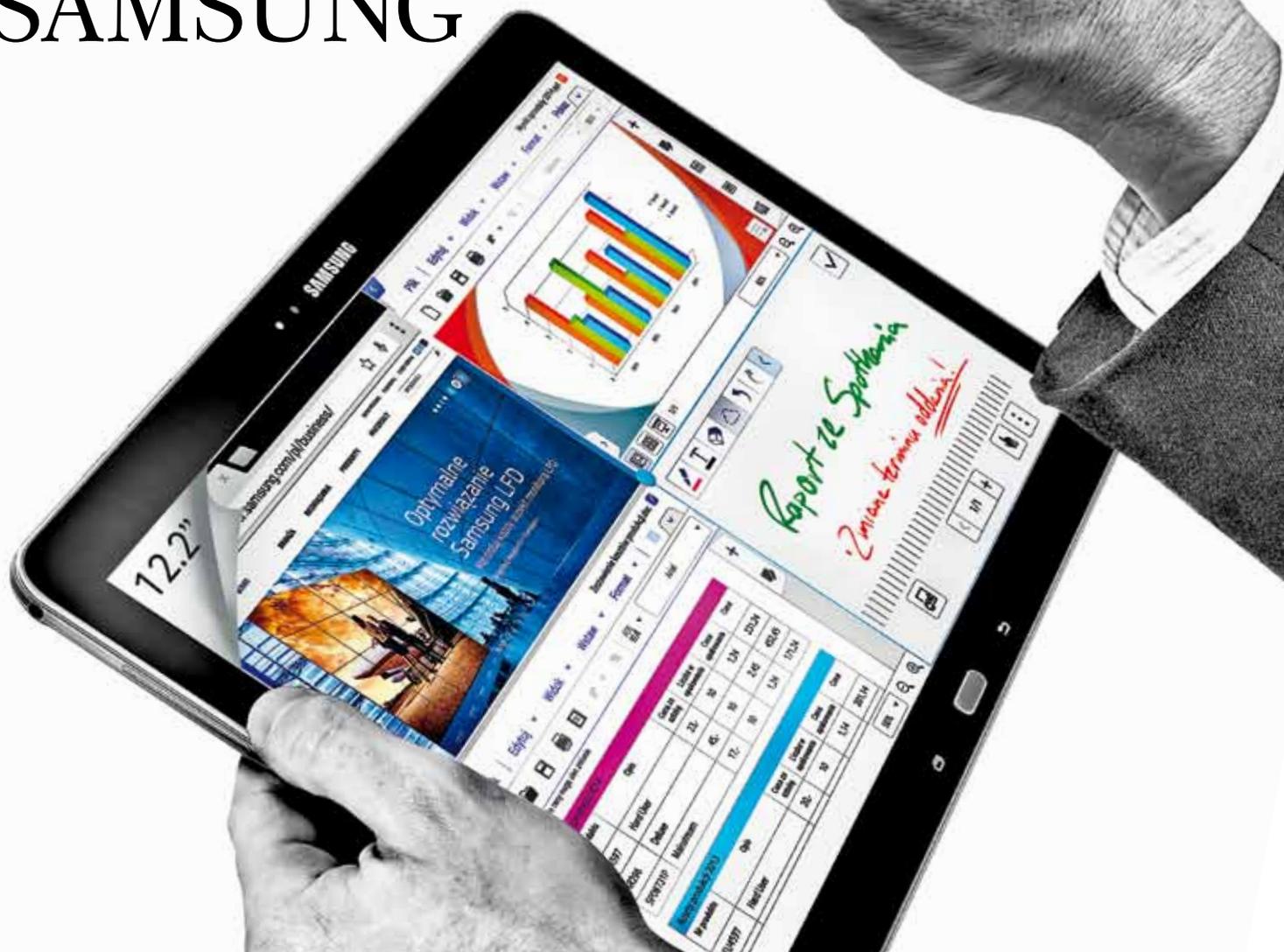


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Editorial	4
On Top	6
• Hotel, restaurant, and airline news	
Cover Story	12
• Spring 2014 belongs to Samsung	
Tried&Tested	16
• SWISS Airbus 340-300 business and economy class	
• Airbus 380 British Airways Club World	18
• GrandHotel Tiffi in the very heart of Warmia	20
• Under the roofs of Warsaw	22
• Villa Park MED & SPA Ciechocinek	24
• Spa Bristol	26
• The essence of joy of driving	27
• Clarins Skin Spa	28
• Medcover Hospital	29
Report	30
• Slash and burn	
Air Travel	36
• Poland is an important market for Lufthansa	38
• "Schiphol – the Dutch master"	
Hotels	42
• 20th Mercure in Poland is now open!	44
• Sheraton Sopot – the Pearl of the Polish Riviera	
Interview	46
• High tech beauty	48
• In search of the perfect shirt	
Fair	50
• Regions tempt with tastes at Regionalia Fair	
Destinations	52
• Norway for Active Leisure	58
• Weekend in Rome	62
• Swiss excellence	72
• 4 hours in... Munichi	
A Business Person on Holiday	66
• Skiing in the beat of the music	
Moto&Techno	68
• Fit for off-road excursions	
Ask Peter	74

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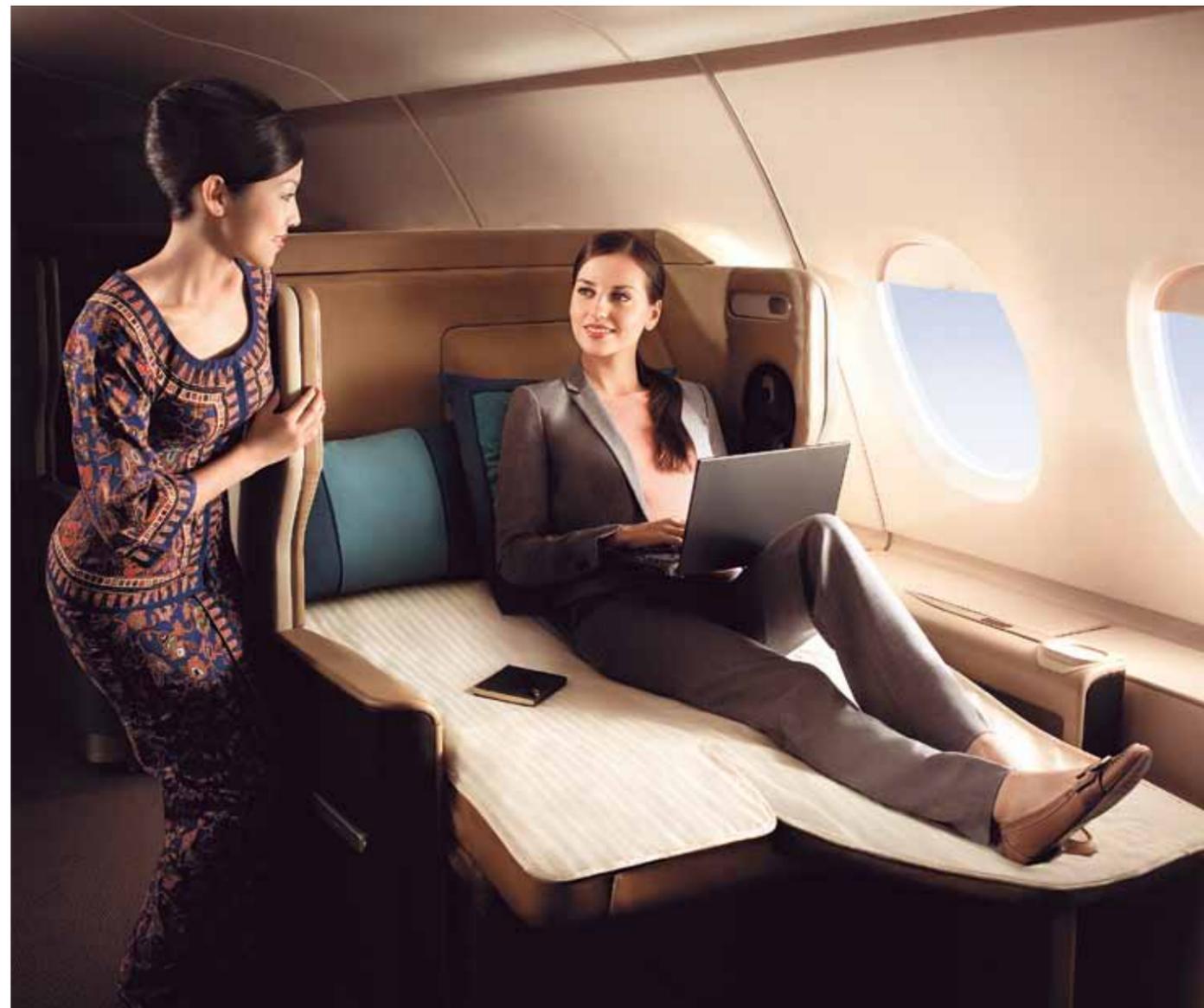


SPRING INSPIRATIONS

In this month's issue we have prepared for you several short trips for the spring. Norway is my great discovery and a true fascination. A spectacular scenery with fjords in the background, raw untouched nature, friendly trolls who reportedly live in every valley, remarkably friendly people and a truly original cuisine. It's a good idea to start the trip to Norway from Bergen – a sea port in the western part of the country and a city that for over 500 years was the largest in the Nordic region. Also Rome looks great in March. We encourage you to spend a weekend in the Eternal City, suggesting you several original places to visit there – the morning at Campo de Fiori market, the afternoon on the Palatine Hill, and the evening in one of the many restaurants of the bohemian district of Trastevere. March is also a great time for skiers. And if skiing then you should definitely visit the Austrian Ischgl with 250 kilometres of pistes both for experienced ski lovers and beginners. A weekend in Switzerland? That's a great idea! We recommend a trip to Jungfrauoch or Top of Europe, which offers the beautiful views on both German Black Forest and French Vosges Mountains. Enjoy your reading.

Marzena Mróz

Marzena Mróz
Editor-in-Chief



SINGAPORE AIRLINES

BUSINESS CLASS

NAJBARDZIEJ PRZESTRONNA JAKĄ WIDZIAŁ ŚWIAT

Zrelaksuj się w Twojej prywatnej przestrzeni, odpęż w najszerszym na świecie fotelu Business Class, który rozkłada się w zupełnie płaskie łóżko. W drodze baw się dobrze korzystając z KrisWorld, osobistego systemu rozrywki pokładowej, oraz serwisu pokładowego, o którym mówią nawet inne linie lotnicze.



Dostępna w samolotach Singapore Airlines typu Airbus A380-800 z Londynu, Frankfurtu, Zurychu i Paryża oraz Boeing 777-300ER z Londynu, Frankfurtu, Monachium i Mediolanu.



Hotel

Radisson Blu

RADISSON BLU HOTELS AWARDED BY TRIPADVISOR

The latest Travellers' Choice™ ranking published at TripAdvisor portal lists two Radisson Blu hotels in Poland – Radisson Blu Gdańsk Hotel and Radisson Blu Hotel Kraków.

Radisson Blu has long been appreciated by its guests. Now, thanks to positive feedback obtained on TripAdvisor two of its Polish hotels have been awarded in the latest edition of the prestigious ranking. Radisson Blu Hotel Kraków won the Travelers' Choice™ 2014 in the category of Luxury, while the Radisson Blu Hotel Gdańsk was awarded in two categories - Luxury and Best Hotels. Travellers Choice™ awards are based on the opinions of millions of travellers from all over the world who visit TripAdvisor website.

"We are pleased to be appreciated by TripAdvisor, which is a very popular travel portal, because the awards for the world's best hotels are decided here by actual hotel guests. For us it's a clear signal that the standards and the quality of services offered in our hotel, are at the highest level," says Jolanta Bonter, the Director of Sales and Marketing at Radisson Blu Hotel Gdańsk. "In Radisson Blu we are committed to constant care of the comfort of the guests, and this award motivates us even more," adds Wojciech Liszka, the Director of Sales and Marketing at Radisson Blu Hotel Kraków. There are six Radisson Blu hotels in Poland, apart from the establishments in Cracow and Gdańsk, they also operate in Warsaw, Szczecin, and Wrocław.

Airline

airberlin

NEW SOLUTIONS

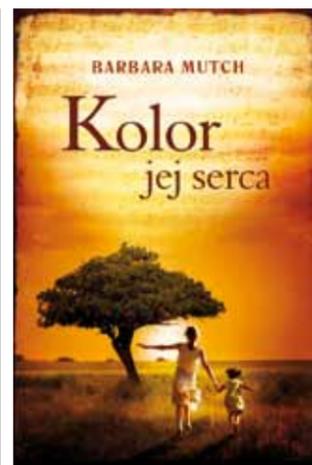
airberlin is set to introduce a second daily flight between Berlin and Abu Dhabi and introduces to its offer new codeshare flights to India.

- Since October 2014 there will be two Berlin-Abu Dhabi flights daily, which doubles the number of weekly connections;
- in this way, airberlin will offer 8,344 seats each week between the two capital cities;
- airberlin and Etihad Airways will offer 56 combined weekly flights between Germany and Abu Dhabi; airberlin and Etihad Airways will offer 56 combined weekly flights between Germany and Abu Dhabi;
- Codeshare agreement between the airlines will be expanded mid-February to include six Indian destinations served by Etihad Airways, including New Delhi and Mumbai.



The additional connection from Berlin to Abu Dhabi will also benefit passengers from Poland with a guaranteed connecting flights from Berlin to Cracow and Warsaw.

Additionally, the two airlines will also expand their codeshare agreement from mid-February, with airberlin guests able to book flights to six Indian destinations served by Etihad Airways: New Delhi, Mumbai, Cochin, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Bangalore. Travellers in India will also benefit from improved connection options within the wide airberlin route network to destinations across Germany and Europe, such as Austria and Switzerland as well as the Nordics or Poland.



Premiere

Book

THE HOUSEMAID'S DAUGHTER

A touching story of a budding friendship in times of apartheid between a black girl and a white woman, which will hit the Polish bookstores on 19 March. The story was inspired by the fate of the grandparents of the author – Barbara Mutch – taking readers to distant Africa. Kathleen Harrington leaves her home in Ireland in 1919 to travel to South Africa and marry the fiance she has not seen for five years. Isolated and estranged in a harsh landscape, she finds solace in her diary and the friendship of her housemaid's daughter, Ada. Despite the opposition of her husband, Cathleen teaches Ada to read and play the piano, and the sensitive girl turns out to be extremely talented musically. When Cathleen leaves, the teenage Ada is visited by Edward in her own bedroom. The girl did not have the courage to oppose her master. When she discovers that she is pregnant, escapes to her people, convinced that she had failed Cathleen's trust. She give birth to a child of mixed race, so in here own environment she is treated with contempt and needs to fight for a decent life for herself and her daughter. Meanwhile Cathleen is trying to find Ada, rebelling against the increasing restrictions of apartheid.

MUZA SA publishing house
Price: PLN 39.99

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Polish days

Andorra

SKIS AND NUMEROUS ATTRACTIONS

From 21 to 30 March, Andorra will celebrate once again the Polish Days. Skiers coming here at that time can enjoy 200 kilometres of well-groomed pistes and have great fun. Andorra is a tiny state situated in the Pyrenees on the border between France and Spain, which 10 years ago wasn't even associated with skiing. Today, this largest ski resort in the Pyrenees includes the ski stations Encamp, Canillo, El Tarter, Soldeu, Grau Roig, and Pas de la Casa. Altogether they offer 205 kilometres of pistes! The Polish Days in Andorra are organized by Infoski.pl travel office. The stay lasts seven days, with departures from Warsaw, Katowice, and Gdańsk. For more information go to www.infoski.pl.

Beauty

Eisenberg

THE ELIXIR OF YOUTH

Every woman would like her skin to retain a youthful glow, be soft and firm as long as possible. Thankfully there are already creams that can work like a magic spell and stop the time. You just need to select the preparation that is appropriate for your skin.

The elixir of youth created by EISENBERG perfectly removes the signs of fatigue, eliminates the effects of stress, prevents aging of the skin, and by the way is a real boost of energy. It's ideal when preparing for special occasions. With extracts of ginkgo and green tea combined with a biotechnological tensioning and smoothening complex, the preparation illuminates the skin and gives it a glow.

THE ELIXIR OF YOUTH BY EISENBERG is a gel which restores radiant complexion and immediately produces effects of radiance and firmness due to presence of extracts of ginkgo biloba and green tea, while the latest development in biotechnology – the tensioning complex and the light reflecting particles, provide the skin its glow. It's a key to make-up that looks fresh for a long time! This lifting, brightening gel which eliminates the signs of fatigue is a real boost of energy to the skin of the face and around the eyes. It's suited to all skin types and for all ages.

Airless PLN 349/30 ml; www.eisenberg.com



Car rental

Hertz

TO SWITZERLAND ONLY WITH HERTZ

Hertz rent-a-car invites you to visit Switzerland with all its beauty – mountains, lakes, beautiful scenery, and charming towns. Hertz has built up a big network of almost 40 locations across Switzerland. You can choose a car from more than 90 different models including the famous Fun-, Prestige- and/or Green – Collections! So let's get moving. Zurich is famous for its festivals and the National Museum, and all its attractions are close to each other. Rent a pedalo on the beautiful lake surrounded by beautiful mountains (famous Pilatus and Rigi), and the picturesque Geneva is a stone's throw from famous ski resorts. In Zermatt you can admire the majestic Matterhorn, while in Berne you need to visit the bear park, the Zytglogge clock tower, and the buildings of the parliament. It's also an ideal base for excursions to the famous mountains such as Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau. www.hertz.com



FOT.: MATERIAŁY PRASOWE FIRM



Beauty

Cece Med Prevent Hair Loss

STOP HAIR LOSS

Prevent Hair Loss Shampoo – restores vitality and radiance to damaged hair and stimulates the growth of new ones. Price: PLN 28.90/300 ml

CONDITIONER Prevent Hair Loss Conditioner - strengthens hair, making it stronger and less prone to breaking and falling out. Price: PLN 28.90/300 ml

AMPOULES - treatment against hair loss, stimulating the growth of new ones. The Package contains a monthly, strongly concentrated treatment. Price: PLN 99.90/ 30x7 ml

SCALP LOTION Prevent Hair Loss Lotion - preparation which prevents hair loss, and stimulates the growth of new ones. Use to sustain the effects of the treatment with ampoules. Price: PLN 23.49/75 ml

HAIR COMPLEX Dietary Supplement - is a combination of carefully selected ingredients to help in the fight against hair loss. The product complements the treatment with extra ingredients. This dietary supplement also has a positive effect on the skin and nails. Price: PLN 99.90/ 30 capsules

All the products are available at chemist's shops (Super-Pharm, Rossmann, Hebe, Natura, Laboo, Kosmeteria), pharmacies, and hair salons.

Suitcase

Wittchen

HIGHLY DURABLE

Polycarbonate is one of the strongest thermoplastic polymers, and its main characteristic is the resistance to shock (after an impact it returns to its original shape) and cracks.

So it's no wonder that suitcase made of such material can endure anything. The suitcases undergo the following tests (with load inside):

- endurance tests of handles and the frame;
- wheel rolling tests (double wheels are more efficient, which is most noticeable while manoeuvring the suitcase);
- drop/dump test
- test of combination locks.

The suitcases are equipped with TSA locks, which are especially useful at airports in the United States, because thanks to them, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officers can search your luggage without any damage to the locks

The basic manufacturing process involves production of the shell with injection moulding. The shells are then transported to production lines where they receive moving parts (wheels, handles, frame, locks), and permanent ones (legs, logo). Finally, the lining and zippers are added. Price: PLN 529



Airlines

British Airways Airbus 380

THE NEW ROUTE LONDON-JOHANNESBURG. FLIGHT OF FANCY

On 6 February British Airways brought together the best of Britain and South Africa at 30 000 feet over Johannesburg to showcase how its £5 billion investment is benefitting customers.

Among the 200 guests on board was the editor-in-chief of Business Traveller Poland, Marzena Mróz. Guests enjoyed a very special Champagne high tea at take-off created specially by The Saxon and South Africa's top chef, David Higgs featuring a raspberry union jack macaroon and vanilla biscuit dress.

The A380 became the longest runway in the sky for a fashion show of British Designer collections for the summer season presented by Harrods, the world's most famous luxury department store. Looks were shown from Stella McCartney, Jenny Packham, Alexander McQueen, Victoria Beckham, Mathew Williamson, Ralph & Russo and Temperley and teamed with Jimmy Choo shoes and jewellery by Astley Clarke, Monica Vinader, Shaun Leane + Lara Bohinc.

It then doubled as a 30 000 foot-high stage for a live performance by multi-award winning Afro-fusion band Freshlyground, who's lead singer Zolani opened the 2010 World Cup singing Waka Waka with Shikira. During the past fortnight the aircraft has visited three major cities in South Africa. Since 27 January it has been based at King Shaka International Airport for flight crew training. Then the superjumbo paid a fleeting visit to Cape Town for a world first fly past over Table Mountain, before arriving in Johannesburg for the launch event.

