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101 TOP TRAVEL TIPS

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A business trip is a part of our daily life and therefore seldom seems special, but if you think longer about it, you will be able to define certain principles which determine whether your trip is going to be successful and pleasurable. That is why, we have made a list of 101 pieces of advice which might improve the comfort of your business trips.

That's not all. Even the best advice seems pointless, if you are let down by the thing which largely contributes to overall comfort of your journey, especially during a transfer from one plane to another. I'm talking here about the luggage. Our editors did a great job (but it's for you to decide), and tested various brands of suitcases. In this issue you can read a special report on their findings.

This month we also present Berlin's airports, as well as hotels in Zakopane, Warsaw, Łódź, Copenhagen, and Istanbul. Add to this, a short stroll along the beautiful city of Moscow, and the charm of incentive trips in Tenerife. We invite you to take a truly remarkable trip aboard a luxurious Prince Albert II cruise ship which visits the places

where other vessels can't go, and the cruise has always a character of a scientific expedition. Finally, we encourage you to read the results of the latest edition of Business Traveller Awards which are annually voted for by our readers.

Let's not forget about our health. A business trip can be an excellent opportunity to take some exercise, especially after long and tiring meetings, and these days well-equipped hotel fitness centres are open even 24/7. As you will learn from our article, you don't really have to slog your guts out in a gym to stay fit. How should we do it, then? Enjoy your reading.



Robert Grzybowski
Wydawca BT Poland



Read more details! Visit businessstraveller.pl

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LOT Wins Awionetki 2010 Awards

LOT Polish Airlines has been presented with Awionetki 2010 awards in category "Innovative Solution of the Year", and "The Event of the Year". In the former category, the Polish airline received its award for launching a direct cargo connection between Poland and North America on Hamilton-Katowice route.

The Chapter justified its decision, by saying that "the idea shed a bright light of innovation on Polish cargo market".

The award in the latter category was presented for launching a brand new route from Warsaw to Hanoi, which marks the airline's return to Far East destinations and decision to compete not only on the European market. The awards were presented to the acting President of the Management Board of PLL LOT, Zbigniew Mazur.

"Awionetki" are the awards presented to the companies of the Polish aviation industry. This year's edition was second. The prize-winners are chosen by a Chapter consisting of five members.

Business Customers Promoted

The passengers travelling with LOT Polish Airlines who bought roundtrip business class tickets for October and November 2010 are entitled to a PLN 200 voucher until the end of November. To claim your voucher, send an e-mail at biznes@lot.pl with the number of your ticket in business class. The voucher can be used in the first half of 2011 when purchasing tickets for short and long-haul flights of the airline in LOT's ticket offices.

A NEW MODEL OF TRAVEL BY CSA

At the end of October Czech Airlines introduced a new flight schedule. The schedule features numerous changes in comparison to the previous one, as profitable destinations have now become more frequent, while the routes which didn't turn out to be very successful are being limited. The flight network of CSA is very wide: the airline offers flights to over 100 destinations in 44 countries worldwide.

The new business model of CSA assumes that the Czech air carrier will become a bridge between the East and the West. This means that a less stress will be put on domestic routes and the airline will expand its range of flights to holiday destinations. Another novelty is shifting the departure times to more convenient ones: e.g. launching morning flights to and from Hamburg, Bologna, or Cracow, as well as increasing the number of flights to Brussels, Paris, Athens, or Saint Petersburg. The changes will also include the in-flight service. In summer, CSA introduced a wider choice of dishes and beverages in all the classes.



AIRBUS

A Phone on Board

Egypt Air has received its first new Airbus 330-300, which allows passengers to use GSM, SMS and GPRS services from their mobile providers, as well as use WIFI connection during their flight. The rates will be the same as the international calls rate of the passengers' service providers. The new A330-300 features 301 seat, including 36 in Business class, where passengers will be able to sleep on their 160 Flat Beds, or indulge themselves in hundreds of entertainment options through the personal entertainment system screened on 15.4" screens.



InterContinental Is the Best Business Hotel

Hotel InterContinental Warszawa belonging to InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) - one of the world's largest hotel chains has been presented an international award for the best Polish hotel in category "Poland's Leading Hotel", and "Poland's Leading Business Hotel". This was the 17th edition of World Travel Awards. This year over 180,000 people representing the hospitality industry from all over the world voted for the best products and services in their branch. The award was presented to the representatives of the hotel during the World Travel Awards ceremony which took place in Rixos Premium Belek, in Turkish city of Antalya.

InterContinental Warszawa is a modern hotel located in the very centre of the Polish capital. It is located in one of Warsaw's largest buildings. It offers 326 guest rooms and 75 luxurious Residence Suites. The hotel guests may savour the dishes of the Polish cuisine and the world's cuisine in a number of restaurants located in the hotel. Among them are Frida, +One Bar, and E.Wedel's Chocolatery. Riverview Wellness Centre, located on the 43th and 44th floor offers the highest indoor swimming pool in the city, gym classes, sauna, and steam bath.



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5 MILLIONS OF A|CLUB

A|Club – a global loyalty programme by Accor group celebrates its 2nd birthday. Since 2008 the programme has gained nearly 5 million members. Owners of A|Club cards earn points for their stays in over 2,000 hotels, services by the programme partners e.g. in Europcar, Club Méditerranée, and twelve large airlines e.g. Air France, KLM, and British Airways..

Each 2,000 points can be redeemed for gift vouchers worth €40 or \$60. They can also be used to pay for a stay in a hotel. It is expected that until the end of the year other airlines will join the programme, and soon A|Club cards will be accepted also at Shell petrol stations across the world.

More Flights from Gdańsk

Lufthansa is going to expand its present offer of flights on Gdańsk – Munich route by launching an additional daily connection. In its summer 2011 flight schedule the German air carrier will offer 33 direct connections from Gdańsk to three largest airports in Germany, i.e. Frankfurt, Munich, and Dusseldorf. Having launched the direct connection between Gdańsk and Dusseldorf in March 2010, Lufthansa's connection to Munich seems a considerable addition to Gdańsk Lech Wałęsa Airport. There will be as many as 86 seats available on board a modern CRJ-900 Lufthansa City Line jet aircraft both in business and economy classes.

Air France Expands

From May 9 next year, Air France will roster one of its superjumbos every day for flight AF346 (departing Paris CDG at 16.10, arriving Montreal 17.20) and AF347 (departing Montreal 19.55 and arriving Paris CDG the next morning at 0830).

Montreal, Canada, will be the fourth city on Air France's A380 network after New York JFK (launched in November 2009), Johannesburg (February 2010) and Tokyo Narita (September 2010). With the A380, Air France can rationalize its frequencies on these busy routes by combining two flights which leave at similar times while offering the same seat capacity at a 20% reduction in operating costs. The main deck of the A380 boasts equivalent capacity of a Boeing 777-200 and the upper deck that of an Airbus A340-300.



A New Menu in 'The Olive'

The Olive restaurant, located in Warsaw's Sheraton hotel, has introduced a new lunch menu. Everyday the menu features other dishes made by Artur Grajber, the restaurant's chef. The lunch sets consists of four options. Among the dishes you will find a watermelon and spinach salad,

pork tenderloin escalopes, papardelle with creamy chanterelle sauce, bacon and goose liver mousse, as well as salmon filet with a salad of fennel and chicory, 'cremolata' rice with citrus fruit and parsley.

The price of the set starts at PLN 55 (€14) for two courses.

BRITISH AIRWAYS

Mobile Card



British Airways has introduced a new application for smartphone users which allows them to check-in via their phones. At present, only members of British Airways' free-to-join frequent flyer programme, the Executive Club, can download mobile boarding passes on their phones. These can then be scanned at check-in to speed up the boarding process. The electronic boarding pass will allow the passengers to board both domestic and international flights. The application can also be used by owners of Blackberry phones and other devices with Android operating system. Members can also access their Executive Club details using the app, see real-time flight information about their bookings and make amendments to their bookings directly from their phones.



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Lufthansa Reaches 100,000 on Facebook



Within several months Lufthansa managed to gather 100,000 fans on Facebook.

The German air carrier started its fan page in December 2009. The Lufthansa Facebook page is one of many opportunities in the growing social media space in which customers can

network with the airline, swap information and pick up special offers and promotions. Lufthansa Facebook fans were, for example, the first to be informed about the chance to book a seat on the inaugural flights operated by the A380, or to obtain exclusive on-site coverage in Pal-

ma about the special A380 flight to Mallorca. In addition, fans could see exclusive, behind-the-scenes photos from a TV commercial shot at Lufthansa Technik's maintenance hangar in Munich for the German TV entertainment show, "Wetten Dass" – hosted by Thomas Gottschalk.



Finnair to Fly to Seoul and Nagoya

The air traffic within Finnair's between Poland and Japan as well as Poland and China increased in the third quarter of 2010 by 28 and 24 per cent respectively (in comparison to the same period of 2009). The traffic on the route from Poland to Korea increased four times. Finnair responds, increasing the number of connections to Asia. From the end of the year, Finnair will fly to Seoul six times per week

and to Nagoya five times per week from December this year. In January next year, the number of weekly flights to Osaka will be increased to six and to Delhi seven. From 27 March, the start of the summer traffic season, Finnair will fly daily to Seoul, Nagoya and Osaka.

In its offer Finnair has daily flights to Hong Kong, Tokyo, Osaka, Beijing, Shanghai, and Bangkok.

BUSINESS CLUB IN IBERIA

Iberia Airlines formally launched its new Business Club class for business travellers on the airline's longest medium-haul flights on October 21. The new seats will also be offered on flights between Spain and Lagos, Moscow, Tel Aviv, and Cairo.

The 14 seat Business Club section has 2 seats on each side as well as 1.27 metres of separation between rows. The extra-large, 55-cm-wide seats are of totally new design, with adjustable backs, head rests, leg rests and foot rests. Each Business Club passenger may use the latest Play Station Portable (PSP), with an LCD screen, to watch late-release high-definition films or television series, or to listen to the ten audio channels. The passengers will also enjoy new comfort-enhancing services such as special access and „Fast track” movement through security controls, the extension of boarding by cell phone options to more destinations, and the upgrading of Iberia's VIP lounges.



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FLIGHT CHECK: LONDON – SÃO PAULO

TAM Airlines B777-300ER Business class

BACKGROUND TAM flies daily from Heathrow Terminal 1 to Sao Paulo, departing at 2205 with flight JJ8085 and arriving at 0535 the next day into Guarulhos International's Terminal 1. The carrier introduced its B777-300ER aircraft to this route in 2008 and in February it reconfigured the premium cabin to introduce four first class seats, with 56 in business and 302 in economy.

CHECK-IN The airline offers a chauffeur service for both business and first class passengers in the UK. I was picked up from central London at 1900 and, amazingly, arrived at T1 in only 35 minutes. The check-in area was empty for both business and first. I added my Bmi Diamond Club membership number to the booking now that TAM is a member of Star Alliance, then went through fast-track security. I was quickly airside.

THE LOUNGE TAM uses the Star Alliance lounge (for facilities see "50 top airport lounges", businessstraveller.com/archive/2009/july-august-2009). Flights aren't called and when the screen showed mine as boarding I left immediately as Gate 48 is a long walk away.

BOARDING This was quick, with a dedicated queue for premium passengers. Once on board my jacket was taken

and I was offered a glass of champagne, orange juice or water.

THE SEAT There is a dividing wall between first class and the front business cabin, which has three rows of 2-3-2 seating (A-C, D-F-G, H-K). There is then a galley and washrooms, and a larger business cabin with five rows (see seat plan, right). At first glance, row eight seemed to have more legroom, but this may be because the other rows extend forwards under the seat in front, which is not possible for row eight since it is the bulkhead. Economy is mainly configured 3-4-3.

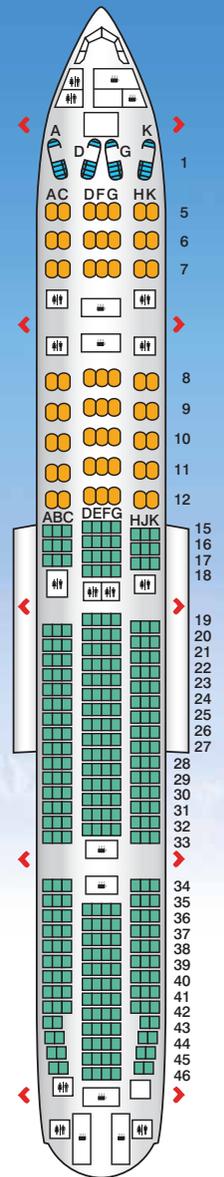
Business seats have a width of 20 inches (51cm), a pitch of 63 inches (160cm) and when fully reclined are 70 inches (178cm) in length. The IFE screen is audio-video on-demand in all cabins. The overall colour scheme is taupe, with the seat surround a pale olive green, and covers and amenity kits a deep red (for a video of the product visit passiontoflyandserve.com.br/pt).

The seat is similar to the angled lie-flat version on airlines such as Lufthansa and Air France. I was in window seat 6K. I found it very easy to sleep in, but then I am used to these seats and was tired. There was a fair amount of turbu-

lence but having already belted up over the blanket I was left undisturbed. There were no flight announcements to interrupt sleep, which was welcome.

WHICH SEAT TO CHOOSE? The front business cabin is quieter than the second one, and row five has advantages because there is little footfall past you into the first class cabin. That said, I would personally go for row six, and any seat apart from F, in the middle. With the seats fully reclined it can be difficult to access the aisle across your sleeping neighbour, but then again if you are in the aisle seat you are the one being climbed over. In the main business cabin, avoid row 12 as economy class may disturb, and possibly row eight since the washroom and galley are in front.

THE FLIGHT Appetizers were green leaves served with bresaola and tomato and mozzarella terrine (fairly bland) or with smoked tuna fillet with black pepper crust, or a tartlet with crème fraîche and wasabi. There was also a choice of bread and the option of mushroom soup. Mains were lamb with gratin potato and vegetables, chicken fillet with harissa sauce and orzo pasta, or ricotta cheese tortellini with tomato sauce. The chicken was reasonably tender, the haris-



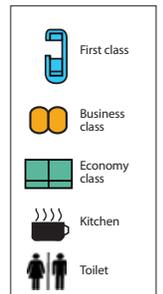
sa pasta not spicy and I left most of this. There was also a selection of cheeses and desserts.

The service was friendly, and while at first it took a little time to attract the flight attendant's attention (they seemed to see to the Brazilian nationals and Portuguese speakers first), it was professional and well thought-out. After the meal I fell asleep for several hours. A few hours before landing breakfast was served, which was either a herb omelette with chicken sausage or a sandwich, along with pastries, yoghurt and fresh fruit.

ARRIVAL Immigration took ten minutes. I had no bags to wait for but a colleague in business did and it was out quickly.

VERDICT Excellent. The angled lie-flat seat is very comfortable and easy to sleep on, and the service is friendly if a little vague at times.

Tom Otley



FACTS **SEAT CONFIGURATION** 2+3+2
SEAT LENGTH 178 cm
SEAT WIDTH 51 cm
PRICE Internet rates for a return business class flight from London to Sao Paulo in September started from £2,671.
CONTACT tamairlines.com



RAIL CHECK:
LONDON - LIVERPOOL

Virgin Trains First class

BACKGROUND Virgin's 200km/ph Pendolino trains run from London Euston to Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow. From Euston to Liverpool Lime Street, the first train departs on weekdays at 0527 (arriving at 0801), followed by 0707 and then an hourly service (with extra trains during the evening rush hour) until 2107. The first service from Liverpool also leaves at 0527 (arriving at 0750), followed by trains at 0605 and 0700, and then hourly at 48 minutes past the hour until 2048.

THE LOUNGE Virgin's first class lounge is located above Marks and Spencer. It was packed when I arrived at 1700, and I ended up on a stool by a TV showing BBC News 24. The main seating area has a sofa, coffee table and stools, while a business centre has desks, sockets and a printer – wifi is free. There is also a quieter room with departure boards, and phone charging facilities. Free refreshments included coffee and orange juice, apples and a rather dry chocolate cake, while alcoholic drinks were available from a bar, at £2 for a beer, glass of wine or spirit (mixers are free). The lounge was adequate, but felt tired and had it been any busier, I would have gone to sit in the main concourse. I left the lounge at 1715, allowing plenty of time to board my 1733 train.

THE SEAT The first class section was located in the front two carriages and was arranged in groups of four or two forward- and backward-facing seats, with a table between each pair or quartet. The storage space overhead was big enough to hold the carry-on case I use for flights. I had been allocated seat 27 in coach J – a forward-facing aisle seat in a group of four. The three other passengers all knew each other and at first I wished I had been sat in one of the pairs, but they turned out to be friendly. There is free wifi in first class, provided by T-Mobile Hotspot, as well as individual seat power. The seat was comfortable and there was a lamp on the table, although the carriage was amply lit.



THE JOURNEY We left on time and soon after departure I was offered an evening meal (available 5pm-7pm). The choice was a tasty venison stew or a chicken dish (a vegetarian option is available on request, or you can have a sandwich), and either a chocolate dessert or cheese and biscuits.

A full breakfast is served until 10am, with "light bites" between 10am and 4pm, and after 7pm. Virgin offers weekend first class upgrades for £15, which includes lounge access, although there is no meal service at the weekend – first class passengers receive free tea, coffee, water, crisps, biscuits and fruit instead. We arrived on time at 1955, and I walked past the new-looking first class lounge at Lime Street.

VERDICT A good meal service and comfortable seating. The lounge is adequate if very busy at peak hours.

Mark Caswell

W POCIĄGU:
LONDON - MANCHESTER

Virgin Trains Standard class

BACKGROUND I arrived at Euston 15 minutes before my 1620 departure to Manchester. I was heading for an evening event and the train was due to arrive at 1828. For those aiming for a morning meeting, the 0617 gets into Manchester Piccadilly at 0828. From 0800, trains depart every 20 minutes, with the last one leaving at 2200 and arriving in Manchester at 0035.

THE SEAT I had pre-booked my ticket and was allocated coach C, seat 28A, so had to walk quite a way down the platform after queueing up to show the guard my ticket. The carriage was configured 2-2, a mixture of groups of four seats with a table between them, and pairs of seats with small, pull-down tray tables. Mine was a window seat at a table, travelling backwards. Someone was sitting in it, despite it being reserved, but I was happy to be by the aisle. I put my wheeled bag on a luggage rack halfway down the carriage. There are also racks by the doors, but you should keep an eye out, as British Transport Police has warned of people getting on just before the train leaves and taking them.

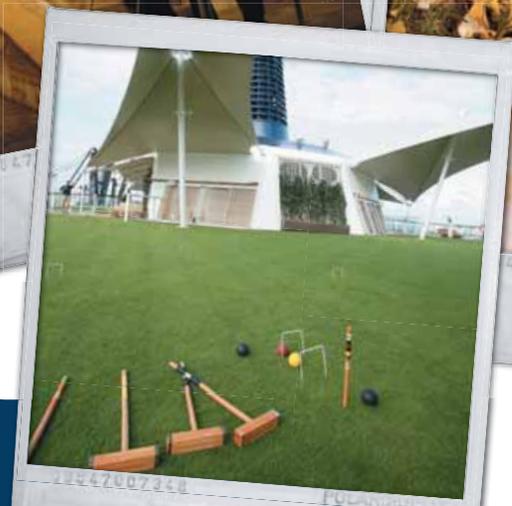
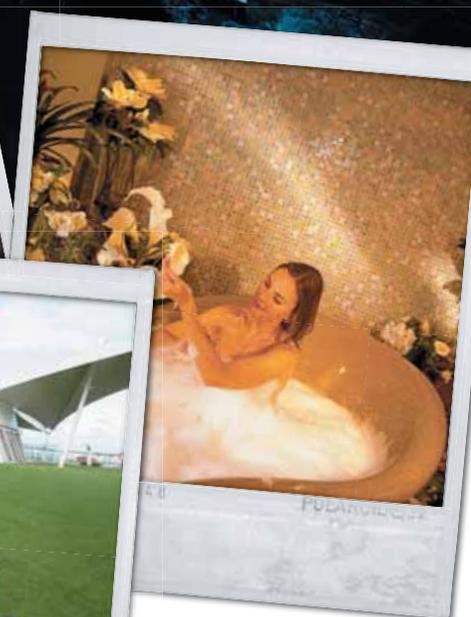
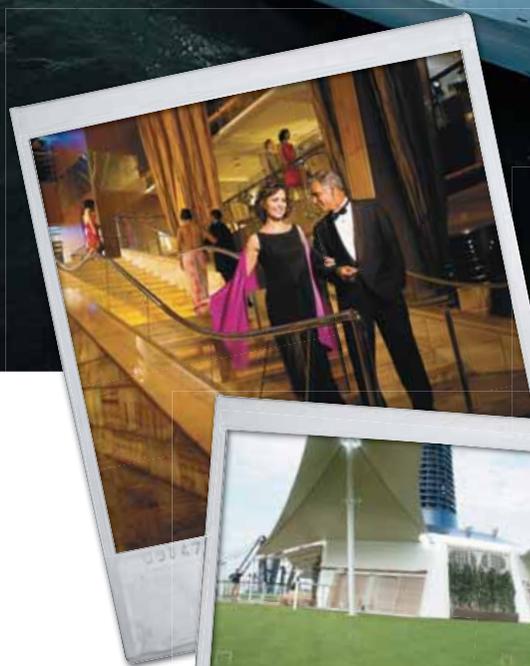
THE JOURNEY The train was busy and left on time. I did some work on my laptop (there was a spotlight above the seat and plugs at the table). Wifi costs 75p for ten minutes, £5 for an hour, or £10 for 24 hours. An onboard shop sells snacks and drinks – a meal deal including a sandwich, crisps and a drink costs £4. The train was far too hot and I was relieved I was not sitting near the window, where a vent was pumping out stifling air. This was also the case on the return journey, and I overheard other people saying they had experienced it before. We arrived on time.

OCENA A punctual service but the train was uncomfortably hot.

Felicity Cousins

FACTS **PRICE** Internet rates for a first class midweek day-return fare from London to Liverpool booked one week in advance started from £79.50/ from London to Manchester booked one week in advance started from £27.
CONTACT virgintrains.co.uk

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- ▶ WYCIECZKI

HOTEL: ZAKOPANE

Litwor



WHAT'S IT LIKE? A few weeks ago the hotel underwent a renovation, thanks to which it received additional conference rooms. The building, tucked away in the main street of Zakopane, is of traditional, stylish design – sloping roofs, glass towers with bay windows and balconies overlooking Giewont. Inside, you will see an unusual, for this type of interior, reception desk. It is an enormous, massive desk with a computer screen hidden under the glass top. On the right-hand side there is a culinary section, and next to it there is a lift. The decor alludes to the local tradition and contributes to the boutique character of the hotel.

The five-star Litwor (the first hotel with such a number of stars in Zakopane) belongs to TRIP Group, which is the owner of two more hotels in the city, as well as a hotel&convention centre in the town of Ossa between Warsaw and Łódź. What's new is the recently introduced option to rent the whole hotel for your sole own needs. The programme is called “exclusive use” and it is aimed mostly at business people.

WHERE IS IT? Krupówki is the most frequently visited street in Zakopane – the main promenade in the city full of stalls and local attractions. It takes a couple of minutes to get there from the railway station, and over 2 hours – from the Balice airport in Cracow. Motorists can expect an underground car park with 9 parking spaces and another car park outside the hotel.

ROOM FACILITIES The check in time starts at 4.00 pm and you have a range

of 53 rooms to choose from. They were divided into a few categories – double ones with a single bed and a sofa, or two twin beds. The business offer includes double rooms with an additional bed and 5 suites.

