

# baltic

## outlook

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25 years in the sky  
airBaltic

We will be able  
to adapt to whatever  
the future may bring

MARTIN ALEXANDER GAUSS  
Chief Executive Officer, airBaltic

**Dear guests of airBaltic,**  
While the ongoing crisis is still having a heavy impact on us and the aviation industry, I would like to talk about something different. This is a special month, because we have something to celebrate. *airBaltic* turns 25 years old – a quarter of a century!

Back in 1995, when our airline was founded, it provided very basic connectivity for a country that needed air infrastructure to develop in a new role and strengthen its ties with the European countries. That was a different world back then. It would take 12 years before the *iPhone* was launched and 14 years before the first *Tesla* car was available.

We've seen various crises in the industry over this time, such as September 11, SARS, the 2008 financial crisis, and now the Covid-19 crisis. But none of that stopped *airBaltic* on its way to becoming what the airline is today. We started at a time when low-cost airlines played only a minor role in European aviation. Over these

25 years we've done an amazing job and have adopted a low-cost model with much more affordable ticket prices for all travellers while maintaining a high standard with one of the best Business classes in Europe. We grew the airline to be the largest in Latvia and the Baltics, and we also transformed from a niche player to a globally recognised airline leading in its approach to a more sustainable aviation future with the most modern aircraft, the *Airbus A220-300*. Over the years, *airBaltic* has carried more than 45 million guests safely to their destinations.

We are a young and innovative airline, and we know that we will be able to adapt to whatever the future may bring. Our aim is to connect the Baltics to the world and be the leading player in the region, helping to develop the local economies while maintaining a sustainable growth path.

It has been an honour to serve as the CEO of *airBaltic* for the past nine years. My colleagues in the company, some of whom have been here for the entire 25 years, are equally proud to be a part of this Latvian and Baltic success story. We are thankful for your support over the past 25 years, and we look forward to becoming your preferred choice of travel.

May our birthday be a happy occasion for you, too!



Yours,  
Martin Alexander Gauss





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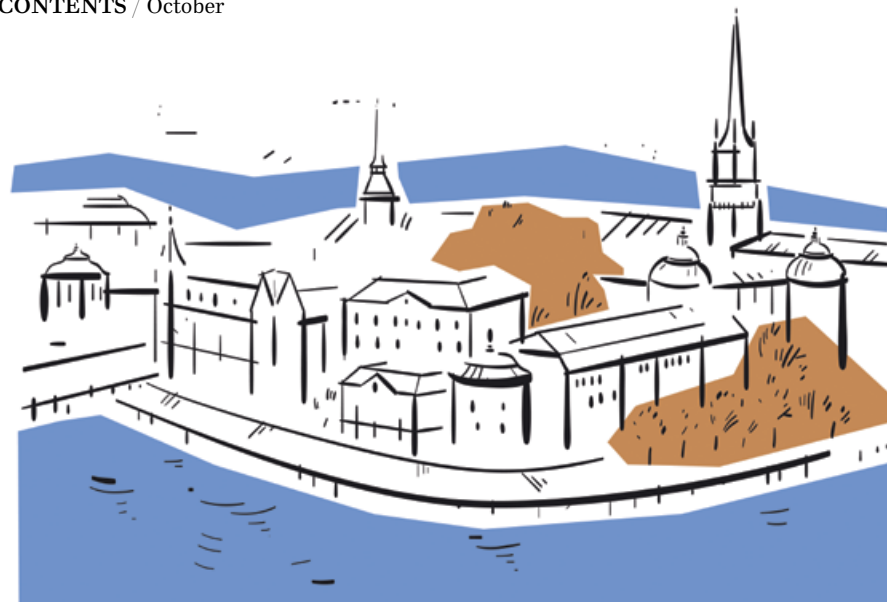
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## baltic outlook

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# The ultimate October checklist



## TAKE A HIKE

October is one of the last months in the year to take advantage of the great outdoors before it gets too cold. Besides, it’s arguably one of the best times to visit a national park. Why? National parks are special at any time of year, but when the leaves change colour in the autumn, the reds, oranges, and yellows are simply breathtaking.

Gauja National Park in Latvia is best known for its brilliant fall colours and ample recreational opportunities. But that’s not the main reason to visit the country’s oldest and largest national park. The park is a place where modern and cosy guest houses, restaurants, and leisure spots live alongside legends from the past. The remains of 19 ancient hillforts and six medieval castles are scattered along the Gauja River and within Gauja National Park. Before heading out to explore, check the park’s website at [entergauja.com](http://entergauja.com). There you’ll find tips on hiking routes at various levels of difficulty as well as all the necessary information for planning your trip, including a list of accommodations, restaurants, and other local treasures. After that, all you need to do is enjoy nature’s paintbrush at its finest!



## MUSIC

### Magical moments

If you’re looking for music that’s suited for tender autumn evenings, have a listen to *There Will Come Soft Rains*, this year’s release by Latvian composer Eriks Ešenvalds. Recorded by the Pacific Lutheran University Choir of the West under the direction of conductor Richard Nance, it has received countless excellent reviews, including by the prestigious *Gramophone* magazine. Ešenvalds is one of the most in-demand composers of choral music, with a busy commission schedule and performances of his music heard on every continent.

[eriksesenvalds.com](http://eriksesenvalds.com)



## DESIGN

### Cosy mood

With the days getting shorter and darker, taking the time to refine the lighting in your home can make a big difference to its ambience. Find inspiration in the products offered by the Latvian brand *Mammalampa*. Its creator, Ieva Kalēja, has been listed among the ten most talented female designers of the past decade by the influential design magazine *Elle Decor*. *Mammalampa* produces lamps with a contemporary design and great aesthetic impact. All of its lamps are handmade, and the lamp shades often recall paintings or artistic fantasies.

[mammalampa.com](http://mammalampa.com)



## FASHION

### Understated elegance

On your search for unique earrings and necklaces, check out *Rozenthal Jewelry*. For the new season, the Latvian brand has created a unique collection of porcelain jewellery that adheres to the zero-waste concept. The *Astilla* collection brings to mind historical terrazzo surfaces with an effect produced by mixing new porcelain with chips of already fired porcelain left over from the jewellery-making process. Perfect for an elegant everyday look.

[rozenthal.lv](http://rozenthal.lv)

AD Beatrice Rossetti - Photo Federico Cedrone

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Iryna Babenko  
[iryna.babenko@itis.agency](mailto:iryna.babenko@itis.agency)





**Did you know?**  
At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Riga's parks were not called parks but resorts – places to relax and regain health.  
[liveriga.com](http://liveriga.com)

**OUR MUSEUM: THE STATE MUSEUM OF ART – 100**  
**Until December 13**

The Riga Bourse Art Museum is one of the most vivid locations of the Latvian National Museum of Art. Built in 1852–1855 and resembling a Venetian Renaissance palazzo, it is currently hosting an exhibition in honour of the museum's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In addition to significant local works of art, it also provides an intriguing look behind the scenes at the museum.  
[lnmm.lv](http://lnmm.lv)

**Quote of the month**

Every time I go to a movie, it's magic, no matter what the movie's about.

Words by **Zane Nikodemusa**  
Publicity photos and by *iStock* and *F64*

**October 2020 / RIGA**



**THE QUEEN OF SPADES**

**October 11, 13, 17, 20**  
The Latvian National Opera is again presenting Pyotr Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades*. Known in Latvian as *Piķa dāma*, the work first premiered here in 2005, under the direction of the opera's long-time director Andrejs Žagars (1958–2019). The production received wide international acclaim, with opera critics at home and abroad describing it as 'both fragile and fascinating'.  
[opera.lv](http://opera.lv)

Steven Spielberg, American film director and screenwriter, whose quote can serve as inspiration to check out some good film festivals in Latvia. First, there's Baltic Pearl (October 7–12), the annual festival celebrating first-rate movies, from exclusive premiers to age-old classics. Then, the baton is passed to the Riga International Film Festival (October 15–25), which showcases a comprehensive programme of the most daring contemporary European cinema.



**RIMI RIGA MARATHON**  
**October 10–11**

Riga's 30<sup>th</sup> marathon is the only marathon in northern Europe to have entered the league of the world's most prestigious marathons, a.k.a. World Athletics Gold Label. Moreover, foreign runners who can't come to Riga due to pandemic restrictions will have the opportunity to run virtually in their hometowns and receive a unique once-in-a-lifetime medal by post. The medal was created by Japanese designer Junichi Kawanishi, who also designed the medals for the Tokyo Olympic Games.  
[rimirigamarathon.com](http://rimirigamarathon.com)

**WE AIM TO LIVE: CONTEMPORARY ART FROM THE ZUZĀNS COLLECTION**

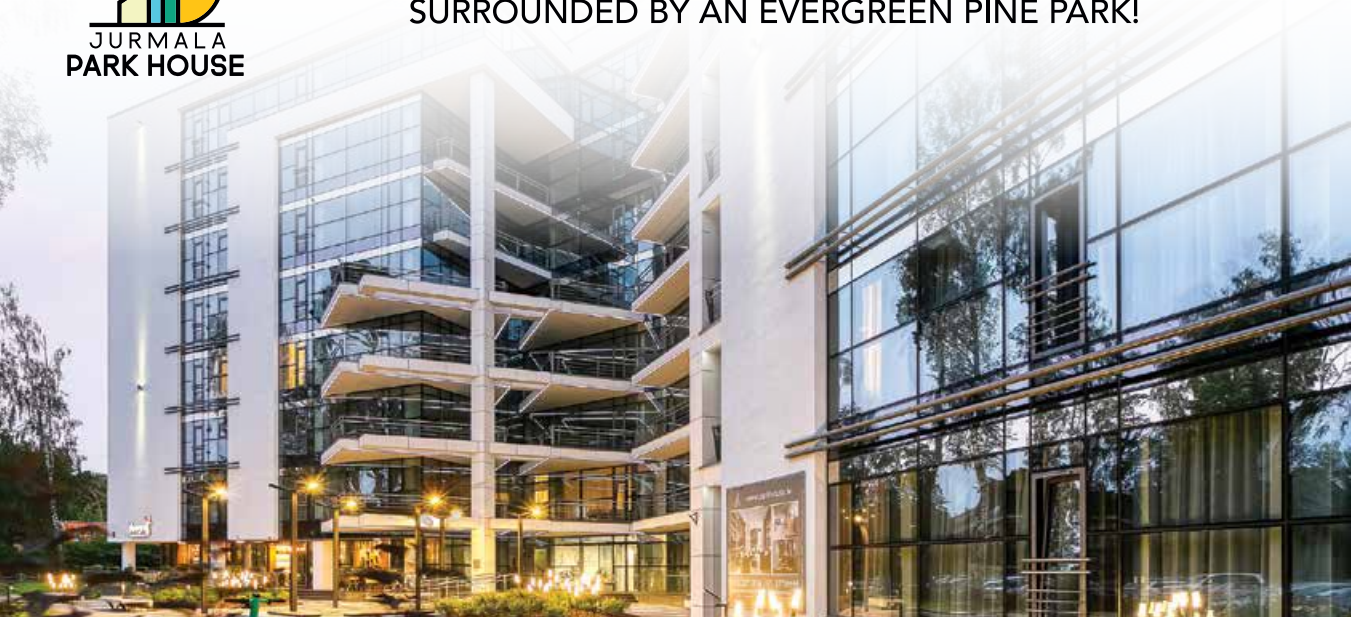
**Until November 8**

As of this autumn, Riga has become one art space richer. The new Zuzeum Art Centre is the contribution of art collectors and patrons Dina and Jānis Zuzāns to the art infrastructure of the Baltic region. With more than 20,000 works of art in a variety of genres, the Zuzāns Collection is the largest private collection of Latvian art in the world. The current exhibition features the collection's new acquisitions and includes work by local and foreign artists.

[zuzeum.com](http://zuzeum.com)



**THE NEW PROJECT JURMALA PARK HOUSE IS LOCATED IN THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS PART OF JURMALA - DZINTARI, SURROUNDED BY AN EVERGREEN PINE PARK!**



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Jurmala Park House is a modern space for life and work, created with care for people and their well-being, a place where the closeness of nature and new opportunities for comfortable living are harmoniously combined.

**Jurmala, Dzintari, Rembates 4 | visit [www.parkhouse.lv](http://www.parkhouse.lv) or call us +371 22777034**





**OUTLOOK: 40 YEARS OF STREET PHOTOGRAPHY IN ESTONIA**  
**Until October 11**

The Juhan Kuus Documentary Photography Centre presents the first comprehensive exhibition of Estonian street photography. This show gives an overview of Estonian street photography over the past 40 years. The earliest pictures are from the 1980s, when Estonia was still under Soviet rule. The timeline ends with photos taken just a few months ago, offering unexpected and exciting shots of the streets in the spring of 2020. [dokfoto.ee](http://dokfoto.ee)

**ALWAYS BY OUR SIDE: CATS AND DOGS IN 16<sup>TH</sup>–19<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY ART**

**Until February 28**  
For thousands of years, cats and dogs have lived side by side with people. This exhibition at the Kadriorg Art Museum explores the portrayal of cats and dogs, their roles, and symbolic meaning in society. The displayed works are sourced from the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Sinebrychoff Art Museum in Helsinki, and public and private art collections in Estonia. [kadrirumuuseum.ekm.ee](http://kadrirumuuseum.ekm.ee)

TALLINN



Photo by Pavel Demidov



**JAZZKAAR FESTIVAL**  
**October 9–15**

Jazzkaar is the biggest jazz festival in the Baltic region, filling Tallinn's music stages with world-class musicians and highly valued local groups. The main programme includes long-awaited headline performers Dirty Loops (Sweden), Rymden feat. Bugge Wesseltoft, Dan Berglund, Magnus Öström (Norway-Sweden), and Airtto Moreira & Flora Purim with Neto Band (Brazil). The festival takes place at Telliskivi Creative City. [jazzkaar.ee](http://jazzkaar.ee)

**Did you know?**

Named after Andrei Tarkovsky's cult film *Stalker* (1979), which was partly filmed in Tallinn's Rotermann Quarter, *Stalker's Passage* is a treasure trove of cool restaurants, bars, and cafés. [visittallinn.ee](http://visittallinn.ee)

**FOODLOVER RESTAURANT WEEK**  
**October 9–18**

During this special week, take a gourmet tour of Tallinn's restaurants and discover unexpected flavours. The best chefs in the city create special menus, tasting dinners, and edible works of art to delight and surprise guests. The participating



restaurants offer two-course lunch menus starting from ten euros and three-course dinner menus starting from 20 euros. Find all of the participants on the event's website. [toidunautleja.ee](http://toidunautleja.ee)

**ARTVILNIUS CONTEMPORARY ART FAIR**

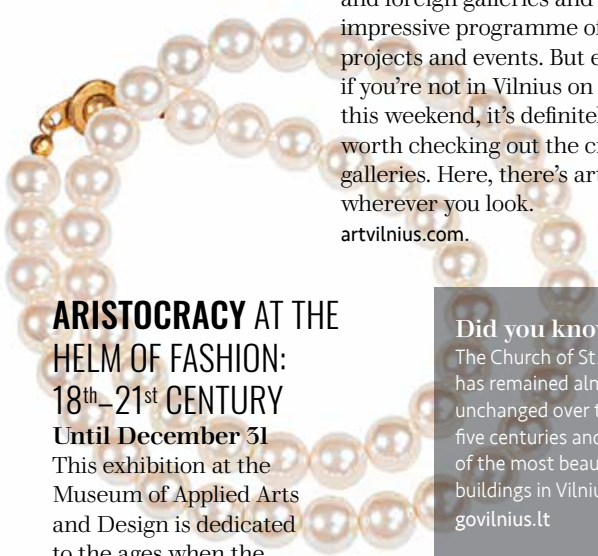
**October 2–4**  
Twice postponed, this contemporary art fair finally invites art fans to the Litexpo Lithuanian Exhibition and Congress Centre. The largest visual arts event of its kind in eastern Europe, it presents the most interesting local and foreign galleries and an impressive programme of projects and events. But even if you're not in Vilnius on this weekend, it's definitely worth checking out the city's galleries. Here, there's art wherever you look. [artvilnius.com](http://artvilnius.com)

**ARISTOCRACY AT THE HELM OF FASHION: 18<sup>TH</sup>–21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

**Until December 31**  
This exhibition at the Museum of Applied Arts and Design is dedicated to the ages when the ruling class, or aristocracy, shaped the notion of fashion and influenced its development. The show also highlights the Lithuanian aristocracy, which likewise played a role in guiding global fashion. First and foremost is the American Lee Radziwill, sister of Jacqueline Kennedy, who married a famous Lithuanian duke and became a fashion icon in the United States. [lndm.lt](http://lndm.lt)

**Did you know?**

The Church of St. Anne has remained almost unchanged over the past five centuries and is one of the most beautiful buildings in Vilnius. [govilnius.lt](http://govilnius.lt)



**VILNIUS GHOST TOUR**  
**On Fridays and Saturdays**

If you want to do some untraditional sightseeing, hear horrifying stories of ghosts, and discover dark secrets in some of Vilnius' most hidden locations, this is the tour for you. Explore the Old Town on a Friday or Saturday evening and get ready for an extraordinary experience with spooky stories and mysterious places. An exciting experience is guaranteed! [vilniuswithlocals.com](http://vilniuswithlocals.com)

**VILNIUS JAZZ FESTIVAL**  
**October 15–18**

Founded in 1987, Vilnius Jazz is the oldest annual jazz festival held in the Lithuanian capital. This exceptional event provides a broad perspective on contemporary trends in jazz from all over the world. Here, the stylistic boundaries of jazz and free improvisation are often crossed and expanded through joint projects with musicians with backgrounds in classical, ethnic, rock, and industrial music. [vilniusjazz.lt](http://vilniusjazz.lt)

RIGA  
R.  
PORCELAIN  
P. M.  
MUSEUM

Items from the tea set  
"Supremats"  
Design by Āris Seglinš,  
Riga, Latvia. 2014  
Porcelain, pigmented  
glaze, printed overglaze  
decor, partially platinized  
Photo by Gvido Kajons



**Riga Porcelain Museum** is located in the historical centre of Riga. It holds an extensive collection of porcelain art and design items manufactured in Riga starting from the 19th century up to nowadays.

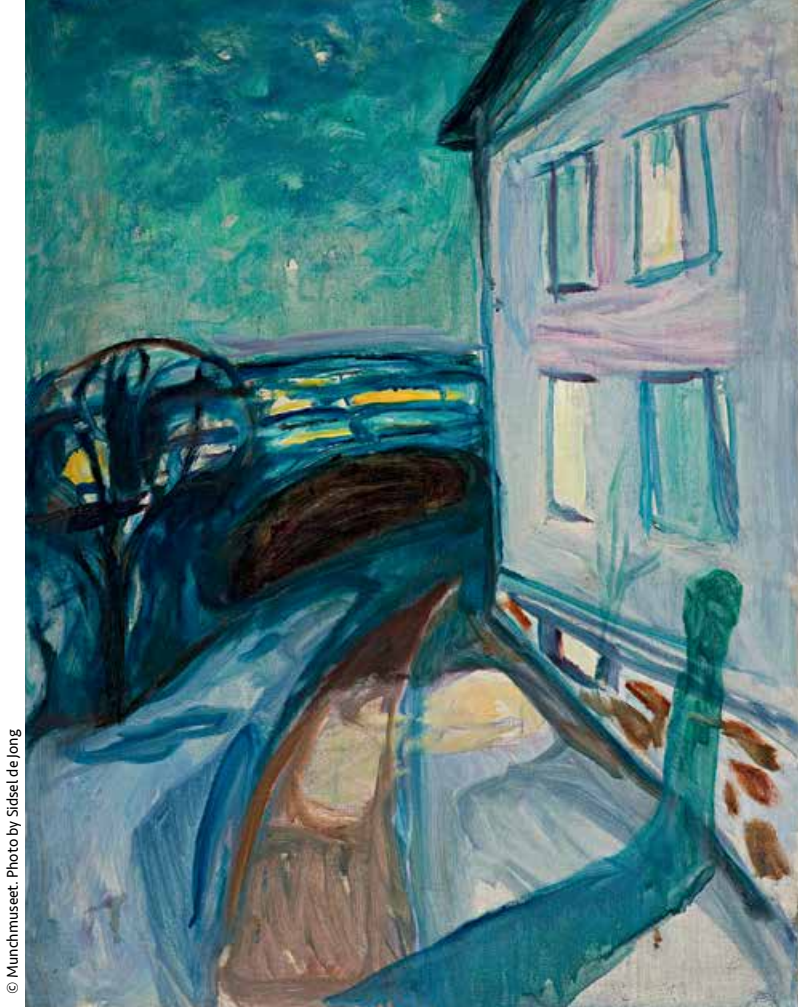
9/11 Kalēju Street  
(Konventa sēta courtyard)  
Riga, LV-1050, Latvia

Tue–Sun 11.00–18.00  
+371 67 181 296  
[rpm@riga.lv](mailto:rpm@riga.lv)  
[porcelanamuzejs.riga.lv](http://porcelanamuzejs.riga.lv)

Riga Porcelain Museum  
Association of Culture Institutions  
of Riga City Council

Supported by  
Education, Culture, and  
Sports Department of  
Riga City Council





© Munchmuseet. Photo by Sidsel de Jong

## CITIES OF THE MONTH / October

Words by Olga Dolina  
Publicity photos

◀ Edvard Munch, House Wall in Moonlight (1922-1924)



The Munchmuseet presents **Edvard Munch and Nature** – a special glimpse into the landscape paintings by the world-famous Norwegian artist (until October 31; Tøyengata 53; munchmuseet.no). Nature motifs in Munch's work serve as a tool to express the shift between the inner and outer world and embody psychological moods – fears, melancholy, longing – that sometimes contrast with waves of optimism and a love of life. These lesser-known paintings are displayed next to his most famous pieces, including *The Scream* (1893) and *The Sun* (1909). Divided into two parts, the exhibition moves from the artist's darker and more symbolic period to a lighter and colour-wise more vivid and expressive period, depicting enchanted forests, nude bathers, and sunlit summer evenings. The neighbouring exhibition, titled *The Experimental Self*, offers a unique selection of Munch's photography and even some of his 'selfies'.

Who said that the sauna is the exclusive privilege of the Finns? Oslo's urban sauna scene is no less intriguing. The **Oslo Fjord Sauna** volunteer organisation of sauna enthusiasts offers specially crafted saunas overlooking the picturesque waters of Oslo Fjord at Sørenga Wharf behind the Oslo Opera House (oslobadstuforening.no). Situated around a rustic driftwood raft, most of these saunas can fit up to 15 people each. The trend for cosy floating gems began in 2015 with the *Måken* sauna. In 2019, the edgy *Skarven* was designed by Zeuthen + Stjern architects. Now this city-meets-nature experience welcomes two newcomers: the completely round *Anda* sauna with changing rooms and a bathing platform, and *Havørnen* with its powerful stone stove and flat roof from which to jump into the water.

Earlier this year, the Oslo Botanical Garden inaugurated its new **Climate House**, a research and discussion venue designed to teach about Earth's climate and ecosystems, share research on environmental issues, and offer possible solutions for how to act responsively towards a better future (Natural History Museum, Sars' gate 1; nhm.uio.no). The wood-framed, zero-emission building designed in a climate-friendly way by *Lundhagem* and *Atelier Oslo* merges with the surrounding trees and nature paths and has a low-height pavilion extension that opens up into an inviting garden. Especially welcoming for curious and climate-conscious kids and teenagers, the exhibition design by *SixSides* encourages involvement with interactive installations and impressive visual tools, such as a massive floor-to-ceiling projection room.

## OSLO




Oslo Fjord Sauna




The Climate House


© Becky Zeller

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◀ Orazio Gentileschi *Judith and her maidservant with the Head of Holofernes*, about 1608. The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo



## LONDON



Twinings Flagship Store 216 Strand



Treehouse Hotel London

**Artemisia**, a major monographic exhibition at the National Gallery, pays homage to one of the most significant female figures in art history (October 3 – January 24, 2021; Trafalgar Square; [nationalgallery.org.uk](https://nationalgallery.org.uk)). Artemisia Gentileschi (1593 – c. 1654) was an artist of exceptional talent and the first woman to become a member of the Florentine Accademia delle Arti del Disegno. Throughout her career, which spanned more than 40 years, she overcame countless prejudices and humiliations. Now, about 30 of her most prominent paintings, including *Susanna and the Elders* (1622) and *Self-Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria* (c. 1615–17), are displayed along with a number of recently discovered letters that let visitors hear her vulnerable yet resilient and witty voice. A particular gem in this showcase is the emotional and violent *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (c. 1612–13) – Gentileschi's artistic revenge on those who had insulted her.

The oldest tea shop in London, **Twinings** **216 Strand**, dates back to 1706 (216 Strand; [twinings.co.uk](https://twinings.co.uk)). But even historic urban icons tend to add a modern touch to their appearance. Newly redesigned by *Dalziel & Pow*, this popular tourist destination features an interactive twist and new retail experiences. As the brand's spiritual home, this flagship store attracts tea aficionados and invites visitors to immerse themselves in the universe, heritage, innovation, wellness, and lifestyle of *Twinings*. Four 'Moments of Curiosity' equipped with digital displays and sensory touch-points mark this journey and culminate in a tasting bar at one end of the shop. The senses of taste and smell are highlighted with stunning moving images of tea plantations, gardens, and fields of herbs.

Inspired by childhood games and tree house shelters, the new **Treehouse Hotel London** attracts guests with its relaxed and playful atmosphere (14-15 Langham Place; prices from GBP 184; [treehousehotels.com](https://treehousehotels.com)). It offers six floors and 95 rooms with panoramic bay windows overlooking some of the British capital's most significant landmarks. The spaces are packed with hip design, colourful and crafty details, nostalgic objects, tactile materials, and lush greenery. The *Backyard* coffee shop and wine nook is also dressed in exposed wood, while *The Nest* rooftop bar offers gripping 360-degree views.

