaratons.lv).
- 2/ Visit the lush lilac garden founded by horticulturist Pēteris Upītis in the city of Dobele.
- 3/ Take a bungee jump over the Gauja River near Sigulda. This is the only place in Europe where such jumps occur from a suspended cable car (bungee.lv).
- 4/ Buy some fresh radishes from farmers at a local market and enjoy their earthy taste.
- 5/ See the Latvian car rally championship event *Rally Talsi*, or *Rally of Champions*, as it is also known (May 16 and 17; rallytalsi.lv).



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ON THIS MONTH'S MENU

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



Beauty A year after the release of its new men's fragrance *Brit Rhythm*, Burberry has launched a more powerful eau de toilette named *Brit Rhythm Intense*. The fragrance's sensual aroma has smoky masculine and leathery accords, and its ad campaign continues to be fronted by British musician George Barnett. One can't imagine a more perfect union!



THE TREND:

Design The innovative *Pirouet Lamp* has been created with adjustable beams and sections that let you control the amount of light in the room. Made by Berlin-based *Koslowski & Dwalischwili Industrial Design*, the lamp is being sold for EUR 599 and more, depending on which features you desire, such as lightbulb dimming or even control of the device through a smartphone app. getpirouet.com



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Estonian composer Arvo Pärt (left) and American experimental theatre stage director Robert Wilson have some surprises in store for viewers of *Adam's Passion*

Music This year, the world is celebrating the 80th birthday of its most performed living composer, Estonian Arvo Pärt. Equally influential artist Robert Wilson of the USA is paying homage with a special production in Tallinn. A master of modern theatrical language, Wilson is joining forces with Pärt for the creation of a new musical theatre performance named *Adam's Passion*. The musical core of the production consists of three works by Pärt: *Adam's Lament*, *Tabula rasa* and *Miserere*. Wilson's staging will be a personal reading of the music in sound and light, with the participation of the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir and other artists. When? May 12-16. Where? Noblessner Foundry, Tallinn. Tickets: piletilevi.ee

Text by **ZANE NIKODEMUSA**
Publicity photos

READING LIST



Linen, Laima, Latvia

This beautiful hard-cover volume recounts the story of designer Laima Kaugure, also known as Latvia's "linen ambassador", and her experiments with natural linen fibre. Kaugure's *Studija Naturals* workshop markets unique linen products and has gained recognition all across the world, forming successful partnerships with Calvin Klein, Armani and other well-known brands. Available at bookstores throughout Riga (EUR 15-20).

Another Travel Guide Riga

The third revised edition of *Another Travel Guide Riga* in Russian by *Baltic Outlook* contributor Una Meistere and her team takes a creatively visual approach that differs from that of typical travel guides. The photographs – commissioned especially for the publication – capture the unique essence of each location or object listed, offering a glimpse of the experiences and sensations that make a visit to Riga so unforgettable. The guidebook is also available in English and German. Available at bookstores throughout Riga for around EUR 18.

INSTAFASHION



Sin on the Beach

instagram.com/sinonthebeach

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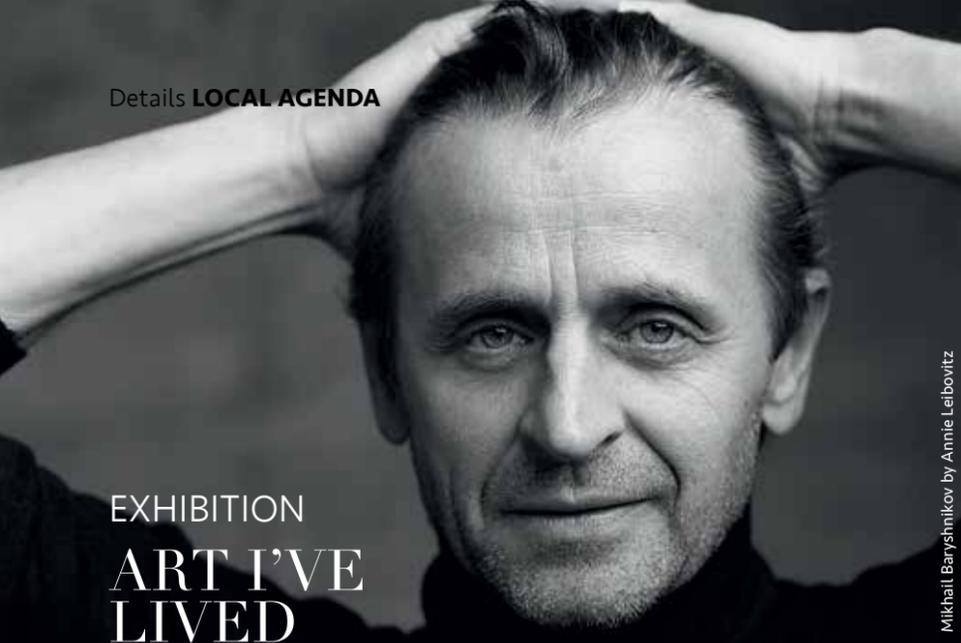


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Mikhail Baryshnikov by Annie Leibovitz

EXHIBITION ART I'VE LIVED WITH

Art Museum Riga Bourse, Riga

Riga-born ballet dancer and choreographer Mikhail Baryshnikov is an avid art collector, and last year he donated his art collection to the Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC) in New York. Now this collection can be seen in his native city, in cooperation with the *kim?* Contemporary Arts Centre in Riga and the Art Museum Riga Bourse. According to critics, Baryshnikov's collection is proof of bright intellect, expertise and intuition. One of its notable aspects is stylistic diversity, marked by a journey from Realism to Impressionism.

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Doma laukums 6

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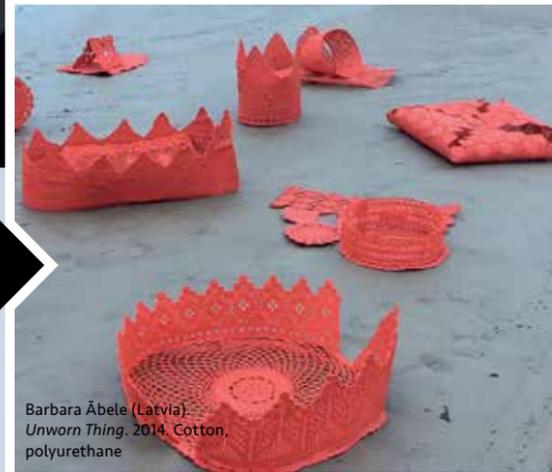
Art Museum Riga Bourse
Riga

Until July 5

To mark the fifth anniversary of its operations in Latvia, the *Boris and Inara Teterev Foundation* is sponsoring a Riga exhibition of works by such legendary European artists as Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Henri Matisse, Vincent van Gogh, Henri Matisse, Paul Gauguin, Marc Chagall, Raoul Dufy and Pablo Picasso. These great masters, who spent parts of their careers working in Provence, have also inspired several generations of artists in Latvia.

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Inmm.lv | Torņa iela 1



Barbara Ābele (Latvia).
Unworn Thing. 2014. Cotton,
polyurethane

Pablo Picasso. *Head of a Faun in Grey*. 8
September 1946. Paper, oil, graphite. MPA
1946.2.5, Musée Picasso, Antibes.

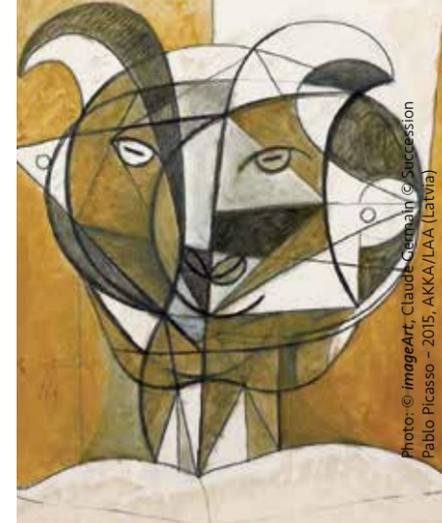


Photo: © imageArt, Claude Giesman. © Succession
Pablo Picasso - 2015, AKKA/LAA (Latvia)

The Aldaris brewery will open its doors to the general public for the fourth time during this year's annual Museum Night – an event when museums all across Europe offer free admission to visitors until late into the night. The brewery, which is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year, has prepared a special programme under which the evening's guests will also be among the first visitors to the *Aldaris Beer Museum*, the most modern museum of its kind in the Baltics. Along with the opportunity to attend master beer-making classes, visitors will also be invited to taste Latvian and imported beers as well as delicacies prepared by Riga's best restaurants.

aldaris.lv
Tvaika iela 44



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Tickets at bilesuparadize.lv / Price: EUR 12-20
Raunas iela 12

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For five days in May, the pristine white sands of Majori Beach in Jūrmala will be a fierce battleground for Europe's best men's beach volleyball players in the first of four European Championship tournaments to be held this year. Beach volleyball has quickly become one of the most popular sports in Latvia, largely due to the success of local athletes in various international competitions, including a bronze medal at the London Olympics in 2012.

📍 jurmala.lv
Majori Beach



MARIUS PETIPA'S BALLET RAYMONDA

Latvian National Opera / Riga May 17

French ballet master Marius Petipa choreographed *Raymonda* at the ripe old age of 80 as the quintessence of his rich and eventful life. The story centres around a noble crusader knight who goes off to war and his beautiful bride Raymonda, whose dances with her companions resound like an ode to the beauty of women, while the appearance of Saracen knight Abderakhman and his suite brings in a dose of Middle Eastern vivacity and colour.

📍 opera.lv
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<p>May 20, 8pm OPENING CONCERT Raimonds Pauls (piano), Vestards Šimkus (piano), Latvian Radio Big Band</p>	<p>May 24, 8pm AMBER DANCE ORNAMENTS Concert by Jurmala's Folk Dancers Free Entrance</p>
<p>May 21, 8pm String quartet ARTEMIS (Germany)</p>	<p>May 25, 5pm Belvedere Young Opera soloist competition auditions</p>
<p>May 22, 8pm MOZART & MOZART Orchestra Sinfonietta Rīga, Inga Šubovska (soprano), Rīga Dom Cathedral Boys Choir, Mārtiņš Klišāns (conductor)</p>	<p>May 27, 8pm Latvian Voices & Georgian Voices</p>
<p>May 23, 8pm TANGO STORIES Ksenija Sidorova (accordionist), Kirill Burlov (choreographer)</p>	<p>May 29, 8pm Orchestra Kremerata Baltica and Baiba Skride (violin), Ēriks Krišfelds (cello)</p>
<p>May 24, 12pm latvian, 2pm russian Concert performance for children. THREE LITTLE PIGS AND ... Sonora Voice, Daumants Kalniņš, Karina Bērziņa un Melo - M</p>	<p>May 31, 8pm Raimonds Pauls and the vocal group FRAMEST</p>

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Details **RIGA CLOSEUP**

Text by **LIENE PĀLĒNA**
Photos by **GATIS GIERTS, F64**

True beauty

The Riga Synagogue is not only the central place of Jewish religious activity in Latvia, but also one of the most beautiful Art Nouveau buildings in the country.

Hidden on Peitavas iela, a quiet street in the labyrinths of Old Riga, is an Art Nouveau gem that even many locals are unaware of. Also known as the *Peitav Shul*, the Riga Synagogue is celebrating its 110th anniversary this year. Designed by Wilhelm Neumann and Hermann Seuberlich, it is one of the few Art Nouveau houses of worship in Riga and is open to the general public on workdays for a modest entry fee of three euros.

The breathtakingly beautiful synagogue incorporates both Art Nouveau and Ancient Egyptian architectural elements, its elegant façade featuring the Star of David, palm leaves and other Middle Eastern motifs. The interior is even more impressive, harbouring just the right balance of decorative features to avoid seeming oversaturated, including stained-glass windows with plant motifs.

During the Nazi German occupation of Latvia from 1941-1945, all of the capital city's synagogues were burned to the ground, except for the one that remains in Old Riga. The *Peitav Shul's* close proximity to other buildings saved it from being destroyed, as the Germans feared that the flames might spread further if the synagogue was set ablaze. Instead, the building was used as a warehouse until the end of the war. During the subsequent



Soviet occupation, the synagogue continued to function despite the pressure of the authorities and KGB.

After the end of the war, it was revealed that the Torah scrolls had been saved by the priest of a nearby Lutheran-Reformed Church. These scrolls are once again prominently housed in the Ark at the heart of the synagogue. **BO**

The author wishes to thank Gita Umanovska, executive director of the Council of Jewish Communities in Latvia, Riga Jewish Religious Community and *Jews in Latvia* museum.



TOP 3

must-do's at the Riga Synagogue

LOOK for the Ancient Egyptian architectural elements, which include palm branches, lotus flowers and papyrus leaves.

TAKE NOTE of one particular tradition. As you enter the synagogue, you will notice a wall fragment that was left uncovered during the most recent restoration of the building in 2009, revealing the original coats of paint. The uncovered segment also corresponds with the Jewish tradition of leaving part of a wall unfinished and without plaster, in tribute to the ruined Holy Temple of Jerusalem.

EXAMINE the ornate stained-glass windows on the ceiling. The 12 circles around the Star of David symbolise the 12 tribes of Israel.

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Details **CITIES OF THE MONTH**

Text by **UNA MEISTERE**,
anothertravelguide.com
Publicity photos and by Alamy



Vienna

May is possibly the most marvellous month to visit Vienna. Roses are in bloom throughout the city, and the most special place to enjoy them in overwhelming abundance is the **Volksgarten**, or People's Garden. The park was created at the beginning of the 19th century on the site of the imperial palace's former bastion (*Brugbastei*), which Napoleon's army had destroyed in 1809. About 400 rose varieties bloom in the garden, looking like giant snowdrifts tinted in practically every imaginable colour tone and giving off a variety of fragrant rose scents. Sit down on one of the park benches and let all of your five senses take in the beauty; draw a deep breath and enjoy the regal feeling that spring has well and truly arrived!

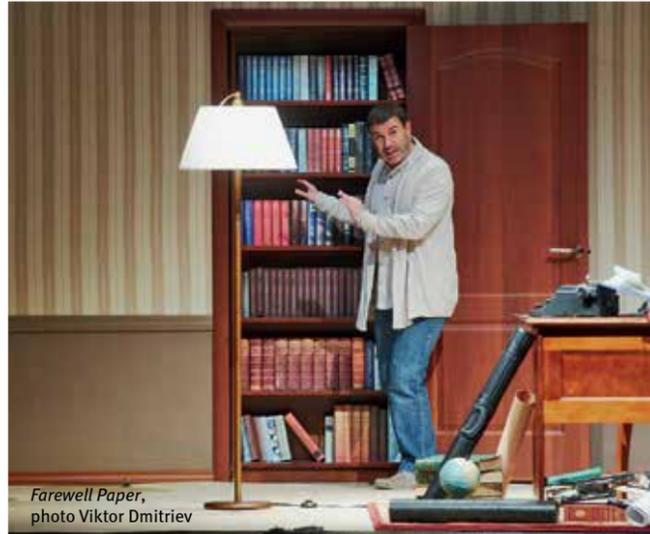
With spring in full force, it is not for nothing that the annual **Vienna Festival** – one of Europe's oldest and largest theatre and music festivals (*Wiener Festwochen*; May 14–June 21; festwochen.at) – has begun in May since 1951. This year's programme features 39 performances by artists from 20 countries.

Among the highlights is *Abschied vom Papier / Farewell Paper* (Halle E im MuseumsQuartier; May 28 and 29), first performed in Moscow by Russian theatre director Yevgeny Grishkovets. In the play, Grishkovets reminisces of an era that has been displaced by modern technologies; of a time when hand-written letters were the main form of communication, serving simultaneously a pronounced testimony of the writer's individuality.

The silent sensation of the festival, for its part, is the performance of *Bluebeard's Castle*, Béla Bartok's 20th-century masterpiece. The Vienna opera showing is a joint project led by American conductor Kent Nagano and outstanding German director Andrea Breth (*Theater an der Wien*; June 19, 21, 23 and 25).

If you want to end your evening on a no less exalting note, then there is hardly a more appropriate place in Vienna than **Steirereck** (Am Heumarkt 2A; steirereck.at), which recently gained a new annex and which is well-known among the gourmet crowd. The restaurant can be found in *Stadtpark*, one of the city's most centrally located parks, which, incidentally, is home to the highest concentration of sculptures and monuments in Vienna. Designed by the local architecture firm PPAG, the restaurant's silver-coloured glass pavilion reminds one of a cross between a labyrinth and a hall of distorting mirrors. *Steirereck* specialises in modern Austrian cuisine, and the herbs and spices used in the dishes are grown right on the roof of the restaurant building.

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Farewell Paper,
photo Viktor Dmitriev



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Monk's Bistro

Although composer Franz Liszt (1811-1886) was an ardent Hungarian patriot, he spent most of his life in Paris, Weimar and Rome and didn't speak Hungarian very well. However, in 1875, he was invited to help found a music academy in Budapest and was appointed as its president at the age of 64. For the following 11 winters and springs until his death, Liszt lived in a residence at the academy, which now serves as a museum devoted to the composer.

A "Liszt Trail" can also be taken through the streets of Budapest and, in deference to the legendary composer, the recently opened 49-room **Aria Hotel Budapest** (Hercegprímás 5; ariahotelbudapest.com) has named one of its suites after him. The hotel belongs to a small and exclusive boutique hotel chain named *Henry Kallan's Library Hotel Collection* and is housed in a former late-19th-century Neo-Classical-style bank building not far from St. Stephen's Basilica and the opera. The whole concept of the hotel centres around the theme of music. The establishment has its own music director, a music library is available for guests with iPads, and a music garden has paths set up with tiles that look like piano keys (this motif is also present in the guest rooms). The rooftop *High Note Skybar* offers cocktails and a 360-degree panoramic view of the city, with Maria Callas singing Mozart in the background.

During the past few years, Budapest has also placed itself firmly onto the gastronomic map of Europe. In 2010, *Costes* became the first restaurant in the city to receive a *Michelin* star. Now there are four such restaurants in Budapest, the latest being **Tanti** (Apor Vilmos tér 11-12; tanti.hu), which received its star very recently and in a record-short time of only six months after opening. The name of the establishment comes from the word *tánti*, which refers to an aunt with the best cooking and whose table is always full of tasty food. Chef István Pesti is well known on the local gastronomic scene and specialises in unconventionally made seafood. And unlike many other establishments headed by star chefs, *Tanti* is especially friendly to families with children.

Another gastronomic destination is the *Piarista Passage*, where one will find the locally esteemed *Babel Delicate* gourmet restaurant, the popular *Kuglóf* breakfast spot and the recently opened **Monk's Bistro** (Piarista Passage 1; monks.hu). The latter is located in the cooking quarters of a former monastery and stands out with an impressive open kitchen, permitting patrons to watch every detail of the cooking process in all of its nuances.

Budapest



Aria Hotel Budapest



Tanti



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Venice

This month, all cultural roads lead to Venice, which inaugurates its 56th International Art Exhibition (popularly known as the **Venice Biennale** – labiennale.org) on May 9. For the next few months, the entire city will become a gigantic museum, displaying art from all over the world on an unparalleled scale. Curated by Nigerian poet and art critic Okwui Enwezor, this year's biennale theme is *All the World's Futures*. The main exhibition with works by 136 artists from 53 countries will be shown at the Central Pavilion (Giardini) and at the Arsenale.

This year, Latvia is also presenting itself on an ambitious scale at the biennale, with a national exposition named *Armpit*. As a part of this showing, a comprehensive exhibition named *Ornamentalism. The Purvītis Prize. Latvian Contemporary Art* is being hosted by the *Indie* cultural project agency and the *Arterritory.com* art portal, in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Works by eight Latvian artists will be shown at the Tesa 99 hall of the thousand-year-old Arsenale Nord pavilion, occupying nearly 800 square metres of exhibition space. During the biennale, *Arterritory.com* will also release the second edition of its publication *Conversations with Collectors*.

However, that is not all. This month, Venice is doubling as a platform for *Expo 2015*. On May 3, two days after the ceremonial opening of the *Expo* world fair in Milan, Venice's Marghera industrial territory will host **Aqua Venezia 2015** (aqua2015.org), an *Expo* collateral event. Designed by Italian architect Michele De Lucchi, this pavilion is devoted to the relationship between people and water, with numerous multimedia, interactive and other exhibits to rouse the curiosity of both adults and children.

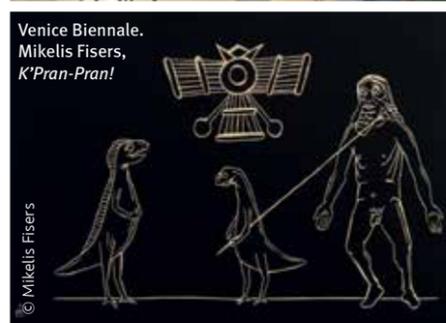
For those who wish to unite the biennale's inimitable cultural experience with a place of accommodation that is no less distinct, then the current top choice might be the recently opened **JW Marriott Venice Resort & Spa** (Laguna di San Marco; marriott.com). The 266-room hotel is located on a private island, the Isola delle Rose, which is also one of the largest in the lagoon. Depending on their mood and budget, guests can stay at one of five residences: the *Hotel*, *La Residenza*, *La Maisonette*, *L'Uliveto* and *Villa Rose*. The complex is also home to four restaurants, a panorama lounge and pool, and a church that can be used for private ceremonies, as well as one of the largest spas in Venice. The short trip from the hotel to the Piazza San Marco can be taken by motorboat in only 20 minutes. **BO**



JW Marriott Venice Resort & Spa



Venice Biennale.
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Details CITY ICONS

Text by **NADJA SAYEJ**
Photos courtesy of *Hufton+Crow*
Photography



Zaha Hadid's masterpiece

A must-see modern architectural wonder in Baku, Azerbaijan

You simply cannot miss the Heydar Aliyev Centre, which looks like cartoon mountains covered in snow. Designed by Iraqi-born British architect Zaha Hadid, this masterpiece is full of flowing curves, wonky shapes and futuristic windows, which fill a 619,000 square-foot space that is named after the former president of Azerbaijan. Set on the western coast of the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan has been an independent country since 1991, but modernist buildings from the Soviet era can still be seen throughout the capital. The Heydar Aliyev Centre offers a breath of fresh air in terms of visual harmony and was completed in 2012 following a five-year construction period.

The centre was built to promote Azeri culture – showcasing traditional folk costumes and intricate rugs – as well as contemporary art, including works by foreign artists. In 2013, for example, the country's first Andy Warhol exhibition was held there. Moscow's *Helikon Opera* has also performed at the centre, presenting the opera *Siberia* by Italian composer Umberto Giordano that same year.



The Heydar Aliyev Centre offers a breath of fresh air in terms of visual harmony

Boasting a conference hall, an auditorium, an art gallery and a museum, the centre represents a key cornerstone of Baku's ongoing development and received the London Design Museum's *Design of the Year Award* in 2014. As in historical Islamic architecture, rows, grids and sequences of columns stream to infinity like trees in a forest, establishing a non-hierarchical space. Continuous calligraphic and ornamental patterns flow from carpets

to walls, walls to ceilings and ceilings to domes, blurring distinctions between architectural elements and the ground on which they were built.

The fluid building eschews sharp angles, representing a continuous relationship between the interior and exterior, and between the past and the present. One of its main features is a "dovetail" of beams that rise in the east.

According to Saffet Kaya Bekiroglu, an architect who worked together with Zaha Hadid on the project, the goal was to create "an architectural landscape that performs a multitude of functions," exuding qualities that are welcoming and embracing and that direct visitors through different levels of the interior. **BO**

① heydaraliyevcenter.az



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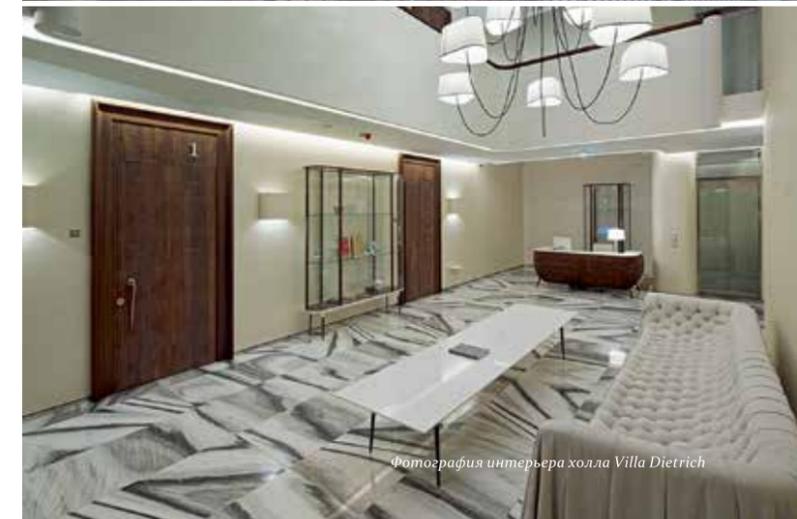
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The *Hotel SP34* in Copenhagen has been putting on various events since it opened last year

Third party

Hotel lobbies are becoming living rooms – the spaces of engagement for lively sociality.

Text by **ROGER NORUM**
Publicity photos

The common space in hotels: how to deal with it? That's a tough one. On one hand, we check into a hotel in order to get some privacy, away from the hustle and bustle of the real world. On the other hand, what cosmopolitan jet setter doesn't enjoy a bit of hustling and bustling (and chatting and drinking) with like-minded people during a weekend away?

Congregating around hotel lobbies has been in our imagination for some time. Agatha Christie's endearing and moustachioed Belgian sleuth Hercule Poirot was obsessed with them, while Wes Anderson's recent film *The Grand Budapest Hotel* explored the relationships formed around a fictional, fantastical hotel lobby. While hotel public spaces were once the domain of stiff upper-lipped check-in staff and besuited, secret-keeping concierges, properties all over the world are now jumping onto the bandwagon to throw together a range of events for their guests – right in the middle of the lobby.

It's all part of the move to establish intimate relations between guests and hotel brands, expanding customer experiences while building customer loyalty. So while hotel rooms are now largely for sleeping, lobbies are becoming living rooms – the spaces of engagement for lively hotel sociality. Lobbies are now being outfitted with couches, settees, chaises longues – even hammocks – and installed with beer taps and wine cooling units, all in the name of breaking down barriers.

This is happening not just at the *Ritz* and *Hôtel Costes*. The trend is being spearheaded both by larger chain hotels and smaller boutique properties. The four-star *Hotel SP34* (brochner-hotels.dk) in Copenhagen's old Latin Quarter, for example, has been putting on various events since it opened last year. In addition to a daily evening happy hour with free wine for guests and frequent, lively "neighbourhood parties", the hotel also brings in various music groups and sponsors art exhibitions. This



A great evening with some jazz

move has made it one of the most sought-after places in the Danish capital for nightlife – among visitors as well as locals.

Sometimes, of course, you just want to be left alone. Which you are welcome to do, of course – in your room. Just be wary of the FoMO (Fear of Missing Out) that might set in once you learn what happened the previous night in the lobby. **BO**

BEST EUROPEAN HOTEL LOBBIES

Four Seasons George V, Paris (fourseasons.com)

Me London, London (melia.com)

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Michelberger Hotel, Berlin (michelbergerhotel.com)



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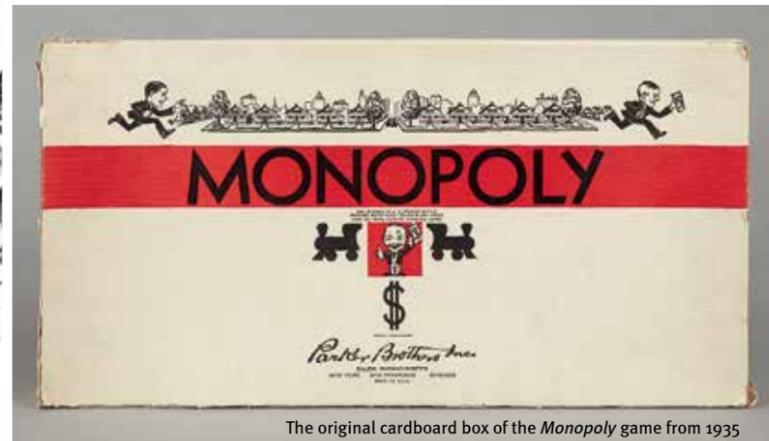
Charles Darrow, an unemployed plumber in search of income, was the first to market *Monopoly*

© Phil Orlandes

Magie's *The Landlord's Game* first gained popularity among students and intellectuals, then quickly spread to other strata of society. Those who played the game were also quite creative, adding their own rules and board squares. By the 1930s, several versions of the board game were being played in the United States.

According to one story about the creation of *Monopoly*, a former domestic heater salesman named Charles Darrow noticed that his friends and neighbours were eagerly playing homemade versions of a game in which real estate was bought and sold. Endowed with a shrewd sense of business acumen, Darrow began selling his own version of *The Landlord's Game*, which he named *Monopoly*, at local stores in Philadelphia.

The royalties made Charles Darrow a millionaire, the first game inventor to make that much money



The original cardboard box of the *Monopoly* game from 1935

Soon, Darrow couldn't keep up with the demand, so he approached American toy and game manufacturer *Parker Brothers* with a business offer. At first, the company turned down the idea of mass-producing *Monopoly*, but when it saw how well sales were going, it negotiated the rights from Darrow to produce the game on a large scale. Within a year, 20,000 *Monopoly* sets were being produced every week. The royalties made Charles Darrow a millionaire, the first game inventor to make that much money.

Magie also ended up being paid by *Parker Brothers*. When *Monopoly* started to take off in the mid-1930s, the company bought up the rights to other related games. For the patent to *The Landlord's Game* and two other game ideas, Magie reportedly received 500 US dollars and no royalties.

Since its debut, *Monopoly* has captivated more than one billion players in 114 countries and has been translated into 47 languages. To celebrate the game's 80th birthday this year, its current patent-holder *Hasbro* invited fans all over the world to vote for their favourite cities, which would become property spaces in the special *Monopoly Here & Now: World Edition*. The company received nearly four million votes from 182 countries, and Riga is one of the 20 cities that made it onto the new version, occupying a coveted green space. The new version of the game will be launched this August. **BO**

Household fixture

Text by **ZANE NIKODEMUSA**
Photos courtesy of *Hasbro*

The historical drama of the world's best-selling board game

The story behind *Monopoly*, the world's most popular board game, is similar to the basic rules of the game itself: buy, sell, take advantage of sudden opportunities and win. Back in 1935, an astute businessman named Charles Darrow patented the game that we know as *Monopoly*. However, the game's roots go back more than three decades earlier.

In 1903, Elizabeth Magie of Brentwood, Maryland, patented *The Landlord's Game*, the direct precursor of *Monopoly*. She supported a Progressive tax movement pioneered by Philadelphia-born politician and economist Henry George, which opposed the concentration of land into the hands of a few monopolists and which called for the imposition of a land tax.

