

# baltic<sup>outlook</sup>

OCTOBER 2015

**airBaltic**  
inflight magazine

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20 YEARS OF *airBaltic*

20 years  
in the air

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Jurmala, Lielupe, Bulduru prospekts  
Area of the apartment: 163.5 m<sup>2</sup>  
2nd floor, 3 rooms  
Price on request

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Юрмала, Лиелупе, проспект Булдуру  
Площадь квартиры 163,5 м<sup>2</sup>  
2 этаж, 3 комнаты  
Цена по запросу

Эксклюзивная квартира в проекте всемирно известного немецкого архитектора Мейнхарда фон Геркана "Bellevue".

Гостиная, терраса, кухня, 2 спальни, ванная комната, гардеробная комната.  
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Riga, Ausekla Street  
Area of the apartment: 50.4 m<sup>2</sup>  
2nd floor, 2 rooms  
Price: EUR 395,000

An elegant apartment in the residential complex "Aleksandra Apartments" – a historic building renovated in 2010 that is a striking example of Riga's Art Nouveau. Architect – Rudolf Heinrich von Zirkwitz.

An entrance hall, a studio type living room with a fire-place, a bedroom. The apartment is fully furnished. A lobby bar, sauna, and fitness room are available for the comfort of the residents. The price includes a parking space in the underground car park.

Рига, ул. Аусекля  
Площадь квартиры 50,4 м<sup>2</sup>  
2 этаж, 2 комнаты  
Цена 395 000 EUR

Элегантная квартира в жилом комплексе "Aleksandra Apartments" - реконструированное в 2010 году историческое здание югендстиля. Архитектор – Рудольф Генрих фон Цирквиз.

Прихожая, гостиная-студия с камином, спальня. Квартира полностью меблирована. Для комфорта жильцов в жилом комплексе обустроен лобби-бар, сауна и фитнес-зал. В стоимость входит 1 парковочное место на подземной автостоянке.



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**MARTIN ALEXANDER GAUSS**  
Chief Executive Officer *airBaltic*

Dear Customer,

*airBaltic* celebrates its 20th anniversary in October. We sincerely thank you for flying with us, thus driving our development as ever new routes are flown by new aircraft, opening up access to new regions.

We started with a small *Saab 340* turboprop between Riga and Stockholm back in 1995, and have grown to operate a network of 70 routes today. *airBaltic* is a critical element of infrastructure in the Baltic region, because we directly connect Riga, Tallinn and Vilnius with key airports in Europe, the Middle East and the CIS, enabling one-stop transfers to the whole world through our family of partner airlines operating in hubs such as Paris, London, Amsterdam, Berlin and Copenhagen.

We continue growing in our home market of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. This year has seen the opening of 14 new routes for the Baltic Sea region. We have reinforced our services in Riga by adding destinations and improving our flight schedules to Scandinavian and Western airports. We have just upgraded our historic first route and will now fly up to five times daily between Riga and Stockholm. Our Riga-Berlin route will have a larger jet aircraft in the winter season to offer twice as many seats at half the price

and reduced flight times compared to the current turboprop operation. For Vilnius, we have opened up new direct flights to major airports in Western and Northern Europe, and we are delighted to see strong demand on some of these routes from the first day of operation. For Tallinn, we have just announced two new direct services to Amsterdam and Stockholm that will reinforce the current direct services to Paris, Riga, Berlin and Vienna. The developments in Estonia and Lithuania are part of our five-year Horizon 2021 business plan.

I would like to thank you, our passengers, for making this success possible. I would also like to thank the people at *airBaltic* for their work and commitment over the past 20 years. We do our utmost to serve you well, to innovate and to take the airline to the next level by continuously improving the connectivity of the Baltic region.

Did you know that we have professionals representing 28 nationalities at *airBaltic*? That's almost 15% of the world's nations represented at the airline.

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

Yours,  
Martin Alexander Gauss



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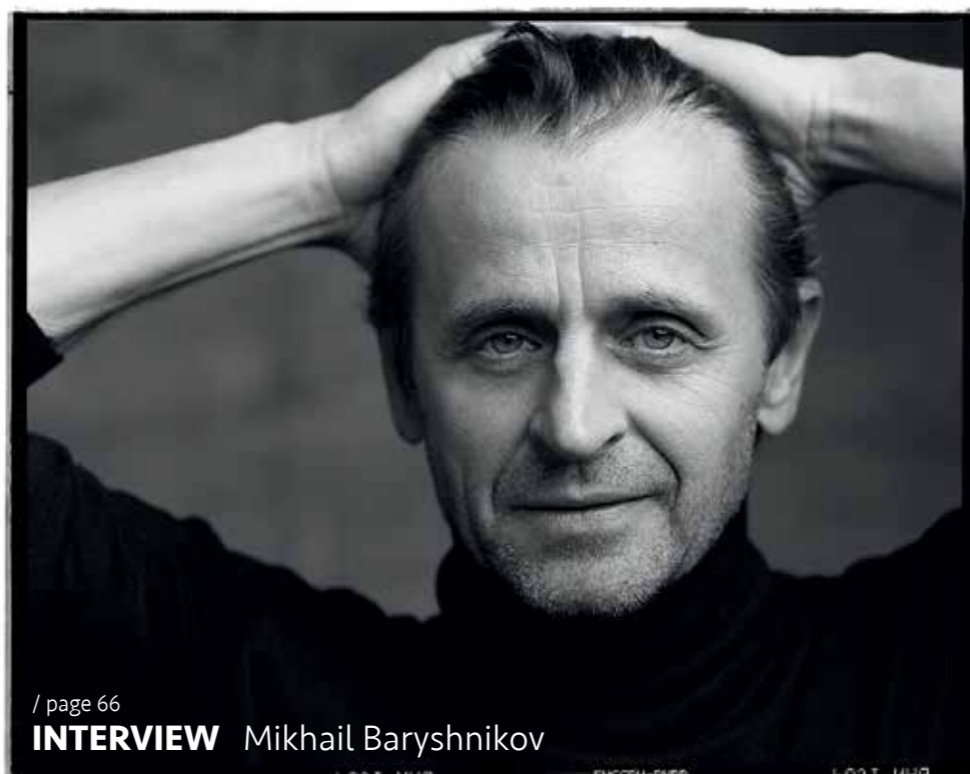
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## How October's cover photo came to be



You've probably noticed that the cover of our October issue is completely different than our usual covers, and that's because this issue is dedicated to *airBaltic's* 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It was the most beautiful September day. After a few rainy days, the sky cleared up and the sun shone brightly. Having just arrived from Zurich, a *Boeing 737-300* was at our disposal for a few hours. For its model, *airBaltic* chose cabin crew member Ksenija Korola, who has worked for the airline for three years and had just arrived back in Riga from Saint Petersburg. Despite the limited amount of time we had, we used a fork lift for the lights and got the most beautiful cover photo.

A big thank you to *airBaltic* technician Dmitrijs Gorbunovs, who supervised the photo shoot!

Enjoy our special edition and all your pleasant travels ahead!

**baltic** Outlook

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# A Red kayak and friendship

**T**his past July we drove from Riga to Tallinn, where a slender red sea-going kayak was waiting for us at the factory. A good Estonian friend had arranged for the pickup. We arrived at a well-kept complex of grey warehouses. The sales manager, a friendly young man with a touch of the Californian, with his long, sun-bleached hair and chic *Oakley* sunshades, expertly strapped the boat onto our roof rack.

It felt good to see the boat's elegant red prow overhead as we negotiated the busy streets of Tallinn. When a police car with flashing lights and blaring siren came up fast from behind, I braced for the inevitable and did a sharp turn toward the curb. But the car went by with a friendly smile and big wave from the policeman in the passenger's seat. A string of police cars followed, escorting a black limousine with the Latvian flag on the front fender. It was the new President of Latvia, inaugurated on the day before, making the traditional visit to Estonia.

A long chain of coincidences over time and space led to this one event of cooperation between Latvians and Estonians – two peoples who have shared centuries of common history. My personal relationship with Latvia's neighbouring country began after the Second World



Tallinn, July 2015

We decided that it would be the language of our friendship

War, in Lübeck, West Germany. Ivo Ilste and I were both in our early teenage years. A love of books brought us together. Neither of us spoke the other's language, and our knowledge of German was poor, but somehow we decided that it would be the language of our friendship. The

precipitating central object was a smallish yet relatively hefty book, adorned by a lone Indian scanning the horizon. Karl May was the author, Winnetou was the Indian. So eager were we to read this book, that we quickly mastered both the Gothic script and the German language. We acquired more books by May, read them and traded them. All sorts of discussions ensued, including serious conversations about the newly founded UN and world peace.

Soon our families moved to different parts of the world. Ivo and I corresponded, but it did not last. I heard rumours that Ivo had become a successful journalist in Stockholm. My next contact with Estonians was at their song festival in 1990. Thereafter, frequent contacts with Estonians ensued at European rural landscape conferences. Contacts deepened into friendships. Two of my letters supported successful Fulbright applications. A pleasant surprise was the translation into Estonian of one of my books. Although a work of literature, the initial translation was by a doctoral student in the earth sciences. Most enjoyable was the book opening at Tallinn University. And thus, on most pleasant evenings, I take my new red kayak out on Lake Baltezers, feel the wind and water, and treasure my Estonian friends. **BO**



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## SPOTLIGHT ON AUTUMN

### Five things you should do in Latvia in October

- 1/ Eat a handful of cranberries every day to ensure the necessary dose of vitamin C.
- 2/ Rent a motorcycle and go see the autumn colours.
- 3/ Enjoy wild game with forest berry sauces at Latvian restaurants.
- 4/ Head to the Ķemeri Marsh before sunrise to photograph the interplay between fog and early morning autumn sun.
- 5/ Devote a weekend to spa procedures. A good choice is the *Baltic Beach Hotel & Spa* in Jūrmala, which was named Latvia's Leading Spa Hotel by World Travel Awards 2015.

## ON THIS MONTH'S MENU

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



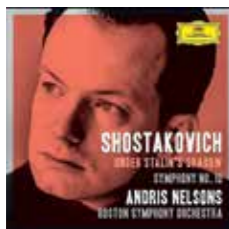
**Beauty** Greet autumn with a very simple but wonderfully effective beauty ritual – aromatherapy. This hand-wrapped linen aromatherapy ball by Latvian cosmetics brand *Stenders* is full of warm spices that vitalise and help detox your body and mind. Heat the ball to feel the energy of ginger root joined by the Oriental touch of cardamom seeds and the evergreen aroma of rosemary.

① [stenders-cosmetics.com](http://stenders-cosmetics.com)



**Design** Ceramics artist Laima Grigone's elegant work has been appreciated not only by leading Latvian design experts but also by visitors to the well-known *Maison & Objet* exhibition in Paris. A couple of years ago Grigone set up a studio in her 100-year-old childhood home in Rundāle, where she creates hand-thrown tableware from porcelain and reduction wood-fired earthenware.

① [laimagrigone.com](http://laimagrigone.com)



**Music** Music critics around the world have ranked Latvian conductor Andris Nelsons among the best orchestra conductors in the world. According to the *Bachtrack* website, Nelsons is ranked fourth among the world's conductors. So, it's no surprise that that his newest CD, in which he conducts the music of Shostakovich, has been greeted with much enthusiasm. This is Nelsons' first major international release with the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

he conducts the music of Shostakovich, has been greeted with much enthusiasm. This is Nelsons' first major international release with the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

## UP IN THE AIR

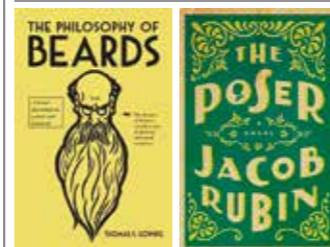
Flight is alluring to humans, and we are fascinated by the many ways one can take to the sky. Autumn, when the leaves on trees start to turn red and orange, is the perfect time to enjoy a ride in a hot air balloon. And in Latvia one

of the best areas to gaze at from above is the Gauja National Park between the towns of Sigulda, Cēsis and Valmiera. The average balloon ride costs about EUR 180, but those who've done it say it's worth every cent. Especially

in early morning, when the fog begins to recede and the wild animals are still grazing in the cool meadows. For more information, visit [balticballoon.lv](http://balticballoon.lv)

Text by **ZANE NIKODEMUSA** and **ROGER NORUM**  
Photos by **DMITRIJS SUĻŽICS** (F64), **GINTS IVUŠKĀNS** (F64) and publicity

## READING LIST



**Thomas S. Gowing.** *The Philosophy of Beards*

To beard or not to beard? That is the question answered by this smart little book. This entertaining little manifesto was actually originally a lecture delivered in the 1800s. It now serves as something of a quirky social history of the era, though, at a time when publications such as the *Guardian* are telling us that we are at "peak beard", perhaps a welcome one. The book contains lots of good sense about facial hair and what we should be doing with it.

EUR 11, ① [bl.co.uk](http://bl.co.uk)

**Jacob Rubin.** *The Poser*

This debut novel follows the exploits and adventures of a talented impressionist, Giovanni Bernini, whose natural gift for mimicry launches him to national fame, only for him to find that his own identity has been obscured by the many he's imitated so successfully. Deftly written by one of today's most unique literary voices, the book should make it onto everyone's reading list.

EUR 24, ① [penguingroup.com](http://penguingroup.com)

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Helgi Thorgils Fridjonsson.  
*Mirror of the North*. 1989. NEMO  
Gallery – Kunst im Nordeuropa,  
Eckenförde.

## Details LOCAL AGENDA

Text by **ZANE NIKODEMUSA**,  
**DOVYDAS KIAULEIKIS** and  
**LIINA KARO**  
Publicity photos



## BRIT FLOYD SHOW

**Nordea Concert Hall, Tallinn**  
**October 21**

The most famous Pink Floyd show in the world, Brit Floyd, is coming back to Tallinn in October. After a sold-out show at Nordea Concert Hall last year, the group is looking forward to returning to Tallinn and playing songs from every Pink Floyd studio album, including last year's release, *The Endless River*. The musical performance is complemented by a major light and laser show guaranteed to take your breath away!

Tickets at [piletilevi.ee](http://piletilevi.ee)  
Estonia pst. 9

## VISUAL ART EXHIBITION SAGA. ICELAND: ART AND NARRATIVE

**Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn**  
**October 9 – March 20**

We've all heard about the magic of Iceland – its art, music and culture. Now enjoy a part of Iceland in Tallinn! The exhibition presents some of the most significant works by different generations of Icelandic artists as well as international

artists who have worked in Iceland. Among others, the display includes works of art by Björk, Olafur Eliasson and Erró.

① [kumu.ekm.ee](http://kumu.ekm.ee)  
Valge 1

# OCTOBER 2015

## EXHIBITION WATERCOLOUR IN LATVIA: 19<sup>TH</sup> TO 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

Arsenal Exhibition Hall of the Latvian National  
Museum of Art, Riga / Until December 13



Unknown artist. *Lily of  
the Valley*. 19<sup>th</sup> century.  
Paper, watercolour.

This is the first watercolour exhibition of such scope in the history of the museum. The works of art, spanning 300 years, show the wide use of this technique in Latvian art through various genres,

from portraits and nudes to landscapes and still lifes as well as book illustrations and theatre costume sketches. A must-see for all art lovers!

Torņa iela 1

## SIMPLY RED CONCERT

**Arēna Rīga,  
Riga**  
**October 23**

Soul and pop group Simply Red celebrates its 30-year anniversary with a concert in Riga on October 23. Don't pass up this chance to hear the group's best songs, because, although Simply Red makes powerful albums, hearing the band live with songwriter and charismatic singer Mick Hucknery in the lead is even better. It's bound to be a simply unforgettable performance!

Tickets at [bilesuserviss.lv](http://bilesuserviss.lv)  
Skanstes iela 21



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## CONTEMPORARY JEWELLERY EXHIBITION CONTEMPORARY PAST

**Art gallery Putti, Riga**  
**October 16-30**

For the first time, the embassy of Hungary is hosting Hungarian Days in Riga. As a part of this event, check out the exhibition of contemporary and conceptual jewellery at the Putti gallery. The works by splendid Hungarian jewellery artists Réka Lőrinc and Flóra Vági reflect the strength and



Réka Lőrinc.  
Brooch Caviar.

fragility of modern women. They not only adorn but also "speak" (and sometimes "whisper") for their owners.

Mārstaļu iela 16

## VILNIUS JAZZ FESTIVAL

**Russian Drama Theatre, Vilnius**  
**October 15-18**

A must for any jazz lover, the Vilnius Jazz Festival also attracts a wider audience with its creative and novel programming. The 28<sup>th</sup> edition of the festival this year offers a taste of Japanese jazz with Hikashu feat. Itaru Oki, a leading act in Japan that has been intriguing the world with its spontaneous experiments and out-of-format improvisations

for almost four decades. The biggest star at this year's festival is American guitarist Bill Frisell and his band *Music for Strings* with a performance of music from the latest Woody Guthrie project, recently premiered at the Lincoln Center.

Tickets at [biletupasaulis.lt](http://biletupasaulis.lt)  
📞 [vilniusjazz.lt](http://vilniusjazz.lt)  
J.Basanavičius g. 13



## BEEPOSITIVE LIGHT FESTIVAL

**Various public locations in Vilnius**  
**October 9-10**

Let there be light, even in October. For one weekend, local and European artists create temporary installations and sculptures of light around Vilnius. The festival began five years ago in the suburb of Pilaite with the aim of promoting culture in the outer areas of the Lithuanian capital. However, the event was so successful that it grew rapidly and today draws crowds both in the suburbs and the city centre. Beepositive lets people enjoy some light before the long dark winter months ahead.

📞 [beepart.lt](http://beepart.lt)

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# Living history

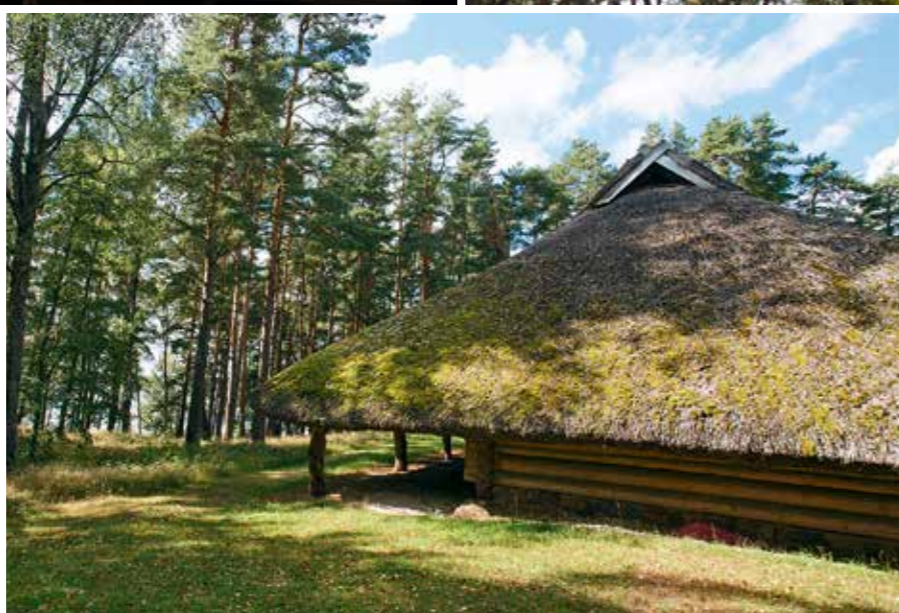
Possibly the most peaceful museum in the Latvian capital

Text by **MARIJA ĀBOLA**  
Photos by **LAURIS VIKSNE**, F64

The Latvian Ethnographic Open-Air Museum lies just a 30-minute drive from central Riga. Established in 1924, it is one of the oldest such museums in Europe. The museum consists of 118 historical wooden buildings that have been relocated from farmsteads all across Latvia to a beautiful pine forest on the outskirts of Riga. The museum's mission is to let visitors experience what life was like in rural Latvia back in the 16<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. And here, on the banks of Jugla Lake, one feels extremely far from the hustle and bustle of the capital city.

The Latvian Ethnographic Open-Air Museum is a unique and very meditative place. Visitors can freely wander from farmstead to farmstead, in and out of the old buildings, and learn about old farming, fishing and crafts techniques. Farmstead buildings have been arranged according to their original layouts, and even the flowers blooming by the windows correspond to the time period of each building and the likely material circumstances of its former inhabitants. Of course, all of the furniture, textiles, dishes and tools inside also correspond to the specific geographic and ethnographic region and historical time period of each building.

The open-air museum is open daily and regularly features special events. For example, on October 26 everyone is invited to celebrate traditional Porridge Day as well as the Eve of Dead Souls. Plan to spend at least two hours at the museum. Better yet, plan for about five hours, because the Ethnographic Open-Air Museum is a place where calmness fills the air and time seems to stand still... **BO**  
Address: Brīvības gatve 440  
① brivabasmuzejs.lv



## TOP 3

things to do at the Latvian Ethnographic Open-Air Museum in Riga

**Wear** comfortable clothing and shoes for walking on gravel paths through the pines.

**Bring** along a picnic basket. There are countless perfect spots for spreading out a blanket and enjoying a leisurely lunch.

**Learn** more about the exhibits by taking a guided tour, or download the free app *OpenEthnoLV*.



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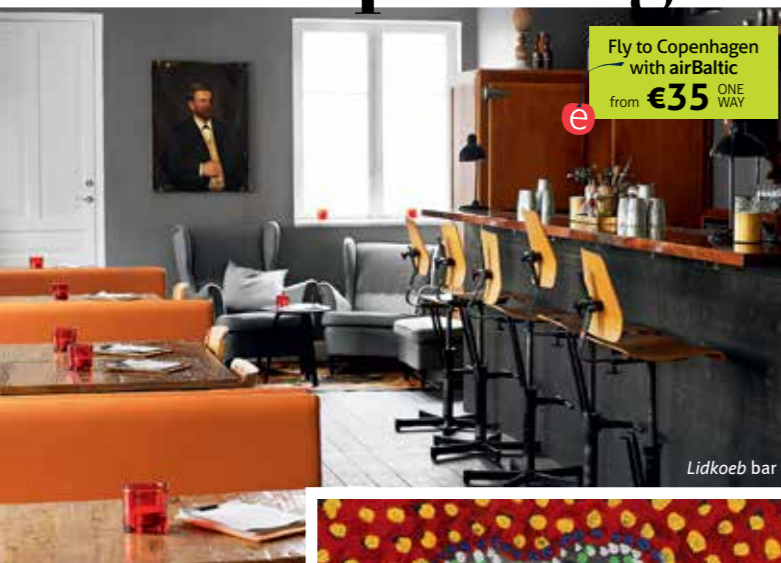
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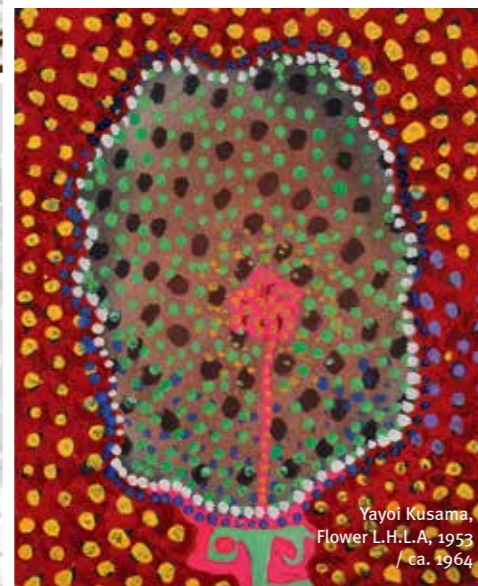
The Circle Bridge

# Copenhagen



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Lidkoeb bar



Yayoi Kusama,  
Flower L.H.L.A., 1953  
/ ca. 1964

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

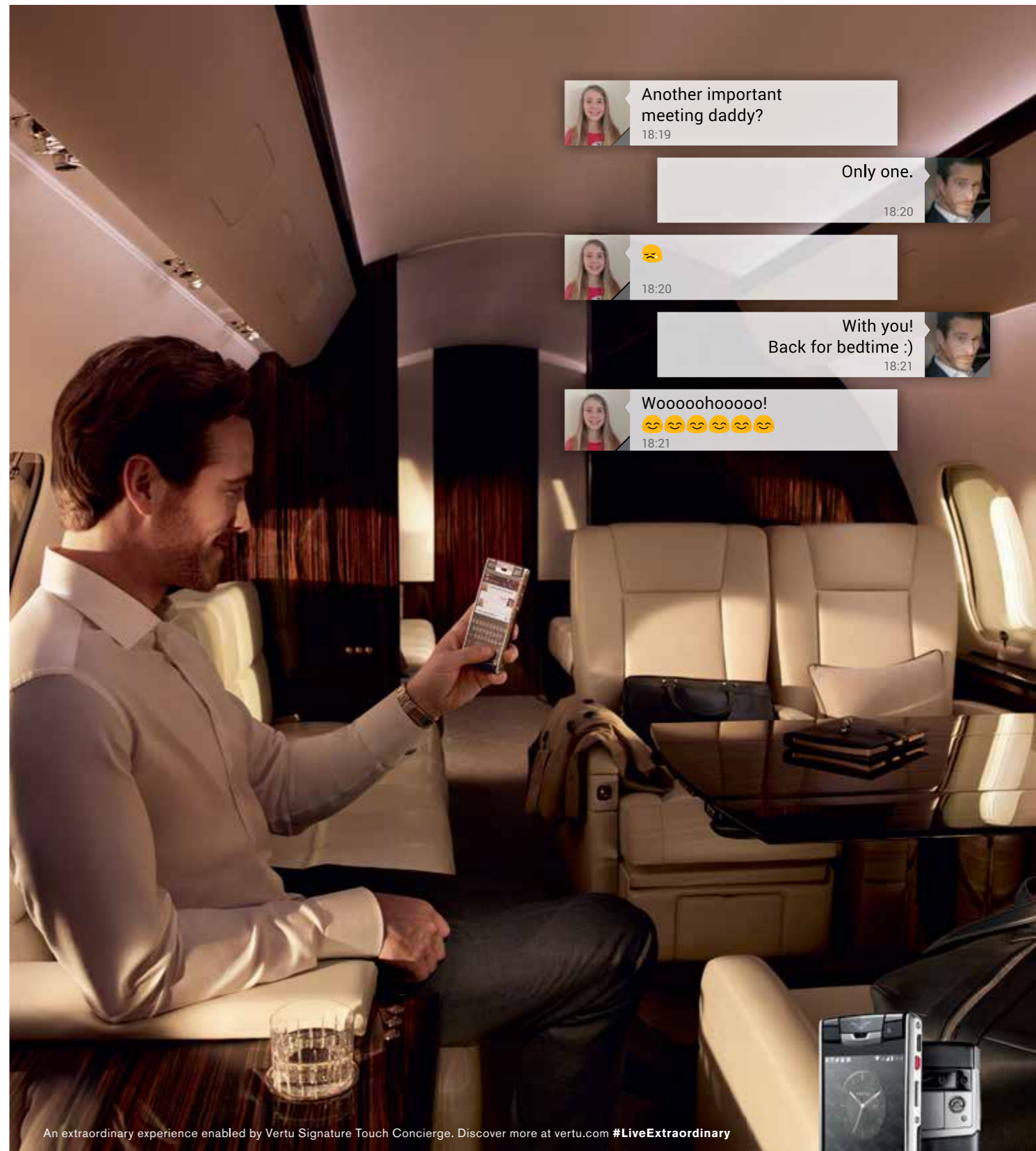
Copenhagen has a special new bridge that not only serves a basic function but is also a magical work of art. The **Cirkelbroen**, or Circle Bridge, is the brainchild of Olafur Eliasson, one of the most poetic contemporary artists of our times. Eliasson drew inspiration from the historical and cultural traditions of the Danish capital's Christianshavn district, in which the bridge is located. The district is also home to the famous *Noma* restaurant and the Royal Danish Opera House. The 40-metre-long bridge, which is lighted in the evenings, consists of five round platforms of various sizes, each of which has its own mast, like a ship. One of the circular sections rotates to allow ships to pass through the canal.

But Copenhagen's epicentre of style is undeniably Vesterbro. Once a working-class and red-light district, last year *Thrillist* named it one of the ten most hipster neighbourhoods on Earth. It all began with the repurposing of the former Øksnehallen livestock market into the city's largest exhibition hall, and the subsequent opening of countless cafés, restaurants, bars and concept stores nearby. One of Vesterbro's newcomers is the **Lidkoeb** bar (Vesterbrogade 72B; lidkoeb.de), which has set up shop in an 18th-century pharmacy building. The bar occupies three floors, each conjuring a different emotional atmosphere. The lower floor with its floor-to-ceiling windows is great for a slightly exhibitionist cocktail hour, while the second floor resembles a bohemian living room. The Chesterfield furniture on the third floor makes a perfect setting for a glass of whisky.

Another place on this autumn's must-do list is the **Louisiana Museum of Modern Art** located 40 kilometres outside of Copenhagen (Gl Strandvej 13, 3050 Humlebæk; louisiana.dk). The current exhibitions there introduce visitors to two legendary personalities: the German-born British artist Lucian Freud (until November 29) and Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama (until January 24).

During his lifetime, Freud (1922–2011) earned the distinction of being the most expensive living artist and was considered the most influential British artist of his generation. He was an excellent portraitist and, as he said himself, always longed to create and reflect drama in his paintings. The exhibition at the Louisiana museum, however, focuses on Freud's works of graphic art instead of his paintings. The figures he drew, who seemed lost in their own flesh, boldly and directly address and provoke viewers to an unavoidable conversation with themselves, as if they were lying on the couch of Freud's well-known grandfather, Sigmund.

Kusama (born 1929) has also spent a lifetime addressing her inner demons through the language of art. The ideas for her artwork often sprout in the hallucinations she has experienced since childhood. Her illness manifests itself in art, she says; art is a unique translation of the illness and, were it not for her art, she would probably have committed suicide long ago. The exhibition at the Louisiana Museum provides a broad overview of Kusama's career from its very beginnings, through the happenings in 1960s New York, to the 1980s, when she returned to Tokyo, and on to the present day. The exhibition also includes some completely new works of art that the 86-year-old artist created specially for this event.



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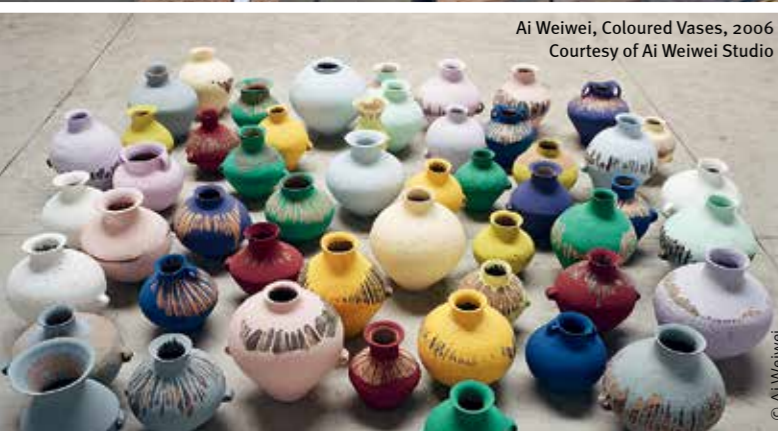
VERTU

HANDMADE IN ENGLAND



The Newport Gallery

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Ai Weiwei, Coloured Vases, 2006  
Courtesy of Ai Weiwei Studio

# London



Ai Weiwei, Dropping  
a Han Dynasty Urn, 1995  
Courtesy of Ai Weiwei Studio



British artist and virtuoso showman Damien Hirst has fulfilled one of his most ambitious dreams. Namely, his own art space – the **Newport Street Gallery** (Newport Street; newportstreetgallery.com) – opens on October 8 in the south London district of Lambeth. The gallery is intended as an exhibition space for Hirst's extensive private collection of art, which includes more than 3000 works by the likes of everyone from Francis Bacon and Banksy to Tracey Emin, Richard Hamilton, Jeff Koons, Pablo Picasso and many others. The gallery is located in a Victorian-era complex of buildings used in the early 20th century as a scenery workshop for West End theatres. Hirst obtained the property in 2003, and for several years he used it as one of his studios.