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## METROCHIC-FALLING IN LOVE WITH EXTRAORDINARY

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<https://www.instagram.com/salonshenrymoon/>

VILLEROY-BOCH.LV



Words by Ilze Vitola  
Publicity photo

# A feast to remember

Just when the rich bounty of the Latvian countryside has been put into jars, basements, and other cool, dark places for hibernation, Riga’s finest dining institutions throw a two week-long celebration to put the freshest and ripest of the fall produce into the limelight. These are Riga Restaurant Weeks, from October 12 to 25!

Taking place for the 18<sup>th</sup> time, the event has increasingly become a favourite among locals and visitors alike. It’s a brilliant excuse for foodies to visit their beloved restaurants again and a starting point for those just wanting to get acquainted with Riga’s dining scene, including places globally acknowledged by the food critics.

There’s no better time to discover food in the Latvian capital, because Riga Restaurant Week gathers around 40 of the city’s most delicious establishments offering knockout dishes – refined down to the last slick of sauce and crumb of bread – for just two fixed prices of 20 and 25 euros.

Mushrooms, smoked fish, legumes, and veggies that only a few days ago were still growing in the fields of local farmers are put to use by top-rate chefs, who twist and turn them into the most innovative, imaginative meals. And of course, it wouldn’t be a party without dessert! Think berries, hazelnuts, and quince flirting with chocolate, meringue, and ice cream.

Riga Restaurant Week is also an excellent way to discover – or, to be more precise, eat your way through – the Latvian capital. The restaurants are spread across the city, from the top of the lushest edifices to the shores of the mighty Daugava River and tucked into the most charming streets of the Old Town.



Restaurant Stage 22 at Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga

## DID YOU KNOW?

**RIGA RESTAURANT WEEKS** takes place two times a year, in spring and autumn.

Check out special **HOTEL OFFERS** during Restaurant Weeks at [liveriga.com](http://liveriga.com).

To enjoy Riga Restaurant Week’s **SPECIAL OFFERS**, you’ll need to book ahead.

The 20- and 25-euro offers include a **THREE-COURSE MEAL** and often also a special delight from the chef.

Each January, Riga also hosts the **STREET FOOD FESTIVAL**, which is one of the few street food events taking place in the midst of winter.



Magdelēnas kvartāls



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## Perfect harmony

If you love stylish new architecture with an old-factory vibe, the Rotermann Quarter in Tallinn is worth exploring.

Words by Ilze Vītola  
Photo by iStock

Hidden between Tallinn's Old Town, the Passenger Port, and bustling Viru Square is a car-free urban sanctuary with state-of-the-art architecture and incredible history. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Rotermann Quarter was the focal point of the city's manufacturing sector. In 1829, the artisan hatter Christian Abraham Rotermann arrived in Tallinn and founded the *Chr. Rotermann* merchant court here. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area blossomed with factories – a grain elevator and flour mill were completed in 1904 and the iconic salt storage facility and the most cutting-edge bread production facility in the Russian Empire soon followed. Many other factories were added to the quarter in the 1920s, including a wool factory and the *Rosen & Co.* vodka factory.

The rapid evolution of the quarter was cut short by the two world wars and the subsequent Soviet era. Under the Soviet regime, all private companies were nationalised, for example, the *Rosen & Co.* spirits factory became the Tallinn Spirit Rectification Factory. The quarter's very existence was threatened in the 1970s, when an extensive reconstruction plan intended

to connect *Hotel Viru* and the port with a wide pedestrian boulevard – right through the middle of the Rotermann Quarter. Fortunately, the plan never came to fruition. But the Soviet period nevertheless brought some doubtful layers to the quarter, which are captured in Andrei Tarkovsky's 1979 film *Stalker*. To honour this Soviet sci-fi film, one of the streets in the quarter is now named Stalker's Passage.

The Soviet administration left the buildings in such a bad state that they were considered useless. The diligent Tallinners, however, have since returned the quarter to its former glory. Today this area of the city features a harmonious melange of perfectly preserved historical buildings and smart, modern constructions that house shops, wine bars, restaurants, and cafés. The salt storage building is now home to the Estonian Museum of Architecture, while the carpenter's workshop extended with three futuristic towers was shortlisted for the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture in 2009. It's probably the best place to catch the vibe of the city!

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# Plugged into a Network



*Design House in Bergs Bazaar, Elizabetes 83a, Riga*  
*Design Space, Boulevard Uzvaras 9, Riga*  
*Design Gallery, Gyneju Gatve 14, Vilnius*

Photo:

1. Moca chair, APC chair, HAL Ply Tube chair, Vases Découpage; Vitra
2. Pixel multi-functional modular furnishing system; Bene
3. Allstar task chair, Uten.Silo organizer; Vitra

Social and business networks, communication and energetic networks, networks of economy and transportation, networks of contacts and networks of culture. We are all tangled up in them. Lately, we have had to rethink the ways we connect within these networks, but it is our human nature to unite. Our physical travels might be restricted, but we have the ability to move information all over the globe, creating unprecedented togetherness in our virtual space. It has also become clear that our physical spaces, both public and domestic, need to adapt to our new lifestyles. Whether you need a home office or a clever layout solution for your restaurant, xcelsior will help to find a design solution that connects with you



Words by Lana Jūra  
Publicity photos

Photo by Riccardo Gasparoni



When **Tommaso Calabro** established his gallery of modern and contemporary art in Milan, he was only 28 years old. But he already had an excellent education and international experience under his belt, which included studies at Milan's Bocconi University and the Courtauld Institute of Art and King's College in London as well as work experience at *Sotheby's* and managing the Nahmad Projects gallery in London. 'I greatly appreciate the fact that Milan is an incredibly international but at the same time deeply Italian city with a magnificent heritage of our culture and traditions,' says Calabro. He tells us about a few of his favourite places in Milan, all located within a short walk from his gallery.



Fly to  
**Milan**  
from  
**€89**  
roundtrip

© Comune di Milano, photo by Thomas Paganì

#### Museo del Novecento

I visit the Museo del Novecento quite often, where I enjoy looking at the works of art by Lucio Fontana, Giorgio Morandi, and many other artists. This museum has one of the most important collections of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Italian art, with 400 works exhibited in chronological order. It's located in the Palazzo dell'Arengario, a superb example of architecture designed by the masters Piero Portaluppi, Enrico Agostino Griffini, Pier Giulio Magistretti, and Giovanni Muzio. Piazza del Duomo 8; [museodelnovecento.org](http://museodelnovecento.org)

#### Libreria Bocca dal 1775

If I need to get something special from the world of art or culture, I always head to the *Libreria Bocca dal 1775* bookstore. It's a unique, historical place and probably currently the oldest bookstore in Italy. Throughout the centuries, it has remained loyal to its original specialisation. Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II 12; [libreriabocca.com](http://libreriabocca.com)

#### Trattoria Milanese dal 1933

What would Milan be without traditional Italian cuisine? I usually eat lunch at the friendly *Trattoria Milanese*. It's a wonderful place for typical Milanese dishes, for example, *risotto alla milanese* or *cotoletta alla milanese*. Via Santa Marta 11; [FB/TrattoriaMilanese1933](https://www.facebook.com/TrattoriaMilanese1933)

#### Galleria d'Arte Tommaso Calabro

When I returned to Milan from London with the goal of opening my own gallery, I wanted to find a space that wasn't a typical white cube. I wanted a historically rich, elegant environment, and I found it here, on the first floor of the Neoclassical-style Palazzo Marietti. The *Casa Iolas: Citofonare Vezzoli* exhibition, which is dedicated to the famous Greek gallerist Alexander Iolas (1907–1987), is on show here until January 16. Piazza San Sepolcro 2; [tommasocalabro.com](http://tommasocalabro.com)



Photo by Riccardo Gasparoni

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## Helsinki IN 24 HOURS

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one way

Words by Olga Dolina  
Publicity photos, by  
Olga Dolina and Shutterstock

Helsinki is always ready to share its most memorable urban impressions. Here are some pit stops to treat your eyes, body, and soul.



### WHERE TO STAY

Hotel U14 offers upscale comfort and inspiring design details in 117 rooms (ten of which are pet friendly) that unite contemporary elegance and joyful décor, such as lively animal wallpapers and light pistachio green walls, colourful furnishings and exotic bird-themed tables. The lobby showcases *A Million Times*, a kinetic sculpture that works like a digital clock. Inside it, multiple analogue clocks move independently, creating a choreographed abstraction that synchronises once every minute to show the correct time.

Unioninkatu 14 | hotelu14.fi

### WHY NOT

There are plenty of ways to enjoy traditional sauna culture in Helsinki, and nearly every hotel offers one. However, for an authentic nature-embraced experience, there's Kaurilan Sauna. The traditional wood-heated sauna is nestled in a small authentic wooden cottage that dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Kaurilan offers escapist therapy to nurture the body and soul. The historical house features atmospheric candle lights, rustic wooden furniture, simple linens and pure cotton towels for an extra cosy feel.

Heikinniementie 9 | kaurilansauna.fi



### WHERE TO SHOP

Two Finnish design icons, *Iittala* and *Arabia*, are keeping up with the sustainable demands of our modern times and at the same offer a unique opportunity to purchase a piece of history. The Vintage Service initiative invites locals to bring their old tableware back into the store and have it resold to new customers. *Iittala* claims that the vintage products sold here in 2019 alone have saved more than 133 tonnes of solid natural resources and more than 45 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Pohjoisesplanadi 23 | iittala.com

### WHERE TO EAT

Kahvila Taikalamppu means 'the magic lamp' in Finnish. Dressed in bright green, blue, and red walls and furnished with vintage chairs and tables, an old piano, handmade toys, and embroidery, this place is run by charismatic Kirsti Lakopulos. The café has no menu – the lady of the house offers whatever she feels like on any given day. Enjoy heavenly iced coffee with a *korvapuusti* cinnamon bun, sweet and savoury cakes, or seasonal homemade lemonade in a setting with a twist. It's truly a local experience to remember.

Torkkelinkatu 21 | FB/ Kahvila Taikalamppu



### A CLASSIC NOT TO MISS

The Academic Bookstore (built in 1969) stands right around the corner from another famous creation by architect Alvar Aalto, the Rautatalo, or 'Iron House', a regular-shaped office building constructed in 1955 and clad with a copper-glass façade. The bookstore continues ideas that Aalto developed in the spacious inner courtyard of Rautatalo and greets visitors with a wow-effect interior. The bright Carrara marble atrium frames the two-storey retail space illuminated by prism-like skylights. A dream come true for avid bookworms and design aficionados, *Café Aalto* on the 2<sup>nd</sup>-floor balcony is a perfect nook for a coffee break and is partly furnished with original Aalto pieces.

Keskuskatu 1 | akateeminen.com



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Words by Olga Dolina  
Photo courtesy of *Enter Gauja*

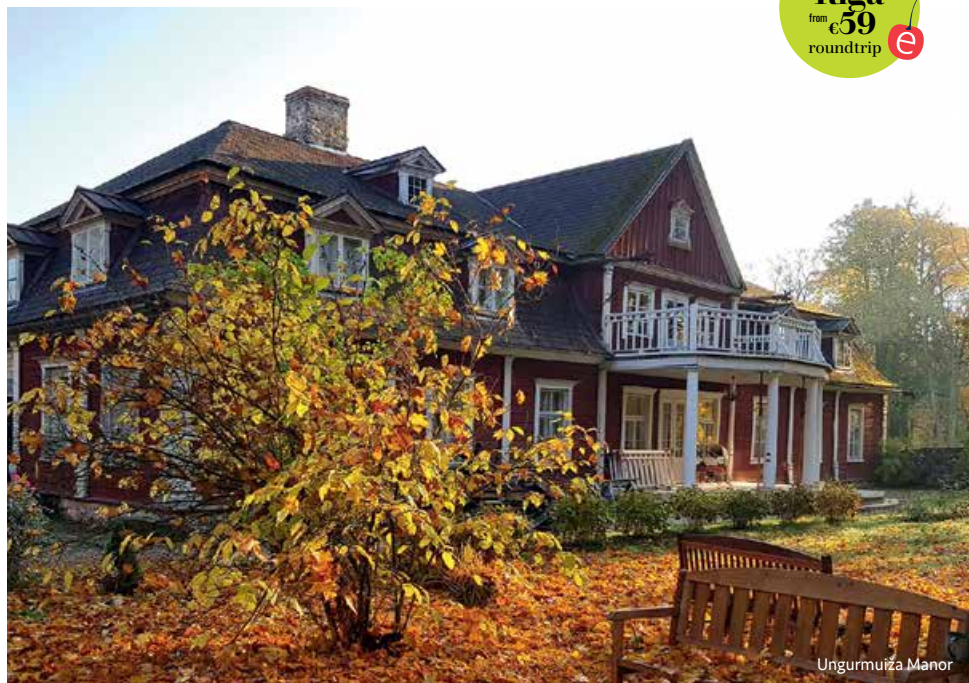
# Explore Latvia's manor houses

Latvia is full of hidden gems. Among them are its many manor houses, which are especially beautiful in autumn.

For centuries, the Latvian cultural and architectural scene was dominated by numerous manor estates. Nowadays these historical landmarks greet modern explorers in various different states, from photogenic ruins to well-preserved museums and restored hotels offering restaurants, relaxing spa experiences, venues for concerts and art exhibitions, and other leisure facilities.

Local cultural researcher Vitolds Mašnovskis recently published another volume of his extensive, multivolume encyclopaedia titled *Manors in Latvia* (Muižas Latvijā), which presents information and photos of nearly 1200 manor estates, although in the past the number of active manors was even greater. Built mainly as family residences, most of the manor houses that survived the revolutionary riots and wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were nationalised and repurposed as schools, sanatoriums, cultural or agricultural centres, etc. Before then, however, life on a manor was like a unique microcosm. A rich infrastructure was built around the main building, including houses for servants, barns, mills, breweries, schools, and churches, often for a total of between 20 to 40 buildings.

Each of the gems listed here is easily reached from Riga in a couple of hours by car. And each destination is like a page in a dictionary of architecture – Baroque, Neoclassical, and Neo-Gothic styles are all widely represented in the country. Adjoining landscape parks, corners of wild nature, and beautiful views bring added value to any visit to a manor.



## BEAUTIFUL, TIMELESS, AND INSPIRING MANORS TO EXPLORE

### Ungurmuiža Manor

Ungurmuiža can be recognised by its red façade and is the only still standing 18<sup>th</sup>-century wooden Baroque-era architecture ensemble in Latvia. Rather modest in size, it was constructed to integrate into the environment rather than pompously stand out. The interior, however, contains some impressive decorations. The treasure box-like rooms display preserved sections of the magnificent original wall paintings and ceiling plafonds as well as an ornate wooden staircase. The restaurant located in a separate building offers a satisfying menu rich in traditional, seasonal Latvian flavours.  
Ungurmuiža, Raiskums parish; ungurmuiza.lv

### Mālpils Manor

A place for beautiful encounters with nature and carefree relaxation, Mālpils Manor is an imposing example of Neoclassical architecture surrounded by a lush, romantic Baroque-style park. The main building was built in 1760. Embodying antiquity and calmness, the manor was meticulously restored in 2008 to welcome a luxurious hotel with 22 atmospheric rooms and a gourmet restaurant. The enchanting 22-hectare park with its walkways, benches, stone ruins, and century-old trees set a fine autumn mood. Visitors can even enjoy a boat ride among the water lilies and fountain in the fairytale-like pond.  
Pils iela 6, Mālpils; malpilsmuiza.lv

### Abgunste Manor

This gem in Jelgava municipality just an hour's drive from Riga basks in the creative and cosy spirit and welcoming aura of its loving owners. A young family acquired Abgunste Manor at auction and moved in here in 2016. They immediately began a careful step-by-step restoration process of the manor's valuable historical and artistic elements, and this process continues to the present day, also engaging the local community of craftsmen and artists. The manor house dates back to 1780. Nowadays, the romantic and picturesque Abgunste Manor, nicknamed the Mecca of Creativity, is a favoured place for artist residencies, craft workshops, exhibitions, photo shoots, and frequent thematic brunches.  
Abgunste, Zaļenieki parish; abgunste.lv

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## Autumn for two

Style by Ieva Čečina  
Publicity photos and by iStock

The romance of autumn has always been much more powerful and intense than that of the vivid summer months. This is the best time of year for taking a stroll in the still-green urban parks. Or spending an intimate evening by the fireplace.

### FOR BOTH

Set of two glasses, Riedel Performance Syrah, EUR 44.90



Inspiring book, *The Gardens Of Arne Maynard*, Amazon.com, USD 52.28



Large wool throw, H&M Home, EUR 49.99

Bright autumn coat, Etro, Yoox.com, EUR 850



Stylish leather jacket, Hugo Boss, EUR 499



Warm wool sweater, Cos, EUR 69



Scarf that also looks good on her, Hugo Boss, EUR 89.95



Light corduroy trousers, Marc O'Polo, EUR 134.95



Sunglasses, Massimo Dutti, EUR 69.95



Comfortable leather boots, Gucci, Yoox.com, EUR 410

### FOR HIM

Romantic pleated skirt, Marella, EUR 129



Stylish ankle boots, Cos, EUR 175



Warm wool sweater, Hugo Boss, EUR 249



### FOR HER



Light, graceful glass earrings, Cos, EUR 29

# THE TREASURES OF ITALIAN HISTORY

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## Outdoor gallery

Free of crowds and full of art, Germany's latest sculpture park, Schlossgut Schwante on the grounds of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century castle, is a new ultimate destination.

Words by Olga Dolina  
Publicity photo

Embraced by the beautiful forests of Upper Havelland, Schwante Castle is an 18<sup>th</sup>-century Baroque gem located just 25 kilometres north of Berlin. Built between 1741 and 1743 as a family estate, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was used as a provisional hospital, post office, and later on even a restaurant. The castle's current owners are Dr. Loretta Würtenberger and Daniel Tümpel, the founders of the Berlin-based Institute for Artists' Estates. This couple of art professionals and aficionados have transformed the landscape park surrounding their new family manor into a gripping open-air sculpture gallery.

Appreciating a rich history and aiming at revealing new horizons, Schlossgut Schwante has filled 200,000 square metres of land with exceptional architectural and landscape features. With the imposing castle façade framed by lush woods, the park has many different terrain levels and vegetation types, from serene meadows and precisely cut green

lawns to untamed corners and mysterious centuries-old tree groves.

This summer, the grounds were inaugurated with the *Sculpture & Nature* exhibition, which is on display until October 31 will return again in May 2021. It features sculptures and site-specific installations by leading artists, including Hans Arp, Tony Cragg, Maria Loboda, Dan Graham, and Ai Weiwei. Situated in specific dialogue with the picturesque rural surroundings, the 24 sculptures explore the relationship between nature and art. Visitors can dine at the welcoming, organic, on-site restaurant next to a captivating piece by Moroccan-born artist Hicham Berrada. The interactive swing hanging in a tree by Jorinde Voigt overlooks a steel staircase by Monika Sosnowska and a neon work by Martin Creed that reflects a cheery message in the calm waters of the adjoining lake: "Everything is going to be alright."

Schlossplatz 1-3, Oberkrämer, Brandenburg;  
[schlossgut-schwante.de](http://schlossgut-schwante.de)



# MORE THAN ITALIAN

**LAVAZZA**  
TORINO, ITALIA, 1895



## Slow looking

Why is it important to look at art slowly?

Words by Ilze Vitola  
Publicity photo

There's no better time than autumn, when the chilly winds usher us into the comforting confines of art galleries and museums, to practise gazing at a work of art, studying every single angle of it. It sounds so easy, like nothing. But in today's world – when we encounter a very wide variety of products not only in grocery store aisles but also at art institutions, and when the most expensive currency is time – spending more than a few minutes to look at a single work of art is not so common. In 2017, a study published in *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* showed that the average person spends just 27 seconds looking at a single work of art.

But this changes on one day in April, which is known as Slow Art Day – a global event with the mission to help people discover the joy of appreciating art. On this day people around the world visit museums and galleries to look at art slowly. They look at five works of art for ten minutes each, and then they meet with others over lunch to talk about their experience. That's it – no guides, and no special knowledge needed.

The first Slow Art Day was held in 2009, with events at 16 museums in the United States, Europe, and Canada. The first events were led by art-loving individuals who simply gathered a group of people to go to a local museum, look at art slowly, and talk about it together. Today, however, museums and other arts organisations are often leading the charge.

Maggie Freeman, the global coordinator of Slow Art Day, says that the initiative was established in response to the fact that not only do museum visitors often not really look at the artwork, but in fact museums themselves frequently don't encourage their visitors to *really* engage with the art on display. But why is it important to look at art slowly?

Freeman responds: 'When we look at art slowly, we notice things we wouldn't otherwise. We have emotional reactions, and, maybe most importantly, we form our own understanding of what a work of art is about and what it means. An essential component of Slow Art Day is that it does not involve guided, expert-led tours. Instead, visitors look at art quietly and on their own. Then, participants come together to discuss what they saw and felt and thought. An educational background in art or even any previous knowledge about the works of art on view is not necessary. All visitors need to do is use their eyes and have patience.'

Many museums that take part in Slow Art Day have incorporated the practise into their daily operations. For instance, Tate Modern in London occasionally offers Slow Looking tours. According to the Slow Art Day philosophy, though, you don't need anyone to govern the process. Just go to a museum, find a comfy spot, ideally switch your phone to airplane mode, and look at the art for five or ten minutes. Take your time.



**Maggie Freeman** is the global coordinator of the Slow Art Day initiative. She lives in Copenhagen, Denmark, and does fundraising for a media NGO called International Media Support. Freeman holds a degree in art history, with an emphasis on Islamic art and architecture.

# ZUZEUM

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Zuzeum Art Centre, Lāčplēša iela 101, Rīga, LV-1011

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# Into the wild

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ikamper.lv  
EUR 3500

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It can get quite chilly if you venture out into the wilderness in late autumn, especially if you choose to conquer some mountain trails. For situations like that, this heated hoodie is an irreplaceable item on your list. The hoodie itself keeps you cosy on your hike, but if you get really cold, it has an embedded heating element that can generate heat for up to 12 hours. No more shivering while outdoors.  
ventureheat.com  
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If you're planning a cycling tour, it's vital to know the wind direction and speed to get a nice bit of tailwind for most of the trip. The *Windy* app gives precise info regarding current wind and weather conditions and for the upcoming hours and days as well. Also great for kitesurfers and windsurfers. Available on *Google Play* and *App Store*



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# OVERSEEING

Henry Ford once said: 'Good organisation of an old system is much better than bad organisation of a new system'. These key words precisely describe the advantages that Oversee can provide your business.

Oversee is a digital tool that can be used to rigorously define production process sequencing, facilitate compliance monitoring, manage resources, and also serve as a data platform that management can use as a basis for process analysis and decision making.

To ensure the efficiency of these processes in daily operations, management can utilise the Oversee application on a mobile smart device through which operational activities are recorded and linked to the WEB system that collects and structures data and creates analytics.

Just as mentioned in the above quote from Henry Ford, one of the processes that Oversee can digitise is the effective maintenance of production facilities. This means that through this function, the manager can coordinate and arrange work organisation issues – preventive technical maintenance (cleaning of equipment, greasing, lubrication, screw tightening, inspection), corrective and planned technical maintenance according to the equipment manufacturer's requirements, emergency maintenance, and repair. In addition, the procedure for cleaning equipment after a shift change is defined for equipment operators.

One of the greatest benefits of this product is that equipment operators can report any deviations in normal operations that they may notice in a very simple and convenient way through the mobile app. In this way, operators look after their equipment, their interest and care for the equipment increases, and operator competence grows. In addition, rapid identification of small problems that could later lead to equipment downtime (unproductive production and losses) is ensured.

Using the app requires no more than a few minutes of the operator's time, and the information is instantly visible to the responsible supervisor in the form of a notification on their mobile device, as well as an e-mail notification and as a registered entry in the WEB database.

However, the greatest benefit that comes from using the Oversee system is the reduction of equipment emergencies during production, which in turn reduces the load on the mechanical department and allows it to instead focus on scheduled maintenance, diagnostics, training, upgrades and other tasks.

The benefits from using Oversee depend on how prepared the business is for such a system.

A good example is a well-organised spare parts warehouse in which the stock is labeled and for which Oversee can provide QR codes, systematised shelving, and an existing warehouse inventory programme that has been supplemented with Oversee's online material outflow accounting system (providing easily controlled minimum balances and delivery planning). Another example is the possibility of collecting structured downtime data from an existing equipment downtime programme – obtaining this additional data allows for productive focus on any vulnerabilities.

Another feature of the app is the option of online employee monitoring. To achieve this, Beacon (bluetooth) sensors are installed in the area where employees work and a need for monitoring has been established. The devices are linked to the Oversee algorithm and the app provides information on ongoing movement in work areas with an accuracy of up to 1.5 m. This is both a matter of occupational safety and a way to quickly detect unnecessary movements of workers so that appropriate remedial measures can be taken. An example of a situation that could benefit from this app feature is if an employee has spent more time on repair work than planned. The supervisor can track the employee's movement history, which can then indicate the possible reasons for inefficient use of time, such as the employee having not properly prepared for the task and making repeated visits to the warehouse to pick up spare parts or to the workshop to retrieve necessary equipment. With this information, the supervisor can now decide on how best to improve the employee's work performance either by streamlining procedures or providing additional training.

Oversee also offers digitisation of other processes, such as replacing various paper registers with digital registers and the filing of reports in Excel formats with digital reports. This optimises employee work time and increases efficiency.

All this notwithstanding, every user of a digital program should keep in mind that digitisation may help to streamline processes and obtain data, but the ultimate road to success depends on the experience and abilities of the decision makers.  
theoversee.com  
youtube.com/ TheOversee

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- A planning tool that provides the manager with all the information necessary to keep track of the current process and to plan ahead. The system keeps track of time, location (if required by health and safety protocols), employees (or at least the required position and skill set), spare parts needed to complete the task, etc.
- Detailed analytics of production performance based on accurate data that records the time spent on tasks, what parts have been used and for how long, and additional work required on the unit being serviced.
- An evaluation of employee performance based on completed work orders, which allows management to analyse each employee's suitability for the task at hand.
- An analytics tool and reports for data-based decisions



oversee





# Pre-show dining

More and more eateries are offering menus designed to have you well fed and on your way before the curtain rises.



