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NOVEMBER 2013

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Dear Customer,

We have achieved a 27-million-euro improvement of *airBaltic's* net profit in the first nine months of this year, after turning a 13-million-euro profit in the third quarter. This means that the *airBaltic* ReShape turnaround plan has been a success story. Becoming profitable was a tremendous exercise, requiring a scrupulous and careful re-evaluation of every aspect of the business. And, yes, it required concessions as well. We had to end operations on several routes. We also reduced our total amount of aircraft from 34 to 25. Again, this was done as part of our fundamental fleet modernisation programme. As a result, *airBaltic* is now flying the youngest turboprop fleet in Northern Europe. Further changes are underway, as we prepare for the introduction of *Bombardier C-series* jets from late 2015.

This summer, we also improved our flight schedules and achieved substantial efficiency gains by flying each of our aircraft about 15% more. From a business perspective, airplanes are "factories" with wings, and better aircraft utilisation means less time on the

ground and lower unit costs, which we can pass on to our customers. This year, we have further improved our services by reinforcing links between Riga and other hubs. Our customers are benefiting immediately from better connectivity with regions where direct flights from Riga are unavailable. A strong family of partner airlines with whom we code-share ensures smooth and seamless travel for *airBaltic* customers through these points. Our current code-share partners include a number of the world's major airlines. We are very pleased to add *Etihad Airways* to this growing family, enabling us to offer excellent connections through the Abu Dhabi hub to destinations worldwide. The new Riga-Abu Dhabi route substantially reduces the travel time between the two capitals, as well as to destinations in Australia, Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Did you know that for eight consecutive quarters, Latvia has achieved the highest GDP (gross domestic product) growth of any EU member?

Thank you for flying *airBaltic*.

Yours,
Martin Alexander Gauss



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baltic^{Outlook}

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Drizzly November in my soul

At the outset of the whaling novel *Moby Dick*, Herman Melville's character Ishmael declares that whenever he feels "a damp, drizzly November" in his soul, it is time for him to head for the watery parts of the world. Those thoughts have stayed with me ever since a slightly mad English teacher insisted that the novel helps readers to learn English. And since November has never been my favourite month, heading off to the faraway seas seemed like a good idea at the time. It still does, especially the thought of travelling to a warm and sunny destination. But over the years, I have managed to acquire a taste for November, just as one does for good single malt Scotch – the kind that gives off the aroma of a sailing ship hawser that has been floating about in the Firth of Forth Estuary by Edinburgh for a hundred years or more.

The taste of good scotch is complex. So is the month of November, especially in northerly climes. It is dark, drizzly, windy, muddy and transitional between autumn and winter. More often than not, the winter freeze-up and snow – with its liberating, white, clean landscapes – does not arrive until later. Nevertheless, November



THE TASTE OF GOOD SCOTCH IS COMPLEX. SO IS THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

is a time for indoor warmth, cosiness, candlelight and stories. My favourite tales during childhood in Latvia were of *veļi* – the spirits of the departed, which I have always associated with fogs that suddenly appear in low-lying meadows during November, as if from nowhere. Slowly, silently they roll about. Imagination then leads me to time-travel back into the pagan past, even though I live in a scientific world.

But in November, the modern world, too, can be enchanting. Just walk down a narrow street in Copenhagen when it is dark and a brisk wind is blowing big, wet snowflakes about. You are bound to come across one of the city's small, cosy basement restaurants. On the sidewalk, on either side of the stairs leading down, will be small metallic oil lamps, their flames flickering furiously in the wind, inviting you to descend into a candlelit cavern. White tablecloths and gleaming silverware, together with the soft sounds of the Danish language and the pleasant scents of good, hearty Danish food will greet you and envelop you in homey warmth. If indeed there is "a damp, drizzly November" in your soul, it will be gone the moment that you enter such a magical, welcoming place. **BO**



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Museum cats

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Despite the proscriptions by local authorities, cats can be found in various public places in Russia – in small grocery stores, in the offices of government institutions, in museums and in libraries.

Moreover, cats have been living quite legally and officially in the main museum of the country – the Hermitage of St. Petersburg– since its foundation, and have become one of the museum’s legendary features.

Last year, the *Day of the Hermitage Cat* was celebrated in St. Petersburg. During the celebration, it was announced that the first cat had been brought from Holland by Tsar Peter I (1672-1725) for the wooden Winter Palace that preceded the current edifice. The next ruler who raised the issue of cats in the Winter Palace was Peter’s daughter, Empress Elizaveta. According to legend, she was greatly disturbed by mice and rats gnawing holes in the walls of the palace, and in 1745, she issued a *Decree to introduce cats to the court*. It read: “Find the best and biggest cats in Kazan that are capable of catching mice and send them with a man to feed and accompany them to the court of Her Majesty in St. Petersburg, giving them as much food and water as they need”.

Some years later, the wooden Winter Palace was superseded by the magnificent Baroque construction that we know today, and which is now part of the Hermitage Museum. Cats had been placed in the building even before the empress settled there and continued living there for centuries.

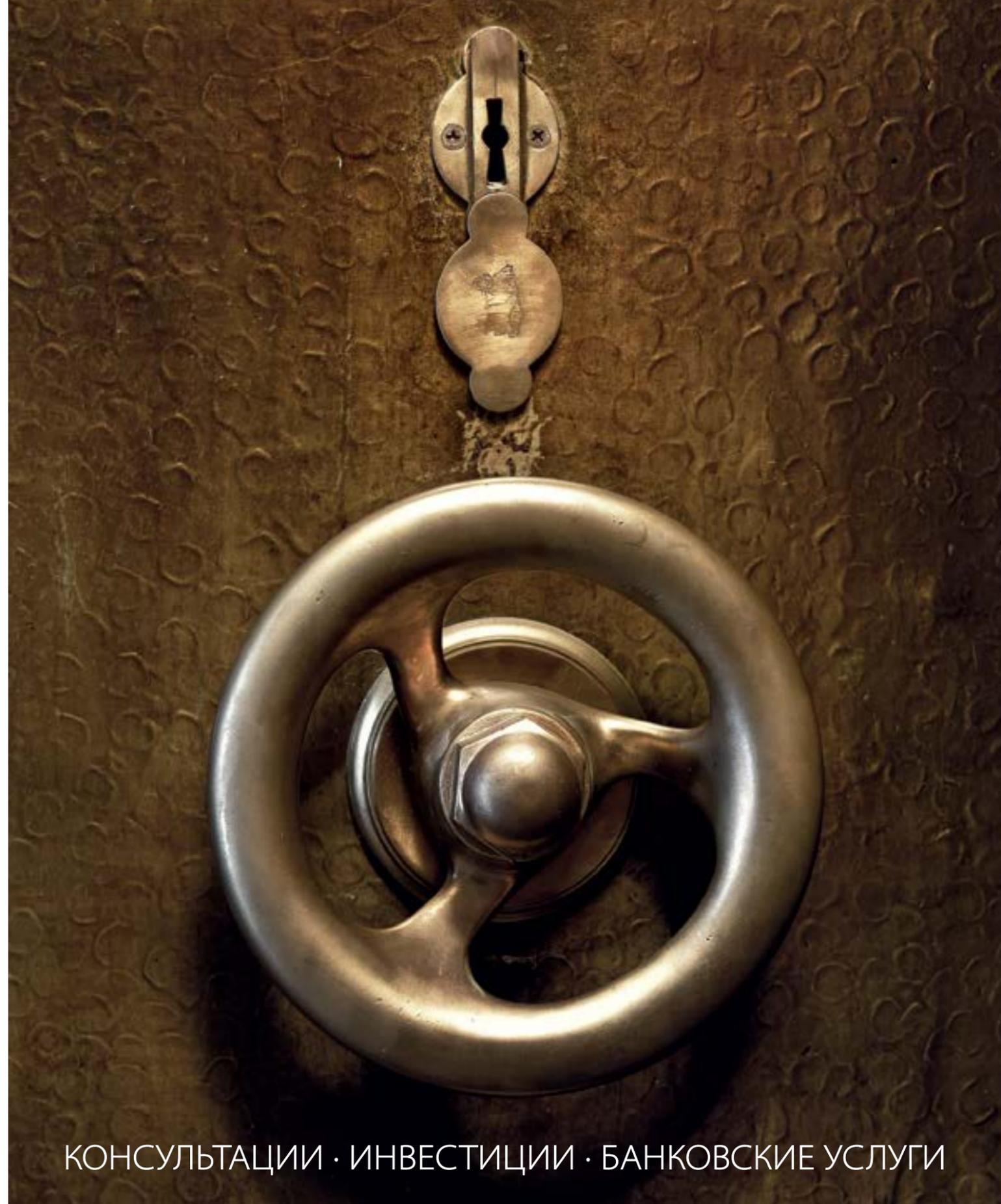
Elizaveta’s great-niece Empress Catherine II was an avid collector of Dutch and Flemish paintings. Her art collection laid the foundation for the creation of the Hermitage. She appointed cats as museum-keepers of sorts, despite the fact that she herself disliked these animals and divided them into two groups: the room cats that served a decorative function, and the domestic cats that lived in the basement and hunted mice.

The tradition of keeping cats in the Winter Palace survived all upheavals and revolutions until the Second World War, when all of the Hermitage cats died during the German siege of the city. New cats were introduced after the war ended in 1945 to continue the mice and rat-hunting duties of

their predecessors. These cats’ descendants attained international fame in 2005, when Dutch director Jan Hinrich Drews made a documentary film on them for *GEO*. Since its premiere on European TV channels, donations have been regularly sent to the museum from all over the continent. Apart from the employees of the museum, who voluntarily buy food and other necessities for the cats, they also have sponsors and loyal contributors among urban residents.

THE TRADITION OF KEEPING CATS IN THE WINTER PALACE SURVIVED ALL UPHEAVALS AND REVOLUTIONS UNTIL THE SECOND WORLD WAR

While there has never been a line in the museum’s budget for feeding the cats, there is a Club of Friends of the Hermitage Cats. Today the museum is home to around six dozen cats, each with its own name, passport, veterinary card and food bowl. Any resident of St. Petersburg can take one of the cats home, as additional homeless cats are sometimes brought to the palace by well-meaning animal-lovers. To adopt a cat, one needs to fill out an application and leave one’s passport data. An owner of a Hermitage cat obtains free access to the museum for the rest of his life, as does the cat. **BO**



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SPOTLIGHT ON FOGGY NOVEMBER

Five things to do in Latvia in November

- Celebrate November 18, when Latvia marks its 95th Independence Day anniversary. In a joyful display of patriotism, the carmine and white national flag will be hanging from every building in the country.
- Take a walk around the beautiful city of Riga in the late afternoon, when it is often enveloped in a warm fog.
- Visit the Museum of the History of Riga and Navigation, the oldest museum in Latvia and one of the oldest museums in Europe. Its rich and diverse collections originate from the art and natural sciences collection of Nikolaus von Himsel (1729–1764), a Riga doctor. | www.rigamuz.lv

- See a show at the Riga Circus, which is celebrating its 125th anniversary. Established in 1888, the circus is housed in an edifice that was built earlier that same year and that is one of the oldest circus buildings in Europe. Exciting shows still take place there, with the world's top circus artists regularly providing guest performances. www.cirks.lv
- Enjoy the end of the autumn season at Ķemeri National Park. It is known for its scenic beauty, rich biodiversity, unique heath and nature trail as well as its mineral and medicinal water springs. Most notably, the park is a bird-watchers' paradise. www.latvia.travel/lv

ON THIS MONTH'S MENU

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

THE TREND:



Egils Rozenbergs. Scars I, 2013. Wool, linen. Property of the artist

BEAUTY

Looking for something new? The *Pien-* dairy spa is the first body and face care line in the world based on pure milk whey concentrate from Latvian dairy farms. Its light and airy *pien-Dairy Spa* foam gently cleanses facial skin to remove makeup and impurities, adding a healthy glow, while making the skin naturally supple and captivating. Whey and aloe gel softens, calms and smoothes the complexion. Other products from this range are also available. www.pienspa.lv



MUSIC

If you are a fan of Bob Dylan, then this could be your chance to see this amazing American singer and songwriter performing in Europe. In November he'll perform in Milan, Rome, Brussels, Paris, London and other cities. *Don't think twice, it's all right!* www.bobdylan.com

DESIGN

Egils Rozenbergs is one of Latvia's most noteworthy textile artists and is known for his large tapestries and spatial objects. He has also been active on both the local and international art scene. From 1993 to 1999, for example, he served as the secretary general of the European Textile Network. This personal exhibition is the most

comprehensive retrospective of the artist's works to date, covering his career path from the 1970s to the present day. Rozenbergs is an astute observer and messenger who freely transcends the usual boundaries of textile art and is constantly expanding the field of his creative work. *Arsenāls* exhibition hall of the Latvian National Museum of Art / Until December 8 www.lnmm.lv

STARO RĪGA LIGHT FESTIVAL



From November 15 to 18, Latvia's capital will be lit up in all the colours of the rainbow. The *Staro Rīga* light festival is taking place for the sixth time, and this year it promises to be bigger than ever. As night sets in, various prominent buildings, squares, bridges and monuments will be visually transformed through light and video technologies. Last year more than 80 buildings and other objects were illuminated for the pleasure of the city's inhabitants and their guests, who could be seen strolling through the streets, mugs of hot coffee in their hands, marvelling at Riga's unusual transformation. Why not join the crowd this year? www.staroriga.lv



FASHION

Here is something special for your little ones. The Latvian *Paade Mode* fashion brand is offering a limited edition

collection for boys and girls up to the age of 8. The company makes simple but elegant clothing made of natural materials. The latest autumn/winter 2013-2014 collection is titled *A Forest*, owing to the fact that Latvia is rich in forests and that the local inhabitants consider forests to be special places. Kids will enjoy the feeling of being in a forest through the patterns and colour range of the new collection. Juicy, saturated and rich colours alternate with stone and foggy grey. www.paade.lv



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Concert by *Instrumenti*

Palladium concert hall, Riga
November 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30
Instrumenti, a two-piece electro indie pop band from Latvia, has proven to be among the best Baltic live acts of the decade. It was formed in 2009 by two academically educated musicians. Shpsi (vocals/keyboards) boasts one of the most impressive falsettos that today's music has to offer, while Reynsi (drums/keyboards/vocals) has the talent of creating rich and warm sounds backed up with beautiful harmonies. The sound of *Instrumenti* has been described as a mix of *Muse*, *Sigur Rós* and Michael Jackson. The group released its second studio album, *Procrastination*, in May of this year.

Tickets at www.bilesuserviss.lv.
 Price: 15–40 LVL (21.34–56.91 EUR)
 Marijas iela 21

PHOTO BY IVETA VAIKODE



Andromeda Mega Express Orchestra concert



Riga Congress Centre
November 28

The *Andromeda Mega Express Orchestra* was established by young musicians from more than eight different countries in 2006 in Berlin. They play a variety of musical instruments, ranging from the trumpet and the saxophone to the harp. Each and every one of them is a master of their own craft – one in classical music, another other in jazz, for example – and together they create a special and surprising synthesis of sound. The orchestra has drawn attention by performing at such odd venues as contemporary arts centres with unusual interiors. It has a particular preference for empty swimming pools, which offer vast acoustics possibilities. Prepare for a wild musical adventure during the *Riga Rhythms (Rigas Ritmi)* music festival, when the extraordinary orchestra will perform in Riga.

More information at www.rigasritmi.lv.
 Tickets at www.bilesuserviss.lv.
 Price: 1–15 LVL (1.42–21.34 EUR)
 Kr. Valdemāra iela 5

NOVEMBER 2013



United in death exhibition of jewellery by Märta Mattsson

Putti art gallery, Riga
November 15 – 28

This express exhibition of unusual jewellery by Swedish artist Märta Mattsson brings to mind the Ancient Egyptian symbol of the sun and rebirth in the form of the scarab beetle, as well as the jewellery traditions of the Victorian era, when butterflies symbolised the briefness of life and beauty. The artist works with insects, animal remains and other biologically

produced matter, turning these into poetically aesthetic jewellery. "In a world where not many new and exotic breeds are discovered, I use dead creatures in my pieces to evoke wonder. The creatures are transformed and reborn, given a new life as objects of astonishment", explains Märta of her artistic mission.

More information at www.putti.lv
 Mārstaļu iela 16

Riga Congress Centre
November 15
 Legendary composer and virtuoso trombonist Glenn Miller created his orchestra back in 1937. Within a few years, it became an American jazz music icon, perfectly executing and recording such Hollywood movie musical hits as *Sun Valley Serenade* and *New York, New York*. The orchestra has been operating in its current form since 1983. Its

leader Wil Salden is an outstanding pianist who fell in love with Glenn Miller's music in his early youth and decided to devote his life to passing on this great musical heritage to the future generations. The world famous orchestra will be presenting its *In the Miller Mood* programme in Riga.

Tickets at www.bilesuserviss.lv.
 Price: 7–28 LVL (9.96–39.84 EUR)
 Kr. Valdemāra iela 5



Glenn Miller Orchestra concert

PHOTO BY AIVARS SLISANS

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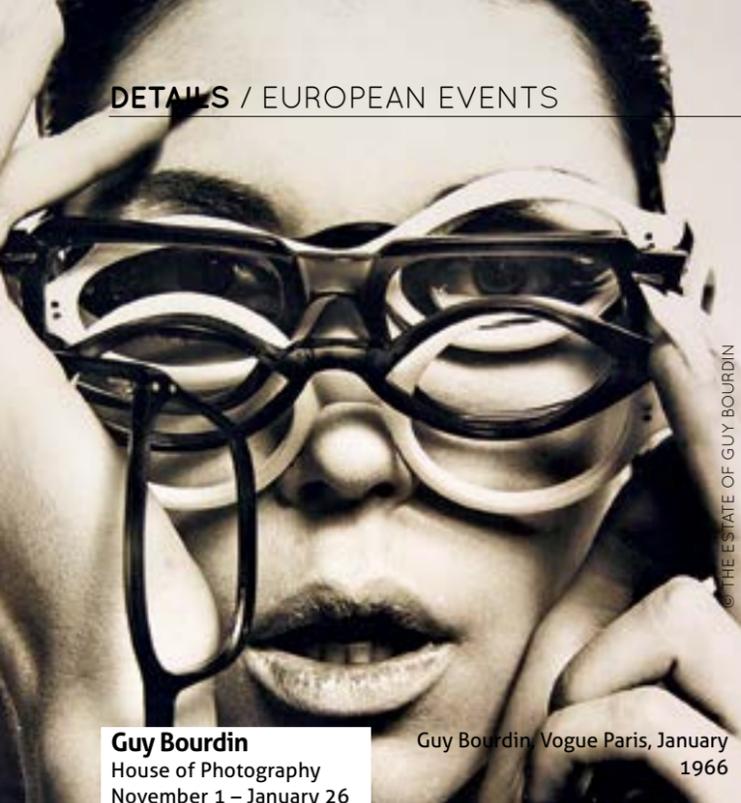
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© THE ESTATE OF GUY BOURDIN

Guy Bourdin
House of Photography
November 1 – January 26

Guy Bourdin, Vogue Paris, January 1966

Hamburg

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Frenchman Guy Bourdin (1928–1991) was one of the first photographers to incorporate a narrative into fashion photo shoots, fully conscious of the fact that it is the overall image rather than the item of clothing itself that draws in the viewer. As a protégé of the famous artist Man Ray, Bourdin drew inspiration from such Surrealists as René Magritte and Luis Buñuel, creating some of the most provocative fashion shoots of the 1970s. Bourdin loved bright colours, often including fetishist elements in photographs that bordered on the pornographic. Many of his works ooze passion and sensuality,

conveying the author's evident preoccupation with sexual themes. The comprehensive retrospective at the House of Photography in Hamburg highlights Bourdin's great talent as a photographer, also revealing the darker and more sinister side of his personality, which may have been connected with various personal tragedies that he experienced during his lifetime. Since he did not make any effort to preserve his own oeuvres, the first major book devoted to his work was published only ten years after Bourdin's death.

Deichtorstraße 1-2
📍 www.deichtorhallen.de

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London

Hello My Name Is Paul Smith
Design Museum
November 15 – March 9



Paul Smith in his first shop in London

If one is to believe the myths that often appear about famous people, then Paul Smith (b.1946) dreamed of becoming a professional cyclist rather than a fashion designer during his childhood. In any case, he has no formal education in the field that he ultimately chose. However, this hasn't stopped him from being among the top players in the global fashion industry for the past three decades. Postulating that "inspiration is everywhere" and that you just need to keep your eyes open for new ideas, Smith practically never leaves home without another faithful and steadfast companion – his photo camera. The pictures that he snaps in his daily life and during his travels provide him with the impulses that he needs for his creative work with fashion and clothing. As Smith once revealed in an interview,

the dyslexia with which he was diagnosed during his childhood has inhibited him from thinking in a purely rational manner. In other words, his brain is not well-suited to linear thinking, because countless new ideas appear in his mind all the time and interfere with his rational processes of thought. The upcoming exhibition devoted to Smith at London's Design Museum is set to be one of the most significant events in the British capital's fall fashion calendar, offering an intriguing and detailed insight into "what it means to be Paul Smith". Everything about Smith the brand is turned inside out for all to see, revealing the design and production steps that Smith takes to get to the final result of creatively designed clothing.

Design Museum | Shad Thames
📍 www.designmuseum.org

MOSCOW



© SIMON HALLSTROM

King Size

NET international theatre festival
November 17 – December 4

Fly to Moscow with airBaltic from **€115** ONE WAY

NET is the acronym in Russian for New Theatre Festival of Europe. It offers a broad-ranging insight into various new European theatre productions, ranging from novel interpretations of classical plays to multimedia performances. The festival was founded 16 years ago by a group of young Russian theatre critics who wanted to showcase plays that one would not usually find on Moscow's theatre stages. This criterion has remained unchanged, with the festival programme designed to provide "new and fresh impulses to the heart and the mind".

Among the highlights of this year's festival is a production of Mozart's *Magic Flute* by the elderly and legendary Peter Brook, who is now blind and popularly known as the "Socrates of theatre". Also on show will be the musical performance *King Size*, directed by Swiss postmodernist Christoph Marthaler. In a country where homosexuality is generally frowned upon, many Russian viewers are likely to be challenged by *Memento mori*, a dance piece featuring male nudes and directed by Pascal Rambert of Paris.