The British architectural firm *Caruso St John Architects* designed the gallery. The ceiling in the central building is 11 metres high, which makes it perfect for displaying large-scale installations. In addition, and corresponding with Hirst's marketing machine, the art at Newport Street Gallery can be viewed from both inside and out. The gallery's façade facing the railway and Waterloo Station holds a giant LED screen displaying information about current exhibitions as well as actual works of art. The gallery, which charges no entrance fee, opens with an exhibition of paintings by well-known British abstractionist John Hoyland (1934-2011).

London's Royal Academy of Arts, for its part, has devoted its space this autumn to the famous Chinese artist **Ai Weiwei** (Burlington House, Piccadilly; royalacademy.org.uk; until December 13). This is the first large retrospective of Ai Weiwei in Great Britain and includes the essence of his works spanning two decades. A Chinese Andy Warhol, political activist, dissident, architect, conceptualist, photographer, sculptor, blogger...the scope of Ai Weiwei's activity is practically infinite, and he has long since become a veritable cultural phenomenon. Bold and fearless, he speaks openly about the situation in China yet harbours no illusions about the West.

Fashion gourmands also have a new destination in London. The American designer **Alexander Wang** opened his biggest store at the end of this summer in Mayfair (43-44 Albemarle Street). Located in a former post office, the extravagant space was designed by Belgian architect and product designer Vincent Van Duysen. The store spreads across three floors, and its black-and-grey industrial interior provides a true tactile experience, a skillful manipulation of finishing textures. The black metal surfaces of the tables have a slightly rubbery finish, the walls are covered in the soft, porous material sometimes used in children's playgrounds, and so on. And of course, visitors will find Wang's entire range of clothing and accessories here.



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The historic Old Railway Station

Text by **ZANE NIKODEMUSA**  
Photos by **ZANE NIKODEMUSA** and publicity

# Tel Aviv

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Pastel brasserie – restaurant

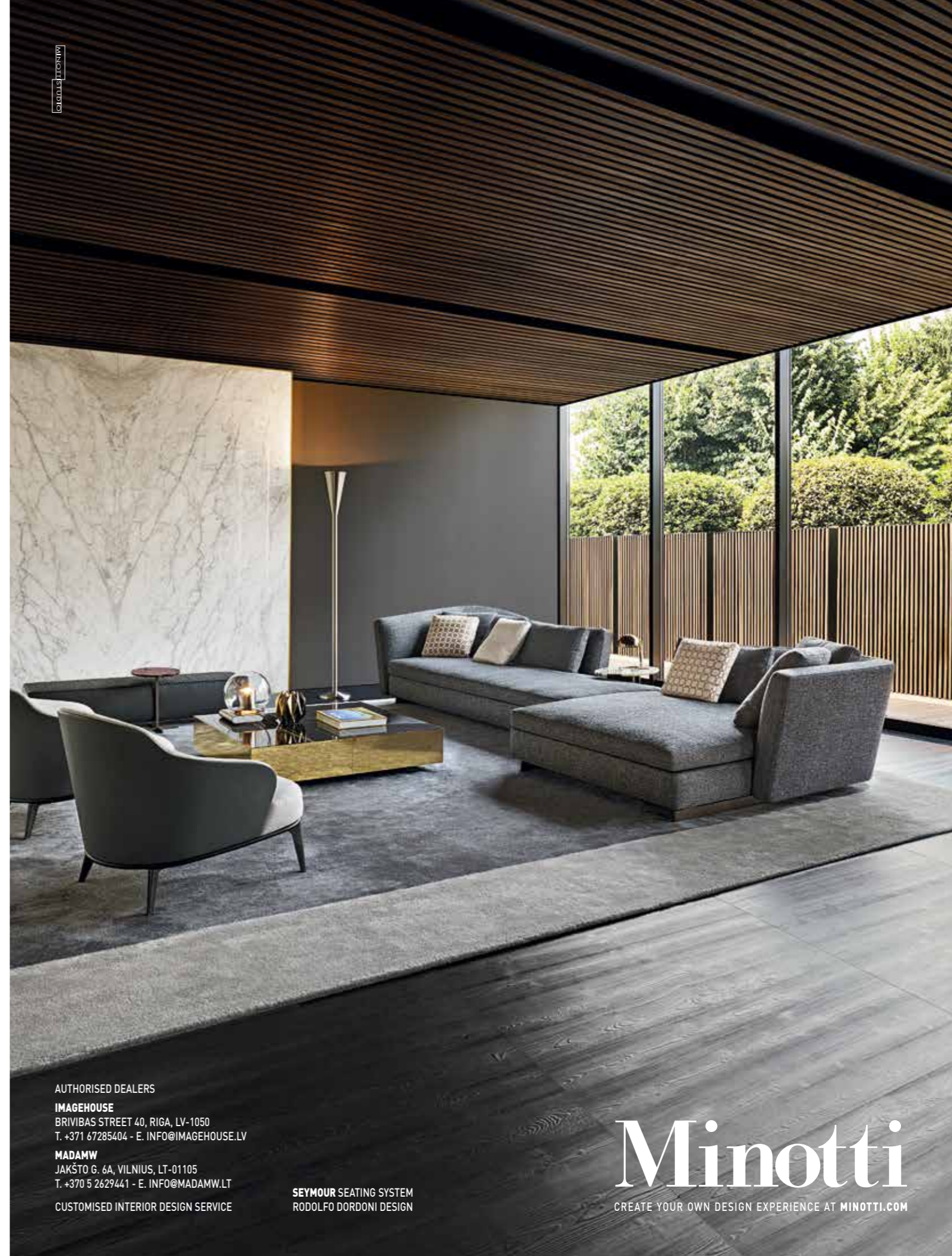


Tasting Room wine bar

Do not make the mistake of limiting your visit to dynamic Tel Aviv to its beaches and beachside bars. One of the most charming and happening places in Tel Aviv is the historic Old Railway Station, or, as it is simply called in Hebrew, **Hatachana**, meaning “the station” (hatachana.co.il). Built in the late 1800s, it served as the terminal for the original Jaffa to Jerusalem railway line until 1948, when it was closed and eventually fell into a state of ruin. The historical ensemble of buildings was restored only several decades later. Today, Hatachana is one of the most beautiful and peaceful spots in the city to enjoy the warm southern evenings. It houses fashionable boutique stores from some of Israel’s finest designers, an art gallery and very cosy restaurants and cafés. Evening is the best time for a stroll through Hatachana. For complete bliss, definitely try the ice cream sold here – locals say it’s the best in the whole city.

Another place to recharge from Tel Aviv’s bubbling energy is the **Tasting Room** (tastingroom.co.il; Eliezer Kaplan 36) in the Sarona quarter. This cosy wine bar and shop with wooden tables and bottles from floor to ceiling offers an innovative concept: an automated pouring system allowing the customer to taste 40 wines from Israel and abroad by the use of a smart card. Just grab a glass and start working your way through the wines one after the other. The wine bar also offers an excellent array of cocktails and a cheese platter, as well as charcuterie or bruschetta for those wanting something more to eat.

Did you know that Tel Aviv’s restaurants and chefs are the rising stars of the gourmet world? For heavenly flavours and superb design, visit the **Pastel** brasserie (pastel-tlv.com; 27 Shaul Hamelech Blvd.), which is the world’s most beautiful restaurant according to the Idea-Tops International Space Design Award. The stylish brasserie, located in the Herta and Paul Amir Building at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, consists of three areas: a large and elegant central space, a beautiful terrace overlooking the museum’s sculpture garden, and the intimate, almost entirely secluded bar called *Cocoon*. *Pastel*’s charming and talented chef Hilel Tavakoli skillfully combines French cuisine with fresh local ingredients. Definitely try the mouth-watering grilled calamari with pickled cabbage, yellow cherry vinaigrette and cumin.



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Text by ELĪNA RUKA  
Photo by Corbis

# Paris' muse – the Café de Flore

**The** French value traditions and culture highly. And enjoying life – for example, a leisurely cup of coffee while reading the morning newspaper, or a glass of wine at a favourite spot after work – is just as important a part of life for them. Maybe that's why such legendary places as *Café de Flore* still exist. This famous café, established in 1887 and still at its original location on the Boulevard Saint-Germain, is a part of Paris and its history.

Named after a statue on the other side of the boulevard dedicated to Flora, the Roman goddess of flowers and springtime, nothing much has changed in the café's Art Deco interior since 1887. The moleskin benches and large mirrors date back to the Second World War, during which the café was surprisingly left undamaged and continued to operate throughout the whole occupation of France. But who knows whether *Café de Flore* would have become such an iconic institution had it not been so popular with writers, philosophers,

artists, actors and other famous Parisians who lived in the vicinity and visited the café not only to have coffee but also – and more importantly – to think, create and talk about ideas and muses. In other words, *Café de Flore* was the coworking space of its day. For this reason, no music is played at the café; instead, it is a place for conversations and contemplation. Pablo Picasso, Jacques Prévert, Juliette Gréco, Truman Capote, Alain Delon and Yves Saint Laurent are just some of the celebrities who've enjoyed spending time at *Flore*, whether indoors or outside on the terrace, which is the perfect place for people-watching.

Today, *Café de Flore* continues to attract artists, writers, designers, celebrities and, of course, tourists wishing to get a glimpse of some famous person and take in the atmosphere of the locale. But tourists are welcome, and the staff even speaks English. Tourists, however, come and go, while the Parisians stay. In 1994 French writer Frédéric Beigbeder established the *Prix de Flore*, which honours promising young authors.

The winner receives EUR 6100, as well as his or her own engraved wine glass and free Pouilly-Fumé at *Café de Flore* for a whole year. One of the most popular foods at the café is a simple hard-boiled egg; the café serves 25,000 such eggs each year. The sculptor Alberto Giacometti, who loved having a hard-boiled egg along with his daily coffee at the café, devoted a sculpture to the egg and gave it to Paul Boubal, the owner of the *Café de Flore* at that time.

Like any legend, the *Flore* has its secrets, too. For as long as it's been around, there's been a rivalry between it and the *Les Deux Magots* café right across the street. For many years, *Deux Magots* was even more popular than the *Flore*. After all, Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir went to the *Deux Magots* to eat and work. But, as the café and its famous patrons attracted more and more people, Sartre and De Beauvoir moved across the street to the quieter *Flore*...thereby making it famous as well. Coincidence or natural selection? In any case, Paris made *Flore* the more *in vogue* place. **BO**



## Five film festivals to attend this October



Photo by Andrejs Strokins

### MOLODIST KYIV INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

This autumn, pay some attention to Kyiv, too, and its Molodist Film Festival, which has been taking place in the Ukrainian capital for an impressive 44 years. The festival began as a review of student films, but in 1991 it became Ukraine's only officially certified film festival. Molodist screens films by some of the region's

loudest, most progressive and most innovative directors. This year the schedule includes over 250 films from around the world, in both competitive and non-competitive programmes. And, of course, traditional Ukrainian hospitality!

Kyiv, Ukraine, October 24–November 1  
① molodist.com

### RIGA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Now in its second year, the Riga International Film Festival will try to continue and further develop what it began so successfully last year, namely, extensive film programmes combined with the best from European film festivals. To that end, this year's festival schedule contains eight saturated programmes (Riga IFF selection, Lielais Kristaps selection, Nordic Highlight, ArtDocFest/Riga, Short Riga, Kids Weekend, #Youth\_matters, In Kino Veritas) as well as some of the best films from the Berlin, Cannes and Venice festivals (*Slow West*, *Louder Than Bombs*, *Tale of Tales* and others).

Riga, Latvia, October 15–25  
① rigaiff.lv

### SITGES FILM FESTIVAL

The most unusual and freest of Europe's film festivals, the Sitges Film Festival is also the best known fantasy film festival in the world. It screens many long-awaited premieres and attracts fantasy-film lovers from around the world, including such legends as Quentin Tarantino, Terry Gilliam, David Cronenberg, Roger Corman, John Woo and many others. This year audiences will see the newest works by Takashi Miike (*Yakuza Apocalypse*), Gaspar Noé (*Love*), Michael Madsen and other icons of the fantasy genre. The traditional Sitges Zombie Walk (the name says it all) will take place on October 10.

Sitges, Barcelona, Spain, October 9–18  
① sitgesfilmfestival.com

### ROME FILM FEST

The Rome Film Fest is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. The festival may not be very old, but with inexhaustible energy and a new director it will try to get a big bite out of the film festival scene. As it competes with Venice, the Rome fest offers a substantial film programme for viewers and an exhibition for industry professionals. Some of the stars attending this year's festival include Wes Anderson, William Friedkin, Joel Coen and Italian genius Paolo Sorrentino. A special retrospective will honour the work of Italian classic Pier Paolo Pasolini.

Rome, Italy, October 16–23  
① romacinemafest.it

### BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL

Autumn's central European film event, the 59<sup>th</sup> BFI London Film Festival takes place on October 7–18 and offers a broad range of films, stars, red carpets and most talked-about premieres. The festival traditionally supports the British film industry and selects for screening current films with. For example, see the premiere of British director Danny Boyle's film *Steve Jobs* featuring Michael Fassbender and British actress Kate Winslet in the main roles. The festival will also screen Todd Haynes' drama *Carol* with Cate Blanchett and Rooney Mara. Get your tuxedos ready and be prepared to encounter many more films and stars!

London, October 7–18  
① bfi.org.uk

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В условиях растущей конкуренции и для увеличения продаж, торговые компании сталкиваются с необходимостью предоставить отсрочку платежа своим покупателям. Недостающие оборотные средства международные и локальные торговые компании смогут привлечь, используя факторинг, предлагаемый банком Rietumu. Банк финансирует кассовый разрыв, возникающие при отсроченных платежах со стороны

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## Details **STYLE**

Text by **DACE VAIVARA**  
Photos courtesy of  
Stockholm Visitors Board  
and publicity photos

# STOCKHOLM

## Scandinavian style

With its minimalism, simple forms, clean design and high quality so characteristic of Scandinavian style, Swedish fashion is best described by the phrase "less is more". Some of the current must-haves include jeans from well-known Swedish brands such as *Acne Jeans*, *Nudie Jeans* and *Cheap Monday*, which embody the Scandinavian aesthetic in their faultless cuts, clean lines and attention to detail.

Founded in 1996 by designer Jonny Johansson, the innovative jeans by *Acne Jeans* (Johansson distributed the first 100 various unisex samples to his friends) are a Swedish success story and are now among the top jeans brands in the world. To say nothing of *H&M*, that symbol of Swedish mass fashion. Established in 1947, *Hennes & Mauritz* has grown into a global fashion giant with 3000 stores in 48 countries. Compared to other "fast fashion" businesses, *H&M* has collaborated with noteworthy designers as guest artists, thereby offering consumers high-fashion designs at low prices. Karl Lagerfeld, Stella McCartney, Jimmy Choo, *Versace*, *Lanvin* and others have all created Limited Edition collections for *H&M*.

In the realm of daily fashion, oversized trench coats and cargo jackets, knit cream-coloured sweaters, leather trousers, comfortable casual-style Chelsea boots and, of course, perfect Swedish-designed jeans (whether boyfriend, skinny or ripped denim style) are all popular on Stockholm streets right now. The essence of Swedish fashion is simple, easy-to-wear and practical pieces of clothing that nevertheless follow current fashion trends.

Twice a year since 2005, the Swedish capital hosts Stockholm Fashion Week, which has by now become one of the most important events in the industry in Northern Europe. **80**

### SHOPPING IN STOCKHOLM

#### Filippa K

Founded in 1993, *Filippa K* is one of the leading and most successful fashion brands in Scandinavia. It offers stylistically clean, simple, timeless designs in high-quality clothing for women and men. The essence of Swedish fashion in a minimalistic pure-white environment. Grev Turegatan 18  
① [filippa-k.com](http://filippa-k.com)

#### Acne Studios

Visit the flagship store of this successful Swedish luxury fashion house and cult jeans brand. Architect Andreas Fornell created the original and modern interior. *Acne Studios* presents a wide variety of women's and men's clothing, shoes and accessories as well as the *Acne Jeans* line of jeans, known for their perfect cut and red stitching. Norrmalmstorg 2  
① [acnestudios.com](http://acnestudios.com)

#### Rodebjer

Swedish star designer Carin Rodebjer's clothing is practical, elegant and modern with avantgarde accents. Established in 1999 in New York, the Rodebjer style is inspired by Swedish folk costumes, French bohemianism of the 1920s and Finnish rock music. Jakobsbergsgatan 6  
① [rodebjer.com](http://rodebjer.com)



Sweater by *H&M Studio*, EUR 49.99, [hm.com](http://hm.com)

Table lamp by *Ikea*, EUR 40, [ikea.com](http://ikea.com)



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Sweater by *H&M Studio*, EUR 149, [hm.com](http://hm.com)



Skirt by *Acne Studios*, EUR 850, [net-a-porter.com](http://net-a-porter.com)



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Style by **KATRĪNA REMESA-VANAGA**  
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[hastens.com](http://hastens.com)

Text by **KRISTĪNE BUDŽE**, *Pastaiga*  
Photos Courtesy of Flos

# Jewellery of light



*Captain Flint* floor lamps,  
manufactured by Flos

## WHAT IS IT?

Anastassiades created the *Captain Flint* design for Flos, one of the most progressive Italian lighting brands. The floor lamp comes in two versions – light and dark. The base of the light version is made of white Carrara marble, while the stand and lamp itself are made of polished brass. The base of the dark version is made of black Marquina marble and the stand and lamp of anthracite-coloured metal. Instead of old-fashioned electrical bulbs, the light source comes from modern LED bulbs. Anastassiades says that with *Captain Flint* he wished to create a single lamp that provides gentle light that reflects off the ceiling but, when turned downwards, is also a great reading lamp. Like his other lamps, Anastassiades' *Captain Flint* seemingly defies the laws of physics. The lamp shade is connected to the stand at only one point, but it can be easily turned and manoeuvred in all directions.

## WHY IS IT SPECIAL?

Last year at *i Saloni*, Milan's international furniture fair and the biggest and most important event in the world of design, Anastassiades' ceiling lamps were the most talked-about item. Designers usually try to hide a lamp's electrical wires in the walls or ceilings, but Anastassiades used them as a design element and to highlight a space's architecture. The designer's popularity continues, and this year Milan's demanding public also approvingly welcomed his newest creations, including *Captain Flint*. Nevertheless, experts

in the field sometimes wonder why such a talented designer as Anastassiades was not heard of earlier.

In the late 1980s, Anastassiades left Cyprus for London to study engineering. The young engineer later continued his studies at London's Royal College of Art. Having received a degree in design, he searched for employment in a design studio, but found none. He therefore established his own business, seeing it as the only way to work in the field of design. Even though his name became known to broader segments of society only last year, Anastassiades' work was highly regarded among designers and especially architects. The first to invite him to collaborate was Indian architect Bijoy Jain, and since then Anastassiades has created lamps and lighting solutions for world-famous British architects David Chipperfield and John Pawson. 80% of his designs are lamps, so one can surely say he is an expert in the field of lighting.

## HOW DOES IT FIT INTO INTERIORS?

Anastassiades' lamps are one of the few contemporary design objects that look great in historical architecture, whether it's a centuries-old manor house or a turn-of-the-20th-century apartment building in one of Europe's capitals. His lamps do not stand in opposition to historical elements, but nor do they flirt with any of the various old styles. Instead, the lamps are so aristocratically elegant that they're on a par with spaces made generations ago. **BO**

Last year at the Milan Furniture Fair, Cyprus-born designer Michael Anastassiades was one of the biggest new discoveries in design. His lamps seem to break the laws of physics, and their refined nature likens them to pieces of fine jewellery. The *Captain Flint* floor lamp is no different.

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**ANDREJ RUD (39),**  
a captain and instructor on *Boeing 737* and *Dash 8 - Q400* aircraft, from Lithuania  
Hours flown: 8000+

Text by **ILZE POLE**  
Photos courtesy of **ANDREJ RUD**

## This is your captain speaking

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

### HOW IT ALL **BEGAN**

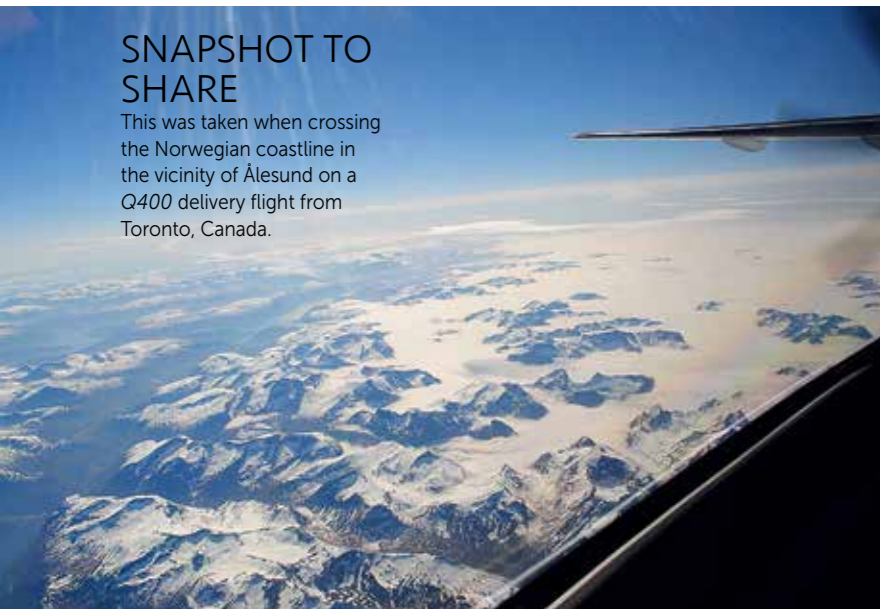
Like many pilots, I always wanted to be a pilot. Most probably due to my older brother's obsession with aviation. As long as I can remember, I've been surrounded by airplane models, so I never dreamed about any other profession, and I still don't regret it. When I was 12 years old, I joined the local gliding club in my hometown of Klaipeda, Lithuania, where I made my first steps in aviation. It was more like jumps instead of flights, but it just strengthened my passion for flying. In 2000 I graduated from the Vilnius Aviation Institute, and a year later I started my career flying a lovely Cessna 210 named *The Mama* down in Namibia.

### FAVOURITE **BOOKS**

I have two: *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov and *03* by the Strugatsky brothers. Every time I read one of them, I am amazed by the authors' astuteness in describing human nature.

### SNAPSHOT TO SHARE

This was taken when crossing the Norwegian coastline in the vicinity of Ålesund on a *Q400* delivery flight from Toronto, Canada.



### THE **BEST THING** ABOUT BEING A PILOT

The ability to see the beauty of the Norwegian fjords, the snowy ridges of the Alps, and the spectacular view of evening in Riga, all in a single day.

### **HOBBIES**

As a pilot, my job involves long hours of being seated, so I try to spend my free time cycling during the summer and skiing during the winter.

### FAVOURITE **RESTAURANT**

Gastronomy is an important part of my life. I like to cook, and I like to try different cuisines. Unfortunately, I can't pick just one restaurant as my favourite. I can suggest *Bouillon Chartier* in Paris, a very charismatic and authentic Parisian restaurant; *Maccheroni* in Rome, which serves the best pasta; and *Aamanns* in Copenhagen, where one can find simple but delicious Danish *smørrebrøds*. One that comes to mind here in Latvia is *Giardino* in Jūrmala. My wife and I like to take a break there during our cycling rides to enjoy a cup of tea and a complimentary bite-size sweet snack on the side.

### THREE THINGS I **NEVER LEAVE** HOME WITHOUT

As probably every modern person, I don't leave home without my *iPhone*. The majority of my indispensable things – from the crew roster and pilot's logbook to a simple calculator – are all in there. And, of course, my sunglasses. And the pilot's most important tool – a pen.

### FAVOURITE **RUNWAY**

Every runway has its own beauty. The latest is Kerkyra on the Greek island of Corfu. When approaching Runway 17, it feels like all the beautiful green mountains are so very close.

### LAST **DESTINATION** FLOWN TO AS A PASSENGER

It was in early September when I flew back from Beirut, Lebanon, where I worked together with my colleagues from *airBaltic* because the company had leased their aircraft and crew to the local tour operator *Nakhal*.

### THINGS THAT MIGHT **SURPRISE** A PASSENGER WHO STEPS INTO THE PILOT'S CABIN

No doubt, the amount of instruments, switches and lights and how pilots can remember all of that!

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Text by **ROGER NORUM**  
Publicity photos

## Scanding the horizon

This month's knowhow collection of gadgetry christens the autumn with Nordic brains and brawn.

### UPLLOUD AUDIO UA1

#### The Finnishing touch

Made right in downtown Helsinki, this fresh Finnish take on home speakers combines gorgeous contemporary looks with audiophile know-how. The passive two-way speaker uses proximity to the wall to its advantage, creating a smooth bass response that is pumped out solidly alongside punchy trebles and mids. You can select from a dozen odd colours for the cover, and the speaker can be easily mounted with just one screw. [uploudaudio.com](http://uploudaudio.com)

EUR 548 | [uploudaudio.com](http://uploudaudio.com)



### LE CORD The cable guy



We're reviewing a cable? For charging a phone? Well, yes it's "just" a cable, but it's probably the sleekest and best constructed charging cable you'll ever connect to your *iPhone*. Swedish made and designed, the woven, textiled sheath uses *Apple* innards and Scandinavian styling to stand out. Several designs available; our vote for coolest look goes to Broken Ocean, Crowed or the one wrapped in braided leather with matching wooden connectors.

From EUR 29.90 | [lecord.se](http://lecord.se)

### SCANDYNA SMALLPOD

#### Speaker's corner

This Danish audio specialist has produced some of the most stylish powered speakers on the market. These iconically designed pods stand out, not least of all for their punchy audio, powered by booming 4-inch woofers and 3/4-inch tweeters. Features a remote control and comes in both *Bluetooth* and *AirPlay* versions as well as several different sizes. [podspeakers.dk](http://podspeakers.dk)



### RØDE I-XY STEREO MICROPHONE

#### I like mike

Founded by a Swede based in Australia, this company has been producing top-shelf mobile microphone products for some time now.

Their iXY is the latest evolution – a plug-in *iPhone* mike that does away with the dinky little one your phone has. It will record stereo audio at 24-bit/96kHz, with true-to-life recordings in extremely high detail; a 72hz high-pass filter reduces unwanted low frequency noise. Compatible with all *iPhones* from 5 and above (another version, the iXY-30PIN, works with *iPhone 4s* and earlier). Includes foam windshield and zip case. [rode.com](http://rode.com)

### JAYS U-JAYS How Swede it is



Just released this month, these Swedish reference headphones are a re-invention of a classic style. The spring steel-reinforced headband is coated in silicone, and the custom-developed 40mm dynamic speaker lets air flow between the parts for improved

audio detail and deeper bass. A full-feature, three-button remote cable is individually optimised for *Windows*, *Android* and *iOS* devices. Also try their wildly successful *a-JAYS*, which fit comfortably in your ear. [jays.se](http://jays.se)

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Text by **LIENE PĀLĒNA**  
Publicity photo

## Swedish hero

Don't miss the chance to meet Eurovision winner Måns Zelmerlöw in the Baltics!

Swedish singer and TV star Måns Zelmerlöw's convincing win at this year's Eurovision Song Contest just provided more proof that the Scandinavians rule the current pop music scene, especially in the dance-pop genre. In fact, the success of this summer's hottest song, *Heroes* (Zelmerlöw's hit at Eurovision), was predicted even before the finale of the European song contest. Zelmerlöw and the creators of *Heroes* had made a hit that millions of people want to listen to in everything from shopping malls to the hippest bars.

"Fortunately, I have really good friends and a close relationship with my family, so they keep me grounded. They still see me as their son and friend, as the person

I was before I was a winner of Eurovision, so I really hope I am still myself. But, of course, Eurovision has opened so many doors for me, and I really want to make the most of it at the moment, so I am ready to work now," says Zelmerlöw about the dizzying international fame he has recently experienced. And his fame is quite real – already this month fans will be able to hear the popular singer as he stops in practically every European country on his tour of the continent. He'll be in Riga on October 13 and in Tallinn on October 14.

Zelmerlöw began his solo career ten years ago as a contestant in the reality-competition talent show *Swedish Idol*. In 2007 he astounded audiences in his native Sweden with the song *Cara Mia*, which was

## MÅNS ZELMERLÖW'S RECOMMENDATIONS IN STOCKHOLM:

- Have dinner at *AG*, a restaurant specialising in meats. [restaurangag.se](http://restaurangag.se)
- Enjoy the cosy atmosphere at *NEWT Food & Bread*, which is the place for organic and healthy food lovers. [newtfood.se](http://newtfood.se)
- Rent a boat, head a little way out of the city and relax.

followed by a debut album titled *Stand by For...* Zelmerlöw has since travelled to Spain for inspiration and this year released his sixth album, *Perfectly Damaged*. He always dreamed of taking part in Eurovision, and this dream finally came true this past spring with an amazing result of 365 points, which is the third highest score in the history of the song contest. "I am extremely grateful, and I'm looking forward to meeting all of the European heroes this autumn," says Zelmerlöw, who, despite his very busy schedule, has tried to rest and save up some strength for his energetic upcoming shows this autumn by spending time at his summer home with a few close friends and Messi, his 2-year-old Labrador Retriever. **BO**



## HOUSING ESTATE FOR SALE

### Brivibas bulvaris 21, Riga

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

Land area – 1 467 m<sup>2</sup>.  
Site area – 1 148 m<sup>2</sup>.  
Gross site area – 5 625 m<sup>2</sup>.

Price: **EUR 7 300 000**

## COMMERCIAL PREMISES FOR SALE

### 201 Brivibas gatve, Riga



For sale: property with an active luxury department store at 201 Brivibas gatve in Riga, located near VEF. Brivibas gatve is the main street of Riga, and this area is surrounded by a well-developed infrastructure and public transport, ensuring a large flow of people on a daily basis. The five-story building is fully equipped with everything required for a retail business, including storage facilities in the basement. Included is a parking lot for up to 60 cars. The exterior of the building can be redesigned in glass, and the inside can be adapted for office use.

Land area: 4343 m<sup>2</sup>  
Gross site area: 10648 m<sup>2</sup>  
Site area: 2274 m<sup>2</sup>  
Commercial area: 7945 m<sup>2</sup>

Price: **EUR 8 900 000**

For sale: property with an area of 63500 m<sup>2</sup> at 201 Brivibas gatve in Riga, located near VEF. The land is suitable for a mixed development, including housing. Maximum building intensity – 220%. The property is strategically well-placed near the Elkor Plaza department store, a hotel, and the offices of various companies. Brivibas gatve is located nearby. The property is suitable for various business activities, including the construction of offices and housing.

Utilities: electricity supply, water supply, central heating.

Land area: 63500 m<sup>2</sup>

Price: **EUR 4 900 000**



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Text by **AGRA LIEGE**  
 Publicity photos  
 Interior design by  
**ANNELI SALUSTE**,  
 sisearhitekt.ee

## Romantic shelter

*Baltic Outlook* takes a tour inside a cosy family apartment in the centre of the small town of Keila, approximately 25 km from Tallinn.



Eero, Külliki and their two sons, Hendrik (the oldest) and Kaspar (the youngest), have lived in their apartment in Keila for around a year. They had been in search of a new home for a while, and, when they first heard of this spot, they realised it would suit all of them perfectly. They enjoy the benefits of the location, because Hendrik and Kaspar have their school and university close by, and Eero and Külliki were also in a position to fully take part in the architectural and interior designing of the apartment. "When we found it, the apartment was like clay in our hands," says Eero, who is an entrepreneur. "We could do whatever we wanted with it! And the building itself is very attractive, so that surely affected our decision to choose this location."