Barnets Bar, Riga

The choreography of the waiters, the scenography of the dining room, the drama on your plate – visiting a restaurant is sometimes akin to a theatre performance. This analogy makes it logical that dining before a performance and after-show drinks are an integral part of the theatre-going experience. They set the stage and mood for the night and make sure you’re well fed before the evening’s main event.

All across Europe, from London to Riga, you’ll find eateries specialising in pre-theatre experiences, either on-site (such as the iconic *Café Oper Wien* at the Vienna State Opera) or just steps away from the venue (such as *Aster*, located within earshot of Victoria Palace Theatre in London). Many of these establishments offer so-called theatre menus, which are available for a short time before the curtain rises and sometimes after it falls as well. These menus are speedy and fixed-price.

## They set the stage and mood for the night

Words by Ilze Vitola  
Publicity photo

## WHERE TO TREAT YOURSELF BEFORE AN EVENING OF CULTURE

### *Frenchie* in London

Every true Londoner will tell you that a pre-theatre meal is a must. This outpost of the famous Parisian venue is a sleek Art Deco-style French bistro close to the Royal Opera House, the Adelphi, and other Covent Garden venues. Gather your favourite theatre company, nab a seat by the table lamps at the bar, and discuss your expectations for the show over exquisite dishes that have a strong French flavour but plenty of British and Asian twists. 16 Henrietta Street; frenchiecoventgarden.com

### *ITA Brasserie* in Amsterdam

Amsterdam’s dining scene is as diverse as its cultural offering. Internationaal Theater Amsterdam, the king of the Dutch theatre scene, has a varied programme of theatre performances with English surtitles. Set the tone for the evening at the theatre’s brasserie, which boasts a menu featuring sustainable ingredients in dishes dreamed up by chef Rogier van Dam of the *Lastage* restaurant. There’s also a three-course theatre menu and a changing ‘one-act’ – all light and quickly served – as well as a great selection of wines from small wineries, which are a great second act. Leidseplein 26; ita.nl

### *Barents* in Riga

Just steps from the Great Guild (the home of the Latvian National Symphonic Orchestra) and the Mikhail Chekhov Riga Russian Theatre lies the ultra-elegant *Barents* seafood bar and restaurant. While the restaurant is a perfect place to unhurriedly celebrate life with excellent seafood, the velvet seating under the gilded chandelier at the seafood bar just around the corner is the ultimate place for after-show cocktails and top-rate nibbles. What makes it a prime destination for a cultural evening is its special pre-theatre menu. Smilšu iela 3; barents.lv

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OCTOBER 2020

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04	O	TOSCA	Returning to repertoire!
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07	B	THREE COMRADES	
08	B	THREE COMRADES	
09	O	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	
10	B	ANTONIJA #SILMACI	
11	O	THE QUEEN OF SPADES	
13	O	THE QUEEN OF SPADES	
14	B	PEER GYNT	
15	O	TOSCA	
16	B	LA BAYADÈRE	
17	O	THE QUEEN OF SPADES	
18	O	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	
20	O	THE QUEEN OF SPADES	
21	B	HAMLET. TELL ME (NO) TALES	
22	B	HAMLET. TELL ME (NO) TALES	
23	O	LA BOHÈME	
24	O	DON QUIXOTE	
25	O	LA BOHÈME	
27	O	DIALOGUES DES CARMÉLITES	
28	B	SWAN LAKE	
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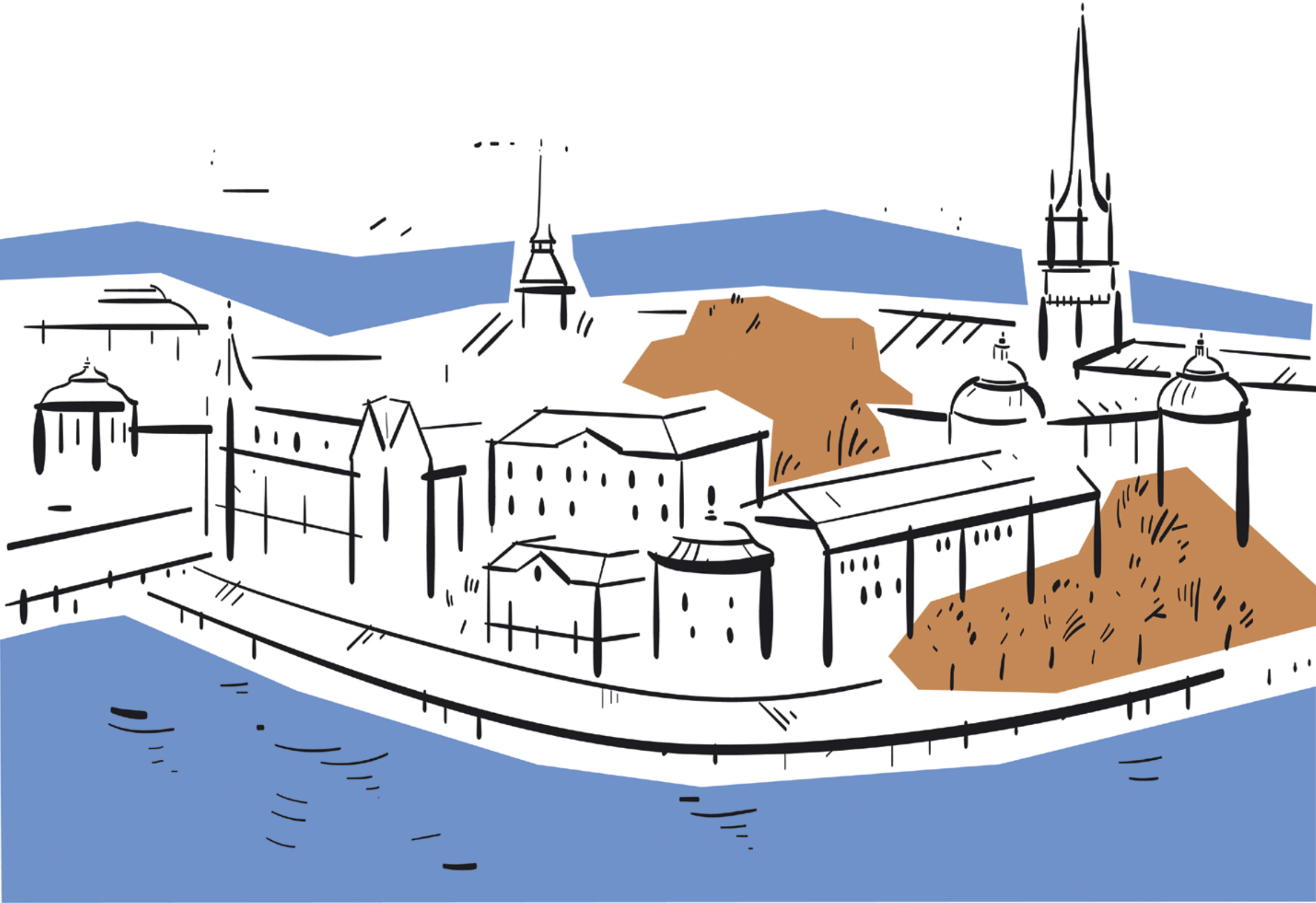


Words by Andrew Mellor  
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Illustration by Agnese Taurina

# STOCKHOLM

1995/2020

It may be Scandinavia’s grandest, oldest capital, but Stockholm has changed almost beyond recognition since *airBaltic*’s first-ever flight touched down there a quarter of a century ago.







Downtown Stockholm near the Slussen metro station.



An old street in Riddarholmen, a part of the Old Town.



A view of the Fotografiska museum, which is situated in a former customs building.



The Odenplan metro station in Vasastan, central Stockholm.

## These days, the city is a cosmopolitan global capital and a benchmark for smart, green living

On the afternoon of October 1, 1995, *airBaltic*’s inaugural flight took off from Riga and touched down in Stockholm. With that, a new national airline was born. Apart from the short interruption caused by Covid-19, *airBaltic* has been connecting the Latvian and Swedish capitals almost every day for the past quarter of a century.

Gazing at each other from opposite sides of the Baltic Sea, Stockholm and Riga have always enjoyed a special relationship. I feel lucky to have been a guest in both cities countless times. They are, respectively, the grand old capitals of the Scandinavian and Baltic regions – awash with golden-age architecture and brimming with history.

Every European city has seen itself transformed in the past 25 years. The changes visited upon Stockholm in that time have been subtle but fundamental. These days, the city is a cosmopolitan global capital and a benchmark for smart, green living. And visitors are reaping the rewards like never before.

**IN 1995, SWEDEN JOINED THE EUROPEAN UNION.** The country was emerging from a deep economic crisis, and, after a brief flirtation with the liberal capitalism of Prime Minister Carl Bildt, had returned the Social Democrats to power. It was also the year my friend and colleague Astrid Selin moved to Stockholm from Gothenburg to study.

Astrid ended up staying there for twelve years, working in retail and fashion before returning to her hometown to start a gardening business. She’s the perfect person to ask about the 90s vibe of the

Swedish capital and confirms that when she arrived there in 1995, Ace of Base’s ‘Never Gonna Say I’m Sorry’ was drifting from car radios all around the city (she doesn’t miss the opportunity to remind me that the band is, in fact, from Gothenburg on Sweden’s west coast). ‘On the streets, the fashion was for dungarees, lumberjack shirts, loose fitting stone-washed jeans, and sweatshirts with big, brash logos,’ she says, ‘And yes, I know it sounds like I’m describing 2020!’

Stockholm would soon become a primary destination for the latest travel trend: the ‘city break’. But locals were already finding new ways to entertain themselves. Less than a month before that flight from Riga landed, a club opened in a huge disused shipyard on the outskirts of the city. *Docklands* would become a mainstay of the Stockholm rave scene – an underground club formed in direct contravention of Sweden’s conservative licensing laws.

‘You’d learn about these parties from tiny paper flyers distributed in record stores and clothes shops,’ recalls Astrid. ‘The only way the authorities in Sweden could combat the growth of these underground clubs was to force the city’s nightlife above ground. So they updated the law, allowing nightclubs to extend their opening times from midnight to 5 am.’ Thus, in the second half of the 1990s, Stockholm’s nightlife as we know it was born.

Astrid and I reflect on some happy weekends in the city over a *Zoom* call, considering how the optimism and economic fertility that swept through Europe when we were both teenagers has shaped our current, adult way of life. In Stockholm, it began with the transformation of districts close to the city centre. What were once predominantly residential, working-class areas quickly became buzzing hubs of activity in their own right. Living in the city became fashionable again, and a property boom followed. Behind the scenes, a new philosophy took root at City Hall. ‘Smart city’ thinking meant every major decision concerning Stockholm’s development would be made with the environment, quality of life, integration, and mobility as key objectives.

**I HAVE ALWAYS FOUND STOCKHOLM PERFECT FOR EXPLORING ON FOOT.** One of the most obvious results of the city’s ‘smart’ thinking is that it has almost emptied the city centre of cars, which are now diverted into tunnels, onto bridges, and via circular ring roads. That has not only benefited walkers but also resulted in an explosion of cycling. ‘Stockholmers go everywhere by bike these days. That is a vast difference,’ says Samuel Branting, an editor at *Stockholmskällan*, which collates and publishes the city’s history online. ‘People come into the city on bikes from miles around. This is a change that has been seen in other cities but has been particularly strong here.’

Self-propelled movement in the city is not confined to dry land. Stockholm sits on 14 granite islands connected by 57 bridges; water is something the city has in plentiful supply. In the 90s, swimming in the city’s waterways was not advised, but in recent years Stockholm has cleaned up its harbour water, which is now very safe for swimming. Beaches and bathing spots are scattered around the inner city. Among the best are the beaches at Trekantsbadet and Oxhålsbadet, of which the latter is particularly suited to winter swimming with its wooden docks. Others, such as Liljeholmsbadet, are also equipped with saunas for the alluring combination of hot steam and cold water. Throw in a beer, and you have a perfect Stockholm activity in any weather.

Developments like clean swimming water are assets Stockholm likes to talk about. But the whole idea of marketing a city to visitors, on a large scale, was still some way off in 1995; *Visit Stockholm*’s current advertising slogan, ‘Capital of Scandinavia’, would probably have been viewed as a jibe at Copenhagen. ‘The influx of tourists has changed the feel of the city, but in return, the city has embraced it,’ says Branting. ‘In a way, you could say it was always Stockholm’s dream to become the capital of the region and a big city in European terms. To some extent, it has managed that while remaining quite small. But the numbers of visitors bears witness to the city’s ambitions.’

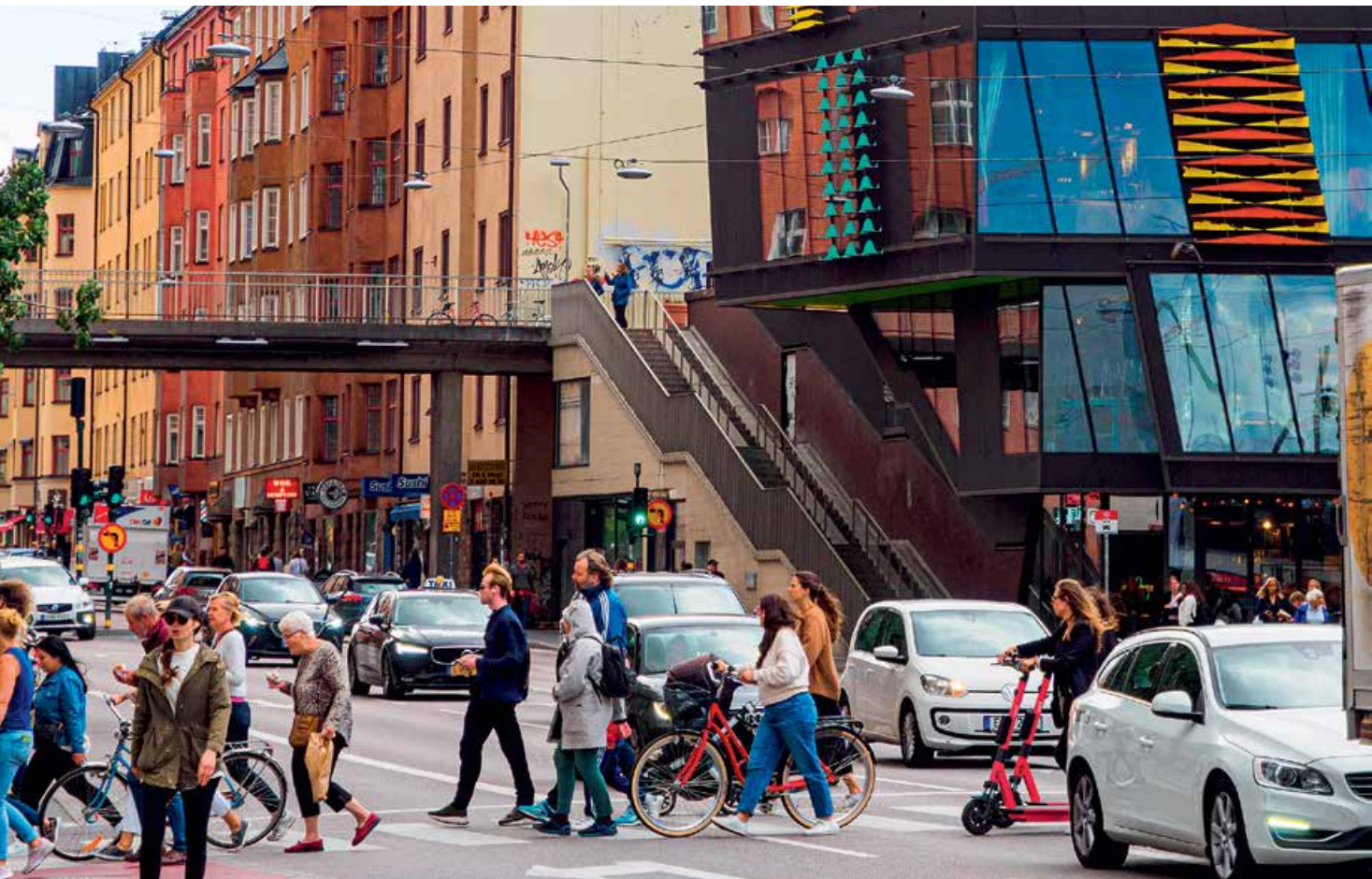
With better marketing came a conscious effort to transform the experience visitors would have in Stockholm. Museums became more interactive, while the Moderna Museet – Stockholm’s answer to Tate Modern – looks very different today courtesy of the 700 works of art from the Pontus Hultén Collection that were bequeathed to it in 2005 as well as some striking additions to its sculpture park.

More excitingly, new museums have sprung up, many of them in buildings long since vacated by old industry. Fotografiska, the Swedish museum of photography, is situated in a former customs building on the fashionable southern island of Södermalm. The brick structure was completed in 1906 to a striking Art Nouveau design by architect Ferdinand Boberg. While the brick façade remains, the interiors have been stripped bare to accommodate small but well-curated exhibitions. From the current lineup, Lauren Greenfield’s evocative *Generation Wealth* has to be seen. Fotografiska also has a cute café with excellent views.

I chat with my friend Astrid about the simpler lives we lived in the 90s, but she warns me not to look back at the era with rose-tinted spectacles. ‘It was far harder to communicate back then, and don’t you remember the stuff you had to carry around and have in your office? The fax machines, pagers, and brick-sized mobile phones that we thought were the height of technology?’ Although I was barely out of my teens at the time, I do get all nostalgic about clunky, plastic, beige technology when I visit Stockholm’s Tekniska Museum, which houses 55,000 objects from the country’s industrial history – from cassette tapes to jet engines.

We miss some elements of the 90s for good reasons. This was, after all, the dawn of modern gaming technology, as the Spelmuseum (Museum of Video Games) reminds us. Anyone with fond memories of the *Nintendo Entertainment System* and *Super Mario Kart* will love this new museum. It’s not just for nostalgia hunters, either. It explores all aspects of video game culture past and present and also organises frequent tournaments and other meet-ups.





Hornstull, a hipster neighbourhood in the western part of Södermalm.

## Södermalm now hosts a generous proportion of the city’s best bars, galleries, and performance venues

‘THE THING ABOUT SWEDISH SOCIETY,’ SAYS ASTRID, ‘IS THAT IT HASN’T BEEN URBANISED FOR VERY LONG. Some would say it’s still a country without a truly urban mindset.’ That might explain the culture of the Swedish capital, with its slow pace, unusual island topography, and its inhabitants’ obsession with escaping into nature. Still, you could be forgiven for not noticing Stockholm’s anti-urban tendencies when tracking its rapid growth over the past three decades. ‘In the early 90s, the population of the capital was about 700,000. Now it’s more like a million, with an additional million in the wider urban area. Every Stockholmer has had to get used to this big change, and it hasn’t always felt that gradual,’ reports Branting, the *Stockholmskällan* editor.

Many who now live in Stockholm weren’t born in the city or even in Sweden; the country’s open immigration policy has made its capital one of the most culturally diverse in the world. At the same time, gentrification has meant new, trendy districts have popped up in areas that were once working-class or industrial.

The most famous is Södermalm, the über-trendy island just south of the Old Town that now hosts a

generous proportion of the city’s best bars, eateries, boutiques, galleries, and performance venues. ‘I live in Södermalm, and I remember in the 90s, when there was barely anything here,’ says Branting. ‘This was originally a workers’ area, a poor area. That changed in the space of just a few years in the mid-90s, and suddenly Södermalm was where everyone wanted to live.’

One of the first things to arrive was the nightclub scene from out by the docks. Legendary clubs like *Le Garage* and *Tritnaha* opened up in Södermalm long before the delicatessens moved in. These days, the island’s club scene is dominated by the two-storey *Under Bron* (Under the Bridge), which is known as *Trädgården* in the summer months. It’s open until five in the morning and visited by well-known international DJs.

There are more established attractions on Södermalm as well, such as Sweden’s National Museum, Stockholm’s second opera house (Folkoperan), and the cliffs that line the island’s north edge and offer great views of the old town and central islands. A walk down Hornsgatan and an exploration of its side streets will take you past plenty of good cafés, bars, and shops.

But as always with trendy neighbourhoods, the epicentre never stays in one place for long. Nowadays you’ll hear Stockholmers referring to SoFo, the area of Södermalm ‘south of Folkungagatan’, which has become a hub for alternative shopping, including vintage and retro stores, vinyl shops, and independent fashion and housewares outlets.



The first urban areas on Södermalm, an island in central Stockholm, were built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Photo by Tove Freij

It livens up considerably at night. While SoFo still has the edge it had when it first started to emerge in the early 2000s, people are now pushing out to the areas that were *really* left empty in the 1990s, when the industry came to an end and there wasn’t anything to immediately replace it. Areas like Hornstull have now become popular with the sorts that used to hang around more central parts of the island, meaning that the few remaining empty bits of Södermalm are joining the party.

Hornstull is Södermalm’s new capital of cool. It sits at the western end of Hornsgatan, and, like so many of the most interesting urban areas in Europe, it was once a no-go area with more than its fair share of crime. Now it has cleaned up (almost; it retains its attractive gritty edge), made the best of its waterfront location, and become a mecca for craftspeople who have opened up shops selling handicrafts, clothes, and more.

Hornstull Marknad is a flea market of sorts, where you can find pretty much anything: vintage, art, design, crafts, antiques, and, of course, food trucks. It’s temporarily closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but there’s talk of a winter opening, safety permitting. In the meantime, there are plenty of other options nearby, especially when it comes to food, including the Brooklyn-styled *Tjoget*. Film buffs should drop by the coolest cinema in town, *Bio Rio*,



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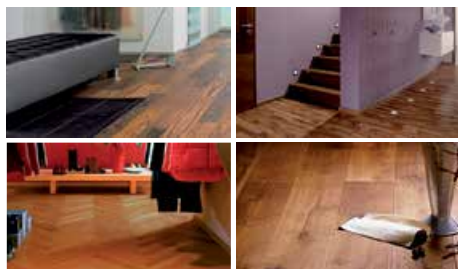
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YOUR NEXT DESTINATION / October



Fika at the Pelikan.

## The meat-packing district of Slakthusområdet is a new hotspot for nightlife

where the vibe is distinctly more 1940s than 90s.

It's not just Södermalm that looks different these days. Whole new districts have popped up in parts of the city that were previously unused. Hammarby Sjöstad is situated just across the water from Södermalm's southeasterly tip and was an industrial wasteland until its rebirth as an eco district a few years ago (it would have been the focus of 'Stockholm 2012', had the Olympic Games not been awarded to London). Developers took advantage of its position on the water to lure visitors with pristine waterside cycle lanes and attract locals with progressive, energy-efficient architecture. It is easily accessible via the Tvärbanen tram.

'Big changes in the cityscape are usually connected to industrial shifts,' says Branting. 'The very last industry in the city is situated at *Cementa*, where cement is manufactured, but the plant will move out next year. That will be an area to watch, partly as it's so close to Hammarby.' Branting also points to Norrtull, a new development close to

the Karolinska Institutet (Royal Caroline Institute), a medical research campus to the northwest of the city centre, which is becoming a desirable new residential district. I ask him what other parts of the city are newly worth a visit. He reports that the meat-packing district, Slakthusområdet, is a new hotspot for nightlife and points to the interesting things happening in Odenplan. The latter is a square in the northern corner of downtown Stockholm that, courtesy of a new railway station, has upped its game. As well as the National Library of Sweden, it is home to hospitable cafés and a touch of Stockholm's old grandeur.

**YOU'LL NEVER WANT FOR ELEGANT 19TH-CENTURY BUILDINGS IN STOCKHOLM, BUT THE CITY'S MODERN ARCHITECTURE HAS NOT PROVED SO POPULAR.** Many of the city's streets were straightened to accommodate cars in the post-war years, which prompted the springing-up of dozens of unpopular concrete edifices. For many, the 'Venice of the North' lost a good proportion of its beauty.

One difference returning visitors will certainly notice today is the disappearance of what many considered to be Stockholm's biggest eyesore – the series of concrete bridges, locks, and flyovers that connected Södermalm with the Old Town at Slussen. The

structure was always guaranteed to get Stockholmers talking; some loved the concrete spaghetti pile, some hated it, but everyone had an opinion on it. 'But let's be honest, most people hated it,' Astrid assures me.

Well, Slussen is no more. In 2009, the City of Stockholm announced that British architects *Foster and Partners* would redesign the area, and in 2016 the wrecking balls finally began to swing. When construction is complete in 2026, the new Slussen will be flat, sleek, and elegant. But it will still be concrete.