The Landlord's Game was a protest against unbridled capitalism and was designed to illustrate how a single tax can discourage speculation. That is in complete contrast with the *Monopoly* that we have come to know, in which the idea is to buy and rent or sell property so profitably that one becomes the wealthiest player and eventually a monopolist.



HOUSING ESTATE FOR SALE

Brivibas bulvaris 21, Riga

Located in the heart of Riga, this prestigious and historical building, including land property, is up for sale. A beautiful view of the park opens up from its windows. The building is located at the intersection of Brivibas bulvaris and Kalpaka bulvaris, and is just a few minutes away from the Old Town. The Freedom Monument - one of the most important national symbols of Latvia, is located nearby. The premises are best suited for either a hospitality business or premium-class apartments.

Land area - 1 467 m².
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COMMERCIAL PREMISES FOR SALE

201 Brivibas gatve, Riga



For sale: property with an active luxury department store at 201 Brivibas gatve in Riga, located near VEF. It's an excellent choice for a good investment -- the object can be sold including cash flow (EUR 50000 per month excluding VAT) or without. Brivibas gatve is the main street of Riga, and this area is surrounded by a well-developed infrastructure and public transport, ensuring a large flow of people on a daily basis. The five-story building is fully equipped with everything required for a retail business, including storage facilities in the basement. Included is a parking lot for up to 60 cars. The exterior of the building can be redesigned in glass, and the inside can be adapted for office use.

Land area: 4343 m²
Gross site area: 10648 m²
Site area: 2274 m²
Commercial area: 7945 m²

Price: **EUR 8 900 000**

For sale: property with an area of 63500 m² at 201 Brivibas gatve in Riga, located near VEF. The land is suitable for a mixed development, including housing. Maximum building intensity - 220%. The property is strategically well-placed near the Elkor Plaza department store, a hotel, and the offices of various companies. Brivibas gatve is located nearby. The property is suitable for various business activities, including the construction of offices and housing.

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Text by **DACE VAIVARA**
Publicity photos and by
Fabio Sartori



Beach style in Nice

As you walk along Nice's famous *Promenade des Anglais* and relax on the beach, you will look fashionable in either classical nautical clothing (for men) or in a ladies' style with a retro touch – much like the movie divas of the 1950s, who wore elegant, figure-flattering monokinis, large hats and designer Italian sunglasses – a ubiquitous style accessory.

The French Riviera's propulsion to fame and popularity took off together with the onset of bikini fashion during the 1950s. The bikini was first presented to the public at an annual fashion show by the *Union des Créateurs de la Mode Côte d'Azur* in nearby St. Tropez. Initially, the bold-looking bikinis, which revealed women's stomachs and backs for all to see, were not a common sight on seaside beaches. However, movie stars did a great deal to popularise their general appeal. While some segments of society were fervently opposed to the introduction of the two-piece bathing suit, that didn't stop film director Roger Vadim from dressing the young Brigitte Bardot in one for *The Girl in the Bikini* (1952). The 18-year-old starlet's appearance in a bikini without bra straps on the beach at Cannes seemed especially daring at the time.



Oasis

After the release of another film by Vadim starring Brigitte Bardot – *And God Created Woman* (1956) – the beaches of St. Tropez and the legendary *Club 55* became cult spots, where another trend to demonstrate women's liberation was launched – topless sunbathing.

Meanwhile, actress Grace Kelly made waves of her own by wearing elegant beachwear in Alfred Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief* (1955). The movie was filmed in the Côte d'Azur and received an Oscar award for best

SHOPPING IN NICE

Façonnable
It's worth visiting this famous store, which was once frequented by such movie stars as Cary Grant and Tony Curtis. Founded in 1950 in Nice by tailor Jean Goldberg, the luxury brand for men and women embodies the spirit of elegance of the French Riviera.
7 et 10 Rue Paradis
① faconnable.com

Saint James
The best store in Nice for obtaining classically striped French T-shirts and popular smart-casual nautical clothing in white and navy-blue tones. *Saint James* was the first company to commercially manufacture the famous sweaters of Breton fishermen.
11 Place Ile de Baute
① saint-james.fr

Smarin
Handmade *livingstones* designed by Stephanie Marin make for original interior design objects to bring back from Nice. The natural shapes and colours of these stone-shaped floor pillows look very much like large versions of the pebbles that line the beach of the city. The *livingstones* can also be purchased through the store's website.
32 Avenue Henri Dunant
① smarin.net



Hat by *H&M*,
EUR 19.99,
hm.com

Bag by *H&M*,
EUR 59.99, hm.com

Swimsuit
by *H&M*,
EUR 24.99,
hm.com

Sunglasses by *Tiffany*,
EUR 271, Fielmann

The French Riviera in the 1920s, EUR 150,
net-a-porter.com



Sandals by *Salvatore Ferragamo*, EUR 525,
mytheresa.com

costume design. At a screening of the movie at the Cannes Film Festival, Kelly met her future husband, Prince Rainier of Monaco, and dropped her career as an actress to become a princess.

Since the 1950s, the bikini has been associated with hedonism and a love of life, as reflected in Federico Fellini's film *La Dolce Vita* (1960), and with the jet set lifestyle of the rich and famous on the French Riviera. **BO**

Store addresses in Riga: Fielmann, Brīvības iela 47

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Three smart options

Style by **KATRĪNA REMESA-VANAGA**
Photos by **LAURIS VĪKSNA, F64**



Shirt, EUR 79, *Pierre Cardin*
Shirt, EUR 205, *Façonnable*
Pants, EUR 110, *Pierre Cardin*
Watch, *Frédérique Constant*, EUR 799, *Laiks*
Shoes, EUR 450, *Façonnable*
Belt, *Otto Kern*, EUR 45, *Pierre Cardin*



Shorts, *Strellson* EUR 94.90, *City Men & Women*
Shirt, EUR 69.90, *Tommy Hilfiger*
Sunglasses, *Ray Ban*, EUR 192.09, *Pasaules Optika*
Trainers, *G-Star Raw*, EUR 89.99, *The Shoes Store*
Belt, EUR 65.95, *Lloyd*



Striped shirt, EUR 220, *Façonnable*
Blue shirt, EUR 165, *Façonnable*
Shoes, EUR 250, *Lloyd*
Eyeglass frames, *Prada*, EUR 185, *Pasaules Optika*

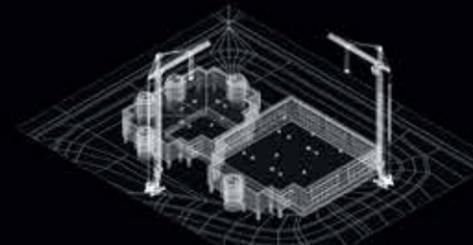
Store addresses in Riga: *Laiks*, *Pasaules Optika*, *The Shoes Store* and *Tommy Hilfiger*; *Calerija Centrs* shopping centre, *Audēju iela 16*; *Façonnable*, *Pierre Cardin*, *Lloyd* and *City Men & Women*; *Domina Shopping* shopping centre, *Ieriķu iela 3*.

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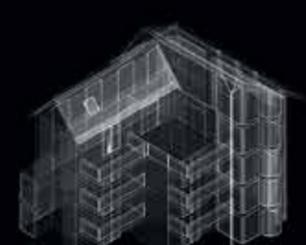
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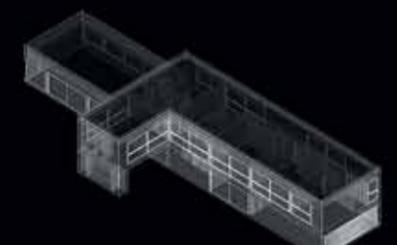
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Text by KRISTĪNE BUDŽE, *Pastaiga*
Photos courtesy of *Iittala*

Ice melted in glass

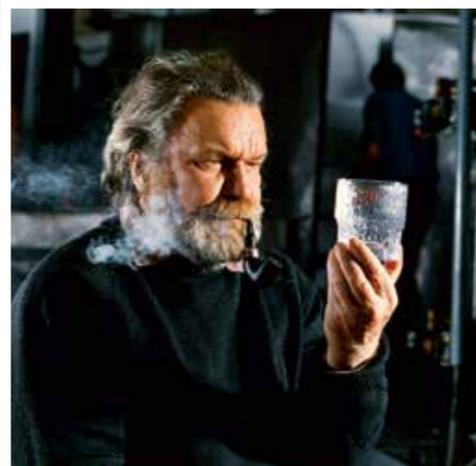
The *Ultima Thule* collection of glass products is among the best-known and most popular in Scandinavia. It has been manufactured by *Iittala* of Finland since 1968.

WHAT IS IT?

A series of glass items (bowls, plates, glasses, etc.) created by Finnish designer Tapio Wirkkala (1915-1985). The bottom surfaces of these items resemble melting ice. In honour of the famous designer's 100th anniversary, *Iittala* is releasing a new set of *Ultima Thule* products that it stopped manufacturing years ago. These include glass plates in two different sizes, drinking glasses and a large-format pitcher. As with other commercially successful series, this collection has been supplemented with various items over the years. The expressive carafe and drinking glasses of various sizes, for their part, have been made without interruption since 1968 and continue to rank among *Iittala's* best-selling items.

WHY IS IT SPECIAL?

Tapio Wirkkala managed to capture the essence of the northern European natural environment in his glass products, drawing inspiration from melting ice in Lapland for his *Ultima Thule* collection. Glassblowers spent thousands of hours experimenting and perfecting the glassmaking technique, which involves pouring molten glass over wooden moulds. The burning surface of the wood gives the glass its unique texture. Wirkkala also incorporated the motif of melting ice in the design of the famous vodka bottles that *Finlandia* used for 30 years until the year 2000. His first joint project with *Iittala* was the *Kantarelli* glass vase, which is shaped like a chanterelle mushroom. The vase's success led to a fruitful relationship between the designer and the glass manufacturer that lasted several decades.



HOW DOES IT FIT INTO INTERIORS?

Glass items from the *Ultima Thule* collection continue to be among the most popular in Finland and can be found in the interiors of many Finnish homes. Both brightly coloured and clear drinks will look good in these "melting ice" drinking glasses. Since *Ultima Thule* items are quite decorative, they go well together with more ascetic tableware. This means that in order to avoid overdoing it with the melting ice look, one should avoid placing too many of the collection's 19 different products together on one serving table. **BO**
① iittala.com

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 **LARUS**
mēbeļu salons



Text by **ILZE POLE**
Photos Courtesy of
Gerhard Ramcke and Orizzonte

This is your captain speaking

GERHARD RAMCKE (48),

Baltic Outlook introduces you to some of the most important people at *airBaltic* – the airline’s flight crew members

from Germany, captain of *Boeing 737* and *Bombardier Q400 NextGen* aircraft and chief pilot and instructor of *Q400* planes
Hours flown: 6,200

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Flying to Australia as a nine-year-old, I was invited to the cockpit by the pilots and spent some 15 hours of pure excitement and fascination. I decided then to become a pilot when I grew up. Embarking on a different career path after university, it took me a little longer to enter the pilot’s career, which I started with *airBaltic* 10 years ago. It’s never too late to grow up!

LAST DESTINATION FLOWN TO AS A PASSENGER

Sydney, Australia, last October, from where it’s just an easy hop to the loveliest places on Earth, including the Whitsunday Islands in Australia itself. From the pristine beaches, outback and rainforests to cities with a great and relaxed lifestyle like Sydney and Melbourne, Australia is a great place to visit.

HOBBIES

The love of my life – my little son Niklas.

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A PILOT

It is very rewarding to do a job that you really love together with people you like, and to know how to handle this complex machine in any situation.

THREE THINGS THAT I NEVER LEAVE HOME WITHOUT

Sunglasses, to enjoy the daily privilege of sunshine above the clouds. A small emergency overnight bag with a toothbrush in case I get stuck away from home. Some kind of camera, which might be just my smartphone.

SNAPSHOT TO SHARE

Sunrise on a February morning during a flight to Brussels, just after passing over Gdarisk, Poland.

FAVOURITE RUNWAY

Ålesund on the coast of Norway, with high mountains on one side and the sea on the other. It has beautiful scenery, but it can be a bit challenging during windy weather.

FAVOURITE BOOK

Any thriller by Tom Clancy, as one just can’t put his books down, they’re so exciting!

THINGS THAT MIGHT SURPRISE A PASSENGER WHO STEPS INTO THE PILOT’S CABIN

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Travel Tech

This collection of mobile gadgets should inspire some wild summer holiday planning



Text by **ROGER NORUM**
Publicity photos



OLYMPUS PEN E-PL7

Chic, sleek shots

This mirrorless interchangeable-lens camera is already several generations into development, meaning that *Olympus* has worked out many of the kinks of earlier models. Recent enhancements include improved autofocus, more remote control options and a better touchscreen that tilts out from under the body. Though the lack of a viewfinder may frustrate some photography purists, the 16 megapixels give it excellent picture quality, while the newer 14-42mm power zoom lens makes it very compact. The built-in Wi-Fi allows for instant uploading of images, while the retro-style, streamlined aluminium body means that you'll look nearly as cool as your pics.
EUR 557 | olympus.com

SEYVR POWER SAVER WALLET

Show 'em who's in charge

This wallet may well save your life – assuming that your life is dependent on your smartphone (which these days is the case for nearly all of us). Designed and made in Norway, the slim wallet has a tiny (6 mm thick) integrated 1,400 mAh battery and a miniature cable built into it, allowing you to charge your phone whenever and wherever you need. The battery recharges to full in two hours. Available in both *Apple Lightning* and *MicroUSB* models, and in either black or brown reinforced cowhide leather.
EUR 70 | cuckooland.com



LINX FUSION PS2000BM

Unique sound for Generation A (audiophile)

Hardly your everyday run-of-the-mill headphones, these experimental noise-cancelling cans operate on haptic technology, which transmits audio vibrations through the hammer, anvil and stirrup – those three tiny bones in your middle ear. This makes for a very clear (if slightly bass-heavy) sound at a volume that is up to 70 db lower than regular headphones, minimising the risk of ear damage. A rechargeable battery also allows use in passive mode, and there is a microphone for phone calls. Perfect for music listeners who are hard of hearing.
EUR 388 | ableplanet.com

LAVA BRIGHTSOUNDS
Affordable, splashable sounds



This new, lightweight and ultra affordable speaker has just come to market and presents some enviable features, including an ambient nightlight with a dimmer that gives a calm glow – perfect for bedtime reading. The 5W ultra-wide speaker suits both family travellers and hardcore campers, with a four-hour charge that gives you eight hours of music playback or ten hours as a lamp. The IPX4 water rating means that it's splash resistant, so you can bring it along to the pool or shower. Features *Bluetooth* and 3.5-mm aux-in connectivity. Available in white or teal.
EUR 56 | amazon.co.uk

LUMINETTE

Because I'm happy (not SAD)

Following on the heels of various products intended to help fight seasonal affective disorder, insomnia and jet lag, these portable, ergonomic glasses will work wonders on your circadian rhythm. The device emits 2000 lux of enriched blue light onto a hologram, which is then reflected back onto your retina's photoreceptors. Wearing it for half an hour in the morning should make sure you've gotten up on the right side of the bed – and in the right time zone. Works fine with prescription glasses and contact lenses, too. Ideal for long-haul jetsetters.
EUR 225 | myluminette.com



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Details **PEOPLE**

Art and the art of living

Text by **LIENE PĀLENA**
Publicity photos

Meet artists **Katrīna Neiburga** and **Andris Eglītis**, Latvia's representatives at this year's Venice Biennale.

"I am happy that I can do what I really enjoy in life, but there was a time in the past when I avoided applying the word 'artist' to myself," says Latvian video installation author **Katrīna Neiburga**.

Both Neiburga and fellow artist **Andris Eglītis** are well-known in Latvian art circles and each of them has received Latvia's most prestigious contemporary arts award, the **Purvītis Prize**, which is awarded every two



years and which comes with a hefty 28,450 euros in prize money. Neiburga has gained recognition for video works in which she addresses personal issues, while Eglītis engages chiefly in painting and sculpture.

The two artists play with ideas,



experiment with materials and gain inspiration from real-life events. Over the years, they have become very close in both their professional and private lives.

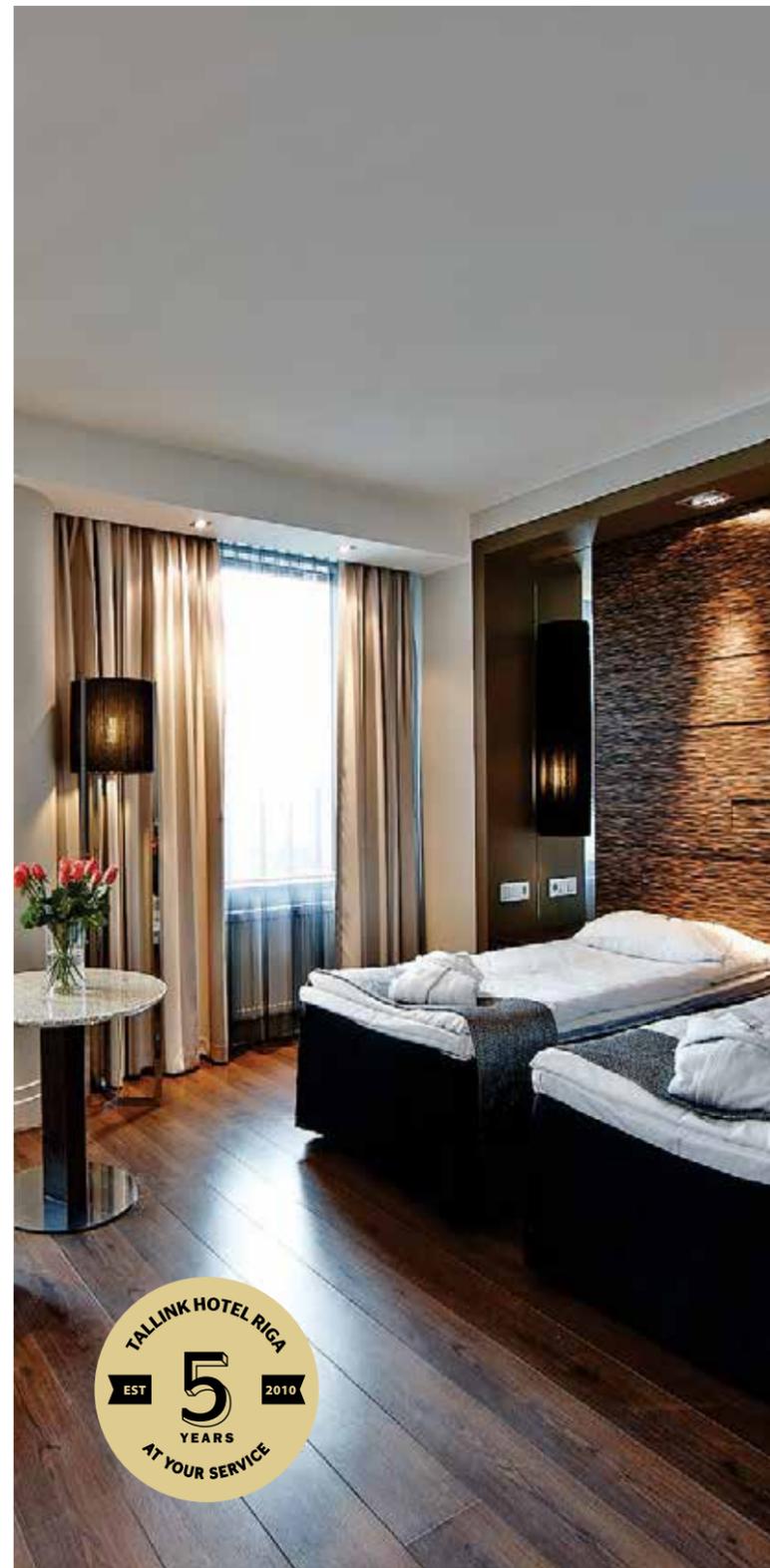
"We work together like the right and left hand of a single individual. It is an absolute level of harmony that is hard to explain," says Eglītis.

This year, **Katrīna Neiburga** and **Andris Eglītis** are pooling their creative potential to represent Latvia at the 56th Venice Biennale in a joint installation that they have named *Armpit*. The installation consists of spatial compositions and video stories inspired by woodsheds and private garages of Soviet-era cooperatives, whose owners have adapted them for hybrid use as workshops-cum-dachas. The stories

centre around life, birth, aging and the ways that people choose to spend their time. They are poignant snapshots into the lives of "garage elves".

Neiburga has contributed to the installation with video projections, while Eglītis has been the main "construction artist". The result is a mythical world that will be on display from May 9 until November 22.

Neiburga and Eglītis are also participating separately in another parallel exhibition that is part of Latvia's contribution to this year's Venice Biennale. Titled *Ornamentalism. The Purvītis Prize. Latvian Contemporary Art*, this exhibition features works by Neiburga, Eglītis and six other Latvian artists. **BO**



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Time for a garden party

Tortillas and cold soup for your first garden party

Cold cucumber and avocado soup

Ingredients

2 long cucumbers
1 avocado
½ sweet onion
½ lime (juice)
1 small bunch dill
200 ml natural yoghurt
Salt and pepper to taste
Sesame seed oil for sprinkling

Preparation

Peel the cucumbers and slice into thin circles. Pit and peel the avocado. Finely chop the onion and dill. Blend the cucumbers, avocado, onion, and dill together with the lime juice in a blender. Add the yoghurt and salt and pepper to taste. Place the soup in a cool place until the beginning of your garden party. In order to keep the soup cool upon serving it, place a piece of ice into each serving bowl. Sprinkle a bit of sesame seed oil into each bowl of soup and serve.

Tortillas with Slow-Roasted Pulled pork, marinated vegetables and lime sauce

Ingredients

Slow-roasted pork

1 kg pork shoulder (together with bones and skin)
1 tsp. sea salt
½ tsp. ground paprika or cayenne pepper
½ tsp. garlic powder
½ tsp. freshly ground pepper
1 tbsp. sugar cane syrup

Tortillas

1 cup whole wheat flour
1 cup all-purpose flour
½ tsp. sea salt
50 g cold butter
1-1 ½ cup warm water

Quick pickled vegetables

1 carrot
1 short cucumber
1 bunch radishes
3-4 mini corn cobs (or other vegetable of your choice, such as bell pepper or snow peas)
1 bunch dill and parsley with stems, roughly chopped

1 tbsp. sea salt
1/2 tsp. mustard seed
1 pinch cumin
½ tsp. caraway seeds
1/3 tsp. black pepper
2/3 cup white wine vinegar
½ cup water
3 tbsp. white sugar

Lime sauce

1 cup natural yoghurt
1 lime (juice and peel)
1 tbsp. liquid honey
1 pinch sea salt and freshly ground pepper

Fresh rucola (garnish)

Preparation

Sprinkle the pork with the spices and pour the sugar cane syrup over it. Cut crosses into the skin. Make diagonal cuts into the skin with a sharp knife and place onto a grill in a baking pan with the skin facing up. Cover the pan with aluminium foil and place into a heated oven at 150°C for about 4 hours. After the pork has cooled, pull the meat into strips with a fork.

Prepare the marinated vegetables. Peel the carrot and grate it into long, thin strips. Slice the cucumber

and radish into thin circles. Cut the corn cobs in half. Pour the water and vinegar into a bowl. Add salt and sugar and mix until they have dissolved into the liquid. Arrange the vegetables, herbs and spices alternatively into a jar. Pour the vinegar mixture over them. Seal the jar and put into a fridge or other cold place. After a couple of hours, the vegetables will already be lightly marinated.

Make the tortillas. Mix the flours and salt together. Divide the butter into pieces and add to the flour mixture. Rub the butter into the flour by hand until it acquires a crumb-like consistency. Add the water and knead the dough until it becomes elastic, adding more flour or water if necessary. Divide the dough into 8-10 parts and roll it out into maximally thin tortilla circles. Fry each tortilla side on a hot pan for about 30 seconds. Cover with a towel to keep warm until use.

Mix all of the ingredients together for the lime sauce and keep in a cool place.

Place some of the slow-roasted pork and marinated vegetables onto each tortilla and garnish with rucola. Sprinkle with lime sauce and serve. **BO**

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BOSCA



ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION MAY HAVE ADVERSE EFFECTS

Cocktail revolution

A handheld smoker is the latest weapon used by bartenders to give cocktails a rich and complex taste

Text by LIENE PĀLĒNA
Photos by GATIS GIERTS, F64



Smoky cocktail recipe

Vieux Riga

- 20 ml Jameson Select Reserve whiskey
- 30 ml Havana Club 7-year-old rum
- 20 ml dry vermouth
- 15 ml Benedictine DOM liqueur
- 2 dashes Angostura bitters
- 2 dashes orange bitters
- Saffron smoke

Stir all of the ingredients into a mixing glass and smoke with saffron. Strain into an old-fashioned glass over a cube of ice. Garnish with an orange twist.

Edgars Grišulis of the *Mākonis* design café in Riga is one of the most skilled bartenders in the Latvian capital. One of his specialties is smoked cocktails, which are becoming all the rage in many European cities. Most people are familiar with smoking as a means to preserve foods and enhance their taste. Some gourmet restaurants smoke their own bacon, salmon, mussels, vegetables, bread and even chocolate, claiming that smoking transforms the most ordinary food into something really special.

Therefore, it seems almost logical to extend the practice to drinks as well. According to Grišulis, who has worked at some of the world's best bars, "bartenders and chefs cooperate closely in the highest quality establishments, where drinks and

meals are paired to complement each other. In addition, the preparation of both cocktails and dishes is turned into a performance to entertain the customer. In that regard, the making of smoked cocktails fits perfectly with this trend."

While there are many ways to add smoke to cocktails, the most often used tool is a smoke gun. It shoots a mist over the cocktail, adding extra zest to its appearance, smell and taste. In many cases, the smoke mist is made of saffron, one of the world's most expensive spices. A cocktail made with saffron smoke goes very well with lamb's meat, for example, which in itself is often prepared with saffron. Aside from saffron, other spices are also used in various combinations to create uniquely flavoured smoked cocktails. **BO**



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French design with a personal touch

Baltic Outlook takes a tour inside the home of Paris-based designer Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance

Text by **AGRA LIEGE**
Photos courtesy of **DIANE HENDRIKX**



Paris-based Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance has numerous masterful items to his account and describes himself as a creator. Among the many accomplishments to his credit are the décor and design for the *Sketch* restaurant in London in 2002, the interior design for the *Le Ciel de Paris* restaurant in 2012 and the design of the bottle of the *One Million* fragrance by *Paco Rabanne Parfums* (2008).

Duchaufour-Lawrance's vision covers interior design, furniture, perfume and other genres. "I don't compartmentalise," he says. "I think it only healthy to explore different areas and challenge one's own creativity."

While specialising in design, architecture and visual installations, Duchaufour-Lawrance originally trained as a sculptor, following in the footsteps of his father. That, he says, explains the depths of his creative approach:

"Sculpture taught me to embrace emotion, to give my projects a narrative element."

Duchaufour-Lawrance is the head of *Néonata*, a prolific agency that he created in 2003 in Paris. Over the years, the productive designer has made his mark on French design with his signature, which could be called "organic style". Nature features noticeably in his drawings and choice of materials.

"There is a close connection between what we humans are made of and the natural elements. I strive to bring this natural element into our homes," he says. Now, however, he says that he would like to "go back to the drawing board, return to the basics" and experiment more with materials.

Duchaufour-Lawrance finds the exacting standards of the luxury products sector to be appealing, and his creativity is evolving in that direction.

"When it comes to luxury, you can focus on quality and durability. Much thought goes into the design of the items, and only the most special ones are actually produced in the end," he explains.

The house where Duchaufour-Lawrance and his family live is situated close to the Père Lachaise cemetery in the east of Paris. Its refurbishing was a massive project that

CLOSER TO NATURE

All of the living areas on the second floor open out onto a plant-lined terrace, thus blurring the boundaries between the inside and outside of the house, making it even more spacious.



the skilled master undertook together with his wife, Valentina, who works as an interior designer and stylist. One of the first things they did was to remove some of the walls and create a "blank canvas" with a lighter and more fluid space.

"We wanted a house that was adaptable, where we could live as a family of three or even five, when the family is complete," he smiles.

The bedrooms are on the first floor and their structure can be easily altered.

"We wanted it that way so that we could easily rework the space to meet the needs of the family. There are several possible layouts for the bathroom, for example. An electric screen allows us to divide it into two to create a shower or bath space," Duchaufour-Lawrance explains.

▼ **PERFECT COMBINATION**

Furniture designed by Duchaufour-Lawrance himself sits comfortably alongside contemporary pieces by other designers such as the Bouroullec Brothers and Ionna Vautrin, as well as more traditional *Gio Ponti* chairs and a Charlotte Perriand table.



More inspirational living spaces of successful Parisian designers can be found in the book *Paris Designers and Their Interiors* (EUR 45, lusterweb.com, authors: Marie Farman and Diane Hendriks). It contains 15 inspirational photo reports made in houses and apartments that are elegant and unusual, designed in a personal and sometimes quirky way.



▲ **INSPIRE TO BE INSPIRED**

"This house is designed to be shared," the couple agrees. They have successfully combined luxury, tranquillity and sensuality to create the perfect family home, which is at the same time a hub of creativity for both – with models, prototypes and images to inspire them all around.

▲ **A FEW MOROCCAN TOUCHES ►**

For Duchaufour-Lawrance's wife, Valentina, who is of Italian origin, it was important to "live in a home, not a showroom," so she added a few Moroccan touches to remind her of the years she spent in Marrakech.



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RHODES – ISLAND OF THE SUN

Text by **UNA MEISTERE**,
anothertravelguide.com
Photos by **AINĀRS ĒRGLIS**

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The locals joke that the tourist season officially starts when the first summer holiday-maker has jumped into the sea from the springboard in Rhodes' harbour. At the beginning of April, the springboard still looks like a design object befitting *Wallpaper* magazine, a true Modernist gem standing solitary out there in the water. It was erected during the Mussolini era by the Italians, who were one of many occupying forces that the Aegean island of Rhodes has experienced. The Italians are still remembered in a positive light, because they – in their ambitious vision of Italicisation – had planned to turn Rhodes into a significant transportation hub. The plan included building aqueducts and a road around the whole island as well as restoring the palace built by the Order of the Knights of Saint John.

Rhodes (Rhodos in Greek) has been generously steeped in myths and mythology, and its origins are still attributed to the ancient Greek gods. After Zeus defeated the giants, he turned to dividing up the land among the gods on Olympus. The sun god, Helios, was not present and was therefore left without a piece of land. But Helios didn't worry; he said he would have the land that emerged from the depths of the sea at sunrise. The next morning, a dolphin-shaped island emerged from the turquoise-blue waters of the Aegean Sea, and this became Helios' land. Geologists, however, have a different explanation for the origins of Rhodes – it was formed by the movement of tectonic plates on the earth's crust. The island's complex tectonic setting also explains the occasional earthquakes experienced there, which the islanders consider just a normal aspect of daily life. When asked when the last earthquake took place, they nonchalantly say: "Last week".