The family wanted brightness and light – lots of white colour everywhere – but were certain they would also want some lavender-coloured accents in the living room, such as the brighter pillows on the sofa. "What we were mostly looking for was that as soon as you walked into the apartment you'd feel cosy and comfortable," says Eero. "We wanted nice, tasteful accents, but really we wanted it to be a usable, practical home where one didn't have to make too many sacrifices in the name of beauty. I think we managed to find a healthy balance," he laughs.

"It's true," Külliki agrees. "Our home makes us feel good about ourselves. It is beautiful and precious to us, but we are still able to do whatever we want without any obstacles coming in our way."



Family portrait of Kaspar, Külliki, Hendrik and Eero

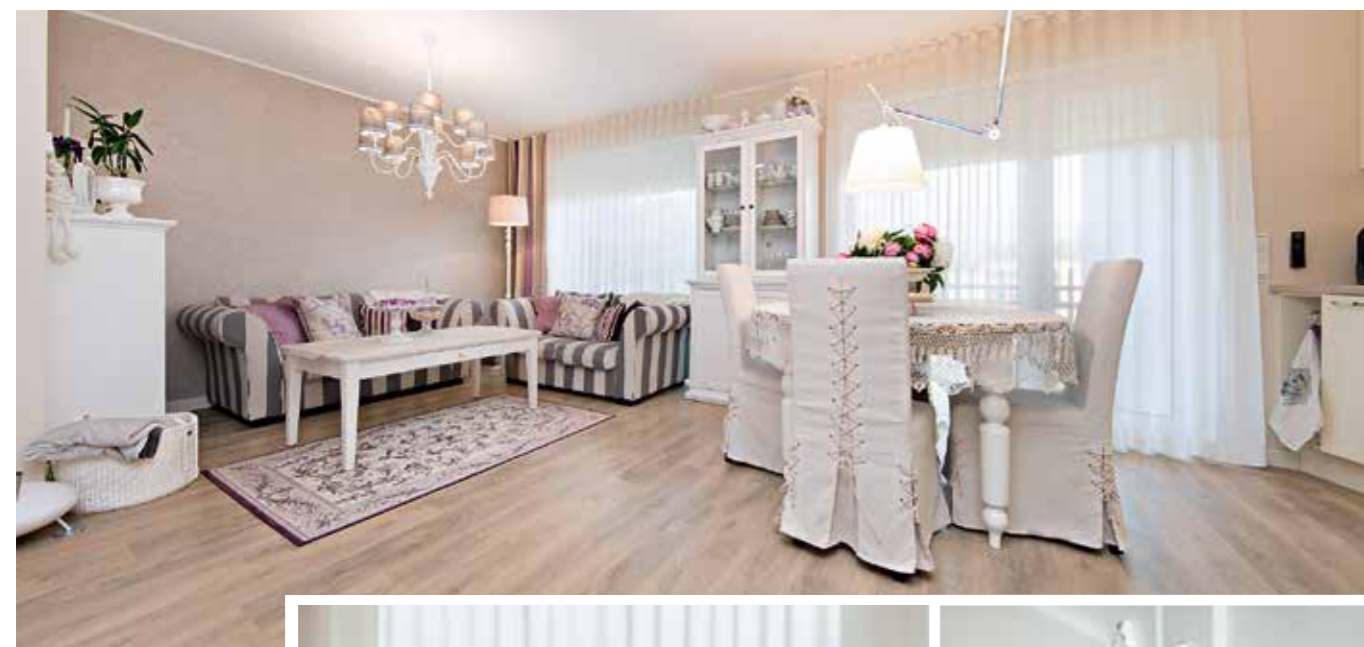


Details **LIVING**

## FINDING BALANCE

"We have always liked the Scandinavian romantic style in interiors, and we enjoyed the idea of blending it with a little bit of industrial design. So, that's what we went for with the help of our friend

Anneli [the Tallinn-based interior designer Anneli Saluste]. She designed our whole apartment! Some of the details can be seen in the dining area – the ceiling lamp above the round dining table and the metallic details in the kitchen," says Külliki.



## THE POWER OF LIGHTING

Both Eero and Külliki love to cook and hang out in the kitchen and the dining area. And sometimes, when the mood strikes, they play poker with guests at the big round dining table. The removable lamp above the dining table – created by Artemide – gives the family the freedom to change its location and the focus of action in the evening. It's simple details like this that make the space enjoyable for them. They really enjoy the way the decorative



wall paint in the living room gives the space a different ambience in different lighting – it's a simple and calming background, but it can also give the space a luxurious touch in evening lighting.



## EVERY LITTLE THING

The couple was not looking to fill the living space with specific objects apart from functional furniture and romantic accents. "It's the harmony created by all the small things working together," says Külliki. "They create this vibe in our home that makes us appreciate it every day. We're happy and harmonious when we're here."



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Details **LIVING**



### KIDS' WORLD

The children, of course, are happy to enjoy their privacy in their own rooms. Hendrik, as most young people, is devoted to his computer, and Kaspar is inseparable from his video games. But most of the "action" takes place in the living room, where the family sits together for the occasional TV show or just a cosy chat.



### TIME FOR YOURSELF

"When it comes to the master bedroom, that's exactly what it is," comments Külliki. The couple believes that a bedroom should be reserved for only its principle purpose – to have a good rest – and the rest of the home is for "hanging out".... "We wanted the bedroom to be as functional as possible, and that's what it is." **BO**



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# TALLINN

## AND SUSTAINABLE THINKING

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



Bad luck, somebody has already taken the Anothertravelguide brochure about Tallinn. But don't worry, all the information is also available at [ANOTHERTRAVELGUIDE.COM](http://ANOTHERTRAVELGUIDE.COM) in cooperation with airBaltic.

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**P**ractically every schoolchild knows that Estonia is the birthplace of *Skype*. But it turns out that Tallinn is also closely linked to the famous Sydney Opera House and the Olympic Stadium in Beijing. Were it not for a once-revolutionary project in Tallinn at the beginning of the 20th century, the architectural design of these structures may not have been possible. More precisely, the seaplane hangars built in Estonia in 1916 and 1917 became the first buildings of their size to be built with a concrete shell. In other words, they're monuments to engineering of sorts.

Seaplane Harbour consists of three concrete shells (8-12 cm thick) supported by a special type of pillar. Back when they were built, the British architecture magazine *The Builder* compared the craftsmanship of the hangars with the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. The project was devised by the Danish engineering and construction company *Christiani & Nielsen*, whose engineers – albeit a generation later – were also involved in the planning of the Sydney Opera House and Beijing's Olympic Stadium. "But the knowledge of how to make the shells out of concrete started with practice here," says Estonian architect Andrus Kõresaar, whose contribution to the hangars is no less revolutionary today. Since 2012 the structures have become the home of Estonia's, and possibly the Baltic's, biggest and most popular new museum, the Estonian Maritime Museum. The Seaplane Harbour reconstruction project, carried out by Kõresaar's architectural firm *Koko*, won the Europa Nostra Grand Prix in 2013.

In 2009, when reconstruction began, the buildings were near collapse. The hangars had not been repaired since 1917, and they stood empty for a long time after the Soviet empire fell apart. "When our engineer called his colleagues in Helsinki and the professors of engineering came to Tallinn, they said it wouldn't be possible to rescue the buildings because pieces



Seaplane Harbour, which houses the Estonian Maritime Museum, is made up of architecturally unique old seaplane hangers



Seaplane Harbour



Fahle House

of concrete were falling down and you could see light shining through the roof. The roof was just five centimetres thick. Despite that, though, we hoped that maybe it would be possible to renovate them if we placed a full sarcophagus below and started slowly," explains Kõresaar.

At the same time, the architects began planning the museum expositions, which are no less innovative than the reconstruction project itself. "We had an idea to organise the exhibition not into zones or rooms, as is usual in museums, but in layers. So, the museum has three levels: underwater, water and air. The main layer is the water level, which is at the level of a submarine. There are boats also hanging at the same level with an airplane above it. And everything that should be under water – torpedoes, wreckages, etc. – is under it," says Kõresaar. But there's actually no real water inside the buildings; instead, the gigantic museum's "three worlds" exist associatively, allowing visitors to move through them along a ramp-like bridge between yachts, boats, ships and naval mines floating in the "water" or, more precisely, hanging in the air.

The museum's most lauded exhibit is the submarine *Lembit*, the only surviving pre-WWII warship made in the Baltic States. It was built by the British in 1936 specially for the Estonian navy, and until 2011, when it was finally pulled out of the sea, it was the oldest submarine still afloat in the world. The *Lembit*'s sister submarine, the *Kalev*, was destroyed in 1941. Visitors to the museum can

now wander around inside the *Lembit*, but do beware lest you run into one of the countless valves or bang your head on the low hatchways that connect one space to the next. The air inside the submarine still smells distinctly of machine oil, creating the illusion that it was decommissioned just a moment ago... but perhaps you really are under water?

In fact, the whole museum bears some resemblance to Captain Nemo's futuristic cave. The impressive historical relics, both visually and emotionally, demonstrate a tale of technology as well as imagination and possibility. And, as befits a nation with IT as its cornerstone, the exposition is equipped with many clever digital gadgets that, for example, let visitors send information about the exhibits to their email addresses in order that they may study it later in more detail.

Kõresaar says that, while working on this project, his team thought a lot about how technology has changed the basic function of museums. "Previously, museums were places of information where you could go to get a picture or text about something rare and special. They were like an encyclopaedia about a specific topic. Today, all this information is available on the Internet. If you're interested in something, you just have to look it up. Actually, the function of a museum today is to provide all the other stuff that cannot be found on the Internet. Museums today are more layered. The layer of systematic information is still there and must remain in the museum; museums have to

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epicentre of Tallinn's cultural and entertainment scene

have a scientific approach, otherwise they lose their skeleton, their backbone, their identity. But the other layer, in a way, is knowledge through entertainment – building up environments that are maybe now lost to the world. You can touch the exhibits, you can get a feel for things, you can get an impression of something that you haven't experienced yourself. At Seaplane Harbour there is an exhibit where you can “pilot” a 1960s plane. It's simple, but you get the basic feeling. The engine is baffling – it doesn't work well, you have the stick between your legs, and if you lift it, the noise gets louder and you get this wobbly feeling of flying....

“Basically, today and in the future, museums will have the same role as cinemas, theatres and shopping centres. They are just one of many choices for the family to go out, and usually this choice is made by the mother or children. Therefore, I believe the function of the museum is to balance this idea of scientific proof and education with entertainment. Because you have to find an option that appeals to the mother and child more than the shopping centre with its 100,000 square metres of shops or playgrounds.”

Seaplane Harbour is not the only museum project in Tallinn created by the architects at Koko. They've also developed the Museum of Puppet Arts and the Estonian Health Care Museum, as well as the reconstruction of the Tallinn TV Tower. Currently they're finishing up on the reconstruction of the University of Tartu Natural History Museum, which plans to open to the public at the end of this year.

I meet Kõresaar in another of Tallinn's iconic buildings, the Fahle House. When it was opened in 2007, the house became something of a symbol of Estonia's ambition and the opportunities provided by the country's economic boom. Located in an otherwise fairly boring part of town between the airport and city centre, the building's unusual form – a glass addition seemingly perched atop an old industrial carcass – immediately attracts attention. Not that long ago, this used to be the site of a cellulose and paper manufacturing

A visit to the recently renovated **Tallinn TV Tower** (Kloostrimetsa 58a; [www.teletorn.ee/en](http://www.teletorn.ee/en)) is a must! Built for the sailing regatta at the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow, at 314 metres the tower is the tallest building in Estonia. On a clear day, one can even see the Finnish coast from the 170-metre-tall observation platform. The tower was closed for many years and opened again only in 2012 after major reconstruction designed by the Estonian architecture firm Koko; now it's a unique tourist attraction. The interactive Estonian Hall of Fame exhibition on the 21st floor introduces visitors to the most famous Estonian inventions, and the panorama from the restaurant is unbeatable.

Climb up **Toompea Hill** in the Old Town to enjoy the best panoramic view of Tallinn. It's also worthwhile to have a look from the sightseeing spot on the other side of the hill, which usually slips by unnoticed.

Recently reopened after an extensive reconstruction, the **Energy Discovery Centre** (Põhja pst. 29; [energiakeskus.ee](http://energiakeskus.ee)) is a wonderful destination for a family excursion. Located in a power plant that is more than 100 years old, the centre promotes popular science through interactive exhibits covering such fields as energy, classical physics, sound and optics. One exhibit permits visitors to see and feel how electricity is

plant, but now it houses offices, beauty salons, apartments and a restaurant. In fact, Fahle House was one of the most complicated reconstruction projects in the Baltic States.

When I ask Kõresaar about the current feel of Tallinn, he compares it to Berlin. “The city has a neighbourhood character similar to that of Berlin, but on a smaller scale. For example, Kalamaja neighbourhood is different from Telliskivi and Seaplane Harbour, but all these areas are active and creative parts of the city.”

Although, to get a complete view of Tallinn's urban landscape, he suggests one begin with the Old Town. “Because you have to get a feeling of foundation and background. After that, it's worth travelling to the east, to Lasnamäe. That's the Soviet-era district of 1970s apartment buildings where a full third or even half (approximately 119,000 people) of Tallinn's population lives. It's very huge. Five-, nine-, sixteen-storey block buildings; poor space regulation between the buildings; wastelands in some parts. If the Old Town provides the foundation, Lasnamäe embodies the feeling of Soviet influence. That era had the power to build, but it didn't embrace quality of living.”

“And after that it's good to go to more residential places like Kalamaja,” continues Kõresaar. “I would even suggest taking a walk to the harbour through Kalamaja. This area has a very interesting history. In the 17th century people who moved to Kalamaja were not allowed to have cows or other animals, because everybody who lived by the bay had to be a fisherman. Fish, such as herring, were the main export. The people there might not have had cows, but they had houses – usually one-storey wooden houses. Over the past century these same houses grew up to two or three storeys, but when you walk through the area, it still has a village feeling. Afterwards, I would suggest going to the Patarei Prison to get a feeling for the ugliest jail of the Soviet era. Originally opened as a sea fortress in 1840, the site served as a jail from 1919 until 2004, when it was finally closed down completely. It's



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been left virtually untouched since then. I visited it in the late 1990s, and it was horrible – overcrowded cells, no ventilation, an awful smell....

“From the jail you can go along the promenade to Seaplane Harbour to see the museum, and then continue further to the northwest harbour. There you’ll find yachts, boats, old harbour buildings and also Noblessneri Valukoda, where big concerts are held. There are nice indoor and outdoor cafés and many activities going on in that area. From Noblessneri I would go to Telliskivi. It’s best on Saturdays, when they have a flea market. All the food places are open, you can meet the artists and visit some fancy and funny shops. And in the evening there are at least seven or eight different restaurants, all serving excellent cuisine. It’s amazing how this place has developed,” concludes Kõresaar.

**Towards a nation of driverless cars**

Despite the fact that rent prices have risen along with the development of Kalamaja district, thereby pushing the artists out to once again look for a new home, the Telliskivi quarter is still Tallinn’s epicentre of creativity. Former Soviet-era industrial monstrosities such as the Kalinin Electronics Factory, the Tallinn power plant, and the city’s heat supply centre have now become platforms for all sorts of unusual ideas. In fact, the Telliskivi area feels like a self-sufficient republic bordered by old railway tracks – a republic large enough to require a map to get around. One of the former factory’s buildings is now home to design and fashion shops, while right across the yard people flock to concerts and theatres and cafés. The *F-Hoone* restaurant in Telliskivi’s “F” building is the dinosaur of the bunch, and is said to be the establishment that set the wheels in motion here. Its attraction is undeniable, the perfectly authentic Soviet industrial atmosphere combined with a likewise ostentatious hipster clientele. Even though the space is truly gigantic, it gets so crowded at lunchtime that you may not find a seat without a reservation.

To get an idea of all the creative things going on in Tallinn, pick up the yellow Design Map of Tallinn, available at practically all of the most stylish cafés, cultural institutions and shops. It lists 56 design sites all across the city: shops, hotels, restaurants, cafés, exhibition halls, galleries and urban objects. Here you’ll find information about the Estonian Design House, which displays and sells the best in Estonian design, and also *Nu Nordik*, a shop whose small size contrasts with a broad assortment of original designs. It also lists the *Sfäär* restaurant/store, one of the most fascinating inhabitants of the Rotermann quarter. A new addition to the

made. Another, the “bridge of lightning”, makes one’s hair stand on end by way of static electricity. A separate exhibition is dedicated to oil shale energy, a national source of pride. This locally mined rock meets the bulk of Estonia’s energy needs, and many of the technologies for its extraction have been developed in the small Baltic country. In fact, Estonia’s oil shale industry is the most developed in the world.

Reborn to a new life, the eccentric buildings of Tallinn’s attractive **Rotermann Quarter** – a living experiment of contemporary architecture that has entrusted its 20th-century industrial brick and traditional Estonian dolomite structures to the hands of adventurous architects, and seen trapezium-shaped black glass constructions placed on top of its boring old warehouses and façades panelled with rusted metal-like material – house quite a few intriguing little shops, cafés, proper restaurants and art galleries. Hidden behind the two-leaved door of 6E Mere pst., the **Sfäär Restaurant** (6E Mere pst.; [www.sfaar.ee](http://www.sfaar.ee)) is the perfect eatery for those whose daily rhythms just don’t accommodate themselves to the restricting protocol of proper lunch and dinner hours. *Sfäär* serves Nordic cuisine based on local seasonal ingredients at pretty much any hour of the day, and its wine shelves feature both wine classics and the latest trends.

As you walk from the city centre towards Kadriorg Park, make sure not to miss the narrow and quiet Köleri Street, which is located on the right side of the loud and busy Narva maantee. Housed in an old wooden building, the **Nop Café** (Köleri 1) is known for its tasty “vitamin cocktails” made from various fruit juices, as well as the fresh and organically-grown ingredients in its salads and sandwiches.

city’s cultural scene is Kultuurikatel – the “culture cauldron” – in the old power plant near the harbour, which already hosts a variety of cultural, design and art projects.

But no matter which of Tallinn’s districts you go to, you cannot fail to notice that a strategy of sustainable thinking and sustainable development is the city’s current leitmotif. The Third International Tallinn Architecture Biennale (TAB) is still on at the Museum of Estonian Architecture until the middle of October. In its exploration of this year’s theme – Self-Driven City – the Biennale has been analysing the consequences of the third industrial revolution, or, how the latest technologies will change architecture, urban planning and everyday social processes. Tallinn’s ambition is to become the first city in Europe to start using only self-driving, or driverless, cars. The pilot project for this idea will be launched in 2018, when Estonia takes over the presidency of the Council of the European Union, and the complete transfer to driverless cars is set to take place 15 years from now, in 2030.

I met Marten Kaevats, an architect, urban planner and the curator of the Biennale, at the opening of TAB. “In a way, Estonia is the ideal model, or test platform, for such a project,” he said. “As opposed to, say, Germany or Great Britain, we are a relatively small country, and therefore we’re able to implement changes more quickly and we can more efficiently solve any problems that might come up.” But what does such an ambitious goal mean for architects, designers and urban planners? What does it mean for the city itself and its citizens?

“Actually, we could say that driverless cars are a kind of symbol,” Kaevats continued. “They’re a technological tool that embodies the essence of the digital age. For an average-sized European city, a complete transfer to driverless cars means a ten-fold reduction in the number of cars on the roads. And urban planning can then continue without so much thought to parking spaces, traffic jams and so on. For example, complicated intersections and multi-level interchanges will no longer be as necessary, and so the city itself, its streets, and the way people live in it will radically change. But, in order to implement all of this, the most essential thing is to first change the way we think. And what we can begin with right now is a sort of ‘acupuncture’ for the city. Select a small neighbourhood, or maybe just one street, and turn it into a pleasant urban space. Until now, the planning of public spaces was more the domain of traffic engineers, but from now on it should be landscape architects who do this type of work.

“In addition, the current infrastructure is completely suitable for driverless cars, so in this



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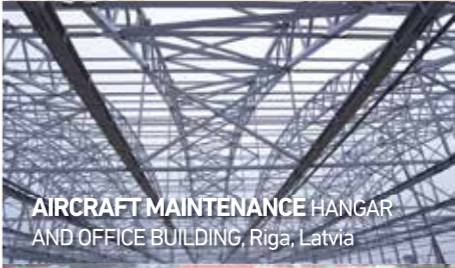
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sense no additional investment is needed. Yes, of course, we'll need the cars themselves, as well as servers and control systems, but no fundamental changes in the existing infrastructure. The changes are more likely to be psychological. It's not possible to introduce a new technology by just telling people it's going to be great. No, they need to understand the possibilities, the negative aspects and so on. In essence, the changes each of us will individually face in our own neighbourhoods will also let us experience how our quality of life improves."

### Upcycling as a fashion philosophy

For its part, the Estonian Academy of Arts this year became the first educational institution in the Baltic States to introduce a department of sustainable design. It's still in the pilot project stage, but the academy hopes that by next year it will be able to welcome students from abroad. Well-known Estonian fashion designer Reet Aus is one of the department's initiators. Aus has been working in the so-called upcycling niche of fashion since 2002, which means that her clothing collections are made of manufacturing waste, or industry leftovers. Even though this branch of fashion is becoming more and more popular in the present age of green thinking, Aus is still the only designer in Europe who has managed to turn upcycling into a mass production enterprise, albeit a small one.

For several years now Aus has worked together with the *Beximco* factory in Bangladesh to produce collections made of the leftovers from *Zara*, *H&M*, *Tommy Hilfiger*, *Calvin Klein* and other well-known fashion brands whose products are made there. "There are no more garment factories in Europe anymore," says Aus. "Most of the mass production now takes place in Bangladesh, and that's the main source of income for that country. There are over a thousand such factories in the capital, Dhaka, alone. When they place their semiannual orders, companies like *Zara*, *H&M* or *Calvin Klein* don't think much about what happens with their leftovers. The fast-fashion mill just turns too quickly."

Aus continues: "Some of the factories try to sell the leftovers on the black market. It's illegal, though, and no one talks about it. Or they burn the leftovers or just throw them away. Usually they end up somewhere in the environment because the country doesn't have a system of waste management. *Beximco* alone produces more than 240 million garments per year. Roughly 20 percent become waste, and there's always a very big overproduction as well. And, of course, they can't act as waste managers themselves. With our production we're able to use only a really small amount of leftovers. But in the ideal world, upcycling could be a very natural part of the whole production process. For example, if *Calvin Klein* orders a million men's shirts, the leftovers from the production process can be used to make another 35,000 shirts. It's just a matter of design and organisation. And it's good for everyone. The brand could get more items out of the same amount of fabric, the producer wouldn't have to deal with the leftovers, and, compared with a newly made product, making an upcycled shirt uses 90% less water and 80% less energy."

A documentary film about Aus and the fashion industry – called *Out of Fashion* – premiered in mid-September during Tallinn Design Week. Made between 2009 and 2014, the film is a study of consumer culture and the nature of fast fashion. It follows one pair of jeans from a cotton field in South America to a factory in Bangladesh, where workers are paid eight euros a month, and finally to a shelf in an *H&M* or *Zara* store. Research and the urge to address a challenge led Aus to *PVH Corp.* in New York City (which owns the *Tommy Hilfiger* and *Calvin Klein* brands) and the *H&M* headquarters in Stockholm. Accepting the fact that only large corporations are capable of radically changing an industry, Aus' goal has been to find a brand that can integrate the upcycling philosophy into its own manufacturing process. The film shows how, no matter how convincingly Aus proved to the leadership at *PVH* that using industry leftovers could reduce the brand's water use by 50%, her initiative was not supported at the company's headquarters. She later received the same bureaucratically cool response at *H&M*.

From the collection of Estonian fashion designer Reet Aus

Photo by Herkki Erich Merila



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A section of Old Tallinn's City Wall

## Aus' clothing is also sold at a number of shops throughout the city and is immediately recognisable by its simple lines

Ever since the world entered the mindset of fast fashion, with fashion becoming like a throwaway tissue that we use for one season and then toss out, profound change will only take place once we change our own attitude as consumers. Aus says Estonians are already realising this: "I think sustainability is increasingly becoming the issue at hand. Young designers are using more organic fabrics, or they're going the upcycling way. They're thinking about that sort of thing much more than they were ten or maybe five years ago."

Aus' workshop is located in Tallinn's Old Town and also serves as her showroom. But her clothing is also sold at a number of shops throughout the city and is immediately recognisable by its simple lines. She also often uses a combination of different fabrics in one garment, because leftover amounts can never be precisely calculated. Sometimes she receives 80 centimetres, sometimes 10 metres or more.

Aus takes a sip of green tea and says: "I think the next big thing will be toxicity. If the textile industry adopts the same kind of regulations as are currently in force in the food industry – namely, that the label must state what kind of toxins have been used to make a specific piece of clothing – that will change the industry very much. Currently, a lot of very toxic chemicals are used to dye and finish garments, and they affect our health. I think the second big thing will be raw materials. For example, the price of cotton is going up every year because we're running out of land. We don't even have enough land to grow food. And, of course, because of climate change. Many of the areas where they used to grow cotton are now deserts and can no longer grow anything anymore. It's a very complex and difficult situation. And if you look at the fast-fashion stuff, it contains less and less cotton, and more and more of these different chemical and man-made fibres. But it's very difficult to change people's habits – I think that's the most difficult thing to do." However, step by small step, and in the form of various unusual and innovative projects, everything points to the fact that Tallinn is trying to do just that. At least on its own small scale.

The authors were guests of *Park Inn by Radisson Meriton Conference & Spa Hotel* in Tallinn and would like to thank the hotel for its hospitality.



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Insider's view

## “WE ARE EXTREMELY NON-HIERARCHICAL...”

**Tanel Veenre** is one of the best-known Estonian jewellery artists. He graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in metal arts and has also studied with Prof. Ruudt Peters at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam. Veenre is currently a professor of design at the Estonian Academy of Arts, a photographer, a lecturer, and a participant in many international exhibitions. The Estonian school of jewellery design is currently considered one of the strongest and is

instantly recognisable by professionals in the field. “We most often work with spiritual qualities and tend to be turned inwards. Yes, I suppose, we’re also a little depressive, which can definitely be felt in the jewellery made by Estonian artists. We’re northerners, after all. But that’s also what we teach our students – you’ve got to begin from the inside. From inside yourself.” Veenre’s workshop is in Tallinn’s Old Town, and he arrives for our interview pushing a bicycle.

**Why do you love to live in Tallinn?**  
First, it’s my choice by blood. I think I’m too fond of comfort to move. Tallinn is clearly centred, and it’s very easy to navigate. Everything is very close, everything you need for life is just a ten- or fifteen-minute walk away.  
And, of course, the smell of the sea. The freshness. I’m very glad the sea is so close; the air is very fresh all the time. The society here is very special as well. We are extremely non-hierarchical. Everyone is so easily accessible. At most schools around the world, you first need to set up an appointment to meet someone. But here you can just knock on the door. The social system is very open.

**Which area of Tallinn is currently the epicentre of creativity?**  
Telliskivi, the former industrial complex (Telliskivi 60A; [www.telliskivi.eu](http://www.telliskivi.eu)) in the Kalamaja district. They have lots of design shops and restaurants, all kinds of cuisines and cafés. Last year, an open stage (Verba Lava) opened in Telliskivi, too. The main idea of the stage is that independent theatres and music groups that don’t have

their own permanent locations can rent the space for relatively little money. Almost every day there is some interesting performance – contemporary dance, art, concerts, theatre. In the evenings it’s a very alive area.  
**Is there a building in the city that means a lot to you?**  
I really like the Fahle House, with its glass addition at the top of the building. In terms of proportions, I think it’s a real masterpiece. I think the old Soviet town hall is still very special as well. I’ve discovered it again. During the Soviet era, when I was a kid, we lived in a residential area, and it was always a trip to come to the city centre. We didn’t even do it every month. Linnahall, which is also called Town Hall by locals, was built in the 1980s for the regatta that took place in Tallinn during the Moscow Olympic Games. The gigantic concrete structure is located right by the sea, near the old town wall. When I was a child, there was always a spruce tree there in winter, as well as regular circus performances and concerts. In addition, as a child, I always thought it was such an impossibly large

place with all those steps. It was really like a ceremony – you go up the stairs and then there’s this huge foyer and this round hall. Now it’s abandoned, with just graffiti there. The problem is that no one wants to take it over because it would cost a fortune to reconstruct or rebuild it. It’s not reasonable anymore. But it’s still a very special place. This abandonedness, this huge scale, and in the evening you just go there and there is nothing else – just the sea and this enormous space. It’s a great place for a picnic, and you often encounter groups of friends or couples there. It’s become like a Hyde Park for young people. Next to it is the Contemporary Art Museum (Kumu), which is kind of a squatted factory building. And the Estonian Design House is also nearby, where you can see the essence of what’s current on the Estonian design scene.  
**Which are your favourite restaurants/cafés in Tallinn?**  
I don’t go out very often; I usually prefer to eat at home or at my studio. **F-Hoone** (Telliskivi 60; [www.fhoone.ee](http://www.fhoone.ee)), the oldest

inhabitant of Telliskivi, is still a very good option in terms of both quality and price.  
**Kohvik Sesoon** (Niine 1; [www.kohviksesoon.ee](http://www.kohviksesoon.ee)) in the same area is a nice choice as well. It’s located a little bit further in Kalamaja, between the sea and Telliskivi.  
I really like the restaurant **Neh** (Lootsi 4; [www.neh.ee](http://www.neh.ee)). It belongs to the same guys who run the Pädaste Manor House on Muhu Island. The restaurant is near the port and specialises in Nordic Island cuisine. But the best thing is that they have a special person on the island – a lady who is a botanist. Her specialty is finding foods in the local forests and the sea that the locals regularly ate a hundred and more years ago, but which have since been forgotten. So, they’re reviving some of the old traditions and adapting them to contemporary cuisine.  
I sometimes also go to **Leib Resto & Aed** (Uus 31; [www.leibresto.ee](http://www.leibresto.ee)) in the Old Town. In Estonian, *leib* means “bread”, and the owners of the restaurant are a couple of young men who are real foodies. The food there is simply superb. **BO**

With special thanks to Visit Estonia and Maris Hellrand.



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## MIKHAIL BARYSHNIKOV:

**“BRODSKY/BARYSHNIKOV IS THE MOST IMPORTANT WORK OF MY LIFE.”**

Legendary Riga-born dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov (67) is known as a person who doesn't often give personal interviews, so this *Baltic Outlook* conversation with him is a special event. This is also a special time for Baryshnikov himself – on October 15, Riga will see the world premiere of *Brotsky/Baryshnikov*, the dancer's very personal story about the poet Joseph Brodsky. The line for tickets to this unique performance at the New Riga Theatre in October and November stretched around the block, and people even flew in from Moscow and Berlin to buy tickets. In this interview with *Baltic Outlook*, Baryshnikov shares his memories of his close friendship with Brodsky, the burden of fame that came along with the cult TV show *Sex and the City*, and his own personal dreams.

**M**ikhail Baryshnikov is a living legend. He is widely seen as one of the three best dancers of all time (alongside Nijinsky and Nurejev). He became a national cultural icon at a young age as the star of Leningrad's Kirov Ballet. During a Canadian tour in 1974 he fled to the West and caused a ballet euphoria in the U.S., Canada and Western Europe. Besides working as a dancer, choreographer and artistic director with the best Western ballet ensembles, he also began a career in Hollywood. Baryshnikov later became an important figure in modern dance and, after being forced to quit dancing due to a knee injury, has become a critically acclaimed theatre actor. He came to international television fame as Carrie's lover in *Sex and the City* in 2003. In 2005, he founded the Baryshnikov Arts Centre in New York City, which is “a creative space for presenting and nurturing multidisciplinary artists”.