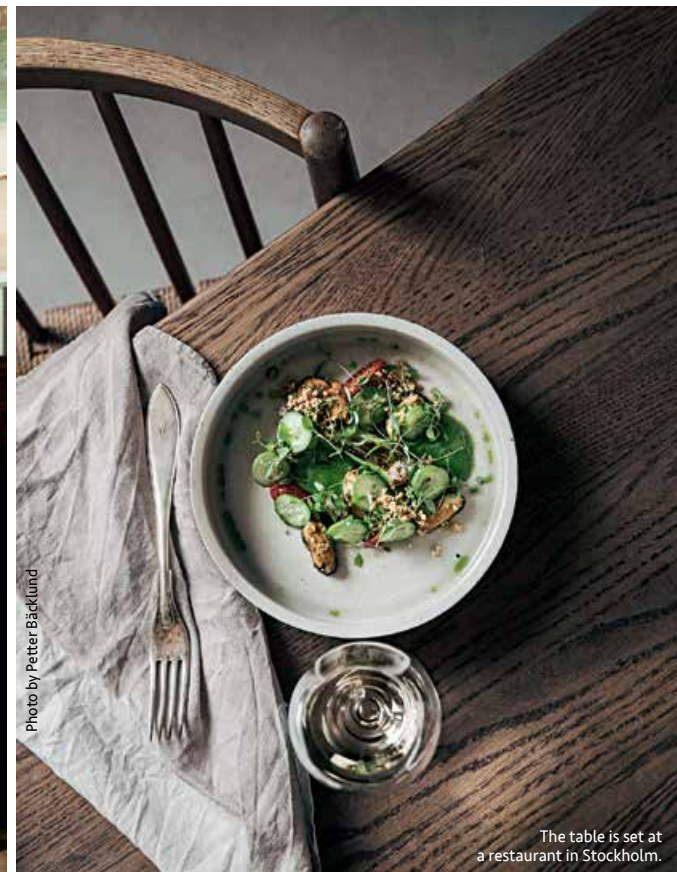
Elsewhere, building has outpaced demolition, making Stockholm denser than ever. New structures have sprung up all over the city to complement its grand Arts and Crafts-style apartment blocks, its distinctly Nordic Neoclassical structures of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and those Brutalist concrete edifices. The most obvious of them is the gigantic Stockholm Waterfront, a meeting of offices, a hotel, and a conference hall that protrudes elegantly upwards from a triangular plot hemmed in by water, the Central Station, and City Hall. The building, designed by *White Architects*, has become a talking point in the city as much for its apparent combination of floating shapes as for its delicately spindled metal façade.

One of the most beloved buildings of the past quarter of a century is the new

home of the private collection of Sven-Harry Karlsson, opened a decade ago on the edge of Vasaparken. People love the way Sven Harry's Art Museum looks from the front, its plain brass façade referencing the functionalist architecture of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. That neatness is something Swedes still pride themselves on. The museum is worth a visit for its art collection as well as its exterior beauty.

**OF ALL THE SENSES, THE TASTE OF STOCKHOLM HAS TRANSFORMED ITSELF MOST MARKEDLY OVER THE PAST 25 YEARS.** Much of that is connected to globalisation and immigration. A comprehensive ethnic food scene barely existed in 90s Stockholm. But with the ensuing influx of immigrants from Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, that scene has not only matured but has moved from a side-show to being a central part of the town's culinary tapestry.

Southeast Asian cuisine has been a strong suit in Scandinavia since the 1970s but has never been fresher or more inventive than it is now. It has even taken on board some of the New Nordic principles of locally sourced, fresh ingredients (a perennial favourite is the *Farang* restaurant). The food-truck craze came to Stockholm a few years ago as well, but now some of those trucks have become actual restaurants, even



The table is set at a restaurant in Stockholm.

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**Frida Ronge** is one of the hottest properties in Nordic cuisine. She is the culinary director at two Stockholm restaurants, *Tak* and *Unn*, and has pioneered the fusion of Scandinavian and Japanese cooking cultures. She counterbalances the fast pace of restaurant life with regular yoga and occasional surfing.

How has Stockholm's food scene changed? We're seeing more and more good-quality wine bars and excellent food for reasonable prices. Restaurants are working with urban farmers, and the menus are more seasonal – you can even get fast food that's healthy and sustainable. Chefs are also working more with different flavours and spices, particularly North African, Middle Eastern, and my favourite, Japanese. In general, people are more food-conscious, so we *have* to deliver quality every day!

How do you survive winter in Stockholm? I recommend visiting the Old Town, watching the snow falling on the beautiful rooftops, and then finding a cosy bar or café – maybe *Pastis*, *Tweed*, or *Chokladkoppen*. Then I would visit the beautiful Centralbadet for a swim and sauna bath. That makes life easier!

What do you do in your downtime? A lot of yoga! A favourite thing for Sundays is to visit Fotografiska, which is a really cool museum. If I need a break from the city, I head to Torö Stenstrand, a beach about 40 minutes away where I can surf. When 'off-duty', I might head to a favourite bar or restaurant, such as *Grus Grus* or *Sturehof*, or just invite friends to dinner at my place, *Tak*. It's got the best view over Stockholm!

Do you see parallels between the Scandinavian and Japanese cultures? Swedish and Japanese people are loyal. We like to work hard and see good results, both in our business and private lives. Both cultures are very interested in food, the quality of ingredients, and the different seasons of the year. Something we should copy is the Japanese *onsen*, or hot bath. We need this in Sweden – it would help with wellbeing.

restaurant chains. The best known is *Indian Street Food*, with various branches. Another is *Falloumi*, whose restaurant in Södermalm specialises in Arabic and Mediterranean dishes. Definitely try the chili sauces!

You can always cool your mouth down with a beer. Like the rest of Scandinavia, Sweden seems to have abandoned the cheap, fizzy lager that was the taste of the 90s for more distinguished, tailored brews. Look out for beers from *St. Eriks Bryggeri*, which are stocked in plenty of Södermalm-type restaurants, while anything from the *Gamla Enskede Bryggeri* is also worth a sip. Of course, nothing goes with beer like pizza, and the Italian favourite is now also way better than it was in the 90s. Try *Taverna Brillo* on Sturegatan, which serves probably the best pizza in eastern Sweden.

Thanks to the New Nordic revolution that has swept through the region, native Swedish food has also changed. Stockholm's own culinary renaissance

## For locals, Bistro Boheme has remained a firm favourite since its heyday in the 90s

began in the 90s with its own take on the New Nordic style pioneered by Marcus Samuelsson, who later left for Manhattan. These days, Swedish New Nordic mirrors that in Denmark, with the occasional local twist, meatballs included. Otherwise it's unfailingly fresh, ecological, locally sourced (plenty of fish and berries), and focused on quality over quantity. Astrid confesses it's not her thing. But I can promise you won't be disappointed at *Frantzén*, the city's best-known New Nordic restaurant. Among its most celebrated dishes is the locally sourced pork marinated for a week in soy sauce, smoked for 24 hours, and then hung out to dry for 100 days.

If that sounds extreme, it might be reassuring to know that some things never change – or at least, take a long time doing so. For locals, *Bistro Boheme* on Drottninggatan has remained a firm favourite since its heyday in the 90s; the restaurant and tapas bar has maintained its founding principles to the present day. 'And we haven't even talked about music,' Astrid reminds me. True.

So consider this: in November 2020, the Stockholm-born pop sensation Robyn will appear at an awards ceremony in Reykjavik, where her dark, complex album *Honey* has been nominated for the Nordic Council Music Prize. Robyn looks and sounds as stylish and as youthful as ever. So it's reassuring to know that her debut album, *Robyn is Here*, was released in the vintage year that was...1995.

### USEFUL ADDRESSES

#### WHERE TO STAY Ett Hem

Literally named 'at home', this ultra-stylish hotel opened in 2012 and delivers what it promises: the feeling of being a guest in someone's elegant townhouse. It also has a spa and gym. Sköldungagatan 2 (Valhallavägen) ettthem.se

#### No. 53

A little less exclusive but almost as comfortable, *No. 53* is a high-end branch of the ever-reliable *Scandic* chain. It has everything you need and nothing you don't, and despite the lively interior provides an oasis of calm in the heart of Stockholm's shopping district. Kungsgatan 53 scandichotels.com

#### WHERE TO SHOP Grandpa

A classy boutique selling a variety of handpicked clothes, jewellery, art, and gifts for men and women, *Grandpa* has lost none of its quirky idiosyncrasies despite having branched out. It is fast becoming a Swedish institution and is a one-stop-shop for tasteful Christmas gifts. Södermannagatan 21/ Fridhemsgatan 43/ Gamla Brogatan 32 grandpastore.se

#### Acne Studios

Now recognised as Sweden's coolest specialist fashion brand, *Acne Studios*

was founded in 1996 within a year of *airBaltic*'s maiden flight. It has since spread all over the world but retains a number of stores at home in Stockholm. The flagship outlet on Norrmalmstorg is of real historic interest – it was the scene of the bank robbery and hostage-taking in 1973 that gave rise to the term 'Stockholm syndrome'. Norrlandsgatan 10 acnestudios.com

#### Caroline Hjerpe

More than just a shop, at Caroline Hjerpe's base in Södermalm you can watch this diligent local artisan crafting the statement gold and silver jewellery that has become a great favourite of locals and take a piece home with you as well – a gift for that special somebody, or maybe just for yourself. Äsögatan 132 carolinehjerpe.se

#### WHERE TO EAT

##### Tak

Masterminded by our Insider Frida Ronge (see left), *Tak* is situated on a revamped Brutalist square in Norrmalm. But it's not the concrete building you'll be looking at, thanks to brilliant views over the city. There's a bar and terrace, and the restaurant lets you sample Ronge's pioneering Nordic-Japanese menu. Brunkbergstorg 2-4 tak.se

#### Sturehof

This seafood restaurant is a Stockholm institution whose roots can be traced

back to 1897. It was here, in 1924, that two businessmen made an agreement to establish the Swedish carmaker *Volvo*. 'A wonderful mix of the traditional and the modern,' says the *Michelin Guide*. The description could apply to the interior as much as the food. Stureplan 2 sturehof.com

#### DON'T MISS Spirit Museum

This museum offers a frank look at Sweden's complicated relationship with alcohol, which, outside of bars and restaurants, can still only be purchased from state-controlled *Systembolaget* outlets. An examination of new developments in Swedish cider lasts until the beginning of November, but permanent exhibitions remain in situ and you'll always have the opportunity to learn some traditional drinking songs. Djurgårdsvägen 38 spiritmuseum.se

#### Vasa Museum

In case you'd forgotten that Stockholm's history stretches much further back than 1995, the Vasa Museum is on hand to prove otherwise. It has only one exhibit: the huge, ornate wooden ship that was launched in the city in 1628, sank immediately, and was finally salvaged in 1987. In a word, spectacular. Galärvarvsvägen 14 vasamuseet.se **bo**

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LATVIAN NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**22 OCTOBER, 19:00**  
DAILE MUSIC HOUSE

**ČIURLIONIS AND JAZZ**  
AUDIOVISUAL PERFORMANCE  
PROGRAMME:  
Works by  
**Mikalojus Konstantinas ČIURLIONIS** arranged by  
Edgars CĪRULIS, Jānis RUBIKS,  
and Rokas ZUBOVAS

**28 OCTOBER, 19:00**  
RIGA GREAT GUILD

**TEMPUS BALTICUS**  
PROGRAMME:  
Works by  
**Ludwig van BEETHOVEN**  
**Bronius KUTAVICIUS**  
**Erkki-Sven TŪŪR**  
**Pēteris PLAKIDIS**  
**Linda LEIMANE**  
**Jāzeps MEDĪŅŠ**

**30 OCTOBER, 19:00**  
RIGA GREAT GUILD

**TCHAIKOVSKY AND SIBELIUS**  
**Lukas GENIUŠAS** – piano  
**Latvian National Symphony Orchestra**  
Conductor **Kristiina POSKA**  
PROGRAMME:  
Works by  
**Jean SIBELIUS**  
**Liisa HIRSCH**  
**Pyotr TCHAIKOVSKY**



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**Latvija 100** 



Words by Ilze Pole  
Photos by Gatis Gierts  
Photo location *Trentini, Space and Design*, Riga



## THE TAKE-OFF

Martin Alexander Gauss,  
President and CEO  
of *airBaltic*

He arrived right on time. Then again, I've never yet met a pilot who has arrived late for an interview or photoshoot. Sometimes they don't even confirm. They simply arrive. Half an hour early. And Martin Gauss is a pilot.

That late Friday afternoon full of September sunlight, Gauss arrived directly from a session in the *A220-300* simulator. He was dressed in a perfect dark blue suit and tie. As always. 'If I ran a different company, I would be different,' he says. 'But I've been in this industry for 30 years; I represent the airline – safety and punctuality – and I've learned in life that if you hold a certain position, you have to fulfil certain expectations.' Saturdays and Sundays might be exceptions.

Gauss has been with *airBaltic* for nine years now, and he strongly embodies its DNA. Or maybe it quite easily could be the other way around – *airBaltic* has taken over his DNA, marked it with the ambition, vision, energy, and drive to move, to take it forward, and to not give up. We talked a lot about this during our conversation, but I began with a simple question about that October 25 years ago, when *airBaltic* took its first flight.

### October 1995. What you were doing?

I was based in Munich at the time. I was a co-pilot at *Deutsche British Airways* on *Boeing 737* aircraft, the same aircraft type that *airBaltic* had in its fleet. My goal was to become a captain, which I did later on, and I was already involved in helping management. I was paying off a loan I had taken out to become a pilot. That was a burden on me, and I couldn't afford to buy a house, so we rented one; I remember it had a small garden. I was married, and my daughter was born a year later. And because I wasn't from Munich, my social life mostly revolved around the people from work. I played tennis occasionally. I used to be a semi-professional tennis player; I can still play very decently, but I don't do it that often anymore. I play golf more.

Munich Airport had just opened; it had only one terminal at the time. It was heavily criticised for being too big and having runways that were too long. But I've seen it develop over the years, and now, at least before the Covid crisis, even with three terminals it was hardly able to cope with the passenger numbers.

Having been in this industry for so long, I've seen historic things happen. Nineteen years ago, I was running the airline's operations. On September 11 of that year, there was a warning strike going on, and I was managing pilots to fly rather than strike. That was my task on the day of the September 11 attacks, and after that the world changed. Like with Covid now. I've been with this industry through several crises, and we'll get through this one as well. The only question is what and how things will be afterwards. But we have the opportunity to develop that 'afterwards' by being ready to grow out of it. That's what I'm doing now.

## We have the opportunity to develop that 'afterwards' by being ready to grow out of it

The world is very different today. Even if we just consider the fact that the *airBaltic* Training Centre has a simulator for the *A220-300*, the world's most modern aircraft.

Yes, the aviation industry now has the *Airbus A220*, the most modern aircraft in the world, and the greenest one, too. But I believe that, as an industry, we have not developed as fast as other industries. In the past 25 years, we've seen developments in other industries that have been real breakthroughs.

There are regulatory issues, of course, but I think we need to get better, especially if we look at the future and the sustainability of developing aircraft. I'm guessing it will be electric; biofuel can only be an intermediate solution, because it's very expensive and still burns something. But I think we need to be faster in developing future technologies in our industry. And also on the ground. We have very old-fashioned ways of doing things. For example, we use the Amadeus system, which has its roots in the 1970s. We have airports that operate like dinosaurs as well. Twenty-five years ago we didn't have *Google* or *Amazon*, so I hope that in 25 years we will have learned from this and will develop much faster.

This is an extreme crisis, nobody can survive on their own. States are supporting their airlines, but in



general, airlines should support themselves. We’ve survived through various different crises, and also this time the shareholders made sure that our airline has the trust to continue. But this airline needs to be able to maintain itself. In upcoming years, *airBaltic* needs to be in the stock markets, raising capital from shareholders, because they believe in the profits and the positive future we are going to produce. That means we need to grow significantly, and with this new aircraft we now have we’re on the right track. Now we just need to get back on the track that was working so well for us before the crisis.

We will be driving sustainability in the industry. Not only in terms of aircraft types but also in business ethics and in the development of future managers for the company. We are now developing a high-level management and leadership programme, called Alfa, which will work according to similar principles as our Pilot Academy. There’s another project coming, too, but I can’t yet talk about that very much.

Gender diversity as a form of sustainability is something we’ve already achieved. Our workforce in management is exactly 50% female. In top management, 40% are female. No other airline in the world has such high numbers. In this sense, we’ve already overachieved in terms of sustainability according to a pledge signed with IATA last year,

**My dream has always been to be an entrepreneur. That has never changed**

which sets out to increase representation of women in management to 25% by 2025. *airBaltic* has 50%. We want to maintain that.

There are other initiatives I want to implement as well. I want to have full electric ground operations, which Stuttgart Airport already has. No cars running on fuel are used there. With our future development, we will hopefully be able to influence certain things to make Riga Airport a positive example, too. Twenty-five years from now – maybe already five years from now – *airBaltic* will be a very different company.

**But how did it all begin for you? That’s a question we ask all the pilots we interview for *Baltic Outlook*. What’s your story?**

In my case, it wasn’t a childhood dream. I had begun studying economics when I read an article in *Capital*, a German business magazine, that talked about becoming a pilot as an alternative to studying. I read it, saw the salaries for pilots, and thought

that that would be a much more efficient way of earning a good living. I was doing all kinds of jobs on the side just to survive while studying. Tough stuff, including offloading ships and working night shifts for a German parcel service.

To become a pilot, I had to complete my military service, which was mandatory in Germany at the time. After that, I took out a loan and started a pilot’s education, being quite naïve and thinking that when I was ready, there’d be no problem getting a job. That wasn’t the case. It took a while, but eventually I was employed by the *British Airways* subsidiary *Deutsche BA*. I became a pilot because it was faster than getting a degree in economics and the salary sounded good. My choice was very rational, but I loved the job and I still love flying today.

The focus on the business side of things started already in my first year, when they took me into the office and asked me to do some extra work, which happens with co-pilots here at *airBaltic* as well. Then I was sent to leadership training. *BA* was a very good education for me; a lot of it took place in the United Kingdom.

Later I was able to do many different jobs within the airline. I’ve been the boss of the crew planning department, ground operations, the director of flight operations. I became a captain, and I flew as a training captain. I’ve flown more than 8000 hours on commercial aircraft. So, I saw many very different areas of the business before I became a managing director of the airline. I keep up my pilot’s licence, but my job today is not being a pilot; it’s running the airline. But I’m proud that I’m a pilot, and I respect the job of a pilot very much, because it was my first job and it has helped me a lot. But my dream has always been to be an entrepreneur. That has never changed.

**Is that something that’s in your nature?**

I was raised as an entrepreneur. My family had a company, which I was supposed to take over one day, but it collapsed after 20 years of operations despite having been very successful. Just before I began my studies, my family lost all its money. That’s why I had to work to earn a living. But the desire to be an entrepreneur comes from the way my parents raised me.

They both have an entrepreneurial spirit, they both worked hard, and I’ve always lived my life building something up. My parents both are still around, they both support me very strongly, and my father is my biggest idol. He’s an engineer, a very smart and intelligent person who has no problems using an *iPhone*, *iPad*, or social media. He’s one of those people who can easily reach 100 and still be fit.

My goal is to live to at least 103, and I’ll probably raise it, because medicine is always developing (*laughs*). But tell me why not? Right now I say 103 years, but I might adjust that upwards when I turn 53 next year. At the moment, I want to live to at least 103 and be fit. When people ask me how long I’m going to work, I say that I will always work. Because I don’t work like many other people do. I’ve never looked forward to the day when my work will be done or when I’ll retire.

I do understand that a lot of people work for that day when they’ll finally be able to do what they’ve always wanted to do. I’m the opposite. I do all the things I want to now. Work is a very important part of my life; it drives me. But that doesn’t mean working every day from nine to five. For me, it means using my abilities to create something, to take something forward. Why would I stop doing that? As long as I have a functioning brain, I will always work. I’m not looking forward to any retirement age. Not at all. Quite the opposite. I’ll work at least until age 75. There are enough people who still work hard at that age. Then I’ll see how I feel (*laughs*).

I have too much energy. People call me Duracell because of the energy I have. I don’t know... I just have it. At one point I fought it, because it’s disturbing to the people around me, especially in my private life. I tend to lose people along the way because I go too fast. I used to stop myself so they could catch up, but that didn’t really work. *Paga, paga, paga* (wait, wait, wait – Ed.), that’s the Latvian word you’d use a lot if you were working with me (*laughs*). You’d say I need to sit down, rest, breathe. I do all those things, obviously, but in a different way.

**How do you deal with it?**

I listen more today. I’ve learned that my speed sometimes leads to the opposite of what I want to achieve. But normally, if I lose someone, I find others who then want to follow this path with me. It’s not just in relation to work; unfortunately, it also affects my private life. But there’s nothing you can do if somebody says that this is enough for them and they don’t want to go any further. For me, it’s not about material stuff – I’m well beyond that – but there’s so much to do, to create!

Some people say: but you already have *airBaltic*, you’ve turned it around, why do you want to do more? And I reply that *airBaltic* is a small airline, but why do we have to be a small airline if we fly the best jet in the world and have one of the best countries in the world as a platform from which to develop? Latvia is a European country; it has young, intelligent

**Work is a very important part of my life; it drives me**

people and a good education system. It has people who are dedicated to their country. Why can’t we be the base for one of the biggest airlines in Europe? Why not? We’ve seen so many developments in the world, such as cities in China that did not exist just 20 years ago. Why can’t we take it beyond the Baltics and have the best, the greenest, and the most sustainable airline in Europe?

The combination of Latvia, its amazing nature, and *airBaltic* is perfect. Now, with Covid, Latvia is getting a reputation for being one of the best in the world in dealing with the virus, which will have a positive effect on *airBaltic*. I see Latvia very, very differently than Latvians do. And the people I’ve met here in the past nine years! It’s not only about the skills and abilities, it’s about just letting them work! Remove the barriers for people and give them a chance!

There are companies in Latvia like *Twino*, but the world is not talking about them. *airBaltic* is







## I would fight to the end, because I don't give up

one thing they talk about, and I will make sure more is told about it. And we will always have the Latvian flag raising it up. I was the first person from Latvia to talk with Richard Quest on *CNN*. I was very proud sitting there in New York with him and being asked about this country. I want to go again and talk about the success of *airBaltic*. I want to take *airBaltic* to the stock exchange. Those are the targets I have.

That's what drives me. I like the company. I run it as if it were mine. That's how much I like it.

Growing within a professional career is like a path. Never ending, don't you think? I agree. We all reach a point of our own incompetency, but we don't know when that will happen. Which I really like, because I think it lets you go further; and right now I don't think I've reached that point, not at all. And I don't feel like I've reached that highest point, either. Therefore, I have the energy to go on and see what the

world has for me, and I'm committed to exchange my energy for that. To achieve more. And it's not at all material in my case. It's about achieving the targets I have with *airBaltic*. There is a lot we can still do.

### What are the main things you've learned along the way?

To not give up. That's something in my blood now – not giving up and finding a new way. When I was a teenager playing tennis, if I felt that I wasn't going to win, I would give up. Especially if the score was 6:0, 6:0. I would have been, like, 'Come on! Let's call it a day.' But today I would not do that. I would fight to the end, because I don't give up.

I've also learned that in our industry age doesn't matter. If we look at managerial roles, an older person is not necessarily better than a younger one. I was a young manager, and I had to put up with a lot of challenges because I was called too young for... everything. Because of that experience, I deliberately give young people big responsibilities. What I've learned is that you do not necessarily need somebody who has experience; you need somebody who has the right mindset, especially if it's about development in any area. For me, age is completely irrelevant. On the other hand, if I need someone with specific experience, I choose according to that. Of course, it depends a bit on what you do, but this is something I've learned myself, and it has paid off. There are people who've made a career because I said to them, 'You can do this job!' I know I can see the potential in people.

And the third thing... I think the best advice I got was from my mentors almost 20 years ago. I had sold my *Deutsche BA* shares and got a lot of money for them, but, especially when you're young, you have to make sure that something like that doesn't spoil you. You need to continue valuing what you earn for what you do. When you're in your mid-30s and you get wealth like that in one go, like a lottery win, that would normally change your lifestyle. But my mentors said to me: 'Listen, give it to the banks, let them deal with it. You continue to focus on working, you're too young to lean back and relax, you're not done yet!'

I'm very thankful for that advice, and I would give the same advice to others as well, if I saw someone in that same situation. Of course, I did all the crazy things people do when they get a lot of money, but I adjusted, and it was a learning curve for me. I've seen people lose touch with reality because they're taking home big pay checks. Or thinking that they're above or better than others because of that. The arrogance that comes with money... That's something I don't like.

### Do you like having people around you?

I need people around me. I cannot be alone. I'm not enjoying this time now, when I feel locked in because of the Covid isolation rules. I cannot travel, because I need to work. I can't leave the country and I'm not socialising much here, so it means that on weekends I'm mostly alone. But I've seen the country properly.

### I understand you took your car and drove around to explore Latvia.

Yes, I've seen it all. Every beach, road, and stone. I'd do other things as well, if I could, but that's for when we've finished dealing with Covid.

### People working close to you also say that you have a strong sense of intuition.

Yes, I have. Sometimes I think it's crazy, but I see things before they happen. It's intuition backed up by previous experience.

### How does that affect your decision making?

It definitely helps. I can read body language. It's something I really love and try to do. I read books about it and take courses. Of course, you can read someone you know very well, but the challenge comes with people you don't know at all, and I think I can do that extra well. Trying to find out what the person opposite me is really thinking – from the facial expressions, from the gestures, maybe the person is trying to hide something. If somebody's feeling uncomfortable, then I have two possibilities: I can increase the level of discomfort, or I can decrease it. It depends on what I want to achieve. If the person is wrong, let's say, about some kind of a solution for a problem, and I feel that they don't really believe in it themselves, then why should we would go on? Why don't I just break the ice and say that I want to do the opposite?

Also, for example, if I'm interviewing someone for a job, I ask myself whether I'd be able to spend a week travelling with that person. Could I travel with the interviewee for a week, or would that person get on my nerves very quickly? If I can't imagine travelling with the person, how can I work in the same company with this person for years? I feel that you have to be able to go through all the ups and downs in business together, and why employ a person if you feel it's not a good match?

**Managerial roles are not only about success and high flying; they're mostly about managing the low points. Like the one we just had in mid-March. It must have been tough.**

Very.

**Where did you find that point of strength within yourself to face it, to hold those online briefings**

**every day for staff to explain every move the company made and the impact it would have?**

I'd say that was the most extreme phase in my life. First of all, I made a conscious decision to not go home to Munich, although my family asked me to go. I stayed in Latvia. I was locked in here and couldn't travel anymore. Back then, nobody knew how long it would take and how things would develop thereafter. There was the fear of the disease itself, and I had extreme moments, too, like all of us, facing our own fears – for ourselves, for our families, for our jobs. But I was alone in Latvia.

Luckily, I had a team of 11 people – my top-level management team – and in a way we became like a family. Sometimes we worked through the weekends. That gave me strength – seeing these people every day and working with them. We had already been a close team before, but I feel that we're way closer now. If I hadn't have had them, I think I would have gone *ku-ku*, as you say in Latvian (*laughs*).

