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## outlook

APRIL 2014

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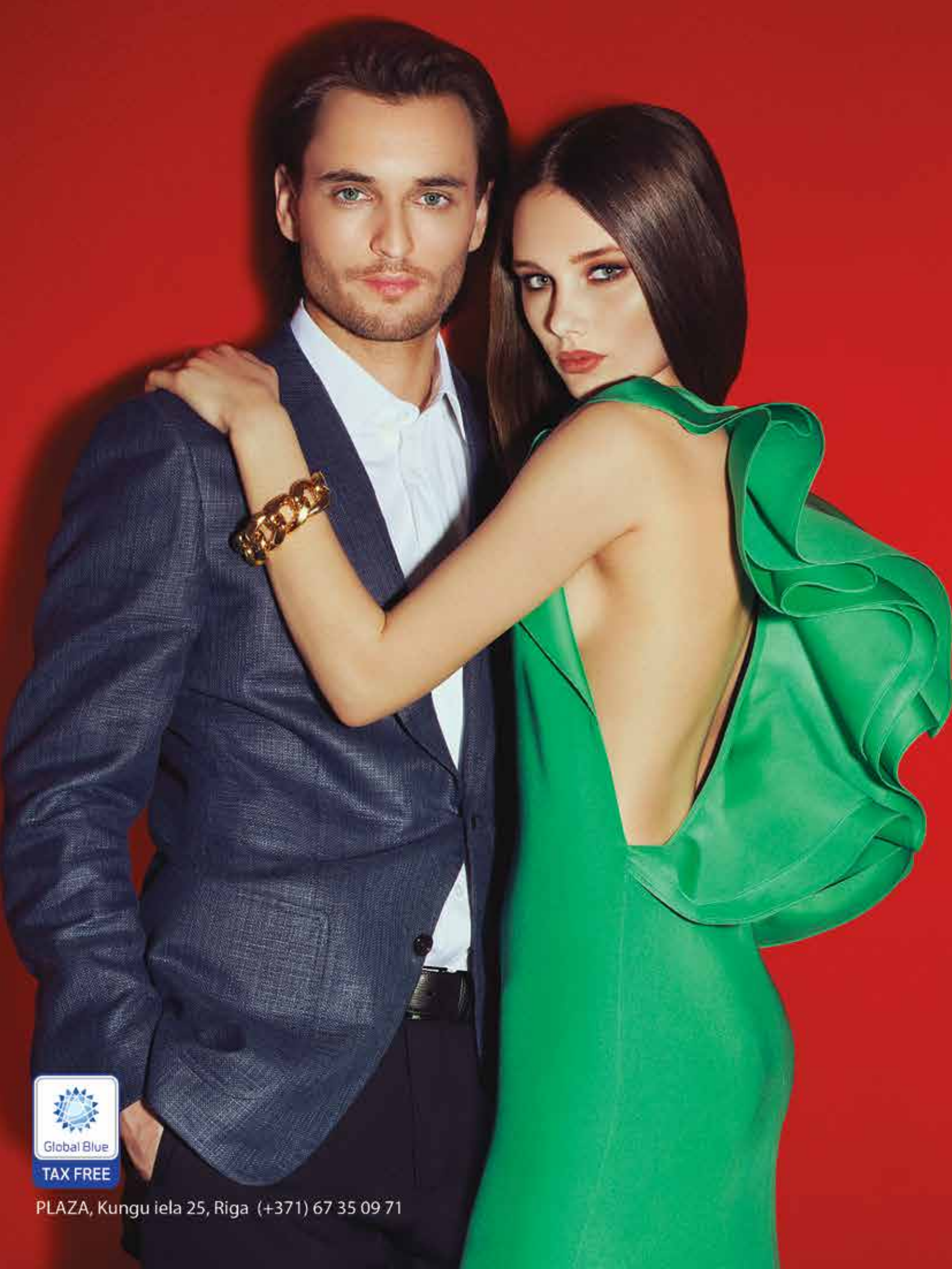
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# English spring

We went to London one April for theatre, not for the spring, knowing that the British capital can be cold even in June. However, in bracing ourselves for the awkward realism of a Harold Pinter play, we experienced the rare and famous “English spring” that is depicted in such works as John Galsworthy’s *Flowering Wilderness*.

There were clear hints of spring already on our first evening in London, along with signs that our quest for theatre tickets would come to naught. The *Half Price Ticket Booth* at Leicester Square, where I had purchased tickets on previous occasions, had become a neglected stall surrounded by a tall chain-link fence – obviously a victim of the reconstruction works for the coming Olympics. Fortunately, the weather was warm enough to spend a pleasant hour drinking wine and watching the crowds at a nearby street café with outside tables.

The next morning, we awoke to bright sunshine in our Notting Hill B&B room. Daffodils, tulips, forsythia and even magnolias were blooming in the semi-public garden. A team of gardeners was busily turning over the soil and planting things. In the adjacent streets, the air was scented with spring flowers, together with



**PEOPLE** WITH SMILING  
FACES WERE SHEDDING THEIR  
JACKETS AND ROLLING UP  
THEIR SLEEVES

the exhaust of bus and car traffic.

We set out to see David Hockney’s Yorkshire landscape painting exhibit

at the Royal Academy. Standing in the bright sunshine, sheltered from the wind, it was as hot as in midsummer. People with smiling faces were shedding their jackets and rolling up their sleeves. Inside the academy itself, the brilliant colours of Hockney’s landscapes were inspiring and thought-provoking.

In the following days, cabriolets zoomed around with their tops down and bicyclists were everywhere. Pub crowds spilled out onto the sidewalks like viscous plastic from a tube. The outdoors eating places on the right bank of the Thames were so crowded and noisy that it was difficult to have a conversation.

At the spacious greens below the Observatory of the Greenwich Maritime Museum, we beheld an impressionist scene from summer: people walking everywhere, playing with Frisbees, sunbathing, or just sitting and enjoying the sunshine. Children slid down a water-covered concrete ramp in their underwear and shrieked with delight. This was our unexpected English spring – not exactly as depicted in local literature about villages and the pastoral countryside, but real enough. Unfortunately, there were no Harold Pinter plays on during that week. **BO**

TEXT BY EDMUNDS VALDEMARS BUNKSE,  
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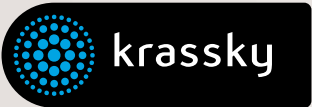


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# The granite city

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Arriving in Aberdeen, it's hard to miss the Scottish city's love affair with granite. From grand monuments to the smallest of houses, locally-quarried grey granite was the construction material of choice for over 200 years.

Despite its and tough grey texture, the granite used in Aberdeen hasn't given the city a dull and drab appearance. Far from it. The local variety sparkles like silver thanks to its high mica content. Buildings can literally gleam, but it's not just this that brightens up the city. Aberdeen has won the Britain in Bloom competition more often than any other city in the UK, assuring visitors of a bright and floral welcome.

The northeast of Scotland's geological base is granite, with the stone's colours ranging from light white-grey to blue, pink and red. Granite has long been incorporated into local buildings and structures. Its toughness means that it is difficult to quarry and work, so in the past, unpolished boulders or lightly crafted stones were

used in construction. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Aberdeen was the world centre for the granite trade.

Modern Aberdeen is a prosperous city dominated by the riches of the oil industry, but its heritage is clear from its architecture. The Athenaeum-Union Building, the James Burns' Banking Company and the imposing Marischal College, said to be the second largest granite building in the world, are just some of the sights on the city's Granite Trail. If you're thirsty for more, then the Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums hold over 1,000 granite-related artefacts, along with a significant archive of information and photographs.

Even children can't escape the dominance of granite in Aberdeen. The pirate mascot of the city's Maritime Museum

is named Granite Jack. References to the material are everywhere, from local restaurant names to PR companies.

No place sums up Aberdeen's relationship with granite better than the fountain at the centre of Victoria Park, which opened in 1871 and was Aberdeen's first municipal green space. The impressive fountain is made of 14 different types of granite and was presented to the city by the Granite Polishers and Master Builders of Aberdeen. On a warm spring day, there are few better places to be than here, watching the fountain flow and the granite gleam. Over 140 years after the park was built, its beautiful shrubs, blooming flowerbeds and lush garden still provide locals with a serene escape from daily life. **BO**

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## SPOTLIGHT ON SPRING

Five things that you should do in Latvia in April

- Join local Latvians in the colourful tradition of painting Easter eggs and take part in other fun-filled Easter events at the Open-Air Ethnographic Museum ([www.brivdabasmuzejs.lv](http://www.brivdabasmuzejs.lv)).
- Listen to first-rate musical performances at the international Riga Jazz Stage competition (April 3-5, [www.rigajazz.lv](http://www.rigajazz.lv)).
- Look for blue liverleaf and white and yellow anemones in the spring countryside.
- See and hear the most enthusiastic fans in the world at the women's world ice hockey championship in Ventspils (April 6-12, [www.iihf.com](http://www.iihf.com)).
- Taste freshly tapped maple and birch sap.

TEXT BY ZANE NIKODEMUSA AND ROGER NORUM  
PUBLICITY PHOTOS AND COURTESY OF F64

## READING LIST



**Jonathan Bastable, *Devil's Acre*** (EUR 10.40, [www.thereforepublishing.com](http://www.thereforepublishing.com))

Long-time *Sunday-Times*-correspondent-turned-*Conde-Nast*-*Traveller*-journalist Jonathan Bastable has put out an enthralling debut novel of historical fiction. Vadim, a young Leningrader in the 1980s, becomes obsessed with learning the truth about the demolition of Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in 1931 and meets a brainy and beautiful American student along the way. An erudite and meticulously written work, with politics, drama, romance and everything else that makes for very compelling reading.

**Boel Westin, *Tove Jansson: Life Art Words*** (EUR 30.30, [www.sortof.co.uk](http://www.sortof.co.uk))

As the creator of the Moomin trolls, Tove Jansson (1914-2001) is probably Scandinavia's most beloved author. She was also a prolific painter, cartoonist and illustrator. In celebration of the centenary year of her birth, this authorised biography delves into one of the modern world's most fascinating, brilliant and complex creative minds. Stimulating and engaging.

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## ON THIS MONTH'S MENU

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

THE TREND:



**Music** It's worth collecting recordings by outstanding musical personalities, especially when they join forces, as is the case with composers Giya Kancheli of Georgia and Raimonds Pauls of Latvia. Both men have been close friends for decades, and Kancheli says that he is thrilled at Pauls' superb piano renditions of his film and theatre scores on the new CD, *R. Pauls plays G. Kancheli*. The album can be purchased at the *Randoms* and *Upe* stores in Riga.



**Beauty** *Fahrenheit* made its debut during the late 1980s. The good news is that François Demachy, Dior's resident perfume creator, has freshened up *Fahrenheit Parfum*. Now it has a sweeter dimension with notes of rum, bourbon and vanilla ([www.dior.com](http://www.dior.com)).

**Design** To mark the advent of spring, the Latvian fashion brand ZIB\* has released a new line of home accessories, *ZIB\* HOME*. Pillows, cloth paintings and carpets are just some of the items that will help to create a cosy and modern atmosphere in practically any interior. The designers' products will please both those who appreciate bright patterns and those who like more subdued pastel tones. ([www.etsy.com/shop/ZIBtextile](http://www.etsy.com/shop/ZIBtextile))

### Seasonal markets and great entertainment

For extra colour and suburban flavour to your afternoons in Riga, visit the Kalnciema Quarter on Kalnciema iela 35, an ensemble of renovated wooden buildings dating from the end of the 19th century. Hidden from the eyes of passers-by is a courtyard with a restaurant and small orchard, where one can enjoy a glass of fine wine in a relaxed atmosphere. An open-air food and crafts market, often with a culture program, is open every Saturday from 10 AM – 4 PM. Friendly people of all ages congregate there, from families with children to aging and respectable artists. The themes for the April markets are: Bird Day (April 5), Lithuanian Market (April 12), Easter Market (April 19), and Spanish Market (April 26, part of the Spanish Culture Days in Latvia. [www.kalnciemaiela.lv](http://www.kalnciemaiela.lv)).





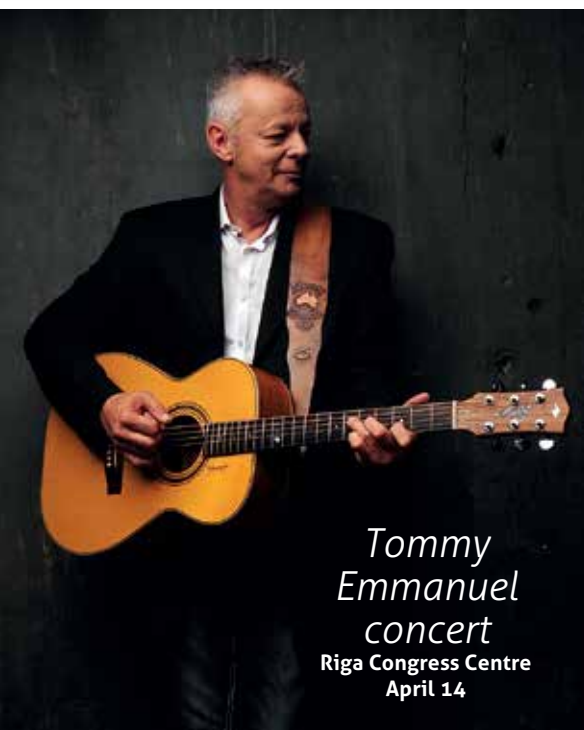


**ZOO is life** jewellery exhibition by Felieke van der Leest  
Putti art gallery, Riga  
Until April 19

Contemporary jewellery artist Felieke van der Leest employs unusual techniques like knitting, crocheting and beading in her work, with the aid of special, extremely fine yarns and tailor-made needles and hooks. In connecting precious metals with textiles and toy animals, the artist creates witty, attractive and colourful jewellery that puts a smile on people's faces and leaves no one indifferent. However, despite her humorous approach to jewellery-making, Felieke also addresses such serious issues as animal rights and environmental protection.

More information at [www.putti.lv](http://www.putti.lv)  
Mārstaļu iela 16

APRIL 2014



Tommy Emmanuel  
concert  
Riga Congress Centre  
April 14

**Guitarist** Tommy Emmanuel is one of Australia's most respected musicians. With a professional career that has spanned five decades and two *Grammy Award* nominations, Tommy has garnered hundreds of thousands of loyal fans worldwide. Tommy places great importance on performing live, which he has demonstrated by playing close to or over 300 concerts every year for the last seven years! Guitar players of all levels come to his shows to watch him play, but his appeal goes far beyond musicians. His live performances are known for their humour, passion and infectious joy.

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Price: EUR 19.50 – 65  
Kr. Valdemāra iela 5



The dismantling of the North  
by Northeast pavilion  
kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Riga  
Until April 25

Last year, the Latvian North by Northeast pavilion received widespread praise at the 55<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale. The international art news portal *Blouin Artinfo* even included it in its list of top five must-see pavilions. Now Kaspars Podnieks and Krišs Salmanis, the two artists who created the pavilion, have set up an installation in Riga with large-format photographs, a video clip and other artistic forms of expression, which they have titled "The dismantling of the North by Northeast pavilion".

More information at [www.kim.lv](http://www.kim.lv)  
Maskavas iela 12/1

**Riga's Porcelain Art.  
1925–1940**  
Museum of Decorative Arts and Design,  
Riga / Until April 27

To mark Riga's status as a European Capital of Culture for 2014, the Museum of Decorative Arts and Design is hosting a large-scale exhibition of porcelain artworks from both state and private collections. This unique showing recounts the history of Latvia's first independence period (1918–1940) and highlights Riga's role as a metropolis of European culture. The exhibition introduces viewers to Latvian painters and graphic artists who, inspired by the establishment of an independent Latvian state in 1918, developed new artistic thinking and created sketches for porcelain painting in the 1920s and 1930s.

More information at [www.inmm.lv](http://www.inmm.lv)  
Skārņu iela 10/20



Aleksandra Beļcova (1892–1981).  
Masks decorative plate. 1925.  
Porcelain, overglaze painting  
and gilt. From the collection of  
the Latvian National Museum  
of Art (LNMA)



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## DETAILS / EUROPEAN EVENTS

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PUBLICITY PHOTOS AND BY CORBIS, ALAMY

Michalis Kallimopoulos, *Here Come the Investors*, 2009.  
Collection of Markus Nystrom and Penelope Vlassopoulou

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## Brussels

### No Country For Young Men. Contemporary Greek Art In Times Of Crisis

Centre for Fine Arts  
Until August 3

This is the most comprehensive exhibition of Greek contemporary art to be held outside of Greece in the past ten years. It is also the first exhibition devoted to the current economic crisis

and its effect on the lives of people in Greece. The works of 32 artists and artist groups are arranged in a labyrinth that intentionally disorients and deceives the viewer, leading to a dead end in some places and to a "light at the end of the tunnel" in others. The labyrinth's design serves as a metaphor of the crisis, while the exhibition itself can be seen as a powerful visual essay that not only reflects on the events in the country but also provides a stimulating impulse for positive change.

23 Rue Ravenstein  
① [www.bozar.be](http://www.bozar.be)

Sculpture in the Rodin  
Museum in Paris

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**Mapplethorpe-Rodin**  
Musée Rodin  
From April 8 to September 21

## Hamburg

### Feuerbach's Muses – Lagerfeld's Models

Hamburger Kunsthalle  
Until July 15

Visitors to the Hamburger Kunsthalle will be treated to a dialogue between two masters on a subject that has always been topical since the most ancient of times – beauty. Nineteenth-century German painter Anselm Feuerbach (1829-1880) and fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld (b. 1933) have each sought to realise the ideal of timeless beauty, with models serving as icons and muses for both artists. On show are over 40 paintings, most of which Feuerbach produced between 1860 and 1870, along with 60 large-format photographs that Lagerfeld made specifically for the exhibition.

Glockengießerwall  
① [www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de](http://www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de)



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**Mapplethorpe-Rodin** is a unique exhibition in the sense that it highlights a dialogue – or rather a confrontation – between the photographs of Robert Mapplethorpe (1946-1989) and the sculptures of Auguste Rodin (1840-1917). Both men were fascinated by the human body, with American artist Mapplethorpe giving preference to men and French sculptor Rodin to women.

Of course, that doesn't mean that Mapplethorpe didn't photograph women and that Rodin didn't make sculptures of naked men. As Rodin once said: "Man's naked form belongs to no particular moment in history. It is eternal and can be looked upon with joy by people of all ages."

Throughout Mapplethorpe's short and brilliant career, the photographer aspired to achieve technical perfection, planning out the content of his works to the smallest detail. His images are known for their aesthetic refinement and faultless composition. Rodin, for his part, excelled at capturing the essence of bodies in movement and took advantage of the accidental.

79 Rue de Varenne  
① [www.musee-rodin.fr](http://www.musee-rodin.fr)



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# Barcelona

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Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris).  
Villa Savoye, Poissy, 1928-1931

*Pasolini Roma* is the story of legendary Italian film director, poet, writer, thinker, artist, journalist and communist Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922-1975) and his complex relationship with the Italian capital. Rome was not merely the city where Pasolini lived and made his films. It was also a place where he portrayed the full gamut of emotions, from love, passion and tenderness to hatred and violence. Pasolini tried to flee the city countless times, but it always insistently drew him back. The exhibition is divided into six parts, starting with the day that Pasolini first arrived in Rome in 1950 and ending with his brutal murder in November of 1975, when his body was discovered on the beach at Ostia near the Italian capital (he had been run over several times with his own car). The circumstances surrounding his death remain a mystery, with some of his contemporaries going so far as to speculate that Pasolini might even have orchestrated his own murder.

Via Nazionale 194  
① english.palazzoesposizioni.it



# Rome

## Pasolini Roma

Palazzo delle Esposizioni  
April 15 - June 20

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# Le Corbusier: An Atlas Of Modern Landscapes

La Caixa Forum  
Until May 11

Le Corbusier: An Atlas Of Modern Landscapes marks the first time in 25 years that Barcelona is hosting such a comprehensive exhibition devoted to famous French architect, thinker and artist Le Corbusier. Visitors can view 215 items, including original architectural models, drawings, interior replicas, furniture, photographs, paintings, sculptures and films, which together provide an extensive look into Le Corbusier's creative work in all of its diversity.

The showing covers 60 years of the master's career, starting with his very first project at the age of 19 and ending with his final oeuvres. Among the latter is a sketch of St. Peter's Church in the French town of Firminy, which was built long after the architect's death. Also on view are four reconstructed interiors that the architect designed: his first project, the *Maison Blanche*; the *Villa Church* music pavilion in Ville-d'Avray; the *Unité d'Habitation* apartment complex in Marseilles and a cabin at Roquebrune Cap Martin on the Mediterranean seacoast, where Le Corbusier spent the last years of his life.

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### Park: Vondelpark

An Amsterdam spring classic, *Vondelpark* is the city's largest and most famous park, which welcomes about 10 million visitors every year. Its location near the *Rijksmuseum*, *Stedelijk Museum* and *Van Gogh Museum* makes it a perfect choice for a Saturday stroll. You can walk around, rent a bicycle or just get lazy and enjoy the sun while lounging in the grass. The park also has a fun playground for children.

### Bar: Brouw

If you fancy a substantial meal in a relaxed atmosphere and if you like meat, then this is the place to be, because meat plays a central role in the menu here. You can order your meat cut choice-fried, slow-cooked, grilled or smoked. Any way you try it, the meat is organic and super tasty. Each meal comes with two side dishes and you can make it complete by ordering something special from an appetising list of craft beers. However, if you want to go out on a Saturday night, then arrive early or you might not get a table.

Ten Katestraat 16  
① [www.barbrouw.nl](http://www.barbrouw.nl)



## Little Black Book

### April classics of Amsterdam



### Take-out shop: Lobsterhouse

A super place for those who enjoy seafood (the shop specialises in oysters and lobsters), authentic service and mingling with the local hipster crowd. All of the products are seasonal, obtained fresh from the market and prepared right on the spot. If you are in a hurry and have little time to eat, then you can grab a takeaway or have a quick oyster fix right at the bar counter.

Frederiksplein 6  
① [www.lobsterhouse.nl](http://www.lobsterhouse.nl)

TEXT BY SANTA KRISTIANA ZAMUELE  
PUBLICITY PHOTOS AND BY ALAMY

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### Restaurant: Hotel De Goudfazant

Amsterdam North has long been a trendy industrial part of the city, but over the last few years it has also seen the appearance of some good restaurants. *Goudfazant* is a former factory and garage turned into an ultra-hip waterfront gourmet spot, busy like a stock market at the peak of the day, but with a laid-back atmosphere. The accent is on French cuisine, together with plenty of seasonal offerings. Among the stylish interior items are a huge 5-metre glass bottle chandelier, along with old racing cars such as a *Porche 911* and a white *Ferrari Testarossa*.

A waterfront terrace operates during the warmer months.

Aambeeldstraat 10 H  
① [www.hoteldegoudfazant.nl](http://www.hoteldegoudfazant.nl)



### Museum: Rijksmuseum

The famous artwork *Lotus Dome* by Dutch artist Daan Roosegaarde is in the Netherlands for the first time and can now be seen at the *Rijksmuseum*. Created in 2012, *Lotus Dome* comes to life in response to the visitor's body heat. Hundreds of aluminium flowers unfold, a deep bass sound fills the space and light projects lotus flowers onto the walls. The artist calls it techno-poetry. The *Rijksmuseum* is also worth visiting if you haven't been in Amsterdam for a while, since it reopened last year after a major renovation. The historic museum building has been restored and new facilities have been added, including an Asian pavilion and a renovated garden. And of course, it's always nice to see Rembrandt's *Night Watch* again.