Baryshnikov is likely the most famous person to be born in Riga, which is where he spent his first 14 years and started to dance. Apart from some private visits since Latvian independence and a comeback appearance as a dancer at the Latvian National Opera in 1997, this year is his busiest in Riga since leaving the city to study in Leningrad 52 years ago. In May, he showed his personal art collection at the Riga Bourse Art Museum. And on October 15, Riga will see the world premiere of *Brotsky/Baryshnikov*, a one-man-piece about the poet Joseph Brodsky, based on selected poems and directed by local director Alvis Hermanis at the New Riga Theatre.

**Mr. Baryshnikov, it's a sunny summer day in Riga. At the age of 13 or 14, what would you have done today?**

Many of the things that young people do, like going to the beaches in Jūrmala with my classmate Andris Vītiņš. It was a difficult situation for me at that age. My mother had died [when Baryshnikov was 12 – Ed.], so I lived with my father and was on my own much of the time. And I spent a lot of time with friends' families, mostly the Vītiņš family. My life was already much about dancing at that time. From my last years in Riga I remember mostly school and theatre. I loved what I was doing, and trying to become as good a dancer as I could was my only concern. I have some pleasant and some less pleasant memories of those last years in Riga. Back then it was a good idea to leave the place.

**Where did you live?**

We lived on Skolas iela until I was 12, and then we moved out of the city centre.

**Are you still in contact with friends from school?**

Oh, yes. Like with my dear classmate Andris Vītiņš and his sister. Also with Mischa Maisky and Gidon Kremer,

for example. Mischa and I shared a desk for one year, Gidon was one class higher.

**In which language did you chat with your friends and other people at that time?**

Both in Russian and Latvian. At the Riga Choreography School it was Latvian and Russian back and forth all the time. Some of the teachers addressed us only in Latvian, so we learned it pretty much along with our mothers' milk – except that my parents didn't understand any Latvian.

**Can you still speak Latvian?**

*Es saprotu, bet es esmu aizmirsis latviešu valodu, jo pirms 52 gadiem es aizbraucu* [Baryshnikov speaks in Latvian: I understand it, but I've forgotten how to speak Latvian, because I left 52 years ago. – Ed.]. I understand it very well and used to speak very well, but I haven't had many opportunities to speak Latvian over the past 40 years. I'm really looking forward to being in Riga for three weeks in a row, and then I'll speak more fluently again. My mother didn't speak any Latvian, but she brought me to the Latvian National Theatre every week when I was like 10 and 11 years old. She loved the theatre. And I used to translate it to her in the middle of the piece. The people around us were not very happy [laughs].

**In what language do you dream or think today?**

I do think in English, and I assume I also dream in English, but I'm not 100% sure about that. You know, my family is American. My wife, kids, grandchildren – none of them speak Russian or Latvian. And I'm an American citizen.

**What was your first contact with ballet?**

My first contact wasn't with the ballet but with the opera. That was during my first year at school. I played one of four little Moors in *The Queen of Spades* at Riga's opera house. We wore brown socks over our heads with small holes for the eyes. Then came *The Nutcracker* directed by Helēna Tangijeva-Birzniece. I'll never forget that. It was my first dancing appearance ever with a big orchestra, a real set, real characters, on a big stage in front of an audience. And dancing the *Clara's Dream* scene – ah, that was really powerful!

**Which person has influenced you most in life?**

Well, the person I'm the most grateful to is my mom, Alexandra. Without even understanding it herself, my mother opened the world of arts to me. Without her I probably would have played football instead, you know. She was a simple woman from the Volga River, and she arrived in Latvia in 1946 with the Russian tanks, because my father was in the military. But once she was in Riga, she jumped into the cultural life of Latvia, and



she was so extraordinarily curious and gifted – and very beautiful! She sang very well, she went to see Latvian choirs, to the Dom Cathedral; she took me to the ballet, to the opera, to the theatre or to exhibitions. She was really very hungry for the arts. That affected me and pushed me, especially after the first time I saw children performing in a ballet piece together with adults – I think it was *Doctor Faustus*, and Haralds Ritenbergs was dancing – and I was absolutely fascinated. I said, “Mom, I want to see this again,” and she agreed. Then she met a woman who had once danced at the Bolshoi. She formed a little group for young dancers, and she looked after me a little bit and placed my feet in first position and told me about all the great ballet dancers. I went to my parents and said, “I want to go to professional ballet school.” And so I went to the examination at the Riga Choreography School [the ballet school of the Latvian National Opera – Ed.] and got accepted.

**What was it like coming back to Riga’s opera house in 1997?**  
It was something special – you know, one of those moments when your heart beats a bit faster than usual. And the opera still looked much the same as I remembered it.

**In October, Riga will see you again on stage. How did the collaboration with Alvis Hermanis come about?**  
We’d been in contact for already a couple of years. He asked me to do some projects that I couldn’t. But I knew his work and watched some of his works on the Internet and on video, such as *Shukshin’s Stories* at Moscow’s Theatre of Nations and his opera work. He is an extraordinarily gifted and interesting man, and we’d met a few times. Then he proposed this project to me out of the blue: “I think I have the concept for a play about Brodsky,” he said, and I was really taken when he told me his idea. I simply couldn’t say no to that. We had talked quite a lot about Joseph’s work before, and he was very interested to get to know about him as a person. He knew that Joseph Brodsky and I were friends, even close friends.

**What can we expect of *Brodsky/Baryshnikov*? Acting, dancing or simply reading Brodsky on stage?**  
It’s not just reading Brodsky but also acting. It won’t be the

classical idea of actor-goes-on-stage-reading-poets, as is popular in Russia, like *Sergey Jurksij Reads Pushkin*. It will be something that hasn’t been done before. It’s a theatrical journey through all periods of his work. Hermanis created a kind of story from the very first till the very last of Brodsky’s works, and we carefully selected poems – some longer, some very short – from the 1950s to the 1990s for the performance. Poems that are not too complicated, poems that resonate with the audience from their first reading. I trust Hermanis about the concept. I only work with people that I trust 100%, otherwise I couldn’t give all that I can. He has the specific idea; I am only the instrument. But then again, of course, there’s also the personal story – Brodsky and I were close friends. In the end it will be like with all kinds of art – either it works or it doesn’t.

**The Brodsky project will be all in Russian. Will it also include some of his late poems that he wrote in English?**  
No, it won’t. We only selected those he wrote in Russian. The audience will see Latvian translations. Or translations into the languages of other countries where we will perform it. We will have a very nice set, and the translation will be integrated into the setting. It won’t be a simultaneous interpretation of the whole performance but more like an explanation of the topic.

**Where will you perform *Brodsky/Baryshnikov* after Riga?**  
Next we will perform in New York, and hopefully next spring we’ll perform in other American cities. Then Israel and London, Paris and Germany, and Italy, too. Fortunately, there is a lot of interest in the project. Many people also want to come to Riga to see it.

**Will you also perform in Russia?**  
No.

**Joseph Brodsky said in his Nobel Prize Banquet Speech that you can’t share literature, and poetry even less, with other people, because to read it is a very private, intimate experience. Isn’t the task even harder for you because he was a very close friend?**  
Well, yes, it’s a big challenge. It’s...probably the most private and important work I’ve done in my life. More than my dancing career or any other theatre project. Because it’s a much more vulnerable work for me.

**When did you first read Brodsky?**  
When I was 16 and arrived in Leningrad. It was forbidden to read Brodsky then, but a young girl from my class was very much into poetry. She gave me five or six poems and I was instantly taken by them. We’re still friends; she lives in Brussels now. There was a big scandal around Brodsky back then, because he was sent “up north” [Brodsky was sentenced to five years in a forced labour camp in Siberia – Ed.] and then exiled.

**How did you become friends?**  
Well, we met [at a gala dinner – Ed.] when I’d been in the U.S. for only a couple of weeks. Somehow we already had a lot of mutual friends in Leningrad....





Baryshnikov performing in *The Argument*, a piece by well-known choreographer Mark Morris



Baryshnikov at rehearsal

**Brodsky once said that both of you were even dating girls living in the same building?**

Well, that's nearly true. His girlfriend at the time lived in that building, and a girl who was a good friend of mine also lived there, but I wasn't dating her. Funny, though, that Brodsky and I never met in Leningrad. When we finally met in 1974, we soon became very close friends and remained friends until his death in 1996.

**Brodsky wasn't a big ballet fan, was he?**

True, he wasn't very interested in dancing. He also didn't like theatre. But the fact that I'm a ballet dancer doesn't mean that dancing is my only interest. Very few of my friends are ballet dancers. We talked about art in general. We were both music people. He loved photography and movies, and, of course, we talked about books. And we discussed politics often. Politically we were quite different, because he was a conservative while I consider myself a liberal. He always said, "One day you will understand." [Laughs.] He had very strong opinions about morality, dignity, excellence. Besides being an outstanding poet, he was an unusual personality. Like me, he was obsessed with mortality and death, and, like many artists, he worried about not having enough time – but then he smoked like a chimney wherever he went, even while teaching at the university. He couldn't write a line without a cigarette.

**Do you write poetry yourself?**

God forbid, no! [Laughs.] Like everybody else, I write a little poem here and there.... But really, it never crossed my mind to do it seriously.

**But didn't you occasionally attend Brodsky's poetry classes?**

Well, yes, I sneaked in from time to time. Like when he was teaching in Europe. But I wasn't there to seriously learn anything. I wanted to see how he conducts himself in an auditorium.

**Was Joseph Brodsky an old-fashioned person?**

He tried hard to be. He wanted to look "professorial" in the way intellectuals used to look in old times – think Stendhal. You know, wearing a tweed jacket and always writing with a fountain pen.

**Wasn't that partly due to an academic inferiority complex due to the fact that he left school at just 15 years of age?**

Well, yes, he had no academic education, but he was the most educated person of all of them. He knew not only all about Russian literature but also about German literature and Italian literature, among others. He could recite Dante or Rilke by memory. He knew he wouldn't survive in Soviet schools because he had his own views, and that's why he left school. Instead, he worked in factories, went on geological expeditions, learned Polish and English on his own and read and read and read. Then he started to translate and began to write poetry and met interesting people, such as Anna Akhmatova. And you could say that was the beginning of the end for him in the Soviet Union.

**Was he a pessimist after all?**

Not about himself, but there is a lot of pessimism and scepticism about the rest of the world in his poetry and essays. But he believed in the beauty of the human spirit. And in poetry.

**Brodsky once said that poetry is the best protection against the vulgarity of human emotions. Do you agree?**

Yes, but that could also be the poetry in dancing, the poetry in music. To him, poetry was the most pure and sacred spiritual exercise.

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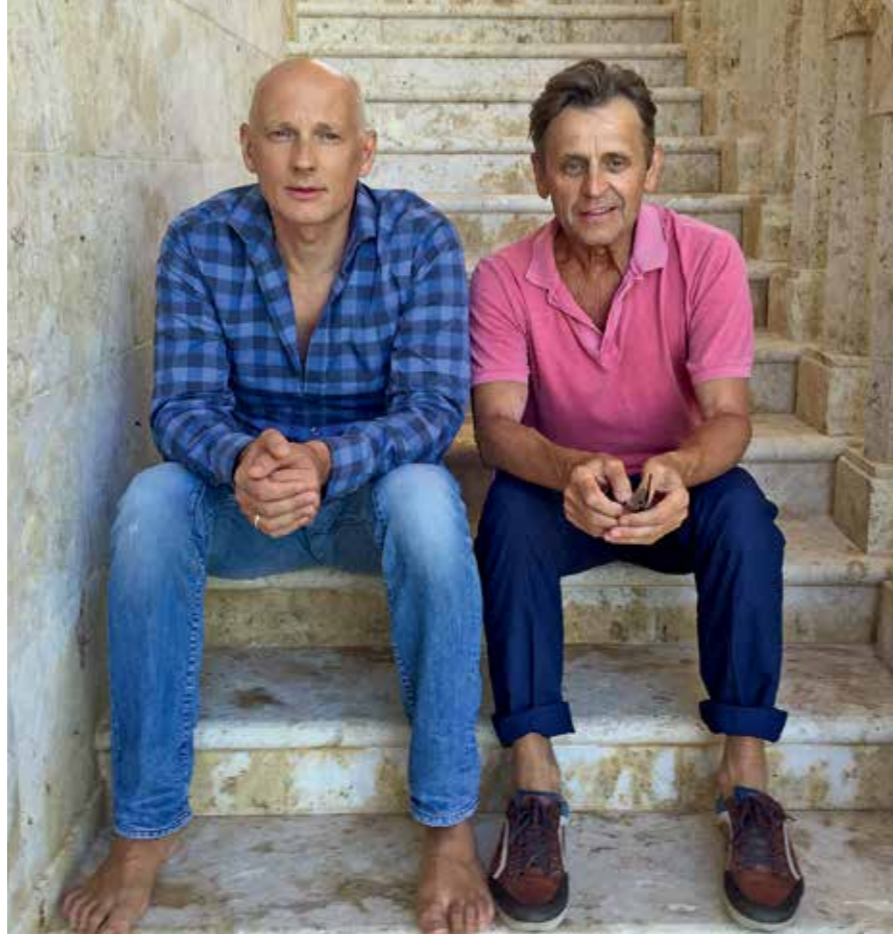
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Baryshnikov and director Alvis Hermanis

After working hard he always  
liked to sit down, have his glass  
of whiskey and talk

How do you remember Joseph  
Brodsky?

Sitting in a small café in the Village,  
smiling, lighting a cigarette, lifting his  
hat – wearing a big hat like a rabbi – and  
saying “miaow!” He adored cats. He  
drew cats all the time, and he was a very  
gifted drawer. After working hard he  
always liked to sit down, have his glass  
of whiskey and talk. But he couldn't sit  
for a long time. We both liked to walk  
around cities like Paris, New York, Venice,  
Stockholm or London. There were always  
a lot of people around him, but inside he  
was a loner. A very private man.

You once said that you envied his way  
with women....

That was half-jokingly, but women really  
adored him, and he simply loved women.  
He had kind of a magnetic appeal, and  
not only with women. People were  
happy just spending twenty minutes in  
conversation with him. Bill Clinton has  
the same quality.

Bill Clinton honoured you in 2000 at  
the Kennedy Centre [Kennedy Centre  
Honours are the highest national  
honour for artists in the U.S.]. What was  
that like?

It was a great honour, of course. I have  
known the Clintons since Bill was governor  
in Little Rock. We've been friends – if I  
may say so – for 35 years. Just recently  
I talked with Hillary. I'm rooting for her  
to become our next president. I'm a  
fan of the whole family. Bill was a very  
extraordinary president. He is still into a lot  
of important stuff – AIDS, Africa, minority  
issues – working as hard as he did when he  
was president. He was probably the most  
popular president besides Kennedy and  
Reagan, who was Joseph's favourite. We  
both were friends of the Reagans, too, even  
though I had different political opinions.

Talking about fame – the *Brodsky/  
Baryshnikov* project won't be the first  
time you recite Brodsky's poetry in  
public. I found it impressive that you

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Baryshnikov and actress Sarah Jessica Parker as Aleksandr Petrovsky and Carrie Bradshaw on the set of *Sex and the City*

used your role in the TV series *Sex and the City* to advertise Brodsky to a huge audience [in the episode, Alexander Petrovsky recites the poem *Six Years Later* to Carrie Bradshaw]. Or did Brodsky's publisher pay you for that? [Laughs.] No, it was my idea, and I was really happy that the producers allowed me to do that.

**Did you expect the huge popularity boost?**  
The *Sex and the City* popularity was indeed kind of strange. When I am in Argentina or Peru, everybody knows me only by my role name. "Oh, look, there's that guy Petrovsky – or is it Gorbachev?" [Laughs.] They asked me to play in a few episodes, but then it turned out to be the whole season, and it really did take up a whole year.

**You gave them your finger and they took the whole hand.**  
Exactly. That was very hard to manage with all the other things I had to do.

**Wasn't it frustrating to see that a TV role brought you more fame than your outstanding dancing career?**  
But that's not surprising. Who cares about the ballet? Most people watch TV, but they don't read books or go to the theatre

or the opera. So, it's no wonder. It's OK. TV is an audience, too.... [Laughs.]

**And your first date with Carrie took place at your restaurant, the *Russian Samovar*. I won't ask whose idea that was, but where did you get the idea to run a restaurant together with Joseph Brodsky?**  
The restaurant was Joseph's idea. Just to have a small Russian club, a place to hang out with friends, but not necessarily as a real business. We had great times at the *Samovar*!

**You have been very busy lately. Are you afraid of running out of time?**  
Yes, it is a little bit like that. When you reach that age, every week and month seems to pass by in double speed. And then you get all these interesting proposals from all sides that you can't refuse. Like this project with Hermanis; it would be very silly for me not to do it.

**What moves you?**  
Curiosity. Nerves and excitement. What drives me is the dynamics of performing. I wake up inspired to do what I am currently up to in the following weeks. The nerves because I am a very nervous performer; I get more and more stage fright during the rehearsals, and I have to fight my nerves. Getting myself into mental and physical shape drives me.

**What are you up to at the moment besides the Brodsky project?**  
I still do the solo show *Letter to a Man* about Nijinsky with Robert Wilson [their second collaboration after *The Old Woman* co-starring Willem Dafoe – Ed.], and we're celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Baryshnikov Arts Centre in New York. My plate is full, you could say. I only have to stay healthy and try not to get too nervous, that's all. **BO**

*Baltic Outlook* thanks the Baryshnikov Arts Centre in New York City and especially Huong Hoang for help in the preparation of this interview.

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# HALFA KILOMETRE FROM THE BEDROOM TO THE BATHROOM

A small tour and big tour of Zemgale's palaces

Locals call Latvia's southern region of Zemgale boring because of its flat terrain and dusty roads. But Zemgale, with its golden fields of waving grain, is also known as Latvia's bread basket.

This was the seat of the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia (1562-1795), which also had colonies in Tobago and at the mouth of the Gambia River in West Africa. During the rule of Duke Ernst Johann

von Biron (Bühren), the prolific 18th-century architect Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli was employed to design ornate palaces for the duchy. Thus, today's visitor to Zemgale can cast a gaze through the perfect enfilades of these palaces, and further out across the ever-fertile fields, to confirm that the story of this geographically quite small region, nevertheless, has some global breadth.



Jelgava Palace

## THE SMALL TOUR: JELGAVA - RUNDĀLE - MEŽOTNE

### I Jelgava Palace

278 years ago, a grandiose explosion rocked Mitau (Zemgale's largest city, now known as Jelgava). The culprit was Biron, the favourite of Empress Anna Ioannovna of Russia, who had been born into a poor family but had just been made Duke of Courland and Semigallia. The ambitious 47-year-old duke marked his rise to power with much pomp, blowing up the old Medieval castle in Mitau in order to make room for a new Baroque-style palace that would be the largest such palace in the Baltic States. Rastrelli, Russia's court architect and the starchitect of the day, was invited to design and build the palace.

The foundation of Jelgava Palace was laid in 1738 on the island between the Driksa and Lielupe rivers. Unfortunately, Biron only lived in the completed palace for 20 days before he died. His body was laid to rest in the burial vault under the palace next to the Kettler dukes from the previous dynasty. In fact, the Rundāle Palace exposition *Kurzemes hercogu kapenes* (Burial Vaults of the Courland Dukes) is on display at Jelgava Palace until

October 31. The exposition introduces visitors to what life in the palace was like and tears down various stereotypes about history made popular in films and stories. Here, everything is real and really once was alive. The burial vault contains 21 metal sarcophagi and nine wooden coffins holding the remains of members of the Kettler and Biron dynasties. The exposition also shows several pieces of restored historical clothing, garments that reflect the forms, values and passions of their day. If there's one place in Jelgava Palace you shouldn't miss, this is it.

But history has not been kind to Jelgava Palace, for it suffered numerous fires over the centuries. In 1961 the palace was reconstructed and now houses the Latvia University of Agriculture (LLU). The largest change was the transformation of Rastrelli's original three-wing composition into an enclosed square. Ginta Linīte, the director of the palace's museum, tells that the palace now belongs to the university and most of its inhabitants are university students, of which there are about 5000 in Jelgava. In all, the Baltics' largest palace

Rundāle Palace

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① [www.latvia.travel](http://www.latvia.travel)




has 674 windows, 615 doors, 669 rooms and 25 chimneys. “If you get lost in the palace on a Saturday, you’ll only get out on Monday, because the palace is closed on Sundays,” Linīte laughs.

Jelgava Palace – a forerunner of Rastrelli’s Winter Palace in St. Petersburg – is a popular place for students to celebrate weddings. Visitors can get a feel for the students’ life in the basement-level cafeteria. History buffs will definitely enjoy the palace museum, which chronicles the palace’s construction and provides a glimpse into the original interiors of its rooms, the majority of which have not been preserved to the present day. The museum also offers a “Hot chocolate at the duke’s residence” activity, in which guests can taste a drink that has been specially developed in the LLU Faculty of Food Technology, while the more romantically inclined may prefer “Duchess Dorothea’s letter workshop”, which teaches about calligraphy in a theatrical 19<sup>th</sup>-century environment and lets guests send someone a handwritten letter. The name of this activity is no coincidence – Princess Dorothea von Biron (also the Duchess of Sagan) was the granddaughter of Ernst Johann von Biron and is mentioned in Marcel Proust’s novel *In Search of Lost Time*. The passage inspired popular French author Françoise Sagan’s pseudonym.

While Jelgava Palace – the embodiment of human fantasy and ability – stands at one end of the island, the meadows at the other end are home to genuine children of nature, namely, a herd of over 40 wild horses. They were introduced to the island to maintain the alluvial meadows that are the nesting sites of rare bird species. Their home is a wonderful place for a leisurely hike and learning about Latvia’s flora and fauna. However, binoculars may come in handy so you need not wander the entire territory to locate the horses. Upon the advice of local horse whisperer Einārs Nordmanis, I found them at the southern end of the island.

**Jelgava Palace:** Lielā iela 2, Jelgava

Phone +371 63005617,  ll.u.lv

Make reservations for the hot chocolate and letter writing activities at least three days in advance.

For a tour of the island’s alluvial meadows guided by horse expert Einārs Nordmanis, call +371 20264343.



## II Rundāle Palace

Located 35 kilometres from Jelgava and sharing many design ideas with Versailles, Rundāle Palace is a happy place, a beautifully restored dessert. Visitors should keep in mind that Rundāle was intended as the afore-mentioned Duke Biron’s summer residence and is therefore smaller than Jelgava Palace. A tidbit of history sheds light on the duke’s imposing character – namely, he ordered the old castle at Rundāle to be torn down and construction on Rundāle Palace to begin even before he was confirmed Duke of Courland and Semigallia. He had won the sympathy and affections of Empress Anna Ioannovna, and his ambitions could not even be reined in by the fact that Rastrelli was preoccupied at that time with building Anna’s main residence, the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. But the architect did agree to the project and began work, despite the fact that the valley of calm that awaited him in Rundāle (from the German Ruhenthal) lacked adequate construction materials, labourers and even roads. Brick and lime kilns were built specially for the palace’s needs, and logs and firewood were procured from nearby estates. At least 400 teams of horses arrived for work each day. Thus, by 1737 – when Biron was blasting the old castle in Jelgava – construction on Rundāle Palace was in full swing, and the roof of the summer residence was already being covered with tin panels.

32,818 linden trees, 4500 chestnut trees and 188 oak trees were planted in the park surrounding the palace. A village housing workers grew up near the construction site, and a small church was even built for their needs. Rastrelli, who directed the construction of the palace, also lived in the village. Every two weeks he sent updates on the construction to his patron, Duke Biron, in St. Petersburg. Biron, however, began concentrating more and more on Jelgava Palace and therefore ordered the artistic interior work at Rundāle to be simplified. For example, the cast iron façade ornaments ordered from Tula were used in Jelgava instead and can still be seen there to this day.

Today, Rundāle Palace – a fine example of Baroque architecture situated in a pristine natural environment – is a top tourist destination in Latvia. A couple thousand visitors visit the palace each day during the summer season, so the sunny early days of autumn are ideal for a peaceful stroll through its park and gardens. The 72-hectare territory includes a 10-hectare French garden and a 32-hectare forest park. The main element of the palace’s museum is the interior spaces themselves: festive halls, the duke’s public and private rooms, the duchess’ apartments and even the kitchens, stairways and hallways. Most of the rooms reflect the style popular during the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, although two

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The White Hall



The Billiard Room



The duke's second study

rooms were furnished in a 19<sup>th</sup>-century and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century style according to the wishes of the Dukes Zubov and Dukes Shuvalov, who owned the palace during those eras. Legend says that the heart of Prince Platon Zubov, who died at Rundāle under mysterious circumstances in 1822, is buried on the island in the middle of the pond.

But Rundāle's past has not always been so rosy. Over the years, the palace has endured unskilful reconstructions and wars; it has been used as a field hospital, a military barracks, a school and even a grain storehouse. Art and beauty returned to the palace only relatively recently, with the latest restoration being completed in 2014. I'll admit that I expected to be intimidated by huge amounts of historical facts during a tour of Rundāle. Emerging from the palace's main entrance into the sunlit afternoon outside, the clock rang out a new hour. I calculated that I had spent almost six hours in the palace, park and gardens. One of those hours was spent having lunch in the White House (Baltā māja), the former servants' quarters.

I suggest first visiting the palace itself and discovering its ornate interiors. Pay particular attention to the wallpapers woven in Moscow (unlike other museums, at Rundāle you can even touch them!), and follow your nose to find the elaborate potpourris used in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to mask household odours. And yes, the porcelain! Gaze out the window in the duke's bedroom, located in the centre of the palace's main wing – the view opens onto the restored French garden, providing the eyes a pleasant respite from the palace's ornate interiors.

P.S. A descendant of Duke Ernst Johann von Biron, who is currently the head of the Biron family, has said that he prefers to live in smaller houses, which offer central heating and electricity and in which everything is just a few steps away. "Just imagine having to walk almost half a kilometre to get from your bedroom to the bathroom!"

Rundāle Palace: Pilsrundāle, Rundāles pagasts;  
Phone +371 63962274, ① rundale.net  
Boat rides in the palace pond: ① rundale.net  
Lunch and accommodation in the White House:  
phone + 371 29121374, ① hotelbaltamaja.lv



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Mežotne Palace



Ceiling ornaments at Mežotne Palace



Hotel room



The halls of Mežotne Palace

### III Mežotne Palace

On the other side of the river, and just a 40-minute walk from Rundāle Palace, lies Mežotne Palace, a fine example of Classicism architecture. Along the way, visit the ancient Semigallian hill fort on the left bank of the Lielupe River across from Mežotne Palace. At a height of over 16 metres, it is one of the largest Semigallian fortifications dating to the 9<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries.

As you cross the charming pontoon bridge across the Lielupe, Mežotne Palace welcomes

visitors with lightness and spark in the orange light of autumn. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, during the time of the great Duke Jacob of Courland, Mežotne was the site of a brocade weaving factory. The palace, designed by architect Johann Georg Adam Berlitz and built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, was based on the Medem family's palace at Eleja (Elley), which, in turn, had been created by architect Giacomo Quarenghi. Located 45 kilometres away, all that remains of Eleja Palace today is ghostly ruins, although restoration work has been begun on the tea house. Mežotne Palace (fully restored in 2001) now indirectly lets visitors experience the former atmosphere at Eleja. A tidbit of history: Duke Peter von Biron, the son of our story's hero Duke Ernst Johann von Biron, secretly married Dorothea von Medem of Eleja.

Mežotne Palace now operates a 19<sup>th</sup>-century-style hotel and restaurant, where guests can enjoy fresh fish from the Lielupe River prepared by a chef from Germany. After the large palaces at Jelgava and Rundāle, Mežotne feels like an oasis of tranquility. I imagine the repose and relish felt by elegant ladies from various European capitals as they arrive here, seeking respite in a charming rural setting. As they set down their suitcases in one of the ravishingly named rooms – like Ceļotājs (Traveller), Dorothea, Safari, Ērkšķrozīte (Sleeping Beauty) – they tell the groundskeepers to not get carried away with mowing the grass in the palace's park...otherwise it'll look just like the city! The staff really does attend to the wishes of the hotel's guests, and part of the park is left unmown.

The grandest space at Mežotne Palace is the domed main hall (Kupola zāle). Its high dome not only reminds one of Rome's Pantheon, but the choice of tones used in the hall also brings to mind Mediterranean skies, although in the palace's heyday the hall had genuine leather on the walls. Today, the domed main hall is a popular site for wedding ceremonies. Ilze Djačuka, Mežotne Palace's marketing director, laughs, "Wherever I go, I always meet someone whose wedding I've helped plan at Mežotne Palace."

**Mežotne Palace: Mežotne Palace restaurant and hotel, Mežotne, Mežotnes pagasts;**  
phone +371 639 60711, ① mezotnespils.lv



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Restored stable at Blankenfelde Manor

## THE BIG TOUR: THE SMALL TOUR + BLANKENFELDE AND ZAĻENIEKI

### Blankenfelde Manor

A big tour of Zemgale's palaces includes Blankenfelde Manor, located about 50 kilometres from Mežotne. Proof that I have arrived in Blankenfelde is provided by a lonely bus stop that hasn't seen a bus in years. Locals say the nearest working store is now ten kilometres away. In earlier times, however, Blankenfelde had three taverns. Back in the library at Rundāle Palace I found a book with a stamp from the Blankenfelde library, so I knew there had to be something here. A small but comfortable hotel has been established in the manor's former stable, and there I meet Valdis Jākobsons, the manager of the manor. Although he complains plenty about the dusty road that passes near the historical buildings, he also tells countless absorbing tales about the manor. It turns out that King Louis XVIII of France visited Blankenfelde several times in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and enjoyed its elderberry wine and good foods. The Classicism-style manor house still awaits restoration, but the manager gladly shows the interior to visitors.

But that's not all. Here – in the place one tourist called Nowhere Land – visitors can also sample locally made elderberry syrup. But Jākobsons says one shouldn't have too much of the syrup, which he distributes to stores across Latvia. Two tablespoons a day is enough. Jākobsons directed Latvia's largest pharmaceutical company for several decades, so he's a man who can be trusted in such matters. "The elder tree and elderberry has a magical quality. Even Harry Potter's



Social life at Zaļā Manor, 19<sup>th</sup>-century drawing

wand is made of elder wood," he says. Elder trees grow best in the vicinity of people and can be planted in places that need protection. For example, at Blankenfelde an elder tree decided to grow next to a 400-year-old ash tree that has suffered much damage over the years. Jākobsons has now turned all of his care and attention to the Blankenfelde estate. The gate house will open as a conference hall this autumn, and there are also plans for a restaurant. Jākobsons' own hobby – his collection of bells from around the world – has found a home in the stable and symbolically rings in a new era at Blankenfelde.

Blankenfelde Manor and Hotel: Blankenfeldes muiža, Vilces pagasts;  
Phone + 371 27810348, ① blankenfeldesmuiža.lv  
With prior reservation, Blankenfelde offers a bell painting workshop.

### Zaļā (Zaļenieki) Manor

On the way back to Riga, shake off the dust from Zemgale's small roads at Zaļā muiža (Green Manor, from the German Grünhof) in Zaļenieki. Located 25 kilometres from Blankenfelde, the manor house was built in 1775 and its façade has not changed since then. Even the plastering and decorative details are all original. The manor house has been used as a school since the 1920s, and today it is the home of the Zaļenieki Commercial and Crafts High School. Even though the interior walls have been reconstructed to accommodate classrooms and are covered in many layers of paint, Duke Biron's hunting palace has remained quite well preserved to the present day. Although designed by the above-mentioned architect Rastrelli, construction of the manor was supervised by Severin Jensen, who planned the Classicism-style character of the building. Zaļā Manor was Jensen's first major commission after his employment in the Duke of Courland's service. Perhaps significantly, the manor has enjoyed a fairly peaceful past, and most of history's tragic events have passed it by.