📍 www.netfest.ru

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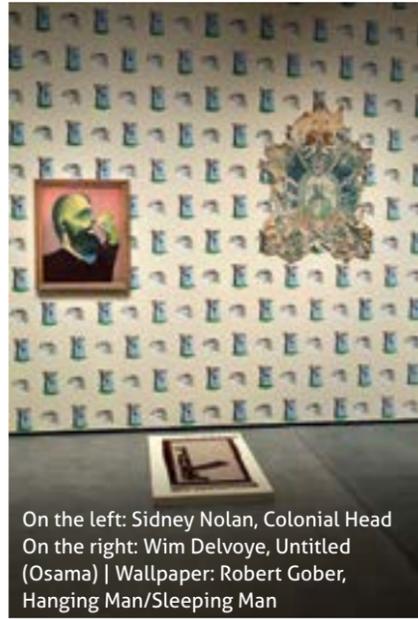
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On the left: Sidney Nolan, Colonial Head
On the right: Wim Delvoye, Untitled (Osama) | Wallpaper: Robert Gober, Hanging Man/Sleeping Man

Théâtre du Monde (*Theatre of the World*)

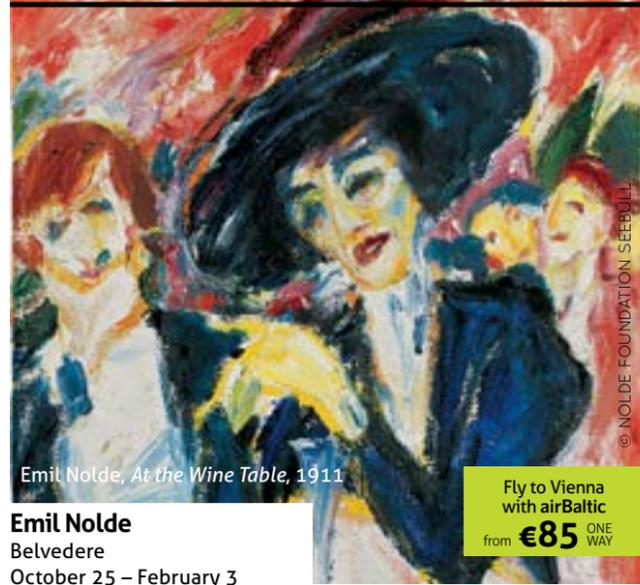
La Maison Rouge
October 19 – January 12

David Walsh (b.1961) is one of the most notorious personalities among art-collectors. As a mathematically inclined high school graduate, he made his fortune by setting up a gambling system that he successfully used to bet on horse races and other sports. Also known as the owner of various wineries and breweries, Walsh set up the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in his native Tasmania in 2011. The museum's location is just as peculiar as Walsh himself, carved into a seaside

cliff, with most of its exhibition space located underground. Walsh's eclectic art collection is the modern equivalent of the Renaissance *Cabinets of Curiosities*, featuring everything from Ancient Egyptian mummies, Roman mosaics and Ancient Greek coins to flamboyant examples of contemporary art. A number of works from Walsh's collection are now on display in Paris at an exhibition whose name paraphrases the *Theatre of Memory* by Italian philosopher Giulio Camillo (1480-1544). Here one will find all kinds of diverse objects ranging from tribal art and items from Antiquity to modern works by Marina Abramovic and Damien Hirst. The intended effect is to make the viewer see the world from a completely different perspective.

10 boulevard de la Bastille
www.lamaisonrouge.org

Vienna



Emil Nolde, *At the Wine Table*, 1911

Fly to Vienna with airBaltic from **€85** ONE WAY

Emil Nolde Belvedere

October 25 – February 3

Energetic, rough brush strokes and an expressive choice of colours were a hallmark of the works by Expressionist German painter Emil Nolde (1867–1956) from the outset of his career. The artist never hid that his main passion and source of inspiration was travel. Accordingly, Nolde criss-crossed the globe, visiting such exotic destinations (to Westerners) as Russia, the Far East and the tropical islands of the South Seas in voyages that heavily influenced his style of painting. In 1937, the Nazi German regime branded the works by Nolde and other modernist painters as "degenerate art", removing them from museums and forbidding the

blacklisted artists from painting, even in private. Nolde sought refuge in his country home on Sylt Island in the North Sea, where he continued to paint in secret. The tiny water colours that he painted during this time (also known as his Unpainted Pictures) were no larger than the palm of his hand, and by the end of the Second World War he had produced more than 1300 such works. The exhibition in Vienna showcases the essence of Nolde's best oeuvres – landscapes, portraits, religious themes and the aforementioned Unpainted Pictures.

Prinz Eugen-Straße 27
www.belvedere.at/en



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PHOTO BY TERJE RAKKE, NORDIC LIFE, FJORD NORWAY

► Old Town

Once considered the least desirable area in the city, Gamle Stavanger (Old Town) has the best-preserved collection of wooden houses in Northern Europe. Spend a morning enjoying the picturesque collection of 173 fully-renovated houses, cobble streets, and 18th-century character. The area is also home to the Canning Museum, a perfectly-preserved factory from the 1920s, and galleries where you can watch artists at work.

Øvre Strandgate

▼ European Curling Championships
November 23-30

The sport of curling comes to Stavanger's *Sørmarka Arena* for the 39th European Championships in late November. The tournament has crowned Scandinavian winners for the last four years, and Norway will surely be favourites to win the trophy again on home ice. Day passes are available from as little as 7 EUR, and in a positive initiative from the organising team, those under 20 get free admission throughout the tournament.

Sørmarka Arena, Sørmarkveien 20
① www.ecc2013.curlingevents.com



PHOTO BY
MICHAEL BURNS,
WORLD CURLING
FEDERATION

▲ Sightseeing at
Preikestolen

One of the most famous attractions in the whole of Norway, Preikestolen, or the Pulpit Rock, is a massive cliff overhanging the beautiful Lysefjord. The breathtaking views inspire up to 200,000 people to make the 3.8-km hike to Preikestolen every year. The trip can be combined with a cruise along the Lysefjord, taking in the scenery from a different angle. If you do take the hike, then there's just one question you need to answer: dare you walk right to the edge of the cliff?

► Renaa

Stavanger's growing international community is influencing the dining options in the city. Widely considered to be Stavanger's best restaurant, *Renaa* offers an extensive menu that combines locally sourced seafood and meat with exciting flavours from around the world. The dishes range from coal-grilled local Jæren beef to a nine-course taster menu with accompanying wines. Local food writer Whitney from the Norwegian food blog *Thanks for the Food* says of *Renaa*: "It's three restaurants in one: a lunch café, a bistro and a fine dining restaurant all under one roof."

Breitorget 6 | ① www.restaurantrenaa.no



PHOTO BY TERJE RAKKE, NORDIC LIFE, REGION STAVANGER

▲ Energy - Problem or Solution? exhibition
Until May 2014

This thought-provoking exhibition deals with the most important energy dilemmas: global warming or oil? Industrial development or nature conservation? Climate balance or prosperity? Despite the serious subjects, the Petroleum Museum is a surprisingly family-friendly attraction. Kids will love climbing all over the former installations of the Frigg Oil platform, brought back to life in the colourful Geopark, while inside you can sample the harsh conditions of life on a North Sea oil rig.

Norwegian Petroleum Museum, Kjerfingholmen
① www.norskolje.museum.no



PHOTO BY TOM HAGA

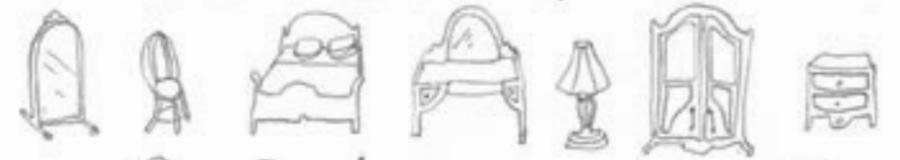

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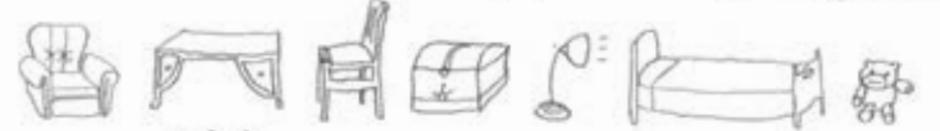
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A fine dining experience

Eating has been a ritual since the times when our distant ancestors gathered around campfires to share their meals. Nowadays – be they family dinners, holiday celebrations or parties with friends – the gatherings are usually no longer around a fire, but at a table.

The dining table is the heart and centre of the home, and *Vitra Dining* is a new collection designed to ensure the perfect dining atmosphere. *Vitra* offers elegant dining tables by such famous designers as Jean Prouvé, Isamu Noguchi, Maarten Van Severen and Jasper Morrison. Varying in size and style, these tables provide endless possibilities, such as a nice dinner for one at the *Guéridon* table while watching your favourite film or listening to your favourite album. Or perhaps an intimate dinner for two at Isamu Noguchi's round *Dining table*

with a nice bottle of wine. For more festive events or family gatherings, *Vitra* offers the *Solvay*, *Trapèze* and *EM Table* by Jean Prouvé. Up to ten people can be seated comfortably around these tables to enjoy each other's company and drive away the cold feeling of rainy autumn evenings.

The classic designs of *Vitra's* dining tables connect perfectly with the company's colourful and versatile chairs. From plastic and fabric to wood and steel, the possibilities are endless. While choosing the perfect chair can be difficult, the company offers options that can organically blend into any interior. The colourful *Panton* or *Tip Ton* chairs will bring a fresh and youthful feeling to your dining

room, while *Standard*, *Basel* or *Eames* chairs will work better with more classical interiors. Designs become iconic through the test of time, and *Vitra Dining's* collection unites established icons with future ones. The timeless ritual of eating together is something that will continue for as long as humans inhabit this planet. What better way to enjoy each other's company and the pleasure of communication? A pleasant dining room may feel like a luxury in smaller living spaces, but the table does not need to fill the

whole room. *Vitra's* dining tables come in different sizes and styles to provide the perfect dining experience for every taste and need. **BO**

① www.vitra.com

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From left to right: Orri Páll Dýrason (drums), Jón Þór Birgisson (guitar and vocals) and Georg Hólm (bass)

The majestic Sigur Rós

The Icelandic post-rock band *Sigur Rós* is back with a brand new album, *Kveikur*, sounding noisier and nastier than ever before. Recently guest-starring on *The Simpsons*, the group is hitting the road and will tour Europe in November to promote the band's seventh studio LP

Founded in 1994 and named after *Sigur Rós*, the newborn sister of lead vocalist and guitarist Jón Þór Birgisson (more conveniently known to the world as Jónsi), the band has just been through nothing short of turmoil. *Kveikur* follows hot in the footsteps of *Valtari*, which the enigmatic musicians released last year. Being a creative struggle and critically received with less awe than their previous musical masterpieces, *Valtari* ignited speculation as to whether the quirky and modestly cool band isn't for once losing momentum. In addition, long-time member and multi-instrumentalist Kjartan Sveinsson left the band shortly after *Valtari's* release. On top of this, the group cut ties with the EMI record label in favour of the smaller *XL Recordings*.

Yet, surprising as always, the band took an impressive turn and immersed itself into the creation of *Kveikur* even before the previous album, *Valtari*, had been released. A large step away from the majestic *Sigur Rós*-like sound that the band's faithful audience is accustomed to, the newest album is much heavier, aggressive and up-beat. In the words of bassist Georg Hólm, *Kveikur* was "fun

to make" and "something completely different from what we've done before".

The band members admit to getting out of their comfort zones in the process of recording their new album, which was released in June. However, their experimentations have paid off handsomely,

as *Kveikur* has been a great success and *Sigur Rós* is now touring the world in renewed glory. Despite their accomplishments, the boys from the volcanic island are as down-to-earth as can be, meeting success with the same humbleness as they accept mishaps and change. Lead vocalist Birgisson says that while Sveinsson's departure from the lineup came as a heavy blow, it induced the remaining three members to try something new and spontaneous.

Over the years, the exceptional musicians of *Sigur Rós* have proven themselves far beyond the borders of their homeland. They've been the opening band for *Radiohead* and have had their music used in the popular film *Vanilla Sky*. However, it is only their recent appearance in cartoon form on *The Simpsons* – a show deeply engraved in pop culture – that has finally led them to boast just a little, saying that "now we've made it"! **BO**

THESE MUSICIANS FROM ICELAND ARE PROBABLY AMONG THE MOST DOWN-TO-EARTH CELEBRITIES THAT ONE COULD EVER MEET

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Сапфировое стекло стало неотъемлемой частью телефонов Vertu. Для защиты фронтальной части аппарата, под которой находится экран с диагональю 4,3 дюйма и разрешением 720p, в телефоне Constellation используется стекло с диагональю 5,1 дюйма весом более 100 карат. Сапфир нельзя повредить ничем, кроме алмаза, что гарантирует практически идеальное состояние стекла в течение всего срока эксплуатации телефона.

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Для отделки Constellation используется натуральная телячья кожа высочайшего качества. Дизайнеры Vertu тщательно отбирают цельные куски кожи на мануфактуре со 150-летней историей, расположенной в Альпах. Телефон Constellation представлен в пяти эксклюзивных цветах: капучино, черный, оранжевый, мокко и малиновый.

С технической точки зрения Vertu Constellation отвечает всем требованиям современного смартфона, в перечень основных характеристик входят: операционная система Android™ 4.2 Jelly Bean, двухъядерный процессор Qualcomm® Snapdragon™ частотой 1,7 ГГц, 32 Гб встроенной памяти, 13-мегапиксельная основная камера с возможностью записи видео в формате Full HD (1080p), дополнительная фронтальная 1,3-мегапиксельная камера, идеально подходящая для общения в Skype™, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth и NFC.

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Помимо современных технологий новый Constellation предлагает эксклюзивные сервисы Vertu: Vertu LIFE и Vertu CERTAINTY.

Сервис Vertu LIFE – это эксклюзивные привилегии и неограниченный доступ на мероприятия, включая бесплатный вход в закрытые частные клубы по всему миру и возможность делать покупки «за закрытыми дверями».

Сервис Vertu CERTAINTY помогает защитить устройство, персональные данные, а при необходимости и самого владельца телефона за счет передовых технологий и партнеров-экспертов. Партнерство с Silent Circle гарантирует возможность шифрования каналов связи, iPass предоставляет доступ к сети Wi-Fi по всему миру, личную безопасность клиентов обеспечивает компания Protector Services Group, антивирус разработан Лабораторией Касперского.



Golden tears of the amber sea

The people who live along the shores of the Baltic Sea perceive this moderately salty body of water very subjectively. The Germans, Danes, Swedes and even the Finns call it the Eastern Sea (although it actually bathes the Western and Southern shores of Finland). The Estonians call it *Läänemeri* or the Western Sea. The Poles and the Russians call it the Baltic Sea, while the Latvians often call it the Amber Sea.

Although the average Baltic sprat doubtlessly holds greater significance for the sustenance of these nations than any precious stone, amber is nevertheless the most famous resource to come from the depths of the Baltic Sea. One of the most fundamental subatomic particles, the electron, is even named after this yellowish substance, as *ἤλεκτρον* (*ēlektron*) was the word for amber in Ancient Greek. It referred to a mysterious stone that attracted small objects when rubbed with fur and that the Greeks associated with the rays of the sun.

Part of amber's charm lies in the uniqueness of each stone. Amber is the petrified resin of 30 to 50-million-

year-old pines, with each amber piece gaining its shape and form in a seemingly random manner.

Amber comes in various hues, shapes and sizes. Some amber has a matted white colour due to the tiny air bubbles that are concealed inside it, while other types are a translucent golden yellow. Some pieces of amber envelop the remains of ancient ants, dragonflies, spiders and even lizards or are shaped in the contours of pine tree bark. Massive pieces of amber weighing five kilograms have even been found, generating surreal images of what an ordinary forest must have looked like back then, with pieces of dripping resin reaching the size of a human head!

Most of the amber in the Baltic Sea lies in a layer of blue clay that is 60 metres deep and that the sea's southeastern waters have been slowly eroding over the course of the last 7000 years, incrementally washing up tonnes of amber fragments on the shores of Russia, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia. About 90 percent of all amber deposits are located

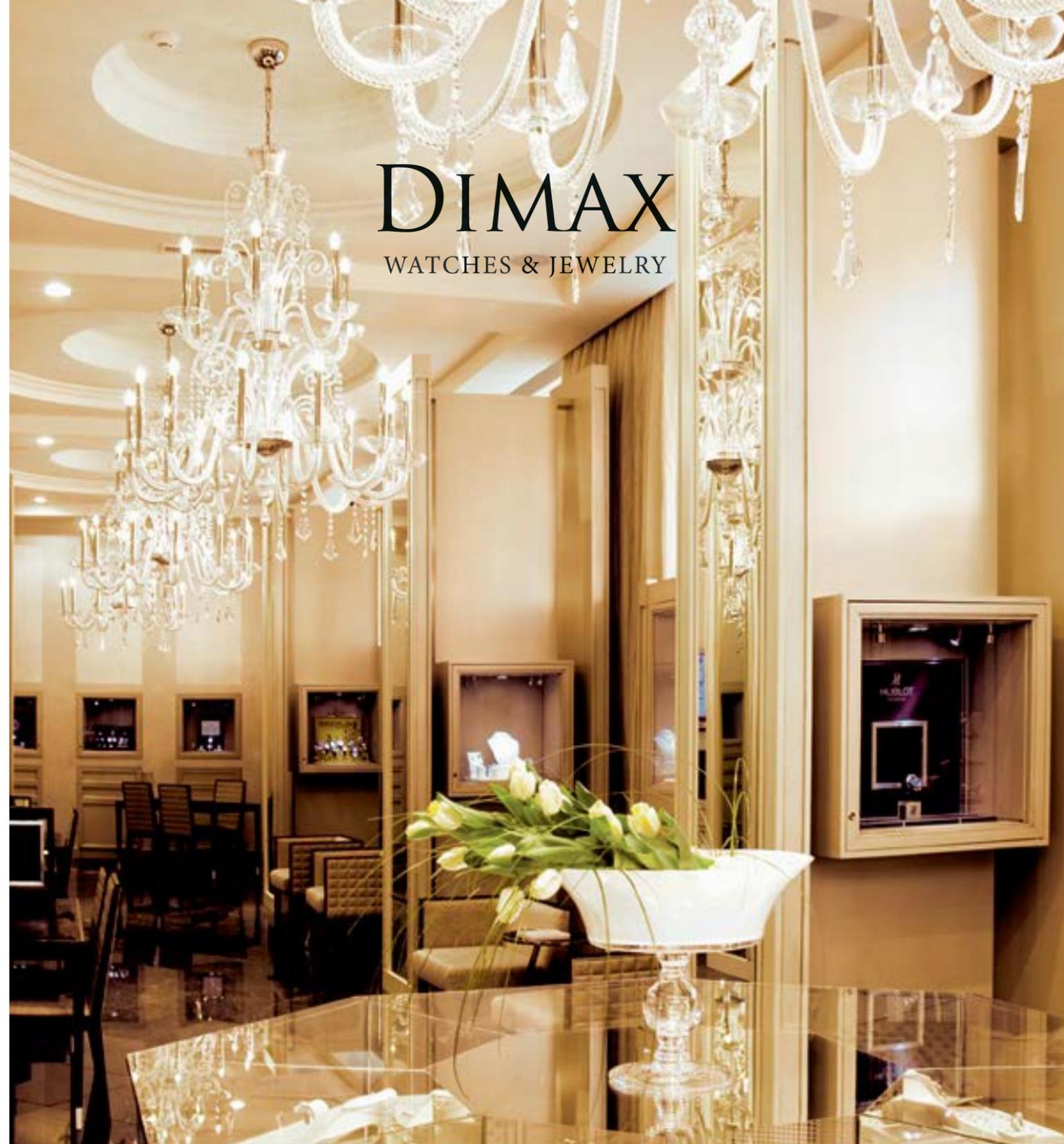
in what is now the Kaliningrad oblast of Russia, formerly a part of Prussia. There, amber is extracted on an industrial scale, with excavators digging into the blue clay, of which one cubic metre yields about four kilograms of amber.

MANY ARABS PRAY DAILY WITH AMBER PRAYER BEADS

For centuries, the Polish city of Gdansk was the main centre of the amber trade along the Amber Way, which once extended along various branches from what is now Liepāja in Latvia to Aquileia and Rome in Italy. Today, the waves of the Baltic Sea still wash large amounts of amber onto the shores of

Lithuania, whose inhabitants can retrieve it without having to dig for it, and who fashion some of the most original amber items. The Chinese like to buy huge hunks of the stone at the amber market in Gdansk, while many Arabs pray daily with amber prayer beads fashioned by Lithuanian craftsmen. After a year, the beads are burned and new ones are purchased.

Latvians usually look for amber after heavy storms, their backs bent forward as they comb the shoreline for pieces of the stone. **BO**



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A taste of Latvia

On November 18, Latvia will celebrate its 95th Independence Day anniversary. Here are some inspirational ideas for a sumptuous holiday dinner with Latvian gastronomic staples that have been passed down over the generations



- 1. Birch sap**
Possibly the most characteristically Latvian drink, it can be imbibed fresh from the tree, or lightly fermented as a sparkling soft drink, or further fermented as a wine and even distilled as a strong spirit.
- 2. BIO birch sap syrup**
Used as a sweetener for desserts

and marinades, providing them with an inimitable flavour.

- 3. Jams**
Red and black currant, apple, raspberry, sea buckthorn and gooseberry are just some of the local jams that Latvians use throughout the winter with pancakes, wild game and cheeses.

- 4. Honey**
The honey that comes from northern countries like Latvia is particularly aromatic and rich. Particularly healing and delicious with herbal teas.
- 5. Rye flour**
Used to make genuine, dark rye bread, one of Latvia's hallmark foods.

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

RECIPES

Cranberry jellies

A healthy treat for both young and old

Ingredients:
300 g cranberries
150 ml + 250 ml water
100 g + 200 g sugar
25 g gelatine

Preparation:
Put the cranberries into a pot, add 150 ml water and 100 g sugar. Boil over a low fire for about 10 minutes until the berries have broken up. Strain through a sieve.

Let the gelatine swell up in half a glass of cold water.

Heat up 200 g of sugar with 250 ml water in a kettle until the sugar has dissolved. Remove the kettle from the fire and add the gelatine. Stir until the gelatine has dissolved. Add the cranberry water, mix well, pour into a flat tray and chill in the refrigerator.

Once the marmalade has hardened, cut into cubes and roll them in sugar.

Whipped goat's cheese with sea buckthorn jam

A truly contemporary combination of Latvian tastes – tender goat's cheese on crispy slices of dark rye bread, which are complemented with sweetly sour sea buckthorn jam.

Ingredients:
100 g soft goat's cheese
70 g whipping cream
a pinch of sea salt
sea buckthorn jam
slices of dark rye bread

Preparation:
Use a mixer to whip the goat's cheese together with the whipping cream and sea salt until the mixture becomes fluffy.
Toast the slices of dark rye bread. Spread two teaspoons of the whipped cheese mixture over each bread slice and decorate with a teaspoon of sea buckthorn jam.

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A cultural holiday in Paris

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Bad luck, someone has already taken the photo. To the travelguide brochure about Paris, but don't worry, all the information is also available at ANOTHERTRAVELGUIDE.COM in cooperation with airBaltic.

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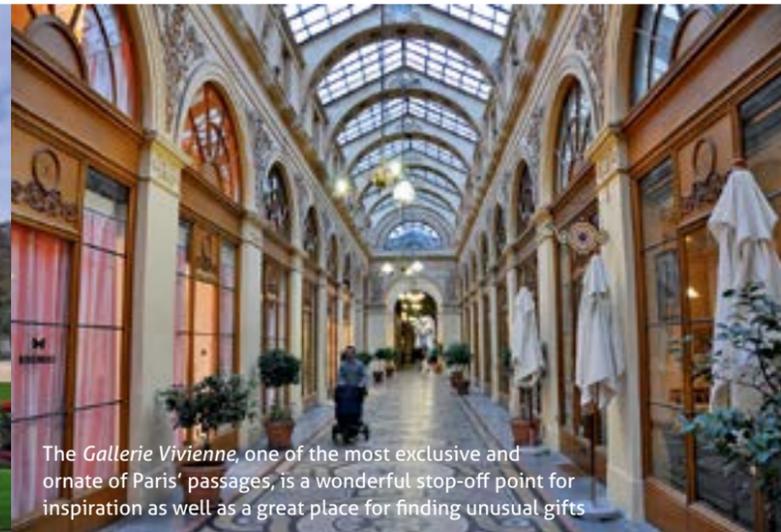
"In Paris we live as if in a dream. We know nothing of reality, of the economic crisis and so on, even though we really are going through a crisis, and a very serious one at that. Wandering through the streets of Paris, you see restaurants full of people every day, even on Mondays and Tuesdays. And it's not just tourists, but locals as well. We are supposedly all in the same boat, but we don't even realise what's happening, not even here at home in France. It feels like there's a glass dome covering Paris," says Alain Bisotti, author of the popular *Hôtels Paris Rive Gauche* blog. With a green scarf casually worn over his grey jacket, Bisotti looks like a typical Parisian...at least the way we usually imagine they look.