Museumstraat 1  
① [www.rijksmuseum.nl](http://www.rijksmuseum.nl)

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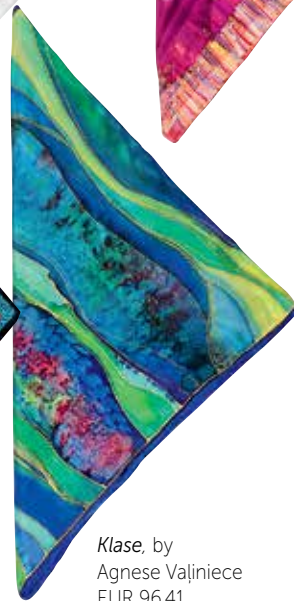
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TEXT BY NATALI LEKKA  
PUBLICITY PHOTOS

## Iconic poster

**Little did Mary and Stuart Manley, the owners of Barter Books – a second-hand bookstore in northeastern England – know that a poster they discovered in a box of old books would become a global phenomenon.**

**T**oday, *Keep Calm And Carry On* is one of the most widely recognised posters of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. You will have, doubtlessly, seen it before. In the poster, the royal Tudor crown sits atop a message written in all-capital letters against a bold red background. Its iconic design embodies the British spirit during the years when restraint and a stiff upper lip were a matter of life and death. The story behind the poster is simply too beautiful not to share.

On the eve of the Second World War, with an armed conflict against Germany looking increasingly likely, the British Ministry of Information was tasked by

the government to design a number of motivational propaganda posters. The aim was to boost the public's morale in the troubled years that lay ahead. Posters like *Your Courage, Your Cheerfulness, Your Resolution Will Bring Us Victory* and *Freedom Is In Peril, Defend It With All Your Might* were publicly displayed on notice boards, shop windows and railway stations.

However, over 2.5 million posters bearing the *Keep Calm And Carry On* message remained in storage throughout the war, as they were to be released only in the event of a German invasion. The invasion never occurred and so the message lay forgotten in the mists of time, until 2000, when second-hand bookstore owner Stuart Manley accidentally discovered a poster in a box of dusty old books. Stuart showed it to his wife Mary, who liked it so much that she had it framed and placed over the shop till at the couple's Northumberland store.

Thanks to a *Guardian* article in December of 2005, requests for copies of the poster skyrocketed. "We sold over 4,000 posters alone that month," says Stuart.

**THE POSTER HAS BEEN IMITATED, PARODIED AND REPRODUCED EXTENSIVELY**



Today, the poster has attained iconic status. It has been imitated, parodied and reproduced on T-shirts, mugs, shopping bags, cushions, cufflinks and items of everyday use. It has also spread to other aspects of popular culture, ranging from Prince William's recent royal wedding to popular music and games.

"To date, we have sold over 100,000 posters, not to mention mugs, T-shirts, aprons and other items," Stuart explains. "If you add in the hundreds of others who jumped in as the requests gained momentum, many millions of *Keep Calm* products and their derivations have been sold over the years." **BO**



**Karlis Roznieks**  
CEO

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Latvian National Library, Riga, Latvia

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## American art's best-kept secret

Vija Celmins (1938) is one of the most coveted artists of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Two years ago, her drawing *Untitled #8* sold for more than USD 1.1 million at *Christie's* in New York, setting a personal sales price record for the artist. Intricately drawn with graphite, charcoal and chalk on paper, the work depicts a white comet streaking across a dark, starlit sky. Celmins' art is in high demand, resulting in a backlog of requests for her works, each of which can take several months to complete.

From April 12 until June 22, the Art Museum Riga Bourse provides the rare opportunity for art lovers to see almost 50 of Celmins' works in one place. The *Double Reality* exhibition covers the last 50 years of the artist's career, from 1964 to the present. It is a fitting return for Celmins to her native Riga, where she spent the

first six years of her life. She left Latvia in 1944 as a war refugee and spent four years in displaced camps in Germany, settling in the United States not long before her tenth birthday.

Since she initially could neither speak nor write in English, Celmins spent a great deal of time drawing and painting, both at school and at home. However, she decided to become a professional artist only in 1961, at the age of 22, when she joined a student and artists' community during a summer session at Yale University. Celmins then moved to Los Angeles, where she lived until 1980, and is now based in New York. The artist attributes her success not only to hard work, but also to her consistent efforts to remain in the limelight.

Celmins is best known for her realistic depictions of fragile spider webs, ocean waves, moonscapes and starry night

skies. In reviewing a retrospective of the first 30 years of her career in London in 1996, *The Independent* described her as "American art's best-kept secret."

The works for the exhibition in Riga have been borrowed from a large number of museums and collections, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Museum of Modern Art in Frankfurt am Main, the Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art in Paris, the Tate Modern gallery in London, the National Museum of Scotland, the Embassy of the United States in Latvia, the Mūkusalā Art Salon in Riga, the Latvian National Museum of Art, the McKee Gallery in New York and the artist's own collection. **BO**

① [www.rigasbirza.lv](http://www.rigasbirza.lv)

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## Bird-watchers' paradise Meet some of Latvia's most colourful inhabitants

**A**pril is one of the best months to spot migrating birds in Latvia. Historically, bird-watchers have been associated with brave explorers and far-off places, but in the 21<sup>st</sup> century all one needs is a love of nature to create one's very own bird "collection", so to speak. This is easily done in Latvia, with a fluctuating population of around 44 million birds and 2 million humans. Even if you have forgotten your cell phone, tablet computer or photo camera at home, you can start your bird collection with a pencil, a sheet of paper and a pair of binoculars.

If your next flight from the Riga airport is only in a couple of hours and you have some time to spare, then grab a cup of coffee and step outside. Yes, that's right – outside. Creating lists of airport bird species has been all the rage among some bird-watchers. For example, out in the fields right next to Riga's airport one will find river warblers, corncrakes and nightingales. The latter, by the way, is not the species that Shakespeare once wrote about but an Eastern European variety, providing a unique addition to the collection of birds that you will have seen.

Another advantage of bird-watching in Latvia's diverse landscape is the genuine opportunity to report new species. Currently about 360 bird species have been registered in Latvia, while in neighbouring Estonia and Finland that number exceeds 400. This means that you can very well become the first person to report a previously unobserved bird species in Latvia.

So, the next time that you fancy going to the opera only to find that the tickets to the next performance have been sold out, consider making a road trip to the seaside or perhaps a forest, swamp, field or village. These are all places where birds will conduct colourful performances before your very eyes.

And if you like to sleep in longer in the mornings, then how about becoming a night bird specialist? A good way to start is by registering at [www.iGoTerra.com](http://www.iGoTerra.com), an internet resource that is highly regarded by professionals. There you can record, manage and share your outdoor observations. You will also find contact information for local bird-watchers as well as useful information to help you begin your sightings and plan your bird-watching outings. **BO**

### Make it happen

Here are three of Latvia's top bird-watching spots, as recommended by geographer and professional bird-watcher Andris Klepers.

**Ķemeri National Park.** Less than an hour's drive from Riga. During the spring, you might spot rare species of woodpecker as well as owls and birds of prey, including the lesser spotted eagle, which winters in Africa. [www.daba.gov.lv](http://www.daba.gov.lv)

**Gauja National Park.** Latvia's largest and oldest national park. Along with bird-watching, guests can enjoy the scenery, visit various cultural and historical monuments, and rest at cosy cafés on both sides of the Gauja River. [www.entergauja.lv](http://www.entergauja.lv)

**Kolkasrags.** The northernmost tip of the Kurzeme peninsula. The surrounding fields can be home to as many as 40,000 geese during the spring. Kolkasrags is an important stopping point for migrating birds, and on April 26 experienced ornithologists will be on hand to mark Bird-Watching Day and help visitors identify bird species. [www.kolkasrags.lv](http://www.kolkasrags.lv)

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# Raw green

Spring is an ideal time to use the gifts of nature in fresh and raw form

TEXT, PHOTO AND STYLE  
BY ZANE JANSONE  
WWW.GATAVOZALV

## Where to buy the ingredients?

Sesame seed oil: *Ellas Koks*, [www.ellaskoks.lv](http://www.ellaskoks.lv) and at the largest *RIMI* supermarkets.  
Sprouts: Ilze Lipska, Kalnciema Street farmer's market (Saturdays), Kalnciema iela 35, Riga.  
Dehydrated tomato crackers: *Raw Garden*, Skolas iela 12, Riga, [www.rawgarden.lv](http://www.rawgarden.lv).

## Raw broccoli, pea and herb soup with lime and chilli

### Ingredients (2 portions)

5 broccoli flower heads  
1 cup fresh or frozen green peas  
1/2 cup snow peas  
1 avocado  
10 basil leaves  
5 peppermint leaves  
1/2 tsp. chopped red chilli  
1 lime (juice and peel)  
1 tbsp. chopped chives  
1 tbsp. cold-pressed sesame seed oil  
1 1/2 - 2 cups water  
1 tsp. sea salt  
1 pinch freshly ground pepper  
2-3 tbsp. cashew nuts  
Various sprouts: leek, sunflower, red cabbage

### Preparation

Put the broccoli, peas, avocado, basil, peppermint, chilli, chives, lime juice and grated peel into a blender. Add the sea salt, sesame seed oil and water. Blend well until the ingredients have acquired a uniform, creamy consistency. If the soup is too thick, then add some more water. Pour the soup into two bowls. Sprinkle with chopped cashew nuts, sprouts and freshly ground pepper.

## Tomato and seed crackers with cucumber pesto

### Ingredients

1 small cucumber  
3 dried tomatoes  
1 clove garlic  
1/2 tsp. grated fresh ginger  
1 tsp. honey  
1/2 lemon (juice and peel)  
1/2 tsp. sea salt  
1 pinch freshly ground pepper  
Cress sprouts  
2 - 3 sheets dehydrated/dried tomato and seed crackers

### Preparation

Steep the dried tomatoes in water for a couple of hours. Put them in a blender together with the garlic, ginger, honey, lemon juice and peel, salt and pepper. Blend all of the ingredients together. Add 1/2 a cucumber and blend again. Chop the other half of the cucumber into small cubes and mix into the blended pesto. Split the crackers into small pieces. Put the pesto onto the crackers and sprinkle with the sprouts.



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## How does Jerusalem taste?



An Israeli-born chef,  
cookery writer and restaurant  
owner Yotam Ottolenghi

*I*t all started when Yotam Ottolenghi met Sami Tamimi at a small bakery in London. Yotam was from the Jewish-populated west side of Jerusalem, while Sami was from the Muslim-dominated east side. They hadn't known each other back when they lived there.

The two became close friends, and when Yotam decided to open a restaurant of his own in the British capital in 2002, they also became business partners. *Ottolenghi* serves some of the best Jerusalem cuisine around and this is saying a lot, since the dishes from that ancient city are among the most cross-cultural that you will find. (If you fancy a more elaborate gastronomic account, then Yotam and Sami published their third book, *Jerusalem*, last year.)

Jerusalem is a place where the culinary traditions of different cultures interact in the most unpredictable ways. There you will find Jewish culinary traditions from Tunisia, Libya, France and Britain, along with those of Palestinian Muslims, Christian Arabs, Armenian Orthodox and many more.

*Ottolenghi* adds a Mediterranean vibe to all this with pickled, roasted and stuffed vegetables such as aubergines and peppers. These are combined with spices, oils,

hummus and fresh fruit, including figs, pears, pomegranates and apricots. The establishment also serves meat, despite the fact that many expect it to be a vegetarian restaurant – the reason being Yotam's recent column on vegetarian food for *The Guardian*. That being said, *Ottolenghi* treats vegetables as a dish in and of themselves and not just a

**VEGETABLES  
ARE COMBINED WITH SPICES,  
OILS, HUMMUS AND FRESH  
FRUIT, INCLUDING FIGS, PEARS,  
POMEGRANATES AND APRICOTS**

side order; nor are vegetables made to taste like meat. In fact, they are the star attraction and centre of most dishes at this restaurant.

Yotam and Sami have introduced scores of diners to many new and exciting flavours by using a large variety of spices and interesting ingredients, which guests can sample in every meal. Try a bit of mashed pumpkin, butterbean hummus with roasted mushrooms and, say, a spoonful of *fregola* and *mograbieh* with lemon, or perhaps the burnt aubergine with black garlic yoghurt, and you'll be transported straight to Jerusalem itself! **BO**

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# Gothenburg –

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**R**ooftop swimming pools, especially in early springtime, are usually associated with the more spirited southern climes, not Scandinavia. But never say never, because under Gothenburg's northern skies you can enjoy a steaming hot swimming pool even in the middle of winter. What's more, this swimming pool is located atop a 1920s building in the very centre of the city – a former post office that two years ago became the 500-room *Clarion Hotel Post*. Soaking in the pool, the feeling is somewhat surreal, because on one side you see Gothenburg's 19<sup>th</sup>-century train station, which serves as the second largest railway hub in Sweden, while on the other side is a park featuring a palm house built in 1878 and inspired by the *Crystal Palace* in London. The park is criss-crossed by hundreds of joggers daily, all running to maintain a healthy lifestyle. In the distance, the sea, the port and its many cranes can be seen at the edge of the city.

Even though Gothenburg is Sweden's second largest city, it has only a little over half a million inhabitants. Area-wise it's really only a large town. What makes Gothenburg truly unique is its almost unbelievable concentration of big-city attributes and ambitions all contained within a pocket-sized format. Although small, Gothenburg's style and quality of life is worthy of a metropolis. The *Clarion Hotel Post* is only one testimony to the city's scope. The owner of the hotel, Norwegian millionaire, hotelier and art collector Petter Stordalen, does not hide the fact that the *Clarion Hotel Post* is one of the gems in his hotel empire. Only Amsterdam's *Conservatorium Hotel*, housed in a former 19<sup>th</sup>-century bank, and Singapore's *Fullerton Hotel*, also located in a former post office, have inherited an industrial legacy of a similar scale.

"The whole concept of the hotel is a story about communications – from the days of sending postcards to the satellites of today. The first thing you notice upon



YOUR NEXT DESTINATION

The Röda Sten neighbourhood, located on the shores of the Göta älv river in the western part of Gothenburg, was once Sweden's only gateway to the North Sea and Atlantic Ocean



Gothenburg's Palm House was built in 1878 and inspired by the Crystal Palace in London



Sculpture of fishermen in front of the city's fish market, or *Feskekörka*, a name that translates to "Fish Church"

entering is a huge, six-metre-high, flattened red Norwegian postal truck on the wall," an enthusiastic Stordalen told me when I met him last autumn in Oslo.

At first glance, the flattened postal truck in the gigantic *Clarion Hotel Post* lobby resembles a pressed butterfly. The building itself – with its impressive Neoclassical-style pillars, 17 large windows and clock dials that decorate the upper cornices like eyes – looks like a

**THE NEW YORK TIMES RECENTLY CALLED  
GOTHENBURG NORTHERN EUROPE'S TOP  
CULINARY DESTINATION**

venerable gentleman who has weathered many of life's difficulties. Further inside, history blends with the most extreme expressions of contemporary design: a counter of gilded crumpled metal, polished black tile floors and a hotel bar nestled into the spot where postal workers once weighed and stamped letters.

The place is always full of people, because the locals have taken

a liking to it as well. In one sense, the *Clarion Hotel Post* embodies the essence of Gothenburg: despite its modest size, life is like in a beehive. This is true in many spheres, from gastronomy to the arts to fashion (Gothenburg is the home of the well-known Swedish brand *Nudie Jeans*). Gothenburg is also home to the first and only fashion and design museum in Sweden, and the city's international biennial, established in 2001, is the largest biennial of contemporary art in Sweden. The biennial takes place in *Röda Sten*, a former boiler house on the coast that was transformed into an art space in 2000.

Thanks to its strategic location at the mouth of the Göta älv river, Gothenburg has always been at the crossroads of both trade and culture, which has led to a number of epithets for the city. Its system of canals, designed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by the Dutch, leads to comparisons with Amsterdam. But Gothenburg's history as an industrial port and the presence of British merchants in the 18<sup>th</sup> century have lent it the nickname Little London. The epithets continue today. *The New York Times*, for instance, recently called Gothenburg Northern Europe's top

culinary destination – to say nothing of the city's status as an ideal weekend stop, a designation that it has honourably earned.

**The Fish Church and Michelin**

Gothenburg is also known as Sweden's seafood capital. The best testimony to this is the city's fish market, or *Feskekörka*, a name that translates to "Fish Church". What other city boasts such an outright temple to gastronomy? The market is located right by the canal in central Gothenburg and actually looks like a church. The building, built in 1874, was designed by a well-known local architect of the era, Victor von Gegerfelt. Inspired by the classic wooden churches of Norway and Gothic stone churches, this was an experimental project, an attempt to construct a building without any pillars.

Like a symbolic altar, the *Restaurant Gabriel* has stood at one end of the fish market for the past 30 years. During that time, some of the restaurant's regular clients have managed to not only raise a generation of children, but are now even bringing their grandchildren to enjoy *Gabriel's* seafood dishes. Father and son Gunnar and Johan Malm both work at the restaurant, which makes the atmosphere even more family-like. On the day that we visit, Gunnar does not allow us to choose from the menu; he says that he already knows what to serve us. A few moments later, we are presented with oysters and oyster porter (*Grebbestad Ostronporter*). Our weak statements about usually combining oysters with wine are met with a light-

hearted smile. "Taste them," says Gunnar.

Both the oysters and the porter are from Grebbestad, the Swedish oyster and lobster capital located over 100 kilometres from Gothenburg. A small port town with a population of approximately 1400, Grebbestad's clear and cold waters are ideal for oysters because they prevent the growth of viruses and parasites. About 90% of Sweden's oysters come from Grebbestad. And I must admit that the combination of oysters and beer is quite surprising. As befits wild-harvested seafood, Grebbestad oysters have that distinct taste of the ocean, which the beer smooths out, making the overall taste mild and velvety. So it's no surprise that *Grebbestad Ostronporter* is called "oyster porter". There are even oysters or, rather, the "imprint" of their taste, in the beer itself. At the beginning of the brewing process, 24 oysters are added to every 2,500 litres of beer and held there for seven minutes. "The quantity is very small but, of course, it adds something," says Johan Malm.

Until very recently, Gothenburg had five *Michelin*-starred restaurants. The only other place with such a high concentration of fine restaurants in such a small area can be found in the Basque gastronomical citadel of San Sebastian. But Gothenburg now has only three *Michelin* restaurants, and the city's chefs are following the global trend of "democratic gourmands", which is based on the principle of excellent food made from the highest quality ingredients but served at relatively low prices. In addition, just like in any metropolis, it is now possible



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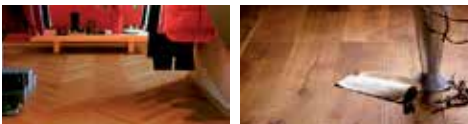


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## YOUR NEXT DESTINATION



Clarion Hotel Post

## IN FACT, ONE OF THE BEST SOUVENIRS TO BRING HOME FROM GOTHENBURG IS A GIGANTIC FRESHLY BAKED CINNAMON ROLL

to enjoy cuisines from around the world in Gothenburg.

One of the most intriguing newcomers to Gothenburg's gastronomy scene is *Koka* ("boil" in English). Its newcomer status, however, is arguable, because until recently another restaurant owned by the same chef, Björn Persson, occupied this same site. That restaurant, named *Kock & Vin*, existed for 14 years and also earned a *Michelin* star. But Persson admitted in an interview shortly before closing the restaurant that "It [*Kock & Vin*] feels sleepy and boring and not at all the modern restaurant we want it to be." In the gastronomic sense, the concept at *Koka* remains the same – its menu (three-, five- or seven-course) is a true gourmet experience – but there is no longer any hint of stiffness.

Local Gothenburg architects have completely transformed the interior, bringing the "less is more" concept to a true culmination. Light wood dominates the rooms, and the tables are covered in leather patinated by the wear and tear of daily use. The lighting issue – a common problem for restaurants because the lighting must simultaneously present the food in the best possible manner but also flatter guests' faces – is solved with globe lamps whose height guests may regulate themselves. Each guest's knife, fork and spoon are placed in a special light-coloured wooden case. These and other chic, initially

inconspicuous but ultimately functional details are what make a dinner at *Koka* a doubly rewarding experience.

As is common in life, while one group gives up its *Michelin* stars, another group passionately pursues them. The most ambitious and expensive restaurant in Gothenburg is *Upper House*, located in the *Gothia Towers*, a grand project that includes several hotels representing various categories and two panorama restaurants. One of them, *Heaven 23*, is already considered a classic, but people's thoughts differ regarding *Upper House*. Some are enthusiastic about its excellent food and service, while others are horrified by the prices, which are quite astronomical by Gothenburg standards.

While *Upper House's* design resembles that of many other panorama restaurants around the world (the ceiling decorations bring to mind Vienna's *Sofitel Stephansdom*), an ambitious young chef with *Michelin* experience is in charge of the kitchen. Måns Backlund has admitted in an interview that, "of course, a *Michelin* star in our first year wouldn't be a bad thing." Only time will tell whether *Upper House* will fulfil this goal, but it has already received an award in the *White Guide 2014*, Sweden's equivalent of *Michelin*.

### A ritual to make life sweeter

Another of Gothenburg's gastronomic

traditions is the pleasant ritual called *fika*, which is somewhat like a coffee break, although not really. *Fika* means to have a coffee and a little something sweet, for example, a traditional cinnamon roll. And the rolls in Gothenburg are so tasty that they cannot be resisted. In fact, one of the best souvenirs to bring home from Gothenburg is a gigantic freshly baked cinnamon roll. The best place to buy such a delicacy is the legendary *Café Husaren*, one of the oldest cafés in the city and located in the Haga neighbourhood.

"*Fika* is a social ritual, because you cannot have a *fika* alone. *Fika* requires at least two people," says Sofie Flensburg, the press secretary at Gothenburg's tourism office. Flensburg also represented her country at *Visit Sweden* in Spain for seven years. But, she laughs, nostalgia and the comfortable lifestyle in a small city lured her back to Sweden.

Haga was once a working-class neighbourhood and is one of the few parts of Gothenburg where you can still see the old 19<sup>th</sup>-century wooden architecture. Similar buildings elsewhere

## YOUR NEXT DESTINATION



Haga neighbourhood



Strömmingsluckan food trucks are a tasteful fast-food alternative to fancier restaurants specialising in Scandinavian cuisine

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## YOUR NEXT DESTINATION



Haga was once a working-class neighbourhood and is one of the few parts of Gothenburg where you can still see old 19<sup>th</sup>-century wooden buildings

were lost long ago to fires and warfare. Most of the houses in Haga have only one or two storeys and have been converted into nostalgic cafés or small shops that display their wares right outside their doors. Wander along the main cobbled street and you will see the life of the entire neighbourhood on display in front of you, like on the palm of a hand. An array of sneakers are set out on a bench in front of one of the shops.

"Nothing like this would be possible anywhere in Spain," says Flensburg. While front doors cannot be left completely unlocked, there is hardly any theft in Gothenburg. However, I do spy a sign on an old door that now only serves as a part of a shop's décor: "Beware pickpockets and loose women." Be that as it may, Gothenburg does have a sense of humour.

Haga currently has a population of a little over 4,000 and, thanks to its historical architecture, is quite a popular neighbourhood among the locals, with some of the highest real estate prices in Gothenburg. Haga is also one of Gothenburg's most touristy neighbourhoods, with all of the customary tourist shops. However, this aspect does not lessen Haga's charm, because there are actually not all that many tourists.

Arguably the trendiest part of Gothenburg is Magasinsgatan, which gained this reputation due to the string of stylish fashion and design stores and cafés along the length of the centrally located street. The epicentre of Magasinsgatan is one particular cobbled courtyard that is home to two *Strömmingsluckan* trucks.

Like Helsinki's famous grill kiosks, these trucks sell inexpensive and tasty foods. One truck sells meats, while the other sells fried herring with mashed potatoes (made on site) and lingonberry jam.