Legends about Greek gods notwithstanding, it's true that the sun has always indulged Rhodes. The island



Medieval walls of the Old Town of Rhodes



Rhodes is famous for its black-and-white pebble mosaic courtyards



Palace of the Grand Masters



Narrow streets of Lindos



Statue of the famous ancient Rhodian athlete Diagoras being carried by his two sons

The island has more sunny days than elsewhere in Europe. Sometimes it's still possible to swim there in November

has more sunny days than elsewhere in Europe, and the summer season lasts from May to the second half of October. Sometimes it's still possible to swim there in November. Measuring 77 kilometres long and 37 kilometres wide, Rhodes is Greece's fourth largest island (after Crete, Euboea and Lesbos). It belongs to the Dodecanese group of islands, which consists of 12 large and 150 small islands. The islands are located between the Aegean and Mediterranean seas, which meet at Cape Prasonisi on the southwest tip of Rhodes. In the summer, when both seas are calm and the water level is relatively low, the strip of sand connecting Prasonisi to the main island can clearly be seen. But in winter, the strip is hidden under the water, turning Prasonisi into a separate island. The waves on the Aegean side are always larger, and Prasonisi is considered a surfer's paradise.

Rhodes lies 200 nautical miles (or about an hour's flight) from mainland Greece. Its capital, the ancient city of Rhodes, was planned by Hippodamus of Miletus, an Ancient Greek architect, philosopher, mathematician and the "father of city planning". According to legend, one of the seven wonders of the antique world – the Colossus of Rhodes – was located on Rhodes. At 33 metres tall, the statue stood at the mouth of Mandraki Harbour, while ships passed between its legs. However, considering that the entrance to the harbour is 400 metres wide, one is forced to question the truthfulness of this legend. The Colossus is said to

have been built as an homage to the sun god following Rhodes' victory over Macedonian forces under the military commander Demetrius Poliorcetes.

However, even the appearance of the statue is disputed – some sources say the image of the sun god was nude, others say it was partially dressed. It was supposedly made of 15 tonnes of bronze and nine tonnes of iron, with rocks filling its interior. The Colossus was designed by a famous Greek sculptor from the town of Lindos, now a popular resort town, but he did not live to see his masterpiece finished, having committed suicide shortly before the Colossus was completed.

The statue stood by Rhodes' harbour for 56 years, its polished bronze form shining like gold in the sun, until a powerful earthquake destroyed it in 226 BCE. The Colossus fell apart into thousands of pieces and tumbled into the sea, where it lay for at least 900 years. It is said that the Egyptian king Ptolemy III offered to pay for its reconstruction, but the people of Rhodes refused. The Oracle of Delphi had warned them that the statue had offended the sun god Helios, who had then sent the earthquake to destroy the Colossus.

Be that as it may, when the Arabs later conquered Rhodes, they claimed to have pulled the remains of the Colossus out of the sea and have brought them to Syria on the backs of 900 camels, where the material was melted down and turned into coins. Interestingly, archaeologists have as yet been unable to find any proof of the giant statue's existence – not even a speck of bronze that might have been used to make it. The only witnesses to the Colossus are coins from that era with Helios' head on one side and a rose – the symbol of Rhodes – on the reverse side.

The Colossus later served as inspiration for French sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi when he created the Statue of Liberty

in New York City, given as a gift from France to the United States of America. People have studied the poses and faces of both statues for similarities, although the Statue of Liberty has only one base, which is much higher than that of the Colossus. Still, the Statue of Liberty is sometimes called the Modern Colossus.

Two other important legendary characters from the island's history now stand at the entrance to Rhodes' harbour, namely, fallow deer (Dama dama). On one side of the entrance to the harbour is a stone statue of a buck on a high base; on the other side is a doe. The Dama dama are a rare breed of deer, introduced to Rhodes in the early 14th century by the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem after they took control of the island from the Byzantine Empire.

According to a local legend, Rhodes was full of snakes at that time, and the crusaders imported the deer to drive out the snakes. Of course, the deer did not directly kill the snakes; instead, it is believed that the snakes are repelled by a secretion from the deers' antlers. Fallow deer still live on the island, mostly in the interior, but snakes (and scorpions) can also be encountered here and there in the more mountainous regions of the island.

Dama dama are smaller than related types of deer, standing less than a metre tall and weighing only 40 to 80 kilograms. They are light brown with white spots, but the tips of their tails are black.

The oldest continually inhabited Medieval-era Old Town

Deer are not the only legacy of the crusaders on Rhodes. Having controlled the island from 1309 to 1523, the crusaders built a four-kilometre-long and twelve-metre-wide defensive wall around the city. Constructed atop former Byzantine fortifications, the wall was built to withstand any siege, and it still surrounds the Old Town today. In truth, the city did finally fall to the Ottomans after a six-month-long siege in 1522. Unlike the city wall surrounding, say, Dubrovnik, which has since become a popular tourist route, Rhodes' city wall is open to the public only during certain times of the year.

However, it is possible to follow the city wall in its entirety along the former moat, which, due to incorrect calculations, was never filled with water. Today, the moat has become a small republic in its own right, where life flows at a different pace. Here, in the green meadows, you might find people practising yoga, playing sports,


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The historic seaside city of Lindos is known for its white-washed houses and labyrinth-like maze of streets



View from the Acropolis of Lindos

taking walks, kissing or exercising their dogs. Some parts of the trail feel quite lonely, as if you've entered a time warp, but sooner or later you'll be surrounded by people again. Rhodes' Old Town was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1988 and, with a population of about 6,000, is one of the oldest continually inhabited Medieval cities in the world.

The Old Town is undeniably a tourist magnet, but if you stray from the typical routes and avoid the main squares, which have become tourist traps, you will enter a completely different world. Here, you can lose your way and wander back in time. The streets are cobbled with small black-and-white stones (white from one side of the island, black from the other side) that gently massage the feet and keep your senses sharp, allowing you to peer into the small courtyards and half-open doors. Some of the streets are not even named, and it seems there has never been a need to do so. Sokratous and Ippoton are the city's busiest streets. Measuring about 600 metres in length, Ippoton (also known as Street of the Knights) was built on an ancient path leading from Rhodes' Acropolis to the harbour.

This is where the Knights of Saint John built their accommodations, the

eclectic decorations reflecting the styles of the crusaders' homelands. About 2,000 Christians lost their lives in 1523 as the crusaders tried to defend the city from Turkish attacks. The Turks, on the other hand, lost considerably more men (a total of 50,000), but they nevertheless managed to take the city. About 5,000 residents – Christians who did not want to live under the sultan's rule – fled along with the last of the crusaders. Mosques and the ubiquitous Turkish baths were built atop the Christians' churches.

It is in one such place that *In Camera Art Boutique*, one of Rhodes' most special accommodations, is located. Its owner is well-known Greek photographer Nikos Kasseris, who was born in Rhodes and is a true patriot of the island. He has published several books of photography devoted to Rhodes, including a co-project with the famous *Magnum Photo* agency. He created the small six-room hotel from three interconnected historical buildings, which he acquired with the intention of adhering to the Greek tradition that fathers must provide living quarters for their daughters. He bought the first house for himself, thereby fulfilling a long-time dream to live in Rhodes' Old Town. The house was in ruins, but Kasseris has restored it

scrupulously. Life didn't turn out exactly as planned, though, and his daughters decided to live elsewhere.

So Kasseris decided to open a hotel instead, which would double as an exhibition and meeting space – a sort of informal cultural centre. His photographs are displayed on the walls, and most of them feature scenes from Rhodes, including one of the famous springboard during a

Each room at *In Camera* is different and thematically inspired by Kasseris' photo exhibitions in Greece and elsewhere in Europe. The rooms have also been inspired by the building's archaeology; for example, evidence of a former Turkish bath can still be seen in a bathroom ceiling. One of the most interesting rooms in the hotel, named *Forms of Light*, is dedicated to Kasseris' 1984 solo exhibition that focussed

The real place from which to enjoy the magic of sunlight is the historic town of Lindos

storm. The weather was extremely bad that day, he says with a laugh. Although Kasseris is over 60 years old, he has no plans to put his camera down. In fact, he has a whole collection of cameras, which are displayed as museum pieces in the hotel's rooms. Here you'll find *Linhof* and *Canon* cameras from the 1970s, *Hasselblad* and *Sinar* cameras from the 1980s, *Fuji*, *Rolleiflex* and *Leica* cameras from the 1990s and also a 21st-century *Noblex*. He has used them all in his work in the travel, archaeology and advertising fields. The hotel lobby also has a photo copier and other professional tools of his trade.

on the use of light in photography. Actually, it cannot really be called a room; instead, it's an apartment on several levels in which the drama of light is played out literally, triumphing in a terrace on the upper floor from which you can look out across the Old Town's roofs to the blue sea beyond. Come up here in the evenings to watch a most breathtaking sunset.

Acropolis and the wrath of Hera

However, the real place from which to enjoy the magic of sunlight is the historic town of Lindos. Located 49 kilometres from the City of Rhodes, Lindos lies at



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Rhodes city beach

It is said that the labyrinth of small, cube-shaped homes and meandering streets was built to thwart pirates

the foot of a steep cliff and is surrounded by small, picture-perfect Aegean coves. As you approach the town, the view is truly like a postcard, with small white houses covering the entire foot of the cliff, like sugar scattered onto the landscape. An ancient acropolis sits at the top of the cliff, a testament to Lindos' prominent role in the past. It is a past that stretches back 3,000 years. The town was once an important regional harbour, a commerce hub and a centre of art and culture that was later out-rivalled by Rhodes. Rome was still a small Etruscan village when Lindos was at the peak of its influence and prosperity. It is said that Lindos' acropolis was established by Danaus, who arrived there together with his 50 daughters seeking refuge from the wrath of Hera. The Apostle Paul is also said to have come ashore at Lindos after a shipwreck; one of the nearby bays is called St. Paul's Bay in his honour. The acropolis stands at an elevation of 116 metres, with an ancient road leading through the town's narrow streets, across a meadow ablaze with poppies and other flowers, and then up the cliff to the acropolis. The monumental stone steps leading into the acropolis itself create a truly majestic impression.

At the very top are the ruins of a temple to Athena Lindia built in the 4th century BCE. If the path is too steep to climb, donkey rides to the top are available. Lindos is a strictly pedestrian town and all cars must be parked well outside the centre. Although we visit in early April and the summer season

has not yet begun, the first tourists have already arrived. Of Lindos' 600,000 tourists per year, most are day-trippers, so if you want to really enjoy the magic of this town, then you should plan to spend at least one night there. It is said that the labyrinth of small, cube-shaped homes and meandering streets was built to thwart pirates. Today, they're an experience within an experience. Due to the compact size of the town, it's not really possible to get lost in it, but there are nevertheless surprises around every corner. The most legendary buildings are the former medieval captains' residences with their cobbled courtyards and heavy wooden doors, often still decorated with their original owners' emblems. Some of the residences now house cafés.

Also inspired by the architecture of the captains' residences is *Melenos Lindos*, the most coveted hotel in the area and, possibly, all of Rhodes. The hotel has only twelve rooms or, to be more precise, small cottages. All of them face the sea, and all are designed to reflect local construction practices from the 17th century. The high bed platforms made of carved cedar wood are also an authentic detail. Each house has its own terrace, where visitors come to fully understand the popular Greek expression *sigá-sigá*, meaning "slowly, slowly".

That is the best way to enjoy not only the beautiful view, but also life in general. The owner, Michalis Melenos, spent 13 years bringing this project to fruition. Now, as we arrive, the hotel is still getting ready for the real tourist season to begin – mattresses are being dried and aired out, and the last details are being repainted. Local home-owners paint their houses every spring, following winter and the rains. They do it for aesthetic reasons, but also because white reflects the sun's rays back into the atmosphere, thereby keeping the residents cool in the summer heat, which at the peak of the season can reach 40° C.

Italian period

Rhodes came under Italian rule in 1912, following the Italo-Turkish War. The "golden Italian years", however, came a bit later, during Mussolini's rule. Approximately 8,000 Italians lived on the island in the 1920s. As Rhodes had been declared the capital of the Italian Islands of the Aegean, it became the site of several significant infrastructure and architectural projects. The largest concentration of projects from that era can be found at Eleousa, a village in the island's interior near the foot of Profitis Ilias Mountain and about 37 kilometres from the city of Rhodes.

This area is always very green, even in the middle of summer, when the ancient cedars and pines provide welcome shade. The locals consider Eleousa like a refuge during the summers. Almost all of the buildings in this area are Italian-built, and one of the most pompous examples of architecture from that era is the former residence of the Italian governor. Constructed on a hill, it is said that the ornate building was intended for Mussolini, although he never made it to Rhodes himself. Unfortunately, the grand villa has now fallen into ruin. It is still possible to wander through parts of the ghostly residence, but do watch your step, because the ceilings and mosaic-covered floors have rotted out in places. The *Elafos and Elafina* hotel, another relic

The island of Rhodes has a population of about 110,000, half of which lives in the capital, Rhodes City.

Rhodes' 220-kilometre-long coast is mostly rocky or covered with pebbles, but it also has many idyllic sandy coves.

Visit the Palace of the Grand Masters (Street of the Knights, Medieval City) to gain an insight into the island's complex history. Built in the 14th century, the palace was partially destroyed in 1856, when the munitions stored in the basement of St. John's Church exploded. The Italians later restored the palace and turned it into Mussolini's holiday retreat. Mosaic floors and ornate frescos decorate the



Meander (meandros) ceramics

from the Italian era, lies at the foot of the mountain and across from the villa. Surrounded by cedar and cypress trees and built in 1929, the hotel resembles an Alpine grand hotel. It was recently restored and is now enjoying its second lease on life.

Another storied monument to the "golden years" can be found slightly outside the village. The former sanatorium was built before the First World War, and many Italian soldiers wounded in that war – as well as locals – received treatment there. Thanks to



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Agios Nikolaos Church is one of the most striking Byzantine churches on the island of Rhodes



Springboard on Rhodes City beach



The Rhodes Aquarium was built in the 1930s, when the island was under Italian rule



Mt. Filerimos is famous for its peacocks freely roaming among the pine trees

the hilly environment and the region's special micro-climate, the sanatorium was also considered the best place to treat various lung ailments. It closed in 1949, two years after Greece regained control of Rhodes, but you can still see the decorative pond and fountain built by the Italians in the early 20th century. The pond was once used as a reservoir and contained crystal-clear water. Today, however, the slightly greenish water shows the effects of time, although the small, rare freshwater *gizani* fish living there do not seem to mind.

After exploring the Italian side of Rhodes, have lunch at the nearby tavern named *Oasis*. Its walls are full of local history, displayed for all to see in countless old photographs. Practically each photo tells a story, including the story of Jews hidden here by local residents. After the capitulation of Italy in 1943, Rhodes was occupied by the Germans, and most of the Jews – who had lived on the island for countless generations – were killed or deported. Only 179 Jews survived.

Oasis opened in 1990 and is family-owned. This is the place to come for authentic Greek food,

interior, and three of the palace's galleries serve as exhibition halls with displays interpreting the island's history from the 3rd century BCE to the Ottoman period.

For a lasting souvenir from Rhodes, visit the *La Magia* jewellery gallery (Omirou 83). Located on one of the narrow streets in the Old Town far from the typical souvenir shops, it sells works by the best contemporary Greek jewellers.

Vintage Wine & Spirits (29 Alexandrou Diakou) is the place to go for really great local wines. It has a superb collection and good service as well.

from meat and cheese balls to dolmas to lamb and moussaka. A large plate of appetisers costs a mere ten euros and includes classic Greek salad (which the locals call "farmer salad") and a glass of house wine. *Oasis* is also a place where locals go to break their Lenten fast and celebrate the Resurrection of Christ. Lambs are slaughtered and marinated for several days in preparation for the feast, and the event is carefully planned for several weeks in advance.

Easter time is also special in that it marks the beginning of a new season. The islanders do not hide the fact that Rhodes – like most Mediterranean islands – has two faces. One face can be seen at the height of the summer season, when cruise ships arrive at its shores, the streets are full of tourists, and locals enjoy their "harvest time". The second face shows itself when the island is empty and quiet, most of the hotels and restaurants (and many places of employment) are closed, and the majority of the residents survive on what they earned during the summer. The seasonal ferries also stop running, charter flights no longer land, and it's considerably more difficult to get to and away from the island.

Of course, those of us who visit the islands yearning for the sun find this second, quieter face difficult to imagine. And, most likely, we needn't even try. The Greeks are great patriots and unbelievably hospitable. You may not feel this at the restaurants in Rhodes' Old Town (many of which are tourist traps), but as soon as you step off the popular tourist routes, don't be surprised to find that your post-dinner coffee or sweets are on the house.

Gastronomy is a sacred thing for the Greeks. Evening meals can last three hours or more...in other words, *sigá-sigá*. If there's time, the meal might even last all day, for example, if you arrive at the *Avantis* restaurant on Afandou Beach. Here you can order a late breakfast, have lunch and then enjoy dinner all in one place. In addition, the restaurant stays open until the last guests leave, and it also has a number of beach chairs reserved for its visitors. *Avantis* has been owned by the same family since 1983



Idyllic St. Paul's Bay near Lindos

and is now run by the second generation. The *pater familias*, however, still makes daily appearances to make sure that everything is running smoothly.

The calamari and seafood at *Avantis* are simply superb. Many have tried to find out the family's culinary secrets, but to no avail. After all, the fish chef has been working there for already 35 years. The restaurant serves the morning's catch, and everything is fresher than fresh. *Avantis* even has its own fisherman to oversee the bounty from the sea. At the end of the meal, guests are served the traditional Greek dessert without which one cannot imagine any meal in this part of the world.

There's no use in trying to avoid temptation; after all, there's a reason why Pythagorean cups can be found nearly everywhere on the island. In his day, the brilliant Greek philosopher and mathematician created the cup as a reminder that everything in life requires balance. The vessel is shaped like a wine goblet, but it can be filled with (or emptied of) wine or any other liquid only up to a certain level. If too much is poured in, a deceptive gravitational mechanism forces the entire contents to spill out... leaving the cup completely empty. But holidays are holidays for the precise reason that one is allowed to be slightly sinful – save the Pythagorean cup for once you get back home, as a souvenir of your good intentions.

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Insider's view



"IF YOU DON'T SAY GOOD THINGS ABOUT YOUR HOME, THEN IT WILL FALL DOWN ON YOUR HEAD"

Manos Sabanis is like a volcano. He was born in Rhodes and is a passionate patriot of the island, as are all of the locals. There is a reason why they call themselves Rhodians instead of Greeks. Sabanis has worked in the tourism sector for over 21 years and runs his own agency called *Manos Going*. When yachts owned by superstars dock in Rhodes, Manos is usually the first person they look up.

"As a child, I saw holiday-makers arrive here. I always wondered why they came and what they did." Soon enough, curiosity got the better of him and he decided to talk to the tourists himself. So, at the age of 14, Manos travelled to London to learn English. Later, he studied hotel and business management. He began his own business in 1994, and in 2007 he met his future wife on his native island – a Latvian woman named Gunta. While Manos now considers Latvia to be his second home, his true home, of course, remains Rhodes – the island that he knows like the back of his own hand.

There are so many wonderful Greek islands. Why should one travel specifically to Rhodes?

Greece has 1,277 islands, 777 of which are inhabited. The other 500 are just rocks and cliffs. The Greeks have a saying: "if you don't say good things about your home, then it will fall down on your head". So, first of all, Rhodes is the place where I'm from. But aside from that, this island can fulfil any traveller's desires; it's cosmopolitan and has a very long history. It has both mountains and the sea. The blueness of Greek waters is absolutely wonderful. In Rhodes you can see the water every day. One side of the island borders the Aegean Sea, while the other side is on the Mediterranean. If you like to swim, then go to the eastern coast; if you like extreme sports, then go to the western coast.

Rhodes takes the most pride in its medieval town and I believe it's the most fantastic place in all of Greece. To experience it most fully, you need to go off on your own and wander through the small streets, because that's how you will get to know the local people and their traditional culture, which is still alive here. Rhodes is a mix of cultures – we've got Greeks, Italians, Turks and Jews living here. From here you can also go explore other nearby islands or Turkey, whose coast you can see from Rhodes. The Turkish port town of Marmaris is only a 55-minute ride away, or 28 nautical miles. And finally, the food here is simply great; compared to other tourist destinations, the prices are very friendly.

Is there anything you miss by living on an island?

Lots of things. When I go to Athens, the first thing I do is get behind the wheel of a car. I want to see streets crowded with people and experience the craziness of driving. Here on the island, we work non-stop for seven months straight. Life on the island has two faces – that's also one of the specific things about living here.

What are your favourite restaurants on Rhodes?

In Rhodes City, it's *Louis*. The restaurant has a truly Greek atmosphere and its location right in the centre of the city is also great.

In the Old Town, it's *Dinoris*, which is a fish restaurant that's been in the same family for over 45 years. The children of the original owners now run the restaurant. Outside of town, my favourite restaurant by the sea is *Avantis*. It's also a fish restaurant, but you can spend practically the whole day there. Enjoy the sun in the morning (the restaurant reserves beach chairs for its clients), then have lunch, then lounge around in the sun some more and soon it will be time for dinner.

If you're headed to the mountains, then there's no better place for lunch than *Maroulakis*, where they serve the best lamb on the whole island.

Which other islands do you recommend visiting while on a trip to Rhodes?

Symi, Patmos, Tilos and Kastellorizo. **BO**



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Text by **TREVOR BAKER**
 Photos courtesy of
 Foodpairing®

LIKE CHALK AND CHEESE?

Will Bernard Lahousse's *Foodpairing* programme change the way that we eat?

Surrounded by tubes, open bottles and mysterious scientific contraptions, Bernard Lahousse looks every bit like an eccentric professor as he hands over a glass of coppery-red liquid. We're at *The Drinks Factory*, the London laboratory of his colleague, acclaimed barman Tony Conigliaro. Both men exude the focussed enthusiasm of boys who grew up with chemistry sets. That's an advantage these days, when pretty much every high-end chef and even bartenders like Conigliaro have to know their way around "rotary evaporators" and liquid nitrogen. Lahousse stuck with his boyhood enthusiasm for science and trained as a bio-engineer during his youth. Only when he started noticing chefs moving into his turf about ten years ago did he become interested in the business of food technology.

Now Lahousse's foodpairing system has become a secret weapon for an increasing number of enthusiasts, including chef Andoni Aduriz of the Basque restaurant *Mugaritz*. And Conigliaro's *Woodland Martini*, which Lahousse has just helped to mix, tastes superb.

"Ten years ago, chefs became more open to working with scientists because of the work that Ferran Adrià was doing at *elBulli* [which was once ranked as the world's top restaurant but which shut down in 2011 - ed.]," he explains. "Adrià shut *elBulli* for six months every year and experimented with hundreds of flavour combinations. In the end, only one or two of these would appear on the menu. Other chefs wanted to do similar things, but they couldn't afford to shut their restaurants and experiment for six months. Very soon, they too had questions like: 'How can we make different flavour combinations?' They wanted a more efficient way to establish what flavours go together well."

Taste vs. smell

Lahousse was inspired by work that British chef Heston Blumenthal and fragrance and flavour scientist François Benzi had done together. Blumenthal - head chef of the number one restaurant in the world at the

time, *The Fat Duck* in southern England - wanted to know why certain unexpected flavours go together. Why are caviar and chocolate such a winning combination? Researchers at Benzi's firm *Firmenich*, one of the world's leading flavour houses, studied the products at a molecular level and concluded that the answer lay in trimethylamine, a compound that both products share.

Lahousse read about this research and wondered whether other flavour combinations could be discovered in a similar manner. Could we enjoy a far wider range of food pairings than previously thought possible?

"When you analyse recipes by [*French cuisine legend*] Georges Auguste Escoffier [1846-1935], for example, you almost always find an underlying scientific reason for why he combined certain ingredients and not others," says the food scientist.

Over a period of several years, Lahousse analysed thousands of ingredients to establish what he calls their "flavour profile". To a large extent, this is simply their aroma broken down into its constituent parts.

"Eighty percent of what we experience as taste is actually smell," he explains.

These different flavour profiles are now available to anyone on Lahousse's foodpairing website (blog.foodpairing.com). Visitors can enter any one of thousands of different ingredients, where a "foodpairing tree" will instantly reveal many combinations that might work much better than you'd expect. Just looking at peas, for example, brings up a whole range of possible matches, from the obvious to the bizarre. There's carrot, potato, cod and chicken. But there's also white chocolate, vanilla, gin and passionfruit.

Unexpected culinary marriages

The way that Lahousse analyses food is similar to the way that perfume companies analyse scent. They use a machine that "recognises" flavour- and aroma-creating molecules.

"The principle of the machine is that you take the flavours from the product and shoot them through a



A perfect combination: *Zacapa XO* rum, beetroot, dark chocolate, raspberries and black olives



Rum pairing with tomatoes, yoghurt and plums

Coffee contains hidden vanilla notes, as do asparagus and strawberries

very long, narrow tube," he explains. "The smaller molecules are faster than the bigger ones. So if you put the whole flavour profile through the tube, the little, light floral ones come out first. The larger, heavier ones come out at the end. The machine recognises their pattern and it knows each molecule.

"It's almost like a perfume or an aftershave," he continues. "If you put perfume onto your skin, the first notes that you smell are the lighter ones, because the heat of your skin evaporates the smaller molecules first. After an hour or two, you start to get different notes because it takes more energy from your skin to evaporate the larger molecules. At the end of the night, you've got the bigger, heavier notes."

However, breaking the food down to its molecular level is only the first part of the process. Some molecules are more important than others.

"The first thing that we do is analyse the flavour profile of the product and decide what's important," Lahousse explains. "Coffee, for example, has more than 1,000 different molecules, but not all of them are interesting. About 80 or 90 are relevant for the taste of the coffee, and then you start looking at the connections."

This makes it possible to explore culinary marriages that you'd never expect to work. Coffee contains hidden vanilla notes, as do asparagus and strawberries. So according to the computer, a dish using coffee and asparagus ought to be perfectly palatable.

But are there occasions when the computer says "yes" and the fussy human palate says "no"?

"Actually, there aren't," says Lahousse. "We map out the best combinations and you always find that they

work. However," he adds, "food is also about culture. Chocolate and soy sauce make a great combination, but if you don't like soy sauce, you won't like the combination. On the other hand, some people might assume that they won't like it, but if you give it to them in a blind tasting test without telling them what it is, they discover that they do."

Bartenders' best friend

Although Lahousse started out working exclusively with chefs, first in his native Belgium and then around the world, bartenders have also been very receptive of his ideas. Tony Conigliaro has long been famous for his use of scientific techniques in the pursuit of cocktail-making at his *69 Colebrooke Row* bar in London. He says that the innovations made by Lahousse's *Foodpairing* project have been highly useful, enabling him to quickly put together flavour combinations that most cocktail makers would never consider. The *Woodland Martini*, for example, contains "woodland bitters" distilled from trees such as maple, birch, sequoia and oak. Mixed with gin and sherry instead of the more traditional vermouth, they make for a very different kind of Martini.

"It opens up so many possibilities," says Conigliaro. "The other day I sent him a message asking for information about bone marrow, because we're working on that. Before that it was hibiscus. In the past, people always worked with sweet tastes in cocktails. We used to have a lot of contact with pastry chefs because the palate is similar. But this has given us a new set of tools for working with a whole new load of savoury ingredients."

According to Lahousse, the classic cocktails can be retrospectively explained by foodpairing technology in the same way as classic recipes.

"Take a mojito, for example. If you divide rum into its aromas, you will find that one part smells like

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A lot of chefs know a few products and stick with them because they don't know what else they can use

mint [another ingredient in the cocktail - ed.]. Most combinations that work have a flavour explanation. I do more and more work with cocktails," he says.

One recent experiment at the *Madrid Fusion* food summit involved pairing Tony Conigliaro with Mugaritz's Andoni Aduriz. Using the information available on the foodpairing website, they came up with a dish to match Conigliaro's classic Dry Martini. Lahousse's system classifies aromas by different

names such as "fruity," "spicy," "floral," "cheesy," "roasted" and "smoky", among others.

The Martini is mainly characterised by "fruity", "spicy" and floral" scents. The perfect matches for the drink, according to the foodpairing system, is crabmeat, strawberry, parsnip and black garlic.

"Crab and strawberry share their fruity flavours with the Martini," explains Lahousse. "Black garlic highlights the vanilla-spicy side of the cocktail. The interesting honey-floral notes are also present in crab and black garlic."

Discoveries across cultures

Part of the reason that chefs such as Aduriz are so enamoured with the foodpairing website is its confirmation of their own instinctive mix of flavours, according to Lahousse. However, even the chefs are occasionally surprised by the possibilities.

"That's the advantage of foodpairing," says the food scientist. "You can make matches that you'd never think of."

However, there are certain complications. Sometimes flavour combinations in dishes are there by chance, rather than because they add anything important.

"You can't explain everything," he admits. "Sometimes lemon is added to a recipe for the acidity rather than the flavour. You might add something else for the colour or the texture, but from the 180,000 recipes that we've analysed, we've been able to explain more than 60%."

Some argue that a scientific explanation for food pairings ignores the important role of culture. Dishes that might delight diners in one part of the world could appal their counterparts in another. Nevertheless, as globalisation introduces us to cuisines from all over the planet, Lahousse argues that we will find ourselves with a wider, more open palate. He's confident that in the end, the science of good taste is stronger than notions of what we should and shouldn't be eating.

"The nice part of foodpairing is that it overcomes cultural differences," says Lahousse. "In Asia they might combine chocolate with soy sauce, while over here it's not done, even though there's interest in having umami notes [the mysterious flavour found in many savoury dishes - ed.] in chocolate. A lot of chefs know a few products and stick with them because they don't know what else they can use."

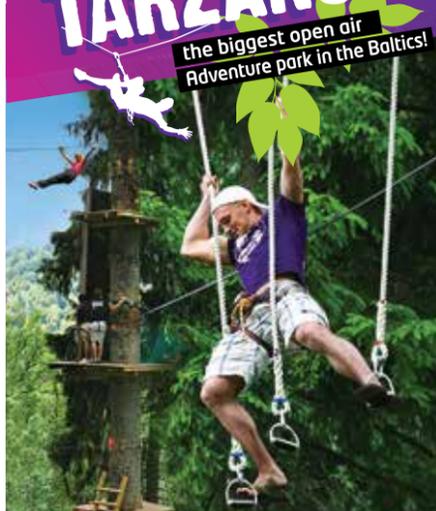
Lahousse adds that his foodpairing technology has been embraced by chefs in parts of the world where



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Outlook **IN CONVERSATION**

local ingredients have often been ignored by high-end restaurants.