We have met in the recently reconstructed *Hôtel du Panthéon*, which is the perfect embodiment of the myth of a "glass dome" over Paris. It is a hotel that immediately transports you into that mythological "city of eternal celebration". Its 35 rooms are like a hymn to legendary French women: passionate, venerated, free and independent. It is also a hymn to their no less passionate and stormy love affairs. Like the majority of Paris' old buildings, the hallways of the *Hôtel du Panthéon* are small and narrow, making the trip to your pocket-sized bohemian-style room with a large suitcase a veritable journey back in time.

One whole floor of the hotel is devoted to the love affair between Edith Piaf and French boxer Marcel Cerdan. They were together for just under a year before Cerdan died in an airplane crash, but the relationship has been immortalised in countless photographs and later in Claude Lelouch's film *Edith et Marcel*. Far from banal, the 1950s-style interior contains no direct reminiscences of the couple (such as the famous photos of the two of them happily together), only two stylised punching bags on the wall and general photographs of couples in love on the streets of 1950s Paris, calling to mind the bliss of Edith and Marcel. The photo series is titled *Days of Happiness*.



Paris' legendary fashion museum, the *Musée Galliera*, opened this September after an extensive reconstruction



The *Galerie Vivienne*, one of the most exclusive and ornate of Paris' passages, is a wonderful stop-off point for inspiration as well as a great place for finding unusual gifts



The *Centre Pompidou* is hosting the first retrospective of French contemporary artist Pierre Huyghe



Once an old Parisian port warehouse, today *Les Docks* is an epicentre of fashion and design

Another floor of the *Hôtel du Panthéon* is devoted to the legendary 19th-century courtesans known as *cocottes* – women whose business was wealthy men. Drowning in red velvet and with a bathtub in one corner, the rooms resemble a fishnet stocking. The bedside table even holds a typical object of a courtesan's "work room", namely, a small box of napkins, while the window provides a view of that necropolis of men, the *Panthéon*. Say what you will, but the owners of the hotel have a good sense of humour. Seeing that the *Hotel Les Grands Hommes* is just nearby, they must have decided that this area has enough glorification of the male.

The impressive *Panthéon* – 110 metres long, 84 metres wide and 83 metres tall – is a building shrouded in passion. Inspired by the Pantheon in Rome, the construction of the Neoclassical-style building began in 1757 and lasted 35 years. It was originally planned as a church, but the final phase of construction coincided with the French Revolution and the revolutionaries decided not to create a temple to any god, but instead a temple to outstanding men who had served the nation. The inscription above the entrance reads *Aux Grands Hommes La Patrie Reconnaissante* (To the great men, the grateful homeland) and the structure is the final resting place of such great men as Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Jean-Paul Marat, Victor Hugo and Émile Zola.

Only two women – Nobel Prize-winner Marie Curie and Sophie Berthelot, both scientists – lie among the 74 people interred in the famous mausoleum. Moreover, it is rumoured that Berthelot was included only because she flatly refused to be buried apart from her husband, Marcellin Berthelot. Needless to say, the *Panthéon* has been the object of many a feminist protest. The latest was at the beginning of 2013, after which French president François Hollande declared that the discriminatory situation should be righted and even issued a public poll to decide which women deserve to be honoured by being interred in the *Panthéon*. At the same time, he admitted that the roots of gender inequality stretch far back into French history, because women were almost nonexistent in French public life at the time when only men were being interred in the *Panthéon*. In fact, French women did not even have the right to vote until 1944, with France being one of the last countries in Western Europe to introduce women's suffrage. Switzerland did so even later, giving women the right to vote in 1971.

As George Sand, whose love affair with French poet and playwright Alfred de Musset is also played out in one of the floors of the *Hôtel du Panthéon*, once wrote: "Life resembles a novel more often than novels resemble life." Perhaps this feeling of the "glass dome" that Bisotti describes is why most of us enjoy returning again and again to Paris. The city is the citadel of romanticism, and upon approaching it we close our eyes at the ugly concrete apartment buildings in various surrounding neighbourhoods and pretend to not see them, as if they were a part of a completely different city, a city not associated with the "true" Paris...at least not the Paris that exists in our dreams and imaginations.

In this sense we should express gratitude to common sense, which did not allow the utopia of the modernist architect and designer Le Corbusier to be realised. Namely, he had proposed to sweep away the Neoclassical-style Haussmann-era buildings of central Paris and replace them with huge blocks of concrete buildings that were ten times higher than anything existing at the time. If Le Corbusier's vision had come to fruition, then the "eternal celebration" illusion of Paris, where the air smells differently and steps have a completely different rhythm, would have been lost to us forever. It doesn't matter that this illusion has nothing in common with the real Paris.

A trip to Paris is like a journey to find the hidden essence of inspiration inside a crystal vessel. In addition, no other European city is able to enclose this essence in such a beautiful wrapping. Maybe that's why – no matter how stereotypical it sounds – there's no better destination for a cultural holiday than Paris.

The sculptor of fashion

Culturally speaking, this autumn is particularly generous in Paris. One of the city's gems of historical architecture, the *Musée Galliera* (or, the fashion museum), has opened its doors again in September following four years of reconstruction. The ornate Renaissance-style building was built in the late 19th century as a home for the private art collection of Marie Brignole-Sale, the Duchess of Galliera. Construction was finished only after the duchess' death, in 1894, although she had bequeathed the property to the city shortly before she died. Her only wish had been that the building serve for the display of sculptures.

Life, however, takes unexpected turns. Following several changes of ownership, the *Galliera Palace* finally became a fashion museum in 1977. The museum has now already been reconstructed twice, although its history actually reaches back to 1907, when the French historian and collector Maurice Leloir established the *Société de l'Histoire du Costume* and agreed in 1920 to donate his own collection of 2000 garments and accessories to the city of Paris with the condition that it would open a museum of fashion.

Today, the museum has more than 90,000 objects in its collection representing the best of three centuries of fashion. In a way, the museum's re-opening exhibition, featuring the work of one of the most loved contemporary designers, the Tunisian-born genius Azzedine Alaïa, is a tribute to the original wishes of the duchess. Alaïa studied sculpture at art school in Tunis and became a true architect of fashion, a perfectionist whose clothes contain a feeling for the body that is difficult to describe in words.

Alaïa is now 73 years old and has been living in Paris for 54 years. Among his clients are many first ladies, Greta Garbo and all the top supermodels. In fact, models have been known to

work for Alaïa for free, receiving a dress in place of a fee. This is understandable, because the designer's clothing is like an ode to perfection, something that is almost impossible to find nowadays. This absolute ideal of beauty in the form of a dress also adds to the "glass dome" feeling of Paris. Alaïa's creations feel timeless – they seem to have no past, no future, and are immune to short-lived fads. As Olivier Saillard, director of the *Musée Galliera*, said in an interview with the fashion journal *WWD*, "An Alaïa garment is like an *Hermès* handbag. He makes clothes that endure."

Unlike other designers, who in their roles as creative directors have become more like managers than *couturiers*, Alaïa still creates his own patterns and sews his own samples to ensure that each seam is located exactly where he has intended. It has been said that his hands have a brain of their own. Not only are the seams and fabric of his creations perfect, but the whole garment surrounds and fits the body like a second skin, highlighting its most ideal form.

Stressing Alaïa's perfectionism, the museum's exhibition contains no photographs or videos of fashion shows, as is common in other retrospectives of designers' work. The exhibition contains

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Le Passage du Chantier features one of the oldest little cobblestone streets in Paris



Chez Prune, the local bobo (bourgeois-bohemian) HQ in Paris' trendy Canal St-Martin neighbourhood



Le Perchoir bar/restaurant is this moment's place "to see and be seen"

Humans have so often chased nature away from cities, but Blanc's gardens are bringing it back

only garments and nothing else to distract the visitor's attention. The mannequins also have no heads and are made of almost transparent plastic, thereby highlighting the form of the garments.

The Alaïa exhibition is located in two halls: the *Musée Galliera* and the Matisse Gallery of the *Musée de l'Art Moderne* (Museum of Modern Art) across the street. His clothes stand next to such legendary works of art as Matisse's *The Unfinished Dance* and *The Dance of Paris* as well as 20 paintings by Daniel Buren that are exhibited in the same hall. This is definitely one of the most emotional parts of the exhibition, because none of these three luminaries reigns superior or overshadows the others. It is a symbiosis of three geniuses that lifts fashion design to a pedestal that few are able to achieve today.

An alchemist of vertical gardening

Coinciding with the exhibition is the opening of Alaïa's second store in Paris, located at 5 rue de Marignan, a small side street

near Avenue Montaigne, Paris' famous artery of luxury. Although the store is in an ornate 18th-century building, its interior reflects a futuristic minimalism. The ceiling lamps, designed by British industrial designer Marc Newson, look like gigantic lifebuoys, and the giant chain chandelier by American artist Kris Ruhs stretches from the first floor all the way up to the fourth floor of the white marble stairwell.

The white walls of the store and the manner in which the clothing is displayed create a feeling that is more like an art gallery than a classic clothing store. The first floor, which features footwear and accessories, provides access to the small courtyard, where a verdant vertical garden covers one wall of the building like a lush forest. Only the windows remain unplanted, like eyes in a sea of green. The creator of this garden is none other than the founder of the vertical garden trend, botanist Patrick Blanc.

Another of Blanc's walls, *Oasis d'Aboukir*, has just been finished at the corner of the Rue d'Aboukir and Rue des Petits Carreaux. From a very young age, Blanc has been fascinated by vertical gardens and plants accustomed to growing on vertical surfaces, such as cliffs, waterfalls and caves, and that do not require soil in the traditional sense. He patented his vertical garden concept and created his first vertical garden for the *Pershing Hall* hotel in Paris, designed by recently deceased French designer Andrée Putnam. The idea snowballed and Blanc has since created many similar projects, both on his own and in collaboration with well-known architects such as Jean Nouvel and *Herzog & de Meuron*. Over 30 of his projects

can be seen in Paris alone, including the vertical garden at the *Quai Branly* museum of ancient civilisations.

"Do plants really need soil? No, they don't. Soil is merely nothing more than a mechanical support. Only water and the many minerals dissolved in it are essential to plants, together with light and carbon dioxide to conduct photosynthesis," explains Blanc, the alchemist of vertical gardens. His creations are actually quite like an Alaïa dress in that they serve as a second skin to a surface. In addition to plants, each of Blanc's gardens also contains a metal frame, a layer of PVC and then a layer of felt. The non-rotting felt allows the plants' roots to stretch across and through it, never actually touching the wall of the building. The thermal effect produced by the garden lowers the building's energy consumption, protecting it from the cold in the winter and acting as a natural air conditioner in the summer. In addition, the leaves, roots and microorganisms within the plants form an ecosystem that actually cleans and improves the surrounding air. Humans have so often chased nature away from cities, but Blanc's gardens are bringing it back.

The *Oasis d'Aboukir* garden, located on a formerly blank concrete building façade marred by graffiti, is 25 metres high and has 7600 plants representing 237 different species. Arranged in diagonal waves, the plants seem to reach for the sun. The wide stone bench-like border in the small square next to the green wall is almost always full of people gazing at the garden. Like a wonderful oasis...and the air here smells like a tropical garden, too. When the wind

rustles the plants, the vertical green carpet seems to come alive and begin breathing.

Robert Wilson at the Louvre

The Pierre Huyghe retrospective exhibition at the *Centre Pompidou* – the first time such a broad exposition of this artist's work has been displayed in France – also calls to mind the relationship between humans and nature. Huyghe's art balances on the border between fantasy and reality, constantly challenging our generally accepted ideas and notions about the world. Living things (crabs, bees, spiders and much more) are integral "inhabitants" of his art and have been placed there by Huyghe as actors in his plays. In one sense, the artist determines the rules of the game, but in another sense he allows his subjects absolute freedom to just be.

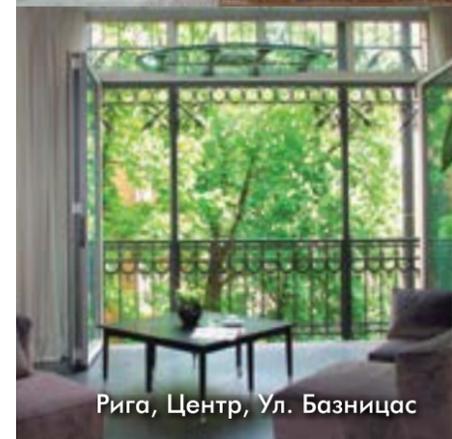
Huyghe's exhibitions resemble a surreal dream in which everything is in continual flux and nothing stays the same from one moment to the next. His exhibitions create a light euphoria of emotions in the viewer, similar to dizziness, making one wander like a child looking for adventure, not unlike Alice in Wonderland. Water that falls from the ceiling like a waterfall...and then turns into smoke. A pile of pink sand without borders that slowly spreads across the room. A light installation that follows people's movements as they control the lights by remote control, like in a computer game. A woman lounging on a concrete pedestal (*Untitled*, 2012), except that her head is a swarm of bees that constantly changes shape as the bees move around – apparent chaos that is actually the flawless order of the world of bees.



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Azzedine Alaïa's newly opened boutique boasts no window displays and its minimalist, slightly futuristic décor is more reminiscent of an art gallery

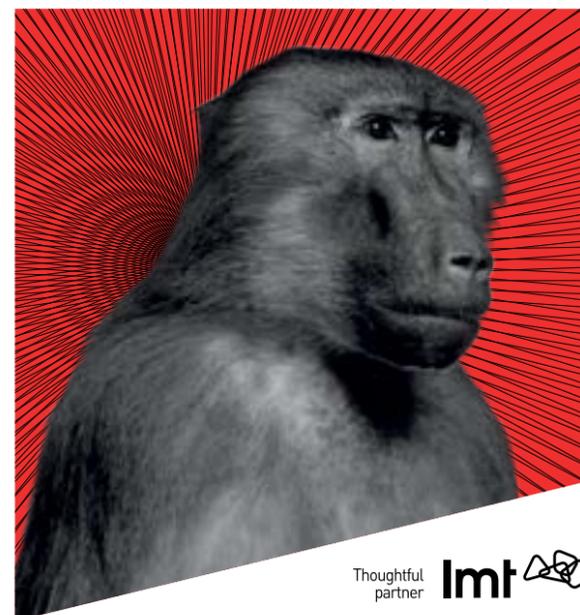


An exhibition of Tunisian-born fashion genius Azzedine Alaïa marks the reopening of the Musée Galliera after four years of renovation

One of the most memorable pieces in the exhibition is the live hermit crab in an aquarium that spends its days slowly moving around in its craggy underwater world, carrying a golden house on its back, but the house is in the shape of Brancusi's famous *Sleeping Muse*. The image in the aquarium changes depending on where the viewer stands, making it look like the crab lives several different lives. Does the crab realise that his house and he himself are a work of art? And what can we learn of bees and the rules of a swarm? Huyghe provokes and poses questions. As he said in an interview in *The Art Newspaper*, "I'm interested in how to quantify the different variations of being alive...how to intensify the presence of things. I look at how things change, are transformed or metabolise."

In November, the Paris Autumn Festival (which lasts until January 12) pays tribute to Robert Wilson, the American avant-garde theatre director also known as the alchemist of theatre. This year is the 40th anniversary of the Paris showing of *Deafman Glance*, Wilson's then-hardly-known silent opera. This year, the festival includes a production of Wilson's newest work, *The Old Woman* (November 6-23), based on motifs from Daniil Kharms. In it three brilliant New York artists – dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov, actor Willem Dafoe and director Robert Wilson – join together in a masterpiece of Russian theatre of the absurd. *Peter Pan* by the Berliner Ensemble also travels to Paris on December 2-20 for a performance about the boy who did not want to grow up.

The Louvre also opens its doors to Robert Wilson in a programme called *Le Louvre invite Robert Wilson* (The Louvre invites Robert Wilson). Wilson's exhibition, called *Living Rooms*, can be seen from November 11 to February 17. It features works from his own private art collection and other objects that hold significance for him as well as a wide programme of performances.



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Conductor: **Normunds Šnē**

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7.00pm
The Great
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Mahler's Fifth

Programme: **Symphony No. 5**
Conductor: **Rossen Milanov**



Monsieur Bleu restaurant at the Palais de Tokyo

"Must-visit" gastronomy stops

Paris' gastronomic agenda is just as saturated this autumn as its cultural scene. Although the rest of Europe is talking about the eclipse of the *Michelin* star, the inertia of traditional splendour under Paris' "glass dome" remains alive and well. Thus, one of this autumn's most talked about events is the collaboration between French star chef Alain Ducasse and the luxury hotel *Le Meurice*, the interior of which was recently freshened up by Philippe Starck. When star chef Yannick Alléno, who had earned three *Michelin* stars for the hotel's restaurant, left it earlier this year, a general state of confusion is said to have fallen upon the local culinary community.

Considering that Ducasse already manages one legendary hotel restaurant – the *Plaza Athénée*, which, along with the hotel, is closed until next summer due to reconstruction – *Le Meurice* is quite the trophy in the chef's empire of over 20 restaurants across the globe. The interior of *Le Meurice* was inspired by the Peace Room at the Versailles Palace, and the Tuileries Gardens can be seen through its large windows. The food – a contemporary take on traditional French cuisine – likewise corresponds with the general atmosphere of the restaurant.

Ducasse's colleague, chef Eric Fréchon at the *Hôtel Bristol's* three-*Michelin*-starred restaurant, has ventured a slightly more affordable sidestep by opening a restaurant in Paris' Saint-Lazare railway station. The restaurant is named *Lazare* and is difficult to find at first glance due to the construction currently taking place at the station. Warm

wood dominates the interior, and even the white plates and glasses on the shelves form a part of the interior design. Since the restaurant is still very new and has not yet managed to be reviewed in popular food blogs, there are few tourists. However, Paris' gourmards have already found *Lazare*. The prices are friendly and the fare is outstanding classic French food (*steak à cheval* and so on).

By the way, if the major George Braques retrospective at the *Grand Palais* until January 6 is on your Paris itinerary, then lunch at the *Mini Palais* restaurant in the other wing of the palace is highly recommended. The menu there has also been created by Eric Fréchon and, unlike the majority of Parisian restaurants, the *Mini Palais* does not close in the afternoons.

Befitting Paris' status as a fashion capital, an integral part of its gastronomy scene consists of places that one goes "to see and be seen". *Monsieur Bleu* in the *Palais de Tokyo* contemporary art space and the rooftop bar/restaurant *Le Perchoir* in Paris' 11th arrondissement are at the top of the list of current must-visit venues. Located right across from the Eiffel Tower, almost on the banks of the Seine, *Monsieur Bleu's* location is the quintessence of romance. Its interior is elegant in the manner of a supermodel's grey-haired attendant who collects art and has the lifestyle of a dandy. The menu is a virtuoso symbiosis of flavours from around the world, the clientèle is likewise a global crème de la crème of fashion, and the staff seems to have just stepped off the latest fashion runway.

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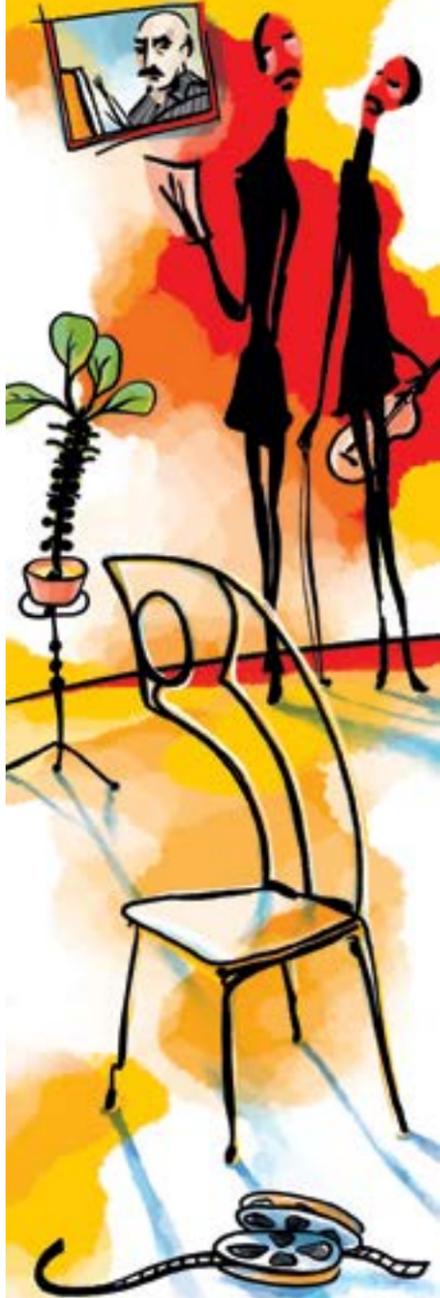
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View of Notre Dame, one of the most famous cathedrals in the world

Believe it or not, but it's hard to find a flat roof in Paris

Keeping in step with the latest trends, most of the wines on *Monsieur Bleu's* wine list have been made using organic and biodynamic methods. Keep note that if your head is swimming a little after dinner at *Monsieur Bleu*, then be careful to not fall for the "gold ring scam" on your way home along the Seine. Swindlers have come to favour this area along the river, casually asking, "Have you lost something?" and waving a gold ring in front of your nose. Apparently, plenty of naïve folks get hooked by the sparkle of gold. Just so you know, there's a gold ring just for you lying in the autumn leaves every five metres...

Le Perchoir is Paris' first real rooftop bar, and its owners promise to keep their patio open all winter long. Believe it or not, but it's hard to find a flat roof in Paris, nor are there many seven-storey buildings. Located off the tourist track atop a mundane industrial building in a multiracial neighbourhood with a likewise international selection of eateries, *Le Perchoir* is not a place you'll come across by accident. It has no loud signs to mark its entrance, only a watchman at the door who checks the reservation list and shows you the way to

the elevator, which you take to the seventh floor. This would be normal in Berlin, but not in Paris.

Even though the evening is cool and everyone is wrapped up in blankets, the bar is full. We see the rooftops of Paris all around us and two of the city's main symbols – the Eiffel Tower and *Sacré Coeur* – laid out as if on the palm of our hand. A spiral staircase leads from the romantic rooftop to the industrial-style but nevertheless homey restaurant one storey lower. Each chair is different, the tables are made of rough-hewn boards and the clientèle consists mostly of young, well-situated, creative intellectuals.

The menu is a three-course meal improvised daily by the chef. The dishes are placed on a two-centimetre thick board in the middle of the table, and sharing is part of the whole experience. You will not overeat, but the meal is filling enough to want to spend some time afterwards with a glass of wine, enjoying the view. A view as surreal as everything else in this city, a view with that same concentrated feeling of slight dizziness, a view that momentarily allows us to see only those things we wish to see...even if it's only the Paris of our imaginations.

Insider's view



PHOTO BY JASON WHITTAKER

Alain Bisotti

Where have all the Parisians gone?

Alain Bisotti has been living in Paris for more than 20 years. He is the marketing manager at the small, charming *Hôtels Paris Rive Gauche* hotel chain on the Left Bank of the Seine. He is also the author of the popular *Hôtels Paris Rive Gauche* cultural blog. Bisotti's humorous, witty entries are a joy to read, no matter whether the theme is a current art exhibition or a new gourmet find. In any case, his blog is definitely worth a look before heading to Paris.