Modern, fuel-efficient aircraft are the mainstay of British Airways' five-year investment programme in products and the A380 is the third of 12, all of which will be in daily service by 2017. It has also ordered 24 Boeing 787 Dreamliners and is the first airline in Europe to operate both aircraft types.

Speaking on at two-hour launch flight, Frank van der Post, British Airways' managing director brands and customer experience, and Erik Venter, Comair chief executive outlined the enhancements being introduced for domestic, regional and international customers.

LE CLUB ACCOR
HOTELS



Program

Le Club Accorhotels

TRAVEL IN BUSINESS CLASS WITH LE CLUB ACCORHOTELS

Increase the comfort of your trip with free worldwide loyalty programme - Le Club Accorhotels. Be a special guests in one of 2,700 hotels in 92 countries worldwide and take advantage of the benefits tailored to your individual style and expectations.

In 2014 Le Club Accorhotels celebrates its 5th birthday. This Round anniversary coincides with the introduction of numerous facilities and novelties in the programme, including the launch of the new website accorhotels.com/leclub and implementation of a revolutionary system of privileges in hotels.

The primary benefit of membership in the programme is the ability to collect points and exchange them into e.g. discounts when booking, airline miles or vouchers of the partners to the programme. Points in Le Club Accorhotels are awarded for every stay in an Accor hotel based on the amount of money spent and the membership status: Classic, Silver, Gold, or Platinum. The higher the status of the card, the more extra perks waiting for a member of the programme during their stay at the hotel.

The range of benefits is very wide, including priority check-in, free Internet access, an invitation to a welcome drink, room availability guarantee, and the access to the VIP lounge at the hotel.

An important aspect of the Le Club Accorhotels is that the collected points don't expire. It's sufficient that the programme member spend yearly at least one night in one of Accor hotels.r.

Le Club Accorhotels is a guarantee of a comfortable rest, saving time and professional service for customers traveling both for leisure and business. With numerous privileges of the programme every guest of Accor hotels will feel there at home.

Beauty

La Mer

INTENSE REJUVENATION

The new Lifting & Firming Mask by La Mer is the culmination of 50 years of innovation and the genius of the brand. Its special lifting and firming action is ensured by carefully selected ingredients which stimulate the skin to recover the youthful elasticity through encouraging the natural production of collagen.

Luxurious, creamy texture instantly softens and nourishes the skin. The skin of the face and neck immediately becomes firmer and regenerated.

Key components
Concentrated Miracle Broth TM – a legendary ingredient from La Mer which intensifies the natural renewal process, providing the energy to help skin focus on repair. A potent level helps soothe and transform the look of skin.

The new Concentrated Lifting Ferment penetrates skin with a blend of powerful brown algae, marine peptides and active marine plant stem cells, known as the pure concentration of life. Enhancing skin's support structure, this carefully



crafted ferment helps increase skin's density and elasticity, filling in natural shape for a visibly sculpted look. The mask nourishes the skin 24 hours a day. Since at night, skin is resting and naturally recovering, it's an ideal time to use reparative skincare.

Price: PLN 670/50 ml



Airline

SAS

PLATINUM AGAIN

SAS granted IATA Fast Travel Award Platinum status - the only airline to achieve this, yet again. Last year, Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) was the first airline in the world to achieve IATA Fast Travel Award Platinum status. This year they have repeated that achievement, and are once again the only airline to do so.

In order to achieve Platinum status, at least 80% of an airline's passengers must have access to various kinds of self-service options which they are invited to use during their flight. SAS satisfies this requirement by a clear margin. It was the first airline in the world to be granted this status in 2013, and once again this year is the only airline to be given the IATA Fast Travel Award Platinum.

IATA's target is that 80% of the world's air travellers will have the opportunity to choose self-service options during their trip by the year 2020. This means that passengers will be offered a range of options in order to create a simpler and faster flow through the various stages involved in taking a flight.

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HOTELS

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** Oferta obowiązuje wyłącznie przy rezerwacjach dokonanych od 1.03. do 31.05.2014 r. na pobyty w terminie od 1.04. do 31.05.2014 r.



SPRING 2014 BELONGS TO SAMSUNG

The number of novelties on the market of consumer electronics can make you dizzy. And although sometimes it's hard to guess if a given device is a real technological breakthrough or just a gimmick, Samsung leaves no doubt in this regard with its new tablets GALAXY NotePRO and TabPRO.

As recently as 10 years ago, no-one even dreamed of tablets. However when they appeared on the market, they immediately conquered our hearts. And as tablets have revolutionized the mobile market, so has the GALAXY series on the tablet market. We have decided to look closer at the functions of the long-awaited Samsung GALAXY novelties – the 12.2-inch NotePRO, as well as 12.2, 10.1 and 8.4-inch TabPRO.

A GREAT KICK-OFF TO THE YEAR

“We created the Galaxy NotePRO and TabPRO series to kick-off a year in which Samsung truly establishes its leadership in the tablet market,” said JK Shin, CEO and President of IT & Mobile Division, Samsung Electronics. “This new line offers the best-in-class content consumption and productivity, combining a stunning viewing experience with Samsung’s design legacy. The Samsung Galaxy NotePRO and TabPRO truly demonstrate our commitment to pro-

viding our customers with extraordinarily versatile product offerings, tailored to tablet users of every description.” This declaration seems to be legitimate. The Galaxy NotePRO and TabPRO series bring premium style and powerful performance in a single device. Created to satisfy every possible type of user case scenario, the Samsung Galaxy NotePRO and TabPRO combine a crystal-clear, WQXGA display for a world-class viewing experience, powerful productivity tools, and unique features with preloaded and free downloadable content, producing a superior mobile solution. In this way anyone can easily personalize their tablet to a degree that so far has been hardly seen.

IS IT THE END OF THE CINEMAS?

This may be a slightly far-fetched prediction, but indeed the WQXGA display is a true novelty available on board Samsung GALAXY NotePRO and TabPRO. To appreciate the clarity of the screen, you simply

must see it. It has a head-spinning resolution of 2560x1600 with more than 4 million pixels. With a larger viewing area, the defined screen allows users to enjoy stunning Full HD video play and view even more information at a glance.

A personalized Content Home, specifically optimized for a large screen, allows users to further tailor their Galaxy tablet experience for their own needs. The Content Home UX enables them to organize their favourite content in an easy-to-use dashboard with automatic feed or news updates and then quickly access the most frequently used apps.

By utilizing a screen size that is more comparable to traditional magazine-sized material, content is easier to view in its original format when reading digital magazines or e-books.

TOP PERFORMANCE

The Samsung Galaxy NotePRO and TabPRO (12.2) come equipped with a variety of productivity tools to help users to manage



By utilizing a screen size that is more comparable to traditional magazine-sized material, content is easier to view in its original format when reading digital magazines or e-books.



The new display is one of the most striking new features of the tablet. Indeed the WQXGA is a true novelty available on board Samsung GALAXY NotePRO and TabPRO.

both their personal and professional lives. For example, the Multi Window enables users to split the screen up into four different windows. Virtual Keyboard provides you with enough space to type comfortably, leveraging haptic feedback to produce a more realistic typing experience.

The Samsung S Pen included with the Galaxy NotePRO delivers a more responsive, productive and overall efficient tablet experience with access to features such as Action Memo, Scrapbook, Screen Write and S Finder. In addition, Pen Window enables users to simply draw a window of any size on the screen, and instantly access unique in-application features such as YouTube or a calculator.

Users can easily access and control their home or office PC directly through their Galaxy NotePRO or TabPRO with Remote PC in order to seamlessly edit and save files remotely.

Users can easily access and control their home or office PC directly through their Galaxy NotePRO or TabPRO with Remote

PC in order to seamlessly edit and save files remotely.

Users can easily access and control their home or office PC directly through their Galaxy NotePRO or TabPRO with Remote PC in order to seamlessly edit and save files remotely. Samsung e-Meeting provides collaboration capabilities by giving users the ability to share content during a meeting without having to access a central server or network.

A GIFT PACKAGE

For additional value and productivity right out of the box, the Samsung Galaxy NotePRO and TabPRO (12.2) will feature up to approximately \$700 worth of the premium pre-paid, long-term subscription offers from best-selling news, social media and cloud storage providers, including: Bitcasa, Bloomberg Businessweek, Blurb, Cisco WebEx Meetings, Dropbox, Easilydo Pro for Tablet, Evernote, Hancome Office for Android, LinkedIn, LIVESPORT.TV, NY Times, Oxford Advanced Learner’s A-Z, and

Sketchbook Pro (content packages may vary by region).

The Samsung Galaxy NotePRO and TabPRO line will come in various connectivity options: WiFi Only or WiFi and LTE. Users can choose between the 12.2-inch Galaxy NotePRO that comes with an included S Pen, and the 12.2-inch Galaxy TabPRO, Galaxy TabPRO 10.1-inch and 8.4-inch without the S Pen. Designed to extend productivity even further, the following optional accessories are also available for purchase with the Galaxy NotePRO and TabPRO: Various Book Covers, USB LAN HUB, Universal BT Keyboard and S Action Mouse (accessories may vary by product model).

The Samsung Galaxy NotePRO and TabPRO tablet line will be offered globally and will be available starting from Q1, 2014. Now, when going on a holiday (or even a short trip) you won’t have the dilemma whether to take your laptop with you or not. You will simply take your new tablet instead...

Anita Janowiec

FOT. MATERIAL PRASOWE

SWISS AIRBUS 340-300

BUSINESS AND ECONOMY CLASS



It's a very good connection, and punctual like in a Swiss watch. I liked the short connection time between subsequent flights, which on long-haul routes is of paramount importance.

Looking for a perfect connection from Europe to Asia, I decided to test the offer of SWISS, which is known for its punctuality and attention to detail. I flew from Warsaw to Singapore (via Zurich) in business class, and on the way back I travelled in the economy cabin.

WARSAW – ZURICH

The last of the daily flights on Warsaw-Zurich route, offered by SWISS at 7.45 pm, is operated by Fokker 100. My seat was 1F, located in the first row. Since the aircraft is quite small, it has no curtain separating business class from the economy. Before the take-off the cabin crew handed bottles of water and wet wipes.

Once we reached the cruising altitude, we were served warm dinner. The options included beef steak or ravioli with spinach and lettuce with balsamic vinegar and olive oil. The dessert included a choice of Swiss cheese and tiramisu. Shortly before landing about 9.55 pm, all passengers received chocolates with the logo of the airline.

When the plane came to a halt, a minibus took all business class passengers to the main terminal. It's good to know that Terminal E which serves Asian-bound flights is located a long way from the main building and it's best reached by a train, which takes about 15 minutes.

ZURICH-SINGAPORE

My seat on board the Airbus 340-300, which took-off promptly at 10.45 pm, was 14K - a single one, situated in the last row, next to the window. The



seat configuration in business class cabin is 1x2x2, which, in my opinion, is very convenient both for passengers travelling alone and in a company. I, personally, was happy with the fact that I could sit alone, because I was planning to work during the flight.

What I especially liked in the cabin was the comfortable seat which reclines fully into a flat bed. It has beige upholstery with wooden finish, a lot of legroom, and a shelf where you can put a small bag. Additionally, the seat has several features, with which you can individually adjust the position of the mattress. Several times during the flight I used the "massage" function, and tried its softer mode when I lay down to sleep. You can also adjust the setting of the lumbar support, which comes in handy during a long journey. Each business passengers received a pillow, a duvet and a coat hanger, as well as a travel kit which contained travel socks, a toothbrush and a toothpaste, colourless lip moisturiser, earplugs, a sleep mask, and Ricola candies.

Add to this, the excellent menu prepared by great Swiss chefs! I chose the carpaccio of smoked tenderloin with fig sauce, cheese and nuts, as well as penne with the carrot and Parmesan cheese, prepared according to the recipe of the first

vegetarian restaurant in Zurich called "Hiltl". The selection of wines included white Les Terrasses Dorees 2012 and Sauvignon Blanc Private, while for the red ones you could choose among Cornalin Montibeux 2012, The Stump Jump 2011 and Chateau Villa Bel-Air 2010. The choice of snacks, which were available throughout the flight, included chocolates, apples, bananas, and dried fruits. From the rich offer of the IFE system I chose "Gravity", and I also listened to some operas on one of the music channels. The buffet breakfast included cold meats, chesses, muesli, fresh fruit salads, bread, jams, and cakes.

After a 12-hour trip, we landed in Singapore at 6.00 pm local time. I got up from me seat, feeling well rested and relaxed.

SINGAPORE-ZURICH - WARSAW

We took off from Changi Airport at 11.35 pm. After we reached the cruising altitude, the cabin crew served late dinner – chicken or lasagne and salad with dressing, accompanied with a choice of drinks – white and red wine, juices, tea and coffee.

The seat configuration in the economy class is 2x4x2. The flight lasted 13 hours. I had an aisle seat in row 25. It's difficult to compare the business class



seat with the product available in the economy cabin, which reclined a bit, but obviously provided much less comfort of travel.

Before the lights in the cabin went off for the night, each passenger received a bottle of water, a chocolate, a blanket and headphones. In the morning, the flight attendant served breakfast – an omelette, yoghurt, bread, butter, jam, tea and coffee.

At 6.10 am the plane landed in Zurich, and already at 7.10 am I boarded the plane to Warsaw. Friendly flight attendants offered me another breakfast, but I chose to drink only a cup of coffee and helped myself to one more delicious Swiss chocolate. After less than two hours, the aircraft landed at Warsaw airport.

VERDICT

It's a very good connection, and punctual like in a Swiss watch. I liked the short connection time between subsequent flights, which on long-haul routes is of paramount importance. I would definitely recommend the business class, which offers good value for money. It's really worth it. The seats with massage function and the sophisticated catering - it's where SWISS stands out from the other carriers offering trips from Europe to Asia.

Marzena Mróz

CONTACT
www.swiss.com

PRICE
Standard rate in Economy Class – PLN 3,029;
Standard rate in Business Class – PLN 10,969;

You might want to visit swiss.com for various promotions offered by the airline.

Airline

JOHANNESBURG-LONDON

AIRBUS 380 BRITISH AIRWAYS CLUB WORLD



CONTACT
ba.com

PRICE
Club World on WAW-LHR-JNB-LHR-WAW route from PLN 10,670

I took the inaugural flight from Johannesburg to London on board the Airbus A380 that is a part of the fleet of British Airways. The legendary Super Jumbo, called the giant of the skies, makes a truly huge impression on passengers and the journey on its double-deck is an unforgettable adventure.

SUPER JUMBO IN BRITISH LIVERY

Length - 72.73 m, width - 24.45 m, wingspan - 79.75 m. The A380 can reach the speed of over 900 km/h, while passengers, sitting comfortably on the lower deck (6.54 metres wide) or the upper, more secluded one (5.8 metres wide), drink champagne Boizel Grand Vintage 2004 and watch recent film premieres. With the upper deck extending the entire length of the fuselage, the A380 can ac-

commodate as many as 469 passengers, including 14 people in First Class, 44 in Club World (business class), 55 in World Traveller Plus (premium economy), and 359 people in World Traveller (economy).

The innovative technologies employed in the A380 enable it to fly quieter and consume 16% less fuel than the popular B747. British Airways has ordered a total of 12 aircraft of this type. Four of them are already serving connections between London and Los Angeles, Hong Kong and, more recently, with Johannesburg. The remaining eight will join the British fleet by the end of 2016. British Airways is the tenth airline, which operates this giant machine, after Singapore Airlines, Emirates, Qantas, Lufthansa, Air France, Korean Air, Malaysia Airlines, China Southern, and Thai Airways.

BOARDING AND TAKE-OFF

The aircraft takes off from Johannesburg at 8.15 pm to reach London early in the morning, just after 5.00 am. The trip takes 10 hours and 15 minutes. Luggage check-in and security control at O.R. Tambo airport, run smoothly and efficiently. The A380 departs from gate 9, which is situated close to British Airways Business Lounge where you can relax before the trip, drink coffee or tea, eat a tasty snack and check your e-mail accounts.

Boarding procedure started on time, 55 minutes before the take-off. As a Club World passenger, I used the fast track boarding and took seat 14 F. After a short while came a flight attendant with a warm hand towel, and offered a choice of drinks: water, orange juice or champagne. This time business class passengers didn't

receive travel kits, as they used to on BA's long-haul flights. Instead they were given turquoise bags with face and hand cream samples as well as a colourless lipstick by Elemis. Several minutes later the plane took off so smoothly that you could simply miss the moment. Throughout the trip, I felt like I was sitting in a comfortable chair in a fancy hotel.

SEAT CONFIGURATION, MEALS

I chose my seat myself. Since there were no vacant seats on the more intimate upper deck (configured 2x3x2), I chose the middle row on the lower deck (2x4x2) - backward-facing, but it didn't really matter. It was separated from the other passenger's seat by an opaque retractable screen.

I am a big fan of the seat configuration proposed by BA in Club World class, which on the one hand allows you to communicate with your fellow-passengers, but also provides a sense of intimacy. If necessary, you can use the screen to gain more privacy and, for example, rest, read or enjoy a great variety of on-board entertainment, including the current film premieres.

Meanwhile, the flight attendants offered us dinner: a salad with feta cheese and smoked

salmon seasoned with olive oil and red pepper, as well as halibut with mashed potatoes and spinach. Add to this excellent wine: white - Chateau Olivier 2011, South African Radford Dale Chardonnay from Stellenbosch, and red - French Chateaufort-du-Pape 2011 and South African Optima 2009 Western Cap. For dessert we could choose between a piece of cake in chocolate sauce or a selection of chesses, followed by coffee, tea, brandy, and various types of whisky.

During the flight, passengers could freely use the Club Kitchen, which offered hot and cold drinks as well as snacks. In the fridge, which was available to all premium passengers, there were sandwiches, yogurt, sliced fruit, or strawberry mousse. In the morning, the flight attendants served English breakfast, while the lighter option was yogurt with fruit.

INTERIOR

Everything about this plane is neatly and functionally arranged. The cabin, decorated in light shades of grey, is spacious and features adjustable light intensity, depending on the time of the day.

The seat, which reclines into a flat-bat (more than 200 cm in length!), is padded with high quality herringbone cloth, and

comes with a pillow in a white case, as well as blue-beige quilt. I liked the small but handy drawer at the bottom of the seat, where I put my purse with documents. Each seat also featured an electrical socket for charging mobile devices. Other useful things in the cabin included friendly, intimate illumination of the interior, large coffee tables, footrests, adjustable armrests, LCD touch screens and beige, soft, cotton blankets. The toilet, equipped with sensors, is the largest I have ever seen on board Airbus aircraft, and it's sterile clean.

VERDICT:

The motto of British Airways: "To fly. To serve" is treated very seriously by BA staff, especially on board the A380. I was particularly impressed with the excellent on board service, the comfort of the Club World cabin, the punctuality, and convenient flight times. While waiting for my connecting flight in London, I went to British Airways Business Lounge at Terminal 3, where I sat in the relaxation zone, had breakfast, sipped some tea, and read a morning paper. When I got off at Okęcie, I didn't feel tired at all. On the contrary, I felt I could make this whole trip once again.

Marzena Mróz



The legendary Super Jumbo, called the giant of the skies, makes a truly huge impression on passengers and the journey on its double-deck is an unforgettable adventure.



FOT.: MATERIAŁ PRASOWE

Hotel

ŁŁAWA

GRANDHOTEL TIFFI IN THE VERY HEART OF WARMIA



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PRICES
 from 359 PLN single room
 from 399 PLN double room

Tiffi is a brand, which has been present on the Polish market for over 10 years, but so far has only been associated with fashion. But now Tiffi is also a hotel, which features (yes, you guessed it) a Tiffi showroom where the latest collections are available even before the official premiere. The hotel itself is located almost in the very centre of Łława, but at the same time close to Poland's longest lake – Jeziorak.