The standard room is not too big – about 20 sq m. The rooms are furnished in a traditional way, with no special amenities. Dark furniture contrasts with pastel-hued walls and light ornaments. In each room the air conditioning is adjusted manually (a requirement to be granted 5 stars, although the average annual temperature in the area is no more than 4 degrees Celsius), a workdesk, a safe, a mini bar and Pay TV. The bathrooms come with showers, under-floor heating and a tower heater. Some of the rooms also feature stylish fireplaces.

A suite consists of two rooms, a lounge with a bathroom for guests and a separate bedroom with a private black and white bathroom.

The rooms have access to wifi, but the service is charged extra.

BUSINESS FACILITIES After the renovation the hotel received a new conference room with club decor, which can hold up to 60 people. The other room, intended for smaller meetings, will hold up to 15 participants. Both rooms are equipped with essential conference facilities.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS A place well known in the city is the hotel Koneser restaurant, which seats up to 120 people. It serves Polish and international cuisine – I especially recommend horse-radish soup and a duck.



★★★★★ HOTEL

You may order the specialty of the chef – Dariusz Siciarz, which is a set consisting of roasted lobster flambéed in cognac with avocado dip, artichoke cappuccino or beef wellington with aged wine sauce and smoked mushrooms.

The adjacent Lobby bar is a place, where you can have an informal business meeting over a glass of something stronger.

LEISURE Guests have access to a fitness room with Technogym equipment, a 11-metre long countercurrent swimming machine, a Jacuzzi, a sauna, a Turkish bath and a Spa centre, which uses the Comfort Zone cosmetics.

VERDICT Good location and friendly atmosphere are the biggest advantages of this hotel, situated in the centre of Poland's mountainous capital.

Wojciech Chetchowski



PRICE Internet rates for a standard room started at PLN 297.

CONTACT Hotel Litwor; Krupówki 40, 34-500 Zakopane, Tel. +48 18 20 202 22; litwor.pl



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HOTEL: ŁÓDŹ
Andel's



WHAT IS IT LIKE? Andel's is a 4-star hotel named after the Anděl district of Prague (Anděl means "angel" in Czech), where its design concept was first realised. Even though it may be of no appeal to some that the hotel is situated on the vast grounds of the Manufaktura commercial centre, the hotel's location in the very heart of the city makes up for all the inconveniences.

The history behind the edifice is truly amazing – located in the district that was established in the second half of the 19th century by Izrael Kalmanowicz Poznanski, (a multimillionaire with powerful vision, also considered one of the three "kings of cotton" of Łódź) the building originally housed a spinning factory. During the period of prosperity, the number of people employed at the factories and those who lived on the Poznański's housing estates exceeded 6,000.

Andel's is a truly contemporary hotel, and red brick that is a characteristic feature of the entire property gives it a cool,

industrial feel which is additionally emphasised by glass elements. There are many paintings on display throughout the hotel, but its private gallery particularly seems to be an interesting solution, with a number of artworks by contemporary artists from around the world.

WHERE IS IT? The property of Manufaktura is located on Ogrodowa Street, in the city centre. It takes about an hour to get there from Warsaw by car. Władysław Reymont Airport is 10km away, and if you want to get to the train station, you need to cover the distance of 5km.

Car owners have an underground car park at their disposal, although its construction does not appear to be a well-considered design – you really need to rack your brain when driving in a maze of narrow passages if you want to avoid the inevitable consequences that are often seen in the form of marks on some of the pillars.

The lobby area is of a fair size and gives you the idea of what to expect from the rest of the establishment.

The large reception area is situated on the right side of the main entrance and there is the Lobby hotel bar nearby.

ROOM AMENITIES The hotel comprises 278 air-conditioned rooms located on the four floors, including 216 double rooms (63 of them feature two single beds), 53 suites with kitchenettes designated for those who are planning a longer stay, 4 two-level Maisonette Suites, 1 two-level Maisonette Deluxe Suit which features a large terrace, and there are also 4 disabled rooms.

Decorated by the British designers from Jestico&Whiles, Andel's is a quality hotel with a modern feel. Standard room (over 25sqm) features light-coloured walls and beige wall-to-wall carpeting which brighten up the room and complement the contrasting furniture and the rest of the room amenities. When you walk out of the bathroom that is decorated in shades of beige and equipped with a separate bath tub and shower cubicle, the short corridor leads to a spacious living area where you can find a large, com-



comfortable bed, a bedside table, and a desk with a thick glass top and a comfortable armchair. Other amenities include a flat-screen TV on the wall (some of the rooms feature a recess in the wall that has been specially made for this purpose), a laptop size self deposit box, a minibar, tea/coffee making facilities and a CD player. All the guests may enjoy WIFI high-speed Internet access.

BUSINESS FACILITIES With 7 conference rooms, Andel's boasts the most extensive of all the hotels in the region congress centre. Each room (2300 sq m altogether) offers natural daylight. The Ballroom is the largest (together with foyer, where coffee breaks are organised, it has 1298 sq m and can be divided into two smaller rooms). The names of the rest of the rooms are connected with textiles – there is the Satin Room (272 sq m), the Silk Room (90 sq m), the Damask Room (87 sq m), the Velour Room (83 sq m), the Cotton Room (82 sq m), and the two sister rooms: the Velvet and the Cashmere Rooms (80 sq m each). Most

of the rooms can be divided into two smaller ones and they all feature state-of-the-art equipment.

With a view over the city, there is the spacious Lounge Room on the last floor of the hotel – it features a large terrace and is strictly designated for the special wishes of the business guests.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS Located in the lobby area, Delight is the main restaurant that occupies 4 rooms and can seat up to 300 people.

At 6.30 (7.00 at weekends) it serves breakfast, and from 5.00 pm till 10.00 pm you can order meals from a la carte menu.

The main chef, Miroslaw Jabłoński, treats the guests to a spicy coconut soup, coriander chicken cooked with shiitake mushroom, pork loin wrapped in bacon on the mushroom toast with asparagus and truffle sautéed with rosemary.

Operating till 1.00 am the Oscar's Bar is situated behind the reception area and it invites guests for a proper coffee and a wide range of quality alcoholic beverages

which would make a business meeting more intimate and productive.

LEISURE FACILITIES The hotel boasts a large, glazed swimming pool which is situated on the highest floor of the building, where you can also find fitness rooms with modern equipment and the skySPAcE centre offering a variety of beauty treatments (including massages and revitalising treatments). Guests may also take the advantage of the complimentary sauna (2 rooms available) and the Wellness Bar.

VERDICT A quality hotel located in the very centre of the Łódź city, with an amazing décor and staff that provides a high-quality service.

Jakub Olgiewicz

CONTACT The Andel's Hotel, ul. Ogrodowa 17, 91-065 Łódź; tel.: +48 42 279 10 00; andelslodz.com

RATES A rate for a standard room booked for the beginning of November was €80 (breakfast included).



HOTEL: WARSAW

Metropol

WHAT IS IT LIKE? With the smell of fresh paint still lingering inside the rooms, the conversion of the hotel came to an end several weeks ago and it involved the entire façade and the 9th floor, where in place of previous offices you can find now some additional rooms.

If you enter the building from the Marszałkowska Street, you will find yourself in a relatively small in size, yet cosy lobby that retains the air of understated elegance thanks to its maroon walls and floor with columns that are both made of stone. Moreover, the intriguing sculptures of human bodies and faces made of thin metal net are present throughout the hotel. The reception area is located opposite the entrance, with the hotel restaurant, staircase leading to the 2 lifts and the casino entrance on the left side.

WHERE IS IT? Located in the very heart of the capital, near the Centrum metro station, Metropol is half an hour drive from the Warsaw Chopin Airport (Okęcie district), and several hundred metres away from the train station which has also been undergoing a rejuvenation treatment. Since parking a car in the area may prove to be of some inconvenience, the hotel offers its very own car park for PLN 45 a day.

ROOM AMENITIES Thanks to its convenient location and competitive rates Metropol is the favourite choice mainly among foreigners. It comprises 191 rooms, including standard rooms which are of the smallest size (approx-

mately 20 sq m) and feature either one king size bed (110 rooms) or two single beds (44 rooms). Decorated in shades of salmon and yellow, this type of accommodation is equipped with a relatively small work desk, mirror, cable TV, telephone and a rack where you can place your luggage. Wireless Internet access is charged extra.

Small bathrooms and lack of air conditioning may prove to be a bit inconvenient – even though the windows in the rooms can be opened. This may, however, leave you struggling with the noise which seems inevitable in a centrally located hotel. Nevertheless, the windows perfectly block noise and feature blackout curtains.

Metropol has also air-conditioned rooms of a higher standard – these include Superior King Room (approximately 25 sq m), Executive Room, Junior Suite and Suite (up to 50 sq m), with the suites amenities being adequately extensive.

Thanks to the renovation Metropol can now offer its “9th floor” – 18 Executive Rooms and 2 Suites, that have nothing to do with the standard we would normally expect from a 3-star hotel. Not only colour scheme of the rooms (shades of violet and green) but also their amenities are completely different – here you can find a laptop size safety deposit box, minibar, coffee/tea making facilities, flat-screen TV’s and free Internet access. Naturally, each room is air-conditioned and there is also a bathroom with shower cubicle, where a range of toiletries and slippers await the guests – all these features actually meet the standard of a 4-star hotel, which is also the case when it comes to the 2 Suits situated on the very same floor.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS Located in the lobby area, Metro Jazz&Bistro can seat up to 80 people. Here you can relax with some live Jazz music (concerts are played 3 times a week) while enjoying your breakfast, business lunch or evening meal – the orders are taken till 23.00 and the restaurant itself operates till midnight. Several plasma screens on the walls indicate that clearly it is a place of gathering for the sports fans.

The items on the menu vary from plain burger or grilled chuck steak to a roast duck, trout or medallions of pork loin served with roast potatoes. Although I myself have not tried the local dishes, the former guests of the hotel, including internet users, would recommend them.

VERDICT Truly convenient location in the heart of the capital. I highly recommend booking one of the new Executive Rooms located on the 9th floor of the hotel.

Olga Chelchowska



FACTS **CONTACT** The Metropol Hotel; Marszałkowska 99a, 00-693 Warszawa; tel.: 48 22 32 53 100; hotelmetropol.com.pl
RATES The Executive Room for the beginning of the November could be booked online for €95.

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HOTEL: ISTANBUL

Park Hyatt Macka Palas Istanbul

WHAT'S IT LIKE? This boutique five-star property opened in November 2008 in what was once a 1920s society residence. Although the interior is largely modern minimalist, art nouveau-style light fittings and chandeliers, black and white jazz prints, vintage mirrors and wooden floors add warmth and character. After going through a metal detector past a security guard, you enter via sliding frosted glass doors. Staff are highly professional and welcoming, with doormen outside to call taxis and manage luggage.

WHERE IS IT? In the new part of the city on the European side, tucked away on a discreet street with a side entrance to its restaurant on the corner of Macka Cadesi, one of the main high-end shopping avenues. The Istanbul Convention and Exhibition Centre (icec.org) is nearby. Traffic permitting, it's about a 25-minute drive to Ataturk airport on the same side, or 50 minutes to Sabiha Gokcen airport on the Asian side. I found that a lot of the time taxi drivers were unsure of where the hotel was, so it's a good idea to note down the address or carry a map.

ROOM FACILITIES Half the bedrooms face the street while the others overlook the pool. They differ in size depending on category but the décor and layout is the same. Spa rooms have 20 sqm bathrooms. Wired and wifi internet access costs €18 for 24 hours and rooms all come with flatscreen TVs measuring at least 25 inches, DVD players, safes with laptop chargers, air conditioning, 24-hour room service, combined clock radio/iPod docks, robes and slippers, blackout blinds and daily newspapers. The minibar is expensive – a small bottle of Coke is TL12 (£5) while an Efes Pilsen lager is TL16 (£7).

My Deluxe corner room was on the fourth floor. It had a high ceiling and was of a good size, with a generous entry hall and separate seating area with a coffee ta-

ble and a dish of fresh fruit. There was a large workdesk with a reading lamp, power sockets, UK adaptors and wired internet cables. An ice bucket was refilled nightly at turn-down. The bathroom was exceptional, with twin sinks – one for filtered tap water – Blaise Mautin toiletries, a heated floor, a freestanding bath with coloured mood lighting above, a separate toilet and bidet, and a combined steam room and rainshower.

Although on the whole the room was great, there were a few downsides. The housekeeping was a little too thorough – one morning it took me nearly five minutes to find my shoes, which had been placed under the bench at the foot of the bed. There was quite a lot of noise from the street at night when I had the windows open (ask for one at the back if this is a concern), and I had difficulty staying connected to the wifi when using my iPhone. Iron and ironing boards and tea and coffee-making facilities are not supplied so you need to call reception for these.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS The Lounge is part of the lobby and is open 6.30am-12am daily for breakfast, all-day dining and afternoon tea. There is a bar with a glass-fronted wall of wine opposite, and by the pool is the Terrace, open May to September, where a buffet and à la carte breakfast is served along with lunch and dinner. The deck is fringed with potted orange trees, flowers and bamboo, and there are comfy cream sofas. I enjoyed a beautifully presented meal here one evening beneath the stars.

The Terrace shares its menu with the hotel's signature restaurant, the Prime, which is adjacent. It specialises in grilled meat and seafood so there is not much in the way of vegetarian options, but when I was there the chef was happy to accommodate my dietary requirements.



There is an extensive wine list and a live cooking station, with set one-hour business lunches available for TL45 (£19) for two courses and TL55 (£24) for three courses. It's open Mon-Sat 12pm-3pm and 7pm-11pm.

BUSINESS AND MEETING FACILITIES There are two boardrooms, one for eight delegates and the other for 12. A small 24-hour business centre behind reception has two laptops and free internet.

LEISURE FACILITIES The heated outdoor pool is open May-October from 8am to 7pm. Accessed by a separate lift in the lobby, the spa is in the basement and features a sleek gym with Life Fitness machines, three treatment rooms, steam rooms, saunas and a relaxation area. In-room treatments are also available, and those staying in Spa rooms can enjoy a full Turkish hammam experience.

VERDICT A superb top-end boutique business hotel with elegant bedrooms fitted with all you need for both work and relaxation. The restaurant and staff were also commendable.

Jenny Southan

FACTS **CONTACT** Park Hyatt Istanbul Macka Palas, Tesvikiye, Bronz Sokak No 4, Sisli; tel +90 212 315 1234; istanbul.park.hyatt.com
PRICE Internet rates for a midweek stay in November started from €216 for a Queen room.

HOTEL: COPENHAGEN

Hilton

WHAT'S IT LIKE? For the past couple of years the Hilton Copenhagen Airport has been awarded the first position in the rankings of the best business hotels in Denmark. Not without a reason. Open in 2001, it has become an obvious choice for businesspeople coming to Denmark on business. The interior is very spacious and in the centre there is an atrium with glass roof – 45 metres high – thanks to which the hotel is filled with natural light throughout the day. The atrium connects four towers – each comprising 12 floors – where guestrooms are located. This original architectural idea makes the Copenhagen Hilton stand out of the crowd. Besides, it can also boast its comfortable rooms and excellent service. As for the decor, you can say it is very Scandinavian – which means that the main material is wood – both dark and light. It contributes to nice, family atmosphere and balances the modern furnishing like The Egg chair or the Swan chair by the famous designer Arne Jacobsen. One of the Egg chairs was used for the “Charity of fame” project. The chair was placed in the lobby, so that the celebrities could sign their autographs on it. It is going to be put up for auction in 2012, and the proceeds will support the Red Cross.

WHERE IS IT? It couldn't have a better location, especially if you are pressed for time and have a lot to do. Hilton is close in proximity to Kastrup airport, opposite Terminal 3, from where you can get to the reception area by using a comfortable roofed passageway. All business matters can be done on the spot, and if you need to get to the centre (Copenhagen is really worth visiting), you will probably be pleased to know that you can do it by using the underground or a train – the stations are located in the airport's underground. It takes only a couple of minutes to get to the famous Tivoli gardens. It is also a short distance from the 16-kilometre bridge over the Øresund strait which connects Denmark with Sweden.

ROOM FACILITIES The Copenhagen Hilton is a real conglomerate. It has 382 rooms, including 222 standard ones (the biggest in the city, starting from 33 sq m), 70 Deluxe rooms, 61 Executive rooms, 28 Executive Plus suites and one

presidential suite (160 sq m). The rooms come with manually-adjusted air conditioning, the Internet access, Pay TV, a mini bar, an ironing set, a laptop safe, coffee and tea making facilities, Bang & Olufsen TV sets, and a separate bathtub and a shower in the bathrooms. Guests can ask for one double or two single beds. The rooms are furnished with a comfortable workdesk, and there are huge floor-to-ceiling windows thanks to which the rooms naturally-lit. The windows are absolutely sound-proof, an important detail, given the fact that the hotel is located near the airport. The eleventh and twelfth floors are business-oriented with Executive and Executive Plus rooms. Besides bigger space, the guests can expect here the access to the Executive Lounge – a business lounge with a separate check in and check out option. In the lounge the guests can also have breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks, use the lounge bar, read international newspapers and have a rest by the fireplace. It is a highly luxurious place, ideal for informal business meetings.

BUSINESS FACILITIES As for business facilities, the hotel has prepared an offer called Hilton Meetings. It is about providing the guests with the maximum number of places equipped with modern amenities, as well as high quality service connected with organizing business events. The hotel's second floor has been arranged to cater for such purposes. There are 29 conference rooms of the area from 9-107 sq m – ideal to organize both small meetings and large conferences. There is also the Business Centre, which serves as a reception area on the second floor, but also provides the guests with a photocopier, a printer, a fax, a scanner and computers. Next to it, there is a lobby, often used for coffee breaks. Apart from this, there is the Ellehammer ballroom on the ground floor which is 404 sq m and holds up to 450 people. There are also 14 conference rooms located in the Terminal 3 of the airport.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS There are two restaurants and one bar in the hotel. All of them are situated on the lobby level and designed as an open space, which gives the guests an easy access. The Horizon All Day restaurant is open from 5.30 am till 10.30 pm and offers meals in a form of buffet. It specializes in international cuisine with Danish flavour (the famous smorebrod sandwiches are especially worth recommendation). The Hamlet

Nordic restaurant opens at 6.00 pm and offers Scandinavian dishes à la carte. The Axis Bar is open from 10.00 am to 1.00 am, and offers a wide selection of cocktails and snacks.

LEISURE The hotel offers its guests the access to the Ni'mat Spa salon – and its Thai name translates to English as “luxury”. The place is decorated in a typically Asian fashion. There are six massage rooms, a steam bath, a salt water pool, a fitness centre, and the hotel's special offer: “The Golden Egg” – an egg-shaped room, where you lie on a bed and indulge yourself with a series of electrically-adjusted massages.

VERDICT The best business-oriented Danish hotel: comfort, convenience, comprehensive service.

Ryszard Bandziejewicz



FACTS **CONTACT** Hilton Copenhagen Airport Ellehammersvej 20, Copenhagen, Denmark 2770 Tel: 45 32 501 501, hilton.com
PRICE An internet rate for a stay in a standard room was 2,195 DKK (about € 294).





RESTAURANT: WARSAW

Stry Dom

INFO Warsaw's Mokotów is slowly becoming a restaurant district, as there are more and more top-class gastronomic outlets which can easily compete with restaurants in the Old Town. One of them is Stry Dom, founded by Mariusz Diakowski – the owner of the Papu restaurant and Zielnik Cafe, Dariusz Zarembea, and a well-known actor, Piotr Adamczyk. You can easily say that the name speaks for itself – the founders wanted to refer back to the best traditions of Polish cuisine and create a welcoming atmosphere. The guests have access to three rooms, including a conservatory, a VIP room and a mezzanine. The restaurant offers 250 covers.

LOCATION Stry Dom is situated in one of the Warsaw's longest streets – Puławska, in a frequently visited area, because of the proximity of Warszawańka – the only aqua park in the capital. The offices of Polish Radio and Television are not far away from here, so you can expect to meet here quite a lot of people with known faces and voices. The restaurant is located in a building with a long history of good cuisine. In the 1950's the then Słowiańska restaurant was a favourite with jockeys and fans of horse racing. In later years the Gościniec Opolski served delicacies from Silesia.

THE INTERIOR The interior is decorated in brown colours with old photographs alluding to family traditions, which makes it look very cosy – just like the owners wanted it. Wooden panelling and other accessories like wall-mounted sideboards, shelves filled with old bottles and wooden beams under the ceiling contribute to the feeling of warmth. The lighting plays an important part in it – stylish chandeliers make the place look mysterious.

MENU The food – the most important thing in a restaurant – in Stry Dom was divided into several sections. In Cold Buffet you will find, among many, Quiche en amoured chef (mushroom, leek or spinach), herring under the duvet with grated apple, chopped onions and salted gherkins, as well as steak tartare – expertly chopped at your table by a senior chef – one of the local specialties. The chefs platter of Polish specialties for 2 persons will also catch your attention: slices of baked bacon, wild boar plate with wild mushrooms, liver sausage and black pudding. Soups include broth, tripe, and sour soup – each of them truly delicious. Hot Starters include bigos (hunter stew), fried kidneys in garlic and parsley, a selection of dumplings or gołąbki (cabbage rolls) “as mum makes them”. Among Hot Buffet you will find: pork chop, famous beef with

grated horseradish, de Volaille, cod filet, or roasted duck and rabbit. There is also pork knuckle and ribs. Stry Dom also offers a wide selection of salads and vegetables. Among Desserts you will find apple pie, mazurek, cheesecake and meringue torte. The local patisserie makes the desserts to order, so the high quality and good taste are guaranteed.

PRICES Cold buffet starters cost between PLN16 – 25, only the chefs platter costs PLN 55, but it is a dish for at least 2 people. Broth with noodles costs PLN 14, and sour soup – PLN 19. Bigos soured in red wine costs PLN 21, kidneys – PLN 23, and cabbage rolls with tomato sauce cost PLN 24. For PLN 24 you will get a composition of green salad and lots of vitamins. Pork chop costs PLN 23, beef with grated horseradish – PLN 24, cod fillet – PLN 26, and Beef Stroganoff – PLN 33. Prices of desserts vary between PLN 15-21.

Tomasz Kacperski

FACTS **CONTACT** Stry Dom
ul. Puławska 104/106
02-620 Warszawa
tel. +48 22 646 42 08
restauracjastarydom.pl

VERDICT An interesting place with an interesting guiding idea. Peaceful atmosphere, good cuisine.



CAR RENTAL: WARSAW

Avis

INFO Warren Avis opened his first small car rental station at Willow Run Airport in Detroit in 1946 with only three cars to rent. He probably didn't expect that this idea will bring about such remarkable effects. Over a period of few years it became the second largest car rental company and in 1956 opened its first international offices. The expansion was successful and today the cars featuring the characteristic red logo of the company can be seen at any airport all over the world. In Poland Avis has been present for almost 20 years, with over a dozen of rental stations and nearly 1,000 cars to rent.

FORMALITIES I was going to Łódź for a quite important meeting, so I asked the company to bring the vehicle to our Warsaw office, as I found out that the company offers such a service. It really saves your time and helps you better plan your day and the trip itself.

I arranged the pick up time for the noon. The formalities are quite similar to those which are necessary when picking up a car from the company's station. The reservation must be done a few days in advance in the reservations office of the company or in the rental station at Okęcie airport. You must provide your personal details: name, date, time and of course the address at which the car is to be brought. You will also be asked about the method of payment (individual customers provide their credit card details, but in case of a business you can ask for a different method). You will choose your car from the catalogue. They are classified into groups and you

will definitely find something which will suit your needs. I didn't have any doubt as to which car I was going to choose, as Avis has recently introduced to their stations the newest Volvo S60 – model 2011. I couldn't resist the occasion.

The driver brought my car on time. He then checked my driver's license, presented the documents to sign, and asked me to follow him to the car park in order to inspect the vehicle (this is a standard procedure where the customer checks if the car is in an appropriate condition, doesn't have any scratches etc.).