"I used to be a book seller in Toulouse in the south of France," says Bisotti. "When I arrived in Paris, I had to accept a job as night auditor at a hotel and I realised that I was enjoying it. I decided to stay and I'm so happy with this decision. I'm living with my future husband and our dog near the Canal Saint Martin."

Why do you like living in Paris?

I travel by bicycle, and every morning on my bike I'm just simply happy – even if it's just watching the sun come up and give colour to the buildings. You can find something beautiful in nearly every corner of Paris. I always cross the bridge on my way to work and every morning I see the *Louvre*, the *Musée d'Orsay* and the *Conciergerie*. Whenever someone comes to Paris for the first time, I always recommend taking a walk through the *Louvre*, both the Pyramid and the museum. I think it's magical and fantastic...simply unbelievable.

Does Paris really continue to amaze you? Have you not become accustomed to it by now?

No. In addition, I now have a dog, so my walks now have a completely different character. I notice things that I never noticed before when riding my bike. That's the magic of this city. I know people who visit Paris regularly and the same thing happens to them – they're continually amazed at what they see. That doesn't happen, for example, in London. In London, I'm not amazed at all. But Rome elicits the same feelings as Paris. Especially when the sunlight bathes the city. The light is fantastic.

Is there anything that you hate about Paris?

Yes, the behaviour of the people. And Paris is not very clean, either.

Because of the dogs?

No, because of the people. For example, people unwrap a sandwich and often just throw the paper onto the ground.

Was it the same 20 years ago?

Now it's just more pronounced. Maybe you don't see it in the centre of the city, because that's tourist territory and is therefore cleaned often. But if you live, for example, by the Canal Saint Martin, it's a mess. But I like Paris anyway.

Could you name your five favourite restaurants and cafés in Paris?

Carmen Ragosta: Mode et cuisine. I like this place very much and I go there almost every weekend. The owner is

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a designer of women's clothing and also a wonderful chef. She specialises in vegan Italian cuisine. The restaurant is not open every day. On Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays it serves lunch; on Saturdays and Sundays it serves brunch. Sometimes Carmen opens it for dinner on weekends, but then you have to be a group of at least four or five people and make a reservation well in advance. But she'll make a meal specially for you! You never know what to expect when you arrive at *Carmen Ragosta*. Whenever I'm there, I meet people who first have a meal and then try on Carmen's clothing. She's very talented. Besides, her restaurant makes some of the best *tiramisu* in the world!

Jésus Paradis. A nice place to have a drink and listen to nice music with nice people. *Jésus Paradis* is in the hip area of the Rue Saint-Denis, serving spicy food from Brazil and Cape Verde. Twice a week the restaurant also serves homemade hamburgers. Just a few years ago, the Rue Saint-Denis was a very creepy area, but now it's very trendy, especially the area around the *Château d'Eau*. It's full of hipsters tasting all kinds of hamburgers, because the newest trend is eateries that serve homemade hamburgers.

Pâtisserie Viennoise. A small Viennese-style *pâtisserie* near the *Ecole de Médecine* that's almost as old as a human lifetime. The counter at the front of the bakery sells cakes and strudels for take-away that are made right on the premises, in the bakery's basement. Further inside is a small café with tables.

Le Salon du Panthéon. Near the Sorbonne, for secret meetings, *Le Salon du Panthéon* is located on the upper floor of the *Cinéma du Panthéon*. Furnished with retro-style furniture, low tables and lush rugs, the place looks more like a designer lounge than a restaurant. The interior designer is none other than French film diva Catherine Deneuve! It's an unbelievably homey place and, furthermore, it serves great food.

Le Pharamond. A place to go for the atmosphere, but not for the food, which is far from excellent. With its wonderful Art Nouveau

interior, the first floor looks like a classic turn-of-the-20th-century bistro. However, the true gems are the private salons on the second floor, which seat three, four or five people and can be reserved for special occasions. Just imagine what might have happened here many years ago.

Le Train Bleu is also a special place. Located in the *Gare de Lyon* station since 1901, its interior brings you back to the *Belle Époque*. The food, however, is nothing special, so it's more of a place to have a coffee or cocktail. When I first came to Paris, I worked nights and came here in the mornings to have a cup of coffee. I sat back and gazed at the ceiling. A fantastic place!

What should one definitely do to catch the vibe of Paris in all its diversity?

I would say *La Fête de la Musique*. Every year on June 21st, there's music of all sorts on every street corner and a real party feeling across the city. There's no other night like it here. Expect a few bad cover versions of rock classics, but also much spontaneous dancing and a great deal of laughter.

How would you describe the true Parisians?

That depends a lot on the neighbourhood. If you compare Paris and Brussels, for example, they're two completely different cities. In Brussels it's the foreigners and poorer people who live in the centre of the city, whereas in Paris it's the other way around: the city centre is mostly full of white, rich people and the further you go from the centre, the more foreigners and poorer people you'll meet.

It's difficult to find a true Parisian in Paris. The people you'll meet most likely are from Provence or other regions of France. The true Parisians have left Paris. Most of my friends are also not native Parisians. Paris is full of foreigners.

And no one knows what's happened with the true Parisians?

They've all run away.

Why have they run away if Paris is so wonderful?

I like Paris very much, but I think I will run away from it in about ten years as well.

Why?

It's a very, very busy city. Furthermore, the older one gets, the more one wants peace and quiet and proximity to nature. Paris is a city for very active people; it's not for senior citizens. Paris is very difficult for the elderly, because they often live alone and in buildings without elevators. Maybe it's like that in all cities, but Paris is definitely not the friendliest city in which to grow old.

Where would you like to grow old?

I think I will head to Seville. In Spain, relations between people are different than they are in France. Even on the streets of such a turbulent city as Madrid one sees young people helping old people. In Paris you don't see anything like that. That doesn't happen anymore. On the bus you'll never see a young person giving up his or her seat to an elderly person.

Is that French arrogance?

Yes, I believe arrogance is actually a very good word. And it's not Parisian arrogance, it's French arrogance. The French have always been big, and humanity is not a part of their character. A mixture of different communities is also not characteristic of France. Many people live next to each other but never meet their neighbours. I must admit that I also have no African or Asian friends. All of my friends are white. Social mixing is not characteristic of Paris, but rather closed circles that do not overlap.

What is the biggest stereotype about Paris and is it true?

People often say to me that "Parisians are so well dressed!" But I'm not really sure that's true. Most people get their clothes from the same chain stores that you'll find the world over, or at the supermarket. If visitors think that we can all afford to get our clothes from *Chanel* and *Yves Saint Laurent*, then they're wrong. **BO**



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The Willy Wonka of the gourmet world

Having transformed a Barcelona city block into a gastronomic mecca, famous Catalan chef Albert Adrià says that the era of Michelin stars is over and that a new language of cooking needs to be created

In a sense, our conversation with Albert Adrià could really be called an exclusive interview, for it lasted precisely one hour and 23 minutes and during this time, he was interrupted only once by one of *Tickets*' many chefs with a question about a restaurant dish. If you Google Adrià and see how popular he is, then you'll understand that this was practically a miracle. Although it was two in the afternoon and *Tickets* officially opens its doors only at seven in the evening, the restaurant's kitchen was a beehive of activity, with steaming kettles, clanking plates, crackling pans and staff running about like sprinters on a race track.

Albert Adrià is most often described as *el hermano de Ferran*, the younger brother of star chef Ferran Adrià. As one gastronomic publication aptly noted, if Ferran is "the greatest chef on the planet", then Albert is "the greatest unknown cook in the world". Now, it seems that the two Adrià brothers have changed roles. *elBulli*, the world-famous epicentre of experimental cuisine, was run by Ferran, but has been closed since 2011. As Ferran takes a break from active cooking, an exhibition devoted to his once fantastically successful restaurant is travelling the globe. It is titled *Ferran Adria and the Art of Food*. Next year, Ferran plans to release a seven-volume almanac, *elBulli 2005-2011*, featuring 750 of the legendary establishment's recipes. He has converted the restaurant into the *elBullifoundation* and is busy at work on a *Wikipedia*-like gastronomic publication named *Bullipedia*, whose publication has been put off for two years from 2014 to 2016.

Albert, for his part, has been building his own restaurant empire (although he strongly dislikes this designation of his activities) since 2010 on a single city block in Poble Sec, a former working-class neighbourhood of Barcelona. Its main street, the Avinguda del Paral·lel, was once known as the Catalan Broadway. Four of Albert's restaurants operate there, while a fifth (serving Mexican food) is to open this winter, and a sixth no later than next April.

"It's a challenge to open a new restaurant every six months. However, once my project is completed, you will be able to eat in a

completely different manner within one city block. *Tickets* [a *tapas* bar that could be seen as a more affordable version of *elBulli*, ed.] has room for 110 guests. It's a party! *41 Degrees Experience*, which we converted from a cocktail bar to a 16-seat restaurant, is a more emotional and gastronomic experience with a fixed menu. However, next year, that will change again, because in my opinion it's better to give people freedom of choice during times of crisis, like the one that we're facing now. *PAKTA* is a Japanese-Peruvian restaurant. You can choose either a 16- or an 18-course meal. The cuisine there is very special. The *Bodega 1900* or *vermuteria* is about vermouth and Spanish traditions. It just opened recently and you can have a great meal there for 40 euro. The idea behind our upcoming Mexican restaurant *Yuarcan* is to prepare the meals right before your eyes. Everything is made right by your table – the Caesar salad, the guacamole."

Since it is the middle of the day, Albert is not wearing his white chef's jacket, but a simple grey T-shirt and shorts. While conveying a disarming cheerfulness and simplicity during our conversation, his eyes continuously dart about like the second hand of a watch. One can detect an unmistakable craziness in them, the type that is characteristic of truly passionate

souls. And Albert harbours just such a soul, for he concocts dishes that nobody else has ever created before. He simultaneously offers both an artistic and a gastronomic experience – something that is so unique and so positively charged that with a simple plate of food, he can instantly transport any hardened adult back to the emotional state of an innocent, gleeful child. There aren't too many chefs who can do that!

If *elBulli* was mainly about the art of cooking, experiments and losing money (with losses of half a million euro every year), are your projects concentrating more on the business aspect and on making a profit?

In a sense they are, although I am happy that I still get the chance to cook. If you put your heart into your work every day, then you end up making a name for yourself and that, of course, helps you to make money. However, money does not interest me as an end in itself. I simply saw an empty niche in the market. I am fascinated by the fact that everything is so accessible through my approach and that I can go from one place to the next every day – from *PAKTA* to *41* to the *vermuteria*, for example.





a completely different type of book named *Nature: Simple, Healthy and Good*, declaring that it is time to go back to the bare essentials.

That is an interesting question. The world has changed quite a bit during the past 20 years. It has become very small. Twenty years ago, a chef would work in only one restaurant. Sometimes he would dine at other restaurants or ask his friends to do so. They would photograph the menus of these restaurants or buy them straight out. Now with the Internet, everything is available through the click of a mouse from anywhere in the world. Before, it was very hard to obtain specific products. Today, all you have to do is make a phone call in the morning and that same evening you will have fish delivered to you from Japan. There are no longer any borders. Everything that you think up in your head can be presented on a plate to your customers that same evening. The technologies and the materials have changed a great deal. Previously, the food guides by *Michelin* and *Gault et Millau* carried great weight in the restaurant business. Now it is *TripAdvisor* and food bloggers who call the tune.

Does this mean that obtaining a Michelin star is not crucial to your business?

I doubt that it would help at all. The economic crisis and the new generation that has come in with its different values and way of life – both have completely changed the situation. Eating bread and butter one hour and paying a bill of at least 100 or 200 euro a couple of hours later... lately no new restaurants of this type have been opened in Spain. People are looking for a new gastronomic language.

Previously, thanks to its three *Michelin* stars, *elBulli* was always packed full of guests. Its fate was changed forever from the moment that it obtained its first star in 1997. Nowadays, three *Michelin* stars no longer guarantee that your restaurant will be full every evening. But that is the most important thing for me. I want my restaurants to be full every night. Therefore, who needs three *Michelin* stars anymore?

But aren't you still drawn by the Michelin restaurant atmosphere and its accompanying attributes – the white tablecloths, the silver cutlery, the refined and simultaneously reserved service?

Sure I like it, but for this type of ceremony we have Robuchon and Ducasse. I am different. For me, the kitchen means the freedom to improvise. I offer people a choice in which they are the referees. They decide whether they like my food or not. True, thanks to my last name, Adrià, I might get more than one chance to make an impression.

However, regardless of what you do, in the end it is the quality of your product that truly counts. Genuine

haute cuisine is not a powder with aroma. The foundation of *haute cuisine* is traditional, honest cuisine. It's impossible to create good meals without the highest quality products. Take the example of pizza. You'll never make a good pizza out of bad flour, bad cheese and bad tomatoes. When the time comes to pay the bill at the end of the evening (at *Tickets* they will pay 80 euro for the taster's menu), then the informal atmosphere might be one thing. The other thing is that once you've paid the bill, you will remember what you ate – the quality of the *foie gras*, the quality of the fish, the quality of everything else that you had.

I think that there is only one cuisine in the world, and that is good cuisine. There is always room for another good restaurant. And while it is always possible to create very good cuisine, it is also important to plan out your menu. A good restaurant offers an intelligent balance between good cuisine and a well-planned menu.

At the same time, diners also expect an element of surprise during a great dinner at a restaurant.

That goes without saying. When you bear a last name like Adrià, people expect something from you. And when they return, they want some things to have changed. They want to see and taste something new.

Nowadays, everybody seems obsessed with a healthy lifestyle. People want to live longer and more fulfilling lives. They want to lose weight, they go on all kinds of diets that forbid them from eating this or that food. Do you take that into account and how is this trend influencing the gastronomic scene?

Of course, I keep that in mind when I prepare my meals. However, I think that *41 Experience*, for example, is a place where you might go once a year to make a party for yourself without worrying about your diet. One day a year isn't too much. At *Tickets* you could even have a meal six times a year without any problems. (Laughs.) Naturally, I am convinced that my cuisine is healthy. I will add that we always take our customers' wishes into account by asking them about their dietary needs when they make their reservation. These are questions that you could ask to any chef. "Do you use the best products?" "Yes!" "Is your cuisine healthy?" "Yes!" (Laughs.)

By the way, traditional Spanish cuisine is very salty. We start with salty dishes to open the palate of tastes. Sometimes people who aren't used to this get the impression that the food is too salty. And everybody knows that too much salt is bad for the health. But at *Tickets* as well, we start with the saltiest dishes, such as the legendary olives that were once served at *elBulli* [actually, they aren't olives, but liquid essence of olive in a fragile membrane the size of a quail's egg – ed.]. When you eat those, you get an explosion of "wow!" sensations. Then you're ready to enjoy the rest of your meal.

Every restaurant has its own signature. After a meal at *PAKTA*, the feeling is perfect. A light feeling. But if you have dinner at *Tickets*, you will leave with the feeling that you have had a very big and hearty meal.

An increasing number of restaurants all over the world are following the slow food philosophy, both in the way that the food is prepared and in the selection of the ingredients. You

Previously, the food guides by *Michelin* carried great weight in the restaurant business. Now it is *TripAdvisor* and food bloggers who call the tune

How would you describe the culinary world now? About 10 to 20 years ago, the main buzzword was *haute cuisine*. Now everybody is talking about returning to basic and simple gastronomic values, to slow food. For example, in 2004, the French star chef Alain Ducasse published a *Culinary Encyclopaedia* with 700 recipes. Among other things, he highlighted thinly sliced white truffles as absolute must-haves. Then in 2009, he released

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said that you like the feeling of freedom that you can get, for example, by serving your clients fish from any place in the world.

It is logical to think that locally grown products will be the freshest and the best that you can get. But that isn't the case all year round. For example, what kind of fresh products would you be able to prepare in Arizona, with its hot, desert climate? Here in Barcelona as well, the best tomatoes don't come from Catalonia, but from other parts of Spain. But I want to serve the best tomatoes! The same goes for anchovies. The best anchovies are unfortunately not from Catalonia. Well OK, at least they are from Spain. And how about *foie gras*? Today I might use Spanish *foie gras*, but if next week I try some *foie gras* from France and find that it tastes better, then I will switch to French *foie gras*, because I want to use the best possible products.

It's relatively easy for you to get good and fresh products. You live in Spain, a warm country with a long growing season. Think about us in Latvia, with our cool climate and short growing season. Or about *Noma* in Denmark.



Interior of Tickets

Noma is doing a fantastic and incredible job. The asparagus that grows in Denmark is different from the asparagus that grows here. How many sunny days and hours of sunshine do you get in Spain and how many in Denmark? It's similar with greens and other vegetables. They taste completely different in Scandinavia. Maybe not worse, but different. However, I'll have to admit that the best strawberries I have ever eaten were from Sweden. On the other hand, their growing season is shorter than in Spain.

People say that there is nothing more uncommon than common sense, but I try to use common sense in my restaurants. For example, we don't use tomatoes

during the wintertime. Once the tomato season has ended, they disappear from our menu. The same goes for artichokes and asparagus. Of course, if you wish, then you can always choose to buy asparagus from Peru so that they are always in your menu. I choose not to buy them, because it is important for me to change my menu on a regular basis. When my customers return next time, I want to surprise them with something new.

What do you think will happen in the future? More than ever, children, teenagers and youths in their twenties are using laptops, iPhones, iPads and other technologies to communicate. They don't seem to have the time, the money, or the desire to devote even an hour or two to the rituals of fine dining. It appears that the gastronomic culture of the older generations isn't being passed on.

That is another very good question. I just returned to Barcelona from my holidays with two other families, and all of us had children. It's terrible to see what is happening. We have access to more information than ever before, but our eating habits have never been so bad. Spain is a country that takes pride in its healthy Mediterranean cuisine, but we have the second highest proportion of overweight people in Europe.

The most surprising thing is that children don't learn anything about healthy eating at school. Even my generation has practically lost the culture of eating. I was lucky that my mother prepared meals for us every day. That's often no longer the case with the youngest generation. In many families, potato chips and chocolate are a fact of everyday life. Even the French fries that you buy when you go out are not the same as those that you prepare at home. They are full of sugar. The excess of sugar in children's diets is one of the biggest problems that we face today. Kids need to eat more vegetables, fish and meat. If they don't get enough of these foods, then the consequences are diabetes and cancer.

Educating the children is a dual responsibility, involving both the schools and the parents. If you want your children to eat foods like cauliflower and broccoli, and if you want them to actually like doing so, then somebody has to tell them about these foods.

Of course! Unfortunately, it's all too easy to seat the children separately at another table and order them some pasta to keep them quiet. Right now, a whole bunch of Spanish chefs are getting ready to collect signatures for a petition, in which we will ask the government to introduce courses about nutrition at schools across the country. About 100,000 restaurants in Spain are ready to take part in this campaign. With an average of 20 people working in each restaurant, that already comes to two million people.

The evening before this interview, we were in Vilafranca del Penedès, the capital of the Penedès wine-making region. The main square was full of people drinking beer and eating sandwiches. Only one restaurant was open, and it was half-empty. The locals are apparently short of money, so most of the restaurants open their doors only two nights a week for dinner. What do you think will happen to the Spanish and European economy over the next five years? Will it start to recover? I think that Spain is surviving mostly due to tourism. We have lots of sunshine, and people return to Spain to eat, drink and party. That is the main reason why

should be devoted to regular gastronomy and to ensure that people in this country eat healthy foods every day – both the locals and their guests. Here in Barcelona people can enjoy the sun and the sea for eight months a year. We have great food. In Spain you can even sow seeds onto the sidewalk and they will grow into vegetables.

However, it's a different story with the sea. We've depleted it completely. I think that in the future, we will all be eating only vegetables, chicken and pork. Well, maybe one or two fish grown in fish farms. I have friends in the seafood restaurant business who recently told me that during the next two or three years, they'll either have to change what they offer or shut



Albert Adrià with his brother Ferran, the founder of *elBulli*

we can keep our heads above water. However, we definitely need to diversify our economy. Up until now, Spain has been dominated by a "sun economy", but today we need something completely different, like investments into quality. One idea is to turn Barcelona into a foodie city, because many people are interested in spending their holidays here and to eat well while doing so. However, it will take at least another three years before that project can be realized.

I think that we need to completely change the language of food. At first we were talking in terms of *haute cuisine*. That should remain, of course, but it should make up only a small part of the food scene. The rest

their doors for good. The sea is simply exhausted and doesn't have the time to renew itself.

At the same time, every new restaurant, particularly if it is opened by a well-known chef, presents a new challenge. People expect something special. What do you think people expect from you?

Before you go to *PAKTA*, you will probably have an idea about what Japanese-Peruvian cuisine might be like. The main factor in this restaurant's success lies in the balance between what its guests expect and what they receive. I am an Adrià and I am different from other chefs. At the

same time, I always listen to what my customers and staff have to say. Every day, we continually evaluate and taste our recipes. As a result, I think that our restaurants are becoming better and better.

You place great emphasis on your last name, Adrià. How do you keep on top of things, taking into account the high expectations that are placed upon you?

It's a struggle. The most important thing is to maintain the soul of the restaurant. Let's say you return to *Tickets* after two years. If you get the feeling that it has lost its soul, then you will say: "Oh, it's no longer the same" and never return again. We are always thinking about the atmosphere, the quality of the food and the menu. And having a good team is very important. Today, for example, our team works at least 50% better than it did two years ago. For me, the future doesn't go very far beyond tomorrow. I'm here every day, five days a week, and it is very rare for me to be away somewhere.

Alain Ducasse doesn't have the opportunity to personally oversee his restaurant empire every day. In that sense, things are much simpler for you.

That makes me jealous of him! (*Laughs.*)

Why? Would you like to have 20 different restaurants spread out across the world?

No, of course not. I like the model that I have established. These are my restaurants and I work for myself. This is my home. However, I am very happy when people enjoy their free time at my restaurants. Some customers reserve a table at a different one of my restaurants every evening and so I see them almost all week long. They say 'Hello!' and greet me like a friend every night. That is a very good feeling.

You left the *elBulli* restaurant before your brother Ferran shut it down. Did you feel drained or tired, or was there another reason?

At that time, the main reason was my wife and family. I wanted to spend more time together with them. The pace of work at *elBulli* was really hectic.

Would you agree that a chef's job is one of the hardest, because you have to be moving around on your feet all day long?

Yes, it really is hard. You have to put in 100 percent every day. But on the other hand, we are closed 140 days a year and have no business during that time. Of course, this means that I lose money, but you also need to find a balance. At the same time, *Tickets* is one of the few restaurants in Spain that is full every evening, just like *Con Roca*, which is owned by the Roca Brothers in Girona, and *Arzak* in San Sebastián.

Is it still important for you to make sure that what the client sees and what he tastes are not one and the same? In that sense, have you remained a trademark Adrià?

The most important thing is a balance between quality, price and the surprise to the client's taste buds. Taste is the only subjective factor in the kitchen and it depends on various things. The first is physical. Nature has given some people a broader perception of taste than others. The other is cultural and depends on where you are from. The third is acquired and depends on the openness of the person, on his or her willingness to try new tastes, foods and cuisines. Although taste is subjective, the best chef and the best kitchen will appeal to the largest possible number of people. If nine people out of ten like what I have prepared, then that means that my dish has been a success. When we were experimenting at *elBulli*, sometimes four or five people out of ten didn't like our dishes, but that was another game altogether.