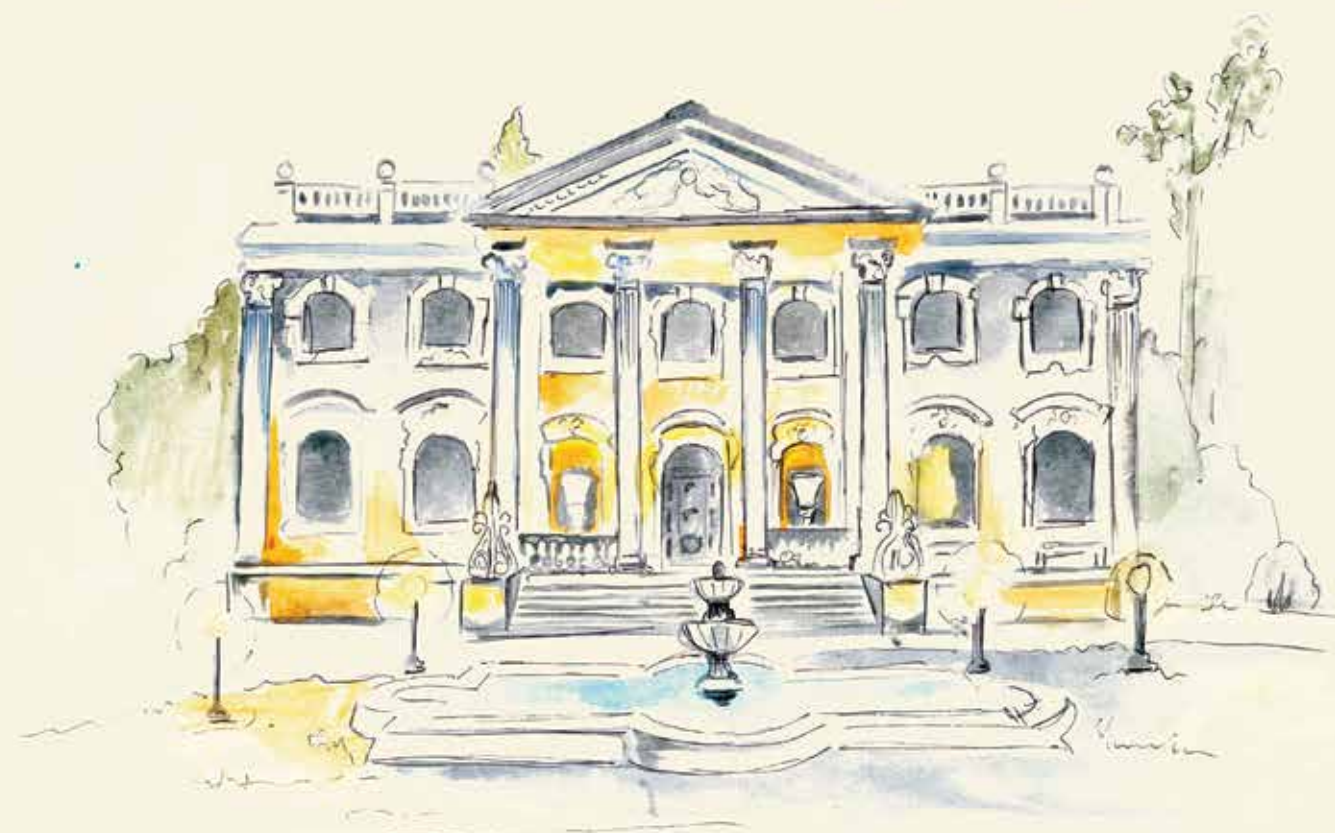
Next door is the *Miss Ragtime* vintage shop and the charming *Grandpa* style shop, both of which cultivate a philosophy of sustainable design. *Grandpa's* name corresponds to its design, because the interior of the shop resembles the home of an old man who has lived a turbulent life and is now displaying the most vivid relics of his youth with the hopes of inspiring his grandchildren. *Grandpa* offers designer clothing and accessories made both locally and abroad – 21<sup>st</sup>-century design combined with vintage, and so on.

On the other side of the courtyard is the *Da Matteo* café, whose ambition has been to become the best place for coffee in all of Gothenburg. And it seems like it has achieved this goal. The owner of the café, Matts Johansson, is a star on the local gastronomy scene, and the café's baristas have won the Swedish Barista Championship three times. The coffee at *Da Matteo* on Magasinsgatan is roasted on site in a special roaster that can be seen in the next room. And, like any true coffee hedonists' hideout, the café collaborates with coffee producers around the world and purchases its coffees from small, specially selected companies.

Gothenburg's best design store, *Artilleriet*, is located right next to *Da Matteo*. Drop in for just a look or a touch of inspiration, and you may find yourself still there half an hour later, having bought



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## YOUR NEXT DESTINATION

not only what you planned on buying, but also something you may never have dreamed of before. *Acne*, Sweden's equivalent to *ABBA* in the jeans department, and *Velour*, the internationally known Gothenburg-based fashion brand that began in its owner's grandmother's clothing store by transforming old items into new clothes, are both located in the very same building as *Artilleriet*.

The top of Magasinsgatan has become a true epicentre of gastronomy, especially the dinner-plate-sized square that is the home of several fine restaurants. Here we find *Magnus & Magnus*, Gothenburg's classic gourmet restaurant that recently won the *White Guide 2014* "Hjärtekrog" (a restaurant with both good food and a great atmosphere) award, a dim-sun eatery, a popular Basque tapas-pintxos place, and *Put a Madre*, a Mexican restaurant that describes its decadent interior as "a tribute to the Mexican brothel mother from 1918".

Gothenburg's first luxury boutique hotel recently opened its doors. Named *Dorsia*, locals proudly say there is none other like it in all of Scandinavia, and I must agree with them. *Dorsia* is the complete opposite of what one usually associates with Scandinavian design. The owner of the hotel is a well-known local chef and antique collector, and the hotel is his dream project. He alone has designed all 37 rooms and the rest of the interior with a truly bohemian banquet of colours and textures that sometimes seems to know no measure or limit. Contemporary design, antique store, East and West...it's a complete climax of eclecticism with a shot of French boudoir to boot that often balances on the knife's edge of kitsch. The owner has miraculously managed to not lose his sense of humour amid the avalanche of details. On the whole backdrop of Gothenburg, *Dorsia* feels like Alice's fall down the rabbit hole, where, although unpredictable, the total experience will definitely be unforgettable.

The density of impressions all within arm's reach and the relaxed port city atmosphere is probably what makes Gothenburg such an ideal weekend destination. Even though it's a small town, you return home with so many stories that you may just as well have spent a few saturated days in a large metropolis.

## INSIDER'S VIEW

### Gothenburg is one of the world's largest villages



**T**he Restaurant *Gabriel*, established in Gothenburg's *Feskekörka* fish market about 30 years ago by Gunnar Malm, has become something of an institution and a place to enjoy the best seafood in the city. Gunnar's son Johan first donned a chef's apron at age six (there's a picture of the occasion displayed on a shelf at the restaurant) and admits that later on, when most people his age were making important decisions about their careers, he wasn't convinced that he wanted to devote his life to the culinary arts. At the time, he was a high jumper, but then he injured his knee.

"The chef's trade is what I knew. Now I'm used to it and don't feel like it's work anymore. It's more like a lifestyle, because one cannot choose this profession as a career. You must love the work, otherwise the hours are just too long and it's too stressful. My father was always at the restaurant every day, from the time it opened until it closed at night. I do the same."

By the way, Johan happens to be the world champion at opening oysters, a distinction he won in 2010 at the Guinness World Oyster-Opening Championship, which has taken place in Ireland for the past 60 years. He laughs:

"When I was younger, I dreamed of becoming a world champion in many disciplines, but was unfortunately unable to do so. So, as soon as the opportunity arose in the oyster niche, I took advantage of it."

Although he's already 30 years old, Johan has never lived anywhere other than Gothenburg, nor has he ever felt the urge to do so.

"The reason is very simple," he says. "This is my city. I've always lived here. This is my home. This is where I was born and grew up. I know everyone here, and they know me. I know what to do here, I know where to go. My business is here, and I'm very happy about that. I enjoy every day. I'm spoiled by my clients. They love this restaurant, and that's always a wonderful feeling."

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## INSIDER'S VIEW

**Why do you think people should visit Gothenburg? What's so special about it?**

I think it's wonderful to live in such a small city. Everything is so close and so easy to find. And the gastronomy scene in Gothenburg has also changed so much in the past five years. We've gotten rid of a string of poor restaurants, and right now most of the eating establishments in the city are very good. In any case, it's hard not to find a good meal in Gothenburg.

**Compared to Stockholm, Gothenburg seems much simpler and more open.**

Yes, definitely. There's an old saying: "No one is actually from Stockholm. Everybody who lives in Stockholm has just moved to Stockholm. It's nobody's town." Many of the families in Gothenburg have lived here for generations. You can feel the difference immediately. All you need to do is get on the train to Stockholm and exit at the central station in the capital. As someone from Gothenburg, you calmly stand by the door and wait to get off the train. But it's not so easy in Stockholm, because people there move quickly. Everything seems chaotic and stressful. People don't look each other in the eye,

they just go their own way. Interpersonal relationships in Gothenburg are much friendlier. Gothenburg is not a city. It's one of the largest villages in the world.

**Where do you suggest people go in Gothenburg to enjoy truly good Swedish cuisine?**

Go to *Koka* (Viktoriagatan 12). It's located in the former home of Michelin-starred *Kock & Vin*, which was also owned by the same chef, Björn Persson. He decided to change his concept, and now he offers the same great cuisine but in a more approachable atmosphere and at friendlier prices.

**What are your favourite restaurants in Gothenburg?**

*Linnéa Art* (Södra vägen 32), which unites fine dining with a bistro atmosphere. Wonderful food! The owner is from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the interior design was created together with some of the best glass artists in the world.

When I want a good, substantial lunch, I go to *Manfred's Brasserie* (Nordenskiöldsgatan 28). It belongs to two gentlemen, one from Austria and the other from Switzerland. The menu is a combination of Wiener Schnitzel, Swedish

cuisine and game.

*Barabica Pan American Grill* (Rosenlundsgatan 4) is very popular. It's a good place to go on a Wednesday or Thursday evening. Always full, the *Grill* has a great atmosphere, good drinks and OK dishes. This is a place to mingle with locals and feel the culture.

I also like *Miss Sophie* (Kungälvsgatan 5). Very good French-inspired cuisine. *Magnus & Magnus* (Magasinsgatan 8) is a classic, having been around for 15 years already. In the summer you can sit outside in the courtyard. Good food, a bar and music, plus the atmosphere is always excellent.

*Mr. P* (Götaplatsen) is also a great choice for dinner. Located right next to the Gothenburg Art Museum, the walls of the restaurant are covered with artworks from the *Nordic Art Fürstenberg* gallery. The cuisine is Asian-inspired.

**What should one definitely do in Gothenburg to feel the vibe of the city?**

That's hard to say. You know the phenomenon of feeling blind in your own city? I live a mere 200 metres from my restaurant, my favourite store is just around the corner, and

my best friend's bar is located nearby in Magasinsgatan. They're all within a 400-metre radius of here. But one thing you should definitely see (especially in the summer), and which hasn't become overdeveloped yet, is the islands. The ferry goes from island to island, and you can travel like that for a long time. In addition, it's not expensive, because you can use the *Gothenburg Travel Card* for trams, buses and ferries. The only problem is that there's not much to do on the islands and there aren't many restaurants or cafés. The islands are more for nature-lovers.

**Where do you head when you have a week of vacation?**

I'm a fisherman and a hunter. I never spend my vacations in the city. I'm more of a forest person than a city person.

**Where are the best fishing spots around here?**

That depends on what you want to catch. There are wonderful spots for sea trout fishing throughout the Gothenburg area. Salmon also catches well in places. You don't always need a boat, as you can fish well from the shore, too. On this topic, the locals are always happy to give advice. **BO**

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# Making the world become a better place

Linda Krūmiņa, Miķelis Putrāms,  
*Made Arhitekti*

Linda Krūmiņa and Miķelis Putrāms of *Made Arhitekti* are among the most illustrious young architects in Latvia. Their first independent project, the music and art school in the western Latvian city of Saldus, received Latvia's highest architectural award and was completed a year ago. Their proposal for the reconstruction of the New Riga Theatre building was also deemed to be the best among those submitted. This year, they are in charge of organising the annual Latvian architecture awards ceremony for 2014 and preparing for the construction of Latvia's national pavilion at the 2015 Expo exhibition in Milan.

Linda and Miķelis don't insist on making their clients live by their rules. They are creative and flexible in their approach to constructing new spaces and are open to suggestions by their customers. The design for the Saldus Music and Art School was based on their own childhood experiences and impressions. Previously, the Saldus Art School was spread out in three different buildings. Part of the school, the ceramics workshop and the modelling class were in the basement of an apartment building. The music school was in a building that had to be heated with wood. Both of the schools lacked space. For example, the office of the principal of the music school was also used as a classroom. The art school, for its part, couldn't take on any new students due to a lack of space. The new building was designed to ensure that the rooms inside of it met the technical requirements of the teachers and students from both schools. The art school needed daylight to enter the rooms from the north side, while the music school needed rooms with excellent sound isolation and acoustics. The new building ensures that both schools are visible to each other. In such conditions, new disciplines can be acquired at the school. An abundance of space, large windows, lots of daylight even on dark and rainy days, natural materials, clean lines and a clear building concept – these are qualities that define the new Saldus Music and Art School.

The New Riga Theatre, led by Latvia's best-known award-winning director Alvis Hermanis, is hard to spot from the street. The unobtrusive building façade blends in with its surroundings, but the theatre itself has a rich history and is one of the country's top cultural venues. For this reason, the architects have taken a cautious approach to its reconstruction, with a view of ensuring that contemporary architectural solutions do not clash with the theatre's current aura. Linda and Miķelis even asked the theatre's actors, who work in the building on a daily basis, to come forth with suggestions. The construction of the Latvian national pavilion at the Expo in Milan, for its part, is taking place with the goal of highlighting the country's advantages and attributes, which ultimately induced both architects to return to their native land, despite launching successful careers in Copenhagen.

**You are both young architects. *Made Arhitekti* has designed several large-scale public buildings, which could be considered as dream projects for any architectural firm. Your company has also received Latvia's most important architectural award.**

**Linda:** Our office is already seven years old. The opportunity to design new buildings and oversee their construction depends on the situation in the country where you are living, on the state of its economy and on its development plans. For example, in Estonia many public buildings are currently being commissioned. They have already built a road museum and a Baltic film and media school as well as several elementary and secondary schools.

In Latvia there is less construction activity and not as many architectural competitions are held. However, there are still opportunities to implement new projects here. The standards and values that are implemented in Latvian architecture depend upon us alone and on the projects that we offer to our clients.

**You have also successfully competed in international architectural competitions abroad.**

**Linda:** Yes, and I have to admit that sometimes our approach to architecture is better received and understood elsewhere in Europe than in Latvia. Often when I read the rules for architectural competitions in Latvia, I notice that things we consider as essential aren't of any importance at all to those who wish to commission new buildings.

**Miķelis:** The client's needs and desires are the main sources of inspiration for the architectural solutions that we propose. That's why we take the customer's demands very seriously. When we read the rules of a competition, we patiently try to establish what the potential client's real needs are and what may have remained unsaid and hidden between the lines. Thousands of ideas can come to mind when you think about an architectural proposal for a project, each better than the previous one that you have thought up. The architect's talent expresses itself in the ability to choose the most appropriate solution for a concrete situation. For example,

the rules for the competition regarding the construction of a tennis hall in Södra, Sweden, mentioned ambitious plans about a world-class tennis hall of the future. However, to us it was clear that the Swedes actually wanted a simple and functional building, and that is exactly what the winners of the competition proposed. Now the hall has been built and has received awards for its superior energy efficiency.

**How do your projects come into being?**

**Miķelis:** We spend a lot of our time in the thinking mode. Our job is to think, think and think again. Only then do we put together what we have thought up into an architectural proposal. We also think about architecture when we are not sitting at the computers in our office or attending a meeting. The office is the place where we convert the best of what we have thought up into a concrete proposal to present to others. We devote a lot more attention to the architectural solution and place less emphasis on colourful slide shows. The most important thing is the architecture itself, not its presentation.

**Linda:** In order to obtain a good result, the leading architects of our bureau have to be involved in all stages of a project, even if decisions have to be taken about what appear to be technical formalities. You can never leave everything in the hands of your colleagues. The architect's job differs from that of a designer in the

*IT'S IMPORTANT TO DO WHAT YOU REALLY LIKE, AND TO DO IT HERE AND NOW*

sense that, unfortunately, an architect can't come up with a brilliant idea, draw up the sketches and manufacture the end product without the participation of the customer, as is the case in the design of tables or chairs.

**Was your decision to become architects something that you wanted to do from the start?**

**Linda:** Both of my parents are architects and my choice of profession was clear from the beginning. I've wanted to be an architect since my early childhood.

**Miķelis:** It wasn't that way for me. Sometimes I'm still surprised that I've become an architect. But in any case, I'm glad that I can provide a service that is useful to others. We've reached the stage where we have been able to prove ourselves professionally and we don't have to convince most of our clients that our approach to architecture is a good one. I can work in a profession that suits me the best.

**Linda:** It's important to do what you really like, and to do it here and now. Don't put it off for an unknown future time, when you think that you might feel more ready to take on the challenge. I remember working on my graduation paper and feeling that I had bitten off more than I could chew. Miķelis consoled me and

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PHOTOS BY GATIS GIERTS, F64,  
PHOTOS OF THE SALDUS MUSIC AND  
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The Saldus Music and Art School.  
Architects Miķelis Putrāms, Linda Krūmiņa,  
Evelīna Ozola, Uldis Sedlovs and Liena Amoliņa

said that I would never feel completely ready and that the ideal conditions would never be completely in place. I had to complete my studies here and now. During our studies, we were opposed to everything. Our study method was to contest everything that our teachers said, to verify and study everything for ourselves.

**Miķelis:** When one of my teachers said that my graduation paper wasn't about architecture, I took that as the greatest compliment. Sometimes it's easier to make decisions when you don't know all of the risks. If you want to climb Mount Everest and are well-informed about all of the difficulties that might lie ahead, then this knowledge can dampen your enthusiasm about starting the climb. In architecture it's important not to get scared. In making the sketches and carrying out the construction works, every individually tailored and non-standard solution is a risk. That's why architects usually don't work alone, but together in teams. They shouldn't be afraid to spend time and money on researching their own proposals. Sometimes a hidden risk can turn out to be a real asset that makes the world a better place, but of course one can also wind up making mistakes. Architects must have very high moral standards. They have to be responsible to themselves, to their clients, to the subcontractors and to the work that they do, since it will ultimately influence other people's lives. When you make a decision, you have to think about the long-term consequences and not only about the short-term advantages.

**Linda:** When developing any technical or creative solution, one must take into consideration that the construction and use of any edifice is expensive. One must have a responsible attitude towards the sums that the client is investing. On the other hand, we don't merely want to be successful project managers who refuse to leave the safety of their comfort zone.

**Miķelis:** You can't reach the stars by playing it safe. My professional dreams aren't original. I want to use architectonic tools to make the world a better place.

**Do contemporary architects still work in that frame of mind?**

**Miķelis:** It certainly is important to me. As a starting point, I want



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Proposal for the Latvian national pavilion at Expo 2015 in Milan. Made Arhitekti together with Positivus, McCann Rīga and MAREUNROL'S

to make the world a better place for myself. Architecture is way to do this rationally and effectively. The essence of architecture is not to be cruel to others. The reasons and the knowledge that stand behind the decisions that you take are important. You cannot try to change the world in a frivolous manner. For instance, when we were remodelling our apartment, the space for the toilet seemed a bit small, but historically that is the way toilets were built and we had chosen to live in a historical building. In order to expand the space, we would have had to tear down a historically authentic wall and build a new wall that also looked authentic. But if we had done that, then the authenticity of the environment would have been irreversibly lost.

**Does the location of an architects' office – be it in Riga, the countryside or in some European metropolis – make any difference nowadays?**

**Linda:** In my opinion, the most important thing is where the architect wants to live. We would like to live closer to the countryside, but at the moment the culture and social life of Riga seem more important. Riga is a good compromise between proximity to nature and the opportunities provided by an urban environment. It is a nicely sized green city. It is also important to find good employees from the vicinity of where one chooses to set up one's office. I have never wanted to live and work in a European metropolis. I can't imagine spending hours on the metro to travel to and from work. I suppose that work and career are not the most important things for me, but rather the overall quality of life. Copenhagen had a very good environment for studying at the Schools of Architecture of the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts and for work experience.

**Both of you had forged successful careers in well-known architectural firms in Denmark (Miķelis worked at Plot and BIG. Linda worked at Henning Larsens Tegnestue and Dorte Mandrup Arkitekter) but decided to return home.**

**Linda:** I wouldn't want to minimise the value of the time that we

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Proposal for the reconstruction of the New Riga Theatre building by *Made Arhitekti* and *Gaiss* (Arnita Melzoba, Kārlis Melzobs)



spent in Copenhagen. We came back bursting with energy, full of experience and knowledge. We had good jobs and decent pay in the Danish capital, but we didn't acquire a sense of belonging with Denmark and it didn't seem likely that we would do so in the future. It's possible that if we had stayed longer, then we might have grown used to living there and returning to Latvia would have become more difficult. We came back in 2007, just in time to experience the economic upsurge before the crash. I doubt that we would have decided to return in 2009, when we would have been more fearful about job opportunities in Latvia. In addition, it is more difficult and complicated for young architects to start their own firm in a foreign country. Here in Latvia the rhythm of work is freer, there is a more pleasant balance between everyday work stress and relaxation. Our parents own a house in the countryside. Here we have every opportunity to create the life that we want to

live. The most important thing is that we understand the context of what's happening in Latvia and that we have a sense of belonging to Latvian history.

**Mikēlis:** We understand the context of local Latvian architectural solutions much better than others, because we are from Latvia. We could never offer such a personal conception for the Latvian pavilion at next year's Expo if we weren't Latvians and didn't live here ourselves. We wouldn't be able to find a depth and truthfulness worthy of a multi-million-euro investment by the state.

**Linda:** We were invited to take part in it. Our team has representatives from a variety of very different professions and who have come forth with all kinds of different ideas. Architects are the people who transform what others have expressed at various meetings into a spatial solution, ensuring that the exposition and the pavilion are a united whole.

**Isn't the idea of the Expo as an exhibition of world achievements a bit outdated in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?**

**Linda:** The organisers of the Milan Expo are trying to create a different kind of exhibition. They think that times have changed and that there is no need for new technological Eiffel Tower surprises in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. But let's see what happens. At the moment, it seems that the pavilions of most of the countries that we have seen are doing the usual thing and are trying to surprise their visitors with grand architectural creations.

**Mikēlis:** Journalists also ask us: "How will Latvia surprise the world this time?" However, we don't have to surprise anybody. We just need to show how great it is to live in Latvia, how the environment here is natural and unspoiled, how healthy our food is. We don't need to sell anything or convince or surprise anyone. We want to showcase the natural beauty and variety of Latvia's ecosystem. Imagine the feeling that you have when the fields are blooming in the middle of summer, the bees are humming and the grass is swaying in the wind. This is an ideal visual and spiritual environment. Most developed countries would like to reach this sort of harmony, or regain what they have lost. Participation in



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the Expo is not just an opportunity to show ourselves to others, but also a chance for us to understand who we are, to raise our self-esteem. In order to present something to someone else, we first have to understand who we are. We must be truly proud of our symbols, of our environment and of our seeming inability to industrialise society, which is actually our greatest asset. We can be proud of our independence, our individualism and our creativity. Maybe that is what people in other countries ought to strive for.

**The world is changing so fast, but architectural masterpieces get built slowly. Some projects take decades to complete.**

**Linda:** Now that the Saldus Music and Art School has been built, it is easier to work on our next projects because we have enjoyed

**WE MUST BE TRULY PROUD OF OUR SYMBOLS, OF OUR ENVIRONMENT AND OF OUR SEEMING INABILITY TO INDUSTRIALISE SOCIETY, WHICH IS ACTUALLY OUR GREATEST ASSET**

a feeling of genuine accomplishment. That job took six years to complete and every so often I felt like changing professions – perhaps becoming a hairdresser who sees the fruits of her labour many times a day. It is difficult to work for a long time without seeing the results. But nothing happens quickly in architecture. If you choose to become an architect, then it is important to understand that you won't see the results of your work right away, and sometimes you won't reach any result at all.

**Mikēlis:** Most structures are designed to be used for a long time. This makes it important not to hurry with decisions or to take short-term trends and whims too seriously. One of my clients once said that what seems like an innovation today will be standard practice in a decade. Although we have to be informed about the latest developments in technology and about the newest materials, we don't try to follow every fashionable trend. We

are always asking ourselves how we want the planet and the environment to look in the future. By answering these questions, we create solutions that we can already put into practice today.