THE CAR Outside there was a black, beautiful, and brand new Volvo waiting for me. I took my keys and documents, then put my bag into the boot and set off. The odometer displayed 30 kilometres of mileage, so I concluded that I was the first customer who was able to test the car. The two litre engine is a real monster and the 165 HP it produces, makes it extremely safe, as there is no problem at all with dynamic acceleration during overtaking and other manoeuvres. The automatic transmission is perfectly aligned with the engine. Add to this the fuel consumption which only slightly exceeded 6 litres of diesel fuel per 100 kilometres on extra-urban roads. In other words, the whole trip was extremely pleasant. The only shortcoming I found was probably an inappropriate design of the seat which, at the end of my trip, slightly bothered my back..

RETURNING THE CAR After the meeting I drove to the hotel. I left the car at an attended car park, and the fol-

AVIS®

lowing morning returned to Warsaw. This time the trip took me two hours due to terrible traffic jams in Warsaw. That is why I decided to return the vehicle directly to the station at Okęcie airport. The whole procedure took less time than the day before. The member of staff asked me about the impressions on the car's handling, took the keys and documents, and I was free to go. You can feel that the company is used to fast work. For returning customers Avis has prepared a service called Avis Preferred, which guarantees that you will receive your car within 3 minutes – otherwise you will be entitled to receive a €30 voucher.

PRICES In Poland Avis offers a large number of vehicles in several groups marked with letters. Group A includes the smallest cars (e.g. Opel Corsa), while the following letters mean larger vehicles with better equipment (e.g. in group D you will find Volvo S40, and in group F Audi Q5). The company also offers trucks and campers. The prices depend on the type of a vehicle, the date of rental, and bonuses – so it's worth checking all the details on the phone or at the company's website.

VERDICT A good car, attractive rental conditions, and procedures which are kept to a minimum. Before you return the car, remember to top up its fuel tank. If you forget to do so, you must prepare to bear additional costs.

■ Avis; reservations office 22 572 65 65 or 0 801 120 010; avis.pl

Tomasz Kacperski





Business Traveller Awards

2010 Announced

We are presenting you with the results of the voting by the readers of the British Business Traveller magazine, announced at a big ceremony at the London Royal Garden Hotel. Receiving such an award has for many years been considered an honour. They are granted to airlines, hotel groups, car rental companies, airports, but also to railway companies and luggage manufacturers.

The prestige of the award has been built for many years. Today the awards are recognised as a benchmark for excellence within the business travel and hospitality sector. Some of the winners, like for example the airport in Singapore, have been unbeaten for

many years. We are glad to know that our Polish air carrier has for many years been recognized as the best in our part of Europe.

The British BT Awards are not the only ones. The awards granted by the Asian edition of our magazine enjoy equal popularity. Soon the Polish edition of Business Traveller will join in and grant its own awards. Go to page 5 of this issue and fill in a survey. You can also do it online at our website businesstraveller.pl

The main advantage of the Business Traveller Awards is the fact that they for years they have been voted for by the strictest as well as most objective panel of judges – the magazine’s readers. Several categories, hard competition, some obvious winners, and several surprises. Who won in 2010? Here are the results.

The representatives of LOT Polish Airlines are being presented another Business Traveller Award for the best Eastern European airline.



Amsterdam Schiphol – best airport in Europe.



Singapore Airlines – best cabin staff.



Virgin Atlantic Clubhouse, Heathrow – best lounge.

AIRLINES

BEST AIRLINE

- 1 Singapore Airlines
- 2 Emirates
- 3 British Airways
- 4 Cathay Pacific
- 5 Virgin Atlantic

BEST SHORT-HAUL CARRIER

- 1 British Airways
- 2 Swiss International Air Lines
- 3 Eurostar
- 4 Bmi

BEST LONG-HAUL CARRIER

- 1 Singapore Airlines
- 2 British Airways
- 3 Emirates
- 4 Virgin Atlantic

BEST FREQUENT FLYER PROGRAMME

- 1 British Airways Executive Club
- 2 Lufthansa Miles & More
- 3 Bmi Diamond Club
- 4 Virgin Atlantic Flying Club

BEST FIRST CLASS

- 1 Emirates
- 2 Singapore Airlines
- 3 British Airways
- 4 Etihad Airways

BEST BUSINESS CLASS

- 1 Singapore Airlines
- 2 British Airways
- 3 Qatar Airways
- 4 Emirates
- 5 Virgin Atlantic

BEST PREMIUM ECONOMY CLASS

- 1 Virgin Atlantic
- 2 Air New Zealand
- 3 Qantas
- 4 British Airways

BEST ECONOMY CLASS

- 1 Singapore Airlines
- 2 Emirates
- 3 British Airways
- 4 Air New Zealand

BEST EASTERN EUROPEAN AIRLINE

- 1 PLL LOT
- 2 CSA Czech Airlines
- 3 Malev Hungarian Airlines
- 4 Wizz Air

BEST CABIN STAFF

- 1 Singapore Airlines
- 2 Cathay Pacific
- 3 British Airways
- 4 Virgin Atlantic

BEST AIRLINE ALLIANCE

- 1 Star Alliance
- 2 Oneworld
- 3 Skyteam

BEST LOW-COST AIRLINE

- 1 Easyjet
- 2 Air Asia
- 3 Air Berlin
- 4 Flybe

AIRPORTS

BEST AIRPORT IN THE WORLD

- 1 Singapore Changi Airport
- 2 Hong Kong International Airport
- 3 Dubai International Airport
- 4 London Heathrow Airport

BEST AIRPORT LOUNGE

- 1 Virgin Atlantic Clubhouse, Londyn Heathrow
- 2 British Airways, Londyn Heathrow T5
- 3 Cathay Pacific, Hong Kong
- 4 Singapore Airlines SilverKris Lounge, Singapur

BEST AIRPORT FOR TAX-FREE SHOPPING

- 1 Londyn Heathrow Airport
- 2 Singapur Changi Airport
- 3 Dubai International Airport
- 4 Hong Kong International Airport

BEST AIRPORT IN EUROPE

- 1 Amsterdam Schiphol
- 2 Londyn Heathrow
- 3 Monachium
- 4 Zurych

HOTELS

BEST BUSINESS HOTEL CHAIN WORLDWIDE

- 1 Hilton
- 2 Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts
- 3 InterContinental
- 4 Marriott
- 5 Sheraton

BEST BUSINESS HOTEL CHAIN IN EUROPE

- 1 Hilton
- 2 InterContinental
- 3 Sheraton
- 4 Sofitel

BEST BUDGET HOTEL CHAIN

- 1 Holiday Inn Express
- 2 Premier Inn
- 3 Ibis
- 4 Travelodge

BEST LUXURY HOTEL CHAIN

- 1 Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts
- 2 Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts
- 3 InterContinental
- 4 Mandarin Oriental

BEST HOTEL LOYALTY SCHEME

- 1 Starwood Preferred Guest
- 2 Hilton HHonors
- 3 Intercontinental Priority Club
- 4 Marriott Rewards

BEST BUSINESS HOTEL WORLDWIDE

- 1 Shangri-La, Singapur
- 2 The Peninsula, Hong Kong
- 3 Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok
- 4 The Peninsula, Bangkok

BEST BUSINESS HOTEL IN WESTERN EUROPE

- 1 Four Seasons George V, Paryż
- 2 Hilton Arc de Triomphe, Paryż
- 3 InterContinental, Paryż
- 4 InterContinental, Frankfurt

BEST BUSINESS HOTEL IN EASTERN EUROPE

- 1 Hilton, Praga
- 2 Four Seasons, Praga
- 3 Four Seasons, Budapeszt
- 4 JW Marriott, Bukareszt

BEST AIRPORT HOTEL

- 1 Regal Airport Hotel, Hong Kong
- 2 Sofitel London Heathrow
- 3 Crowne Plaza, Singapur
- 4 Hilton London Heathrow

CAR RENTAL COMPANY'S

BEST CAR RENTAL COMPANY WORLDWIDE

- 1 Avis
- 2 Hertz
- 3 Europcar
- 4 Budget

BEST CAR RENTAL COMPANY IN EUROPE

- 1 Avis
- 2 Hertz
- 3 Europcar
- 4 Sixt

OTHER CATEGORIES

FAVOURITE LUGGAGE BRAND

- 1 Samsonite
- 2 Tumi
- 3 Delsey
- 4 Antler



101 TIPS

...to make travelling easier

The *Business Traveller* team suggests tried and tested ways to improve your business trips



1 Keep your bag partially packed so you only have to add clean clothes for each trip.

2 Create a list of all the items you will need so you can check them off each time you pack. Remember this should include things such as adaptors, chargers, toiletries and medical supplies, as well as clothes.

3 Lay all your clothes out before packing them as this will help you to avoid taking several items away that are almost identical.

4 Pack crease-free clothing to eliminate the need for ironing. Put socks, chargers and other small items inside your shoes – it cuts down on space and means they will be easy to find.

5 Limit yourself to basic colours that co-ordinate, such as black, white or grey, then add colour through your accessories to change the look of your outfits.

6 Check your insurance, particularly if you are combining a work trip with leisure, visiting an unusual destination or trying adventurous activities.

7 The Identity and Passport Service (IPS) advises you to make two photocopies of your passport – one to leave at home and one to keep with you when travelling. You should report a lost or stolen passport to the police and inform the British Consulate when abroad, or the IPS and local police when in the UK. Visit ips.gov.uk

8 Put together a brief itinerary on one sheet of paper with your meeting times, locations and contacts. Keep this on your person so if your phone battery runs out – taking your diary and contacts with it – you can refer to it easily.

9 Order some local currency in advance, including small denomination notes in case you need to get a taxi, tip a porter or buy a snack or drink on the way to your hotel.

10 Make sure your credit cards won't be blocked for "unexpected activity" when using them abroad and that you know the PINs.

11 If your destination country has a strong currency, it can be better to change sterling (if it is relatively strong) at a bank there.

12 If roaming calls are expensive – for example, in the UAE – or you are in a certain country for extended periods of time, get an overseas SIM card or mobile.

13 Use whitening eye-drops for instant freshness during long flights or nights in stuffy air conditioned rooms.

14 Your feet swell during long-haul flights so consider packing a shoe horn in your hand luggage.

15 Remove the credit and loyalty cards you don't need from your wallet. Don't carry your driving licence unless you need to – if you lose this, it has your full name, date and place of birth, address and photo on it. Perfect fodder for identity fraud.

16 Take your ethernet cable with you in case the hotel doesn't have wifi as some charge for providing one.

17 Pack painkillers, Berocca energising tablets, vitamin C, caffeine pills and mints so you are fresh the next day even after a heavy night out with clients.

18 Carry two travel plugs that have a USB adaptor to charge phones and gadgets, and take a spare USB stick.

19 Put a few plastic bags in your suitcase for putting dirty laundry in or wrapping any bottles of liquids.



20 Use packing aids to organise your suitcase (see "Pack it in", page 48).

21 If you like a particular type of tea, bring some with you in case the hotel doesn't have any.

22 Ladies – re-pack your handbag before you go, take out anything unnecessary and check for stray liquids such as lip gloss. You don't want to empty the whole thing in front of everyone in security.

23 Wherever possible, check in online and select your seat before you travel, consulting seatplans.com beforehand to see where the best place to sit is.

24 Download mobile boarding passes where possible to make the check-in and boarding process quicker, and to cut down on extraneous paper documentation.

25 Boots sells 100ml empty bottles to decant your favourite toiletries into if you are travelling with hand luggage only. Likewise, a Travalo perfume atomiser (about £8 from travalo.com) means you don't have to pack a whole bottle of scent. It holds 50 sprays and can be taken through security.

26 Invest in a Skype headset (from £14, skype.com) to talk for free from your hotel room.

27 The Powermonkey Explorer (£65, powermonkey-explorer.com) portable charger has adaptors and USB ports for re-energising all your gadgets – and it's solar powered so you won't be left stranded when out and about.

28 Depending on your destination, paramountzone.com's Wind Up Mobile Phone Charger (£4.99) could come in handy.

29 Avoid excess baggage fines with a Flylight self-weighting suitcase (£79.99, flylightluggage.co.uk). It can measure to within 0.5kg of an airport weighing machine.

30 Travelling can be hard on your lips. Rehydrate them with Crème de La Mer's Lip Balm (£30.60, cremedelamer.com) – it has a slight minty taste, and when you put it on it doesn't look like you are wearing lip gloss, so it is good for men as well. Clinique also has a travel pack of five mini Superbalm glosses for women (£22.50, clinique.co.uk).

31 Carry a moisturiser – try Jo Malone's Vitamin E Nourishing Hand Treatment (£32, jomalone.co.uk). Estée Lauder's Super Flight Crème comes in two types, for your face and eyes (£36, estee-lauder.co.uk).

32 Cleanse your face before a flight and avoid very hot water as it will dry your skin out even further.

33 Use the Stylus clip-on Book Light (£14, thinkingsgifts.com) to avoid disturbing your fellow passengers on night flights.

34 Log on to wifi-enabled gadgets such as the iPad with the Novatel Mi-fi Wireless Intelligent Mobile Hotspot device. Up to five people can synch to the "connectivity cloud" at any time. It costs £200 and there are monthly packages. Visit novatelwireless.com

35 Check out No 1 Traveller (no1traveller.com), which offers Mercedes-Benz chauffeur services to and from London Gatwick, Stansted and Heathrow for about £60, and airport lounge access from £17.50.

36 A holder for your passport can store frequent flyer cards and boarding passes too – you can also put important details such as your insurance in it.

37 Before you go, print out the relevant Business Traveller Four-Hour Guide from businesstraveller.com/city-guides

38 Check the weather and currency exchange before departure at businesstraveller.com/plan-and-book

39 Travelling with hand luggage only means you can avoid check-in charges. If you are struggling to get everything in your carry-on bag, wear a multi-pocket jacket. Scottevest's Travel Vest for Men (US\$100, scottevest.com) has 22 pockets – wear it to board and then place it in the overhead locker.

40 Slide your business card inside your luggage tag so that if your bag is lost, it will be easier for the airline to reunite you with it. You could also consider adding your hotel details, although perhaps not your home address if you are worried about theft.

41 Use a coloured luggage tag – it will make your bag more easily identifiable on the conveyor belt.

42 If you want to move to a better seat, politely ask check-in staff if the plane is fully booked.

43 Don't board the plane hungry – if take-off is delayed, it could be a while before you get fed. Either eat in the airport lounge or buy something to take on board.

44 Flying budget? Buy a snack at the airport or pack a lunch in your hand luggage if you can get it through security. WHSmith and Boots have "meal deals" for about £3 that include a drink, crisps and a sandwich.

45 If you like an alcoholic drink in your hotel room, consider buying some small tax-free bottles at the airport instead of those in the minibar – it will be much cheaper.

101 TIPS

...to make travelling easier

46 Charge your laptop fully before you fly. If you are going long-haul, keep your charger in your hand luggage to power it on board.

47 In the lounge, ask whether they will call your flight or if you need to keep an eye on the screens. Don't leave it too late to board as gates can be a good walk away.

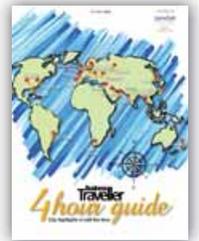
48 Take a large bottle of mineral water with you if you are travelling long-haul in economy class.

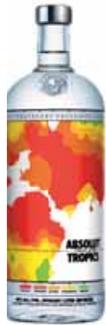
49 Join Worldpoints loyalty scheme to make the most of airport shopping. With Worldpoints (baaworldpoints.com) you can earn a point for every pound you spend at Heathrow, Stansted, Southampton, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen to redeem on things such as frequent flyer miles and parking.

50 Sign up for airport fast-track immigration scheme IRIS, which is available at Heathrow, Gatwick, Manchester and Birmingham – and look out for the new digital biometric passport scanning machines at border control at Heathrow T1, 4 and 5.

51 Always check your luggage receipt has the correct details on if you are checking a bag in at the airport.

52 Take your jacket and belt off and get your laptop out before you join the security queue – it will make the process that bit quicker.





53 If you check in your luggage, take a change of underwear/socks/T-shirt in your hand baggage so that if your bag is mislaid you can at least change clothes.

54 Take noise-cancelling headphones for flights as the ones on board won't always be of good quality.

55 Don't assume the in-flight entertainment will work – take a book, magazine or your own portable DVD player.

56 Pack a pair of comfy trousers and a T-shirt to change into on the plane so you can relax and keep your smart clothes crease-free. Then change back into them before you land.

57 Ladies – invest in a good-quality pashmina. It will add a little luxury to your travels and doubles as a blanket if you get cold on board the plane.

58 Wet wipes are good for cleaning hands and grubby in-flight entertainment remotes, and a fresh face immediately makes you feel better on a long flight.

59 Orientate yourself with the aircraft cabin and count the number of seatbacks to the nearest exit – in an emergency it may be your best way off the plane if visibility is poor.

60 Read the safety card in the pocket in front of you as these differ from aircraft to aircraft, and watch the safety demo.

61 If you want peace and quiet after take-off, put headphones on even if you are not listening to anything to avoid having to talk to your neighbour.

62 Sometimes your ears won't pop – if it is prolonged and causing real pain, an old trick for treating it is "hot cups". Ask the crew for a plastic cup for each ear and two cloths dampened with boiling water to put in them.

Then hold them over your ears for a couple of minutes. The heat generated will create a small vacuum that should unblock your ears and ease any pain.

63 Take a universal adaptor on to the plane as not all seats will have the right sockets for your region.

64 If travelling economy long-haul, it will make a huge difference to get more legroom. Consider paying for "economy comfort" seats for extra space, and avoid the rows closest to the galley, toilets and bassinets to minimise disturbance.

65 If you are on a night flight in coach, take your own ear plugs and cotton eye mask – few airlines provide economy passengers with ear plugs and the eye masks are often cheap plastic, which can make your face sweat.

66 Take time to acclimatise and get your bearings on arrival.

67 At a new airport, fight the urge to jump in the nearest taxi as they can be expensive. Instead, ask at information for alternative transportation options such as trains and shuttle buses.

68 If you need to get a taxi in an unfamiliar city, ask at your hotel what kind of price you should expect to pay or negotiate before you get in to avoid getting ripped off.

69 If you can't access a map of the city on your phone, carry a paper one with you – it will be helpful for finding your way around. You could also show it to taxi drivers if they do not know where you are heading – not every cabbie has a satnav.

70 Learn a few words of the local language and read up on overseas customs – it will go a long way with foreign clients. ▶



101 TIPS

...to make travelling easier



lounge, as sometimes you can be out for longer than you intended in a foreign city.

78 Pack your own toiletries in case your hotel doesn't have the full complement – for example, it might have shower gel and shampoo but no conditioner. Always carry toothpaste as hotels rarely stock this in-room.

79 Check the premium you would pay for the Club floor as it may be less than the cost of the breakfast, which will be free in the lounge along with benefits such as internet and meeting room access.

80 Check the fire escape information on the back of the hotel door and walk the route it suggests – it's easier doing this when fully awake, with the lights on and without smoke filling the corridor. If there isn't a route on the back of the door, check out and find a different hotel.

81 Avoid paying credit card bills in your home currency as the exchange rate may be worse than that offered by your card company.

82 Go easy on the booze – it will dehydrate you and leave you feeling out of sorts when you land. Similarly, know your limits at client lunches and dinners. Drink plus jet lag equals poor performance, and most cultures aren't as impressed as we are at how much we can drink.

83 If you have trouble sleeping, take melatonin (a naturally occurring hormone that helps to regulate your circadian rhythms) or do some light exercise before you go to bed. Try not to eat, watch TV or check your emails immediately before retiring as it may interfere with your sleep.

84 If you are travelling long-haul, adjust to the local time as quickly as you can

71 Use a separate wallet or file for work receipts to help keep control of your expenses, and take a receipt book with you in case you don't know how to ask for one in the local language or your taxi driver doesn't have any.

72 If you're a light sleeper, pack ear plugs and ask for a quiet room away from the lifts – they can be very noisy areas of the hotel. An inward-facing room may be the best option to avoid street noise.

73 If you're renting a car, check whether central car hire locations are cheaper than the kiosks at the airport. If you wait until the next day you may save money and it will give you a chance to get familiar with your surroundings.

74 Ask if you need a password for in-room internet before you go up to avoid having to ring down.

75 If in-room wifi comes at a cost, see if internet use is free in the business centre and log on there instead.

76 Find out whether free mineral water is provided in your room. If not, grab a bottle in a shop on your way back to the hotel to keep by your bed, otherwise you will end up paying through the nose if you wake up in the night with a thirst.

77 Carry snacks such as nuts or take the biscuits from your hotel room or Club

– change the clock on your phone and watch straight away, and try to stay up until your “normal” bedtime. If you get home in the day, resist the urge to sleep because you will pay for it later.

85 Don't over-eat – just because you have to dine out with clients two or three times a day, it doesn't mean you have to consume all the bread, order three courses and clear your plate.

86 If there is a gym at the hotel, use it – you're paying for it, after all (see “Fit for purpose”, page 62).

87 Use iPhone/iPad apps such as the NHS Drinks Tracker or a calorie counter. Or visit livestrong.com for lifestyle advice.

88 Treat yourself to a massage – Gentlemen's Tonic (gentlemenstonic.com) in London has a signature treatment aimed at travellers. Alternatively, try meditation to help you relax. Visit t-m.org.uk for more information on transcendental meditation courses in the UK.

89 Don't buy gifts at the airport, as souvenirs and confectionery will cost more and are less personal.

90 Make sure you have something in the freezer that's easy to heat up for dinner if you are arriving home late.

91 When you get home, take the time to email new people you've met – even if you don't have immediate business with them, it will help to cement the relationship in the future.

92 Sign up for credit cards that offer air miles, lounge access, upgrades and other travel benefits – Amex is a good example. Visit americanexpress.co.uk

93 Get a “lifestyle concierge” to arrange everything for you. Visit tenlifestyle.com or call +44 (0) 20 7479 3300.

94 Don't spread yourself too thin when it comes to hotel and airline loyalty schemes – if you join too many, you won't accumulate the significant rewards associated with high tier status and mileage/points levels. Stick to your favourite brands where possible.

95 Do your tax-free shopping online through the airline website and get it sent to your home – try highlifeshop.com or go to baa.com, for example.

96 Think about adding your Twitter, Skype ID, LinkedIn and Facebook details to your business card to facilitate social networking.

97 Check travel apps for your destination – there may be maps and guides available for download.

98 Use the Google Docs server to make changes to documents while you are away instead of doing it by email. It is more secure and you can track changes.

99 If you are a solo female business traveller, networking sites such as ladiesaway.com and maiden-voyage.com offer a safe way of linking up with other women when away.

100 Turn off data roaming on your smartphone or iPad to avoid costly charges when using email, web browsing and other data services abroad.

101 If you like the idea of location-based software, log on to Facebook Places/Gowalla/Foursquare – but not if you don't want others to know your whereabouts.

■ Do you have a travel tip you'd like to share? Let us know at businesstraveller.com/discussion





BERLIN AIRPORTS

Each year the two airports of the capital of Germany handle over 20 million passengers. However, soon they will be replaced by a new airport: Berlin Brandenburg International and this fact may cause a big shake-up in the region.