Everybody knew about *elBulli*. During its last year in operation, it received almost 8 million reservation requests for 10,000 seats.

elBulli was a cathedral of the new cuisine. The problem was that you can't have 100 cathedrals in one country. Maybe five or six at the most.

Everybody wanted to enter the cathedral, but did everybody understand it?

That's a valid point, and that was the reason why at *elBulli* I sometimes felt apprehensive about going out and talking to the guests at the end of the evening. I don't want to get that feeling here. I like all of the customers who come to *Tickets*. I am the same here as I was at *elBulli*, aside from the fact that there I felt like a Formula 1 race car driver.

How important is it for you to feel satisfied?

Many chefs say that they prepare restaurant meals for their own enjoyment, but that's not very smart. We're very lucky, because we see the public's reaction right away. If three plates full of food are sent back to the kitchen, then I know that I have made a mistake.

You're always trying to create something new. To what capacity is that possible?

This fall we will be releasing our first book with 60 recipes, although actually we have made 240 new recipes since the opening of *Tickets* in 2011, but not all of them are equally good.

Have you ever created a dish that tasted great to you, but that your customers didn't appreciate?

Usually that doesn't happen. When we sit down in the kitchen to taste a new recipe and all of us



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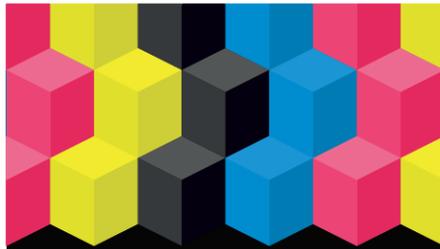
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OUTLOOK / INTERVIEW

say: "Hmm, that's delicious", then our guests also usually think so. It's a different matter with complicated foods that not everybody likes. The cultural differences that I already mentioned also come into play. Take *chipirones*, which are known in English as baby squid. If they are sent back to the kitchen just once, then that is not a problem, but there were times at *elBulli* when 20–30 percent of the food was returned to the kitchen. I don't want to experience something like that here.

Sometimes the client is good and the food is good, but it doesn't speak in the client's language. This evening at *Tickets*, for example, we will be conducting an experiment. We will prepare Caesar salads right in front of the customers who order them, at their tables. Although this dish isn't from Spain, I believe that we make the best Caesar salad in the country. Nevertheless, I have to find a balance and see how the customers react before including Caesar salad as a staple on *Tickets'* menu.

You have to take into account that people's attitudes change, depending on where they are eating. If you are in a Spanish *tapas* bar, then why should you order a Caesar salad? For me this is an interesting dish, because it is relatively inexpensive and consequently my customers don't have to overpay.

By the way, right now only three things can be bought cheaply at the market: eggs, potatoes and salad. Everything else is expensive. For example, we don't buy shrimp during the summer months, because they are the most popular dish at Spanish seaside restaurants. Now that the summer season has ended, most of these restaurants are closed, but shrimp are still available in the sea and we can get them 20-30 percent cheaper. We're always making these types of calculations so that we can offer the best prices to our customers.

The press usually describes *Tickets* and your other restaurants as new projects by the Adrià Brothers. To what extent is Ferran involved here?

He sometimes comes to have dinner here

and we are always happy when he does, because his opinion is very important to us. When I opened this restaurant, we talked it over a lot between us, but this is mainly my project. We've been in this business together for 25 years. We don't always think exactly alike, but our language is the same.

In another interview you used a Barcelona football metaphor, comparing your brother Ferran to Guardiola [a former player and current coach at FC Barcelona, ed.] and yourself to Messi [a current forward with the team, ed.]. Now you have your own Messis in each of your restaurants. How would you describe your current relationship with Ferran?

(Laughs.) Ferran said in that same interview that "at *elBulli*, I was the ying and Albert was the yang. Now, I am the yang and Albert is the ying ying ying." Sometimes I poke fun at him and say, "When I was the yang, I worked hard. Now that I am the ying, I am still working hard, unlike you!"

Have you ever felt jealous of the fact that your older brother has received more fame and glory than you have?

No, no. Ferran is very smart. *elBulli* was his thing. When I worked for Ferran at *elBulli*, he paid me a salary. It was a professional relationship. I was Messi.

Wouldn't you like to be famous?

I choose very carefully who I grant interviews to. Right now, my priority is to finish this six-restaurant project and to create an excellent team. I grant only two interviews per week. I hadn't granted any for the past two months (you are, of course, the exception). Otherwise, I wouldn't have the time to work. I also try to avoid TV interviews. I simply don't like television as a medium. Furthermore, as soon as you are seen on TV, you lose credibility from foodies. Nowadays, television is a very dangerous medium, because it distorts one's sense of reality.

I, for my part, feel best preparing meals behind the scenes in my restaurant kitchens. **BO**

The day after our interview, Albert had to catch a flight to Peru. That evening, his older brother Ferran took his place at Tickets. It seems that together, the ying and the yang of the Adrià family do make up a unified whole after all.

SPICY PRAWN SOUP WITH CHILLI PASTE

INGREDIENTS

3 PEELED THAI PRAWNS
100 G. STRAW MUSHROOMS
100 G. CRUSHED AND CHOPPED LEMONGRASS
2 G. CORIANDER ROOTS AND BIRD'S EYE CHILLIES
3 LEAVES SHREDDED KAFFIR LIME
300G. STOCK
2 TBSP. FISH SAUCE AND LIME JUICE
5 CORIANDER LEAVES
1 TBSP. CHILLI PASTE
100 G. EVAPORATED MILK

DIRECTIONS

1. BOIL THE STOCK AND ADD SHRIMP SHELLS, LIGHTLY CRUSHED LEMONGRASS AND CORIANDER ROOT. CONTINUE BOILING FOR A FEW MINUTES.
2. SIEVE OUT THE INGREDIENTS. BRING THE STOCK BACK TO A BOIL AND ADD SLICED LEMONGRASS AND STRAW MUSHROOMS.
3. ADD PRAWNS AND WAIT UNTIL IT RETURNS TO A FULL BOIL, THEN ADD FISH SAUCE AND KAFFIR LIME LEAVES.
4. ADD LIME JUICE AND CHILLIES.
SERVE TOM YAM GOONG IN BOWL. GARNISH WITH CORIANDER LEAVES (MIXED CHILLI PASTE AND UNSWEETENED CONDENSED MILK INSTEAD OF SHRIMP ROE FOR A VARIATION OF TOM YUM NUM KHON).



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LeBonMarché, Paris

First collections of the season, product catalogues and discount sales

Le Bon Marché is the oldest, most exclusive and most French of Paris' fashion department stores. Last year, the store celebrated its 160th birthday. The birthday cake – decorated in the form of a shop window – was supplied by famous French actress Catherine Deneuve, one of *Le Bon Marché*'s most prominent customers. The story of *Le Bon Marché* began in 1852, when an ambitious young merchant named Aristide Boucicaut, who worked in a small shop on Paris' Left Bank, convinced neighbouring shopkeeper Paul Videau to join forces with him. Videau owned a store named *Au Bon Marché*, which the two men used for buying goods in small batches from warehouses at low prices and then retailing them at a slight markup. Shoppers appreciated the opportunity to buy these affordable products, and it didn't take long for the pair's profits to rise from 450,000 to 7 million francs. Videau later decided to sell his shares and Boucicaut became the sole owner, changing the store's name to *Le Bon Marché*.

The edifice in which the store now stands was designed by architect Louis-Charles Boileau and built from 1869-1887. A young engineer named Gustave Eiffel also helped out in the design of the imposing building's metal and glass roof construction. When the store opened to the public in its new form, it was immediately recognized as an architectural gem, appearing on the city landscape at the same time as the Paris opera house and another monumental structure, the Eiffel Tower.

Le Bon Marché created a veritable shopping revolution in Paris. Until then, the city's inhabitants had made their purchases at small, specialised shops with no fixed prices. Now this store was offering practically everything under the sun at fixed prices, paving the way for the later establishment of other *grands magasins* (large department stores) such as *Printemps* and the *Galleries Lafayette*. Boucicaut presented a whole array of unprecedented new shopping concepts, including seasonal collections, product catalogues, the opportunity to buy on credit and pay for one's purchase incrementally, free product delivery and seasonal discount sales. Under the enormous glass cupola of the store's main hall, the owner held fashion shows and organized various cultural events, including concerts and art exhibitions, turning *Le Bon Marché* into a veritable magnet that drew

thousands of people to its premises.

Boucicaut targeted the middle class, making sure that a trip to *Le Bon Marché* was an event in itself, especially on weekends. The staff also enjoyed a number of privileges. For example, salespeople received a commission for the items that they sold as well as health insurance and special discounts for purchases that they made in the store. In addition, *Le Bon Marché* was one of the first large establishments in Paris to hire women. The store's success later provided inspiration for Émile Zola's novel *The Ladies' Paradise* (*Au Bonheur des Dames*).

Within the span of 25 years, Aristide Boucicaut managed to transform a small enterprise of 12 people into a sales empire with nearly 1800 employees. Years after his death in 1877, his widow commissioned the construction of the *Hôtel Lutetia* on the nearby Boulevard Raspail. The Art Deco masterpiece was originally meant to serve as a place of accommodation for the store's clients, some of whom travelled across the Atlantic Ocean on shopping trips to Paris. Later, the hotel became a hangout for famous artists and intellectuals, including Pablo Picasso and James Joyce.

In 1984, *Le Bon Marché* was purchased by the French luxury conglomerate LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton and was renamed *Le Bon Marché Rive Gauche*. The new owners maintained the store's established traditions and transformed it into the embodiment of distinguished French chic. Here you will find the most refined clothing items of the fashion season, while the store's delicatessen, *La Grande Epicerie* (located in a different building) is one of the most impressive in the city. It offers every treat that one could wish for, or that one couldn't have imagined one would wish for. A good way to end a day of shopping is at the *Delicabar*; if you lack the will to stick to your diet, then you might as well break it here.

During Paris' fashion weeks, *Le Bon Marché* regularly hosts thematic art and photo exhibitions, sometimes entrusting the design of its shop windows to one celebrity or another. This autumn, that role was assumed by film director Sofia Coppola. When speaking of *Le Bon Marché*, the Parisians themselves say, "C'est chic mais cher!" (It's chic but expensive!) Nevertheless, shopping at this store is a true pleasure, particularly during the morning hours, when the store is relatively quiet and a stroll within its historical interior is like a trip back in time.

24 rue de Sèvres (corner of rue de Bac)
www.lebonmarche.com

TEXT BY UNA MEISTERE, WWW.ANOTHERTRAVELGUIDE.COM
PUBLICITY PHOTOS AND ALAMY

Shopping meccas

Some European department stores are known as long-standing symbols of luxury and plenty. Their fascinating history reveals how they have changed over time and what ideas their founders originally had in mind. Based on practical necessity, these establishments introduced a number of innovations that have now come to be taken for granted at practically all modern-day department stores. Before the Christmas shopping rush has started, *Baltic Outlook* offers a background into four of Europe's most prominent department stores



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GUM, Moscow
First complaint and suggestion book

Like the city of Moscow, in which it is located, GUM is a building with a turbulent history and a symbol of the vast changes that the Russian capital has experienced. Built at the end of the 19th century (1890-1891), it was the first department store in Russia. A more prominent location is hard to imagine – at the edge of Red Square, right across from the walls of the Kremlin. GUM was built on the site of the city's former upper trading stalls, a place where merchants had already been selling their wares for centuries. Since most of the stalls had been made of wood, they were subject to the ravages of occasional fires.

In 1888, a competition was announced for the design of the new department store building and architect Alexander Pomerantsev was declared the winner. The result was a magnificent example of the passage architecture that was popular at that time. The impressive building, which extends for almost a quarter of a kilometre along the eastern side of Red Square, encompasses three passages under an imposing glass roof. The department store's official opening day was almost like a national holiday, with a public prayer service also held in honour of the event.

Initially GUM housed more than 320 stores, which were called salons due to the ornate premises in which they were located and the superior products that they offered. GUM's sheltered passageways quickly became a favourite place for wealthy Muscovites to go on family strolls. It was the first place in Russia to instil fixed prices and to display a public complaint and suggestion book. Inspired by similar department stores in Europe, GUM also sought to provide "added value" to its

customers' shopping experience, regularly hosting concerts, art exhibitions and other events. However, the Russian Revolution of 1917 put an end to that golden age. After the Communists took power, they nationalized the department store and trade within it languished. Within a few years, GUM became a pitiful Soviet department store, with most of its space occupied not by shops, but by various institutions.

GUM experienced a revival after Joseph Stalin's death under his successor, Nikita Khrushchev. The building was reconstructed and when it reopened in 1953, the long lines of shoppers had to be kept in order by law enforcement officers or "militia". GUM became a popular "tourist site" (or actually, shopping site) for visitors from other Soviet republics suffering from a shortage of basic goods. Although the choice of products at GUM was not very large, it was still greater than in most other Soviet stores during an era when "deficit" was a commonly used word. GUM's existence was briefly threatened again during the 1960s under Leonid Brezhnev, who believed that it was unbecoming for a merchant store to be located beside such "national treasures" as the Kremlin and Lenin's mausoleum. GUM was allegedly saved thanks to the protests of the wife of another top Communist Party official, resulting in a "top secret" decree that annulled the previous one.

Following the collapse of the USSR, GUM was privatised and changed hands several times. Then, in 2005, it was bought by the Russian luxury conglomerate *Bosco di Ciliegi* and transformed into a new shopping mecca. At breakneck speed, GUM went through the fashion trends of the *nouveaux riches* in the new Russia – from an obsession with such "flaunt your wealth" brands as *Versace* and *Cavalli* to discrete luxury like *Jil Sander*. Although today all of the main luxury fashion brands are still available at GUM, the choice of products differs from those that you will find at other European fashion department stores, both in the colour and design of the items on offer. In any case, once you cross the threshold of GUM, you won't have any doubt that you are in Moscow – a citadel of drastic contrasts and excesses. Locals still ironically refer to GUM as an "exhibition of prices", the joke being that most Russians still can't afford to buy many of the goods that are sold within the premises of this stately department store.

3 Red Square
1 www.gum.ru



La Rinascente, 1920-1930

La Rinascente, Milan
First mail-order catalogue

Now an established store chain with branches all across Italy, *La Rinascente* is a venerable pioneer, starting off as the first fashion store in Milan. Its owners, the Bocconi brothers, had been inspired to set up a similar operation to *Le Bon Marché* in Paris, especially since French influences could already be seen in the Milanese way of dressing, which admittedly was more simple and reserved than in the French capital at the time.

Initially going under the name *Aux Villes d'Italie*, the store began its operations in 1865. In a city where bespoke tailors ran the show (in 1881, Milan had nearly 250 tailors and seamstresses), *Aux Villes d'Italie* started to offer ready-to-wear items. Soon after, the store came out with another new concept: the mail-order catalogue. That was an event in itself.

However, the business later went into a slump that was compounded by the economic tumult of the First World War. In 1917, an entrepreneur named Senatore Borletti bought the nearly bankrupt store and decided to give it a new image. He asked a well-known Italian poet named Gabriele D'Annunzio to think up a new name for the establishment. D'Annunzio suggested *La Rinascente*, or "she who is born again". The name was to refer to a new life for the store under new management,

and to the rebirth of war-torn and impoverished Italy. One year later, on Christmas night in 1918, the renovated premises burned to the ground as a result of a short circuit. Not to be deterred, Borletti had the store rebuilt and when it reopened again, it literally embodied an establishment that had been reborn from rubble and ruin. Not long after, *La Rinascente* established its place as the standard-bearer of Italian elegance and good taste. During the 1920s, the store's shop windows bore posters made by legendary Italian illustrator Marcello Dudovich, which exuded the joie de vivre of those times. The store building was severely damaged in air raids during the Second World War, rising again like a Phoenix from the ashes in 1950.

Among other things, *La Rinascente* is connected with a defining moment in the career of Italian fashion legend Giorgio Armani. During the early 1960s, he began working at the store as a shop window designer before moving on to buy clothing collections. In this way, he learned a great deal about the fashion business, which helped him to build his own fashion empire.

The store itself experienced a gradual downturn, as many classic establishments do over time, becoming just an average and mundane department store by the 1990s. However, *La Rinascente*

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once again got a hold of itself during the early 2000s, placing an emphasis on the contemporary. At first its management revamped the cosmetics, accessories and shoe departments, then turned to the food section. The slightly run-down restaurant and cafeteria on the top floor were replaced by modern food bars and delicatessens. With the astute assistance of the London-based architect bureau *Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands*, the store took full advantage of the top floor's greatest asset – an unsurpassed view of the majestic Milan Cathedral, which now looks like it is almost within arm's reach from the glass-walled terrace of the refurbished café.

In 2011, the Thailand-based *Central Retail Corporation* bought the store for 250 million euro, launching the third rebirth in the establishment's history. The following year, *La Rinascente's* fourth floor, which is devoted to women's fashion, received a new image. Its repainted pearl-grey walls now give off a hue of contemporary but sufficiently discrete luxury, providing an elegant backdrop for the cream of global and niche fashion brands. *Chloé*, *Stella McCartney*, *Marni*, *Diane von Furstenberg*, *Alexander Wang*, *Vionnet*, *Rochas* and *Valentino* are just some of the brand names that are currently represented at the store.

One initiator of these changes was the current chief executive officer, Vittorio Radice, who joined the Italian luxury store chain seven years ago and who previously presided over the restructuring of *Selfridges*, London's renowned fashion department store. Although style-wise *La Rinascente* remains more cautious and reserved than *Selfridges*, the recent changes are quite evident. In addition, the store has become involved in a number of social initiatives.

Last Christmas, for example, the store decorated its shop windows with "sun lamps" by Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson. Under the *Little Sun* project that Eliasson initiated together with the store, *La Rinascente* is providing solar-powered lamps to those parts of the world where electricity remains an unattainable luxury. The small lamps require only five hours of exposure to sunlight in order to provide household lighting that lasts an entire evening.

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Selfridges, Oxford street

Selfridges, London

First ground-floor beauty department

If you had to name one thing that is discussed as passionately over dinner as the latest iPhone or iPad model, then that would probably be the shop windows at Selfridges. Regardless of whether a new fashion season or discount sale has begun, the new shop window designs at Selfridges are always a topic of conversation. From the very beginning, they have always told a story that extends beyond the straightforward goal of attracting customers, while simultaneously being effective at doing just that. Since Selfridges is located in one of the busiest parts of London on Oxford Street, millions of people walk past the store's shop windows every week, with many more glancing at them from passing cars and double-decker city buses. It is hard to imagine a better way to reach the public. In any case, the most widely circulated newspapers and magazines might have fewer readers than the streams of passers-by whose attention Selfridges manages to attract.

Over the years, Selfridges has cooperated with well-known artists, photographers, magazine editors, social movement activists and other

prominent personalities in the design of its shop windows. In 2011, for example, the store drew viewers' attention with the pressing environmental question: "No more fish in the sea?" In cooperation with the Ocean Project, the goal was to get people to think about the damage that humans have inflicted upon the world's oceans through their greed and short-sightedness.

On another occasion in 2003, the store marked the beginning of the winter sales season together with American artist Barbara Kruger, who transformed Selfridges' shop windows into an ironic criticism of our entrenched consumer culture, incorporating various wise quotations into the window design. One of these was a sentence written by American author Edgar Allan Poe in *The Man of the Crowd*: "He entered shop after shop, priced nothing, spoke no word, and looked at all objects with a wild and vacant stare."

Selfridges is also known for another longstanding tradition, the *Bright Young Things* project, under which 15 talented youths in the fields of fashion, the arts, design and gastronomy are assigned with the task of designing the store's shop windows. Selfridges' shop windows are meant to inform, entertain, incite one to think

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seriously or occasionally to smile, and even to provoke. All this, of course, with the ultimate goal of drawing the masses into the store's premises, and few are as skilful at this task as Selfridges.

Selfridges' department store stage antics were initially thought out by the store's founder, Harry Gordon Selfridge, a masterful director in his day and age. He was a passionate American full of crazy ideas who married an English wife and moved to London. Born in the state of Wisconsin, Selfridge was already a rich man when he first visited the British capital in the early 1900s. He had made a fortune by revolutionising the way things were done at the famous Marshall Field's department store in Chicago. For example, one of his ideas was to light up the store at night, after closing hours.

Strolling through the streets of London, Selfridge was allegedly shocked at the non-descript, badly lit and boring shop windows of London's stores. He founded Selfridges & Co in 1906 and chose to set it up on Oxford Street, a not overly popular location at the time. Three years later, the new Neoclassical edifice that housed the store opened its doors to the public. Among Selfridge's innovations was a beauty department on the ground floor, which worked well at masking the smell of manure from his customers' horse-drawn carriages.

Selfridges' fame spread far and wide. At one point, it housed what was then the largest bookstore in the world as well as the first store department devoted to dogs. From the very beginning, the store's shop windows played a major role in Selfridge's "sales theatre", featuring all kinds of crowd-gathering attractions, including tango dancers. When French pilot Louis Blériot became the first man to fly over the English Channel in 1909, his miniature airplane was exposed for four days in a Selfridges shop window, drawing 150,000 viewers.

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OUTLOOK / SPECIAL

The founder had various ambitious goals, one of which was to ensure that any fresh and new product would be sold at *Selfridges* first. Selfridge coined up numerous sayings that have since become the stuff of legend, including "The customer is always right" and "I am prepared to sell anything, from airplanes to cigars". During the First World War, when women began to assume positions that had previously been occupied by men who were busy fighting at the front, Selfridge simply said, "Business as usual." In other words, the store would continue to remain open and adapt, no matter what the situation.

Selfridges' yellow shopping bags practically became status symbols on London city streets, and the store's most flamboyant shop window projects were reported on in all of the news media. Currently *Selfridges* belongs to the English-born and Canadian-based billionaire W. Galen Weston, who owns an entire empire of luxury department stores. Last year, *Selfridges* was recognized as the *World's Best Department Store* for the second time in its history and, despite the recession that Europe is currently experiencing, ended the year with operating profits having risen five percent and earnings of 1.6 billion British pounds.



Blackout accessories for sale, *Selfridge's*, circa 1940

In 1922, more than 15 million customers made purchases at the store. As a colourful personality, Selfridge was a darling of the local press, supposedly tipping his hat in the mornings to customers who were waiting in line for his store to open. However, the millionaire merchant also had some serious weaknesses, namely, a strong penchant for the night life, women and gambling. These led him into massive personal debts, including to his own store. He was eventually compelled to go into retirement in 1939 at the age of 83, retaining the honourable title of President. The man who had turned shopping into a form of mass entertainment died peacefully in his sleep eight years later, aged 91. That was in 1947, when London experienced the coldest winter on record, suffered from frequent power shortages and when not very many people had shopping on their minds.

In 1951, *Selfridges* was sold by the founder's heirs and subsequently changed hands several times. A bomb exploded in the store in 1974, wounding several people but, in accordance with one of *Selfridge's* mantras, business continued as usual. During the 1980s, *Selfridges* became the first British department store to advertise itself on television and experienced a second revival when Vittorio Radice took over the reins for six years, from 1998 to 2003. Radice was a true sales guru, claiming that "shopping is entertainment. It's not just about the product, but about the smile, the packaging, the whole ambience."

Incidentally, this January, the TV series *Mr. Selfridge* made its debut in London, to great acclaim. It is the screen version of *Shopping, Seduction and Mr. Selfridge*, a biography that Lindy Woodhead wrote in 2007. The series has enjoyed a record viewing audience, with each episode watched by an average of 8.5 million people. Consequently, filming has already begun for the second season, which is to be aired next year. In order to demonstrate that *Selfridges* hasn't lost touch with current events and that it has maintained a healthy ability to poke fun at itself and at us all – the obsessed victims of a mass consumer culture – the store recently opened a *Silent Room*. Apparently, something of the sort had already existed in *Selfridge's* time. In a world that – just like *Selfridges* itself – is overloaded with a cacophony of information and visual stimuli, here customers are invited to take off their shoes, switch off their cellular phones and spend some time in peace and quiet.

