

Business Traveller Poland

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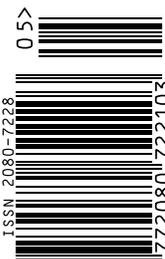
Business Traveller Poland

PODNIĘBNE WINNICE
2011

CELLARS IN THE SKY

2011 CELLARS IN THE SKY Awards announced!

INDEKS 256765



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Wine is a drink, which people have drunk for centuries, but today it is equally popular in many different situations. For example, when flying in a plane. It would be difficult to imagine a flight – especially a long one – without a possibility to take a sip of wine. It not only adds more character to your meal, but is also a good start to a conversation, and helps you to get to know other passengers. Without a question – this alcoholic drink has become an integral part of airlines» offer, and the higher the cabin class, the more interesting choice of wine we get. We've decided to check, how airlines deal with wine selection on board of their aircraft, and award the best carriers. We present the results in this very issue.

Talking about checking, you must admit, that since we were given an opportunity to check-in online, we've sometimes forgotten what good old check-in desks look like. These can, however, be found not only at airports, but also in the city centres. We present you with a selection of spots, where you can check in, before going to the airport.

But we are far from forgetting about the airports altogether – in this issue, we invite you to the Parisian CDG, i.e. Charles de Gaulle airport – the second busiest European airport. We will also take you on a flight from Miami to Rome, and visit hotels in Ożarów Mazowiecki, Warsaw and

Sopot. We will see Hamburg and New York. We will also check the incentive trip offer in Budapest and play golf in Spain, since there are plenty of golf courses to choose from.

Traditionally, a Business Traveller issue would not be complete without articles on technology and food. This time, you will find here a digital camera test, latest news from the automotive industry, articles about wines and best cheese we can get in the French Alps. So, dig in and enjoy your reading!



Robert Grzybowski
Publisher BT Poland



Read more details! Visit businesstraveller.pl

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SINGAPORE AIRLINES BUSINESS CLASS

NAJBARDZIEJ PRZESTRONNA JAKĄ WIDZIAŁ ŚWIAT



Nasza Business Class – najbardziej obszerna w swojej kategorii, zapewnia luksus wypoczynku w czasie lotu. Wyjątkowy fotel rozkłada się w idealnie płaskie, największe podniebne łóżko, gdzie możesz swobodnie się wyciągnąć.

Zasmakuj komfortu na pokładach samolotów typu A380, Boeing 777-300ER i A340-500.



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

Skorzystaj z połączenia: z Gdańska, Poznania, Wrocławia, Krakowa, Katowic, Rzeszowa i Warszawy przez Frankfurt – dwa razy dziennie, przez Monachium – raz dziennie; z Warszawy przez Amsterdam, Mediolan lub Zurich – rejsy codziennie – do Singapuru i dalej na Daleki Wschód, do Australii i Nowej Zelandii.

LOT TELEGRAM LOT TELEGRAM LOT TELEGRAM LOT

Elite Fleet Project

LOT Polish Airlines has just put its "Elite Fleet" programme into operation. The programme will permit the implementation of new standards of in-flight service, as well as a series of training courses for flight attendants. As a part of the "Elite Fleet" project, the selection of cabin crew personnel who will be assigned to business class passenger service on long-distance flights will be made. After successfully completing all of the courses in the programme, these personnel will serve business class passenger on long-distance flights beginning on Boeing 767 aircraft, and later on the 787 Dreamliner. For many years now, those international airlines that provide world-class service have hand-picked their cabin personnel for service of passengers in particular classes such as First Class, Business Class, and Premium Economy.



More On The Internet

The website of the Polish airline carrier has a new function named 'Find the best price'. A special tab was added with a search engine that efficiently finds the cheapest tickets available on flights from Warsaw to all destinations offered and operated by LOT Polish Airlines.



LOT Leases a B-767

The Polish carrier has decided to temporarily lease an additional aircraft that will operate on transatlantic flights.

The Boeing 767-300 was leased from Air Italy. The first flight took place on April 27, from Warsaw to Chicago, and the final will take off on May 12. The

aircraft will make 13 trips altogether, which will be carried out as LOT Polish Airlines flights. The decision to lease the aircraft from another carrier is related to the high level of interest by passengers in transatlantic flights during the period of heightened spring traffic, and to a technical review of one of LOT's long-distance aircraft. The aircraft will be crewed by Air Italy personnel. A LOT flight attendant will also be present among the cabin crew members.

To Micronesia WITH STAR ALIANCE

The largest alliance has introduced a further fare product – Micronesia Airpass. With the Micronesia Airpass, passengers can purchase up to 10 flights on the Continental Airlines and United network across Micronesia, all in a single ticket at an attractive price.

The journey on the Micronesia Airpass can commence from any Star Alliance destination in Japan, as well as from Cairns, Guam, Hong Kong, Manila, Nadi, Palau or Saipan. The ticket is available only in conjunction with an international Star Alliance flight into any of these destinations.

Micronesia consists of more than 2000 islands scattered across the North Pacific. Star Alliance member carriers Continental Airlines and United offer the most comprehensive airline network in Micronesia. In addition to Guam, customers can choose to travel to: Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap in the Federated States of Micronesia; Kwajalein Atoll and Majuro in the Marshall Islands; Rota and Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands as well as Palau.



SPRING WEEKENDS AT SIXT

rent a car



One of the largest car rental companies, has welcomed the spring with a special offer for its customers. Renting a car for the weekend, with no mileage limit to ensure maximum freedom, now costs only PLN 99 net per day. The promotional offer includes cars from two different groups. These are: SEAT Ibiza, Kia Ceed, Ford Fusion, Ford Focus, Seat Leon, and Hyundai i30. The weekend rental period is counted from noon on Thursday until 9.00 am on Monday.

„Sixt rent a car" has also recently introduced to its fleet a brand new luxurious model of Mercedes M-class. In this way, Sixt has become the first rental company in Poland to offer this model to its customers. The interior of the vehicle ML 320 CDI has been finished with taste and flair. For more info, videos and commercials of the company go to the company's You Tube's Sixt Polska channel.

Sixt has been operating in Poland since 2000. The license operator for our country is EuroRent company.

Nasze hotele są zaprojektowane na miarę twojego sukcesu.

Szybkie i bezpłatne łącze internetowe dostępne dla wszystkich uczestników spotkania.* 100% gwarancji satysfakcji gości, nowoczesne rozwiązania oraz idealne lokalizacje naszych hoteli to wszystko czego potrzebujesz do udanego spotkania. Na najbliższą konferencję zapraszamy do hoteli w Gdańsku, Krakowie, Wrocławiu, Warszawie i Szczecinie. Wybierz jedną z ponad 200 lokalizacji naszych hoteli w Europie, na Bliskim Wschodzie i w Afryce.

*Aby uzyskać pełną listę hoteli sprawdź
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Radisson 

HOTELS THAT LOVE TO SAY YES!

Yes Airways Has Taken Off



The end of April marked the first flight ever of the new Polish airline named Yes Airways. The maiden flight was made to Antalya, Turkey. Yes Airways is a charter airline, fully funded by the Polish capital. The company has only two shareholders: Piotr Lubaczewski and Jacek Łyczba, who is also the president of the airline.

The new Polish airline will provide services exclusively to travel companies, and has recently signed a contract with Itaka travel agency which will fully use the airline's potential. The flights will be held from Warsaw, Katowice, Poznań, Wrocław, Szczecin and Cracow. The airline's planes will mostly fly to Turkey with its four cities of destination. Other destinations include Egypt, Tunisia and Greece, as well as the Canary Islands in winter.

This is quite good news, because with winter still a long way to go, Yes Airways has already 50 percent of seats booked for that season.

The fleet of the airline consists of two 16-year-old Airbus A320 aircraft. Each features 188 seats in a standard economy cabin. These are the first aircraft manufactured by Airbus Group that will fly for a Polish airline. Until now, Airbus has been present on our market only through investor relations. Yes Airways will be the 354th airline to use Airbus aircraft. A320 model is one of the most popular planes used by charter airlines.

Jacek Łyczba, the president of the company, says that the board wants „Yes Airways” to start generating profit already after the first year of its operation.

BT ABOUT CULTURE

BOLLYWOOD ON A JAZZ NOTE

The film industry in India is a remarkable reality which attracts people like a magnet. Bollywood has many fans in all corners of the globe and the music which accompanies the films, sells very well.

A pioneer in presenting this type of music is the Bollywood Brass Band, which was formed over 20 years ago. A unique jazz sound effect is achieved thanks to adding to the band several unusual in-



struments such as colossal sousaphone or Punjabi drum. The band, which will play only concert in Poland on 19 May at Palladium in Warsaw, was brought here by a real promoter of jazz, Dionizy Piątkowski. It's going to be a tasty mixture of Indian ethnic music combined with the hits from Bollywood blockbusters.

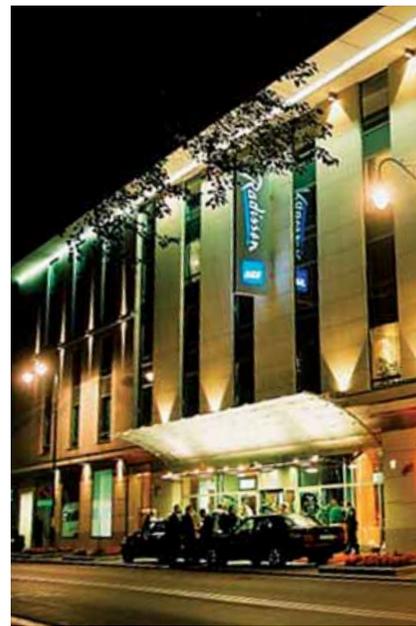


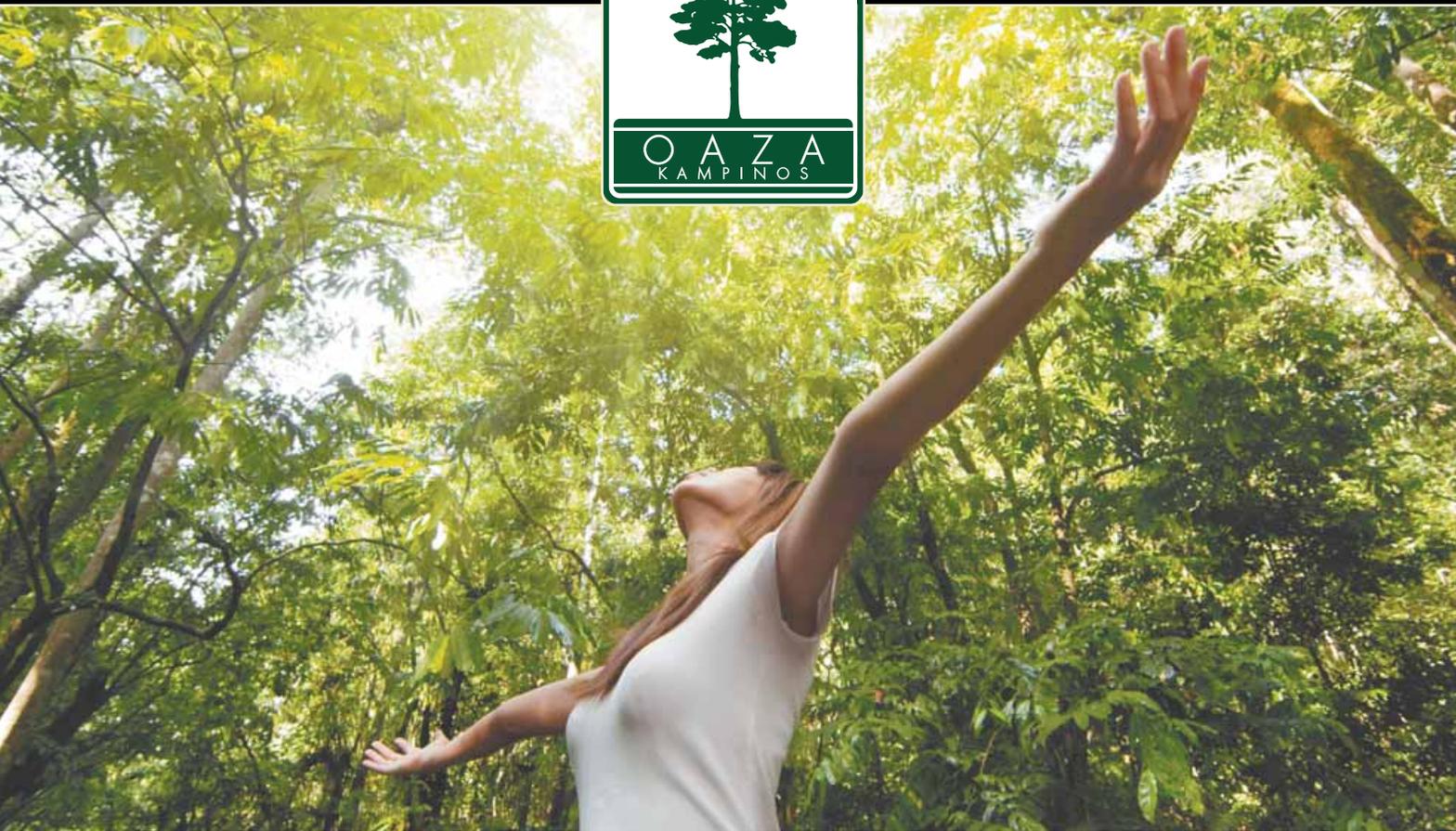
Radisson Blu Cracow Nominated

Radisson's hotel in Cracow has been nominated for the fourth time to World Travel Awards in category "Poland's Leading Business Hotel".

Each year the organizers of awards programme select the best hotels in 10 regions of the world: Africa, Asia, Australasia, the Caribbean, Central America, Europe, Indian Ocean, Middle East, North America, and South America. For each country Leading Hotels as well as Leading Business Hotels are selected. Presented in the contest which was launched 1993, the awards are considered among the most important accolades granted by the global hospitality industry.

The next stage of the contest is voting by executives working within travel and tourism, but notably the majority are the travel agents. The voting will be closed on 5 August 2011.





Oaza Kampinos Pokochasz z miejsca

- Bezpośrednie sąsiedztwo Kampinoskiego Parku Narodowego
- Unikatowe rozwiązania proekologiczne
- Wysoki standard wykonania domów
- Place zabaw dla dzieci, przedszkole, sklepy, fitness club, korty tenisowe
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- 30 km od centrum Warszawy



www.oazakampinos.com
tel.: +48 22 356 80 02 oazakampinos@ubm.pl



AIR BALTIC FROM GDANSK TO RIGA

The connection was launched before Easter holiday, on 18 April. The flights to the capital of Latvia are operated four times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays (departure from Gdańsk at 13.20). The flight takes 80 minutes and the prices for a single ticket start at €39. The connection will be operated by Fokker 50 aircraft, carrying 56 passengers on board.

Gdańsk has become the second Polish

airport, after Warsaw, where AirBaltic planes land. The airline was established in 1995 and serve about 2.5 million passengers annually. AirBaltic flies within the area of Europe, Asia and Africa. Its fleet currently comprises 2 Boeing 757-200, 6 Boeing 737-500, 8 Boeing 737-300, 8 Q-400 NextGen, and 10 Fokker 50 aircraft. The flight network from Riga features a number of European destinations and also a lot of flights to countries across Asia.

PKP For Business

As a part of PKP's attempt to catch up with the latest trends, the Polish national railway operator has come up with an attractive offer aimed at businesspeople. Business travellers can now buy a weekend „Traveller's Ticket” at PLN 99, which enables them to use an unlimited number of connections throughout the weekend in the first class of Twoje Linie Kolejowe (TLK). In addition, Intercity offers a Weekend Ticket for unlimited journeys by TLK and Express InterCity (EIC) trains, for the whole weekend. The price of a first class ticket is PLN 239. Similarly to the Traveller's Ticket, the Weekend Ticket can be used from 7.00 pm on Friday until 6.00 am on Monday. EIC trains are subject to compulsory reservation of seats.

For those who often travel on business, Intercity has created so-called INTERCITY Cards, which enable them to considerably reduce the cost of their business journeys. Passengers can choose transferable and non transferable cards for first or second class, with a different expiry date.



Kung Fu On Board

In order to deal with drunk and unruly passengers, the cabin crew of Hong Kong Airlines is now required to train in martial arts. The airline has made it mandatory for the cabin crew to train in wing chun – a kind of kung fu – in order to deal with drunk and unruly passengers, which apparently happens at least three times a week.

The martial art, classified by sharp movements and close-range combat, has been deemed perfect for an airplane. And while it may seem an odd practice for flight attendants, Eva Chan, an airline spokeswoman told the paper that it came in handy on a recent Beijing to Hong Kong flight. To highlight just how fight-

ing fit its cabin crew are, Hong Kong Airlines has released a new advert, recently posted on YouTube, in which an air stewardess uses her free-flowing kung fu moves to point out the destinations that the carrier serves.



PPL Wants To Develop Okęcie



LOT Polish Airlines and the Polish Airports State Enterprise, which manages Chopin airport in Warsaw, have signed a letter of intent, defining the establishment of future cooperation on both sides. Both parties signing the document will work together to create the highest standard of quality of services, as well as increase passenger traffic through the Warsaw airport. The acceptance of the declaration is also the next move in the execution of the Polish carrier's new strategy, which aims at the creation of a LOT transit hub for East-West air traffic at Chopin Airport.

„The construction of a hub is a natural step in the development of cooperation between the airport and the main carrier. We are pleased that LOT is continuing building its route network with increasing boldness. Changes that we intend to implement in the near future will also allow us to make better use of the airport infrastructure, and to increase comfort for transit travellers”, said Michał Marzec.



REZYDENCJA
FOKSAL



KLEJNOT WŚRÓD APARTAMENTÓW



Luksusowe apartamenty, stylowe biura i ekskluzywne lokale usługowe w wyjątkowej rezydencji tuż przy Trakcie Królewskim.

Rezydencja Foksal mieści najwyższej klasy apartamenty, ekskluzywny salon spa & wellness z basenem, jacuzzi oraz salą do squasha i piwnicę do starzenia wina. O komfort i wygodę mieszkańców troszczy się dedykowany konsjerż. Parter zajmują wysokiej klasy lokale usługowe, których witryny wychodzą na sąsiadujący z ulicą Foksal fragment ulicy Kopernika. Do kameralnych biur na pierwszym piętrze prowadzi osobna recepcja przy głównym wejściu do budynku.

Najwyższy standard architektury, wysmakowane wnętrza art déco i najlepsza lokalizacja w sercu dawnej Warszawy – to gwarancja nienagannego stylu, prestiżu i wyjątkowości.

Developer

 **BBI Development**

Biurowo Sprzedaży: BBI DEVELOPMENT NFI SA ul. Emilii Plater 28
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Projektant

 **JUVENES**
PROJEKT

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GRUPA TRIP
HOTELS KONGRESY SPA

HOLIDAYS WITH TRIP GROUP



Is the local holiday offer considerably different from the foreign one? Do we need to go far away to relax with our family? These were the questions that experts of Trip Group had to answer before creating the All Inclusive offer for summer holidays, based on the group's own hotel base (go to: hotelossa.pl). The personnel at Ossa Congress & Spa have promised that the youngest guests visiting the hotel will never be bored. The staff have for years been training how to be perfect family activity organizers. They learn how to design a balanced programme of activities, which would be interesting for children, while at the higher educational level would help teach social skills and highlight various talents children might possess.

The facilities, which the hotel has, are going to be the key factor in the successful implementation of this project. The list of available attractions is very

long. From the perspective of families with children the most important would be the area around the hotel – the land of over 20 ha features a pond with a sandy beach, hiking and cycling trails, as well as a barbecue spot and various pitches. You can spend all day outside the hotel.

Inside the hotel there are also lots of attractions. Ossa's instructors are the nation's best at the fight against boredom. The creative approach allows them to exploit every hotel room for quite different purposes than they are used primarily. They roam with the youngest around the hotel kitchens, conference rooms, showing the kids how the hotel operates. Mini-discos and costume balls are also quite popular here.

Having provided the youngest guests with appropriate entertainment, the experts of TRIP group, have turned their attention to older clients. This is how the

family all inclusive programme was designed, with the needs of both children and parents taken into an account. Another step was to extend the period for which this fantastic offer is valid. Why should summer holidays be limited to July and August? Holidays, long weekends – their are a number of occasions to take a short break during the whole year. The TRIP group is aware of this. That is why, they have offered a remarkable solution – in winter the All Inclusive club goes to Zakopane.

All Inclusive winter holidays were organized for the first time this year and turned out to be very successful. In Zakopane Trip has three hotels – Litwor in Krupówki, Belvedere close to the Tatra National Park, and Czarny Potok in a quiet and peaceful part of the city centre.



Finnair Reports

Finnair has published its Corporate Responsibility Report 2010 based on the international Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Guidelines, in line with its aim to be "the choice of the environmentally and quality conscious passenger".

Finnair's own personnel are at the centre of social responsibility. During 2010, the Group implemented several projects promoting wellbeing in work and good management practice, and others are currently under way. Long careers speak of employees' job satisfaction: some 39 per cent of Finnair personnel have been employed by the Group for more than 20 years and 12 per cent have served for more than 30 years. The environmental responsibility section of the report tells how Finnair has reduced its emissions and advanced towards its objectives: between 1999 and 2017, Finnair will reduce its emissions by 41 per cent per seat.



Qubus in Bielsko Biata



Several days ago Qubus launched its 4-star hotel in Bielsko-Biała, aimed mainly at business customers visiting the city. The hotel is situated in the very centre of the city, in Mostowa street, and offers 122 rooms (including 4 Junior Suites, and 1 Premium Suite) with a total of 201 beds.

Each room has free Internet access, a safe, an optional mini bar and pay TV. The conference facilities comprise three air-conditioned rooms, with all necessary equipment, and the VIP Room. Qubus Bielsko is the 14th hotel of this chain in Poland.



Sharley

INSTYTUT ZDROWIA I URODY
MEDICAL SPA

*Najlepszy salon urody w Polsce ostatniego X-lecia
Laureat Konkursu Warszawski Znak Jakości*

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Trwale - dzięki zastosowaniu diody o bardzo wysokiej mocy i o długim czasie trwania impulsu.

Bezpiecznie - wysokie bezpieczeństwo zabiegu zapewnia unikalny system chłodzenia kontaktową końcówką szafirową.

Szybko - ma dwa razy większą "głowicę" - tzw. plamkę celującą (12x12mm) co pozwala na szybsze wykonanie zabiegu.

■ Fotoodmładzanie FRAXEL® - najnowocześniejszy laser

w Polsce, Nr 1 na świecie.

Usuwanie blizn potrądzikowych, usuwanie przebarwień, wygładzanie zmarszczek, poprawa tekstury skóry, poprawa owalu twarzy.

■ Makijaż trwały Conture Make-up

Podkreśla kształt i kolor ust, nadaje piękny kształt brwiom, zagęszcza linię rzęs.

Linergistki Sharley - wielokrotne mistrzyni z tytułem ELITE.

■ Wellness, SPA

Sauny: sucha, parowa z aromaterapią;

Sauna na podczerwień - nowość w terapii otyłości; Masaż podwodny z solami morskimi; Zabiegi pielęgnacyjne i relaksujące.

■ Porady dietetyka

■ Dermatolog



■ Ekskluzywne zabiegi kosmetyczne

ThermaClinic - bezbolesny i bezpieczny system poprawy napięcia skóry i spłykania zmarszczek;

Poprawa owalu twarzy TMT, izoliza, ultradźwięki,
Wygładzanie zmarszczek, blizn - mikrodermabrazja;
Dermatologiczno-kosmetyczna terapia trądziku;
Konsultacje wizażystki i stylistki.

■ Pielęgnacja ciała

Lipo Shock - szokujące efekty odchudzania, długoetapowe efekty redukujące tkankę tłuszczową;

Therma Lipo - alternatywa dla chirurgii plastycznej; redukcja tkanki tłuszczowej, cellulitu i ujędrnienie skóry;
Elektrostymulacja, Ultradźwięki;

Body mix - wyszczuplenie, modelowanie sylwetki;
Laser, krioterapia, fotostymulacja, masaż ciśnieniowy;
Zabiegi relaksujące - winoterapia, czekoladoterapia;
Mezoterapia - kondycjonowanie skóry, terapie cellulitu.

■ Medycyna estetyczna

Leczenie przebarwień - peelingi, **Cosmelan** - terapia na przebarwienia hormonalne;

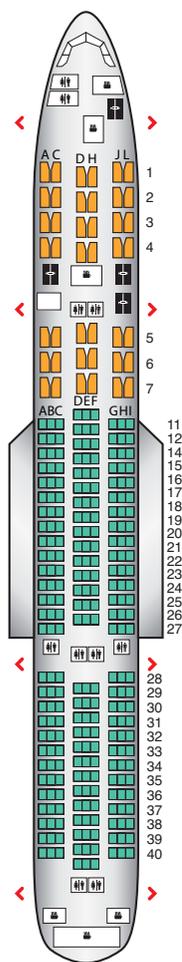
Usuwanie zmarszczek - botulina, wypełniacze;
Mezoterapia - kondycjonowanie skóry, poprawianie owalu twarzy;
Poprawa owalu twarzy - najnowocześniejsze zabiegi.
Leczenie nadpotliwości - botulina.
Zamykanie naczynek - twarz, nogi.