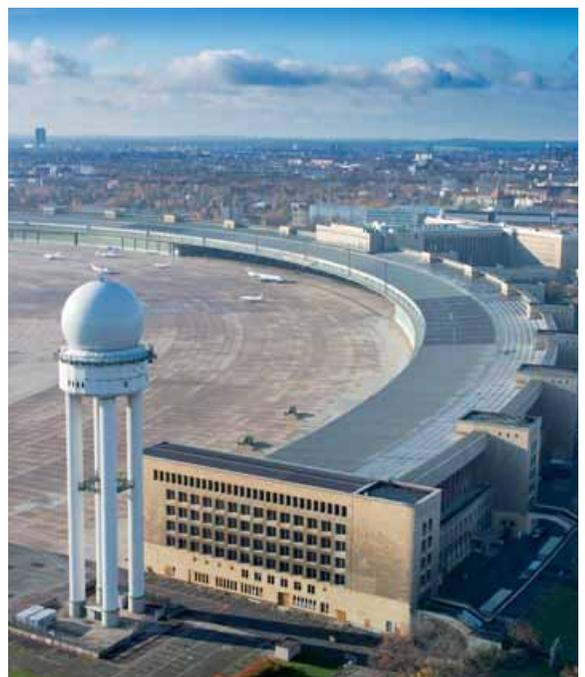
Berlin airports Tegel and Schönefeld are not a competition to such giant airports as the ones in Frankfurt or Munich. Both of them are run by one company: Berlin Airports. Tegel is mostly oriented towards international destinations, while Schönefeld is mainly used by numerous low-cost air carriers and for charter flights.

Last year, both Berlin airports were used by 77 airlines, handling over 20 million passengers, and flying to 166 destinations in over 50 countries. These include a number of long-haul connections e.g. to Doha, Beijing, Bangkok, and obviously to

New York. The most recent, winter schedule includes also new destinations – this time to Dubai, Miami, and Mombasa.

FROM ROCKETS TO PLANES

Tegel airport is named after Otto Lilienthal and is the economic backbone of Berlin Airports. It is located 8 kilometres northwest of the city of Berlin where over 120 years ago there was a Prussian artillery firing range. In 1930s the area was used as an experimental rocket testing and research facility where German-American rocket pioneer Wernher von Braun worked until 1937. When the “cold war” began and Soviets started the Berlin





Blockade, it quickly turned out that Berlin's existing main airport at Tempelhof was not big enough to accommodate all relief aircraft. As a consequence, the French military authorities in charge of Tegel at that time ordered the construction of a 2,428 meter-long runway, the longest in Europe at the time, as well as provisional airport buildings and basic infrastructure. In the late 50s Tegel started to operate commercial flights from West Berlin to various European countries. After the re-unification of Germany the number of operated flights grew dramatically.

The characteristic hexagonal shape of the buildings of Tegel airport was an idea of architect Meinhard von Gerkan. The infrastructure includes Terminal A, with car parks, a taxi rank, and a bus stop. The outer part of the terminal consists of 14 boarding bridges and the inner part accommodates 16 check-in desks. The roof

also plays the role of an observation deck. Terminal B (also called "Nebel-Hall" after German spaceflight pioneer Rudolf Nebel) is a converted former waiting area in a side wing of the main building (check-in counters B20–B39). There is only one bus-boarding aircraft stand directly serving it. Terminal C was opened in May 2007 as a temporary solution (as the airport is scheduled for closure in 2012) because all other terminals were full to capacity. Terminal D, a converted car park, was opened in 2001. It features 22 check-in counters, with one bus-boarding gate and two walk-boarding gates. Most passengers of airlines operating smaller aircraft are brought to the remote aircraft stands by bus from here. Terminal D is the only part of the airport that remains open all night long. The lower level arrival area is called Terminal E.

When "the cold war" ended, the air traffic at Tegel dramatically increased.

You can quickly reach the airport by car, using A110 and A111 motorways, but it's also possible to get there by public transport – I recommend Jet Express Bus service (buses 128, 109 and X9). Next to P2 car park there are offices of car rental companies such as Avis, Budget, Europcar, Hertz, and Sixt.

The airport's infrastructure may not be too impressive, but you can find there over 20 designer stores (almost all of them are located in so-called Boulevard Tegel in Terminal A). There are also four business lounges, one for passengers of all airlines and three others run by Lufthansa, British Airways, and Air France. Wifi is available throughout the airport, but the access is paid. The airport offers seven conference rooms which are able to accommodate from 6 (Junkers rooms) to 24 (Lilienthal room) people. There are a large number of hotels located around the airport where you could stay while on your business trip. The closest ones are Mercure Airport and Dorint Airport.

SCHÖNEFELD

The smaller and more crowded Berlin airport, which is located 18 kilometres from the centre of the capital, used to be a pride of the German Democratic Republic. There are two 3-kilometre runways and an apron which can accommodate up to 36 mid-size aircraft.

To get there by car you should take A11 (from Szczecin) or A12 motorway. If you prefer to use public transport, you may take S-Bahn S9 and S45 railway lines, U7 underground line, or bus 171. Taxi ranks are located along all terminals, while car rental offices are to be found opposite Terminal A.

Four terminals have a total area of almost 18,000 sq m, feature 52 check-in desks (last year over 6 million passengers were served there), and are connected by a passageway. Terminal C was originally built to accommodate flights to Israel. It was reconfigured in 2008 and now handles sightseeing trips and flights in connection with special events.

There are nine bars and cafeterias, and over dozen small shops with three larger duty free zones – definitely not enough as for an airport of this size.

Business passengers flying from Schönefeld may use only one business lounge called Hugo-Junkers-Lounge which is open until 8 pm. The airport's conference centre has 7 meeting rooms. ▶





The largest one can accommodate up to 300 people.

Similarly to Tegel, there is wireless Internet access at Schönefeld airport, but it is chargeable (you can pay with a credit card). The closest hotels are Holiday Inn Berlin-Schönefeld Airport (about 2 kilometres from the airport), and Leonardo Airport Hotel.

CHANGES

The Germans have precisely set the date of launching the new Berlin's airport. This will happen on 3 June 2012 and the fact may cause a major shake-up in the aviation market in our region. The new Brandenburg International (BBI) airport

is being built near Schönefeld airport and it's going to take over the whole air traffic in Berlin. Tegel will be closed, as was Tempelhof airport which stopped its operations in October 2008.

Brandenburg International will be located 20 kilometres from the centre of Berlin and it will take only 20 minutes for the airport shuttle to cover this distance. Add to this a convenient motorway access, a railway station situated next to the terminal, and numerous buses.

The brochure which promotes BBI says that the Polish border is only 70 kilometres away, so getting to the airport from Poland shouldn't take more than two hours. Will it then become a serious

When the new Berlin's airport opens in 2012, this fact may cause a big shake-up in the region.

competition for our domestic airports? The answer seems to be obvious.

BBI will stretch over 1,500 ha – which is the area equal to 2,000 football pitches. This giant infrastructure, whose U-shaped terminal will cover almost 280,000 square metres (according to the idea of a “one roof terminal”), will provide convenient service to over 27 million passengers each year. Additional terminals have already been incorporated into the plans and the final capacity after completion of all expansions is given as 50 million passenger per year. The port will be named after the former German Chancellor and Mayor of West-Berlin Willy Brandt. ■

Jakub Olgiewicz



UNDER A GOOD *Roof*

Warszawa da się lubić (Warsaw is likeable) – a title of a song by Adolf Dymsza is more and more relevant these days in the capital. Also owing to the new investments. One of them is Foksal Residence.

If you asked an average resident of Warsaw where they would like to live, they would surely choose one of the bordering quarters of the capital. Their dream was to have a house on the outskirts of Warsaw. It has changed however, and many people who once bought a house away from the centre, now are coming back there. Why? Firstly, despite numerous investments in the road infrastructure, commuting every day takes too much time. Secondly, the centre of Warsaw is developing, although it already has a lot to offer as regard cultural activities. And thirdly, the real estate market has now new and remarkably attractive offers to consider. If you are looking for a really comfortable suite – there are plenty to choose from – one of the most interesting enterprises is Foksal Residence, which is due to be opened next year.

THE HEART OF THE CITY

The building is located between Kopernik, Foksal and Gałczyński street, near the Nowy Świat district. It is one of the most prestigious locations in the capital. And prestige comes together with quality. Foksal Residence will offer 30 high quality suites, small offices and service es-



tablishments, as well as a spa centre and a squash room. Other amenities include separate wine-ageing cellars providing appropriate temperature and humidity.

The architectural design thanks to its composition and details alludes to the style of modernism. You can also see that the residence was modelled after buildings erected at the turn of the 19th and 20th century, and in the 1930s in the USA. At that time sculptures were an integral part of the construction. And so is the case with Foksal Residence. The architects from Juvenes studio: Krzysztof Tyszkiewicz, Michał Adamczyk and Sławomir Stankiewicz invited to cooperation an outstanding sculptor and a professor of The Academy of Fine Arts – Antoni Janusz Pastwa. He designed the low reliefs on the elevations seen from the Kopernik, Przyboś and Gałczyński streets. It has been the first such enormous sculpting project in Polish commercial architecture for years.

The project depicts organic forms inspired by flowers (sunflowers, lilies, papyrus) which dominate in the bottom parts of the composition and smoothly turn into simpler geometrical forms.

Another material used in construction of Foksal Residence, which was charac-

teristic for the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, but not used in the architectural projects for years, is cast iron. It will be used in certain elements of balcony balustrades, window frames and other ornaments.

PEACE AND LUXURY

The interior of Foksal Residence is inspired by the art deco style. It was completed with the use of noble materials: marble, onyx, granite intarsias, rosewood veneers. Residents will have access to the swimming pool with a decorative element in a form of a smaller pool with exotic fish, and in the entry hall there will be an aviary with birds. A concierge will be on hand for residents convenience. There will also be a special lift for wine storage.

Foksal Residence will consist of 7 floors, including 5 residential ones. The suites will occupy the area of 4840 sq m. There will be 30 suites, including two two-level ones, with green terraces accessible from the mezzanine level. The average area of each suite will be 150 sq m. Each one will feature floor-to-ceiling windows, large balconies, a fireplace and central air conditioning which can be manually adjusted. The suite ceilings are 3 metres high. ■

A Real Star **Alliance**

Easier transfers, one frequent flyer programme, access to business lounges, and numerous promotions – these are just a few out of many benefits available to passengers who travel with member airlines of airline alliances. LOT Polish Airlines is a member of Star Alliance – the largest organisation.

Star Alliance is the world's first and largest airline alliance, founded in 1997 by five airlines, Air Canada, Lufthansa, Scandinavian Airlines, Thai Airways International and United Airlines whose main aim was to offer customers worldwide reach and a smooth travel experience. The idea caught on. Today Star Alliance has 28 member airlines with a fleet of over 4,000 aircraft and employing over 400,000 people. The alliance currently has more than 21,200 daily departures to 1,172 airports in 181 countries, with an annual passenger number of 623.53 million, and almost 1,000 business lounges across the world.



FOR PASSENGERS...

The benefits offered by the members of the alliance are truly impressive. One of the greatest advantages is the membership in frequent flyer programmes, which are combined within Star Alliance. Independently of the loyalty programme we take part in, earning and redeeming points takes place within the whole system created by 28 airlines. In other words, if you have a Miles&More card issued by LOT, you can also earn your points while travelling by e.g. Portuguese TAP, or German Lufthansa – it's just enough to present your membership card on boarding the plane. Each member may reach a higher status within the programme, receiving access to various services available to Silver or Gold status of the whole alliance (although Star Alliance doesn't have its own loyalty programme). The benefits include access to business lounges, priority boarding and priority reservations waitlisting, an additional 20kg (44 pounds) or one additional piece of luggage² which means you can check in three bags instead of two. Another very important thing is an option to redeem your points (or miles) for awards in each of the member airlines of the alliance. In this way, you can choose a free journey or receive an upgrade one class of service.

Another advantage of Star Alliance is that all member airlines are working hard to make your connecting travel as fast and smooth as possible. With the various Move Under One Roof initiatives, the alliance is adapting airports so that they house all member airlines in one terminal, under one roof. So far the waiting

time in many airports has been cut more than half. With the help of special software, Star Alliance Connection Centres are solving problems by continually monitoring your in-bound and out-bound flights, and will take steps to minimize the effects of any delays in your journey. Passengers flying in Business or First class, as well as those with Gold status (independently of the class they choose) can use nearly 1,000 business lounges across the world, when flying with an airline which is a member of Star Alliance. The lounges offer everything you need and expect: silence, space to relax and work, snacks, beverages, the press, and of course the Internet access. Star Alliance lounges have a characteristic logo of a stylized star and you can enter most of them with one accompanying guest.

...AND FOR BUSINESS

Star Alliance has also prepared a special offer for businesses, apart from the dedicated loyalty programme. No matter if you are travelling to or organising a convention, if you are booking corporate travel and your company is large or medium sized: the Star Alliance network offers a tailor-made solution for you.

Conventions Plus is a Star Alliance service that helps make organising and attending international conferences easier. Once you register for Conventions Plus, you'll be assigned one point of contact to help you arrange flights for all your delegates. No more hours of phone calls with different suppliers.

However, your convention must meet certain criteria. There must be a minimum 500 number of international dele-

gates expected to attend and they should come from at least three countries and two continents. However these criteria are not a big problem for many businesses and many of them decide to take advantage of the offered solutions. The types of events covered by the Convention Plus are: conventions, conferences, exhibitions, and sport & music events.

Delegates who have been invited to a conference – simply quote the conventions code the organizer provides them with. They will also have access to the Star Alliance Travel Information and downloadable Tools. If they are members of any loyalty programme, they can earn points and miles in the airline members of Star Alliance, and also use Star Alliance business lounges.

Company Plus and Corporate Plus are the 2 Star Alliance Corporate Travel solutions to maximise benefits either for your company with Company Plus or with Corporate Plus to best support you to serve your employees on corporate level arrangements. Thanks to Company Plus you can reduce your company's travel expenses by collecting valuable Plus points, which, in return, can be exchanged for free flights and upgrades on all business travels. Participation is free of charge and no minimum turnover is required. Corporate Plus provides you with a single point of contact, a single agreement, and your travellers with a single set of frequent flyer benefits. All these benefits embrace the different airline schedules and route networks of our members, and all offer many further advantages in terms of time and money saved. ■

Artur Kolger



Pack it in

The **Business Traveller** team takes a range of check-in bags on the road to find out how they fare

SAMSONITE

Pro-DLX 3 Upright Expandable 74 cm

Part of Samsonite's Pro-DLX range, this two-wheel case is made of armoured nylon with nappa leather trim. In black only, with small red detailing in the logo, zips and stitching, it's a smart bag and feels strong. A shiny metal handle glides in and out smoothly by pressing a button, and there is another handle on the side. The wheels are a good size and sturdy-looking. A pocket takes up most of the front of the case and has two compartments, one deep and one shallow.

Inside, it doesn't feel all that spacious, especially as two sizeable bars run the length of the case under the lining. Still, there was more than ample room for what I needed for my three-day trip and I didn't travel lightly, packing changes of clothes for each evening and documentation. I imagine I could have got enough in for a week. There is also an expandable section – I found the zips quite confusing, though, and kept opening the expandable one instead of the main one.

Fold-over mesh flaps with straps keep everything secure, and in the lid is a mesh pocket handy for underwear, and a see-through plastic wet pocket. This part of the bag zips open to reveal a section underneath for suits. A full-length garment carrier is kept in place by stretchy crisscross straps – it also has a hanger so you can put it straight into the wardrobe on arrival. Other handy features include a TSA lock and a concealed pull-out address label. The case held up well, although I found the plastic around the wheels got a little scratched.

Verdict: A stylish, well-designed bag with plenty of handy features and compartments. **MM**

Contact: samsonite.co.uk

TUMI

Vapor Medium Trip Packing Case (28025)

Very different from Tumi's traditional look, the Vapor range is modern and sleek, with a choice of six colours for this case – silver, blackberry, slate, bronze, black and glacier. The bag can be wheeled behind you using the telescoping handle, or pushed in front or wheeled alongside you using all four of the extremely responsive 360-degree swivel wheels – although be aware that this can be hard work on your wrist if the bag is full or the surface bumpy.

The shell is made of a tough, lightweight, triple-layer ABS (thermoplastic) and polycarbonate with moulded protective bumpers. The printed graphic exterior is said to reduce surface marks, but on one long-haul return trip it picked up a long, thick go-faster stripe from somewhere. In addition, the protective rubber strip covering the "Omega 2010 zipper system" had started to come away on the hinge of the case, which was a little concerning.

In terms of size, I used it for a five-day business trip and it held everything without trouble. There are two main compartments inside, along with a removable garment sleeve, zip pockets and tie-down straps. The bag also has a TSA surface-mounted lock and retractable carry handles.

Verdict: Expensive but impressive. From my experience of owning other Tumi products, the five-year warranty is superb. **TO**
Contact: tumi.com



SAMSONITE
Pro-DLX 3 Upright Expandable
Size 74 cm x 48.5 cm x 28.5-31 cm
Capacity 95-106 litres
Weight 5.3 kg Price £265
Guarantee Five years

TUMI
Vapor Medium Trip Packing
Case (28025)
Size 63.5 cm x 43 cm x 29 cm
Capacity 53 litres
Weight 4.6 kg
Price £485
Guarantee Five years

VICTORINOX**Werks Traveller Hardside Trolley 24 Four-Wheel**

From the makers of Swiss Army Knife, this four-wheel trolley case is part of the Werks Traveller range and comes in two colours – burgundy red or black. It is made from hard polycarbonate with a pleasing “nylony” finish.

The case looks slick and manoeuvres well, either when being pulled behind you on two wheels or pushed beside you on four. The retractable T-shaped handle – made from “aircraft grade aluminium” – jiggles a little, but the slightly rubbery, 360-degree rotating grip, which turns at the press of a button, is a nice touch and means you can adjust it to make it easier to wheel.

Inside, there are two main sectioned-off spaces behind panels that can be released by unclipping a couple of chunky poppers. There is also a removable mesh suiter to help keep jackets and trousers flat between the two main compartments, a small zip pocket inside the top for small items, and compression straps that clip together across your belongings. As it’s not expandable, you have to pack quite carefully, but it held enough clothes for one week.

For those who like the peace of mind of being able to secure their luggage before checking it in, there is a TSA-approved combination lock, into which the exterior zips clip on the side. (You need to press the buttons on each end of the lock to release them.) There were a few scratches on the body after the trip.

Verdict: A smart, secure case with a protective hard body.

Quite pricey. **JS**

Contact: victorinox.pl

DELSEY**Green Days 77cm Four-Wheel Expandable Trolley**

This Delsey case looks impressive, both in terms of its size and its masculine aesthetics. The anthracite grey and brick outer casing is understated and tasteful, with lines that at first seem only for show but actually disguise an array of outer pockets that are discreet yet surprisingly large.

Designed using durable, eco-friendly materials – 45 per cent of it is made from recycled PET bottles – it feels sturdy. Any scuffs and dust picked up during transit were easily brushed off, and the more stubborn marks didn’t show too badly against the grey. It also comes in brick red and beige, and blue and yellow.

The trolley’s 89-litre capacity, expandable by a further five litres, could easily accommodate ten days’ worth of clothing. Two netted inner pockets provide storage for a suit and one or two pairs of shoes. The case also has two elongated outer pockets good for bulky items such as running shoes.

Despite its large size, the trolley has four spinner wheels that move with very little resistance, making it feel extremely light and manoeuvrable. The only downside is that if it’s standing upright on a train, it’s liable to move around. Other features include a TSA combination lock and Delsey’s Securi Tech self-repairing zips. **AG.**

Verdict: Impressive build quality and efficient design – the four low-friction wheels make it extremely manoeuvrable. **AG**

Contact: delsey.com

**REVIEWERS**

AG – Andrew Gough

FC – Felicity Cousins

JS – Jenny Southan

MM – Michelle Mannion

ST – Sara Turner

TO – Tom Otley

BRIC'S**Sintesis 66cm Four-Wheel Trolley**

Made by Italian designer Bric's, this hard-sided case with leather trim is made from a lightweight polycarbonate. Inside it has one shallow zipped compartment in the top, plus elastic clips in the main compartment to hold clothes in place. It is easily large enough for a trip of four or five days. It comes with a leather luggage tag and a combination lock.

The case has both a side and top grip in leather, which makes it easy to grab off a conveyor belt. There is also a black metal handle that glides in and out smoothly and that can be set to any height – a particularly useful feature. There are four multidirectional wheels, so it is easy to roll along the ground, but note that it needs to be secured properly when you get on a train or bus. The wheels are sturdy, and big enough to cope with uneven pavements. The zip is awkward to close, as it has a large rubber lip around it, although this does protect the bag.

I tried out the olive colour case but it's also available in cream, red or navy. It had a high-gloss finish that scratched easily, so after one trip through an airport it looked a little the worse for wear. Personally, I disliked the light-brown leather handles, label and trim, as I thought it looked gaudy against the dark case, but it does make it easy to identify on the carousel.

Verdict: The sturdy multi-directional wheels make it easy to get around with, but the surface scratched easily. **ST**

Contact: brics.it

EAGLE CREEK**HC2 Hovercraft Upright 28**

The HC2 looks smart and sturdy, and is surprisingly light. It comes in black with blue detail or Pacific blue with black – I tried the former but think the latter would have been better as it still looks businesslike but would stand out better on the conveyor belt. (There's also a brash orange with grey for those who really want to make a statement.) It's made from ballistic fabrics so is very durable.

The main compartment is deep with thick, winged straps to keep everything in place. It also expands to provide 15 per cent more space. I managed to pack a week's worth of clothes, as well as four pairs of shoes, without having to cram it all in. There are two good-sized zipped sections inside, along with a smaller zipped area.

Although the case does not feel very padded, the exterior pockets give protection – I brought a bottle of wine back and it survived intact. The exterior has three zipped and lockable pockets – a large one and a smaller one above it, which was useful for papers and last-minute items, and a neat section for a passport.

There is a smooth retractable double handle, and the two wheels are large and protected by plastic guards. Going up and down steps was a bit of an effort as it is quite bulky and heavy when full, and the side handle is quite small, though strong. There is a concealed luggage tag and you can add another case using some detachable straps, although might make it difficult to manoeuvre if you do this..

Verdict: A strong, smart and spacious suitcase that is great if you want something practical and durable. **FC**

Contact: eaglecreekluggage.co.uk



TRAVEL ACCESSORIES

Organise your bits and pieces with Tintamar's fun set of five Bag and Co draw-string bags. Designed to carry your hair kit, leads, socks, jewellery and medical supplies, they have a round porthole-style window allowing you to see what's inside. The bags range from 18cm x 18cm to 34cm x 34cm, with the set costing £30. Visit quirkybags.co.uk



Spot your case easily on the carousel with Tumi's new "Colorization" service (£50) at its London Piccadilly store. Colour can be added to a variety of bags in the Alpha range by changing parts such as the monogram leather patch, luggage tag, bag guards and zip pullers. Choose from blue, green, brown, magenta, red or silver. Visit tumi.com; tel +44 (0) 20 7493 4138



Keep your clothes flat with Eagle Creek's Pack-it Systems. These folders have a hard plastic sheet inside a water resistant cover – fold your garments around the cardboard and secure them flat inside.



They come in three sizes (15/18/20 inches) and cost £18/£20/£25. The largest can hold up to 15 items. Visit eaglecreekluggage.co.uk

The Contura Suit Carrier is a compact, lightweight garment bag ideal for keeping suits flat. It is small enough to fit inside carry-on luggage and comes in two designs – Original and Avantgarde – in medium or large, and in black, grey or brown. From £35. Visit timothytravelgoods.com



AIRLINE ALLOWANCES

The rules on airline baggage allowances used to be simple – economy passengers could check in 20kg, and people in first class 40kg. But over the years the differences have blurred thanks to the arrival of different classes and the advent of loyalty schemes. Here we show what a selection of airlines allow you to carry in different regions. Note that many frequent travellers receive more generous allowances because they have status in loyalty schemes. For example, gold tier members of Star Alliance get an extra 20kg when flying with member carriers, or an extra piece free of charge.