"In Peru they have local fruits that they don't know how to match with anything else. What other ingredients match the local products that you're using?"

This also means that, in theory, chefs can reduce food miles. Rather than importing mangos from overseas, they can create something with the same flavour profile by using different local ingredients combined together.

"Sometimes, what you're doing is creating a bridge," he explains. "If you have two different things that don't go together, then you can find something to bridge them. The third ingredient will tie them together."

This may all sound like esoteric stuff, yet the number of visitors to the foodpairing website suggests that it's not just fancy chefs from the Basque Country and Catalonia who are interested.

"I think this is something that people have been waiting for," says Lahousse. "We had 8,000 visitors to the website on the first day and 100,000 in the first month. Now we have 70,000 registered users and sometimes hundreds of thousands of visitors in a month."

But have all of those visitors been able to make use of the site? There's much more to cookery than just throwing a few ingredients together. The preparation of the meal is also crucial and can fundamentally change the flavours of the foods.

"You do have to know a bit about what you're doing," cautions Lahousse. "The people who are visiting are either chefs or foodies. It's not enough to know that flavours go together; you also have to balance the dish and the textures."

There have been concerns from some critics that dishes produced by this method will lack variety, but Lahousse stresses that there are many ways to create interesting combinations that are not just about the flavour.

"A lot of the time, the contrasts in a dish are more about textures than

flavours. Some people worry that if you make something where all of the flavours have something in common, then it's not exciting, but actually you can go in so many directions. There are countless possibilities."

Although the world's high-end chefs were the first to embrace foodpairing, Lahousse thinks that the website has wider applications for the food industry as a whole. He expects it to become a tool for restaurants that are looking for something new, or for companies working with flavour.

Pineapple and ant is a great combination. If you're a foodie who's into new flavours, then you'll love it

"For top chefs, the results often confirm what they already know, but for smaller restaurants and bistros, it's a way to try out things that they might not have thought of," he says. "Now lots of companies are embracing foodpairing technology, like Bacardi, Pernot-Ricard and big dairy groups."

It sometimes seems that Lahousse is on a mission to persuade people to try the most unlikely dishes imaginable. He's evangelical about the ability of food science to eliminate many prejudices. On a recent trip to South America, he came up with something that may be his most daring dish yet. If he can convince the world to eat this, then his work may be close to complete.

"We analysed a lot of ingredients from Brazil and one of them was a type of ant," he explains. "We discovered that these ants have notes of lemongrass and ginger. Pineapple and ant is a great combination. If you're a foodie who's into new flavours, then you'll love it. I think that in the end, people can overcome their cultural resistance." **BO**

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STORY OF THE ROSE

Spring is the time when roses blossom in many countries, including southern France, where fields of these beautiful flowers are currently in full bloom and generously spreading their fragrant aroma. Gradually, the blooming season will emanate northward across the continent during the up-coming weeks and months. In tribute to Europe's lengthy rose season, *Baltic Outlook* has researched the story of the rose in history, fashion and design and offers a number of destinations to visit for enjoying the beauty, grace and scent of the queen of flowers.



Destinations

Where beauty is abundant

Text by **AGRA LIEĖ**

Publicity photos and by *Corbis*

ROSETO COMUNALE ROSE GARDEN

Rome, Italy

The *Roseto Comunale* is located across from the Circus Maximus on the Aventine Hill in Rome. The public garden was designed by Countess Mary Gayley Senni and established in 1931, when it contained 300 roses. It now covers 10,000 square metres and hosts over 1,100 varieties of roses from all over the world, many of which have been donated as gifts. The park is divided into different sections, each containing rose varieties with similar characteristics.

There are also special experimental sections where new varieties are being tested. If found suitable, some are sent to other public and private gardens in Italy. Among the varieties being selected are hybrid and miniature roses as well as modern climbers and shrubs. Here one will find roses with decorative fruit, hedges made from rose bushes and roses climbing up pergolas and pillars.

① turismoroma.it

ROSE GARDEN OF VALBY PARK

Copenhagen, Denmark

Valby Park is Copenhagen's second largest park (surpassed only by Copenhagen Common) and by far the most varied. It offers large open spaces with plenty of

room for ball games and kiting as well as small intimate gardens and direct access to water, making it popular with windsurfers.

Valby Park also contains one of the largest rose gardens in Europe, where visitors are treated to the sight of approximately 12,000 roses throughout the summer. The rose garden covers about 1.5 hectares and is the oldest garden in Valby Park. It boasts 176 different types of roses, from old and historical varieties to modern English cultivars. Every year on the first Sunday in August, the park hosts an annual rose election, which is an event to write down in your calendar! Valby Park also incorporates other smaller

themed gardens including an Oriental Garden, a Water Garden, a Hans Christian Andersen Garden, an Islamic Garden, a Low-pH-Garden and a garden designed specifically for vision-impaired people and wheelchair users.

① visitcopenhagen.com

ROSE GARDEN OF RUNDĀLE PALACE

About 80 km south of Riga, Latvia

The rose garden of the beautiful Baroque and Rococo Rundāle Palace was created on both sides of an ornate parterre and occupies around a hectare of the palace grounds. It was initially meant to be a

garden of historical roses only, but it has evolved into a living rose museum, where the achievements of both local and foreign rosarians can be admired.

At the far reaches of the garden's east and west sides, one can marvel at historical varieties that existed during the times of the Duchy of Courland (or Kurzeme, 1561-1795) and subsequently until 1914. In other sections, visitors will be treated to rose fields of different colours. Legend has it that a gardener at Rundāle once cultivated a blue rose, which is why a field of blueish roses (a more accurate description would be lilac) has been planted next to the gardener's house. One section showcases

the most striking works of 72 rosarians from 17 countries. At the end of the year 2014, the collection had 2,322 rose species and approximately 12,000 plants.

① rundale.net

ROSE GARDENS OF COLOMA

Sint-Pieters-Leeuw, near Brussels, Belgium

The rose garden complex of Coloma exudes colour and fragrance, its seven gardens containing over 3,000 different rose varieties from all around the world.

The gardens cover 2.2 hectares and have been in full operation since 1995. There

are an average of 20 individual roses per variety and at least six flowers per plant, which means that almost 300,000 flowers bloom on the estate. Visitors to the garden can learn about the cultivation of the roses and see the most beautiful varieties from four continents.

One ornamental garden has only red and white roses arranged in a geometrical framework, while another (considered to be the most important) holds roses of prize-winning Flemish rose-growers. The third garden is a living history book with roses dating from before 1950, while the fourth and largest is an international rose garden containing roses from Europe, the Middle East, North America, Australia and New Zealand. The fifth is a standard rose garden added in 2004, and the sixth is a Japanese rose garden with over 100 authentic Japanese rose varieties, added to the complex in 2010. A latecomer is the Chinese rose garden, completed in 2012, wherein special Chinese roses that flower throughout the blooming season can be admired.

① sint-pieters-leeuw.be

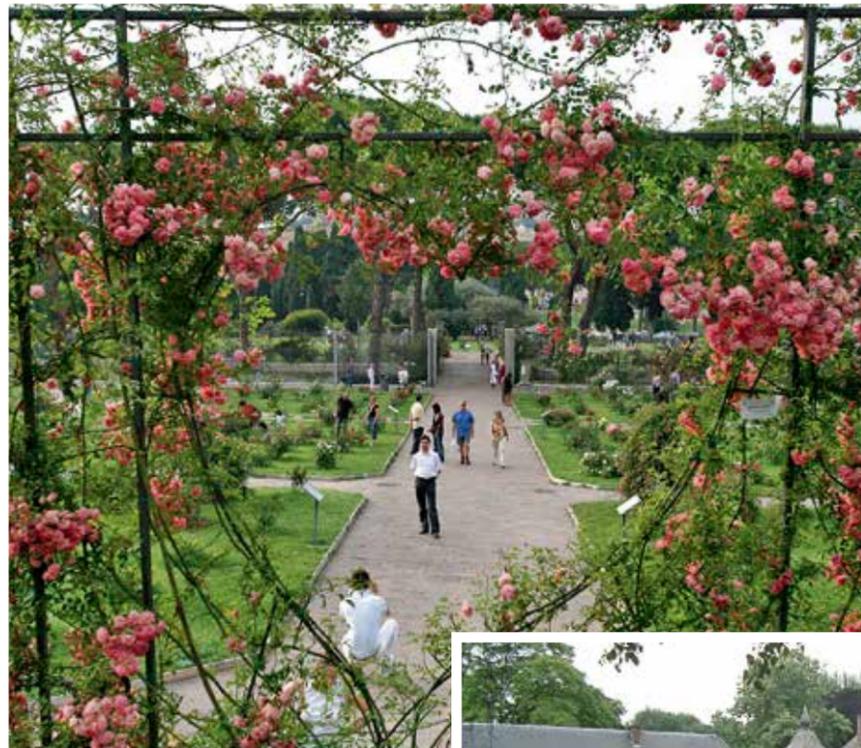
ROSE GARDEN OF BAGATELLE (Roseraie de Bagatelle)

Paris, France

Bagatelle Park (*Parc de Bagatelle*) is one of Paris' four botanical gardens (the others being the *Parc Floral de Paris*, *l'Arboretum de l'Ecole Du Breuil* and the *Jardin des Serres d'Auteuil*). The park and palace were built during the 18th century within a staggeringly short period of 64 days, due to a wager between Queen Marie Antoinette and her brother-in-law, the Count of Artois. The park was designed in an Anglo-Chinese style, which was popular at the time.

In 1905, new collections of horticultural plants were introduced. This is when the rose garden was planted and the *Roseraie de Bagatelle* was established, with a collection that now has 9,000 rose plants. The garden is also where an annual international competition for new roses has been held every year in June since 1907. An iris garden and a beautiful large pond with water lilies and other aquatic plants also grace the grounds.

① french-gardens.com



Her majesty the rose.

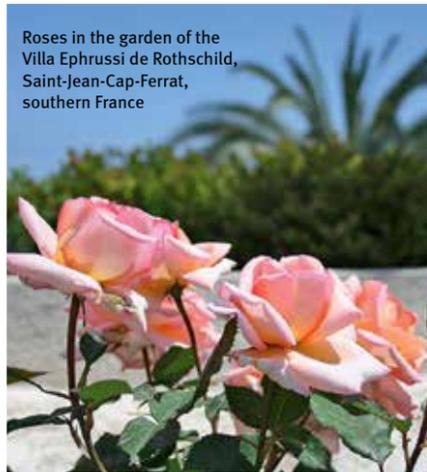
Its history, symbols and beauty

Text by **LIENE PĀLĒNA**
Photos by **DIANA ELEKSE**, Corbis and courtesy of Little Rose Fields

Although the number of rose species in the world is not precisely known due to their polymorphous nature, more than 400 species of the rose (*Rosa*) genus have been documented in the wild, mostly in the Northern Hemisphere. The hardiest species are capable of growing close to the Arctic Circle, while the southernmost varieties can grow in the tropics. Practically no native species of rose grow in the Southern Hemisphere. Roses are classified into three main groups: those that grow in the wild (species roses), old cultivars established before 1867 (old garden roses) and contemporary cultivars (modern roses) created after 1867.

The year 1867 stands out with the creation of the first hybrid tea rose by nurseryman Jean-Baptiste André Guillot, who named his new flower *La France*. This event launched a true explosion in the creation of other rose cultivars. France had already been the leading producer of new rose species in Europe. It is believed that Empress Joséphine de Beauharnais, the first wife of Napoleon I, created the world's first rosarium when she began collecting roses at the Château de Malmaison near Paris in the early 1800s. At one point about 250 species grew there, but little of this collection now remains.

Looking further back, crusaders first brought living exemplars of the colourful and fragrant Damask rose (*Rosa damascena*) to Europe during the 12th century. Additional species were subsequently imported from India, Japan and China. By the second half of the 18th century, Europe's gardens were populated by the likes of the musk rose, (*R. moschata*), French rose (*Rosa gallica*), cabbage rose or Rose de Mai (*Rosa centifolia*) and China rose (*Rosa chinensis*), all of which produced strong-scented colourful blossoms. The intentional crossing of species and creation of new cultivars began in the late 18th century and continues to this day.



Roses in the garden of the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, southern France



© Little Rose Fields

Rose Valley in Bulgaria



Marie Antoinette by Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, 1783



Rosa Centifolia, painting by Pierre Joseph Redouté (1759-1840) from his publication *Choix des plus belles fleurs* (*The Most Beautiful Flowers*), c. 1827-33

The oldest continually functioning rose garden is the *Rosenhof Schultheis*, about 30 kilometres from Frankfurt, Germany. This unique rosarium houses about 1,000 historical, rare and modern species and has been operating for five generations. Aside from being home to the oldest rose garden, Germany is also the country where one will find the world's oldest living rose bush. It is thought to be about 700 years old and can be found by the walls of the cathedral in Hildesheim, in the northwestern part of the country. Spreading upwards to about 10 metres in height, it looks more like a tree than a bush.

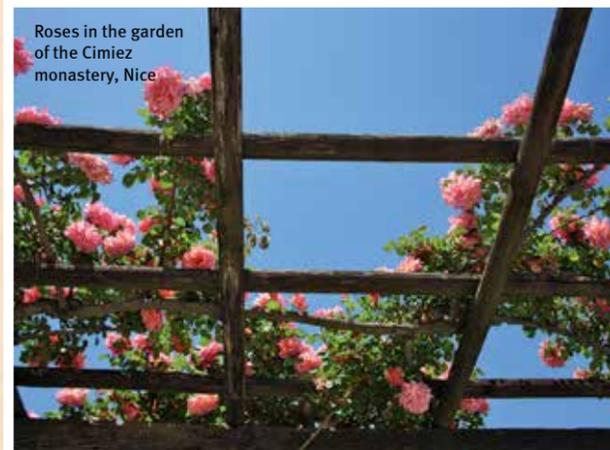
There are many noteworthy rose-growers and nurseries in the world, and

one of the most illustrious creators of new fragrant cultivars in Europe is David Austin of Great Britain. During the 1970s, Austin managed to cross traditional aroma-filled roses with more modern variants, creating new English roses with full blooms and bearing the powerful scent of older historical species.

Of course, England isn't the only place to produce sweet-scented roses. If one talks about rose fragrances, then one definitely has to mention Bulgaria, where roses have been grown in large-scale plantations for centuries to manufacture fragrant rose oil. The principal source of the pleasant-smelling oil comes from the petals of rose blossoms that have just opened up to bloom.

The smell of a rose can change during the course of a single day. The best time to enjoy the magic of a rose's fragrance is during the cool early morning hours. The scent is fairly strong in the late afternoon as well, while during the hot midday heat, roses save their strength and emit less of their aroma. Their fragrance is also less pronounced during cool and rainy summers and with the approach of autumn.

Roses had a sacred status in Ancient Egypt and were placed in pharaohs' tombs. The Ancient Greek poet Homer associated roses with Eos, the goddess of the dawn. According to a Roman legend, Flora, the goddess of flowers and the spring season, created the rose, imbuing it with a red colour from her own blood. The rose symbolised prosperity in Ancient Rome, while in Christian tradition its symbolic meaning has changed over the centuries. If at first the rose was associated with immortality, it regained its popularity during the Middle Ages and was widely depicted in Renaissance art and architecture.



Roses in the garden of the Cimiez monastery, Nice

Roses have been depicted over the ages by countless artists, who have attempted to add life to their works by depicting the flowers' every detail. A whole slew of artists painted still lifes with roses during the 17th century, while during the 18th century, portraits show noblewomen holding roses in their hands, as in paintings of Marie Antoinette by Louise Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, of the Marquise de Pompadour by François Boucher and of Madame du Barry by François Hubert Drouais.

Roses have also been depicted in the illustrations of numerous botanical publications. Some of the best-known works of this type are by Pierre-Joseph Redouté and have served as inspiration for subsequent artworks of porcelain and other materials. Redouté worked in the rose garden of French empress Josephine de Beauharnais at the Château de Malmaison, which was home to the world's largest collection of roses during the early 19th century.

The author wishes to thank Ilma Nereta, leading gardening specialist at the caulescent plant department of the Botanical Garden of the University of Latvia; Lauma Lancmane, department head at Rundāle Palace; and Daila Trubiņa of dailasrozes.lv.


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Festivāla restorāns



Beauty

Return of the rose

Text by **MĀRA BALTMANE-RIMICĀNE**,
Pastaiga
 Publicity photos from *Dr.Hauschka*,
Amouage, *Florame*, *Serge Lutens* and
L'Artisan Parfumeur

© Dr. Hauschka



Harvested Damask rose petals, Ethiopia

closer to that of roses found in nature than the scent of rose essential oil, which is the main reason why perfume manufacturers covet this product.

Regardless of fashion trends, notes of rose have been present in many perfumes, their relative strength changing from time to time. If a few years ago, fragrances with



Along with great aesthetic beauty, nature has gifted the queen of flowers with a rich and powerful aroma as well as medicinal properties that were already valued in Ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome.

Nowadays, rose essential oil (a product of steam distillation), rose water (another steam distillate by-product), rose absolute (a product of solvent extraction) and rose wax (obtained in the process of making rose absolute) are the main rose products used in cosmetics and perfumes. Initially made by steeping rose petals in water, rose water has been used in foods and cosmetics since ancient times. Presently, aroma therapy cosmetics brands like *Florame* from the region of Provence in France offer rose water as a natural alternative to facial tonics.

Although numerous rose varieties have been cultivated over the centuries, only a few are used in the perfume industry. The two most popular species for this purpose are the cabbage rose (*Rosa centifolia*) and Damask rose (*Rosa Damascena*). The cabbage rose, or Rose de Mai, is cultivated mainly near Grasse in southern France and as one can deduce from its French name, blooms during the month of May. The flower's name in Latin can be translated

into English as "hundred-leaved rose".

The *Rosa Damascena*, or Damask rose, for its part, is the principal species used to produce rose oil or rose otto. It is commercially grown in Bulgaria, Turkey, Morocco, Iran, Afghanistan and Ethiopia. In fact, this beautiful variety, with its strong and intoxicating aroma, is the most widely grown rose in the world.

The obtention of rose oil is a labour-intensive and expensive process. About three to four tonnes of rose petals need to be processed in order to produce one kilogramme of rose oil, and approximately one hectare of land needs to be planted with roses in order to obtain the aforementioned amount of rose petals. The price of rose oil varies in accordance with the place where it is manufactured. The German eco-cosmetic brand *Dr. Hauschka*, for example, pays 7000 euros per kilogramme of Ethiopian organic rose essential oil.

Essential oil is the most widely used rose product in cosmetics and aromatherapy, as it can be distilled without adding other products. The perfume industry, for its part, values the properties of rose absolute. The aroma of rose absolute is

a dominating rose scent were considered to be out of fashion, they are presently back in vogue. Perfume brands are coming out with all kinds of new fragrances featuring the queen of flowers, each with its own particularities.

À la Rose by *Maison Francis Kurkdjian* and *Rose Privée* by *L'Artisan Parfumeur* are two other recently released rose fragrances.

The niche perfume brand *Les Parfums de Rosine* offers more than 20 fragrances devoted to the rose. In most popular fragrances made for the general public and particularly for women, traces of rose are present but do not dominate. However, there are certain exceptions, as with the legendary, timelessly elegant and feminine *Trésor* by *Lancôme*, the romantic and gracefully powdered *Paris* by *YSL* and the strongly rose-scented and retro-chic *Stella* by *Stella McCartney*. It is said that women begin to truly appreciate the scent of a rose only after the age of 30. That may be because natural rose essential oil has a rich and complicated structure. It consists of more than 400 components, which allegedly require a certain life experience to be fully appreciated.



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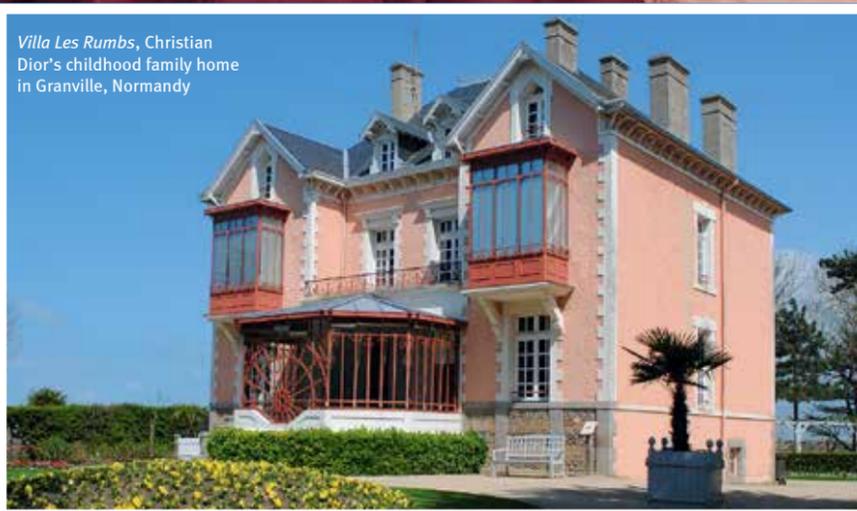


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John Galliano for Christian Dior's haute couture Spring/Summer 2010 fashion collection in Paris



Villa Les Rumbs, Christian Dior's childhood family home in Granville, Normandy

Text by **DACE VAIVARA**
Publicity photos, by Corbis and Vida Press

Fashion

Flower women

This is first and foremost a story about the outstanding fashion couturier Christian Dior and his passion for flowers – and for roses in particular. The beautiful rose garden beside Dior's childhood home in Granville, Normandy, inspired the designer to create fantastic clothes that inaugurated a new era in fashion history. The garden is located at *Les Rhumbs*, a 19th-century villa painted in a soft pink tone that reminds one of a doll's house and that exudes a magical fairy-tale atmosphere. The villa has housed the *Christian Dior Museum* (musee-dior-granville.com) since 1997 and hosts a different exhibition devoted to the designer every year. This year, visitors can see an exhibition named *Dior, the New Look Revolution* from June 6 to November 1.

Dior launched a revolution in postwar fashion with his *New Look* in 1947, when the designer presented his first fashion show. He named the show *Corolle*, a derivation of corolla, which designates a circlet of flower petals. In her review of the show for *Harper's Bazaar*, the enthusiastic editor-in-chief Carmen Snow referred to a "new look". The genius of silhouettes and cuts had created clothing items that resembled seductive flowers, with which he wished to highlight the wearers' beauty. As Dior said himself: "I have designed flower women."

Dior was superstitious, and during the presentation of his first collection he hid a lily of the valley stem under the fold of each dress, seeing the flower as a symbol of success. He also incorporated this flower in subsequent fashion collections and perfumes. However, roses remained the true love of his life, as reflected in many of his haute couture items and fashion show decorations. In honour of the fashion couturier and his love of roses, a special medium-red hybrid tea rose was created in 1958 and named *Christian Dior*. Today, the *Maison Dior* continues

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IX



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АДРЕС: MIESNIEKU I7, RIGA, LV-1050
ПЛОЩАДЬ: 84 м² - 105 м²

IX

LUXURY LIVING
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Dolce & Gabbana
Fall/Winter 2015-16

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to manufacture clothing that conveys a longing for something intangibly beautiful and feminine – a garden of paradise with fairy-tale blossoms.

The Italian fashion designer tandem *Dolce & Gabbana* has also made abundant use of rose motifs in this summer's collection of women's clothing and accessories, uniting Sicilian and Spanish cultural elements in lace, trimmings and needlework. Dresses, blouses, bags, shoes, necklaces, earrings and hairpins are all adorned with red roses in one form or another.

The Italian designers have announced that they plan to continue the rose theme in the upcoming fall/winter collection as well, under the motto: "*Sei la mamma piu' bella del mondo!*" (You are the most beautiful mum in the world!). These and other moving words written in childish handwriting will feature together with children's illustrations and red roses as a declaration of love for one's mother on fine silk and brocade costumes.

The presentation of this collection was more than just a fashion show. It was a veritable manifestation of love for the mothers of the world and led viewers to reflect on what our true values are. Young mothers and their little children from 11 different countries strode along the catwalk, including the famous Italian top model Bianca Balti, who was in her sixth month of pregnancy.

"Fashion in itself is cold. That's why it's important to convey a social message that bears witness to genuine feelings," said Stefano Dolce and Domenico Gabbana, raising motherhood on a high pedestal in accordance with Italian traditions, and with red roses as a symbol of love displayed prominently on the collection's marvellous fashion items.

The *Monaco Rose Ball* or *Bal de la Rose* is another annual event that takes place in March and that draws fashion designers, royal family members, aristocrats and A-list celebrities from all over the world. The charity ball was launched in 1954 and put on the map two years later by Grace Kelly after her marriage to Prince Rainier III. Proceeds from the event go to the *Princess Grace Foundation*, which provides grants to talented young theatre, film and theatre performers.

To mark the event's 60th anniversary last year, patroness Princess Caroline and fashion king Karl Lagerfeld feted Russian Constructivism, in tribute to the principality's past and present ties with the Russians. This year's theme centred on the *Art Deco* style of the 1920s and 1930s. An entry ticket to the prestigious event costs 800 euros and the dress code is strictly black tie / smart dress.

This is one of the rare occasions when princesses and high society dames can be seen wearing haute couture designer evening dresses. Initially, the romantic *Rose Ball* took place without the participation of famous show business stars. The first ball was dedicated to the waltz, followed by other themes such as Gypsy music, the French can-can, the Charleston and the tango, with famous musical artists performing.

As always, the champagne dinner tables at the *Salle des Etoiles* of the *Sporting Monte-Carlo* are copiously decorated with thousands of roses, including the pink *Grace de Monaco* cultivar, which was presented as a wedding gift to Princess Grace and Prince Rainier III. Indeed, roses are the true centrepiece at this grand ball.

Monaco Rose Ball 2015, with proceeds going to the Princess Grace Foundation



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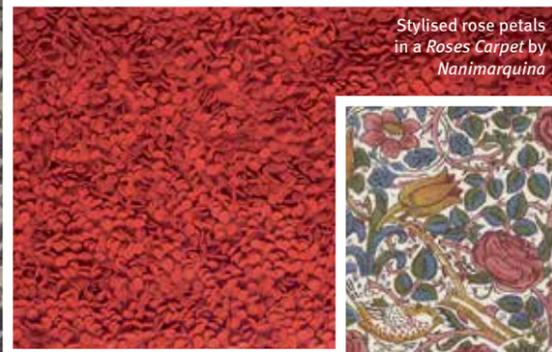
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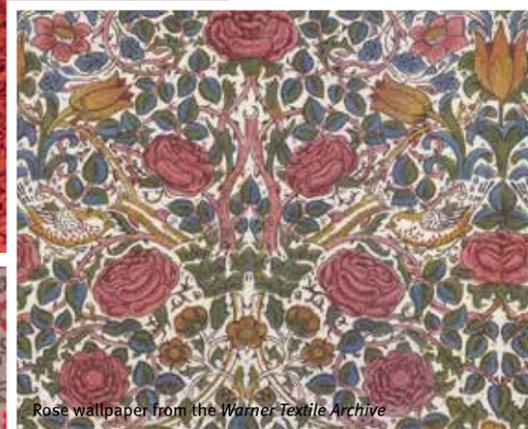
GAISMAS MAĢIJA



This cloth pattern designed by William Morris continues to be manufactured by *Morris & Co*



Stylised rose petals in a *Roses Carpet* by *Nanimarquina*



Rose wallpaper from the *Warner Textile Archive*



Tudor Rose rug designed by *Neisha Crosland, The Rug Company*

The Tudor rose is a combination of white and red in one flower

Interior and design

The rose's thorny nature

Text by **KRISTĪNE BUDŽE**, *Pastaiga*
Publicity photos

In Ancient Rome, a rose blossom placed on top of a door handle signalled that secret deliberations were being held inside. That gave rise to the expression *sub rosa* ("under the rose"), which refers to decisions being made in great secrecy. Rose blossoms were also painted onto the ceilings of rooms where hosts entertained their guests, as a reminder that the conversations being held therein were subject to the influence of intoxicating wine.

England is another place where roses have been used extensively in the decoration of home interiors. The rose is England's national flower and closely linked with the Tudor royal dynasty (1485-1603). Since the late 15th century, the stylized red-and-white Tudor rose has been depicted in the homes of both royalty and

ordinary folk. It combines the red rose of the House of Lancaster and the white rose of the House of York, denoting the union of both families into a new dynasty and becoming a symbol of the monarchy. Similarly to the practice in Ancient Rome, large roses painted onto the ceilings of the English royal residences testified to the discussion of confidential matters of state in these quarters.

In England, roses have been extensively cultivated in outdoor gardens for centuries and their mass entry into home interiors took place at the turn of the 20th century, during the heyday of the *Arts and Crafts* movement in the British Isles. At a time when Europe was experiencing rapid industrial development, the movement's founder, William Morris, called for a return to the roots of folk art and folk traditions. He and his like-minded colleagues created expressive ornamental designs for wallpaper and textiles, many of them depicting blossoms and plants, including roses. A number of these sensuous and sinuous Art Nouveau designs continue to be made by *Morris & Co*.

Nowadays, successfully incorporating roses into home interiors can be a complicated and risky task, as only one wrong step can transmute the rose's aristocratic character into vulgar banality. Those who wish to use the rose as the central motif in their interior should be confident about the refinement of their taste and the professionalism of their interior decorators. One of the most modern and tasteful versions of the rose is the *Roses* collection of rugs by Spanish designer Nani Marquina. The countless felt petals on these rugs make one feel like one is walking on colourful rose blossoms. Meanwhile, *The Rug Company* of Great Britain has created its own version of the Tudor rose. Textile designer Neisha Crosland's *Tudor Rose* rug is made of hand-woven Tibetan lambswool, depicting laconically stylised Tudor roses with winding thorny branches. "Thorny" is the buzzword here, as in their efforts to create a beautiful and romantic environment, homeowners may be taken aback by the fact that the queen of flowers can unexpectedly reveal her thorny nature and, smirking at our naïveté, mysteriously transform a promising interior into garish kitsch. **BO**



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PERFECT HOLIDAY IN KURZEME

An exciting weekend outing in the most picturesque towns of Kurzeme

The towns of Sabile, Kuldīga and Saldus in western Latvia were once ancient settlements occupied by the Curonians or Kurs (*kurši*), a former Baltic tribe. That is why this part of the country is named Kurzeme, or “Land of the Kurs”. During the 17th century, these towns experienced an upsurge of growth and prosperity as part of the Duchy of Courland (1561-1795), and traces of their proud past remain to this day. Aside from their eventful history, these towns also hold some other trump cards up their sleeve: Sabile is home to the world’s northernmost open-air vineyard, Kuldīga has the widest waterfall in Europe, while Saldus offers Latvia’s best-known sweets: the *Gotiņas* or “Little Cows” made of sweetened condensed milk. Equipped with a car and a healthy spirit of curiosity, we set out on a two-day trip to these three destinations.