ROOMS

The stylish interior of Grand Hotel Tiffi exudes a warm and inviting atmosphere, which

combined with modern amenities and discreet service, guarantees comfort and relaxation during your stay. The establishment offers 155 spacious and air-conditioned rooms, including 15 suites spread over three floors. All were designed and decorated in such a way as to achieve the effect of the highest functionality in a sleek design. The floor-to-ceiling windows open to a scenic panorama of the lake. All rooms are decorated in soft colours. The warm tones of beige, brown, and ecru create a cosy atmosphere and beautifully harmonize with natural materials such as granite, sandstone, marble, various species

of wood, and carpets made out of pure wool. The rooms come equipped with safes, minibars, 40-inch LED TVs, and Tassimo coffee makers. The remarkably comfortable single or double beds are yet another thing worth noting. Extra beds for children are available upon request. The largest of the suites – the 85 sq m Terrace Suite has a separate bathroom for guests, and such amenities as TV Bose Sound System with a 55-inch home entertainment systems. But perhaps the biggest attraction of this place is its own 70-metre terrace. Guests will find here comfortable loungers, a garden table with comfortable

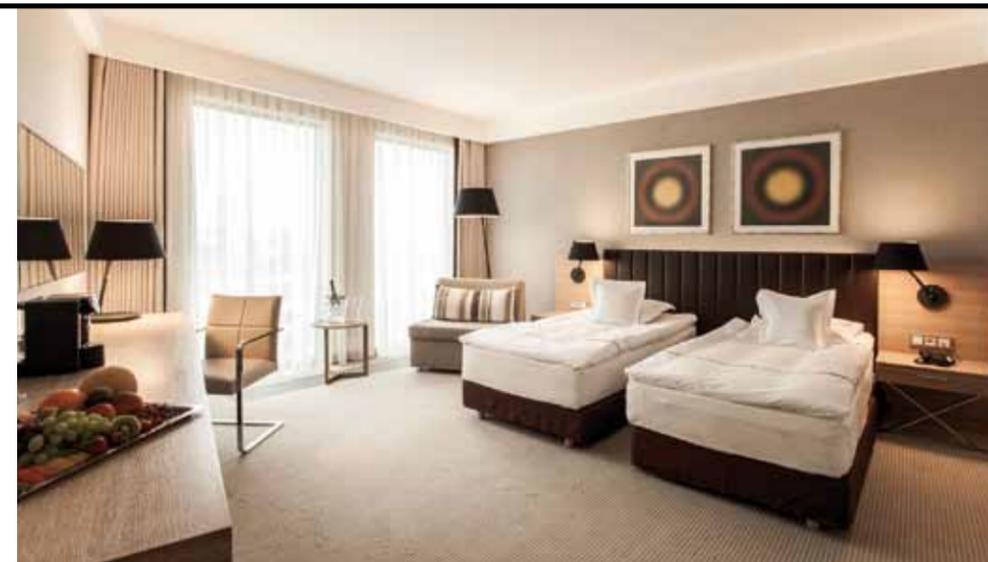
chairs, plants in pots, and, of course the view ... on the lake. The beautiful and spacious bathrooms in all rooms are lined with marble and equipped with walk in rainshowers and L'Occitane toiletries.

BUSINESS CENTRE

The hotel also boasts an excellent conference centre with a total area of 1,300 sq m. Two large conference rooms (over 520 and 460 sq m) are able to accommodate even a vehicle. Each of them can also be divided into four smaller ones. There are also five meeting/training rooms, so altogether GrandHotel Tiffi Łława offers 13 rooms of this type. All of them have access to daylight and are equipped with state-of-the-art multimedia technology – projection screens, full HD projectors, Bose sound system, Crestron control system, wireless microphones, automatic blackout curtains, and own power supply.

FITNESS CENTRE AND SPA

The oriental spa of the hotel comprises 20 treatment rooms, where you can enjoy Ayurveda, unusual massage techniques from the Far East, and the experience of L'Occitane – the manufacturer of high quality natural cosmetics from Provence, France. Qualified therapists from Tibet, Philippines and India take guests into the world of deep relaxation and exceptional experiences. The offer of the spa is comprehensive and includes facial and body treatments, oriental massage, as well as special relaxation packages for the body and senses. They can be complemented with individual sessions of yoga and meditation, run by a master from India. Undoubtedly, one of the largest attractions of the spa are the Young& Fit weight loss retreats run by Witold Szymańda, a well-known personal trainer, who until recently worked with lots of stars and celebrities. His



Therapists from Thailand, Philippines, and Poland offer a wide range of facial and body treatments inspired by Ayurveda.



clients included Keanu Reeves, Heidi Klum, Alicja Bachleda Curuś, and Iza Miko. Now he will share his secrets to weight loss and fabulous figure with the guests of GrandHotel Tiffi in Łława, where he runs classes every last week and weekend of the month. The enthusiasts of active leisure will be happy to use the hotel's well-equipped gym, exercise room, indoor swimming pool, as well as the saunas and Jacuzzi. There are also tennis courts, bike rental, and Ekomarina where guests can moor their boats.

VERDICT

It's a perfect place to organize your company's team building event, a conference, a business meeting, but also a family holiday. For the youngest guests the hotel has prepared a colourful, and well-equipped playroom. The hotel's location – close to the city centre and the nature – make it a truly remarkable place. A big plus for excellent cuisine and local produce in the menu, including fish, vegetables, and the famous cheese from Warmia.

Magda Borecka

TIFFI SPA **DHARMA**
 BY L'OCITANE

FOT.: MATERIAŁY PRASOWE

UNDER THE ROOFS OF WARSAW



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 www.mamaison.com

PRICE
 starting at €290 per night

There are a lot of good hotels in Warsaw, but because of our turbulent history, only few of them boast their old architecture. One of them is Mamaison Hotel Le Regina Warsaw. This former Mokrowski Palace is a three-storey building, which was painstakingly restored in the style of 18th-century palaces. There's even a charming courtyard, which seems to be an exact copy of those found by Italian or the French Riviera, with a lovely garden and a fountain.

HISTORY

The earliest mentions of this place come from 1734. At that time the palace belonged to the wife of General Kazimierz Mok-

rowski. It's also known that at the time of the Saxons it served as a residence of the royal chef Zettner. It was then when the place became the centre of social life for Warsaw aristocracy, and was venue for numerous balls and banquets.

WHERE IS IT?

The hotel is located in the historic centre of the city - the Old Town, which doesn't mean that it's out of the way. At the same time, it's only 12 km from Warsaw's main airport and 4 km from the Central Rail Station. To get there you need to navigate through a maze of old, narrow streets of the Old Town, so it's a good idea to order a hotel limousine which will comfortably

transfer you from the airport to the hotel. If, however, you are a fan of city walks, it's hard to imagine a better starting point for such excursions. It's close from here both to the Royal Palace and the Old Town Square, and a return from an evening performance at the Grand Theatre, walking along fabulously illuminated facades of old houses, can be an unforgettable experience. If you love great views, you should also go to the embankment. It's only a few minutes' walk from Le Regina, and I guarantee that you won't find a more picturesque view of the Vistula River anywhere else in the city. So, if you are in the Polish capital just for the weekend or

a little longer, and would like to feel the magic of Warsaw, you should definitely book a room here. But not any room. Although each of the hotel's 61 rooms is comfortable, spacious, beautifully furnished and well equipped, it's a good idea to choose the penthouse suite.

PENTHOUSE SUITE

Why is it so unusual? For example, because it doesn't resemble a hotel room. You can feel here more as if you stayed in a mansard owned by our friend who is a designer. A luxury lift will take you to the second floor - to reach upper floors, you need to climb the stairs. Although the penthouse is a single 70 sq m room, it's at the same time very cosy and divided into sort of zones. You enter it via a long corridor. Here you can unpack your bags, and it's worth noting that the vast wardrobes on the left can accommodate almost any number of suitcases. The corridor opens to the main room of the suite. The slanted ceilings and round white columns supporting the ceiling,

add the feeling of spaciousness, at the same time making it very cosy. This warm homely atmosphere is also obtained with light wooden flooring, which feels silky in touch. All these slanted walls, columns and wood could have become a real trap for an interior designer and tempt him to go for a bit of rustic décor. Fortunately, there's none of that in the room. All furniture and accessories are black and white, and the austerity of these colours is softened only (and effectively) with soft, round forms of comfortable black and white armchairs as well as pouffes/cushions, which can be found in the living area. The sleeping section is separated from the living area by an ingenious solution - a light partition wall with a funny opening, which adds even more lightness to the room. On its other side there's a super-comfortable bed and a discreet door to the bathroom. A considerably large desk is a great place to work, if only because it's placed close to the window. It's also a perfect place to put your briefcase or laptop

on when you enter the room. The room has two TVs (and the home theatre set), a direct dial telephone, and free access to wifi. It's also air-conditioned, and guests can individually set the desired temperature. The spacious bathroom with a bathtub is well designed and the austere elegance of granite tiles is soothed by wooden furniture in dark brown colour. The penthouse hosted such celebrities as Anja Rubik and Joe Cocker, who liked its design and amenities.

VERDICT:

It's a unique blend of history and modernity. It will suit both those who believe that old houses have a soul, and those who like staying in hotels offering modern amenities and luxuries. It's also a great choice for MICE organizers, with concierge services and assistance of an event planner. And if after a long day you need a moment of relaxation, you can always visit the hotel's spa with swimming pools, saunas and massage rooms.

Rafał Sobiech



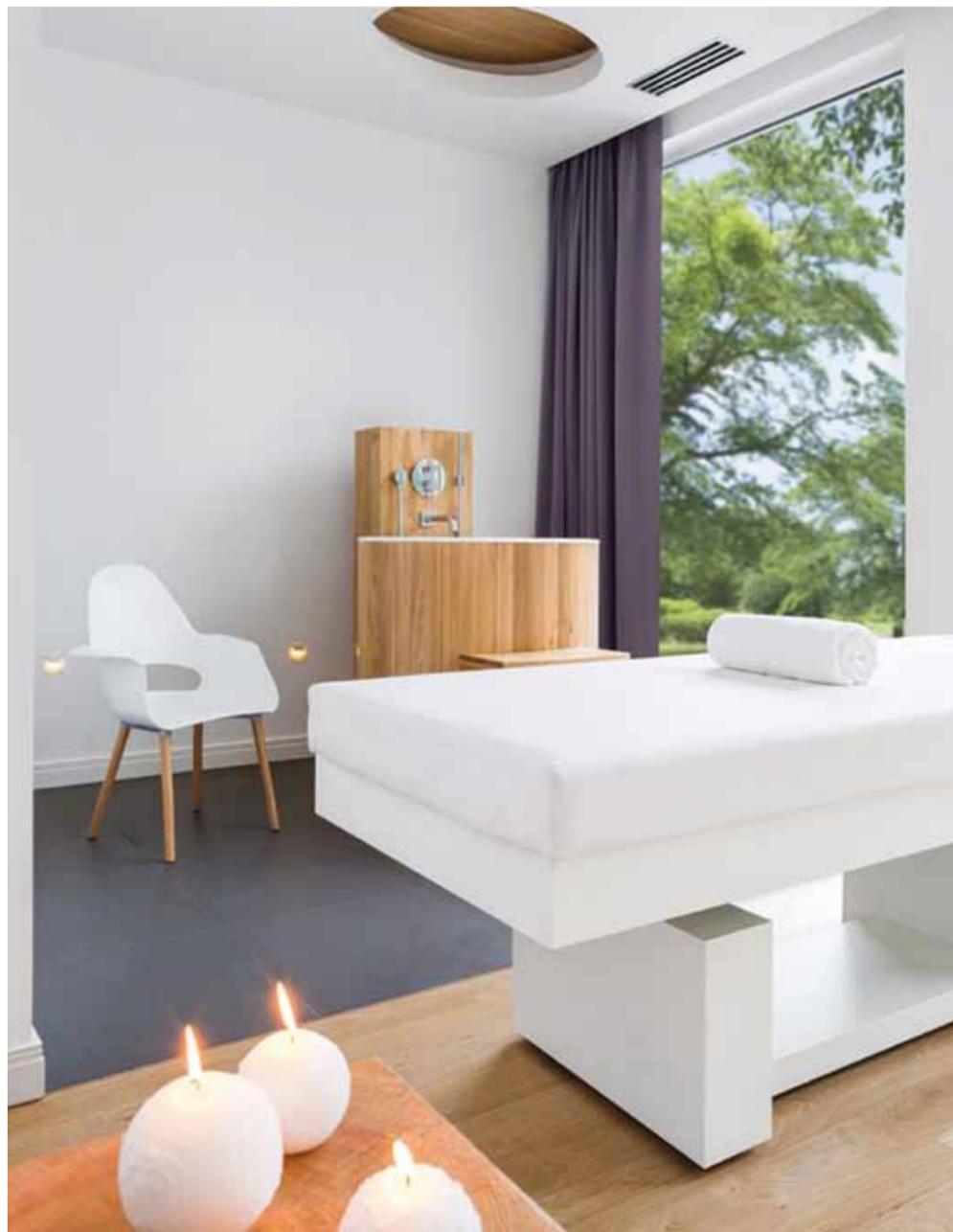
Among numerous celebrities hosted by Mamaison Hotel Le Regina Warsaw, were the top model Anja Rubik and the British rock singer Joe Cocker. They also appreciated the design and comforts of the Penthouse Suite.

FOT.: MATERIAŁY PRASOWE

Hotel

CIECHOCINEK

VILLA PARK MED & SPA CIECHOCINEK



What makes the hotel stand out is its modern construction and the colours. As for the décor, you won't find any baroque ornaments. The architects chose modern minimalistic style.

WHAT'S IT LIKE?

Looking for a possibility for a quick midweek rest I found a legendary place with a reputation of being the most recreational sanatorium resort in Poland, with the famous promenade and Grzybek fountain – namely Ciechocinek. Luckily the only 4-star hotel in the area - Villa Park MED & Spa hotel, belonging to the MPM Hotele SPA is everything but a usual sanatorium stereotype, offering unique treatments based on brine springs, great infrastructure, and unconventional methods of treatment. What makes the hotel stand out is its construction, colours and location.

WHERE IS IT?

The hotel is located in the heart of the city next to a spa park. Everything is close so the only means of transportation used here is a bike. It takes only 5 minutes of walking to get to the complex of the world's largest and longest graduation towers (altogether 1,742 m). Both the complex and the local salt works have been in operation for 180 years, which makes it a historical monument on a global scale. Ciechocinek is about 243 km from Warsaw – you will get there comfortably taking A2 motorway towards Poznań, and then A1 towards Gdańsk.

ROOMS

The hotel offers 72 rooms in the main building and 17 suites in detached villas. You can choose from Basic, Standard, Studio, Deluxe – with modern décor in grey colours – or Classic rooms. I stayed in Studio Modern overlooking the spa park. I was delighted with its white and grey

décor with green accents and modern furniture. It was also equipped with a TV, an electric kettle and a selection of tea and coffee. The bathroom came with hair dryers and toiletries. On the top floor there are spa treatment rooms. Those who value their privacy and peace and quiet, as well as bigger families, may choose to stay in detached villas, about 30 metres away from the main building. Wireless Internet connection is available throughout the hotel.

SALTARIS SPA

This newly-opened recreational space is aimed at the most demanding guests. In the centre you will find a fantastic brine pool with the underwater illumination, geysers, and massagers. Right next to it, there is a Jacuzzi tub with hydromassage (with fresh water).

In the second section of Saltaris Spa, guests have access to a sauna complex, including a dry salt sauna and brine laconium – recommended for bronchial problems and allergies. Next, there is a cooling zone with an ice bowl and miniature graduation towers – the only ones in Poland. After the treatments you can have a rest on heated ceramic stretchers.

On the first floor, in the reception area, you can book the treatments; have a cup of tea or a glass of the famous "Krystynka" water. A gym and a fitness salon are on the same floor.

The spa features 20 renewal treatment rooms, including 2 spacious VIP rooms for couples or friends. The spa offers detoxifying and nourishing treatments using WET-table.

I was offered an OFURO tub bath and a relaxing body massage with aromatic candles. On the next day there was a fantastic "ciechociński ritual" featuring a body scrub with Ciechocińska salt and a brine bath in a tub with hydro massage and a moisturizing treatment for the face using Diego Dalla Palma cosmetics.

FOT.: MATERIAŁY PRASOWE



You can also opt for a unique Kinesis Myofascial Integration treatment (KMI). The manual therapy performed by Wojciech Cackowski, one of the pioneers of this technique in Poland, improves the functioning and restores the balance in connective tissue. This innovative method is used for locomotive disorders, overstrains, post-traumatic conditions, etc. More details at www.anatomytrains.pl.com.

RESTAURANT AND BAR

Robert Kołakowski, the chef at Preludium restaurant offers healthy, light Mediterranean and regional dishes. For the starter I can recommend beef sirloin tartare, duck with potatoes and apples in caramel

for the main course and apple pie with ice cream for dessert. Before each meal you can try freshly baked bread with olive oil and garlic, paprika, black pepper, and herbs. You should also definitely order one of their magnificent Sicily wines.

Café Swing is a nice spot where you can have a lunch or a cup of aromatic coffee by the fireplace.

VERDICT:

Professional and friendly service. Excellent brine treatments. KMI therapy – a unique thing in Poland. I especially recommend if you need a quick recovery and a relaxing weekend. It is also great for organizing events and business conferences.

Katarzyna Siekierzyńska

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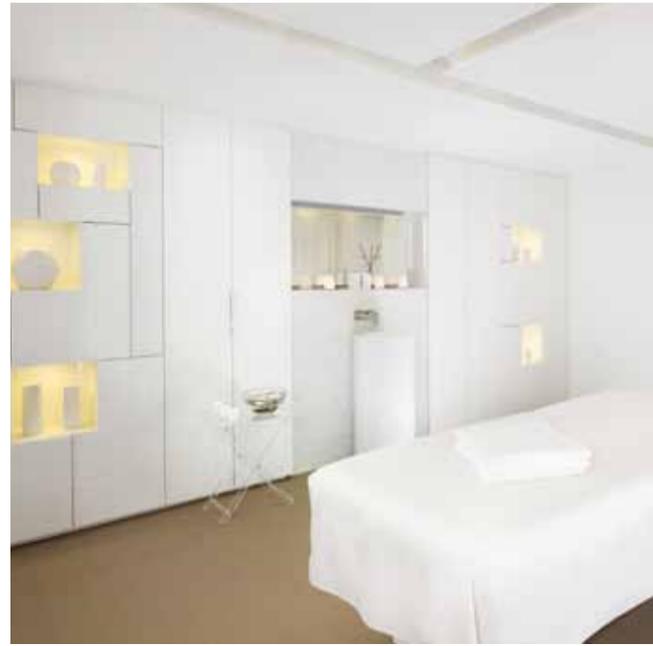
PRICES

single room - from PLN 299
double room - from PLN 399

SPA

WARSAW

SPA BRISTOL



CONTACT
Hotel Bristol
Krakowskie Przedmieście 42/44
Warsaw
tel. +48 22 55 11 000
www.hotelbristolwarsaw.pl

PRICES
Admission on weekdays
between 6.00 am and 4 pm –
PLN 70

The famous hotel has its own spa – an intimate and elegant place with white décor. The spa is available both for the hotel guests and the residents of Warsaw.

INTERIOR

In order to use the spa you need to take the lift to level minus one of the hotel. The place features a swimming pool, a massage room with two tables, a gym with Techno-Gym equipment (treadmills, bikes, stepper, multi-trainer atlas, dumbbells and weights), as well as hammam and Finnish sauna. There's also a small changing room with lockers and a corner where you can relax in a beautiful, white armchair which resembles a bird cage.

The interior is dominated by white tones, including the reception counter (covered in eel skin), draped curtains covering the walls in the spa, and furniture. The heated pool isn't large

(11x4 m), but you can swim there without any problem, and then rest on comfortable beds in a special relaxation room. If you are thirsty, you can order tea, coffee or soft drinks, which are served straight from the hotel restaurant. You can also read here daily newspapers and magazines. Each guest receives a towel and disposable slippers.

TREATMENTS

After a workout at the gym, a visit to the sauna and the pool, it's worth putting yourself in the hands of professional massage therapists. I especially recommend the "Bristol Experience" (the massage of the feet, legs, arms, back and neck), which lasts 75 minutes, or the 50-minute popular massage of the back, neck and legs. They can be performed in a classic version or with special essential oils as a part of aromatherapy. You can also go for one of several offered facial treatments based on the products of the

American company Dermatologica. I also recommend a 90-minute treatment that improves the shape of the face, and before which the therapist thoroughly examines your skin. The procedure itself consists of several stages: selection of essential oils, double face and neckline cleansing, selection of suitable scrub, compression massage, applying the serum and the mask. The beautician doesn't leave the room even for a moment, and massages also hands and arms.

VERDICT:

It's a very good spa located in the heart of Warsaw, with professional massage therapist, and an excellent, though small beauty parlour. Hotel guests can use the gym, the pool and saunas free of charge. Customers who come to Bristol Spa just for massage, pay only for the treatment, and other attractions are free of charge.

Marzena Mróz

FOT.: MATERIAŁY PRASOWE

Car

BMW 4 Series

THE ESSENCE OF JOY OF DRIVING

When asked what makes a care pleasure to drive, we generally come up with such factors as power, dynamics, comfort of travel, safety, and certainly aesthetics. It's common to think that women mostly value aesthetics, and men performance, but no matter from what perspective we look at and experience the new BMW 4 Series, I can assure you that each of your senses will be properly pampered. No wonder then that since its very premiere on the Polish market, the model has been collecting various automotive awards (recently the "Auto Lider" award and the "Golden Wheel").