LONG – HAUL ECONOMY

USA/CANADA/SOUTH AMERICA

*Two bags premium economy (PE)

AIRLINE	ALLOWANCE
Air Canada	One bag 23kg
American Airlines	One bag 23kg
British Airways	One bag 23kg*
Continental Airlines	Two bags 23kg in total
Delta Air Lines	One bag 23kg
United Airlines	One bag 23kg
Virgin Atlantic	One bag 23kg*

MIDDLE EAST

*Two bags PE

British Airways	One bag 23kg*
Emirates	Unlimited bags up to 30kg
Ethiad Airways	Unlimited bags up to 23kg
Oman Air	Unlimited bags up to 30kg
Qatar Airways	Unlimited bags up to 23kg

ASIA – PACIFIC

*Two bags PE **PE same ***30kg PE

Air New Zealand	One bag 23kg*
British Airways	One bag 23kg*
Cathay Pacific	Unlimited bags up to 20kg
Finnair	One bag 23kg
Jet Airways	Unlimited bags up to 20kg
Lufthansa	Unlimited bags up to 20kg plus skis
Qantas	Unlimited bags up to 23kg**
Singapore Airlines	Unlimited bags up to 20kg
Virgin Atlantic	One bag 23kg***

AFRICA

*PE same

Brussels Airlines	Two bags up to 23kg each
Kenya Airways	Two bags up to 23kg each
KLM	One bag 23kg
South African Airways	Unlimited bags up to 20kg
Virgin Atlantic	Two bags up to 23kg each*

SHORT – HAUL ECONOMY

EUROPE

Air France	One bag 23kg
PLL LOT	Unlimited bags up to 20kg
British Airways	One bag 23kg
KLM	One bag 23kg
Lufthansa	Unlimited bags up to 20kg plus skis
Swiss	Unlimited bags up to 20kg plus skis

LONG – HAUL BUSINESS & FIRST CLASS

US/CANADA/SOUTH AMERICA

AIRLINE	ALLOWANCE
Air Canada	Three bags 32kg each
American Airlines	Two bags 23kg each
British Airways	Three bags 32kg each
Continental Airlines	Three bags 32kg each
Delta Air Lines	Three bags 32kg each
United Airlines	Two bags 32kg each
Virgin Atlantic	Three bags 32kg each

MIDDLE EAST

*50kg first class **40kg first class

British Airways	Three bags 32kg each
Emirates	Unlimited bags up to 40kg*
Ethiad Airways	Unlimited bags up to 30kg**
Oman Air	Unlimited bags up to 40kg*
Qatar Airways	Unlimited bags up to 30kg**

ASIA – PACIFIC

*40kg first class

Air New Zealand	Three bags 23kg each
British Airways	Three bags 32kg each
Cathay Pacific	Unlimited bags up to 30kg*
Finnair	Two bags 23kg each
Jet Airways	Unlimited bags up to 30kg*
Lufthansa	Unlimited bags up to 30kg plus skis*
Qantas	Unlimited bags up to 30kg*
Singapore Airlines	Unlimited bags up to 30kg*
Virgin Atlantic	Three bags 32kg each

AFRICA

*40kg first class

Brussels Airlines	Two bags 32kg each
Kenya Airways	Three bags 23kg each
KLM	Three bags 23kg each
South African Airways	Unlimited bags up to 30kg*
Virgin Atlantic	Three bags 32kg each

SHORT – HAUL BUSINESS

EUROPE

Air France	Three bags 23kg each
PLL LOT	Unlimited bags up to 30kg in total
British Airways	Two bags 32kg each
KLM	Three bags 23kg each
Lufthansa	Unlimited bags up to 30kg plus skis
Swiss	Unlimited bags up to 30kg plus skis

For the full table, including extra bag and overweight charges, see "Watch your weight!", businessstraveller.com/archive/2010/may-2010



In the Magical World of Wines

Their colourful stories take us to beautiful regions, where wine is produced by means of traditional methods in family-run vineyards. They tell us why one type of wine has a muddy taste, and another scents of violets and which will suite best our mood or a particular dish. These are the Echansons – the experts who recommend wines from the specially arranged Grands Vins Mercure wine list. They are served in restaurants and bars in all Orbis hotels in the world.

The Echanson is not merely a profession and knowledge – the personality and passion are even more crucial. They not only have to know the Grands Vins Mercure list used in Mercure hotels, but also particular phases of production, or grape varieties. Thanks to Echansons the guests may feel the magic of tastes and aromas of wines – the act of drinking becomes a tremendous pleasure and the best thing you could actually be doing.

Nobody can do it better than the experts talking at the bar about the wine from a small village in Chile, where apart from the houses there is only one church and a vineyard, and the villagers meet together and have fun drinking wines made from local grape varieties. Who wouldn't like to try this special-

BIGSTOCK

Echansons make sure that the hotel guests select only the best wines.



ty after hearing such a nice story? Especially if an Echanson specifies how climate of a particular region influences the wine's taste and aroma, and explains the roles of fogs, winds and other atmospheric phenomena and geographical location.

UNFOLDING THE MYSTERY

However, that's still not everything. The Echansons not only can enthusiastically talk about the provenience and secrets

of the Grands Vins Mercure wines making process, but they also are experts on the human soul. Their role is not limited to advising which wine better matches the dishes ordered by the guests. The Echansons try to recognize their needs and the mood they are in, and on that grounds recommend certain wines. The guests who are especially into it, can learn from them the art of wine tasting.

It's a profession of long and noble history. In France, at royal courts and in the houses of aristocracy, Echansons used to serve drinks to the king or the lord during meal times. Today, it takes a lot of work and effort to become such an expert. A candidate for an Echanson needs to get both theoretical and practical education and pass an exam. Only then can he become a wine adviser of the Mercure hotel guests. Going through different levels of expertise, they are given badges – bronze, silver and gold – corresponding to their abilities. The badges make it possible for clients to recognize what class of expert they are talking to. The Echansons are dressed in black shirts and dark yellow aprons. That's where they pin the badges to.

It needs to be emphasized, however, that the world of the Echansons is not only wine-related magic and interesting stories about wine production and provenience. It is also tough work, which needs to be done daily, to make sure the hotel restaurants and bars have an appropriate setting. The Echanson has to make sure the carafes, bottles and wine glasses come with information about the taste of the particular type of wine. They also need to check if the Grands Vins Mercure list is provided in the rooms, or if the bottles at the bar are exposed enough. All these elements have to match the symbolism and the colour scheme of Grands Vins Mercure.

AN INFINITE CHOICE

The wine list is available in all Mercure hotels all over the world. In Poland it is changed yearly. The latest edition has been valid since November and its distinctive feature is the division of wine according to the taste. You will not



find the usual red – white division, but “Fresh and tasteful”, “Light and fruity”, “Elegant and balanced” and “Full and aromatic”. The first group is an unusual wine composition of unique character and exceptional lightness. You can feel the aromas and flavours of mature apples, candied oranges and citrus fruits. The second category are wines preserving the taste of fresh grapes, the most universal satisfying the needs of the majority of gourmets. You may trace the spice flavours and roasted almond overtones. The third group comprises an interesting combination of subtle flavours – here even the most demanding guests will surely find for themselves. Especially sophisticated connoisseurs who appreciate the red and black fruit combination with spicy overtones. The last group are strong wines of original and rich palette of flavours and aromas like concentrated fruits with oak tree scents. Each category is represented with different colours and symbols. In the new Polish list – to be launched in November 2010 – the clients are going to choose among 17 types of wines – that's two types more than last season. What's new is that among French, Italian or Spanish wines, you can also find those from New Zealand or Hungary. ■

GoldPoints



Customer loyalty programmes offered by airlines have turned extremely successful, providing their users with a number of benefits. The hotel industry is no different in this aspect. Take, for example, the customer loyalty programme goldpoints plus, which is used, among others, in the hotels of Radisson Blue chain.

The idea to reward customers with points is not new (the earliest customer loyalty programs were “green stamp” programs in which customers collected stamps from retailers, then collected them into books), but they became really popular at the beginning of the 80s. Civil aviation industry was particularly keen on introducing such programmes, because the benefits for the customer were clear and easily understood: the more you fly, the less your next ticket costs. Passengers welcomed the idea as at that time plane tickets were quite pricey. Later the hospitality industry took on the idea, but their first big loyalty programmes were simply connected with the offer of airlines. Today, customer loyalty programmes are a present everywhere and it is estimated that only in the USA about 75% of population takes part in at least one type of a loyalty programme. This not only means a huge market, but also competition, which leads companies to providing their customers with more and more benefits to make them stay with them.

A lot of hotels have their own programmes, but it is definitely more profitable for hotel guests if their hotel is a member of a larger loyalty programme as it means far more advantages than in case of a small programme. This is exactly the case for Radisson Blu hotel chain, which offers their customers a membership in goldpoints plus programme. The programme enables its members to earn free hotel nights, room upgrades, airline miles and more exclusive privileges at 1,000 hotels and 20 airlines worldwide.

You can earn your points in many ways: during a hotel stay, when booking your room online, or renting a car from a car rental company.

As it is always the case in every loyalty programme, the customers may have a different status. The higher they are in the hierarchy, the greater benefits they

receive. To reach Silver Elite status, you must spend 15 nights (or complete 10 stays) in one calendar year. What are the benefits? A 25% point bonus, a 2,000 point online booking bonus, and Elite customer service line. The guests can also take advantage of late checkout, and a 10% off standard room retail rates on weekends. If you are travelling within the Americas and Asia Pacific, you are entitled to room upgrade, Avis car class upgrade and 2,500 bonus points, as well as a complimentary bag guard.

OUR WORLD, YOUR LOUNGE

To reach Gold Elite status, you must stay 35 nights (or complete 20 stays) in one calendar year. You are also entitled to 50% point bonus on your stays. Other benefits include: 2,000 point online booking bonus, early check-in, late checkout, 72 hour room availability guarantee, 10% off standard room retail rates on weekends, Elite customer service line, and a complimentary bag guard. There is also Weekend Extend option which entitles us to spending two nights in the hotel the price of one night, or four nights for the price of two. Travelling with the Americas / Asia Pacific we receive Avis car class upgrade and 2,500 bonus points (2,000 in Silver status).

The points earned in goldpoints plus can be redeemed for various rewards. The number of combinations and options seems endless. You can enjoy free hotel nights starting at just 15,000 points. The hotels are divided into 6 categories and a number of points needed to spend a free night depends on a hotel's location. To redeem your points for a night in a hotel in the highest category you need as many as 60,000 points.

Lots of guests will be interested in so-called Express Awards. This is simply an option to redeem your points for various products and services during your stay at a hotel. For example, beverages (juice, coffee, tea) cost 1,000 points, a des-

sert 8,000 points, a Pay TV movie 10,000 points, a bottle of wine 15,000 points, and a dinner for two 35,000 points. Awards vary by hotel so be sure to request a list when you check in.

Another interesting idea is so-called “Our World, Your Lounge”. A guest who is a member of goldpoints plus programme and has a Silver or Gold status, doesn't have to book a room in a hotel to take advantage of the programme's benefits. He can just come to a hotel to enjoy a free coffee, tea or hot chocolate for two, plus free Wi-Fi internet access. The points can also be exchanged for miles in over 20 airlines which also participate in the programme, donated to the World Childhood Foundation, or to offset your CO2 emissions.

The number of earned points depends on your status in the programme. In Gold status, each euro or dollar spent for a stay in one of the hotels of Radisson chain earn 20 points. If you book you stay online, you will be granted as many as 2,000 points. When you rent a car, you earn 1,750 Gold Points with Avis, and save up to 15% with Sixt.

The programme has also additional benefits for those who organize business meetings. As a goldpoints plus for planners participant, you can earn points per dollar spent— there is no minimum spend and no limit to your earnings potential. You can earn: three Gold Points per USD/Euro for qualifying event purchases up to 5,000 USD/Euros, or Five Gold Points per USD/Euro for qualifying event purchases over 5,000 USD/Euros. Points can also be redeemed during such events. For example, a coffee break for 10 guests costs 14,000 points, while a welcome drink 35,000. ■

Adam Tomaszewski



goldpointsplusSM

FIT FOR PURPOSE

Hectic schedules mean exercising on the road can be difficult, but with all the amenities available today, is there any excuse? **Felicity Cousins** reports.

Look around you the next time you are waiting in the business class lounge. Do your fellow business travellers look like a healthy bunch? Jet lag, erratic meal times, client lunches, alcohol, hotel breakfasts, snacks in the lounge, sitting for hours on a plane, jumping in taxis to get to the next meeting... None of these things contributes towards a healthy lifestyle.

Today, in the UK, about a quarter of adults are classified as obese. This fact is not only the result of what we eat but also of our increasingly sedentary lifestyles. Imagine the human body as a giant furnace and the food you put in it as wood. You only need to create enough fire to burn it, but the problem is, most of us don't.

The Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2009 found that 61-71 per cent of adults did less than the minimum required amount of exercise (30 minutes, five days a week), and only 8-10 per cent of adults who claimed to exercise this often actually did so.

What's more, if 70 per cent of the population exercised for 150 minutes or more a week, then the number of sick days taken would be reduced by just under three million a year, saving employers almost £500 million (Deloitte Health of the Nation report, 2006).

The Fitness Industry Association (FIA) quotes Deloitte's findings, which say that almost 35 per cent of interviewees cited work commitments as a major deterrent to working out. With this



Top tips

- Going for a run in a new city is a good way of orientating yourself, as well as keeping fit. Check with the concierge for good loop routes.
- Stretching is relaxing, helps with flexibility, protects against injury and can be done in your hotel room.
- Keep a clean gym or swimming kit in your suitcase so that it is always on hand.

in mind, a business traveller's schedule, which involves being on the road and irregular routines, probably does not help matters.

But Dave Stalker, executive director of the FIA, doesn't think there is any excuse. "The whole world has embraced wellness, particularly in the business community," he says. "There is hardly anywhere that you can't continue your routine".

If anything, it is easier to keep fit these days as many hotels have state-of-the-art gyms that are often open around the clock,

as well as swimming pools and spas. Yet some go further than others. Starwood's Westin has the Westin Workout bedroom fitted with exercise equipment, and the chain also offers Run Westin, a service providing organised runs and jogging maps for guests.

Stalker says: "I travel continuously and I always book myself into a hotel with a health club and make sure beforehand that it's not just a treadmill. More and more gyms are open 24 hours, which is useful for someone with jet lag".

Being tired and having to adjust to the local time zone is probably one of the reasons many of us don't venture down to the gym, but it's good if you can. Personal trainer and fitness instructor Ruth Malone runs a health and fitness company, Achieve More. She says: "Business travellers tend to be jet-lagged but cardiovascular exercise, including running, swimming and cycling, is good at raising energy levels and gives you endurance throughout the day".

Stalker agrees: "Jet lag is a very individual thing. One of the worst things about it is the frustration of being awake when everyone else is asleep, but exercise is good for you and it gets rid of that frustration. It doesn't always make you more tired, it can make you more lively".

So we have all the equipment in place and we know exercise is good for us, but still we find ourselves flicking through the news channels in the hotel room. Perhaps we are daunted by the task in hand? Malone says: "The first thing I say to my clients is they need to be realistic about what they can achieve, rather than setting ambitious goals and then failing. This way you are more likely to stay motivated".

She adds: "We focus on what you want to do rather than what you think you should do. If you have had a long-haul flight or a meeting and then go to the gym and hate it, you won't keep it up. So we say go swimming if you like it, and if you like running then make that a priority".

Even if you are not into sport, you can still find ways to burn some calories. Stalker says: "If you do a bit of research and feel comfortable with where you are going, then instead of jumping in a cab you could leave enough time to walk".

When is the best time to take exercise? Malone says: "Whatever feels right for you and whatever fits in. You should leave at least two hours after you have eaten, which can take a lot of organisation, so that is something to take into account – it can be hard if the gym opens at 7am and your meeting is at 9am".

Stalker thinks our psychological relationship with food can also help with our choices. "You have to go to business dinners but once your mindset has moved to a healthy area then you do go for the healthy options. The trick is to stick to these and not get into binge situations, such as ordering room service because you happen to be away".

The average man only needs to consume 2,500 calories a day, while women

can take in 2,000. These calories should be made up of foods from the main nutritional groups. Worryingly, airline meals can be very disappointing in this respect – online health and fitness network efit.com analysed 15 top airlines dining menus and discovered that the average economy class meal contained 1,054 calories and 52g of fat. In which case, you may be better off grabbing something healthier at the airport.

Advances in 3G technology have also introduced fitness applications to the market, though you should be careful about how you use them. Stalker says: "I have looked at some of them and British Military Fitness has an app [£2.99] that is very good, but I think all exercise should be in a controlled environment where you have the knowledge – if an app is asking you to do something without showing you how to do it properly, then it's not good. Yoga, for instance, is difficult and I can't imagine having an app I'm going to be able to use unless I already have a fair amount of yoga knowledge".

Whatever method of keeping fit works for you, Malone believes the key to success is personal motivation. "It comes down to priorities – it is possible to eat out and eat healthily and not get drunk", she says. "We help people to understand the costs and benefits of a healthy lifestyle".

■ Visit fia.org.uk, achievemore.me.uk

Livestrong.com

Cyclist Lance Armstrong's website, livestrong.com, is one worth checking out. It has 2.2 million registered users and is a portal for health and well-being related topics. You can monitor your calorie intake, exercise for free, save running routes and share ideas with other users. The website also has a "dare" section that compels users to take on a challenge, such as giving up smoking, losing weight or starting a new sport. Livestrong.com is also available as an iPhone and Blackberry application (US\$2.99).

'More and more gyms open 24 hours, which is useful if you have jetlag'

Eat ethnic in Paris

John Brunton samples an array of international restaurants in the French capital

While most visitors to Paris find it difficult to resist a gourmet French meal in a classic bistro or brasserie, the City of Light also has a dazzling selection of ethnic restaurants. These colourful, casual locales offer a fun alternative and are often very reasonably priced. Here are ten addresses for a Parisian tour du monde. Some English is spoken in all.

LEBANON

RESTAURANT LIZA

Open for five years, the elegant restaurant of Liza Souhayar, originally from Beirut, has quickly made a name for its creative, modern interpretation of traditional Lebanese cuisine. Located just by the Paris Stock Exchange in arrondissement two, this is popular with the business set for lunch, attracting a more glamorous crowd in the evening. Among the meze starters, try the moudardara, a rice and lentil salad with crispy onions and orange wedges, or kafta samak, a sea bream tartare with dill and chives. Desserts are irresistible, especially sfouf Liza, a saffron-scented semolina cake with sweetened pumpkin and pistachio-flavoured clotted cream.

■ 14 Rue de la Banque (Bourse metro); tel +33 155 350 066; restaurant-liza.com

■ Open for lunch and dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat, lunch Sun. Two courses €40, set lunch €16 to €21.

NORTH AFRICA

CHEZ OMAR

Paris has a large North African population, and the two classic dishes of couscous and tagine can be found in hundreds of Moroccan, Tunisian and Algerian restaurants around the capital. While gourmets looking to splash out should book at the chic Le Mansouria (mansouria.fr), in arrondissement 11, most people's favourite is Chez Omar, a bustling locale in arrondissement three, with a splendid 1930s dining room. The couscous royale is a feast of succulent lamb, beef, chicken, spicy merguez sausages, a huge pot of vegetables in broth, and a bowl of steamed couscous. Don't be afraid to ask for extra vegetables and couscous, as this is included in the price.

■ 47 Rue de Bretagne (Temple metro); tel +33 142 723 626

■ Open for lunch and dinner Mon-



Restaurant Liza

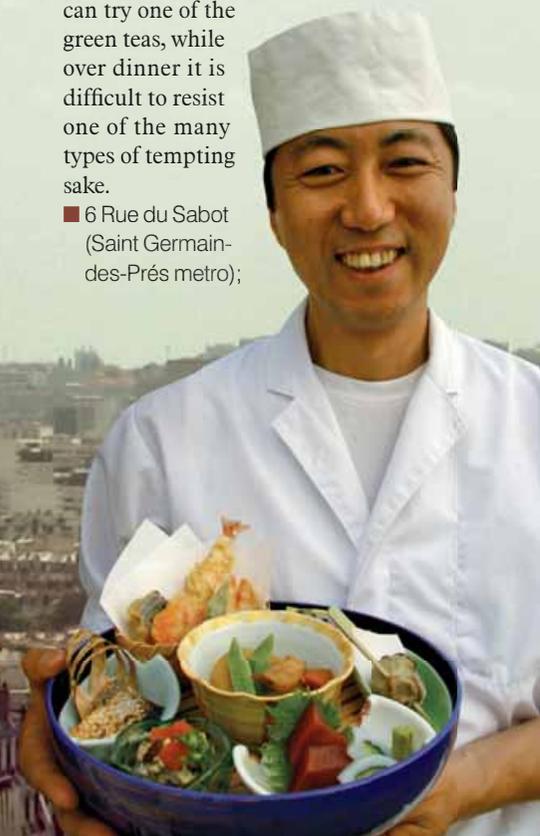
Sat, dinner only on Sun. Two courses €25.

JAPAN

OTO-OTO

While Japanese businessmen will probably take their clients to one of the top, ultra-expensive sushi bars that line the Sainte-Anne neighbourhood near Opera, a new address on the Left Bank by Saint-Germain is attracting more curious clientele. Owned by a restaurateur from Tokyo's Ginza district, Oto-Oto goes beyond the classic sushi, sashimi (raw seafood) and yakitori (grilled chicken on skewers), reinventing traditional Japanese dishes using seasonal French produce such as grilled sea bream, Brittany whelks and white asparagus tempura. At lunch you can try one of the green teas, while over dinner it is difficult to resist one of the many types of tempting sake.

■ 6 Rue du Sabot (Saint Germain-des-Prés metro);





Chez Omar

tel +33 142 222 156; ramla.net

- Open Mon-Sat for lunch and dinner.
Two courses €39, set lunch €12-28.

GEORGIA

DEDA

Rue Coquillière in Les Halles is where Paris's equivalent of London's Covent Garden's food market used to be, and here a brilliant new restaurant has opened up showcasing the utterly delicious cuisine and wines of the Republic of Georgia. The cooking at Deda is an intriguing mix of influences, from Russian and Turkish to Greek and Middle Eastern. Be sure to try khinkalis, plump ravioli stuffed with beef and herbs, and wonderfully tender chakapuli, slow-baked organic lamb. The bread is freshly made in a traditional Georgian clay oven in the middle of the dining room.



- 8/10 Rue Coquillière (Les Halles metro); tel +33 153 408 240; deda-restaurant.com

- Lunch Wed-Sat, dinner Mon-Sat.
Two courses €30, set lunch €17.

CHINA

RESTAURANT HAWAIENNE

The major Chinatown in Paris is centred in the colourful Belleville neighbourhood. Tucked down a backstreet, the tiny, no-frills Hawaienne was one of the earliest places to open up here in the 1970s, run by refugee boat people. Just as popular with Asian diners as Parisians, it's known for its hearty soups – cahn chua ca is a tangy tamarind fish soup, pho tai chin is a traditional recipe from the Gulf of Tonkin, and bun bo que is a noodle soup with pork and chicken.

- 15 Rue Louis Bonnet (Belleville metro); tel +33 143 571 564

- Open daily for lunch and dinner.
Two courses €15.

INDIA

PASSAGE DE PONDICHERY

Paris can't compare with the UK when it comes to Indian restaurants but it does boast its own miniscule Little India,





hidden down Passage Brady, a charming art nouveau alley near Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro. Menus tend to be tailored to French tastes, which surprisingly are not very adventurous, but one exception is the Passage de Pondichery, which opened 30 years ago. Although you can order classic tandoori chicken or fish tikka, it specialises in delicious Tamil dishes such as masala dosa, a thin crepe, and the Pondicherry royal biryani.

- 84 Passage Brady; tel +33 153 346 310
- Open daily for lunch and dinner. Two courses €15-20.