At times, there was no sign that things would ever get better; things just got worse and worse. I was dining alone at *Riviera*, I was having breakfast alone at *Latte It Be*, and I was afraid that they would shut down, too. I bought food to have at home in case there was a complete lockdown and I couldn't leave my flat. I couldn't go back to Munich,

## You have to be able to go through all the ups and downs in business together

so instead there were a lot of video chats.

I would say that, psychologically, it was the toughest time in my life – being here alone. I'm better at being alone now than I was before. But I still don't like it. I like to socialise.

**I heard a lot of positive feedback from *airBaltic*'s employees that hearing from you during that time was very helpful.**

I'm writing a book about the double turnaround, and this is going to be a big chapter, because I think it was done very well. Not only by myself, but by our whole team, and it needs to be written down because it's an example of how to go through a crisis and stay in touch with people. I'm proud that we did it as a team, I'm proud to receive feedback from our employees about how it helped them. I keep these messages and e-mails, received even from people whom we had to unemploy. That shows that we did things the right way. That motivates me to keep going.





**I ask. For everything.  
That's why it's good that I'm  
with other people**

**What did you discover about yourself during this time alone?**

That I have a tendency to sink into a negative mood, where I cannot find the way out. I never did that before in my life. It was only triggered by that time alone here. That was something I learned about myself that I don't like at all, and I'm fighting it. My life was always, like, 'I'm like sunshine! I can do anything at any moment!' But since lockdown I've had a kind of negativity in me, and that's really bad, because I'm actually a very positive person by nature – positive without having read all the positive-thinking books. If I have a fight with someone, I need to restore harmony with that person immediately. But there was a time when I got, you could say,

depressed, and I couldn't find a way out, and I hated it. But it's much better now. I never thought it would take 52 years to find that out. But I believe it happened because of a combination of things that happened to me from February onwards. There are no pills to cure it, only self-esteem – which I have enough of – and telling myself to go beyond that point and be myself again. I lost a bit of being myself at that time; I was focusing too much on needing others. But no, if you are who you are, if you're happy with yourself, then everything is OK.

**What do you do when you don't know what to do?**

I ask. For everything. That's why it's good that I'm with other people. I don't give up until I know. With anything. If you want to become a doctor nowadays, you can start studying medicine if you want to. There's nobody on this planet stopping you; if you really want to, you will be a doctor. This is not something for which you have to be able to jump two metres high. You just need to be able to study and pass exams. I always use this example, because both of my eldest children are studying medicine and I have the greatest respect for that; it's tough and long. But it's the same with a lot of other things.

If you really want it, you can make it happen. You can bombard the world with requests for money, you can make business plans and have ideas, and you can bang on all the doors until you find a way to get it financed. The question is whether it makes sense and what are you going to do with it.

**When are you scared?**

There are a very few things I'm scared of. And I don't do them. I don't do deep diving, and I don't stand on the edge of the rock looking into the abyss. I don't do it.

I'm not scared of business problems, of not making it. Every day I have 24 hours to find a solution. When it's done, when it's over, is it really over? Am I the guy who's still riding a dead horse, as the saying goes? I'm the guy who reanimates the dead horse before I stop riding it. I'm always still trying. That's probably where my energy can sometimes annoy people. It can be annoying that I don't give up. But then... at the end of the day I've achieved a lot by not giving up.

**What gives you fulfilment in life?**

Love. The sense of being truly loved. That's the only thing I believe is worth going for and which fulfils me. **bo**

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## 25 years with airBaltic

There are eight people who have worked at *airBaltic* since the very beginning – 25 years. We encouraged them to come out of their offices and flight decks for a small, family-like gathering. And, as at all family gatherings, pictures were taken and jokes were tossed around about how long it had been since they last met and how much some of them had grown. It's not just loyalty that has kept them with the airline for so long. It's also the opportunities the airline has given them to grow, both professionally and personally, and to do a job they love. We asked these eight people what they've gained most by working at *airBaltic*.



25 years in the sky  
airBaltic

‘At first, we were only four pilots and it was very challenging and interesting to build the company starting from zero. To write all the manuals and implement procedures in accordance with regulations, but still in our own way, the *airBaltic* way,’ remembers **captain ĀRIJS AKIMOVŠ**, who has worked as a pilot instructor from the very beginning and continues to do so today. Ārijs was also the airline's chief pilot for 13 years. Now he's ready to learn something new again and is training to fly the *Airbus A220-300*. ‘I appreciate the opportunity to work and fly from my home country,’ says the captain, ‘and that's also what I've gained the most.’

**SVETLANA ABAŠKINA, Vice President, Aeropolitical and Industry Affairs**, appreciates the opportunity to work in a multicultural environment. ‘Establishing a wide network of contacts with people from different countries and cultures has been the biggest advantage. Working at *airBaltic*, I have been privileged to explore new ideas in different areas of the airline business and see how the realisation of them helped the company to progress to becoming the leading airline in the Baltic region. This brings a huge sense of satisfaction,’ she says.

‘The company at which I began working 25 years ago has grown and changed,’ says **IRĒNA ČĒMA, Senior Revenue Accountant**. ‘It has become a noteworthy, international company, and just witnessing that growth has been a high point. Also for myself, because that growth has given me a broader vision and broader knowledge, which, although very specific, is highly valued in the industry and in the field of international business.’

**PAULS CĀLĪTIS, Chief Operations Officer**, who is also a captain on *Airbus A220-300* aircraft, says that it has been a wonderful opportunity to live and build his career in Latvia with *airBaltic*. ‘People usually join the company at some point and see its development only from that point onward, but I'm lucky to have been here from the very beginning. Besides, working for one and the same company for 25 years is very rare nowadays. But that has given me a different perspective on what this airline and my colleagues mean to me.’

**Captain VLADIMIRS ŠČOGOĻŠ** has spent almost 40 years on a flight deck. ‘I've flown almost my whole life, and I've always loved flying,’ he says. ‘I've never perceived it as just a job I have to do. I go to briefings to talk with my friends, and I head to the aircraft with joy. When flying with a good team, I don't even feel tired afterwards and I return home in a good mood.’ The airline has also given Ščogoļš the opportunity to work abroad. ‘When you've worked abroad, you no longer have the feeling that things are better elsewhere. Because things are good here,’ says the captain.

‘I've learned to find the right solution and remain calm in stressful situations,’ says **technical coordinator JEĻENA GRIGORJEVA-BĀRENE**. She began working at *airBaltic* 25 years ago as a flight attendant. She later graduated from college with a degree in public relations management but has not worked a single day in this profession. ‘I really like flying, and I continue to do so.’

**IRĪNA PIĻIPENKO, Area Sales Manager**, emphasises that her greatest benefit from working with the airline has been learning to adapt to circumstances, to change with the times, and to seek out opportunities to develop herself not only professionally but also personally. ‘That teaches you to react faster and better. To better fit in with the flow of time and trends. To move along with the times,’ she explains.

**EVA PLAKANE, Senior Vice President, Revenue Management**, tells about working with many interesting, smart, and unique people during her long career with the airline. ‘This company has also given me the opportunity to develop myself as a personality,’ she says. ‘I'm a leader by nature, and here I've been able to realise and develop that trait. For me, my work is definitely not simply work. It's a very significant part of my life.’



Words by Zane Nikodemusa  
Photos courtesy of *airBaltic*  
and by *Alamy*

# Making memories

Over the past two and a half decades, *airBaltic* has grown from a small airline into an inspiring role model for the industry. Here are some of the most significant milestones in the company's history.



1995 OCTOBER

The airline is established in the early autumn of 1995 with the signing of a joint venture between the Latvian state and *Scandinavian Airlines (SAS)*. On October 1, *airBaltic* operates its first commercial flight, from Riga to Stockholm, with the *Saab SF340* aircraft, which has just 33 seats.

1997 APRIL

*airBaltic* opens the Cargo Department.



1998 NOVEMBER

The airline's first *Fokker 50* arrives in Riga. A fleet of such aircraft faithfully serves *airBaltic* for the next 15 years.

1999 MARCH

The first issue of *airBaltic's* inflight magazine *Baltic Outlook* is published.

2001 JUNE

*airBaltic* carries its one millionth passenger.

2002 APRIL

In addition to being well connected with *SAS* and offering multiple flights per day to Copenhagen and Stockholm, *airBaltic* opens direct routes from Riga to eight destinations in eastern and western Europe.

2003 APRIL

*airBaltic* launches ticket sales from its website via the internet.



2003 NOVEMBER

The first *Boeing 737-500* is introduced into the *airBaltic* fleet and operations.

2004 MAY

Latvia joins the European Union and, thanks to the Open Skies policy, *airBaltic* is free to fly within Europe.

DID YOU KNOW?

*airBaltic* has carried more than 45 million guests since its establishment.



2000 JANUARY

For several years, *airBaltic's* fleet consists of three *Avro RJ70* and three *Fokker 50* aircraft.

2004 OCTOBER

*airBaltic* introduces a new corporate livery, which consists of an all-white fuselage and lime-green tailfin with the name 'Baltic' on it.

2004 JUNE

*airBaltic* begins direct flights from Vilnius to 11 European destinations and serves 27 routes from Riga.



2007 JULY

*airBaltic* launches its online check-in system. This is the first online check-in system in the Baltic states.

2005 DECEMBER

For the first time in its history, *airBaltic* carries more than one million passengers in a single year.

2007 SEPTEMBER

*airBaltic* begins training *Boeing 737* pilots in a simulator at its home base in Riga.

2007 OCTOBER

*airBaltic* launches the e-voucher – the first prepaid airline ticket in northern Europe to be sold in supermarkets.



2008 DECEMBER

*airBaltic* opens an office in Tallinn, which is its tenth office. The airline also has offices in Riga (two), Vilnius, Klaipeda, Berlin, Kyiv, Minsk, Moscow, and Saint Petersburg.

2009 JANUARY

*airBaltic* management purchases the *SAS* shares in the airline.



2009 OCTOBER

*airBaltic* launches its very own frequent flyer programme, *BalticMiles*. By partnering with leading banking, telecommunications, hospitality, travel, transport, and entertainment companies, it is the first pan-Baltic loyalty programme.

2010 FEBRUARY

*airBaltic* opens the *airBaltic* Training Centre in Riga. It is one of the largest and most modern aviation training facilities in central and eastern Europe.



2010 FEBRUARY

For the first time in history, a self-portrait by Leonardo da Vinci takes a flight. The so-called Lucan portrait travels on *airBaltic* from Rome via Riga to Tallinn.

2010 JUNE

*airBaltic* becomes the first airline in the world to sell roses 11 kilometres up in the sky.



## 2011 NOVEMBER

The *airBaltic* supervisory board appoints Martin Gauss as the new CEO.

## 2011 DECEMBER

*airBaltic* becomes the world's first airline to sell cars on board.

## 2011 DECEMBER

The Latvian government increases its shareholding in *airBaltic* to 99.8%, and *airBaltic* becomes a true national airline of Latvia.



## 2014 FEBRUARY

*airBaltic* operates a special flight from Riga to the Winter Olympics in Sochi with Latvian and Lithuanian athletes on board. The teams depart on a *Boeing 737-500* specially painted with Olympic livery.

## 2014 JULY

*airBaltic* becomes the world's first airline to accept Bitcoin as a payment option.

## 2015 JANUARY

For the first time, an OAG industry report rates *airBaltic* the world's most punctual airline.

## 2010 DECEMBER

For the first time in its history, the airline's annual number of passengers exceeds three million.



## 2012 JANUARY

*airBaltic* is recognised as the top employer in Latvia.

## 2013 DECEMBER

*airBaltic* celebrates 100,000 *Facebook* followers.



## 2014 JULY

*airBaltic* pilots go green with *iPads*. This saves about two million sheets of paper every year.



## 2016 FEBRUARY

*airBaltic* is awarded a gold medal by ISPY for the quality of its cabin service.

## 2016 NOVEMBER

*airBaltic* welcomes the world's first *Bombardier CS300* (now *Airbus A220-300*) in Riga, becoming the global launch customer for this aircraft.



## 2017 JULY

*airBaltic* sets a new world record for turnaround as its newest *Bombardier CS300* takes its first commercial flight only 50 minutes after delivery from Canada.



## 2018 NOVEMBER

*airBaltic* presents a gift to Latvia on its centenary – a special livery for *Airbus A220-300* aircraft. On November 18, the plane takes part in the parade in honour of Latvia's centenary.

## 2019 AUGUST

*airBaltic* honours the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Baltic Way with a special gift – three aircraft painted in national liveries and a song dedicated to the event.

## 2019 OCTOBER

*airBaltic* regularly participates in various air shows, and in autumn of 2019 it takes its *Airbus A220-300* on a tour around the Pacific region, visiting Vanuatu, Australia, New Zealand, New Caledonia, and Papua New Guinea.



## 2020 MARCH

*airBaltic* Training opens a new hangar in Liepāja, Latvia. Students from the *airBaltic* Pilot Academy have been training in Liepāja already since the summer of 2018.

## 2020 MAY

*airBaltic* becomes the first European airline to hand every customer on every flight an envelope containing a face mask and two disinfectant wipes.

## 2020 MAY

*airBaltic* begins operating a single-type fleet consisting only of the modern *Airbus A220-300* aircraft.

## 2017 DECEMBER

The *airBaltic* Training Pilot Academy begins accepting applications to train a new generation of pilots from the Baltic states.

## 2018 SEPTEMBER

*airBaltic* is the official air carrier for Pope Francis and the papal delegation during their official visit to the Baltic states.



## 2019 SEPTEMBER

*airBaltic* becomes the first airline to obtain full-scope maintenance capability for *Airbus A220-300* aircraft.



## 2019 DECEMBER

*airBaltic* presents its *Airbus A220* full flight simulator.

## 2019 DECEMBER

*airBaltic* carries more than five million passengers in 2019, or 22% more than the year before. This is the highest number of passengers carried in a single year in the airline's history.



## 2020 OCTOBER

*airBaltic* opens a new educational programme for its staff – *airBaltic* Leaders for Future (ALFA) provides a solid foundation for *airBaltic*'s future development and growth through excellent leadership.

## DID YOU KNOW?

*airBaltic* has been named the best employer in the transport and logistics sector in Latvia for nine years in a row.

## DID YOU KNOW?

*airBaltic* has been recognised by OAG as the world's most punctual airline for several years in a row.



Words by Zane Nikodemusa  
Illustration courtesy of airBaltic

# Green by nature

airBaltic's fleet is rapidly and continually undergoing modernisation, and it now consists of only the world's greenest commercial aircraft – the *Airbus A220-300*. At the end of this year the airline will receive its 25<sup>th</sup> jet, which will mean that half of its order from *Airbus* will be fulfilled. Check out these amazing facts about your plane.

The *Airbus A220-300* was purpose-designed and built from the ground up. Made with the perfect balance of proven methods, materials, and cutting-edge technology, it is now **the most efficient and aerodynamic commercial aircraft** in the skies. That translates to new routes and improved flight frequency for *airBaltic*. An *A220-300* can fly about 1000 kilometres further than a *Boeing 737 Classic*.

*A220 Family* aircraft are the **quietest commercial jets in service**. With a noise footprint that's four times smaller than many other aircraft, the *A220-300* can fly to noise-sensitive city airports such as Bromma-Stockholm, which has particularly strict noise regulations.

The *A220 Family* also runs **the world's first electric braking system**, developed by *Meggitt PLC*. Electric brakes increase braking efficiency and reduce wear. Braking force is applied evenly, making landing gentler for passengers.

Because the *A220 Family* was entirely purpose-built and specifically designed for the 100- to 150-seat market, it's **up to 12,000 pounds lighter than its competitors**.

The *A220-300* flies at **an altitude of around 41,000 feet**, while the maximum altitude for the *Boeing 737 Classic* is 37,000 feet. The *A220-300* thus encounters less air resistance, which leads to **greater fuel economy**. The *A220-300* consumes only two litres of fuel per 100 kilometres per passenger. Compared to the *Boeing 737 Classic*, its fuel costs per passenger are 18% lower.

The plane has a **real-time monitoring system** to make sure that it is operating properly. This means that while the plane is up in the air, technicians on the ground can spot any problems that might arise.

Artificial lighting has also been greatly improved with **modern LED light sources**. Mood lights convey an unprecedented variation of colour tones and intensity to create the perfect lighting for each flight.

According to the World Health Organization, there is minimal risk of any communicable disease being transmitted onboard an aircraft. The quality of cabin air is carefully controlled and is recirculated with ventilation rates that provide a total change of air 20 to 30 times per hour. The *Airbus A220-300* recirculation filter is a High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) type filter that provides **the best level of filtration currently available for recirculated cabin air**. HEPA filters are very effective at trapping microscopic particles, such as small bacteria and viruses, as the air passes through the system. In such conditions, **airborne pathogens in the cabin air are captured and eliminated with 99.99% efficiency**, making our aircraft cabin air exceptionally clean.

The air conditioning system is controlled automatically according to the number of passengers. This guarantees the best possible ventilation and ensures that every seat in the cabin is at a pleasant temperature, giving you better air quality on each flight. **Airflow is routed down towards the floor, thus minimising air transmission amongst passengers.**

Designed with the passenger's comfort in mind, the *A220 Family* cabin provides space where it matters the most. **Enjoy the greatest seat width** and widest middle seat of a single-aisle commercial aircraft.

There is also enough space for every passenger's carry-on baggage, and the luggage bins are now lower, making them easier to reach.

The cabin windows are 26% larger than those of the *Boeing 737 Classic*. **Extra-large windows** provide additional natural light, and more than **one window can be seen in each row**.

The Earth needs new thinking. As the **greenest single-aisle aircraft in its class**, the *A220 Family* has **radically reduced emissions**. The *A220 Family* fuel-burn advantage translates directly to a 20% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, or up to 6000 tonnes each year per plane. NOx emissions have been cut by 50%.





## High in the sky. airBaltic's special livery

As the leading carrier in the Baltics, *airBaltic* is serving more and more direct routes not only from its central hub of Riga International Airport but also from Tallinn and Vilnius. To build up a shared sense of national belonging in the Baltics, *airBaltic* introduced a series of special liveries on its fleet, representing Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania.

The first special-livery aircraft made its debut in 2018, when *airBaltic* unveiled an exclusive *Airbus A220* aircraft featuring the national symbol of Latvia – a carmine-red flag with a white band in the middle. This was a gift from the airline to Latvia on the country's centenary. The tail of the aircraft displays the official *LV100* graphic identity of the centenary campaign. Alongside the stunning design, the aircraft itself bears the name of Latvia's capital city, Riga.

This was the first time in the history of *airBaltic* that the airline presented a full special livery. 'We at *airBaltic* live up to our core values and act as ambassadors of the Baltics. With the special liveries, we have unlocked a world of opportunities to spread the word about all three Baltic countries,' explains Jānis Krištopš, a captain on *A220-300* aircraft and safety manager at *airBaltic*.

A giant salute to the Baltic countries followed as the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Baltic Way approached. The record-long human chain had weaved through all three countries in August 1989 in a peaceful demonstration for national independence. *airBaltic* wished to rekindle the pride of the people of the Baltics, and, during a special event in August 2019, it presented liveries repainted in the colours of the Estonian and Lithuanian flags as well. 'It was like a fleet parade in which all three *Airbus A220-300*

*airBaltic* has one of the most modern fleets flying across Europe. Three of its aircraft have been repainted in special liveries to reflect the unique DNA of *airBaltic* and the Baltics.

aircraft with national-themed liveries moved in a synchronised fashion on the grounds of Riga International Airport,' Krištopš remembers.

### The painting process

The flags of all three Baltic countries now proudly wave on *airBaltic*'s aircraft high in the sky. But the project began quite some time earlier, when the special liveries were created by 15 painters using 250 litres of primer, paint, and clearcoat. It took a total of 1000 hours to complete.

'The repainting of the special livery is no different than regular aircraft repainting,' says Staņislavs Kirillovs, an *Airbus A220-300* type engineer. 'First, it's necessary to ground and defuel the aircraft, remove various external equipment, and mask all the areas that will not be painted. For *airBaltic*'s special livery, only the aircraft's body and tail section were repainted, so all the other major surfaces, such as wings and engines, were masked.'

The most challenging aspect of repainting is careful surface preparation, which affects how the aircraft surface and paint bond together. It takes time and patience to remove the previous layer of paint because it is crucial to not damage the composite structure or leave paint layers any thicker than they need to be.

The painting process of *airBaltic*'s special liveries was broken down into several steps. First, a layer of primer was applied, and then, within 24 hours, a white base coat was added to all surfaces. Once the base coat had dried, the aircraft livery details were applied one by one: carmine red for the livery of Latvia; blue and black for Estonia; and green, yellow, and red for Lithuania. Emergency and technical

markings were also applied, and then the aircraft was sprayed with a clear-coat finish to add gloss and ensure that the colour is retained. The last step in the process was physical weighing to identify whether the aircraft's weight and centre of gravity had not changed.

### Secret mission

Once the repainting of the special livery was complete, Krištopš was tasked with finding a companion and embarking on a secret mission to bring the repainted aircraft from Tallinn, where the painting had taken place, back to Riga. He was the first to fly the aircraft with the special livery of the Latvian flag. 'That special flight was scheduled during the night to make sure that no one found out about the special livery before it was announced to the public on November 9, 2018,' he remembers.

To commemorate Latvia's centenary, the newly painted aircraft participated in the centenary parade, flying in formation with fighter aircraft above the Daugava River on November 18, 2018. *airBaltic* chose a distinct call sign, BT100, for this memorable flight. 'This is an occasion that I'm very proud to tell my kids about. I had such a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to participate in the parade, flying the aircraft as Latvia celebrated one hundred years since it became an independent state. Perhaps something similar will happen only a hundred years from now,' Krištopš says as he remembers being completely mesmerised by the experience.

But this wasn't the only time Krištopš flew the aircraft for a special event. He also took part in last year's parade and this summer's aviation festival at Spilve Airport, which marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Latvian aviation.

The aircraft instantly draws attention. 'My first regular flight with the special Latvian livery was to Vienna,' Krištopš continues. 'Still today, people are positive and very eager to take photos with the aircraft. In fact, many enthusiasts specifically seek out special liveries. I remember one time in Amsterdam, when an airport ground vehicle swiftly stopped to get a shot of our special livery. Instead of using just a smartphone, the employee had a professional camera and huge lens. This aircraft with special livery has definitely achieved its goal by creating a strong sense of unity and togetherness. It makes me feel that I'm part of a bigger family, part of Latvia, and part of the Baltics,' he concludes.

## QUICK FACTS



First flight:  
November 10,  
2018, to Munich

Number of flights:  
2249

Number of  
destinations: 64

Kilometres flown:  
3,243,341

Registration number:  
YL-CSL

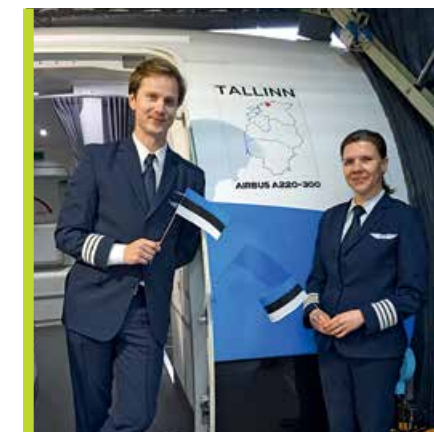
First flight:  
June 29, 2019,  
to London

Number of flights:  
1374

Number of  
destinations: 57

Kilometres flown:  
1,796,022

Registration number:  
YL-CSJ



First flight:  
August 8, 2019,  
to Moscow

Number of flights: 1171

Number of  
destinations: 57

Kilometres flown:  
1,540,942

Registration number:  
YL-CSK



\* Data from first flight with special livery to July 31, 2020.

## WANT TO HAVE AN AIRCRAFT MODEL?

If you're looking for the perfect gift for a budding pilot, collector, or just a good friend, take a look at *airBaltic*'s range of souvenirs. There you'll find the collector's aircraft models of the *Airbus A220-300* scale 1:100 and 1:500 in the colours of the flags of the Baltic states.

Check it out –  
[souvenirs.airbaltic.com](https://souvenirs.airbaltic.com).





Words by  
Zane Nikodemusa  
Photos courtesy  
of airBaltic

## Dress code

According to fashion experts, the best airlines choose a balance of retro styling and modern cuts to give their pilots and flight attendants the most glamorous and professional looks possible. Here's the *airBaltic* story.



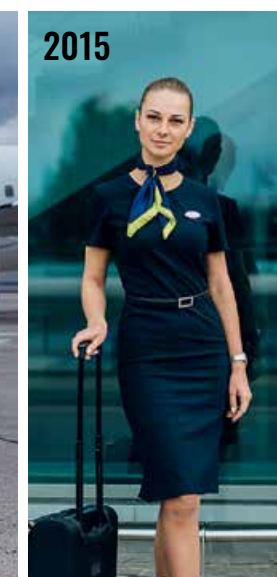
Previously, *airBaltic* pilots wore black uniforms and the cabin crew wore dark blue, but since 2018 both have worn the same colour. The pilots were also involved in creating the new uniforms. In the early stages, all of the employees could come in and see and feel the new material. Later they could also try on the sample uniforms. Input like this is very important, because pilots cannot be distracted from their job duties by uncomfortable clothes or itchy materials. Due to the fact that *airBaltic* has more and more female pilots, a more feminine version of the new pilot uniform was developed specially for them.

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 the airline's 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 Pāvuliņa, Natālija Jansone, and Dāvids. 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, the 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 lime green colour that it is known for today. Since then, uniform design has been changed on an average of every four to five years.

Today, the uniforms feature dark blue and lime green, the corporate colours of *airBaltic*. When the design process began for this new version of the uniforms (which were unveiled in 2018), *airBaltic* asked its cabin crew members for their input and to submit their own ideas, sketches, and descriptions for the new uniforms. Designer Inese Alhimoviča then combined a number of the best ideas and, in collaboration with the working group, drew up a number of sketches and made sample uniforms that were tested on real flights. From these, the final version was developed – new, attractive uniforms that represent *airBaltic's* values and express quality, style, and professionalism.