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ON BOARD: MIAMI – ROME

Alitalia Boeing 777-200 ER Business Class

INFO Following several years of trouble and unfavourable opinions of its passengers, Alitalia has finally made radical changes which can be seen almost everywhere. The intercontinental connection from Miami, Florida by flight AZ 061 (code shared with Delta Airlines), is run everyday at 4.10 pm. The flight to Fiumicino airport near Rome takes 9 hours, and due to changing time zones the plane lands in Italy at 8.10 am.

CHECK-IN The airport in Miami is very well located – just 13 kilometres north of the city centre. Getting there takes not more than 30 minutes. That’s a good result for American standards. Warsaw’s Żwirki i Wigury street leading to Okęcie, is much more jammed, especially at 8.00 am.

Passengers who travel on intercontinental flights must arrive at the airport at least 2 hours prior to the flight, which I obviously did. The check-in procedure for my flight took place in the southern terminal. I had a business class ticket (the class is called “Magnifica”), so I didn’t have to wait long for my turn. After check-in I went for security control which obviously was more detailed and time-consuming. Then I made for Pier J. Gate J16 is located at the very end of a long corridor which has 15 boarding bridges.

BOARDING Our flight was delayed by almost 20 minutes. We were informed about that fact and apologised. The whole boarding procedure went swiftly and without any problems. The passengers of Magnifica class board separately, so they embark the aircraft really fast. After a short

while I found myself on board Boeing 777-200 ER and took my seat.

THE SEAT Magnifica has two sections: the first two rows consist of 22 seat configured 2+2+2 (AC-DH-JL) and are located at the front of the cabin. Then there’s a galley, lockers and two bathrooms with another three business class seats. Behind them there’s the economy class divided into two sections and configured 3+3+3.

I was assigned seat 7J next to the aisle, in the last row of the second business section. The first row of the economy class, which is directly behind the second business section, is often offered to passengers with small children due to slightly larger space. That is why I recommend the seats located in the first section of Magnifica class.

THE FLIGHT We were welcomed with a bit too warm prosecco, served in a highball glass. A bit embarrassing, but it turned out to be the only thing I could really pick on during the whole flight. The rest of my journey was simply excellent.

We were given tasteful toilet bags with Bulgari cosmetic amenities travel kit (moisturizer, eye cream, lipstick, body balm, shaving and after-shave cream, a toothbrush and a toothpaste, an eye mask) and beautifully printed menu as well as a wine list.

Half an hour into the flight the “fasten your seatbelts” light turned off and the in-flight service began. Every few weeks the menu and the wine list in Magnifica class are changed to present a chosen region of Italy. Liguria was the main theme

until the end of April. We were offered wine – I decided on white Roero Arneis 2009. Other recommended wines included Giacomelli Vermentino Colli di Luni 2010, and as for red – Barbera D’asti Doc “I Bricchi” 2005, and Niccolò» V Colli Di Luni Doc – Lunae 2007. It’s also worth mentioning excellent sparkling Alta Langa Doc Brut Millesimato with Pinot Noir and a range of other good spirits. The Ligurian menu included prosciutto, olives and king prawns for appetizer. For the first course we received excellent pesto sauce with ravioli and risotto cheese. For the main dish we could choose either a tuna steak or chicken casserole in olives, both with steamed vegetables, and bread. Dessert consisted of fresh fruit and cake with warm vanilla sauce. What’s important, the meal was served on beautifully laid tables, and the remarkably helpful flight attendants served the dishes from a bowl, so it felt like in a good restaurant.

Of course the passengers could also use the on board entertainment system with a retractable display and several music and film channels.

ARRIVAL We landed in Rome several minutes after the scheduled arrival time. The passengers of Magnifica class left the plane first, so I turned up at the baggage claim area quite quickly.

VERDICT It’s an excellent business connection in Magnifica class, with perfect service, and a top notch cuisine.

Jakub Olgiewicz

FACTS

- SEAT CONFIGURATION** 2+2+2
- SEAT WIDTH** 54 cm
- SEAT PITCH** 152 cm
- SEAT BACK ANGLE** 55 stopni
- CONTACT** alitalia.pl

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ZMIENIA SIĘ
W BENVENUTO.



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space to recline and it is separated from economy only by a bulkhead partition, behind which were the bassinets.

THE FLIGHT We pushed back slightly late at 1145 and took off 20 minutes later. Half an hour after take-off, drinks and a small bag of snacks were offered, followed by a meal half an hour after that. There was a choice of chicken or beef – I had the former and it was served with celeriac mash, rosemary jus and green vegetables. It tasted fine. There was also a salad with a sachet of honey and mustard dressing, a roll and a vanilla mousse. I had a mini bottle of red wine with it – there was a choice of two and I had a Malbec, which was nice. Service was friendly and swift – so swift, in fact, that the coffee came out while I was halfway through the meal. Juice and water were offered periodically throughout the flight.

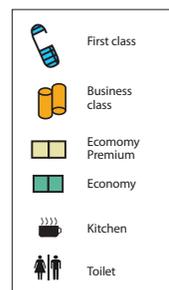
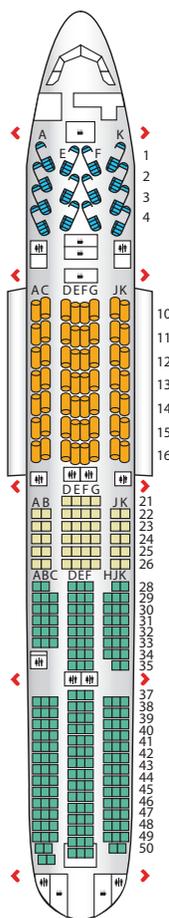
After eating, I tried out BA's new Thales audio-video on-demand system, which has been fitted in all cabins. It's excellent, with more than 80 movies, a wide range of TV and radio shows, games, audio books and more than 400 albums. However, I found the touchscreen wasn't always responsive, and I had to press repeatedly to get it to work (I didn't have this problem on my return). About 80 minutes before landing, hot towels were brought around, followed by a sandwich, Kit Kat and tea or coffee.

ARRIVAL We landed at Chicago O'Hare's Terminal 5 five minutes late at 1425. Immigration was close by and was the smoothest I have experienced in the US, with minimal queues. My bag was out quickly.

Michele Mannion

W SAMOLOCIE: LONDYN – CHICAGO

British Airways B777-300ER Premium Economy



CHECK-IN I arrived at Heathrow Terminal 5 at 0940 for my 1140 flight BA295 to Chicago. Having checked in online, I headed straight to one of the many fast bag-drop counters, which had minimal queues, then proceeded to security, which was also quiet.

BOARDING At 1105 I headed for Gate B43, taking the transit to the Satellite B building then up the escalators to the gate area. I boarded immediately and was offered a newspaper once I was settled.

THE SEAT BA's new four-class B777-300ERs feature its upgraded World Traveller and World Traveller Plus products (see "New seats for some", business-traveller.com/archive/2010/october-2010). These will also be fitted to the airline's forthcoming B787s and A380s, and will be retro-fitted on 18 of its B777-200s. First class was configured 1-2-1, business was in a 2-4-2 herringbone formation, and there were two economy cabins in a 3-3-3 layout (see seat plan, right). The premium economy cabin had six rows numbered 21-26 and configured 2-4-2 (A-B, D-E-F-G, J-K). There were no seats A-B or J-K in the front row (21), this being the exit row. I had pre-selected seat 23B but as the seats behind me were vacant – the cabin was about a third full – I moved to 24A. The seat was comfortable and upholstered in dark blue fabric with a pale silver hard back. There was a built-in adjusta-

ble headrest and a fold-down footrest. Legroom was decent (38in/96.5cm, the same as the older product), though I felt quite constricted when the seat in front was fully reclined.

The control for the in-flight entertainment (IFE) system was fitted to the shared middle armrest, from which my table folded out – this bounced a bit when I worked on a laptop. The recline button was also in this arm. The seat-back screen was 10.5 inches in size, 60 per cent larger than in the older premium economy. Universal plug sockets, two USB ports and an RCA port for linking your devices to the IFE system were also built in. A blanket, pillow and an amenity pouch containing socks, an eye mask, earplugs, a toothbrush and paste, and pen were provided, along with good-quality headphones.

WHICH SEAT TO CHOOSE?

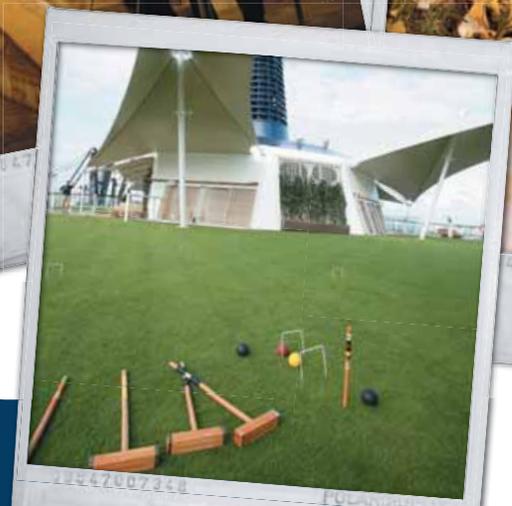
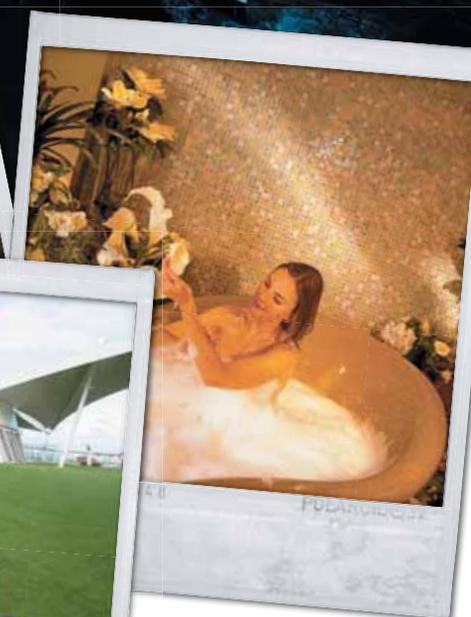
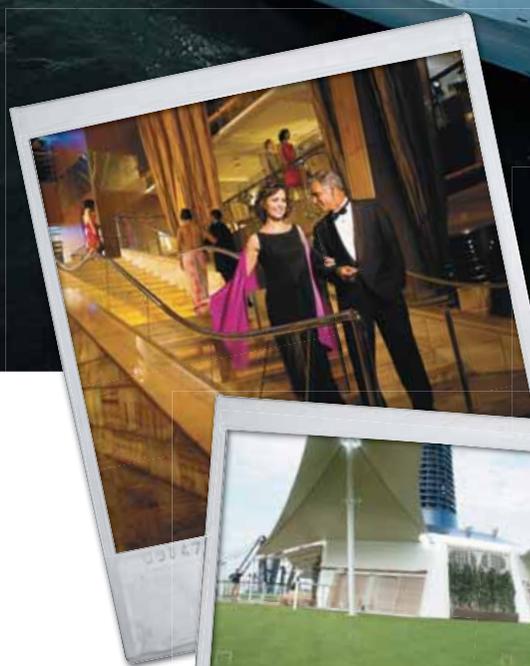
Seats 22A-B and J-K had the most legroom, there being no seats in front of them. Seats 21D-E-F-G, facing the bulkhead, also had more space in front. Passengers in these seats disembark first but are also closest to the washrooms in Club World (premium economy passengers were also using these, as the nearest other ones were between the two economy cabins – perhaps we shouldn't have been, as they were behind a curtain, but we weren't stopped from doing so, possibly because Club World was very quiet). Avoid the back row (26) as there is less

SEAT CONFIGURATION 2+4+2
SEAT WIDTH 47 cm
SEAT PITCH 96.5 cm
CONTACT ba.com

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- ▶ UCZTY KULINARNE
- ▶ WYCIECZKI





HOTEL: OŻARÓW MAZOWIECKI

Mazurkas Hotel & Conference Centre

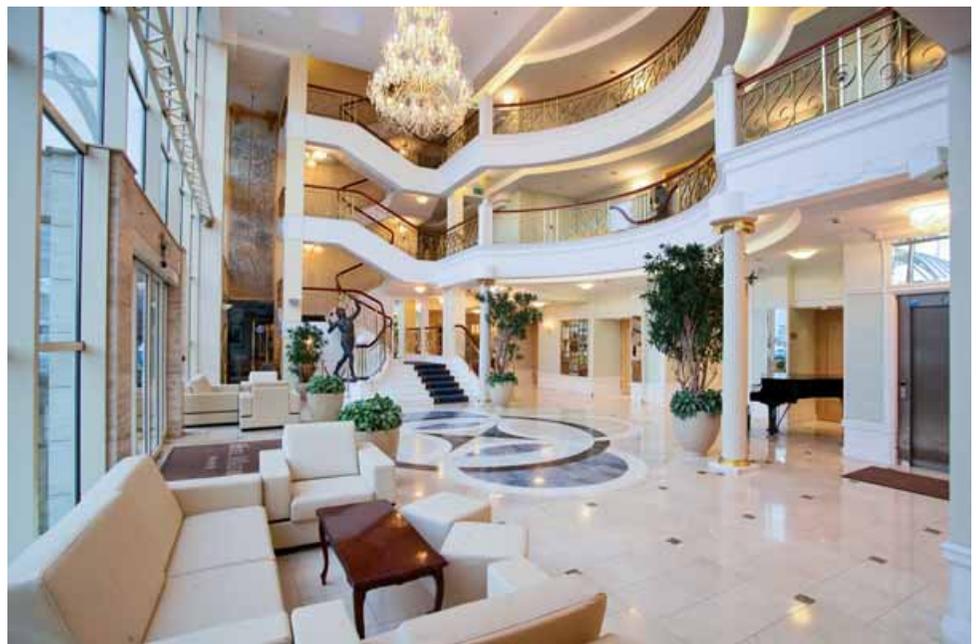
WHAT'S IT LIKE? The hotel, as well as its MMC conference centre, are definitely attention grabbers. The modern body of the buildings, a large car park, and the flags flapping in the wind, make the place difficult to miss. This is definitely the most distinct place in Ożarów near Warsaw. The hotel with its modern and modest reception area as well as its marvellous spiral staircase leading to upper floors, resembles the establishments of this type along the French Riviera. Add to this the lush greenery around the hotel and the overwhelming smell of coffee. The atmosphere here is distinguished, but at the same time homey.

WHERE IS IT? Poznańska Street in Ożarów is the national trunk road number 2, between Warsaw and Poznań. It is about 12 kilometres away from the centre of Warsaw and the railway station, and about 11 kilometres to the airport in Okęcie. Taking into account the traffic congestion and renovations before Euro Cup 2012, it takes about half an hour to get to the latter one.

ROOM FACILITIES Mazurkas hotel has 158 guestrooms on its offer. The standard room has 24 square metres and comes with two comfortable, separate beds, a work area with a huge desk and a chair, tea and coffee making facilities (in suites and Executive rooms, in standard ones – at request), cable TV in four languages, a mini bar and free wireless internet (faster wired internet connection is charged extra). Guests have access to a safe at the reception desk.

There are 11 Executive rooms – these are slightly bigger and come with Pay TV free of charge, and a trouser press as a bonus facility. There are four suites of 40 square metres. These consist of two rooms, a lounge and a separate bedroom decorated in beige, golden and claret colours. Some have a connection to a standard room, which allows to create a large family studio. They also come with very spacious bathrooms and bathtubs with hydro massage. Two of the suites have access to a kitchenette, as they are used for longer, several-moth long stays.

BUSINESS FACILITIES Mazurkas has quite a lot to offer in this respect. It is by all means, one of the best equipped hotel in Poland. Connected to the hotel building by a short glassed corridor, there is Mazurkas Conference Centre – very modern, perfectly equipped and highly functional. In the lower level there is a huge hall, where a reception section for visitors could be organized. From the reception area, you can enter a gigantic Zeus room, where events for even a thousand people can be held. There are 9 entrances, as the Zeus room





Hermes and Hefajstos – each between 64 and 186 square metres (Dionizos). Behind them, there are three other rooms (Hestia, Demeter and Hera), which can also be connected into one room – Kronos – of 180 square metres. Two smaller rooms to be found in the hall, Posejdon and Hades, can be combined into another room, Reja (81 square metres). There is also the main hall, and a 200-square-metre foyer, where coffee breaks are organized. The ground level of Mazurkas Conference Centre has over 1500 square metres of space intended for exhibitions and conferences.

On the first floor, there is a charming Olimp room (98 square metres), which hangs below the ceiling and looks onto Zeus room from one side, and onto the main hall, on the other. The view is stunning – during huge corporate events, the

Each room comes with retractable screens, broadband internet connection and all the necessary facilities and equipment necessary to organize an event, conference interpreting included.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS Georges Sand restaurant is the culinary centre of the Mazurkas hotel, which serves breakfasts in a form of buffet, and a la carte dishes, invented by the chef, Bartłomiej Czerwiński. He is also the manager of Mazurkas Catering – a company, which serves meals at various events, even to a couple of thousand guests.

The menu is short and varied – you will find there the specialties of our cuisine, as well as Italian or French delicacies. You should especially try tenderloin filled with capon mousse, Polish cherry liqueur and pomegranate seeds, or trout roasted in thin phyllo cake served with



– as high as 6,30m and having 744 square metres – can be quickly separated into eight smaller rooms, which can be used independently. What's even greater about Zeus, there are 30 hooks hanging below the ceiling – each with a load capacity of 300 kilograms – so altogether 9 tons of lighting equipment can be hung there, especially than the huge power allows for it.

Thanks to the huge metric area, Zeus can be divided into high and spacious rooms, also named after characters from Greek mythology: Herakles, Apollo, Artemida, Atena, Ares, Dionizos,

VIP room is organized there.

Other rooms are slightly smaller, ideal for business meetings, boards of directors, job interviews and extra activities organized during congresses. The rooms are called after Greek cities: Maraton, Korynt, Itaka, Sparta, Eleuzis, Parnas and Delfy (the two latter ones can be combined into another room – Pytia – 100 square metres), are have between 20 and 64 square metres. Access to the natural light is another advantage of the rooms of first floor.

Apart from the rooms in the Centre, there are also a few to be found in the hotel itself. On 0 level, there are 8 rooms, which – together with a restaurant – form an area called Bolero, which has 370 square metres, and can sit up to 400 people. 1 level offers 5 smaller rooms, of total capacity amounting to 350 square metres.

young zucchini.

The catering capacity of Mazurkas is huge, so all the events organized in the conference centre are provided with the meals by the hotel.

Behind the reception area, there is cafe Adam, offering excellent cakes. Fryderyk bar, on the ground floor, is an excellent spot to organize a meeting in a less formal atmosphere, by a drink of some magnificent liqueur.

LEISURE FACILITIES Guests have access to a fitness centre, a gym, a sauna, and a Turkish bath with water jets, a solarium and a massage service (it's necessary to notify in advance). In the hotel there is also a beauty parlour and a hairdresser's.

VERDICT A 4-star hotel near Warsaw, offering excellent cuisine and impressive business facilities.

Wojciech Chelchowski



KONTAKT Hotel Mazurkas; ul. Poznańska 177, 05-850 Ożarów Mazowiecki; tel. +48 22 721 47 47 to 49; mazurkashotel.pl

PRICE Internet rates for a standard room, at a special offer, started at PLN 250.



HOTEL: SOPOT
Rezydent

a shoe polish set. Naturally, there is also a possibility to connect to the Internet. What's also important, the rooms are equipped with a solid desk made of dark wood, and a comfortable "antique" armchair. Rooms are high and spacious, and the bathroom decor is in line with the room design – the washbasins come with stylish water taps. Superior rooms have a separate spacious lounge section, and a bedroom separated with columns. Superior Plus rooms are studio suites, consisting of two separate rooms – a bedroom, and a lounge. But the most spectacular is the Sopocki suite. There's no way you could enter the room not wishing you could stay there. No wonder many celebrities – including Joe Cocker – stayed here. The suite includes a complex of representative rooms with 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms and could be classified as a piece of art. All the elements of the design have been made of noble material, imported from all over the world. It comes with individually designed furniture cushioned with Dutch and Danish fabric, a marble bathroom, cashmere blankets, mirrors framed in exotic wood hand-sculptured in the Philippines, graphic arts and sculptures. Undoubtedly chic and stylish.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The hotel looks impressive already on the outside. The building refers to the beginning of 20th century, and the word "refers to" is used here on purpose – the hotel was built merely 10 years ago. Despite the fact, it blends perfectly into the Art Nouveau architecture of Sopot. When you enter the building, you cannot resist the impression, that the building was erected in the previous century – everything from the huge door, through the counter, where the receptionists are sitting, to the furniture was made in dark wood, and it makes you think about the times of "fin de siècle" in its prime. Last year Rezydent hotel was taken over by Rezydior hotel chain. It has, however, retained its original boutique character.

WHERE IS IT? It is hard to imagine a better location in Sopot – the hotel is close to the famous "Monciak" – in the most representative part of the city. The railway station is within walking distance, and it is surrounded by various tourist attractions like a promenade, numerous restaurants, cafes and pubs. It is also in

close proximity to the pier. It is also situated close to the famous Krzywy Domek (crooked house), erected in 2003, whose architecture makes you think about works by Antonio Gaudi in Barcelona. It is a part of the shopping centre, which goes by the same name as the hotel – Rezydent. It is merely 18 kilometres away from the Lech Wałęsa airport in Gdańsk Rębiechowo, and 15 kilometres from the ferry terminal.

ROOM FACILITIES Rezydent hotel attracts guests with its stylish interior referring to the 1920s. Heavy curtains, solid dark wooden furniture and pastel-coloured decor – all these sends us back in time to the previous century. The interior of the hotel is cosy and warm, so this time travelling is definitely a pleasant and enjoyable experience. The hotel has 64 guestrooms, including 26 single rooms, 28 double rooms, 6 Superior rooms, 2 Superior Plus rooms and one Sopocki suite. Standard rooms come with a mini bar, satellite and Pay TV, individually-adjusted air conditioning, a safe, a bathrobe and slippers, coffee and tea making facilities and



BARS AND RESTAURANTS The hotel restaurant “Pasjami...” is in line with the whole hotel when it comes to décor. It is situated in the middle of the building, in the internal courtyard. Inside you will see embroidered curtains made of Danish velour, Italian furniture, Belgian ornaments and French lamps. Jacek Fedde is the chef here. The menu is seasonal, but there are fixed dishes like oysters with vinaigrette sauces, crayfish risotto with Bisque mousse and Pecorino cheese, duck roasted in the Sopot fashion, served with caramelized apples, plum sauce and gnocchi, or “Tournedos Rossini” – steak from Argentine beef tenderloin, served with fried boletus and foie gras with fresh truffle sauce. An interesting idea are the so called “dinners with commentary”. The participants have a chance to learn about the culinary savoir-vivre and they are taught how to deal with the so called “difficult food” – e. g. what cutlery should be used when eating a lobster – how to match a wine to a certain meal, etc. The dinners consist of 9 dishes, eaten under the supervision of an expert. There is also the Cafe Resto, where you can have a coffee, a dessert or a drink. Pub Kolonialny – accessible also from the street – is another option you

can try. Open from 5.00 p.m. Rezydent hotel has also its own cake shop.

BUSINESS FACILITIES There are two conference rooms, of similar space area. Both room A and B, can accommodate between 35 and 38 people (theatre-style) and have about 50 square metres. They can be combined together to create bigger space. The rooms are equipped with everything you need to organize a meeting – flipcharts, stationary screens, DVD players, multimedia projectors, laptops, wireless microphones and audio system. The hotel also provides with guests with dedicated service.

LEISURE FACILITIES Guest have access to a small Day Spa, which offer various relaxation packages, like facial and body cosmetics, hand and foot care treatments and massages. Within the distance of a few kilometres, there are golf courses in Postołów, Pękowice and Pasłek (the latter one is about a 100 kilometres away). The hotel has even a special “3 days with golf” offer. Other at-



CONTACT Hotel Rezydent, Pl. Konstytucji 3 Maja 3, 81-704 Sopot; tel. +48 58 55 55 800, hotelrezydent.com.pl

PRICE Internet rates for a one-day stay at a single room, with breakfast in the middle of April was 350 PLN.



tractions have to do not so much with relaxation, but with learning. Some time ago, Rezydent hotel introduced a series of lectures called “A woman with new image”, which helps women who are trying to find their own style. The lecture is done by the stylist, Hanna Duda-Zacharewicz. Another interesting option are oenology lectures.

VERDICT Peaceful, small and stylish hotel for those who want to sink in the atmosphere from the previous century. Close to the biggest attractions of Sopot.