WINE AND STONES IN SABILE

My first stop is the town of Sabile, a drive of a bit less than two hours from Riga. Officially granted the status of a city only in the early 20th century, Sabile is nestled in one of the most beautiful spots in the Abava River Valley and looks like a fairy-tale land. Both sides of the river are dotted with colourful houses, their aged wooden shutters and red-tiled roofs making them look all the more charming. Latvia’s beloved storyteller Kārlis Skalbe (1879-1945) once wrote:

“Sabile was pressed in between [the river’s] two shores; what a marvellous little town! A sparkling spring flowed downward along a stone-lined ditch by the footpath. Who wouldn’t want to live on such a warm riverside slope?”

Although I didn’t come across any sparkling springs during my spring trip to Sabile, I did spot a historical hand-driven water

pump after leaving the Lutheran church, which is home to the oldest church bell in Latvia (cast in 1450). I also suggest visiting one particularly eclectic sight in the town – a streetside garden populated by 200 brightly dressed straw dolls (Rīgas iela 17). There are various opinions about this unusual doll collection and nobody is left indifferent. Some shrug their shoulders, some smirk mockingly, while others take selfies with the dolls. Until you’ve seen the garden for yourself, you won’t know what to think.

Sabile is a town with narrow and hilly streets – an unusual sight in Latvia, whose landscape is mostly flat. It’s worth walking up one of these streets to the top of the 34-metre-high Wine Hill (*Vīna kalns*), which is the municipality’s most famous sight. Grape vines were first planted on the hill in the 14th century and continue to grow there

to this very day, making Sabile the capital of Latvia’s small winemaking industry. Even the town’s coat of arms depicts a cluster of grapes. If you spot romantic letters or heart-shaped balloons placed by the grape vines, then don’t be surprised, as Sabile’s Wine Hill is a popular site for newlywed couples, who can plant their own grape vine on its slopes. Incidentally, the hill is officially registered as the northernmost open-air vineyard on the planet in the Guinness World Record Book. Every year during the last weekend of July, Sabile hosts a wine festival, during which the produce of the hill’s vineyard can be tasted.

Wine-growing seems to be in the blood of a number of people in the region. Two households (one on Raiņa iela 4 and the other named *Drubazas* on the P130 carriageway) offer their own homemade wines for degustation, while at another



Installations at the Pedvāle Open-Air Art Museum



Blooming Abava River Valley in May



Fire art performance at the Pedvāle Open-Air Art Museum

Wine-growing seems to be in the blood of a number of people in the region

location on the outskirts of the picturesque town, the family that runs the *Abavas* (*abavas.lv*) winery plans to expand its winemaking operations not only along the shores of the Abava River, but to other parts of Latvia as well.

Guess what one architect couple from Riga is brewing in Sabile. Not beer, nor wine, nor spirits, but cider. Awarded last year for its tasteful gift packaging, *Sabile Cider* (*Sabiles Sidrs*) is made from



Sabile is nestled in the picturesque Abava River Valley



Abavas Family Winery owner Mārtiņš Barkāns in the family vineyard



Wine from grapes cultivated in Latvia



Quiet side streets of Sabile

local apple varieties in accordance with classical cider-making traditions. Another great thing about this operation is its location in a former cannery (Rīgas iela 22; sabilessidrs.lv). During the Soviet era, the complex produced cans of green peas that were a popular staple Latvia, but eventually the cannery shut down and was abandoned. Now the factory has been reborn like a phoenix from the ashes, its bright metal cisterns storing some of the best cider in northern Europe. Visitors are welcome to tour the plant and take a trip back in time to the unused old parts of the factory.

After trying out some local wine and cider, it's worth taking the two-kilometre trip from the centre of town to the open-air art museum in Pedvāle. Here one will find 150 impressive and thought-provoking sculptures set under the open sky. Interestingly, in order to begin a tour of the exposition, one literally has to crawl into a black hole.

"Just don't forget to climb back out!" hollers sculptor Ojārs Arvīds Feldbergs, the founder of the museum, who makes a ritual of planting stones(!) into the ground and involves visitors in his activities. Have you ever tasted an alcoholic infusion poured over specially selected stones? It's worth a try.

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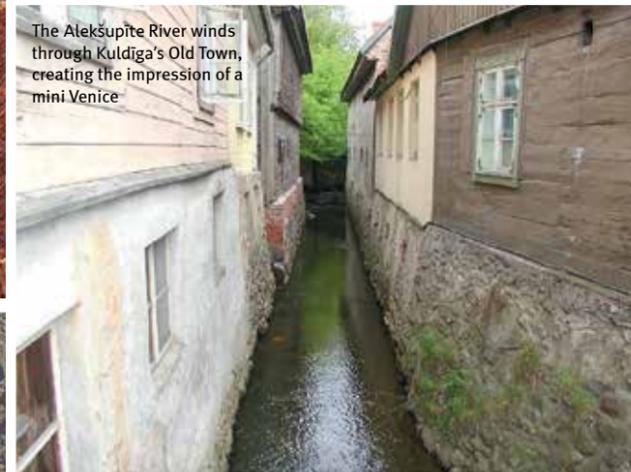
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CINEGENIC KULDĪGA

Slightly less than an hour west of Sabile is Kuldīga. Founded in 1242, this former Hanseatic city is possibly the most photogenic and cinegenic town in Latvia. The charming testimonials of its past can be seen at every step, with many centuries-old buildings still standing. This has made Kuldīga's streets a popular filming location for both local and international films and TV series. The city's name stems from the original Curonian settlement named Kuldinga, which the invading Teutonic crusaders then Germanised and renamed Goldingen – a name that remained until the early 20th century. Even today, one will spot the word "Goldingen" in the name of local restaurants, cafés and other establishments.

In Town Hall Square (*Rātslaukums*), where film crews can often be seen filming actors wearing historical costumes, one gets the feeling of having gone back 100 years in time. Only the newer car models parked along the streets, the pedestrians speaking in their cellular phones and a glass terrace

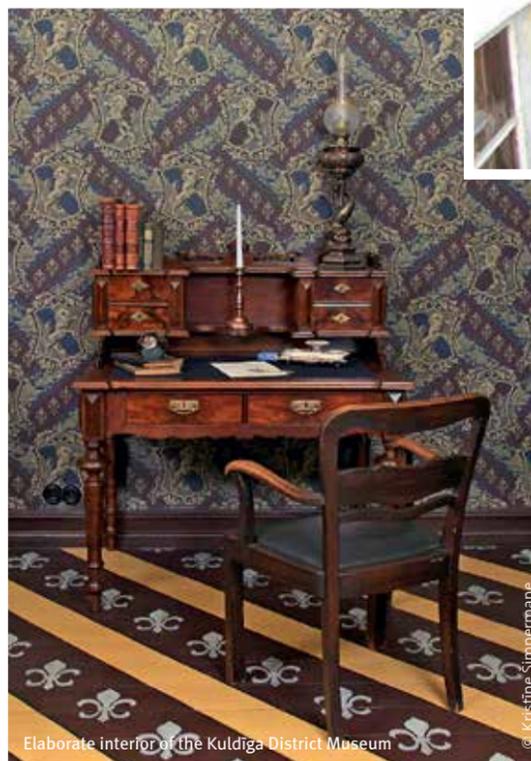
The Aleksupīte River winds through Kuldīga's Old Town, creating the impression of a mini Venice



Kuldīga's bright red-tiled roofs



Monument to Duke Jacob Kettler (1610-1682) in Kuldīga



Elaborate interior of the Kuldīga District Museum

© Kristīne Šimpermane

jutting out onto the cobblestones of the square remind one of the present.

The ascetic terrace belongs to an Italian restaurant that recently celebrated its one-year anniversary: *Goldingen Room* (Baznīcas iela 2). It smells of freshly baked pizza and is packed with customers even on workday evenings – mainly locals, but also patrons from Riga enjoying a brief change of scene from the capital. The tasty pizza and stylish interior make this place worth visiting for a hearty Italian meal.

The fact that Kuldīga's Old Town looks like the set of a movie is no accident. As I was told by a local inhabitant, even the store signs and shop windows must be presented with a retro look so as to blend in with the city's historical heritage. Furthermore, Kuldīga has its own restoration centre, which is working actively to preserve the city's old wooden buildings. Based on well-researched restoration principles, skilled masters not only save, preserve

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Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity in Kuldīga



The medieval streets of Kuldīga's Old Town bring one back to centuries past

and renew portions of wooden buildings, but also educate local property owners. Once a year, the city's inhabitants can come to renovate their buildings' wooden windows under the guidance of restoration specialists.

A woman named Krista, whom I met at the restoration centre, exclaimed gleefully: "I brought the windows of my home here and am fixing them up with my own hands. It's proven to be quite an experience!"

Next to the restoration centre is the pride of Kuldīga, which I recommend enjoying with all five senses. I am referring to the Kuldīga District Museum (Pils iela 5; kuldigasmuzejs.lv) and am greeted at the door by women dressed in outfits from the early 1900s. Luxury, splendour, feminine fragility and masculine strength are how I would describe the atmosphere within. The museum has been set up as a family residence and in order to create an authentically homey ambience, it is decorated with authentic, ornate wallpaper imported from America.

Aside from its superb depiction of life a century ago, the

museum is currently hosting an exhibition on tea-drinking traditions, as well as a showing of black-and-white photographs taken by Italian artist Luca Berti in Latvia. But that is not all. The window in the lady's study provides a stupendous view of the widest waterfall in Europe, the Venta Falls (*Ventas Rumba*), where the Venta River reaches a width of about 275 metres during the spring floods.

Nearby, the arched red-brick bridge that spans the river enhances the feeling of being in a peaceful and idyllic setting. Completed in 1874, the bridge was built to accommodate the width of two horse carriages crossing in opposite directions.

Of course, one cannot live off of scenic town vistas and nature's beauty alone, which is why I stopped for a meal at *Bangert's* restaurant (Pils iela 1; bangerts.lv). Decorated like a stately home with antique furniture, it offers outstanding desserts and coffee. And finally, another local attraction to add to the town's cinematographic atmosphere: the open-air *Goldingen Knight Cinema* movie theatre in the castle park. The film séances can also be seen on weekends from the terrace of the aforementioned *Bangert's* restaurant (consult the movie listing programme at kuldigasmuzejs.lv).

WHERE TO STAY

Kuldīga has a nice choice of accommodations for spending the night when travelling through Kurzeme

Metropole hotel

This elegant three-star hotel and restaurant in the heart of Kuldīga's Old Town has been operating since 1910. It was completely refurbished in 2006 and has retained its historical façade. Guests are treated to a sumptuous breakfast and a *Gotiņa* milk candy placed on their bedroom pillow. **Baznīcas iela 11, Kuldīga**
① hotel-metropole.lv

Kuldīgas rezidence

These two tastefully furnished homes can accommodate 7 to 14 people, with fully equipped kitchens, a *pirts* (sauna-like steam bath) and a *pirtnieks* (*pirts* specialist) who can fire the *pirts* up for you and make sure that you have an optimal *pirts* session. A leisurely breakfast in the peaceful apple orchard can often last until lunchtime. **Mālu iela 14, Kuldīga**
① kalnciemaiela.lv

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Upper level, Departures
area

LIDO DOMINA
Domina Shopping Centre
Ieriķu iela 3, Riga



www.lido.lv



Plays of light over the rooftops of Saldus

SALDUS, A SWEET TOOTH'S PARADISE

Since my childhood, I have associated Saldus – a small town in a valley by the Ciecere River and Lake Saldus – with well-attended motocross races at the edge of the city and with Latvia's oldest rock music festival, *Saldus Sun (Saldus Saule)*. However, if one takes the one-hour drive south from Kuldīga and walks through the streets of Saldus, then one will discover the town's sweet, romantic and artistic side, which is worthy of discovery.

Let's start with the sweet side. The name *Saldus* stems from the Latvian word *salds*, which means "sweet". Saldus is poetically compared to a drop of honey in the bowl of Kurzeme. Even the water fountain in Līgo Square is named *Honey Drop (Medus piliens)* and accordingly shaped. One can thus hardly think of a more appropriate activity than tasting honey that has been drawn from the region. The local inhabitants place the honey sold by beekeeper Jānis Vainovskis in particularly high regard. He will gladly show visitors how he collects honey at homestead, named *Kāres* in the Blidene rural territory.

Those with a sweet tooth can also take a guided tour of the candy production department at the *Saldus Gotiņa* sweets



© Haralds Filipovs

Lake Saldus

One should make a wish every time that one crosses a bridge for the first time



The Gotiņa milk candy remains a popular sweet in Latvia

factory (Lielā iela 9a; saldusgotina.lv), which is the oldest commercial production site of Latvia's national milk candy, the *Gotiņa* or "Little Cow". Women housekeepers were known to make similar candies on a small scale as far back as the 1920s, but these sweets first began to be produced *en masse* at the newly built

Saldus Gotiņa factory in 1960. Even today, each *Gotiņa* candy is still wrapped by hand in two layers of paper. The factory, which continued to successfully operate after the collapse of the Soviet Union, also manufactures black currant, sea buckthorn and other berry-based marmalades, as well as pastries. For a genuinely sweet taste of Latvia, try a *Gotiņa* together with locally grown hemp seeds.

Visitors to Saldus definitely must cross at least one bridge over the Ciecere River, which is spanned by 14 bridges within the town. Nine of these are pedestrian

crossings. According to a widespread superstition, one should make a wish every time that one crosses a bridge for the first time.

One can also climb the ancient Curonian castle mound at the edge of the lake, about one kilometre from the city centre. According to a local fable, people once lived inside the mound itself.

The oldest building in Saldus is St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church (Kuldīgas iela 2). It merits special mention because it appears in several works created by Janis Rozentāls (1866-1916), one of Latvia's most famous painters. Rozentāls' diploma work *After the Church Service (Pēc dievkalpojuma / No baznīcas – 1894)* is perhaps his best-known painting and is housed in the Latvian National Museum of Art in Riga. In the iconic work, the artist depicts worshippers streaming out of church in his native town of Saldus, offering viewers a dynamic portrait gallery of his contemporaries.

The inhabitants of Saldus have re-enacted the painting's church scene twice, in 2006 and 2011. On the first occasion, 40 actors from the *Saldus*



Janis Rozentāls. *After the Church Service*. 1894. Oil on canvas. From the collection of the Latvian National Museum of Art

© Normunds Brašlins



In 2006, local actors from Saldus re-enacted the scene of the famous painting by Janis Rozentāls

People's Theatre posed for a photograph in an attempt to replicate the scene in the painting as closely as possible. On the second occasion, people who had worked to spread Rozentāls' fame abroad posed for another shot at the foot of the church. Both photographs can be seen at the *J. Rozentāls Saldus History and Art Museum* (Striķu iela 22), which is housed in several buildings that surround a small, charming courtyard.

One of the museum buildings houses Rozentāls' former studio, with an exhibition of some of his original early works and personal effects. The attractive museum also offers a "Rozentāls Tour" of the artist's home town.

Once you get hungry, stop in at the *Magdalēna* home kitchen/café (Lielā ielā 23a). The people of Saldus are friendly, delving deep beyond the exterior façade in establishing relationships, as if the legend about people living in the depths of the nearby castle mound had transmuted to the present. **BO**



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CAPITAL MARKETS

Text by **ROGER NORUM**
Photos by **ROGER NORUM**
and Paris Tourist Office



© Marc Bertrand, Paris Tourist Office

Paris' *marchés aux puces* hold treasures for those who can muster the patience and wherewithal.

I wouldn't have ever predicted it, but in the end, I fell for the tall, skinny colonial man in khaki shorts. He was a good deal taller than I was, but at just 10 kg, a good deal lighter too. I was instantly drawn by his meticulously painted buttons and crimson fez as well as the knowing smirk on his poker face and silent gaze. It had taken the better part of a weekend for me to come upon him. I knew I'd have a tough time convincing the airport check-in staff to let me take him along in the plane cabin, but I was at least hopeful that I wouldn't have to apply for a visa on his behalf.

When I first saw him at around 8 AM on a spring Sunday morning, the conversation went like this:

Me: Where is he from?

Stallkeeper: Maghdouche.

Me: Ah. Where is Maghdouche?

Stallkeeper: [asking a man next to him] Where is Maghdouche?

Random man: Madagascar.

Stallkeeper: [to me] Madagascar.

Me: Oh, Madagascar. Combien?

Seller: Soixante-cinq, ahhhh...

My poor French was evidenced by the gross misunderstanding I had just engendered. I had heard the stallkeeper, Gasiela, give me the rock bottom price of *soixante-cinq* (65 euros) for the statue. But when I got out a few crumpled twenties from my pocket to pay him, he looked at me blankly. "Trois cent cinquante! Trois cent cinquante!" I had misheard; in fact he had said *trois cent cinquante* (350), and, due to my failure to master the French numbering system, I had lowballed him by a hefty sum. My day at the market wasn't off to a good start. Also, Maghdouche is in Lebanon.

Birth of a new trade

Paris is known for many things these days, including romance, grand boulevards, *Velib* city bikes and six-euro glasses of *Perrier*. But one die-hard institution has endured here for well over a century-and-a-half: the flea market. The city's *marchés aux puces* are a highlight for window shoppers and fair-weather hoarders (if also occasionally a tourist trap, where sellers ask outrageous prices for old tat).



Some two centuries ago, the not-quite-dignified occupation of collecting rags, scrap metal and other flotsam and jetsam of urban life was held by Paris' rag-and-bone men or "pêcheurs de lune" (moon fishermen) – folk who forged through the centre of the city in the wee hours on the hunt for valuables discarded by more wealthy residents. When Baron Haussmann, the imperial architect of Napoleon III, mapped out his plan for broad, straight boulevards through the centre of the city in the 1860s, Paris' central alleys and slums were razed in a move to clean up the growing capital.

Once the scavengers of these neighbourhoods were dislodged from their dilapidated old dwellings, they were allowed to sell their wares in small stalls just outside the northern city walls in the one-time fortress village of Saint-Ouen. By the early 1900s, a small society of its own began to take shape, with cafés, bars and dance halls opening up to entertain curious visitors (gypsy jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt cut his musical teeth in one Saint-Ouen bar around this time). The increasingly picturesque area slowly began to attract a well-heeled Parisian crowd on the weekends – people of means who came for a promenade, a drink and perhaps to make a purchase or two on a whim. A collectibles industry was thus born and antique-dealing became a legitimate profession. Today, the unique atmosphere of the world-renowned *Marché aux Puces de Saint-Ouen* (also known as *Clignancourt* on account of the nearby metro stop) is

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Recent revival

After a few years of hard times, the markets are on the up again. For one, the popular Paul Bert and Serpette markets were sold by the Duke of Westminster – long unpopular among the stallkeepers due to his seeming lack of interest in the markets themselves – to French businessman Jean-Cyrille Boutmy. The duke had paid 50 million euros in 2005 and Boutmy bought them off him for around half that sum nine years later. There are growing signs of gentrification as well.

In 2012, Philippe Starck designed and opened *Ma Cocotte*, a chic (and, with a 22-euro “classique cheeseburger”, hardly cheap) restaurant at the entrance to Paul Bert. Both the Paul Bert and Serpette markets have encouraged a new generation of young merchants to engage in bricolage and *brocantes*. Allée 6 in Paul Bert, for example, has been christened Young Wolf Lane on account of its youthful movers and shakers. Here one finds Pablo Parra Pozo, a dashing Spanish-French twenty-something specialising exclusively in American furniture from the designer Charles Eames; or Paul Viguiier, a man in his early 30s who opened a gallery to sell Brazilian furnishings from the 1950s to 1970s, including rosewood and jacaranda pieces from designers such as Sergio Rodrigues and Joaquim Tenreiro.

Among the 50 new vendors to arrive at these markets, some 30 are specialists in works of 20th-century design (most of which, needless to say, show few signs of fleas).

The Paris market now has the largest concentration of antique and secondhand goods dealers in the world

so revered that the area has become a protected urban architectural heritage zone.

Nearly 2,000 merchants of antiquarian furniture and clothing are now spread out among 16 distinct market spaces, in addition to umpteen peddlers, hawkers and huskers purveying bric-a-brac and knick-knacks that would inspire FoMO (Fear of Missing Out) in even rainy-day hoarders. Legend has it that the ‘flea’ markets took their name from the pesky little parasites that often infest the upholstery of old and discarded furniture items.

Whatever its etymology, the Paris market now has the largest concentration of antique and second-hand goods dealers in the world, seeing over five million visitors each year. It is the fourth largest tourist attraction in France, in fact. The territory at Saint-Ouen actually consists of 16 separate markets incorporating stalls, hawker stands, mini-villages and open stretches of blacktop, all contained within a few city blocks.

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"Clients these days are less informed about art history," says Édouard Demachy, a merchant who set up shop in 2013 to sell 1930-1970s furnishings. "They're looking for high-quality, restored furniture pieces that they can bring home and integrate into their increasingly smaller apartments."

Something for everyone

But Saint-Ouen is hardly the be-all and end-all of Paris' market scene. The city is home to a whopping

35 a day to unload the contents of their vans onto a square plot of pavement just before dawn.

I strolled down the stretch of asphalt to gander at colonial-era kitchen tins (10 euros), gaudy mirrors with gorgeous frames but distressed – read: heavily tarnished – glass (400 euros, but "easily worth 1000 euros", or so the women selling it informed me) and various rings and tie clips (10 euros). At times, all one sees are things that no one seems to want or were made for some unknown purpose. At



Parisians themselves venture out to haggle over everything from a kilo of beef to a Louis XV armoire

80 flea, antique and food markets, each with its own personality and specialisation. There is *La Cour des Antiquaires* in the 8th arrondissement, the *Auteuil Antiques Village* in the 16th, the *Saint-Germain* antiques shops and galleries in the 6th. Pulsating mini-villages around the city sell objects from shiny shoes and kitsch kitchen items to grotesque 19th-century art – and everything in-between.

These markets are hardly just for tourists: Parisians themselves venture out to haggle over everything from a kilo of beef to a Louis XV armoire. At the other end of the No. 4 metro line from Clignancourt is Vanves, home to Paris' second best-known flea market. Here, on the weekends, several streets are closed off for merchants to sell knick-knacks and other things that you never knew you needed. If Clignancourt is the *Ritz* of the *puces*, then Vanves is the upscale hostel. It's a wondrous car boot sale whose several hundred rag-and-bone men and women pay between EUR 15 and

one stall, I spotted an *lomega* internal hard disk drive that had been extracted from a laptop. It had to be a good 15 years old. My conversation with the man selling it proceeded thus:

Me: What is that?

Man: I have no idea.

Me: How much is it?

Man: Ten euros.

Still, occasionally one happens upon things that one absolutely *must have*. It was along these lanes that I found my tall, handsome Lebanese-Madagascan. I spent a good 20 minutes trying to bargain down the stallkeeper to a price I could afford. In the end, both he and I compromised. I won't reveal how much I paid – just that it was somewhere between *soixante-cinq* and *trois cent cinquante*. It may have been overpriced. It may have been a gratuitous and unnecessary purchase. But something about the silent sentinel spoke rather loudly to me. And my commercial exchange with the seller reminded me that the buying was less about the statue itself than the journey that I had taken to find him.

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Picks of the trade

Treasures that merit your attention



Item: *Le Creuset* casserole dish
Asking price: 50 euros
Merchant: Lionel (Vanves)



Item: *Eames* chairs
Asking price: 200 – 5000 euros
Merchant: Pablo (Paul-Bert, Allée 6, Stand 232)



Item: Vintage 1950s tractor
Asking price: 4500 euros
Merchant: Juncal (Paul-Bert, Stalls 9 and 11)



Item: Madagascan wooden statue
Asking price: 350 EUR [negotiated down to an undisclosed sum]
Merchant: Gasiela (Vanves)

FAVOURITE FLEAS

Paris markets you don't want to miss:

Marché Malik: Clothes, gear, togs and other fashion goodies from artists and young designers.

Marché Jules-Vallès: The oldest covered market in Saint-Ouen has kept its traditional atmosphere, with 120 dealers offering specialty items such as posters, old weaponry, bronzes, books, records and military uniforms and effects.

Marché Serpette and Marché Paul Bert: 400 stalls of 20th-century charm, from Art Nouveau furniture to amazing interior design wares. Not cheap, but gorgeous and glamorous.

Marché Biron: Furnishings from the 17th to the 19th centuries, plus tapestries, clocks, watches, musical instruments and paintings. Trop chic!

Other exciting markets in the city include Saint-Paul Antiques Village (4th arrondissement; Métro Saint-Paul), Swiss Village Antiques (7th arrondissement; Métro La Motte Piquet-Grenelle) and the Drouot Auction House (9th arrondissement; Métro Richelieu Drouot). For a great reference and other ideas, check out the recently published second edition of Marjorie Williams' *Markets of Paris*.

WHERE TO STAY

Le Citizen Hotel (96 Quai de Jemmapes; lecitizenhotel.com; +33 183 62 55 50) has 12 gorgeous rooms (from 189 euros) with views right onto the Canal St Martin. In the warmer months, the banks of the canal bustle with twenty- and thirty-somethings who drink wine and cavort until late at night.

MARKETING TIPS

Most of Paris' flea markets are open on Saturday and Sunday (and some on Monday) all year round, though opening hours can vary with the seasons.

For Saint-Ouen, you're best getting off at the Garibaldi metro stop (Line 13), then walking a few minutes south, or at the Clignancourt stop (Line 4) and walking north.

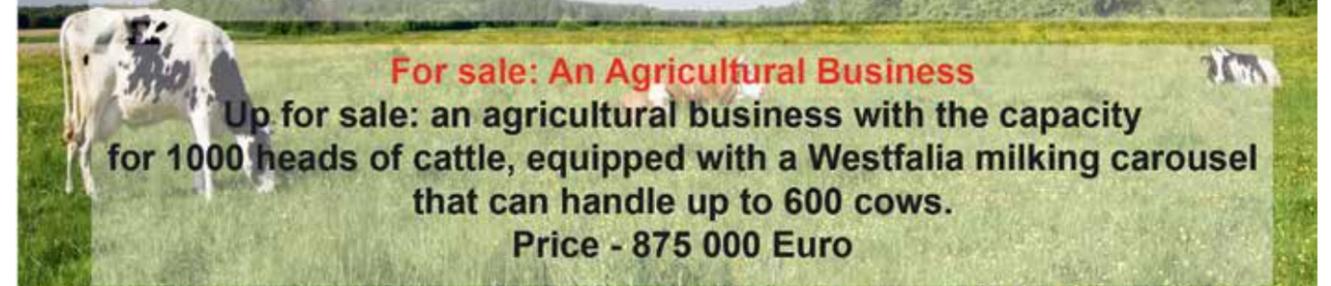
For Vanves, ride the metro to Porte d'Orleans (Line 4), then take the above-ground tramway three stops to Portes de Vanves.

Try to get there early – not because that random knick-knack you've always wanted is going to get picked up by someone else, but because perusing the stalls is more enjoyable when you don't have to jockey for position with the tourist hordes.

Mind the gap between your wallet and pickpockets. The markets are not necessarily dangerous, but it's never a bad idea to keep your wits about you.

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Text by **NATALI LEKKA**
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SEA, SAND AND FILM STARS

A film buff's guide to holidaying in Malta.

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The American epic war film *Troy* (2004) was shot in Malta

© Warner Bros. Entertainment

With its amazing architecture, breathtaking scenery, stunning beaches and historic sites, Malta has for centuries captivated the imagination of artists, writers and other creative souls. It was here that Caravaggio fled from justice in 1607 and was later commissioned to work for the Oratory of St John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta. His *Beheading of St. John the Baptist*, still on display at the cathedral today, was once described as "the" painting of the 17th century. More recently, at the end of the 1960s, British novelist Anthony Burgess spent some time in the small village of Lija, writing his masterly novel *Earthly Powers*.

During even more recent times, Malta has become a prime magnet for Hollywood filmmakers who take advantage of the country's favourable tax rates and tempting financial incentives. They can receive up to 27% in cash rebates to create the "stuff dreams are made of," a Shakespearean quote mentioned by the legendary Humphrey Bogart in the iconic film *The Maltese Falcon*.

"The film industry in Malta goes back to 1925," explains Josephine Vassallo Parnis from the Malta Film Commission, "when the first film *Sons of the Red Sea* was partially filmed in the area of Ghajn Tuffieha. In 2000, however, following the simultaneous productions of *Gladiator* and *U-571*, the Malta Film Commission was set up and in 2005 we were able to

introduce financial incentives that were instrumental in attracting more film productions to our country."

Today, the list of blockbusters filmed in Malta over the decades is long and impressive: three James Bond films (*The Spy Who Loved me*, *For Your Eyes Only* and *Casino Royale*), *World War Z* and *Troy*, *Midnight Express*, *The Da Vinci Code*, *Gladiator*, *U-571*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *Cutthroat Island*, *Munich*, *Agora*, *Marco Polo*, *By the Sea* (due to be released this year, starring Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt) and the multi-awarded global phenomenon *Game of Thrones*, to name but a few.

Strategically located between Sicily and North Africa, Malta has been dubbed the Mediterranean's mini Hollywood by *The Times*. With its impressive coralline limestone archipelago, more than 3,000 hours of sunshine per year, 7,000 years of intriguing history and three UNESCO World Heritage Sites, it is not hard to see why. Filmmakers from all over the world have fallen in love with these islands, which cover only 316 square kilometres and whose versatile landscapes have been used to represent Iraq, Kuwait, Egypt, Israel, Turkey, Palestine and Italy, to name but a handful of other countries.

"Malta has been described as one big open-air museum but it is also an open-air film set," says Paul Bugeja, the CEO of the Malta Tourism Authority. "Most of the film locations are not artificially constructed studio sets, but real places and fully accessible by all."

FAVOURITE HOT SPOTS

Take a tour of the Island of Malta's scenic natural landmarks and architectural treasures to find out what the camera loves so much about them.

Valletta

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the island's Baroque capital, Valletta, is steeped in history, but with a strong cosmopolitan vibe. Here you can stroll along the waterfront and enjoy views of the Grand Harbour or relax at the Upper Barrakka Gardens, once the retreat of the Knights of Malta, or climb to the highest point of the Valletta City Walls.

St. John's Co-Cathedral, a Baroque masterpiece dating back to the 16th century, is known for its ornate frescoes by Caravaggio, while the Grandmaster's Palace is home to the president's office and the old houses of Parliament. Take a moment to catch your breath from this sensory overload of art and culture (Valletta will be an official European Capital of Culture in 2018) and you may recognise some of these spots as backdrop locations for *Captain Phillips*, *World War Z*, *Alexander*, *The Saint*, *Midnight Express* and *Malta Story*, among other films.