Along the same lines, a *Quiet Shop* featuring "de-branded" products has also been opened, inducing customers not to go overboard with their shopping and deriding society's widespread obsession with brand names. Obviously, this is an intelligently set trap and one might just as well fall into it, because one is bound to do so in any case as soon as one crosses the threshold of this legendary department store.

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www.selfridges.com



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03, 16	opera	NABUCCO
06	ballet	SWAN LAKE
07	opera	TOSCA
08	ballet	THE FOUNTAIN OF BAKHCHISARAY
09	opera	LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR
10, 24	ballet	THE NUTCRACKER
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Style in the city



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Few cities in Europe fit the description of 'stylish' as well as Zurich. Like a chameleon, it turns its varied face into a form that suits your preference, from classic and refined elegance to a post-industrial urban style. Here is a glimpse into some Zurich hot spots: the most talked-about hotel, the trendiest restaurants and bars and some unusual stores that might even make you lose your head for a while

Revival of post-industrial neighbourhoods

The *Industrie-Quartier* and *Kreis 5* neighbourhoods in the northern part of the city are providing Zurich with a new image. As opposed to the perfectionism of the Old Town, here a new, modern city is developing step by step, drawing creative minds like a magnet with its harsh industrial landscape. Old factory buildings are being cleared of rubble and waste, their brick walls given a new life as authentic art spaces, trendy restaurants, intimate jazz clubs, urban offices and other modern, functional places.

The depressing atmosphere of former working-class apartment blocks is being livened up by the arrival of artists, hipsters and creative ad agency workers, along with vintage and pop-up shops. This is where the city's creative heart is currently beating the strongest. Zurich's post-industrial neighbourhoods are excellent places for tapping into creative energy and for gaining the motivation to turn even the most seemingly unattainable dreams into reality. *Baltic Outlook* selected seven of the most notable establishments in these thriving, revived neighbourhoods.

1. 25hours Zürich West hotel (Pfungstweidstrasse 102)

While the *25hours Zürich West* design hotel is a newcomer on Zurich's stage of stylish places, it didn't take long for it to become the most talked-about hotel in town. Its youthful and modern atmosphere goes perfectly with the industrial interior by Argentinean architect Alfredo Häberli, complete with exposed concrete construction elements, multi-coloured furniture and ping-pong tables in the lobby, where table tennis tournaments take place on Fridays. Meanwhile, a DJ spins tunes in the bar during the evening. While the hotel rooms are ascetic, they are ideally suited for couples and business travellers, with no unnecessary extras, but with everything well thought out in a contemporary setting. In addition, the hotel provides shower gel and shampoo by the eco brand *Stop the water while using me!*, attesting to the hotel's "green" orientation. The *25hours* hotel chain has found an ideal formula, uniting stylish design with unusual locations. Another hotel of the *25hours* group, located in Hamburg's *HafenCity* or Port City, the world's largest inner-city shoreline project, has even been featured in the respectable *Wallpaper* magazine.





2. Maison Blunt café (Gasometerstrasse 5)

This tastefully decorated Moroccan-style café provides a great brunch all day long, with the dining activity switching from the establishment's pillow-covered sofas to small tables during the evening hours. Whatever time you choose to visit, you are immediately drawn by the homey and pleasant Middle Eastern ambience. The menu is dominated by various tasty Moroccan dishes, including diverse *mezze* snacks, sumptuous couscous salads, warming soups and a delicious homemade soda drink.



4. Bogen33 store (Geroldstrasse 33)

This stylish vintage furniture store is just a stone's throw away from Freitag. It is easy to lose one's head here, because this store houses some real gems, including iconic Charles and Ray Eames chairs, a Le Corbusier sofa, a Verner Panton design lamp from 1964 and countless other interior cult objects that have been painstakingly restored or, quite the opposite, left to show the ravages of time. Bogen33 is located on a basement floor, which means that the establishment might be hard to spot at first. The store sign is also quite unobtrusive. Follow your intuition, which will lead you to the right place.

3. Freitag store (Geroldstrasse 17)

Housed in a tower made of 19 freight containers, Freitag is an outstanding example of innovative thinking. The store brand's accessories (from bags to iPad cases), made of truck tarpaulin, blend in harmoniously with the containers' stark design and highlight the store's adherence to the concept of recycling. As you climb up from floor to floor, you acquire a surreal feeling, for you can hear the wind whistling outside the tower's walls, which almost seem to be swaying. That, of course, is only an illusion, for the tower has been solidly built. The icing on the cake is the container at the summit. It has had its roof removed, making the platform an excellent spot for a bird's-eye view of the surroundings – an experience that you are not likely to forget.



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5. Pop-up shops

As transient as Swiss weather conditions, these small shops pop up unexpectedly, with news of their appearance spreading by word of mouth. Forming an inseparable part of the city's creative culture, the largest concentration of these shops can be found in the *Kreis 5* neighbourhood. However, one has to reckon with the fact that a stylish headgear shop, for example, might be here one day and gone the next, or replaced by a shop that sells something completely different. If you're lucky, then you might wander into the neighbourhood on special weekends, when the numerous pop-up shops are open until late in the evening amid a party atmosphere of DJs playing music. Everyone will be sipping wine and munching on snacks, the air filled with the buzz of conversations in an easygoing and friendly atmosphere.

6. LaSalle restaurant (Schiffbaustrasse 4)

As darkness sets in, Zurich's night sky is lit up not only by the moon and the stars, but also by the light and airy interiors beckoning from behind the large glass windows of renovated buildings. The outstanding *LaSalle* restaurant is housed in a real architectural gem – the red brick former *Schiffbau* shipbuilding factory. Although the establishment's glass walls do create a barrier of sorts, they

permit the diners to enjoy their meal while imbibing in some additional culture from the adjacent theatre stage or jazz music concert hall. The regal Murano glass chandelier in the centre of the hall provides a vivid and perfect contrast to the stark industrial interior.

It's advisable to reserve a table in advance, for long lines can form at the entrance after eight in the evening, even on workdays, with the witty waiters hamming it up for you, as at an entertainment show. The mixed clientele appreciates this modern fusion of Swiss, Italian and French cuisine, relaxed ambience and breathtaking interior. The transformation of former industrial spaces into remarkable dining establishments can also be appreciated in such restaurants as *Rüsterei* (Kalanderplatz 6) and *Blaue Ente* (Seefeldstrasse 223), whose graffiti-covered old factory walls create a stylish symbiosis with the modern restaurant interiors.



7. NietturmBar (Schiffbaustrasse 4)

In order to reach the sky, one doesn't even have to leave the *Schiffbau* building. Just take the lift up to the top floor and head for the *NietturmBar*. Located in a rooftop steel and glass construction, it really gives one the feeling of being between the earth and the sky. Grab a seat at the bar counter in the centre of the room, order a drink and take in Zurich's panorama and starlit skies.

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OUTLOOK / TRAVEL

Zurich's downtown

Zurich's downtown area is dominated by white-collar workers. Bank clerks hurry along the city's main streets in an endless flow, with the saying that "money never sleeps" always at the back of their minds. In lieu of the modern and free atmosphere that characterises the post-industrial neighbourhoods, here one finds oneself surrounded by the silhouettes of large, stately buildings. Instead of pop-up shops, one sees the brand names of legendary Swiss watchmakers. And in place of spacious restaurant interiors dominated by exposed bricks, steel and polished glass, one comes across much more classical and ornate dinner spaces. Countless energy filling stations or espresso bars line the central Bahnhofstrasse, true havens for tired shoppers and weary office workers. For an added energy boost, many order a piece of *Sprüngli* chocolate to go with their coffee before continuing the day at their usual hurried pace. Here are four places where one can relax for a bit in the liveliest part of the city.



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1. Teecafé Schwarzenbach
(Münstergasse 19)

This miniature café offers an unimaginably large selection of coffee varieties from all over the world. Try out some freshly brewed and intensely aromatic coffee from Jamaica, Tanzania, Guatemala or one of many other exotic locations. For an extra touch of gastronomic decadence, order a white chocolate drink, which will make you feel like you are in the seventh heaven of taste. In this unhurried atmosphere, locals like to leaf through the latest newspapers bearing news of Switzerland's still healthy economic state before hurrying on to continue with their daily activities.

2. Neumarkt 17 concept salon
(Neumarkt 17)



Do you remember *Through the Looking Glass*, the sequel to *Alice in Wonderland*? When you enter the concept salon at Neumarkt 17, you will find yourself in a no less surreal labyrinth of rooms and passages. Steel-grated floors hang in the air from huge cables, extending for several storeys in unpredictable twists and turns, leading to new caves (rooms) and new surprises. It is easy to miss *Neumarkt 17* as you wander along the cobblestoned streets of the Old Town, because it looks like a very small interior design store from the outside. However, once you cross its threshold, you will be surprised at its true size.

When Liz and Fritz Schwarz opened this design concept store in 1963, it really was small. Gradually, the store extended deeper and deeper into the depths of the building, taking up an increasing number of floors. The current display of items, spread out on three levels, will provide you with countless design ideas for your home. Bear in mind that it will take you at least an hour to go through the store's many rooms. A strange feeling overtakes you when you reach the top of the building and look down at the decorative pool in the basement level below you, with only the see-through grated floor to prevent you from crashing down to the bottom.

3. Lake Side restaurant
(Bellerivestrasse 170)

An ideal spot for a leisurely lunch with a picture-perfect view of Lake Zurich. As you watch the waves lap against the shore behind the window, you can easily get drawn into a meditative frame of mind, until



the waiter interrupts your thoughts with a plate of some of the best-tasting sushi in town. The restaurant can be reached from the shore as well as from Zürichhorn Park. During the summer months, patrons like to sit on the terrace under gaily-coloured yellow sunshades, while during the colder months the best tables are by the glass wall, from which the waters of the lake spread out in the distance towards the snow-covered mountain peaks of the Alps.

4. Kaufleuten restaurant and bar
(Pelikanplatz)

One of the building's entrances leads to a restaurant with a light Italian ambience, where you will be greeted by the sound of clinking wine glasses and table conversations. The other door leads to a bar that is favoured by the locals. *Kaufleuten* is located in an ornate Art Nouveau building that is just as grandiose in the interior. The small, intimate bar is usually pretty lively, but unlike in the industrial neighbourhoods, the people who order drinks here are dressed in suits rather than artificially faded and torn *Abercrombie & Fitch* jeans.



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How about snowshoeing in a snow-covered forest, riding on a gentle Icelandic horse, or floating down a freezing river in a waterproof suit, carried by the currents? In Lappeenranta and the Imatra region by Lake Saimaa in Finland you will always find exciting things to do, even in the wintertime.

Lappeenranta and Imatra are situated on the banks of Lake Saimaa, Europe's fourth largest natural freshwater body. As part of the Finnish Lake District, the area has drawn visitors for centuries and continues to do so. Your journey to unforgettable Finnish experiences is quick by air, thanks to the improved European connections offered by Lappeenranta International Airport.

Winter thrills and wild safaris

There is lots of snow and ice in Lappeenranta and Imatra in midwinter, providing plenty of opportunities for a wide range of winter activities. At Lake Saimaa you can participate in traditional winter sports almost anywhere. The beautiful natural environment can be

enjoyed during a snowmobile safari, snowshoe hike or, of course, while skiing. Whether it's fast-paced, fun-packed thrills on the ice, unexpected outdoor attractions or slowly soaking up the relaxing warmth of a sauna at a spa, it's very hard to feel bored at Lake Saimaa and its surroundings.

If you fancy adding some excitement to your life, then try a snowmobile or quad bike safari. An experienced guide will accompany you along marked routes, allowing you to enjoy the Saimaa lakeside landscape. Snowmobile safaris vary in duration, with longer safaris including a stop at an outdoor picnic spot or by the lakeside to enjoy a hot drink. A shorter quad bike safari can be enjoyed with children; young boys in particular will find these bikes captivating. If you fancy a safari, then don't forget to bring your driving licence with you. Those seeking even more thrills should try parasailing above the frozen lake. During parasailing, the participant is lifted up to 70 metres into the air by a snowmobile and then floats, suspended by a parachute, to enjoy the view!

Natural scenery

Winter at Lake Saimaa offers wonderful opportunities to experience nature, including long-distance skating on the frozen lakes. This great sport will make you feel pleasantly relaxed at the end of the day. Snowshoeing offers another good way of enjoying the winter landscape. In addition, the Lappeenranta and Imatra areas offer hundreds of kilometres of skiing trails. For cross-country skiing, the endless forests, fields, lakes and trails provide a glorious backdrop as the deep hoarfrost gives a silver colour to the rolling landscape of firs, placing intricate and spectral patterns of ice crystals on every branch, plant and pine needle.

Riding on an Icelandic horse is also worth trying. Being gentle and small, Icelandic horses are easy to manage, even for novice riders. Trail riding trips are undertaken with a guide. You do not need your own equipment, as you can borrow a helmet and riding boots from the stables. Touring the landscape on an Icelandic horse and taking care of the horse after

the ride is an enjoyable and relaxing way to spend an afternoon.

Hire equipment, or go on an adventure with a guide

Tour companies offering winter activities in the Lappeenranta and Imatra regions hire out equipment for many types of winter sports. Visitors can rent skis (both downhill and cross-country), kick sledges, skates, snowshoes and ice fishing equipment as well as toboggans and sledges for children. These winter sports can be enjoyed independently, without an instructor.

If you are a novice, however, then it is recommended that you use the services of professional guides. For snowmobile and quad bike safaris or any other fast-paced sports, a guide is always available to ensure that the equipment is used correctly and safely. Several small companies provide all of the necessary gear, clothing and expertise for winter sports like these, so it's okay to arrive in



A snowmobile safari will get the adrenaline going



Fishing is a year-round sport on Lake Saimaa

Riding on an Icelandic horse is also worth trying

Lappeenranta with just the clothes that you'd normally wear at this time of year.

Guided ice-fishing trips are also available in the wintry landscape. In this part of Finland, fishing is a year-round activity, with plenty of excellent ice-fishing spots in Saimaa and Vuoksi. While sitting at a hole that has been drilled in the ice and awaiting a catch, you can enjoy the surrounding winter landscape and listen to your fishing partner's stories. Warm clothes and hot drinks are essential requirements for ice-fishing trips.

Weekly programme

The area's weekly programme contains fun experiences for people of all ages. You can even choose a different activity for each day of the week. These include skidoo and quad bike safaris, ice fishing trips, tour skating, a Sami tent and coldwater floating. The weekly programme is organised at the *Imatra Spa and Holiday Club Saimaa*, but anyone can participate, regardless of where they are staying. Programmes and trips can be booked either individually or for groups. The weekly programme is valid until the end of March or, in the case of certain programmes, for as long as there is sufficient snow and ice to undertake the activity in question. Some of the activities come with a weather-related warning. You must book an activity by 6 pm on the previous day. Failing that, it is worth asking whether there are free places on the morning of the activity.

Pampering and fun at spas

Along with the year-round selection of outdoor activities at Lappeenranta and Imatra, four different spas in the area offer saunas, massages, face and body treatments, health procedures and more in tropical warmth and comfort. Spas in the Saimaa area are for people of all ages. What better way to round off a day

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of cross-country skiing or trekking than by relaxing in the warm waters of a spa pool or Jacuzzi?

The glorious *Cirque de Saimaa* spa delights visitors with its carnival and circus theme. Alternatively, you can dive into the colourful world of fountains, sounds and lights at the new *Holiday Club Saimaa*. Mist, lights and music create a magical ambience at the *Imatran Kylpylä Spa* in Imatra. There, you can try the Yorokobi hot pool and massaging showers and feel the force of a waterfall at the spa's Magic Forest.

The legendary *Rantasipi Imatran Valtionhotelli* combines a spa with a romantic castle milieu, while the *Day Spa* offers relaxing pools and hot tubs. The *Lappeenranta Spa* is proud to call itself the oldest spa in the Saimaa region. The refreshing powers of water have been promoted on this site close to the harbour since the 1820s. **BO**

More information on accommodation, weekly activities and other attractions in the Lappeenranta and Imatra region is available at www.gosaimaa.com.



Snowshoe trips offer a great way to enjoy the scenery

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Cassina: *Authentic Icons* exhibition

The exhibition can be seen in Xcelsior Vilnius until the 15th of November. The exhibition features both 20th-century design classics from *The Maestri Collection*, and 21st-century future classics from *The Contemporary collection*. Vilnius, Rūdninkų gatvė 2.

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First look: Hyundai ix35 facelift

The *Hyundai ix35* has been given amid-life facelift for 2013, most notably to its looks, but also to the efficiency of some of its engines and to the way that it drives

Outside, the revised rival to the *Nissan Qashqai* now sports redesigned head- and taillights, LED daytime running lights, fresh alloy wheel designs and new colours.

Under the bonnet are revisions to the 2.0-litre diesel engine for slightly better fuel economy and CO₂ emissions. This engine also gets the option of an automatic gearbox. In addition, the *ix35's* front

suspension has been tweaked to improve ride and handling.

What's it like to drive?

There's certainly a difference with the steering. It's quicker, and all models are expected to come with the variable-weight adjustable Flex Steer system that is already seen in other *Hyundai* models, such as the *i30* small family car. Left in Normal mode, the steering is light, making it suited to easy progress through town. In faster bends, the shortage of weight doesn't inspire much confidence, and although selecting Sport makes the steering heavier, it feels artificial and inconsistent as you turn the wheel. While grip is good, there's a fair amount of body lean. That being said, our test car rode well around town on our German test route. Indeed, only larger, deeper road imperfections were uncomfortable, but it remains to be seen how the 2013 *ix35* copes on the broken road surfaces that are common around the Baltics. We drove the two-wheel-drive 1.7-litre diesel model, which has enough shove from below 3000 rpm to feel comfortable in town and when overtaking on the motorway. The car's main fault lies in its gruff sound when accelerating. It's also noisy on the motorway, because the engine does 2500 rpm at 110 km/h in sixth gear.

There's some wind noise from the door mirrors at high speed, too, although the road noise isn't too bad at all.

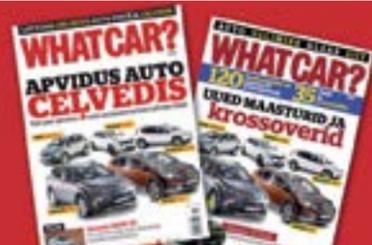


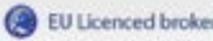
A mild revamp has ensured that the *Hyundai ix35* remains a strong option among soft-roaders

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CARS



What's it like inside?

The car has lots of head- and legroom up front, but while there's plenty of seat adjustment, some drivers might want the steering wheel to adjust lower. The *ix35's* sloping roofline means rear-seat space feels tighter than in a *Nissan Qashqai*. There's still enough headroom for six-footers, but anyone over that won't have much to spare. Rear kneeroom is a little tight for tall adults as well, although the almost flat floor and wide-opening rear doors make the car family-friendly. Where the *ix35* excels is in boot space, which also has a practical shape, with a relatively low loading lip and a wide opening for easy access. The rear seatbacks fold nice and flat, too. *Hyundai* has worked to improve the feel of the cabin by adding extra soft-touch parts to the dashboard and doors.

While our test car didn't look or feel noticeably better than the outgoing model, the new seven-inch infotainment screen (which comes with an optional sat-nav system) is really easy to use on the move. Every *ix35* is to be equipped with air-conditioning, alloy wheels, a USB connection, Bluetooth, four electric windows, front- and rear-heated seats, and parking sensors.

Should I buy one?

Hyundai has succeeded in giving the *ix35* a more comfortable ride. While this model remains a bit flawed to drive, not all of the crossover buyers really care about that. If you do, then test drive a *Qashqai* as well and compare the two. However, with the introduction of a new entry-level model, the *Hyundai ix35* is certain to look better value than ever. **BO**

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OUTLOOK / GADGETS

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Magimix Le Blender
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195 EUR | www.sageappliances.co.uk



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Design wunderkind Yves Béhar has reimagined this iconic kitchen standby, which conveniently turns your tap water into sparkling soda water. The futuristic design does away with levers and buttons, so there's no screwing of bottles. Just push the bottle in and press down to begin the carbonation process, pressing on the appropriate LED-like light to select the amount of bubbles that you desire. A range of compostable pods lets you add a variety of flavours to your soda. Uses 60-litre carbonators. No electricity required.

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The ORTO Clinic – a solid reputation and years of experience

Although Riga's *ORTO Clinic* was established back in 2008, this June it opened the first newly built and privately run traumatology, orthopaedics and rheumatology establishment in the Baltics. Administered by renowned orthopaedic surgeons, it is the only such centre in Latvia to offer a full spectrum of services and treatments for diseases of the bones and joints – from outpatient consultations and diagnostics to inpatient care, surgery and rehabilitation.

Among more than 50 highly qualified health care professionals who work at the clinic, nine prominent doctors specialise in sports and general traumatology, orthopaedics, spine surgery, radiology and rheumatology. The services of a general practitioner are available and can also be used on a regular basis by non-residents of the country. In addition, a special program has been designed to include a broad spectrum of diagnostics. The top-notch premises are well-lit and spacious, occupying all four storeys of a 3,500m² building in close proximity to the centre of Riga, and easily accessible by private or public transport.

The new centre houses a modern ambulatory clinic that can provide up to 1000 consultations a month, a diagnostics and physiotherapy section for outpatients, clinical research laboratories and a stationary healthcare

clinic with 30 beds and two beds for intensive care. The surgery department has three operating rooms, while the third floor houses conference halls that serve as a teaching centre for students and doctors. The specialists of the *ORTO Clinic* have even launched an informative channel on *Youtube*, which operates as a teaching course for existing and future patients.

THE SPECIALISTS OF THE ORTO CLINIC HAVE EVEN LAUNCHED AN INFORMATIVE CHANNEL ON YOUTUBE, WHICH OPERATES AS A TEACHING COURSE FOR EXISTING AND FUTURE PATIENTS

The diagnostics and radiology department is equipped with the most efficient MRI scanner in the Baltics, providing outstanding visualisation. It is possible to rapidly perform a full body scan, the results of which are interpreted by several radiologists, each specialising in specific areas.

The clinic is proud of the measures that it has taken to ensure a truly sterile environment in its operating rooms. These rooms are equipped with the most modern ventilation system, in which the total air mass in the room is cleared 15 times per hour, radically decreasing the risk of infection. Sterility cannot be overrated where high-risk bone surgery is concerned, thus all possible measures are taken at the *ORTO Clinic* – to the point where

surgeons perform the most demanding operations wearing special sealed suits.

If you suffer from bone and joint-related ailments, then these are undoubtedly the professionals you will want to take care of you. **BO**



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Outstanding quality and design

Soft and comfortable furniture adds a cosy feel to any interior. However, it can sometimes be difficult to find tasteful and affordable furniture that fits the buyer's criteria for quality and design. Those who are still seeking the right furniture for their needs need look no further. The *Natuzzi Group's* new *Leather Editions* collection offers a wide range of elegantly designed leather sofas and armchairs that are perfect for contemporary interiors. These furniture items are as comfortable as can be, incorporating innovative technological solutions and contemporary design, at a price and quality ratio that is truly hard to beat.