**Linda:** I have to admit that changes in the world around us are slow to make their mark on architecture. Today architects try to ensure that the buildings they design can be easily adapted for many different functions. Spaces are planned to be as universally adaptable as possible from the very beginning. Architecture is becoming simpler. Maturity has always been valued in architects and I find this thought to be reassuring. Although my experience gives me confidence about the quality of my work, sometimes I must push it aside to gain a different perspective about my proposed solutions.

**Mikēlis:** I wouldn't want to be overcome by preconceptions about the limits of architecture that I have noticed in some of my clients and colleagues. I always have to remind myself not to let these prejudices bog me down. When you see architecture as a field with no borders, then it's easier to work and the end result is better. There is no compulsion to remain within stylistic boundaries, no need to search for formal visual modes of expression. Building materials and technology aren't the only architectural tools. There is also time, as well as social and economic processes. I find architecture interesting because I can adapt it to the goals that I have set out for myself. I can create an environment and situations in which I myself would like to live or work.

**Linda:** A little while ago, it seemed that all the architects were carried away with writing, organising various events and planning bicycle trails. In short, they were doing everything that had to do with architecture. That's good for the field. I also had a period when I wanted to know about everything outside of architecture, so I studied social anthropology in parallel to my work. It was important for me to look at things from another frame of reference, to spot the door in the wall that I had previously overlooked. Now I've understood that I don't want to simply describe architecture; I want to design new buildings and draw up the sketches. I want to create architecture in the fullest sense of the word. **BO**

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# London

## at your feet

The city's five best walking tours

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The public transport system in London is pretty good. The underground metro gets you quickly from one side of the city to the other with a minimum of fuss. However, it's easy for visitors to become overly reliant on zipping from east to west and from north to south on "the Tube", reappearing above the ground like rabbits emerging from a warren. The best way to get to know London is actually on foot with a walking tour.

Previously these tours were basic affairs, but over the last few years they've become more elaborate and ambitious, pointing out tiny details of the city that you might otherwise miss. How else would you know to keep an eye on the chewing gum stuck to the pavement, or to duck into hidden courtyards where lawyers have been scheming for five centuries or more? On foot, London suddenly becomes a different and more intriguing place.

### FOR HIPSTERS

## The London Street Art Tour

At the first stop on our London Street Art Tour, on a corner near the Old Street roundabout in the East End of London, everybody in the large group of young, hip art fans looks around to see which bit of graffiti we'll be discussing first. There's a mural on the wall to our left that seems the likeliest candidate.

Instead, our guide Karim Samuels points to the ground, where we can see a small piece of chewing gum stuck to the pavement. On closer inspection we see that the gum has been painted with a delicate female face. This is one of an estimated 17,000 chewing gum paintings that North London artist Ben Wilson has done over the last 15 years, yet it would be extremely easy to miss them.

Wilson finds discarded pieces of chewing gum on the pavement, heats them with a small blowtorch, coats them with enamel, paints them with acrylic colours and covers them with a clear acrylic seal. He was actually prosecuted at one point, but the judge threw the case out on the reasonable grounds that you can hardly vandalise a piece of dirty chewing gum.

This kind of unusual outsider art sums up the contents of the tour. It runs the full gamut, from officially commissioned murals by acclaimed artists such as Ben Eine (one of whose works British prime minister David Cameron once gave to US president Barack Obama) to "graffiti writers" such as Nemo, who does his work illegally.

Since the famous satirical artist Banksy helped to legitimise a certain kind of street art (his works now sell for hundreds of thousands of pounds) there's been a new recognition that graffiti can be more than just vandalism. The largest Banksy that we see on this tour, a 2002 stencil of an Apache helicopter, is now protected under a sheet of Perspex (a hard transparent plastic similar to Plexiglas). Other pictures, of course, are removed within days of being painted, turning street cleaners into art critics, deciding what's valid and what's not.

Halfway through our four-hour long tour, we stop off for lunch at a trendy



**THEY** EXPRESS A  
SIDE OF LONDON THAT IS  
VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE  
STEREOTYPICAL IMAGES  
OF BIG BEN

but comfortable pub, *The Strongroom*, and discuss what we've seen. What is the difference between a "street artist" and a "graffiti writer"? Are they both equally respectable, and who decides?

This part of London is post-industrial and packed with arty bars, pubs, cafés and

restaurants, providing perfect canvases for graffiti and street art of all kinds. Some of the best, such as Portuguese artist Vhils' extraordinary portraits, which have been carved into plaster with a hammer drill, could grace any gallery. Others are a form of angry self-expression that some call vandalism and others call "true graffiti". Whatever you think of them, they express a side of London that is very different from the stereotypical images of Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament.

How much? **GBP 12 per person (two hours) or GBP 15 (four hours)**  
<http://streetartlondon.co.uk>



FOR LITERARY TYPES

# The Dickens Tour



Charles Dickens loved to walk. According to tour guide Richard Jones, he sometimes turned up in the middle of the night at the house of his long-suffering friend, John Forster, and insisted that they tramp halfway across the city, visiting even the least savoury parts of town. The great writer had an insatiable curiosity for every aspect of life.

That's perhaps what makes Richard Jones' tours work so well. Waiting outside Chancery Lane in his distinctive, battered rain hat, he himself looks like a character from one of Dickens' novels, perhaps a genial Victorian barrister or schoolteacher. You soon discover that Richard has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the famous author's books and that he's an expert at using Dickens' own, fictional dissection of London as a key to unlocking the most secret parts of the city.

The tour starts with a walk down busy High Holborn Street. We duck beneath a brickwork arch into *Staple Inn*, one of London's least-known but most fascinating curiosities. Built in 1586 as a self-contained commune and office block for lawyers, *Staple Inn* was old even when Dickens lived there in the 1830s.

Compared to the noise and traffic of central London, the inn is extraordinarily peaceful and tranquil, although just a tiny bit sinister, as you'd expect from a place where lawyers have been working for centuries. As Dickens himself put it in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, Staple Inn "imparts to the relieved pedestrian the sensation of having put cotton in his ears and velvet soles on his boots."

Although Richard is clearly a big Dickens fan, he's not blind to the great master's faults. As we visit other Inns of Court, from which lawyers still operate to this day, along with the alleged site of the original *Old Curiosity Shop* and the courtyard that inspired



The *Old Curiosity Shop* on Portsmouth Street in Holborn, dating from 1567, claims to be the inspiration for the shop in Charles Dickens' eponymous novel. It currently operates as a shoe store

## RICHARD TELLS US ABOUT THE YOUNG WRITER'S SECRET AFFAIR WITH 18-YEAR-OLD MISTRESS ELLEN TERNAN AND CRUEL ABANDONMENT OF HIS WIFE

the unflattering description of Scrooge's old home, we hear a little about Dickens' darker side.

Richard tells us about the young writer's imperious treatment of his first illustrator as well as his secret affair with 18-year-old mistress Ellen Ternan and cruel abandonment of his wife. This unsavoury aspect of Dickens' life was recently portrayed in *The Invisible Woman*, a film starring Ralph Fiennes and Felicity Jones.

However, after seeing where Dickens worked and where his father was imprisoned (later inspiring the character of Mr Micawber in *David Copperfield*), you feel that you have a better grasp of his life and can forgive him his faults. More importantly, you get a good sense of the London of Victorian times and the London that is waiting to be discovered today.

How much? **GBP 10 per person (two hours)**  
[www.dickenslondontours.co.uk](http://www.dickenslondontours.co.uk)

FOR THE CREATIVE

# The London In Film Tour



Although London may not have appeared in as many films as New York or Los Angeles, it is highly photogenic. This is the basis for the tours conducted by Romanian-born artist Catalina Niculescu of art promoters *Fox & Squirrel*. She is fascinated by the city's architecture and shows that you see things very differently when you look at them through the lens of a video camera.

We meet near Camden Town tube station and head towards the edge of Regent's Park, where Catalina begins by getting us to film static scenes of the grand Georgian houses built by John Nash (who also designed Regent Street and the centre of one of England's most beautiful cities, Bath).

"Pay attention to the relationship between different lines and objects," Catalina urges. From these simple beginnings, we move on to increasingly complicated subjects. In Regent's Park it's easy to find the living animals she suggests we shoot next. After looking at my jerky film of a bird zig-zagging across the grass and a squirrel disappearing into some bushes, Catalina teaches us the best way to capture moving images. Make sure that you're aware of your surroundings, so that you can move the camera smoothly and slowly around obstacles.

With a brief stop for a coffee by the Regent's Canal at Camden Lock,

Catalina then explains her real passion – light – and the best way to capture its effects. Standing on the bridge over the canal, we're instructed to make a film that focuses on the interplay of light and water. The result, in following the reflections of the rippling canal on to the brick of the Victorian road bridge, is surprisingly effective.

Catalina's final challenge, however, seems almost impossible in such a short span of time: to try and make a film that tells some kind of a story. After walking to another charming Georgian terraced street back near *Fox & Squirrel's* offices in Camden, things somehow fall together. A cat comes out from behind a dustbin and, appearing to have some kind of a plan, trots along the pavement. Tracking him closely as Catalina has taught me, I follow him until he disappears beneath a parked car. The result is my very first film, *The Missing Cat*.

Famous director Steven Spielberg will probably not call me anytime soon, but the fact of putting a camera to your eye certainly makes you take in details that you would never have considered before. London by film is an unusual and rewarding way to see the city.

How much? **GBP 80 per person, (about 3 hours, with tea or coffee included)**  
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FOR KIDS OF ANY AGE

## The Harry Potter Tour

Children all over the world have experienced London, but not through the works of Charles Dickens or Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories. No, the "real London", they'll assure you, is depicted in JK Rowling's incredibly successful Harry Potter books and films.

Trawling through the books and comparing JK Rowling's London with the real one must have been quite a task, but it's an important service that Richard Jones (the same Dickens expert referenced above) has generously provided for absolutely nothing. Anyone who wants it can download his wonderfully detailed DIY tour for free.

We start at the Leicester Square underground station with the dramatic image of Death Eaters swooping past,

as they did in the opening scene of the film version of *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*.

We then head down to Charing Cross, the site of the *Leaky Cauldron Pub*. Richard Jones admits that none of the real pubs around here have much in common with Rowling's fictional version, but he helpfully suggests that we try one or two of them and see which we think comes closest.

Children will be delighted to find that there is a place, Cecil Court, which has more than a passing resemblance to Diagon Alley. Its many antique book shops give it an authentically magical air. The shop at number 20, Richard points out, even has the magical world's Gringott Bank Notes for sale. This is not the only location

on the tour to try and exploit London's Harry Potter connection.

*Hardy's Sweetshop* at 25 New Row is included in the tour as the closest thing you'll get to the famous *Honeyduke's Sweet Shop*. It's a resemblance of which the shop owners are well aware, and they now sell Harry Potter-themed sweets such as chocolate frogs and liquorice wands. The more adventurous children will be particularly pleased that bogie and vomit flavours are also available.

Perhaps the most charming example of Harry Potter in London can be found at King's Cross Station itself. Not only have the station authorities gone to the trouble of putting a sign up for Platform 9 ¾ (it's actually between platforms 4 and 5, but never mind) they've even positioned half a shopping trolley against the wall, so it's



easy for children to imagine themselves rushing towards it and disappearing into a more exciting world of the imagination.

How much? **Free** (duration varies)  
<http://www.the-magician.co.uk/private-tours.htm>

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Long before tea made its  
mark in England, it was coffee,  
and specifically, coffeehouses  
that changed the country

**FOR COFFEE LOVERS**

## The Coffeehouse Tour

Even today in British culture, there are few things more important than a "nice cup of tea", commonly held to be the solution to all problems, from romantic heartbreak to natural disasters and world war. However, long before tea made its mark in England, it was coffee, and specifically, coffeehouses that changed the country.

This is the premise of historian Matthew Green's unexpectedly fascinating tour, which takes you back in time through the medium of strong, invigorating black coffee. It starts with the introduction of a drink called *Pasqua Roseé* to London by an entrepreneurial Greek in 1652. This coffee, Matthew explains, was a foul-tasting but rather addictive stimulant, more like a drug than the pleasant-tasting latte that we know today.

As we head down Cornhill towards St Paul's Cathedral, Matthew goes on to explain how coffee's stimulating effects spread through the city, terrifying publicans (who saw their clients deserting beer for this "bitter Mohammedan gruel"). During the reign of King Charles II (1660-1685), he says, there were 82 coffeehouses within the old Roman walls of the city. The King even attempted to close them down, concerned at the kind of insurrectionary conversations that went on inside.

This would be fascinating stuff even if it were just a straightforward lecture, but at various points along the tour, actors jump out of the shadows and bring the story to

life. Particularly interesting is the stop at the site of what was once *Jonathan's Coffee Shop*, the first in London, near St Michael's Church on Cornhill.

Here wealthy stockbrokers gambled, just as they do today. Sometimes this was with stocks and shares amid the various booms and bubbles of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Fortunes were won and lost, with investments made in faraway nut plantations or in the tulip markets of Holland. If they had nothing better to do on rainy days, the stockbrokers might bet thousands on which drop of water would get to the bottom of the window first.



That such a seemingly innocuous drug could change the city, the country and the world so much seems extraordinary when you first begin the tour. It's a testimony to Matthew Green's skills as an orator that by the end of the tour you believe what he has said. Even the opportunity to try some traditionally brewed coffee doesn't ruin the experience, despite the fact that it tastes rather like boiled, gritty mud.

How much? GBP 13.75 per person (about one hour and 45 minutes)  
<http://unrealcityaudio.co.uk/tours/the-coffeehouse-tour/>

With special thanks to the Rosewood London Hotel ([www.rosewoodhotels.com/en/london](http://www.rosewoodhotels.com/en/london)).

# A PASSION TO DREAM

# BOSCA



ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION MAY HAVE ADVERSE EFFECTS



TEXT BY AGRA LIEGE  
PHOTOS BY GATIS GIERTS, F64, AND COURTESY  
OF ARTISTS

## Still life stirring

**Spring flowers are blooming once again, and Baltic Outlook has spoken to some inspiring artists who enjoy expressing themselves through colourful blossoms.**

In centuries past, professional artists tended to depict plants in as detailed a manner and with as much scientific accuracy as possible. This was long before the age of photography. Yet today, various forms of botanical art are thriving again. This is perhaps just as well, considering the rapid rate at which plant species and their habitats are vanishing from the Earth.

The rebirth and growing popularity of plants in art may partly be due to advances in technology, which offer artists a previously unimaginable range of means and techniques to reflect the beauty and elegance of plants in their works. Flowers also provide boundless opportunities for symbolism and can be used by artists to express a wide array of ideas.

Furthermore, in the search for something simple, positive and pure, many are turning back to nature, feeling that perhaps we have moved too far away from it. Blossoming flowers are harbingers of spring, life and regeneration. Tired of the chill that dominates the colder seasons, we want to celebrate life!

Some flowers are painted on canvas, inspired by the early Dutch still life traditions of the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, as in the works of Emma Bennett, or by powerful childhood experiences and the colourful splendour Bali, Indonesia, as in Kristine Luíze Avotiņa's paintings. Flowers have also found their place on rugs, inspired by carpets created in Karabakh and southern Russia at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as is the case with the works of Jan Kath. They can come in eerie cryogenic forms or be made into grandiose sculptures, as in the oeuvres of Mark Quinn.

Flowers can even beckon through their absence – in the form of vases so receptive of their intended contents that, once filled, they become works of art in themselves – as the works of Ronald van der Hilst show us. One thing is clear: these five artists, as diverse as the works that they create, have all lent a hand to the comeback of plant-related art.



Wall covering design by Ronald van der Hilst  
© MICHAEL JAMES O'BRIEN



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Bulbe crystal tulip vase,  
designed in 2005 for Val Saint Lambert  
© MICHAEL JAMES O'BRIEN

### Where to see Ronald's works in April:

Four of Ronald's tulip print collections, along with his prints for wooden floors by *Xilo* 1934 of Italy, will be presented at Milan Design Week (April 8-13). Ronald's tile collections are currently being shown at the *Ceramica Bardelli* showroom in Milan. In May, he will present new objects for *Mobach Keramiek* at an exhibition in Antwerp.



**Ronald van der Hilst** is a Dutch-born artist and landscape designer who is currently based in Antwerp, Belgium. Initially, Ronald focused on designing gardens and landscapes but later turned to designing interior objects as well. According to him, that is the complete opposite of landscape architecture:

"In the latter case, you make an object that will not change. The creative process is very controlled compared to designing gardens." Nicknamed the *King of Tulips*, Ronald came to be linked with this particular flower almost accidentally. Back when he was new to Antwerp, Ronald started organising open-door weekends at his studio to broaden his network. Being Dutch, he jokingly exploited the tulip cliché that is widely linked to the Netherlands and organised tulip-themed events. Eventually, he met some collectors of old and rare tulip species. He started selling the bulbs of some of these species at his events and learned more about this beautiful flower. Now he is a concerted tulip fan, smitten for life. Did you know that there are about 4000 different varieties of the plant?

Ronald's first collection of interior objects, *Tulip Designs*, included vases for tulips, including the widely known *Bulbe*, which Beatrix, the former queen of the Netherlands, also purchased for her collection. Ronald has worked with fashion designers and created murals, sculptures, jewellery and tulip-themed illustrations. Although, as a garden designer, Ronald claims to love all flowers, he admits that for him "no other flower has such a rich, eventful and passionate history as the tulip. Never was so much money spent on a single flower as during the *Tulipomania* in the Netherlands of the 17<sup>th</sup> century."

Regarding the tulip's visual characteristics, Ronald says that "the last phase of their life might even be the most beautiful – they're like watercolour paintings." Ronald believes that throughout history the craving for botanical art is linked to times of change, as a search for something stable, well-known and nostalgic.

### Prices:

*Bulbe* – EUR 3,150 (clear crystal) and EUR 4,415 (coloured crystal)

[www.ronaldvanderhilst.com](http://www.ronaldvanderhilst.com)





**Marc Quinn** is a British artist who is widely known for his provocative work. His installations, sculptures, paintings and drawings often make reference to scientific developments, genetic modification and hybridism, addressing our relationship with nature and our own bodies. One of the artist's most prominent works is *Garden*, a walk-through installation portraying a garden full of impossibly combined frozen flowers (because they could never grow together in nature) kept in cryogenic suspension. The flowers will never decay as long as they are connected to a power source. A similar collection named *Eternal Spring* consists of blooming flowers that have been preserved by plunging them into extremely cold silicone.

The artist is fascinated by the visual intensity and sexual symbolism of orchids, which dominate in most of his latest works. One example is his recent series of oil paintings named *Under the Volcano*, which depicts flashy and colourful orchids in a near-photographic and hyper-realistic manner. Even more grandiose are his large painted bronze sculptures of orchids, which are portrayed in white, red and dreamy patterned blue.

Although orchids might come across as a rather tame subject of focus for the controversial artist, this impression lasts only as long as the sculptures are viewed as isolated items. Once you view them outdoors, they become slightly grotesque and uncomfortably odd, while still maintaining a sense of beauty. Marc says that his work reflects contemporary society and contains "a violent type of thing", a criticism of the current state of affairs.

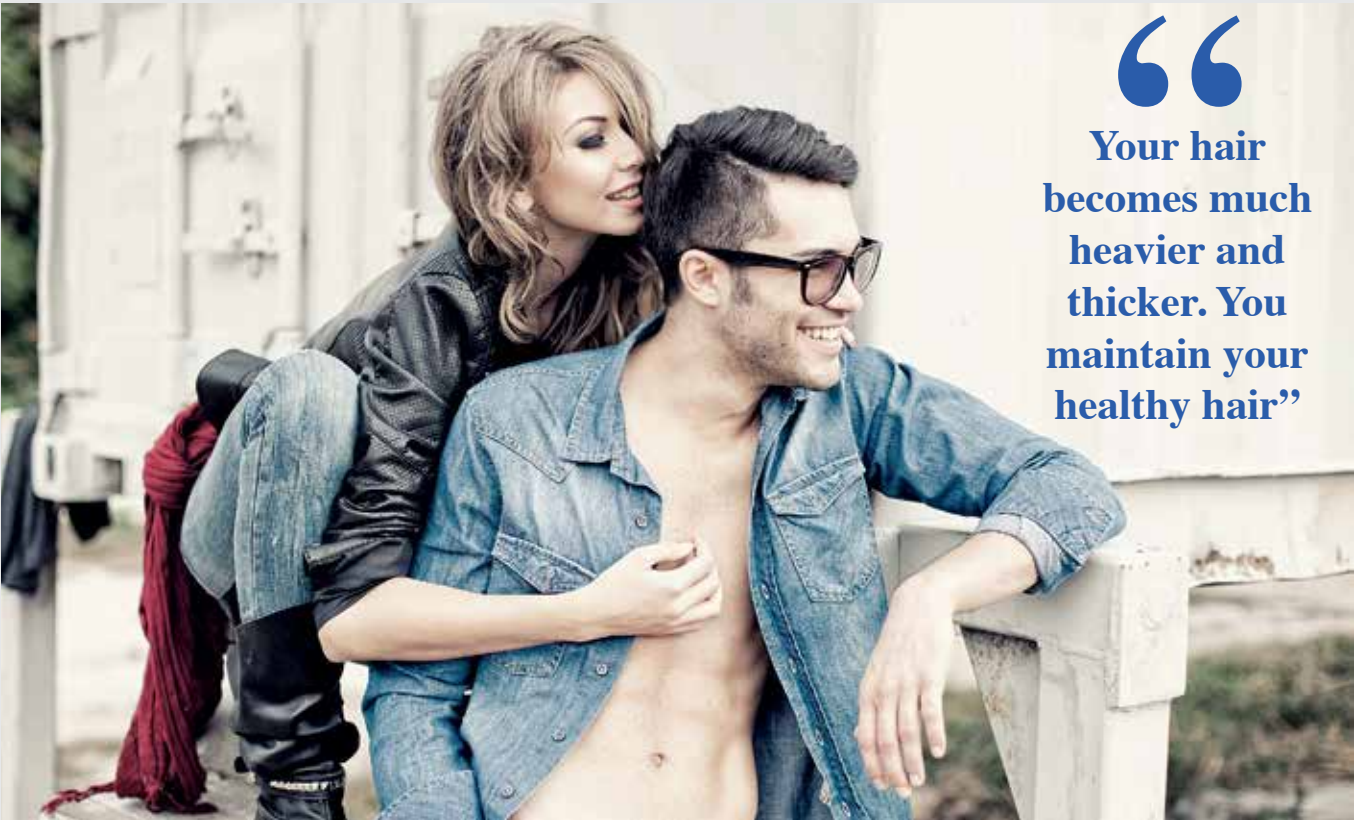
**Where to see Marc's works in April:**  
Marc's first solo exhibition, *The Sleep Of Reason*, which brings together 30 of the works that he has produced since 2010, can be seen until April 27 at the *ARTER* art space in Istanbul, Turkey.

**Prices:**  
Available upon request  
[www.marcquinn.com](http://www.marcquinn.com)

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*The Archaeology of the Baroque*, 2012, painted bronze  
PHOTO: TODD-WHITE ART PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY OF MARC QUINN



“  
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# THINNING HAIR?

How a new pill can boost your hair and self-confidence

Hair loss can be a nightmare for both men and women. It can make you look less attractive, and also lead to disadvantages within your career and limit you in your partner choice. It can lead to depression, loss of self-confidence and even identity change.

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and thicker. You maintain your healthy hair,” says Oxford Biolabs CEO Dr Thomas Whitfield.

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after 18 months of treatment. Start TRX2 as early as possible in order to increase the chances of fully recovering your hair.

TRX2 is suitable for men and women of all ages. The crystalline white capsules come in a brown glass bottle, which is sufficient for one month of treatment and costs approximately €49. The manufacturer offers a money-back guarantee if ordered via TRX2's official website, and ships worldwide.

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**Where to see Kristīne's works in April:**

Kristīne's large-scale paintings can be viewed in the VIP lounge of the Riga International Airport. Other works can be seen in her private studio.

**Price:**

Depending on the size of the painting – between EUR 1,000 and 5,000

[www.cristinaluisa.com](http://www.cristinaluisa.com)



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**Kristīne Luīze Avotiņa** is a Latvian painter who focuses on various elements of nature – mostly flowers, but also birds, animals and plants. Her works are bright, colourful and bursting with life. Having remained faithful to a single style since the age of 15, Kristīne says that her canvases allow for a combination of elements that might not be seen in the outside world. The artist grew fond of nature as a child, when she spent summers in the countryside, taking long walks, picking berries and exploring nature.