# The House of airBaltic

## The Flight Operations

department includes all the pilots and cabin crew members as well as the training and flight support divisions. It is the largest department at *airBaltic*, and its main goal is to ensure the safety and security of flight operations, crew planning, and compliance with company standards and European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) requirements as well as other applicable regulations. This department is also responsible for ensuring that all personnel within Flight Operations are trained and qualified to reliably do their jobs with respect to safety, punctuality, and service.

### Did you know?

The Flight Support division also has a Fuel Efficiency Analyst, whose job is to manage, develop, and configure fuel efficiency software as well as to conduct data analysis and detect fuel consumption trends, monitor existing efficiency initiatives, and identify and implement new initiatives.

**The Technical Department** is the second-largest department at *airBaltic* and ensures that the aircraft are properly maintained according to the manufacturers' recommendations and in compliance with the appropriate regulation authorities. This department carries out all maintenance, overhaul, repairs, and modifications on the aircraft fleet according to the respective requirements and specifications. Aircraft technicians carry out line and base maintenance activities on the *airBaltic* fleet.

### Did you know?

The Continuous Airworthiness Review Manager is the person who checks whether an aircraft or one of its component parts meets its type design and is in proper condition for safe operation.

The people we meet on board the aircraft – our flight attendants – are only a small part of the *airBaltic* 'house'. The airline consists of the President's Office and several departments, each important in its own right and also important in collaboration with other departments in order to ensure flawless operations at *airBaltic*.

## The Engineering Division

is responsible for ensuring airworthiness and providing engineering support to the Technical Department. It maintains and safely stores all of the technical manuals, instructions, and adaptations of all maintenance instructions revised and updated within *airBaltic*.

### Did you know?

An avionics engineer conducts research to address manufacturers regarding problems associated with flight safety systems, landing gear, and electronic navigation systems.

**The Logistics Division** is responsible for purchasing spare parts for aircraft. The purchasing unit makes sure that all materials purchased comply with current regulations and the best commercial conditions, while the warehouse is responsible for the safe storage of these materials according to the producers' and the company's requirements.

### Did you know?

For the next aircraft check, the Procurement Division has already received 400 requests for spare parts. Each part must be located in the market, its price must be negotiated, and delivery to Riga needs to be arranged – all of which is done by the Logistics Department.

## Ground Operations

**Department** issues aircraft electronic weight and balance documents, deals with dangerous goods and aircraft handling procedures, and subcontracts ground handling companies that apply *airBaltic*'s requirements at all destinations. Among other things, they organise and monitor safe passenger, baggage, and cargo handling; aircraft handling on the ramp; marshalling; aircraft loading and offloading; mass and balance reporting;

post-flight documentation storage; de-icing; and aircraft preparation for planned and safe departures and arrivals.

### Did you know?

The Load Control Coordinator ensures that cargo loads are distributed in the aircraft in such a way that the aircraft can be maintained at the correct pitch (angle) for a safe and efficient flight.

**The Quality Department** is responsible for monitoring regulated aviation activities and focusing on the systemic fulfilment of safety-critical aviation standards and *airBaltic* procedures at every stage of daily operations. This department interacts with operations personnel via a reporting platform and also performs activity-specific audits across the company, fleet, and network.

### Did you know?

The Quality Department monitors every flight of *airBaltic*, analysing over 2600 parameters for each flight.

## The Commercial Department

consists of five divisions – Network Planning, Revenue Management, Sales, Marketing, and E-Commerce – each of which works towards the main goal of generating revenue for the company. It also works on strengthening the *airBaltic* brand, improving its visibility, and generating revenue by finding new business opportunities. Marketing mainly focuses on innovative digital strategies combining targeted communication through direct channels with customer-centric search engine marketing and social media advertising. The Sales Division is responsible for business to business sales and maximizing the sales potential from travel agencies and corporate customers. The E-Commerce Division is

responsible for flight tickets and extra services and sales on *airBaltic.com*. Its task is to offer customers the most convenient way to get their desired product or service.

### Did you know?

*airBaltic* has several representatives working abroad: in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Lithuania, and Estonia.

The main responsibility of **the Network Planning Division** is to develop and design the *airBaltic* route network and hub-bank structure according to the company's strategy.

### Did you know?

The Scheduling and Slot Manager is one of the most specialised occupations in the aviation industry. There is typically only one or a couple of scheduling and slot management experts at any airline.

## The team in the Revenue Management Division

is at the heart of the company's commercial function. It is designed to work on predicting demand in order to offer optimum prices to the passengers in each market and at any point in time. The division is also responsible for ancillary products management revenue. The team works in an international environment and also using sophisticated revenue management system tools.

### Did you know?

The history of revenue management can be traced back to the 1980s, originating in the airline industry.

## The Customer Care Division

is responsible for assessing customer needs and achieving customer satisfaction. The Customer Relations Unit evaluates complaints and recommendations and provides accurate and valid information. It includes the Call Centre and Airport Ticket Office.

### Did you know?

*airBaltic*'s Call Centre currently has 112 employees devoted to helping our passengers.

## The main goal of the Corporate Communications Unit

is to proactively maintain the relationship between *airBaltic* and society in order to support the company's business and other goals as well as its reputation of being a reliable company. The unit organises, controls, and monitors all of *airBaltic*'s communication with the media, daily conversations, and content generation on the company's social media accounts. It is also responsible for external and internal communication strategies and crisis communications directly related to reputation management.

### Did you know?

A special unit produces content for *airBaltic*'s social media channels and provides full customer support. During the recent crisis caused by the pandemic, this team disseminated the newest company information, answered passenger inquiries on social media, and reassured the public that *airBaltic* is united with the whole aviation industry in building the new reality of air travel.

## The Human Resources Department

makes sure that the company has, at all times, the right talent in place to most efficiently achieve its business and safety targets. It has developed multidimensional people management and engagement processes to navigate and satisfy very diverse workforce needs, motivations, and cultural differences.

### Did you know?

The Sustainable Workplace Manager position was established to guide our workplace and related processes in an even more sustainable direction.

## The Legal Affairs Unit

provides management with efficient legal advice, strategies, and guidance on issues related to legislation.

### Did you know?

This department is the airline's legal representative in business negotiations and in court. It has also participated in the issuing of bonds and the legal process of purchasing aircraft.

## The Finance Control and Accounting Division

is responsible for delivering qualitative financial information to the company's stakeholders and ensuring that all finance operations proceed according to the respective tax legislation. The division ensures that all activities are accounted and reported in compliance with local and international regulations.

### Did you know?

Over the years, 187 people have worked in this division. 15% of the 33 people currently working in it are named Ilze.

## The IT Department

provides the infrastructure for the automation of various systems and processes. It covers a broad range of responsibilities, from helping employees when their 'computer isn't working' and gathering and analysing data to answer questions such as 'how many pets were transported last year' to building and maintaining complex systems that support pilots and other employees in providing the best service to customers, improving their experiences and creating new ones.

### Did you know?

*airBaltic* transported 7577 pets last year, according to information gathered by the IT Department.

## The Procurement and Administration Division

is responsible for overseeing the company's purchasing process and organising price inquiries. This pertains to products or services needed on a daily basis as well as procurement related to long-term local and international projects. The administration cares for all of the buildings and areas under the management of *airBaltic* – six buildings, for a total of 27,000 square metres of space. The administration also provides daily support to the airline's employees. The uniform warehouse purchases and issues work clothing to all crew and technical staff, ensuring seasonally appropriate clothing and its replacement according to established company standards.

### Did you know?

In 2016, this division planned and oversaw the move of *airBaltic* employees from seven different buildings to one new office building, known as the House of *airBaltic*. The actual move was completed in three days, without any disruption to normal operations at the airline.

***airBaltic* Cargo** offers air freight shipments across Europe, the Middle East, and the CIS. It is possible to ship valuables, pets and other items safe and sound. Our operations team provides customer service to clients and is responsible for daily operations – bookings, cargo handling, and flight planning. One of the operations team's most important roles is to ensure strict standards for flight safety and security.

### Did you know?

In 2019, *airBaltic* Cargo carried a record amount of cargo and mail – 14,800 tonnes, which was 21% more than the year before. This year, it organised the entire logistics chain for the delivery of face masks to Latvia following a request from its national health service to replenish critically low hospital reserves.

## Baltic Cargo Center

is the largest airfreight handling company at Riga International Airport and serves as the Cargo HUB for *airBaltic*. Ever since it began its operations in 2001, the company has been offering a reliable, secure and professional service to airlines, forwarders and private persons. BCC is the first CAA-accredited, regulated agent in Latvia.

### Did you know?

BCC operates in a cargo terminal with 1600sq/m of heated warehouse space and is capable of processing any type of airfreight.

***airBaltic* Training**, a subsidiary of *airBaltic*, offers a wide range of aviation training services – Pilot academy, flight crew, cabin crew, ground personnel and instructor. The modern and purpose-built *airBaltic* Training facility is equipped with an *Airbus A220* Full Flight Simulator, a *Boeing 737 Classic* Full Flight Simulator (the world's only one with UPRT and PBN certification), a *Diamond DA 40/42* Fixed Based Simulator, a Multi-Purpose Cabin Trainer, *A220 / B737 / F50* door trainers, and convenient, computerised classrooms. All *airBaltic* Training programmes adhere to EASA and ICAO regulations.

### Did you know?

Last year, the *airBaltic* Training simulators were flown for a total of 9096 hours. (There were 8766 hours in the year 2019)

***airBaltic* Club** is a loyalty programme in which you can earn PINS loyalty points and collect stamps while travelling and receive various rewards. Members can earn PINS every time they fly *airBaltic* or use the services of many other travel and retail partners. Points can also be earned by using Booking.com, *Sixt*, *Hertz*, *Avis*, and Riga International Airport and *Narvesen* services, among others.



Words by Zane Zaķe  
Photos courtesy of airBaltic

## Your most-liked airBaltic social media posts

With the help of various social media, *airBaltic* has reached 582% more clients over the past five years, while its virtual *Facebook* chatbot has served almost 22,000 clients. *airBaltic* stands out among its much bigger competitors in terms of, for example, its *Facebook* engagement rate, and it successfully fulfils its vision of clients buying flights after visiting its social media platforms.

In these times, social media channels are often the first place passengers turn to get what they need, whether it be new ideas, advice, or information. That's why *airBaltic's* social media sites not only inspire travellers to book long-awaited trips but also provide full customer support and execute crisis communication. Social media is nowadays a crucial cornerstone of communication that strengthens brand image, drives sales, and grants positive customer experiences. *airBaltic* works very hard to be a customer-centric brand that adheres to best practices and is innovative in its social media communication.

Diāna Grudule,  
*airBaltic* Social Media  
Communications manager

### on *Facebook*

*Facebook* has consistently remained *airBaltic's* biggest social media platform. Over the past two years, the number of followers it has on the platform has grown by 94,000, reaching an impressive **376,000 followers**. Between August 2019 and September of this year, all three of its most-liked posts relate to the *Airbus A220-300* aircraft painted in the colours of the Baltic states.

#### NO 1

On August 8, 2019, Lithuania was especially honoured with the unveiling of the *Airbus A220-300* named Vilnius and painted in the colours of the Lithuanian flag. This post received an impressive **19,000 likes** on *Facebook*.



#### NO 2

In second place, with **14,000 likes**, was the August 23, 2019, 'Proud to be Baltic' post about the special event in honour of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Baltic Way. All three aircraft painted in the colours of the Baltic flags could be seen together.



Photo by Kārlis Dambrajs

#### NO 3

And in third place, with **4500 likes**, the photo gallery published on December 17, 2019, in which *airBaltic* introduced its new 2020 calendar. Talented Latvian photographer Aiga Rēdmane took the colourful calendar photos of *airBaltic's* employees posing with the specially painted *Airbus A220-300* aircraft. **FB/airBaltic**



Photo by Aiga Rēdmane

### on *Instagram*

*Instagram* is *airBaltic's* fastest-growing social media platform. Its number of followers has almost doubled since the beginning of 2019, currently reaching almost **65,000 followers**. It has more than a thousand photos posted on the platform.

#### NO 1

*airBaltic's* ambassadors are to thank for some of the most beautiful photos posted on the airline's *Instagram* account. For example, the most popular image since August 2019 – earning almost **30,000 hearts**, or likes – is a picture taken by ambassador Olga Bogdanova on the Côte d'Azur in France.



#### NO 2

The second most popular photo on *Instagram*, with more than **20,000 likes**, is Valentino Valkaj's picture of the northern lights. This breathtaking natural phenomenon can be seen at several *airBaltic* destinations, including Finland and Iceland.



#### NO 3

And it is a photo taken in Iceland that takes third place, with more than **16,000 hearts**. Taken by photographer Pavel Matveev, the image contains everything a traveller can dream of: Iceland's spectacular nature, mighty mountains, and a warm drink. **IG/airBaltic**



### on *YouTube*



#### NO 1

The all-time most popular video on *airBaltic's* *YouTube* channel was made and published two years ago. It's only a minute and a half long and quite romantic, showing an *airBaltic* pilot proposing to his beloved – who's also a pilot! – just a moment after landing. Almost **five million people** have watched the video!



#### NO 2

The song 'Via Baltica', *airBaltic's* beautiful and moving tribute to the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Baltic Way sung in all three languages of the Baltic states, brought together artists from Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia: Jānis Šipkēvics, Reinis Sējāns, Jazzu, and Ewert Sundja. The airline's specially painted aircraft also appear in the video, which has been watched by **33,000 people**.



#### NO 3

With more than **2500 views**, the third most watched video of the past year also honours the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Baltic Way. The *airBaltic* team and guests celebrated the event on August 21, 2019. Proud to be Baltic! **youtube.com**



Words by Liza Valko  
Photos by iStock and Shutterstock

# SUN-KISSED COASTS

It's always the perfect time to head down south and enjoy the sunshine and peaceful beach life. Here's our pick of beautiful destinations for a warm, short-haul holiday.

Spectacular, unspoilt Legrena Beach is located near Cape Sounion and only about 60 kilometres from Athens.





Nissi Beach has garnered a reputation as a true paradise destination that can be enjoyed year-round.

Fly to  
**Larnaca**  
from  
**€99**  
one way

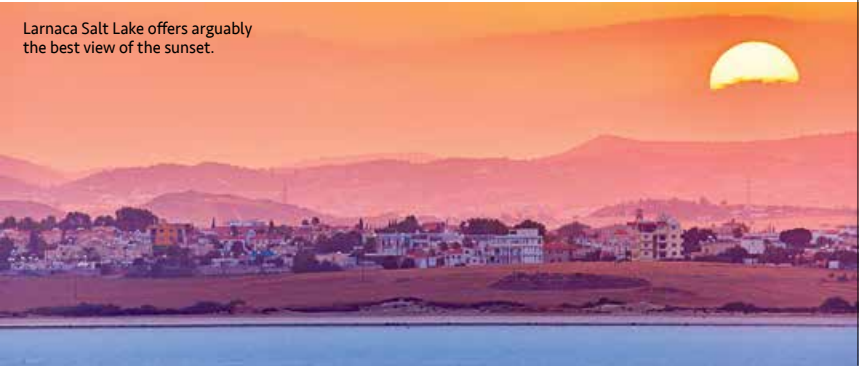
## LARNACA, CYPRUS

Larnaca is full of year-round sunshine and easy-going beach life. The city is built on the ruins of ancient Citium, a principal Phoenician town on Cyprus, and entices travellers with numerous attractions. The city's palm tree-lined promenade along the waterfront, otherwise known as Finikoudes, is a hub of restaurants, cafés, and bars and the place to meet locals and travellers enjoying drinks or relaxing on the beach. If you prefer a stroll, the promenade will take you past Larnaca Castle, the Buyuk Cami mosque, and the old Turkish quarter of Skala.

Larnaca has no shortage of beaches, with everything from party strips to quiet, natural spots. Finikoudes is the city's main coastal strip, extending for two kilometres from the Larnaca Marina down to the Psarolimano

wharves. If you're looking for a party on the beach, Mackenzie Beach is the place to explore. Nature lovers will appreciate Yannathes Beach, which adheres to the principles outlined by the Greening Cyprus Beaches eco-initiative and boasts unique plants, environmentally friendly signage, recycling bins, and parking for bicycles.

Not far from Larnaca you'll find some real treasures, for example, at Protaras and Ayia Napa, which offer captivating bays. Venture to Fig Tree Bay for azure waters and plenty of water sports facilities. One of Europe's most beautiful beaches lies near Ayia Napa. Nissi Beach attracts crowds with its sands and glittering azure waters. If you prefer more secluded spots, head to Konnos Bay for lush seasonal greenery and cliffs.



Larnaca Salt Lake offers arguably the best view of the sunset.

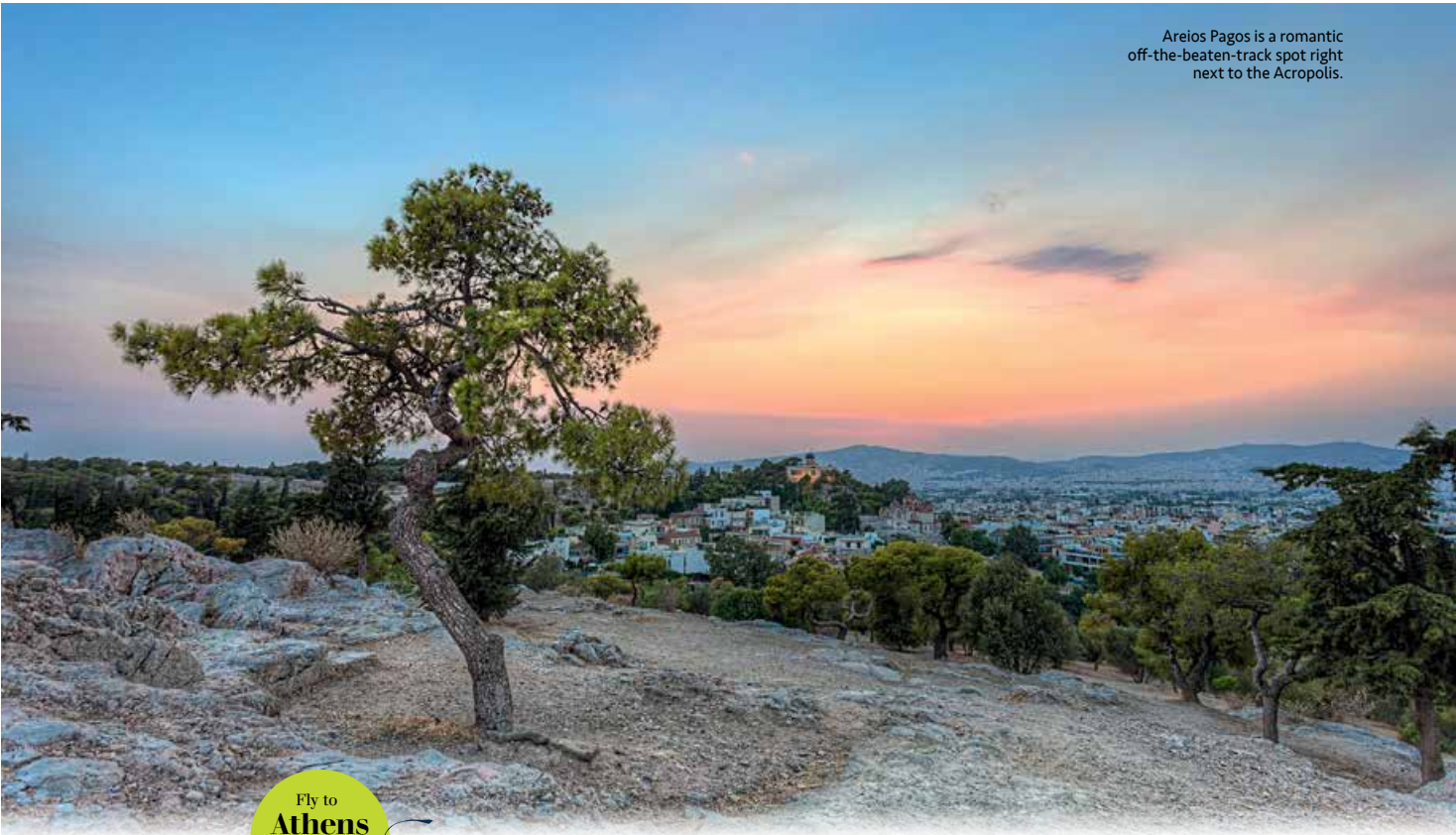
**Must-have food:** *Souvlakia* is the king of meat cuisine in Cyprus. It's a grilled kebab made of pork, lamb, or chicken meat.

**Must-visit sunset spot:** Larnaca Salt Lake offers arguably the best view of the sunset. As the sun fades over the horizon, the wide-open space is beautifully illuminated and takes in the marbled colours. The area is especially delightful in winter, when it's filled with water and migrating flamingos and other birds.

**Must-see beach:** Nissi Beach with its pearl-white sand and turquoise waters has a reputation for being a true paradise destination. Although young crowds come here for beach parties, there are plenty of quiet spots around for an evening or early morning stroll.

**Must-try sport:** Alaminos near Larnaca is considered one of the best kitesurfing locations in the world. The island has good conditions all year round for the sport. Whether you're a novice or advanced kiteboarder, you're sure to find something to your liking.

**Must-buy souvenir:** A game of backgammon, also known as *tavli*, has been the national game of Cyprus for generations and is often played in Cypriot cafés and coffee shops. Available in many different sizes and materials, the game will bring fond memories of a trip to Larnaca.



Areios Pagos is a romantic off-the-beaten-track spot right next to the Acropolis.

Fly to  
**Athens**  
from  
**€79**  
one way

## ATHENS, GREECE

Athens radiates a rich mix of history and contemporary culture. Ancient Greece gets the most attention, but you can also combine your city break with the relaxation of a beach holiday. There's even no need to take a ferry to the islands in the Aegean Sea, because Athens and the surrounding region boast a serene stretch of coastline.

With gorgeous azure waters and pristine golden sand, it's no wonder that Greece and Athens are one of the all-time favourite destinations for beachgoers. The Apollo Coast, also known as the Athenian Riviera, begins about 17 kilometres southeast of Athens. Whether it's a sandy strip in the upscale suburb of Glyfada or hidden coves near Cape Sounion, this 48-kilometre stretch down to Cape Sounion should be on your radar. The further south you go, the less crowded and built-up the region gets.

If you'd rather skip the busy streets of Athens, Anavissos offers a beautiful setting by a long, sandy beach. In addition, Anavissos Bay is a popular destination with windsurfers of all levels. Athenians come here on weekends to unwind and enjoy fresh fish and seafood in the restaurants and taverns in the nearby village of Palaia Fokaia.

Or how about exploring an offbeat gem further down the coast in Cape Sounion? One of the best-preserved Greek temples in the world, the Temple of Poseidon, is perched on top of a cliff here and overlooks the Aegean Sea. The sunset at Cape Sounion is genuinely spectacular. But to avoid crowded nearby beaches during the daytime, head to the lesser-known beach at Asimakis. There are many more beaches along the coast (such as Sounion Beach and Kape Beach), but you'll need a car to reach them.



The Temple of Poseidon is the most prominent monument at the archaeological site of Sounion.

**Must-have food:** *Pastitsio* is a Greek comfort food usually served on Sundays and made of layers of penne pasta, juicy minced meat, cheese, and béchamel sauce topped with a hint of spice and cinnamon.

**Must-visit sunset spot:** Areios Pagos is a romantic off-the-beaten-track spot right next to the Acropolis. Come to this rocky outcrop and watch the sun set over the picture-perfect Athenian skyline.

**Must-see beach:** Situated 44 kilometres from the centre of Athens, Kalivia is a stunning coastal area with blue waters, sandy beaches, and a calming atmosphere. To get out of the blazing heat, find a spot under the shadow of the surrounding greenery.

**Must-try sport:** The Lousios, Alfios, and Ladonas rivers are the most popular Greek rivers near Athens for year-round rafting. Varying levels of difficulty mean that everyone can embark on a rafting adventure here.

**Must-buy souvenir:** Custom-made leather sandals are a traditional yet stylish souvenir to bring back home. Stop by the world-famous *Melissinos* sandal shop (Normanou 7, Monastiraki) to try on the footwear that every Greek woman and many celebrities have in their wardrobes.





## LISBON, PORTUGAL

From pristine stretches of sand to crashing waves and rocky cliffs, Lisbon lies near Portugal's finest beaches. Here you'll find something for everyone in the family, from kid-friendly beach escapes to resort towns and surf spots.

Four different coastlines surround the city. The coast between Lisbon and Cascais is lined with numerous picturesque beaches and resort towns. Carcavelos Beach is one of the largest and only 30 minutes from Lisbon by train. Thanks to the long stretch of sand, sports facilities, and proximity to the city, this beach has become a popular destination among locals and holiday goers, especially those who love active sports such as surfing, beach volleyball, and running.

Beaches closer to Cascais are small but certainly crowded in the summer. The setting here is very different in character, ranging from the tranquil waters near Estoril to the wild beaches of Serra de Sintra.

Further north along the coast is Praia do Guincho, a surfer's paradise. The wild and rugged beach lies on the western edge of Sintra National Park, which ensures its raw beauty and remote ambience. Praia do Guincho is located along the Atlantic coast and boasts strong winds and massive waves, making it one of the best windsurfing and surfing spots in Europe.

Most beachgoers head to the beaches on the Cascais-Estoril coast, but the Costa da Caparica south of Lisbon is equally suited for

a day trip to the beach. Jump on a ferry from Cais do Sodre to get to the coastal town near Almada. Besides lounging on the beach, here you can also witness a cultural heritage that is slowly being lost. Watch the fishermen practising *xavega* (known as 'blind fishing') and later enjoy the fresh catch at one of the local seafood restaurants.