The recently introduced 4 Series is a new generation of the old 3 Series which, until recently, was available in coupe and convertible body styles. With the new car the Bavarian automaker wants to sort out its model range, so now the series with even numbers are the sporty versions of the coupes. Indeed, at first glance you can see that 4 Series has a more sporty character than its

predecessor. It's also slightly lower and wider, and its body line looks more dynamic. The version I tested was 428i with the additional M Sport package, which highlighted this sporty flair and sparkle even more.

ENGINE

The 428i is equipped with a 2-litre motor producing 245 HP, which allows for dynamic driving, especially in SPORT or SPORT+ modes. For those who prefer a slightly more economical driving, there are also modes ECO PRO and COMFORT. In combination with xDrive system, the car is not only dynamic and fast, but it has also a remarkable grip, giving the driver the sense of safety.

INTERIOR

The new 4 Series is an extremely comfortable car. The incredibly comfortable leather seats with adjustable parts make the "driving pleasure" phrase take on a new meaning. You may drive it for long hours and still feel that you don't have enough of it.

And one more little thing com-

fort-wise, which will surely be appreciated by those who in most coupes have to stretch and bend to reach the seat belt – in 4 Series the seatbelt is handed over by an automatic arm.

The ergonomics of the dashboard and the intuitive solutions make all the operations in the cabin seem simple and natural. And the leather steering wheel available in the M Sport package is thick and remarkably comfortable to hold. At the same time it's so beautifully designed that I couldn't stop myself from stroking it delicately when standing at the traffic lights.

VERDICT

For me, BMW 4 Series is a car that perfectly affects all the senses. It's simply a complete car. The aesthetics and the quality of build that BMW is known for, are also visible in this model. The sporty character in combination with the comfortable interior can indeed give you an idea what a real driving pleasure may be.

Marta Wilk

KONTAKT
www.bmw.pl

CENY
From PLN 186 900



CLARINS SKIN SPA



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PRICE

PLN 360

The mission of Clarins is to improve well-being and highlight the natural beauty. This mission is successfully carried out in the brand's beauty salon in Warsaw, where experienced beauticians select appropriate treatments and offer long-term skin care both for men and women. Clarins Skin Spa, situated in Warsaw's Mokotów, is a true oasis of peace and harmony. It's a quiet and posh place, filled with the scent of aromatherapy oils.

CLARINS TOUCH

It's just enough to enter the salon to feel immediately that you are in good hands. For over 50 years the salons of this one of the most recognizable brands in the world boast their own methods and techniques of massage, called the "Clarins Touch". Its secret lies in the fact that the beautician almost continually touches the client's body, including their face, neck, and hands. The inventors of the technique came to the conclusion that no machine can ever replace the sensitivity, precision and softness of human hand. "All the treatments performed in our salon involve a unique,

manual technique with a series of precise gestures which are based on in-depth knowledge of the anatomy of the face and body," says Edyta Paliwoda, the owner of Clarins Skin Spa.

INTERIOR

The salon is spacious, with sterile furniture and good taste. The dominant colours are white and red. On the ground floor there is a reception desk and a cosmetics kiosk. On the floor, there are treatment rooms, and a hall, where you can relax before the treatment, read a paper or have a conversation.

RADIANT REJUVENATION

The treatment revitalizes, smoothens, and radiates the skin, giving it a fresh look. The first stage is make-up removal, and then delicate, enzymatic peeling of the face, neck and neckline. Then there is time for massage with preparation that contains extracts from caffeine, which redefines the facial oval and its contours. After a while, you are treated with a central massage of the face, neck, neckline and shoulders using professional and highly-concentrated supplement, available only in the salon. With the thorough massage the sub-

stances get into the inner layers of your skin. An important element of the treatment is relaxation after the neck massage. The last active element is putting on a mask with pink algae grown by Clarins in an ecologically protected area of Quessant. The treatment illuminates, smoothens, and moisturizes the skin. All this is topped with serum and cream - adequate to your skin type, and rinsing and moisturizing your hands and feet, which is unusually pleasurable.

VERDICT:

A visit to the salon restore the perfect balance of your skin, improves the condition of your muscles, the looks of your face, and also has a relaxing effect. The method is based on very precise gestures carefully selected to each treatment and person, which are performed with remarkable precision. The "Radiant Rejuvenation" treatment redefines the facial contour and looks, and gives a feeling of refreshment and regeneration. Besides the touch, the pleasant scent of cosmetics and oils based only on plant extracts and relaxing music, also create a nice impression.

Marzena Mróz

FOT: MATERIAŁY PRASOWE

MEDICOVER HOSPITAL

Opened 5 years ago, Medicover hospital comprises 7 specialized clinics, performing 3,500 surgeries a year. Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care Unit, Diagnostic and Consultation Centre, surgery, Cardiology, oncology, orthopaedics, urology, otolaryngology, and paediatrics are the leading units, just as high-performing as obstetrics, gynaecology and pathology of pregnancy wards.

SUDDEN OPERATION

I was taken to hospital at 4.00 a.m. with a piercing pain in the lower abdomen. I was examined by the doctor on duty, who diagnosed appendicitis. Since Medicover offers a full range of services 24 hours a day, the decision about surgery was made immediately. I was on an empty stomach and was immediately taken to the operating room, where friendly nurses took care of me.

When I woke up, I didn't feel the pain, and a nurse told me everything was all right. Since the operation was performed using a laparoscope, the wound was not extensive and my convalescence - shorter. Then I was

taken to a post-operation ward, and later - to a single room.

Interior

This is without a doubt the nicest hospital I've ever seen in Poland. Spacious, decorated in pastel colours, very well equipped. My room came with a bed, a bedside cabinet, a closet, a table, an armchair, a lamp, a TV set and air-conditioning - like in a good hotel. In the crystal-clear bathroom there were towels and a bathrobe.

The wi-fi was available not only in my room but throughout the hospital, so I could go online soon after the operation. Next to my bed there was a nurse call button, in case I needed immediate help.

Patience coming to the hospital can choose between a family room with a bathroom and a separate bed for a guest, or a comfortable suite with a bedroom and a lounge.

THE STAY AT MEDICOVER

I spent two nights at the hospital in absolute comfort. The day began with medical rounds, and then a dietary breakfast was served. The nurses were professional and took care of me, and

I didn't misuse the nurse call button. As for lunch, you can choose a dish from the menu, and the dishes served for supper were not very large, but varied. Since I had to be operated urgently, I didn't have time to take any cosmetics with me. But it was necessary to notify one of the nurses of the fact, and thirty minutes later I had all I needed. Hospital patients have also access to a restaurant, a well-stocked kiosk and a pharmacy.

VERDICT:

This is the only such hospital in Poland. What's important - it's accessible not only to private patients. Patients staying in Medicover hospital under a contract with Polish National Health Fund are located in double rooms. The personnel - both the doctors and nurses - are doing their job with great dedication offering medical services at the highest level. Like other Medicover patients, I also appreciated the fact that hospital visits are unlimited in time. No one wishes to end up in a hospital, but if I ever need medical service, I will definitely choose Medicover.

Agata Janicka

CONTACT

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Warsaw - Wilanów
Al. Rzeczypospolitej 5
www.medicover.pl/szpital

This is without a doubt the nicest hospital I've ever seen in Poland. Spacious, decorated in pastel colours, very well equipped.



SLASH AND BURN

The value of loyalty schemes is depreciating fast. **Jenny Southan** investigates why your miles and points are reaping fewer rewards, and what you can do about it



Frequent flyers need to keep track of two types of currencies – “real-world” pounds, dollars and euros, and the “virtual” miles and points they accumulate through airline and hotel loyalty schemes. Back in the 1980s, when Virgin Atlantic launched its Freeway programme – an early incarnation of Flying Club – the rewards were much simpler. “I think the deal was that if you flew Upper Class you got a free economy ticket,” says Alan Lias, the airline’s head of loyalty and ancillary revenue. Nowadays, you need to have accrued thousands of miles from numerous flights (or partners) to get the same benefits, often with fees and taxes charged on top. The problem is a consequence of inflation – just as the purchasing power of real-world currencies depreciate over time in response to market forces, so too do miles and points in the travel industry.

IT’S HARD TO COLLECT

Far from being a low, steady rate of inflation, loyalty members are complaining of dramatic and sudden jumps in the number of points and miles required for free nights and flights, along with higher tier status thresholds, black-out and expiration dates, route restrictions and reduced award seat/night availability. All of these changes immediately devalue balances and may even coerce travellers into spending more cash to get what they want.

As Brad Benton, director of rewards global programmes at Marriott International, says: “Our goal is to drive more paid business into our hotels.” Since the beginning of the year, US-based members of Delta’s Sky Miles Medallion programme now have to fulfil minimum annual spend requirements to qualify for silver, gold, platinum or diamond status in 2015 (see below). United introduced a similar model last month for those looking to achieve Mileage Plus Premier status. It shows that legacy carriers are beginning to move over to revenue-based models, which have, until now, been favoured by low-cost carriers. “The distance flown is no longer the sole way to determine how frequently a customer is travelling with you, or who is the best or most valuable customer,” says a spokesperson for Delta Sky Miles.

Now Delta and United have done that, it’s a pretty fair expectation that American will do the same.

The erosion of generosity is an emotional subject for any business traveller – when you sense your loyalty has been undermined, the normal reaction is to feel personally affronted.

YOU PAY FOR YOURSELF

After taking a deep breath, it’s worth considering why these changes are happening. First, to increase profitability and ensure

sustainability. As hotels invest in revamps and expansion projects, and airlines pour money into their onboard products (flatbeds in business are now the norm), the costs, it would seem, have to be met by the customer – either directly, through increased rates, or indirectly through adjustments to the structure of loyalty schemes. Virgin’s Lias acknowledges that it has been “quite lean” for the frequent flyer programme (FFP) member. He says: “Legacy carriers have lost billions and billions of dollars over the past 20 years and what tipped it over the edge was the banking crisis in 2009. Many airlines went through a process of consolidating and decreasing capacity to drive more yield.”

“With more and more big airlines getting together, it has taken a significant amount of capacity out. The result is a reduction in the availability of rewards, and given there are trillions of miles out there, the response has been to make the perks side of things work a bit harder.”

It could be argued that virtual currency redemption rates are more stable than real-world currency prices, which fluctuate daily or even hourly. So although hikes in redemption rates may come as a shock to the consumer, it is simply because they are more noticeable.

As with real-world currencies, inflation is exacerbated by the issuing of yet more tender – think of hyperinflation in Weimar

Some critics argue that elite benefits are being watered down due to greater numbers of top-tier members.



Germany in the 1920s, when people had to queue with wheelbarrows of notes to buy a loaf of bread. In the same way, the constant issuing of billions upon billions of points – through double/triple/quadruple miles promotions, partnerships and credit card bonuses – weakens their value.

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF MILES?

In 2004, The Economist estimated that there were 14 trillion unredeemed miles in circulation (although FFP news and advice site webflyer.com later put the figure at 23.8 trillion) – the value of which also somehow needs to be accounted for by the industry.

Like money, miles are only worth what they can be redeemed for. Although travel companies rely on the fact that a good chunk of them will never be cashed in, one way of reducing the liability they have for providing all the rewards themselves (as well as generating additional revenue) is to take in partners and create online shops.

Lufthansa’s Miles and More scheme is linked to more than 300 affiliates, ranging from alliance carriers, car rental firms and hotels to spas, duty-free stores and tech brands. Members of Virgin’s Flying Club who have 1.2 million miles to spare can even nab a seven-night stay on Richard Branson’s Necker Island. But as Lias notes: “Most collectors want to redeem back on flying.”

Far from solving the problem, taking on partners, particularly credit card companies, increases the number of miles and points out there, contributing to depreciation. Brian Kelly, founder of thepointsguy.com, says: “In the US, you can get tonnes of miles just from doing online shopping and never stepping on a plane, and it’s not like they are adding more flights to keep up with demand [when it comes to spending them].”

John Ollila, loyalty expert and founder of loyaltylobby.com, agrees: “Loyalty-branded credit cards offer the general public a way of obtaining status they wouldn’t normally obtain through stays or flights.”

In November, Ollila was sent a Chase credit card offer from Hyatt, offering elite Gold Passport diamond membership “for as long as you are a cardholder” – giving anyone that was approved top-tier status without even setting foot in any of its properties. (This later turned out to be a mistake – the offer being for lifetime platinum.) All this might sound good, but there are wider implications. While the hotel company may gain revenue through these sales channels, it completely dilutes the benefits for me as a loyal guest as well as making redemptions more expensive and less available.

GROWING POPULARITY

The number of global loyalty members is rising – Delta Sky Miles has 90 million (up from 70 million in 2009, when it incorporated Northwest’s World Perks), while IHG Rewards has 76 million (up from 61 million in 2011).

Gretchen Kloke, vice-president of Starwood Preferred Guest, says: “SPG membership in emerging markets has grown by 400 per cent since 2008. Room nights abroad for Chinese SPG members are up over 20

TEN WAYS TO FIGHT LOYALTY SCHEME DEPRECIATION

- Don’t hoard your points and miles – use them within 12-24 months of earning them.
- Work out what the value of a point or mile is in financial terms to better assess the value of your redemption.
- Consider transferring points out of one scheme and into another when you know a devaluation is approaching.
- Use your miles and points effectively – don’t burn them all on gadgets and spa breaks.
- Don’t rush into making a booking – sometimes it might cost more than paying for a cash ticket.
- Boost your earnings – put everyday expenses on airline-affiliated credit cards and take advantage of shopping bonuses.
- Don’t be too loyal – switch to another scheme, ask for a status match, and book with competitors if you don’t think you are getting value for money.
- Behave like an investor in the stock market and do your research – miles and points are a currency just like pounds and dollars.
- Sign up to US airline schemes – they tend to have fewer surcharges and fees on award flights than European counterparts.
- Redeem miles on flights starting in non-UK European hubs that have lower taxes and charges.



Like money, miles are only worth what they can be redeemed for.



Gretchen Kloke, vice-president of Starwood Preferred Guest, says that high thresholds aren't putting customers off.



per cent this year and every 20 seconds, in China, a new guest joins."

As a consequence, more limitations have to be put in place to protect the finite number of award nights and flights available. Winship says: "We have seen the price of many awards gradually increasing. There is a herd mentality among the airlines – when one raises the price of award tickets, the predictable reaction from others is to follow suit." The same goes for hotels. Last May, Marriott introduced a ninth category, with some of its most popular top-end hotels, such as London's St Pancras Renaissance and the New York Marriott Marquis (previously in category eight, priced at 40,000 points), bumped up to 45,000 points per night.

In the past year or so, Starwood has increased the award price of 218 of its hotels (decreasing 48), while IHG Rewards has hiked the price of a free night at 30 per cent of its properties, as well as introducing nine award categories, with top-end hotels costing 50,000 points. The worst offender is Hilton HHonors, shunting redemption rates up by as much as 90 per cent by bringing in an extra three categories costing 40,000 to 95,000 points in high season. Previously, a top-level category seven hotel cost 50,000 a night.

Making elite status harder to gain or hold on to is a common tactic – Hilton recently increased its requirements for gold and diamond status. Members now need 20 stays or 40 nights or 75,000 base points per calendar year to reach gold, up from 16 stays or 36 nights or 60,000 base points. Marriott's Ben-

ton says: "There is no limit to the number of top tier members we can have, though we have some pretty high thresholds – our top platinum tier guests need to give us 75 paid nights within one year. That's about three months worth of business days, and there are not a lot of people who travel that much." Still, Kloke has observed that high thresholds aren't putting customers off. She says: "It may be counter-intuitive, but Starwood's elite membership in its loyalty programme has doubled over the past five years, despite the global recession and ongoing economic challenges.

"At SPG, our strategy is to focus on this new tribe of global travel elites who are more profitable – and powerful – than ever by creating the richest elite hotel loyalty programme in history. In fact, the top 2 per cent of our members drive 30 per cent of

HOW MANY MEMBERS?

- Delta Sky Miles - 90 MILLION
- American Airlines AAdvantage - 71 MILLION
- United Mileage Plus - 52 MILLION
- Lufthansa Miles and More - 25 MILLION
- British Airways Executive Club - 7 MILLION
- IHG Rewards - 76 MILLION
- Marriott Global Rewards - 44 MILLION
- Hilton HHonors - 39 MILLION
- Starwood Preferred Guest - 17 MILLION
- Accor Le Club - 12 MILLION

Starwood's profit. What's more, they spend 60 per cent more than they did five years ago." But perhaps that's just the Chinese.

DOES IT PAY TO BE LOYAL?

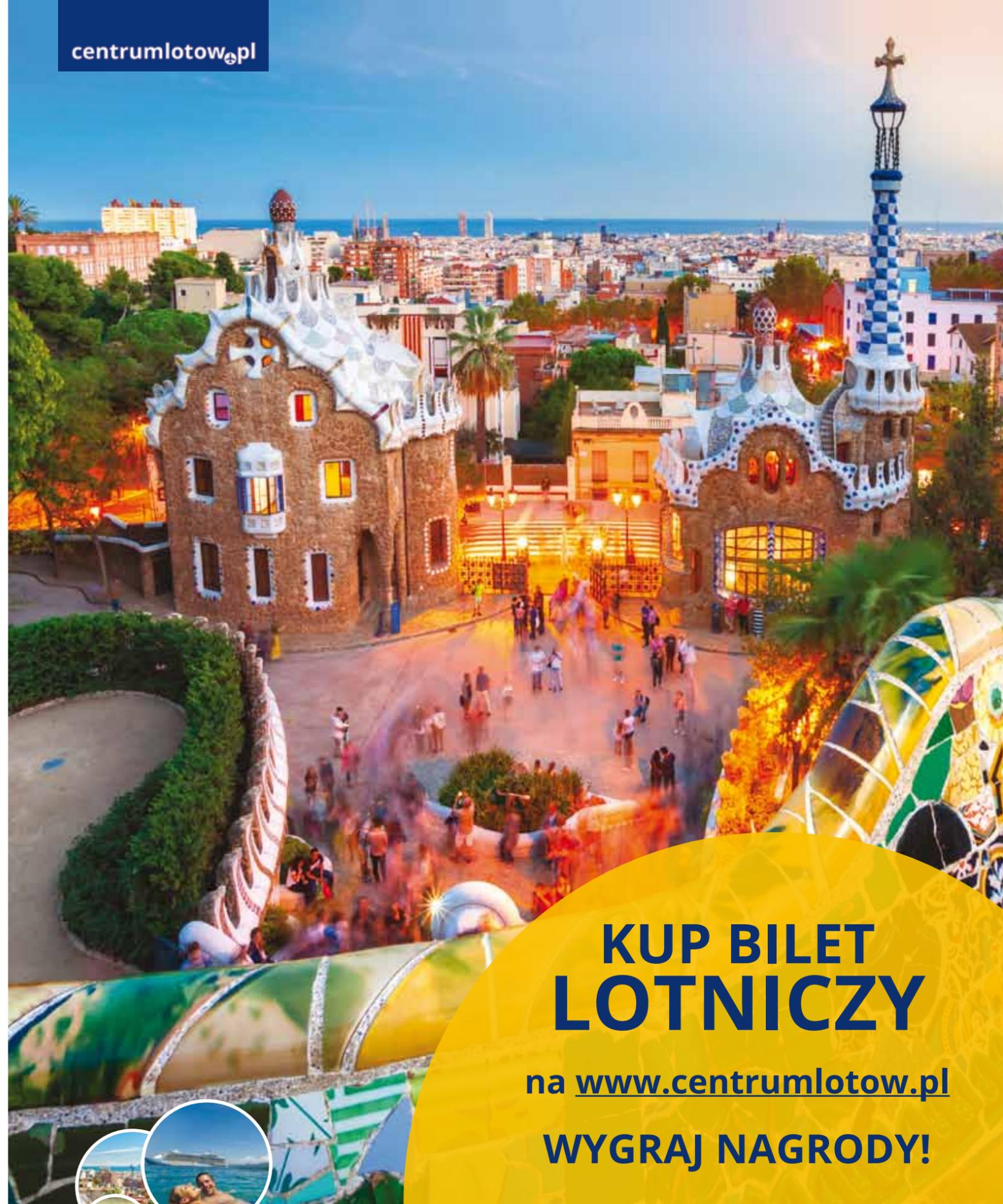
Some critics argue that elite benefits are being watered down due to greater numbers of top-tier members (though Starwood denies this). Kelly says: "It used to be that the top 1 per cent got all the perks. The airlines now see a real opportunity to sell upgrades, and for credit card companies to pay for all the perks. Silver passengers are now seeing credit cardholders receive almost the same benefits as them."

What does the future hold? Kelly says: "If the airlines squeeze too much and really devalue miles and points, there will come a time when consumers say: 'These miles have become worthless, I'm going to switch to a cashback card.'

