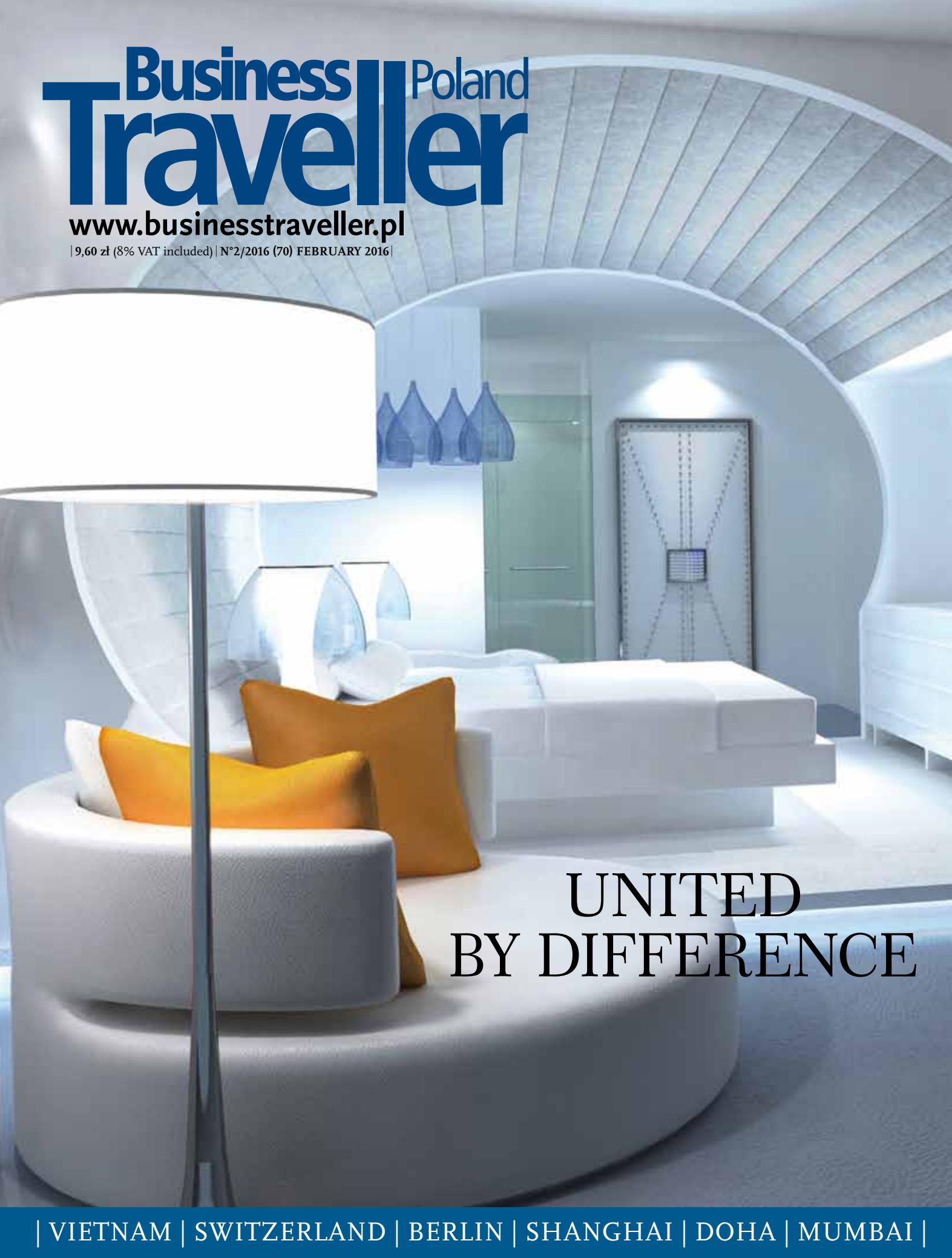


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VIEW COSMOPOLITAN WARSZAWA

CURATED HOTELS

Signing up independent properties allows hotel groups to extend their reach – and enables travellers to earn points in unusual places. Our UK correspondent Jenny Southan has rounded up the big chains' new collections and share with us her impressions. There have been collections of independent hotels for some time – Preferred Hotels and Resorts, Leading Hotels of the World, Relais and Châteaux, and so on. Now the chains are attempting to capture a piece of this market, too, by building a portfolio of "curated" independents that measure up to their own in-house audits.