Andrzej Czuba





and Nicea (66 square metres). Apart from this, business travellers can use 5 meeting rooms – including VIP Boardroom (21 square metres) accommodating up to 15 people. They are perfect for small meetings and job interviews.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS Nova restaurant serves breakfast in a form of buffet since 6.30 am., for PLN 30. A la carte dishes are served between 1.00 am and 10.00 pm. The chef, Jacek Kosicki, especially recommends mushroom

HOTEL: WARSAW

Best Western Felix

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Warsaw districts have always evoked certain associations. Praga Północ and Południe districts were not considered to be the most ideal places for living. But for some time, both the districts have been changing really quickly. In Praga Południe many new and modern buildings are now being constructed. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise, that the biggest hotel group in the world, Best Western, has decided to open their first hotel there.

The hotel is slightly tucked away, on the outside it resembles a panel building block of flats with balconies. In front of the hotel there is a huge amount of space. The entrance is guarded by security service. The hotel has dozens of parking places, and there is even a separate section for coaches. You enter the hotel through high stairway. After the sliding door opens, you can see a light and modern lobby – a lot of effort has been made to draw a guest's attention away from the uninteresting construction of the building. Felix is managed by PUHiT company, which also has a couple of other hotels in Warsaw and Cracow, including an interesting Metropol Jazz..

WHERE IS IT? Omulewska Street is situated by one of the main roads in the district – Grochowska, between Warsaw and Lublin. It is located 7 kilometres from the city centre, getting there should take no more than 15-20 minutes. The Chopin airport is about 12 kilometres away.

ROOM FACILITIES Felix offers 227 guestrooms, which have been renovated in the recent years. The total cost of the hotel renovation was 12 million PLN, which is a lot, but the results are visible. Rooms are divided into two main categories. The 32 Premium Lux are rooms of higher category. They are of 20 square metres each, and their décor is dominated by brown and vanilla colours. The furniture neatly composes with the décor. Each room comes with a work section with a huge desk, coffee and tea making facilities, wireless internet access, and comfortable beds. Some of the rooms can be combined to form family studios.

The other rooms are of Lux category. What is especially different about them is the colour of the walls – they differ depending on which floor they are located.

All bathrooms are equipped with bathtub with the shower option and a basic set of cosmetics. Only 16 of the rooms do not come with a balcony.

Guests have also access to a safe, and an internet kiosk at the reception area. Business travellers can also use a Xerox and a fax. The hotel has been adapted for the disabled guests, and smoking is forbidden throughout the building.

BUSINESS FACILITIES There are three conference rooms in the hotel. The biggest one, Haga is of 119 sq m and can accommodate about 120 people. The others are Bruksela (114 square metres)



cappuccino – a mushroom cream with square noodles and sour cream, duck roasted in herbs or grilled salmon. In the evening, you can relax in the hotel Lobby Bar or After Five club.

LEISURE FACILITIES Guests have access to a sauna.

VERDICT Three-star hotel with good infrastructure, providing a business traveller with satisfactory conditions.

Wojciech Chetchowski

FACTS **CONTACT** Best Western Hotel Felix; ul. Omulewska 24, 04-128 Warszawa; tel. 22 210 70 00; bwfelix.pl
PRICE Internet rates for at least a two-day stay at a special offer started at PLN 144 for a night.

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F **FACTS**

DIMENSIONS: 122,6 x 81,4 x 84,5 mm
WEIGHT: 483g (bez akumulatora i karty)
POWER: akumulatory/baterie AA/R6 [4x]
RESOLUTION: 10.1 MP
PRICE: 1250 – 1800 złotych

APARAT: CASIO
Exilim EX-FH25

INFO Casio introduced its first compact cameras back in 2009. Model EX-FH25, which is advertised as the fastest digital camera thanks to its very efficient high speed burst mode. It enjoys quite a popularity and doesn't differ from its younger brothers specifications-wise, which puts it high in the ranks among other products of this shelf.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Exilim EX-FH25 has been designed especially for users who look for a compact camera, but with a functionality of a SLR. There's a clearly profiled hand-grip, a large lens and a slightly recessed electronic viewfinder. It is then clear that the Exilim EX-FH25 doesn't even aspire to be a pocket camera. The camera looks like a solid piece of equipment, which is further underlined by its bulky chassis.

THE DESIGN The body is made of plastic and its assembly and the finish are of a nice quality. Most of the elements and buttons are kept in dark colours with some chrome trim. The front part of the camera is dominated by the large lens with a 20 x zoom. The lens with its focal range of 26-520 mm, provides the user with a wide range of opportunities on how to use the camera. On the back of the EX-FH25, the Japanese manufacturer has installed a large 3-inch TFT LCD screen, with 960 x 240 resolution. It offers several display modes apart from the basic one where only the frame is displayed. On the right side of the device,

there are several buttons and a multi-function keypad. Another three buttons are located close to the viewfinder, as well as the mode selector, the ON/OFF switch, and the shutter button.

THE MENU AND THE MODES The camera features a CMOS sensor offer-

ing 10.1 MP resolution (the maximum size of the generated image is 3648 x 2736 pixels). The range of sensitivities available in the camera varies from ISO 100 to ISO 3200. Unfortunately, the noise level is quite high at higher values, but the automatic white balance function generally works well. It is worth noting that it's possible to adjust white balance manually, which seems to be quite useful. Whenever it's necessary, we can still choose to turn on additional information about the parameters and functions. There is also a compositional grid with a live histogram. Similarly to other models from EX-Fx family, Casio Exilim EX-FH25 offers an extremely powerful burst mode, for shooting at a speed of 40 frames per second (up to 30 photos in the series, resolution limited to 9 megapixels). Another interesting feature is a burst mode with the flash. Although the camera looks rather inconspicuous, more serious photographers can try to switch it to the manual mode. For the less advanced (or more lazy) users, there are the modes offering pre-selected exposure and aperture. Is possible to take ten shots at a speed of five frames per second. Video recording mode is certainly one of those elements that immediately draw the attention of potential buyers. This is mostly due to the camera's ability to record the slow-motion videos, which are recorded at very high speeds – up to 1,000 frames per second. The manufacturer has also remembered about the option to save the RAW format images, but the functionality of this tool leaves much to be desired. The camera not only has problems with saving data in this format, but it also has a limit of sensitivity limited to ISO 100 and ISO 200.

VERDICT Casio Exilim EX-FH25 is a universal camera which can be used to taking various types of images: from macro to landscapes. Despite certain shortcomings, mostly related to recording in RAW format, it's a very nice digital camera, and the quality of images it produces should satisfy an average amateur photographer.

Piotr Walicki





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RESTAURANT: WARSAW

Villa Nuova

INFO This is one of the most elegant restaurants in Warsaw. It's located in an old, carefully renovated Polish manor house, with a beautiful cosy garden. In winter, there is a winter garden located in a glassed orangery, filled with citrus aromas, while in summer, the guests can sit on the terrace in the sun, or under umbrellas. Villa Nuova has for almost 10 years been highly regarded as an excellent venue for a prestigious business reception, an unforgettable wedding party or an atmospheric evening for family and friends, while its cosy meeting rooms are ideal for business meetings in a private atmosphere.

WHERE IS IT? Villa Nuova is situated in a both charming and prestigious place – in Wilanów, only several kilometres from the Wilanów Palace Museum. Nearby, there is the Poster Museum, where you can see interesting exhibitions. Thanks to the successfully completed road repair – getting there from the city centre should not be a problem.

INTERIOR Even if you tried very hard, you would not be able to miss the building. It is a massive mansion in a typically Polish style. In winter there is a special glazed winter garden. As for the interior, you can describe it with one word – elegance. Stylishly decorated round tables, covered with long tablecloth, paintings and mirrors on the walls, massive chandeliers and comfortable armchairs and sofas in the club area. There is also a fireplace, the rooms are full of flowers, and wooden swing doors to complete the design.

The ground floor is decorated in pale colours, while the room on the first floor is slightly darker. Villa Nuova has also two offices called Chinese and English – arranged accordingly to their names.

MENU Villa Nuova serves mostly Polish cuisine (with a few exceptions), but in a modern lighter form and in an attractive way. Even regular dishes like żurek taste blissfully, and mushroom cream has a wonderful aroma.

Among the starters you can find red caviar from Alasca, farmhouse white sausage with fruit preserve or veal sweetbread in white wine, served with pear. If you want a soup, try wild mushroom cream or broth with noodles. As for fish, seabass fillet, served with lemon sauce, basil and tomatoes is especially worth recommending. Among the meat dishes, you should definitely try lamb cutlets with pesto sauce and grilled zucchini, Polish-style duck with cranberries, apples and red cabbage, or tenderloin steak roasted with red pepper and baked potatoes. After a substantial meal, comes a time for a dessert. It is extremely difficult to resist the temptation, as apart from traditional Polish desserts, you can find delicacies like crème brûlée.

PRICES As for a restaurant of this category, the prices are reasonable. Starters cost between PLN 27 – PLN 46, soups between PLN 16 – 19, and fish courses range between PLN 49 and PLN 67. The cost of meat dishes is about PLN 46 – PLN 76. Villa Nuova has an impressive wine menu. A bottle of white or red Argentine wine costs even PLN 50, while a glass – PLN 10.

Apart from that, the restaurant also has a collection of high quality expensive wines.

Jakub Olgiewicz



FACTS **VERDICT** A new and elegant look on Polish cuisine, and an ideal place for a meeting – especially if you want to impress your foreign partner with Polish specialties.
CONTACT Restauracja Villa Nuova, ul. Stanisława Kostki Potockiego 23, 02-958 Warszawa (Wilanów), tel. +48 22 885 15 02, villanuova.pl

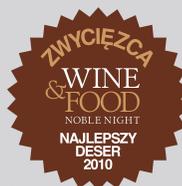
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DODAJ NAJWYŻSZEJ JAKOŚCI MIĘSO OD POLSKICH HODOWCÓW
I RYBY Z MAZURSKICH JEZIOR.
PODLEJ ŁYKIEM WYBORNEGO WINA.
POŁĄCZ Z ZESTAWEM TRZECH DAŃ W CENIE 79 ZŁ*.
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Cellars *in the Sky*

The first Polish edition of the contest for the best wines served on boards passenger aircraft has finally come to an end. We present you with a list of winners, awarded with a Cellars in the Sky 2011 statues.



Business Traveller Poland

PODNIEBNE WINNICE
2011

CELLARS IN THE SKY

and we suggested they take part in the contest. Twelve carriers agreed to take part, which seems to be quite a result.

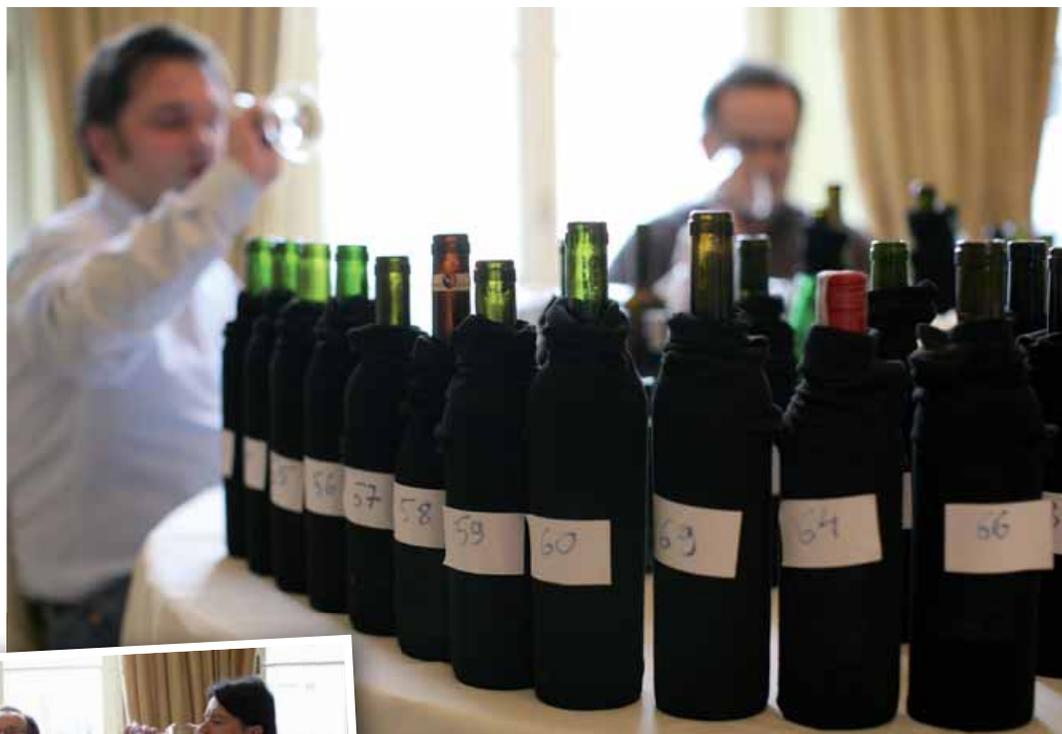
We asked the best specialists to help us carry out the competition. The jury comprised three people, the chairman Tomasz Prange – Barczyński, an editor in chief on Wine magazine, Andrzej Daszkiewicz, the head of the wine.pl portal and Tomasz Kurzeja. We all agreed that the contest would be broken down into five categories: the best wine in economy class — both white and red wines included, sparkling wines and champagnes, and red, white and sweet wines in First/Business class.

We were provided with samples of wines served on board. The wine tasting took place in Sobański Palace, where the awarding ceremony was also held later. The jury was seated at the table, and prepared to take the so called blind test, con-

The contest was organized for the first time, although it has a rather long tradition. It was first launched by the British Business Traveller back in 1985. Together with Business Traveller Awards, which are presented to the best hotels, airlines, airports, and car rental companies, Cellars In The Sky has become the magazine's hallmark. In Britain the contest is highly popular — in the last edition, won by the Australian Qantas airlines, there were more than 40 competitors. The Asian Business Traveller also has its own contest. We had also thought about it for a long time. Finally, after a year of our presence on the market, we decided to give it a go.

BLIND TEST

Several weeks ago, we talked to airlines operating flights from Polish airports



The jury tasted over 100 wines which were submitted to the contest

sidered to be the most objective way to achieve verdict. The wine bottles were hidden in... black, cotton socks, which guaranteed anonymity.

B MINUS

You may think there is nothing more pleasant and easier, than sitting in a nice company and tasting several wine samples. You might think so, indeed. The truth is, however, that this is real- ▶



ly a tough job. You have to be in top gear all the time, stimulate your taste buds and maintain maximum objectivity. All competitions of this sort, are a nice occasion to emphasize that a jury member is a genuinely unique person.

When the tasting part was over, the verdict was achieved and all wines in all the categories were given a grade, there was some time for reflection and commentary. We wanted it to be as objective and critical as possible. This is how Tomasz Prange – Barczyński summarised and commented on the jury's effort:

“The sparkling wines came out really well in the competition. They are the best represented group, there is no doubt about that. White wines in First and Business class are also quite impressive. All the five we eventually chose, could easily compete with one another in a classic panel, the one we usually have in our magazine. Whereas the wine served in economy class sometimes leaves much to be desired. Besides, there were a couple of wrongly selected wines in higher class as well. In some cases, the wines served in First / Business class, should be placed on the wine list in economy class, where they would really do the job – this applies especially to red wines. But all in all, it was not too bad – our overall grade to all the wines would be «B minus». At the same time, I feel obliged to emphasize that selecting a good wine to be served on a plane, is not an easy thing. What you should especially pay attention to is the acidity. Because of the high pressure at

the altitude of eight or ten thousand metres, it becomes more evident, than on the ground. The sparkling wines usually have problems with foaminess, but this is usually one of their basic advantages.

AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

The Cellars in the Sky 2011 awarding ceremony took place at 12: 00 on 11 April in rooms of the Polish Business Roundtable and the Amber restaurant at the Sobański Palace. During the ceremony both the statuettes, diplomas and distinctions were given. The event was sponsored by Benefia Insurance Group.

The ceremony was attended by representatives of all the carriers, taking place in the contest. Some came to Warsaw with the sole purpose of being there. Robert Grzybowski, the editor-in-chief of the Polish Business Traveller, outlined the history of the Cellars In the Sky contest, and the chairman of the jury Tomasz Prange – Barczyński suggested that one day, the wine tasting could be organized on a plane, a several thousand kilometres above the ground. Thus the wines would taste the same for the jury and regular passengers (who often have to drink it from plastic cups, especially in economy class).

Apart from granting statuettes made of glass and stylish certificates to the winners, the jury and our editor-in-chief decided to give a special award for the best Cellar in the Sky in 2011. It was given to the airlines, which turned out to be the most versatile and received the biggest number of distinctions. The jury



decided that Air France was undoubtedly the best competitor in this category – it received four awards, including 2 statuettes for the best sparkling wine (for Brut 2000, Champagne, Billecart-Salmon) and for the best wine in economy class (La Vieille Ferme Rouge 2008, Côtes du Ventoux, Perrin & Fils). When receiving the award, David Garcia, the general director of Air France/KLM in Poland said: – «We were very pleased to have taken part in such a contest. I can guarantee you, that next year we will also participate and provide you with even better wines.»

Here is the list of all the airlines, which took place in the Cellars In the Sky 2011:

Air France,
 Polskie Linie Lotnicze LOT,
 Alitalia,
 Finair,
 Lufthansa,
 Swiss International Air Lines,
 Australian Airlines,
 SAS Scandinavian Airlines,
 Czech Airlines,
 Malev Hungarian Airlines,
 EI AI,
 Adria Airways. ■

The award
 for the best
 Cellar in the
 Sky was
 presented
 to Air France





We present you with the result of the Cellars In the Sky 2011 contest, along with the jury's commentary on the winner wines.



Tomasz Prange-Barczyński – Redaktor Naczelny magazynu Wino
David Garcia – Country Manager for Poland Air France / KLM
Robert Grzybowski – wydawca magazynu Business Traveller Poland

BEST ECONOMY CLASS

*La Vieille Ferme
Rouge
2008,
Côtes du Ventoux,
Perrin & Fils*
AIR FRANCE

Honest, straightforward Rhone wine with good tannins, nice acidity, and rich fruit flavour. Ideal match for simple onboard type of cooking.

*Cabernet Sauvignon
2010,
Vale Central,
Viña Tarapaca*
SAS

The archetype of "aircraft wine"

– distinct, rich in fruit cabernet which will definitely satisfy the needs of both passengers asking for "just red wine" and of the more refined wine-lovers.

*Zweigeltrebe pozdní
sběr,
suché 2010,
Morava,
Znovin Znojmo*
CZECH AIRLINES

Awarded for originality and character. The wine preserves pleasant fruity flavour and overtone characteristic for this variety. A good wine to boast about aboard national airlines.

**FIRST/ BUSINESS CLASS
SPARKLING WINES**

*Brut 2000, Champagne,
Billecart-Salmon*

AIR FRANCE

Serious, fully mature and long champagne of high quality and complex taste. It perfectly balances the fruity and mineral overtones. Excellent by itself, but also for a meal.

*Brut Classic NV,
Champagne, Deutz*

AIR FRANCE

Distinctive, light and refreshing champagne of unique character. Any overseas flight will be a sheer pleasure, if you can sip it along the way.

*Cuvée Royal Brut
Vinatage 2003,
Champagne, Joseph Perrier*

FINNAIR

Massive, aromatic mineral-scented champagne with apple and toast tones. Wine of great structure – a type of champagne that goes perfectly with meals.



Szymon Zaliński – Marketing Manager Region East Europe SAS Scandinavian Airlines



George Athanassiou – General Director for Poland Alitalia i Krzysztof Baranowski – Director for Poland Czech Airlines

DISTINCTION:

*Millesimato 2005, Alta
Lunga, Enrico Serafino*

ALITALIA

Usually it is difficult to successfully compete with champagnes, and that is why this brave, Piedmont-originated, frothy wine of unique fruit and mineral flavour has been awarded.



Szef magazynu Wino oraz Bart Buyse – General Manager Poland – Lufthansa, Austrian Airlines, Swiss International Air Lines



Tomasz Prange-Barczyński – Redaktor Naczelny magazynu „Wino”
David Garcia – General Director Air France



WHITE WINES

Jesuitengarten Riesling GG 2009, Pfalz, Bassermann-Jordan

LUFTHANSA

What characterizes great Riesling wines, is the fact, that they taste wonderfully both after having been stored in a cellar for 20 years, as well as when they are fresh and young. Classic, complex and very serious wine from Palatinat is richly fruity, as well as lively and cheerful – something you could not do without during dinner in the sky.

Senftenberger Piri Grüner Veltliner 2009, Kremstal, Nigl

AUSTRIAN AIRLINES

The Austrians boast about having one of the best Kremstal wine. This should not come as a surprise, as this excellent wine has great fruit expression, mineral and flowery aftertaste, and develops beautifully in the glass. Austrian wines enthusiasts will be satisfied, while amateur wine-drinkers – intrigued.

Vaillons 2008, Chablis Premier Cru, William Fevre

SWISS INTERNATIONAL AIR LINES

Sivi Pinot 2008, Štajerska Slovenia, Verus

ADRIA AIRWAYS



Dominika Domagalska – General Manager Poland i Laszlo Gal – International Sales Manager Malev Hungarian Airlines

WINA SŁODKIE

*Aszú 3 puttonyos 2005,
Tokaj, Château Dereszla*

MALEV HUNGARIAN AIRLINES

Among a rather scarce choice of sweet wines, the Dereszli Tokay wine was a real treat. It is a proper, gently balanced mineral wine, perfectly reflecting the character of its native region. A perfect wine to sip, when at high altitude.



Radosław Podhorecki – Finnair Corporate Sales Manager w Polsce oraz Krzysztof Baranowski – Czech Airlines Manager for Poland

RED WINES

*La Chapelle de la Mission Haut-Brion 2006,
Pessac-Léognan, Domaine Clarence Dillon*

SWISS INTERNATIONAL AIR LINES

A very serious, perfectly made Bordeaux with distinctive fruit flavour and mature tannins. It could be aged for another couple of years in a cellar, but it already tastes heavenly, especially, when flying through the clouds at 10 km high.

Il Bruciato 2007, Bolgheri, Tenuta Guado Al Tasso

AUSTRIAN AIRLINES

A very solid, expressive, tannic wine with a taste of fruit from the Tuscan coast. On the ground, you will feel like pouring it into a carafe – but in the air you have to spin the wine around in your glass.

Château Dassault 2004, Saint-Émilion Grand Cru Classé

LUFTHANSA

A very mature, typical saint-émilion wine of high quality - still full of fruity taste, with distinctive and mature tannins.

Sangiovese dell'Umbria 2005, Claudio Campanella

ALITALIA

Yatir 2007, Yehuda Heights

ELAL



Tomasz Prange-Barczyński z magazynu Wino i Wojciech Gurba – Product Department PLL LOT

WYRÓŻNIENIE

Floralis Moscatel Oro, Pino de Licor, Torres

LOT



No Pressure

If you wish to avoid the unnecessary rush when going to the airport and also stay away from long queues, you can always check in outside the airport – it's a very comfortable and stress-free way to get on board.

No other stage of air travel has changed as dramatically as the check-in procedure. The process has particularly benefited from the implementation of modern technology at airports, making life of passengers much easier. Fighting for customers, airlines have provided them with tools which merely 10 years ago nobody even imagined, including online check-in, or a boarding card which can be displayed on the screen of your mobile phone. This doesn't mean, however, that airlines have forgotten about those who prefer other check in methods. Especially for them a number of city terminals and self-service check-in kiosks were launched to allow us to check in before we arrive at our

airport. Below a selection of spots where passengers may check in prior to their trip to an airport.

WARSAW

Last year, LOT Polish Airlines launched a check-in terminal in Złote Tarasy shopping mall, in the very centre of the Polish capital, next to Warsaw Central Rail Station. Check in begins 24 hours before flight time and closes three hours before the flight. Check in offer applies to the passengers who purchased tickets on lot.com, through the Call Centre, at LOT's high street or airport ticketing offices, or at travel agents offering LOT tickets: for LOT connections or with at least the first leg carried out on LOT. Passengers may also check-in their bag-



Warsaw

gage and are offered free transport to the Warsaw airport. Transport buses to the airport leave from the bus stop with the LOT logo next to the Hard Rock Café. They run all the week according to the timetable (every 1 or 2 hours, depending on the time of the day). The buses take passengers to Terminal 2 on the departure level, and from there the passengers can go directly to security. Check-in at Złote Tarasy does not apply to charter flight passengers, special baggage (bicycles, skis, snowboards, surfboards), and

children travelling alone. LOT's office is located on -1 level of Złote Tarasy mall and it's open Mon-Fri 9:00 am - 9 pm, Sat - Sun 9.00 am - 8.00 pm. For more information go to lot.com

GDAŃSK

City Terminal is the name of the check-in office located in the centre of Gdansk, close to Mercure Hevelius hotel. The terminal was launched almost 3 years ago by the management of the airport in Gdańsk-Rębiechów. You can check in there 24 hours before your flight, or at least 4 hours before the scheduled departure time for passengers travelling with their check-in luggage, or 2 hours before the departure time for those who travel without any check-in luggage. The procedure is available for passengers of all airlines departing Gdansk airport. There's also a shuttle which takes passengers straight to the airport - a ticket costs PLN 9.90. The cash desks in the City Terminal offer air tickets for any route and with any airline. The terminal is open Mon-Sun, 9.00 am - 5 pm. More information at airport.gdansk.pl.