"The FFPs are some of the most profitable arms for airlines. What's more, elite flyers bring in a disproportionate amount of revenue – airlines don't want to anger their top customers. If they lose too many, they may roll back these changes or add on new benefits to keep them happy. They are testing the limit – trying to make people pay and take things away as much as possible."

Don't be blindly loyal, exercise your power as a consumer and react to changes you don't like. Use your points wisely, but also consider the role you may play in exacerbating the problem. You can't always have it both ways...

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POLAND IS AN IMPORTANT MARKET FOR LUFTHANSA

Marzena Mróz talks to **Bart Buyse**, General Manager for Poland at Lufthansa German Airlines



How was the beginning of 2014 for Lufthansa? What are the airline's short-term goals?

Bart Buyse: Lufthansa is steadily expanding its offer in Poland. In the winter schedule we have increased the number of seats by more than 20% and in summer we aim at a 30% rise. It's a truly unique result among traditional international airlines that serve Polish regional airports. We have an extensive network of 212 connections to 81 countries worldwide. It's available not only for flights departing Warsaw,

but also Gdańsk, Poznań, Katowice, Wrocław, Cracow, and Rzeszów, via our main hubs in Frankfurt and Munich. We have also increased the number of connections from regional airports, for example from one to two from Rzeszów, Poznań, Gdańsk, and Wrocław to Frankfurt. On the route from Cracow to Frankfurt we have increased the number of daily flights from three to four, and on Wrocław/Poznań – Munich route from two to three. It's a proof that Poland is an important market for Lufthansa. We are pleased that for the growing

number of both business and leisure passengers we are the airline of their first choice.

You have mentioned the growing popularity of Lufthansa with the Poles. Can you tell us more details?

The convenient access to the global route network and the highest quality of our services, are the advantages that are highly regarded by our Polish passengers. Lufthansa is present in seven Polish regional airports and from each of them depart even up to 15 flights a



We are pleased that for the growing number of both business and leisure passengers we are the airline of their first choice.

day, thanks to which the passengers can easily reach our main hub airports in Frankfurt and Munich. What's more, the well-connected flights allow for significant reduction of travel time. We should also mention that in 2013 Lufthansa recorded the highest score of punctuality in the company's history. At the same time we raised the level of reliability of indirect connections, as well as improved the quality of luggage service. Safety, punctuality, highest quality of service and Lufthansa's extensive offer are appreciated by the Poles.

Recently, we have observed here a growing popularity of Asian destination such as Bangkok, Singapore, Beijing, or Shanghai. In this year's summer season we will launch flights to Jakarta, which will certainly please Polish passengers. We are proud to offer the product of the highest quality at an extremely competitive price. Lufthansa is the only traditional international air carrier in Poland that offers such an extensive flight network and comprehensive service.

Polish passengers choose mainly the Economy Class tickets. Have you noticed any increase in the popularity of your First Class product?

I can definitely say that Polish passengers also fly in our First Class cabins. Lufthansa is a leader among international carriers that offer the First Class product on the Polish market. In 2013 we observed a 50 percent increase of the popularity of this product compared to the previous year. What distinguishes us is the highest quality. This is confirmed by numerous prizes, such as the 5-star rating for our First Class from Skytrax, or Five Star Diamond Award for three achievements in the Premium category. However, among the Poles choosing our airline, the Economy class



The convenient access to the global route network and the highest quality of our services, are the advantages that are highly regarded by our Polish passengers.



is the most popular. In the spring of 2014, so soon, we will present a new Premium Economy product. We have also introduced new amenities, which enable you to choose your seat already at booking stage for passengers traveling in all classes. Our priority is to create an offer that meets the expectations of customers. For each market in which we oper-

ate, it's important for us that the changes we are introducing are approved by our passengers - whether it's about the modernization of the fleet, improving the quality of on board services, expanding the network of lounges at airports, or broadband internet access on-board Lufthansa aircraft.

Thank you for the interview.



SCHIPHOL – THE DUTCH MASTER



Amsterdam Schiphol airport's connectivity has been mentioned many times in these pages – it has a network of 317 direct destinations, and provides roughly 120 flights per day to and from 28 UK locations. Almost 7.5 million UK passengers travel through the hub every year – accounting for 15 per cent of its annual capacity (51 million in 2012) – most of whom are transiting to inter-continental cities. Its popularity is largely down to its single terminal – a one-of-a-kind feature among international airports that contributes to ease of connection for those in transit. And despite Schiphol's steadily increasing capacity, it intends to stay this way.

"We know the one-terminal concept is our USP, and we will keep it," says Maarten de Groof, executive vice-president and chief commercial officer for Schiphol Group. "There have been ideas proposed to develop new terminal areas but we have decided that our main development will be in a south-westerly direction. This will be adjacent to the current terminal complex, and will be connected [to it]." Schiphol's

plans for growth also include the addition of a new pier to the south of the terminal for eight aircraft, which is in the process of being finalised and is set to be unveiled "in the near future".

SECURITY CHECK

Despite the airport's success, there is room for improvement. DavidGordon10, a poster on our online forum (business-traveller.com/discussion), "The non-Schengen part operates with at-gate security. This is terrible for short-haul flights boarding at short notice. London-bound flights are often delayed because there is not enough time for the passengers to get through."

This frustration has been noted, and a central screening facility is being introduced. De Groof says: "It will be a big improvement for those arriving from and departing non-Schengen destinations. The security checks at the gates will disappear and we will go to five central security filters. Three will be in the departure hall and two will be for transferring passengers – Schengen to non-Schengen and vice versa." The new area will be built in

stages alongside the day-to-day running of the airport, and will open by mid-2015.

SHORTER TAXIING?

Another issue that UK passengers experience when transiting is lengthy taxiing times. The ten-year-old, 3.8km Polderbaan is the newest of Schiphol's five main runways and extends so far away from the main terminal that its other end is almost in a different town. When landing on the Polderbaan, which is almost a given when flying from the UK in the evening, the taxi to the gate takes 25 minutes, which for some passengers seems simply absurd.

De Groof says: "The reasons for [the long taxiing times] are environmental – primarily noise reduction. We have an agreement about route usage and have to limit the noise from each aircraft as much as possible, so we use the runways that cause the least noise, of which Polderbaan is one."

RENOVATIONS

Good news for UK flyers is the planned revamp of Lounge Two in the heart of the non-Schengen area – the largest of

When it comes to accommodating new-generation aircraft, Schiphol is ready and waiting. The Dutch hub became the first European airport to be equipped to receive A380s in 2003.

Its popularity is also largely down to its single terminal – a one-of-a-kind feature among international airports that contributes to ease of connection for those in transit.

FOT: ARCHIVUM



The airport is spacious and convenient with numerous stores and good restaurants, as well as (obviously) florist's shops selling the most beautiful tulips.

Schiphol's public departure lounges, and the waiting area for flights to the UK. The last of the airport's four departure facilities to be renovated, it will be completed in 2015. Schiphol's oldest hotel, the Hilton Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (opened in 1972), is going to be replaced. Scheduled for a 2015 opening, a new futuristic cube-shaped Hilton is being built alongside the existing property with 433 guestrooms, 23 meeting rooms and a covered walkway to the terminal. When the new hotel opens, the older one will be demolished.

OTHER NOVELTIES

What else is in store? When it comes to accommodating new-generation aircraft, Schiphol is ready and waiting. The Dutch hub became the first European airport to be equipped to receive A380s in 2003 (following the opening of the Polderbaan runway), yet it wasn't until August 2012 that Emirates became the first carrier to deploy a superjumbo on its Schiphol route. Being the fourth-largest European hub airport in terms of passenger capacity (after London Heathrow, Paris Charles de Gaulle and Frankfurt),

it makes sense that airlines would choose to deploy their wide-bodied aircraft on point-to-point routes with the highest volume, so Schiphol may be less of a priority.

KLM has not ordered any superjumbos, and De Groof was unable to confirm whether any other carriers had plans to start flying their A380s to Schiphol. As for connectivity, Schiphol remains focused on the UK, which is reflected in the strategy of its national carrier.

How about Schiphol's long-haul prospects? In February 2014, KLM will serve Santiago de Chile, which will be its ninth destination in Central and South America. In addition, the Dutch national carrier has increased its flights to Bangkok from seven weekly flights to ten for its winter schedule, and will up the frequency of its recently launched route to the Japanese city of Fukuoka from thrice-weekly to four flights per week in March.

In response to the proposed launch of a direct Eurostar route from London to Schiphol in 2016, De Groof says: "Good accessibility over land is crucial to an airport like Schiphol. There may be a little competition [with London to Schiphol flights], but it will mean increased connections to Schiphol from London."

The new Eurostar link may also attract Brits to Schiphol as a method of escaping air passenger duty. Still, with a journey time of about four hours, it remains to be seen whether APD-dodging Londoners will favour getting the train to Schiphol over taking the two-hour 15-minute Eurostar service to Paris Gare du Nord and exiting Europe from Charles de Gaulle.

The good news for Schiphol is that it can rely on its connectivity to the UK regions to keep its feeder air traffic at a buoyant level – something that Britain's own hub airport cannot attest to.



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At the beginning February 2014, Mercure hotel chain was expanded by yet another hotel operating under a franchise agreement - Mercure Raclawice Dosłońce Conference & SPA. It's the third establishment of this international chain in Małopolskie Voivodeship. The hotel is located in a picturesque area near Cracow, and the numerous attractions offered here make it a real alternative for people seeking active leisure in nature away from the hustle and bustle of a big city.

UNIQUE SETTING

Mercure Raclawice Dosłońce Conference & Spa is situated among the scenic hills of Miechowska Highland, just 50 kilometres from the centre

of Cracow, and near Raclawice – a place which played an important role in the history of Poland. The hotel is a perfect choice for the whole family. It offers the opportunities for active leisure among forests and meadows that form the landscape of a typical Polish countryside.

Guests can enjoy here a number of attractions, such as a barbecue hut, a tennis court, a putting green and driving range, courts for beach volleyball and basketball, Nordic walking, ATVs, buggies, an off-road track, or aqua aerobic. And if you seek unique atmosphere and real quiet, you will find them in the Japanese Garden.

Mercure Raclawice Dosłońce Conference hotel has 67 spacious and comfortable bed-

rooms and suites. The conference zone stretches over the area of 550 sq m. The hotel also has a restaurant called Planeta Smaków (Planet of Flavours) which serves international and Polish cuisine, and it specializes in delicious game dishes. Those who feel like spending time in a less formal atmosphere, should definitely visit the Księżycowy Bar (Lunar Bar) which offers over 40 types of drinks, fine freshly brewed coffee and a wide choice of teas.

MOMENTS OF RELAXATION AND REGENERATION

The hotel also has a large SPA & Wellness Centre with a full-size swimming pool and jacuzzi. Dosłońce Spa & Wellness Janssen offers a wide range of relaxation and beauty treat-

ments which are performed with high-quality equipment and carefully selected cosmetics and preparations. To feel truly relaxed you should try a bath in sulphide water supplied from water intakes of Winiarski Forest around Busko Zdrój.

The centre also offers various relaxation rituals, such as Asian, Moroccan and Mediterranean. Other treatments available here include oxybrasion, 'spring' cold therapy, rejuvenating with 24-carat gold, Body Master body shaping treatments, lifting with ions, mesotherapy, and slimming body treatments. The specialists at Dosłońce Spa & Wellness Janssen also offer a number of massages, such as ayurvedic, Hawaiian Lomi Lomi, GUA-SHA, with herbal punches, or with a warm candle.

Mercure Raclawice Dosłońce Conference & SPA is registered as a centre where physical therapy retreats can be held. The programmes are carried out under the supervision of qualified and experienced physiotherapists in the area of balneology, kinesiology taping concept, kinesitherapy, hydrotherapy and thermotherapy.

HIGH QUALITY

Mercure Raclawice Dosłońce Conference & Spa is business and leisure oriented, meeting the standards of quality for Mercure hotels. It has been included in the Global Systems of Reservation, Distribution and Sales of Accor Group and Orbis. The owner of the hotel is Start Travel company. "We are proud to be able to join Mercure hotel chain, which has such a good reputation. We are pleased that the group has rated highly the quality of our service, as well as our modern conference facilities and an exclusive offer for the business. This recognition for our current activities is at the same time a commitment to maintaining a high quality of service," said Dagmara Leja, the head manager of Mercure Raclawice Dosłońce Conference & Spa.



Mercure Raclawice Dosłońce Conference & SPA. It's the third establishment of this international chain in Małopolskie Voivodeship. The numerous attractions offered here make it a real alternative for people seeking active leisure in nature away from the hustle and bustle of a big city.



SHERATON SOPOT – THE PEARL OF THE POLISH RIVIERA



CONTACT

Sheraton Sopot Hotel
Conference Center & Spa
ul. Powstańców Warszawy 10
81-718 Sopot
tel. 48 58 767 1000
www.sheraton.pl/sopot

Sopot is deservedly called the Pearl of the Baltic, for years attracting tourists from Poland and abroad. And indeed, Sopot has a lot to brag about. Its wide and sandy beaches, modern clubs and the elegant Sheraton... In other words, it can easily live up to the expectations of the most demanding tourists.

WHY SHERATON?

The Hotel is located in the very heart of the city, right on the beach, close to the most famous pier and the equally known promenade – Monte Cassino Street. Its location gives guests a rare opportunity to have relaxing walks along the seashore, as well

as be in the very centre of all the events happening in the city. We also choose Sheraton because it offers attractive accommodation packages that include spa treatment. The offer is quite comprehensive, and there is something for everyone here. The hotel is a perfect choice for a romantic getaway for two, as well as a family stay with children.

There's the comfortable and spacious spa, several restaurants and bars, the Kids Club, and the unique view from the window. The management guarantees that every guest that uses the hotel's spa will leave Sheraton rejuvenated, because the place boasts its holistic ap-

proach to life. This means that the therapists ensure that you reach the balance of both body and mind.

SHERATON SOPOT SPA

This name translates into "the oasis of relaxation". The place stretches over 2,000 square metres on three floors. Its elegant and relaxing interiors were created by the designed by the best architects and interior designers in Europe. The spa's 11 treatment rooms (including the room for couples) therapists put guests into the state of deep relaxation. Facial and body treatment improve the condition of the skin, while massages provide relaxation.

In Sheraton Sopot Spa you can also take advantage of professional beauty treatments that come near to aesthetic medicine. In treatments the spa uses preparations of three cosmetic lines: Anne Semonin - the products used by Hollywood stars (the spa has exclusive rights for their use in Poland), Dermalogica and AA Prestige Institute. In addition to massages Sheraton Sopot Spa recommends a stay in the so-called "Wet Zone", where you will find an indoor swimming pool, a hydrotherapy pool with Sopot brine baths, an aromatic Hammam Turkish bath, a brine bath, a sauna, an ice fountain, rain caves, a tepidarium with heated couches and a gym.

RESTAURANTS

The hotel's restaurants are also a guarantee of unforgettable experiences. Wave serves international and Polish cuisine. You can also observe here the whole cooking process, because the restaurant features the open kitchen.

Sheraton Sopot Conference Center & Spa also houses an oriental restaurant InAsia, which offers a wide range of Asian flavours. The menu, décor, service – all these elements have been refined to the tiniest details to create a one-of-a-kind place attracting guests with its unique atmosphere. The restaurant offers a beautiful view of the sea. It's also worth visiting the Vinoteque Sopot & Cigar Lounge - an extraordinary wine cellar located in the basement of the Spa House, which store more than 200 wines from around the world. Specially selected wines are served by an experienced sommelier. Snacks served in Vinoteque are ideally suited to a particular type of wine to bring out its flavour. If you feel like having a coffee in Sopot, then go to Rotunda Café situated in the historical Rotunda in front of the pier.

It's also a good idea to visit Sheraton in the morning where on



Apart from its fabulous spa and fancy restaurants, Sheraton has one more thing. You can come here in the morning, sit on its spacious terrace, sipping tea and admiring the pier and the city that is waking up.



its spacious terrace you can sip tea and admire the pier and the city that is waking up. Contrary to the opinion that you should visit Sopot only in the summer,

the city has its own unique atmosphere even in winter and spring, when you can enjoy the empty beaches and the fabulous sea views.

HIGH TECH BEAUTY

Tomasz Mackiewicz interviews *Kalina Ben Sira*, the President of La Perla clinic



Kalina Ben Sira
She says she doesn't work, but creates. For the last 12 years she's been searching for modern, reliable, certified technologies. She selects only the best and most expensive solutions – too expensive for Polish conditions, some might say. She has managed to achieve what seemed impossible – to create a clinic in Poland, which can compete with the best clinics in the US and Europe.

On your site we can read as follows: "One treatment, one hour, one size smaller" or "lifting with no scalpel". Sounds great, but is it really possible?

A lot of people who call us for the first time, ask the same question. Yes, it's possible thanks to the devices like Liposonix and Ulthera – the world's greatest innovations in aesthetic medicine. I don't want to bore you with a detailed description of how they work, I'll just say they use the ultrasound energy delivered deep below the surface of the skin. What's important, they are gentle to the tissue and don't affect the cuticle, concentrating the energy where it's needed – in the place where the new, improved collagen is formed. The effects are astounding – after just one treatment, the skin is visibly rejuvenated, firmer and more tense.

How much do you need to invest to achieve the desired effect?

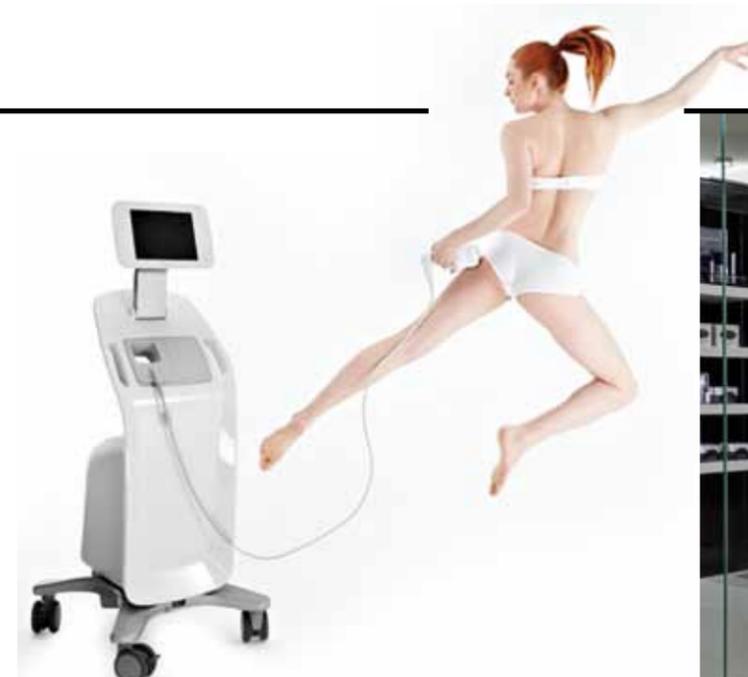
Liposonix costs between PLN 5,000 up to even PLN 15,000, while the Ulthera – about PLN

12,000, but both devices are worth the money. In return, you get not only a flatter stomach or a clearly outlined waist, but also a guarantee of safety, as both devices have an American FDA certificate of effectiveness. We equip the clinics in expensive solutions of the highest quality, so that our clients have access to what's best out there.

How many of these miraculous machines do you have and what treatments do you offer?

Currently, we have over 30 devices that rectify literally all beauty deficiencies while constantly enriching our offer with subsequent equipment. I regularly go to international congresses of aesthetic medicine in search of the best technology. Recently, in Monte Carlo, I spoke to several owners of well-known clinics from the US and Europe, who admitted, that not only we're not falling behind when it comes to new solutions, but often use better and more innovative equipment. Clients who have been to clinics in New York, London or Paris can eas-

ily see it's true. They'll find the same solutions in Poland. And if they improved their looks one or two years ago, we can surprise them with something new, as we select only the best treatments, which often places us ahead of the American clinics. Not to mention the fact that we offer competitive prices. The technology is developing very quickly, and many novelties used a few years ago now have much better and more efficient counterparts, which most Polish people can't afford. Such a great number of new equipment in one clinic is a rarity. For example, other clinics continue to offer basic endermologie, while in La Perla, we offer its more modern counterparts like Icoone or LPG Integral. It's like replacing last year's Mercedes cars with latest models. But it's all for the benefit of our clients, not a marketing effect. The most modern, reputable equipment provides even better effectiveness of the treatments and better safety standards that are guaranteed by prominent specialists with scientific degrees, e.g. Elżbieta Radzikowska prof. dr hab. med.,



Józef Jethon and Barbara Jerschina, lek. med. Listing all their functions and professional and scientific achievements would take up too much space.

Our readers are frequent travellers and busy people. They might not have time for time-consuming treatments and long convalescence.