In so doing, travellers can enjoy unique experiences, loyalty points, a level of certainty about the quality of their stay, and the possibility of corporate bookings via global distribution systems. The hotels get more exposure and (hopefully) increased bookings, while chains get paid for signing them up. How would you know you were staying in a hotel that was part of a chain and what benefits do they guarantee? To find out, read our cover article. Enjoy your reading!

Marzena Mróz

Marzena Mróz



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Lufthansa

NEW EJOURNAL AND SHOPPING IN THE SKY

Thursday 21 January is the starting date for the new ejournal approach. From this date on, any Lufthansa traveler will be able to log into lh.com/ejournals within three days of their departure using their name and their reservation code or ticket number and download two ejournals of their choice onto their mobile device. From March onwards, Lufthansa plans to offer its guests different numbers of such ejournal downloads, depending on their class of travel and their frequent flyer status. Needless to say, the PDF ejournal downloads can also be read after the flight if the customer chooses. And Lufthansa will continue to offer print newspapers and magazines in its lounges, in First and Business Class on board and at select airports. Also shopping above the clouds is now easier and more convenient for Lufthansa passengers. The airline's leisure and business travellers can now reserve their desired items from the Inflight-Shopping-selection of Lufthansa WorldShop online at www.LH.com/preflight-shopping before their Lufthansa flight. A free "preflight shopping" reservation is non-binding and can be made up to four days before take-off. Passengers can look at their pre-reserved products on board and acquire them by paying with cash, credit card or Miles & More miles. In contrast to ordering online, inflight shopping gives customers the chance to examine the desired products. Around 180 premium products are on offer, including technology and entertainment items to exclusive cosmetics and perfumes, as well as watches and children's toys. As of today, the new service is available on all intercontinental Lufthansa flights, as well as on selected inner-European flights with inflight shopping.

Beauty

La Mer

SERUM FOR TRAVELLERS

La Mer continues its mission of creating products that improve the appearance of skin. This time the brand introduces the new Lifting Eye Serum containing a revolutionary Stretch Matrix Complex to add visible firmness to the area around the eyes and eyebrows.

Right after applying the silky serum, the skin around the eyes becomes soft and slightly taut. Over time, the lifting effect intensifies. Regular use of the serum allows you to significantly improve the eye contour, making the skin look young and healthy. The effect is visible for a long time.

The serum was formulated in such a way as to create a dense network of active substances



saturated with sea red algae. The Lifting Eye Serum contains natural ingredients that operate in a strictly targeted way, improving the appearance of the delicate skin under the eyes. Combined with other La Mer products it helps recover the skin's vitality, firmness and elasticity, making it look young and fresh.

Recommended especially for ladies that are frequent travellers.



Hotels

Aries Hotel & SPA

WINTER AT THE FOOT OF GIEWONT

A unique, new hotel located in the very heart of Zakopane with a view over the Tatra Mountains. It is a perfect place for both winter holidays and a March stay at the foot of Giewont, as well as joyful Easter festivities. Aries Hotel & SPA is situated close to the popular Krupówki Street. It stands out with its Alpine style and standards, as well as Polish hospitality and excellent cuisine.