FRANKFURT

German Lufthansa doesn't provide its passengers with extra check-in desks, relying more on online solutions and check-in kiosks. Such kiosks are located at most railway stations throughout Germany. In Frankfurt they are to be found close to the airport, at AIRail Terminal railway station. The idea is simple - the passengers who arrive at the airport by a long-distance train, can simply check in on leaving the train. The procedure is available up to 45 minutes before the flight (the airport is close to the station). The machines are situated along the way leading from the station to Terminal 1 of the airport. You can check in there in 3 different ways: using your Miles&More card or a credit card, by placing your passport in the machine's scanner (and entering the number of your flight, the destination port or the reservation number), or by touching the screen and entering your name and your reservation number. This method of check in is not available for passengers who travel with children younger than 2 years, and for those who travel with their pets. The list of kiosks located throughout Germany is available at lufthansa.com.



City checking in is another convenient solution for passengers

ZURYCH AND GENEVA

In Switzerland there are over 50 railway stations with self-service check in kiosks for passengers travelling with Swiss, Lufthansa and other airlines. The hours when check in procedure is available depend on how far a given railway station is from the airport. The trip from Hauptbahnhof station in Zurich to

the airport takes 15 minutes, while in Geneva - around 20 minutes. You can use the machine 24 hours before your departure time. Checking in of one item of luggage costs CHF 20. More information at mct.sbb.ch

VIENNA

City Air Terminal is located at Wien-Mitte Station and is available for passengers travelling with Austrian Airlines. They can use either a traditional check-in procedure or a self-service check in machine. Check in begins 24 hours before flight time and closes 75 minutes before the take off. Passengers are then taken to the airport by a train - the trip takes around 15 minutes. The train departs every 30 minutes from 5.38 am to 11.08 pm. More info at cityairporttrain.com

PARIS

Air France and SCNF line (which runs the renowned TGV trains) offer their



Hongkong



Singapur



passengers a combined ticket for both a plane and a train. There is a railway station of TGV fast train at Charles de Gaulle airport. The trains go to 9 different destinations throughout France e.g. Lyon, Nantes, or Le Mans. You can buy your railway ticket considerably cheaper if you present your plane ticket at the cash desk. If you book your ticket online, you will receive one, combined ticket for the train and the plane. You can also check in there, but no later than 15 prior to the departure of the train. Air France also offers a TGV connection between Brussels and Paris. For more information go to airfrance.com

SINGAPORE

The passengers who travel with Singapore Airlines, SilkAir, Air China, China Eastern Airlines, China Southern Airlines, Qantas, and EVA Air, can use the check in desk located in Marina Bay Sands hotel, at the bus terminal. The

check in procedure is available no later than 3 hours prior to the scheduled departure time, and no earlier than 48 hours before the flight. The passengers receive their boarding passes and go by bus to Changi airport. The check in fee for two items of luggage is S\$25. The check-in desks are open Thu-Mon 10.00 am - 6 pm. For passengers who are guests of Marina Bay Sands hotel, the transfer to the airport is free of charge. Other passengers must pay a fare of S\$25. For more information go to marinabaysands.com.

HONG KONG

Airport Express, which connects the airport with the city and Asia World-Expo, offers check-in desks at two stations - Hong Kong and Kowloon. The passengers can check in here for most airlines, including a low-cost Jetstar. The procedure is available up to 90 minutes before the scheduled departure time. Check in

begins 24 hours before the flight time. Then passengers can go by train to the airport. The train departs every 12 minutes from 5.50 am to 1.15 pm - the trip takes 24 minutes. The website: mtr.com.hk

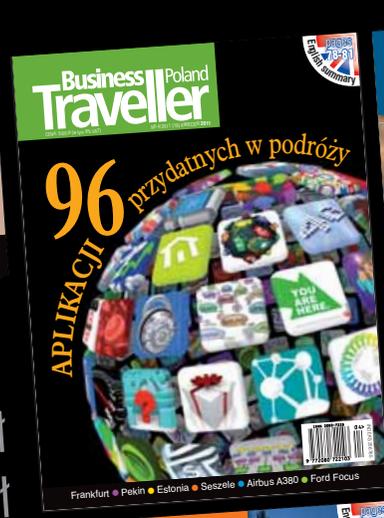
DUBAJ

Passengers who travel with Etihad Airways can check in at the airline's office located in Chelsea Tower Apartments near Crowne Plaza hotel on Sheikh Zayed street. The desk is open 24 hours a day. Check-in is available up to 6 hours before the scheduled departure time. The airline offers luxurious coaches which transfer its passengers to the airport. They depart regularly between 5.30 am and 11.30 pm. The journey takes 20 minutes. The passengers travelling in Diamond or Pearl class are offered a limousine to the airport. More info at etihadairways.com. ■

Ryszard Nieziemski

Business Traveller Poland

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PARIS AIRPORT

Marcin Tomczyk visits the Europe's second biggest airport – Paris Roissy Charles de Gaulle, situated less than a hundred kilometres northwards from the French capital.

The largest French airport can boast a considerable number of passengers it serves annually. Last year over 58 million people used the French airport, which makes it the second busiest in Europe (after London), and the seventh busiest in



the world. What's more, the airport is packed with various facilities: shops, bars, restaurants, and conference centres. Not mentioning the fact, the centre of Paris is not far away from here — just a half an hour trip by train. Other attractions such as Palace of Versailles or Disneyland, are also close.

INSIDE A TUBE

The main French airport is relatively new, and does not remember the beginning of aviation business. The construction of the CDG airport – as the name is usually abbreviated – started in 1966, and lasted for eight years. Originally it was called Aéroport de Paris Nord. It consists of three terminals, Terminal 1 being the oldest. Terminal 2 was originally constructed for Air France, but today it is operated also by other airlines, and Terminal 3 is used for charter flights and operated by low-budget carriers.





The escalators look as if they were taken out of a Sci-Fi movie and they have already been used in a few productions.

Since its construction, it has attracted attention because of its design. Terminal 1 is modelled on an octopus. The round area in the middle is intended for the passengers, while the arms are departure lounges and flight gates. In the central building, each floor has a different function. On the first floor, you will find shops, restaurants and CDGVAL stations – a shuttle rail which goes to all the terminals. Departing passengers use the third floor, while the fourth one is intended for arriving passengers. The escalators which connect all the floors are covered with a transparent tubes. They look amazing, and were used in numerous films. Alan Parsons Project album *I Robot* features these escalators on its cover.

Terminal 2, intended for domestic flights in fact consists of seven terminals, forming a more traditional construction, although you cannot deny that vast halls are highly impressive. There is a tragic story behind the T2 – soon after open-

ing in 2004, a proportion of T2E ceiling collapsed, killing four people. It was later reconstructed. In Terminal 3 there is one hall, used only by low-budget carriers and charter flights.

In June 2007, the biggest departure lounge was opened here – Galerie Parisienne. It was designed with the sole purpose of operating huge aircrafts like A380.

MULTI PORT

CDG airport is home to about a hundred of restaurants, cafes and shops. Among them you will find such well-known Parisian brands as Galeries Lafayette, l'Édcafe Parisienne supermarket, Brasserie Flo, as well as Brioche Dorée, France Café or Clément Ader restaurant. Over 20 free-duty shops sell of sorts of products: from luxurious to more down-to-earth products. Alcohol, cosmetics, technological gadgets, toys, clothes, local products – it has been estimated that the number of

products that you can buy here is more than a thousand. Apart from this, the airport has many other services to choose from like car renting, ATMs, chemists», a medical centre or a post office.

If you are tired after your flight, visit Be Relax centre, where you can have many energizing treatments. If you do not have much time, you should still go – the shortest session lasts merely 10 minutes. To top it all, the centre also has special massage chairs – to be found in various places across the airport.

If have time to spare, you can spend it playing a game – on your own, or with your children. The airport extensive offer includes Playstation 3 consoles, playgrounds, billboard tables, foosball tables and video games. On the airport there is even a cinema, or rather a room with 3D TV sets, where you can sit in comfortable futuristic armchairs with headphones on and watch your favourite film using the latest technological solutions.

Internet is hard to do without. You can connect to the Net in multimedia terminals – characteristic, easily-recognizable orange booths with screens. They give you an opportunity to use the Internet, VoIP, an internet camera, but also print a document or a picture, download music files, read or burn data on a CD or a DVD. The cost depends of type of operation you intend to make – a minute of surfing costs about €0.15.





WHAT ABOUT BUSINESSPEOPLE?

The Parisian airport provides business travellers with all sorts of facilities and spots intended especially for them. There is Atlanteam internet cafe—a huge room, where you can sit at a desk and use the Internet. Two of these cafes are to be found in Terminalu 2, and one – in Terminalu 1.

Besides, businesspeople can also use conference rooms, offices, VIP lounges, telephones, faxes and Xeroxes. All of these you can find in the main Business Centre in Terminalu 1, where there are eight conference rooms, each with capacity of up to 15 people. A slightly smaller Business Centre is located in T2 – there are two small conference rooms.

Inside the Terminal 2, there is a Sheraton hotel. It has 250 rooms and a conference centre, which consists of 22 conference rooms. The biggest one can accommodate 100 people, the remaining ones are smaller, with the capacity of only several people. Most of the rooms are located on the same level, and they can be adapted according to guests' needs. Most of them also have access to natural light. The hotel also provides its guests with necessary equipment and high level of service by highly trained staff.

In the vicinity of the airport there are other hotels, like Kyriad Prestige, Ibis, Sofitel and Hilton. Guests are transferred in buses. There are also car rental offices

The plans for the expansion of the airport in Paris are impressive.



offering all the most important brands, including Hertz, Avis or Europcar. The airport has also a limousine service. You can rent a car with a driver – the cost of a drive to Paris is 105 euro. It costs €38 to cover the same distance in a taxi.

TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The Parisian CDG airport has one huge advantage, which is, of course, Paris. The city has attracted, and always will, people from all over the world, both business travellers as well as regular tourists. Therefore it is hardly a surprise that Aéroports de Paris – the company managing the airport (it also owns Orly and Le Bourget airports and a helipad) – needs to consider investing.

Between 2007 – 2011 the company wanted to invest 2.5 billion euro to improve the airport infrastructure. Not without a reason — the number of passengers using the airports is believed to increase by 20 million by the end of 2011, when compared to how often it is used to-

day – 83 million on all three airports. The main projects include building a satellite S3 terminal on the Charles de Gaulle airport (it has already been opened, and handles 8 million passengers a year), a new automatic baggage handling system, creating CGDVAL shuttle rail to go between the terminals (already in use) and renovating Terminal 1.

Some money will also go to expanding the commercial service section, so that the passengers have a bigger choice of goods and services. The number of shops, bars and restaurant is supposed to be increased by 30% in the nearby future. Apart from that, there will be over 5 thousand new parking places. Lots of money is also invested in a web site HYPERLINK «<http://www.aeroportsdeparis.fr/>», especially in a section that allows passengers to arrange many things online - booking a flight, check-in or renting a car. Thanks to all these investments Paris will surely become an even better place to visit. ■



Embraer 195 Has Landed

Embraer 195 - the largest aircraft in the Embraer family – has joined the fleet of LOT Polish Airlines.

The aircraft landed on Okęcie on Monday, 11th April, just after midday. It's the largest plane manufactured by the Brazilian aerospace conglomerate. It is popularly named Embraer 195, although its official symbol is 190-200.

The Polish air carrier has operated the Brazilian aircraft for many years. In fact, LOT was one of the first major clients of the South American company. The Embraers turned out to be very successful, especially the larger 170 and 175 models. In its fleet the Polish air carrier has 10 Embraers 170 (range up to 3,000 km, 70 seats), 14 larger Embraers E175 (range up to 3,000 km, 82 seats). The smallest aircraft by Em-

braer is model 145 and LOT has still five such planes (range 1,500 km, 48 seats). However, they will soon be gradually phased out.

Passengers like them for their comfort, modern and decent design, as well as their excellent sound-proofing which is superior to many other machines. While waiting for Boeing's Dreamliner, which is to revolutionize the airline's route network and the quality of its services, LOT is already trying to modernize its fleet, turning to reliable aircraft from Brazil. E195 is a very modern and economical aircraft. Three days after its arrival in Warsaw, Business Traveller Poland had a unique opportunity to see it while it



was being prepared to its maiden flight LO 231 to Brussels, Belgium.

We were taken to a huge hangar no.4 located within the area of the airport, where the new Embraer with its newly painted tail mark SP-LNA, was undergoing final preparations. The personnel was putting on special stickers, and the technicians were once again inspecting carefully all wires and little screws.

The plane looks impressive. It's fair-sized and simply beautiful. Its total length is 38.65 m and its wingspan



of almost 29 metres, it occupied almost the whole width of the hangar. It was also much longer than B 737 standing nearby. The total height of the aircraft is impressive 10.55 m. The new Embraer is powered by two CF34-10E engines manufactured by General Electric. Each of them measures 1450 mm in diameter and weighs 1678 kilograms.

A DOUBLE BUBBLE

Inside the cabin everything still smelled new and fresh. The cockpit features two

remarkably looking seats (with characteristic hollows for the yoke), and hundreds of various gauges which probably are not the most difficult to follow, but their mere looks command respect and confusion.

The passenger cabin is bright and elegant. It was created basing on the new concept of fuselage space management, called by the constructors "double-bubble". This double shape is seen on the cross-section of the plane, which can be seen at the manufacturer's website. Indeed, the space has been thoughtfully arranged in every single inch. The dark,

almost black leather covers the seats configured in a traditional for this type of machine 2+2 configuration in 28 rows.

Now the most important information for all future passengers of the aircraft on the European routes (the Embraer will only operate on such routes). The seats are very comfortable with their width of 46.3 cm, and the seat pitch of 78.74 cm. This is more than enough to sit comfortably on short and medium-range flights. The Brazilians manufacture Embraera 195 in a few configurations. In the most economical one E195 can seat as many as 122 seats. The Polish version has 112 of them.

Embraer 195 built in Brasil for PLL LOT has on board 112 seats

The most comfortable seats are situated in row 12 close to emergency exits, where there's twice more leg space than with standard seats. There's no special business class cabin, but the classes will be separated by a portable partition. The most convenient business seats are to be found in row 1 where you sit behind the bulkhead, but have a lot of leg space.

The first Embraer 195 in LOT's fleet has already made its maiden flight. This year our national air carrier will receive three more machines of this type. ■



Orbis Hotel Group is an environmentally conscious company. All hotels belonging to the group are now installing systems to save water and energy. This action is a part of “Earth Guest” programme, which by the end of 2010 was implemented by 64% of the hotels of the group. The hotels care about the nature and the health of its guests also by introducing ecological cosmetics, balanced menu, as well as good practices which are implemented by hotel personnel both at work and home.



Environmentally-friendly hotels

Orbis hotel group started introducing “Earth Guests” programme in 2006. Originally introduced by Accor group, an Orbis strategic partner, the programme is to decrease the hotels influence on natural environment, and to increase knowledge and environmental awareness of the staff, guests and suppliers. Environment Charter, implemented five years ago, sets the pro-ecological standards in hotels. It includes 65 actions, such as: informing and arousing awareness, energy, water, sewage, waste, ozone layer, biodi-

versity and ecological shopping. The hotels, which follow 20 of them, can inform its guests about it, by displaying a special poster.

THE PRACTICAL SIDE

Up to 2010, 64% of the hotels joined the Earth Guests programme. What does that mean? Hotels belonging to Orbis Group monitor the use of water and energy, equip the bathrooms with water control valves and dual flush toilets, exchange regular lighting to energy-saving one, sort rubbish and recycle harmful waste and substances (batteries, oil).



To take care about the guests health, they use eco-friendly cosmetics and detergents. They also raise pro-ecological awareness of their staff and suppliers, by forming appropriate habits (trainings, ecological campaigns and promoting good practices).

A BRAND WITH A CERTIFICATE

Ibis hotels are especially interested in ecology. In 2006 the brand was awarded with the ISO 9001 quality certificate, as the first international chain of economy hotels in Poland. The brand is also hoping to achieve the international ISO 14001 certificate. It is granted to companies and institutions which take action to protect the environment. Ibis hotels equip their rooms with water control valves, thermostats controlling the temperature and air conditioning, while in the restaurants the staff uses modern methods of washing up, to save water and energy. Unused equipment in the reception area is switched to a stand-by mode. Energy-saving light bulbs and

rubbish segregation are also common practices here.

ECOLOGY WITH PLEASURE

Orbis group also takes care about environment by offering ecological cosmetics to its guests. For instance, Mercure hotels have introduced “Mercure&me” cosmetics. These products do not contain dyes and are eco-friendly. Guests staying at Novotel hotels, also use ecological cosmetics called “N”. They were designed specially for the brand, and have Ecocert and Ecolabel certificates. They have only natural ingredients, and are not tested on animals. The guests of Executive rooms may enjoy a wider range of those cosmetics: apart from a soap and shampoo, they can also find a body lotion, peeling or bath salts and exfoliants.

EARTH GUEST DAY

The staff takes care about environment not only at work, but also by taking part in ecological campaigns. For several years, each spring the staff in Sofitel,

“Earth Guest” programme aims at increasing ecological awareness among the personnel, guests and suppliers of Orbis Group

Novotel, Mercure, Ibis, Etap and Orbis hotels has taken part in Earth Guest Day, organized because of the international Earth Day. This year was no different. In April, GH Orbis workers, together with their families cleaned the forests, beaches, parks, planted trees and flowers. They organized trips and meetings with ecologists and foresters aimed at children. Guests also took part in the event – Ibis Poznań Centrum provided them with special containers to sort the rubbish they collected, while Ibis Warszawa Centrum hotel introduced a special “green” menu in its bar and restaurant.

This year Orbis Group hotels also took part in a campaign initiated by an ecological organization called WWF – “Earth Hour”. At 8.30 on Saturday, 26 March, all non-essential lights and electrical appliances in millions of households and institutions – including 59 hotels – was turned off. The staff tried to convince their guests to turn off the lights for an hour, for the sake of the planet. ■

Hamburg hangouts

Andrew Eames wanders through Germany's second-largest city, discovering a wealth of watery attractions along the way



Let's face it, some German city centres can be a little soulless, largely as a result of "redevelopment" during the Second World War. Hamburg is no exception, but rather than taking one look down the *hauptstrasse*, harrumphing and getting on the plane home, business travellers with a modicum of curiosity and a small amount of time can get a lot more out of their trip. Try some of these suggestions the next time you visit, and see for yourself.



IN TWO HOURS ELBSTRAND

When your work is done, head for some relaxation on the urban beach on the Elbchaussee. A beach in Hamburg barely seems credible, but you'll find one along the riverbank just beyond the Museumshafen, downriver of the port.

The sand is not native to these shores but it is certainly appreciated by families at weekends and by a trendy, overdressed crowd who come in the evenings mainly between May and September, but on other fine days too. The outlook must be one of the most unusual beach views in the world, with huge dockside cranes sil-

houetted against the sky on the far bank, and the evening sun blocked by the occasional slow-moving wall of steel as giant container ships slip by.

Despite its proximity to the city and port, you'll find a villagey, rural atmosphere here, with three or four well-loved fish restaurants – try Hoppe (fischrestaurant-hoppe.de), a traditional, family-run terraced eatery with river views. Fish is a speciality, particularly local smoked eel and *krabben* (small prawns), as well as the typical sailor's meal, *labskaus* (mashed potato, corned beef, eggs and gherkins with pickled herring). Ovelgonne, the narrow lane that runs down the back of the beach, is lined with cottages and cabbage patches.

■ **Practicalities:** The best time to visit is 4pm onwards. Bus 112 takes 34 minutes from the Hauptbahnhof, or take the S-bahn to Königstrasse and walk.

HAFENCITY

If you haven't seen this huge piece of dockland revitalisation, you should. Hafencity begins at the Speicherstadt, a huge block of old spice warehouses about 1km south of the city centre that now house a variety of museums and



temporary exhibitions, including Miniatur Wunderland (miniatur-wunderland.com), one of the world's finest miniature railways – a breathtakingly ambitious and witty piece of modelling.

Beyond, the old wharves of Sandtorhafen and Grasbrookhafen are now

Hamburger Dom



Na kanale



Targ rybny



Elbstrand



Hafencity

surrounded by a mix of new offices, living accommodation, restaurants and waterside bars. Prestigious companies such as Unilever and Spiegel have moved here, so standards are high, and there are open-air concerts and theatre performances in the summer. The landmark building of Hafencity, the Elbphilharmonie, an audacious concert hall-cum-hotel designed by Swiss architects Herzog and de Meuron in the shape of a giant iceberg of glass, is still under construction.

■ **Practicalities:** The best time to go is 6pm onwards. The nearest U-bahn is Baumwall. Event and cultural attraction information is available at hafencity.com

HAMBURG FISCHMARKT

If you are in town on a Sunday morning, hit the rock “n” roll fish market just downriver of Landungsbrücken. This is much more than just a market – from 5am traders start to sell everything and anything, from smoked eel and tropical plants to budgerigars, in a village of stalls erected around the elegant old fish auction hall here. Some of the traders can be very entertaining, and their banter draws big crowds – Eely Dieter, in particular, has carved out a TV career from his market profile.

Meanwhile, inside the auction hall, all-night revellers from the Reeperbahn (Hamburg’s “sinful mile”) are getting their second wind, drinking beer at long tables as rock bands take it in turns to do their stuff. For those who come seeking fish, not beer, extensive seafood brunches are offered up along the galleries on either side of the building. The whole thing is done and dusted by 9.30am, so you can go back to bed wondering if it was all a dream.

■ **Practicalities:** Every Sunday through the year from 5am, entry is free. The nearest U-bahn is Landungsbrücken (eight minutes from the Hauptbahnhof) and then follow the crowds. Visit hamburg-tourism.de

HAMBURG CANALS

Many cities claim the title of “Venice of the north”, and Hamburg, with its 2,600 water-crossing bridges, must be a good contender. Most tour-boat attention is focused on the port, but the inland waterways provide a real insight into the city’s wealth.

The canal tour starts at the Jungfernstieg (near the town hall), crosses the inner and then the outer Alster lakes – the latter busy with scudding sailboats and rowing crews – and then plunges into the leafy canal network around the residential districts of Barmbek and Winterhude. Expect to see elegant villas, some of them with waterside gazebos for afternoon tea (this is, in some respects, a very British city), and laid-back cafés.

■ **Practicalities:** Departures from Jungfernstieg are 9.45am, 11.45am, 1.24.45pm, 2.45pm, 3.45pm and 5.45pm (only 9.45am, 12.45pm and 3.45pm in early spring/late autumn, no winter service). The trip lasts two hours and costs €14.50. Make sure you get the canal tour, as many cruises just do the Alster lakes.

HAMBURGER DOM

This fair is the northern equivalent of Munich’s Oktoberfest, but the month-long Dom is not so crowded and takes place three times a year, in spring, summer and winter. The name is confusing, for *dom* means cathedral – first recorded in 1329, this was a market that surrounded the cathedral at festival times, with traders and

performers intent on waylaying the populace en route to church. Much to the disgust of the bishop, they used to take shelter in the building during bad weather, hence the name used today.

Today, the only spiritual connection is the Heiligengeistfeld (Holy Ghost field), where the Dom's roller coasters and big dippers swing into action amid brass bands and beer tents – you will still find local produce on sale, though. Seasonal highlights include a medieval fort and a witches» village during the spring Dom (on this month), cowboy action in a Wild West town during the summer and, in winter, a kitsch Christmas market with stall holders dressed in medieval costumes.

Practicalities: Best after 6pm (gates open 3pm), nearest U-bahn St Pauli (11 minutes from the centre), entry is free. This year's dates are March 25-April 25, July 29-August 28, November 4-December 4. Visit hamburg.de/dom



IN HALF A DAY
CYCLING IN ALTES LAND

It may be hard to believe when you are sat in the bar of your downtown hotel, but the largest orchards in northern Europe are actually just under an hour from the Hauptbahnhof on the S-bahn – and cycling through them is a pure pleasure.

Altes Land is mainly reclaimed marshland on the western side of the Elbe, and in late April and early May the blossom (mainly apple, pear, cherry, plum and damson) is stupendous. Despite the closeness to Hamburg, the landscape is carefully preserved and traditionally farmed, coming complete with some of the finest north German half-timbered farmhouses with their distinctively intricate brickwork.

The best starting point is the ancient port town of Stade, rich with merchants» houses, and an example of what downtown Hamburg might have been like if it hadn't been so badly bombed during the Second World War. From here, cycle routes snake out over the flats, particularly towards the river and down to Jork, the spiritual centre of Altes Land. Farm shops along the way allow you to slake your thirst with fresh juice.