She doesn't deny that her mother, painter Ilze Avotiņa, has also had an influence on her work. "My mother's paintings are even brighter and more colourful than mine," says Kristīne, who admits to being a hopeless romantic, inspired by the love that she sees around her. Another powerful source of inspiration was a fateful trip to Bali: "When I travelled to Indonesia, something opened up. I saw colours and splendour that I previously thought existed only within my interior self," says Kristīne.

In her admiration of nature, Kristīne is especially reverential to flowers. "Nature has manifested an infinite ability where flowers are concerned," she says. "Take orchids, for example. Such a range of different types! So many colour transitions! Nothing can compete with that." To her, flowers also represent the beginning of a new life, a transition and a perpetual cycle in which we are all small and temporary beings.



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**Jan Kath** is one of the most successful rug designers in the world. Hailing from Germany, he grew up in what he calls a “rug family”, meaning that his father and grandfather were in the business of selling carpets. As a young boy, Jan accompanied his father on visits to manufacturers in Iran and Nepal. “These trips trained my eye and gave rise to a deeper understanding of colour combinations and proportions,” he says, adding that he never intended to continue running the family business. In the search for his own path, Jan travelled to Asia and the Middle East when he was 20 years old. He obtained work as a quality controller for a carpet manufacturer in Nepal and later started to produce his own designs.

Jan also travelled to Russia, Siberia and Mongolia, where he “inhaled the impressions” that would manifest themselves many years later in his collection *From Russia With Love*. The rose motifs on the rugs in this collection are reminiscent of the traditional headscarves and shawls that elderly Russian women in rural areas of the country still wear to this day. The motifs are also inspired by the flowery carpets made in Karabakh and in various southern Russian provinces around the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

One can sense Jan’s strong emotional bond to times gone by. His patterns are rich and bright, and through the simple, powerful flower, a motif rich in history reaches out to the modern-day viewer. Jan says that it hasn’t been that hard for him to continue depicting roses in so many of his works. In the fear of being considered a bit cheesy, he admits to liking this queen of flowers very much.

**Where to see Jan’s works in April:**  
Some of Jan’s works will be on show in Milan at the *Salone Internazionale del Mobile* from April 8 to 13.  
**Prices** (per square metre):  
From EUR 1,300 to 2,500  
**www.jan-kath.de**

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*From Russia With Love* collection – *Janka Splashed*,  
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and Chinese silk



*From Russia With Love* collection –  
*Sofianka Splashed*



*From Russia With Love* collection –  
*Karabagh Splashed*



*From Russia With Love* collection –  
*Sofianka Wrapped*



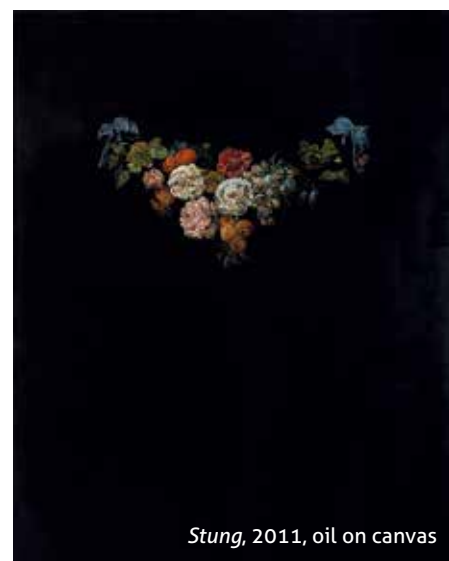
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*Shadow of Doubt, 2009, oil on canvas*



*Stung, 2011, oil on canvas*



*A Weightless Quiet, 2013, oil on oak panel*

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**Emma Bennett**  
is a British artist whose still  
lives have been inspired by the  
best examples of 17<sup>th</sup>-century  
Dutch and Italian painting.

She became particularly interested  
in depicting flowers after seeing the  
exhibition *Dutch Flower Painting* in London  
in 1996, and flowers have remained a  
central theme in her art ever since. As was  
the case with the Dutch still life painters,  
Emma is interested in notions of time and  
transience, of life and death.

As a proponent of still life paintings,  
Emma has taken notice of the renewed  
interest in this genre of art. She says that  
since we are bombarded with a vast  
amount of information, still life images  
provide us with "much needed quiet space  
in which to contemplate time, the value of  
life and all living things...and perhaps also  
the fragility of the human condition."

Emma is not overly concerned with  
making accurate botanical depictions of  
plants or flowers. She uses art books as  
source materials and seems to embrace  
the tonality of the colour palettes found in  
them. Her preference of books over reality  
as sources of inspiration is not common  
among contemporary artists. Although  
Emma enjoys painting all kinds of flowers,  
she has a particular fondness for roses,  
sweet peas and sweet william blossoms.

#### Where to see Emma's works in April:

Emma's works can be viewed at the  
*Charlie Smith London* gallery.

#### Prices:

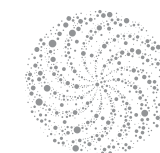
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GAISMAS MAĢIJA



TEXT AND PHOTOS BY JIMMY PETTERSON

# Hiking in the cradle of civilisation

*Trekking around in the sparse desert may well be your best travel experience*

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**H**istory involves, among other things, the tumultuous clash between competing civilisations and cultures. It is a record of the customs, religions, beliefs and practices of the many empires that have risen and fallen through the annals of time.

Recently, I embarked on a journey to a country that is one of the cradles of history. Almost every power that has played a dominant role in the last 3000 years has also laid a claim on this piece of land. It is a nation that has seen more masters come and go than Elizabeth Taylor has had husbands, and conflicts over its rule continue to this day.

If the reader has not already guessed, my recent visit was to Israel, a land that is of critical importance to three of the world's major religions. I embarked on my journey on the spur of the moment, without a plan or an itinerary, and entirely without an idea of what to expect.

Okay, okay! I am not totally without knowledge about that part of the world. I knew that it is still warm in November, a major plus for anyone coming from northern Europe. I also knew that the Red Sea has some of the best coral reefs in the world, and that there are enough religious sites of historical significance to keep anyone busy for well over a week.

What I found, among other things, was a friendly and hospitable people as well as a stupendous desert wilderness that would keep a hiking enthusiast happy for an entire holiday. The country is small, and in about ten days, with the help of a rental car, one can explore it quite well from top to bottom. I wandered along the historic streets and alleyways of Old Jerusalem, was invited into people's homes, and had active days of hiking among stunning scenery. Early one evening, as I returned to my hotel tired from a long day of activities, I was invited to an enormous feast of barbecued food by a complete stranger.

## Hiking paradise

Many know of Israel's long and rich history and of the amazing melting pot that is Jerusalem, but not many know that this country also offers numerous interesting hiking possibilities for those seeking an active holiday. There are hikes to suit all different occasions, from short 45-minute jaunts to all-day excursions. There is also plenty variety in the terrain, ranging from flat cakewalks to extremely steep climbs.

While most hiking aficionados are familiar with mountain territory, trekking around in the sparse desert will present an experience like no other. Late fall, winter and early spring are the best times of year for hiking in this region. The water temperature of the nearby seas is still around 23 degrees Celsius in November, and the air temperature has mellowed enough to make hiking a pleasant experience – similar to the climate in central Europe during the summer.

In April, the average high temperature is a pleasant 25 degrees. By May, the high in Israel averages 28 degrees, and by June it rises to a rather oppressive 31 degrees. That might still feel pleasant if you are accustomed to hiking in southern locations like Texas, but I suspect that most people would prefer to let the summer months pass and take their hiking holiday from mid-October until the middle of May.

As opposed to the mountains of Europe, hikes in the Israeli desert offer little shade, and there will rarely be a cool mountain stream or lake to accommodate the hiker at just the right moment. With that in mind, it is wise to begin your excursions early in the morning and to bring along a good supply of water.

The desert offers a unique kind of beauty. The lush green meadows and pines that give mountain hikes their distinct character are nowhere to be seen here. Instead, a broad spectrum of orange, pink, yellow, purple and even red brings the desert to life in a manner that is hard to imagine if one has not experienced it before.

The deserts of this region are not lifeless, flat basins of sand as far as the eye can see – far from it. There are moonscapes of bizarre limestone formations and canyons of sandstone that have been eroded into magnificent patterns, the likes of which not even the greatest surrealist could conjure up from imagination alone.

You will also see massive red mountains of rock that protrude 700 vertical metres straight into an azure sky like giant icebergs towering above a flat, calm sea of sand. Add the fact that this region, so steeped in history, often provides the fascinating remnant of some bygone civilisation as a compliment to the remarkable geology, and you can begin to picture what hiking in Israel is all about.



My friend Thomas and I warmed up our legs with two days of marching around Jerusalem. We were intrigued by the dynamics of this multi-cultural religious centre. Jews prayed fervently at the Western Wall, Arabs hawked their wares in the colourful bustle of the Muslim Quarter, and Christians, on pilgrimages from all over the world, wandered along the crowded Via Dolorosa, following the path along which Jesus carried his cross.

A NICE WAY TO BEAT THE HEAT IS TO TAKE AN EARLY MORNING HIKE AND ENJOY THE SUNRISE OVER THE DEAD SEA

We began our third day with a relatively short excursion up Masada Mountain, the site of a legendary incident in Jewish history. During the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, King Herod the Great built an impressive palace high atop a mesa of orange limestone overlooking the Dead Sea. The settlement marked the eastern border of his domain.

impregnable fortress, thwarted all efforts of the Roman force, which had 30 times their manpower.

Finally, the Romans built a ramp of rock and sand from a neighbouring peak – an unbelievable project that ultimately resulted in a level pathway for them to cross to Masada, which otherwise towers 440 vertical metres above the desert below.

Faced with certain defeat, not to mention torture and enslavement at the hands of the merciless Romans, the Zealots lived up to their name and committed mass suicide. Two millennia later, Jim Jones' ill-fated followers were written off as lunatics in the jungles of South America as a result of their group suicide. The Zealots, however, became martyred heroes through their act of ultimate defiance.

Masada is a well known and popular attraction in Israel. Even a cable car is in place to bring visitors to the top. A nice way to beat the heat and the crowds is to take an early morning hike and enjoy the sunrise over the Dead Sea. The ascent takes between 30 and 60 minutes, depending on your speed and condition, while the walk back down takes less than half an hour. One can easily spend an additional hour or more wandering around the remains of the settlement high on this cliff top and merely enjoying the views from various vantage points.

This accomplished, Thomas and I were ready for our second tour of the day, a hike into the En Gedi Nature Reserve, just a short drive from Masada and also on the perimeter of the Dead Sea. Lying 400 metres below sea level, this salty lake is the lowest place on Earth. All along its western flank, an escarpment of steep rocks rises about 600 metres above the water.



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## OUTLOOK / TRAVEL



The Dead Sea is the lowest spot on the face of the Earth and a natural health spa

### *HERE, THERE IS NO ESCAPING THE SUN, SO BRING PLENTY OF WATER IF YOU WISH TO WANDER AROUND FOR A LONG TIME*

meandering oasis amidst the desert cliffs provides a strip of green vegetation all along the hiking route. About 20 minutes into the En Gedi hike, one arrives at a small waterfall. This is a congregation point for dozens of families and hundreds of children in school groups, laughing, screaming and splashing.

However, don't give up on your nature experience, but persevere beyond the masses. Past the first waterfall, one can venture further up the canyon and choose from an assortment of different hikes that can take as long as five hours, round trip. Some school groups continue to hike on as well, but the further one ascends, the more isolated the scenery becomes.

A second waterfall drops down by a cave about an hour past the initial falls, providing an excellent swimming hole at a time when a bit of refreshment is most welcome. There are also a handful of historical landmarks along the various trails. What's more, at En Gedi and Masada it is not unusual to share the hiking trails with native ibex goats, an added attraction of this region.

#### **Salty Sodom**

Another possible hike along the Dead Sea is in the area of Mt. Sodom of biblical fame. (Remember Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities of sin?) This hike also begins with

the scaling of a rather steep escarpment. Amazingly enough, the mountain that you climb is made of pure salt! Normally, salt could not form a mountain, because under normal circumstances the rain would wash it away. However, the extremely arid climate of the Judean Desert has allowed this salt mountain to remain standing.

The mountain appears to be of sandstone, like so much of the neighbouring terrain, but on some of the steep passages near the beginning of the hike, close inspection will reveal that a thin layer of sand and dirt merely covers the salt below. One can easily wipe a spot clean and lick the salt rock if one is not convinced.

During our hike, we crossed paths with a group of about 20 schoolchildren accompanied by three teachers. We were astonished to see that each of the teachers was armed with a machine gun. While Israel is a relatively safe place to travel, there are constant reminders of the tense coexistence among the various groups that lay claim to this holy land.

Following the initial steep section of trail, one reaches a plateau. From that point, the hiking is rather mellow, and one can decide how far into the interior one wishes to walk. The plateau is full of interesting examples of desert erosion, and the edge of the escarpment provides some good

views of the Dead Sea. Here, there is no escaping the sun, so bring plenty of water if you wish to wander around for a long time. One does not necessarily have to follow the trail on the plateau, but in that case it is essential to make a mental note of the landmarks so as not to lose the correct place for later descending the steep section of the trail.

A little ways south of Mt. Sodom is the trail to the Flour Cave. While this excursion is hardly long enough to be called a hike, the white sandstone formations are spectacular, and the exciting walk through the cave itself can be lots of fun, especially for children. The walk starts on a flat sector of desert that appears totally bland and uninteresting. Out of view – until one literally steps into it – is a narrow gorge in the dry plain. At first, the walls of the gorge are no more than five or six metres high, but as one continues to wind along this intriguing chasm, the cliffs extend higher and higher. Finally, one reaches the Flour Cave itself.

One should bring a flashlight along for this section of the excursion, but to transform the walk into a real adventure, try to refrain from using your lamp. Instead, keep your hand along the right wall of the cave. Continue walking carefully forward as the light from behind you gradually diminishes until you are left in the darkest place that you have ever experienced. Move onward, feeling the right wall all the while, and learn, if only briefly, what it is like to be blind.

Eventually, after some minutes in pitch darkness, light appears at the end of the tunnel and you clamber out of the cave into a spectacular chasm, from where you can once again reach the broad plain above. This exit from the canyon and cave includes a



The high platform at Mount Sodom offers breathtaking panoramic views



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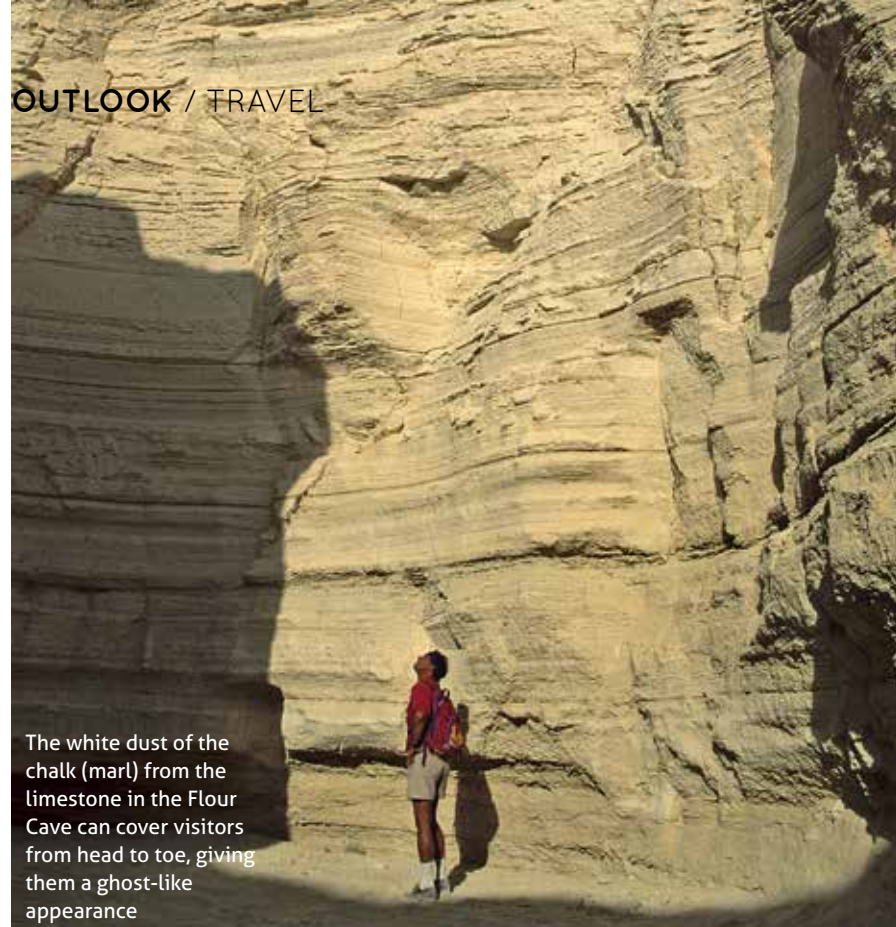
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## OUTLOOK / TRAVEL



The white dust of the chalk (marl) from the limestone in the Flour Cave can cover visitors from head to toe, giving them a ghost-like appearance

natural arch and appears, from above, to be a crack in the Earth's surface created by a long-forgotten earthquake.

## Rock formations

About 25 kilometres north of the beach resort of Eilat is another excellent spot for some day hikes among the extravaganza of desert colours in Timna Park. This was the location of King Solomon's copper mines some 3,000 years ago, and the mineshafts as well as the remains of the smelting ovens can still be seen.

The rock formations here are in almost every colour of the rainbow, and the millennia of erosion have moulded the soft stone into some magnificent odd shapes. The most impressive attractions are the Arch, the Mushroom and Solomon's Pillars. Hikes include short 45-minute family walks, three- and four-hour outings and even an eight-hour trek that brings visitors to both the Milchan Heights and Mt. Berekh.

North of Timna Park, in the middle of the austere Negev Desert, is the largest crater of its kind in the world. Known as Mitzpe Ramon, it is a rugged 360-square-kilometre piece of real estate hemmed in by a ridge of cliffs and mountains. This, too, is a unique area for exploring desert scenery, although the region here is much larger than that of

Timna Park, and the attractions are more spread out.

Israel has, for centuries, been a region of conflict and contradiction. It is not only steeped in history; it is also a place where history is continuing to be made, often in a turbulent fashion and on a daily basis.

There is, however, much more to the story than what one reads in the newspapers. Israel is an enigma. Despite the tensions that often break out into violent disharmony, a walk through Old Jerusalem reveals a mix of Jews, Muslims, Christians and many other religions mingling peacefully in the same fashion as in New York, London or any other of the planet's melting pots.

In addition, the religious groups that live in the region share long-standing traditions of hospitality. During my stay in Israel, I experienced the warmest friendliness, congeniality and generosity – even from complete strangers.

The friendliness of the local people, the long and amazing history of the region and the spectacular desert scenery make Israel a wonderful destination for an active holiday. Around every corner of the city or hiking trail, one can observe the juxtaposition of ancient and modern history. *L'chaim* (to life)!



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Hiking trails of various lengths and for all levels of experience snake across Timna Park

## Items to take along on your hike

**The following is a short list of items to bring in order to make your hiking experience more pleasant:**

1. **A day pack.** This is a small backpack – about 25-30 litres – large enough to carry numerous odds and ends for a half-day or full-day hike.
2. **A swimming suit and towel.** This depends on which route one takes, but if you plan to pass a stream or a lake, then it is great to cool off with a dip.
3. **A flashlight.** You never know when it might come in handy, and on a visit to the Flour Cave it will be very helpful.
4. **A Swiss army knife.** This useful item can serve multiple functions. You might need a bottle-opener or tweezers or just want to cut an apple into slices.
5. **A thermos with water, tea or lemonade.** A thermos will keep your refreshments colder, especially if you throw in a few ice cubes. What a pleasure to have an ice-cold drink when it is hot

- and you have been hiking and sweating!
6. **Snacks.** Depending on the length of your hike, sandwiches, fruit, chocolate bars, granola bars and trail mix are all good suggestions.
  7. **Candy or gum.** One's throat can get dry when hiking, so sucking on a piece of candy or chewing some gum can be quite soothing.
  8. **Sunscreen.** Clearly, the sun can be very strong in this part of the world.
  9. **Your mobile phone.** It cannot hurt to have a mobile phone AND a telephone number to call in case an unexpected problem arises.
  10. **Cap.** A baseball cap or other headgear will protect your head from the sun.
  11. **Sunglasses.** This hardly needs any explanation.
  12. **Camera.** Don't leave home without it. **BO**

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## Driven: the Peugeot 308, European Car of the Year for 2014

**T**he Peugeot 308 is the first new model in the company's history to retain the name of its predecessor. However, don't let that fool you. The French car maker claims that the 308 actually represents one of Peugeot's biggest steps forward, a claim that has now been backed by a European Car of the Year award for the French hatchback.

Peugeot has used a mixture of composites, aluminium and high-strength steel in the car's construction, helping to make it around 140 kg lighter than the outgoing 308 and improving performance.

What's more, Peugeot has sought to deliver class-leading interior quality as well as improved ride comfort and handling. As for the engines, we get a mix of 1.6-litre petrols and diesels with a wide range of power output as well as a new three-cylinder turbo petrol engine and two new 2.0 Blue HDi diesels.

### What's it like to drive?

The 308 feels best-suited to town driving, where you can make the most of its tight turning circle and light controls, although the gearbox has a slightly vague action.

Aside from a bit of patter from the rear end of the car, the 308 rides pretty well. Unfortunately, you pay for this suppleness with sloppy body control. Also, the 308's brakes are rather grabby, making it tricky to slow your progress smoothly.

Engine noise is not a big issue, except with the low-powered diesels. Wind noise isn't a deal-breaker either, but it does build up around the door mirrors at motorway speeds.

### What's it like inside?

As in the 208 supermini, there's an unusually small steering wheel that you look over



(instead of through) to see the instruments. However, the basic driving position is better in the 308, so fewer drivers will find that the top of the wheel blocks their view of the speedometer.

A smartly trimmed cabin adds to the 308's appeal, although there are some signs of cost-cutting, including a swathe of hard, scratchy plastic beneath the centrally mounted touch screen.

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## THE NEW PEUGEOT 308 IS WORTHY OF MENTION AMONG THE CLASS BEST

The touchscreen is standard on all but the entry-level trim and features large easy-to-hit icons. That said, some of the minor functions are a bit fiddly to operate on the move, and it's a pity that Peugeot hasn't fitted separate controls for the air-conditioning; you have to adjust the cabin temperature and fan settings through the touchscreen, which forces you to switch between menus more often than you would like.

The boot can swallow 470 litres of luggage, which is 120 litres less than the Skoda Octavia can manage but (officially at least) a lot more spacious than you get in a Ford Focus or VW Golf.

The 308's large carrying capacity comes at the expense of rear legroom; six-footers will feel cramped when sitting behind a similar-sized driver, while rear headroom is also on

the tight side if you specify the optional panoramic glass roof.

### Should I buy one?

There is much to like in the 308, such as an interior whose appearance and material finish is the equal of all in its class, and vastly improved dynamics over its predecessor. The gap to its rivals has been reduced neatly by the advances made in build quality, comfort, refinement and all-round appearance.

That said, the car's rear space and handling could be better. Those things are significant enough to prevent the Peugeot 308 from challenging its competitors for the outright lead in its class. However, it does come appealingly close to the sharp end and to the sky-high standards set by rivals such as the Audi A3 Sportback, Skoda Octavia and VW Golf. **BO**

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Designed by Finn Magee, this innovative 2D clock is designed to look and function like a 3D bedside alarm clock. The fully functional clockface is fit perfectly into a canvas covered in a thin veneer that lets the clock's LEDs shine through, displaying the hours in military time. Comes with a 3-metre cord for you to plug in almost anywhere.

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# Lithuania's enchanting seaside

*The Lithuanian seaside has been celebrated for centuries as an ideal getaway. We invite you to enjoy our pristine nature and excellent cuisine as well as our genuine hospitality and vibrant city life.*

## ▼ Klaipėda

Klaipėda has a colourful history that goes back to the days of the German knights. Its glorious and regal past as the capital of the Prussian Kingdom is evident in the city's architecture. As the third largest city in Lithuania, Klaipėda is home to the country's busiest harbour and hosts numerous cultural events, including an annual jazz festival and sea festival, both of which are worth attending.