For another cinematic experience, visit the Lascaris War Rooms, used in the 1953 British war film *Malta Story*. Here, in deep tunnels and chambers several metres below the Upper Barrakka Gardens, you will find the faithfully restored secret bunker from where the defence of Malta and later the Allied invasion of Sicily in 1943 were managed.



Valletta coastline



Door knocker



Religious symbol



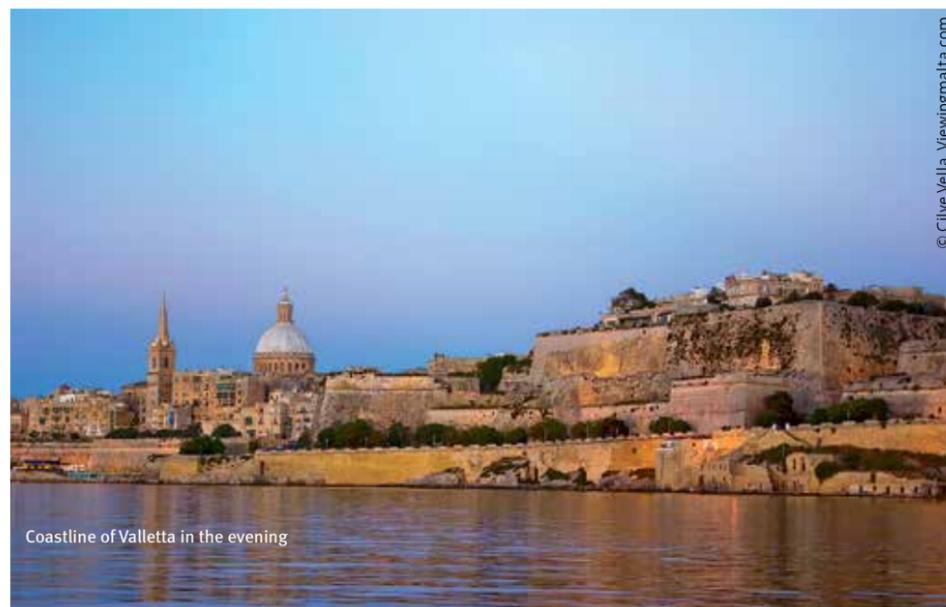
Gate décor



Historical balconies



Window shutters



Coastline of Valletta in the evening

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The advertisement features two models showcasing clothing from the OSKA collection. The model on the left is wearing a white long-sleeved top, a white cardigan, and grey wide-leg trousers. The model on the right is wearing a blue long-sleeved top, a blue cardigan, and blue wide-leg trousers. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The brand name 'Amely' is written in a large, cursive font at the top, and 'OSKA' is written in a bold, sans-serif font in the middle. The boutique information is located at the bottom right.

Outlook **TRAVEL**

Vittoriosa (also known in Maltese as Il-Birgu)

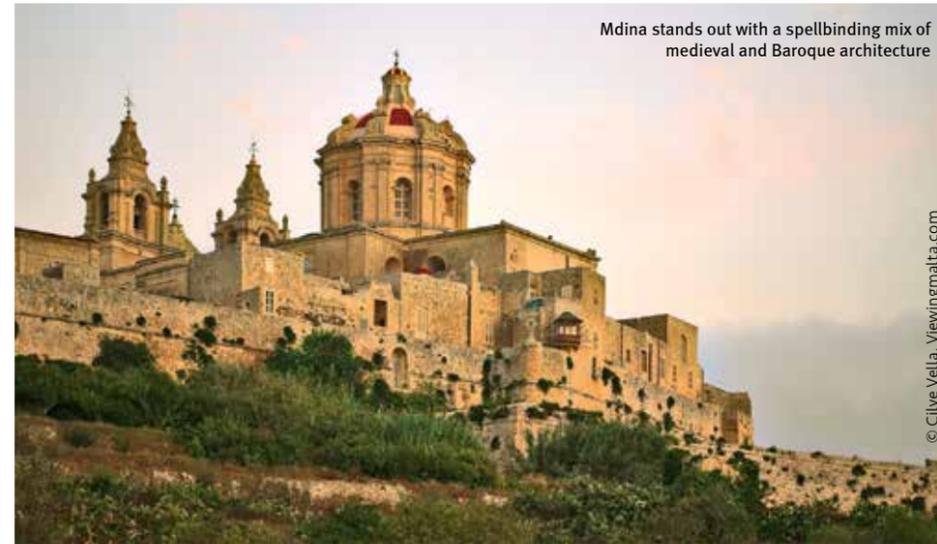
Vittoriosa is known as one of the Three Cities that face Valletta, together with Cospicua and Senglea. Its long, straight waterfront stretch named Xatt Ir Risq has been used as a backdrop for numerous films, including *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *Swept Away* (starring Madonna) and the exciting chase sequence of *Cutthroat Island*. The 2006 blockbuster *The Da Vinci Code* also used Vittoriosa as one of its Malta locations. Here you can visit Hagar Qim, a prehistoric megalithic temple complex dating back to 3,600 BC, as well as St. Lawrence's Church and the Inquisitor's Palace. To enjoy an iconic view of Vittoriosa from the water, jump into a *dghajsa* while you are still in Valletta, less than 8 kilometres away. Pronounced "daysa", this is a traditional Maltese fishing boat similar to a gondola.



The traditional Maltese fishing boat is a cousin to the Venetian gondola



Historic Vittoriosa waterfront



Mдина stands out with a spellbinding mix of medieval and Baroque architecture

Mдина

Once the capital of Malta, the tiny walled town of Mдина is also known as the Silent City. With fewer than 400 inhabitants and very few cars, it seems to take its silent status quite seriously. The white town looks like a layered cake from a distance, but a closer look reveals a spellbinding mix of medieval and Baroque architecture. Winding cobbled streets offer mesmerizing views, thanks to the town's strategic position on the highest point in the centre of the island.

Among the most iconic buildings are the 18th-century Vilhena Palace, St. Paul's Cathedral, the Carmelite Priory, the Palazzo de Piro and the Mдина Dungeons. Parts of *Cutthroat Island*, *Gladiator* and *The Count of Monte Cristo* were filmed there. For an unforgettable experience, go on a carriage ride in a traditional *karrozzin*. The scenic route departs from the city's gate, which *Game of Thrones* fans will immediately recognise as the backdrop for King's Landing in the TV show's first series.



Religious symbol



A theatre stands hidden behind these walls

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Stunning Ramla Bay

Mellieha

Mellieha, in the northwest of the island, is particularly popular among families thanks to its long, sandy beaches with shallow water. Here you will find St. Agatha's Tower, also known as the Red Tower, built in the 17th century by Grand Master Lascaris of the Knights of Malta and manned during both World Wars. Wildlife lovers can enjoy themselves in the Il-Majjistral Nature and History Park. Mellieha is also where *Troy* was filmed. If you are heading northwest with your family, stop to visit Popeye Village. Built originally as the film set of the 1980 film *Popeye*, starring Robin Williams, it was later turned into a tourist attraction.

Gozo and more

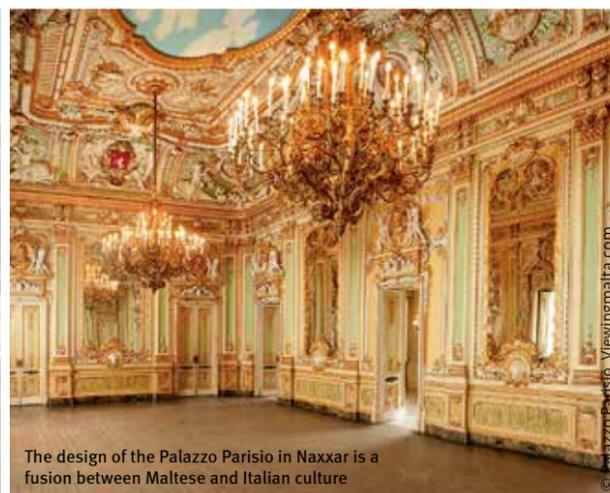
Other breathtaking locations around the Maltese Islands include an impressive limestone natural arch known as the Azure Window on the island of Gozo. Possibly the island's most iconic landmark, it appeared in the American mini-series *The Odyssey* as well as in *Game of Thrones*. Gozo's medieval hilltop Cittadella served



Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieha



Azure Window on the island of Gozo



The design of the Palazzo Parisio in Naxxar is a fusion between Maltese and Italian culture

as a backdrop for BBC's *Byron*, while the nearby sandy beach at Ramla Bay was used for Percy Shelley's funeral pyre scene in the same series. The Blue Lagoon in Comino was used for a diving scene in *Swept Away* among other films. And finally, the opulent 19th-century stately home in Naxxar has featured in *The Count of Monte Cristo* and the BBC dramas *Byron* and *Daniel Deronda*.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Situated right in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, the Maltese Islands have been coveted by many a seafaring people throughout the centuries. The Phoenicians, the Carthaginians, the Romans, the Arabs and the Normans were the first to put their cultural stamp

on the islands, as can be witnessed today in the local architecture and exotic Maltese language. From 1530 and for nearly three centuries, the islands were ruled by the Order of Knights of Saint John, also known as the Knights of Malta. Their home rule came to an end in 1798, when the island was conquered by Napoleon. After Napoleon, Malta became

a British crown colony for 160 years. During World War II, Malta was heavily bombed, allegedly to an even greater extent than London during the Blitz. Such was the strength and the courage of the Maltese people that in 1942, King George VI awarded Malta with the George Cross for bravery. In 1964, Malta gained its independence from the United Kingdom.



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EAT LOCAL

Invasions by different civilisations over thousands of years have resulted in a spellbinding mosaic of cultures that has heavily influenced the local cuisine. When dining out, make sure that the following are not missing from your table.

Hobza

Available in bakeries, grocery stores and restaurants, this is Malta's traditional baked bread. As the locals will tell you, no dish can be truly enjoyed without a hearty loaf of hobza. For a true Maltese bread experience head (or follow your nose) to Nenu Debono's *The Artisan Baker*, a restaurant and bakery in Valletta that still uses a wood-fired oven (nenuthebaker.com). Here you can also try the traditional *ftira* bread topped with delicious local ingredients.



Pastizzi

Sold by street vendors, this is the ultimate savoury snack, made from filo or puff pastry with a ricotta or mushy pea filling.



Bragioli or Maltese beef olives

A tip from the top; there are no olives in this popular dish. Bragioli contains slices of beef stuffed with minced veal, herbs and flavourings braised in a tomato or wine sauce.



Maltese fenek or rabbit stew

Said to be Malta's national dish, it dates back to the era of the Knights of Malta.



WHERE TO STAY

True film lovers will want to stay at the *Phoenicia Hotel* (rooms start at 75 euros per person; phoeniciamalta.com), the first luxury hotel to open in Malta back in 1947. A personal favourite among Hollywood celebrities, the *Phoenicia* hosted its first A-listers in 1952, when Alec Guinness and Jack Hawkins filmed *Malta Story*. Since then, hundreds of illustrious guests have been added to the hotel's logs.

"Over the years, we have hosted Charlton Heston, Joan Collins, Isabella Rossellini, Geena Davis, Jeff Bridges, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Roberto Benigni, Pierce Brosnan, Gérard Depardieu, Ridley Scott, Joaquin Phoenix and Rachel Weisz, to name just a few," the *Phoenicia Hotel's* general manager Charles Azzopardi explains proudly. "Brad Pitt also visited the hotel while filming *Troy*," he adds.

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First drive: the Nissan Pulsar

The Pulsar is Nissan's first mainstream family hatchback for more than eight years. During this sabbatical, the Japanese brand has concentrated on building SUVs. The tactic has certainly paid off, because Nissan's Qashqai and Juke models are flying out of showrooms.

However, while competition in the small SUV class is by no means weak, it's nothing close to what the Pulsar is going up against; take the Ford Focus, Seat Leon, Škoda Octavia and even low-end versions of the mighty VW Golf, for example.

With a starting price of slightly less than 15,000 euros and a decent amount of standard kit, though, the Pulsar certainly promises good value for money. It's also one of the most spacious cars in its class, thanks to the unusually long gap between the front and rear wheels.

What's it like to drive?

The new Pulsar initially was introduced with a 1.2-litre turbo petrol and a 1.5-litre diesel engine, both of which were borrowed from the Qashqai. This spring, a 190-hp 1.6-litre turbo petrol joins the range.

As long as you keep the revs above the 1,500 rpm mark, the 1.5 diesel delivers its pull progressively and with no unpredictable surge when the turbo kicks in. That makes it easy to drive the Pulsar smoothly at all speeds. Flat out, the diesel never feels fast, though.

The Pulsar's engine doesn't feel as refined as in the Qashqai because the Pulsar's cabin isn't as well insulated from noise and vibration. You'll feel both intruding into the cabin through the pedals and steering wheel. However, the equivalent diesel versions of the Octavia and Focus aren't especially hushed, either, and

the Nissan does quiet down when cruising, with little wind or road noise spoiling the peace.

If performance or refinement are a priority, then the 1.2-litre petrol is the best choice. It's nippier, smoother and quieter when you accelerate. The only irritation is the whooshing noise that the turbocharger makes every time you lift off the throttle.

You'd never describe the Pulsar as fun, but it handles securely and predictably, with a decent amount of grip and tidy body control. The steering, while fairly accurate, could be better, though, as the car's weight doesn't always build quickly enough when turning into corners. That doesn't inspire much confidence on twisty country roads.

The ride is a mixed bag. You're certainly jostled around more than in a Golf or a Focus, and minor imperfections are transmitted up through the steering column more than we'd like. That being said, things never border on uncomfortable, and the Pulsar feels well tied down over high-speed dips and crests.

One area that Nissan's engineers have certainly worked hard on is cabin refinement. The Pulsar's petrol version is noticeably quieter inside than its rivals, with low levels of wind and road noise.

What's it like inside?

If you're sitting in the back, then the car is very spacious indeed. There's a vast amount of legroom and even lanky adults can sit comfortably without hunching thanks to the generous headroom.

Outright boot space is also pretty impressive at 385 litres. That's a fair bit less than you get in an Octavia, but more than in a Golf or a Focus.

From the driver's point of view, there's little to moan about. All-round visibility is excellent thanks to the Pulsar's tall windows and slim pillars, and there's plenty of adjustment in the seat and steering to help you find the ideal driving position.

At first glance, the Pulsar's dashboard looks very similar to the one in the latest Qashqai. Start interacting with it, however, and you'll quickly realise that it isn't built with quite the same high-grade materials; there's some particularly cheap-feeling plastic on the back of the steering wheel and above the instrument binnacle.

The control layout isn't as simple as the Qashqai's, either, because rather than twisting dials to adjust the cabin temperature, you have to prod various buttons. At least the Connect infotainment system is intuitive and quick to respond to commands.

Should I buy one?

With such a talented array of cars to choose from in this hugely competitive class, the Pulsar had its work cut out for itself from day one, yet it does merit consideration. It's spacious, decent to drive and great value for money – both as a private or a company car.

For class honours it won't trouble the Škoda Octavia, which is bigger and has a better-quality cabin, but the Pulsar is a thoroughly inoffensive family hatchback that stacks up well against most other similarly priced rivals.

All in all, it's a sensible car that you're more likely to buy with your head than with your heart. **BO**



QUICK FACTS:

- 1 The Pulsar is Nissan's first family hatchback in eight years.
- 2 The car that we knew as the Almera was originally a version of the Japanese-market Nissan Pulsar, launched in 1995.
- 3 The new Pulsar is based on the Common Module Family all-steel platform used by the Qashqai and X-Trail.
- 4 Nissan has positioned the Pulsar to go head-to-head with value players in the C-segment field.

**BIGGEST AND BEST
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EPRISMA

Dazzling sculpture

The extravagant *Eprisma* fabric by *Création Baumann* looks like a sculpture decorating a window. It is decked in geometric sequins which, depending on the colour selection, shimmer in either white, bronze or black. Glistening triangles are appliquéd next to each other on a semi-transparent fabric in a closely packed geometric arrangement. Furthermore, the fabric's three-dimensional foil has been moulded and top-stitched in an elaborate process. The result is truly something to behold. The fabric's three-dimensionality generates depth, while its multifaceted light display changes with the angle of incoming light. In short, *Eprisma* is a real eye-catcher that bestows glamour to any interior.



Publicity photos

Brilliant choice

Création Baumann introduces fabulous curtains from its Spring Collection 2015.



FANTASIA ▼

Enchanted world

Yellow-green climbers, blooms of rosettes in pastel colours and bright orange buds. *Fantasia*, a curtain fabric from the Spring Collection 2015 by *Création Baumann*, conjures up a world of enchantment with an unusual floral design. The dense fabric's oversized floral pattern comes in two options: on either a white or an anthracite-coloured backdrop. On white, the print injects an ambiance that awakens memories of fresh mornings, while the dark backdrop accentuates the brightness of the textile's colour accents. The pattern has a strong luminous quality, being arranged as a central border in the middle of the width. Despite exuding an air of joy, the plain-coloured sections also convey a sense of calm.

FAVOLA ▲

Tender playfulness

Fantasia's lively and playful design has been taken up by *Favola*, the transparent curtain fabric in *Trevira CS* models. Here, abstract climbers and blooms flourish in the lower section as a border arrangement, while a few single leaves appear to float upwards. This fabric is also available on a white and on an anthracite-coloured base.



CUBA, NEVADA, NICARAGUA ▲

Delicate outdoor fabrics

The new *Cuba*, *Nevada* and *Nicaragua* collections of curtain and upholstery fabric have been made for both indoor and outdoor use. The 100% acrylic fabric is very tough and easy to clean. It repels water and is resistant to soiling by stains or mould as well as to residue and discolouration from chlorine or salt water. It also provides optimum colour retention and protection against light and UV radiation. **BO**

Explore the fabulous Spring Collection 2015 by *Création Baumann* at the KATE salon in Riga.



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For Your beautiful Being!



Dressing for travel

Publicity photos



Whether you are flying to a conference or a fun city break, travelling in style and comfort is important. How should one dress for travel?

With decades of experience in international fashion retail, *Baltika Group* has some useful suggestions for wearing optimal attire when hitting the road. The company creates quality fashion items that allow people to express themselves and feel great. Taking inspiration from *Baltika Group's* three brands – *Ivo Nikkolo*, *Baltman* and *Monton* – here are some outfits that radiate spring freshness.



monton

DESTINATION 2 Fun city break

When heading out for a fun city break, **Monton's** fashionable collections have everything that you require. *Monton* offers a trendy, cosmopolitan, smart city look for self-confident men and women who dare to be a bit quirky and playful in their fast-paced life.

This summer, *Monton* has packed great colours and patterns that work well for daily sightseeing and that transition easily into the night. Having fun with details is the core message here! The colours form a classical combination of navy blue, bright green, red and white.

Monton was launched in 2002 and is now *Baltika Group's* largest brand. *Monton* collections are sold in over 50 stores in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia and Spain.

monton.andmorefashion.com

DESTINATION 1 Smart conference

Ivo Nikkolo

Ivo Nikkolo collections are designed for modern-day women, offering chic minimalism with unexpected design elements. *Ivo Nikkolo's* clothes fit the high demands and lifestyle of busy cosmopolitan women who seek originality and premium fabrics. The emphasis on quality is expressed through the design, material, fitting and durability.

This season, *Ivo Nikkolo* has combined minimalistic elegant lines with sporty details resulting in a contemporary look. The colours are bold and fresh. Timeless black, white and ivory have been spiced up with raspberry red, apple green and vivid blue.

Ivo Nikkolo is one of the most unique Estonian design brands with experience that spans over two decades. *Ivo Nikkolo* collections are available in 38 stores in the Baltics, Russia and Spain.

ivonikkolo.andmorefashion.com



Baltman is the right choice for men travelling with a business agenda. Connecting high-end design with top-quality fabrics. *Baltman* offers superb menswear for conferences, business trips and formal events.

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Baltman creates distinguished businesswear for men who expect stylish, classic and high-quality clothing. Both classical and trend-driven looks are represented in the collections, covering all the needs of modern-day gentlemen.

Baltman operates through 12 concept stores in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia and Spain.

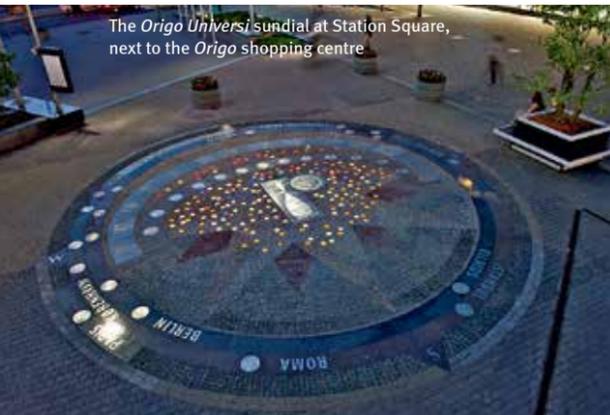
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Places for Shopping and Cultural Experience



Linstow Center Management (LCM) is the developer of the *Alfa*, *Origo*, *Galerija Centrs*, *Mols* and *Dole* shopping malls in Riga. Aside from managing these Latvian shopping centres, *LCM* also runs the *Ülemiste* shopping centre in Tallinn, Estonia. The total floor space of shopping centres managed by *LCM* is 230,000 m² in Latvia and over 329,000 m² in the entire Baltics. Before 2014, when Riga was a European Capital of Culture, *Linstow Center Management* implemented several projects aimed at preserving the cultural and historic heritage of Latvia's capital city and significantly upgrading the urban environment.



The *Origo Universi* sundial at Station Square, next to the *Origo* shopping centre

Origo Universi sundial

Trade is an integral function of traffic hubs. Railway, underground and bus stations in cities around the world are ideally supplemented by a quality environment and cultural life, prompting passers-by to stop for a minute and explore a particular place. The outdoor *Origo Summer Stage* in the square by Riga's Central Railway Station and next to the *Origo* shopping centre has become such a venue in the centre of the Latvian capital.

Another interesting site in the square is the *Origo Universi sundial* – a nine-metre-wide interactive and educational design object that has been amusing passers-by for more than a year. Viewers can interact with the object by raising a hand (provided that the sun is shining) and following instructions in the figure eight (analemma) at the centre of the object, which shows how the Sun appears to move

The *Origo* shopping centre has been implementing an educational project under which schoolchildren can learn interesting facts about the interactive and educational *Origo Universi sundial*. After learning how the sundial works from a professional astronomer, the children put what they have learned to practice in natural history classes.

over the Earth. The coordinates of 11 palaces and castles in Latvia and ten key cultural objects in Europe help the viewer to learn more about particular attractions.



Galerija Centrs – a fashion shopping centre since 1938

Galerija Centrs is located at the very heart of the Latvian capital in Riga's Old Town. The charming shopping mall is steeped in tradition, offering decades of retail experience combined with the latest trends and stylish shopping as a natural part of life in the 21st century. The *Galerija Centrs* can be found in a key historic building that has been serving as a successful retail venue (under various names) since 1938. The centre's historic stairways showcase a unique photo exhibition made up of 63 photographs that cover the history of the edifice. The unique project was implemented by *Linstow Center Management (LCM)* in co-operation with various Latvian museums, foundations and archives.

Galerija Centrs has been singled out as a facility of outstanding design on a European and global scale in building renovation and expansion competitions organised by the International Council of Shopping Centres (ICSC). It is

Galerija Centrs shopping centre is a building of historic importance. It has been singled out as a facility of outstanding design on a European and global scale in building renovation and expansion competitions organised by the International Council of Shopping Centres (ICSC).

therefore particularly important to maintain the historic heritage of the building, many elements of which have been fully preserved to this day, as the development of the edifice continues. The noteworthy photography exhibition – which informs the public about the building's role in Riga's social life from its first incarnation as the Army Surplus Store to the present day – was *LCM's* contribution to Riga's European Capital of Culture programme in 2014. **BO**



The historical photo exhibition at *Galerija Centrs* shopping centre



Ridzenes iela in *Galerija Centrs* shopping centre



Springfield, Galleria Riga, 3rd floor

Galleria Riga — Riga's newest shopping centre



GALLERIA RIGA shopping centre
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bulvāris and Tērbatas iela)
Information centre
Tel. (+371) 67307000
info@galleriariga.lv
galleriariga.lv/en

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

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

At Galleria Riga you can purchase items by such famous brands as *Mango*, *Tommy Hilfiger (Moskito)*, *Guess (Denim Dream)*, *MAX&Co*, *Stefanel*, *Only (Moskito)*, *Marella*, *Suitsupply*, *Ivo Nikkolo*, *Karen Millen* and many more. In addition, a number of talented Latvian designers are also making their mark on the fashion scene. Thanks to their refined sense of style, good taste, lively imagination and high-quality craftsmanship, they have gained international recognition in a short period of time. The latest collections of clothing and accessories by some of Latvia's best designers are available at *8 rooms*, *OT Ogres Trikotāža* and other shops at *Galleria Riga*.

To better serve its customers, the shopping centre has a built-in parking garage (free parking for one hour on Sundays) and special stands for bicycles. Guests have the use of free Wi-Fi and can take full advantage of *Global Blue* tax-free benefits.

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

Outlook **PROMO**

Publicity photos



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Personal tailoring at *Suitsupply*

Suitsupply, the biggest up-and-coming brand in men's fashion, offers the finest Italian fabrics, Italian and English styling, a personalised approach to service and while-you-wait tailoring – all at an unbeatable price.

Suitsupply's elegant store in Riga can be found in an easy-to-reach spot on the second floor of the modern *Galleria Riga* shopping mall. The spacious store, gleaming with colour and high-definition floor-to-ceiling photography, provides high-end service and an exciting made-to-measure option that's open to everyone. In fact, there are several options for tailoring, all of them available at a surprisingly reasonable price.

To ensure a perfect fit head to toe, *Suitsupply's* comprehensive Suit Up Personal Tailoring programme gives visitors the opportunity to obtain fully measured suits, jackets, trousers and coats.

There are over 600 Italian fabric varieties to choose from, including pure cashmere and wool fabrics from Super 110 to Super 180, along with a broad range of unique design options for jackets and coats, all fully made-to-measure.

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BOTANICAL GARDEN
Use floral prints and exotic colour mixes to breathe new life into your style.



Galleria Riga is located by Riga's key shopping area, Tērbatas Street Quarters.

Only a five-minute walk from Riga's Old Town, the historic cobblestone streets of Tērbatas Street Quarters are easy to reach by any means of transport. The thriving business and commercial area houses numerous stores, restaurants and entertainment venues that offer plenty of shopping and dining opportunities to

suit all tastes (*Zara*, *Hugo Boss*, *Patrizia Pepe*, *Gerry Weber*, etc.).

A stroll through verdant Vērmāne Park and its adjacent flower market, followed by a movie at the beautiful *Splendid Palace* theatre is just one of the many ways that one can enjoy the sounds and sights of Tērbatas Street Quarters.

See a detailed map of Tērbatas Street Quarters' stores, restaurants and cultural attractions at www.terbataskvartali.lv.

Photos by **LAURIS VĪKSNE (F64)**
and publicity materials

More than just sushi

If you are in the Latvian capital and in the mood for some superb Japanese-style food, then head straight to the *Planeta Riga* restaurant.



In order to enjoy truly outstanding Japanese cuisine, one doesn't have to travel to Asia. *Planeta Riga* in the heart of the Old Town has become the Latvian leader in Japanese-style casual dining. The restaurant is frequented every day by business people who appreciate its large lunch selection as well as by tourists seeking the best sushi in town.

The atmosphere at *Planeta Riga* changes with the seasons. During the summer months, patrons enjoy sitting on the beautiful terrace that offers a splendid view of Dome Square, while during the winter, they can dine in a cosy and pleasant interior. Both floors of the restaurant are decorated in light and classical tones highlighted by various historical elements, such as the exposed original brick walls.

The spring season has also arrived with a new menu, and the restaurant is particularly busy on weekdays between 12:00-16:00, when guests can choose from six different lunchtime specials. These will suit practically all tastes, including those of vegetarians, who have not been neglected. The lunchtime specials include miso soup, a main course, salad and sushi, and a choice of tea or coffee. It's worth mentioning that the portions are quite sizeable and that both the salmon and sushi melt right in one's mouth.

On weekends, also between 12:00-16:00, a particularly lazy atmosphere reigns, as Rigans and visitors to the city enjoy the opportunity to have a late all-you-can-eat breakfast or brunch, which includes a variety of starters, main courses and desserts along with tea, coffee, homemade lemonade and a complimentary glass of sparkling Prosecco – all of this for one fixed price.

Of course, the sushi (classical maki, premium and even hot and tempura-baked rolls) is in a class by itself and parades under an array of impressive names, including famous Japanese manga artists and film directors. Among the most requested are

the refined Kanto and Tohoku maki with seafood fillings.

However, *Planeta Riga* offers much more than just outstanding sushi. If the restaurant's menu has a star performer, then it is definitely ramen, the traditional Japanese soup-like noodle dish. This involves preparing a special broth that is boiled for several hours to achieve an extremely rich taste. Head chef Staņislavs Gurjanovs has gone out of his way to perfect his ramen preparation technique, which he learnt from Japanese master chef Kanji Furukawa (also known as Ramen Boss) at the *Shoryu Ramen* restaurant in London. Not surprisingly, that restaurant has been recommended in the *Michelin Guide 2014*.

Another dish worth trying at *Planeta Riga* is dim sum, which Staņislavs Gurjanovs mastered while working under a renowned chef in Moscow. Dim sum is a Chinese delicacy, with little packages of mushrooms, veal, chicken, lamb, Peking duck, salmon and more served in a traditional steamer basket. *Planeta Riga's* dim sum are handmade and offer a truly unique taste experience.

One of the most popular desserts, whose fame has spread to the extent that guests come in specifically to try it, is the *Asian Planeta Sphere* – a specially made chocolate sphere that the chef has filled with homemade ginger ice cream, cashew nuts and blueberries. When melted chocolate is poured over it, the sphere opens up and releases its contents, just like a lotus blossom – a true delight for the eyes and for the taste buds of the most discriminating gourmet.

Planeta Riga's high standards of quality have ensured that many of the restaurant's guests keep returning on a regular basis. Some have also obtained a *Planeta Special* client card, which gives them extra privileges and the opportunity to enjoy discounts of up to 70 percent as well as special offers. The client card can be obtained at the restaurant from the waitstaff. **BO**



Planeta Riga
Šķūņu iela 16 (entrance
from Tirgoņu iela)
Tel. (+371) 67223855
E-mail: planeta@rrg.lv
www.planetariga.lv



Restaurants, bars and cafés

Text by **LIENE PĀLĒNA**
Photos by **GATIS GIERTS (F64)**,
EDMUNDS BRENCIS (F64)

Culinary hotspots

A guide to the best restaurants, cafés and eateries



PARUNĀSIM, RIGA

The best cheesecake in town

The first words that come to mind when entering this newly opened café in Old Riga are: "What a charming place!" And it is not for nothing that the owner has chosen the name *Parunāsim* (which means "Let's talk" in English), because talking seems to be the central concept of this establishment. If the owner happens to be on the spot, for example, then he will introduce himself and chat with each guest, making every visitor feel right at home. The café's customers will also need to speak with the waitstaff, as there is no menu in

the classic sense of the word. Instead, the waiters will tell you what the chef has prepared on the day that you are visiting. That didn't pose any problems for me personally, although I suppose that more introverted types might prefer to silently peruse a written menu, rather than converse with a waiter to see what's on offer.