Pustak Luneburska



Lubeck

Practicalities: S-bahn line three ends in Stade (stade-tourismus.de – go to the section on bike travel). Cycle hire from €7 a day is available from Fahrrad Brandt (fahrrad-brandt.de) in Freiburg-erstrasse, an easy walk from the station.

LUNEBERG HEATH

Much of the vicinity of Hamburg is low-lying and fertile, but a large region to the south-west is quite the opposite – dry, sandy-soiled, wild and covered with heather and pine forest. The Luneberg



Muzeum Emigracji



heath has remained pretty much unchanged since Neolithic times (apart from the large NATO military base that occupies the southern area), and the best preserved section, west of Luneberg itself, is now a national park laced with walking trails, its air resinous and fragrant on a summer's evening. If you're in need of refreshment, there are lots of *hofcafés* – cafés attached to farmhouses. Try the Hof Bockelmann (hof-bockelmann.de) in Oberhaverbeck, which serves homemade *wurst* and cakes in a farmhouse with a garden.

■ **Practicalities:** If you have hired a car, it is a half-hour journey down the E7 to Bispingen. Otherwise, there are trains every 20 minutes for the 25-minute journey to Buchholz, which is served in summer by the Heide-Shuttle bus. Visit bahn.com

MARZIPAN TASTING IN LUBECK

Marzipan is thought to have originated in Turkey but trade routes at the time brought it into Hamburg's Hanseatic partner port, Lubeck, a handsome place whose old town contains fine merchants' houses and is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Here, specialist confectioner Niederegger (niederegger.de) keeps the marzipan flag flying in a prime location directly opposite the town hall.

The Café Niederegger (Breite Strasse 89) is part boutique, part museum (see the 12 lifesize figures made of marzipan), and you can watch staff model marzipan figurines before you settle

down for a slice of nut cake and a cup of marzipan tea. The beautifully wrapped products in the shop are a good reason for coming here in themselves, especially if you're looking for a special gift.

■ **Practicalities:** Trains for Lubeck leave Hamburg Hauptbahnhof every half-hour and take 45 minutes, costing €23.20 return. Visit bahn.com



IN ONE DAY...

BREMER-HAVEN'S NEW MUSEUMS

Two remarkable new museums have colonised unused wharf space in this port city, located a couple of hours by train from Hamburg. The first is the Klimahaus (klimahaus-bremerhaven.de), which presents a journey through the world's climate zones, as well as taking a long, hard look at global warming. The second, the German Emigration Centre (dah-bremerhaven.de), focuses on the experiences of the more-than-seven million emigrants that have passed through the port en route for the US.

For a while, Germany was a serious contender for America's national language – big-number emigration started from 1830 and lasted for most of the 19th century, with peaks again during the Weimar Republic (1919-1933) and after the Second World War – and many of the museum's visitors are Americans retracing their roots. The centre investi-

gates the reasons for emigration, recreates the journey undertaken along with arrival at Ellis Island, and allows visitors to research their ancestry. There's a fine restaurant downstairs.

■ **Practicalities:** The train journey from Hamburg Hauptbahnhof takes between two to two-and-a-half hours, with a change in Bremen (the square around its cathedral has been elegantly restored if you want to stop off briefly), and costs from €42 return. Klimahaus open 9am-7pm (10am-7pm Saturday-Sunday), 10am-6pm November-February, €13.50; German Emigration Centre open 10am-6pm (10am-5pm November-February), €11.20.

BOAT TRIP TO HELGOLAND

Once a British territory called Heligoland, these two islands out in the Wadden Sea were swapped for land rights in East Africa in 1890 (the region registers on the British shipping forecast as «German Bight»). These days, the main island is a tourism destination and health retreat, and people come here to walk along the top of the red cliffs and breathe in the dust-free air.

If you are at all interested in the sea, the journey itself is worthwhile. The high-speed catamaran zooms up the Elbe, overtaking giant ships. The onboard commentary picks out key landmarks, such as the Willkomm Hoft at Schulauer, which welcomes every incoming vessel with a dip of the flag and by playing the national anthem of the ship's origin through giant loudspeakers.

The catamaran's timings won't allow you to do much more than stroll, shop and have a seafood lunch in one of the small and informal restaurants, such as the Mocca-Stuben (mocca-stuben.de). Seek out Helgolander *knieper* (crab claws), which are served with various dips. If you have more time, there's the option of overnighting at the island's upmarket spa hotel, the Atoll (atoll.de), where the occasional celebrity comes to chill out.

■ **Practicalities:** The Halunder Jet leaves Hamburg's Landungsbrücken daily at 9am, arriving at Helgoland at 12.45pm. It returns at 4.30pm, arriving back in Hamburg at 8.15pm. It costs €62.70 return. Visit helgoline.de, helgoland.de ■

Go to germany-tourism.co.uk





New beds in New York

Manhattan has seen a big boom in hotel openings. **Jenny Southan** takes a look and finds out what's to come

Next time you visit New York you'll have many more options for resting your head. Like London, which is experiencing its own surge of property launches and revamps (see business traveller.com/tags/london+hotels), the Big Apple has seen a flurry of new hotel openings.

Last year close to 40 properties opened their doors, increasing the city's room count by almost 6,650. And with overall occupancy standing at about 85 per cent despite this growth in capacity, there is a sense of optimism in the air.

Thomas Mathes, general manager of Kimpton's Eventi (see page 64), which opened in Chelsea last June at 75-80 per cent occupancy, says: "We were surprised by the number of bookings when we opened – we actually had to stop selling rooms because we didn't have enough employees". He puts this down, in part, to people doing more face-to-face business. "During the recession people used video-conferencing a lot more, but personal meetings are coming back", Mathes says.

Although room rates in Manhattan are on the up again, having gone down as much as 30 per cent during the financial crisis, Mathes says it will be "about two to three years until we are back to 2008 rates".

David Chase, general manager of the Trump Soho (see facing page), which opened last April, says: "The brakes were on over the period between 2008 and early 2010 but since we opened we have seen things picking up. We are getting more business travel and meetings bookings".

Trump Soho



Hoteliers have also noticed a growing trend for travellers to combine business with pleasure by adding a few days on to their trip. Properties such as the Eventi are keen to cater to both aspects, offering a range of facilities from boardrooms to spas. “People are expecting more these days so a hotel has to offer everything”, Mathes says.

The industry is also finding demand for rooms away from the usual Manhattan hotspots – Starwood, for example, has travelled north of Central Park to open the Aloft Harlem. Patricia Gilles, sales manager for the property, says: “Harlem is totally different now – it has been gentrified. Things are changing and with the addition of the Aloft it’s taking Harlem to a whole new level”.

It is estimated that by 2013, over 5,000 more hotel rooms will have been added, bringing the total up to more than 91,000. So what do we have to look forward to? Hyatt was set to open the 116-room 48 Lex in Midtown, within walking distance of Grand Central station, this month, and will follow with a 175-room Hyatt near Union Square in the autumn. Other spring openings include the 91-room Four Points by Sheraton Long Island City in Queens, and the 172-room Hotel Indigo Brooklyn.

Later in the year, Conrad will open its first property in the city in the financial district of Lower Manhattan, with 463 rooms, and budget brand Yotel will open a 699-room Japanese-style “capsule” hotel by Times Square. In the meantime, here is a look at some of the properties that have already starting welcoming guests...

NEW YORK

DOWNTOWN

W NEW YORK DOWNTOWN

Starwood’s fourth W hotel in New York, the new-build W Downtown was unveiled last August and overlooks Ground Zero. Once the memorial is complete in September, the view from the hotel will be more attractive. The lobby is on the fifth floor and features an eye-catching undulating LED light installation across the whole ceiling (see our cover image). Only about 100 bedrooms are available at the moment but once the higher floors have been fitted out over the next few months, there will be 217 – each equipped with showers, Munchie boxes and iPod docks. Guests have use of a 24-hour gym, a ground-floor “pub grub” eatery, and four meeting rooms. Wired/wifi internet costs US\$15 a day. DJ nights are held twice a week in the Living Room bar.

- **123 Washington Street;**
tel +1 646 8268 600;
starwoodhotels.com
- **Rooms from US\$266**

MONDRIAN SOHO

A sneak preview of the fourth New York property from Morgans Hotel Group, which opened in March in the trendy Soho district, revealed lavish interiors decked out with crystal chandeliers, custom-designed furniture, blue mirrors (to make you look more beautiful, apparently), gold banquettes and rose-patterned carpets. As there are no signs, guests must look out for a series of foliage-

covered archways that frame the Crosby Street entrance, while the 270-room hotel block rises up beyond. A ground-floor restaurant serves sustainable seafood, while a Chinese-style speakeasy displays birdcages and a glowing neon sign that reads: “This is not a brothel, there are no prostitutes at this address.” Standard “sleeping chambers” are small, at 18 sqm, but have iPads and walk-in showers with city views.

- **9 Crosby Street;**
tel +1 212 3891 000;
mondriansoho.com
- **Rooms from US\$427**

TRUMP SOHO

This 46-floor new-build is the second Trump property to open in Manhattan. The 391 rooms start from 39 sqm and have impressive urban panoramas, and standard amenities including Nespresso machines, microwaves, wet bars, separate baths and showers, and Fendi Casa furniture. Décor is stylish and masculine with cream marble, dark wood, glass, and glossy leather. Contemporary Italian dining room Quattro is well worth trying, with great service, delicious food and plenty of well-heeled locals to remind you that you are in New York. There is also a 24-hour gym, a spa, outdoor pool, and 1,115 sqm of meeting space.

Visit businessstraveller.com/trying-and-tested for a full review.

- **246 Spring Street;**
tel +1 212 8425 500;
trumpsohohotel.com
- **Rooms from US\$393**

THE JAMES NEW YORK

Sister property to the James Chicago, the James New York, also in Soho, opened last September and is a 114-room boutique-style offering. Doormen wear tweed flat caps and waistcoats, while the Sky lobby provides a relaxing welcome for guests, with floor-to-ceiling windows, quirky light fittings, pale décor, and free coffee and pastries. Bedrooms start from 29 sqm and are well designed with glass-walled bathrooms, plenty of storage space, circular ta-

W New York Downtown



Mondrian Soho



The James New York



Gansevoort Park Avenue



Intercontinental Times Square Eventi



bles for dining and working, and eco-friendly bathing products. There is also free wifi, iPads that can be borrowed from reception, a 24-hour fitness centre, a rooftop plunge pool and adjacent cocktail bar, Jimmy. A garden terrace and David Burke restaurant opened last month.

- **27 Grand Street;**
tel +1 212 4652 000;
jameshotels.com
- **Rooms from US\$491**

MIDTOWN

GANSEVOORT PARK AVENUE NYC

The 249-room Gansevoort Park Avenue joined its counterpart in the buzzing Meatpacking District of Manhattan last August. The hotel lobby sports mismatched furniture, a purple chandelier, and black and white striped floor, while a separate entrance on East 29th Street gives visitors direct access to the 930 sqm Asellina restaurant and bar, which is backed by a wall of Cinzano bottles. As well as a heated outdoor rooftop pool that is open year-round, the property has free wifi, a 280-capacity ballroom, open-air terraces for hire, and guestrooms measuring from 33 sqm – each of these has iPod Touches and sound-docks, well-stocked minibars, azure bedspreads, erotic fuschia pink prints, and chartreuse chairs.

- **420 Park Avenue South;**
tel +1 212 317 2900;
gansevoortpark.com
- **Rooms from US\$319**

EVENTI – A KIMPTON HOTEL

US chain Kimpton has more than 50 hotels across the US, and the new-build Eventi opened in Chelsea in June last year. The 292 rooms and suites start from 26 sqm and features a muted palette of grey, chestnut and cream, rainshowers, large workdesks and Frette linens. Members of the Kimpton In Touch loyalty scheme benefit from free wired/wifi internet (US\$15 per 24 hours otherwise). Free tea and coffee is available in the morning, as is wine in the evening. There is 2,200 sqm of meeting space, and a huge outdoor screen at the back of the hotel can also be used. Bar Basque was created by Syd Mead, set designer of *Blade Runner*.

- **851 Avenue of the Americas;**
tel +1 212 5644 567;
eventihotel.com
- **Rooms from US\$312**

THE SETAI FIFTH AVENUE

Unveiled last November, the Setai is managed by Capella Hotels and Resorts. The facilities and level of service are five-star – there's a 1,050 sqm spa with 11 treatment rooms, a classy ground-floor bar, personal assistants, free wifi, a 24-hour gym and 2,300 sqm of event space. There are no check-in or check-out times. As well as 57 apartment suites there are 157 bedrooms measuring from 36 sqm, featuring Nespresso machines, Pratesi sheets and fridges stocked with free soft drinks. The smart and sophisticated Ai Fiori restaurant (aifiorinyc.com) is a top-

class option for entertaining clients, with white tablecloths, low lighting, and meat and seafood-heavy cuisine inspired by the Italian and French Riviera. A good value four-course prix fixe menu is available for US\$79.

- **400 Fifth Avenue;**
tel +1 212 695 4005;
setaififthavenue.com
- **Rooms from US\$686**

ANDAZ FIFTH AVENUE

Hyatt's boutique Andaz brand opened its fifth hotel, and its second in New York, last July (there is another on Wall Street). Like the other properties, it has broken away from the traditional concept of a hotel reception, instead having plain-clothed "hosts" in the lobby to check guests in with tablet PCs and offer them a coffee or glass of wine. The 184 rooms and suites are minimalist in design and come with minibars stocked with free soft drinks and snacks, free wifi and walk-in rainshowers. There is also 600 sqm of function space, a gym, and a ground-floor eatery. Visit businessstraveller.com/trying-and-tested for a full review.

- **485 Fifth Avenue;**
tel +1 212 601 1234;
andaz.com
- **Rooms from US\$291**

THE CHATWAL NEW YORK

The Chatwal, which arrived on the scene last August, provides an appealing combination of renovated art deco interiors, cutting-edge technology and impeccable service. Located a short walk from Times Square, much of the 80-bed-

room property dates back to 1905, and guests can avail of a modest spa, 200 sqm of meeting space, and the legendary Lambs Club bar and restaurant. This must-try eatery specialises in modern American cuisine. Bedrooms (from 28 sqm) feature free wired/wireless internet, backgammon sets, Japanese waterjet toilets, Asprey bath products, Bluray DVD players, Kashwero robes, butler service and retro radio/alarm clocks. Visit businessstraveller.com/trying-and-tested for a full review.

- **130 West 44th Street;**
tel +1 212 7646 200;
thechatwalny.com
- **Rooms from US\$635**

CASSA HOTEL AND RESIDENCES

A member of Worldhotels, Cassa debuted last August, although its subterranean bar/restaurant is not due to open until the summer. The property has 57 extended-stay units on floors 27 to 48, as well as 165 guestrooms on levels two to 26. It's a mid-range of-

The Setai Fifth Avenue



The Chatwal



fering in a good Midtown location, with facilities including walk-in rain-showers, large flatscreen TVs, iPod docks, Dean and DeLuca snacks, and minibars (note that beds in the standard rooms are small doubles). There are three meeting rooms and a 24-hour fitness centre.

- **70 West 45th Street;**
tel +1 212 3028 700;
cassahotelny.com
- **Rooms from US\$256**

INTERCONTINENTAL NEW YORK TIMES SQUARE

The 36-floor, 607-room Intercontinental, which was unveiled last July, is one of the largest hotels to open in Manhattan in recent times, and is an obvious choice for many business travellers. There are 12 function rooms totalling 900 sqm of space, a 24-hour fitness centre and an all-day restaurant. Bedrooms start from 33 sqm in size and have a predominantly brown, cappuccino, gold and cream colour scheme. The higher the category, the better the view. Amenities that come as standard include

in-room PCs (wired/wifi access is US\$13 per 24 hours), iPod docks, minibars, Gilchrist and Soames toiletries, and a free morning paper.

- **300 West 44th Street;**
tel +1 212 8034 500;
interconny.com
- **Rooms from US\$264**

THE PEARL

Also near Times Square is the 94-room Pearl – it opened its doors in October and is a member of the Empire Hotel Group, which operates seven other properties in the city. It's not going to wow guests but does provide everything business travellers might need for a short trip. Bedrooms have flatscreen TVs, large workdesks, triple-glazed windows and interiors that are a smart combination of chocolate, blue and beige. Wifi is free, as is a continental breakfast, and evening wine hours are held. Until the on-site steakhouse opens in June, in-room dining is provided by two local eateries. There is a small 24-hour gym.

- **233 West 49th Street;**
tel +1 212 245 4000;
pearlhotelnyc.com
- **Rooms from US\$279**

ELEMENT NEW YORK TIMES SQUARE WEST

The first of Starwood's eco-friendly extended-stay Element hotels in the city was launched near Times Square in November. It feels fresh and relaxed, with a free continental breakfast laid out in the foyer

each morning, a store selling essentials, a business centre, free wired/wifi internet, and recycling bins and furniture made from recycled or sustainably produced materials. All of the 411 rooms come with a mini kitchen, Heavenly beds (as found in Starwood's Westin properties), DVD players and walk-in showers.

- **311 West 39th Street;**
tel +1 212 6430 770;
starwoodhotels.com
- **Rooms from US\$256**

UPTOWN

ALOFT HARLEM

Open since December, Starwood's 124-room Aloft is one block from the nearest subway station or about 15 minutes drive cab from Times Square, and is an excellent budget option. The reception has a pool table, self-service snack bar, funky seating and welcoming staff, while the rooms are at least 23 sqm and have huge workdesks, king-size beds, free wired/wifi internet, fridges, Bliss toiletries, flatscreen TVs, free water, tea and coffee. There are no meeting rooms or restaurants but there is a 24-hour gym. A second Aloft is set to open in Brooklyn this month.

- **2,296 Frederick Douglass Boulevard;**
tel +1 212 7494 000;
starwoodhotels.com
- **Rooms from US\$243**

Visit nycgo.com

NEW YORK

Element Times Square West



Andaz Fifth Avenue



Aloft Harlem





Best Western Plays In The East

Wojciech Chetchowski interview **Saija Kekkonen**, CEO of the Best Western Hotels Osuuskunta chain in Finland, Baltic countries and Poland.

Best Western has been on the market for 65 years, can you explain how the hotel industry has changed recently? Well, the biggest change came when the Internet arrived. Today we live, buy and book using the Internet. It had also a major impact on the hotel industry. Especially because the behaviour of people has also changed – they have totally different needs than, say, 20 years ago. They travel more and more, and the travelling itself is much easier now, so their expectations are also growing and growing. The industry couldn't stay indifferent to those changes, it had to change over time, in order to meet those expectations.

This is the biggest chain in the world, having over 4 thousands hotels. At the same time, it is very different from other chains, when it comes to doing business. Say something about it.

We differ dramatically, if you compare us to other chains who grant franchising rights. First of all, we are a non profit member organization. All the members are owners of the chain. All the hotels associated with Best Western brand, are independent hotels, run by each member's boards. All the money we get from them are then used for support, global marketing and promotional campaigns, so as a chain we don't generate any income. We will never ask for any extra money, or try to put the Best Western brand on the stock market. What we are interested in the most, is the satisfaction on the part of the associated hotels, no matter how big or small they are, because whenever we make any joint deci-



sions, their opinion is equally valid. Naturally, there are dozens of different owners from various places, and everybody has their own view on a specific issue, and knows what they care about, so solving some of the matters is not an easy thing to do. But this is what we are for.

You inspect all these hotels yearly. What do you especially pay attention to?

Yes, we call it "a quality check". We do it specifically because Best Western hotels are extremely diverse – they can be mansions, country estates, castles, old tenements, modern skyscrapers, complexes – which were once a prison, for instance, small and large buildings in big cities, in the suburbs, in exotic, hot coun-



tries and in the vicinity of the polar circle. You won't find such diversity in any other hotel chain. And so, we are keen on maintaining high quality of service and all the mod cons we have, when we welcome new guests. That is why we monitor all of our four thousand hotels. When it turns out that a given hotel does not meet all our requirements, we don't delete it from the list of Best Western hotel immediately. We prefer to sit down with the owner and work on a solution, so that the hotel could still provide our guests with accommodation to their satisfaction.

Let's get back to the last two years for a moment. Is the recession – the word, which evoked fear in the hotel industry – over yet?

Yes, until another slump in the economy occurs. The end of the crisis is already seen on the Polish market, where the number of accommodation places is growing – the forecasts say even about a 10% growth. Similarly, the market in Finland is also doing good – at the beginning of 2011, they had 30% growth in the number of hotel room bookings. The forecasts are optimistic and I strongly believe they will come true. Although I know I could win a lot of money if only I knew for sure what would happen in the hotel industry within the next two or three years.

And what do you think about the Polish market – is it easier, or more difficult to do business here, than in other parts of Europe?

What really impressed me here, was the fact that hotel owners and managers are very passionate about what they do, and set themselves clear goals they want to achieve. Besides, I still admire the professionalism I see when working here. Most of my experience I got from working in Finland. I think we are a bit more relaxed, while you care much about details. Naturally, there were cases, when a hotel owner knew everything about the industry, and didn't need any guidance, and consequently – wasn't interested in cooperation. But such people can be found anywhere, so there is nothing to worry about. I can't complain, I really enjoy cooperating with Polish people. You have great potential and a large ac-

commodation base in the so called hotel industry – although numerous accommodation places are not really hotels. You travel more and more, and large hotel chains have entered the country to realize their projects here. So, development is inevitable. I hope that together with Best Western, we will be a part of this process.

Before the Euro Cup 2012, the hotel industry in Poland is indeed likely to expand – what are your plans for the upcoming years?

Our primary goal is to open 10 Best Western hotels in Poland by the end of this year. And we will do it. We've just opened the first Best Western hotel in Warsaw in the Praga Południe district. Felix is managed by the PUHiT company. It is a very special place for us – Warsaw is a huge city, and naturally we dream about opening a second property on the other bank of the river. The next hotel, Symfonia was opened in Osjaków, on the way to Wrocław. We already have hotels in Białystok, Rzeszów, Katowice, Cracow and Wrocław, but there aren't any in two other big cities: Poznań and Łódź.

But still, it is far too few, considering the potential of the Polish market. In Finland, where there are five million people, Best Western already has 19 hotels. In Poland, the population amounts to 38 million, but the number of hotels is still under 10. It basic arithmetic – we should open here a lot more hotels than that.

Especially, that we already have three brands to offer: Best Western, Best Western Premier – a higher quality brand, and only recently introduced in Europe – Best Western Plus. That leaves our clients with even greater choice, and makes it easier for them to find the very hotel they need.

I need to ask you about business clients – what can they expect in your hotels?

We provide them with unlimited and free access to the Internet, which is one of our priorities now, and not only for business clients, but also for regular guests and tourists. Another thing they can expect when staying with us, is a substantial breakfast – we believe this



BEST WESTERN CHAIN

Founded in 1946, the hotel chain was already over 4 thousand properties in 80 countries. The founder, M. K. Guertin, had an original idea to form an association consisting of independent hotels and its owners, which would provide necessary support in promotion and sales.

Each Best Western hotel has a right to use the international brand, distribution systems and BW-operated activity in specified areas. Despite the membership, each Best Western hotels maintains administrative and financial independence. Thus, the hotels – although they must use Best Western signage – can welcome their guests in their own way, for instance by referring to the local traditions. Each contract with Best Western is signed for at least 2 years, and the membership fee is dependent on such factors as fixed revenue or operating costs. Currently, the hotel owners considering Best Western membership, can actually choose between the three brands they can be associated with: Best Western, Best Western Plus and Best Western Premier. The brands differ when it comes to the quality of service and the requirements each hotel has to meet.

In Poland, there are 8 Best Western hotels at the moment, and the total number of their rooms is 877.

is vitally important. Besides, we offer the Best Western Rewards loyalty scheme, which functions reliably for over twenty years and provides the clients who frequently stay in BW hotels with various facilities. Naturally, we also guarantee appropriate quality of service provided by highly-trained hotel staff in all Best Western properties. ■



View from
Le Méridien

Meet in Budapest

Spectacular architecture, great food and 120 hot springs – **Catherine Chetwynd** finds the Hungarian capital is a MICE destination in ascendance

Next time you are choosing a destination for a European event, why not look east to Budapest? The Hungarian capital was one of the first cities to emerge from behind the Iron Curtain and welcome delegates. At first, there was a limited choice of hotels but after Four Seasons Gresham Palace opened on Roosevelt Square in 2004, others quickly followed.

Budapest is rich in art nouveau splendour and there are beautiful buildings on almost every corner. Its two sides, Buda and Pest, are divided by the Danube. Pest provides the dynamic, more

modern character, plus good shopping, the Hungarian State Opera House, St Stephen's Basilica, lively nightlife, museums and most of the hotels – and if the Parliament Building looks familiar, it is because it is modelled on ours. The centre of Pest is relatively compact and most distances are walkable.