**Must-have food:** Sardines are a quintessential Portuguese specialty. If you travel to Lisbon between June and October, try freshly grilled sardines with a slice of lemon and boiled potatoes or a salad.

**Must-visit sunset spot:** The Miradouro da Senhora do Monte is the city's highest lookout point and a fascinating sunset spot with slightly fewer crowds than the Miradouro da Graça.

**Must-see beach:** Backed by high cliffs, Praia da Adraga is one of the most beautiful beaches in Portugal. The golden sand beach is a favourite among locals to enjoy the ocean breeze and the wild scenery.

**Must-try sport:** Stand-up paddle boarding, or SUP, is a fun and exciting experience. From the Lagoa de Obidos to the River Tagus, join a SUP tour and explore the city from the water.

**Must-buy souvenir:** Besides colourful ceramic *azulejos*, soaps from *Castelbel* make for a great souvenir from Portugal. These truly one-of-a-kind luxury soaps are handmade following a 300-year-old tradition and have become a favourite among Hollywood celebrities. **bo**

## 7 REASONS TO VISIT LIEPĀJA

Visit this gem on Latvia's western coast!



**Liepāja – the best place for the whole family to relax!**

Located on the western coast of Latvia, surrounded by a beautiful natural environment, and known as a great place to see colourful sunsets, Liepāja is a relaxing, safe, and child-friendly place for the whole family.

**Enjoy the whitest sandy beach in the world!**

Liepāja takes pride in its beach – a completely natural, undeveloped expanse of the finest, whitest sand. After storms, one can sometimes find pieces of amber on the beach that have been washed out of the sea together with seaweed and shells.

**Take a rest from the big city and let the wind clear your mind in Karosta!**

The setting and mentality in Liepāja lets you clear your head, daydream, and generate some new ideas. Head to Karosta, a naval base developed on the outskirts of Liepāja in the late 19th century for Tsar Alexander III of Russia, which



now features a museum and a variety of activities. Or take a walk along the sea or lakeside to look at things from a different perspective and recharge your inner batteries.

**Enjoy some culture and find inspiration in the Baltics' best concert hall!**

The Lielais Dzintars (Great Amber) concert hall is the symbol of Liepāja's cultural life and the pride of Latvia and the Baltics. Artists from about 60 countries around the world perform in Liepāja every year. The city also boasts Latvia's oldest theatre. Make sure to check out the Liepāja Museum or attend a concert by the Liepāja Symphony Orchestra.

**Enjoy the city's charming and romantic cafés!**

Liepāja has several restaurants and charming cafés offering foodies an array of cuisines and atmospheres. In all, the city has 23 restaurants, 30 cafés, and a variety of bars, bistros, and summer

cafés. While you're here, try *menčiņi*, Liepāja's official dish, which consists of smoked cod, potatoes, and onions cooked according to an old southern Kurzeme recipe. Liepāja is the only place in the world where you'll find this delicacy!

**Stay at a stylish hotel!**

Liepāja has a variety of accommodations, from a five-star hotel right along the waterfront promenade to classic business-style and boutique hotels in renovated warehouse and factory spaces. The city has 15 hotels, ten guest houses, youth hostels, and campgrounds as well as countless private apartments in which to enjoy your stay.

**Visit Liepāja region!**

Head a little way north, east, or south of Liepāja to discover wild horses and aurochs, wander forested labyrinths and ancient valleys, sail in a Viking ship on a foggy morning, or learn a craft or skill from the olden days, such as baking bread, churning butter, or smoking fish. [liepaja.travel](http://liepaja.travel)

**Liepāja**





## A MONTH OF CELEBRATIONS

With a long history in Europe, the *Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga* upholds local heritage and cultural identity, welcoming guests and locals alike to experience five-star, luxury service in Riga, which is a hidden gem and one of the safest places in Europe under the current circumstances.

As the northernmost *Kempinski* hotel in Europe, *Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga* has become a trendsetter in the Baltics and a stunning urban oasis providing a superior level of luxury and elegance for an autumn break in the city. With the famous Latvian National Opera House around the corner, the luxury hotel is well-suited for both business or leisure travellers seeking polished, world-class service, breathtaking views, and the rich cultural life of the city.

The attractive location of *Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga* and the revival of this former hotel haven't been a coincidence. The hotel's historic site has a long, storied past dating back to the 1878. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this building housed the glorious *Hotel Rome*, which was the first hotel in Riga with a telephone connection and electricity. Also, it turns out to be one of the first hotels in Europe built right next to a city's opera house, which later became an urban planning trend. A part of the establishment was damaged during the Second World War but later renovated. In 1954, the Soviet-era *Hotel Riga* opened in the building and became one of the most acclaimed hotels in the region. In fact, the first alcoholic cocktail in the Soviet Union was mixed at the bar of this hotel.

*Grand Hotel Kempinski* celebrates the 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the opening of its luxury hotel in Riga

Today, *Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga* continues to celebrate the rich history and legacy of the royalty and other celebrities who have stayed at the hotel over the years. The location has ultimately reclaimed its position and is gradually becoming a social hotspot and meeting place for locals and guests travelling to Riga.

*Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga* has created a space where true luxury can be experienced. The lobby lounge is designed to welcome travellers, locals, and like-minded guests who have a natural affinity with the *Kempinski* spirit. But what makes *Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga* stand out is the hospitality that embraces local cultural heritage in its own way and the opera theme that permeates the hotel. Its Opera Deluxe Rooms, for example, provide front-row views of the Latvian National Opera and Ballet House. The hotel's five stunning, fully equipped private meeting rooms, in turn, are named after individual musical movements: Sonata, Solo, Symphony, Andante, and Allegro.

In addition to the hotel facilities, no matter where you travel to and whatever the reason for your stay may be, it's always great to enjoy the surroundings and make time for yourself. In Riga, guests can immerse themselves in the classics and watch world-class opera and ballet performances at the Latvian National Opera and Ballet. 'From our side, *Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga* offers an opera weekend package along with pre-opera and after-opera specials. We have noticed that when the opera season starts, many of our loyal clients come to the hotel during intermissions for a glass



**Grand Hotel  
Kempinski**

RIGA

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With the autumn season in full swing, there's no better way to relax and wind down than by booking a stay at the five-star hotel. As it turns out, October is a month of celebrations for both *airBaltic* and *Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga*. The luxury hotel in Riga was opened in October three years ago. For this occasion, *Kempinski* has prepared a special anniversary offer as a gift to *airBaltic*'s passengers and readers of *Baltic Outlook* magazine.

This offer includes a special rate for a stay at *Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga*, a complimentary drink at the reception desk, and also a compliment from the executive chef as well as access to world-class spa and wellness facilities. For those who would like to have a holistic spa experience, spa and massage treatments are available for additional fees.

Enter promo code AIRBALTIC  
and get a 30% discount.

of champagne or the finest cuisine at the *Grand Bar* or one of our restaurants,' says Leon Baum, the hotel's general manager.

High-quality and sophisticated service in combination with authenticity is one of the top priorities at *Kempinski Hotels*. And during these times of Covid-19, the hotel has implemented its White Glove Service programme, which offers luxury service without compromising on guest care and safety. The 50-page handbook that accompanies the implementation of this new service describes the activities and measures that require special attention, starting from a guest's arrival to the arrangement of public spaces in compliance with regional health safety measures. First of all, it means that employees wear gloves when serving guests, whether in the lobby, restaurant, or guest rooms. Absolute privacy is offered to guests who upon check-in and during their stay decide to not allow any hotel team member to enter their room during their full stay at the hotel. While usually a 'do not disturb' sign is used temporarily, the new 'privacy' sign assures that requested services will still be handled, but in front of the guest's room door.

The ultimate goal of *Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga* is taking care of international and local guests and adhering to all safety requirements whilst upholding high, five-star service standards in the hotel, spa and fitness centre, restaurants, and bars. 'Our team is happy to welcome every visitor to our warm, luxurious surroundings to discover the authentic experience at *Grand Hotel Kempinski Riga*, which is second to none!' concludes Baum.





Publicity photos



## SOAKING IN THE ART OF BATHING

From its manufacturing base in Latvia to high-end customers worldwide, *Aquatica* embodies a new generation of bathroom excellence.

There are so few places where one can experience genuine relaxation and reorganise one's thoughts, body, and mind. This is why bathroom design and the wise selection of bath hardware that unites both functionality and the ability to create an ultimate spa experience plays a crucial role in the modern home. High design and high technology meet in *Aquatica's* bathroomware products to indulge the needs of the most discerning customers.

*Aquatica Plumbing Europe Ltd* was founded in Canada in 2003 as a wholesale plumbing supplier, but its team soon began to supplement the products with its own water therapy systems. 'Ten years ago we began to develop our own products with manufacturers in different countries, but the quality was not satisfying enough, and we decided to do the manufacturing ourselves,' says Joseph Burnstein (Jāzeps Burnšteins), the Latvian-born and globally experienced founder of *Aquatica*. 'Our bathroomware is created for modern, well-situated clients, people who are keen on technology and well-developed products – the kinds of products one can interact with, that are user-friendly, and that solve specific problems.' Now a quickly evolving power player in the niche bathroomware sector, *Aquatica* is the sole manufacturer of high-quality solid-surface and composite bathtubs, basins, hot tubs, lavatories, and showers as well as outdoor furniture and accessories.

The company launched its manufacturing site in Latvia in 2018, and at the beginning of 2020 it moved

to a more spacious location in the Latvian city of Jelgava. From there, exclusive high-quality bathtubs and luxurious hot tubs travel across the world to the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Russia, Hong Kong, and the United Arab Emirates, with pit stops at the villas of Hollywood stars and high-end Mexican boutique hotels. Every *Aquatica* product is designed so that each country can have its own regional version that meets local standards of quality and safety.

'Some time ago, we pursued a remote operations routine, but once all of the manufacturing processes were focused in one place, we united our team in Jelgava. But we still collaborate remotely with professionals from Serbia, Italy, Portugal, and Ukraine, where our IT services and online store development team is based,' adds Burnstein. The design process, product innovation, and problem-solving are carried out collectively and with input from people of many different cultures and backgrounds.

For a relatively young company in a field where many of the other industry players are more than a century old, it was not easy to find a free corridor to reach the customer. 'We realised that nowadays it doesn't make much sense to fight for a product that's exactly the same as everyone else's. I really believe that people are more open to investing more in a product that solves problems,' says Burnstein. 'That's why we decided to develop our electronic systems, aiming to endow the bath with similar features

that, for instance, household appliances have, where intelligence, electronics, heating systems, and many other factors unite with high-end design. Our bathtubs allow customers to heighten their sensations.'

As an alternative sales channel, *Aquatica* created an online retail model – its website provides customer service in eight languages, 18 hours a day and seven days a week. It also introduces a special online tool, the interactive *Body Positioner*, which allows customers to evaluate the measurements and water depth of products virtually.

The *Aquatica* philosophy is based on the rule of 3 F's: function, form, and fashion. This formula includes high-quality materials, well-thought-out engineering, and ergonomic design. From sleek and minimalist forms to imaginative reinterpretations of traditional bathtubs, *Aquatica* aesthetics are rooted in timeless beauty and premium-quality Italian design traditions. Still, they wouldn't be as special without the company's high-tech innovations and specially developed, patented composite materials, such as the solid homogeneous composite material *AquateX*, *EcoMarmor* cast stone, or even *LegnoX* solid wood. *NeroX* solid-surface composite material in a matte, black graphite tone, for its part, is a customer favourite.

*Aquatica* has its own chemical laboratory where existing formulas are constantly monitored and new ones are developed. It takes three to four days to make a solid-surface technology bath – including casting, hardening, and finishing – or up to a week if it's additionally equipped with electronic therapy and water heating systems.

'Our sales and design team recognised that there were very few, if any, functional bathtubs that could fit small spaces. But such products are becoming increasingly important for small, inner-city dwellings in densely populated major cities,' says Burnstein. 'In some of these homes, the bathrooms are so small that there is no space for a regular bathtub. But that doesn't mean their inhabitants don't want one. So, we created a bath that fits in a small space and allows its owner to enjoy the bathing experience in full.' The *True Ofuro* series is a modern reincarnation of the distinctive Japanese *oidaki* bathtubs made for seated soaking and full body immersion.

Burnstein continues: 'We realised that people love hot baths, but when we speak of apartments, the water boilers tend to be rather small as well, and it's not wise to refill a bath to keep the water warm. So *Aquatica* introduced the *Tranquility* bath heating system with a digital control panel and temperature display, which reduces water consumption and provides a prolonged warm soaking experience.' For high-tech geeks, the bathtubs also steal the show with integrated *Bluetooth* audio and an LED-based chromotherapy system.

*Aquatica* also offers designs for the elderly generation and people with restricted mobility or simply different physical conditions. The stylish, low-step *Coletta*, for instance, is the perfect solution for reduced-mobility bathers, while the company's first walk-in bathtub, *Baby Boomer*, has a transparent resin door.



**aquatica**  
*Function, Form & Fashion*

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Now officially street legal! This driverless cuteness rolls around the streets of Tallinn, open and free for anyone to hop on.

# THE ESTONIAN UNIVERSITY PROJECT

that turned into a driverless bus

This self-driving shuttle bus now officially on the streets of Tallinn emerged from a university robotics course.

It feels like being in a giant toy car. There's almost no sound, no steering wheel, no pedals, and, well, no driver, either. Unless you consider an operator with a joystick a driver. For now, he has to come along for safety.

Next year, the plan is that the operator won't need to be there anymore. The bus will be monitored entirely from the control centre, where one person will be able to oversee between three to ten buses and make sure everything runs smoothly.

Other than having a maximum speed of 30 km/h, the bus named *Iseauto* doesn't

differ much from the other vehicles in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. Officially, *Iseauto* is now part of the Estonian public transportation system and anyone can hop on and ride for free, because public transportation in Tallinn is free of charge for locals.

There are other automated shuttle buses like this one, but none of them have a story like this.

The original version of this vehicle was developed with only 400,000 euros for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech). Around 20 students and university researchers were given one year to make it happen.

To speed up the process, the team built the vehicle using open-source software. But the pursuit of a different way of doing things didn't end there. Most driverless vehicles are created by giant corporations with billion-dollar investments. And because there's a lot at stake, they usually keep their black boxes strictly confidential, so it's almost impossible for outsiders – even scientists – to work with them. *Iseauto* turned all that around and for its own benefit.

'We build everything using only open source solutions,' says Raivo Sell, the head of the autonomous vehicles research team at TalTech. 'We're completely open. Anyone can join us and test their software with our bus at any time.'

The bus was ready in a year, just as promised. And that's where the story could have ended.

'Universities are usually not interested in becoming car production facilities or engineering bureaus,' Sell continues. 'We prefer to show how and what can be done and then move on.'



Autonomous vehicles expert Raivo Sell (left) and Rahul Razdan (right) after signing the collaboration agreement between Tallinn University of Technology and Florida Polytechnic University.



The creators of *Iseauto* – the students and their supervisors – feeling excited right after the vehicle's launch on September 20, 2018.



The rector of TalTech, Jaak Aaviksoo (back left), former Finnish prime minister Alexander Stubb (back right), and senior research scientist Raivo Sell (front right) taking the first ride in *Iseauto* on the university campus.

But things were different with *Iseauto*. After graduation, some of the students who had worked on the bus founded the *Auve Tech* company to develop the vehicle into a product.

There are now ten *Iseauto* vehicles and five more coming in the next few months. Cities around Europe that want to develop their smart city concepts have reached out to the new company. Which city wouldn't instantly look cooler with a self-driving bus? It's the real buzzword these days. So much so that many university teams and companies are exploiting the concept.

The idea of a vehicle moving around on its own sounds attractive, but it's still largely the material of science fiction. In reality, even the products made by the biggest companies still require drivers to keep their hands on a steering wheel at all times because the automated vehicle technology barely works. They vehicles can still hardly get to the other side of the street. And there have been enough accidents already.

One of the people who has had the guts – and enough knowledge – to say this out loud is professor Rahul Razdan, who runs a research group at Florida Polytechnic University. His group is one of the very few that studies how to verify safety for automated vehicles, and they're a step ahead of what most automated vehicles need to learn at this point.

Razdan's team selected the Estonian research team to work with. The Estonian self-driving bus was the perfect choice because of its policy of transparency. *Iseauto* is also built by researchers, meaning that they're interested in developing and

improving the product without being afraid of criticism, which might be seen as bad publicity for a commercial company. And finally, the Estonian automated shuttle buses are already driving in real traffic, so the simulations that Razdan's team runs can be based on real cases. They run the simulations in Florida and come back to the Estonian team with results. Some of the cases are played out in the streets of Tallinn, too.

Razdan calls Estonia a 'city country' because of its size. This northern European country has a population of only 1.3 million people, so bureaucracy is not an issue the way it is in the United States.

This spring, the self-driving buses were officially registered with the Estonian Road Administration. Because it's a completely new process, the government officials closely cooperated with the *Iseauto* team when coming up with the 'driving exam'. This is something difficult to imagine in most other countries.

The examiner made the driverless bus stop, park, and turn. To test its ability to detect danger, the examiners threw balls across the road for the bus to detect and also covered its cameras with a blanket to see if it would stop. The automated vehicles are generally programmed to stop in case of any danger or uncertainty. Thankfully, *Iseauto* passed the exam and received a number plate.

There's still a long road ahead for the TalTech team and for this startup, but their story shows that not all science projects have to end with another forgotten PDF file.





# IKOS OLIVIA

an unforgettable  
gastronomy experience

Mediterranean cuisine with hints of Scandinavian flavour

For already more than half a year *Ikos Olivia* restaurant has been welcoming Rigans and guests to the city with a combination of Mediterranean and Northern traditions and foods that are not available anywhere else in Latvia.

In creating the menu, the team at *Ikos Olivia* has taken inspiration from French, Italian, Greek, and Spanish gastronomic traditions, and has also included hints of Asian flavours and combined everything with the chef's own passion for experimental cuisine. However, the team always pays the most attention to the ingredients they use – they must be not only seasonal but also clean and organically grown. 'Fresh produce and ingredients are the most important

thing. They must be not only correctly grown, obtained, and delivered but also be processed correctly in our kitchen,' says the chef. 'Therefore our task is to find produce and meats of excellent quality, prepare them with respect, and serve them in an agreeable setting. In addition, it's important for us to give thought to each ingredient, from the fish and meat all the way to the mushrooms and berries, which are, for example, gathered in the forests of northern Finland. If each of the ingredients in a dish is of the highest quality, then the meal is truly delicious and enjoyable.'

*Ikos Olivia* is distinct not only for its high-quality produce and unique flavours and manner of preparation, but also for



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Krišjāņa Valdemāra  
iela 25, Rīga  
Open:  
Mon-Fri 13.00–23.00  
Sat-Sun 12.00–23.00  
Phone: +371 27 338 866  
ikosolivia.lv

its general philosophy. Each food on the menu has a story of its own. The main menu highlights fish and seafood: the Mediterranean turbot is from the French coast, where it is raised on an organic fish farm, while the North Sea cod is caught in the Barents Sea and the shrimp are supplied from Canada. The swordfish comes from the Atlantic Ocean and sometimes takes more than 20 hours to be delivered to the restaurant. *Ikos Olivia* is the only restaurant in Latvia to have been granted an official catch quota for bluefin tuna, leading its restaurant team to create a unique concept for Riga – a tuna menu.

The *Ikos Olivia* team has also kept meat lovers in mind. Most of its meats come from Ireland because in addition to having been quality meat producers for many generations, the Irish are also able to ensure that the meat delivered to the restaurant is organically grown, tender, juicy, and full of flavour.

The dessert menu at *Ikos Olivia* is not large, but each of the dishes contains refined, nuanced flavours that might even recall childhood. One of the favourite desserts at the restaurant is the caramelised Brunost, or cheese cream with cloudberry from the Arctic – guests call it an absolute masterpiece. Another highlight is the chocolate brownie with black garlic and lingonberry sauce, which once again confirms the chef's tendency to not shy away from experimenting with various flavours and manners of preparation. It is precisely for this reason that the menu at *Ikos Olivia* often features fermented products made on site at the restaurant, including nuts, egg yolks, and kombucha, which features in several sauces.

*Ikos Olivia* is located in a two-storey wooden building dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the heart of Riga's Art Nouveau district. The restaurant has taken care not only with its gastronomic offer but also its visual image. Naturally, the exterior attracts attention, but so does the well-considered interior with its subtle colours, brick walls, velvet, copper, wood, and the romance of an attic space. Because *Ikos Olivia* can accommodate up to 100 guests, the restaurant's unforced informal atmosphere is ideal for meetings with friends and romantic dinners as well as for business meetings and larger celebrations.





Photos by iStock and Shutterstock

# WELCOME ABOARD airBaltic



Larnaca Salt Lake in Cyprus

## WARM MEDITERRANEAN DESTINATIONS FOR YOUR AUTUMN GETAWAY

Prolong the summer season by the Mediterranean! With some great holiday spots easily accessible via direct flights from Riga, there's no need to travel very far.

Catch some rays in **Larnaca**, enjoy a city break in **Lisbon**, explore culture in **Athens**, or dip into the sea in **Dubrovnik**. Book your tickets now, starting from EUR 79 one way.

## airBaltic CLUB INTRODUCES THE DIGITAL LOYALTY CARD

The *airBaltic* Club travel loyalty programme has introduced digital loyalty cards, which members can download to their mobile wallets and thus reduce unnecessary use of plastic.

The new digital cards can be used in the same way as the plastic card, yet are more convenient for users. As part of our efforts towards sustainability and digital improvements, *airBaltic* Club no longer sends out physical *airBaltic* Club and PINS member cards.

## EXPLORE GERMANY WITH airBaltic

This autumn, choose one of *airBaltic's* six destinations in Germany for shopping, sightseeing, or just getting to know the German culture. *airBaltic* offers direct flights to Germany from all the Baltic capitals.

You can fly to the trendy capital **Berlin** from Riga two times per day, from Vilnius four times per week and from Tallinn two times per week.

There are also flights to **Munich** – the heart of Bavaria and gateway to the Alps – four times a week from Riga and three times a week from Vilnius.

Explore the art and fashion scenes in **Düsseldorf** and the great night-life in the vibrant port city of **Hamburg**. Visit the *Porsche* and *Mercedes-Benz* museums in **Stuttgart**, or take a trip to Germany's most popular wine region from **Frankfurt**.

Book your tickets to Germany starting from EUR 65 round trip.



To get the best flight deals, look for prices with cherries on [airbaltic.com](http://airbaltic.com)!

All flight prices mentioned in this magazine apply to Basic tickets from Riga, Vilnius, or Tallinn that are booked in advance at [www.airbaltic.com](http://www.airbaltic.com).

Prices are subject to availability and not available for all flights or days. Special conditions apply. Prices can be changed unilaterally by *airBaltic*.



View of Kyiv with the Dnieper River, Paton Bridge, Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, and Vydubychi Monastery

## NEW FLIGHT FROM VILNIUS

This autumn, on October 6, *airBaltic* opens new direct flights from Vilnius to the capital of Ukraine, **Kyiv**. The new flight will run three times a week, with ticket prices starting from EUR 19 one way.

Together with the new route, there are a total of 11 direct flight connections from Vilnius. You can fly to **Amsterdam, Berlin, Dubrovnik, Dublin, London, Munich, Oslo, Paris, Riga, and Tallinn**.

## GREEN CLASSIC – FOR MORE FLEXIBLE TRAVEL!

Changes in your travel plans are stress-free if you book a GREEN Classic ticket.

With GREEN Classic, you get all the essentials included in the price: checked baggage; seat selection; airport check-in; flight date change.

You also get greater flexibility when it comes to passenger name change and flight cancellation.

If you are a member of our *airBaltic* Club loyalty programme, you earn 100 bonus points for every GREEN Classic ticket.

## THE SLOPES ARE WAITING

The ski season starts soon, so now's the time to book your tickets to Europe's most popular ski destinations.

Reach the classic ski resorts in the Alps by flying to **Salzburg** directly from Riga and Tallinn as of December. Or choose our flights to **Munich, Vienna, Milan, Geneva, Zurich, Verona, Tbilisi**, and more.

If you're up for something different this year, try Scandinavia. Norway's ski resorts feature one of the longest seasons and there are convenient flights to **Oslo** from all three Baltic capitals.

Frozen trees and northern lights – Finland is the perfect place to learn to ski. You can fly from Riga to **Helsinki** and **Turku**. Or choose from more than 100 ski resorts in Sweden by flying to **Stockholm** or **Gothenburg** from Riga or Tallinn.

When booking tickets, don't forget to add skis or a snowboard to your booking from EUR 29.99.





# Your health and well-being are our top priority

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



## BEFORE THE FLIGHT

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

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



## AT THE AIRPORT

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

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

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

## BOARDING

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

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

## ON BOARD

Our crew wear protective face masks and gloves during the whole flight. Each passenger also receives a complimentary protective mask and disinfecting wipes in order to be able to change his or her mask after the inflight meal.

Choose food and drinks from the disposable menu cards that the cabin crew hand out to Economy class passengers. Meal service is included with Business class tickets. All meals are prepared and packed separately in our

kitchen under strict hygiene standards. Payment is possible by card only.