Once inside, the school decor dominates and little remains of the manor's former grandeur. But the well-preserved old photographs and new museum exposition in honour of the manor's 240<sup>th</sup> anniversary are worth a look. Note the high ceilings (6.98 metres), four-metre-high ceramic stoves, the wooden floors with 64-centimetre-wide boards and the ceiling paintings dating to 1888.

While gaining access to certain rooms in Zemgale's large palaces can be quite complicated, it's not difficult to even see the attic at Zaļenieki, says Vallija Brakovska, the assistant director of the school and guide to the manor house. "You just have to see the huge beams they used to build the house! Let's go!" she says and adds that students tend to change for the better once they begin attending school at Zaļā Manor. **BO**

Zaļā Manor: Pils, Zaļenieki, Zaļenieku pagasts;  
phone + 371 63074250,  
① latvia.travel/en/sight/zalenieki-green-manor



IEGULDĪJUMS TAVĀ NĀKOTNE



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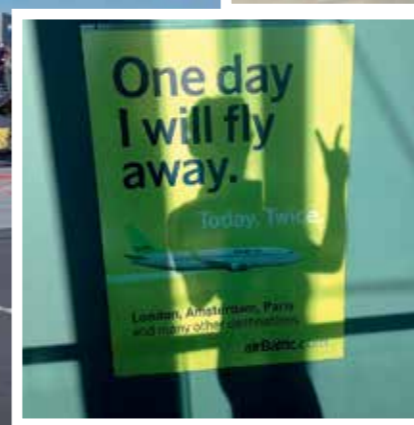
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20 years in the air

# airBaltic

## 20 MOMENTS OF FUN, WORK AND LOVE

Photos courtesy of airBaltic



## FROM FLIGHT DECK TO OFFICE

Text by **ILZE POLE**  
Photo by **LAURIS VIKSNE, F64**

Martin Gauss has been the head of *airBaltic* for the last four years. The company has stabilised under his leadership and continues to grow. "It was already a strong airline, it got into difficulties, and now it is a strong airline again and on a solid base," he tells *Baltic Outlook*. Being a pilot himself, Gauss knows the industry inside out.



We meet one afternoon in Gauss' office, which has a wonderful view of the airport; the airplanes seem just an arm's reach away. One of *airBaltic*'s planes, with its green tail, has just taken off and doesn't make it into the frame when we take the director's photo. Gauss is welcoming, to the point, and talks about his job with great pride. Regarding his own four years at the airline, Gauss considers them to have been very successful. "We have achieved a lot by putting an airline back on track and showing the strength of *airBaltic*," he says. "Sometimes it was tough, but I never had a single day when I felt frustrated, even though there were difficult things to do. Over the past 23 years there have been occasions when I've felt that this is not going in the right direction. But that's never happened to me during these last four years here in Riga. So, it must have been a pretty good time."

Before starting to work for *airBaltic*, Gauss had never been to Riga before. "I only came twice for my job interviews," he admits. "I started to work here in November, and since that time I've spent my work days here, and on Friday evenings I fly home to Munich. I started working here in the winter, and it was a tough winter, very cold, which was a very interesting experience for me, and then I had a beautiful summer. I got everything I could imagine from Riga!"

Gauss began his career in aviation in 1992, when he got a job as a pilot for *Deutsche British Airways*. Already back in 1992 they were looking at him as a candidate for management. "Somebody wrote that in my file. I didn't know that at the time; I only found that out 12 years later, when I saw my file: 'Excellent candidate, should be considered for management.' Already in my first year, in addition to flying, they gave me some tasks to do in operations." Gauss then went through management training while he continued flying, indulging his interest

in the administrative aspect of the job, mainly in operations at the beginning. The new investor that took over the airline from *British Airways* in the early 2000s asked Gauss to become a managing director. "We did a restructuring plan and took the airline to profitability. Since that time I have continued to work at the top management level. What took me there? It's my destiny probably," he says.

Gauss is a captain on the *Boeing 737* aircraft and used to be on the flight deck from time to time as well. "At the moment, I only hold a license for the flight simulator because in the last couple of months here at *airBaltic* we've had to make some important decisions for the future, and my focus is on my job in administration and as CEO of the company. If things were a bit quieter, of course, I would fly."

When asked whether he misses flying, Gauss says no, because he flies as a passenger several times a week – sometimes twice a week, sometimes up to six times a week. "I don't miss sitting on the flight deck as much as I would if I wasn't flying so much as a passenger. Two hours on Friday evenings and two hours on Monday mornings to and from Munich. At least. I know every sound of the aircraft, every movement," he says.

Becoming a pilot was not Gauss' childhood dream. Instead, he wanted to become an economist and started to study economics. "But I soon found out that becoming a pilot would be faster. That's the reality. But I love the job, and I'm still proud to be a pilot because it's a very interesting job. It satisfied me very well when I was doing it in the early stages of my career. I started as a first officer on *Boeing 737*, exactly the same airplanes we have here at *airBaltic*. Which means I've been flying this aircraft for 23 years."

"I think I have a reputation for being a calm person, it's my nature," Gauss says when asked how he would describe himself – if he's either a calm and rational person or a passionate person. "But I can be very passionate when I'm selling a new idea or a vision. I'm good at convincing

people. If you asked our employees, they'd say I'm a calm guy. Although some of them have seen my emotional side as well. I can be emotional if there's something I believe should be done or there's a new idea that should be invented. Or when I want to get something. I can convince my partner, for example, that I need a new car. (Laughs.) She has no choice but to agree. I can be very passionate about that!"

When talking about his family, Gauss says he does not have any pictures of them on his desk in the office or at home in Riga. Instead, he has all their pictures on his phone. "I live in different places, that's why home is not one place for me. My home is where my family is, and it does not matter where that is. I don't have things with me from home

When the watch came out, I brought it to a management meeting and I let everyone know! (Laughs.)"

Gauss always has his laptop with him, and he uses a cloud service to store all his data. He combines his *iPhone* with his *Apple* watch and uses the full functionality of it. "What I don't do is I don't talk through my watch, which is possible, but I think it's a bit weird to shout at your watch. But otherwise I use it and I love it."

Gauss uses the *FlightTrack* app very often. "If you're stuck somewhere and need to get, for example, to Riga, you just enter your airport/city and destination, and you get all the information about all the flights departing to there. It also gives you correct information about flight status," Gauss explains. "It even shows you if a flight is delayed, and even the gate number. I also

### I can be very passionate when I'm selling a new idea or a vision

apart from pictures of my family in my phone," he says. Gauss' favourite holiday destination is Italy. "I have a house in Italy. It's an old farm house with an olive garden, which produces olive oil, so I have my own olive oil. I would say that's my preferred holiday destination because that's where I go to spend my free time. My family is there as well, and it is a holiday! But if you gave me a completely free week and I could take my family with me, I would very likely go to southern Argentina, to Ushuaia. That's the southernmost city. I would get on a ship and cruise around the ice blocks. That's something I would like to see."

Gauss' colleagues have told *Baltic Outlook* that he's a gadget fan. "It's true," says Gauss. "An *Apple* fan, to be precise. I have an *Apple* laptop, the latest *iPhone* and the new *Apple* watch. I do believe *Apple* has made the right decision in investing in quality. I always have the latest gadgets as soon as they're available, and everybody knows about it.

use it to check my flight status, because what's written on the screens is not always very accurate. This information comes straight from airline systems and is very convenient. I also use *DriveNow*, which is very useful in big German cities to make car reservations. It also opens a car with one touch."

Gauss' wish for *airBaltic* passengers is for them to share his vision that *airBaltic* will become a key factor of development for the Baltic States, helping to make this region a very strong part of Europe. "I also wish for our passengers to see the Baltics as a beautiful part of Europe that is developing very well." And to his team, Gauss says, "After four years of restructuring, may you enjoy the success of the company!"

When our photo session is over and we get ready to say goodbye, Gauss' watch beeps. He looks at it with a smile and translates the message: *It looks like someone's just entered your house*. "What time is it?" asks Gauss. "Oh, it's probably my partner," he says with relief. **BO**

# GLAMOUR IN THE SKIES



Last year *airBaltic* was globally ranked among the most stylish airlines for its cabin crew uniforms by *Ginza*, a leading Japanese lifestyle and fashion magazine. But what did the very first flight attendant wear?

## AIRBALTIC UNIFORM TIMELINE



Cabin crew have always had an aura of glamour, although it was most prominent in the 1950s and 1960s, called the Golden Age of Flying in Western aviation history. Back then, flying in an airplane was a luxury that few could afford. And a luxury event called for luxurious attributes: a designer airplane cabin, seven-course meals and countless rounds of cigar smoking. Amongst all of this were the pilots (handsome war heroes) and the stewardesses (quasi movie stars). This cinematographic world emerged thanks to the new lifestyle trends of that era; in other words, people finally had more free time and more money to spend, and the realms of celebrity, fashion and good food began to captivate the masses.

### From modest classics to high fashion

Interestingly, the very first flight attendants were men. When the passenger air travel industry began to develop in the West in the 1920s, flight attendants were sometimes the sons of the businessmen who had financed the airlines. A little later, however, when airlines began understanding how important passenger needs were to the success of commercial air travel, skilled male stewards were hired. Their responsibilities included helping passengers with their baggage, serving refreshments and tactfully ensuring that all the finished cigars were completely snuffed out. They performed all of these duties while elegantly dressed in suits and bow ties or military-inspired outfits with hats and brass buttons on the jackets.

The first female flight attendant was a 25-year-old American nurse named Ellen Church. She was a trained pilot and wanted to work in commercial air travel, but women were not allowed to do such work at that time. So, in 1930 she approached the influential American airline company *United Airlines* with the novel idea of employing nurses aboard airliners. She convinced the company that the presence of female nurses would help relieve the travelling public's fear of flying. Seven other registered nurses soon joined Church's team, wearing conservative uniforms made of dark

green wool with matching green and grey wool capes. According to information at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., Church developed the job description and training programme for the first stewardesses.

Other commercial airline companies promptly followed suit and opened their doors to female stewardesses. By 1936 the job was already considered almost exclusively female. But competition was harsh – applicants were rated not only according to their knowledge, skills and character but also their body proportions, age and health. Three decades later, marital status was added to the list. This meant that preference was given to single women (widows and divorcees with no children considered) with higher education. Such selection criteria were clearly influenced not so much by sexism but rather the often fairly difficult working conditions in air travel. A steady, logical mind, a youthful stamina and the ability to be away from home often and for long periods of time were the essential preconditions for good flight attendants.

At this time, flight attendant uniforms tended toward military tailoring, with long skirts and dark colours. The only colours used were navy blue, dark green and brown for winter uniforms and light green, light blue and beige for summer uniforms. Only at the end of the 1960s, along with the sweeping general changes in culture and social norms, did some airline companies begin introducing brightly patterned and coloured hot pants and miniskirts designed by famous fashion designers. This also marked the beginning of an attitude that allowed stewardesses to look feminine and even provocative. Emilio Pucci, Pierre

Balmain and Christian Lacroix are only some of the most famous fashion designers who helped turn the stewardess uniform on its head and emphasised the great importance of style in the sky.

### The evolution of *airBaltic's* style

Today's flight attendant uniforms focus on comfort and safety, but they're also a very important element of an airline's identity. Since it was founded in 1995, *airBaltic* has gone through several changes in its cabin crew uniforms. To create a look that's in tune with its business philosophy and its growing status as a major player in the airline industry, the company has at various times turned to leading Latvian fashion designers Sonita Pavulina, Natālija Jansone and Davids. However, the very first *airBaltic* cabin crew uniforms were made in conjunction with *Scandinavian Airlines*, because the Baltic company was established as a joint venture between *Scandinavian Airlines* and the Latvian state. As a result, flight attendants wore plain black skirts and jackets.

The first uniquely *airBaltic* uniform was designed in 1999 and incorporated the revamped *airBaltic* identity, which was a light blue logo with blue squares. It was a major event at the time, and the new uniform was unveiled at a big bash at the Latvian National Opera. The next big changes in *airBaltic's* uniform design took place in 2004, when the airline developed a totally new brand with the bright green colour that it is known for today. Since then, uniform design has been changed on average every four or five years. Today, the uniforms feature dark blue and bright green, the corporate colours of *airBaltic*. When creating the uniforms, designers

emphasised the professionalism of the cabin crew, at the same time offering a stylish, comfortable and practical outfit. But simple elegance and attention to detail remain constant values throughout the changes in fashion.

Attention to detail is also one of the main duties of Ronalds Pambakers, *airBaltic's* uniform warehouse manager. He is responsible for the more than 330 flight attendant uniforms (about 50 of which are men's uniforms) and 236 pilot uniforms. Pambakers says that small changes to the uniforms actually take place all the time. Most often, during the course of wearing the uniforms, employees discover that the uniform may have too many pockets or a ruffle gets in the way of their duties. "Functionality and comfort are very important in cabin crew clothing. For this reason, stewardess' dresses are made of a thin material that's actually even more durable than the material used to make work overalls. And pilots' trousers have pleats," says Pambakers.

Airlines also have strict regulations regarding the wearing of their uniforms. In *airBaltic's* case, these regulations have been published in a thick handbook. For example, a stewardess' dress must reach to her knee, she is allowed to wear only a light application of makeup and light fragrances, her hair must be attractively pulled back and not cover her forehead, her nails must be of a certain length and so on and so on. Actually, many of the details described in this cabin crew bible are linked to safety issues instead of simply dictating physical appearance. Speaking of details, the most common dress sizes for *airBaltic* stewardesses are 34 and 36, and pilots most often wear size 42 and 43 shoes. **BO**

# PILOTS FROM DAY ONE

Text by **ILZE POLE**  
Photo by **GATIS GIERTS, F64**  
Style by **LĪGA VEKMANE**

In this special issue, *Baltic Outlook* honours all the pilots who have been flying *airBaltic* aircraft since the company’s very first years. They all have amazing experience, and we are proud to introduce them to you, our readers. Most likely, one of these pilots is on the flight deck right at this moment.

**ELMĀRS ŽEIMUNDS**, captain on *Boeing 737* (has worked for *airBaltic* since 1996)

Žeimunds has been a pilot for over 30 years. He was first employed by *Aeroflot* right here in Riga, where he began working after graduating from the Civil Aviation Flight School in Sasovo, Russia. Being a pilot was a childhood dream, and as a child a favourite hobby of his was making airplane models. Žeimunds has flown almost 20,000 hours. When not working, he gladly takes on the role of passenger and enjoys flying somewhere to relax with his family.

Captains **Pēteris Banders** and **Aivars Grants**, who is also an instructor on *Boeing 737* aircraft, could not take part in this photo session because they were on duty. Both of them have worked for *airBaltic* since 1996.

**PAULS CĀLĪTIS**, Senior Vice President Flight Operations, captain and instructor on *Boeing 737* (1995)

Cālītis graduated from Confederation College in Thunder Bay, Canada, in 1992, and his first job was flying small airplanes in the Canadian Far North. He began working at *airBaltic* in 1995. At the same time, Cālītis also began working at *airBaltic* administration, but he still maintains his pilot’s license and tries to fly at least once a week. “When I was studying, I was very excited about my career being so close to taking off and about everything that still lay ahead of me. Being a pilot is still a lot more to me than just a job,” he says.

**ĀRIJS AKIMOVŠ**, captain and instructor on *Boeing 737* (1995)

Akimovs began working as a pilot in 1978 and has flown seven different types of aircraft during his 37-year career. At age 16 he already knew he would become a pilot. “*airBaltic* has become my company and my responsibility. Here I am known by my own name, not by a number, as in other, bigger companies,” he says. Akimovs’ colleagues are quick to note that he possesses the 3D format required of pilots, namely, dedication, discipline and documentation. And this is also something he teaches young pilots.

**BORISS LUŅKOVŠ**, captain on *Boeing 737* (1996)

Luņkovs has been flying since 1969, and his first place of employment was in Mogilev, Belarus. He’s been in Riga since 1977, when he worked for *Aeroflot*. He still flies regularly and says that being on the flight deck is always so good that one does not want to leave. “I’ve always been fascinated by the feeling of flying through the clouds and seeing the sun,” he says. He tells his younger colleagues to always remember that they’re pilots and to stay in good shape – health, knowledge, behaviour. The experienced captain still loves sports and bicycling and travelling on holiday...as a passenger.

**ULDIS JACIS**, captain on *Boeing 737* (1996)

Jacis has been flying since 1980, when he began working in the Tyumen Region of Russia. There, he flew both passenger aircraft and helicopters, but he later returned to work in Latvia. Ever since he was a child, he dreamed of becoming a pilot, and this dream may have been inspired by his brother, who was also a pilot.

“Pay attention to your handwriting!” I usually tell them,” laughs Jacis when asked what advice he’d give to young pilots. “Otherwise I can’t read what you’ve written and can’t log the flight in my logbook!” Jacis’ colleagues also enjoy his sense of humour. He enjoys spending holidays in Greece.

**ALEKSANDRS POIKĀNS**, captain on *Boeing 737* (1997)

Poikāns began his career as a pilot back in 1969 in the USSR Air Force, where he worked as an instructor. He graduated from the Higher Military Aviation School of Pilots in Volgograd, Russia. In 1988 he began working in Šiauliai, Lithuania, and, when the USSR ceased to exist, he returned to Latvia. At the time, Latvia was establishing its own air force, and Poikāns was asked to join. He has attained the rank of colonel in the Latvian army. Even though he’s been flying for so long, Poikāns still comes to work excited every day.

**ANDREJS LUDBORŽS**, captain on *Boeing 737* (1996)

Captain Ludboržs has been flying since 1978, when he graduated from the Krasnokutskaya Civil Aviation Flight School in Russia. His first job was at *Aeroflot* in Riga. Shortly before *airBaltic* was formed, he worked for the Latvian National Guard near Rēzekne, where he “flew parachute throwers”, he says with a laugh. Ludboržs enjoys returning to eastern Latvia and spending his days off at his summer home there, because that’s where both he and his wife are originally from. But he’s always itching to fly again after only a week on the ground.

**VLADIMIRS ŠCOGOLS**, captain on *Boeing 737* (1995)

Šcogols has been flying since 1980 and, like many of his colleagues, began his career at *Aeroflot*. He believes flying is the most appropriate profession for people who are not afraid of taking responsibility and making decisions. “In a way, it’s actually a very pleasant feeling,” he says. “You just need to understand the real reasons why you want to fly. Is it because you want to make money, or wear a uniform, or prove something to others, or because you love to fly?”

**VLADAS KEMTIS**, captain on *Boeing 737* (1996)

Kemtis graduated from the Civil Aviation Flight School in Sasovo, Russia, together with his colleague, Captain Luņkovs. But his first job was with *Aeroflot* in Vilnius, Lithuania. He moved to Riga in 1975 and doesn’t even want to think about the fact that he’ll have to retire from flying just a year from now. But, unfortunately, he’ll have to end his long career at age 65. “It’s too bad, because I still haven’t grown tired of flying, and my job is very satisfying!” he says. Kemtis’ colleagues admire his great experience and particularly that he’s always happy to share with and help his younger colleagues.

**ARTIS RIEKSTIŅŠ**, captain and instructor on *Boeing 737* (1997)

Riekstiņš did pilot training with the Latvian Air Force before joining *airBaltic*. His first experience with flying, however, was with gliders. And from there, he took it step by step. He wanted to be a pilot ever since he played in the sandbox. “Back then, everyone wanted to become a cosmonaut or at least an aviator,” he remembers. Riekstiņš says every flight is different and possibly the greatest satisfaction in his job comes from the good dynamics in the company and his interesting colleagues, who are just as enthusiastic about flying as he is. He hopes everyone who has ever dreamed of flying will some day be able to fulfil this dream.



Over the past 20 years, *airBaltic* has helped to bring back Olympic medals won by Baltic athletes, tamandua anteaters and even a self portrait of Leonardo da Vinci. Here, our employees tell about some of their most interesting passengers.



#### Animals on board

"*airBaltic* transports not only our dear pets, such as dogs and cats, but also zoo animals. They are usually transported in the cargo hold with the help of *airBaltic Cargo*. Penguins, seals, parrots, lynx, capybaras and frogs are all regular passengers on their way to the Riga Zoo. This past July we helped transport two tamanduas (lesser anteaters) from the Prague Zoo. And in August the Tallinn Zoo sent four marmoset monkeys to the St. Petersburg Zoo via *airBaltic Cargo*. Marmosets are one of the smallest monkeys in the world. Animals are very special clients, and we receive special instructions about how to care for each one before, during and after the flight. For example, seals need to be splashed with water before and after a flight so that they don't overheat."

*Toms Andersons, vice-president (VP) of airBaltic Cargo*



#### Leonardo da Vinci makes historic first flight

"In February 2010, after receiving approval from Italian authorities, a self-portrait by Leonardo da Vinci took a flight for the first time in history. The so-called Lucan portrait travelled on *airBaltic* from Rome via Riga to Tallinn and was accompanied by a group of scientists, art historians and officials. Professor Felice Festa, a researcher of the Da Vinci portrait, had verified the authenticity of the portrait using his festa2face® method only a year earlier. It is the only known self-portrait of Da Vinci as a young man. The portrait made its first flight on *airBaltic* via Riga to an exhibition in Estonia more than 500 years after Da Vinci sketched the designs of his flying machines."

*Jānis Vanags, vice-president of corporate communications*



#### The Dalai Lama's blessing

"That was the nicest call I've had, on a flight from Riga to Oslo. The Dalai Lama was flying in business class in May 2014, and I had the honour of being a flight attendant on that flight. He was a very charming passenger, displaying a childlike wonder about everything going on around him. For example, during the flight he walked past the kitchen, where a basket of freshly baked croissants and rolls stood on the counter. He leaned down to smell them, and with genuine joy he said, 'This smells delicious!' After the flight, when we shook hands and said goodbye, I felt I had received a really special blessing."

*Santa Stāmare, cabin crew*



#### Olympic medal flight

"*airBaltic* has the honour of transporting Latvia's best athletes to their most important competitions. We've flown Latvia's national football, basketball and hockey teams to championship games and many athletes to the Olympic Games as well. For example, in 2014 *airBaltic* operated a special flight from Riga to the Winter Olympics in Sochi with Latvian and Lithuanian athletes on board. The teams departed on a *Boeing 737* specially painted with the Olympic livery."

"Just as important when working with athletes and sports teams is planning the flight schedules to coincide with their practice and game or competition times. Regarding baggage, the 'heaviest' athletes are hockey players, with the average team hauling along 1.5 tonnes of baggage."

*Ilze Kokta, charter and block sales manager*

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### Almost a red carpet

"Last March, one of our flights was just a tiny bit more special than all the others – we had the honour of flying talented actor Ralph Fiennes to his next destination. The famous British actor, director and two-time Oscar nominee had been in Riga to dub his role for the movie *Two Women*. He plays Rakitin in the Latvian-Russian-French-British co-production, which is based on the Russian play *A Month in the Country* by Ivan Turgenev. While in Riga, Fiennes gave an exclusive interview with *airBaltic's* inflight magazine *Baltic Outlook*, and many people remember a very beautiful and personal comment from that interview: 'Rakitin could be played in many ways, I'm sure. You know I made this film *Invisible Woman*, where I was interested in the moment before two people kiss. The space between them before they.... I think that can be the most erotic and powerful thing – the tension between two people who have an attraction.' And you know, this month is the world premiere of Fiennes' debut as M – the director of the MI6 secret intelligence service – in the new James Bond movie *Spectre*."

*Egita Krastiņa, cabin crew*



### Magic flights

"On several flights in the summer of 2012 we delighted *airBaltic* passengers with shows by magicians. After takeoff, the flight attendants not only tended to the passengers' comfort, but they also introduced them to a magician, who then helped to keep them all in good spirits during the flight by demonstrating all kinds of magic tricks. We specially planned this fun entertainment for some of our longer flights to holiday destinations, when we usually have more families with children on board. We did it just to make the long flight more fun and entertaining for all our passengers, both big and little."

*Arta Lūse, senior cabin crew*



### Is the troll really lost?

"Lots of well-known musicians choose to fly with *airBaltic*, and the local Latvian pop group BrainStorm are particularly good friends of ours. They fly with us regularly and even wrote the song *Pilots Tims* about flying. But my funniest experience was with the Russian intellectual pop band Mumiy Troll. They really like Riga, often do concerts here, and in 2011 they even agreed to be photographed for the *airBaltic* calendar. Well, about 15 years ago, when I was working as an *airBaltic* check-in agent, it was my job to register the members of Mumiy Troll for their flight and get their boarding passes ready. Everybody had already boarded the plane, and I realised that we were still missing one passenger – Ilya Lagutenko, the leader of Mumiy Troll. I immediately took the microphone and made an announcement throughout the entire airport: 'Attention, please. The Honourable Mr. Mumiy Troll, who is flying to Moscow, please head to your gate. Boarding will close in two minutes.' My passenger arrived at the gate soon after, a big smile on his face. 'You made my day!' he said. But I was quite embarrassed when I realised what I had just announced to the whole airport.... Colleagues from neighbouring gates also called on their walkie talkies saying they were laughing so hard that they couldn't work!"

*Liene Kunderka, airport and sales project manager*



### The Presidents on board

"We are proud to service the state visits, carrying the President of Latvia and official Latvian delegations. And, as a truly Baltic airline, we are also always happy to welcome on board the Lithuanian and Estonian presidents. I have particularly fond memories of May 2007, when President Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga was on an *airBaltic* charter for an official visit to the Kingdom of Morocco, where she was very cordially welcomed by King Mohammed VI of Morocco. I was the senior flight attendant on that flight. Our President had very warm memories of Morocco, where she has lived in her early youth. During State visits – as in this case – the President receives state presents, that often include fragile and large-sized items, which are always carefully handled by our staff and safely brought to Latvia."

*Skaidrīte Bulmeistere, service training manager*



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# 20 YEARS AIRBALTIC

SINCE 1995

## 28 650 000 PASSENGERS

carried



44%

WOMEN



56%

MEN

## AVERAGE WEIGHT

of a passenger



## 1130 PEOPLE CURRENTLY WORKING AT AIRBALTIC

of them work from the very first day



NATIONALITIES

## OR ALMOST 15%

from all world's nations are represented at airBaltic

LATVIA / LITHUANIA / ESTONIA  
FINLAND / RUSSIA / SWITZERLAND  
UKRAINE / INDIA / NETHERLANDS  
CZECH REPUBLIC / PORTUGAL  
BELARUS / UZBEKISTAN / GERMANY / ITALY / FRANCE  
SPAIN / SWEDEN / UNITED KINGDOM / IRELAND  
NORWAY / HUNGARY / BELGIUM / ICELAND  
BULGARIA / DENMARK / SLOVAKIA / PAKISTAN

## OVER 10 760 000 MEALS

served on board



## MOST POPULAR SALMON FILET WITH RICE

## 534 500 FLIGHTS

or 455 492 327 km flown

11 366 x

around the globe



## FIRST FLIGHT

on October 1, 1995



STOCKHOLM

RIGA



## SHORTEST FLIGHT

TALLINN - HELSINKI  
101 KM



## LONGEST FLIGHT

3 MONTHS



6 HOURS

RIGA - ABU DHABI  
4369 KM



## MINI CARS SOLD ON BOARD



## CHECK AIRBALTIC WEBSITE

monthly (in average January – August 2015)



## AWARDS

- 2009/2010 Airline of the Year Gold Award by the European Regions Airline Association (ERA)
- 2010 Phoenix Award by Air Transport World magazine in recognition of operational excellence in product improvement
- 2012 The International Diamond Prize for Excellence in Quality by the European Society for Quality Research
- 2014 ranked the World's most punctual airline by OAG analysts

## 74 445 783 KG CARGO AND MAIL

carried since October 1, 1997 when airBaltic Cargo operations started - this corresponds to the weight of the Eiffel tower



## 3 MOST POPULAR DESTINATIONS

by number of passengers



## 7 TYPES OF AIRCRAFT

flown



The Bombardier Q400 NextGen was the first brand new aircraft introduced in the Baltic region

## MOST SOLD GOODS

on board are watches, perfumes, cosmetics



## 92 000 SMALL ANIMALS

(dogs, cats, rabbits, birds) carried in passenger cabin



## IN 2009 AIRBALTIC JOINED

and now has

## 127 000 FOLLOWERS



## BIGGEST AIRLINE IN THE BALTICS

Number of routes operated out of each country in 2015



## AVERAGE AGE OF THE FLEET

11

YEARS

## NUMBER OF ROUTES

1995 > 4



2015 > 70

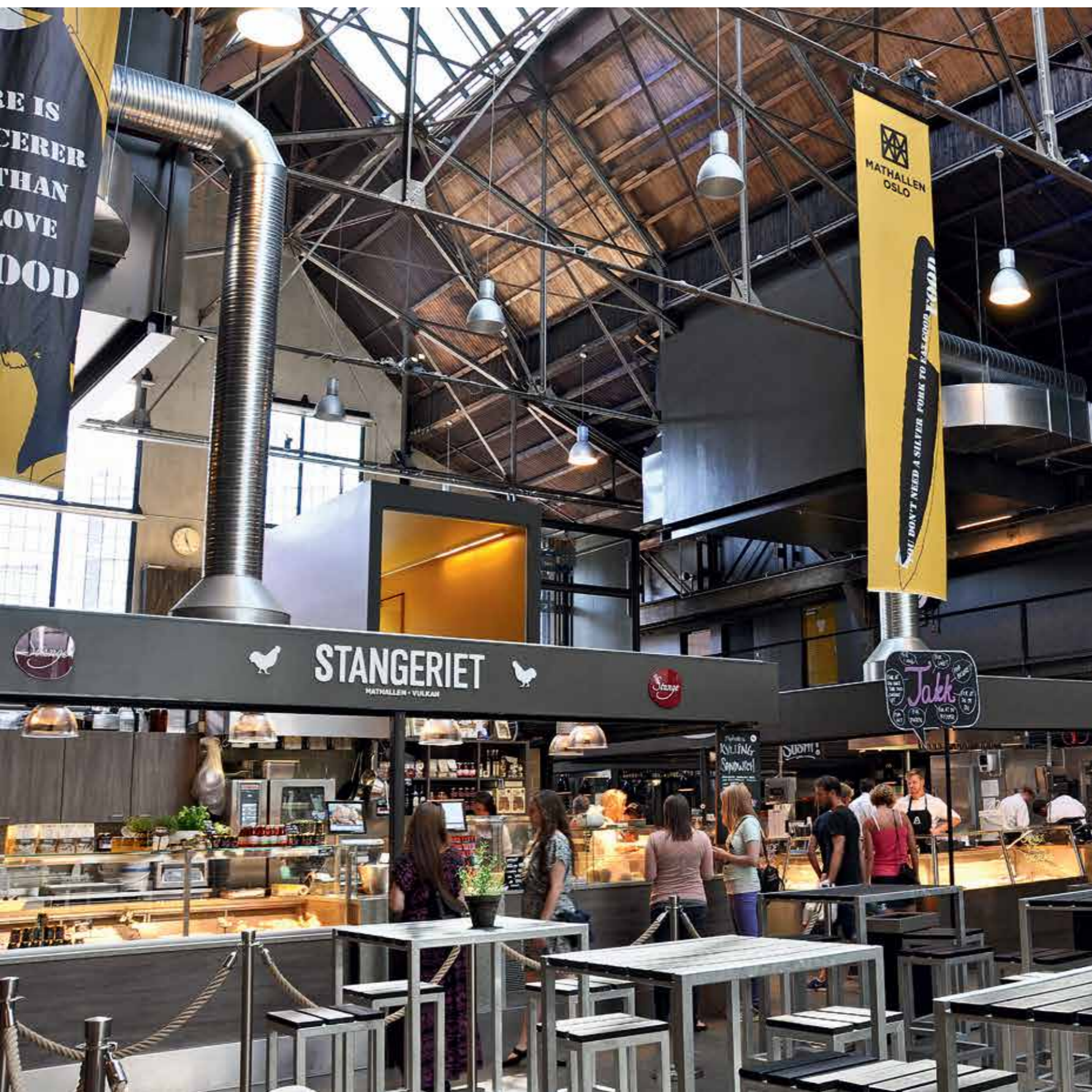
20 years in the air

airBaltic

# THE MARKET

## THE CENTRE OF CITY LIFE

Text by **UNA MEISTERE**  
Photos by **AINARS ĒRGLIS**



Go to the market or tavern to find out what's happening in a city – that old adage is still as true as ever. But, if in earlier times the market was the city's stomach, where both the gems and dregs of society, the aristocrats and plebes, all mingled between the stands and among the smells and sounds, then today, as ever more European capitals open contemporary market halls, the market has become an epicentre of lifestyle. Sometimes these new market halls even manage to change the ambience of a whole city district. *Baltic Outlook* recommends four such market halls – in Oslo, Amsterdam, Zurich and Vienna – that have become gastronomic and lifestyle destinations in and of themselves.