**FINLAND
MILLE LACS**

A snug, homely eatery serving Finnish cuisine has to be the last thing most people would expect to find in Paris, but this is a great insider's address, quite close to the Bastille quarter. Genial chef and owner Leea Karnaattu produces creative dishes in her kitchen and then pops out to socialise with customers at the end of the evening, suggesting they try one of her dozens of vodkas. Importing most products from her native land, the grav-lax salmon is outstanding, while marinated herrings are served with a beetroot and horseradish salad. Winter sees reindeer cooked with lingonberries from the Arctic Circle.

- 240 Rue du Faubourg Saint-Antoine (Nation metro); tel +33 143 720 605; lesmillelacs.com
- Open for lunch and dinner Tues-Sat. Two courses €25, set lunch €17.

**JEWISH
YAYIN**

While tourists seeking Jewish cuisine usually head for the historic Marais neighbourhood, locals are more likely to be found in the chic 17th arrondissement, where the city's first kosher wine bar opened at the end of last year. Yayin offers a wide range of wines from Israel and France, and a menu that proposes two vintages per dish. The cuisine is termed nouvelle juive, but the chef is actually Vietnamese, so don't be surprised if you find the gefilte fisch (filled fish) is steamed in a banana leaf with coconut milk.

- 33 Rue Cardinet (Wagram metro); tel +33 143 806 360; yayin-restaurant.com
- Open for lunch Sun-Fri, and dinner Mon-Thurs. Two courses €40, set lunch €19.50.



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**CREOLE
COROSSOL**

The Marché des Enfants Rouges in République is one of the city's oldest markets, dating back to 1628, but has be-



Mille Lacs



Corossol

come a fashionable location for foodies, with many stalls transformed into casual eateries offering Japanese, Moroccan, Italian and, in Corossol's case, Creole cuisine. Charming owner N'Julienne comes from Cameroon but offers delicious French Caribbean specialities such as accra (fish cakes), colombo de poulet (chicken curry), and spicy boudin antillais sausages. The fun décor features her colourful paintings, and she makes some amazing flavoured rums.

- 33 Rue Charlot (Filles du Calvaire metro); tel +33 148 873 271
- Lunch only, Tues-Sun. Two courses €15.

**IVORY COAST
A LA BANANE IVOIRIENNE**

While the Francophone African countries of Ivory Coast, Senegal and Mali have a large presence in Paris, finding good places that showcase their cuisine is not always easy. Kouassi N'Guessan opened A La Banane Ivoirienne in Bastille 20 years ago and has a loyal clientele, especially on Friday nights, when live music plays. N'Guessan spends all afternoon preparing traditional Ivoirian dishes including mafé de boeuf, cooked with a rich peanut sauce, and a chilli-hot poulet mango atoko. The ti punch, with rum and ginger, is legendary but lethal. Book in advance.

- 10 Rue de la Forge Royale (Faidherbe-Chaligny metro); tel +33 143 704 990
- Dinner, Tues-Sat. Two courses €25.



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Tenerife's Paradise

Your first association with the Canary Islands is probably a holiday leisure. However, the islands are becoming more and more popular as destinations for incentive trips. Tenerife, according to **Tomasz Wierzcholski**, seems to be the leader.

It is quite far away, but it makes up for the inconvenience with numerous attractions. Isn't it worth to spend a few hours on a plane to see Tenerife, which is considered the most beautiful island in the Canary archipelago? The island of Tenerife has volcanic structure, which determines its landscape and climate. Apart from lavish flora and sun-kissed beaches, you will see here rocks and the snow-covered Mount Teide, the highest mountain in Spain. It is good to know the islands belong to this country, as the level of infrastructure in Tenerife is definitely European. Tenerife belongs to a small number of places in the world, where the summer season lasts all year round. You can always expect good weather, and the temperature is about twenty something, but the Northern part of the island is a bit cooler..

BIGSTOCK / FOTOLIA

What especially attracts the conference and incentive trip organizers is the rich infrastructure. The island offers 5 large convention centres (for up to 4 thousand guests), every hotel has its own conference rooms, and there are plenty of hotels here – it is enough to mention that the island offers about 50 thousand beds in hotels of a higher category. Another great advantage of the island is its diversity. The participants of the incentive trips may go to a banana plantation, a beautiful park, climb rocky mountainsides, or visit an excellent beach – all within one day.

Such diversity gives you an opportunity to engage in many different activities: in Tenerife you can play golf, go sailing, scuba-diving, observe whales, go on a jeep safari, do horse-riding, go on a wine theme trip or have a climbing training course. This is a great opportunity to organize all sorts of team-building events.

For example? There are plenty of possibilities. A very interesting offer is something referred to as BOB Diving Safari, where BOB stands for Breathing Observation Bubble – it is a cross between a diving bell and a scooter, only it cruises under

water. A “driver” of this unique vehicle has a helmet on their head with an air bottle connected to it – the bottle is not on the diver's back, but fixed to the front of the scooter. This underwater trip lasts for 2 hours and requires no special abilities. It gives you a chance to get to know this stunning, colourful underwater world off the coast of Tenerife.

A jeep tour to the summit of Mount Teide will surely give you an adrenaline rush. This rocky mountain of volcanic origin is 3,718 metres high. The name of the volcano comes from the indigenous language of the Guanchetos people and means “an infernal mountain”. And it is infernal, indeed – thanks to its form – it is one big jagged rock, which is not easy to drive or walk on, like in the beautifully-situated gorges of Masca. To get to the snow-covered summit of Mount Teide you can use the cableway – it is an incredible experience to see the snow in the middle of summer. It is possible to organize star-gazing on Mount Teide – with telescopes and under the supervision of an astronomer. It is an unforgettable experience.

In 2008, the Siam Park was opened on Tenerife. It is one of the biggest water parks here in Thai style. The park is a perfect place both for dinner, as the local restaurant serves excellent Asian food,





and for a business meeting – as there are plenty of suitable places, including a room for 1,500 people, and a separate island for business meetings. You can have more organized events here as well. There are plenty of attractions: the Wave Palace generates 3-metre high waves, so you can organize there a surfing competition. There is also an artificial beach where volleyball matches and grilling competitions are held. To top it all, there are also huge water slides (the biggest one is 28-metre high), an artificial river and a wide choice of pools.

Spain is known for wine production, and the island of Tenerife is no different than the rest of the country. That's why you can organize there a wine tour, which always evokes great interest in the participants. The tour may start in Casa del Vino Baranda, a 17th-century property, which is also a museum of viticulture. The Bodegas Monje, on the other hand, has been producing wine since 1750 and is still open for visitors. Its cellars have been adapted for this purpose, and now they can hold up to 100 people. Events such as lectures, wine tasting and culinary courses are often organized here.

Naturally, Tenerife has a lot more to offer – there are whale and dolphin watching cruise trips, walking tours – e.g. down a picturesque Barranco del Infierno, and all sorts of activities and team games on the beaches. You can also use the pools – not artificial, but natural ones – in many places the volcanic rocks formed little bays and ponds, filled with sea water. The greatest number of such pools can be found in the North of Tenerife, the region called El Caletón. An interesting

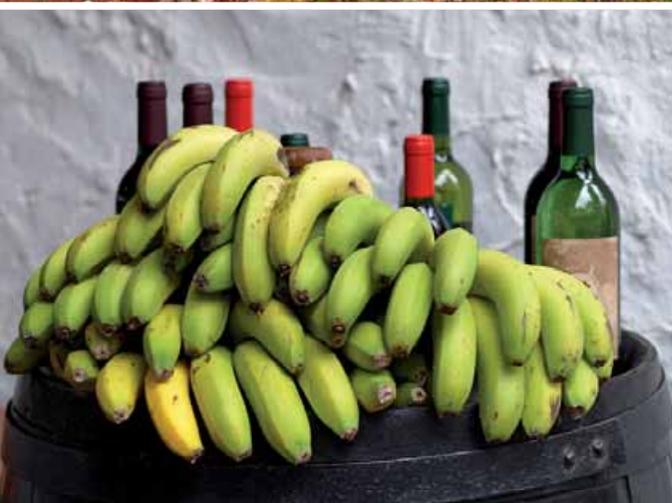
place is T3, Tenerife Top Training – a vast sports and recreation centre, where companies often organize various trainings and matches. The offer includes: swimming, football, rugby, squash, volleyball and tennis. The Centre is situated in the South of the island, in La Caleta.

The local cuisine is also excellent and original – you might try it in many splendid restaurants. La Bodeguita Canaria in Santa Cruz, is one of them. The guests may savour here the traditional dishes like ropa vieja (meat stewed with vegetables), rabbit with salmorejo (tomato sauce), or shark dishes.

Another place worth recommendation is the Tacoronte Barbecue – a restaurant in the North of the island, located in an old historic house. It specializes in grilled dishes and can seat up to 500 guests. There is also a scene here, where folk performances are held. The 30-year-old tradition is enough to take the local chefs' talents for granted – the food is just fabulous.

The Casa Comida La Hierbita restaurant boasts its specialty – puchero canario – meat with vegetables, as well as cheese from the island of Gomera, called gomero. Anyone who tries it will never forget its taste. Other local specialties include grilled fish and potatoes boiled in salty water, served with garlic sauce. The restaurant's cellar is its another pride – it is filled with excellent wines and liqueur called La Hierbita.

But there is a lot more to Tenerife than all this – it is not possible to mention all the attractions. You just have to come here, see and experience it. After all, it is not that far away. ■



GOLFING AROUND... BUENOS AIRES

Minty Clinch puts her skills to the test on courses close to the Argentine capital



HURLINGHAM CLUB

WHERE IS IT? 30km west of Buenos Aires

WHAT'S IT LIKE? As is often the case in Argentina, this is a private club founded by the British residents who created

much of the country's infrastructure in the Victorian era. John Ravenscroft and his friends, many of them involved in developing the railway network, modelled it loosely on the Hurlingham Club in London, but on a much more spacious site.

Today it has six grass tennis courts, rare in Argentina, cricket and polo grounds, plus a track for training racehorses. Selected by the developers because it was close to two train tracks, it still has rapid access to the city centre. The present 18-hole golf course was completed in 1928, again with design input from Englishmen abroad.

Like many of the courses in the Buenos Aires catchment area, it is flat parkland, with wonderful old trees – notably, spreading camphorwoods that give welcome shade. Although the course is short by modern standards, it is well defended, with narrow approaches to fast, tricky greens. A lake and a creek provide water hazards on half the holes.

ADDRESS Avenida Julio A Roca 1,411, 1,686 Hurlingham

CONTACT Tel +54 11 4662 5510/4, hurlinghamclub.org.ar

PRICE Guests by invitation only, Monday-Friday £32.50, weekends £65. Caddie £12-16.

CLUB HIRE Mizuno and other brands, £26

CLUB HOURS 8.30am-3pm (last tee time)

MINIMUM HANDICAP 36

FACILITIES 18 holes (5,948m, par 71), practice area and putting green.

AFTER THE GOLF The Edwardian-style clubhouse, with its gables and terrace shaded by mature trees, could belong to many a traditional golf club in Surrey. The wood-panelled interior features big

silverware, billiards and bridge rooms, a hal-
lowed members» bar and restaurant. A stay in the 40-room Dormy House completes the feeling of detachment from the real world.



THE JOCKEY CLUB

WHERE IS IT? 25km north-west of Buenos Aires

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Founded in 1882 by the movers and shakers of the racing fraternity, the Jockey Club developed along similar lines to the Hurlingham, with cricket, polo, tennis, squash and stables. It is still men-only, although women are welcome as guests.

In 1928, Alister Mackenzie, a Scottish surgeon better known as a course architect, arrived from California on a mission to transform the golf. As was his custom, the man who went on to design Augusta worked his subtle magic on natural features to create the Red and Blue courses.

Don't be deceived by flat terrain and wide fairways lined with pretty flowering trees – the Red, host to the 2001 Argentine Open, is the championship track, but the Blue, with its tighter approaches, is equally testing. It takes skill and patience to stay on ridged fairways and land the ball accurately on domed greens. And that's before you tackle the diabolical contours on the putting surface. If impatience kicks in early, regroup in the shady halfway house at the ninth – things can only get better.

ADDRESS Avenida Marquez 1,702, San Isidro

CONTACT Tel +54 11 4743 1001, golf.eljockeyclub.com

PRICE Blue course, guests by invitation only, Tuesday-Friday, £78. Caddie (compulsory) £14-16.

CLUB HIRE Callaway, £23.50

CLUB HOURS 7am-9pm (summer), 8am-8pm (winter). Closed Mondays.

MINIMUM HANDICAP 36

FACILITIES Two 18-hole courses – Red (6,014m, par 72) and Blue (5,807m, par 72). Driving range, practice area, putting green.

AFTER THE GOLF The no-expense-spared clubhouse was built in 1945 to a vaguely Tudor design, complete with a squat castellated tower and a broad entry arch. Like the Hurlingham, the ambience is yesteryear British, with a men-only bar and a restaurant serving large plates of beef – staple fare in all the clubs.

LOS OLIVOS

WHERE IS IT? 32km north-west of Buenos Aires

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Created in 1926 by 30 Englishmen from the railway industry, the club moved to its present location in leafy suburbia in 1951. Intensive tree planting, irrigation and landscaping masterminded by Luther Koontz – Alister Mackenzie's assistant at the Jockey Club – resulted in an 18-hole course that was technically ahead of its time. As the membership grew, the fees funded a clubhouse and a further nine holes, making three possible 18-hole combinations.

The terrain is slightly undulating and richly forested, with water hazards on the seventh on the Blue, and the seventh and eighth on the Red. Good putting is at a premium on slick greens.

ADDRESS Ruta Panamericana Ramal Pilar Km 32 Ing Pablo Nogués

CONTACT Tel +54 11 4587 1076, olivosgolf.com.ar

PRICE 18 holes £65. Caddie £10-15.

CLUB HOURS 7am-end of play. Closed Mondays.

CLUB HIRE Callaway £16

MINIMUM HANDICAP 36

FACILITIES Three mix-and-match nine-hole layouts: White (3,095m, par 36), Red (3,056, par 36) and Blue (2,817m, par 35); plus a practice area and putting green.

AFTER THE GOLF By Buenos Aires standards the clubhouse is quite understated. The café at the ninth hole and large swimming pool are very welcome.



GETTING THERE

Minty Clinch stayed in the Loi Suites hotel (tel +54 11 577 78950, loisuites.com.ar) in Recoleta. Golf was arranged by Oyikil (tel +54 11 4878 3480, oyikilviajes.com.ar) – English speaking with the contacts required to book tee times in any of the private clubs.

MARTINDALE COUNTRY CLUB

WHERE IS IT? 55km north-west of Buenos Aires

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The focus of the original Martindale, created by part-time dairy farmer Henry Martin, was a large house overlooking a cricket pitch and six holes of golf. Martin used his estate to graze his Friesian cows, and entertain his family and friends.

Martindale became more commercial in the late 1980s when a US architect was employed to build the 18-hole Cancha Grande on contemporary American lines. That means big water, with more than half the holes affected by lakes or the diverted brook that meanders across several of the fairways. The signature 17th, a 505m, par five, offers a spectacular risk-reward second shot on to a distant green surrounded by grass and sand bunkers. Miss it and you're dead in the water. The par 11th is equally dangerous, with a lake running all the way up to a small, well defended green.

ADDRESS Juan Domingo Peron 2,375, Pilar

CONTACT Tel +54 232 248 5749, golfinbuenosaires.com

PRICE £100. Caddies available.

CLUB HIRE Various makes, about £55

CLUB HOURS For visitors 11am-6pm Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-9pm Sunday. Closed Mondays.

MINIMUM HANDICAP 36

FACILITIES 18-hole Cancha Grande (6,249m, par 72), nine-hole executive par three, Cancha Chica (par two), golf academy, driving range, practice area and putting green.

AFTER THE GOLF Henry Martin's unusual brick-faced home is now an opulent clubhouse with rooms for overnight visitors. The Martindale also has swimming, polo and tennis.



The Caribbean

my earthly paradise



Business Traveller interviews **Zbigniew Pszczulny**, an architect, a co-founder of the JSK studio, where, among many, the National Stadium in Warsaw was designed.

I usually travel to...

The Warsaw-Düsseldorf connection is my usual route. I go there at least once a week, sometimes even more often. It's just that I live in Düsseldorf, but work in Warsaw, so I just have to commute.

On the plane I like...

What's most important for me is comfort and good service during the flight. And peace and quiet of course.

My favourite hotel...

I like a few hotels in different cities. For many years, when I've visited these cities, I've tried to stay there. In New York it is The Lowell hotel, and I also appreciate the Saint James's in London, and the Le Bristol in Paris.

My remedy for a long journey...

I've learnt it's important to always take it lightly. It's not worth worrying about momentary problems such as a delayed flight.

I always take with me...

I don't take it with me really, but I nearly always ask the plane staff for a pillow.

During a flight...

To tell the truth I usually catch up with the sleep. I also like to read a newspaper.

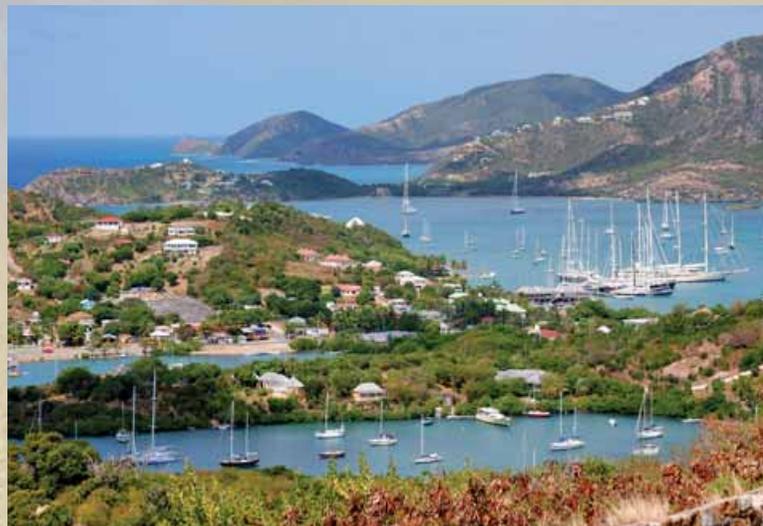
I regret that...

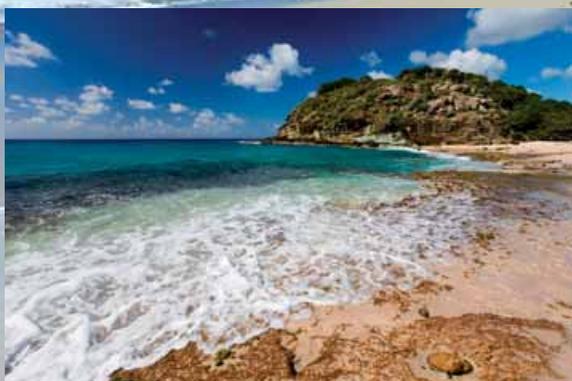
There's no open internet access on the planes. Luckily, most of the new Lufthansa jets – and it's the airline I choose the most often – offers the possibility to use the Internet during long-haul flights. I make use of it every time.

My favourite airport...

Naturally, the one in Düsseldorf. Not only because it's my "home" airport – it takes only 15 minutes to get to my place from there. I designed it, and I'm always happy to go back there.

So, after visiting it for several times, what is your opinion about it? Are you asking about the things I would change there now?





I think it's a well-designed place, and I have to admit I still like it, and it makes me very proud. First of all, reaching your plane never takes too much time. In the arrival and departure halls we decreased the intensity of light, as in such places artificial lightning is usually used a lot. As a result, it resembles a bit the atmosphere of a living room. I designed quite a few terminals, among them the Berlin Schönefeld, the Münster-Osnabrück, and the Frankfurt. Currently, we've been working on two projects in Poland – the airport terminals in Gdańsk and Wrocław.

What attracts my attention in hotels...

I usually pay attention to the service and the way I am treated there by the staff. I expect to be welcomed at the entrance, as I make an assumption that by going there, I pay a visit. It's the most important thing for me.

Naturally a comfortable bed in the room, good equipment and peace and

quiet are also very important, but for me – the hospitality comes first.

When I have a break, I usually...

If I visit a city which I don't know, naturally I try to go sightseeing, provided I have enough time. When in Warsaw, I enjoy going to the cinema or theatre to catch up with news from Poland's culture. Because of my work, I can't do it on regular basis.

The greatest holiday so far...

The greatest holidays always make me think about the Caribbean. Jumby Bay, a private hotel on a tiny island near the Antigua island is, in my opinion, one of the most beautiful places on our planet. I guess last time I went there the hotel belonged to the Rockefeller. I haven't been there for at least five years.

A trip adventure I'd be willing to forget about...

I always remember an interrupted take-off of my jumbo jet at the old Hong Kong airport where the runway ended where the sea was. We were returning by a Lufthansa plane to Frankfurt. At that time long-range Boeing 747-400 planes weren't in operation, so it wasn't at

ways possible to fly without a refuelling stop. The plane was filled up, and before the take-off some turbine defect was detected. The plane required an inspection, which lasted about two hours.

When we finally got on board, during the take-off, at full speed, the captain started to apply emergency brakes. We were all thrown forward, and that was when I realised what the use of the safety belts was. We weren't sure whether the pilot would be able to stop the plane before we reach the water. Luckily, the captain managed to stop the plane before we reached the water – we stopped literally on the verge of the runway. We were towed back, and after a few hours of further repairs, luckily we departed. Yet it was quite an intensive experience.

I know I'm going to visit...

I would definitely like to visit Australia one more time. I think it's a beautiful continent, and you can really unwind there.



Champagne

Among Icebergs

There are no boys in today's world (and even the girls have been bitten by the bug) who would not dream about faraway journeys or dangerous adventures. And there is a really interesting and original way to make those dreams come true – to embark on the Prince Albert II expedition ship.

Silversea's idea was as simple as it was brilliant. To build a ship for everybody who seeks adventures, and combine the comfort holiday with experience previously reserved only for people who take part in a real scientific expedition. Popularity of Prince Albert II cruise ship shows the idea was a major success. There are a number of people interested in the trip, and the well thought out cruise programme makes the whole expedition an unforgettable experience.

Prince Albert II was built to explore those places on Earth which are normally inaccessible for other cruise ships. Its special construction makes it possible for it to float on waters of Arctic or Antarctica covered with ice floe. The ship can hold 132 guests and 117 crew members, it is 107-metre long and reaches the speed of 14 knots. As the parameters can tell you, it's a rather small vessel, not intended for mass tourism, but rather focusing on quality and comfort. Even more so, because a stay on the ship involves an All In-

clusive offer, which means the passengers have all the meals, beverages and numerous attractions included in the price. That also includes the tips (with other shipowners paid separately).

The guests can count on good quality service – like the dedicated room service for all the passengers. The places at the table are not designated (like with other shipowners), that's why during the meals you have a chance to make new acquaintances. The room service, available 24/7, is ready to fulfil all your wishes, includ-





ing the culinary ones – and it's worth mentioning that the menu is prepared in cooperation with the well known Relais & Chateaux hotel and restaurant group. Naturally, the guests have access to wifi throughout the whole ship. The specialists from all the fields – and that includes: scientists, explorers, writers and photographers – are also present throughout the cruise to serve you as tour guides, giving you all the necessary details about the places visited along the way.

Prince Albert II is owned by the Silversea cruise line, which is a guarantee of the high quality comfort in the cabins. There are a couple of different types of cabins here, so every passenger will find something for themselves. In all the rooms you can expect champagne (on the day of embarking), fresh fruits and flowers, a set of drinks adjusted to your personal preference, cushions in your favourite colour, comfortable mattresses, a bathrobe, a pair of slippers, binoculars (useful during expeditions), a safe, a hair-dryer and a comfortable single or double bed, a bathroom and a TV set. The cabins are cleaned twice a day, and there is also a turn down service.