The choice of dishes is fairly restricted but respectable enough and no one is likely to go hungry. I was offered the soup of the day (goulash) and the opportunity to choose from a number of salads and pastries.

I should add that the café's cheesecake has already become a best-seller and tastes truly divine. The story

behind its making makes one appreciate the cheesecake even more, as according to the owner, the pastry chef gets up in the middle of the night at 3 AM to ensure that a fresh batch is available every morning.

Despite being located in Old Riga, where the cafés and restaurants are not generally known to have low prices, *Parunāsim* offers decent and affordable fare. I paid less than 10 euros for a warm chicken salad, the aforementioned superb cheesecake and a cup of tea.

Address: Mazā Pils iela 4
Open: Mon.-Thu.: 10:00-23:00
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facebook.com/parunasim

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IBAR, RIGA
A truly urban environment

iBAR unites a hybrid concept that has not been common in Latvia until now. Aside from being a café and a bar, this three-in-one establishment is also a store that sells IT products by the well-known Apple brand.

The first thing that attracts my attention as I enter iBAR is the well-planned and stylish interior, which was created by internationally recognized Latvian designer Anna Butele. Just like the name of the Apple brand itself, the interior draws from the story of an apple falling from a tree and inspiring physicist Isaac Newton to work out a theory of gravity. iBAR's interior seems to defy

Newton's law of universal gravitation, with the furniture and other items carefully chosen to generate the illusion that they are not touching each other.

Together, iBAR's owners and interior designer have created an environment that is equally suitable for a work session with one's laptop, a relaxing meeting with friends or a weekend party. True, in order for the latter to be a veritable success, it would help if the cocktail menu offered a larger choice of drinks.

The menu, like the interior, is also non-traditional. Aside from the usual assortment of salads, one can try the cold cream of corn and spinach, for example, which is served with beet leaves and homemade vegetable chips. It tastes

fantastic! Admittedly, this soup might not be the first choice for more conservative patrons.

Another nice touch is the complementary freshly baked croissant that each guest receives with his or her coffee. I also heard good customer reviews about other iBAR pastries.

Although the iBAR concept and its realisation appear to be successful, it's still hard to gauge who the target audience is. It does seem clear, however, that regardless if the patrons are Apple brand aficionados or people who appreciate a tasteful interior, this is a place with a truly urban environment.

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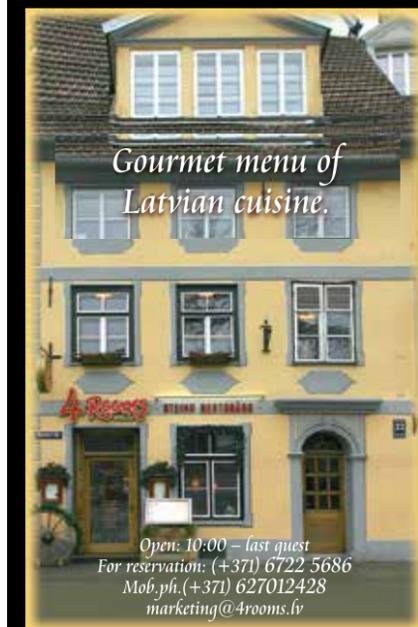
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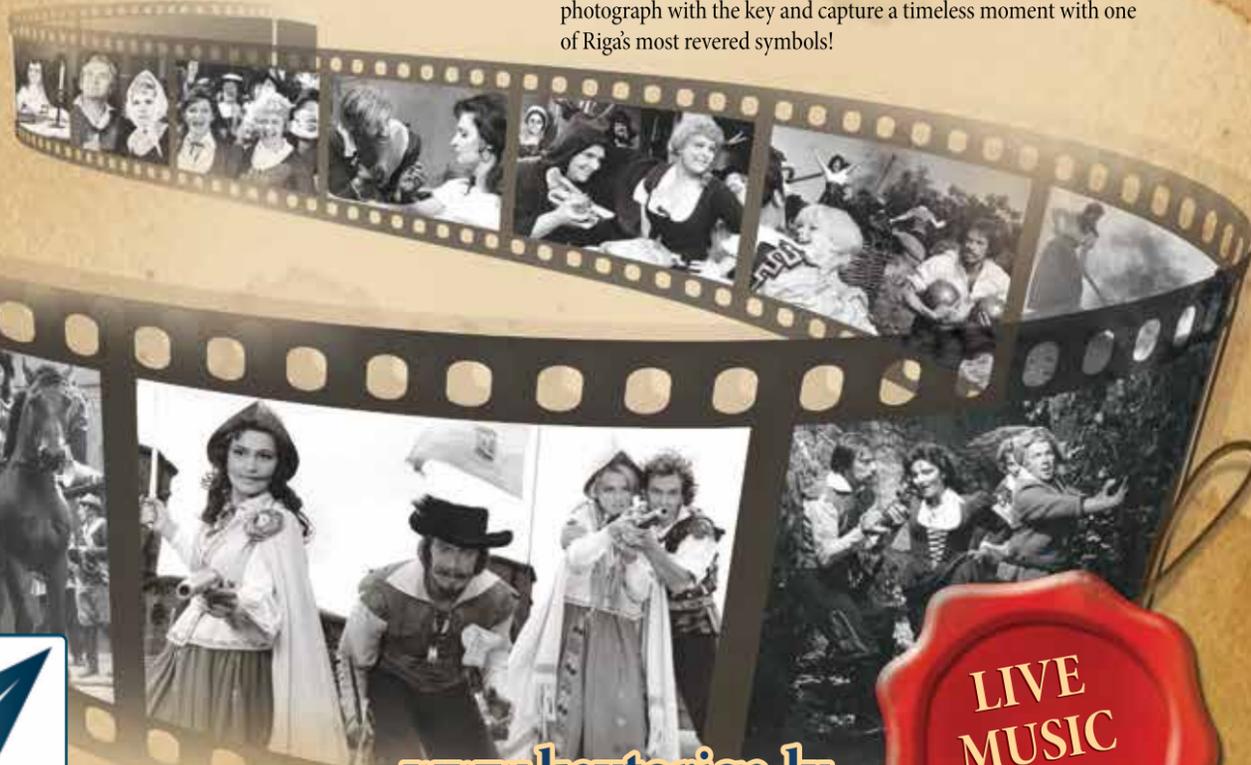


KEY to RIGA

Every city has its key. It is the city's guardian. It is used to open the city gates when guests are welcome.

We extend you a warm welcome and an invitation to Key to Riga where you can experience the atmosphere of ancient Riga, its hospitality and the flavour of its traditional meals. It is located in the very heart of Old Riga at Dome Square. Among our special features are genuine medieval interior decorations, the magnificent twinkling of candlelight and Latvian cuisine served in local clay tableware. In the evenings live medieval music is played by musicians in period costume.

The legendary Latvian film 'The Devil's Servants', which was produced by the Riga Film studio in the 1970s, served as the inspiration for the restaurant. The Key to Riga was an essential part of this cinema classic and an exact replica now holds a place of honour in the restaurant. It is said that he who holds the key to Riga will unlock a world of wealth and happiness and we encourage you to pick it up and see what it feels like to hold the key to this ancient city. Take a photograph with the key and capture a timeless moment with one of Riga's most revered symbols!



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Welcome aboard airBaltic!

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- 4/ airBaltic teams up with PayPal
- 5/ Better timetable to Zurich

1/ Get inspired by our new summer destinations

This summer, *airBaltic* is offering an even wider range of summer destinations to suit the needs of practically every traveller. Hot in the heels of popular flights routes that we introduced last year – including Palma de Mallorca, Gothenburg, Burgas and Olbia – here are other notable newcomers:

- **Dubrovnik** – With its breathtaking old town and imposing city walls along the shores of the Adriatic Sea, Dubrovnik is one of Europe's top summer destinations. Flights to this pearl will start on May 26, increasing in June to two flights per week.
- **Thessaloniki** – This city boasts a glorious Byzantine history, fine restaurants with great Greek cuisine and a hip nightlife. Flights to Greece's second largest city will be launched on June 5 and will operate twice a week.
- **Rhodes** – With eight months of sunshine, stunning beaches and green hills, this is the ideal place for a summer seaside vacation. Flights to this Greek island will operate once per week from June 12, in cooperation with tour operator *TezTour*.
- **Pisa** – A world-famous Italian destination and a gateway to Tuscany. Visit nearby historical sites such as Florence and Siena, indulge in renowned Tuscan wines and food and fly to this beautiful city starting June 13.

Your summer begins at airbaltic.com, with ticket prices to the best summer destinations starting at EUR 75.

2/ Improved service to Stockholm

airBaltic is proud to be the airline with the most flight frequencies and the best product on the Riga-Stockholm route. There are four daily flights in each direction, with improved timing for business travellers at both ends. A morning flight arrives in Stockholm at 8:05 and two flights arrive in Riga at 08:35 and 10:55. Evening flights leave Riga at 19:00 and 23:35 and depart from Stockholm at 19:50, making one-day travel smooth and convenient. *airBaltic's* morning and evening flights on the route are operated with jet aircraft, while midday and late evening/early morning flights are flown with our new *Dash Q400* turboprops.

One-way ticket prices from Riga to Stockholm start at EUR 35.

3/ New direct flights to New York in co-operation with UZBEKISTAN airways

We're happy to announce that from now on, *airBaltic* has extended codeshare agreement with Uzbekistan Airways, and you can easily access the United States of America, with our partner flight from Riga to New York. The new partner flights to John F. Kennedy International Airport will operate twice a week on Thursdays and Sundays, starting from June 4. Tickets can be booked in all *airBaltic* distribution channels, including www.airbaltic.com.

In addition, *airBaltic* offers partner flights from Baltics to Tashkent twice a week on Fridays and Mondays.

4/ *airBaltic* teams up with PayPal

When booking flights at airbaltic.com, you can now use *PayPal*, the most popular international online payment system. Thousands of stores in 203 markets accept *PayPal*, processing almost 11.5 million payments per day. The main benefits of *PayPal* are that you need only one e-mail address and one password, and you don't have to take your credit card out of your wallet. *PayPal* also gives the opportunity for an easy refund if an item does not arrive, is damaged or differs from its description. Join *PayPal* now at paypal.com.

Customers can also use other new payment options at www.airbaltic.com, including *SofortBanking*, *iDeal* and the *Nordea* bank link, and even *BitCoin*.

5/ Better timetable to Zurich

The flight schedule between Riga and Zurich has become even more friendly to both business and leisure travellers. *airBaltic* is now flying the Riga-Zurich route daily, with four flights in the morning and three in the evening, allowing business travellers to spend more time at their destination. We are also offering superb weekend gateway options with convenient flight times on Friday and Sunday nights.

Flights to Zurich operate daily, with round trip ticket prices starting from EUR 95.



© Zürich Tourism / photo by Noë Flum

Zurich

Jolanta Rema,
vice president of
e-commerce



Along with the times. All of the time

If you have purchased an *airBaltic* plane ticket through the *airBaltic.com* website, then that is thanks to the work put in by Jolanta Rema and her team. In this interview Jolanta reveals how much effort is put into maintaining *airBaltic's* web page and what she does to be full of energy during the work week.

Text by **EGITA KRASTINA**
Photo by **ANDREJS
TERENTJEVS, F64**

What inspired you to work in e-commerce?

During the time that I was studying to become a teacher of economics and entrepreneurship, I had to attend computer science lectures, which I really hated. One day, the head of the computer science department invited me to work as an assistant in the computer room. I didn't know anything about computer science and wasn't interested in this field at all. Nevertheless, she encouraged me to take the position and said: "Come and try it out! If you don't like it then you can always leave." She knowingly gave me

assignments that required a lot of research so that I could learn more about my job. The more I learned, the more I realised that this type of science really interests me! I worked as an assistant for two years, until an agency took me on as an Internet project manager.

How did your career begin at *airBaltic*?

Well, the agency that I was working for specialised in web design and *airBaltic* was our client. I worked out one of the first versions of the *airBaltic* Internet website. At that time, the company didn't yet have people who could work exclusively on web projects. Then in 2004, *airBaltic* began to concentrate on selling tickets through the Internet and wanted to find somebody who could administer these sales. I didn't hesitate to apply for the position. At first, the head of the personnel department wasn't convinced that I was the right person for the job, because I would be moving down from a position of relatively high responsibility to the lower-ranking position of e-commerce administrator.

Why did you decide to quit a good position for a job at *airBaltic*?

I remember the moment when I realised that I wanted to work in aviation. That was long before I applied for the position with *airBaltic*. I had sent out my CV to other prospective employers such as the Riga airport, but nobody called me in for an interview. Nevertheless, the thought remained in my head. I didn't move mountains to try to join the industry. Things just fell into place naturally. If you really want something badly enough, then somebody up there helps you to get it. This May, I will have spent 11 years working for the airline. After starting out as an e-commerce administrator, I assumed a management position and set up my own team when *airBaltic* expanded its operations. Now I am the vice president of e-commerce and have 10 people on my team.

What do you see as your main work accomplishment?

When I joined *airBaltic* in 2004, the airline had already begun to sell tickets through the Internet. At that time, things were still in a primitive state. The system was slow and didn't work well. A great deal of time and resources were spent on fixing mistakes. The company with which we were working was very inflexible and so we had to create a new system and look for a new partner. Then we came upon our current partner, *2eSystems* of Germany. Although the new project lasted about a year, the system was

implemented very quickly, within three or four months. At that time, there were four members on our team and we worked much more than eight hours per day to get this done. We launched the system in January of 2007 and e-ticket sales rose very quickly after that. It was so satisfying to see that all of our efforts were paying off!

What is a typical work day like?

My work day already begins at about 5:30 in the morning, when I get up, turn on my smartphone and check the e-mail about the previous day's sales results. My work mainly involves e-mail correspondence, meetings, data and information analysis, leading projects and generating new ideas. We sell about 40% of the airline's plane tickets through the *airBaltic* website and are working hard to make this figure increase.

What are you working on now?

Currently we are working on the implementation of responsive design for the *airBaltic.com* website. We want the *airBaltic* web page to be even more easily understandable and usable from any device, be it a desktop, a smartphone, a laptop or a tablet computer. The new design will make the website automatically adapt itself to the device that the user is employing to access the *airBaltic* website. We plan to launch the responsive design page this autumn, followed next year by the applications. A large number of people use their smartphones to enter our website. We want to ensure that they can conveniently use the website, check our flight times and prices, and buy tickets. That is one of our priorities right now.

Last summer, social networks and news media widely reported on the fact that *airBaltic* became the first airline to accept *Bitcoin* as a form of payment. Was it easy to implement this option in the airline's website?

It was not the most complex project that we have undertaken. If we talk about forms of payment as such, then of course they take up a large proportion of the work that we do in e-commerce. There are various means of payment that customers can use to purchase their plane tickets through our web page, including credit cards, bank links and, most recently, *Paypal*, which has a huge number of users all across the world. We are trying to offer a maximally large choice of payment options so that clients can choose the one that suits them best.

Are you looking forward to a time when the web page will be complete and no further changes will need to be made to it?

I've been dreaming about that for the past 11 years! [Laughs.] It hasn't happened yet and most probably never will. A couple of years ago, we implemented the current design for our web page, but things didn't end with that. We continued to make further changes and improvements. We have to ensure that the system always works, that the website is easy to use and that it creates

a good customer experience. If something doesn't work, then it has to be immediately changed and simplified. If we want to sell a maximum number of plane tickets on *airBaltic.com*, then the system has to be simple and easy to understand. We react immediately to any changes in our sales indicators, look for any problems and work to fix them. The process of change is going on all of the time, without interruption. It's similar to the legend about Riga – neither the city nor the *airBaltic* web page will ever be complete! [Laughs.] Technology is continually changing and we have to move along with the times.

E-commerce has become an integral part of aviation. What changes do you see for this branch in the future?

From the point of sales, sudden and huge changes are not a positive thing. It takes time for people to get used to new things, and in the beginning there would probably be a drop in sales if a radical change was implemented too quickly. Changes have to be introduced prudently, and the way that clients react has to be analysed. That being said, I think that our web page and the process for buying plane tickets will continue to become more simple. I would be happy if customers could buy their tickets with just a couple of mouse clicks! I would be happy if choosing the flight destination was the hardest part of buying a ticket.

With such a large amount of work to do, it sounds like your team has to function like a well-oiled machine!

I have a very good team and can only say the best about my colleagues. I could not do anything alone and without a good team. E-commerce is a very broad field, starting with how to attract visitors to your web page, what content to put in so that your page is interesting, and how to present the content so that it is understandable and motivates customers to purchase flight tickets. Such a wide field requires specialists who master specific aspects of the work that needs to be done. In our web page we offer not only flights, but also hotel reservations, car rentals and travel insurance. Teamwork is essential for the mechanism to operate smoothly.

After a solid day's work, you definitely need to take a well-deserved break! How do you spend your free time?

Most of my free time is taken up by the main joy in my life – my three-year-old daughter. Since I return home only at about 8:00 in the evening, because I live outside of Riga, this time belongs to my loved ones. I usually take winter vacations to go downhill skiing and recently I returned from a ski trip to Austria. Last summer I fell in love with Georgia. The country is so beautiful that I'm ready to sacrifice one skiing trip to go to Georgia again in May. My husband is a hunter and I used to accompany him before our daughter joined our family. I hope to do so again when our daughter gets bigger and can join us. I also like to cook. On weekends, I draw energy from the nature around our house in the countryside and enjoy cooking tasty meals for my loved ones. **BO**

Onboard menu



Economy Class

Economy Class passengers can choose their onboard meal from the *airBaltic Café* menu. This spring's selection includes delicious hot meals such as lasagne, tasty chicken and cheese panini, and hot chicken bites with fries. Those who prefer cold dishes can try the Scandinavian-style salmon sandwich and croissant with ham and cheese. A variety of snacks and drinks round out the menu.

Business Class

Our menu offers superior and healthy meals prepared with fresh and seasonal ingredients. For breakfast, Business Class passengers can enjoy energising main courses served with granola and yoghurt. On afternoon and evening flights, sublime main courses like grilled chicken fillet with papaya salad and pine nuts, lightly salted salmon with yeast pancakes and fresh salad, and roasted duck with black currant sauce and vegetables are served together with delightful desserts. Settle back, relax and enjoy your flight with a gourmet meal and an exquisite wine or other beverage from our carefully selected drinks menu.

Brunch in the sky

For those who want to make their journey in style, the new exquisite and stylish Sky Brunch meal option is now available at our pre-order website (airbalticmeal.com). Sky Brunch offers a set of selected cheeses, fuet sausage, ham, fresh vegetables and olives as well as a croissant with jam and yoghurt. You can complement your brunch with a free sparkling wine, water, juice or red wine.



Order your meal before the flight

Use one of our three meal pre-order options to have a guaranteed tasty meal on your next flight and to be among the first to be served.

airBaltic's pre-order menu can be accessed through the **Manage My Booking** section at airbaltic.com. Also available by phone at (+371) 67006006 for international callers or 90001100 within Latvia; up to 24 hours before departure.

More than 70 dishes are available at our innovative pre-order website airbalticmeal.com. There you can create your individual meal on a virtual tray up to 24 hours before your flight.

Our online check-in system allows passengers to pre-order their meal **during online check-in**, from 72 hours up to one hour before departure for flights from Riga.

On some designated flights, a new service allows you to order the meal for your next flight while still in the air! Ask the cabin crew about this opportunity during your flight.

airBaltic frequent flyer loyalty program PINS



About the program

PINS is the **airBaltic frequent flyer loyalty program**, which uses the loyalty currency "PINS". You can collect PINS while flying with airBaltic, shopping in airports, staying in hotels, renting cars, dining out and even by using the **airBaltic Payment Card** or the **PINS MasterCard**. It is also possible to collect PINS by doing your everyday shopping, with more than 700 local, global and online partners represented.

PINS program has various card designs from which you can choose, but if you are a frequent flyer, then the most suitable one for you will be the green **airBaltic PINS card**. The more you fly with airBaltic the higher your membership level and the greater the privileges. **Executive** and **VIP levels** are reserved for

the most loyal airBaltic customers and ensure various benefits which include a **free baggage allowance**, **priority check-in**, **reserved seats** and much more to make traveling more pleasant. The youngest members starting from age 2 are issued with a special **airBaltic PINS Young Pilot card** which allows also children to collect PINS.

If you aren't a PINS program member yet

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



airBaltic PINS card



airBaltic PINS Executive card



airBaltic PINS VIP card



airBaltic PINS Young Pilot card



How to collect

Collect PINS for flying with airBaltic, staying in hotels, renting cars, shopping, eating out and much more. The program also offers collecting PINS at a wide range of well-known international online shops for travel, home, sports, beauty and more.

Collect with airBaltic:

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

How to spend

Spend PINS on airBaltic flights, electronics, gift cards and more than 2000 other rewards available at the PINS Online Rewards Shop. When spending on Online Rewards, you can also use PINS in combination with money.

Spend on airBaltic:

- Exchange your PINS for flights from just 4 200 PINS.
- Upgrade your ticket to Business Class from just 8 000 PINS.



Prices are reflected for airBaltic economy class, one-way flight tickets. Airport taxes and fees are not included, seat availability is not confirmed, restricted and subject to change. Please read full terms and conditions at pinsforme.com
*Seasonal flight

Collect PINS when traveling

Collect PINS every time you travel! Book your holiday or business trip with program partners and get rewarded! Choose your favorite destination and start enjoying the benefits of your loyalty program!

Check out stories of PINS members who have collected PINS to spend on rewards perfect for their upcoming trips.

Member	Activity	Points	Total PINS	Reward
Anna	airBaltic Economy class ticket	500	pins 2 250	We Can Make It Luggage Weight Scale
	AVIS Renting 1 car	500		
	Radisson Staying at the hotel	500		
	CHIC OFFICE SHOPPING Shopping	600		
	HolidayCheck.com Review about a hotel stay	150		
The Johnsons	airBaltic 4 Basic class tickets	600	pins 4 500	airBaltic flight
	Budget Renting 1 car	500		
	airBaltic 4 meals on board	100		
	Points4Travel Booking 2 hotel stays	3000		
	HolidayCheck.com 2 reviews about hotel stays	300		
	From 4200 pins			
Robert	airBaltic Business class ticket	1800	pins 6 350	Belkin Charge and Sync Dock for iPhone/iPod
	SIXT Renting 1 car	500		
	WORLDHOTELS Staying at the hotel	500		
	STO Shopping	50		
	The Economist Yearly subscription	3500		

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Fly airBaltic to the best beaches!

OLBIA Italy

Fly to Olbia with airBaltic from **€99** ONE WAY

Riga – Olbia

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 655	11.04. – 24.10.2015	-2-----	16:00	18:10
BT 655	11.04. – 24.10.2015	-----6-	15:45	17:55

Olbia – Riga

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 656	11.04. – 24.10.2015	-2---6-	18:45	23:00
BT 656	01.07. – 26.08.2015	--3----	18:45	23:00

Olbia is located in the northeastern part of Sardinia. The island is a paradise for gourmets and the seafood is particularly special. We recommend the *malloreddus* (Sardinian gnocchi) and *fregula* (a small pasta-like couscous) together with prawns and mussels in a fish sauce. Besides, Sardinia's northeastern coast is said to be the secret vacation getaway among world-class celebrities.

🌊 **Spiaggia del Principe** (Principe Beach). Situated within the **Costa Smeralda** which is known as a holiday spot for the international jet-set. It stands out with a turquoise sea and a sandy beach with few rocks, along with shallow water that is suitable for children. →26 km

🌊 **Cala Corsara**. Located south of **Spargi Island** and reachable only by sea, this is definitely one of the most spectacular beaches on the island. →52 km

🌊 **Porto Istana Beach** lies on a stretch of coast that is one of the most beautiful in Sardinia and that is lapped by an emerald-green sea opposite the Island of Tavolara. →11 km

🌊 **Cala Brandinchi**. Nicknamed Tahiti due to the bright colours of the sea, this beach is surrounded by dunes and pine forests. →21 km

🌊 **Gulf of Orosei**. If you have more time to spend and want the combination of wild

nature and picturesque beaches, then head south to the **province of Nuoro**, where you will find the Gennargentu Massif (highest point 1834 m). Many pristine stretches of coastal sand can be reached only by hiking in or by boat. The best-known beaches are **Berchida, Cala Luna, Cala Goloritze, Cala Sisine** and **Cala Biriola**. →75 km

▶ **L'Estate Olbiese**. A cultural festival that includes concerts, performances, readings and cabarets. June-August

BARI Italy

Fly to Bari with airBaltic from **€109** ONE WAY

Riga – Bari

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 623	19.05. – 29.09.2015	-2-----	08:00	09:55

Bari – Riga

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 624	19.05. – 29.09.2015	-2-----	10:30	14:25

The capital of the Puglia region in southern Italy beckons with its historic architecture and lively cultural scene. Start your visit by exploring Bari Vecchia (the old part of the city) and see the Basilica di San Nicola. Take a stroll along the two main shopping

streets, Corso Cavour and Via Sparano. Walk along the Lungomare Imperatore Augusto – where you will find restaurants that serve the local dish *Pane di Altamura* – and enjoy the picturesque sunsets.



🌊 Pane e Pomodoro Beach.

A pleasant city beach that is great for picnics and relaxing afternoons. →24km

🌊 **Trani**. A picturesque coastal town with well-preserved medieval architecture, a sandy beach and a great view of the sea. →40km

🌊 **Bisceglie** is the most popular spot for a beach vacation, not only

because of its location, but also due to such seaside resorts as the *Hotel Salsello* and *Hotel Villa*. →30

▶ Don't miss out on the monthly **food festivals** in Puglia. May is the time for the festival of *ciliegie* (cherries), June celebrates *sceblasti* (Greek foccacia with tomatoes), July is the month of *anguria* (watermelon – the sweetest you will ever taste), and August heralds the Sagra della Polpetta food festival in Felline.

VENICE Italy

Fly to Venice with airBaltic from **€99** ONE WAY

Venice's maze of canals makes it a truly unique city. Try afternoon *aperitivi* and *cicheti* (the city's answer to tapas) on colourful Murano or Burano islands.

- 🌊 **Lido.** A 12-kilometre-long stretch of beach with a marina and numerous other attractions, including restaurants, shops and kids' playgrounds. → 27 km
- 🌊 **Caorle.** An attractive seaside village divided between the Ponente and Levante sides. It is over 15 kilometres long and offers both private and public beaches. → 40 km
- ▶ **72nd Venice International Film Festival.** August
- ▶ **56th International Art Exhibition La Biennale.** May-November

Riga – Venice					
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	
BT 627	01.06.–07.09.2015	1-4---	17:05	18:45	

Venice – Riga					
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	
BT 628	01.06.–07.09.2015	1-4---	19:30	23:05	



PISA Italy

Fly to Pisa with airBaltic from **€75** ONE WAY

Pisa, of course, is known for its famous leaning tower, but there is much more to see besides the Campo dei Miracoli. For example, only a stone's throw away is the Botanical Garden, one of the oldest in Europe and the perfect place for a relaxing lunch. Pisa is also a gateway to Tuscany, one of the world's great regions for wine and food lovers.

Riga – Pisa					
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	
BT 637	13.06.–12.09.2015	-----6-	09:00	10:50	

Pisa – Riga					
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	
BT 638	13.06.–13.06.2015	-----7	16:55	20:45	
BT 638	21.06.–19.07.2015	-----7	08:00	11:50	
BT 638	26.07.–06.09.2015	-----7	19:10	23:00	
BT 638	13.09.–13.09.2015	-----7	08:00	11:50	



- 🌊 **Viareggio Beach.** Play beach volleyball, make sand castles, grab a *gelato* (ice cream) and then, of course, do the evening *passaggiata* along the Belle Époque promenade together with everyone else. → 29 km
- 🌊 **Marina di Vecchiano.** A four-kilometre-long sandy beach surrounded by golden dunes and pine woods. Makes for a great day trip. → 26 km
- 🌊 **Tirrenia Beach.** A splendid beach with all sorts of facilities for water and land sports, including sailing, snorkel fishing, horse-riding, golf and beach volleyball. → 15 km
- ▶ **Luminara di San Ranieri festival.** Around 70,000 wax candles illuminate many of Pisa's most notable buildings and structures, culminating with a fireworks display at 11 PM from the Cittadella Vecchia. June 16th

PALMA DE MALLORCA Spain

Riga – Palma de Mallorca					
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	
BT 687	31.05.–27.09.2015	-----7	08:05	10:50	

Palma de Mallorca – Riga					
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	
BT 688	31.05.–27.09.2015	-----7	11:40	16:20	



Fly to Palma de Mallorca with airBaltic from **€115** ONE WAY

- Pure sand and crystal-clear water plus never-ending nightlife. The city's vast cathedral is a major architectural landmark and a must-see. Enjoy boat trips, wine-tasting at local vineyards and visit the *Palma Aquarium*, which boasts the deepest shark tank in Europe.
- 🌊 **Cala Mayor Beach.** A Blue Flag beach where the water is calm most of the time, though when conditions are right, surfable waves also beckon. The *Luabay Beach Club* is right on the shorefront for cocktails, DJ music, lunch and dinner. → 18 km
- 🌊 **Port de Soller** is a wonderful little village situated in one of Mallorca's most beautiful horseshoe harbours. Surrounded by the Tramuntana Mountains, this town has the best of both worlds, offering magnificent mountain scenery together with a sea view. → 35 km
- 🌊 **S'Amarador.** A quiet and peaceful spot surrounded by pine trees with a magnificent view. → 35 km
- ▶ **Nit de Foc.** Translated as "Night of Fire", this event takes place on Midsummer's Eve, when bonfires are lit to mark the beginning of Mallorca's summer fiestas. June 23rd

BARCELONA Spain

Fly to Barcelona with airBaltic from **€95** ONE WAY

Riga – Barcelona					
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	
BT 683	30.03.–24.10.2015	1--456-	14:40	17:25	
BT 683	07.07.–25.08.2015	-2-----	14:40	17:25	

Barcelona – Riga					
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	
BT 684	30.03.–24.10.2015	1--456-	18:10	22:50	
BT 684	07.07.–25.08.2015	-2-----	18:10	22:50	

Exquisite Catalan cuisine, fabulous architecture, afternoon strolls down La Rambla and the modernist Park Güell by Antoni Gaudí are only a few of the highlights of Barcelona, a city that everyone seems to fall in love with.