① [www.klaipedainfo.lt](http://www.klaipedainfo.lt)

## ▼ Curonian Spit

According to legend, a giantess created the drifting sand-dune formation known as the Curonian Spit (*Kuršių nerija*), which is otherwise known as the "Lithuanian Sahara". A national park and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Curonian Spit offers unspoiled natural beauty and breathtaking views of gigantic sand dunes along with picturesque fishing villages and pine-scented air all year long, making for an idyllic holiday destination.

① [www.visitneringa.com](http://www.visitneringa.com)



## ▲ Palanga

The lively seaside resort of Palanga is home to the biggest amber museum in the Baltics. Housed in an elegant 19<sup>th</sup>-century mansion with botanical gardens, the museum showcases thousands of amber pieces and beautiful jewellery. Palanga is also a year-round health resort, offering natural mineral water treatments and spa procedures along with luxurious and cosy accommodation.

① [www.palangatic.lt](http://www.palangatic.lt)



## ◀ Friedrich's Arcade

Start with a morning coffee and fresh pastries at the *Coffee & Liquor House*. Continue with lunch at *Friedrich's Pizzeria*, which is famous for its tasty Italian pizzas, or at *Friedrich's Tavern* for authentic Lithuanian cuisine. If you fancy a juicy steak, then the *Steakhouse* next door will be just the right place to visit, while seafood fans can head over to *Friedrich's Restaurant*. Enjoy exceptional wine and gourmet snacks at *Friedrich's Wine Cellar*, and stay at the luxurious and modern *Friedrich's Guest House*.

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① [www.nationalgolf.lt](http://www.nationalgolf.lt)



## ► Vanagupe

The 5-star *Hotel Vanagupe* invites you to relax and work at the seaside resort of Palanga. Nearly 100 luxurious rooms, along with a spacious and modern conference centre and fine dining opportunities, will ensure great comfort. You may also choose from over 90 procedures that include spa rituals, classical and oriental massages, and face and body treatments. For those who enjoy swimming and other water pleasures, *Hotel Vanagupe* houses two spa zones with indoor pools, saunas and an outdoor pool.

① [www.vanagupe.lt](http://www.vanagupe.lt)



## Palanga Airport

The Lithuanian seaside at Palanga, Klaipėda and the Curonian Spit is well-served by the small and modern Palanga Airport, which is very convenient to use and handles flights to several European cities.

Direct flights from Riga to Palanga are operated by *airBaltic*.

① [www.palanga-airport.lt](http://www.palanga-airport.lt)

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## Growing your business in the Baltic Sea region

**The Turku School of Economics at the University of Turku is offering a new programme for business managers of small and medium-sized companies.**

**T**he new Business Development Programme (BDPro) – established by the University of Turku (Finland), in association with the Stockholm School of Economics (Saint Petersburg branch), the University of Latvia, the Saint Petersburg State University of Economics, the University of Tartu (Estonia) and Pskov State University (Russia) – aims to develop future leaders who can add value to their companies through a modern business approach and international networks. It is a six-month programme focusing on promoting cross-border activity and developing new business opportunities and networks around and between northwest Russia, the Baltic countries and Scandinavia.

The participants will go through five interlinked four-day modules located in Finland, Russia, Latvia and Estonia and organised by the leading universities and business schools of the region. BDPro offers wide and unique access to the most interesting insights from both top-class academics and experienced business practitioners from several countries around the Baltic Sea region.

Professor of Entrepreneurship and Business Antti Paasio explains that the University of Turku saw a need in the market to organise a programme where business managers from around the Baltic Sea region would be put together in order to learn from each other and learn from the different business cultures around the region. The practice-oriented target is to develop participants' already existing business ideas or create new ones while participating in this innovative programme.

No such programme has been put in place to date. This is a unique idea to combine the state of the art know-how of several universities into one programme that takes place in several countries. The content of the programme includes themes that are considered

crucial for businesses when aiming for growth and acquiring new ideas and possibilities.

The modules will reflect the specialisations of each university, including topics such as Value-Based Leadership, Growth and Success, Change and Innovation and Global-Baltic Business Environment. In each module the participants will also have a closer look at some of the most interesting international companies in the region during company visits. A combination of experienced speakers from Finland, Russia, Estonia, Latvia and France has been chosen to deliver up-to-date business content. In addition to improving their business skills during the programme,

**THIS IS A UNIQUE IDEA TO COMBINE THE STATE OF THE ART KNOW-HOW OF SEVERAL UNIVERSITIES INTO ONE PROGRAMME THAT TAKES PLACE IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES**

participants will also be able to improve personal skills and competences such as cross-cultural communication, leadership and teamwork skills. Participants will be able to expand their networks outside of their home countries while learning from other business cultures and institutional differences.

The programme is targeted to business managers of small and medium-sized companies from and outside of the Baltic Sea region. The more international the team of participants, the better the learning impact of the programme.

The first module will be launched in September of 2014. The application deadline is June 15, while the early bird and corporate discount application deadline is May 15. **BO**



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# Small moments in big city life

**The KATE salon in Riga is proud to present a new fusion collection by *nendo* of Japan, in partnership with *BoConcept* of Denmark. The stylish collection's new functions and visual effects produce more than a few little surprises and put a smile on your face, thanks to the skilful fusion of Japanese aesthetics and Danish functionality.**

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## Origami

It all started when *nendo* founder Oki Sato got the idea to design objects based on *origami*, the traditional Japanese art of folding two-dimensional sheets of paper into three-dimensional objects. Sato further developed the concept by mixing two and three dimensions into a form that is clearly reflected in all the designs of the fusion collection.

The new fusion collection includes a sofa, chair, footstool, coffee table, wall

system, rugs, cups, plates, trays, cushions, storage boxes, wall clocks, candleholders and bird sculptures.

## Japanese and Danish design

The Japanese and Danish design cultures have enjoyed worldwide appeal for years, sharing simplicity and authenticity in their approach. Already at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Danish artists and architects were among the first in the Western world to embrace Japanese art and craftsmanship,

creating an independent form of Danish expression based on functionality. This tradition has been kept to the present day. Now, just as Danish architects found inspiration in Japanese design more than a century ago, *BoConcept* has established a cooperative design venture with *nendo*, one of Japan's most prolific contemporary design studios.

With the Japanese influence in interior design trends stronger than ever, *nendo*'s designs fulfil *BoConcept*'s ambition of providing modern, functional, yet beautiful pieces of design to urban-minded customers around the world. Claus Ditlev, the collection director at *BoConcept*, explains:

"The *nendo* look is pure and authentic, providing something extra special with a minimal touch. A little twist that catches the eye and creates a small moment. This is something that we feel is of value to our customers and just right for the time we are living in."

Oki Sato, the founder of *nendo*, adds that he enjoys working with the Danish company, with which he shares a similar approach to design.

"We have a great deal in common, especially in the way that we work with materials, along with a love for natural products like wood and leather. We try not to work on the materials too much and to be as honest and true to them as possible." **BO**

## nendo

Founded in Tokyo by Oki Sato in 2002. Just three years later, a *nendo* office was opened in Milan. The name *nendo* is Japanese for 'modelling clay' and reflects the studio's playful yet rational approach. The *nendo* philosophy is to transform people's interaction with everyday objects by creating 'small moments' in everyday life.

## Oki Sato

Founded *nendo* in Tokyo at the age of 24 in 2002. Ten years later, in 2012, he was proclaimed Designer of the Year by *Wallpaper* magazine and received the Elle Deco International Design Award.



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# Gourmet paradise

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www.1221.lv

It is never boring in the kitchen of old-town jewel 1221, as new ideas are in the air to mark the arrival of spring. Indeed, this promises to be a revolutionary season for the maverick Riga restaurant.

Head chef Roberts Smilga has decided to go all out by introducing a couple of dishes that are hardly ever seen at first-rate restaurants, at least not in the Latvian capital.

For starters, he's launching a horse steak! Following the initial confusion on whether to turn away in disdain or not, one would be well-advised to hear Roberts out, for after cooking it and trying it himself, he's come to the conclusion that horse meat is a beautiful addition to every carnivore's menu. It's powerful and rich, has a strong meaty taste and is slightly tangy.

Roberts has looked into the

tradition of serving it, which dates back to pre-war times in Latvia, when horse meat was popular and various products, including sausage, were made of it. Roberts believes that the saying "everything new is actually the revival of something old" applies here, pointing out that, in fact, not everyone has forgotten about this particular food.

"Horse meat has long been a delicacy in French cuisine," says the virtuoso chef, adding that the widely held stereotype of horse meat being tough is misguided. "It depends on what parts of the animal one is using and on how the meat is cooked. The meat of any animal can be made tender and soft. It's a matter of skill!" he explains.

The chef is currently experimenting with side orders and garnishes for this unusual dish, and intuition tells him that these

**PIGEON** HAS A STRONG TASTE AND SO DO THE CHERRIES WITH WHICH IT IS SERVED

should come from the habitat of the animal, perhaps even from its diet.

"I'm thinking about greens – a nice mix of green salad, something from the meadow that a horse would eat, or maybe a berry vinaigrette."

The second unusual addition to the menu will be another "oldie but goldie" – braised beef tail. Roberts describes it as "a hearty dish of long standing." He will most likely be serving it in a stew and expresses a slight regret that neither 1221 nor most other restaurants in Riga have given it a try before.

"When I was visiting restaurants in Moscow, I tried various wonderful dishes with all kinds of wrongfully belittled animal offal. They're not worried about trying new things!" says Roberts. "Here we regularly use liver but tend to scorn kidneys, hearts and udders. We shouldn't!" he laughs.

Along with the aforementioned provocative newcomers, pigeon is returning to the menu at 1221, but this time Roberts has played around more with its flavours:

"Pigeon has a strong taste and so do the cherries with which it is served. Therefore, I'm adding some mozzarella to 'put out the fire', so to speak!" Well, the spring season at 1221 is going to provoke, and the more daring will certainly be rewarded with some memorable culinary experiences. **BO**



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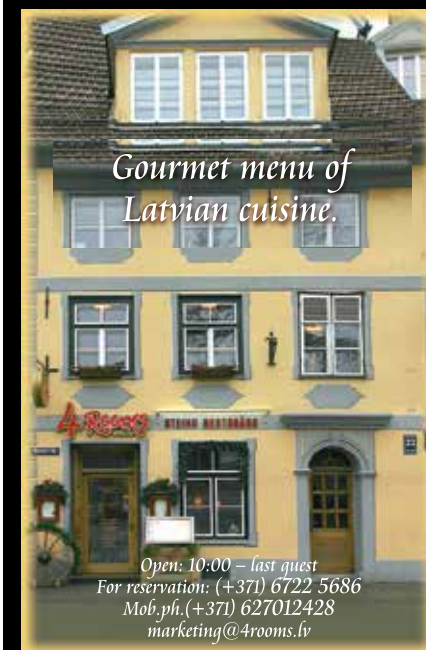
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## FOOD & DRINK

## Restaurants, bars and cafés

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### Art & Shok, Riga Italian food with a little bit of art

Hardly anything shocking, a little bit of art and quite a bit of artichoke is what you'll come across at the newly opened Italian restaurant *Art&Shok* on Lāčplēša iela. It's at the higher end of the scale and is quite authentic, with Italian head chef Massimiliano Montroli representing the fourth generation of his family to work in the same profession. In contrast, the high-tech oven in the kitchen has been lifted hot off one of the latest Italian techno-exhibitions.

The discrete wait staff has been so well-trained that it could just as well be wearing white gloves (which it isn't). The artichoke-covered tables are a bit quirky, but once you've sat down, you'll start feeling cosy and the food will be a delight!

Nothing mind-blowing here – these are classic Italian dishes based on traditional recipes that Montroli is said to have brought from home, having rummaged through the secret drawers of his great-grandfather's cabinet.

However, there is a sufficient variety of dishes to meet the needs of most eaters.

You will, of course, find plenty of pizza, from a 4-euro *Margherita* to a 20-euro *Gigante assortita* featuring mozzarella and Italian scamorza cheese, courgettes, white mushrooms, rucola and – yes, you guessed it – artichokes. The pizza menu contains both simple and refined dishes. Next to the modest *al Tonno* (tuna) are pizzas with smoked salmon or mascarpone with herbs as well as gorgonzola and pear or cream of porcini mushrooms with truffle oil.

There is also a plentitude of risottos and pastas (including the homey *Fettucine Bolognese*) along with a fair choice of fish, meat and grills. Vegetarians would not feel neglected either. Although this spot might not be the most exciting among the newcomers, it certainly is family-friendly.

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**Stargorod, Riga**  
**Year-round Oktoberfest**

Stargorod might be one of the tackiest places in which you have ever set foot. A smiling pig is the talisman and pretty much all of the celebrations that take place at the Czech brewery feature this endearing element. Assuming that you do set your foot in it (and why not? It serves primo Czech beer!), the place is actually quite charming.

Located in a historical building at the edge of the old town, Stargorod is big, loud and enjoyable, making you feel like it is Oktoberfest every day of the year. With the capacity to accommodate some 400 thirsty souls, it is ideal for large feasts and hockey games on the big screen at the centre of the downstairs hall, serving decent beer on its two gigantic floors.

The establishment takes things pretty far where over-the-top visual effects are concerned – you'll find a

children's-style painted history of Riga all over the walls on the second floor. This décor blends humorously with the enormously long tables, conjuring up associations of ancient medieval lords gulping down endless cups of beer and wine and chomping on succulent pieces of pork.

In fact, this would be just the right venue for practically anyone on one occasion or another. It's fancy but accommodating, and you'll definitely find enough space to comfortably seat your whole extended family at your annual reunion dinner. You'll also be able to laugh loudly and won't have to worry about the dress code. Plus, there's always live music and dancing from Thursday to Saturday.

Among other things, you can get beer snacks served to you straight up, including garlicky rye croutons and traditional Czech pretzels. Stargorod also offers typical Latvian fare, such

as pickled herring with cottage cheese and chives, sauerkraut soup with pearl barley and rye-bread parfait for dessert. However, the main emphasis is on meat. There's skewered pork, beef and chicken along with the chef's special – pork knee – and various Czech-style pork dishes.

Oh, and did I mention that they brew their own beer downstairs? Every day, the hosts offer a brewery tour, revealing some of their beer-making magic. They're serious about their beer and this must also be one of the rare places to offer a loyalty program for beer lovers. Ten litres and you're a member; 200 litres and you're an honorary cup holder; 5,000 litres and a cast of your hand will be exhibited in the Beer Alley of Fame. Give it a go?

Address: Republikas laukums 1  
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## IN BRIEF

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2/ Fly to the Bulgarian coastal resort of Burgas

3/ New route to Varna, a legendary summer capital

4/ Long-awaited summer comeback

5/ Freeze that price with a new payment option

1/ The exciting capital of Romania beckons, thanks to a new route to Bucharest

Bucharest is a city on a grand scale and feels every inch a capital. Discover its wide boulevards and imposing architecture. It even has its own Arc de Triomphe, with an interior staircase that allows visitors to climb to the top for a panoramic view of the city. Visit Calea Victoriei, the oldest and most charming street in Bucharest. It's a perfect place to stroll past some major landmarks, including the Cantacuzino Palace, Revolution Square and National History Museum. The national opera always provides a memorable experience and Bucharest's jazz scene is one of the best in Eastern Europe. Visit Bucharest for an unforgettable and classy vacation!

Beginning in June, *airBaltic* will fly from Riga to Bucharest four times a week: on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Flights available starting from EUR 89\*.

2/ Fly to the Bulgarian coastal resort of Burgas

It's time to relax and get some sunshine in Burgas! This major seaport is a place where people come to enjoy the sun, sand and sea. Like the other Black Sea towns, Burgas has a subtropical climate with long and warm summers. Children will love a visit to the *State Puppet Theatre* or the *Aquapark* at the *Sunny Beach* sea resort. If you are looking for an unusual museum, then the *Salt Museum* at Pomorie will tell you everything that you ever needed to know about the ubiquitous white seasoning that sits on every dinner table.

Beginning in May, flights from Riga to Burgas will operate two times a week, on Thursdays and Sundays, in co-operation with *Tez Tour*. Ticket prices will start from EUR 99\*.



3/ New route to Varna, a legendary summer capital

Varna is often referred to as Bulgaria's "summer capital". It is a cosmopolitan city with a fun and creative atmosphere, hosting numerous prestigious cultural events. Varna also has the best nightlife in the country, particularly in the summer. Check out the *La Playa* club for the perfect beach-side chill-out, *Bacha* for a sophisticated modern feel or *El Gordo* for underground sounds and hot DJs. Another reason for Varna's popularity is its enviable subtropical climate. Bulgaria's summer capital is waiting for you. Don't forget your sunscreen lotion!

Beginning in May, flights from Riga to Varna will operate two times a week on Tuesdays and Fridays, in co-operation with *Tez Tour*. Ticket prices will start from EUR 99\*.



4/ Long-awaited summer comeback

Stunning beaches, fun party places, diverse landscapes and great spots for summer sports enthusiasts and shoppers – all can be found at the destinations offered by *airBaltic* this summer, including Larnaca, Malta, Rijeka, Olbia and Athens. The best of our summer schedule is on sale now, with additional flights added this year to the most popular cities. In addition, meet our brand new summer destinations, such as Palma de Mallorca, Gothenburg and Aberdeen.

The best possible offer for your perfect summer vacation is now online at [www.airbaltic.com](http://www.airbaltic.com), at prices starting from EUR 49.

5/ Freeze that price with a new payment option

You have found the perfect offer on *airBaltic.com* but are not yet sure of your friends' plans for that weekend? We have a solution! *Freeze My Price* lets you book your flight, but postpone payment for up to 48 hours. A handy option for those who want a little more time to find a matching hotel deal, learn a bit more about their destination, or simply finalize their travel plans with friends and family.

Simply select the *Freeze my price* option when booking your flight on *airBaltic.com*.

To secure your price, pay only EUR 8.99 if using an *airBaltic* Payment Card or EUR 14.98 if using other means of payment. To pay for your flight within the 48-hour period, enter the *Manage my booking* section.





Ruslans Šabanovs,  
airBaltic pilot

TEXT BY AGRA LIEGE  
PHOTOS BY GATIS GIERTS, F64

## Dancing in the clouds

**Ruslans Šabanovs is an airBaltic pilot with quite a hobby. Ever since he started practicing for the "first waltz" of his wedding day, he's been smitten with dancing.**

**T**hat's no surprise, since his wife Jelena is an accomplished ballroom dancer and dancing instructor. Both have found enjoyment in each other's professional activities. Jelena loves flying and has even been at the controls of a small airplane. Now she and Ruslans are organising a large-scale annual dance competition – the *Magic Dance Festival*. The link is perhaps less unexpected than it might seem, for it takes two to tango as well as to fly a commercial aircraft.

### Tell us the story of how you both met.

Actually, we had been "just friends" for quite some time. I got into an accident with serious injuries and had to undergo reconstructive surgery. In the beginning I didn't look so great. When my friends were visiting, I could see it in their faces, this "Oh my god!" expression. But when Lena saw me, she just smiled! She didn't show any sign of feeling awkward and kept returning to visit me. We talked a lot and grew really close. She helped me and I also helped her. Lena had just parted ways with her long-standing dance partner. She already had some job offers for dancing in the USA and Canada, but said that she wasn't so keen on going. I asked her to stay with me, and she did! Although we didn't have a "butterflies in your stomach" beginning, our relationship was built on something much stronger. A year later, I proposed and Lena said yes.

### With the condition that you learn a dance for your wedding?

(Laughs.) You could say so. Since Lena has worked all over the world (among her accomplishments are winning the Australian Dance Championship and becoming a world finalist), she's become friends with many of the world's leading dancers. Quite a few of them came for our wedding, which was planned for September of 2010. In June, I found out that my initial training at airBaltic would start with simulator sessions in Amsterdam the following month, and would finish only after my wedding. I practiced my dance steps in between the flight simulator sessions, which lasted until September. As other pilots sat and chatted or read magazines, I was either watching the dancing videos that Lena was sending me or practicing the steps in front of her over Skype.

### Did you manage to perfect your technique?

I don't know about that, but I was lucky to make it to my wedding on time. I almost missed the plane! The wedding was beautiful, only I had to leave again straight after. We got married on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September, but my final flight simulation session was on the 6<sup>th</sup>. My examiner laughed about me and said: "Congratulations, Ruslan, you just had a honeymoon in a simulator!" (Laughs.)



### So you kept on dancing after your wedding?

I did, but I didn't want to do it on my own. I mean, I didn't want to be the only pupil. Several other pilots also expressed an interest in learning to dance, so Lena started

organising classes for all of us together, and thus the *airBaltic* Dance Club was born. Now we have around six couples who come regularly, as it is quite challenging to work around pilots' schedules and arrange the times, but we try our best. Some just come once in a while, and it's not only pilots – people from other departments in *airBaltic* also join us occasionally. Dancing is a lovely and relaxing way to socialise outside of work.

### What it is about dancing that's got you so involved with it?

I feel like I can no longer imagine my life without it. Dancing has become more than a hobby, it's a lifestyle! I love the different moves and mimicry, and dancing helps me deal with stress. It is also an interesting and emotionally charged type of workout, and it improves one's coordination, which is crucial for me as a pilot. I've grown to see dancing as a universally beneficial activity. I guess that's why I also got involved in the *Magic Dance Festival*, which I am organising together with Lena.

### Tell us a little bit about the festival.

The first festival took place in 2011 under the name *Baltic Rising Stars*. As the tournament quickly progressed into an international event, we chose a new name, *Magic Dance Festival*. This year, it will traditionally take place at Riga's largest exhibition hall in Ķīpsala on May 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. We expect to see over 500 dance couples. That's over 1000 guest from all over the world. Most of the participant countries are represented by their best dance couples,

and so the quality of the dancing at this festival will be very high.

This year, we have decided to fit in even more events. In addition to tournaments in ballroom and Latin-American disciplines, we have arranged an evening show with musicians, singers and dancers performing together. As a bonus, all guests will be able to take part in free dance lessons during the festival.

### So this is quite a big part of your life!

I can help Lena out because I've had previous experience in project management. I'm happy to do so, as I strongly support spreading the word on dance. But ultimately, I've got my own job as a pilot and future plans related to it.

### What are your plans?

I am currently acquiring a Master's of Science in Air Transport Safety and Accident Investigation at Cranfield University in the United Kingdom. This is something that mostly former pilots choose to do, because it involves the practical aspects of aviation. Although I love to fly, I also want to do something that complements flying. I see an opportunity for myself to grow and develop in this branch of aviation. Of course, I also want to keep flying for as long as possible!

Lena and I sometimes fly together in our free time as well. She has performed take-offs and landings of small planes and has been instructed by a good friend of ours, Igors Gusts, who I believe is one of the best instructors at *airBaltic*. She absolutely loves it! BO

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## New spring and summer menu on board

### Business Class

With the advent of the spring season, we are delighted to offer a new Business Class spring and summer menu. Our experienced chef has created light and seasonal meals prepared from fresh and local products. His juicy and mouth-watering meat and fish dishes will be appreciated by real gourmards, as will the splendid desserts made with a variety of fruits and berries. These can be enjoyed with premium coffee or drinks from our wine and beverage selection.

### Economy Class

A special seasonal menu has also been prepared for our Economy Class passengers, who can choose from two different hot meals, freshly made sandwiches, a chicken salad, a tortilla and a variety of snacks and drinks.

### Order your meal before the flight

Make your flight experience even more exciting! Order a gourmet meal while booking your flight ticket or any time later, up to 24 hours before departure, under the Manage my booking section at [www.airbaltic.com](http://www.airbaltic.com).



## Customized meal pre-order system



Baltic-style Fish Plate



Happiness Breakfast



Provence Salad

Passengers who want to create their own meal set or who have special dietary requirements can try out our customized in-flight meal pre-order system. It allows passengers to choose from more than 70 pre-order meal options and place them onto their virtual tray.