Seeking furniture through the Internet can be useful, but that is no match for seeing and trying out a prospective sofa or armchair in the flesh, so to speak. Those who happen to be in Riga are in luck, as the *KATE* furniture salon has been offering various furniture collections by this highly regarded Italian manufacturer for the past several years. Currently *KATE* is one of more than 250 furniture salons worldwide that showcase the *Leather Editions* brand gallery, and the only one in Latvia to do so.

The *Leather Editions* line is designed entirely in Italy, at the *Natuzzi* style centre. The sofas and armchairs are made at the Group's factories that are closer to the company's sales markets, in accordance with established Italian traditions of craftsmanship and industry. Certain stages of the furniture-making are conducted entirely by hand, ensuring perfection in every detail.

The *Natuzzi Group* uses only the finest leather in its furniture, placing great importance on the ethical

aspects of the leather's obtention. For this particular collection, the company uses only leather from cattle that has been raised to produce meat. The processing of this type of leather is a complicated and lengthy process, involving nearly 30 different steps, several of which are conducted by hand. However, the premium quality of the end product justifies the effort put into obtaining it.

For lively households with small children and pets, *Leather Editions* has created a special line of *Protecta* leather, which comes with an invisible protective coating. This extra layer effectively protects the leather against liquids, stains and visible signs of aging without compromising the leather's natural beauty. Even after many years, *Protecta* leather retains its smooth texture and uniform colour. It is also easy to maintain, with a small amount of soap and water being sufficient to clean out most stains.

There are times when visually appealing sofas end up disappointing their owners because they are not as comfortable as they look. No such problems with *Leather Editions* furniture, which will provide the user with years of comfort and pleasure. *Leather Editions* allows for no compromises here, with the option of ordering such extra features as reclining mechanisms, upholstered benches and headrests. The extra comfort and added functions are ensured by invisible high-quality mechanisms that operate silently and don't require much physical effort to operate. *Leather Editions* soft furniture combines smart-looking contemporary design with the highest possible degree of comfort. **BO**

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A restaurant worth visiting

It is not every day that you will come across a renowned head chef, who – while used to being the king and ruler in his kitchen – has no problems with humbly shadowing another master of the trade. One such chef is Roberts Smilga. Always willing to improve his already outstanding cooking skills, Smilga recently returned from Moscow, where he learnt some new tricks from the head chef of the prominent Italian *Cantinella Antinori* restaurant. Now Smilga is full of excitement and, not surprisingly, new ideas. The dishes served at the Moscow establishment are very much in line with the kind of food that Smilga values highly.

As a result of his internship, he is now working on various new ways to present exquisite pasta dishes and recipes with rabbit's meat, something that he had not done until now. The same applies to such seafood as octopus and molluscs, which he has already got hold of for some creative culinary experiments. Though eager to learn from knowledgeable experts, Smilga maintains his own mindset about the way that things should be done, which means that he does not necessarily

run with the pack. For example, while in Moscow, Smilga had the chance to observe the now popular technique of cooking meat for 10 hours over a low fire. However, when asked if he plans to implement this trendy method in his restaurant, he just shakes his head. "While such techniques are interesting, many of them stem from trends that will likely go out of fashion at some point. I'm not the man to go running after trends. I want to stick to values that don't go out of style. I know that

something is good and right if it brings positive emotions to my guests. Consequently, many of them will return again to my restaurant. A month or a year later, they will want the exact same thing – something that makes them feel welcome. You cannot describe this sense of *rightness* precisely; it feels similar to winning a lottery. In any case, it's great when what you deliver is received with the same emotion that you've put into it." 1221 is ready to provide you with a warm welcome to its New Year's Eve festivities, but book in advance, as the clock is already on countdown for spare tables! **BO**

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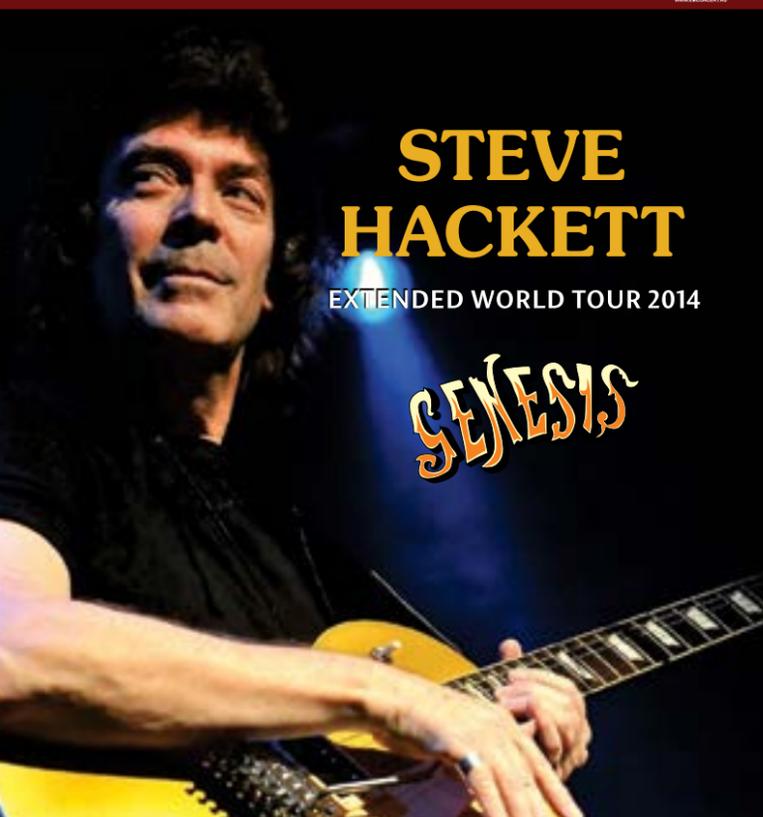
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WAY**Dživoklis Nr. 19, Riga**

Dživoklis Nr. 19 (Apartment No. 19) is a restaurant inside an apartment on quirky and artsy Tērbatas iela. This is as much as you can find out by browsing the internet, because the house number is kept a secret. You have to dig a bit deeper to find your way to this equally quirky and special place. It is run by the charismatic Inārs Birmanis and by him alone. The establishment manages to pull off being elegant, calm and subtle, yet also innovative, edgy and original at the same time. "I have no obligations and no standards set by anyone

else," says Birmanis. "I do what I like. If people enjoy being here and if they are happy with the way that things are done, then they will come back. If not...well, I don't mind that either!" For two years, Riga has kept this special vegetarian restaurant as a closely guarded secret. Birmanis is actually an established snowboarding coach, who started taking an interest in cooking during the 15 years that he spent organising training camps for children. He prepared their meals by himself, and when the kids and their parents started telling him how great the

food was, he began to think about founding his own restaurant. *Dživoklis Nr. 19* turned out to be very different from your usual dinner spot and acquired a loyal clientele in practically no time at all. Birmanis cooks light, simple yet interesting vegetarian food and offers a weekly menu. People call him and book in advance, this being the only way to visit *Dživoklis Nr. 19*, without knowing what dishes will be served on the day that they visit. To this Birmanis says: "If you like what I do enough to come here, then trust me!" The atmosphere is truly special and you would be hard-pressed to feel the sensation of being in both a public space and an intimate private realm anywhere else. Sometimes, people ask him to prepare his legendary dishes for them again (even though Birmanis has never written down a recipe). Such is his Brie salad, which consists of Brie cheese, sun-dried tomatoes, pickled cucumbers and strawberry sauce. There are some hard-to-forget items on the evening menu as well, including the baked celery root with swede (yellow turnip), beetroot, honey and sea buckthorn sauce, as well as the eggplant, spinach and tomato puree with cashews and quinoa. It is easy to fall in love with this place and wish to come back, partly because you are sure to be warmly welcomed each time. All you need to do is find it... Good luck!



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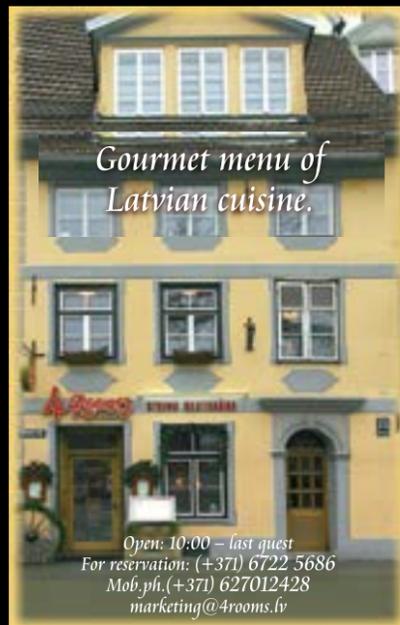
Portofino – it's gentry, stylish, luxurious. It's hospitality at its finest, and Portofino's team, who are all ardent and non-compromising enthusiasts for service and food excellence, know the value of a loyal guest. Warm and welcoming, it is a place to return to, tomorrow or in a couple of years. It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

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Trīs Naži, Riga

Trīs Naži (Three Knives) is yet another innovative project by the men of the culinary powerhouse *Trīs Pavāri (Three Chefs)* and has replaced the *Trīs Zivis (Three Fish)* bistro in Riga's Old Town. The owners of the new restaurant have entrusted its kitchen to the skilful hands of Artūrs Taškāns, who had been working 16-hour days at *Texture*, a prominent London restaurant, for the past four years. Artūrs credits the long hours that he spent in the kitchen of the Michelin-starred establishment for making him the master chef that he is today. The accomplished chef had left Latvia to acquire new cooking techniques abroad, claiming that most Latvian chefs have learnt their trade from the same few masters, making the local dining scene too homogenous for his taste. The concept of *Trīs Naži* is an expansion of that which was implemented at the preceding establishment and could be described as Scandinavian cuisine. According to Artūrs, it could also be called Latvian cuisine with equal right, because many of the products used at *Trīs Naži* are nature's gifts from the local flora and fauna. The restaurant serves game, such as deer, elk and wild boar, as well as fish caught in Latvia's rivers and the sea. Artūrs also uses a multitude of plants found in the forests, including sea buckthorn, juniper, wild strawberries, raspberries and alder.

The menu is small and the food is superb but not overly extravagant, because, in Artūrs' words, he doesn't want to serve dishes consisting of 70 ingredients, which only other chefs and gourmards could truly appreciate. While Artūrs includes elements customary to the local traditions, he also adds innovative features even in the simplest-looking components of a dish. For example, a hunk of mashed potatoes, which is traditionally mixed with double cream in Latvia, will have duck fat added to it instead. In seeking to arouse a certain "food nostalgia", he simultaneously wants to introduce his customers to new and interesting flavours. Serving desserts made with vegetables has been all the rage of late and, accordingly, Artūrs cooks up a mean dark chocolate parfait with beetroot candy and yoghurt foam as well as a white chocolate pudding with rye bread biscuit and sweet cucumber. The dishes that Artūrs prepares really come to life, which he says is mostly due to the techniques he has acquired. Thus, at *Trīs Naži*, even a dish that you think you have had before can turn out to be a whole new experience, and a great experience at that.

Mon.-Sat. 12:00-23:00
Sun. 11:00-17:00 (starting with brunch)
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Abu Dhabi

IN BRIEF

- 1/ Land of the sun within reach – direct flights to Abu Dhabi!
- 2/ More flights to Eastern Europe
- 3/ A new route to dreamy Aberdeen!
- 4/ Book your perfect holiday with us – *airBalticTravel*
- 5/ *airBaltic's* ambient media

1/ Land of the sun within reach – direct flights to Abu Dhabi!

Enjoy the sun throughout the year and discover both ancient monuments and the finest examples of 21st-century architecture. Starting December 16, direct flights from Riga to Abu Dhabi will now operate four times a week thanks to a codeshare agreement between *airBaltic* and *Etihad Airways*. The planes have the seating capacity for 14 Business Class and 102 Economy Class passengers. Furthermore, our code-share cooperation will offer convenient connections for passengers travelling through Abu Dhabi to key destinations in Australia, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. The whole world has just become even more accessible!

Book now at www.airbaltic.com to get the lowest possible prices.



St. Petersburg

2/ More flights to Eastern Europe

With the onset of the winter season timetable, *airBaltic* will increase flight frequencies between Riga and several gems of Eastern Europe in co-operation with regional codeshare partners. Now there will be six flights per week to Moscow's Vnukovo airport complementing 28 flights to Sheremetyevo and seven flights per week to Domodedovo. Three daily flights will depart for Kiev, with 12 flights per week to stunning St. Petersburg, eight to Minsk and four to Kaliningrad. Excellent travel options for business and leisure travellers.

3/ A new route to dreamy Aberdeen!

Discover the Scottish seaside city of Aberdeen, known as the oil capital of Europe and famous for its breathtaking views, impressive architecture and many more wonders to make your trip unforgettable. With mountains, forests, heaths and lochs, it's a paradise for nature lovers, climbers, hikers, cyclists, fishermen and even winter sports enthusiasts.

The flights will operate four times per week and one-way ticket prices will start from 39 EUR.

4/ Book your perfect holiday with us – *airBalticTravel*

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5/ *airBaltic's* ambient media

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Aberdeen



TEXT BY AGRA LIEGE
PHOTO BY GĀTIS GIERTS, F64, JANIS SALINS AND ILZE ARKLINA

Flying to win

Igors Rasiņš,
Workshop Manager

Igors Bakovs,
Aircraft Technician –
Shift Leader



Among the aircraft of the *airBaltic* family, there is now one like no other. For just over two weeks, a selected *Boeing 737-500* has been sporting a special design element, yet this is more than just a fancy addition. In honour of the rapidly approaching Winter Olympic Games, which will be held in Sochi in February, *airBaltic* has begun a collaborative effort with the *Latvian Olympic Committee* and is showing it off to the world.

Our special *Boeing 737-500* now has the *LOK (Latvian Olympic Committee)* symbol printed on its side, and it will be flying the Latvian Olympic team to Sochi for the Winter Olympics in 2014. In the meantime, it's business as usual. The *LOK Boeing* has already been on its first flight to Berlin since its visual makeover.

The livery of an aircraft is not your odd bumper sticker, and the process of applying a new design element on the airplane's surface can be tricky, both technically and in terms of regulations. The technicians who work on aircraft take care of both the technical maintenance of planes and the decoration of their surfaces. Standard technical check-ups take place after each

flight. However, if a lengthier job comes up, then it is done by the team of technicians that works nights as well.

Such was the facelift of our *Boeing* and it took approximately four days to accomplish. We asked Igors Rasiņš, an expert in aircraft structural repairs and workshop manager, to explain the technical specifications of this very special task.

As Rasiņš explained, the *LOK* ornament covers a staggering 40m² (almost one fourth of the aircraft's total surface area) on the left side of the plane. Four colours were painted on, with a sticker applied afterwards. The colours were three different shades of green and a shade of blue, all for the mountain view of the symbol.

The painter-mechanic and a few more members of the technical team applied each colour on a different day, so as to allow the paint to dry for more than the minimum 12 hours. The paint itself was a polyurethane coating that is used specifically for the needs of aviation. It has a very high endurance level, which any material used in a plane's livery needs in order to remain intact, as planes undergo great extremes in temperature and speed.

Interestingly, this paint has to be elastic as well – a little bit like rubber, because the airplane, once high up in the stratosphere, expands slightly. Thus, anything painted on its surface must also be capable of expanding. The sticker placed onto the paint was made out of vinyl film, which is so strong that it can remain on the surface it's placed on for up to seven years.

Contrary to what some might think, there are few restrictions as to what can be pictured on a plane and where. The few exceptions are that the written technical instructions, which are placed on several spots of the plane's surface, cannot be covered up. The same goes for the all-important static ports. These little devices are open ports in strategic places on the plane, which are used to measure the outside air pressure, and that is why they must remain open at all times.

Igors Bakovs has had most of *airBaltic's* aircraft pass through his hands, be it for a routine check-up or more serious repairs. He is an *airBaltic* veteran and the shift supervisor at the airline's technical department. Igors has worked in the field for 35 years and also oversaw the application process of the *LOK* symbol to the aircraft for the four nights that it took.

In 1978, Igors graduated from an aviation institute in Russia and later retrained to be an aircraft mechanic. He went on to work with *Baltic International Airlines* at the Riga airport before joining *airBaltic* at its very outset. This was also the beginning of the era of modern airplanes, a change that is no small matter for mechanics. Igors still remembers how experienced Western technicians arrived to help the local experts, himself among others, to retrain on modern aircraft. They started with small planes and then moved on to passenger aircraft.

Now, as a long-standing expert in the field who oversees 75 technicians working on *airBaltic* aircraft, Igors knows an



impressive number of different aircraft models inside out. He leads 10 technicians on day shifts and around 30 of them on night shifts, when the more comprehensive maintenance and repair work takes place. As Igors recalls, since the changes in design of all the *airBaltic* aircraft, there has not been one single case of advertising on the outer surface of the planes, only inside the cabin. Surface repainting is reserved for very special occasions. After all, an airplane is just about the perfect symbol for an anticipated success – rising up into the sky and flying to win! **BO**

Onboard menu

Business Class

Once again, our chef is offering a new menu for airBaltic's Business Class passengers. The exquisite and healthy inflight meals include a variety of appetizers, as well as tasty main courses like salmon with Brussels sprouts, roasted duck breast with cranberry sauce or braised rabbit in white wine. For dessert, Business Class passengers

can savour the Florentine apple tart, rosemary panna cotta, cranberry zephyr or cherry tiramisu.

Economy Class

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



Customize Your meal!

To make your flight even more enjoyable, we have not only widened our pre-order menu choice, but also the choices at www.airBalticMeal.com. The Virtual tray – how it works:

→ Step 1

Choose your meal from more than 70 dishes. Select a starter and a dessert according to your taste. Don't forget to add your favourite drink to fully enjoy the meal. Make your order no later than 48 hours before departure.

→ Step 2

Your selected meal will be cooked by our chefs using the freshest ingredients and delivered on board just before your flight.

→ Step 3

The friendly crew will serve your meal and drinks to you individually prior to general service onboard. Bon appétit!



BalticMiles

What's more, if you are a BalticMiles loyalty program customer, then you can

collect 300 bonus points for each meal that you pre-order until November 17. Pre-order now at www.airBalticMeal.com

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If you wish to enjoy a gourmet meal or have special dietary requirements, then take a look at our special pre-order menu.

By ordering a meal before your flight, you will save money and will be served first on board.

You can pre-order your meal while you book your flight ticket or anytime later, up to 24 hours before departure, under the *Manage my booking* section at www.airbaltic.com.

Breakfast EUR 9



- Pancakes
- Croissant and jam
- Fruit
- Coffee and orange juice

Cold meal EUR 10



- Salmon in mustard with pickled vegetable salad
- Dessert
- Orange juice

Latvian Cuisine EUR 15



- Potato pancake with smoked salmon
- Latvian free range chicken breast with fried potatoes and seasonal mushrooms
- Crumble cake
- Orange juice

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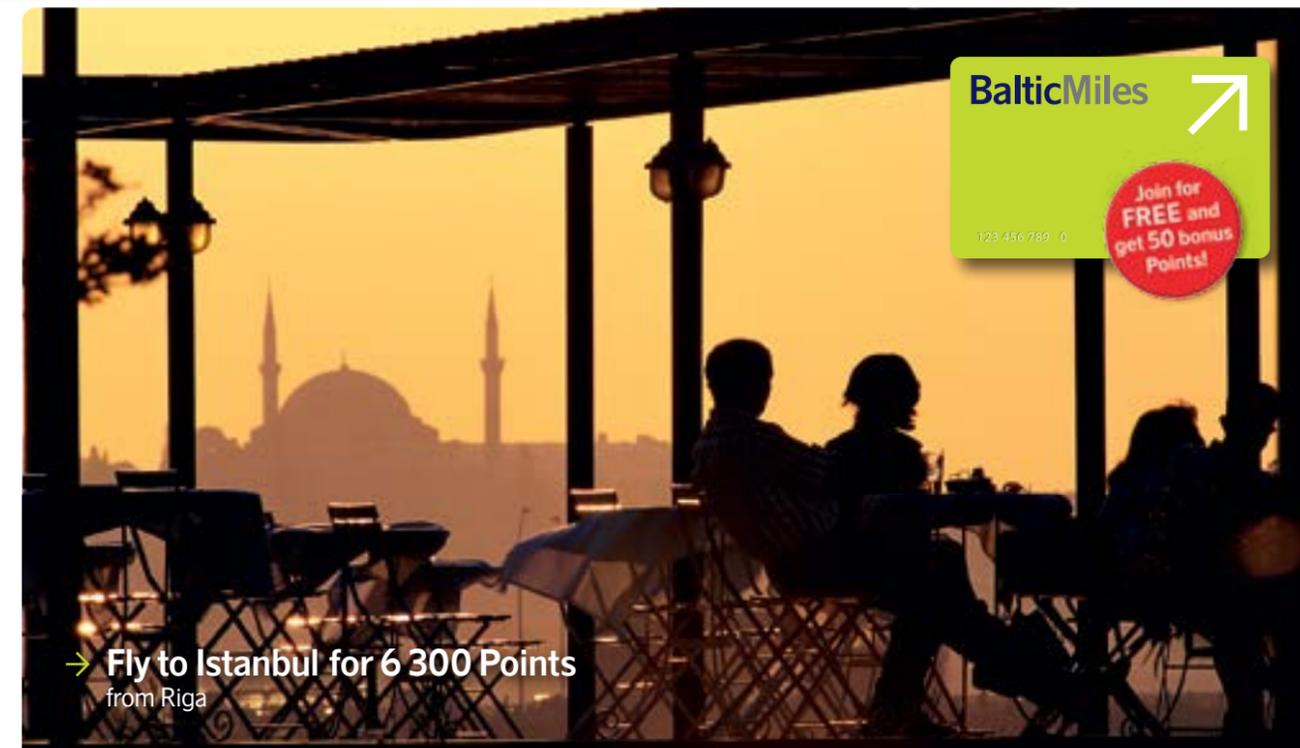
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	Basic	Economy Smart	Economy Elite	Business Smart	Business Elite
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Name change	EUR 35 per ticket	EUR 35 per ticket	Available free of charge	Available free of charge	Available free of charge
Cancellation with refund	Not available	EUR 100 per direction	Available free of charge	EUR 100 per direction	Available free of charge
Advance seat reservation	from EUR 2.99	from EUR 2.99	Available free of charge	Available free of charge	Available free of charge
Hand baggage	Available free of charge 1 piece up to 8 kg	Available free of charge 1 piece up to 8 kg	Available free of charge 1 piece up to 8 kg	Available free of charge 2 pieces up to 8 kg each	Available free of charge 2 pieces up to 8 kg each
Checked-in baggage	EUR 19.99 per piece per direction if purchased together with flight ticket at www.airbaltic.com	Available free of charge 1 piece up to 20 kg	Available free of charge 1 piece up to 20 kg	Available free of charge 3 pieces, 30 kg total	Available free of charge 3 pieces, 30 kg total
Sports equipment	EUR 29.99 per piece per direction if purchased at www.airbaltic.com	EUR 29.99 per piece per direction if purchased at www.airbaltic.com	EUR 29.99 per piece per direction if purchased at www.airbaltic.com	Available free of charge 1 piece	Available free of charge 1 piece
Airport check-in	EUR 10 at the Economy Class desk, EUR 14.99 at Business Class desk	EUR 10 at the Economy Class desk, EUR 14.99 at Business Class desk	Available free of charge At the Economy Class desk, EUR 14.99 at Business Class desk	Available free of charge At the Business Class desk	Available free of charge At the Business Class desk
Security Fast track	Not available	Not available	Not available	Available free of charge	Available free of charge
Business Lounge	Not available	Not available	Available free of charge In Riga only for BalticMiles Executive card holders	Available free of charge	Available free of charge
Meals and drinks	from EUR 9 for hot meal, preorder or buy on board	from EUR 9 for hot meal, preorder or buy on board	Available free of charge Economy Class menu	Available free of charge Business Class menu	Available free of charge Business Class menu
Seating	Economy cabin	Economy cabin	Economy cabin	Front cabin	Front cabin
Free seat next to you	from EUR 50	from EUR 50	from EUR 50	Available free of charge	Available free of charge
BalticMiles Points earned from ticket purchase	1 Point for each EUR spent	5 Points for each EUR spent	5 Points for each EUR spent	10 Points for each EUR spent	10 Points for each EUR spent

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<p>New Smart Taxi LT</p>  <p>Smart Taxi is the most convenient taxi service in Vilnius. Call your taxi online, enjoy new hybrid vehicles and free WI-FI on board.</p> <p>1 Point for each LTL spent</p> 	<p>New Smart Pack baggage wrapping LT</p>  <p>Travel from Vilnius International Airport with confidence and 100% peace of mind with Smartpack baggage wrapping – guaranteed protection against theft, damage, accidental openings, illegal insertion and precipitation. Available 24/7.</p> <p>1 Point for each LTL spent</p> 
<p>New Continental Moda shop EE</p>  <p>Continental Moda has the biggest choice of dresses in Tallinn city centre for all kinds of festive events. You will find unique designer dresses for special occasions like graduating, weddings and cocktail parties. All dresses can be fixed according to your measures by a dressmaker on the spot.</p> <p>4 Points for each EUR spent</p> 	<p>New Optiline Group shops EE</p>  <p>Optiline group is the authorised seller of Ray-Ban and Vogue eyeglasses operating in 30 shops all over Estonia under the names Stockoptika, Pereoptika and Säästuoptika. In Optiline group stores you will also find special glasses for golf players, swimmers, bikers and drivers and register for eye examinations.</p> <p>4 Points for each EUR spent</p> 

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All the prices displayed include shipping costs to Latvia. Prices and availability of rewards are subject to change and may vary by delivery country.