It is modern, but at the same time offers the atmosphere of tradition and history. The hotel investors made sure that it is a unique architecture, interiors, as well as guest facilities. That is why Aries is a good place for both business travellers and families. Other advantages of the hotel include a thermal pool, the biggest hot tub under the foot of Giewont, a wellness zone with DR Irena Eris Beauty Partner treatment rooms, a perfectly-equipped conference centre, the Halka restaurant and the Sculpture Park. All conference rooms come equipped with state-of-the-art equipment, as well as wifi in guest rooms and public areas; hotelaries.pl





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Venice

Carnaval

GONDOLAS, MASKS AND CICCHETTI

The Venice Carnival is Europe's largest and oldest street festival. It is celebrated by the whole city, but the greatest festivities take place in Saint Mark's Square (Piazza San Marco), dubbed by Napoleon "the finest drawing room in Europe". One of the most interesting events of the festival is the competition for the most beautiful mask. It is participated by both Venetians and visitors from all over the globe. The Venetian Carnival starts with a show on water, but the most fascinating part of this event is the water parade on the Grand Canal. It is there where you can admire most beautiful gondolas that carry masked people wearing historical costumes. After the parade all the participants enjoy yet another attraction, called cicchetti. These are the famous Venetian tapas that are sold at numerous bars and stalls constructed in the city for the time of the carnival.



Golfing

Dominican Republic

THE BEST DESTINATION ON 2016

The International Association of Golf Tour Operators (IAGTO) has named Dominican Republic "Best Golf Destination of Latin America and the Caribbean 2016". The country boasts 28 courses, with 68 ocean-view holes, of the highest standards of design, and friendly services of five-star quality. Many of the courses were designed by legends such as Pete Dye, PB Dye, Jack Nicklaus, Robert Trent Jones, Gary Player and Tom Fazio. Among these are such spectacular ones as Punta Espada Golf Club in Cap Cana, La Cana at Puntacana Resort & Club, Teeth of the Dog and Dye Fore at Casa de Campo which are mandatory destinations for each travelling golfer. Thanks to its tropical and mild climate, Dominican Republic is willingly visited by golfing enthusiasts throughout the year; [GoDominicanRepublic.pl](http://GolfDominicanRepublic.pl)

Uroda

Carpe Diem

MAXIMUS SYSTEM

The Centre of Aesthetic Medicine Carpe Diem offers treatment with Maximus System, the most comprehensive anti-aging system available on the Polish market. It is a non-invasive way to improve the firmness of the skin on the face and the body, reducing wrinkles and modelling the contours of the body as well as the shape of the face. The technology reduces fat and cellulite, and is the only device that acts on the skin, fatty tissue and muscles. Maximus - maximum effects at Carpe Diem! carpediem-klinika.pl



ZAPROJEKTOWANA SPECJALNIE DLA CIEBIE
Nowa Business Class



Wypróbuj perfekcyjnie zaprojektowaną przestrzeń do pracy, rozrywki i odpoczynku w Nowej Business Class Singapore Airlines. Panel, który mieści wszystko, czego potrzebujesz aby popracować, łącznie z gniazdkiem zasilającym, abyś mógł być w kontakcie; z licznymi schowkami, abyś wszystko miał w zasięgu ręki. Fotel o szerokości 71 cm można ustawić w kilku nowych pozycjach, tak żeby było Ci najwygodniej i który zamienia się w zupełnie płaskie łóżko, abyś mógł wygodnie wypocząć podczas snu. Każdy szczegół jest doskonale przemyślany i zaprojektowany z myślą o Tobie.


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Tourism

Senales Valley

THE ALPINE WINTER

The Senales Valley glacier ski area is one of the most popular winter sports centres in the Alps. It is located only 30 km from the Alpine-Mediterranean city of Meran. It also features Europe's highest-situated hotel - the Glacier Hotel Grawand.

The skiing area is open almost year-round, from mid-September to mid-July. Not only skiers, but also ski tour enthusiasts, hikers and mountaineers will find breath-taking challenges up to 3,700 metres among spectacular mountain scenery. The glaciers also hold a lot of secrets. One of them was the 5000-year old Ice mummy named Ötzi that was found below the Similaun peak at the Tisenjoch in 1991.