Among the dishes on offer is the Baltic-style fish plate, honey-glazed duck breast, and dietary dishes like salmon with rice and herbs, as well as special meals for kids such as chicken nuggets in the sky. These can be selected together with one of nine salads and nine types of dessert, along with a drink of your choice.

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### → Riga

Route nr	Departs		Arrives		Departs		Arrives		Duration
BT001	Daugavpils	03:45	Jekabpils	04:55	Jekabpils	05:00	Riga	07:10	03:25
BT002	Tartu	03:55	Valmiera	05:45	Valmiera	05:50	Riga	07:30	03:35
BT003	Siauliai	05:00	Jelgava	06:25	Jelgava	06:30	Riga	07:20	02:20

### Riga →

Route nr	Departs		Arrives		Departs		Arrives		Duration
BT001	Riga	23:30	Jekabpils	01:40	Jekabpils	01:45	Daugavpils	02:55	03:25
BT002	Riga	23:20	Valmiera	01:00	Valmiera	01:05	Tartu	02:55	03:35
BT003	Riga	23:40	Jelgava	00:30	Jelgava	00:35	Siauliai	02:00	02:20

**airBalticBus**





BaltcMiles jointly with many existing loyalty programs and partners is unveiling a new and innovative global loyalty program PINs.

All BaltcMiles members will be automatically enrolled in the new PINs program. Instead of BaltcMiles Points now you can collect PINs with the same value (1 Point = 1 PINs). Membership number, account balance, personal information, login data and tier levels (if applicable) all remain the same. BaltcMiles cards will still be accepted for the next few months. If you haven't received your PINs card in the mail, apply for your PINs card at [pinsforme.com](http://pinsforme.com)

The Nordea BaltcMiles MasterCard is changing to the PINs credit card. Current BaltcMiles credit cards users will receive the PINs credit cards bearing a new design when their current credit cards expire.

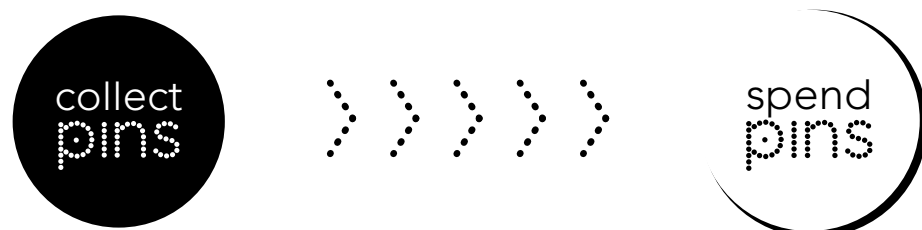
### What is new?

The PINs program is based on a new and different concept where both everyday shoppers and frequent flyers can benefit from an integrated loyalty program. The program offers a wide range of retailers, online shops, hotel and car rental chains where you can collect PINs and spend them on a broad range products and experiences via the PINs Online Reward shop at [pinsforme.com](http://pinsforme.com). PINs also introduces Friends & Family accounts so you can collect PINs together with other program members and get your desired rewards faster.

### New look for airBaltic PINs cards



### How does it work?



The loyalty currency for the program is PINs, which you can collect by traveling, staying in hotels, renting cars, shopping, eating out and much more. PINs can also be collected at a wide range of international well-known online shops.

Spend PINs on flights, cinema & bus tickets, gift cards, donations, music downloads or online shopping, with a wide range of products using a combination of PINs + money.

Join at [pinsforme.com](http://pinsforme.com) or ask a flight attendant for your card!

## Where to collect pins

You can collect PINs at over 700 local, global and online partners worldwide.

1

LOCAL



2

GLOBAL



3

ONLINE

Collect PINs for shopping online at more than 400 leading online retail brands through the PINs e-Shop!





## Easy to collect

You can collect PINS at over 700 local, global and online partners worldwide.  
New in April



### Euronics stores in Lithuania

Euronics is one of the largest consumer electronics and domestic appliances retailers in Europe, with stores in 31 countries. It is a reliable brand which offers its customers the latest technology and products from the leading producers with the highest level of service, competitive prices and the best expertise. Euronics has been active in the Lithuanian markets since 2010 and currently is represented by eight stores.



### Northway Medical Centers

Northway is one of the largest private medical centers in Lithuania providing comprehensive medical, rehabilitation and wellness services. Northway operates two centers in Lithuania and the London-based clinic Baltic Medical Centre.



### HEROS stores

HEROS are fashion multibrand stores located in Vilnius and Klaipeda where you can find handbags, shoes, accessories and everything for traveling. Their core values are style, quality and high customer service standards. In our shops you may find exceptional products - from elegance of the Furla up to the extravagance of the Braccialini.



### Sixt leasing

Offer for corporate customers – lease a brand new Nissan Qashqai 4X4 diesel in full service leasing and collect lots of PINS. Customer receives 1500 PINS for each signed agreement + 2 PINS for each EUR 3 in a monthly invoice. Offer is valid till June 30th, 2014. Find out more at [www.sixt.lv](http://www.sixt.lv), [www.sixt.lt](http://www.sixt.lt) and [www.sixt.ee](http://www.sixt.ee)



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### Polaris Book Stores

Polaris book stores focus on Russian language books. The stores carry tens of thousands of titles, including the latest novels, sci-fi, detective stories, romance novels, non-fiction titles such as history, memoirs and biographies, handbooks, children's books, art books and gift editions, cookbooks and business literature.



### Senior Baltic care

Dzintara Melodija is the first Senior Baltic residence in Latvia, providing European quality senior care. Located in a new, custom-built building, it features everything necessary to provide a comfortable living space for seniors requiring assistance, such as well-equipped bathrooms, wide lobbies and comfortable furniture.



## Member story



Meet Ieva Putriņa, an active programme member who tells us about her experience with PINS.

### Tell us briefly about yourself.

I live in Riga and work for an international company with manufacturing facilities and offices all over the world. This means that I travel quite frequently. In my spare time I

choose an active way of life, which includes skiing in the winter, biking and taking part in adventure competitions in the warmer seasons, as well as travelling for leisure, playing squash and running throughout the year.

### How long have you been a program member?

I joined the program in 2009 but started to use the card actively in 2010.

### How do you feel about BalticMiles joining PINS?

I really like your new look and feel. I wish you success and look forward to receiving more great offers.

### Where do you usually collect PINS?

At the Riga restaurants *Vairāk Saules* and *Tikai karotes*, when shopping at *Burusports*, playing squash in the *Joker Club*, tanning in *Blue Box* studios, using my *Nordea PINS* credit card and, of course, on flights. Last year, I took part in your Facebook Burn the Miles competition, where I submitted

a story on how to stay in shape and participated in your Endomondo challenge. Even though I didn't win any PINS, it was a lot of fun. I'd be happy to participate in similar promotions.

### How do you spend your PINS?

I use them for flights when I go on holidays or when I visit friends who live abroad. Now I am collecting PINS for my dream flight to Italy at the end of the summer. I can't wait to experience the incredible heritage of the country's history and culture, to enjoy traditional Italian cuisine and live a bit of *la dolce vita*.

### What do you like the most about our program?

It's simple and you can collect PINS doing what you have always done in a lot of places, not only here in Latvia, but all over the world.

### What would make the program better?

Expanding it with more and more partners.

## Did you know you can collect PINS for shopping online?



You can choose from hundreds of leading online retail brands and collect up to 12 PINS for each euro spent through the PINS e-Shop.

The broad selection of online stores covers a variety of product categories, so you can get PINS for just about all your daily purchases. Look great with clothing from your favourite brands, such as **Gap** or **UGG Boots**, and exquisite jewellery from **Astley Clarke** and pick the best health and beauty offers from **StrawberryNET.com** or **FragranceX.com**. Decorate your home in style with **Cath Kidston** and **Emma Bridgewater**. Surprise your kids with new toys from **Hamley's** or **The Children's Place** and save the hassle — and money — by shopping for baby goods online at **Kiddisave**. And, if you're looking for that special gift, make sure you see what department stores like **Macy's** and **Harrods** or gift shops like **Beauty Expert** have to offer.

Our retail partners at **Focalprice.com** and **ELV** have all the latest gadgets, electronics. Visit **Apple**, **Microsoft**, **Garmin** and **CyberLink** for all your computer and software needs. You can also collect PINS when you travel by booking your next flight or hotel room at **Hotels.com** and **Expedia** and renting a car anywhere in the world with **CarRentals**. Or, if you prefer staying

at home, let the hours pass with a great book, magazine, movie or music from **Alibris**, **ebooks.com** and **BBC Shop**. You can get all you need for your hobbies, sports and recreation at **Golfonline**, **JD Sports** and **Backcountry**, treat yourself to the best gourmet food at **Hotel Chocolat** or **Twinnings Teashop** and check out the wide range of entertainment options at **Viagogo**. You can even collect PINS for office supplies at **CalendarClub** and **Filofax** and pet goods at **EntirelyPets!**

New merchants are added all the time, so you are sure to find something you like. Merchants may vary based on your country of residence. And make sure you do not miss the special offers which allow you to receive 2x or even 3x PINS for your online purchases at selected retailers.

To start collecting PINS, sign in to your account at [www.pinsforme.com](http://www.pinsforme.com), select **PINS e-Shop** and click "Start shopping" and choose from your favourite online stores. PINS will be automatically credited to your account for all purchases you make.



Great to **spend**

Choose from more than 3000 rewards at pinsforme.com and more than 400 000 digital music downloads at the PINS Music Shop. **In April we recommend:**



Spring is here at last! Not only does this call for one less layer of clothing and for your most stylish sunglasses to be dug out of the dresser drawer, it also means that there are a lot more ways to spend your time outdoors – be it a lazy weekend in the garden or a session of hefty sports activity, now that exercise can officially move back outside.

It is equally important that you feel refreshed and confident with your looks in this youthful, joyous and bright season. Fortunately, you can conveniently meet many of your seasonal needs at the PINS Online Rewards shop. Finding a way to reward yourself using PINS will most certainly be exciting, and here are some suggestions on how to best use them this spring.



Fancy a barbecue with your friends and family during the first warm weekend? A portable cooker is convenient to no end. Consider the *LANDMANN Piccolino Portable Charcoal BBQ* for 13,333 PINS from PINS Online Rewards.

We have also thought about the evening chill. Get a *Solway CIRCUS Lamb's Wool Blanket* for 29,616 PINS and stay outside for longer, while still feeling warm and comfortable.

What really has “spring” written all over it is a hammock hung up in a tree in the garden. Get the colourful *LA SIESTA Double Weatherproof Hammock* for 18,501 PINS.

If you are active in your free time, then a *Suunto M2 pulsometer* for 21,980 PINS might come in handy. Following a fully monitored treadmill season, you’re bound to benefit from keeping your outdoor runs in check as well.

If you give priority to matching your looks with the high-spirited season, then don’t hesitate to visit the *Cosmetics & Makeup* section in PINS Online Rewards. There are a plenty of great products to choose from. Perhaps you’d like to start with a gift card to yourself from the *KOLONNA* beauty salon. Get the EUR 10 card for only 1,998 PINS and let the spring begin!



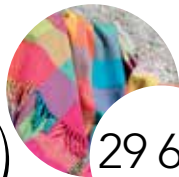
1 998 pins



18 501 pins



21 980 pins



29 616 pins

**pinsforme.com**  
You can use a combination of PINS + money.

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

Tips for spending



flights



gifts



music

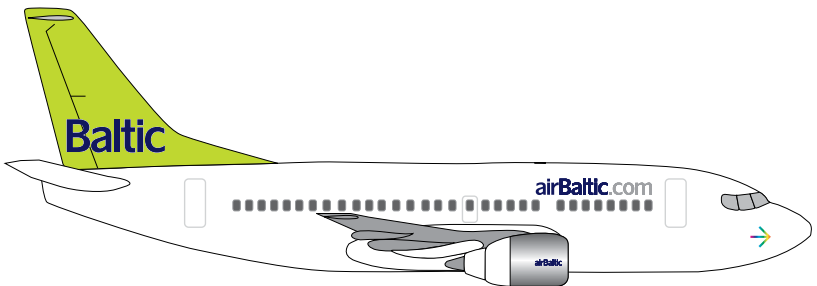


shopping



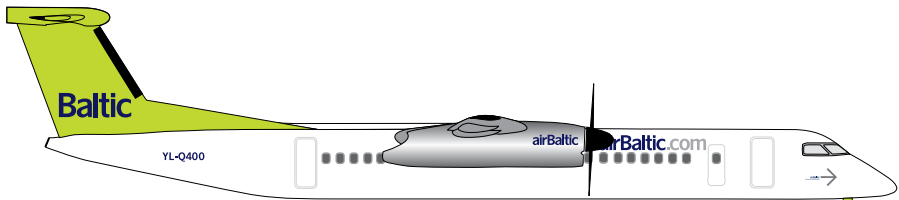
Boeing 737–300

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



Boeing 737–500

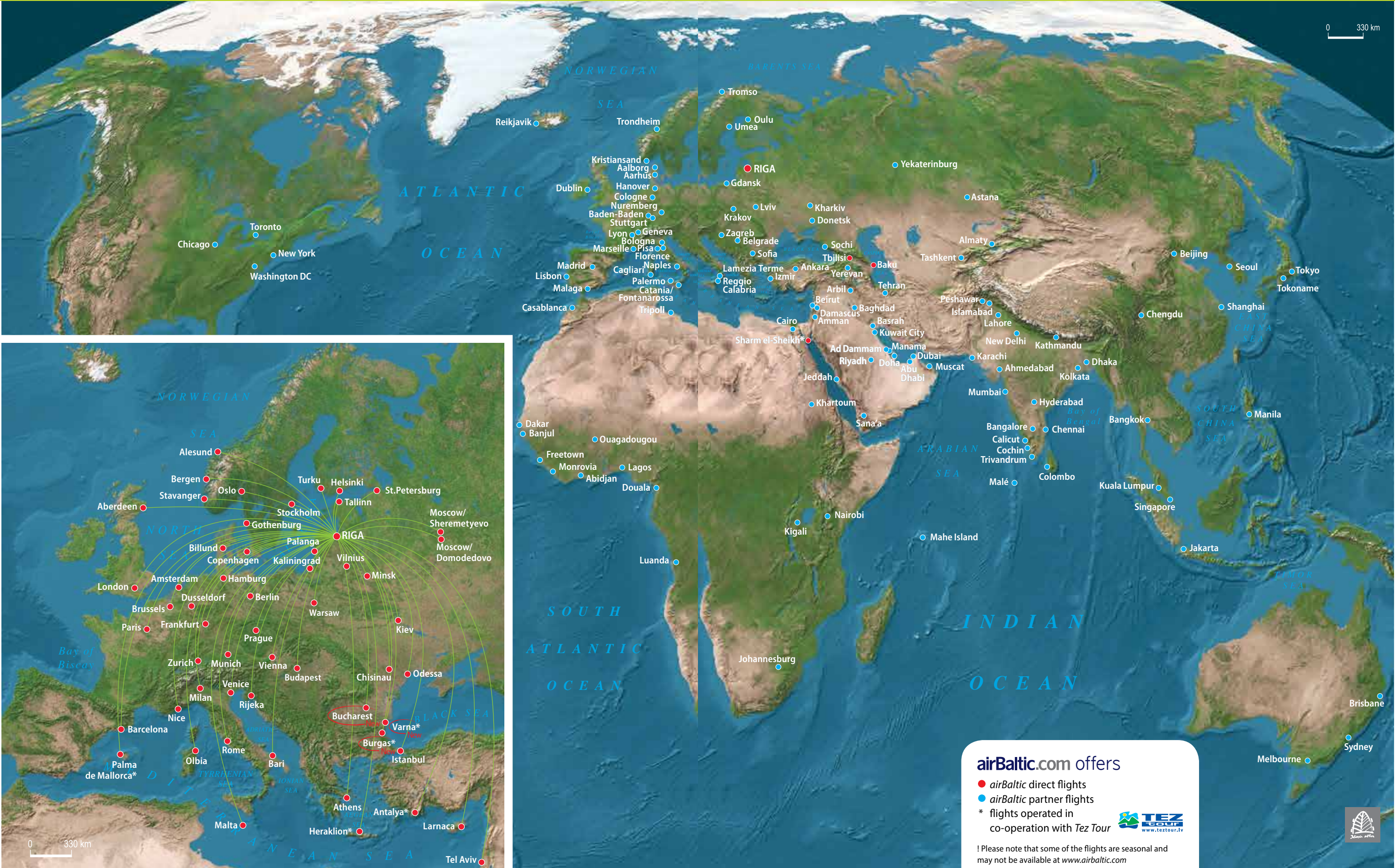
Number of seats	120
Max take-off weight	58 metric tons
Max payload	13.5 metric tons
Length	29.79 m
Wing span	28.9 m
Cruising speed	800 km/h
Commercial range	3500 km
Fuel consumption	3000 l/h
Engine	CFM56–3



Q400 NextGen  
Bombardier

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







Flights from Riga					Flights to Riga				
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival
<b>VILNIUS</b>					<b>VILNIUS</b>				
BT 341	RIX	VNO	1234567	09:55 10:45	BT 350	VNO	RIX	1234567	07:40 08:30
BT 343	RIX	VNO	1234567	13:15 14:05	BT 342	VNO	RIX	1234567	11:15 12:05
BT 345	RIX	VNO	1234567	16:30 17:20	BT 344	VNO	RIX	1234567	14:35 15:25
BT 347	RIX	VNO	1234567	19:35 20:25	BT 346	VNO	RIX	1234567	17:50 18:40
BT 349	RIX	VNO	1234567	23:05 23:55	BT 348	VNO	RIX	1234567	21:05 21:55
<b>PALANGA</b>					<b>PALANGA</b>				
BT 033	RIX	PLQ	123-5-7	23:30 00:15+1	BT 032	PLQ	RIX	1234-6-	07:00 07:45
<b>TALLINN</b>					<b>TALLINN</b>				
BT 311	RIX	TLL	1234567	09:55 10:45	BT 362	TLL	RIX	1234567	07:40 08:30
BT 313	RIX	TLL	1234567	13:15 14:05	BT 312	TLL	RIX	1234567	11:15 12:05
BT 315	RIX	TLL	1234567	16:30 17:20	BT 314	TLL	RIX	1234567	14:35 15:25
BT 317	RIX	TLL	1234567	20:05 20:55	BT 316	TLL	RIX	1234567	17:50 18:40
BT 361	RIX	TLL	1234567	22:55 23:45	BT 318	TLL	RIX	1234567	21:30 22:20
<b>STOCKHOLM Arlanda</b>					<b>STOCKHOLM Arlanda</b>				
BT 101	RIX	ARN	1234567	09:15 09:30	BT 104	ARN	RIX	1234567	06:15 08:30
BT 105	RIX	ARN	1234567	14:25 14:40	BT 102	ARN	RIX	1234567	10:05 12:20
BT 109	RIX	ARN	1234567	19:10 19:25	BT 106	ARN	RIX	1234567	15:10 17:25
BT 103	RIX	ARN	1234567	22:55 23:10	BT 110	ARN	RIX	1234567	19:55 22:10
<b>GOTHENBURG Landvetter</b>					<b>GOTHENBURG Landvetter</b>				
BT 121 <sup>As of 14-april</sup>	RIX	GOT	12-4-6-	22:55 23:40	BT 122 <sup>As of 15-april</sup>	GOT	RIX	-23-5-7	06:00 08:35
<b>COPENHAGEN</b>					<b>COPENHAGEN</b>				
BT 133	RIX	CPH	1234----	06:45 07:25	BT 142	CPH	RIX	--3-567	06:00 08:35
BT 131	RIX	CPH	1234567	09:40 10:20	BT 134	CPH	RIX	1234----	08:05 10:40
BT 139	RIX	CPH	1234567	18:10 18:50	BT 132	CPH	RIX	1234567	12:35 15:10
BT 141	RIX	CPH	-2-456-	22:55 23:35	BT 140	CPH	RIX	1234567	19:20 21:55
<b>BILLUND</b>					<b>BILLUND</b>				
BT 145	RIX	BLL	1-34567	22:45 23:45	BT 146	BLL	RIX	12-4567	05:50 08:40
<b>OSLO</b>					<b>OSLO</b>				
BT 151	RIX	OSL	123456-	09:10 10:05	BT 158	OSL	RIX	1234567	05:50 08:40
BT 153	RIX	OSL	1234567	18:00 18:55	BT 152	OSL	RIX	123456-	10:35 13:25
BT 157	RIX	OSL	1234567	22:45 23:40	BT 154	OSL	RIX	1234567	19:25 22:15
<b>BERGEN</b>					<b>BERGEN</b>				
BT 171	RIX	BGO	----4--7	22:45 00:10+1	BT 172	BGO	RIX	1...5--	05:20 08:40
<b>STAVANGER</b>					<b>STAVANGER</b>				
BT 177/179	RIX	SVG	...4567	22:45 00:05+1	BT 178	SVG	RIX	1---567	05:25 08:40
<b>ALESUND</b>					<b>ALESUND</b>				
BT 175	RIX	AES	----5--	09:50 11:15	BT 176	AES	RIX	----5--	11:45 15:00
BT 175	RIX	AES	-----7	12:45 14:10	BT 176	AES	RIX	-----7	14:40 17:55
<b>HELSINKI</b>					<b>HELSINKI</b>				
BT 301	RIX	HEL	1234567	09:40 10:45	BT 326	HEL	RIX	1234567	07:40 08:35
BT 303	RIX	HEL	1234567	12:50 13:55	BT 302	HEL	RIX	1234567	11:15 12:15
BT 305	RIX	HEL	1234567	16:25 17:30	BT 304	HEL	RIX	1234567	14:25 15:25
BT 307	RIX	HEL	1234567	19:45 20:50	BT 306	HEL	RIX	1234567	18:00 19:00
BT 325	RIX	HEL	1234567	22:55 23:55	BT 308	HEL	RIX	1234567	21:20 22:20
<b>TURKU</b>					<b>TURKU</b>				
BT 359	RIX	TKU	-234567	23:15 00:25	BT 360	TKU	RIX	1-34567	07:25 08:30
<b>BERLIN Tegel</b>					<b>BERLIN Tegel</b>				
BT 211	RIX	TXL	12345-7	09:20 10:15	BT 212	TXL	RIX	12345-7	10:45 13:35
BT 217	RIX	TXL	123456-	13:10 14:05	BT 218	TXL	RIX	123456-	14:35 17:25
BT 213	RIX	TXL	1234567	17:55 18:50	BT 214	TXL	RIX	1234567	19:25 22:15
<b>HAMBURG</b>					<b>HAMBURG</b>				
BT 251	RIX	HAM	123456-	09:10 10:15	BT 252	HAM	RIX	123456-	10:45 13:40
BT 253	RIX	HAM	1-3-5-7	17:30 18:35	BT 254	HAM	RIX	1-3-5-7	19:05 22:00
<b>MUNICH</b>					<b>MUNICH</b>				
BT 221	RIX	MUC	123456-	09:20 11:00	BT 222	MUC	RIX	123456	11:35 15:05
BT 223	RIX	MUC	12345-7	16:35 18:15	BT 224	MUC	RIX	12345-7	18:45 22:15
<b>FRANKFURT</b>					<b>FRANKFURT</b>				
BT 243	RIX	FRA	1-3---7	09:30 11:15	BT 244	FRA	RIX	1-3...7	11:45 15:20
BT 245	RIX	FRA	-2-456-	16:15 18:00	BT 246	FRA	RIX	-2-456-	18:35 22:10
<b>DUSSELDORF</b>					<b>DUSSELDORF</b>				
BT 231	RIX	DUS	-2-4-6-	09:45 11:25	BT 232	DUS	RIX	-2-4-6-	11:55 15:25
BT 233	RIX	DUS	1-3-5-7	16:05 17:45	BT 234	DUS	RIX	1-3-5-7	18:15 21:45
<b>VIENNA</b>					<b>VIENNA</b>				
BT 431	RIX	VIE	123456-	09:40 11:05	BT 432	VIE	RIX	123456-	11:40 15:00
BT 433	RIX	VIE	12345-7	16:40 18:05	BT 434	VIE	RIX	12345-7	18:40 22:00
<b>ZURICH</b>					<b>ZURICH</b>				
BT 641	RIX	ZRH	-2--56-	16:10 17:40	BT 642	ZRH	RIX	-2--56-	18:20 21:50
BT 641	RIX	ZRH	1-4--7	09:10 10:40	BT 642	ZRH	RIX	1-4--7	11:40 15:10
<b>MOSCOW Domodedovo</b>					<b>MOSCOW Domodedovo</b>				
BT 418	RIX	DME	12345--	09:30 12:15	BT 417	DME	RIX	1234-67	07:10 08:20
BT 416	RIX	DME	123-567	23:05 02:15+1	BT 419	DME	RIX	12345--	13:00 13:45
<b>MOSCOW Sheremetyevo</b>					<b>MOSCOW Sheremetyevo</b>				
BT 424	RIX	SVO	12345--	05:50 08:30	BT 425	SVO	RIX	12345--	09:20 10:05