The Castle District on the Buda side is part of a UNESCO World Heritage site, the most outstanding attributes of which are the 700-year-old Matthias church and the Fisherman's Bastion, both of which were recently restored.

The city is well set up for hosting meetings. It has a proactive and effi-

cient convention bureau – recently restructured by the new government, which supports the industry – and destination management companies (DMCs) are well established, clued-up and creative, ensuring that support for any kind of programme is forthcoming.

Hungary is two and a half hours from the UK and is well served by BA, Malev and low-cost carriers. Previously, se-

curity procedures for departing passengers at Ferihegy airport were slow but a new £61 million terminal building, Sky Court, which has been constructed between Terminals 2A and 2B and was set to open at the end of March, should speed things up. It has 28 passenger security screening channels, 50 border crossing points, 21 boarding gates, 80 check-in counters and 16 self-check-in kiosks, as well as retail and dining outlets.

The city is well set up for meetings, with a proactive and efficient convention bureau



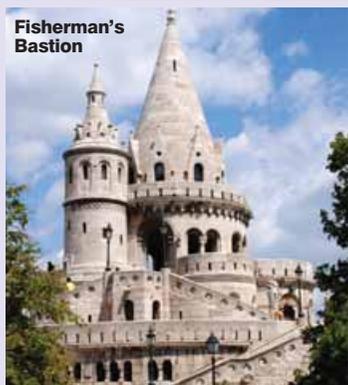
Museum of Fine Arts



Szechenyi Baths



Buddha Bar



Fisherman's Bastion



Telikert, Four Seasons

SPECIAL VENUES

■ **THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS** (szeptmuveszeti.hu) on Heroes» Square is an excellent venue for a gala dinner. Guests enter on a red carpet flanked by Hussars holding torches and, after cocktails in the Marble Hall, dinner could be accompanied by a jazz band in the 250-capacity Renaissance room or, in the 300-capacity Baroque room, by a «sand-and-light» show (pictures painted by an artist with sand on a lightbox and beamed on to a screen).

■ **THERE ARE 120 THERMAL SPRINGS** beneath Budapest (1,300 in Hungary), resulting in many baths and hammams in the capital. Szechenyi Baths (szechenyibath.com) in the City Park near Heroes» Square are curative, so Hungarians can get a prescription for visits from their doctor. UK visitors might be hard-pressed to pull that off but the baths can be included as a relaxing element in a programme. Szechenyi has three outdoor pools and 19 indoor ones, plus chess boards, massage services and saunas. Entertainment such as trapeze artists can be arranged.

■ **IN SEPTEMBER**, the 102-room Buddha Bar and Hotel Klotild Palace (buddhabarhotelbudapest.com) will open in a century-old building on Váci street. Promising unusual décor, a lively atmosphere and a variety of spaces that lend themselves to lunch, gala dinners or cocktails, it will have three connected boardrooms with a total capacity of 90 theatre-style, which will lead on to a lounge area.

■ **THE TELIKERT** (Hungarian for «winter garden») is in the mezzanine-level internal courtyard of the Four Seasons Hotel Gresham Palace (fourseasons.com/budapest). With a glass ceiling and wall, it is a light, flexible space suitable for a wine tasting, press conference, presentation or elegant dinner. Blackout curtains are installed, as is state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment.

■ **THE RESTAURANT IN THE FISHERMAN'S BASTION** (halaszbastya.eu) in the Castle District has reopened after a six-year renovation that has restored the warm stone to perfect condition. The bastion provides a superb venue for a gala dinner (80 people indoors, 250 outside), with crisp table cloths, well-spaced seating and wonderful views across the Danube to Pest. Cocktails or dinner on the adjacent ramparts are another option.

Connections are good: “The city has excellent flight access, which makes it an ideal destination for a worldwide audience, and it is great value for money”, says Katrina Rannard, lead design manager for events organisation company BI. Although Hungary is a member of the EU, it is not in the eurozone and the exchange rate with the forint is favourable.

The city’s good spread of hotels from mid-range to luxury means it can cater to a range of budgets. “Hungary has an excellent range of three-, four- and five-star hotels and because there is so much competition [with 16 five-star and 61 four-star properties], they are outstanding value”, says David Marks, managing partner of MM and Company, a DMC representation firm. “The MICE [meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions] industry is well established – the people at the convention bureau know what they are doing and DMCs are experienced. We have been representing it for a number of years

and last year it was one of our best sellers. In short, it works”.

It also stands out because potential delegates have often not been there, which gives it an advantage over its neighbours. “We rarely lose the business once [event planners] have been here [to check it out as an option]”, says Agnes Racsai, managing director Microcosmos, a DMC represented by MM and Company. „As a little known destination, it is difficult to sell but it is great when 90 per cent of a group has not been here”.

Some of the events Microcosmos arranged last year included a product launch and recognition event for 250 customers from the Dubai office of a mobile phone company, a strategy conference weekend for 50 CEOs for a media company based in South Africa, and a trip to the Hungarian Formula One Grand Prix race for 20 staff from an automotive company.

The hotels have excellent meeting facilities and many are close to one other, making it easy to accommodate large

groups across properties. “The city is picturesque and offers a great hotel product”, says BI’s Rannard. “We ran a conference here for 400 delegates and it provided a fantastic, compact solution owing to the close proximity of many of the hotels”.

Within walking distance of one another are the 179-room Four Seasons, which holds 133 delegates theatre-

‘For a conference of 400 delegates, the city provided a fantastic, compact solution’

style in its largest meeting space; the 420-room Intercontinental Budapest, which accommodates 850 theatre-style; and the 354-room Sofitel Budapest Chain Bridge, with a maximum theatre-style capacity of 340. The Four Seasons provides art nouveau charm against its more modern neighbours.

The 366-room Kempinski Hotel Corvinus Budapest (with a theatre-style capacity of 450) and the 218-room Le Méridien (210 theatre-style) are al-

FIVE INCENTIVE IDEAS

■ A **KNIGHTS» TOURNAMENT** and a medieval village experience in the gardens of the Citadel on Gellert Hill on the Buda side of the river, including visiting a blacksmith's workshop, dressing up in medieval costume or knights» armour, and experimenting with weapons. Follow with dinner in the covered prison for a new spin on a captive audience.

■ A vintage train can transfer delegates from downtown to the **HUNGARIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM** on Tatai Ut (street), just north-east of Margaret Island. There are direct rail services from Nyugati station (mavnosztalgia.hu) for a gala dinner surrounded by vintage locomotives and carriages, with gypsy musicians and folk dancers providing the entertainment.

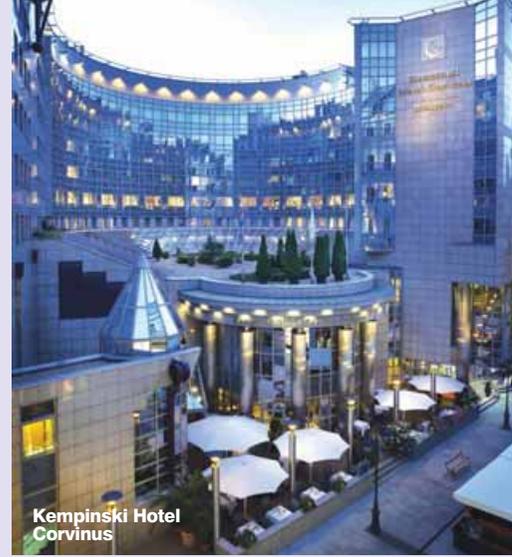
■ **WOK AND ROLL COOKERY** at the Corinthia (corinthia.com), making spring rolls guided by the hotel's Chinese chef, provides an entertaining half-hour before lunch.

■ The **HUNGARORING** (hungaroring.hu), 18km from the city centre, is host to the Hungarian F1 Grand Prix each summer, but mere mortals can give it a spin too in one of the circuit's race cars – choose from an Opel Astra, a BMW M3 or a Porsche 911. Go-karts and quad bikes are available at the adjacent Hungaroring Adventure Park, and tackling the course in a historic Trabant is another option.

■ Go on a **CULINARY TREASURE HUNT** organised by DMC Microcosmos (microcosmos.hu). You will be given the recipe for a traditional Hungarian dish then, after following hidden clues to the Great Market Hall (csapi.hu) to buy the ingredients, report back to base and a skilled chef will demonstrate how to prepare the dish.



Trabant rallying at Hungaroring



Kempinski Hotel Corvinus



Great Market Hall

so next-door neighbours on Erszébet Square. The 170-room Boscolo New York Palace, which holds 140 delegates in its largest meeting room, has the grandeur you would expect from a building constructed as a bank in the late 19th century. A short walk away and open since 1886, the 414-room Corinthia Grand Royal hotel (which holds 520 people in its biggest venue) is the largest five-star property in the city and still has its original spa.

In the four-star bracket is the Achat Premium hotel, open since September last year, on the ring road 5km from the city centre; the Expo Congress Hotel, located at the entrance to exhibition space Hungexpo; the Courtyard by Marriott Budapest City Centre, popular with groups; and, after a £39 million renovation, the former Continental hotel, also in the city centre, which has reopened as Continental Hotel Zara.

If you're looking for an unusual option, the huge outdoor skating rink at Heroes» Square can be taken over for

private events such as group skating or displays. And in the old town of Buda, a raft of interesting venues can be found among the clamour of cobbled streets. The Hungarian National Gallery (mng.hu/en) stands majestically at the top of Castle Hill, overlooking the river, and has meeting rooms for up to 400 delegates. Cocktails or dinner can be arranged under the dome or in one of six other impressive halls, and in summer, drinks on the terrace takes full advantage of the views. Many of Budapest's other museums are also available as special venues.

Even the Hilton Budapest, which holds 660 people theatre-style, has an unusual spin, being built around a 13th-century Dominican monastery. Appropriately, groups can be greeted by monks singing Gregorian chants, which is one way to get a meeting off to a good start... ■
Visit hcb.hu

Interesting venues can be found amid the old town's cobbled streets



Parliament



Nobu

FOODIE MEETINGS

The Hungarians are hearty eaters and it is possible to dine and drink very well in Budapest. Those who remember Bull's Blood (*Egri Bikaver*) as the country's main wine export (think 1970s and rough) should not be deterred – amazingly, it is still made (to a higher standard) but there is much else to be enjoyed from the country's vineyards.

Located on the shores of the lake next to Heroes» Square skating rink, the **ROBINSON RESTAURANT** (robinsonrestaurant.hu) can be hired for exclusive use (80 in winter, 100 with terrace), while across the road, the more formal **GUNDEL** (gundel.hu) seats up to 600 inside and out, with private dining rooms for smaller groups. Its wine cellar has a dedicated entrance and lends itself to tastings, during which groups can choose their wine for dinner – they can also learn to make pancakes or (fiendishly difficult) strudel.

On the floor above the sinful cakes and tempting smell of coffee in the **GERBEAUD** café (gerbeaud.hu) on Torosmarty Square are ten interlinked rooms ideal for breakout sessions or a conference with an exhibition. When the work's done, guests can retreat to the basement pub for dinner.

NOBU (noburestaurants.com) recently opened in the Kempinski Hotel Corvinus Budapest and can be taken over for exclusive use for up to 80 people. «The dishes are those found in Nobu worldwide, plus some with a Hungarian spin, » says Nobu spokesperson Adrienn Kovacs.

Otherwise, try cocktails or dinner on the Danube, either at **SPOON CAFE AND LOUNGE** (spooncafe.hu) – three restaurants (the largest holding 600) and five bars on a two-storey boat – or the 900-capacity **EUROPA** (europahajo.hu). Both combine a relaxing atmosphere with a chance to drink in the views.



Gerbeaud





Following the Incas

Interesting and original programme is a crucial component of any good incentive trip. **Olga Chelchowska** proves that Peru has a lot to offer in this respect.

Peru is a genuinely picturesque and diverse country. It has everything you can dream about – sandy seashore with desert stretches, flatlands covered with lush greenery in the East, and monumental peaks of the Andes mountains, where the secrets of the ancient world are still waiting to be discovered. The legend has it that the name of the country comes from the Quechua word Birú, meaning a river. The climate changes from dry – on the coastline – to tropical in the Amazon flatlands.

BUSTLING WITH ACTIVITY

Founded in the 12th century, the Inca Empire had been thriving for over 2 hundred years to eventually cover the area of what is now Peru, Ecuador, Argentina, and partly Chile, Bolivia and Columbia. In its prime time, it was inhabited by over 12 million people – the sun worshippers and builders of the flawless system of roads combining the major adminis-

trative areas. Such skill in construction is especially surprising, as the Incas did not know the wheel, and the transport relied entirely on llamas.

In 1531, under the rule of Atahualpa, the Incas were invaded by scarce by well organized and well-armed groups of Spanish conquistadores lead by Francisco Pizarro. Thousands of the Inca dignitaries were invited by them to a feast, and then treacherously murdered, while Atahualpa was put in prison. Pizarro agreed to bail him out for an astronomical price – the Spanish demanded 6 tons of gold and 14 tons of silver. Nevertheless, Atahualpa was murdered. Soon, the empire collapsed.

The flight, with a stopover in Amsterdam, takes several hours. And this should not come as a surprise, the distance is enormous. Landing in Lima, the capital of the country, usually takes place in the evening. Later, you can have a rest at a hotel, especially as the time zone change will also contribute to the feeling of tiredness.

You can expect a welcoming beverage called Pisco Sour, made from the Peru brandy, lime juice and egg white. The accommodation base in Lima is really good. Especially two of the 5-star hotels are worth recommendation. Marriott is situated in the Miraflores district, near a huge shopping centre. It offers 288 rooms and 12 suites scattered across 25 floors, with a swimming pool and a fitness centre. Equally interesting Sheraton, is situated merely a fifteen minutes» drive from the Jorge Chavez international airport. It offers 431 spacious, perfectly equipped rooms and excellent business and recreational facilities.

In Peru an incentive group will be anything but bored. The participants ought to be quite fit, as they will be constantly on the go, taking every opportunity to explore. Lima was often struck by earthquakes, nevertheless it is worth spending some time exploring the city – especially the old town, which was put on UNESCO's list already 25 years ago. You should also go to the seaside, to spend some time in one of the numerous bars. Trip organizers sometimes prepare a surprise for the participants – they hire professional surfers and dress them in costumes with letter, which read the name of the company.

MYSTERIOUS PAINTINGS

From the capital, you set off to the plateau of Nazca. It is one of the most mysterious



Surfing
on Lake Titicaca

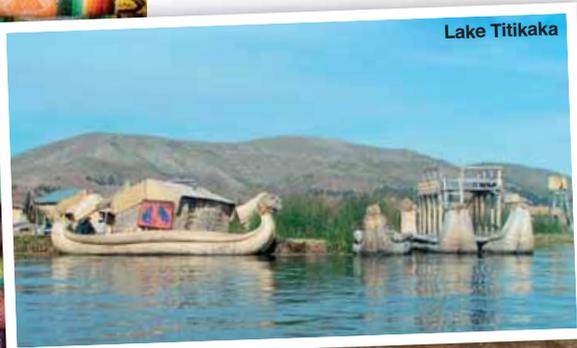


A take-off over
the Nazca Plateau



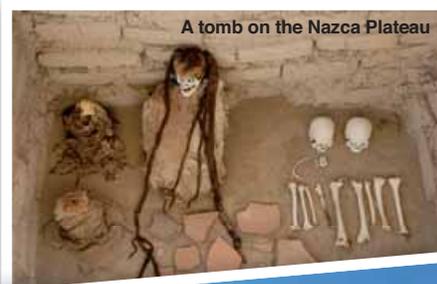
Machu Picchu



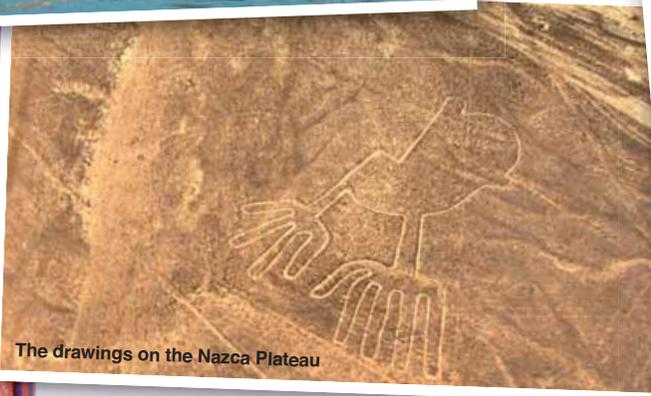


Lake Titicaca

The schedule of the incentive programme organized in Peru is very tight. There's simply no place for any boredom



A tomb on the Nazca Plateau



The drawings on the Nazca Plateau



Cathedral of Lima



places on Earth. On the area of about 700 square kilometres, you can see enormous geoglyphs – drawings and lines depicting animals and plants produced on the ground. These gigantic drawings were made about 2 thousand years ago by peoples of Nazca, who created it by removing the gravel from the ground, exposing lighter soil. The marks are 1 metre wide and form a trench 20 centimetres deep. They were discovered in 1920s and soon people began to theorize about their purpose. It was assumed that the drawings had something to do with religion or irrigation system, and Erich von Daniken, a famous supporter of extraterrestrial influence theories, claimed that lines were designed by aliens. But it is a German scientist, Maria Reiche, who seems to have been the closest to the truth. She believed that Nazca Lines reflect astronomical observations and have something to do with sowing and harvesting time. The view from the plane is genuinely breathtaking, making an impression on anyone who sees it.

The next stage, is a trip to Cuzco, the ancient Inca capital, founded in 12th century by their first ruler Manco Capaka. This Quechua word translates into English as the hub of the universe. The town is situated 3300 metres above the sea level, so some people might be susceptible to changes in air pressure. To adjust to the new conditions, you can visit one of the local bars – coca tea is the best remedy. A nice accommodation is El Monasterio,

situated by the main square in a former monastery complex. In 1692 the pope Innocent II ordered to convert it to a university, and in 1965 it was taken over and further converted into a luxurious hotel. The second place worth recommending is Libertador hotel with 250 rooms and oxygen tanks in the lobby, accessible by all the guests. Each person can use the oxygen, whenever they feel weak or out of breath. The itinerary leads through the main square, a magnificent cathedral, buildings erected by conquistadors, and most importantly – the remnants of the Incas buildings – palaces, temples of the Sun, houses and strongholds, like the one built outside the town of Sacsayhuaman, consisting of triple walls. When seen from above, it resembles a head of a panther with sharp teeth. To observe the sky, the Incas used Kenko, a round building made of stone, considered to be a tomb and a place where mummies were kept. In the neighbourhood of Cuzco, you should also visit the Temple of Wiracocha (foam of the sea god) considered by the Incas to be a creator of universe, the sun and the moon. The temple was made of huge stone blocks – some of them weighing more than 300 tons – which fit together closely, despite the lack of mortar.

SUN CULT

But what really causes excitement among the group, is a trip to Machu Picchu. Getting there by train takes about 3 hours, while if you go by a helicopter – it takes

less than 25 minutes. The winter capital of the Inca is situated a few hundred metres lower than Cuzco, so you need to remember about changes in air pressure. It is the best preserved city of the civilization. It was founded some time in 15th century, and abandoned in 1537 for some inexplicable reason. The stony buildings were skilfully tucked into the mountains of Peru. The city became a real fortress, with its own irrigation system, streets and thousands of steps, enabling flawless communication. Machu Picchu is a monument, which makes an astounding impression on all visitors. It should not therefore, come as a surprise, that five years ago it was announced one of the New Seven Wonders of the World.

The trip could not be complete without an escapade to Lake Titicaca, on the border between Peru and Bolivia. On the Bolivian side you will find the famous Isla del Sol («island of the sun»), where – according to the Inca religion – the Sun and Viracocha were born. There are dozens of artificial floating islands, called uros, inhabited by the Indians, and frequently visited by the tourists. If you are not pressed for time, take a trip to the canyon of the Colca river. It is 120-kilometre long and is considered the deepest structure of this sort on Earth. The canyon walls can reach to over 4200 metres above the river in some areas, which makes it two times deeper than the famous Grand Canyon. Polish expeditors were the first to paddle it down in a canoe. ■

First

Cuba? Kenya? The Maldives? The choice is tough – we can visit all of the above places thanks to the TUI holiday offer called Premium. Now you can spend all-inclusive holiday at the top quality hotels.

Class

Picturesque, exclusive hotels with lots of attractions, all inclusive offer and the flight included in the price — the Premium offer looks really interesting. Those tempted by it, can expect beautiful beaches, excellent food,

and magnificent tropical landscapes. Unforgettable holidays and high quality leisure. Especially, as both the stay, meals and numerous attractions are included in the price.

CUBA

Cuba, considered the most beautiful island in the Caribbean, offers tropical climate, turquoise sea, famous Cuba Libre, salsa and relax on beautiful beaches like the one in Varadero. Among the hotels, Riu Varadero attracts attention – it is situated on a 3-kilometre long beach with white sand, within 14 kilometres from the centre of Varadero. It is a new and comfortable hotel belonging to the Riu chain. It has two buffet restaurant, and five specialist restaurant, including one with Creole cuisine. Apart from that, there are eight bars, two swimming pools and a separate children's pool. The rooms are comfortable and overlooking the sea. You can also rent Royal suites, located in an autonomous part of the resort, with a separate restaurant, reception desk and a swimming pool. The price also includes access to tennis courts, a fitness room and a sauna. Spa and water sports are charged extra. The hotel has also an extensive entertainment offer.

Another place worth recommending in Cuba is Barcelo Marina Palace & Cayo Libertad hotel, also situated in the proximity of Varadero. The resort consists of two parts — Barcelo Marina Palace hotel and Cayo Libertad, a part situated on an island, connected with the continent by a causeway. Guests have access to seven bars and seven restaurants – one with a buffet, the others being specialist, serving Spanish, Italian and Cuban cuisine. The recreational complex consists of three huge swimming pools with jacuzzi and a children's pool. Guests staying at

the Cayo Libertad area additionally have access to a separate swimming pool and a bar, La Duna restaurant, VIP Lounge and Cigar Bar in the evenings (previously accessible by everyone), quick check-in and check-out service (if available at a moment), and the concierge service 24 hours a day. They are also entitled to free brand drinks in a bar and restaurant on Royal Island.

KENYA?

Beaches with stunningly white sand, coral reefs, warm ocean waters, wild animals wandering through the savannahs and national parks — it is quite impossible not to fall in love with Africa, once you have seen all this. Serena Beach Hotel & Spa, one of the resorts in the Premium offer, is located on the coastline, northwards from Mombasa, on the spectacular Shanzu Beach. Surrounded with tropical gardens, the resort was modelled on the 13th century village on the pre-co-



Cuba Riu Varadero



Cuba Riu Varadero



Cuba Riu Varadero



Serena Beach Kenya



Serena Beach Kenya



The Sands at Nomad



The Sands at Nomad

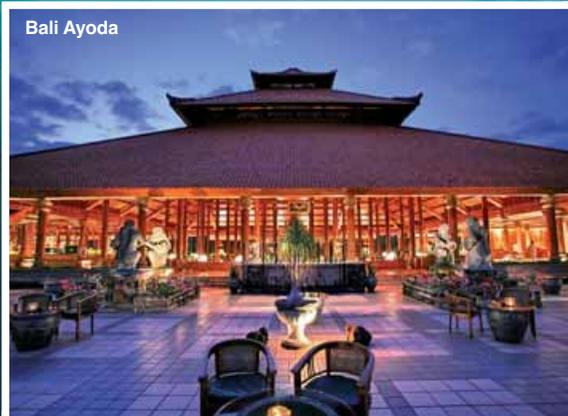


lonial island of Lamu. Standard rooms, decorated in African fashion, are located in one- or two-storey villa buildings. Despite the traditional design, guests have access to all mod cons. Stylish suites in the Village area, also come with an additional guestroom. Guests have access to the magnificent Fountain restaurant, which overlooks the Indian Ocean, and Jahazi Grill — modelled on the Swahili dau boats, where they serve fresh, grilled fish and seafood. The sports offer includes tennis courts, squash, aerobics, fitness room, volleyball, table tennis, windsurfing, catamarans and basic diving course. Extensive diving course and water sports are charged extra. The hotel has also Maisha Spa, built to imitate a sultan's palace.

In the South of Mombasa, there is a small, but stylish hotel, The Sands At Nomad. Rooms come with antique furniture. Guests have access to a beach restaurant, where they can have their breakfast and dinner: pastas, pizzas, local cuisine specialties, fish and seafood. You can lie in the shadow of a palm, or relax in the swimming pool or jacuzzi. Rooms have been decorated in Italian, or in African style.