The smallest are the Adventurer rooms. They are 16-17 sq m and have two windows (portholes). They are not too big, but comfortable – they come with a separate lounge area, a desk, and a bathroom with a bathtub or a shower. Explorer rooms are slightly bigger, while View and Vista suits have large panoramic windows. Veranda suite comes with a so called “French

balcony” – a balustrade situated behind the balcony door. Expedition suite offers much bigger space – 43 sq m – and comes with huge windows and a separate lounge area furnished with a sofa. Silver rooms offer similar space, but have two French balconies. They can be combined with Veranda cabins to make a two bedroom suite. Additional amenities are a dressing room and a dressing table. Medallion suite is 33 sq m, and comes with a balcony of 8 sq m. With its space of 63 sq m, the Grand Suite is almost like a flat – it also has a separate lounge, dining room and a huge balcony. The Owner's Suite is of similar area, but the balcony is 15 sq m. The rooms slightly differ when it comes to decor, but you can be sure you will feel comfortably in each one of them.





Guests can expect various attractions on the ship. Ladies – and some gentlemen too – will surely be interested in visiting the Beauty Parlour, where you will be pampered by a hairdresser or a manicurist. There are lots of shops on the ship where you can buy various high quality products such as jewellery, fashionable clothes or perfumes. What made an unusually positive impression on me was the Connoisseur's Corner – a place which looks like taken straight out of the films about 19th-century England. Here you can sink into a comfortable leather armchair and savour a glass of cognac and a good cigar. If you are not a fan of smoking, however, you may like to go to the fitness centre, equipped with modern and efficient calorie burning machines. The offer also includes aerobics or pilates sessions. There is also a Spa salon, where you can undergo series of revitalising treatments. In the library, all avid readers will find hundreds of books in various languages, as well as audiobook stations. On the 6th deck, there is the Observation Lounge. It's a place where you can see stunning panoramic views – naturally over a cup of coffee or a good cocktail. There is no swimming pool on Prince Albert II, however, there are two outdoor jacuzzis, and the adjacent grill always ready to serve you something delicious. Talking about food, you must not forget about the ship's restaurant, where you can savour excellent dishes in an elegant atmosphere.

What's especially important when travelling on Prince Albert II, is the route of the

The cruise by Prince Albert II is a real scientific expedition

cruise. The ship goes to a few regions: the Antarctic, the Arctic, Southern and Latin America, and the Western coast of Africa. The cruise line offers also cruises called "Remote North" – that is a connection between Lisbon and Scotland or Reykjavik and Canada.

One of the cruises around the Southern cold waters is the route starting in Ushuaia, Argentina to the Falkland Islands, North-western Antarctic islands and the Drake Passage. Within these twelve days, you are given a chance to get to know the real treasures of the Antarctic: snow-covered mountains, massive glaciers and you can also observe penguins, whales, dolphins and various species of birds. Prince Albert II is also equipped with Zodiac motor boats, so reaching the seemingly inaccessible places should be no trouble. Naturally, during the cruise, you might go sightseeing – e.g. to the English cathedral in the Falkland Islands or ancient arctic research stations.

Equally exciting are cruises around the North Pole. During the expedition from Oslo and Longyearbyen, the passengers visit the Svalbard archipelago and the Jan Mayen island in Norway and a couple of places in Iceland. The expedition is called "Fire & Ice" – and not without a reason. The ice is represented by the glaciers, fjords, bears, reindeer, whales, seals and seagulls, while fire – by the volcanoes, lava and geysers. The passengers have a chance to see the Spitsbergen island and visit a real tundra. A visit to Jan Mayen,

with 2,300-metre high Mount Beerenberg, is an opportunity to see a real volcano. In Iceland you might see the biggest waterfall in Europe (44 m high, 100 m wide), admire rare species of birds, boiling mud pits and geysers. During the cruise the passengers are also told about the history of Vikings.

An interesting expedition is one from Portsmouth, England to Leith in Scotland. It's not far away, but the journey lasts 11 days, and it is a "Gardens and Mediaeval Castles" theme cruise. The stops include the island of Sicily, Waterford, Dublin, the Gigha island and a few Scottish cities. The passengers visit castles and churches, spectacular gardens accessible only from the sea, caves, and observe various birds. The expedition gives you a chance to sink into the Gothic atmosphere and take hundreds of excellent pictures.

A cruise from Puerto Caldera, Costa Rica to Callao, Chile is a real visual paradise for photography enthusiasts. It gives you a chance to learn about ancient cultures and visit tropical forests, which includes seeing wild monkeys, iguanas, sloths and the abundance of flora. The passengers also visit the archaeological sites and a banana plantation, as well as Ecuador, Panama, and the famous Quito in Peru.

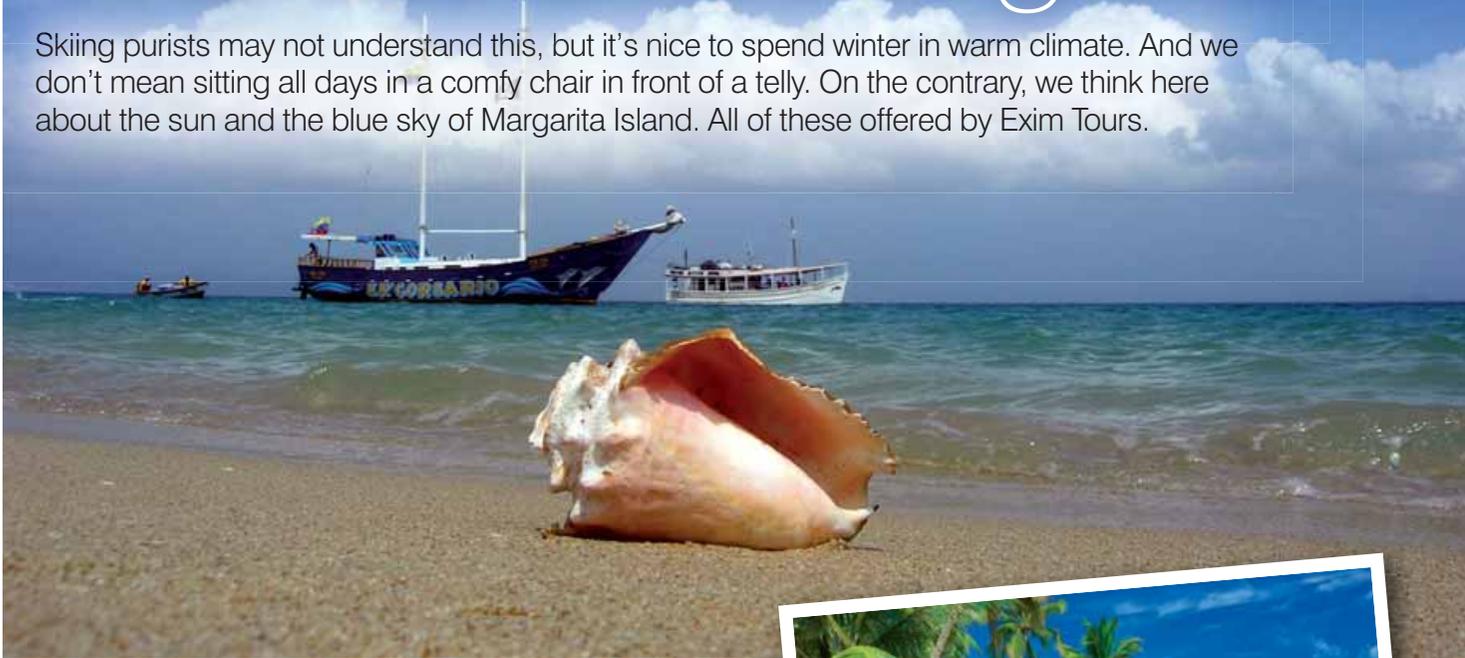
As for the African expeditions, the cruise from Cape Town, South Africa to Dakar, Senegal is especially worth mentioning. This visit to the Western coast of Africa lasts nearly a month, but this enables you to explore the desert, see the rock salt deposits, spectacular crags, as well as pelicans, flamingos and cormorants. The passengers visit typical African villages, schools, coconut plantations and, naturally, numerous towns.

Obviously, on returning from all these expeditions, you bring not only hundreds of pictures, but also souvenirs. And the fact that the Prince Albert II reaches the places which are inaccessible for others, makes them all the more valuable. After all, it's a thing for real explorers. ■

Pawel Kowalski

Winter à la Margarita

Skiing purists may not understand this, but it's nice to spend winter in warm climate. And we don't mean sitting all days in a comfy chair in front of a telly. On the contrary, we think here about the sun and the blue sky of Margarita Island. All of these offered by Exim Tours.



It is sometimes worth going against all trends and have a rest in nice and friendly environment, when in Poland all you can count on are snowstorms and blizzards. Who wouldn't be tempted to try one of the 72 beautiful beaches, the turquoise sea, and the resorts which are always ready to welcome the new visitors? This is exactly what Margarita Island is like. The place is barely known, but really worth consideration.

Isla Margarita is the largest of Venezuelan islands. It lies on Caribbean Sea, about 40 km from the mainland. Margarita is, in fact, an archipelago consisting of two little islands connected by an isthmus called La Restinga. The landscape here is quite diverse, and the climate remarkably friendly.

The island's capital is La Asuncion with Santa Rosa fortress, but its real charm can be seen through its small cities such as La Galera, or Ell Valle. They are worth visiting even if only for their cuisine, as there are numerous bars and restaurants there, offering seafood, corn flour pies, or pabellon – chopped beef with rice, beans, and fried bananas.

Margarita offers a great deal of leisure time activities. Swimming with dolphins, a wide range of water sports, horse-riding along the beach – these are just some of them. You can take a tour around the island, which will quickly and conveniently introduce you to what Margarita has to of-

fer. You can also choose to go off road and take a jeep safari – such a trip takes you to the south of the island and Macanao Peninsula with its charming mountainous and semi-desert landscape. It is there where you will find one of the greatest attractions of the island – La Restinga lagoon – a national park which is home to flamingos, herons, parrots, pelicans, and hawks, as well as numerous sea species. The coast of the lagoon features a 22-kilometre long sand beach. The programme of the tour also includes a boat trip along this lagoon, an opportunity to take a swim by Punta Arenas beach, and lunch. Finally, you will cross La Sierra mountains which offer an unforgettable view over the whole Macanao Peninsula.



Margarita Splash is, in turn, a trip by fast boats along the island's coasts. You can also choose to visit La Coche island which is situated between Margarita and the mainland. La Coche is known for being ideal for windsurfing, and the most convenient way to get there is by catamaran. Another interesting place is Cubagua island with a shipwreck which can be explored while snorkelling. There is also an option to take a full-day trip by plane to Los Roques National Park where you can scuba dive in one of the most beautiful coral atolls. In a similar way (by plane) you can visit Canaima park where you will see the charming El Sapo waterfall. However, if you wish to go truly exotic, we recommend a 2-day trip to the delta of the Orinoko river, where you can admire the might and magic of the tropical forest, including caimans, and anacondas. ■

All in One

The “all-in-one” mobile phone, commonly known as the smartphone, has become not only a fashionable gadget, but also an inseparable life companion for every modern inhabitant of our planet. The standard version offers the access to your mailbox, an internet browser, an advanced multimedia player, satnav, not to mention a camera or, in fact, a video camera. Additionally, thanks to new applications, smartphones are consolidating their position on the market. They are used by businesspeople, doctors (medical applications), travellers (satnav), and linguists (advanced dictionaries). Electronics companies, don't

let grass grow over their feet, and are continuously working on new solutions. The stakes are high. That is why, why have decided to look at the most newest, best, and most advanced smartphones on the market. **Darek Zawadzki** – our electronics geek – reports.

iPhone 4

The fourth edition of the fantastic smartphone made by the company with a bitten apple in its logo, boasts with a lot of novelties. In comparison to the previous model (3GS), iPhone 4 comes with a better 3.5» Retina display, offering 960 X 640 resolution (which is four times more than in the previous models), a 5 MP digital camera with movie recording in HD (not in 3 MP – as before), and an utterly new front panel camera (providing better quality in video calls). The newest iPhone also features a new processor – Apple A4, which efficiently manages all phone's operations. Thanks to FaceTime function, the users of iPhone 3 are able not only to talk to each other, but also e.g. wave to each other, as the data is transmitted over WiFi network. Gamers will definitely like the 3-axis gyroscope thanks to which iP4 is able to precisely calculate yaw, pitch, and roll. The newest iPhone is different from its predecessor not only as regards the included electronics, but also visually. iPhone 4 has a flat back (the back panel of the previous model had a bulge), which makes it easier to use it when, for example, it's placed on a desk.

CONCLUSION: The newest iPhone is an excellent smartphone with an extensive range of camera options, and access to a huge number of applications (unfortunately, you must pay for most of them) via App Store. The initial problems with signal loss have, fortunately, been resolved. Unfortunately, iP4 is one of the most expensive devices in its class. The model with 16GB memory costs around €900, the one with 32GB as much as €1,100.





Motorola Defy

True – the name of the model doesn't sound that good for a Polish speaker, but the phone itself is just excellent. It is based on Android platform which automatically gives its user access to over 70,000 applications, widgets, and games from Android Market. The phone has a large 3.7» WVGA touchscreen (offering 480 x 854 resolution) and does well especially in severe weather conditions as it's water resistant and dustproof. Moreover, CrystalTalk PLUS function helps eliminate background noise by dedicating two microphones as filters. Other interesting features are: a 5 MP digital camera with flash and digital zoom, DLNA (Digital Living Network Alliance) – a media share technology which allows us to store and share data with compatible home equipment, the newest version of MOTOBLUR application (which allows you to personalise and organise all the information for each of your friends under one listing). The price hasn't yet been announced.

CONCLUSION: We haven't been able to test the newest model of Motorola, but basing on our previous experience we dare to predict that it's going to be a successful smartphone.

Samsung Wave II

A second wave is coming! Samsung has recently presented the newest version of Wave model, known as GT-S8530. The second generation is based on the newest version of bada system (which means "ocean" in Korean). The phone features a large 3.7» Super Clear LCD touchscreen (WVGA 480x800), a 1GHz processor, a 5 MP digital camera with a function of HD recording, and Social Hub service (offers a convenient, single-point access to all your email accounts, calendars, personal contacts, IM and SNS information. Social and work calendars from all portals and social networking sites are colour-coded and displayed in an integrated view via 2-way synchronization). The price hasn't been announced yet.

CONCLUSION: The new Samsung Wave is aimed at users on a mid-range budget. The price for the Wave's first generation was as little as €300. New applications for the phone are available via online store Samsung Apps, but more advanced users may feel a bit disappointed because both Android Market and Apple AppStore offer considerably more applications.



BlackBerry Torch 9800

The Canadian company RIM (Research In Motion) introduced its first mobile featuring a slider. The manufacturer claims that the slider mechanism is rated for more than 150,000 cycles, so you don't have to worry that frequent opening the QWERTY keyboard will wear the mechanism. The Torch has also a 3.2» touchscreen (HVGA 360 x 480) with a virtual keyboard. The smartphone runs on the newest BlackBerry OS 6 operating system, has a 5 MP digital camera with 2x digital zoom, a 624 MHz processor and a nice multimedia player. The «Berries» don't need any special recommendation – if you have used one, you will definitely stay faithful to the brand. A solid chassis, safety (it is even used by the US president), and a classic design, are the device's major advantages. Price: €700.

CONCLUSION: Another solid design with an innovative (as for BlackBerry) solution in form of a QWERTY keyboard hidden behind a slider. It seems to be an excellent choice for corporate users. It definitely is not a revolutionary device, and creating BlackBerry Torch 9800 the manufacturer opted more for consolidation of its position on the market. ▶



Nokia N8

Welcome to Poland! Pre-sales for the newest N8 model began in August and the first customers received their smartphones in October. Nokia N8 was a long awaited device, but it seems that it was worth it. The Finnish company equipped this remarkable telephone with a 12 MP digital camera which features Carl Zeiss optics, HD video recording, and HDMI port (to connect it to a TV). There is also an integrated web television (Web TV application), free satnav (Ovi Maps), and a sophisticated multimedia player. The 3.5 AMOLED screen with 360x640 resolution and "pinch zoom" function (which enables you to quickly zoom in images), is excellent. The telephone runs on Symbian 3 operating system and is available in 5 colours: black, white, green, orange, and blue. Price €400.

CONCLUSION: Undoubtedly, Nokia knows how to create a good mobile phone. The N8 is a show off of the company's experience. It features a solid aluminium body, excellent graphics, and the newest version of the operating system. It might be a real competition for the iPhone. It's a shame, though, that we had to wait for it for so long.

HTC Desire HD

The phone was officially presented in September in London, and in October it appeared on the Polish market. Desire HD is well equipped to handle multimedia content thanks to its 4.3» bright Super LCD screen with 480 x 800 resolution, Dolby Mobile sound system, and a new Qualcomm 8255 Snapdragon 1 GHz processor. The HD symbol hasn't been added to the name of the model by accident. The device features a 8 MP digital camera which records video with HD quality. The body is made of one piece of aluminium which contributes to the overall sturdy looks. Android 2.2 operating system has been enhanced with



a new user's interface called HTC Sense. Price €620.

CONCLUSION: It's huge! Let's hope that the large 4.3» display won't overload the battery resulting in a dramatic drop in its life. Another thing worth mentioning is HTC Sense.com service which, if necessary, will find your lost phone on a map, switch the ringtone one, or redirect incoming calls to a different number. If it doesn't help, the system may display info about a prize offered for the person who has found the telephone. If it doesn't help, however, there will always be an option to remotely wipe the whole content of the phone's memory.

SHARP LCD 3D/2D



At this year's IFA fairs Sharp Corporation presented 3D touch-screen LCD featuring the industry's highest brightness that can switch between 2D and 3D modes. Users can view 3D images without the need to wear special glasses, making this LCD ideal for mobile devices such as digital cameras, mobile phones, and smartphones. The newly developed 3D LCD uses a parallax barrier system to display 3D images. This parallax barrier, which has a series of vertical slits, is incorporated into an ordinary LCD to control the path of light reaching the right and left eyes, thus creating a sense of depth. However, the conventional 3D LCD with this system had difficulty in displaying high-quality images in 3D mode. The display is 3.8 inch and offers 640 x 760 resolution in 3D and 1280 x 768 in 2D.

A Taste of Japan

The average person usually associates the Japanese cuisine only with sushi. The impression is reinforced by the commerce, in shops there are more and more ingredients needed to prepare this admittedly unique dish. But Japan has a lot more culinary specialties to offer than this one.

My friend, who often goes to Japan, claims that what attracts us to the Japanese way of living, the apparent mystery, the samurai traditions and mysticism is only a gimmick, which is used to promote and sell the local cars and TV sets. To top it all, the world is hugely indebted to Japan. And we are not talking about the famous Godzilla monster, but the food. The abundance of flavours, spices and – what is not irrelevant – colours, makes the cuisine from the land of the rising sun one of the most interesting culinary phenomena in the world. However, because sushi bars and restaurants are thriving, our command of Japanese specialties is limited to those popular fish delicacies. What a pity.

A couple of years ago, some of us would quail on hearing the name “Chinese cabbage”. Naturally, only if we were expected to use it in our kitchen. Where possibly could we have bought it? Today it is no longer a problem. Chinese cabbage is available on the Polish market, which is especially a good thing, as it is one of the ingredients needed for the Natto Miso Shiro soup. It is a dish for those who like to experiment with different tastes: natto are fermented soybeans, which have strong, unpleasant smell. Also available in Poland – however, in shops we can often find the export version of natto, devoid of the characteristic aroma. So you’d better look for the smelly soybeans! When you have found it, pour two cupfuls of dashi (bouillon) into a pot, heat it up and add 2 leaves of Chinese cabbage. Wait until the leaves have softened, pour out some of the bouillon and mix it with a spoonful of red miso (soy paste), and then add it to the soup. Add about 200 grams of natto and boil it up. Garnish with a few onion rings before serving. If it is 3 o’clock in the morning and your guests have overstayed their welcome, treat them to the soup – works like a charm!



A little less extreme is the dish called Donburi. To be precise, you should call it a set of dishes, as the word “donburi” means a bowl, or a saucer – but at a restaurant it also refers to a dish served in a thick bowl. There are plenty types of Donburi, some of them resemble a soup, others a gratin. All types also differ in terms of ingredients. The one thing which never changes is rice. Donburi is a rice-based dish. To prepare one of them, called Oyakodon, we need 3 glassfuls of rice, 3 spring onions, 200 grams of chicken breast, 4 eggs and sauce made from half a glassful of dashi bouillon, soy sauce and sugar. Pour the eggs into a bowl and mix it, cut the raw chicken into thin strips, and chop the onion into rounds of about 2 cm. Pour the prepared sauce into the pan, add strips of chicken, and after a couple of minutes add the onion and fry for about 2 minutes.

Japanese cuisine is not only the world-recognized sushi, as the culinary diversity of this country is really huge.

Slowly pour the eggs, don’t mix them but don’t let them get too solid. To complete the dish we put the hot, cooked rice into the bowls – and top it with the pan-fried mixture. The bowls should be quite deep with thick walls, and possibly – they should come with lids. Donburi may be served with green tea, although I know some people who prefer to wash it down with sake.

The abovementioned dishes are only a tiny fragment of the vast spectrum of possibilities offered by oriental cuisine. Abundance of experiences guaranteed. And coming back to this friend of mine, well... Personally I have nothing against Japanese TV sets or cars – given that, they are of really good quality. But I like to go “the Japanese way” when cooking as well, even if I am guided not by mysticism, but my sense of taste. Banzai! ■

Artur Kolger

Everyone who has entered the world of viticulture comes to a point when they ask themselves a question: How is it possible that two wines from the same grape variety and produced by means of the same technique, but in different parts of the world taste so different? And why should you never say: “I don’t like Chardonnay”?

One of the three main factors which influence the quality of wine – besides the grape variety and a method of production – is the so called terroir, which is the soil expression, climate and geography of the region where the vine is grown. Each of us has surely read in a book or heard somebody in a movie talking about “gravel soil”, or “the Southern slope”, and we all thought it was nothing worth further deliberation. However, all this is of huge importance and strongly influences the taste of wines.

GRAPEVINE TORTURES

If you want to know the difference between a regular farmer and a winemaker, show them a piece of poor, stony soil – the farmer will sit and cry, while the winemaker will jump for joy. Poor soil is ideal for winemaking. It is by no means an accident that the poorest soil makes the best wine. It’s because self-respecting winemakers aim at quality, not efficiency. The worse conditions grapevine has to grow in and the more it has to root in the soil in search for water and nutrient – the fewer fruits it will produce, but their quality will be outstanding. What’s more, winemakers often remove some grape bunches, so that the vine puts all its energy into developing the remaining fruits. It is called a green harvest. An advantage of poor soil is that it does not keep water, which when excessive, could damage the grapevine. Poor soil allows for better air circulation and protects the roots against diseases.

The Wine’s Expression

Part 1

The climate in which wine is produced is equally important. Grapevines like neither the heat nor cold. Maturing of the grapes can be compared to steak preparation – if a pan is too cold, the meat will be grey and bland, if it is too hot – the steak will be burnt on the outside and raw on the inside. The same applies to water – if the soil is too dry, the vine will die, even though in search for water its roots can reach a depth of 40 metres. However, when it is too wet – the plant will produce too many fruits of bland, watery taste. Or worse – they will rot or get infected by mould.

HOW MUCH SUGAR IS THERE IN SUGAR?