Haste is, unfortunately, a sign of the times we live in. Everyone, who wants to achieve success, whether a president of a large company or an executive employee in a corporation, lacks time to spare. We understand it perfectly, and so we've prepared a package of "lunch treatments" aimed at such people. Botox can be done anywhere. We are the only place in Poland where you can have treatments like Ulthera or Perfectus, which last no more than 90 minutes, their effects last for 2-3 years, and the first results are visible right after the treatment. The "lunch" treatment includes: Liposonix, guaranteeing a rapid decrease in thigh, stomach or hips circumference, Ulthera – i.e. face lift and Thermage – eye lid lift, body or a stomach lift. Busy clients will also benefit from Body Jet – a plastic surgery that we carry out in just 2-3 hours, which requires a very short re-

FOT: MATERIAŁY PRASOWE

covery period. Body Jet is the latest, little invasive liposuction, which allows for a transplant of the sucked out fat to the breast or buttocks.

We are talking in the beautiful interior of one of your clinic in Mokotów district, Warsaw. It's clear that you attach great importance to aesthetics.

I studied the history of art, and it's still close to my heart. I like to be surrounded with pretty things, be inside beautiful interiors, that's why I try to provide my clients with the best possible aesthetic experience. In La Perla clinic, our priorities include efficiency, safety and high quality of service, but the appearance of our facilities is also very important to me. I'd like everyone to feel comfortable with us.

Speaking of efficiency and safety – many people still have qualms about undergoing plastic surgery. How would you convince them they have nothing to worry about?

We have the greatest experience in Poland. La Perla was founded in the pioneering days of the beauty industry, when people only went to beauty salons to take care of their looks. We were the first ones to hire a doctor and introduce innova-



In La Perla clinic, our priorities include efficiency, safety and high quality of service, but the appearance of our facilities is also very important to me.



IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT SHIRT

Marzena Mróz interviews Robert Czerucki from van Laack Store Warsaw



Does a perfect shirt even exist?

Of course, it does, and it is easily recognizable. You just put it on, look in the mirror and say: "Wow!", immediately knowing that this is it. But on a more serious note, the most important thing is to feel and look good, because it adds you self-confidence. Besides, according to the saying "fine feathers make fine birds", good looks are half the battle won. The perfect shirt is one that fits well, suits the figure, is made of fabric that corresponds to the occa-

sion as well as the other pieces of clothing, and has a unique look and feel.

How do you make the finest shirt?

Mostly with lots of experience. Van Laack with more than 130 years of experience in making shirts, has what is needed to ensure the shirt you buy is of excellent quality. Selecting a unique pattern of the fabric, appropriate weave of cotton, excellent cut, using only natural elements and perfect sewing – all these ingredients together

make up a perfect shirt. For example, few people realise that a truly excellent shirt consists of as many as 35 pieces of fabric.

Why is it worth having a shirt made to measure?

Because not all of us have perfect figures. Some of us don't have perfect proportions of the body, and shirt made to measure are mainly aimed at such customers, because they can conceal any shortcomings of our physique. They are also aimed at those who are creative enough to create something

unique and their own. Choosing the type of collar, cuff, the cut of the shirt, as well as the individual combination of fabrics with our personal monogram, we create something truly unique, because most of us want to be and feel original.

Your company has a long history.

Van Laack was founded in Berlin in 1881 by Hainrich van Laack. His idea was to set up a company specializing in high quality shirts that would retain unique look for a long time. In 1974 van Laack opened its first factory abroad in Indonesia, in 1993 another one in Vietnam, and in 1995 yet another one again in Indonesia.

Van Laack focuses on tradition and quality, and your pearly buttons with three holes have become your trademark. Do you have anything on your offer aimed at younger customers?

Of course, we do! For our younger customers we propose an excellent combination of classics with the latest, most up-to-date trends. The vast majority of van Laack shirts have a Tailor Fit cut, that is, with gently fitted waist. For the slimmest customers we have shirts in slim fit cut. The shirts which, until recently, were known as Regular Fit, that is without any fitted waist, are now practically out of fashion. That's why we don't suggest such shirts to our customers anymore. Naturally, besides classic shirts, van Laack also offers casual shirts, which are perfect for everyday wear and suitable for a Friday informal party. In winter seasons flannel shirts become more and more popular and are often chosen by younger customers.

But van Laack is not just about shirts?

That's true. Van Laack can dress a man almost from head to toe. In addition to shirts, we



also offer jackets, trousers, full suits, sweaters, jackets, ties and pocket squares, as well as swimming trunks, briefs, and pyjamas.

Does your offer also include women's clothing?

Naturally. Ladies are almost half of our customers. Our offer for ladies includes well-cut women's blouses, dresses, and jackets. You can also find here beautiful silk scarfs or cashmere shawls. The majority of our female customers are businesswomen who value the impeccable appearance not only during business meetings. The basic advantages of our blouses are a great cut and excellent fabrics. These are the qualities that our customers appreciate most.

What fabrics do you use?

Mainly cotton with the highest weave (120 and more), cashmere, silk, and angora wool. Tell us what a perfect shirt for a business traveller should look like.

In business wear what counts is classic colours, perfect cut that fits your figure, and the thing that any business traveller care for – the overall appearance. The shirt must look fresh, and when you take it out of your suitcase, it shouldn't be created. A shirt from our Natural Easy Care range is the best choice in this respect. Just take it out of your bag, put it on a hanger and after a few minutes it will look impeccable.

Thank you for the interview.

CONTACT

van Laack store Warsaw
Galeria Mokotów
ul. Wołoska 12
02-675 Warsaw, Poland
www.vanlaack.pl
tel. 22 5413427

REGIONS TEMPT WITH TASTES AT REGIONALIA FAIR



Delicious meat, crispy bread, delicious preserves, products of regional breweries, and even unique crafts – all of this will be available at the 3rd Regionalia Fair which will take place from 4 to 6 April 2014. The event organised in Congress Centre MT Polska in Warsaw will be attended by numerous producers from various Polish regions. They will try to encourage the visitors to buying healthy food and traditional products. Regionalia Fair is the largest initiative of this type in the capital of Poland. It's focused on ecology, which is part of the popular slow food trend promoting a healthy lifestyle and care for the environment. The honorary patrons of the event are the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development – Stanisław Kalemba, the Marshal of the Mazovia Voivodeship – Adam Struzik, and the Polish Chamber of Regional and Local Products.

ECO-STYLE

"Today, being eco isn't a fad, but a lifestyle," says Bartosz Sosnowski, the President of MT Polska. "It's worth promoting healthy food, not only

because of the latest trends, but also for its taste and high quality. And where would you find such products if not at Regionalia Fair, which is devoted entirely to articles produced with respect to tradition and nature? This year, the event will be organized just before Easter. It will be a good opportunity to order healthy snacks for the festive table. We have also planned a variety of activities for the participating guests, making the Regionalia a perfect idea for an interesting family weekend," he continues.

DELICIOUS AND BEAUTIFUL REGIONS

For the three days of Regionalia Fair you will be able to discover a cornucopia of healthy food produced in different parts of the country and the world. The event will be attended by local manufacturers and distributors of ecological, organic and traditional products. Apart from the regional food, the stands will also showcase wooden craft, natural cosmetics, and even hand-made jewellery as well as fashion inspired by folklore. There will also be an opportunity to learn more about the nature of the Polish regions, be-

cause at the same time the Congress Centre MT Polska will be a venue for Agrotourism Fair which promotes holiday close to nature, away from the city's hustle and bustle. The Fair will present the offers of numerous farmhouses and private accommodation. Also at that time the centre will host the annual LATO Fair.

WEEKEND ATTRACTIONS

In addition to the comprehensive offer of the exhibitors, the organizers have prepared numerous other attractions. The programme of the fair includes cooking demonstrations, food tasting, as well as inspiring recycling workshops. There will also be several competitions for the visitors. An interesting competition will be organized under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development with the aim of selecting the best regional products. This year's winners will be selected in four categories: natural treasures, alcoholic beverages, nature and beauty, and crafts. Regionalia Fair will be held in Congress Centre MT Polska at ul. Marsa 56c in Warsaw. For more information go to www.targiregionalia.pl.

For the three days of Regionalia Fair you will be able to discover a cornucopia of healthy food produced in different parts of the country and the world.



TWOJE WYDARZENIA W NAJWIĘKSZEJ SKALI!

Centrum Targowo-Kongresowe MT Polska, Warszawa



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KONTAKT

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NORWAY FOR ACTIVE LEISURE

Apart from picturesque cities and spectacular fjords, Norway has a lot to offer for those looking for active leisure, including glacier hiking, mountain biking, or visiting the famous Preikestolen cliff. **Marzena Mróz** invites you to a spring trip!



To reach the cliff you need to traverse rocky hills, green meadows, forest paths and narrow gorges with large exposure.

W

hen I think of Norway, the very first word that comes to my mind is "idyll". A spectacular scenery with fjords in the background, raw untouched nature, friendly trolls who reportedly live in every valley, remarkably friendly people and a truly original cuisine. It's a good idea to start the trip to Norway from Bergen – a sea port in the western part of the country and a city that for over 500 years was the largest in the Nordic region.

MUSIC OF THE FJORDS

It's almost certain, that Bergen will welcome you with rain or drizzle. But soon this first, slightly unpleasant feeling will succumb to an interesting reflection on the unusual location of the city. The cliffs and the fjord surrounded by seven mountains, make you stop and delight in this truly magnificent view. It's not an accident that Bergen is referred to as the gateway to the fjords. Then you can look to the right to see Bryggen – 61 colourful houses standing side by side. This UNESCO World Heritage site, erected from the 14th to the 16th century in the Hanseatic Wharf, today is a vibrant place, and an important part of the city.

Even if you only pass through Berlin, you should really find some time to take the funicular from the centre to Fløien mountain (320 metres above sea level), which offers an amazing panorama of the city. It's also worth visiting art galleries located near the centrally situated Lille Lungegårdsvann lake, as well as Bergen Art Museum which features a unique collection of paintings by Edvard Munch. Then, there's the Trolldhaugen Museum – the home of the famous Norwegian composer, Edvard Grieg who lived there for 22 years. Many of his most famous works were created in a small gazebo on the shore of Lake Nordas. You can also visit the rock-cut tomb where Grieg and his wife Nina are buried. In summer the place is the venue for weekly outdoor concerts.

SARDINES, SWORDS AND THE CATHEDRAL

The cobbled streets of Stavanger meander uphill between the white houses, most of which were built in the 18th century. Each of them is nicely decorated with pots of flowers and herbs, and features fancy wickets and fences. It's the largest concentra-



tion of old wooden buildings in Northern Europe – a true al fresco museum. Today, the tiny rooms of these miniature houses are often rented by students or converted into art galleries that are very popular with tourists. With its 126,000 inhabitants, Stavanger is the fourth largest city in Norway, and in 2008 was the European capital of culture.

It's rapid expansion in the 20th century the city owes to abundance of sardines in the area which were then harvested and packaged into cans in nearly 70 factories. Today Stavanger is growing even wealthier thanks to vast oil and gas deposits that are extracted from the North Sea. It's worth visiting the Petroleum Museum to see how the area has developed over the years. Stavanger is also famous for its unique murals created by well-known artists from all over the world who come here for the annual festival of street art called "Nuart." You must also see the medieval cathedral of the Holy Trinity as well as the Three Swords Monument commemorating the battle of Hafsford.

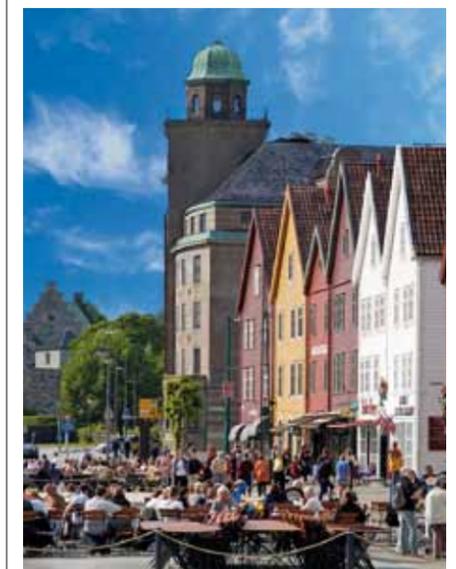
PULPIT ROCK

The area around Stavanger is abundant with beautiful fjords. One of the most famous is the 42 km long Lysefjord with its walls falling nearly vertically into the dark blue water from a height of a thousand metres. The fjord is not only long and narrow, but also penetrates water to incredible depth. The best way to enjoy this miracle of nature is to take a boat cruise from Stavanger. However, the biggest attraction of the famous fjord is, undoubtedly, Preikestolen ("the Preacher's Pulpit"), which rises to a height of 600 metres above sea level. Preikestolen is well seen from Lysefjord, but the view from the top is even more impressive.

To reach the cliff you need to traverse rocky hills, green meadows, forest paths and narrow gorges with large exposure. During the hike you can sit on a rock, relax for a moment and drink fresh water from a stream. The road isn't too difficult, but it's a good idea to put on sports shoes to make it even more comfortable. After a nearly 2.5-hour hike you reach the spectacular destination

Important info

- In summer you can fly directly to Bergen from Warsaw and other Polish cities with such airlines as Norwegian Air, WizzAir, and Ryanair, or with SAS and Air Baltic with a change in Copenhagen.
- Hotel in Bergen - Basic Hotel Bergen located in the very centre; www.basichotels.no
- If you plan a tour of museums and other attractions in Bergen, it's worth buying the Bergen Card which entitles you to free admission to most museums; www.visitbergen.com
- Grieg Museum at Trolldhaugen; www.griegmuseum.no/en
- Stavanger is accessible by ferry or directly from Warsaw, Katowice, Cracow, Szczecin and Gdańsk on the plane of one of the low-cost carriers.
- Exploring the Folgefona glacier; www.folgefonni-breforlag.no/UK/home.htm
- Hardangerfjord Hotel
Hardangerfjordvegen 613 5610 Øystese, Norge +47 56 55 63 00; www.hardangerfjord-hotell.no
- Grand Hotel
Osen 5 5411 Stord, Norge +47 53 40 96 00; www.grand-hotell.com
- Hotel Spa Hotel Velvaere, 4130 Hjelmeland. tel +47 480 50 600; www.spahotellvelvaere.no/
- Park Inn Hotel Lagårdsveien 61, 4010 Stavanger tel. +47 51 76 20 00; www.parkinn.com
- One of the best and oldest restaurants in Stavanger; Bevaremegvel Skagen 12, 4006 Stavanger; tel. +47 51 84 38 60
- "Nuart" Street Art Festival; www.nuartfestival.no/home
- When planning a trip to Norway, you can obtain detailed and reliable information trip to Norway at visitnorway.com/en





Raw, simple Norwegian landscape is also a perfect place for cycling trips. Of course, here mountain bikes are de rigueur, because the area is packed with steep hills. But hikers and canoeists will also find here a cornucopia of attractions.



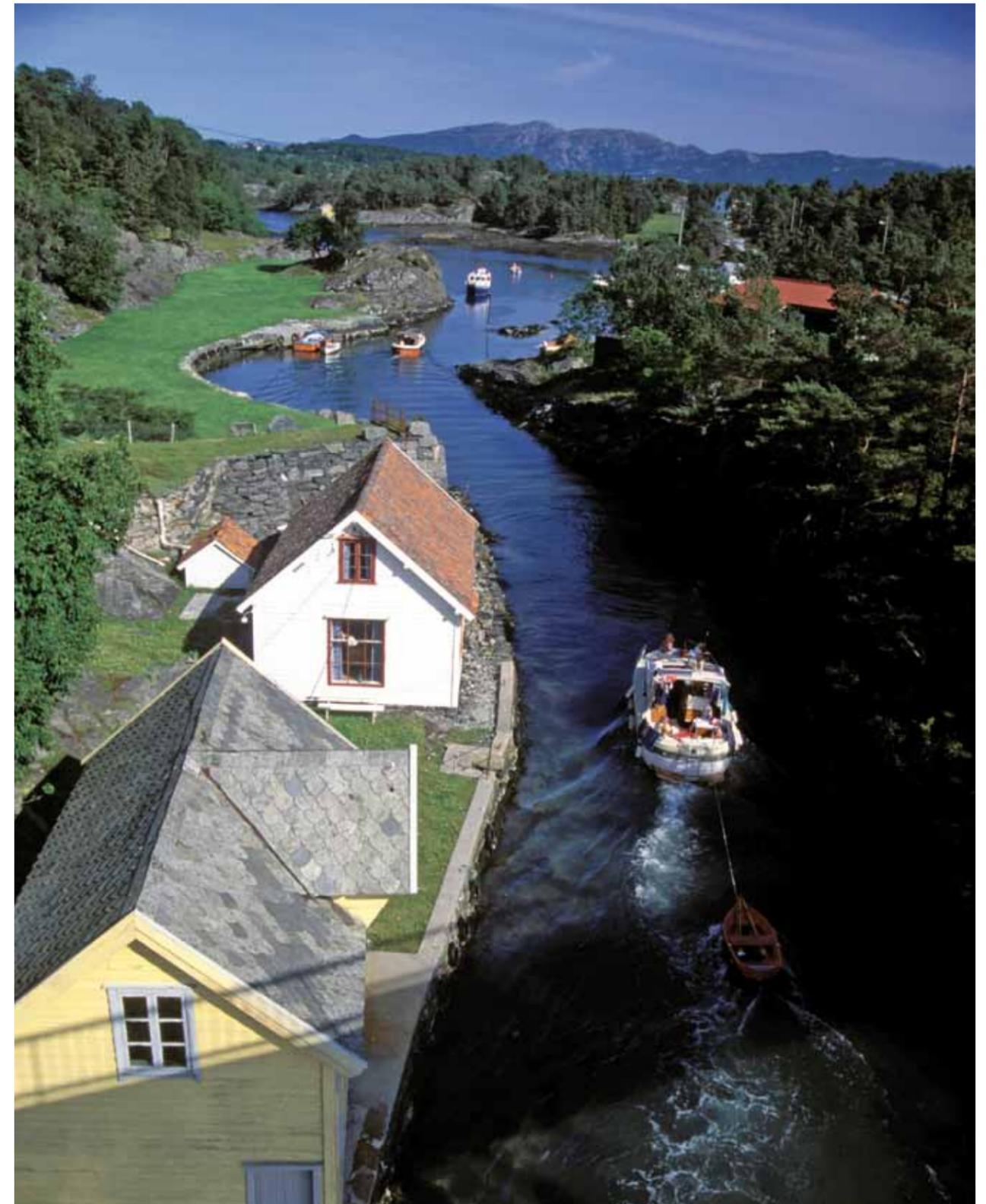
– the top of the cliff (25 x 25 m) protruding over a steep precipice (photo on the previous page). It was formed during the ice age, approximately 10,000 years ago, when the edges of the glacier reached the cliff. I sat on the ledge and swung my legs, feeling absolute freedom! Note that Stavanger region is not only famous for its fjords and mountains, but also for its sandy beaches which are the longest in Norway.

WALKING ON THE GLACIER

A climb with a guide on Folgefonna glacier, which lies on Folgefonn peninsula, between Hardangerfjorden, Akrafjorden, and Sorfjorden in the south of Norway, is one of the greatest experiences you can imagine. Equipped with crampons, ice axes and helmets, and tied with a rope, we first walked on flat ice, but soon started our climb up the slope. About an hour into our walk in the fog and snow, the clouds cleared the sun came out, revealing the horizon - the perfect whiteness, which seemed to stretch endlessly. We ate our lunch (sandwiches) leant against a ledge, almost motionless, with crampons dug between small stones. After this unique meal we headed towards turquoise crevasses, which we cleared quite swiftly to reach an ice tunnel. Our guide decided that it was tall and stable enough to try to enter it on our ropes. This is how we found a real ice palace, which was a true nature's masterpiece! We spent there several minutes, exploring it in complete silence. We also remembered to take a few unique photos of the place, because the ice there is in constant motion and probably now the tunnel is already gone.

CYCLING UP

Raw, simple Norwegian landscape is also a perfect place for cycling trips. Of course, here mountain bikes are de rigueur, because the area is packed with steep hills with inclination up to 45 degrees. I decided to set off for a day cycling trip around Bømlo island situated halfway between Bergen and Stavanger. We rode a narrow, tarmac road, winding along the steep shore. The strong wind made the challenge even more difficult, but this was made up for with wonderful views that we passed on our way. We stopped to take pictures and relax a little, but most of all to look at the little red houses located just above the fjord, green islands connected by bridges, as well as bays with thousands of moored boats. If you feel that one-day trip is too short, you can always spend a night in the romantic old lighthouse, and have meals in roadside eateries, which offer delicious salmon soup with sour cream and butter.



When I think of Norway, the very first word that comes to my mind is "idyll". A spectacular scenery with fjords in the background, raw untouched nature, friendly trolls who reportedly live in every valley, remarkably friendly people and a truly original cuisine.