In the summer months, Senales Valley is an ideal starting point for Alpine hiking to high altitude summits. A unique experience for mountaineers and hikers alike is the 360 degree view from the mountaintop, including the highest peak of South Tyrol (Ortles, 3,905 m) and North Tyrol (Wildspitze, 3,798 m). At the cableway mountain station, and on the sunny terraces of the mountain huts, one can enjoy the unique atmosphere of the high Alpine glaciers. The tangible cultural history, location and climate of the sole glacier skiing area in South Tyrol help make it a unique location for year-round vacations and outdoor activities. Hikers, mountain bikers and leisure travellers will all find a varied selection of accommodation, from 4-star hotels to the highest-located hotel in Europe, from rooms at historic farms to contemporary apartments.

Airline

LOT

WARSAW - TOKYO

The first plane from Warsaw landed in Japan's capital. LOT's Dreamliner was welcomed by celebration for passengers at the airport. The just launched Warsaw-Narita service is the first-ever and sole link between Poland and Japan and it provides a greater convenience for both Japanese and European passengers. For passengers from Poland and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Warsaw – Narita 10-hour flight guarantees the most convenient and most efficient travel on this route. Before that, a trip to Japan took about 15 hours with passengers forced to make at least one transfer in a large and crowded European hub. All flights to Tokyo are operated by the Dreamliners with three travel classes on board: Passengers of LOT Business Class enjoy comfortable seats that can be converted to the full flat bed. The experience comes with the

top restaurant quality cuisine. LOT Premium means a lot of personal space and modern, wide and comfortable seat with individual arm rests and footrests and upgraded menu served on porcelain. In LOT Economy Class passengers can enjoy travelling on smart and cozy seats equipped with footrests and individual screens with sockets and USB ports. The service includes fresh, tasty and seasonal meals and snacks. Flights from Warsaw to Tokyo are held three times a week, on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, and from Tokyo to Warsaw on Thursday, Saturday and Monday. The capital of Japan seems a natural destination for LOT, if only because of clear economic reasons. About 300 Japanese companies invest in Poland, the trade between Japan and Europe is growing steadily and the Japanese economy is the world's third largest.





MODELOWA OFERTA ROCZNIKA 2015



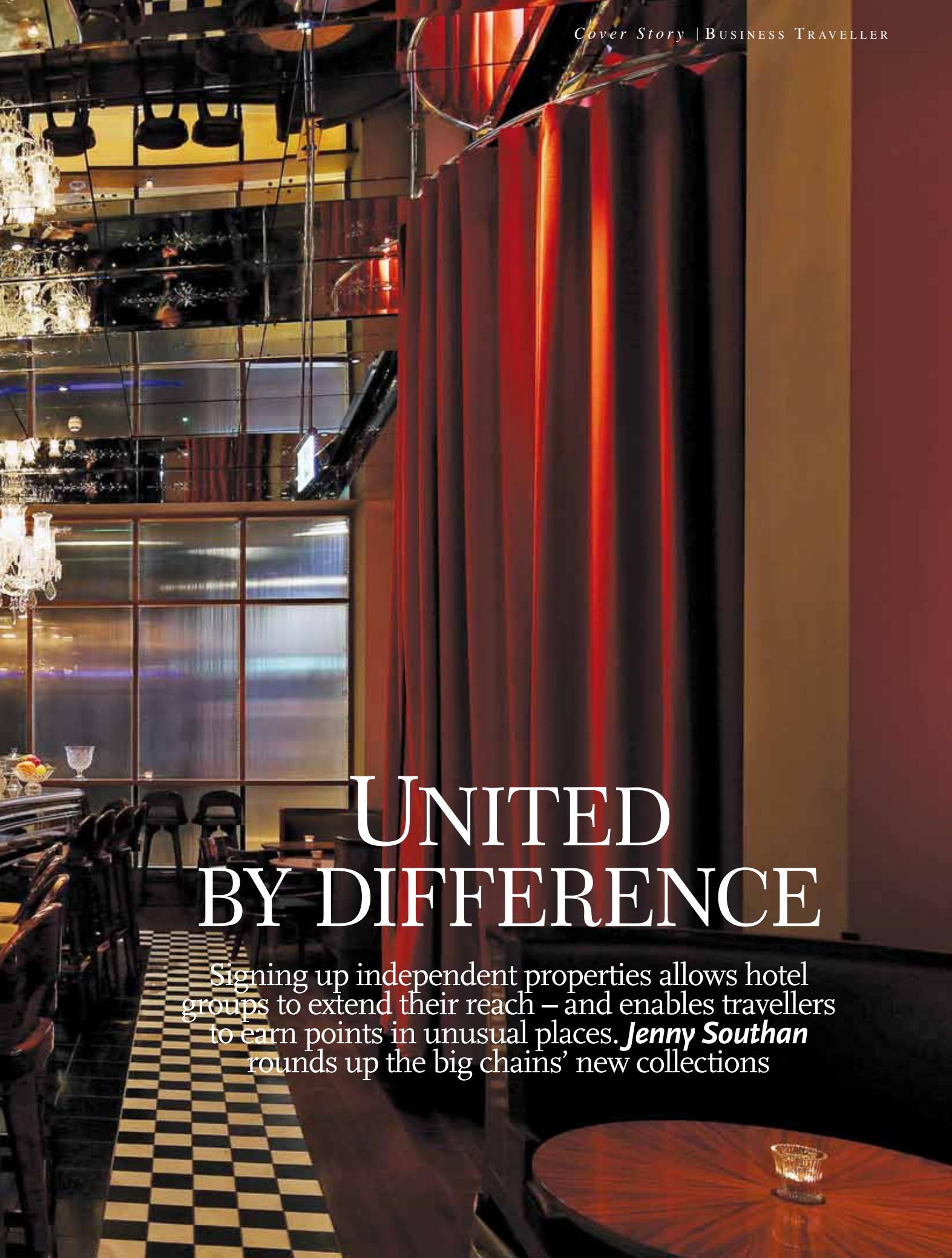
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UNITED BY DIFFERENCE