- 🌊 **Sant Sebastia Beach** is favoured by the locals and is the oldest and most traditional one. Its sports clubs offer various nautical activities. → 18 km
- 🌊 **La Barceloneta.** This excellent spot has two beaches, one at each end. **Passeig Marítim Beach** is near the Olympic Port, while the aforementioned Sant Sebastia Beach is near the Port of Barcelona. → 17 km



- 🌊 **Mar Bella Beach** is a must for those who like water sports. Here you'll enjoy windsurfing, sea kayaks and more. → 20 km
- ▶ **Sonar Festival,** or the International Festival of Advanced Music and New Media Art. June 17-20
- ▶ **Festival Jardins de Pedralbes.** A series of outdoor summer concerts in the Jardins del Palau de Pedralbes (Gardens of the Pedralbes Royal Palace). June 12-July 10

NICE France

Fly to Nice with airBaltic from **€99** ONE WAY

Riga – Nice					Nice – Riga				
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 695	31.03. – 29.09.2015	-2-4-6-	16:30	18:35	BT 696	31.03. – 29.09.2015	-2-4-6-	19:10	23:10
BT 695	03.10. – 24.10.2015	-----6-	16:30	18:35	BT 696	03.10. – 24.10.2015	-----6-	19:10	23:10

The French Riviera, or Côte d'Azur, is known for its unique flair, which comes from the close proximity of snow-capped mountains, the clear blue sea and the famous French *joie de vivre*. Famous artists such as Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso made the region their home and drew inspiration there. When you watch Alfred Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief* starring Grace Kelly or *Anthony Zimmer* starring Sophie Marceau, look at the background for a glimpse of Nice's city vibe!

Nice's beaches stretch 12 km along the Baie des Anges (Bay of Angels) right from the airport past the Old Town to the foot of Mont Boron. The beaches are composed of large pebbles called *galets*, which over the centuries have been brought down from the mountains by three rivers. After a day in the sun, walk along the beachside Promenade des Anglais and enjoy seafood and cocktails in the Old Town.

Cap d'Antibes. This famous cape features many

sandy beaches. The most chic is **La Garoupe**, where F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night* is set. →21 km

The glittering bay at **Villefranche-sur-Mer** is one of the world's most majestic sights. The entire beachfront is open to the public and free of charge. →8 km

Cap Ferrat. This indented peninsula is studded with idyllic coves that look like private playgrounds for the cape's famous inhabitants, but they



Courtesy of Médias OTC NICE

are mostly open to the public. The most spectacular is Paloma Beach, a stretch of sand and gravel on the southeast side of the peninsula that opens onto

the bay of Beaulieu-sur-Mer. As the beach faces east, it's perfect for early sunbathing. →11 km

▶ **Nice Jazz Festival** July 7-12

MALTA

Fly to Malta with airBaltic from **€99** ONE WAY

Riga – Malta					Malta – Riga				
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 739	29.03. – 18.10.2015	-----7	23:30	02:10+1	BT 740	30.03. – 19.10.2015	1-----	02:50	07:30

Seven thousand years of intriguing history, Rococo architecture and the Valletta Baroque Festival are only a few of Malta's highlights. In addition, plenty of wellness and luxury spa facilities provide a whole array of affordable beauty, body and physiotherapy treatments.

Mellieha Bay. Laze on a sun lounger or go water skiing, sailing and windsurfing if you feel more active. There's a diving school up the road in Paradise Bay. →28 km

Ghajn Tuffieha is the beach for you if you are seeking beautiful and untouched locations. The bay has unusual reddish sand. →20 km

Golden Bay. One of Malta's most popular sandy beaches. The spectacular sunsets that can be seen from here have made it a popular spot for evening barbecues and romantic dates. →20 km

▶ **Malta Jazz Festival** July
▶ **Malta Arts Festival** July 1-15



DUBROVNIK Croatia

Fly to Dubrovnik with airBaltic from **€99** ONE WAY

Riga – Dubrovnik					Dubrovnik – Riga				
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 497	26.05. – 22.09.2015	-2-----	16:35	18:15	BT 498	26.05. – 22.09.2015	-2-----	18:55	22:40
BT 497	18.06. – 17.09.2015	---4---	09:20	11:00	BT 498	18.06. – 17.09.2015	---4---	11:40	15:25



CROATIA Croatian National Tourist Board
Dubrovnik RIVIERA & OTOCI Dubrovnik - more than just a name

Also known as the Pearl of the Adriatic, Dubrovnik is a city of marble streets, shimmering waters and street performers on the Dalmatian coast. Yes, this is also the place where the famous dogs originate. If you're a fan of the TV show *Game of Thrones*, then Dubrovnik should be your summer destination of choice, because its city walls are among the main filming locations.

Neptun Beach. A Blue Flag beach with the most beautiful views of the Elafiti Islands, the open sea and Lapad Bay. →24 km

Plaža President (President Beach). The name says it all. As a bonus, the picturesque

island of Daksa is nearby. →21 km

Banje Beach. This divine pebble and sandy beach is conveniently located right by the city. →9 km

Lokrum Island. A wildlife reserve and

botanical garden covered in thick Mediterranean flora that includes cypress, laurel, olive, magnolia and palm trees as well as agave plants. →21 km

▶ **Dubrovnik Summer Festival** July 10 - August 25

RIJEKA Croatia

Fly to Rijeka with airBaltic from **€89** ONE WAY

Riga – Rijeka					Rijeka – Riga				
Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 495	03.06. – 25.09.2015	-3-5--	17:05	18:30	BT 496	03.06. – 25.09.2015	-3-5--	19:05	22:30

Rijeka means "river" in Croatian, so it is no surprise that this is a fluid and active place, waiting to be discovered by visitors from around the globe. Rijeka's airport is actually located on the nearby island of Krk. With numerous marvellous beaches, Rijeka is a place for magical sunsets, preferably enjoyed together with a glass of local Malvazija wine.

Ploce. An award-winning Blue flag beach. →33km

Kostanj. One of the oldest beaches in Croatia, beside a promenade in Kostanj Bay filled with dazzling shops and cafés. →25 km

Preluk. Due to the early morning wind, this beach is a real paradise for windsurfers and sailors. →39 km

Opatija Riviera. A 12-kilometre-long seaside promenade with rich architecture that includes buildings in Renaissance, Gothic and Baroque styles. →39 km

▶ **The Summer Nights Festival** features classical music concerts, plays and street theatre performances. June, July

CROATIA Croatian National Tourist Board
KVARNER



Courtesy of Kvarner County Tourist Board

BURGAS Bulgaria

Fly to Burgas with airBaltic from **€105** ONE WAY

Riga – Burgas

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 755	27.05. – 09.09.2015	--3----	09:30	12:10
BT 755	30.05. – 19.09.2015	-----6-	17:10	19:50
BT 755	03.08. – 24.08.2015	1-----	17:20	20:00

Burgas – Riga

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 756	27.05. – 09.09.2015	--3----	12:50	15:25
BT 756	30.05. – 19.09.2015	-----6-	20:35	23:10
BT 756	03.08. – 24.08.2015	1-----	20:50	23:25

Bulgaria has its own riviera, which encompasses the *Sunny Beach Resort* on the Black Sea and is comparable to the famous party heaven of Ibiza. Prices are low at Bulgarian resorts, and there is local culture to enjoy when the partying stops.

🌊 **Sunny Beach Resort.** The biggest and one of the most famous resorts in Bulgaria, with the longest and widest beach. Get ready for fine golden sand, natural dunes, and a clean and gently deepening sea. →25 km

🌊 **Solnicite.** More isolated than the central beaches, it's perfect for windsurfing and other water sports. →7 km



🌊 Sveti Vlas Nov (New) Beach.

Enjoy the picturesque coastline at the resort town of Sveti Vlas, where the Balkan Mountains dive into the Black Sea. →33 km

🌊 North Beach.

An urban sandy beach. The perfect getaway within the boundaries of Burgas for families with kids. →10 km

▶ **Spirit of Burgas.** The biggest and the most varied music event in Bulgaria, which gathers hundreds of international artists every year. June 27-August 12

RHODES Greece

Fly to Rhodes with airBaltic from **€125** ONE WAY

Riga – Rhodes

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 597	12.06. – 04.09.2015	----5--	07:25	11:00

Rhodes – Riga

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 598	12.06. – 11.09.2015	----5--	11:40	15:20

Rhodes is the largest of the Dodecanese Islands, covered in a web of sugar-cube houses spilling down to turquoise bays. The atmospheric Old Town of Rhodes is a maze of cobbled streets that spirit you back to the days of the Byzantine Empire. While strolling through history, make sure to visit the Valley of Butterflies and see the local breed of fallow deer.

🌊 **Anthony Quinn Beach.** The crystal-clear sea and gorgeous underwater scenery makes this one of the best places for snorkelling. →18 km

🌊 **Faliraki Beach.** Covered in golden sands, it offers dozens of colourful sunbeds, umbrellas and water sports facilities. →17 km

🌊 **Kallithea.** A cosmopolitan holiday resort bustling with

hotels lining Faliraki Beach. The main attraction is the Roman Baths, a unique example of orientalist Art Deco from 1929. →16 km

▶ **Medieval Rose Festival.** Throw yourself back in time and participate in the Witches' and Fairies' Dance while watching fire-eaters, jugglers and jesters, all dressed in medieval costumes. June



THESSALONIKI Greece

Fly to Thessaloniki with airBaltic from **€79** ONE WAY

Riga – Thessaloniki

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 595	05.06. – 27.09.2015	----5-7	23:55	02:50+1

Thessaloniki – Riga

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 596	06.06. – 28.09.2015	1----6-	03:45	06:40



Explore the Byzantine age and other historical periods in this Greek coastal city. Enjoy lazy days strolling around Tsimiski, the main shopping street, and end the day with romantic views that extend as far as Mount Olympus.

🌊 **Perea Beach.** Very well organised, with great nightlife and lovely nature all around. →10 km

🌊 **Aretsou Beach.** A recommended stretch of sand close to Thessaloniki and edged with cafés, bars and good facilities. A marina is close by, so

there are often boats to watch sailing by while you take in the sun. →8 km

🌊 **Galaxias Beach.** This popular Blue Flag beach is in a four-star resort alongside the villages of Agia Triada and Nei Epivates. →14 km

▶ **Reworks International Music Festival.** Over three days, different venues host DJs from various countries, with electronic music playing in public squares and clubs. September

ATHENS Greece

Fly to Athens with airBaltic from **€105** ONE WAY

Riga – Athens

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 611	31.03. – 24.10.2015	-2---6-	15:30	18:50
BT 611	01.04. – 21.10.2015	--3---	09:30	12:50

Athens – Riga

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 612	31.03. – 24.10.2015	-2---6-	19:25	22:45
BT 612	01.04. – 21.10.2015	--3---	13:25	16:45

The historical capital of European civilisation offers a journey through Ancient Greece with splendid monuments such as the Acropolis, as well as breathtaking views. Psyri and Gazi Squares are famed for artists' spaces, galleries, fashionable bars and cosy restaurants with delicious food.

🌊 **Fáliro, Flivos Marina.** An amazing view of the Saronic Gulf and plenty of water activities are why Fáliro is the ultimate summer hot spot for Athenians. →40 km

🌊 **Vouliagmeni.** One of the best-organised beaches, Vouliagmeni offers all types of beach facilities, including tennis and volleyball courts, a play area for children, a water slide, individual cabins and a restaurant. →20 km

▶ **Hellenic Festival and Epidaurus Festival.** Open-air theatre, opera, classical music and dance. July, August



LARNACA Cyprus

Fly to Larnaca
with airBaltic
from €115 ONE WAY

Enjoy the countryside near Larnaca in an alternative way by riding a camel in *Mazotos Camel Park* or a donkey at the *Golden Donkey Farm* in Skarinou. Take a dive at the *Zenobia Wreck*, which is considered to be one of the best wreck-diving sites in the Mediterranean, and rejuvenate yourself by experiencing sea yoga.

Phinikoudes. One of the most famous beaches in Cyprus. The main road, *Athenon Avenue*, is lined with palm trees, green areas and colourful flowers that add to the magnificent scenery. → 8 km

CTO Beach. Also known as *Pyla Beach*, it is a favourite among families, with a playground area for children, as well as volleyball, handball, water sports and other facilities. Numerous seaside



restaurants offer great Cypriot cuisine. → 23 km

McKenzie Beach. Lie down in the fine grey sand of this Blue Flag beach or bathe in the water and watch the planes as they come in to land at the airport. This is also

a lovely place for a meal, with a long line of restaurants parallel to the beach that offer great views and fine dining. → 5 km

► **Larnaca Summer Festival.** This annual festival provides both outdoor and indoor

concerts and lots of other entertainment at various town venues, including the courtyard of Larnaca's medieval fort and the *Pattichion Municipal Amphitheatre*. July



Riga – Larnaca

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 657	31.03.–24.10.2015	----6-	23:55	03:45+1
BT 657	02.06.–25.08.2015	-23----	23:55	03:45+1

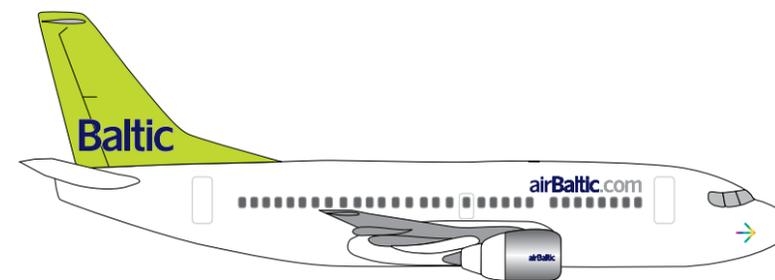
Larnaca – Riga

Flight No	Period	Days	Departure	Arrival
BT 658	29.03.–18.10.2015	--3---7	04:30	08:30
BT 658	02.06.–25.08.2015	-23----	04:30	08:30



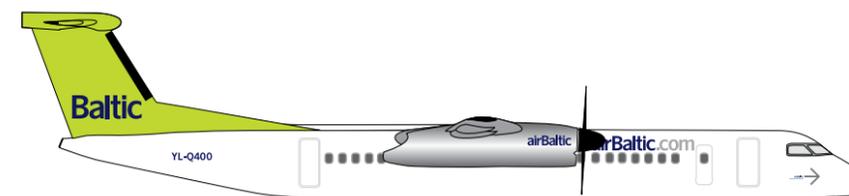
Boeing 737–300

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



Boeing 737–500

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



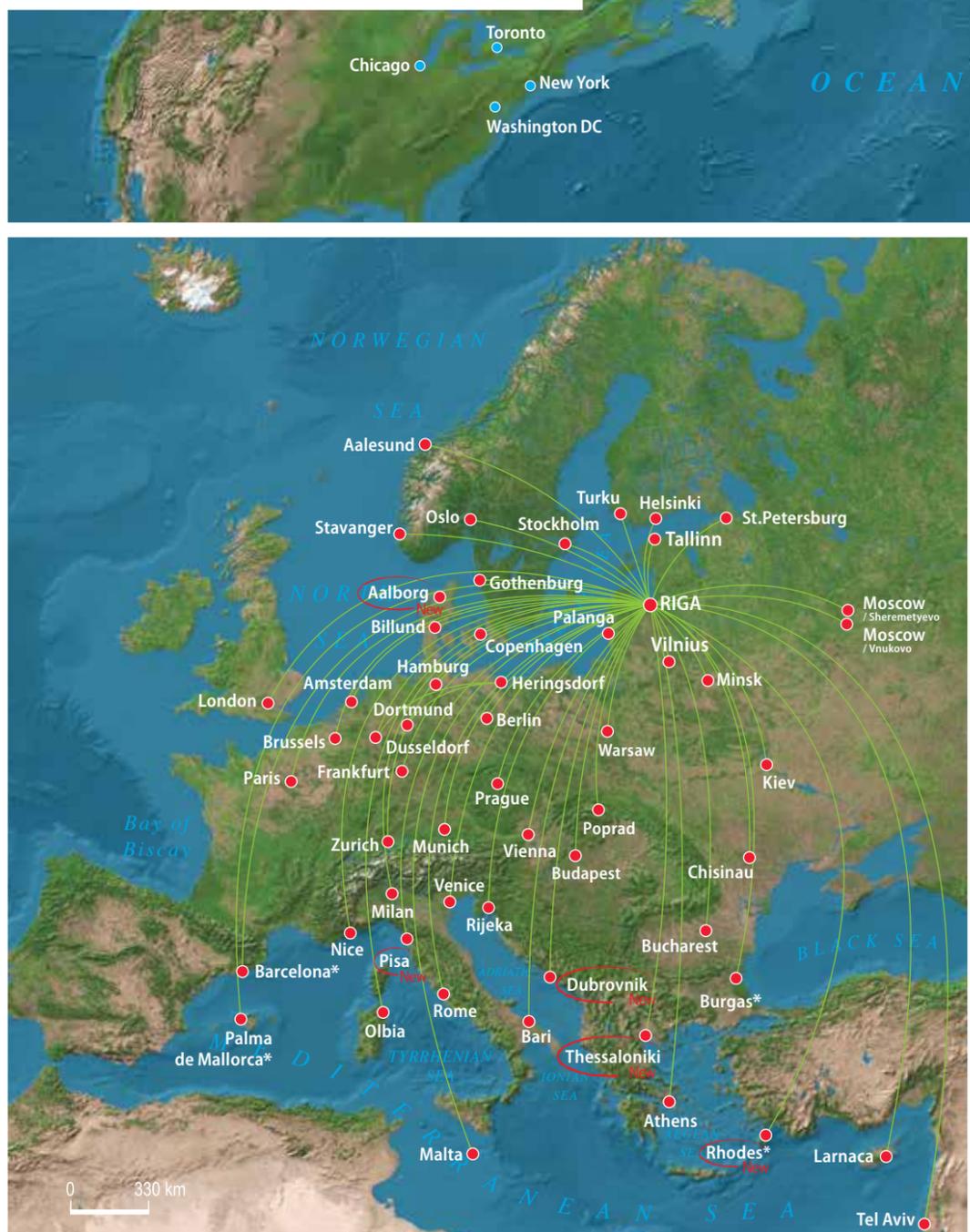
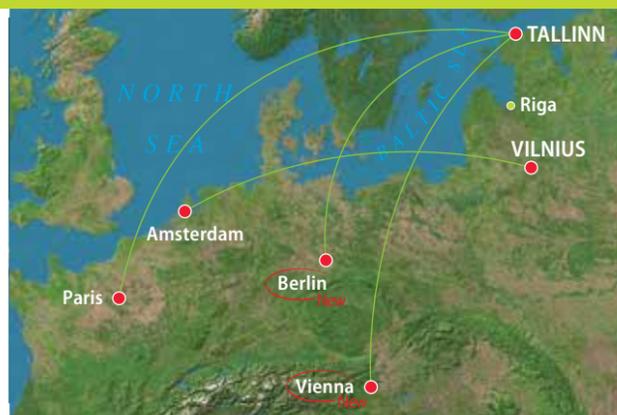
Q400 NextGen Bombardier

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



Flights from RIGA							Flights to RIGA						
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival		Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival	
AALBORG													
BT 149	RIX	AAL	-----6-	12:35	13:15		AALBORG						
BT 149	RIX	AAL	-----6-	12:35	13:15		AALBORG	AAL	RIX	-----7	15:00	17:30	
ALESUND													
BT 175	RIX	AES	-----5-7	13:20	14:45		ALESUND						
BT 175	RIX	AES	-----5-7	13:20	14:45		ALESUND	AES	RIX	-----5-7	15:15	18:30	
AMSTERDAM													
BT 617	RIX	AMS	1234567	08:35	10:00		AMSTERDAM						
BT 617	RIX	AMS	1234567	08:35	10:00		AMSTERDAM	AMS	RIX	1234567	11:30	14:45	
BT 619	RIX	AMS	12345-7	17:10	18:35		AMSTERDAM	AMS	RIX	12345-7	19:55	23:10	
AMSTERDAM flights from VILNIUS													
BT 609	VNO	AMS	12-4567	08:35	10:35		AMSTERDAM flights to VILNIUS						
BT 609	VNO	AMS	12-4567	08:35	10:35		AMSTERDAM flights to VILNIUS	AMS	VNO	12-4567	12:30	16:15	
ATHENS													
BT 611	RIX	ATH	--3----	09:30	12:50		ATHENS						
BT 611	RIX	ATH	--3----	09:30	12:50		ATHENS	ATH	RIX	--3----	13:25	16:45	
BT 611	RIX	ATH	-2--6-	15:30	18:50		ATHENS	ATH	RIX	-2--6-	19:25	22:45	
BAKU													
BT 732	RIX	GYD	-----7	21:30	03:25+1		BAKU						
BT 732	RIX	GYD	-----7	21:30	03:25+1		BAKU	GYD	RIX	1-----	04:20	06:30	
BT 732	RIX	GYD	-3-----	23:45	05:40+1		BAKU	GYD	RIX	-----4	06:30	08:40	
BARCELONA													
BT 683	RIX	BCN	1--456-	14:40	17:25		BARCELONA						
BT 683	RIX	BCN	1--456-	14:40	17:25		BARCELONA	BCN	RIX	1--456-	18:10	22:50	
BARI / From May 19													
BT 623	RIX	BRI	-2-----	08:00	09:55		BARI						
BT 623	RIX	BRI	-2-----	08:00	09:55		BARI	BRI	RIX	-2-----	10:30	14:25	
BERLIN Tegel													
BT 211	RIX	TXL	1234567	07:50	08:45		BERLIN Tegel						
BT 211	RIX	TXL	1234567	07:50	08:45		BERLIN Tegel	TXL	RIX	1234567	09:40	12:30	
BT 217	RIX	TXL	1234567	14:00	14:55		BERLIN Tegel	TXL	RIX	1234567	15:25	18:15	
BT 213	RIX	TXL	1234567	18:15	19:10		BERLIN Tegel	TXL	RIX	1234567	19:45	22:35	
BERLIN Tegel flights from TALLINN													
BT 201	TLL	TXL	1--4---	05:50	07:10		BERLIN Tegel flights to TALLINN						
BT 201	TLL	TXL	1--4---	05:50	07:10		BERLIN Tegel flights to TALLINN	TLL	TXL	1--4---	08:00	11:15	
BT 203	TLL	TXL	--3-5--	18:20	19:40		BERLIN Tegel flights to TALLINN	TLL	TXL	--3-5--	21:55	01:10+1	
BILLUND													
BT 145	RIX	BLL	12345-7	23:45	00:45+1		BILLUND						
BT 145	RIX	BLL	12345-7	23:45	00:45+1		BILLUND	BLL	RIX	123456-	05:50	08:40	
BRUSSELS													
BT 601	RIX	BRU	--345--	05:45	7:40		BRUSSELS						
BT 601	RIX	BRU	--345--	05:45	7:40		BRUSSELS	BRU	RIX	--345--	08:15	12:00	
BT 601	RIX	BRU	12345--	06:15	08:10		BRUSSELS	BRU	RIX	12345--	08:45	12:30	
BT 607	RIX	BRU	-----6-	12:25	14:20		BRUSSELS	BRU	RIX	-----6-	14:50	18:35	
BT 603	RIX	BRU	12345-7	16:35	18:30		BRUSSELS	BRU	RIX	12345-7	19:05	22:50	
BUCHAREST													
BT 503	RIX	OTP	1-3-5--	12:30	15:15		BUCHAREST						
BT 503	RIX	OTP	1-3-5--	12:30	15:15		BUCHAREST	OTP	RIX	-2-5-7	03:50	06:40	
BT 503	RIX	OTP	1-4-6-	23:45	02:30+1		BUCHAREST	OTP	RIX	1-3-5--	15:45	18:35	
BUDAPEST													
BT 491	RIX	BUD	1-345--	13:00	14:25		BUDAPEST						
BT 491	RIX	BUD	1-345--	13:00	14:25		BUDAPEST	BUD	RIX	1-345--	14:55	18:10	
BURGAS													
BT 755	RIX	BOJ	--3----	09:30	12:10		BURGAS						
BT 755	RIX	BOJ	--3----	09:30	12:10		BURGAS	BOJ	RIX	--3----	12:50	15:25	
BT 755	RIX	BOJ	-----6-	17:10	19:50		BURGAS	BOJ	RIX	-----6-	20:35	23:10	
CHISINAU													
BT 420	RIX	KIV	-2-4-6-	12:40	15:05		CHISINAU						
BT 420	RIX	KIV	-2-4-6-	12:40	15:05		CHISINAU	KIV	RIX	-2-4-6-	15:40	18:10	
COPENHAGEN													
BT 133	RIX	CPH	1234---	06:45	07:25		COPENHAGEN						
BT 133	RIX	CPH	1234---	06:45	07:25		COPENHAGEN	CPH	RIX	1234---	08:05	10:40	
BT 131	RIX	CPH	1234567	09:40	10:20		COPENHAGEN	CPH	RIX	1234567	10:55	13:30	
BT 139	RIX	CPH	1234567	19:00	19:40		COPENHAGEN	CPH	RIX	1234567	20:15	22:50	
BT 137	RIX	CPH	12345-7	21:40	22:20		COPENHAGEN	CPH	RIX	12345-7	23:00	01:35+1	
DUBROVNIK/ From May 26													
BT 235	RIX	DBV	-2-----	16:35	18:15		DUBROVNIK/ From May 26						
BT 235	RIX	DBV	-2-----	16:35	18:15		DUBROVNIK/ From May 26	DBV	RIX	-2-----	18:55	22:40	
DUSSELDORF													
BT 235	RIX	DUS	1234567	12:30	14:10		DUSSELDORF						
BT 235	RIX	DUS	1234567	12:30	14:10		DUSSELDORF	DUS	RIX	1234567	14:45	18:15	
FRANKFURT													
BT 243	RIX	FRA	-----6-	07:50	09:35		FRANKFURT						
BT 243	RIX	FRA	-----6-	07:50	09:35		FRANKFURT	FRA	RIX	12345-7	15:00	18:10	
BT 241	RIX	FRA	12345-7	13:00	14:25		FRANKFURT	FRA	RIX	-----6-	19:35	23:10	
GOTHENBURG													
BT 121	RIX	GOT	1--4--7	23:45	00:30+1		GOTHENBURG						
BT 121	RIX	GOT	1--4--7	23:45	00:30+1		GOTHENBURG	GOT	RIX	12-5--	06:00	08:35	
HAMBURG													
BT 251	RIX	HAM	12345--	07:50	08:55		HAMBURG						
BT 251	RIX	HAM	12345--	07:50	08:55		HAMBURG	HAM	RIX	12345--	09:25	12:20	
BT 255	RIX	HAM	-----6-	13:15	14:20		HAMBURG	HAM	RIX	-----6-	14:50	17:45	
BT 253	RIX	HAM	12345-7	17:55	19:00		HAMBURG	HAM	RIX	12345-7	19:40	22:35	
HELSINKI													
BT 301	RIX	HEL	1234567	09:20	10:25		HELSINKI						
BT 301	RIX	HEL	1234567	09:20	10:25		HELSINKI	HEL	RIX	1234567	06:00	06:55	
BT 303	RIX	HEL	1234567	14:00	15:05		HELSINKI	HEL	RIX	1234567	10:55	11:55	
BT 307	RIX	HEL	1234567	19:00	20:05		HELSINKI	HEL	RIX	1234567	15:35	16:35	
BT 325	RIX	HEL	1234567	23:35	00:35+1		HELSINKI	HEL	RIX	1234567	21:30	22:30	
KIEV Borispol													
BT 400	RIX	KBP	123456-	09:15	11:05		KIEV Borispol						
BT 400	RIX	KBP	123456-	09:15	11:05		KIEV Borispol	KBP	RIX	123456-	11:35	13:30	
BT 404	RIX	KBP	12345-7	18:40	20:30		KIEV Borispol	KBP	RIX	12345-7	21:00	22:55	
LARNACA													
BT 657	RIX	LCA	-----6-	23:55	03:45+1		LARNACA						
BT 657	RIX	LCA	-----6-	23:55	03:45+1		LARNACA	LCA	RIX	-----7	04:30	08:30	
LONDON Gatwick													
BT 651	RIX	LGW	12-456-	08:35	09:25		LONDON Gatwick						
BT 651	RIX	LGW	12-456-	08:35	09:25		LONDON Gatwick	LGW	RIX	12-456-	10:10	14:55	
BT 653	RIX	LGW	-----45-	16:00	16:50		LONDON Gatwick	LGW	RIX	-----4-	17:35	22:20	
BT 653	RIX	LGW	1-3--7	16:30	17:20		LONDON Gatwick	LGW	RIX	-----5-	17:55	22:40	
BT 654	RIX	LGW	1-3--7	16:30	17:20		LONDON Gatwick	LGW	RIX	1-3--7	18:10	22:55	
MALTA													
BT 739	RIX	MLA	-----7	23:30	02:10+1		MALTA						
BT 739	RIX	MLA	-----7	23:30	02:10+1		MALTA	MLA	RIX	1-----	02:50	07:30	

Flights from Riga							Flights to Riga						
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival		Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival	
MILAN Malpensa													
BT 629	RIX	MXP	1--5--	12:20	14:05		MILAN Malpensa						
BT 629	RIX	MXP	1--5--	12:20	14:05		MILAN Malpensa	MXP	RIX	1--5--	14:45	18:25	
BT 629	RIX	MXP	--3--7	17:00	18:45		MILAN Malpensa	MXP	RIX	--3--7	19:25	23:05	
MINSK													
BT 412	RIX	MSQ	1-3--7	13:55	15:05		MINSK						
BT 412	RIX	MSQ	1-3--7	13:55	15:05		MINSK	MSQ	RIX	1-3--7	15:45	16:55	
MOSCOW Domodedovo / May 13													
BT 418	RIX	DME	--3----	09:40	11:50		MOSCOW Domodedovo / May 13						
BT 418	RIX	DME	--3----	09:40	11:50		MOSCOW Domodedovo / May 13	DME	RIX	--3----	12:30	14:40	
MOSCOW Sheremetyevo													
BT 424	RIX	SVO	1234567	07:55	09:35		MOSCOW Sheremetyevo						
BT 424	RIX	SVO	1234567	07:55	09:35		MOSCOW Sheremetyevo	SVO	RIX	1234567	10:25	12:10	
BT 422	RIX	SVO	1234567	18:45	20:25		MOSCOW Sheremetyevo	SVO	RIX	1234567	21:10	22:55	
MOSCOW Vnukovo													
BT 416	RIX	VKO	12345-7	23:55	01:40+1		MOSCOW Vnukovo						
BT 416	RIX	VKO											



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BELGIUM	
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Nice	Airport Nice Cote D'azur
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