Flights from Riga					Flights to Riga				
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival
KAUNAS									
BT 041	RIX	KUN	-23-5-7	22:45 23:30	BT 042	KUN	RIX	1-34-6-	08:00 08:45
VILNIUS									
BT 341	RIX	VNO	1234567	09:55 10:50	BT 350	VNO	RIX	1234567	07:50 08:45
BT 343	RIX	VNO	1234567	14:15 15:10	BT 342	VNO	RIX	1234567	11:55 12:50
BT 347	RIX	VNO	1234567	19:10 20:05	BT 344	VNO	RIX	1234567	15:40 16:35
BT 349	RIX	VNO	1234567	22:45 23:40	BT 348	VNO	RIX	1234567	20:35 21:30
PALANGA									
BT 032	RIX	PLQ	1-3-5-7	22:45 23:30	BT 033	PLQ	RIX	12-4-6-	08:00 08:45
TALLINN									
BT 311	RIX	TLL	1234567	09:50 10:45	BT 366	TLL	RIX	1234567	07:50 08:45
BT 313	RIX	TLL	1234567	14:15 15:10	BT 312	TLL	RIX	1234567	11:55 12:50
BT 363	RIX	TLL	1234567	19:05 20:00	BT 314	TLL	RIX	1234567	15:40 16:35
BT 365	RIX	TLL	1234567	22:45 23:40	BT 364	TLL	RIX	1234567	20:30 21:25
STOCKHOLM Arlanda									
BT 101	RIX	ARN	1234567	09:40 09:55	BT 104	ARN	RIX	123456-	06:45 09:00
BT 109	RIX	ARN	1234567	18:45 19:00	BT 102	ARN	RIX	1234567	10:25 12:40
BT 103	RIX	ARN	12345-7	22:35 22:50	BT 110	ARN	RIX	1234567	19:30 21:45
COPENHAGEN									
BT 133	RIX	CPH	1234---	06:05 06:45	BT 134	CPH	RIX	1234---	07:15 09:50
BT 131	RIX	CPH	1234567	09:15 09:55	BT 132	CPH	RIX	1234567	10:50 13:25
BT 139	RIX	CPH	1234567	18:00 18:40	BT 140	CPH	RIX	1234567	19:15 21:50
BILLUND									
BT 145	RIX	BLL	1-3-5-7	22:25 23:25	BT 146	BLL	RIX	12-4-67	06:05 08:55
OSLO									
BT 151	RIX	OSL	123456-	09:15 10:10	BT 158	OSL	RIX	1234567	06:00 08:50
BT 153	RIX	OSL	1234567	17:10 18:05	BT 152	OSL	RIX	123456-	10:45 13:35
BT 157	RIX	OSL	1234567	22:25 23:20	BT 154	OSL	RIX	1234567	18:35 21:25
BERGEN									
BT 171	RIX	BGO	1-4-5-7	22:25 23:50	BT 172	BGO	RIX	12--56-	05:40 09:00
STAVANGER									
BT 177	RIX	SVG	-2-4-7	22:25 23:45	BT 178	SVG	RIX	1-3-5--	05:45 09:00
ALESUND									
BT 175	RIX	AES	----5-7	13:25 14:50	BT 176	AES	RIX	----5-7	15:20 18:35
HELSINKI									
BT 301	RIX	HEL	1234567	09:50 10:55	BT 330	HEL	RIX	1234567	07:50 08:50
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BT 329	RIX	HEL	1234567	22:35 23:40	BT 306	HEL	RIX	1234567	20:40 21:40
TURKU									
BT 359	RIX	TKU	12-45-7	22:35 23:45	BT 360	TKU	RIX	123-56-	07:30 08:35
TAMPERE									
BT 357	RIX	TMP	1-4-7	22:55 00:15+1	BT 358	TMP	RIX	12--5--	07:15 08:30
LAPPEENRANTA									
BT 387	RIX	LPP	1-345--	22:35 23:50	BT 388	LPP	RIX	-2-456-	07:25 08:40
BERLIN Tegel									
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BT 213	RIX	TXL	1234567	17:10 18:05	BT 214	TXL	RIX	1234567	18:40 21:30
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BT 255	RIX	HAM	1-----7	14:05 15:10	BT 256	HAM	RIX	1-----7	15:40 18:35
BT 253	RIX	HAM	-3-5--	17:10 18:15	BT 254	HAM	RIX	-3-5--	18:45 21:40
MUNICH									
BT 221	RIX	MUC	1-3-5--	09:20 11:00	BT 222	MUC	RIX	1-3-5--	11:40 15:10
BT 223	RIX	MUC	12-4567	16:00 17:40	BT 224	MUC	RIX	12-4567	18:20 21:50
FRANKFURT									
BT 243	RIX	FRA	1-3-5-7	09:30 11:15	BT 244	FRA	RIX	1-3-5-7	11:50 15:25
BT 245	RIX	FRA	---4-6-	15:40 17:25	BT 246	FRA	RIX	---4-6-	18:00 21:35
DUSSELDORF									
BT 231	RIX	DUS	1--5--	09:40 11:15	BT 232	DUS	RIX	1--5--	11:45 15:15
BT 233	RIX	DUS	-3--6-	15:55 17:30	BT 234	DUS	RIX	-3--6-	18:00 21:30

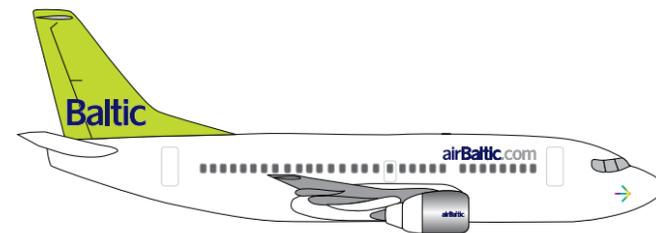
Flights from Riga					Flights to Riga				
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival
VIENNA									
BT 431	RIX	VIE	123456-	09:50 11:15	BT 432	VIE	RIX	123456-	11:45 15:05
BT 433	RIX	VIE	12345-7	16:20 17:45	BT 434	VIE	RIX	12345-7	18:15 21:35
ZURICH									
BT 641	RIX	ZRH	1--5--	09:25 10:55	BT 642	ZRH	RIX	1--5--	11:35 15:10
BT 641	RIX	ZRH	-2--6-	16:15 17:45	BT 642	ZRH	RIX	-2--6-	18:20 21:55
MOSCOW Domodedovo									
BT 418	RIX	DME	1234567	09:40 13:50	BT 419	DME	RIX	1234567	14:30 14:45
MOSCOW Sheremetyevo									
BT 424	RIX	SVO	1234567	04:25 08:05	BT 425	SVO	RIX	1234567	08:45 21:30
BT 422	RIX	SVO	1234567	17:00 20:40	BT 423	SVO	RIX	1234567	21:40 21:30
ST-PETERSBURG									
BT 442	RIX	LED	123456-	09:40 13:00	BT 443	LED	RIX	123456-	13:35 12:55
BT 444	RIX	LED	12345-7	18:30 21:50	BT 445	LED	RIX	12345-7	22:25 21:45
KALININGRAD									
BT 428	RIX	KGD	1-34--7	22:45 00:40+1	BT 429	KGD	RIX	12-45--	08:40 08:35
MINSK									
BT 412	RIX	MSQ	---4--7	09:40 11:50	BT 413	MSQ	RIX	---4--7	12:30 12:40
BT 412	RIX	MSQ	1-3----	18:10 20:20	BT 413	MSQ	RIX	1-3----	21:00 21:10
KIEV Borispol									
BT 400	RIX	KBP	1234567	09:40 11:15	BT 407	KBP	RIX	1234567	06:40 08:35
BT 404	RIX	KBP	1234567	16:40 18:30	BT 401	KBP	RIX	1234567	11:50 13:30
BT 406	RIX	KBP	1234567	22:40 00:30+1	BT 405	KBP	RIX	1234567	19:45 21:40
WARSAW									
BT 463	RIX	WAW	12345-7	22:25 22:55	BT 464	WAW	RIX	123456-	06:30 08:55
PRAGUE									
BT 481	RIX	PRG	1-3----	09:25 10:40	BT 482	PRG	RIX	1-3----	11:10 14:15
BT 481	RIX	PRG	---5-7	16:40 17:55	BT 482	PRG	RIX	---5-7	18:25 21:30
BUDAPEST									
BT 491	RIX	BUD	-2--6-	09:50 11:15	BT 492	BUD	RIX	-2--6-	11:45 15:00
BT 491	RIX	BUD	---4--	16:10 17:35	BT 492	BUD	RIX	---4--	18:05 21:20
BRUSSELS									
BT 601	RIX	BRU	12345--	06:30 08:25	BT 602	BRU	RIX	12345--	08:55 12:40
BT 601	RIX	BRU	-----6-	09:40 11:35	BT 602	BRU	RIX	-----6-	12:05 15:50
BT 603	RIX	BRU	-----7	15:30 17:25	BT 604	BRU	RIX	-----7	18:00 21:45
BT 603	RIX	BRU	12345--	17:25 19:20	BT 604	BRU	RIX	12345--	19:50 23:35
AMSTERDAM									
BT 617	RIX	AMS	12-456-	09:20 10:45	BT 618	AMS	RIX	12-456-	11:30 14:45
BT 619	RIX	AMS	123-5-7	16:30 17:55	BT 620	AMS	RIX	123-5-7	18:40 21:55
LONDON Gatwick									
BT 651	RIX	LGW	1-34---	09:30 10:20	BT 652	LGW	RIX	1-34---	11:10 15:55
BT 653	RIX	LGW	12-4567	15:20 16:10	BT 654	LGW	RIX	12-4567	16:50 21:35
PARIS Charles de Gaulles									
BT 691	RIX	CDG	123-56-	09:30 11:25	BT 692	CDG	RIX	123-56-	12:10 15:55
BT 693	RIX	CDG	1-345-7	15:20 17:15	BT 694	CDG	RIX	1-345-7	18:05 21:50
ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino									
BT 631	RIX	FCO	-2-4-6-	09:25 11:30	BT 632	FCO	RIX	-2-4-6-	12:15 16:25
BT 633	RIX	FCO	--3-5-7	14:10 16:15	BT 634	FCO	RIX	--3-5-7	17:05 21:15
MILAN Malpensa									
BT 629	RIX	MXP	-2-4-6-	09:30 11:15	BT 630	MXP	RIX	-2-4-6-	11:55 15:35
BT 629	RIX	MXP	1--5-7	15:45 17:30	BT 630	MXP	RIX	1--5-7	18:10 21:50
ISTANBUL Sabiha Gokcen									
BT 711	RIX	SAW	--3--7	09:40 12:45	BT 712	SAW	RIX	--3--7	13:25 16:20
BT 711	RIX	SAW	-2-4-6-	14:45 17:50	BT 712	SAW	RIX	-2-4-6-	18:30 21:25
LARNACA									
BT 657	RIX	LCA	-----6-	15:30 19:20	BT 658	LCA	RIX	-----7	12:20 16:25
BARCELONA									
BT 681	RIX	BCN	--3--6-	09:30 12:15	BT 682	BCN	RIX	--3--6-	12:55 17:35
BT 681	RIX	BCN	1-----7	13:35 16:20	BT 682	BCN	RIX	-----7	17:00 21:40
TBILISI									
BT 722	RIX	TBS	---5-7	22:55 04:25+1	BT 723	TBS	RIX	1----6-	07:00 08:35
TEL AVIV									
BT 771	RIX	TLV	-2-4-6-	10:00 14:20	BT 772	TLV	RIX	-2-4-6-	16:30 21:00

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



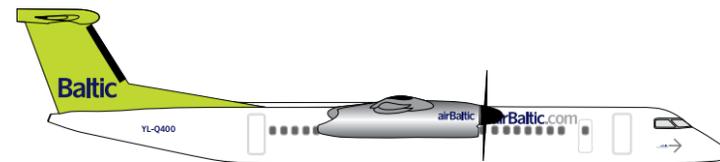
Boeing 737-300

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



Boeing 737-500

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



Q400 NextGen

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

airBaltic codeshare partners



- City served by airBaltic
- City served by airBaltic partner airline
- Route operated by airBaltic
- - - Route operated by airBaltic codeshare partner

0 170 km

* Seasonal flights.
** Operated in cooperation with tour operator Tez Tour.

- Reikjavik
- Chicago
- New York
- Seattle
- Washington

- Norilsk
- Naryan Mar
- Irkutsk

- Beijing
- Tokyo
- Shanghai
- Bangkok
- Singapore

- Petropavlovsk Kam
- Khabarovsk
- Yuzhno Sakhalinsk
- Krasnojarsk
- Novosibirsk
- Kemerovo
- Ulan Bator
- Vladivostok
- Ust Kamenogorsk

- Abidjan
- Freetown
- Kigali
- Entebbe/Kampala
- Banjul
- Guinea
- Kinshasa
- Nairobi
- Conakry
- Monrovia
- Luanda
- Dakar
- Doha
- Yaounde



Country/City Ticket offices	Airport Ticket Offices
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AZERBAIJAN	
Baku Improtex Travel 16. S. Vurgun Str. Baku AZ1000, Azarbijan ☎ +994 124089239 info@improtex-travel.com booking@improtex-travel.com	Heydar Aliyev International Airport Airport Ticket Office Silk Way Airlines South Terminal ☎ +994 124972600
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Minsk	Airport Minsk 2 2 nd floor Airport Ticket Office airBaltic ☎ +375 172792568.
BELGIUM	
Brussels Air Agencies Belgium 153 A Vilvoordelaan 1930 Zaventem ☎ +32 (0) 27126427 airbaltic@airagencies.be	Airport Zaventem Departure Hall ☎ +32 (0) 27230667 Airport Ticket Office Aviapartner
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Rijeka	Rijeka Airport Airport Ticket Office Zračna Luka Rijeka ☎ +385 51 841 222
CYPRUS	
Larnaca	Larnaca International Airport Airport Ticket Office airBaltic / LGS Handling
CZECH REPUBLIC	
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DENMARK	
Copenhagen	Airport Copenhagen International Terminal 3 Departure Hall Airport Ticket Office SAS
ESTONIA	
Tallinn ☎ 17107 (0.51 EUR/min, local calls only) tallinn@airbaltic.com	Airport Tallinn Main Terminal, Departure Hall Airport Ticket Office airBaltic / Tallinn Airport GH
FINLAND	
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Lappeenranta	Lappeenranta Airport
Tampere	Airport Tampere-Pirkkala Airport Ticket Office Airpro OY
Turku	Airport Turku Airport Ticket Office Airpro OY
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Paris APG France 66 avenue des Champs Elysees Building E, 2 nd floor 75008, Paris ☎ +33 153892100 airbaltic@apg.fr	Airport Charles de Gaulles Terminal 2D Airport Ticket Office Swissport Services CDG
Nice	Airport Nice Cote D'azur Terminal 1 Airport Ticket Office Lufthansa Ticket Desk
GEORGIA	
Tbilisi Discovery Travel Ltd/airBaltic GSA 72 Palashvili st. Tbilisi ☎ +995 32 2 900900 airbalticgsa@discovery.ge	Airport Tbilisi Airport Ticket Office Discovery Ltd ☎ +995 32 2 900900
GERMANY	
Berlin airBaltic Germany Hauptstrasse 117, D-10827 Berlin ☎ 0900 124 7225 (EUR 0.69/min German landline – mobile calls may be different) service@airbaltic.de	Airport Berlin-Tegel Main Terminal Airport Ticket Office GlobeGround Berlin Opposite Gate 4/5
Dusseldorf	Airport Dusseldorf Terminal B Airport Ticket Office AHS ☎ +49 (0) 2114216275
Frankfurt	Airport Frankfurt Airport Ticket Office AHS Terminal 2, Hall E, Desk 939 ☎ +49 69 690 61464

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Munich	Airport Munich Terminal 1 Airport Ticket Office AHS ☎ +49/89 975 92553
GREECE	
Athens Tal Aviation 44 Ithous str. 17564 - Pfalliro ☎ +30 210 9341500 F: +30 210 9341620 airbaltic@tal-aviation.gr	Athens International Airport Airport Ticket Office Goldair Handling
HUNGARY	
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ISRAEL	
Tel Aviv Caspi Aviation Ltd 1 Ben Yehuda st. Tel-Aviv 63801 ☎ +972 3 5100213 /4 F: +972 (3) 5108365 bt@caspi-aviation.co.il	Ben-Gurion International Airport Airport Ticket Office Lauter Aviation GmbH Level 3, Terminal 3 ☎ +972 39754076
ITALY	
Rome Tal Aviation Italy Via Adolfo Rava, 106, 00142, Rome ☎ +39 0654242544 F: +390654242534 airbaltic@talaviation.it	Leonardo de Vinci – Fiumicino Airport Terminal 5, Departure Hall A.R.E. Airline Representative Europe
Bari	Bari Airport Airport Ticket Office Bari Palese
Milan	Milan Malpensa Airport Terminal 1, Departure Level Airport Ticket Office A.R.E. Airline Representative Europe
Venice	Airport Venice Marco Polo Airport Ticket Office A.R.E. Airline Representative Europe
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Riga ☎ 90001100 (0.37 LVL/min, local calls only)	Riga International Airport Main Terminal Airport Ticket Office airBaltic
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Malta	Malta Airport Airport Ticket Office Air Malta ☎ +356 22999620 mia.airmalta@airmalta.com
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Bergen/Stavanger	Bergen Airport – Flesland Stavanger Airport Airport Ticket Office Aviator
POLAND	
Warsaw	Warsaw Airport Airport Ticket Office BGS

Country/City Ticket offices	Airport Ticket Offices
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SPAIN	
Barcelona	Airport El Prat de Llobregat Terminal 1 Airport Ticket Office Lufthansa Ticket Desk
SWEDEN	
Stockholm	Stockholm Arlanda Airport Airport Ticket Office airBaltic / Nordic Aero International Terminal 5
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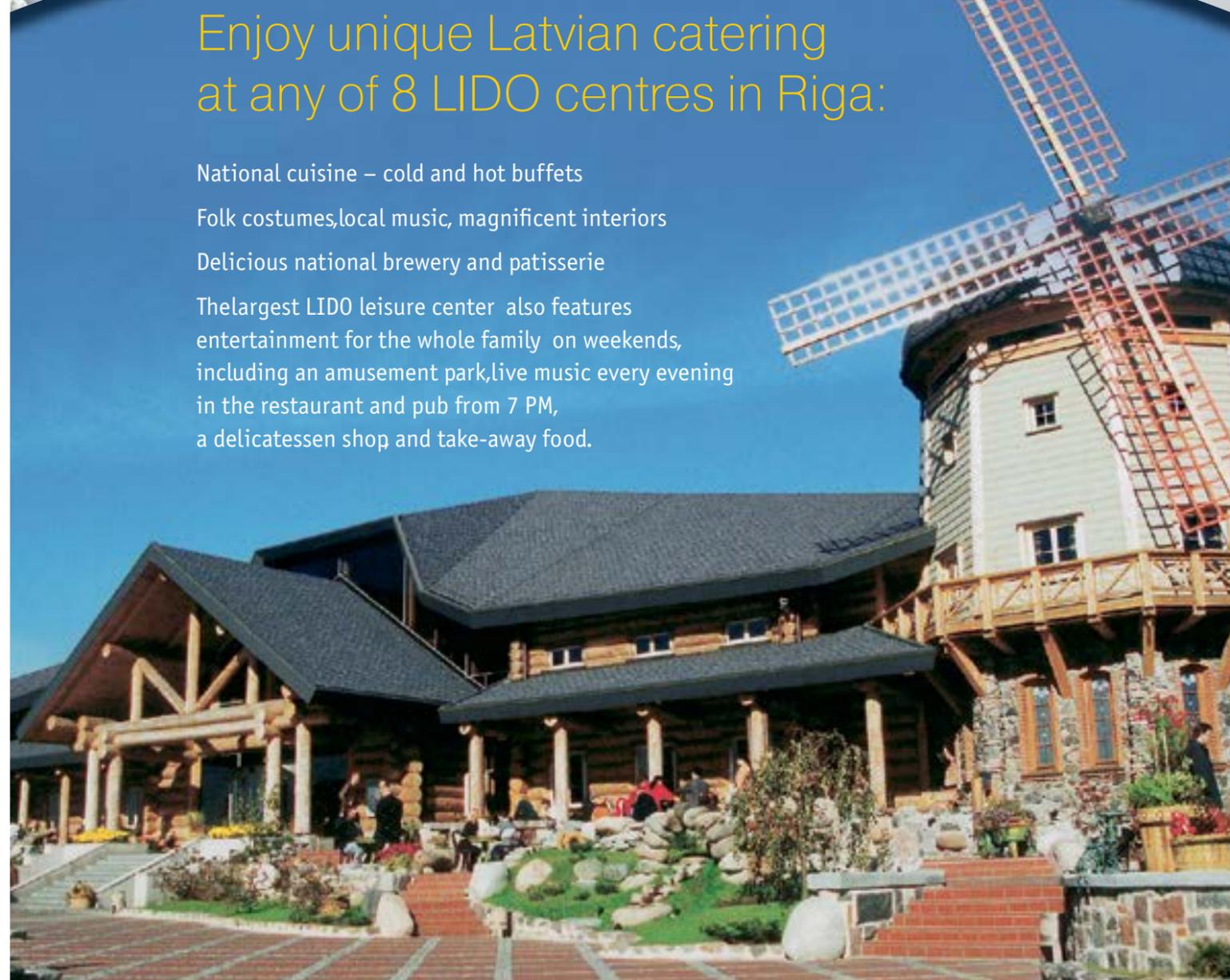
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