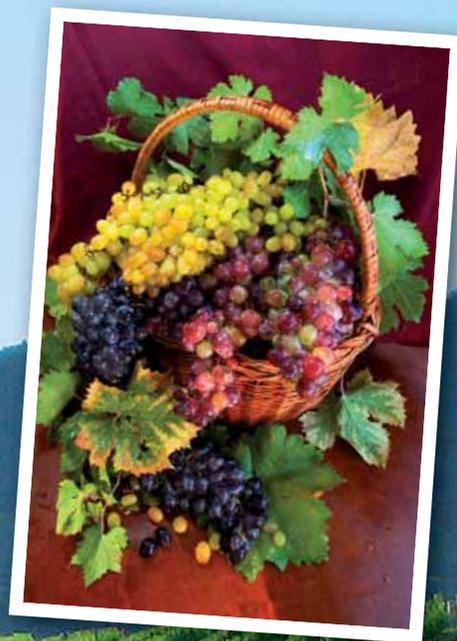
The location of the cellar is also a crucial issue. A sloping will carry the water better, and if it is directed properly, it provides a better exposure to the sun. What's more, on the slopes the soil is usually poorer, as rich soil is usually leached by water, and accumulates in the valleys.

All these factors influence the final product, i.e. wine. As the climate gets hotter and drier, the acidity of wines tends to decrease. Instead, they become more concentrated. It often happens that the level of sugar in grapes is so high, that the yeasts cannot convert all of it, and some sugar remains. It makes the wine taste smoother despite its muscular structure. Wines from cool climates are delicate, and more acidic (which is preferred). They are less concentrated, but more complex and sophisticated, as nothing inhibits the expression of the most subtle overtones. That's why the Chardonnay from Argentina is a rich, thick wine scented with candied exotic fruits with creamy consistency. The one from the French Chablis is a more ephemeral, fresh wine with the aroma of lemon pip and mountain stream waters with distinct acidi-

The worse conditions grapevine has to grow in, the better quality grapes it produces

ty. Therefore, when somebody claims they are not a fan of Chardonnay, they would have to try all the Chardonnays in the whole world, otherwise they expose themselves to ridicule. ■

Michał Poddany & Robert Mielżyński



The Explosion of Gadgets



Compact cars are functional, but you can forget about all the amenities the producers equip bigger cars with.

Such a statement, however, does not make sense when referring to the latest Citroen C4, which has been endowed with an explosive name and top-end facilities.

The first C4 received an ideal promotion thanks to participation of Citroen in WRC championship and seven championship titles won by Sebastien Loeb behind the wheel of this model. The car shocked with its line, but also with remarkable solutions used on board. The engineers equipped C4 with a number of smart gimmicks such as the fixed steering wheel hub which lets the driver operate several functions of the car without removing his or her hands from the wheel, directional headlights, a lane departure warning system, tyre air pressure sensors, and even a perfume dispenser. No - not scent, but "perfume" - the French decided that comfort is the most important feature. Therefore it's not surprising that the previous model was a sales hit. This time, however, Citroen decided to introduce some changes, because the market evolves and becomes even more demanding. What did the Citroen engineers decide then? They made the new C4... even more comfortable. First of all, the new C4 has grown in dimensions to provide even more comfort for the passengers in the cabin and more space for the luggage in the boot (now the boot's capacity is record 408 litres - the competitors are far behind), the dashboard is made from soft materials, and the car itself has been better sound-proofed (in line with the idea that less vibration and noise equals less tiredness, which in turn equals more joy from driving the car), and equipped like limousines. I'm not exaggerating! Your new C4 may feature not only leather upholstery or a glass roof (known and banal), but can also have internet access, or even seats with a massage function.

TAILORED TO THE NEEDS

Journalists generally loath to use marketing terms, but in this case the term "tailored" seems surprisingly appropriate and not exaggerated. The new Citroen can be tailored to your own preferences, but also to your own mood. How is it done? The French specialists claim that this

art is seen in details - the colour of the backlighting behind the instrument panel, and various configurable chimes/alerts. That is why, in C4 it's possible to not only adjust the colour of the display of meters, but even change the shade of their edges. For the same reason the new C4 has a choice of various polyphonic sounds, which can be assigned to various alerts just like polyphonic ringtones in a mobile phone may be assigned to various profiles.

ONLY PROVEN SOLUTIONS

All Citroens are extremely functional and feature numerous compartments whose location has been well thought out. It's the same with the new C4. In the version with clutchless manual transmission called EGS (works similarly to an automatic transmission), the free space between the front seats is now occupied by a large fridge. Literally - this huge box can store and cool as many as four 1.5 litre bottles.

It can't be said that the new C4, which will soon appear in Poland, is only a car which has undergone a facelift. Citroen has, in fact, built a completely new car, which weighs less, although it features all the above novelties. It's the best proof that the design of the new C4 has been well refined. Only the engines haven't changed - but this seems quite understandable as customers don't like unproven solutions. The choice is wide, both in case of petrol and diesel engines. Will there be anything new? Yes - a diesel micro-hybrid - that is a car featuring a diesel engine and Start&Stop system (when the car comes to a halt, the engine automatically shuts down, and on engaging the clutch starts again). Thanks to the omnipresent electronics you will be able to save money and the Mother Nature. Gadgets may be fun, but saving the environment is also important - not only for C4 manufacturers. ■

*Rafał Jemielita
is a journalist for Playboy
and a co-presenter of TVN Turbo's
'Automaniak' - a motor magazine programme.*



EQ.7

this is how coffee tastes

Good coffee is worth living for, as well as paying a lot to get some. Lovers of this aromatic drink are truly aware of this. Luckily, not only them. Siemens also knows it, and their new coffee maker is a good proof of this.



The company analysed all stages of coffee making and the factors which may influence its taste (the type of coffee beans, the grinding level, the temperature, and the brew pressure). Adding to this the cutting edge technology, and an impressive design, Siemens created the first completely automatic coffee machine named EQ.7. The machine is a real breakthrough in coffee making, with over 60 inventions which have been utilised in the new EQ.7. At the same time EQ.7 is the strongest coffee machine, with 1700 W wattage and a 19 bar pressure water pump.

STEP BY STEP

The process of making coffee starts with appropriate grinding of the beans. It is well known that this process is one of the most crucial when preparing the traditional espresso. The machine features a specially designed ceramic grinder called silent ceram drive. The unit not only grinds coffee beans with consistent performance, but also does it very quietly. In contrast to traditional steel grinders, this one is made of wear resistant material making it extremely reliable.

In order to obtain rich aroma and thick, tall, medium brown crema, the "aroma pressure system" automatically achieves the ideal, continuous pressure and therefore the perfect brewing result, for every single cup. The tamper has been designed with a convex shape, that allows even

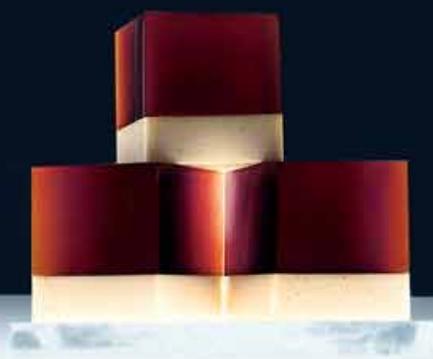
more flavour to be released from the ground coffee. For a cup of espresso to achieve perfection, the water must be sustained at the ideal temperature for 30 seconds during the brewing process. With the new Senso Flow System, this is now possible, giving you perfect flavour every time and anytime. Earlier only professional coffee machines used by the best baristas were able to do so. The heating system is switched on only when it is necessary. Special sensors measure the water's temperature, ensuring that coffee is ideally brewed. It's also a unique, energy-saving feature.

ONE BUTTON

EQ.7 features a coffee dispenser with adjustable height for varying cup size. It's simple, but very practical. The innovative milk frothing nozzle creates delicate milky foam frothy as light whipped cream. The height of the nozzle is also adjustable which makes it possible to use cups as tall as 15 centimetres. The "cream center" option makes it possible to prepare coffee of your preferred aroma, so making various types of coffee with or without the foam is now even easier and more convenient. Thanks to "one touch" function only one push of a button is enough to make an excellent drink – either cappuccino or latte macchiato. The intelligent "auto valve system" switches automatically between steam- & hot water function, dispensing appropriate quantities of all ingredients to produce an ideal drink. This sophisticated system of valves is the heart of EQ.7 machine. It's worth remembering that the milk container is thermo-insulated and keeps all the ingredients fresh for as many as 7 hours.

Another good thing about this creation from Siemens is its automatic cleaning system. "One touch service" programme simply starts the whole process of cleaning and removing scale. Moreover, EQ.7 is equipped with a practical function called "cream center cleaner" to quickly clean the frothing nozzle. It can be started with one touch of a button. The nozzle can also easily be removed and washed in a dishwasher.

Add to this the elegant looks of the machine (which will fit any interior as the available colours include black piano or aluminium/antracite), an intuitive LCD with Polish menu, an individual setting function called "My Coffee" (to adjust your preferences regarding your favourite coffee), Brita water filter, and EQ.7 becomes an essence of what a real coffee lover needs. Enjoy your coffee.



4 hours
in...

MOSCOW

From imposing architecture to delicate Fabergé eggs, **Jenny Southan** experiences the ambition and imagination of the Russian capital.



Lenin's Mausoleum

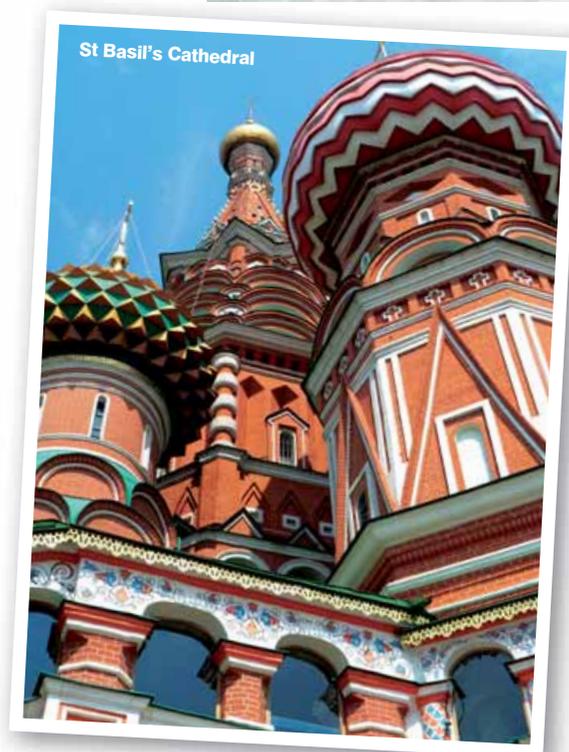
LENIN'S MAUSOLEUM

Red Square is the obvious place to start a tour of Moscow, with the orange crenellated walls of the Kremlin – the official residence of the president – and the neo-Russian GUM shopping emporium on opposing sides. If you get the timing right and don't mind queuing for up to an hour (it could be a push in winter), you can visit Vladimir Lenin's mausoleum, where the communist revolutionary lies in state.

After a series of strokes, Lenin died in 1924, aged 53 – the outpouring of public grief was overwhelming, with almost 100,000 mourners paying their respects in the first few weeks. Such was the demand for his body to be preserved for future generations that the Soviet government decided to have it embalmed, and in 1930 the stone tomb that stands today by the Kremlin walls became his resting place.

Inside, visitors are ushered a few at a time down a dim staircase by stern guards. At the bottom is a chamber where Lenin lies in a glass-sided coffin. Although he is wearing a dark suit, a spotlight shining on his face reveals smooth white skin and a neatly trimmed beard – think Madame Tussauds waxwork rather than Egyptian mummy.

It might not appeal to everyone but it's a unique experience that may not be available for much longer as debate continues about whether or not to bury him. In the meantime, it is reported that his body requires daily maintenance, along with chemical baths every 18 months. Open 10am-1pm daily except Mon and Fri; free entry. No photos, phones or large bags – after queuing at the north-west corner of the square, you can check them in for 40 roubles (85p) at the Historical Museum Tower before going through security.



St Basil's Cathedral

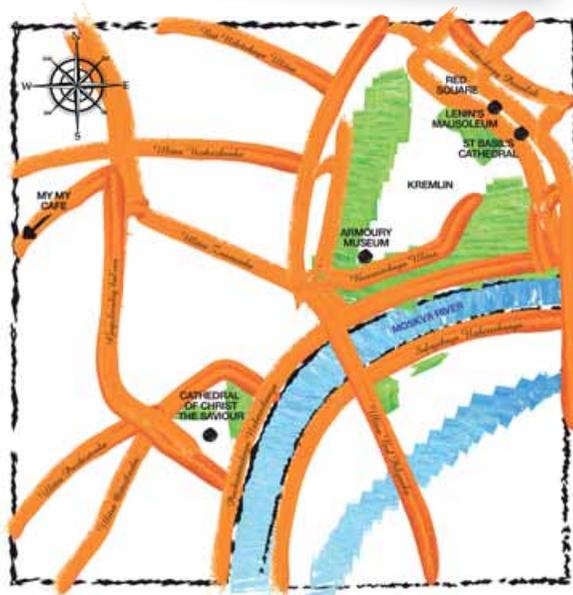
ST BASIL'S CATHEDRAL

A short stroll across the square will bring you to the colourful St Basil's Cathedral, the twisted candy domes of which have become a symbol of Moscow. The Russian Orthodox place of worship was commissioned by Ivan the Terrible in the 16th century but has since become a museum. It features eight small chapels, each decorated with golden Byzantine icons, plus a larger central one beneath the fish-scale spire. Each is connected by steep staircases and well-walked corridors decorated with floral and geometric murals. Audio guides are available for 200 roubles (£4). Open 10am-5.30pm daily except Tues. Entry is 200 roubles (£4). No photos.

ARMOURY MUSEUM

On the other side of the Kremlin, tickets for the Armoury Museum (open daily except Thursdays) can be bought at the Kutafya Tower entrance, from where visitors walk through the Alexander Garden to a security point (large bags not allowed). Although entry times are restricted to 10am, 12pm, 2.30pm and 4.30pm, it is well worth fitting into your itinerary as even a whirlwind tour will leave you stunned.

Founded by Peter the Great in 1720, the collection of tsarist treasures is spread across two floors and includes a dazzling array of ecclesiastical robes, court dresses, royal carriages, ornate crowns, thrones, icon and bible covers, weapons and armour. Signs tend to be in Russian only but items that may catch your eye are the children's carriages designed to be pulled by ponies and led by dwarves, the throne encrusted with 1,964 nuggets of sapphire, turquoise and pink amethyst, the velvet and gold brocade horse coats, and the wedding dress of Catherine the Great.



The museum is also home to ten Imperial Fabergé eggs, the world's largest collection. The House of Fabergé was a jewellers established in St Petersburg in 1842 that became known for its intricately designed Easter eggs made for the Russian tsars – the first was commissioned by Alexander III as a gift for his wife in 1855. Some 50 were created in total, each handcrafted in precious stones and metals with a “surprise” of some kind inside – be it a miniature Trans-Siberian Express train or a replica of Alexander Palace. But only 42 eggs are known to have survived – those remaining are worth millions. Entry is 700 roubles (£15).

CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE SAVIOUR

Not far from the Kremlin is the Orthodox Cathedral of Christ the Saviour (Khram Khrista Spasitelya), complete with shimmering golden onion domes, a white marble and granite façade, and life-like bronze saints adorning the exterior. Originally built in the 19th century, the church was destroyed by Stalin in the early 1930s in a bid to use the site – well positioned on the banks of the Moskva River – for a soviet palace. But construction was interrupted by a lack of funds and then the Second World War, after



Metro station

which the area was used as an outdoor swimming pool.

Today's cathedral was rebuilt in 1997 and even if you only have a few minutes spare, you should take a look inside at the lavish murals, flickering candles and soaring architecture. Entry is free. No photos. Open 10am-6pm daily.

MY MY CAFE

This branch of the popular Russian chain of eateries (pronounced Moo Moo) is located on the lively shopping street of Arbat, where you'll find plenty of buskers, T-shirt stands and souvenir stores. My My offers a democratic style of dining suited to tourists, business people and families alike, with a wide selection of local salads, stews, soups and meat dishes at low prices – take a tray and

choose what you want at the counter before paying and sitting down.

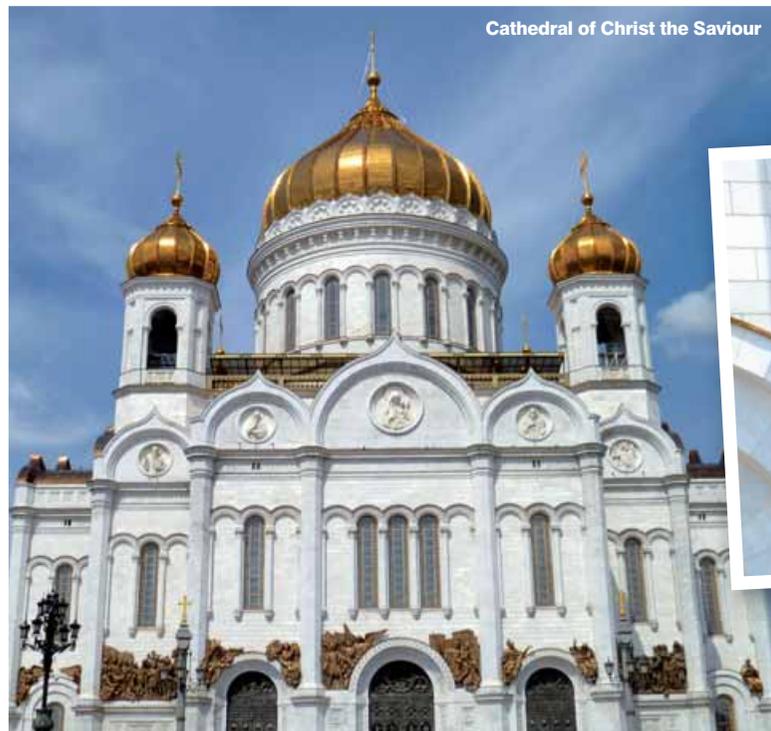
Try the *oroshka* cold summer soup with cucumber, spring onions, potato, ham and sour cream, the beetroot salad, the *blini* pancakes topped with fish eggs, or a glass of *kvas*, a non-alcoholic drink made from fermented bread – it tastes nicer than it sounds. Arbat 45/23; cafe-mumu.ru (Russian only) ■
Go to visitrussia.org.uk

TAXI TIP

Cabs tend to be expensive if you are a foreigner as drivers often charge two to three times more. As a guide, a ten-minute journey should cost about 500 roubles (£10) in an official yellow cab. Locals may offer to pick you up in their own vehicles but this can be risky. If you decide to do this, agree a price first – ten minutes should be about 150 roubles (£3).

MOSCOW'S METRO

The city's metro system is a sight in itself. Commissioned by Stalin in the 1930s, many of the stations were built as “palaces for the people” to showcase the might of the regime, with grand chandeliers, statues, marble columns and pro-soviet frescoes. London Underground provided advice on its construction.



Cathedral of Christ the Saviour



My My café





Piotr Kalita has been associated with the air travel market for almost 20 years. He specializes in corporate and diplomatic travel. **Do you have any questions?** Ask Peter. Send your question at redakcja@businesstraveller.pl

VACCINATION BEFORE A HOLIDAY

I want to go to Africa. My colleague has talked me into a journey to Kenya and Tanzania. She was there before, and especially loved safari. I'm really excited about this journey. However, I've heard about some tropical diseases occurring in this region, which discourages me a bit. Apparently, there are some side-effects of anti-malarials. Is it really that dangerous?

Beata

TURBULENCE

A few times a month I go away on business, and spent a lot of time on the plane. When turbulence occurs I feel rather uneasy. Is turbulence dangerous? Should I keep my safety belt fastened all the time?

Andrzej

Dear Beata,

It will surely be an unforgettable journey. You have to prepare yourself for every expedition. Tropical diseases do occur, but there are adequate ways to minimize the risk of becoming infected. I consulted a doctor specializing in contagious diseases (including tropical ones). The most important thing is to be vigilant about hygiene, and nothing can replace that. Washing and disinfecting your hands is an absolute necessity. The most common conditions are stomach complaints caused by the change of bacterial flora. You should drink only originally sealed bottled water, and some popular carbonated soft drinks. Avoid drinks with ice cubes, as water used to make them might not have been boiled – even in the best hotels and restaurants.

It is recommended to vaccinate against viral hepatitis A and B. The vaccine is administered in three doses. The second dose is given after a month, and the third one after six months. Immunity to the disease is developed after the third dose. That's why you should start preparing for such a journey a couple of months ahead of time.

Kenya and Tanzania are countries where malaria often occurs.

The malaria parasites are transmitted by the mosquito vectors. So, the key thing is to avoid the mosquito bites. The mosquito repellents available in the pharmacies in Poland should effectively do the job. The mosquitoes are troublesome mostly in the morning and in the evening. It is therefore recommended to wear clothes covering arms and legs, in natural light colours. Bold colours, like intense yellow or red, usually attract these insects.

No cure for malaria has been discovered so far, but there are medicines, which prevent the malaria plasmodium from multiplying in the human organism. One of such medicines is Lariam, which can be obtained by prescription in Poland. The first dose is taken a week before departure, and you should still continue the treatment for 4 weeks after coming back from the malaria endemic countries. Each drug may cause undesirable side-effects. Rarely, it may cause a patient to undergo short-term depressive symptoms. These are rather individual responses to the treatment.

I strongly suggest you should make a doctor's appointment and seek medical consultation before the journey.

Dear Andrzej,

As I'm writing this reply to you I am waiting for my plane to Europe at the Damascus Airport, and I'm not afraid of turbulence. It's because, in fact, they pose no real danger to the safety of the flight. It's one of my favourite topics to talk about with the pilots. The planes are constructed in such a way, to resist far heavier loads, than those occurring at natural conditions during the flight. Usually the plane encounters turbulence when going through the clouds or after running into the so called wind gradient, i.e. a difference in wind speed. At that moment the plane is very sensitive to strong winds coming from all directions. The term "wind shear" is also used. If you think about driving a car on a windy day, it would be easier for you to imagine the forces exerting pressure on the car in perpendicular directions. When flying, the plane is additionally exposed to the forces pushing it up and down, which cause the plane to additionally move upwards and downwards. That's what we call turbulence.

As I've mentioned before, the aren't dangerous for the plane,

but they sometimes are unpleasant for the passengers, especially when occurring suddenly (and when you spill your coffee). Pilots have very accurate and up-to-date aviation weather maps, supported with radar screens, so that they can avoid the areas where heavy turbulence are likely to occur. In case of turbulence the passengers should keep their safety belts fastened, and the luggage must be put in the locker. If turbulence is especially troublesome, the captain may ask the crew to finish the in-flight service and be seated, just like during the take-off or landing. Other objects like serving trays are also protected to prevent the possibility of hitting or for instance, spilling the coffee.

Pilots always have a possibility to change the route of the flight in case of really strong turbulence. Sometimes the pilot may also decide to decrease the cruise speed, because then the whirls of air do not have such a huge impact on the plane.

I hope now it will be easier for you to get accustomed to the turbulence during the future flights.

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Laguna Coupé Monaco GP to model, który powstał dzięki współpracy z Automobile Club de Monaco. Auto budzi wśród kierowców sportowe emocje oraz zachwyca wyróżniającym się designem, dorównującym najbardziej znanym modelom z torów wyścigowych. Kierując się najwyższym poziomem wymagań, oferujemy w Lagunie Coupé Monaco GP ponadprzeciętną jakość oraz wyposażenie z unikalną technologią 4Control, systemem dźwiękowym Bose® oraz systemem nawigacji Carminat TomTom®. Zużycie paliwa w cyklu mieszanym wynosi 6,2 l/100 km, emisja CO₂ 163 g/km. Szczegółowe informacje dotyczące obsługi i eksploatacji samochodów wyciecznych z Renault zainicjuj na www.renault.pl

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