Flights from Riga					Flights to Riga				
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival
BT 424	RIX	SVO	-----67	09:20 12:00	BT 425	SVO	RIX	-----67	12:45 13:30
BT 422	RIX	SVO	1234567	17:50 20:30	BT 423	SVO	RIX	1234567	21:15 22:00
ST-PETERSBURG					ST-PETERSBURG				
BT 442	RIX	LED	123456-	09:30 11:50	BT 447	LED	RIX	123-5-7	07:55 08:15
BT 444	RIX	LED	12345-7	18:50 21:10	BT 443	LED	RIX	123456-	12:25 12:45
BT 446	RIX	LED	12-4-67	23:05 01:25+1	BT 445	LED	RIX	12345-7	21:45 22:05
KALININGRAD					KALININGRAD				
BT 428	RIX	KGD	-2-4-67	23:05 23:59	BT 429	KGD	RIX	1-3-5-7	07:30 08:25
MINSK					MINSK				
BT 412	RIX	MSQ	1-34--7	14:10 15:20	BT 413	MSQ	RIX	1-34--7	15:55 17:05
CHISINAU					CHISINAU				
BT 420	RIX	KIV	-2---6-	12:55 15:20	BT 421	KIV	RIX	-2---6-	15:55 18:25
KIEV Borispol					KIEV Borispol				
BT 400	RIX	KBP	1234567	09:25 11:15	BT 407	KBP	RIX	12-4-6-	06:25 08:20
BT 404	RIX	KBP	1234567	16:40 18:30	BT 401	KBP	RIX	1234567	11:45 13:40
BT 406	RIX	KBP	1-3-5-7	23:20 01:10+1	BT 405	KBP	RIX	1234567	20:10 22:05
WARSAW					WARSAW				
BT 463	RIX	WAW	1234567	22:45 23:15	BT 464	WAW	RIX	1234567	06:10 08:35
PRAGUE					PRAGUE				
BT 481	RIX	PRG	1-3----	09:40 10:50	BT 482	PRG	RIX	1-3----	11:15 14:20
BT 481	RIX	PRG	----5-7	12:55 14:05	BT 482	PRG	RIX	----5-7	14:35 17:40
BT 481	RIX	PRG	-2-4----	17:15 18:25	BT 482	PRG	RIX	-2-4----	18:50 21:55
BUDAPEST					BUDAPEST				
BT 491	RIX	BUD	1-3-5-7	13:10 14:35	BT 492	BUD	RIX	1-3-5-7	15:05 18:20
BRUSSELS					BRUSSELS				
BT 601	RIX	BRU	12345--	06:05 08:00	BT 602	BRU	RIX	12345--	08:30 12:15
BT 601	RIX	BRU	-----6-	09:20 11:15	BT 602	BRU	RIX	-----6-	11:55 15:40
BT 603	RIX	BRU	-----7	15:55 17:50	BT 604	BRU	RIX	-----7	18:20 22:05
BT 603	RIX	BRU	12345--	17:30 19:25	BT 604	BRU	RIX	12345--	19:50 23:35
AMSTERDAM					AMSTERDAM				
BT 617	RIX	AMS	1234567	09:10 10:35	BT 618	AMS	RIX	1234567	11:20 14:35
BT 619	RIX	AMS	1234567	16:35 18:00	BT 620	AMS	RIX	1234567	18:45 22:00
LONDON Gatwick					LONDON Gatwick				
BT 651	RIX	LGW	1-3-56-	09:20 10:10	BT 652	LGW	RIX	1-3-56-	10:50 15:35
BT 653	RIX	LGW	12-4--7	15:55 16:45	BT 654	LGW	RIX	12-4--7	17:30 22:15
BT 653	RIX	LGW	-----5--	16:00 16:50	BT 654	LGW	RIX	-----5--	18:10 22:55
ABERDEEN Dyce					ABERDEEN Dyce				
BT 659	RIX	ABZ	1-4----	09:20 10:00	BT 660	ABZ	RIX	1-4----	10:35 15:05
BT 659	RIX	ABZ	--3--7	16:20 17:00	BT 660	ABZ	RIX	--3--7	17:35 22:05
NICE					NICE				
BT 695	RIX	NCE	-2---6-	15:25 17:30	BT 696	NCE	RIX	-2---6-	18:15 22:15
PARIS Charles de Gaulles					PARIS Charles de Gaulles				
BT 691	RIX	CDG	123456-	09:05 11:00	BT 692	CDG	RIX	123456-	11:55 15:40
BT 693	RIX	CDG	12345-7	15:55 17:50	BT 694	CDG	RIX	12345-7	18:35 22:20
ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino					ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino				
BT 631	RIX	FCO	-2---7	09:20 11:25	BT 632	FCO	RIX	-2---7	12:10 16:20
BT 633	RIX	FCO	1-3456-	15:05 17:10	BT 634	FCO	RIX	1-3456-	18:00 22:10
VENICE Marco Polo					VENICE Marco Polo				
BT 627	RIX	VCE	-2-----	09:05 10:45	BT 628	VCE	RIX	-2-----	11:25 15:00
BT 627	RIX	VCE	-----6-	16:15 17:55	BT 628	VCE	RIX	-----6-	18:35 22:10
MILAN Malpensa					MILAN Malpensa				
BT 629	RIX	MXP	-2-4-6-	09:30 11:15	BT 630	MXP	RIX	-2-4-6-	12:00 15:40
BT 629	RIX	MXP	1-3-5-7	16:00 17:45	BT 630	MXP	RIX	1-3-5-7	18:30 22:10
ISTANBUL Sabiha Gokcen					ISTANBUL Sabiha Gokcen				
BT 711	RIX	SAW	-----7	09:30 12:30	BT 712	SAW	RIX	-----7	13:05 16:00
BT 711	RIX	SAW	-2-----	15:35 18:35	BT 712	SAW	RIX	-2-----	19:10 22:05
ATHENS					ATHENS				
BT 611	RIX	ATH	-23-----	10:55 14:15	BT 612	ATH	RIX	-23-----	14:50 18:10
BT 611	RIX	ATH	-----6-	14:40 18:00	BT 612	ATH	RIX	-----6-	18:35 21:55
LARNACA					LARNACA				
BT 657	Until 12 april	RIX	LCA	-----6-	22:45	02:35+1			
BT 657	As of 13 april	RIX	LCA	-2---6-	22:45	02:35+1			
BT 658	Until 13 april	LCA	RIX	-----7	04:30	08:30			
BT 658	As of 14 april	LCA	RIX	--3--7	04:30	08:30			
BARCELONA					BARCELONA				
BT 681	RIX	BCN	-2--56-	09:30 12:15	BT 682	BCN	RIX	-2--56-	12:55 17:35
BT 683	RIX	BCN	1-4--7	14:10 16:55	BT 684	BCN	RIX	1-4--7	17:40 22:20
TBILISI					TBILISI				
BT 722/724	RIX	TBS	-2-5-7	23:05 03:35+1	BT 723/725	TBS	RIX	1-3-6-	05:45 08:20
BAKU					BAKU				
BT 732	RIX	GYP	--3--7	23:05 05:00+1	BT 733	GYP	RIX	1-4----	06:00 08:10
MALTA					MALTA				
BT 739	RIX	MLA	-----7	09:15 11:55	BT 740	MLA	RIX	-----7	12:40 17:20
TEL AVIV					TEL AVIV				
BT 771	RIX	TLV	--3-6-	09:35 13:55	BT 772	TLV	RIX	1-3-6-	17:10 21:40
BT 771	RIX	TLV	1-----	10:40 14:55					



Country/City Ticket offices	Airport Ticket Offices
<b>AUSTRIA</b>	
Vienna airBaltic Germany Hauptstrasse 117, D-10827 Berlin ☎ 0620600830 local calls (EUR 0.17/min) service@airbaltic.de	Airport Schwechat Terminal 2 Airport Ticket Office Celebi Ground Handling ☎ +431 700736394
<b>AZERBAIJAN</b>	
Baku Improtex Travel 16, S. Vurgun Str. Baku AZ1000, Azerbaijan ☎ +994 124989239 info@improtex-travel.com booking@improtex-travel.com	Heydar Aliyev International Airport Airport Ticket Office Silk Way Airlines South Terminal ☎ +994 124972600
<b>BELARUS</b>	
Minsk	Minsk National Airport TransAvia LLC Ticket office
<b>BELGIUM</b>	
Brussels Air Agencies Belgium 153 A Vivoodelaan 1930 Zaventem ☎ +32 (0) 27126427 airbaltic@airagencies.be	Airport Zaventem Departure Hall ☎ +32 (0) 27230667 Airport Ticket Office Aviapartner
<b>Croatia</b>	
Rijeka	Rijeka Airport Airport Ticket Office Zračna Luka Rijeka ☎ +385 51 841 222
<b>CYPRUS</b>	
Larnaca	Larnaca International Airport Airport Ticket Office airBaltic / LGS Handling
<b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b>	
Prague	Vaclav Havel Prague Airport Terminal T2 Airport Ticket Office CEAS ☎ +420 220117540
<b>DENMARK</b>	
Copenhagen	Airport Copenhagen International Terminal 3 Departure Hall Airport Ticket Office SAS
<b>Billund</b>	Billund Airport Departure Hall Airport Ticket Office ☎ +45 76505205
<b>ESTONIA</b>	
Tallinn ☎ 17107 (0.51 EUR/min, local calls only) tallinn@airbaltic.com	Airport Tallinn Main Terminal, Departure Hall Airport Ticket Office airBaltic / Tallinn Airport GH
<b>FINLAND</b>	
Helsinki	Helsinki-Vantaa Airport Terminal 1 Airport Ticket Office Servisair
Lappeenranta	Lappeenranta Airport
Tampere	Airport Tampere-Pirkkala Airport Ticket Office Airpro OY
Turku	Airport Turku Airport Ticket Office Airpro OY
<b>FRANCE</b>	
Paris APG France 66 avenue des Champs Elysees Building E, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor 75008, Paris ☎ +33 153892100 airbaltic@apg.fr	Airport Charles de Gaulles Terminal 2D Airport Ticket Office Swissport Services CDG
Nice	Airport Nice Cote D'azur Terminal 1 Airport Ticket Office Lufthansa Ticket Desk
<b>GEORGIA</b>	
Tbilisi Discovery Travel Ltd/airBaltic GSA 72 Palashvili st. Tbilisi ☎ +995 32 2 900900 airbalticgsa@discovery.ge	Airport Tbilisi Office Discovery Ltd ☎ +995 32 2 900900
<b>GERMANY</b>	
Berlin airBaltic Germany Hauptstrasse 117, D-10827 Berlin ☎ 0900 124 7225 (EUR 0.69/min German landline – mobile calls may be different) service@airbaltic.de	Airport Berlin-Tegel Terminal B Main Terminal Airport Ticket Office GlobeGround Berlin Opposite Gate 4/5
Dusseldorf	Airport Dusseldorf Terminal B Airport Ticket Office AHS ☎ +49 (0) 2114216275
Frankfurt	Airport Frankfurt Airport Ticket Office Havas Germany GmbH Terminal 2, Hall E, Desk 939

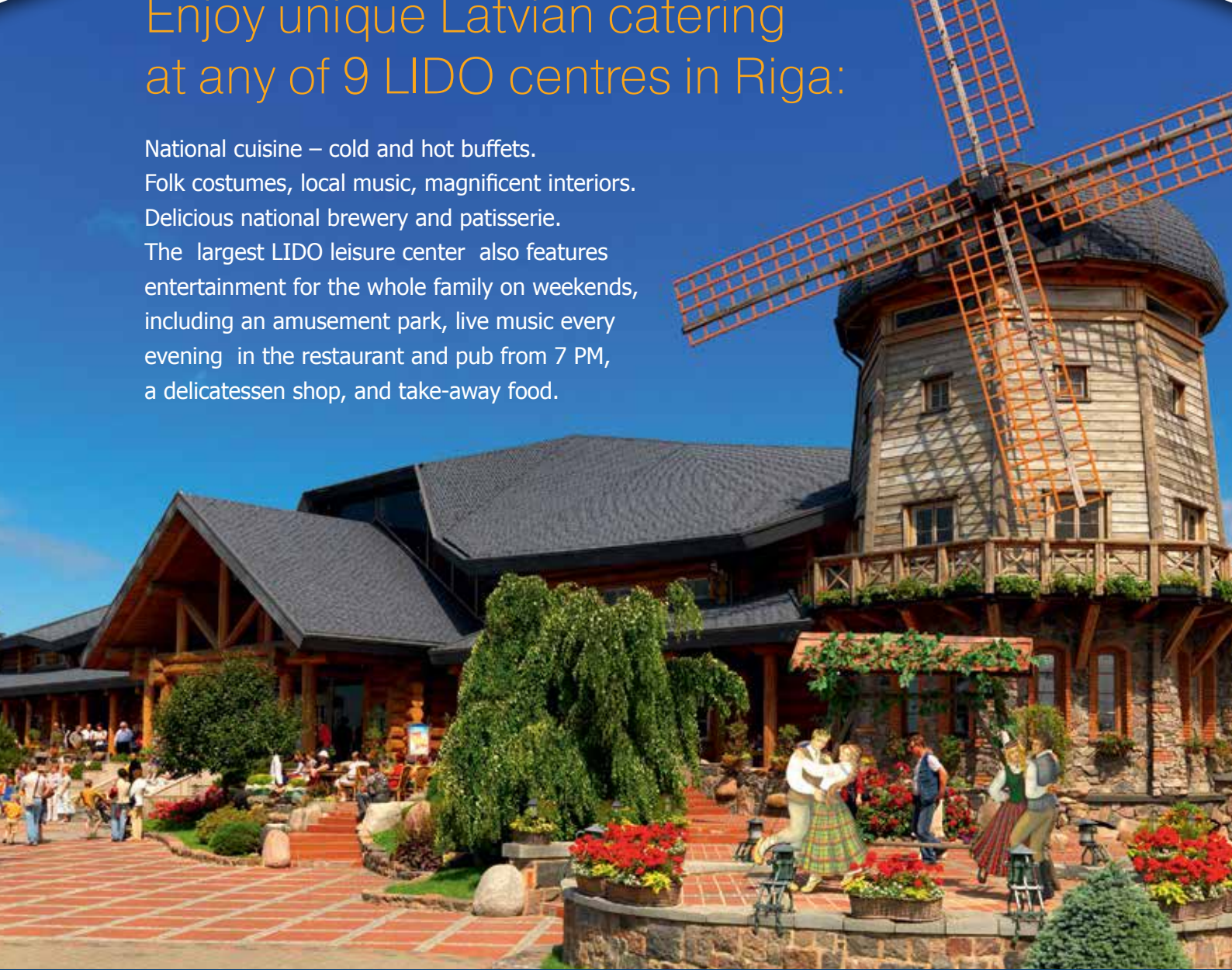
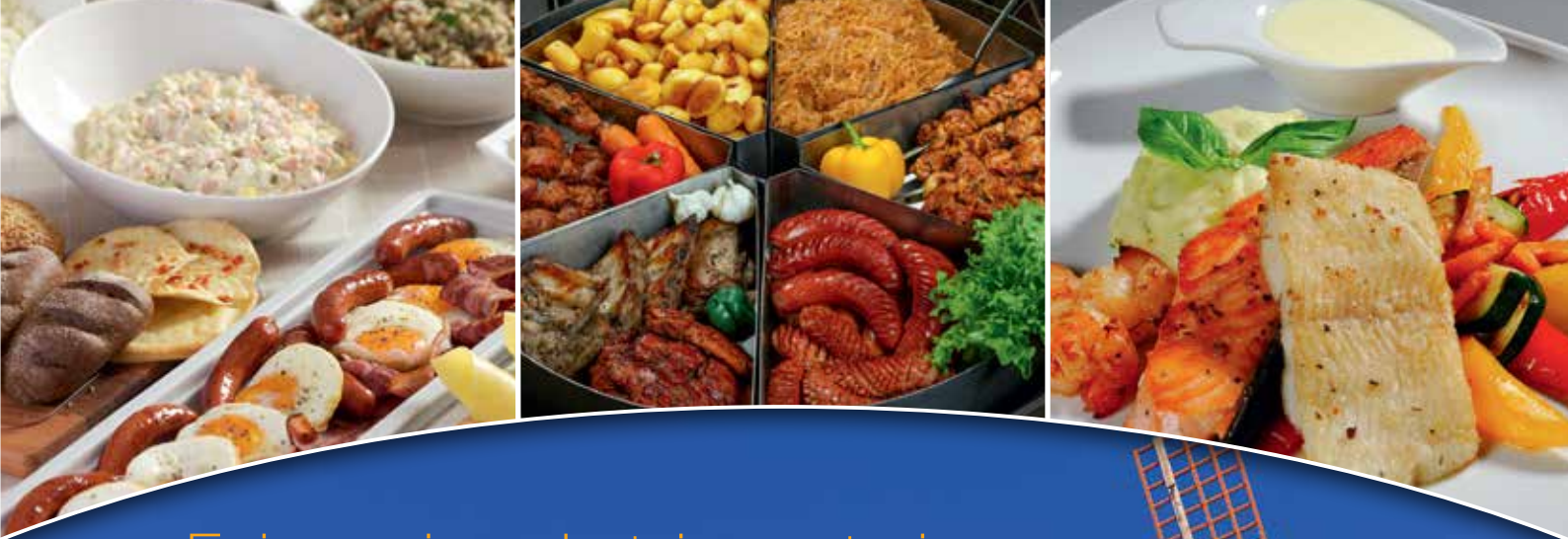
Country/City Ticket offices	Airport Ticket Offices
<b>Hamburg</b>	Airport Fuhlsbuttel Terminal 1, Departure Hall Airport Ticket Office Havas Germany GmbH
<b>Munich</b>	Airport Munich Terminal 1 Airport Ticket Office Havas Germany GmbH
<b>GREECE</b>	
Athens Tensi Aviation Kft 44 Ithous str. 17564 - P.Faliró ☎ +30 210 9341500 F: +30 210 9341620 airbaltic@tal-aviation.gr	Athens International Airport Airport Ticket Office Goldair Handling
<b>HUNGARY</b>	
Budapest Tensi Aviation Kft Kormjádi Béla utca 1. ☎ +36 1 3451526 F: +36 1 9991466 aviation@tensi.hu	Budapest Airport Airport Ticket Office Celebi Ground Handling Hungary
<b>ISRAEL</b>	
Tel Aviv Caspi Aviation Ltd 1 Ben Yehuda st. Tel-Aviv 63801 ☎ +972 3 5100213 / 4 F: +972 (3) 5108365 bt@caspi-aviation.co.il	Ben-Gurion International Airport Airport Ticket Office Laufer Aviation GHI Level 3, Terminal 3 ☎ +972 39754076
<b>ITALY</b>	
Rome Tal Aviation Italy Via Adolfo Rava, 106, 00142, Rome ☎ +39 0654242544 F: +390654242534 airbaltic@talaviation.it	Leonardo de Vinci – Fiumicino Airport Terminal 3, Departure Hall A.R.E. Airline Representative Europe
Bari	Bari Airport Airport Ticket Office Bari Palese
Milan	Milan Malpensa Airport Terminal 1, Departure Level Airport Ticket Office A.R.E. Airline Representative Europe
Venice	Airport Venice Marco Polo Airport Ticket Office A.R.E. Airline Representative Europe
<b>LATVIA</b>	
Riga ☎ 30001100 (0.37 LVL/min, local calls only)	Riga International Airport Main Terminal Airport Ticket Office airBaltic
<b>LITHUANIA</b>	
Vilnius ☎ 890015004 (2.12 LTL/min, local calls only) vnoreservations@airbaltic.com	Vilnius International Airport Airport Ticket Office Litcargus ticketing@litcargus.lt
Palanga	Palanga Airport Airport Ticket Office Orlaivių Aptarnavimo Agentūra ☎ +370 46052300 F: +370 46056401
Kaunas	Kaunas Airport Airport Ticket Office Litcargus
<b>MALTA</b>	
Malta	Malta Airport Airport Ticket Office Air Malta ☎ +356 22999620 mia.airmalta@airmalta.com
<b>MOLDOVA</b>	
Chisinau Moldavian SRL - AirService Bd. Stefan cel Mare 3, MD-2001 Chisinau ☎ +373 22 549339 ☎ +549340, 549342 F: +373 22549341 agency@airservice.md	Chisinau Airport Airport Ticket Office Air Service ☎ + 373 22 525 506
<b>NETHERLANDS</b>	
Amsterdam	Amsterdam Schiphol Airport Air Agencies Holland Ticketdesk Departure Hall 3, opposite checkin 22 ☎ +31 20 3161945 / 46 Fax: +31 20 316 1998
<b>NORWAY</b>	
Oslo	Menzies Aviation Ticket Office Airport Oslo Gaerdemoen Departure hall
Aalesund	Aalesund Airport Airport Ticket Office Roros Flyservice 6040 Vigra ☎ +47 70 30 25 60
Bergen/Stavanger	Bergen Airport – Flesland Stavanger Airport Airport Ticket Office Aviator
<b>POLAND</b>	
Warsaw	Warsaw Airport Airport Ticket Office BGS

Country/City Ticket offices	Airport Ticket Offices
<b>RUSSIA</b>	
Moscow	International Airport Sheremetjevo Terminal E Airport Ticket Office DAVS ☎ +7 (495) 5785957, +7 (916) 2221271  International Airport Domodedovo Airport Ticket Office DAVS Ticketing counters no: 177, 185
St. Petersburg	Airport Pulkovo Terminal 2 Airport Ticket Office LTD North-West Transport Agency
Kaliningrad	Airport Khrabrovo Airport Ticket Office airBaltic / Aviapartner
<b>SPAIN</b>	
Barcelona	Airport El Prat de Llobregat Terminal 1 Airport Ticket Office Lufthansa Ticket Desk
<b>SWEDEN</b>	
Stockholm	Stockholm Arlanda Airport Airport Ticket Office airBaltic / Nordic Aero International Terminal 5
<b>SWITZERLAND</b>	
Zurich airBaltic Germany Hauptstrasse 117, D-10827 Berlin ☎ 0840600830 local calls service@airbaltic.de	Airport Zurich Kloten Airport Ticket Office Swissport Terminal 2
<b>TURKEY</b>	
Istanbul Aviarsere Havacılık ve Turizm Miralay Şefikbey Sok. No:9 D-5 Gümüşsuyu, 34437 Beşiktaş ☎ +90 212 297 48 51/2 F: +90 212 297 4854 bt.turkey@aviarsere.com	Sabiha Gökçen International Airport Airport Ticket Office Merkur ☎ +902165888800 F: +902165888801
<b>UKRAINE</b>	
Kiev	Airport Borispol Terminal D Airport Ticket Office Intervia ☎ +380 442 817 461
Odessa	Odessa International Airport Airport Ticket Office airBaltic Airport Handling ☎ + 38 048 239 3025
Simferopol	Simferopol Airport Airport Ticket Office Airport Handling ☎ + 38 065 259 5693
<b>UNITED ARAB EMIRATES</b>	
Abu Dhabi	Abu Dhabi International Airport Airport Ticket Office ADAC
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	
London Aviacircle Building D, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor 28-29 The Quadrant Business Centre 135 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6RJ ☎ +44 870 774 2253 Res.AirBaltic@aviacircle.com	Airport Gatwick Airport Ticket Office Skybreak Terminal 5
<b>USA</b>	
New York airBaltic USA 1 Penn Plaza, Suite 1416 NY 10119 ☎ +1 - 877 359 2258 ☎ +1 - 646 500 7727 nyc@aviaworldna.com	
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