INDONESJA / BALI

It is a and full of contrasts and cultural monuments, thanks to which, all the visitors immediately fall for the place, as they get to see the volcanoes, temples, green rye fields and villages hidden in the jungle. ▶



Bali Ayoda



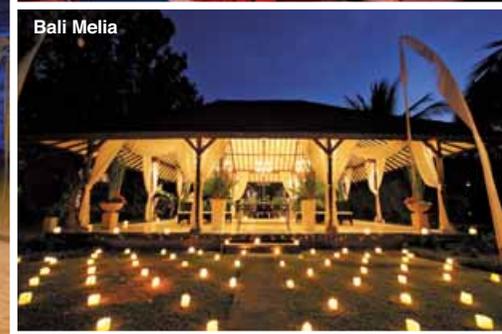
Bali Ayoda



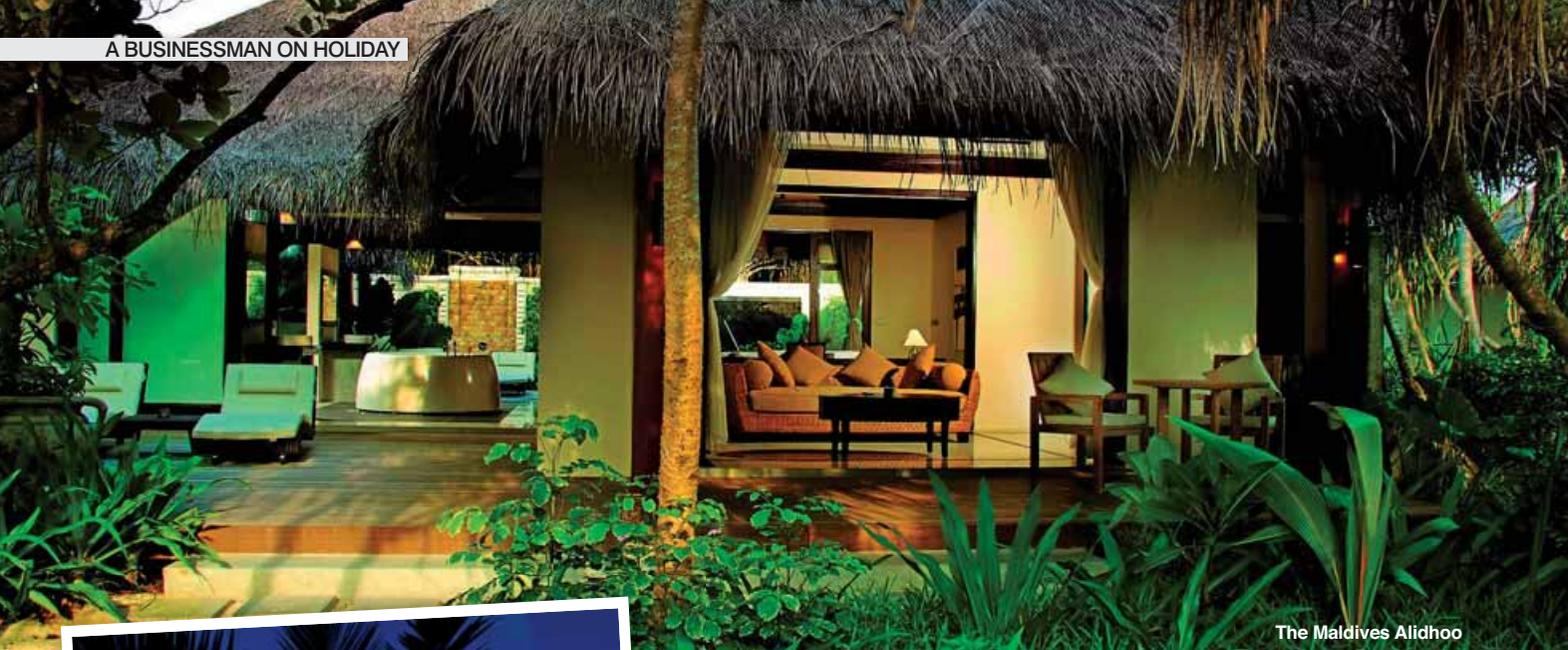
Bali Melia



Bali Melia



Bali Melia



The Maldives Alidhoo

Ayodya Resort Bali is a picturesque resort on Nusa Dua beach, surrounded by a tropical garden. In the garden itself, you can see specially designed rivers. There are a couple of restaurants, serving Italian or Japanese cuisine. In „Bali Theatre” restaurant you can both have a dinner, and see folk events, which are held there. Rooms come with all the facilities, the price also includes access to a fitness centre and mini golf. Tennis, squash, snorkelling and scuba-diving are charged extra. In the area surrounding the hotel, you can practise water sports and parasailing. There is also an 18-hole Nusa Dua golf course. The Spa is a centre of wellness and beauty, offering traditional aromatherapy and massages.

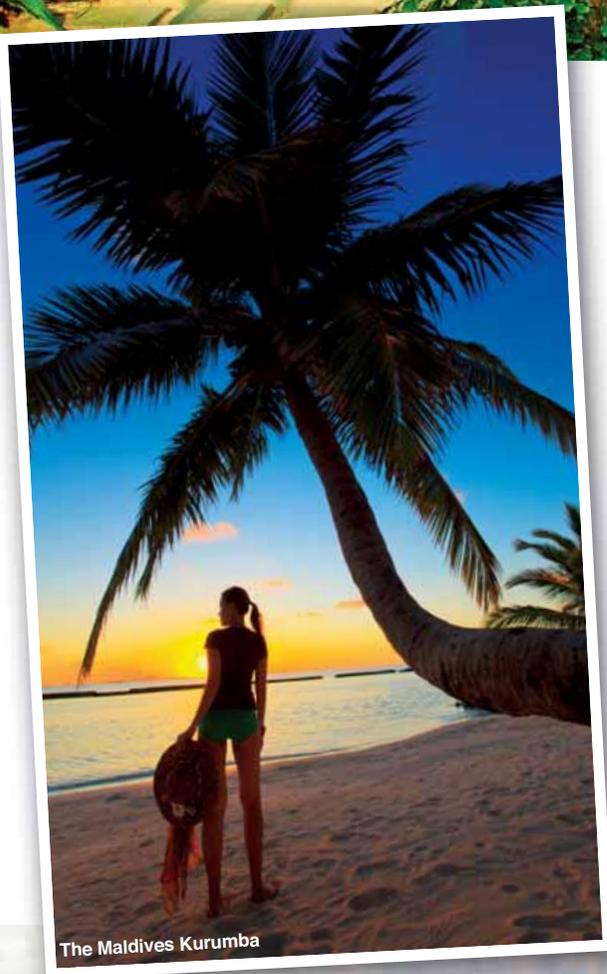
Next to the Nusa Dua beach, there is Melia Bali Villas & Spa Resort. It is a comfortable hotel, surrounded by a vast tropical park. It has four restaurants, an open air stage, where performances are held, and a complex of swimming pools. There comfortable rooms of a categories: from standard rooms to two-storey suites. Hotel has also 350 square

metres of space, in every villa for renting. Guests have access to a fitness room, table tennis, a jogging path, as well as daily aerobics, or beach volleyball sessions, a cookery school, etc. For extra charge, you can go to Yhi Spa in Melia Bali, which offers treatments and a special wellness menu.

THE MALDIVES

Exotic world with azure water, turquoise lagoons, coral reefs, colourful fish and magnificent white beaches – it is difficult to imagine a better place for those you wish to spend their time diving, windsurfing, sailing or just reading, lazing about and having a rest.

Kurumba Maldives resort is situated on an island southwards of the North Male atoll, surrounded by the turquoise sea and a huge lagoon. The island is 500-metre-long and 300-metre wide. Guests stay in rooms located in two-storey sections, furnished with all the facilities. Deluxe rooms are located in separate bungalows. In the hotel there are seven restaurants, offering international cuisine, as well as thematic cui-



The Maldives Kurumba



The Maldives Alidhoo



The Maldives Alidhoo



The Maldives Kurumba



The Maldives Kurumba

sines, e. g. Hindu. Guests have access to a fitness room and a table tennis, while tennis court and windsurfing and diving course are charged extra. You can also take yoga sessions or try out some of the treatments in the local wellness centre.

The picturesque Resort Alidhoo hotel, is situated on a small, round island of Alidhoo. It is a part of the Haa Alifu atoll. The transfer from the airport, including a domestic flight and a boat travel, takes about 90 minutes. What characterizes the local resort is elegant architecture. It consists of 99 bungalows with terraces and separate outdoor showers. There are also Duplex Ocean Villas bungalows, located only a few metres from the beach. Guests have access to Hiyaa restaurant, which specializes international cuisine dishes, and Holhuashi restaurant, situated on a beach, where fresh seafood is served daily. The hotel has also its own swimming pool. Guests have access to a fitness room, tennis courts, table tennis, beach volleyball and badminton. Water skiing, windsurfing, sea fishing and diving (operated by external agencies) are charged extra.

MEXICO

On one side – extensive offer and magnificent monuments, and excellent leisure – on the other. Visitors can see picturesque, colonial towns in the Yucatan Peninsula, Indian villages, colourful markets and mysterious pyramids – silent witnesses of the thousand-year Maya culture. Not to mention beautiful beaches, turquoise sea and comfortable hotels. Grand Palladium White Sand Resort & Spa is an elegant and vast (120 ha) resort with a direct access to the beach. It was build to imitate the style of a colonial hacienda, situated amid exotic greenery and by a picturesque artificial lake. Guests have access to 14 restaurants – including 9 serving a la carte dishes – and 26 bars. The swimming pool complex includes one salt water pool, and

eight pools with fresh water. Hotel offers comfortable rooms – or suites – of a few categories, including Royal rooms equipped with jacuzzi. The resort has an extensive recreational offer, including fitness centre, aerobics, water gymnastics, table tennis, air rifle shooting, basketball, volleyball, tennis, catamaran, kayaks, diving, etc.

Sapphire Cancun Resort is another place worth recommendation in Mexico. Located on the beach and surrounded by a mangrove forest, the resort is a luxurious hotel designed in Mexican style. Comfortable suites are located in the bungalows, of different categories. To satisfy your appetite, you can visit the main restaurant serving food in a form of buffet, and five a la carte restaurants, specializing in Asian, French, Mexican, Mediterranean cuisine, as well as seafood and meat dishes. The hotel has also 7 bars and a complex of 4 swimming pools. The sports offer includes 2 tennis courts, a fitness centre, water aerobics, water polo, beach volleyball, snorkelling, windsurfing, catamarans, kayaking and sailing. There is also a golf course nearby. ■

MORE ABOUT PREMIUM

The TUI offer gives much more than the places listed in the article. The list is much longer. Other interesting holiday destinations available are the Canary Islands, Seychelles, Cyprus or Portugal. To see the full offer, visit:

TUI.PL/WAKACJE-SAMOLOTEM/PREMIUM



Mexico Grand Palladium White Sand



Mexico Grand Palladium White Sand



GOLFING AROUND...

BARCELONA

Peter Swain tries his luck at some top courses in the vicinity of the Catalan capital

1. REAL CLUB DE GOLF EL PRAT

WHERE IS IT? 24km north of Barcelona

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The venue for the 2011 Spanish Open, which takes place next month, is an exclusive club with a proud 57-year history – the current 45-hole, Greg Norman-designed course opened in 2003 after a move north from its old site near the El Prat airport. Ranked fourth best in Spain by *Golf Digest*, the Rosa course has a tight front nine through the forest, then a much more open, in places positively agricultural, back nine. Elevated tees invite ambitious driving but the rolling fairways are narrow, with the designer's signature fairway bunkers much in evidence. The undulating US Golf Association-spec greens are generously sized and fast. With seven tee positions on each hole, the set-up suits a variety of handicaps, but only scratch players should attempt to play off the tips. The Amarillo course is slightly longer but just as tight, with several slippery multi-tiered greens guarded by massive bunkers. The Spanish Open is being played over the best 18 holes from the Rosa and Amarillo combined. The Verde course is a little shorter but still in immaculate condition and quite challenging. With no real estate in sight, this is Barcelona's premier club.

ADDRESS Plans de Bonvilar 17, Terrassa

CONTACT Tel +34 937 281 000; rcgep.com

PRICE Weekdays €114, weekends and public holidays €228; buggy €52

CLUB HIRE €43, various makes



CLUB HOURS 7.30am-9pm May to October, 7.30am-7.30pm November to April

MINIMUM HANDICAP 28 men, 36 women

FACILITIES This is a 45-hole set-up – the par 72 Rosa course is 6,465m; the Verde and Amarillo courses share 27 holes between them, both using the middle nine – Verde is 6,210m, par 71; Amarillo is 6,637m, par 72. Next to the course is Valles Golf, a public course owned by El Prat with nine par 3s, a driving range, a clubhouse and a golf school.

AFTER THE GOLF The plush club restaurant is open 1pm-5pm on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, offering seasonal cuisine based on traditional Catalan fare. The chic, modern snack bar opens between 8am and 9.30am every day, depending on time of year, until close of play. Multi-function rooms are good for corporate events.



2. TERRAMAR GOLF CLUB

WHERE IS IT? 36km south-west of Barcelona

WHAT'S IT LIKE? This links-style resort course looks out over the Mediterranean, and you first encounter the sea on the 174m par-3 third, which plays straight into the prevailing wind coming off the beach. Unlike some other Barcelona courses, this one is flat, almost treeless and easily walked. Built in 1927 and much tweaked since, it would make an ideal first round in a tour of Catalan courses. There are tennis courts, a gym and a pool for non-golfers.

ADDRESS Carretera del golf, s/n, Sitges

CONTACT Tel +34 938 940 580; golfterramar.com

PRICE Weekdays €75, weekends €130; buggy rental €38, electric trolley €15

CLUB HIRE €25, Callaway

CLUB HOURS 8am-6pm in summer, 8am-4pm in winter (closed Mondays in winter)

MINIMUM HANDICAP 28 men, 36 women

FACILITIES 6,431m 18-hole par 72 course, plus pitch-and-putt, a driving range and a practice green.

AFTER THE GOLF With dramatic views out to sea, both the restaurant and bar serve a mixture of Mediterranean and Catalan dishes washed down with the finest local beverages. The nearby four-star Terramar and Sunway hotels offer special golf packages.

4. SAINT JOAN GOLF CLUB

WHERE IS IT? 20km north of Barcelona

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Commissioned to encourage local participation in the sport, it was designed by Severiano Ballesteros. As a public course it's rather more accessible, cheaper and a tad easier than nearby El Prat.

ADDRESS Finca can Sant Joan, s/n, Apartado de Correos 148, Rubí

CONTACT Tel +34 936 753 050; golfsantjoan.com

PRICE Weekdays €42, weekends €56; buggy rental €30, trolley €2

CLUB HIRE €21, various makes

CLUB HOURS 8am-8.45pm weekdays, 8am-5.45pm weekends

MINIMUM HANDICAP 36

FACILITIES 6,046m, 18-hole course (par 72), floodlit driving range, short game area, two practice greens and an academy.

AFTER THE GOLF The club restaurant is open Tuesday to Sunday, 8am to 6pm.



GETTING THERE

■ The Hotel 1898 on La Rambla in the heart of Barcelona is a stylish 19th-century one-time tobacco HQ. It has a heated rooftop pool with a view of Gaudí's Sagrada Família, two good restaurants, a spa for post-golf physio, and a helpful concierge to book games at El Prat and other local courses. Visit hotel1898.com

■ British Airways flies from London Heathrow to Barcelona six times a day. Visit ba.com

3. BARCELONA GOLF CLUB



WHERE IS IT? 20km north-west of Barcelona

WHAT'S IT LIKE? When current Ryder Cup captain Jose Maria Olazabal set out to design this course, he was faced with a mountainous, forested terrain divided in two by a deep ravine. Built in 1990, it's a set-up that, unless your play is exceptionally straight, needs

plenty of golf balls. Elevation changes make for a scenic round, with views of Montserrat mountain in the distance. But from the forbidding opening par 5 to the elevated tee on the par-3 second – not to mention the most difficult hole on the course, the dogleg eighth, which has a fairway no more than 25m wide – it's a severe test of accuracy. Olazabal has used aggressive US-style bunkering, so holes such as the 18th, with four traps on the fairway and five ringing the green, require good club selection and shot execution. To deal with the hills, a buggy is recommended for visitors. The modern 150-room four-star Barcelo Montserrat hotel, overlooking the first and 18th holes, makes a good facility even better.

ADDRESS Carretera de Martorell a Capellades, km 19.5, Sant Esteve Sesrovires

CONTACT Tel +34 937 728 800; golfdebarcelona.com

PRICE 18-hole weekdays €75, weekends €170; nine-hole weekdays €12, weekends €26

CLUB HIRE €50, Callaway

CLUB HOURS 8am-8pm (7.30am on weekends, until 9pm in summer)

MINIMUM HANDICAP 28 men, 36 women

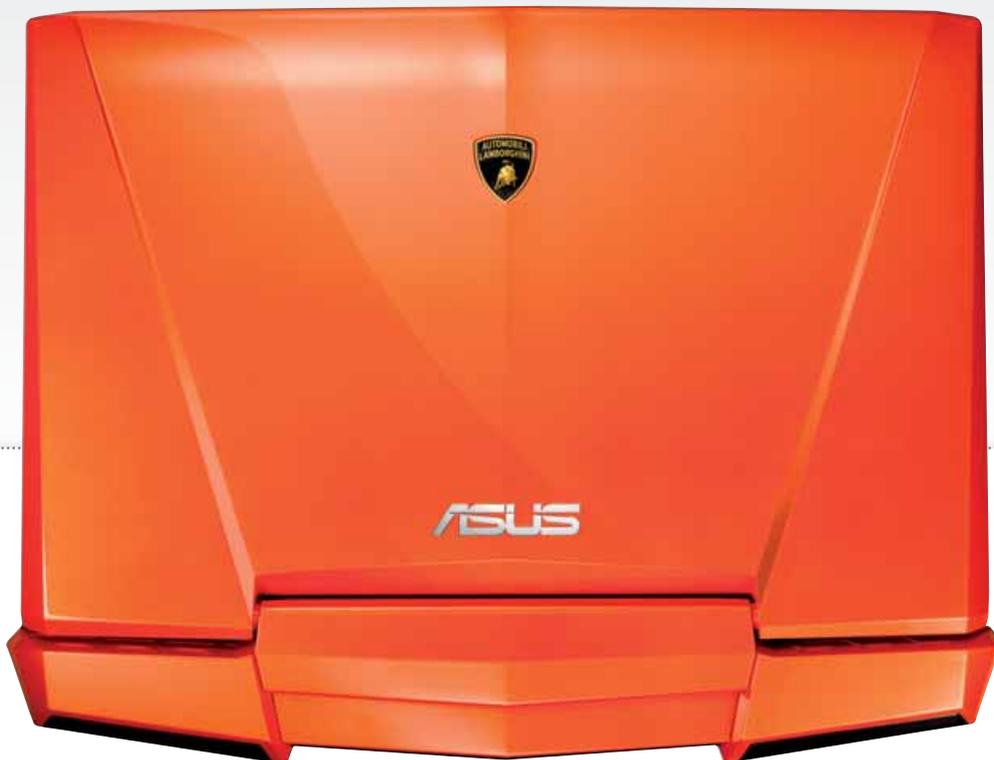
FACILITIES The championship 18-hole par 72 course measures 6,271m. The nine-hole Sant Esteve set-up, good for high handicappers, is 1,780m, and there is a big driving range and practice area. There are also squash and tennis courts, and family-friendly indoor and outdoor pools.

AFTER THE GOLF In the modern three-storey clubhouse, the Mallot restaurant features Mediterranean cuisine with house speciality *ous trufats* – truffled eggs – and is open 1pm-7pm Tuesday to Sunday. The friendly terrace bar is open all day.

THE DIGITAL OFFICE

The term 'office equipment' doesn't necessarily apply only to photocopiers, fax machines, and document shredders. There are also computers, projectors, telephones, and many other gadgets which can make our business life easier.

In this issue we present six most interesting electronic devices which, in our humble opinion, can be especially useful in your office.



ASUS Automobili Lamborghini VX7

It's commonly known that the computer is the most important office device. More old-fashioned users would probably insist that an ideal machine for a day to day business activities is a stationary PC with a considerable processing capacity, a powerful processor, and a screen of a desired size. We, however, are attracted to a more universal solution in form of a laptop. The presented unit is produced by Asus – Lamborghini duo and, most importantly, it matches up to its stationary rivals. The computer features a 15.6-inch LCD screen with LED backlight, a powerful quad-core Intel Core i7 processor of the 2nd generation, and for the first time in a laptop a dedicated

graphic card NVIDIA GeForce GTX 460M with 3GB of video memory. Users will also benefit from a speedy solid-state hybrid drive of up to 1.25TB in capacity, rated at approximately 10,000 rpm for super-fast



access and performance. The chassis is crafted to reflect the ultra-sporty and aggressive look of Automobili Lamborghini models. One clear example of this are the cooling vents at the rear of the VX7, which enable superior heat dissipation just as they echo the unique taillights and exhaust assemblies of Automobili Lamborghini supercars. The VX7 is available in distinct orange, black and carbon fiber colors. The dimensions are 402.36 x 309.42 x 57.91mm. Weight: 3.82kg. Price: PLN 7,999.

Verdict: original design, excellent performance and a high quality design. It's an ideal machine for a businesspeople who ant to emphasize their uniqueness.

Nokia E7 Communicator

Nokia: Reloaded! The Communicator, or if you wish "the world's most renowned business phone" returns to life. Telecommunications market has changed dramatically since the premiere of the first generation of the device manufactured by the Finnish company in 1996. Although its rivals have grown and started to threaten its position on the market, especially in the area of smartphones, we are convinced that Nokia still makes excellent business mobile phones. Nokia E7 features a 4-inch AMOLED touchscreen offering 640 x 360 resolution, a QWERTY keyboard, a 8-MP digital camera with HD video option, and 16 GB of memory. With

Microsoft Exchange ActiveSync on board, the Nokia E7 provides direct, real-time and secure access to corporate email inboxes and other personal applications, as well as fully integrated social networking, and free navigation. The dimensions of the device: 123.7 x 62.4 x 13.6 mm. Weight: 176 g. Price: PLN 2399.

Verdict: *a class of its own, a solid, elegant and reliable business phone. It's performs well in any situation, and features a virtual QWERTY keyboard as well as a physical one.*



SONY ICD-SX712D

Your call is monitored! Sony is an unquestionable leader in the area of portable audio devices. Let's not forget it was the Japanese giant which introduced the world's first Walkman back in 1979. But what is the link between the most popular portable device and a voice recorder? -Of course, the sound quality. Model ICD-SX712D has also, for obvious reason, been named "Walkman", although it can also record live music with high quality. You can use the two built-in microphones to record in stereo. The mics swivel to different positions, so you can optimize your recording quality. And the PX712D records not just in MP3, but also linear PCM so you can make high-quality recordings – great for capturing live music. You can also switch the mics to mono for voice recording. With its included Dragon Naturally Speaking software, the recorder makes taking notes or transcribing speech simple. Just record the lecture or event and transfer the resulting MP3 to your computer. There, the Dragon software automatically transcribes the content, creating a text document of your recording – great for students, secretaries, and others who need to transcribe speech. Price PLN 790.

Verdict: *Before you buy a recorder of this class, decide if you really need one. If you record only occasionally, a typical smartphone would be more than just enough for your purposes. If, however, you need a reliable and high quality equipment to record voice on regular basis, then SONY ICD-SX712D is a model to go for.*

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EVOKO Room Manager

Have you ever barged into an ongoing meeting in a conference room and said "oops, sorry, I thought this room was free" or apologized for forgetting to cancel a booking after the meeting was called off? The Evoko Room Manager booking system is used by companies that want to avoid all the usual hassle and misunderstandings that can disturb meetings or lead to rooms standing needlessly empty. It consists of an 8" touch-sensitive screen that is placed on the wall outside of the meeting room, connected to the company Exchange Server. All important information is displayed on the screen: current time, starting time and finishing time of the meeting in progress and how long the meeting will continue. The touch-sensitive screen displays an overview of the booking status and enables you to book the room, confirm a booking, cancel a booking or extend a meeting in progress. Price PLN 3999.

Verdict: *Evoko Room Manager is especially useful in large offices, hotels, and conference centres. It remembers everything, doesn't take lunch breaks, and is never sick – in other words: it's an ideal receptionist. It's also elegant (a winner of iF Design Award 2011) and easy to operate.*



ACER ICONIA Tab W500

Acer for the undecided. Iconia Tab W500 can function both as a tablet or a netbook thanks to its fully-sized Chiclet docking keyboard. In other words, if you are passionate about electronic novelties, but are not ready yet to get rid of your good old physical keyboard, this gadget will suit you ideally. The machine has a 10.1-inch touchscreen, offering WXGA resolution (1280 x 800), 32 GB of memory, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth 3.0 (3G modem as an option), as well as two 1.3 MP Crystal Eye Internet cameras. The heart of the new Acer is 1GHz AMD C-50 processor supported by AMD Radeon HD6250 graphics chip. The device is powered by Windows 7 operating system. When fully charged, the battery of the tablet allows for almost 6 hours of continuous work. Dimensions: 275 x 190 x 15.95 mm, weight: 970 g. The price in Polish zloty hasn't been announced yet, but it will revolve somewhere around €500.