## Mathallen

In Norwegian, Mathallen means “food hall”, and it’s also the name of the first and only enclosed market hall in Oslo. It’s located in the Vulkan district, a former industrial part of the city that is now the stylish home to Oslo’s most creative educational institutions, hotels, restaurants, shops, cultural centres, offices and apartments. Vulkan got its name from the steel foundry that once operated here and produced such vast amounts of heat that the surrounding area is said to never have frozen in winter. The Mathallen building was constructed in 1908 and used for the manufacture of metal structures for bridges until the 1950s. The recent reconstruction preserved the building’s original form, only supplementing the old brown bricks and steel beams with modern glazing. It now houses more than 25 independent local producers, cafés, bars and restaurants. Everything you might wish for: from freshly baked bread, fruit, vegetables, wine and countless varieties of coffee beans to kitchen accessories and gourmet snacks. Here you’ll also find *Smelteverket* (one of Oslo’s longest bars) and *Frøya Sjømat*, which specialises in all kinds of seafood and is especially known for its oysters and scallops. The *French Bakery* sells baguettes made according to old, authentic French recipes and baking techniques. Mathallen even has a culinary academy (Kulinarisk Akademi) that offers courses in a wide variety of culinary themes. On an average day, Mathallen welcomes about 20,000 visitors and is definitely one of the most popular lunch spots in Oslo. Tasty and also quite friendly in terms of prices!



## Vulkanfisk

Definitely make a stop at *Vulkanfisk*, which sells fresh fish and seafood to take away or enjoy right on the spot at the small tables in the market hall. *Vulkanfisk* prepares wonderful fried calamari, tuna carpaccio

and even sushi. The restaurant collaborates with Norway’s fishermen, who guarantee that you’ll always find the freshest cod, monkfish and halibut at *Vulkanfisk*.

📍 [vulkanfisk.no](http://vulkanfisk.no)

## Scandic Vulkan

Right across from Mathallen is one of the currently most stylish and reasonably priced accommodations in Oslo – the *Scandic Vulkan* hotel. Its lobby resembles a successful young artist’s loft with colourful, eclectic furniture and lots of catchy design details. And the hotel also serves as a platform for new talent, displaying in its public spaces the work of students from nearby art and design schools. The art theme also extends to graffiti in the hallways and on room doors.

Maridalsveien 13  
📍 [scandichotels.com/no](http://scandichotels.com/no)



a passion  
to dream

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ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION MAY HAVE ADVERSE EFFECTS



## AMSTERDAM

### Foodhallen

*Foodhallen* is located in the western part of Amsterdam in a former tram depot, a symbol of the city's industrial era. Under the vaulted metal ceiling of the gigantic red-brick hangar you'll also find a movie theatre (*Filmhallen*), several design studios, a library/reading room and the ubiquitous bicycle repair shop as well as more than 20 other eateries serving a wide variety of cuisines. Historically, Amsterdam's culinary culture has been greatly influenced by the country's colonial past, so it's only natural that the eateries at *Foodhallen* also reflect cuisines from around the world, from the pizza at *Pink Flamingo* and Vietnamese foods at *Viêt View* to the Spanish-inspired *Jabugo*, sushi at *Meneer Temaki*, Turkish manti and Swiss raclette. *Foodhallen* is usually full of people at lunch and dinner time. And why not – the prices are friendly, the food is good, and there are no white tablecloths or stiff welcomes. Seating is at simple, long wooden tables (both small and large) – hipsters, families with young children, romantic couples and office workers in suits – all together, shoulder to shoulder.

Bellamyplein 51  
 ① dehallen-amsterdam.nl



### The Butcher

Gourmet burgers are the newest fad in gastronomy, and *The Butcher* has quickly carved out its place in this niche market. The restaurant's first and most famous location is in Amsterdam's famous Albert Cuyp Market, and it recently opened a second location in *Foodhallen*. Unless you're a diehard vegetarian, *The Butcher* is definitely worth a visit. Juicy and yummy – exactly the way an authentic burger should be!



### Hotel de Hallen

Just a few steps from the hustle and bustle of the market, *Hotel de Hallen* gives its guests a certain measure of privacy. The rough brick walls, high ceilings and industrial steel details are all original elements that have been preserved in the reconstruction process of this historical depot. Combined with vintage and contemporary furniture, they provide a slightly elusive feeling of a crossroads of style and experience. A carefully selected collection of contemporary art adds additional vibrancy to the robust atmosphere. With 55 rooms, *Hotel de Hallen* is the newest link in the Dutch boutique hotel and apartment chain *Vondel Hotels*.

Bellamyplein 47, 1053 AT Amsterdam  
 ① hoteldehallen.com

### Meat West

A little more formal than most of *Foodhallen's* eateries, *Meat West* is nevertheless a stylish place to eat. And with a separate entrance at the far end of the market hall, it is also a step removed from the regular marketplace frenzy. Attractive design elements include the special cupboard ensuring the perfect temperature and conditions for curing meat, and the open kitchen, where everything is grilled and cooked. A popular feature on the menu is the 160-gram Lady Steak.

De Hallen, Bellamyplein 51  
 ① meatwest.nl



## BoConcept®

### BoConcept is proud to announce its 2016 design catalogue.

'This is our response to the challenge of making a catalogue relevant in the digital age. It's a way for our customers to take a break from their hectic always-connected lives, immerse themselves in BoConcept and find inspiration for their own homes, says BoConcept Visual Manager Jette Christensen.



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Nīcgales iela 18a, Rīga, Latvia / [www.kate.lv](http://www.kate.lv)

## VIENNA



### Karmelitermarkt

Karmelitermarkt is not your classic market hall. Instead, it's a legend of its era that has recently managed to set in motion a whole district's gastronomy scene. Karmelitermarkt is one of Vienna's oldest markets, having occupied this site since 1671. It is located across from the elegant city centre in the 2nd District, also called the Carmelite Quarter, which has historically been home to Vienna's Jewish community and remains so to this day. But Karmelitermarkt feels more like a small village instead of an urban market. The simple market stalls also serve as eateries, and from the outside you'd never be able to tell that some of the eateries are true oases for gourmands. Some of the most popular are *Kaas am Markt* (Karmelitermarkt 33), which sells produce from local farms and prepares great lunches, and *Zimmer 37* (Karmelitermarkt 37-39), a small but charming eatery for those who appreciate healthy food. The latter adheres to the five-element theory of foods adopted from traditional Chinese medicine which encompasses the five elements: fire, water, earth, metal and wood. Thus, *Zimmer 37* serves a balance between yin (cold) and yang (hot) foods and prepares healthy, nutritious meals according to the seasons. For example, now in the autumn, which is associated with metal, the foods we eat should boost our immune systems and help prepare our bodies for winter.



### Pizza Mari

Located just a few minutes' walk from Karmelitermarkt, *Pizza Mari* is probably the most authentic pizzeria in all of Vienna. The owner, Maria, hails from Naples and brought all of the best Neapolitan pizza recipes with her when she moved to Vienna. What makes *Pizza Mari* even more special is that it serves only pizzas. No other gastronomic temptations to worry about here! Leopoldgasse 23A  
① pizzamari.at

### Skopik & Lohn

Also near Karmelitermarkt is a restaurant with the most talked-about ceiling design in all of Vienna. The expressive black-and-white network of lines created by Austrian artist Otto Zitko, called *Wildes Gekrakel* ("wild scribbling"), has an almost hypnotic effect; it looks like an algorithm of the unconscious suddenly made visible and hovering above the guests' heads. Or madness breaking out into the open. The crazy ceiling contrasts sharply with the otherwise quite modest and unassuming interior featuring lots of wood and reminiscences of the 1940s. The cuisine at *Skopik & Lohn* is also creatively experimental, serving French and Mediterranean cuisine with a distinct Austrian accent. It's no surprise, then, that this undeniably lively combination has made the restaurant a favourite hangout for Vienna's creative types. Leopoldgasse 17

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ZURICH



Markthalle

The *Markthalle*, which opened in 2010, is the first enclosed market hall in Zurich. In addition, it's located in the currently stylish 5th District northwest of the city centre, on one of Europe's most unique shopping streets – the former railway viaduct now called simply Im Viadukt. The railway played a very important role in the growth of Zurich as a city. Originally, the rails were constructed on traditional embankments, but, as city planners realised the embankments impeded urban development, they were gradually replaced with viaducts in the late 19th century.

The Im Viadukt reconstruction project, led by the Swiss architecture firm *Em2N*, began in 2004 and won several prestigious architecture awards. The 500-metre-long market "street" is comprised of over 30 shops nestled in 36 stone arches.

The *Markthalle* stands at one end of Im Viadukt and brings together in one space the crème de la crème of Swiss delicacies. Each stall in the market has its own character, which makes shopping there even more interesting. For example, *Berg und Tal* (berg-tal.ch) only sells products made by small, local Swiss producers – everything in the shop is handmade and corresponds to slow-food principles. Mustard from a historical mustard mill, fine salamis, bread baked in a wood-burning oven and so on. *Braschler's Comestibles* (braschler.ch), on the other hand, sells fresh fish from Switzerland's lakes as well as exotic seafood. The shop, which has been in business for over 20 years, also runs an oyster bar popular with locals. Also check out the cheese experts at *Tritt* (tritt.ch), who sell both traditional cheeses and a variety of innovative, new cheeses made from cow, buffalo and goat milk. They specialise in cheeses from small producers operating in Switzerland and throughout Europe.

Südhang

If you've enjoyed a glass of wine in one of Zurich's many restaurants, then Südhang (sudhang.ch) may seem like paradise. The small shop sells high-quality, organic wines made by small and innovative wineries. No mainstream in this heaven for foodies. And really great prices to boot!



Fashionslave

This is the place for connoisseurs of fashion who prefer small, unusual niche brands to loud and popular names. The small shop is located only a few steps from the Markthalle and – featuring labels such as Damir Doma and Thom Krom – caters to creative types who like an inconspicuous but refined style.



Viaduktstrasse 29

Im Viadukt symbolically divides "old" Zurich from "new" Zurich. On one side of the viaduct lies a rough, industrial landscape covered in graffiti, while the other side features a park with playgrounds and a relaxed weekend atmosphere. Trams 4 and 13 stop very near the entrance to Im Viadukt, but the shopping district can be reached just as easily by bicycle or on foot. **BO**

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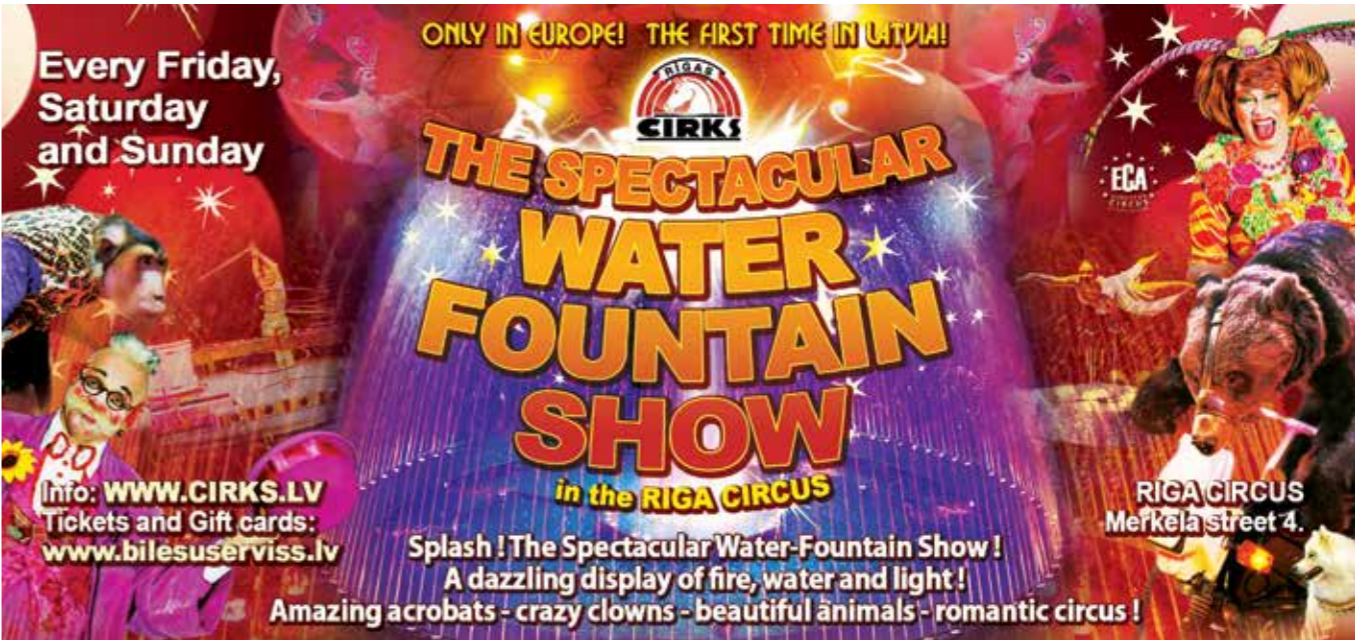
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- Accounting & Finance
- Law & Tax
- Agri Estate

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- Info: Investment portfolio of agriculture land/forest | Total area: 1127.70 ha**  
**Description:** Agricultural and forest land for sale in N part of Latvia. Total area of agriculture land: 675.25 ha; total area of forest land: 369.90 ha. Agricultural land is currently rented out. Possibility to do forestry activities
- Info: OPERATING FARM | Total area: 1639 ha | ID: 33**  
**Description:** Large-scale operating crop farm. Fully equipped machinery park, storage facilities (silos), drying facilities, machinery storage facilities. Located in western part of Latvia.
- Info: AGRICULTURAL LAND | Total area: 647 ha | ID: 5674**  
**Description:** Agricultural land for sale in eastern part of Latvia. Object includes a place with the necessary infrastructure for the development of a new farm base.

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AUSTRIA

Flight No	Days	Departure	Arrival
<b>Riga – Vienna</b>			
BT 431	1-3456-	07:40	09:05
BT 433	12345-7	16:30	17:55
<b>Tallinn – Vienna</b>			
BT 205	1-3-5--	07:10	08:30
<b>Riga – Salzburg</b>			
BT 438	-----6-	12:25	13:35
Flight No	Days	Departure	Arrival
<b>Vienna – Riga</b>			
BT 432	1-3456-	09:45	13:05
BT 434	12345-7	19:00	22:20
<b>Vienna – Tallinn</b>			
BT 206	1-3-5--	09:55	13:05
<b>Salzburg - Riga</b>			
BT 438	-----6-	14:20	17:25



**Resort altitude:** 1000 m  
**Highest lift:** 2100 m  
**Total piste length:** 270 km  
Black 6 | Red 27 | Blue 31  
**Longest run:** 7 km  
**Snow parks:** 2  
**Ski lifts:** 70  
**Lift pass prices:**  
day EUR 51.00 |  
EUR 25.50 (children);  
week (6 days) EUR 145.00 |  
EUR 122.50 (children)  
**Resorts accepting lift pass:**  
Saalbach Hinterglemm  
**Season:**  
November 28 – April 10

**Saalbach Hinterglemm** Visitors should make sure that they are well-rested before they come to the Saalbach-Hinterglemm region of Austria. Colourfully named the Ski Circus, the region combines the slopes of one of the largest linked ski areas in Austria with the liveliest of après-ski activities. Saalbach is big and full of life, while Hinterglemm is more old- fashioned and down to earth. Both have great charm, a safe, car-free centre, plenty of après-ski events and all the traditional Austrian attractions.

**Kitzbühel** This is where it all began in Austria, and Kitzbühel is a dream destination for skiers. The small town in the Tyrolean Alps is home to the Streif Piste: surely the most iconic

2.6 km of snow on the planet. Since 1931, the brutally steep racecourse with its 80-metre jumps, tight corners and ferocious compressions has hosted the annual Hahnenkammrennen ski races,

which are among the most famous in the world. The Hahnenkamm slope is the most demanding on the World Cup downhill circuit and one that every accomplished skier wants to tackle.



**Resort altitude:** 800 m  
**Highest lift:** 2000 m  
**Total piste length:** 170 km  
Black 13 | Red 26 | Blue 21  
**Longest run:** 6 km  
**Snow parks:** 2  
**Ski lifts:** 51  
**Lift pass prices:**  
day EUR 51.00 |  
EUR 25 (children);  
week (6 days) EUR 248.00 |  
EUR 124 (children)  
**Resorts accepting lift pass:**  
Kitzbühel  
**Season:**  
December 14 – April 7

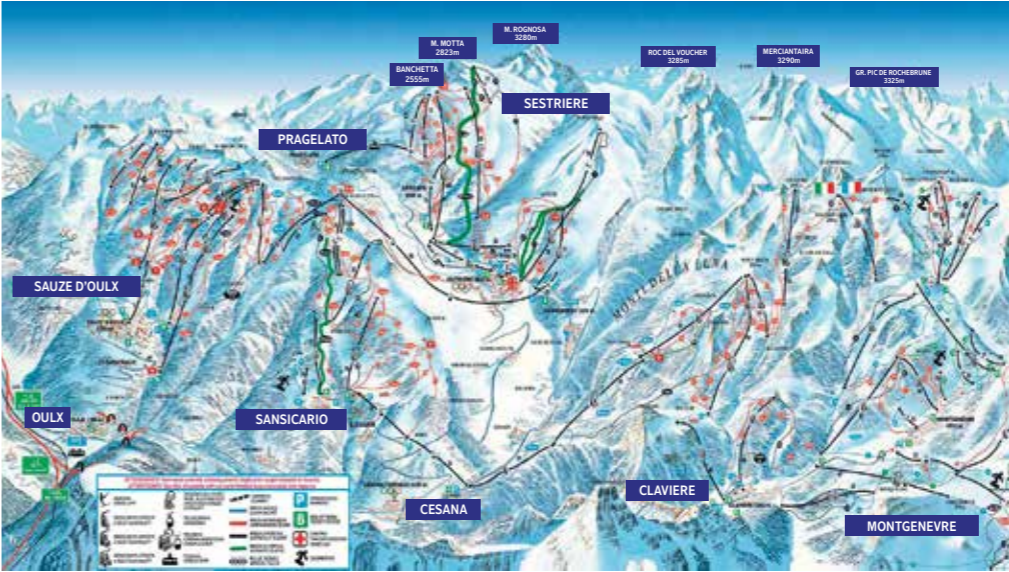
ITALY

**Sestriere** Sestriere is the highest ski resort in the extensive Via Lattea (Milky Way) linked ski area, boasting an impressive Alpine winter sports history as one of the world’s first purpose-built ski resorts. A good choice for beginners and intermediates. Sestriere is also one of the few resorts where it is possible to ski at night on a floodlit run. During the

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summer months, it is a famous starting and arrival point in the *Tour de France* and the *Giro d'Italia* cycling races. Notably, it was the scene of a definitive moment in cyclist Lance Armstrong’s now tarnished career. It regularly hosts FIS Alpine Ski World Cup events, and it was a main venue during the 2006 Winter Olympic Games.

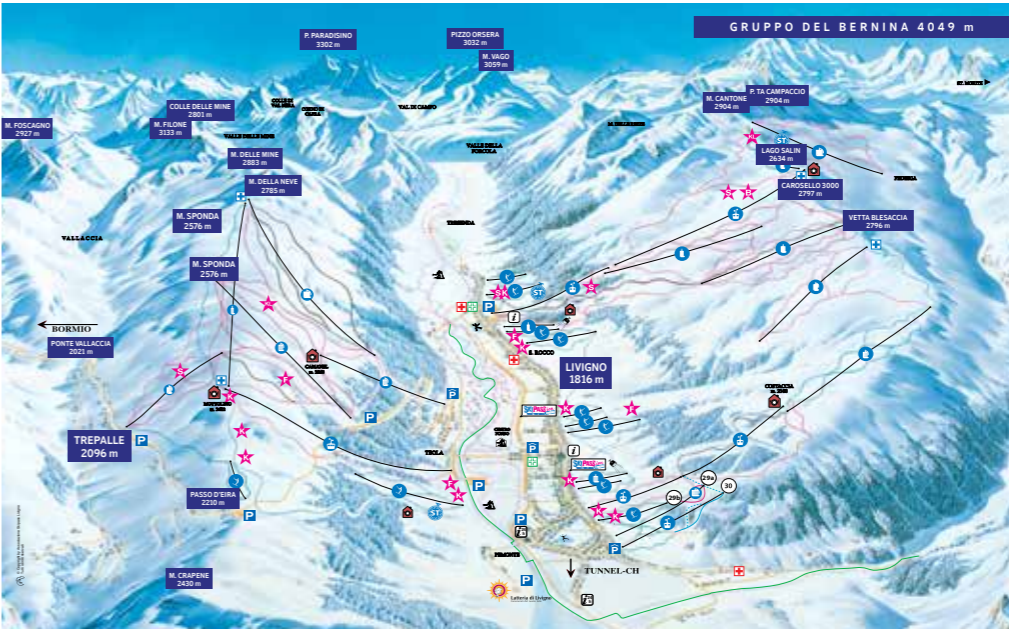


**Resort altitude:** 2035 m  
**Highest lift:** 2823 m  
**Total piste length:** 200 km  
Black 42 | Red 118 | Blue 54 | Green 7  
**Longest run:** 5 km  
**Snow parks:** 1  
**Ski lifts:** 92  
**Lift pass prices:**  
day EUR 36.00 |  
EUR 5.00 (children);  
week (6 days) EUR 155.00 |  
EUR 25.00 (children)  
**Resorts accepting lift pass:**  
Milky Way ski resorts of Clavière, Sansicario, Sauze d’Oulx and Montgenèvre  
**Season:**  
November 29 – April 12

**Livigno** Families and beginners can enjoy gentle slopes and fun areas suited for acquiring basic techniques and for learning by

playing. Furthermore, Livigno has a special tax status that dates back to Napoleonic times. There’s no VAT, which means that drinks, fuel

and consumer goods are among the cheapest in Europe. Apparently, there is even a Latvian-run hotel that serves Latvian cuisine.



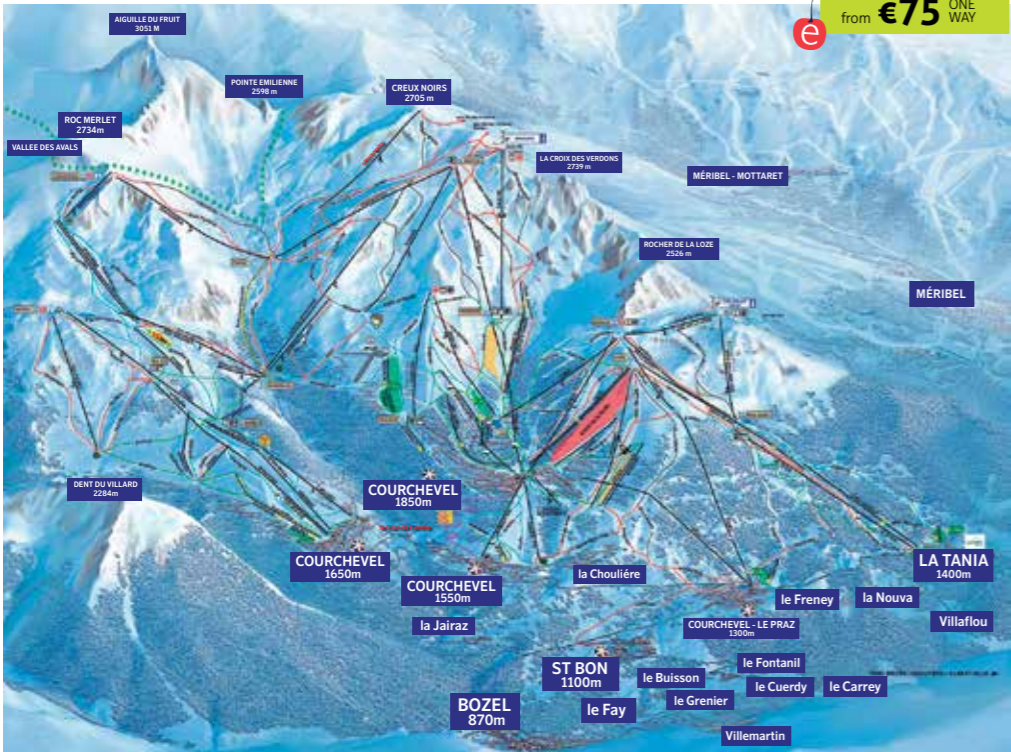
**Resort altitude:** 1816 m  
**Highest lift:** 2800 m  
**Total piste length:** 110 km  
Black 13 | Red 37 | Blue 29  
**Longest run:** 4 km  
**Snow parks:** 10  
**Ski lifts:** 31  
**Lift pass prices:**  
day EUR 40.00 |  
EUR 34 (children);  
week (6 days) EUR 190.00 |  
EUR 133.50 (children)  
**Resorts accepting lift pass:**  
other Alta Valtellina ski resorts of Bormio and Santa Caterina.  
**Season:**  
December 18 – April 09

FRANCE

**Courchevel** Considered the most glamorous and celebrity-filled ski resort in the world, Courchevel offers breathtaking views of Mont

Blanc. If the first thing that you think about when you hear 'Courchevel' is skiing, then the second thing should be gastronomy, as Courchevel

boasts many *Michelin*-starred restaurants and is a gourmet ski destination.



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**Meribel** There are plenty of reasons to love Méribel aside from its chalet-style architecture, wooded surroundings and friendly, village atmosphere. The prime

reason is its central position within France's huge Trois Vallées ski area. The Olympic Centre built for the 1992 Winter Olympics is also open daily, offering a variety

of non-ski activities for the whole family. It's no secret that avid skiers Prince William and Kate Middleton have also checked in for a family vacation at Trois Vallées!



Flight No	Days	Departure	Arrival
<b>Riga – Paris</b>			
BT 691	123456-	07:30	09:25
BT 693	1--45-7	15:30	17:25
<b>Tallinn – Paris</b>			
BT 689	-2-4-67	07:05	09:05
<b>Vilnius – Paris</b>			
BT 701	-2-4--7	15:25	17:10
Flight No	Days	Departure	Arrival
<b>Paris – Riga</b>			
BT 692	123456-	10:10	13:55
BT 694	1--45-7	18:30	22:15
<b>Paris – Tallinn</b>			
BT 690	-2-4--7	18:50	22:45
<b>Paris – Vilnius</b>			
BT 702	-2-4--7	10:10	13:45

**Resort altitude:** 1850 m  
**Highest lift:** 3230 m  
**Total piste length:** 600 km  
Black 10 | Red 42 | Blue 40 | Green 27  
**Longest run:** 7 km  
**Snow parks:** 2  
**Total Lifts:** 20  
**Lift pass prices:** day EUR 50.00 | EUR 40.00 (children); week (6 days)  
**Resorts accepting lift pass:** Three Valleys ski resorts of La Tania, Les Menuires, Méribel, Saint Martin de Belleville and Val Thorens  
**Season:** December 19 – April 16

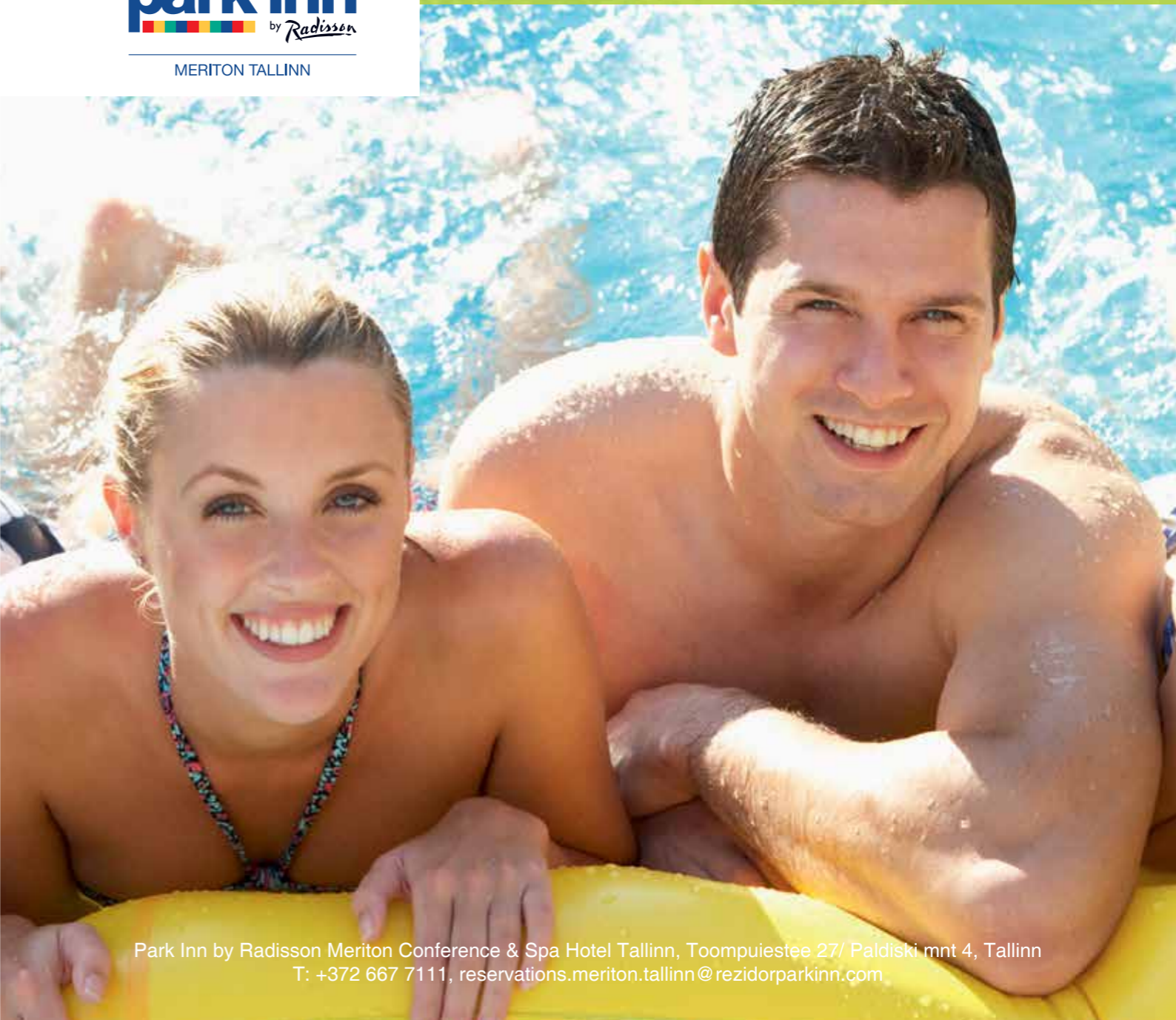
**Resort altitude:** 1450 m  
**Highest lift:** 3200 m  
**Total piste length:** 600 km  
Black 9 | Red 24 | Blue 34 | Green 10  
**Longest run:** 5 km  
**Snow parks:** 2  
**Total Lifts:** 18  
**Lift pass prices:** day EUR 46.40 | EUR 37.30 (children); week (6 days) EUR 226.40 | EUR 182.40 (children)  
**Resorts accepting lift pass:** Three Valleys ski resorts of Courchevel, La Tania, Les Menuires, Saint Martin de Belleville and Val Thorens  
**Season:** December 5 – April 17

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GEORGIA

**Gudauri** Gudauri is a growing ski resort, enchanting visitors with a wealth of opportunities for an active holiday in the mountains, unparalleled views, amazing colours, a festive atmosphere and a warm welcome for its guests. Situated on a south-facing plateau of the Greater Caucasus Mountain Range, its skiable area enjoys maximum exposure to the sun, which makes Gudauri a magnificent year-round tourist destination. Georgian hospitality is another reason why you should consider Gudauri for your next ski trip.