Signing up independent properties allows hotel groups to extend their reach – and enables travellers to earn points in unusual places. **Jenny Southan** rounds up the big chains' new collections

I

In 1975, Holiday Inn's slogan was: "The best surprise is no surprise." It was a formula the brand quickly established.

The first opened in Memphis in 1952 and, if you go to the Henry Ford Museum in Detroit, you can see a reconstruction of one of its first-ever motel rooms – two double beds with grey eiderdowns, blue curtains, a couple of lamps, a sink, a chair and an old tube TV.

At a time when more and more people were doing road trips, there was huge demand for standardised lodgings, and the trend took off.

It might seem today that chains are everywhere, but hospitality research group MKG Global reports that out of 19.5 million hotel rooms in the world, only 7.85 million are part of a chain.

Even the giants of the industry want to expand. By the end of last year, Marriott International had 715,000 rooms across 4,175 properties; it is aiming for a million rooms (either open or under development) by the end of this year.

Intercontinental Hotels Group (of which Holiday Inn is a sub-brand) claims to be the largest of the chains, with more than 4,900 properties globally (724,000 rooms).

There are signs of a counter trend, however. As travellers have become more confident, the prospect of staying in a predictable environment is, for some, less appealing than the excitement of checking into a place with quirky design, historic architecture and informal service.

Chains still have their place, especially for business people who may need to be able to rely on a certain level of comfort and security to do their job.

According to a recent survey of Starwood Preferred Guest members by Communispace, 89 per cent of respondents were interested in staying in independent hotels, particularly for leisure.

Almost 70 per cent had stayed at an unbranded hotel. Destinations in which they wanted Starwood to have a greater presence included northern Europe and Scandinavia,

Savannah, Charleston, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Tokyo and Hong Kong.

PLACES, POINTS AND PROGRAMMES

Many international groups are attempting to bridge the gap between the chains and independents by creating brands that offer (to a greater or lesser degree) uniform service and facilities but in properties that display more of a sense of place through distinctive décor or communal coffee shop-style lounges, for example.

There have been collections of independent hotels for some time – Preferred Hotels and Resorts, Leading Hotels of the World, Relais and Châteaux, and so on.