Verdict: *Acer is and ideal device which may serve both as a portable entertainment centre and a computer for work (the fully-sized keyboard is really useful here). Obviously it can't serve as a full-time replacement of a typical laptop because of its relatively small screen and quite limited capacity of the processor.*



PHILIPS Fidelio SoundSphere

A good office needs an equally good audio equipment. The newest Philips' docking station supports iPod, iPhone, and iPad. The sound is sent wirelessly thanks to AirPlay – Apple's technology, which makes it possible to place our speakers anywhere we wish in the room. The unique form of the Fidelio makes it so-called "conversation piece", i.e. an unusual object that arouses comment or interest. The detailed technical specifications of the device are still unknown, because it has merely been presented at the annual Philips event in Barcelona. One thing is for sure: the sound is perfect! The gadget is going to hit the market in May. Price €799.

Verdict: *It's a device with remarkable design, and perfect sound. A real treat for all iPad, iPod, and iPhone users. The question is whether you are allowed to listen to music during working hours. If not, you'd better buy good headphones.*



do not know anyone, who, when planning a visit to France, would not hope to treat his palate with excellent food. France is a country of gourmets and it's enough to visit any restaurant there, to understand how true these words are. Ideally, the restaurant should be in one of the culinary acclaimed regions. Rhône-Alpes undoubtedly could be classified as one. It is the capital of excellent wines, meat, fish, and – cheese, a product which would be very difficult to do without. Just take a look a dozens of specialist cheese shops, scattered across the mountains towns. The moment any cheese enthusiasts enters such a shop – usually run by an always smiling shopkeeper – they are bound to lose the sense of reality. It simply isn't possible to stay indifferent to all the mould, smell and sometimes unusual shapes.

All this food and drink can make your head spin, so if you decide to visit the French Alps, take with you this issue of BT. Below we present you with some cheese types, especially worth trying when you get there.

Condrieu is a small district in the Western part of the area, which is famous for goat cheese called rigotte. The cheese looks inconspicuous, it is round and soft. But the very moment you try it, you will learn that this tiny wheel of cheese can have a distinctive and powerful taste. To your astonishment, you will feel the flavour of honey and acacia.

Another cheese worth recommendation is reblochon from Savoy. This moderately soft cheese of nutty flavour has a rather interesting story, which contributed to its name – reblochon means „to milk one more time“. In 14th century, cattle breeders were levied with a tax based on how much milk they produced. As a result, breeders didn't milk their cows fully, and then secretly milked them one more time, and produced cheese from the milk. It's absolutely delicious!

It takes not less than 11 litres of milk, to produce one kilogram of another excellent cheese, made in the mountains – Beaufort. This hard cheese dates back to the Roman times. It matures for about 6-12 months in a cool cellar – after this time it gains its characteristic yellow colour. As for consistency, it resembles gruyere cheese – also known in Poland. It has delicate taste. As it quickly melts under the influence of heat – it is a perfect cheese for fondue.

The cheese

I asked a fellow Frenchman to explain to me why despite sumptuous dinners and evenings with wine, the French people are so amazingly slim and graceful. He turned his thin face towards me and replied with a disarming smile: "I don't know".

Poetry

Bresse Bleu is another cheese specialty of the Rhône-Alpes area. This mouldy cheese tastes of mushrooms – on the outside it is covered with white mould, while inside you will find blue mould. It was firstly produced during the II world war, and gained popularity in 1950s. Today, many people consider it the best French cheese.

This small goat cheese with a black label only looks inconspicuous. In fact, picodon from Drôme is a real treat for gourmets. Picodon has a long and eventful history – it was produced as early as in the Middle Ages. Its name also comes from mediaeval slang expression, meaning „spicy“. Indeed, the word perfectly describes its taste and unforgettable impression it brings.

And finally, the last thing on our list: Saint-Félicien – it has not only a nice name, but also looks attractive – it resembles a creamy pancake. Once made from goat milk, nowadays it is produced only from cow milk. It has a delicate taste and literally melts in your mouth.

Lastly, I'd like to explain a term, which every cheese buyer stumbles upon when doing shopping. Shopkeepers often boast that their cheese was awarded an AOC label. What does it stand for? Appellation d'origine contrôlée is a quality certificate awarded by the French ministry of agriculture. It is not easy to get one, so it is a reason to be proud of. And now, after writing such an article, I couldn't do anything else but make my way to the kitchen to have another slice of French cheese... Bon appetite! ■

Artur Kolger



Grateful For The Acidity

We feel anxious whenever we hear about a high level of acidity in a wine. In fact, it is one of the most important elements. And even though the word itself evokes rather unpleasant associations, nobody has found a better one to replace it. Without acidity wine would not be the same thing. Even the New World wines have it, although in smaller quantities. Otherwise, you would not be able to tell the difference between wine, compote, or alcohol-flavoured fruit preserve.



Wine acidity is highly correlated with the climate in which the wine is produced. In cool climates, like in Champagne, Burgundy or Rheingau, where sunny days are scarce and rainfalls heavy, the grapes contain less sugar and the acidity level is higher, than in grapes from hot Chile, or the South of Spain. If we go further towards the Equator, the wines produced there are more and more concentrated and less acid, which changes not only the character of wine, but most importantly its fruit expression. Thus, the same Chardonnay in Chablis is full of fresh citrus fruit aromas – lemons and limes, and sometimes grapefruit, whereas in Tuscany – Chardonnay is characterized by warmer and sweeter overtones. In Aus-

tralia, in turn, the wine tastes of tropical fruit – either candied or preserved ones. Naturally the acidity level can be slightly regulated during the production process, and the very variety itself can differ in this respect. For instance Sangiovese from Tuscany is high in acidity by nature, whereas Merlot – quite the opposite.

STRONG BACKBONE

Acidity is the backbone of wine. It is like an openwork construction, filled with aromas, tannins, potential sweetness and alcohol. The more acid the wine, the more can be created – we can obtain more complicated and sophisticated structures. If wine is not acid enough, its taste becomes flat, one-dimensional and silent, resembling a fruit-flavoured soap or a heartburn medicine.





Wine acidity is highly correlated with the climate in which the wine is produced

For a few thousand years, the nature controlled the balance between acidity level in grapes, and consequently – in wine. In cool climate, where high level of acidity is more likely, grapes do not want to grow. Likewise in hot climates – where acidity would be barely noticeable. However, the technology gives us the opportunity to create irrigation system, which makes it possible to grow grapes in tropical areas. Winemakers from these areas have to artificially increase acidity by adding lemon acid – the same substance used for making fruity wine gums. It does not necessarily mean that the wine is tasteless, but not everyone has the ability to blend such an artificial acidity into wine, so that it does not taste like a vitamin-enriched orangeade we used to drink as children. Winemakers from cooler countries have also solved the problem, but in a more controlled and noble way. In some areas in the north of Europe, you can sweeten the wine during the production. The process is known as chaptalization. Sometimes, wine producers delay the harvest, so that grapes are more mature and sweeter. It increases the level of sugar, and the acidity becomes less noticeable. However incredible it may sound to us, even the most perfect sweet wines have higher acidity level than dry wines. Thanks to the fact, you can drink even the whole bottle at a time without a sickening aftertaste.



WHETTING THE APPETITE

High acidity has also a refreshing effect and whets the appetite – that is why Champagne is often drunk as aperitif. It can perfectly emphasize the aromas, and enriches the bland taste of fat foods. It is also the element responsible for wine longevity. Thus, wines from Priorat or Sicily reach the end of their day after 15 years, whereas Burgundy and Piedmont wines are in their prime. But the best and most appreciated thing about acidity, is that it is the carrier of what we call wine intelligence – i. e. this unique feeling of sharpness, complexity and – most of all – ambiguity. ■

Michał Poddany & Robert Mielżyński

NEW

Paweł Małaczyński is smiling to me from a huge billboard located in the centre of Warsaw, endorsing Lexus CT200h. -“That’s my car”, he says and I can’t help myself, but feel extremely envious.

For the start, a few facts which will probably prevent the unfavourable comments uttered by opponents of hybrid vehicles (i.e. the ones which combine an internal combustion engine and one or more electric motors). Since the first full hybrid Lexus was introduced in Europe in 2005 (model RX400h), over 300,000 cars of this type have been bought on our continent. Over 60% of all newly purchased Lexus models are hybrids. It’s not surprising though, because in such countries as Great Britain, Greece, the Netherlands, or Norway, you can save a lot of money buying a hybrid car, with tax reductions reaching up to €4,000 (around PLN16,000). In Iceland, hybrid car owners can park them anywhere free of charge, which over time can mean substantial savings, especially if you need to park your car in the centre of your city on a daily basis.

TOO LITTLE POWER

For me Lexus CT200h is a remarkable model, because the Japanese engineers

managed to achieve with it something that seemed impossible. They really had to rack their brains to come up with a solution how to fit this massive drive unit with equally large batteries under the body of a typical compact vehicle. The car is powered by two engines: an Atkinson cycle four-cylinder petrol engine, generating 99 BHP, and an electric motor. The two generate the total power output of 136 BHP which is quite enough for a car of this size, and it accelerates quite swiftly up to 80-100 km/h. The initial acceleration of CT200h is quite impressive, but over the 100 km/h mark the car is much less dynamic and potential overtaking manoeuvres become much more difficult. It seems that the CVT transmission suppresses the potential of the combined motors.

IT HANDLES WELL

If we look at the official press hit, we will learn that the CT200h is packed with the newest technology. For instance, the car is equipped with a second generation Electronically Controlled Braking-Regenera-

tion system (ECB-R), and uses an exhaust gas recirculation system to reduce the time it takes the engine to reach operating temperatures. It also enables the heater to warm the cabin more quickly in the winter. If you add all those little steps intended to save fuel, it will turn out that the newest Lexus is a car for penny pinchers. The manufacturer claims that in the combined mode CT 200h consumes only 3.8 litres of petrol per 100 kilometres. In everyday use, when we don’t want to (or can’t) control the way in which we operate the gas pedal, the consumption may be a bit higher, but still not far from what the manufacturer claims. What’s more, this Japanese is environment friendly. Suffice to say that the emission of the harmful carbon dioxide doesn’t exceed 87 grams per kilometre. I wouldn’t exaggerate by saying that this car is the cleanest one available in Europe!

WELL EQUIPPED

In the centre of the dashboard there’s a large hybrid drive selector with which we can choose one of 4 different drive modes: EV – which is driving under electric motor power alone, Eco, Sport or Normal. Each change of mode changes also the colour of the backlighting behind the instrument panel, but in practice a regular driver won’t notice any big

difference in the car's performance. It's worth remembering that from start-up and at speeds of less than 45km/h the CT 200h can automatically operate in EV mode, while switching to Sport mode changes the hybrid power gauge into a real-life tachometer.

The chassis of the car is quite rigid, and its precise steering as well as well balanced suspension will definitely perform well on Polish bumpy roads. A Lexus first, both Premium Sound systems are equipped with unique, bamboo charcoal-based resin diaphragm speakers. The new top-of-the-range Mark Levinson Premium Surround Audio System features 13 speakers and an 8-channel ML amplifier. Unfortunately CT200h is not very cheap (the basic version costs around PLN 106,000), so it's hard to predict whether it will become popular on our market. All in all, it's a really nice compact car and Paweł Małaczyński is a lucky devil to have one... ■

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



4 hours
in...

Rome



Piazza Del Popolo



Maxxi



Sara Turner discovers ancient islands and the ultimate pizza topping combo in the Italian capital



Santa Maria del Popolo

its peak. Pop your head into the church to the north of the square, Santa Maria del Popolo, where there are two paintings by Caravaggio.

MAXXI – MUSEO NAZIONALE DELLE ARTI DEL XXI SECOLO

From ancient city to contemporary metropolis – Rome’s Museum of 21st Century Arts represents a new, forward-looking generation. Take tram number two from Via Flaminia to Piazza Apollodoro, a 15-minute journey. Open since May last year and designed by Zaha Hadid, the sinuous structure is worth a visit on its own merit, even before exploring the collections inside.

The museum’s remit is to promote ultra-modern art and architecture, with temporary exhibitions on display alongside a number of permanent shows from a mix of Italian and international artists, including Gilbert and George and Anish Kapoor. Check out the humorous *Mozzarella in Carrozza* by Italian artist Gino de Dominicis – an old horse’s trap with a white ball of mozzarella inside, it is a play on the name of the popular snack of fried bread stuffed with cheese (translated as mozzarella in a carriage).

Open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday 11am-7pm, and

on Thursday and Saturday 11am-10pm. Entry is €11.
6 Via Guido Reni;
tel +39 063 9967 350;
fondazionemaxxi.it/en

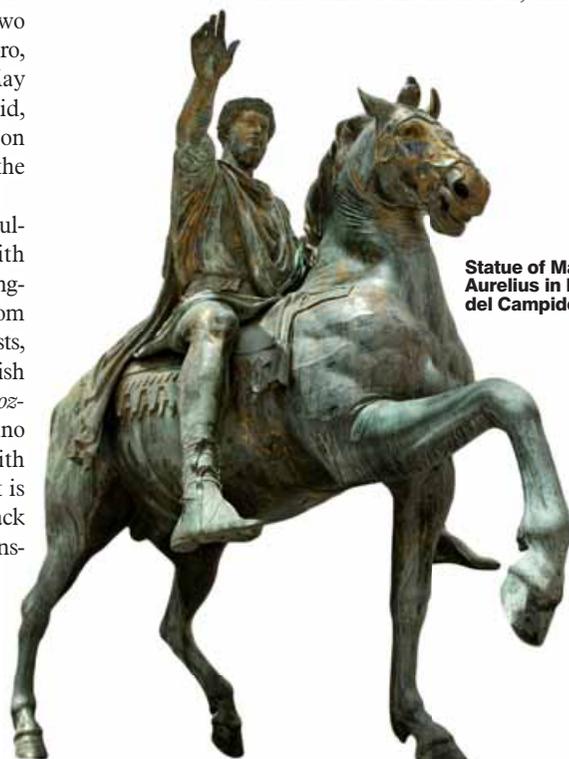
CASTEL SANT' ANGELO

History is never far away in Rome and the next stop, a 15-minute cab ride westwards on the banks of the Tiber river, takes you

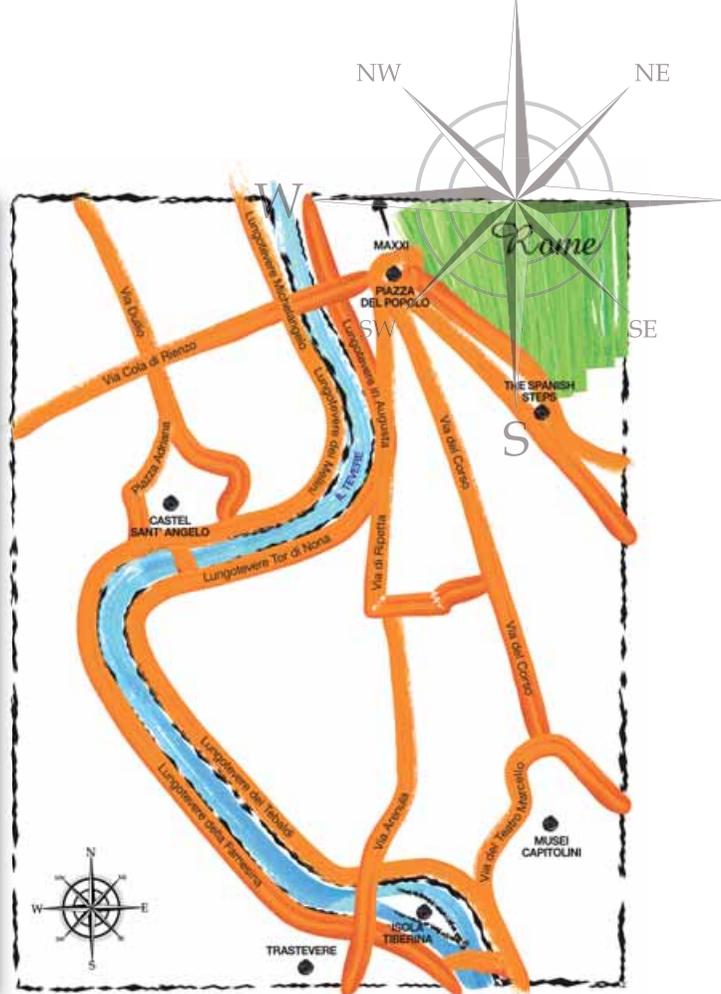
PIAZZA DEL POPOLO

Start your tour at this grandiose square in the centre of the city. For centuries this was the first view of Rome for people arriving from the north, through the main gateway – Porta Flaminia – in the city walls, the remains of which can still be seen today. A wide, pedestrian-friendly *piazza*, it’s surprising to think this was also the site for executions until the mid-19th century.

Have a look at the sand-coloured obelisk, complete with carved hieroglyphs, that dominates the centre of the square. Thought to date from the 13th century BC, at 24 metres tall it is one of the biggest in Rome, and was brought here in 10BC when the Roman Empire was at



Statue of Marcus Aurelius in Piazza del Campidoglio



back to the second century. This hulking cylindrical structure, built as Emperor Hadrian's mausoleum, has also housed numerous popes and is now a museum.

The riverside entrance takes you through a dimly lit, funereal tunnel, where evidence of parts of the night on 2,000-year-old mosaic flooring remains. Wind your way upwards and you will discover 14th-century frescoes, paintings and carvings adorning the popes' inner chambers.

From the top of the building you can also enjoy some of the best 360-degree panoramas of the city and a glimpse of one of the largest churches in the world, St Peter's Basilica.

Open Tuesday-Sunday 9am-7pm. 50 Lungotevere Castello; tel +39 066 819 111; castelsantangelo.com

IL TEVERE

Cross the statue-lined bridge in front of the castle, turn right and enjoy a stroll along the plane tree-lined avenue that hugs the river. Il Tevere, the Tiber, is the river into which Rome's mythical founders, Romulus and Remus were thrown before being rescued by a she-wolf.

It is the third longest in Italy and has its source in the Apennines – by the time it

KEATS' ROME

Poetry buffs shouldn't leave Rome without visiting the former home of John Keats, his final residence before succumbing to tuberculosis in 1821. Located on the Spanish Steps, the Keats-Shelley Memorial House has been kept almost exactly the way it was, but a library dedicated to English romanticism has been added. Open Monday-Friday 10am-1pm and 2pm-6pm, Saturday 11am-2pm, 3pm-6pm. Entry is €4.50; visit keats-shelley-house.org/en. Keats is buried in the Protestant cemetery south of the city.

reaches Rome, it is wide enough to carry large boats and, historically, it was a major trade route. Follow the bend until you see the tiny Isola Tiberina in the middle, and take a few minutes to explore the island. It includes sites such as the Basilica di San Bartolomeo all'Isola, where you will discover artefacts from the lives of numerous Catholic martyrs. When you're done, cross over to the west bank.

TRASTEVERE

The trendy district of Trastevere, where you will have now arrived, is always lively and offers plenty of restaurants if you're in need of sustenance. A great option is Pizzeria da Ivo (158 Via di San Francesco a Ripa; tel +39 065 817 082). It's fun to create your own pizza from your favourite ingredients and most eateries of this style will let you – try asparagus and *prosciut-*

to crudo with buffalo mozzarella, which should come in at about the €10 mark.

Where the best pizza comes from is a point of contention between the Romans and Neapolitani. Natives of Naples believe their thinner, crispier bases beat any others hands down, although the Romans favour their doughier version. There are plenty of shops and bars in the area, so spend a while exploring.

MUSEI CAPITOLINI

Your final stop is 20 minutes' walk away so if you are pressed for time, hail a taxi to Piazza del Campidoglio, which sits atop one of Rome's seven ancient hills. In the centre of the main square (a good vantage point for a photo) is the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius. It's an impressive sight in itself, but if you go inside the Musei Capitolini you will see the breathtaking original bronze casting from 161-180AD. The detail in the work, from Marcus's flowing locks to his finely crafted sandals, is exquisite.

Elsewhere in the museum you will find a range of antiquities, including a grotesque sculpture of Medusa's head.

Open Tuesday-Sunday 9am-8pm. Entry is €12. Piazza del Campidoglio; tel +39 060 608; en.museicapitolini.org ■

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



TO BE A FLIGHT ATTENDANT

A couple of days ago I was going back from a course for assistants. The plane was full. I became particularly interested in the work done by the flight attendants. I had never focused my attention on what they do. I thought their job was all about distributing meals and smiling. Do they need to do a special training? If so, what kind of training is it? What do you need to be a flight attendant?

Ewa

Dear Ewa,

People often wrongly assume, that a flight attendant is just a person who serves coffee during a flight. However, they could not be more wrong. The cabin crew is responsible for making the passengers feel safe. The flight attendants have to undergo a special training concerning mainly the safety procedures. If you carefully observed their behaviour during the flight, you would have no problems remembering what their duties are. Putting passengers in their seats has a huge impact on the appropriate balance of the plane. That's why sometimes the staff don't allow the passengers to change seats before the take-off, even if the plane is not fully occupied. Before taking-off, they always check in the hand luggage was put in the lockers, or under the seat, and if the lockers are closed. If a piece of luggage fell from the locker during a flight, it could be really

dangerous for the passengers. Flight attendants also have to check if all the doors are properly closed, if the trolleys are secured in the galley, and make sure that all the trays are folded and seats are in the standard position. The staff also presents a short safety demo for the passengers, instructing them how to fasten the safety belts, put on the life jackets, use oxygen masks and where to look for the nearest emergency exit. There is also an additional presentation for people who sit right next to the emergency exits. The passengers occupying these seats have to be fit and be able to obey the instructions given by the staff in a crisis situation. That's why these seats cannot be occupied, for instance, by a person with a broken leg, so that they have some more space. Flight attendants also take care of children travelling without supervision, are responsible for on board sales, and distribute landing cards, which are often required by the immigration service. Besides, they need to know how to give a person first aid in emergency situations. Pushing the food trolley is a tough physical work. Serving coffee and smiling is in fact only a nice bonus.

Airlines regularly recruit for flight attendants. You should carefully read the advertisements or contact the personnel departments of selected airlines. The most important requirements are good health, good command of foreign languages and ability to work with people.

A LONG FLIGHT

Together with my husband, I'm going on a scientific conference in South America. The flight includes a transfer to Buenos Aires, where my husband is giving a lecture, and a trip to Iguazu Falls. The flight is very long and I may have some trouble falling asleep. Should I prepare somehow for a journey like this?

Agnieszka

Dear Agnieszka,

A flight from Europe to Buenos Aires is indeed very long, as it lasts about 12 hours. From the information about your ticket you enclosed, I learnt that you are travelling in a business class. A long flight in economy class, especially over the night, can indeed be tiring, but travelling in business class is a rather pleasant experience. I have checked that your plane

has been equipped with new reclining seats. In that case, you shouldn't have any problems falling asleep. At your disposal is also a private screen and a digital movie library. If you wish to go to sleep right after the take-off, you should order dinner in the business lounge while waiting for the departure. Your airline offers such a possibility, and you will be given the same menu as the one on the plane board. You are entitled to a seat on the upper deck. This part of a plane is considered luxurious by some people.

In Buenos Aires there are 2 passenger airports. You are arriving at the international Ezeiza airport, about 20 kilometres from the city centre. You should bear in mind that the flight to Puerto Iguazu is operated from the national airport, situated very close to the

city. The waterfalls are really impressive. No wonder, the scenery was often used by filmmakers (e. g. „The Mission”). It would be a nice idea to cross the boarder with Brazil, to admire the views from many perspectives. They often organize boat trips to the narrow chasm close to the falls, called Devil's Throat. If you want to do it, go only with licensed agencies.

As the falls are in the jungle, which is a part of a national park, you will have to pay for the entrance. You should only go along signposted paths and avoid stepping aside, as they will lead you to very interesting vantage points. I strongly recommend buying an extra digital camera memory card. I am sure you will be delighted to see various species of butterflies, which can be found in the region.

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Ekspresy EQ.7 Plus i EQ.5 otwierają nowy rozdział w kulturze picia kawy. Ich zadaniem jest precyzyjne spełnianie najbardziej wyszukanych potrzeb miłośników kawowych specjalistów. Służą temu innowacje w ekspresie EQ.7 Plus: **individualCup Volume**, **aromaDouble Shot**, czy **oneTouch-Function[®]**. Te profesjonalne rozwiązania dostarczają nowych doznań ściśle według indywidualnych wymagań. Również ekspres EQ.5 bez trudu zrealizuje wszelkie oczekiwania użytkowników dzięki funkcji **aromaDouble Shot** z dokładną regulacją mocy kawy oraz wbudowanemu systemowi **autoWhirl Plus**, wytwarzającemu idealną mleczną piankę. Przyjemność delektowania się aromatycznymi napojami potęguje też komfort obsługi oraz ekskluzywny design. Wejdź na www.siemens-kawa.pl i zobacz, co znaczy smak, aromat i styl.

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