## CLEAN AIR INSIDE THE CABIN

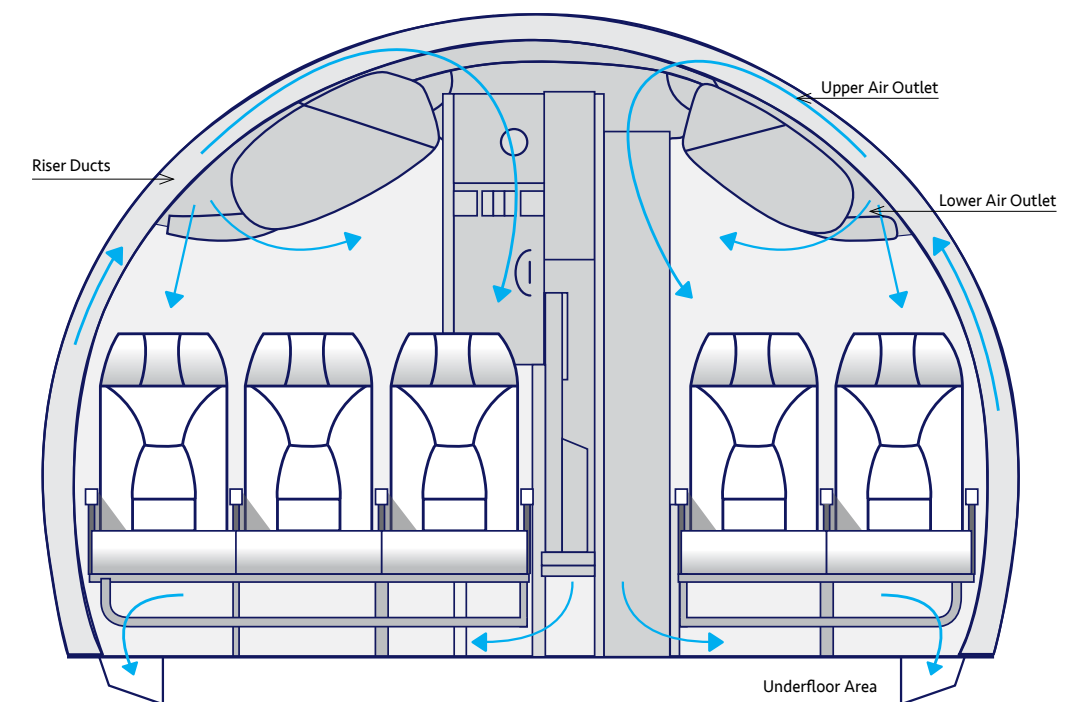
Our *Airbus A220-300* aircraft are equipped with a modern environmental control system using HEPA filters to eliminate all viruses and bacteria. Airflow is routed down towards the floor, thus minimising air transmission amongst passengers.

## AIRCRAFT DISINFECTION

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

# The science behind keeping cabin air clean

Words by Līga Vaļko



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Words by Ilze Pole  
Photo by Dmitrijs Sulžics (F64)



**Uldis Jacis (63),**  
captain on *Airbus A220-300* aircraft,  
from Latvia

## Pilots out of their office

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

### HOBBY

Uldis was quite concerned about how Hanna would behave in the photo studio. ‘I can pose as long as you need, but I’m not sure about the dog. She can get nervous in unfamiliar places,’ he said over the phone. But Hanna, an eight-year-old bull terrier, behaved perfectly, even enjoying the new surroundings and showing a curiosity about everything.

‘When I was a kid, I used to play with the neighbour’s dogs; we didn’t have one,’ Uldis remembers. But ever since he started his own family, there’s always been a dog in the house. Hanna is the fourth one. Before that, his family had a Doberman for 13 years. ‘We’ve always had less-common breeds of dogs,’ he adds.

Hanna was acquired in Moscow and arrived in Riga on a train. She underwent serious dog training for the first four years. ‘Now she trains us – me and my wife – when we take her for walks in the nearby woods,’ Uldis laughs. ‘We run after her, but that helps to keep us in shape.’ Hanna is friendly and never raises her voice. ‘Some dogs bark and bark at each other when they pass on the street or in the park. But the big and strong ones don’t bark like that (*laughs*); it’s only the little dogs who do it.’ Hanna, however, has still not made friends with the family cat, who has now been granted exclusive rights to the second floor of their house.

Hanna takes part in competitions and dog exhibitions from time to time as well.

### HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Becoming a pilot was a childhood dream for Uldis. Before the war, his father did gliding. They used to be called sail gliders, because the wings of the gliders had holes in them and the flyers didn’t follow a specific route. Uldis’ older brother also became a pilot and still takes an active interest in aviation. In fact, his brother strongly influenced Uldis’ choice of career.

After completing his military service – where he served in the landing forces – Uldis returned to Riga and worked as a mechanic at Spilve Airport for a while, where agriculture aircraft were based. He then enrolled in the Sasovo Civil Aviation Flight School in Russia, which was one of the very few institutions in the whole Soviet Union where one could learn to become a pilot. Uldis’ brother had trained there as well. After graduating, Uldis was sent to work in Tyumen Oblast in Russia, where he flew an *AN-2* aircraft and helicopter. He worked there for 11 years and returned to Latvia shortly after the country regained its independence in 1991.

*airBaltic* made its first flight in October 1995. Uldis began flying for the company in May 1996. Before that, however, he had to learn English, because all of the communication in his work before then had been in Russian. But learning new things is something he is used to doing. Uldis has flown almost all of the aircraft types *airBaltic* has had, except for the *Saab* and *Dash Q400*. Only a couple of years ago, he did his type rating on the *Airbus A220-300*.

Uldis appreciates working with all the young colleagues: ‘Everyone has their own story, their own experiences and education. But as I always say, I have my own – my old-school experiences – and sometimes I share my old-school knowledge with them as well. For example, that it’s good to trust what the instruments say, but it’s also good to know how to do the calculations in your head.’

Through *airBaltic*’s wet leases, Uldis has worked in Portugal, Germany, and Belgium as well as Nepal, Cambodia, and in Lebanon. He will retire next year. ‘I had a bit of practice earlier this year and got a taste of what it’s like to stay at home for a longer time. But everything was fine. I got a lot of things done,’ he laughs.

Thank you, captain, from all of us!

Words by Ilze Pole / Photos from the personal archives of Luīze Šternberga, Dace Martinsone, and Inese Eltermane

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

1/ Senior cabin crew member and line trainer **LUĪZE ŠTERNBERGA** has worked for *airBaltic* for 22 years. Her first attempt to get a job was unsuccessful, because the recruitment period for flight attendants had just ended and she had to wait three years for the next period to begin.

2/Luīze has loved working with horses since childhood and often accompanied her father to Ligatne, where she learned to ride and care for horses. Here is a picture of Calegro.

3/Luīze began dancing in folk dance ensembles while in school and continues to do so today, although it is not easy to combine the hobby with her schedule as a flight attendant. She also enjoys classical ballet, which demands a lot of discipline and keeps her in good shape.

4/**DACE MARTINSONE**, a senior cabin crew member and instructor, joined *airBaltic* at 1998. She loves working as an instructor, preparing training materials and presentations. ‘I have to know how to present each topic I teach in three languages,’ she says. She also enjoys the fact that a flight attendant has a lot more sunny days per year than people who work on land.

5/ Here is Dace at El Torcal in Malaga, where she travelled together with her family.

6/Dace’s hobby is handicrafts. Her favourite is knitting, which she learned at age five. In the past few years she



# 9

## SNAPSHOTS from the lives of our flight attendants

has done a lot of knitting with beads, making wrist warmers, mittens, and even socks. She has recently also made two sweaters and three jackets. She enjoys learning new knitting techniques.

7/Senior cabin crew member

## Our cabin crew is always there for you!

**INESE ELTERMANE** began working for *airBaltic* at 1997. Becoming a flight attendant was her mother’s dream, which she did not fulfil. But Inese did. She loves the dynamism of the job as well as the romance: sunrises, sunsets, being able to enjoy moments of summer in the depth of winter and welcoming spring earlier than usual.

8/ Inese has always loved mountains. She and her family take almost every opportunity to enjoy them, whether skiing in the winter or, as in this photo, hiking in Zakopane, Poland.

9/ While she finds it interesting to visit all kinds of destinations both near and far, Inese admits that there’s no place like home. Cēsis, Latvia.





NEW TICKET TYPES ON *airBaltic* FLIGHTS

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

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

	GREEN	GREEN plus only on <a href="#">airBaltic.com</a>	GREEN classic	BUSINESS
	The simplest ticket for the lowest price – with the option of changing the flight date.	A great price that includes checked baggage and the option of flexibility. Plus regular discounts on different ancillary services.	A smart choice! The most important services plus greater flexibility in changing or cancelling the flight.	Our proven value – enjoy plenty of benefits, sophisticated service and total flexibility.
CABIN BAGGAGE	✓	✓	✓	✓
CHECKED BAGGAGE	from EUR 14.99	✓	✓	✓
SEAT RESERVATION	from EUR 4.99	from EUR 4.99	✓	✓
DATE CHANGE*	EUR 50 per direction	EUR 50 per direction	✓	✓
REFUND	✗ **	✗ **	EUR 50 per direction, or EUR 25 per direction, if you choose a refund in the form of a gift voucher	✓
NAME CHANGE*	✗ **	✗ **	EUR 70 per ticket	✓
MEAL	from EUR 9.99	from EUR 9.99	from EUR 9.99	✓
AIRPORT CHECK-IN	EUR 14.99	EUR 14.99	✓	✓
FAST TRACK	✗	✗	✗	✓
BUSINESS LOUNGE	✗	✗	✗	✓
<i>airBaltic Club</i> ***	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent + 50 bonus <i>pins</i>	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent + 100 bonus <i>pins</i>	Earn 1–3 <i>pins</i> per euro spent + 200 bonus <i>pins</i>

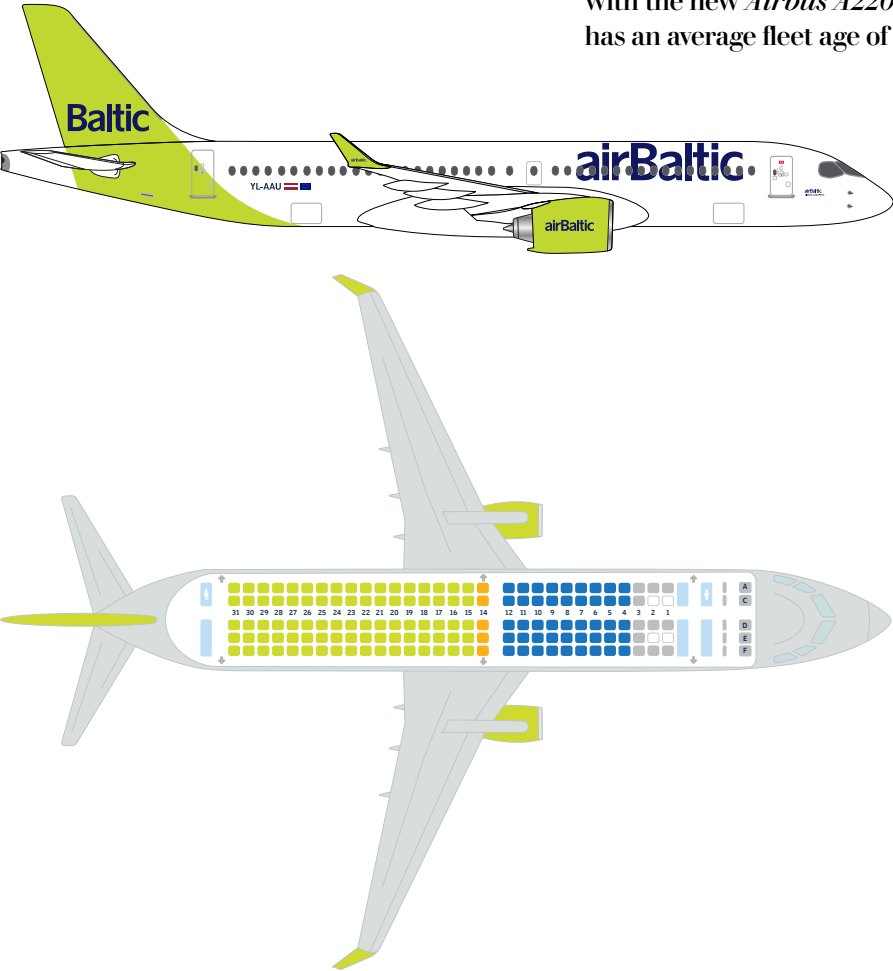
\* Fare difference may apply.  
\*\* A Flight Cancellation option and Name Change option can be added to your tickets by making the reservation on [airBaltic.com](#).  
\*\*\* The number of *pins* earned per each Euro spent on a ticket depends on the tier level within the *airBaltic Club*.

Flights from RIGA						Flights to RIGA					
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure	Arrival
AMSTERDAM						AMSTERDAM					
BT 617	RIX	AMS	1234567	07:45	09:05	BT 618	AMS	RIX	1234567	10:20	13:30
BT 619	RIX	AMS	1234567	16:30	17:50	BT 620	AMS	RIX	1234567	18:35	21:45
ATHENS / Till Oct 24						ATHENS / Till Oct 24					
BT 611	RIX	ATH	-2---6-	08:00	11:10	BT 612	ATH	RIX	-2---6-	12:10	15:20
BERLIN Tegel						BERLIN Tegel					
BT 211	RIX	TXL	123456-	07:30	08:10	BT 211	TXL	RIX	123456-	09:10	11:45
BT 213	RIX	TXL	-----7	18:10	18:50	BT 214	TXL	RIX	-----7	19:40	22:15
BILLUND						BILLUND					
BT 147	RIX	BLL	1---5-7	12:50	13:30	BT 148	BLL	RIX	1---5-7	14:30	17:05
BRUSSELS						BRUSSELS					
BT 603	RIX	BRU	1---5-7	16:25	17:50	BT 604	BRU	RIX	1---5-7	18:50	22:10
BUDAPEST						BUDAPEST					
BT 491	RIX	BUD	-2---6-	12:30	13:30	BT 492	BUD	RIX	-2---6-	14:30	17:25
CATANIA Fontanarossa / Till Oct 18						CATANIA Fontanarossa / Till Oct 18					
BT 639	RIX	CTA	-----7	07:15	09:45	BT 640	CTA	RIX	-----7	10:35	14:55
COPENHAGEN						COPENHAGEN					
BT 131	RIX	CPH	1234567	07:45	08:15	BT 132	CPH	RIX	1234567	09:15	11:40
DUBLIN						DUBLIN					
BT 661	RIX	DUB	1-3-5--	07:25	08:35	BT 662	DUB	RIX	1-3-5--	09:15	14:10
DUBROVNIK / Till Oct 19						DUBROVNIK / Till Oct 19					
BT 497	RIX	DBV	1-----	15:40	17:20	BT 498	DBV	RIX	1-----	18:20	21:55
DUSSELDORF						DUSSELDORF					
BT 233	RIX	DUS	-2-4-6-	16:25	17:40	BT 234	DUS	RIX	-2-4-6-	18:35	21:40
FRANKFURT						FRANKFURT					
BT 243	RIX	FRA	1-3-5-7	08:00	09:20	BT 244	FRA	RIX	1-3-5-7	10:00	13:10
GOTHENBURG						GOTHENBURG					
BT 121	RIX	GOT	-2-4-6-	12:20	12:45	BT 122	GOT	RIX	-2-4-6-	13:45	16:05
HAMBURG						HAMBURG					
BT 251	RIX	HAM	1-3-5-7	12:40	13:30	BT 252	HAM	RIX	1-3-5-7	14:30	17:10
HELSINKI						HELSINKI					
BT 301	RIX	HEL	1234567	07:45	08:45	BT 326	HEL	RIX	1234567	05:30	06:30
BT 325	RIX	HEL	1234567	23:25	00:25+1	BT 302	HEL	RIX	1234567	09:45	10:45
KALININGRAD / From Oct 12						KALININGRAD / From Oct 12					
BT 454	RIX	KGD	1-345-7	23:30	23:25	BT 455	KGD	RIX	12-456-	04:30	06:25
KIEV / From Oct 12						KIEV / From Oct 12					
BT 404	RIX	KBP	1234567	18:25	20:00	BT 405	KBP	RIX	1234567	20:50	22:30
LARNACA						LARNACA					
BT 657	RIX	LCA	-----6-	13:55	17:40	BT 658	LCA	RIX	--3----	03:45	07:30
BT 657	RIX	LCA	-2-----	23:00	02:45+1	BT 658	LCA	RIX	-----6-	18:40	22:30
LISBON						LISBON					
BT 675	RIX	LIS	-2-5--	12:30	15:10	BT 676	LIS	RIX	-2-5--	16:10	22:30
LONDON Gatwick						LONDON Gatwick					
BT 651	RIX	LGW	1234567	07:45	08:40	BT 652	LGW	RIX	1234567	09:25	14:05
BT 653	RIX	LGW	---4-7	15:40	16:35	BT 654	LGW	RIX	---4-7	17:35	22:15
MILAN Malpensa						MILAN Malpensa					
BT 629	RIX	MXP	1-----	07:55	09:40	BT 630	MXP	RIX	1-----	10:40	14:20
BT 629	RIX	MXP	---5--	15:55	17:40	BT 630	MXP	RIX	---5--	18:40	22:20
MINSK / From Oct 12						MINSK / From Oct 12					
BT 412	RIX	MSQ	1-4--7	14:15	15:15	BT 413	MSQ	RIX	1-4--7	16:15	17:15
MOSCOW Sheremetyevo / From Oct 12						MOSCOW Sheremetyevo / From Oct 12					
BT 422	RIX	SVO	1234567	18:05	19:45	BT 423	SVO	RIX	1234567	20:40	22:25
MUNICH						MUNICH					
BT 223	RIX	MUC	1-3-5-7	17:00	18:10	BT 224	MUC	RIX	1-3-5-7	19:15	22:20
NICE						NICE					
BT 695	RIX	NCE	1---5--	07:30	09:35	BT 696	NCE	RIX	1---5--	10:35	14:25
ODESSA / From Oct 12						ODESSA / From Oct 12					
BT 410	RIX	ODS	1-4---	23:45	01:45+1	BT 411	ODS	RIX	-2-5--	04:10	06:10
OSLO						OSLO					
BT 153	RIX	OSL	1234567	18:10	18:50	BT 154	OSL	RIX	1234567	19:50	22:20
PALANGA						PALANGA					
BT 033	RIX	PLQ	1-3-5-7	23:40	00:25+1	BT 032	PLQ	RIX	1-3-5-7	05:40	06:25
PARIS Charles de Gaulle						PARIS Charles de Gaulle					
BT 691	RIX	CDG	-2-4-67	07:20	09:10	BT 692	CDG	RIX	-2-4-67	10:05	13:45
PRAGUE						PRAGUE					
BT 481	RIX	PRG	---4-7	12:40	13:25	BT 482	PRG	RIX	---4-7	14:25	17:10
REYKJAVIK						REYKJAVIK					
BT 169	RIX	KEF	1---5--	13:15	14:10	BT 170	KEF	RIX	1---5--	15:10	21:50
ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino						ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino					
BT 633	RIX	FCO	1---5--	14:50	16:50	BT 634	FCO	RIX	1---5--	17:50	21:45



# Welcome aboard our new *Airbus A220-300*

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



Number of aircraft	22
Number of seats	145
Max take-off weight	67.6 metric tons
Max payload	16.7 metric tons
Length	38.7 m
Wing span	35.1 m
Cruising speed	870 km/h
Commercial range	4575 km
Fuel consumption	2200 l/h
Engine	PW 1521G

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

## Use of portable electronic devices

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

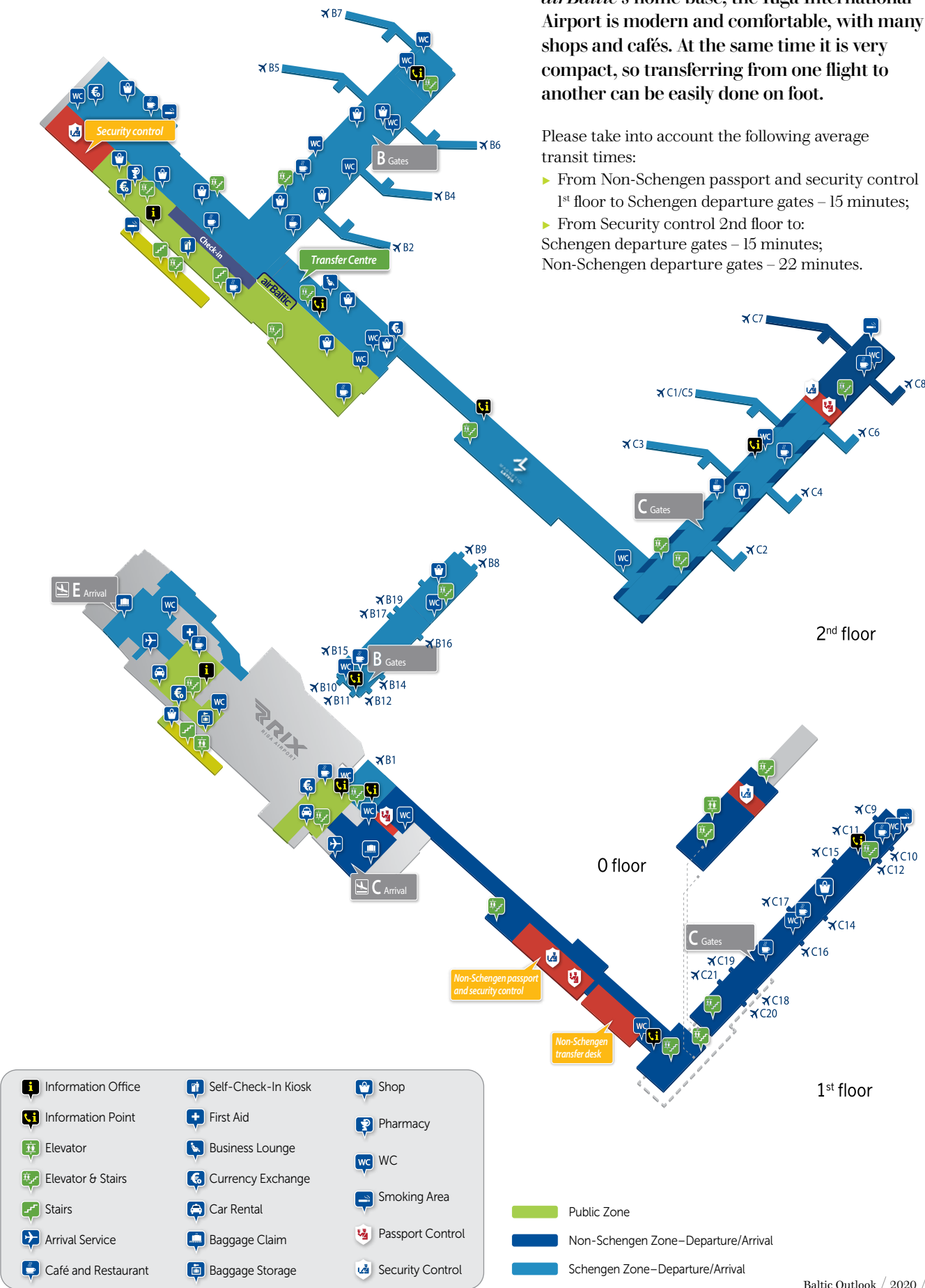
\* Shall be stowed in overhead bin or under the front seat inside an appropriate bag.

# Welcome to Riga International Airport

*airBaltic*’s home base, the Riga International Airport is modern and comfortable, with many shops and cafés. At the same time it is very compact, so transferring from one flight to another can be easily done on foot.

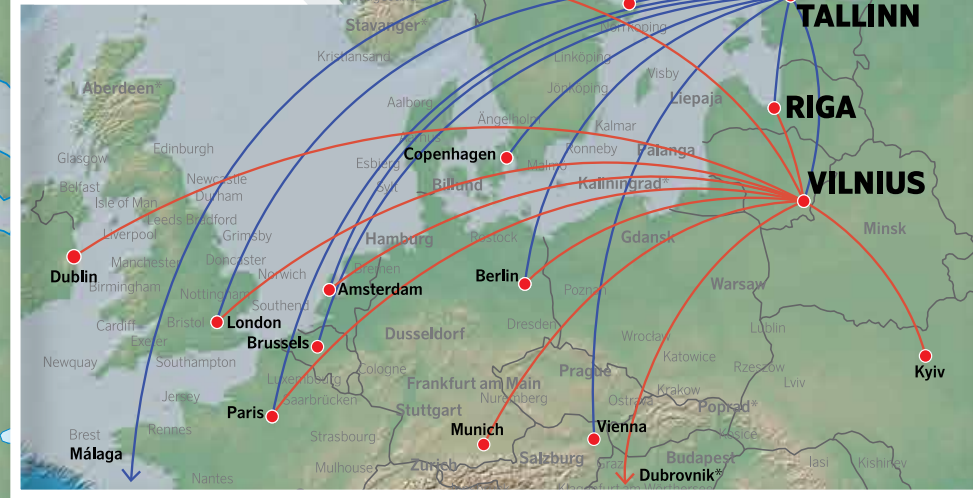
Please take into account the following average transit times:

- From Non-Schengen passport and security control 1<sup>st</sup> floor to Schengen departure gates – 15 minutes;
- From Security control 2<sup>nd</sup> floor to: Schengen departure gates – 15 minutes; Non-Schengen departure gates – 22 minutes.





### Direct flights from Tallinn and Vilnius



● **airBaltic** direct flights  
\* Seasonal flights  
● **airBaltic** code-share partner flights  
○ **airBaltic** interline partner flights

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# Spice up your trip with our extras!

Book these useful services along with your ticket at [airbaltic.com](http://airbaltic.com) or add them to your booking later on.



## Heavy cabin baggage

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

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

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



## Flight cancellation and name change options

For your peace of mind, add the option to cancel your reservation and get a full refund in the form of an *airBaltic* gift card in case your travel plans change. This service costs **EUR 24.99** per passenger per direction.

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

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



## Checked baggage

Add checked baggage if you want to take up to **20 kilograms**, including liquids over 100 ml, which are not allowed in cabin baggage. The cheapest option is to book checked baggage along with your ticket at [airbaltic.com](http://airbaltic.com) starting from **EUR 14.99**. You can also add baggage anytime later at a higher price.



## Pre-order a meal

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



## Reserve a seat

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

Whichever it is, you can secure your favourite seat in advance starting from **EUR 4.99**. With a reserved seat you will enjoy an additional bonus – the opportunity to **check in for your flight already five days before departure** (instead of the usual 36 hours).



## Fast track in Riga

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



## Special equipment

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

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



## Assistance for children flying alone\*

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



## Travelling with pets\*

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



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