**Resort altitude:** 2196 m  
**Highest lift:** 3250 m  
**Total piste length:** 57 km  
Black 10 km | Red 25 km | Blue 15 km  
**Longest run:** 7 km  
**Snow parks:** 1  
**Ski lifts:** 9  
**Lift pass prices:** day EUR 13.00 | EUR 9.00 (children); week (6 days) EUR 70.00 | EUR 47.00 (children)  
**Resorts accepting lift pass:** Gudauri  
**Season:** November 28 – April 17

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Flight No	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	Days	Departure	Arrival
<b>Riga – Tbilisi</b>				<b>Tbilisi – Riga</b>			
BT 722	----5-7	23:05	04:35+1	BT 723	1----6-	05:20	06:55



GERMANY

Garmisch-Partenkirchen

The two villages of Garmisch and Partenkirchen were merged into one when Germany hosted the Winter Olympic Games in 1936. However, even though they have been officially unified for nearly 80 years, unofficially they still compete with each other,

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Flight No	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	Days	Departure	Arrival
<b>Riga – Munich</b>				<b>Munich – Riga</b>			
BT 221	12-45--	07:25	09:05	BT 222	12-45--	09:40	13:10
BT 225	----6-	12:10	13:50	BT 226	----6-	14:25	17:55
BT 223	1-345-7	16:30	18:10	BT 224	1-345-7	18:50	22:20

sporting two of practically everything: two fire stations, two schools and so on. Partenkirchen is cute and cosy, with narrow streets and a centre filled with painted houses, while Garmisch's

more organised grid of streets is lined with new concrete buildings and upscale shopping stores. This summer, Garmisch-Partenkirchen also hosted the BMW Mottorad days.



**Resort altitude:** 720 m  
**Highest lift:** 2830 m  
**Total piste length:** 62 km  
Black 4 | Red 25 | Blue 10 | Green 3  
**Longest run:** 4 km  
**Snow parks:** 1  
**Ski lifts:** 33  
**Lift pass prices:** day EUR 39.50 | EUR 23.00 (children); week (6 days) N/A | N/A (children)  
**Resorts accepting lift pass:** Garmisch-Partenkirchen  
**Season:** December 12 – April 3

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## SWITZERLAND

**Davos** Davos prides itself on keeping good company. Alongside resorts such as Zermatt, St. Moritz, St. Anton and Kitzbühel, Davos is a member of *The Best of the Alps* association of 12 classic Alpine resorts. The

nearby resort of Klosters has long been a favourite haunt of Prince Charles and sometimes his sons as well. Hence, the main cable car that takes skiers to the top of Gotschnagrat is called the *Prince of Wales*.

Flight No	Days	Departure	Arrival
<b><u>Riga – Zurich</u></b>			
BT 641	1-3-567	12:10	13:40

Flight No	Days	Departure	Arrival
<b><u>Zurich – Riga</u></b>			
BT 642	1-3-567	14:15	17:45

**Resort altitude:** 1560 m  
**Highest lift:** 3146 m  
**Total piste length:** 320 km  
 Black 12 | Red 39 | Blue 31  
**Longest run:** 12 km

**Snow parks:** 3  
**Ski lifts:** 50  
**Lift pass prices:**  
day EUR 55.90 |  
EUR 22.20 (children);  
week (6 days)  
EUR 272.93 |  
EUR 109.34 (children)

**Resorts accepting lift pass:** Parsenn, Pisch, Jakobshorn, Rinerhorn, Madrisa and Gotschna  
**Season:**  
November 14 - April 19



**St. Moritz** St. Moritz is Switzerland's most famous exclusive winter resort. There are plenty of designer stores to keep

posh ladies busy after lunch, while other visitors come to watch the annual polo, horse racing and cricket competitions on

the town's frozen lake. You might even run into Ivana Trump!



**Resort altitude:** 1850 m  
**Highest lift:** 3300 m  
**Total piste length:** 350 km  
Black 9 | Red 61 | Blue 18  
**Longest run:** 10 km  
**Snow parks:** 2  
**Number of ski lifts:** 57  
**Lift pass prices:**  
day EUR 64.11 |  
EUR 19.73 (children);  
week (6 days)  
EUR 294.27 |  
EUR 100.28 (children)  
**Resorts accepting lift pass:**  
Corviglia, Corvatsch above  
neighbouring Silvaplana and the  
Diavolezza Glacier area  
**Season:**  
October 17 – May 22

Information from:

 [www.skiresort.info](http://www.skiresort.info) |  [www.skiingthealps.com](http://www.skiingthealps.com) |  [www.piste-maps.co.uk](http://www.piste-maps.co.uk) |  [www.ski-france.com](http://www.ski-france.com) |  [www.i2ski.com](http://www.i2ski.com) |  [www.vt.sk](http://www.vt.sk) |  [www.skiqermany.com](http://www.skiqermany.com)



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petrol engine or 1.7 and 2.0-litre diesels. The 1.7-litre diesel in the Tucson isn't particularly powerful but, on the open road, it doesn't feel much slower than the more expensive 2.0-litre diesel. It's also quieter and smoother, which people undertaking longer trips will appreciate. Most of the versions are available with 4WD.

The ride is impressive. Although the suspension felt a fraction too stiff on the bumps we encountered, the pay-off is solid body control, which means there is little roll in bends and that any road imperfections are quickly dealt with. While the Tucson is always predictable and safe in its handling, the shortage of steering feel is a bit disappointing, as there is no real connection between the driver and the road surface – although that is likely to be a side issue for most buyers.

### Should I buy one?

It is too early to say for sure, but it is clear that *Hyundai* has delivered on its promise of continuing its rapid gains against more established opposition, most notably in terms of cabin quality and technology and, to a lesser degree, dynamics. Most significantly, the Tucson has appeal well beyond the belts-and-braces attractions of decent quality at a decent price, which in itself marks another step forward for *Hyundai*. While not class-leading, the new *Hyundai Tucson* is worthy of closer inspection by anyone seeking a practical, cost-effective small SUV. **BO**

## First drive: Hyundai Tucson

The 2015 *Hyundai Tucson* is a replacement for the outgoing *Hyundai ix35*. It takes a new name (or at least re-adopts the name it had up until 2009) because *Hyundai* claims it represents such a step forward that it wanted to launch it without the baggage associated with the laudable, but not especially likeable, car that went before it.

Where the *ix35* stood out for being spacious, well priced and laden with standard kit, the Tucson is designed to add a level of lustre to the equation, from its more expressive styling to its more luxurious, tech-laden interior. Its engine combinations and gearboxes are also as frugal and refined as the best.

These are bold claims, but they are absolutely necessary if the Tucson is to compete with the class-leading *Nissan Qashqai* (a former *What Car?* Car of the Year) and newcomers to the class like the *Renault Kadjar*.

### What's it like inside?

The fit and finish of the cabin is first-rate, and the wide range of materials are well placed so that the harder, less appealing plastics are either out of sight or in areas where durability is of more concern than look and feel.

Getting comfortable is easy: the steering wheel adjusts for reach and rake, and the driver's seat – electrically controlled on our test car – has a wide range of adjustment. The cabin is also spacious, with enough room for five adults.

The *Hyundai Tucson* is sold with the choice of some high-level technology, including the kind that is more normally associated with premium cars. Both *Nissan* and *Ford* have made great strides in offering big-car technology on more mainstream models, and highlights of the

*Hyundai* range include heated and ventilated seats, a self-parking system and lane keeping assist. The sat-nav is also a significant improvement on the old system.

There are plenty of storage areas, and the boot space significantly exceeds that of the *Qashqai* with the seats up and is also greater than that of the *ix35*. Fold the seats down and you are presented with a large load bay, although the backrests don't lie flat and, in this guise, space is not quite up to the *Qashqai*'s.

### What's it like to drive?

Performance-wise it's brisk enough, especially given that the Tucson weighs more than two tonnes. The engine is eager and the gear shifts smooth and slick unless you're pushing on, when there is a tendency for the gearbox to hold revs for a fraction too long and change more abruptly.

Wind and road noise are extremely well suppressed, as are vibrations coming through the pedals. However, the refinement of the turbocharged 175hp 1.6-litre petrol engine mated to a seven-speed dual-clutch transmission and four-wheel drive is not, with noise levels becoming intrusive even around 2500rpm. It's worth noting, though, that this powertrain combination is unlikely to be anything other than a fringe seller. Alternatives are a naturally-aspirated 1.6-litre

#### QUICK FACTS:

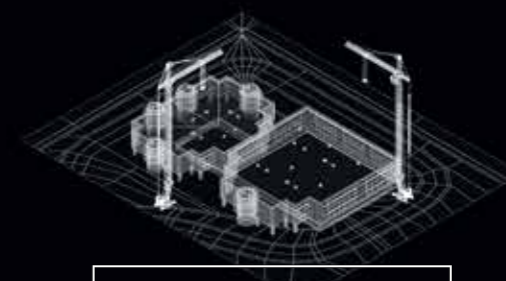
- 1** Prices of the new *Tucson* start at EUR 20,990 (Latvia).
- 2** The new sat-nav system is said to be three times faster than the outgoing one.
- 3** *Hyundai* hopes the *Tucson* name will help to make it a more global product.

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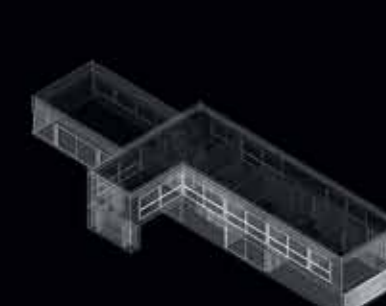
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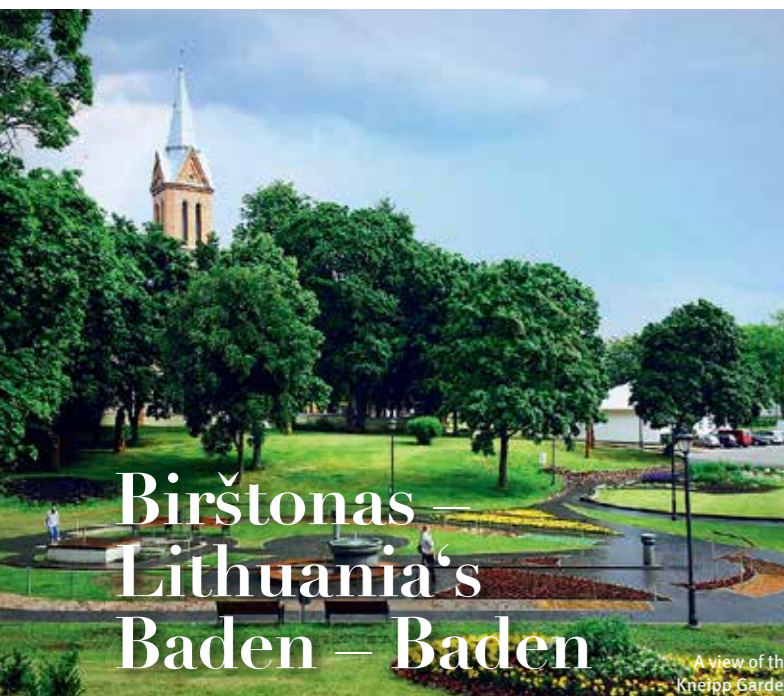
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## Birštonas — Lithuania's Baden — Baden

Birštonas is one of the country's oldest resort towns and is known for its natural mineral water, unique natural environment and peaceful ambience.

Just an hour's drive from Vilnius one finds an oasis of peace, harmony and incredible natural surroundings. Located along the Great Bends of the Nemunas River, Lithuania's main waterway, and surrounded by lush forests, Birštonas has been known as a place for rest and relaxation since 1846. Over the years Birštonas has helped to both improve the health of countless patients, and to recharge the batteries of even more visitors seeking rest and recreation.

An open mineral water evaporation tower with a mineral water fountain and a salt gallery has recently been built in the town's central park. As mineral water flows down the tower, it naturally evaporates due to the impact of sunshine and wind, resulting in a salty mist that feels like sea air. The healthy sea-like air enriched with minerals can then be inhaled inside the tower itself and within a 50-80 metre radius of it. Breathing air saturated with salts is not only beneficial for people with various respiratory diseases; it also has a positive effect on the skin, making it smoother, brighter and more elastic. The meditative quality of watching the rippling water also calms the nerves and improves one's sense of well-being.

The water evaporation tower is just one of many mineral water related attractions in Birštonas. The town's sanatorium also offers amber treatments, mud baths and other spa procedures. One can even taste the real non-carbonated mineral water in the sanatorium's pump rooms.

Most procedures offered in Birštonas are based on the so-called Kneipp philosophy, which Birštonas specialises in and is rapidly becoming a leader of such treatments in the region. Sebastian Kneipp was a German priest who in the 19th century perfected a unique approach to health and well-being based on five elements: water therapy, exercise therapy, plant therapy, balance therapy and nutrition. Wellness according to the Kneipp method strengthens

one's entire constitution, hardens the body and the soul, and bolsters the immune system.

Close proximity to nature makes Birštonas an attractive spot for active leisure. Cycling along the park lanes, kayaking in the nearby rivers, hiking in the surrounding forests – these are just a few activities on offer.

Art lovers will appreciate an intense calendar of cultural events in Birštonas. The town hosts the oldest jazz festival in Lithuania and many classical music concerts. The well-preserved wooden architecture of the town makes Birštonas an interesting destination not only for strolls in the parks and nature, but also around the town itself.

Those looking for a peaceful environment, balanced body and spirit relaxation will not regret choosing Birštonas as their destination. **BO**

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## Cosiness and elegance meet at *MUUSU* restaurant



Chef Kaspars Jansons

If you're looking for a warm, homey feel in Riga's Old Town, best head to the *MUUSU* restaurant (the name means "ours" in Latvian). *MUUSU* is not only a beautiful place for gourmands to enjoy a refined meal; it is also a wonderful experience for those seeking atmosphere. The feeling of being welcome is strengthened by the elegant wooden dressers, unpretentious linen accessories, exposed original brick walls and tasteful shades of grey in the warm and cosy interior. And, as in every welcoming home, *MUUSU* also has its keeper of the hearth – head chef Kaspars Jansons.

On Latvia's restaurant scene, Jansons' name required no further introduction – he is one of the leading chefs in Latvia and has been not only a participant and a winner of many international chef competitions, but also a judge for many international food competitions around the world. Jansons has also trained in-service at the three-Michelin-starred *Schwarzwaldstube* at the *Hotel Traube Tonbach* in Baiersbronn and the one-Michelin-starred *L'Atlantide*.

Jansons truly loves what he does. His eyes sparkle and his voice becomes more spirited when he talks about preparing foods, experimenting in the kitchen and wishing to please customers. "*MUUSU*'s clientele are educated gourmands who know what they want, know how food should taste and are not afraid of experimenting and trusting a chef's sense of creativity. We're always on the side of the client, because the client is the one who needs to leave the restaurant happy and satisfied. Our job is to read a person's wishes, so our waiters always try to get to know the client," explains the talented chef.

While *MUUSU* belongs to the same people who founded three other popular Riga restaurant chains – *Steiku Haoss*, *Ribs & Rock* and *KID\** – it carries a slightly different message than its kin, offering modern interpretations of classic European cuisine. Last year, *Live Riga* deemed *MUUSU* to be the Latvian capital's best new restaurant, preparing gastronomic treats to satisfy even the most discriminating gourmands.

Even the restaurant's location in the very heart of Riga is intentional. Jansons explains that *MUUSU*'s goal is to define its own place between the wide array of street food available in the Old Town. "It's important for visitors to Riga to be able to not only see the city but also taste it. And to taste it not via French fries but through the seasonal foods grown locally in Latvia," emphasises the chef. That's why the new autumn menu at *MUUSU* features a variety of seasonal vegetables, game and fish from the Baltic region. Here you'll find venison steak and fillet of seatrout and sturgeon, among others.

In addition to this autumn's new seasonal menu; Jansons is also continuing his tradition of hosting degustation dinners on the second Thursday of every month on the top floor of the restaurant. He calls these laid-back evenings a form of "get-to-know-the-chef", when he's finally allowed to come out of the

kitchen and spend time with the people who enjoy his creations. Jansons demonstrates his knowledge and experience by serving six-course meals at the degustation evenings. But if a romantic dinner for two is what you're looking for, then come to *MUUSU* on a Friday or Saturday evening, when the gentle sounds of live piano music waft through the entire restaurant.

*MUUSU* is also a great choice for a weekend breakfast, business lunch or special event with dear friends. Once discovered, clients keep returning to *MUUSU*. And that's exactly what the founders of the restaurant hoped for when they began the enterprise. *MUUSU* is the place for being together with loved ones and feeling the warmth of home. Definitely try the tasty bread baked on site, because that's what a homey feeling is really like – accompanied by the aroma and taste of freshly baked bread. **BO**



**muusu**  
RESTORĀNS

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Photo by **KASPARS GARDA**



RAIMONDS ZOMMERS – the chef at *Kaļķu Vārti*, named Latvian Chef of the Year several times, the winner of gold and silver medals at international competitions, also trains and supports young chefs.  
HARALDS SAUSS – winner of the Medallion for Excellence in cooking at WorldSkills São Paulo 2015.  
DINĀRS ZVIDRIŅŠ – silver medal winner at the Latvian Chef of the Year 2015 competition.  
KRISTIĀNA ŠTEINFELDE – gold medal winner at the Latvian Apprentice Chef of the Year 2015.

## A contemporary taste of Latvia

The *Kaļķu Vārti* restaurant in Old Riga is one of the best places for an unforgettable dining experience with exquisite modern Latvian cuisine.

The opinion of award-winning chef Raimonds Zommers is important to many foodies in Latvia. He runs his own TV cooking show and is regularly interviewed by glossy local magazines that consult him about the latest cooking trends. He serves sumptuous meals to visiting monarchs and other heads of state at Latvian presidential banquets. He is the author of *Zommers. Contemporary Latvian Cuisine* (*Zommers. Mūsdienu latviskā virtuve*) and a consulting expert at the prestigious *WorldSkills* and *EuroSkills* international competitions for young professional chefs. Yet there is one place where Zommers can be found almost every day of the week, despite his local popularity and busy schedule. For the past 15 years, he has been the head chef at *Kaļķu Vārti* – one of Riga's best-known and most highly rated restaurants.

Anyone who goes for a leisurely stroll through the streets of Old Riga is likely to come across the legendary restaurant. *Kaļķu Vārti* has become such a fixture of life in the vibrant Old Town that some local inhabitants and tourists even see it as a symbol of the city. Over the years, the restaurant has stood out with superb cuisine and outstanding service, along with the ability to change with the times and introduce bold innovations. This is thanks

to the staff at *Kaļķu Vārti*, which is known for its professionalism and eagerness to try new things. Zommers has managed to put together a team of some of the most accomplished chefs and confectioners from the Baltic region, all of whom have proven their skills at countless local and international competitions.

*Kaļķu Vārti*'s trademark feature is modern Latvian cuisine, to which Zommers is passionately devoted. He was one of the first chefs who, after familiarising himself with dishes from other nations, began to actively establish what he has called "a contemporary taste of Latvia". As a result, Zommers continues to surprise and delight even the most spoiled and discriminating gourmets with each new menu that he sets up for *Kaļķu Vārti*.

"My goal is to be different from other chefs; to see further and think more expansively than usual. I want my dishes to be based on local ingredients as much as possible and to work with foods that are not always widely used. At the same time, I never permit the level of quality to suffer in my continual experimental quests," says Zommers.

The chef admits that he also sees an educational mission in his work, which he fulfils by offering new and seemingly

unusual dishes to the patrons of *Kaļķu Vārti*. That is one reason why the restaurant's meals rarely repeat themselves in the regularly changing menu. The food on offer, which is based primarily on the highest-quality local ingredients – including those that are organically farmed and come from the forest – will suit the tastes of both refined food connoisseurs and those who are accustomed to classical fare.

This fall, the menu at *Kaļķu Vārti* features autumn foods such as mushrooms, hazelnuts, autumn raspberries, sea buckthorn, fava beans, barley and pike from Latvia's lakes and rivers. We recommend you try the baked pike fillet with homemade pike sausage, chanterelles, wild broccoli and cucumber-dill sauce. Dishes are constantly being perfected and added to the menu, new flavour combinations are being developed, and long-lost local foods are reintroduced with a new twist. **BO**



**kaļķu vārti**

Address: Kaļķu iela 11a, Riga  
Open: Mon.-Sun. 12:00-24:00  
Tel.: (+371) 67 224 576  
① kalkuvarti.lv

## Steak and fish restaurant



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Outlook **FOOD & DRINK**

## Restaurants, bars and cafés

**Culinary hotspots in Riga**  
A guide to the best restaurants, cafés and eateries

Text by **LIENE PĀLĒNA**  
Photos by  
**EDMUNDS BRENCIS, F64**



### SPĀRNOS

#### Brunch all day

Brunch has been "the new black" of the café and restaurant scene for quite some time. Leisurely conversations with friends, a wide variety of food and – just as importantly – all you can eat for one set price are just some of the reasons why late breakfasts at many culinary hotspots are not just for weekends anymore. Several locales now set richly laden tables for an unhurried brunch even on weekdays.

But there's one place in Riga that serves brunch all day long, seven days a week. Located on Tērbatas iela, one of the most beautiful streets in central Riga, *Spārnos* is

a family-run restaurant operated by a mother and her daughters. They've created a homey place in the midst of the hustle and bustle of the city where local hospitality merges with a Provençal-inspired interior. From nine in the morning until lunchtime they offer a classic breakfast buffet for a mere five euros: eggs Benedict, bacon, cheese, salads, fresh fruit and pancakes. From 12 until 4 p.m. they switch to a big lunch buffet for nine euros. The buffets seemed to be replenished regularly while we visited the restaurant, but, like any urban eatery, traffic gets heavier and the pans may empty sooner over the lunch hour, when business

people from nearby offices flock to *Spārnos*.

We northerners need to let go of the stereotype that late breakfasts and enjoying life is something relegated only to weekend mornings, and *Spārnos* is ready to help us. After all, there's a reason it's a popular place. Another bonus: if all-you-can-eat buffets aren't your cup of tea, the restaurant also offers a traditional menu with bouillabaisse, paella, a variety of pastas and even Black Angus steak.

Address: Tērbatas iela 28

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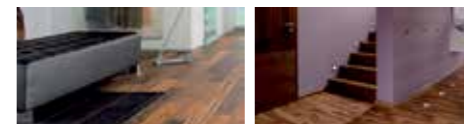
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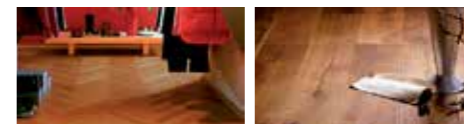


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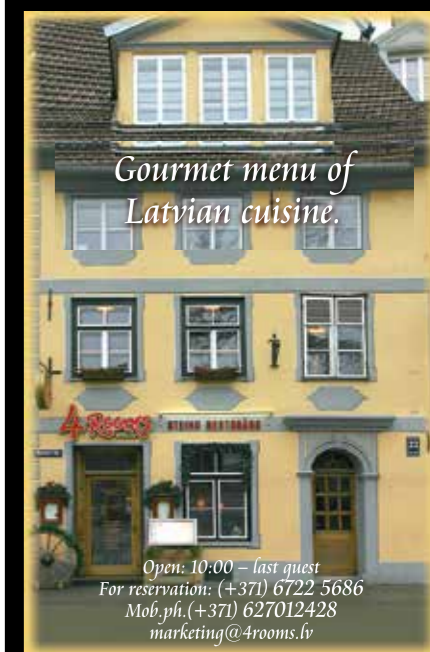


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## GARAGE

### A bar for enjoying life

Nestled in the elegant Berga Bazārs courtyard, *Garage* calls itself a democratic wine bar. But don't let the name fool you – *Garage* has ambition and lots to offer. Perfect for a business meeting as well as a date with a dear friend, this refined hotspot is the place to enjoy a meal and a glass of good wine. The menu changes every day depending on what has inspired the chef, resulting in truly unforgettable breakfasts, lunches and dinners. Just don't expect a Caesar salad with chicken.

That said, the menu does include a few favourite standards. The *Garage* specialises in tapas, and the bestseller is a chef's choice of five mini tapas. Other popular, mouth-watering items include truffle-oil-glazed portobello mushrooms and grilled scallops. I chose the celery root-parsnip

cream soup with prosciutto. Even though the portion sizes correspond to what one expects at a good restaurant and may not satisfy the very hungry, the flavour pairings are faultless. The atmosphere and interior at *Garage* are also impeccable. In fact, the interior, designed by prominent Latvian architect Zaiga Gaile, has won numerous awards. But why not do as a number of celebrities – including Kylie Minogue and Sting – have done, and take a break from the busy day, order a glass of wine, and enjoy the wine bar's charming terrace while the autumn sun is still warm.

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The legendary Latvian film The Devil's Servants, which was produced by the Riga Film studio in the 1970s, served as the inspiration for the restaurant. The Key to Riga was an essential part of this cinema classic and an exact replica now holds a place of honour in the restaurant.

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**The new flights are already available for booking at *airBaltic.com*, and one-way ticket prices start at EUR 89.**



Stockholm

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Those travelling often within the Baltics on business or study purposes can purchase the Baltic Pass, which consists of a set of 10 or 20 prepaid tickets at a fixed price with no set travel dates. The tickets can be used for travel from Riga to Tallinn, Vilnius and Palanga and back, and can be booked up to four hours prior to departure. More information at [www.airbaltic.com/baltic-pass](http://www.airbaltic.com/baltic-pass)

## 5/ Book now, pay later at airBaltic.com

If you book your flight at *airBaltic* website, you can split the payment into several instalments.

This is a very handy option in case you find a very good deal but know that the money will come only later. No worries – on the last step before finalising the booking, when you are asked how you would like to pay, choose the option to pay one part now and the rest later, without any interest rates.

If the ticket amount exceeds EUR 100, you can split it into two instalments at least one month before departure. If the amount is above EUR 200, you can pay in four parts at least three months before departure.

## 6/ New hand baggage allowance

*airBaltic* has introduced a new hand baggage allowance that freely allows passengers to take one handbag and one personal item on board. You can choose one personal item to carry on board with your hand baggage, such as a ladies' purse, laptop bag, camera bag, tax-free bag or umbrella. The maximum combined weight is 8 kg. If you are unsure about the size or weight of your hand luggage, please contact the baggage drop-off desk before going through security.





About the program

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

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

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

If you aren't a PINS program member yet

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



airBaltic PINS card



airBaltic PINS Executive card



airBaltic PINS VIP card



airBaltic PINS Young Pilot card

Let your kids collect PINS

Children are welcome to start collecting PINS as soon as they reach 2 years of age and are enrolled in the program by their parents or legal guardians. The youngest members are issued with a special airBaltic PINS Young Pilot card which allows children to collect PINS in the same way as adults.

airBaltic PINS Young Pilot card do not have an expiry date. They can be exchanged for a standard PINS card on request when a child reaches 12 years of age.

Young Pilots can exchange their PINS for the same rewards that are available to any PINS member. On behalf of the child, PINS can also be redeemed by a Young Pilot's parents or guardians.

From time to time, Young Pilots will be provided with special exclusive PINS offers.

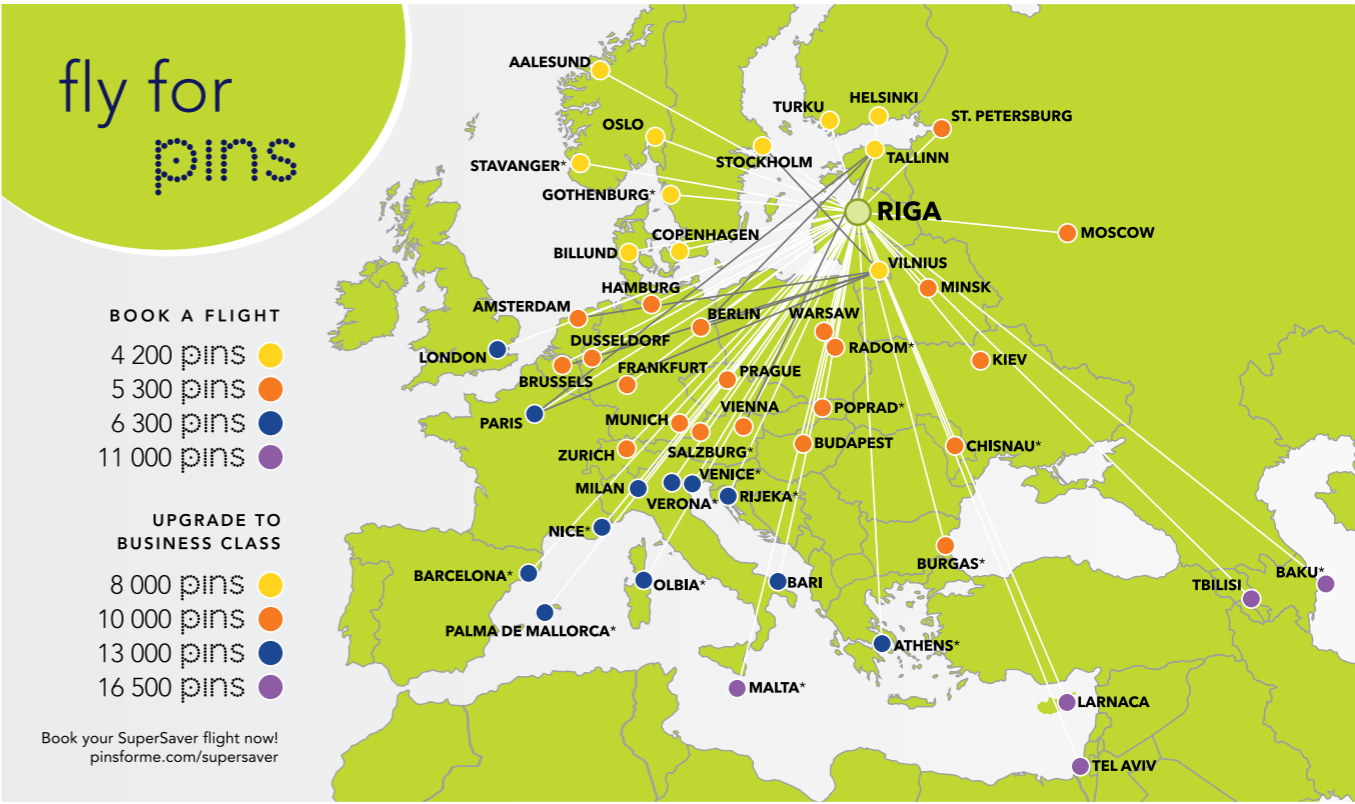


How to spend

Spend PINS on airBaltic flights, electronics, gift cards and other rewards from great selection of products available at the PINS Rewards Shop.