WEEKEND IN ROME

Spring in the Eternal City – this can be a trip of your dreams! The morning at Campo de Fiori market, the afternoon on the Palatine Hill, and the evening in one of the many restaurants of the bohemian district of Trastevere. **Agata Janicka** invites you to Rome.

In 2013, Rome welcomed its 266th Pope – the Argentinian Jorge Mario Bergoglio (also known as Pope Francis), who not only became the first pontiff to come from Latin America but is also an avid tweeter (@Pontifex) with more than three million followers.

For many visitors with free time in the Italian capital, the Vatican City is a special place to visit, especially on Wednesday mornings, when there is often the opportunity to take part in a papal audience. Of course, there are all the other famous sights, too – the Spanish Steps, Colosseum, Trevi Fountain and the Pantheon – but for those who are more familiar with

Rome, here is a selection of lesser-known places to take in.

CAMPO DE FIORI

One of the best ways to get a sense of local life in a city is to visit a market, and the one that takes place Monday to Saturday on Campo de Fiori is particularly colourful. Packed around the statue of Giordano Bruno (a philosopher who was burnt at the stake here in 1600), the majority of stalls display food – be it bunches of young asparagus, piles of peaches, sacks of dried herbs, bottles of olive oil, bags of pasta, jars of pesto or cups of freshly chopped fruit. The sellers are good humoured, calling to

each other jovially and encouraging you to try things as you walk by. One particularly entertaining man sits demonstrating all the magical things his vegetable peeling gizmos can do – cut spirals of potato and courgette, “a necklace for your wife” – before trying to sell them to you.

VILLA BORGHESE GARDENS

Ascend the Spanish Steps and turn left up the hill (Piazza della Trinita dei Monti) until you get to the elevated plateau at the front of the Villa Borghese public gardens. From here, there are panoramic views over Rome, and the lush landscaped park makes a refreshing retreat from the hubbub of the

city streets. Bring a picnic, take a walk or rent a Segway to zoom around on. Then make your way to the far end, where Galleria Borghese (galleriaborghese.it) is located. Dating back to the 17th century, the museum is crammed with Renaissance and Baroque antiquities, paintings and sculpture. Note that you will need to book a ticket (€11) in advance and it is closed on Mondays.

BASILICA DI SAN CLEMENTE

A ten-minute walk from the Colosseum, just off Via Labicana, is the ancient church of St Clemente. Although the 12th-century basilica is a gem in itself, with its richly decorated Byzantine apse covered in golden mosaics, it has been built on the site of two even older churches dating back to the fourth and first centuries, both of which have been excavated. Buy a ticket (€5) and take a flight of stone steps down into the cool, dark, damp

chambers below, where you can explore underground walkways, see faded frescos and hear the rushing water of subterranean rivers. There's even a pagan altar, inscribed with an image of the god Mithras sacrificing a bull, in a second-century cave-like Mithraeum. Open Mon-Sat 9am-12.30pm, 3pm-6pm, Sun 12pm-6pm. basilicasanclemente.com

CAPUCHIN CRYPT

Living an ascetic life modelled on that of their founder, St Francis of Assisi, Capuchin monks advocate a poverty-stricken, hermit-like existence in constant contemplation of God, but they have also exhibited a dark side. The Capuchin Crypt experience begins with a tour of its museum, which houses numerous glass cases displaying, among other oddities, instruments of self-punishment – metal scourges, a whip of knotted cords, and a cilice of metal hooks worn around the body to cause constant pain.

EATING AND DRINKING

● NEW: Romeo Chef and Baker

A short walk from the Vatican, this slick new eatery-cum-deli opened at the end of 2012 and is a great place to stop for a quick lunch. The menu is extensive, and the antipasti, gourmet panini and slices of pizza – drizzled in olive oil with a crisp, chewy base – are moreishly good. When it comes to the last, choose from cream cheese and salmon, potato and rosemary, or Buffalo mozzarella, tomato and fresh basil. Via Silla 26; romeo.roma.it

● APERITIVO: Freni e Frizioni

The Italian aperitivo tradition is essentially happy hour with free food, and one of the best places to experience it is at quirky Freni e Frizioni on the edge of bohemian Trastevere. Every day between 7pm and 10pm, a long table is laid out with a generous buffet of salads, pasta, bread and risotto, while out on the street, everyone from students to suits chat, drink and eat. Via del Politeama 4/6; freniefrizioni.com

● TAKEAWAY: Antico Forno Roscioli

Around the corner from Campo de Fiori is one of Rome's most authentic bakeries. Join the locals on their lunch break for a juicy slab of pizza – it is sold by weight, heaped with toppings and served wrapped in a sheet of paper.

The recipes have been perfected by three generations of the Roscioli family, who also own the characterful, upmarket Salumeria a few paces away. Via dei Chiavari 34; salumeriaroscioli.com

● BAR: Antico Caffè Della Pace

With its crumbling, ivy-clad exterior, this 19th-century bar on the corner of Via della Pace (3-7) could have featured in any Fellini movie. Enjoy an Aperol spritz or a strong espresso while people-watching from a table outside. caffedellapace.it

● GOURMET: Aroma

It's hard to believe there could be anywhere in Rome with better views of the Colosseum than this – and what makes Aroma really special is that it also serves superb Italian cuisine. The rooftop restaurant is part of the 14-room Palazzo Manfredi boutique hotel, a member of Relais and Châteaux, and although pricey – about €40 for a main course – offers a truly memorable fine-dining experience. Arrive for a sunset cocktail before ordering, perhaps, the black mezzelune pasta filled with fish ragout, asparagus and coriander, followed by saddle of rabbit with potato flan and herbs from the kitchen garden. The fluffy chocolate soufflé is beautifully paired with a glass of Giovanni Allegrini Recioto della Valpolicella Classico dessert wine. Via Labicana 125; aromarestaurant.it



After this, you will arrive at a long, stone-walled corridor with six macabre chambers decorated floor-to-ceiling with the bones of 3,700 long-dead monks. “The soul sinks forlorn and wretched under all this burden of dusty death,” wrote Nathaniel Hawthorne upon visiting it in 1860.

The ossuary, stacked with skulls and embellished with ribs, shoulder blades and pelvises, is thought to have been created by one of the fathers in the early 1700s – some skeletons still stand in robes, the skin of their grinning faces turned to leather, and there are even the mortal remains of children. Via Veneto 27; open daily 9am-6.30pm; entry €6.

PALATINE HILL

Most people head straight for the Colosseum and the Forum, where the best-known

ruins of ancient Rome still stand, but the Palatine Hill is also worth exploring. One of the capital’s seven famous hills, it is also the one most steeped in myth – it is here that city founder Romulus and his baby brother Remus were raised in a cave by a she-wolf. Enjoying sweeping views, you can walk among the walls of what were once mighty Imperial Palaces, havens of luxury complete with spas, gardens and villas.

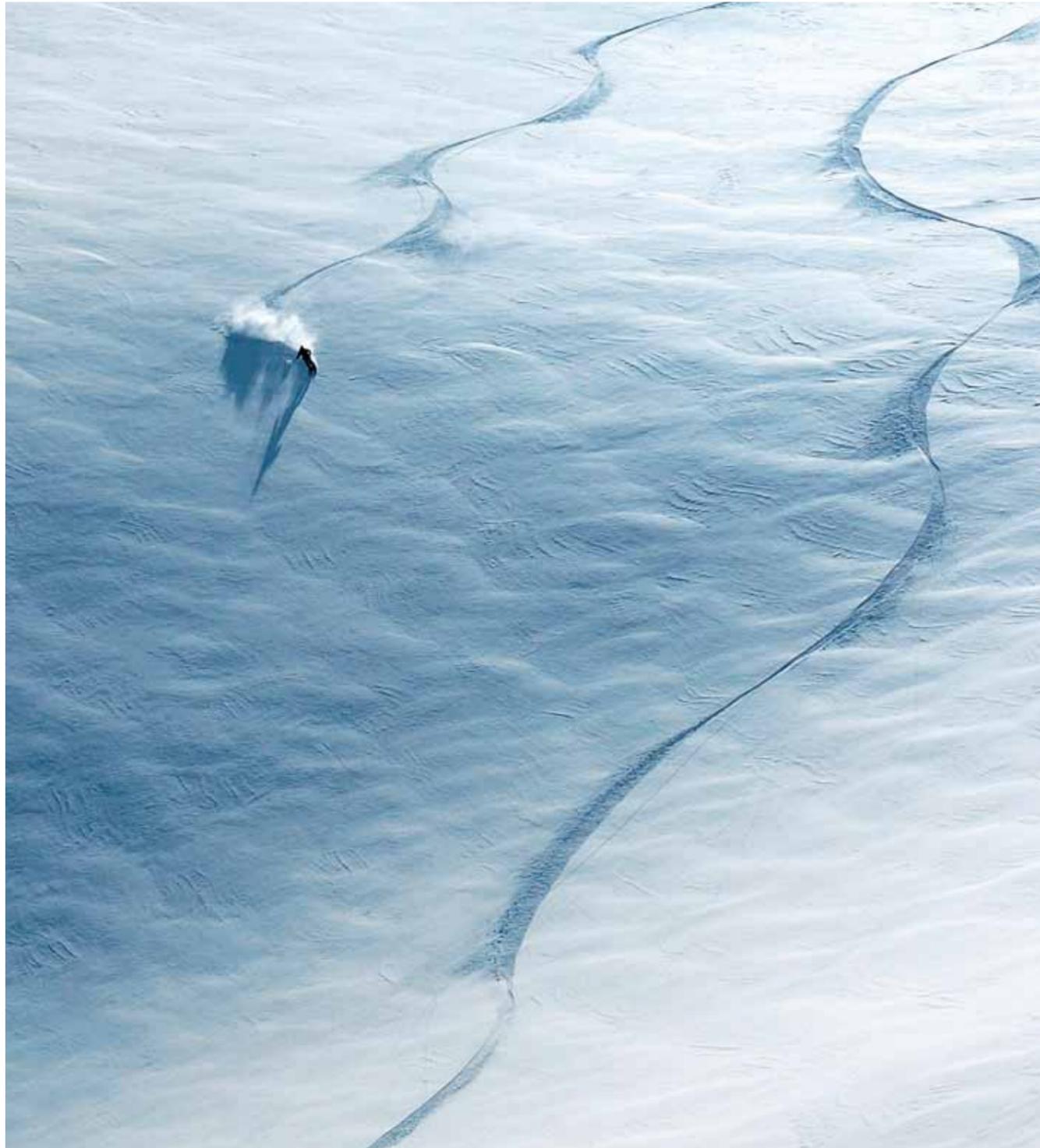
If it’s a hot day, you will be glad to find that the water from the natural springs – once used by Roman emperors to drink and bathe in – still flows out of the rocks and continues to be safe to consume. A combo ticket to the Colosseum, Forum and Palatine Hill costs €20.50 but ask your hotel to book one for you in advance as queues can be long. Open from 8.30am to an hour before sunset.

TRASTEVERE

A quintessential Italian district of cobbled streets lined with tables draped in red and white cloths outside lively local trattorias, Trastevere is situated on the west bank of the Tiber river. Visit in the evening, when the area comes to life with people tucking into plates of spaghetti vongole and clinking glasses of vino rosso in the candlelight. Relax with an aperitivo before choosing where to dine – La Canonica (Vicolo del Piede 13) is nestled in a cinematic side street frequented by trios of musicians, while Il Duca (Vicolo del Cinque 56) and Carlo Menta (Via della Lungaretta 101) also have a lively buzz. In the heart of medieval Trastevere is the Piazza di Santa Maria, home to a church of the same name and, at night, street hawkers who throw glowing helicopter toys into the sky, which flutter down in a rainbow of LEDs. italia.it/en



It’s difficult to list all the greatest attractions of Rome. the Spanish Steps, Colosseum, Trevi Fountain and the Pantheon are the most famous ones, but it’s hard to decide whether also most interesting.



SWISS EXCELLENCE

Those who visit Switzerland, want to experience there only what's the best and most exquisite. In the Bernese Alps the nature and people have joined their efforts to meet these expectations.

The area of Haslital and Jungfrau regions in Berner Oberland offers a unique variety of forms of the landscape. It has everything you might expect from the alpine nature. Jagged ridges of wild four-thousanders, vertical rocks, gullies, and winding glaciers. Below, there are picturesque valleys with waterfalls with clear water, surrounded by pastures- lively green in summer and refreshingly white in winter. And at the very bottom there are high spruce forests which are reflected in the waters of vast, mountainous lakes.

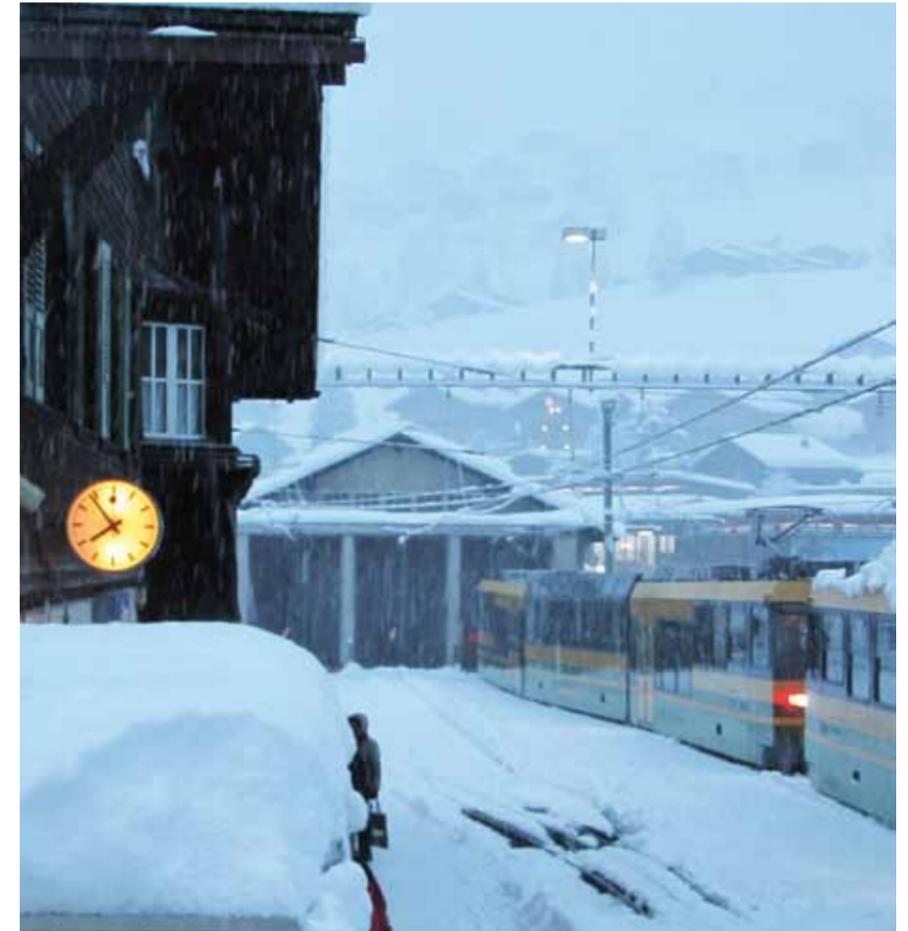
CONQUERING PEAKS

One of the four-thousanders I have mentioned before is the 4,158 metres high Jungfrau with the 3,454-metre Jungfrauoch saddle, which features the Top of Europe - a high-altitude building overlooking Aletsch Glacier. In good weather, you can see from here an amazing panorama, which stretches from the Black Forest area (Germany) to the Vosges (France). What's more, it's not difficult to get here, because the Swiss built here a railway line, with the highest rail station in Europe. They did it in 1912, just for a whim, treating it as a joyful challenge, which involved drilling a long tunnel. The highest station of the railway line is located next to the Top of Europe building. This huge and truly impressive complex features several restaurants, the Sphinx Observatory, shops with Tissot watches and Lindt chocolates, a rotating observation deck, a snow park on the Aletsch glacier (available all year round), and the breath-taking Ice Palace with ice sculptures. How can you not admire this nation?

The northern edge of Eiger is the most famous challenge to mountaineers with its 1,800-metre almost vertical wall. Wild and volatile, shaded and covered with ice and rock debris, it has, so far, become a deadly curse for 68 people. In 1936, four Germans and Austrians, on seeing this monster, said: "We will conquer this mountain or die". Soon the image of Toni Kurtz hanging dead on his climbing ropes spread round the world, after the mountain claimed lives of all four of them. The story was thoroughly described in the documentary "The Beckoning Silence". The wall is also popular for one more reason. You can sit comfortably on the balcony of your hotel room in Grindelwald and sip a drink while watching the mountaineering feats of the daredevils who are trying to conquer the rock.

The waterfall is the famous Reichenbachfall. 200 metres of white water and one of the highest waterfalls in the Alps drops with five cascades where the river Reichen-

FOT.: SCHARF, FOTOLIA



The 3,454-metre Jungfrauoch saddle features the Top of Europe - a high-altitude building overlooking Aletsch Glacier. In good weather, you can see from here an amazing panorama, which stretches from the Black Forest area (Germany) to the Vosges (France).





The architecture is dominated here by wooden houses built in alpine style from logs and covered with a low pitched roof supported by ornately profiled rafter ends with wide balconies under the eaves. Large cow bells hanging on the porches aren't just some decoration.



bach connects to the Aare. It's here where on 4 May 1891 an Englishman named Sherlock Holmes wandering a narrow path with a smooth wall behind his back and a bottomless abyss at his foot, encountered his mortal enemy. In the final battle entwined in a deadly embrace Holmes and Professor Moriarty fell into the abyss. "And there, deep down in that dreadful caldron of swirling water and seething foam, will lie for all time the most dangerous criminal and the foremost champion of the law of their generation". And although Arthur Conan Doyle, after some time changed his mind and miraculously saved his hero, the people of Meiringen didn't want to accept this. They have commemorated this event with a plaque on the ledge and other mementos.

THE LAND OF MILKA

Alpine pastures are synonymous with pure meadows with beautiful violets, edelweiss, gentians, eryngiums, cornflowers, and chocolate Milka cows that have here their salad bar. Below are spruce and stone-pine forests with remarkably tall and thick trees going all the way down to two great and clear lakes: Brienz and Thun, which in summer are used by water sports aficionados.

The Swiss were able to retain all these wonders of nature, at the same time adapting them to human needs. It's a true art to know how to enjoy the beauty of nature in a thoughtful way, without the need of isolating it from the rest of the world.

The access to the Bernese Alps is provided by the SBB federal rail as well as by local train services. This densest and most widely used railway network in the world reaches almost everywhere and small, charming stations are located in almost every village and town. Travel by rail is a real feast for the eyes, with scenic views of the mountains and towns outside the window. Don't be afraid of changing trains with only a small time window, as the timetable here is truly sacred. The most convenient way is to buy a multi-day ticket called Swiss Pass - which gives you're a complete freedom to travel and you don't have to book a seat (an 8-day ticket costs CHF380).

Reaching the top, you can easily find accommodation in the towns of Meiringen and Grindelwald. The former guarantees peace and quiet, while the latter offers more evening entertainment and shopping opportunities. But don't hope to find here any large hotel chains. Most hotels in the region are family establishments where homely atmosphere and an individual approach to the customer are of utmost importance. The architecture is dominated here by wooden

houses built in alpine style from logs and covered with a low pitched roof supported by ornately profiled rafter ends with wide balconies under the eaves. Large cow bells hanging on the porches aren't just some decoration. A lot of the barns are inhabited by Swiss cows, sticking their nostalgic faces out of the gates.

It's not a surprise though, as the local cuisine is dominated by milk and cheese, and each good restaurant serves them from their own production. This is also true at Café Cafe 3692 in Grindelwald, where the owner himself serves the delicious dishes. I highly recommend the heavenly ice cream with snow-white meringues, but before you need to try a dish or two made with home cheese. The first dish is, of course, fondue, served in a large communal pot called "caquelon", in which you dip long-stemmed forks with bread, or it can be raclette - a mix of small vegetables covered with melted cheese. What about meat? Well, cows wouldn't be too pleased to hear this question.

RISK IS FUN

It's dark outside and the only well-lit thing in the town is the slope where people go... sledding. Here it's not an embarrassing at

all, because it's simply a great fun. Traditional wooden constructions, as you may know them from your childhood - go down the wide slopes landing in deep, soft snow. The area boasts 110 kilometres of such sledding runs. The longest one in Europe is 15 kilometres long providing you with hours of great fun and sledding at great speeds. Even faster than sleds is the so-called Velogemel, invented in 1911 for postmen. The construction resembles a wooden bike on skids and guarantees lots of adrenaline rush, if you only forget about braking and put your feet on the supports. Well, no risk, no fun.