Spend on airBaltic:

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



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

NEW pins REWARDS EXPERIENCE

Check out the new pins Rewards Shop and take full advantage of a **greater selection** of products, **faster delivery, new design**, and a **user-friendly** shopping experience for all devices.

➤ Visit **spend.pinsforme.com** and choose rewards perfect for your upcoming trips.

**Cinema Tickets**

from **1 020 pins**

**Sony Headphones**

from **5 015 pins**

**Ajungilak Mammut SoftSkin Pillow**

**4 025 pins**

**Dolce & Gabbana The One**  
EDP, 30 ml

**6 125 pins**

**airBaltic flights**

from **4 200 pins**

**Solier Leather Laptop Case**

**7 265 pins**

**Philips Radio Watch**

**5 082 pins**

**GoPro Action Cameras**

from **23 935 pins**

**Lego Toys**

from **1 720 pins**

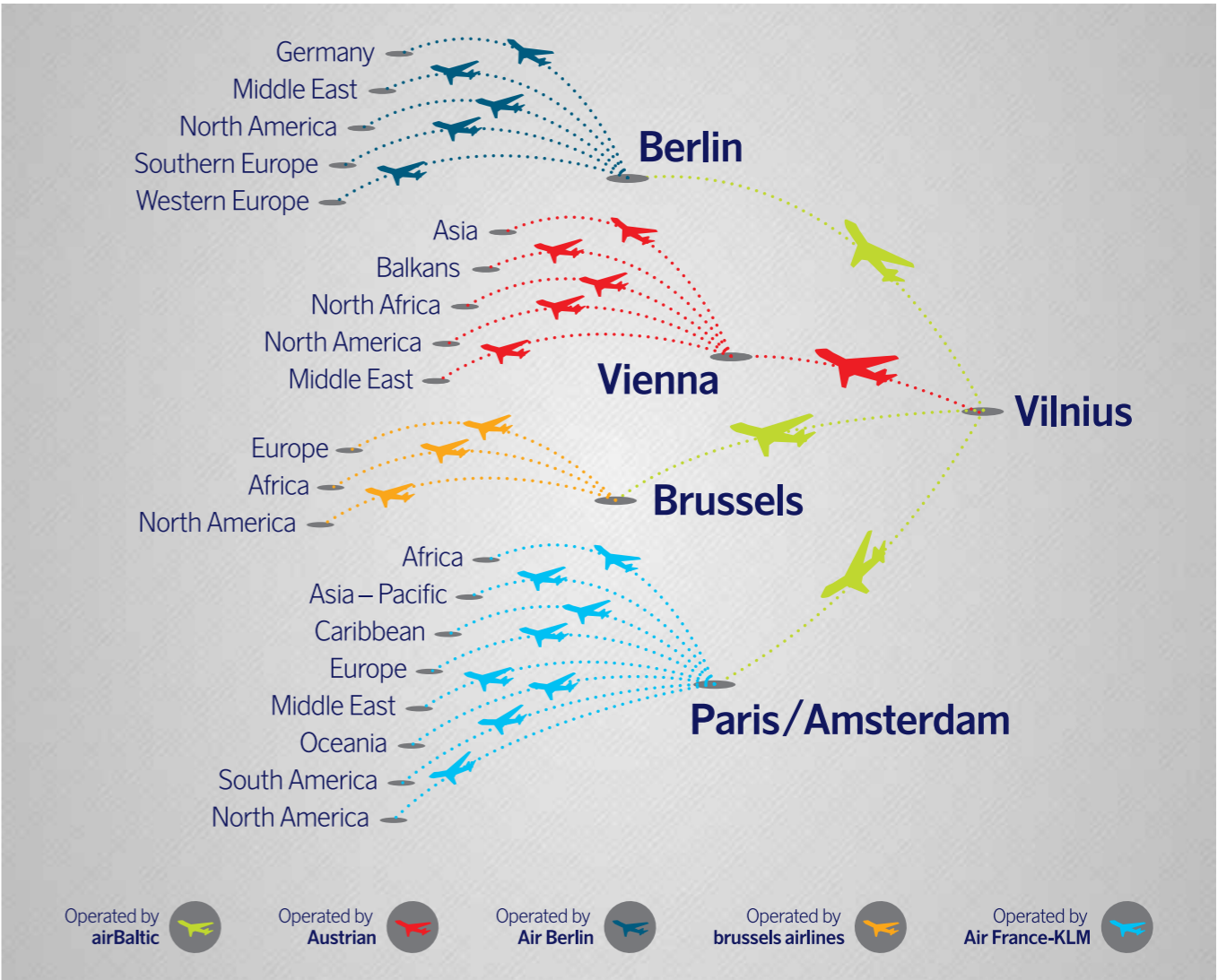
All prices include delivery to Latvia and are subject to change. The product range may change. Products are subject to availability.

Fly worldwide from Vilnius in cooperation with partner airlines

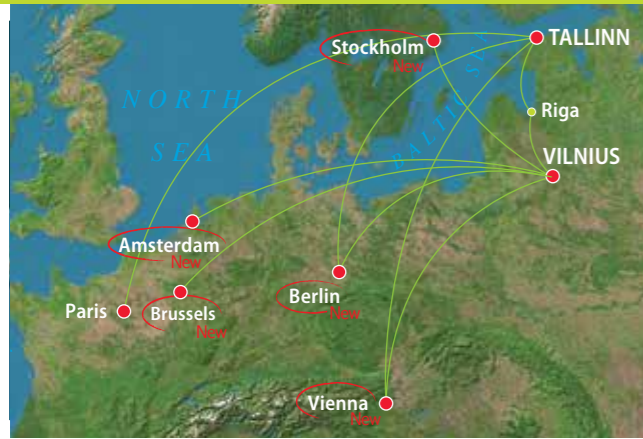
This September *airBaltic* opened several new direct flights from the Lithuanian capital to Stockholm, Berlin, Brussels, Paris, Amsterdam and Vienna. The flights to Paris and Amsterdam are operated in cooperation with codeshare partners *Air France* and *KLM*, which serves 316 destinations in 115 countries through their hubs at Paris-Charles de Gaulle and Amsterdam Schiphol airport.

The new flights to Berlin are served in cooperation with *Air Berlin*,

giving *airBaltic* passengers the chance to explore over 92 further destinations within the partner's network, while *Brussels Airlines* offer convenient connections to 76 destinations in Europe, Africa and USA through their hub in Brussels. The partner for the Vienna flights is *Austrian Airlines*, allowing our passengers to benefit further from great connections and prices to more than 130 worldwide destinations through Vienna.



*airBaltic* codeshare partners

Flights from RIGA						Flights to RIGA							
Flight No		From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No		From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival
AALBORG						AALBORG							
BT 149		RIX	AAL	-----6-	12:35	13:15	BT 150		AAL	RIX	-----7	15:00	17:30
ALESUND						ALESUND							
BT 175		RIX	AES	----5-7	13:20	14:45	BT 176		AES	RIX	----5-7	15:15	18:30
AMSTERDAM						AMSTERDAM							
BT 617		RIX	AMS	1-3-567	08:35	10:00	BT 618		AMS	RIX	1-3-567	11:30	14:45
BT 619		RIX	AMS	12345-7	17:10	18:35	BT 620		AMS	RIX	12345-7	19:55	23:10
ATHENS						ATHENS							
BT 611		RIX	ATH	-2---6-	15:30	18:50	BT 612		ATH	RIX	-2---6-	19:25	22:45
BARCELONA						BARCELONA							
BT 683		RIX	BCN	1--456-	14:40	17:25	BT 684		BCN	RIX	1--456-	18:10	22:50
BERLIN Tegel						BERLIN Tegel							
BT 211		RIX	TXL	123456-	07:50	08:45	BT 212		TXL	RIX	123456-	09:40	12:30
BT 217		RIX	TXL	12-4567	14:00	14:55	BT 218		TXL	RIX	12-4567	15:25	18:15
BT 213		RIX	TXL	12345-7	18:15	19:10	BT 214		TXL	RIX	12345-7	19:45	22:35
BILLUND						BILLUND							
BT 145		RIX	BLL	12345-7	23:45	00:45+1	BT 146		BLL	RIX	123456-	05:50	08:40
BRUSSELS						BRUSSELS							
BT 601		RIX	BRU	12345--	06:15	08:10	BT 602		BRU	RIX	12345--	08:45	12:30
BT 607		RIX	BRU	-----6-	12:25	14:20	BT 608		BRU	RIX	-----6-	14:50	18:35
BT 603		RIX	BRU	12345-7	16:35	18:30	BT 604		BRU	RIX	12345-7	19:05	22:50
BUDAPEST						BUDAPEST							
BT 491		RIX	BUD	1-3-5--	13:00	14:25	BT 492		BUD	RIX	1-3-5--	14:55	18:10
COPENHAGEN						COPENHAGEN							
BT 133		RIX	CPH	1234---	06:45	07:25	BT 134		CPH	RIX	1234---	08:05	10:40
BT 131		RIX	CPH	1234567	09:40	10:20	BT 132		CPH	RIX	1234567	10:55	13:30
BT 139		RIX	CPH	1234567	19:00	19:40	BT 140		CPH	RIX	1234567	20:15	22:50
BT 137		RIX	CPH	1234---	21:40	22:20	BT 138		CPH	RIX	1234---	23:00	01:35+1
DUSSELDORF						DUSSELDORF							
BT 235		RIX	DUS	1234567	12:30	14:10	BT 236		DUS	RIX	1234567	14:45	18:15
FRANKFURT						FRANKFURT							
BT 243		RIX	FRA	-----6-	07:50	09:35	BT 242		FRA	RIX	12345-7	15:00	18:35
BT 241		RIX	FRA	12345-7	12:40	14:25	BT 246		FRA	RIX	-----6-	19:35	23:10
HAMBURG						HAMBURG							
BT 251		RIX	HAM	12345--	07:50	08:55	BT 252		HAM	RIX	12345--	09:25	12:20
BT 255		RIX	HAM	-----6-	13:15	14:20	BT 256		HAM	RIX	-----6-	14:50	17:45
BT 253		RIX	HAM	1-345-7	17:55	19:00	BT 254		HAM	RIX	1-345-7	19:40	22:35
HELSINKI						HELSINKI							
BT 301		RIX	HEL	1234567	09:20	10:25	BT 326		HEL	RIX	1234567	06:00	06:55
BT 303		RIX	HEL	1234567	14:00	15:05	BT 302		HEL	RIX	1234567	10:55	11:55
BT 307		RIX	HEL	1234567	19:00	20:05	BT 304		HEL	RIX	1234567	15:35	16:35
BT 325		RIX	HEL	1234567	23:35	00:35+1	BT 308		HEL	RIX	1234567	21:30	22:30
KIEV Borispol						KIEV Borispol							
BT 400		RIX	KBP	123456-	09:15	11:05	BT 401		KBP	RIX	123456-	11:35	13:30
BT 404		RIX	KBP	12345-7	18:40	20:30	BT 405		KBP	RIX	12345-7	21:00	22:55
LARNACA						LARNACA							
BT 657		RIX	LCA	-----6-	23:55	03:45+1	BT 658		LCA	RIX	-----7	04:30	08:30
LONDON Gatwick						LONDON Gatwick							
BT 651		RIX	LGW	12-456-	08:35	09:25	BT 652		LGW	RIX	12-456-	10:10	14:55
BT 653		RIX	LGW	----45--	16:00	16:50	BT 654		LGW	RIX	----4--	17:35	22:20
BT 653		RIX	LGW	1-3---7	16:30	17:20	BT 654		LGW	RIX	----5--	17:55	22:40
MALTA						MALTA							
BT 739		RIX	MLA	-----7	23:30	02:10+1	BT 740		MLA	RIX	1-----	02:50	07:30
MILAN Malpensa						MILAN Malpensa							
BT 629		RIX	MXP	1-3-5--	12:20	14:05	BT 630		MXP	RIX	1-3-5--	14:45	18:25
BT 629		RIX	MXP	-----7	17:00	18:45	BT 630		MXP	RIX	-----7	19:25	23:05
MINSK						MINSK							
BT 412		RIX	MSQ	1-3---7	13:55	15:05	BT 413		MSQ	RIX	1-3---7	15:45	16:55
MOSCOW Sheremetyevo						MOSCOW Sheremetyevo							
BT 424		RIX	SVO	123456-	07:55	09:35	BT 425		SVO	RIX	123456-	10:25	12:10
BT 422		RIX	SVO	12345-7	18:45	20:25	BT 423		SVO	RIX	12345-7	21:10	22:55
MOSCOW Vnukovo						MOSCOW Vnukovo							
BT 416		RIX	VKO	1--5-7	23:55	01:40+1	BT 417		VKO	RIX	12--6-	04:45	06:40
MUNICH						MUNICH							
BT 221		RIX	MUC	123456-	07:20	09:00	BT 222		MUC	RIX	123456-	09:35	13:05
BT 223		RIX	MUC	1-345-7	17:20	19:00	BT 224		MUC	RIX	1-345-7	19:35	23:05
NICE						NICE							
BT 695		RIX	NCE	-----6-	16:35	18:40	BT 696		NCE	RIX	-----6-	19:10	23:10
OLBIA						OLBIA							
BT 655		RIX	OLB	-----6-	16:00	18:10	BT 656		OLB	RIX	-----6-	18:45	23:00
OSLO						OSLO							
BT 151		RIX	OSL	1234567	08:05	09:00	BT 158		OSL	RIX	--34--7	05:50	08:40
BT 159		RIX	OSL	12345-7	13:55	14:50	BT 152		OSL	RIX	1234567	09:25	12:15
BT 153		RIX	OSL	1234567	18:35	19:30	BT 160		OSL	RIX	12345-7	15:20	18:10
BT 157		RIX	OSL	-23--6-	23:45	00:40+1	BT 154		OSL	RIX	1234567	20:00	22:50
PALANGA						PALANGA							
BT 033		RIX	PLQ	123-5-7	23:45	00:30+1	BT 032		PLQ	RIX	1234-6-	06:05	06:50
PARIS Charles de Gaulles						PARIS Charles de Gaulles							
BT 691		RIX	CDG	1234567	07:30	09:25	BT 692		CDG	RIX	1234567	10:10	13:55
BT 693		RIX	CDG	1-345-7	16:30	18:25	BT 694		CDG	RIX	1-345-7	19:20	23:05

Flights from Riga						Flights to Riga					
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival
PRAGUE						PRAGUE					
BT 481	RIX	PRG	1-4567	13:15	14:25	BT 482	PRG	RIX	1-4567	14:55	18:00
RADOM						RADOM					
BT 459	RIX	RDO	-2-4-6-	14:05	14:45	BT 460	RDO	RIX	-2-4-6-	15:25	18:00
ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino						ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino					
BT 631	RIX	FCO	----5-7	09:20	11:25	BT 632	FCO	RIX	----5-7	12:10	16:20
BT 633	RIX	FCO	1-4----	15:50	17:55	BT 634	FCO	RIX	1-4----	18:50	23:00
STOCKHOLM Arlanda						STOCKHOLM Arlanda					
BT 101	RIX	ARN	1234567	07:50	08:05	BT 104	ARN	RIX	12-45--	06:20	08:35
BT 105	RIX	ARN	1234567	14:15	14:30	BT 102	ARN	RIX	1234567	08:40	10:55
BT 109	RIX	ARN	1234567	19:30	19:45	BT 106	ARN	RIX	1234567	15:00	17:15
BT 103	RIX	ARN	1-34--7	23:35	23:50	BT 110	ARN	RIX	1234567	20:15	22:30
STOCKHOLM Bromma						STOCKHOLM Bromma					
BT 119	RIX	BMA	12345--	18:35	18:45	BT 118	BMA	RIX	12345--	09:30	11:35
ST-PETERSBURG						ST-PETERSBURG					
BT 442	RIX	LED	1-34567	09:20	10:40	BT 447	LED	RIX	1-4-6-	05:20	06:40
BT 444	RIX	LED	12-45-7	19:00	20:20	BT 443	LED	RIX	1-34567	11:15	12:35
BT 446	RIX	LED	--3-5-7	23:55	01:15+1	BT 445	LED	RIX	12-45-7	21:20	22:40
TALLINN						TALLINN					
BT 319	RIX	TLL	1234567	07:20	08:10	BT 322	TLL	RIX	-2--6-	07:50	08:40
BT 311	RIX	TLL	1234567	09:30	10:20	BT 312	TLL	RIX	1234567	10:55	11:45
BT 313	RIX	TLL	1-345--	12:55	13:45	BT 314	TLL	RIX	1-345--	13:50	15:25
BT 313	RIX	TLL	-2--67	13:55	14:45	BT 314	TLL	RIX	-2--67	15:15	16:05
BT 315	RIX	TLL	1-45--	14:25	15:15	BT 316	TLL	RIX	1-45--	15:50	16:40
BT 317	RIX	TLL	1234567	19:00	19:55	BT 320	TLL	RIX	1234567	16:55	17:45
BT 321	RIX	TLL	--3--7	23:05	23:50	BT 318	TLL	RIX	----4--	20:25	21:15
BT 361	RIX	TLL	1234567	23:35	00:25+1	BT 318	TLL	RIX	123-567	21:40	22:30
TBILISI						TBILISI					
BT 724	RIX	TBS	--3-5-7	23:25	03:55+1	BT 725	TBS	RIX	1-4-6-	04:40	07:15
TEL AVIV						TEL AVIV					
BT 771	RIX	TLV	--3-6-	13:00	17:20	BT 772	TLV	RIX	--3-6-	18:20	22:50
TURKU						TURKU					
BT 359	RIX	TKU	12345-7	23:45	00:55+1	BT 360	TKU	RIX	123456-	05:45	06:50
VIENNA						VIENNA					
BT 431	RIX	VIE	1-3-5--	07:20	08:45	BT 432	VIE	RIX	1-3-5--	09:25	12:45
BT 431	RIX	VIE	-2-4-6-	07:30	08:30	BT 432	VIE	RIX	-2-4-6-	09:25	12:25
BT 433	RIX	VIE	12345-7	17:40	19:05	BT 434	VIE	RIX	12345-7	19:50	23:10
VILNIUS						VILNIUS					
BT 351	RIX	VNO	1234567	07:20	08:10	BT 350	VNO	RIX	1234567	06:00	06:50
BT 341	RIX	VNO	1234567	09:30	10:20	BT 342	VNO	RIX	1234567	10:55	11:45
BT 1343	RIX	VNO	1--5--	12:50	13:40	BT 1354	VNO	RIX	12-----	13:00	13:50
BT 343	RIX	VNO	1234567	13:55	14:45	BT 344	VNO	RIX	1234567	15:15	16:05
BT 1345	RIX	VNO	---3---	17:20	18:10	BT 352	VNO	RIX	-23--67	16:55	17:45
BT 347	RIX	VNO	1234-67	19:05	19:55	BT 348	VNO	RIX	1234-67	20:25	21:15
BT 1353	RIX	VNO	1-----7	23:05	23:55	BT 1344	VNO	RIX	1-5---	21:50	22:40
BT 349	RIX	VNO	1234567	23:35	00:25+1	BT 1346	VNO	RIX	1-345--	23:50	00:40+1
WARSAW						WARSAW					
BT 461	RIX	WAW	123-56-	07:50	08:20	BT 462	WAW	RIX	123-56-	09:20	11:45
BT 467	RIX	WAW	-234-7	19:05	19:35	BT 468	WAW	RIX	-234-7	20:05	22:30
ZURICH						ZURICH					
BT 641	RIX	ZRH	1-4-6-	07:40	09:10	BT 642	ZRH	RIX	1-4-6-	09:45	13:15
BT 641	RIX	ZRH	--3-5-7	17:30	19:00	BT 642	ZRH	RIX	--3-5-7	19:35	23:05
Flights from Tallinn						Flights to Tallinn					
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival
BERLIN Tegel						BERLIN Tegel					
BT 201	TLL	TXL	1-4---	05:50	07:10	BT 202	TXL	TLL	1-4---	08:00	11:15
BT 203	TLL	TXL	----5--	18:20	19:40	BT 204	TXL	TLL	----5--	21:55	01:10+1
PARIS						PARIS					
BT 689	TLL	CDG	1234567	09:35	11:35	BT 690	CDG	TLL	1234567	12:30	16:25
VIENNA						VIENNA					
BT 205	TLL	VIE	----5--	06:25	08:20	BT 206	VIE	TLL	----5--	10:40	14:30
BT 207	TLL	VIE	1-4---	17:40	19:35	BT 208	VIE	TLL	1-4---	20:35	00:25+1
Flights from Vilnius						Flights to Vilnius					
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival
AMSTERDAM						AMSTERDAM					
BT 609	VNO	AMS	12-4567	08:35	10:35	BT 610	AMS	VNO	12-4567	12:30	16:15
BERLIN Tegel						BERLIN Tegel					
BT 215	VNO	TXL	1-3-5--	18:35	19:35	BT 216	TXL	VNO	1-3-5--	20:05	22:50
BRUSSELS						BRUSSELS					
BT 605	VNO	BRU	12-----	06:00	07:55	BT 606	BRU	VNO	12-----	08:45	12:35
BT 605	VNO	BRU	----4--	17:00	19:05	BT 606	BRU	VNO	----4--	19:35	23:25
HELSINKI						HELSINKI					
BT 323	VNO	HEL	12345--	22:15	23:45	BT 324	HEL	VNO	12345--	06:25	07:55
PARIS						PARIS					
BT 701	VNO	CDG	--3-----	09:50	11:35	BT 702	CDG	VNO	--3-----	12:30	16:05
BT 701	VNO	CDG	1-5---	14:25	16:10	BT 702	CDG	VNO	1-5---	16:55	20:30
STOCKHOLM Bromma						STOCKHOLM Bromma					
BT 111	VNO	BMA	12345--	08:20	09:00	BT 114	BMA	VNO	12345--	19:15	21:50

**Ingars Vaivods,**  
Vice President Production

Text by **EGITA KRASTINA**  
Photo by **GATIS GIERTS, F64**

# Safely in the air!

Ingars Vaivods reveals what it takes to become an aviation technician and how his team takes care of *airBaltic's* aircraft.

**How did you get involved in aviation, and what brought you to *airBaltic*?**

I was in my last year at the Riga Aviation University, studying for my bachelor's degree, when two of my fellow students, who were already working for *airBaltic*, suggested I apply for a job vacancy for ramp coordinator. I decided that such a job would be a great way to get into aviation and also a step closer to becoming a technician, which I was then studying to become. I ended up getting the job and began working while finishing up my studies. I got an engineering degree in aviation transport, and later, a

master's degree as well. I've been with *airBaltic* for 15 years now, and I've moved up, step by step, from ramp coordinator to technician and now, two years ago, to vice president of production.

**Did you not want to become a pilot?**

The thought of becoming a pilot did come up, but I considered all the pros and cons and decided to continue the path I was already on, that is, becoming an aviation technician. I've flown in small and large aircraft, and the view you have up there is fascinating, and the sun's always shining.

**But was a career in aviation always your dream?**

Actually, no. When I graduated from high school, I found out that the Riga Aviation University was offering a combined programme at both the Defence Academy and the Aviation University. Since most kids have no idea what they want to do when they graduate from high school, I figured this would be a good way to kill two birds with one stone and get two forms of higher education in four years. When we graduated, we had earned both the rank of lieutenant from the Defence Academy and a bachelor's degree from the Aviation University, so we had a number of options ahead of us.

**What are your responsibilities in your job?**

I've got a lot of responsibilities, and a variety of them, but the main one is timely and high quality technical maintenance of our aircraft. That includes all of the technical aspects and the preparation, planning, training and procedures involved with them as well as providing appropriate operating conditions. Our main priority is passenger safety. Airplanes are built to fly and deliver passengers to their destinations, so the time we spend on maintenance needs to be used effectively. We need to ensure that as soon as an airplane lands, we efficiently use the time we have to service it. When planning new flight schedules, we always plan time for technical maintenance, which is adjusted according to the number of hours or days or cycles the plane has flown. Airplane manufacturers determine the list of procedures that need to be performed on a plane before it can be safely allowed to fly again.

We've also got our own internal workshops where we perform maintenance on various components. For example, we test the inflatable life vests to see whether they're still in good condition. We also test the escape slides and do maintenance on batteries and so on.

We've also got a special Ground Support Group that makes sure the planes are clean and treated with de-icing fluids in the winter.

**What do you like best about your job?**

Of course, the airplanes.... It's very satisfying to see our planes take off in the air instead

of idly sitting on the ground. I know that most of the technicians have put their hearts and souls into their work, and many of them have devoted their lives to aviation alone. In my job, each day is different and has different challenges. The company's development plans let us confront a variety of new projects, and that makes it necessary to prepare one's self for something new. This past summer was interesting in that we opened up a lot of new destinations, so I had to ensure technical maintenance at the new destinations, and I travelled a lot to meet with the local maintenance organisations.

Of course, the people at work play a big role, too. It's nice to come to work when you know that your team is professional and responsive – people who'll always be ready to help one another.

**I presume that, in order to become an aircraft technician, you need more than just a diploma in your pocket. How much practical, on-the-job experience does one need to work independently in this job?**

You need to invest quite a bit in yourself to become an aircraft technician, both in terms of money and time. An experienced technician is someone who's invested at least seven years in his career and who has general experience in aviation as well as experience with a specific type of airplane. You need at least two years of experience after graduating from aviation school to become an entry-level technician who's allowed to do smaller procedures on his own and certify them. To become a technician who can replace various components and divert defects, you need at least three years of experience with a specific type of airplane. For the first two years, technicians work only under the supervision of other certified technicians and are not allowed to do aircraft maintenance without the supervisors' presence or approval. It takes at least six months for a technician to requalify for working on another type of aircraft. We even joke that it takes longer to learn to be an aircraft technician than it does to become a doctor! Our technical staff is always upgrading its skills. The technicians

need to take obligatory courses in order to maintain their certification.

**But you really are doctors of sorts – airplane doctors!**

*(Laughs.)* Yes, exactly! We inspect airplane engines with borescopes! We look for where it hurts and cure illnesses.

**Do you ever have any qualms about getting on an airplane, and how do you rate the safety of *airBaltic's* planes?**

I regard *airBaltic's* technical safety to be at a very high level. When I go somewhere on vacation, the safety of my family is the most important thing, so we usually choose to fly with *airBaltic*. I have absolutely no doubts about the safety of *airBaltic's* planes, because I know that maintenance and component replacement is always done in a timely manner and according to the manufacturers' and

It takes longer to learn to be an aircraft technician than it does to become a doctor!

operators' instructions. If we compare aircraft maintenance procedures with those of automobiles, then, for example, you might check the pressure in your car's tires only three times a year. But for airplanes, we do it every day. We do certain maintenance procedures every day, others every three days, and every seven days we do a full maintenance check on each plane in order to ensure a safe and sound structure. Manufacturers are always sending us new improvements for planes currently in operation, in order to increase safety and prolong their operation. And after a certain number of hours in the air, each plane undergoes a full technical maintenance procedure, during which the whole plane is practically all taken apart and each detail is tested.

**Next year *airBaltic* will add Bombardier C Series airplanes to its fleet. They just got a good rating at their presentation**

**in Paris. What do you think of these airplanes?**

They really have good ratings, in terms of economics, sound and speed. And they require less time for maintenance, which means that they're made of even better and sturdier materials and are introducing an updated diagnostics system. According to the technical data, they really do look quite excellent. All that remains now is for the planes to prove themselves! We're anxiously awaiting their arrival.

**What do you do when you're not working?**

I like to stay active. I've been playing hockey for several years now. That's a team sport with lots of speed, agility and, of course, excitement. In the summers I play football and water ski. I also run and bicycle, and I love just taking a walk in the forest. I've taken part in a 60K endurance race along the coast. We began at 11 p.m. and finished the race about 15 hours later. We participated as a team, and all of us crossed the finish line. Physical tiredness feels satisfying to me, especially if I can go in the sauna afterwards. Staying active isn't just good for your health; it also keeps your body and your mind in good condition. I also attend cultural events, but I'd like to find more time to do that.

**Do you like to travel, and which destination has left the biggest impression on you?**

I love to travel! My family and I try to get away at least once a year, either to some warm climate farther away, or somewhere nearby. And I travel quite a bit for work, too. Iceland is a very impressive place. It's so different, with volcanoes, beautiful waterfalls, geysers, volcanic ash, black sand and the blue lagoon where you can soak in the warm water under the open sky. Of course, Iceland doesn't have a very warm climate. The airport there even has a sign that says something to the effect of "the weather isn't very good here, but we've got great landscapes". For our last trip, we flew with *airBaltic* on the direct flight to the island of Rhodes. And our next favourite places are probably still ahead of us! **BO**

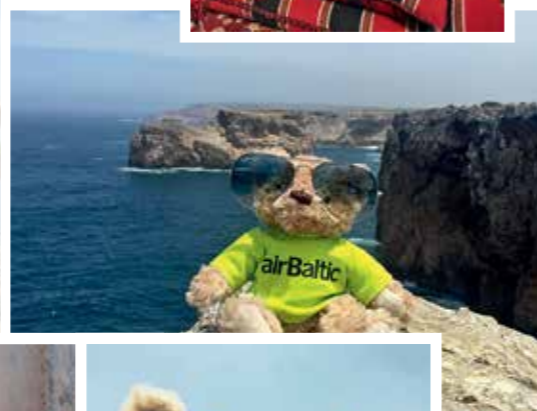
# airBaltic Teddy travels

In March we announced the *airBaltic* teddy bear travel photo contest, in which the winner could win free *airBaltic* flights for two persons.

Now the contest has finished, and we see that our little bear has had the most amazing time this summer. *airBaltic* Teddy has accompanied our customers in their journeys to all kinds of destinations – from all across the *airBaltic* route network to distant places in North and South America, from picturesque islands and sandy beaches to deserts and snowy peaks. Altogether we received 226 photos from 46 participants.

Congratulations to the winner – a photo of *airBaltic*'s teddy bear at the foot of the Tsminda Sameba Church in Georgia, in the Greater Caucasus mountains. The author of this picture is Eszter Vincze, who took it together with her six-year-old son Marcell during their three week backpacking trip around Georgia, Armenia and Turkey.

Now *airBaltic* Teddy has moved from our menu card, but you can still find some of his friends at [airbalticshop.com](http://airbalticshop.com). Meanwhile, we've got a new crew member on board – *airBaltic* Teddy in a pilot's uniform, who is available only during our flights.



# ENJOY THE REAL TASTE OF LATVIA AT LIDO!



An extensive menu of Latvian cuisine at nine LIDO locations throughout Riga  
Magnificent interior in Latvian-farmhouse style  
Our food is prepared fresh every day, from natural and fresh locally-grown ingredients  
Staff members dressed in Latvian folk costumes  
Dancing to live Latvian music every evening at the LIDO Leisure Centre  
Rich seasonal decorations and great festive celebrations



LIDO Leisure Centre is one of the largest and most beautiful log buildings in Europe, constructed of specially selected, more than 100-year-old Latvian fir trees. It is home to a bistro, restaurant, pub, the LIDO Brewery and the Family Amusement Park.



Taste real Latvian beer! Our own LIDO Brewery produces special beers including honey beer. Book a LIDO Beer tour at the LIDO Leisure Centre (groups only) +371 67700000.



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## WELCOME TO LIDO!

Ask for directions to the nearest LIDO at tourist information centres or your hotel.  
The largest ones are:

**LIDO LEISURE CENTRE**  
Krasta iela 76  
+371 67700000

**LIDO SPICE**  
Spice Shopping Centre  
Lielirbes iela 29, Riga

**LIDO AIRPORT**  
Riga International Airport,  
Upper level, Departures  
area

**LIDO DOMINA**  
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