"The most efficient way to burn the cheese calories is to visit our trails" - this is how the Swiss could advertise their 70 kilometres of cross-country and 40 kilometres of snowshoe trails. Located in a scenic area, they cross glaciers, pastures, and spruce forests, giving you time to reflect on life. There's only the crunching sound of snow, our thoughts, and the feast for the eyes. At the beginning and end of each trail there are yellow buses taking us to more civilized areas.

But the Jungfrau region is also the home of alpine skiing. It's here where in winter of 1912 bored Englishmen marked out the

first slalom route which corresponded to the quantity of gin they had drunk. Then in 1931 Murren hosted the first World Alpine Skiing Championship. Tradition obliges, so both regions Jungrau and Haslital provide a large network of excellent ski slopes with a total length of 270 km. Cable cars take skiers to a selected starting point where they ski even until 11.00 pm. The bars situated on the slopes provide necessary supplies to recharge your batteries and then perhaps even try some off-piste skiing. I especially recommend the traditional local soft drink called Rivella which tastes like lemonade and is based on milk.

There are so many pistes there that in many places you will certainly be skiing alone. Don't be surprised when suddenly on the black piste from Schilthorn you'll see a skier wearing an elegant suit and saying: "My name is Bond. James Bond". Agent 007 used to ski here On Her Majesty's Service. You can, however, suspect that Bond, as hundreds of thousands of wealthy citizens, has fled here for tax reasons, because the federal corporate income tax rate is 8.5% flat while the income tax varies from 6 to 20%. But hush! It's top secret.

Barbara Scharf



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SKIING IN THE BEAT OF THE MUSIC

It's the place where each year the ski season starts the earliest. Add to this nearly 250 kilometres of runs, excellent off-piste slopes, the Mountain VIP Club for picky ones, the duty free zone on the Swiss side, and for music fans concerts of such stars as Robbie Williams, Scorpions, and Rihanna. With all of this and more, you can be sure of one thing: in Ischgl you simply can't get bored.

The facts speak for themselves - the Silvretta Arena resort located in the Austrian state of Tyrol, on the border between Austria and Switzerland, offers 241 kilometres of runs that will satisfy both the most demanding off-piste fans and those who are complete beginners. The resort is an Austrian-Swiss company, which has made investments on both sides of the massif, with Ischgl on one side and Samnaun Dorf on the other.

Those who wish to buy cheap alcohol and perfumes visit the duty free zone, which is located at the foot of the mountain, on the Swiss side. It's good to remember, however, that on your way back you cross the Swiss-UE border and the Austrian customs officers may want to have a peek into your bag, especially if it's heavily packed.

FABULOUS RUNS

The two highest peaks in the area, both lying perfectly on the border between the two countries, are Palinkoph (2864 m) and Greitspitze (2876 m). It's here where you can find some of the most fabulous runs, including the black ones no. 14 (50% inclination), 20, and 21.

Ischgl is also famous for its excellent off-piste slopes and semi-prepared runs. They

are incredibly picturesque and often require traversing. Remember, however, that you can go there (for your own safety) only with mountain guides, because the area due to extremely steep slopes, is prone to avalanches.

The whole Silvretta Arena complex is served by almost 50 ski lifts, most of which are gondolas and chairlifts (also heated).

IN THE WORLD OF VIPS

Ischgl is a very entertaining place. It features several après-ski bars and each ski season is opened with a concert of rock and pop stars. The 2013/14 season was opened with a performance of the legendary Scorpions band, and a few years ago it was Rihanna. Andreas Steibl, who is the head of marketing at Ischgl promotion office, the region has set itself an objective to open and close the ski season with a great fanfare. This year, at the beginning of May, Idalp Moutain will be the venue for Robbie Williams' only European concert.

Ischgl has also an extensive offer of pleasures for VIPs. You can, for example, become a member of the VIP Mountain Club - all you need is to pay the entry fee of €1,900 and the annual fee of €1,130. In return you will receive access to the VIP lounge locat-

ed in the ultramodern restaurant on Idalp mountain, a personal ski trainer, the underground car park, the VIP zone during the concerts of stars, priority at ski lifts, and many, many other privileges. Some of the members of the VIP Club include Nicole Scherzinger from Pussycat Dolls, or Dieter Bohlen from Modern Talking.

FOR FAMILIES

Fortunately, Ischgl isn't only about loud music and crazy parties until morning. In the area, a half hour drive away, there are two lovely and very quiet family ski resorts. The first one is Kappl and See which lies 1,258 m above sea level. You will find here ten ski lifts, the Sunny Mountain Adventure Parks - a children's zone with snow caves and carpet lifts, as well as the Sunny Mountain Club Kappl where adults can leave their children for almost a whole day of fun.

The second tranquil and family-friendly resort is Galtur - a tiny village situated 1,600 metres above sea level, which is divided into several zones, including the ones for children and their parents. Particularly charming is the run almost straight to a large artificial lake, whose shore is home to the lower station of one of the lifts.

Filip Gawrys

FOT.:MATERIALY PRASOWE



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FIT FOR OFF-ROAD EXCURSIONS

Mercedes-Benz GLA impressively reinterprets the compact SUV segment. It effortlessly masters day-to-day driving and is also robust enough for off-road excursions.

The 2015 GLA-Class is the first Mercedes-Benz SUV to be available with the new-generation permanent all-wheel drive system 4MATIC, with fully variable torque distribution. The most economical version 200 CDI will consume an average of only 4.3 l of diesel per 100 km.

A COMPACT ALL-ROUNDER

The first Mercedes-Benz in the fast-growing compact SUV segment is highly manoeuvrable around town (length x width x height 4,417 x 1,804 x 1,494 millimetres), lively on country roads and dynamic and efficient on the motorway (Cd figure 0.29). The high-quality appointments, developed with much love for detail, and the flexible interior clearly position the GLA as a compact premium SUV.

"With the compact GLA we add a fifth attractive SUV variant to the Mercedes-Benz model portfolio in this constantly growing segment. The GLA impresses mainly with its progressive character and agile handling," says Dr. Joachim Schmidt, Executive Vice President Sales and Marketing Mercedes-Benz Cars.

As a serene day-to-day companion, the GLA has a flexible and variable interior. The rear seat backrests can not only be folded down completely, but are also adjustable for angle

if required. The generous luggage compartment (421 – 836 litres) is well-presented and can be loaded without difficulty thanks to the low sill and the wide tailgate, which opens automatically as an option. Sensual clarity as an expression of modern luxury - this was the focus for the designers, and is the design philosophy of Mercedes-Benz. The goal is to create clear contours and smooth surfaces that communicate both high-tech sophistication as well as emotional appeal. The sensual clarity is reflected in the core design values of Tradition, Emotion and Progression. These are the guiding star, and are accentuated differently depending on the model. Each model series has an assigned role and has a very specific character, depending on the attributes on which the design focuses. Just as the GLA.

Its appearance exudes strength and tranquillity. An impressive front aspect is ensured by the headlamps and LED daytime running lamps. The front bumper features diamond-pattern grilles in front of the cooling air intakes. The optional fog lamps are integrated into the front bumper. At the sides the cladding follows the contours of the wheel arches and side sill panels into the rear bumper. The side panel has depressions shaped like an excavator's teeth

to accentuate the SUV character. Roof trim strips complete the side view at the top as standard, and as an optional extra aluminium roof rails in high-gloss or polished black are available. On request the GLA is fitted with tyres up to size 19-inch.

The muscular and imposing appearance of the exterior is systematically continued into the interior. This has a particularly high perceived quality that is achieved by the contours, choice and combinations of high-grade materials. All trim surfaces are galvanised in silver-shadow for material authenticity, resulting in a metallic finish with a "cool-touch" effect.

The wide choice of seat upholsteries in material (e.g. leather, fabric, fabric/leather) and colour combinations allows plenty of scope for individualisation. Sports seats with integrated head restraints are available as an optional extra.

POWER AND ECONOMY

Initially the power range of the 1.6 and 2.0-litre petrol engines will extend from 115 kW (156 hp) in the GLA 200 to 155 kW (211 hp) in the GLA 250. The GLA 250 4MATIC sprints from zero to 100 km/h in only 6.5 seconds, underlining the dynamic claim to leadership of the GLA-Class. It has a top



The compact body of the GLA feels great in a big city jungle, and its solid construction and optional 4MATIC drive make it a reliable companion on forest trails.

speed of 235 km/h and a combined consumption figure of just 7.1 l/100 km (151 g CO₂/km - provisional figures).

The two diesel engines excel with dynamic torque and outstanding efficiency: The GLA 200 CDI develops 100 kW (136 hp), a maximum torque of 300 Nm, has a displacement of 2.2 litres, and consumes an average of just 4.3 l/100 km - a record in the class.

All the engines feature the ECO start/stop function as standard. The engines are combined with a six-speed manual transmission or with the 7G-DCT dual clutch automatic transmission (standard for GLA 250, GLA 220 CDI and the 4MATIC models), which unites comfort and sportiness to an outstanding degree.

SUSPENSION - FUN GUARANTEED

The GLA has an extremely rigid body, and therefore the basis for stable and safe handling characteristics both on and off the road, as well as a high level of NVH comfort. The GLA from Mercedes-Benz is optionally available with a new generation of the 4MATIC permanent all-wheel drive system featuring fully variable torque distribution. The components of the 4MATIC system include the power take-off to the rear axle that is integrated into the 7G-DCT automatic dual clutch transmission, and the rear-axle gear with integrated, electrohydraulically controlled multi-disc clutch. This set-up allows fully variable distribution of the drive torque between front and rear axles. Additional benefits of this design are a lower system weight than is available from the

competition, and high efficiency.

Confident on light terrain: off-road functions Models with 4MATIC are equipped with DSR (Downhill Speed Regulation) and an off-road transmission mode as standard. DSR is activated by a control button in the centre console, and assists the driver on demanding downhill stretches by maintaining a slow, manually selected vehicle speed within the physical limits when negotiating downhill gradients. This is done with the help of the engine and transmission control. When the off-road transmission mode is selected using the transmission mode switch, the gearshift points and accelerator characteristics are modified so that the requirements for driving on light off-road terrain and particularly loose surfaces can be met. In combination with Audio 20 CD (standard) and COMAND Online (optional extra), the head unit can also be switched to an off-road display. The steering angle, the selected off-road transmission mode and a compass are displayed there. The roll angle in degrees, the gradient in percent and activation of Downhill Speed Regulation DSR are also indicated.

SMART SAFETY

Numerous driving assistance systems offer support in the GLA and reduce the driver's workload. Standard-fit features for the SUV include ATTENTION ASSIST drowsiness detection and radar-based COLLISION PREVENTION ASSIST with adaptive Brake Assist, which now helps to protect against collisions from a speed of only 7 km/h. This

incorporates an additional function: When a danger of collision persists and the driver fails to respond, the system is able to carry out autonomous braking at speeds of up to 200 km/h, thereby reducing the severity of collisions with slower or stopping vehicles. The system also brakes in response to stationary vehicles at a speed of up to 30 km/h, and is able to prevent rear-end collisions at speeds of up to 20 km/h.

Established assistance systems, such as the optional Lane Tracking package with Blind Spot and Lane Keeping Assist or Adaptive Highbeam Assist, are also available for the GLA. Active Parking Assist (optional) allows automatic parking in parallel and end-on parking spaces.

"ALWAYS ON"

The latest multimedia generation deployed in the GLA boasts new functions, additional apps and a modified graphic colour scheme. Daimler's Digital Drive Style app concept, which together with the Drive Kit Plus for the iPhone(R)" allows seamless integration of an iPhone(R) into the vehicle, has been extended. The highlights include Siri voice control and Glympse real-time location sharing. Additional functions include Facebook(R), Twitter(R), internet radio, AUPEO!(TM) personal radio and the advanced navigation system from Garmin(R) with internet-based real-time traffic information, an online POI search function including Street View(TM) and a 3D map display. The COMAND Online multimedia system has also been extended.



The GLA has an extremely rigid body, and therefore the basis for stable and safe handling characteristics both on and off the road.

4 HOURS IN... MUNICH

Even when you are in Munich just for a moment, you might want to see the Marienplatz, look around in search of Rococo architecture, drink delicious coffee at Dallmayr delicatessen, or walk around the English Gardens. **Agata Janicka** invites you for a quick stroll through the Bavarian capital.



Marienplatz was once a place of markets and jousting, but now the focus of the pedestrian shopping zone.

MARIENPLATZ

Any exploration of the Bavarian capital will inevitably begin in the Marienplatz, once a place of markets and jousting but now the focus of the pedestrian shopping zone.

The square is Munich's front room, filled with tourists, workers, living statues and even, on occasion, a quintet complete with grand piano. This is where the city comes to meet up, to celebrate special festivals and football successes.

Visitors gather to gaze up at the flower-filled Gothic-revival façade of the Neues Rathaus, far more cathedral-like than the rather plain brick Frauenkirche, the cupola towers of which rear up just off the square's north-western corner.

The Marienplatz gets particularly busy at 11am (also 12pm and 5pm in summer), when the Rathaus clock, with its 32 life-sized figures and 43 bells, commemorates dancing and jousting scenes from the 16th century.

VIKTUALIENMARKT

The lanes around the Marienplatz are lined with designer boutiques, but a five-minute walk south will take you to a true Munich institution, the Viktualienmarkt, an open-air market with more than 100 speciality stalls where locals do their shopping.

Fruit and veg dominate, but there are also wine and cheese delis, florists, fishmongers and honey sellers. Most stalls are open 8.30am-6pm.

Also part of the marketplace is Munich's most central beer garden (9am-10pm) – you can buy delicacies from the stalls and take them to a table under the spreading horse-chestnut trees to enjoy with a beer from one of six local breweries, who take it in turns to supply the thirsty.

There's no shelter, however, so if it rains, decamp north up through Sparkassenstrasse or Brauhausstrasse to the Hofbrauhaus, the boisterous Munich beerhouse where the oompah and the Oktoberfest



ambience lives on all year round. Open 9am-11.30pm. viktualienmarkt.de; hofbrauhaus.de

DALLMAYR

Back across the Marienplatz, this time head north out of the square some 150 metres up Diererstrasse, where at 14/15 you'll find the arcaded façade of Dallmayr, Munich's famous delicatessen and restaurant, which dates back to 1700.

The food hall is reminiscent of London's Harrods – elaborate presentations under vaulted ceilings, marble columns, and stags' heads on the walls.

Dallmayr's initial success was based on supplying the Bavarian royal family with luxurious and exotic foods, but in the post-war era it concentrated on the coffee business, and it now has 50,000 vending machines in 14 countries.

Its deli counters have gleaming displays of canapés, pastries and cheeses in vary-

ing palettes of colours, whilst elsewhere in the building there's a fine-dining restaurant with exemplary service, and an oak-panelled bistro with tables in Jura marble and Thonet chairs from Vienna, a Bavarian take on the Viennese coffee house. Open Mon-Sat 9.30am-7pm. dallmayr.com

RESIDENZ

Not so long ago Bavaria was a powerful independent kingdom, and the sheer scale of the Royal Residence, a further five-minute walk up Diererstrasse, is indicative of the wealth of its monarchs.

The largest city palace in Germany, with its ten courtyards and 300 years of architectural styles, from Renaissance to Neoclassical, is rather daunting for a visitor with limited time. It houses a huge selection of portraits, relics, jewellery and furniture, as well as the riot of Rococo that is the Cuvilliés Theatre, where Mozart's *Idomeneo* opera was first performed.

If you are short of time, just dip into the Cuvilliés for a taste, and then walk around the circumference of the Residenz to admire its grandeur. Open 9am-6pm, entry €7, or €13 to include the Treasury and the Cuvilliés; €3.50 Cuvilliés only. residenz-muenchen.de

ODEONSPLATZ

The northern corner of the Residenz adjoins Odeonsplatz, the site of Hitler's first rally, where his clash with police ended in a prison term, during which he wrote *Mein Kampf*.

Looking around you, it is hard to imagine anything so ugly occurring in this romantic square, which looks like a stage set for an Italian opera, with its grandiose loggia copied from Florence's open-sided galleries, and the distant Alps rising above the red-tiled rooftops.

The square is dominated by the flamboyantly Italianate Theatiner church, which on the outside is a sun-burst of Mediterranean yellow, but on the inside is like a monochrome Baroque engraving, seemingly made of intricately folded paper and left a dusky white.

Across the Odeonsplatz from the church stands the Hofgarten, a formal garden which fronts the Residenz, where nannies push prams and newlyweds have their photographs taken in front of the 17th-century Diana Pavilion.

THE SEEHAUS, ENGLISCHER GARTEN

It is a short two-stop U-bahn ride (U6) from Odeonsplatz to Munchner Freiheit, the trendy, artistic area of town.

An interesting ten-minute walk down Feilitzschstrasse, past architects' offices and music studios, will bring you into the Englischer Garten, a huge tongue of tree-shrouded green threaded by water and popular with joggers, families and naked sunbathers.

Here, on the side of a small boating lake, is the Seehaus, looking like a villa resort transplanted from one of the North Sea spas. The skirt of lakeshore in front of it is one of Munich's most upmarket beer gardens, patronised by the schicki-micki (trendy) crowd.

The Seehaus interior is all white linen, chandeliers and fine dining, but most people come here on sunny evenings for the waterside location, the beer and pretzels. And there's all the length and breadth of the Englischer Garten for strolling in before or after, for working up a thirst. The Seehaus is open 10am-1am. kuffler.de/en/muenchen/seehaus



ASK PETER

Letters

Piotr Kalita is related with air transport market for almost 20 years. He is specializing in corporate and diplomatic travel segment. Have a question? - ask Piotr. Mail your question to: redakcja@businesstraveller.pl

The new Turkish visa

Soon I'm going to Turkey for business and so far I've always bought a visa at the airport. But now I've learnt that you can't buy a visa anymore and you have to get it online. Why did the Turkish authorities introduce such impediments? What's the easiest way to obtain a visa? Do I need any additional documents? How much is a new visa?

Mariusz

Dear Mariusz,

A lot of countries change rules regarding granting visas. First of all, you can't buy a visa. Visas – (documents allowing a person to enter or leave a country) are granted by consular offices. You might be charged a handling fee for issuing a visa. That's why you didn't really pay for the visa in Turkey, but you paid a fee for its issuing. The same procedure applies to any other country. Indeed, the Turkish authorities have changed the rules regarding granting visas following 10th April 2014. Visas won't be granted at the airport in a form of a stamp or a sticker put in the passport, but through the internet system. This change applies not only to the Polish citizens. You need to apply for a visa ahead of time through the evisa electronic system. You'll find a link on the website of the Turkish embassy.

If your trip is purely business, you should apply for a business visa in the Turkish embassy. In case of a combined business and tourist trip, you can travel on a tourist visa.

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months following the date of entry to Turkey. This is a multiple entry visa, and the maximum, total period of your stay must not exceed 90 days. It's crucial to fill in the visa application very carefully. The visa fee is currently \$20. Both Visa and Mastercard cards are accepted. In case of any mistake, you need to fill in the form again and pay yet another fee. Applications must be completed at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled arrival, although it's recommended to do it about 1 week ahead of time. Your visa will be sent via email within 24 hours.

Other rules apply to cruise ship passengers. When visiting the port, no visa is required.

Which airport?

My boss asked me to book him a ticket to New York via London. In London, he needs to take the same flight as the regional director – BA001. I checked the connections from Heathrow and Gatwick, but couldn't find this particular one. I'm not sure if there are any US flights from other London airports. Is it better to buy one ticket from Warsaw for the entire route, or separate tickets to London, and then to New York?

Magda

Dear Magda,

Heathrow and Gatwick aren't the only hubs offering Transatlantic flights. In the eastern London, there is the London City airport, which, thanks to its proximity to the headquarters of companies and banks, is popular among business travellers. Many airlines offer connections from Europe to London City. However, there are no such connections from Warsaw, as here the traffic is mainly tourist and transit rather than business. Each day there are 2 flights from London City to New York numbered BA 001 and BA 003 by British Airways. The plane you are interested in leaves at 09.50 am and arrives in New York at 02.20 pm (local time). Airbus 318 takes 32 passengers on board, only in business class. It's therefore a typical business flight, very popular among travellers due to an easy and quick transport to the airport and a very short check-in time. It's enough to be at the airport at least 15 minutes before the departure (20 minutes if you are checking-in luggage).

Because of the short runway, the plane can't take a sufficient amount of fuel to flight across the Atlantic. That's why there is a brief stopover in Shannon, Ireland for fuelling up. On the way back, no stopover is necessary, as the plane can fly with a full fuel tank. When in Shannon, the passengers go through immigration and customs control (only BA 001 flight). Because of that, when arriving in New York, they don't need to go through the control and are treated like domestic travellers.

The transatlantic flight offers only business class and therefore the entire ticket should be issued in the business rate. The price may vary depending on the availability of seats, and whether or not your boss is planning to stay in London for 24 hours (stopover) or less. Please check the exact calculations with your agent.

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