Now the chains are attempting to capture a piece of this market, too, by building a portfolio of "curated" independents that measure up to their own in-house audits.

In so doing, travellers can enjoy unique experiences, loyalty points, a level of certainty about the quality of their stay, and the



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Many international groups are attempting to bridge the gap between the chains and independents by creating brands that offer uniform service and facilities.



possibility of corporate bookings via global distribution systems.

EASY PROFITS

The hotels get more exposure and (hopefully) increased bookings, while chains get paid for signing them up. It seems like a win-win for everyone involved.

How would you know you were staying in a hotel that was part of a chain?

"You might not," says Julius Robinson, vice-president of Marriott International's Autograph Collection. "There's a plaque on the outside and a magazine in the room, which are requirements, and if you are a Marriott Rewards member we will recognise you at reception."

On the other hand, if you stay in a Radisson Red, you can expect standard amenities such as free wifi, a minibar and an app with information on the local area.

Best Western's Vib will always bring you smart TVs, Zen Zones and gaming pods, while IHG's Even Hotels promises eco-

friendly bathing products, free filtered water and in-room training equipment.

An apparent contradiction – being loyal to independents – is something that makes sense to younger jetsetters.

According to Robinson, Autograph Collection is aimed at people who are "curious about different social experiences and mixing business with pleasure". Interestingly, in the five years since it launched, half the properties that have opened are new-builds that wouldn't have become Marriots because of their size and location, so are "uniquely designed" for the portfolio – almost taking the concept full circle.

MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL: AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION

Autograph was one of the forerunners in this market, launching seven "upper upscale" hotels in the US in 2010 from the Kessler Collection.

Since then, the portfolio has grown to more than 90 properties mostly in the

US, along with 30 in Europe, four in Latin America, two in the Caribbean and one each in Dubai, Japan, Australia, Bali and Canada.

The 97-room Gewandhaus Dresden joined in the summer. Crete's Domes of Elounda, which has 78 suites and 40 villas, signed up in September. Boston's Envoy hotel opened in the same month; Seoul's 410-room Plaza joins early next year.

Craig Smith, president and managing director of Marriott, Asia-Pacific, says the collection is "fast expanding" in Asia. [auto-graph-hotels.marriott.com](http://autograph-hotels.marriott.com)

STARWOOD: TRIBUTE PORTFOLIO

Starwood introduced its tenth hotel brand and second portfolio (following the Luxury Collection), in April.

Properties selected are all independent and retain "a firm focus on four-star and upper upscale". The first to be signed was the Royal Palm South Beach Miami, recently joined by London's Great Northern hotel.



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These are to be followed by four new openings. The 166-room Noel Place in Nashville and a 173-room hotel in Savannah, Georgia will launch next year, while 2017 will see the opening of two North Carolina properties: the 150-room Vandré Nouveau in Asheville and a 100-room hotel in Charleston.

There will also be hotels in Japan (Hokkaido), Fort Lauderdale and Coral Gables in Florida. The Riviera Palm Springs in California was signed in September.

The group expects to have 100 Tribute Portfolio properties by 2020, mainly in Europe and North America. starwoodhotels.com/tributeporfolio

CURIOS BY HILTON

Launched in June last year, this collection of four- and five-star hotels (a mix of revamps, new-builds and historic properties of varying sizes and types) was inaugurated with the new 1,600-room SLS Las Vegas Hotel and Casino.

This was followed by the Sam Houston in Texas, the Hotel Alex Johnson in Rapid City, South Dakota, and the Franklin hotel

in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

US properties opening next year include the London House Chicago, the Logan Philadelphia, the Porter Portland and the Hotel Sarasota in Florida. There is also the new Anselmo in Buenos Aires, two pre-existing resorts in Jamaica, and the Reichshof Hamburg, which recently had a €30 million restoration.

The MOQ is due to open in Doha next year, while 2017 promises the new Statler Dallas and the Hotel Astor in Paris. The Rumeli Han Istanbul arrives in 2018. curio-collection3.hilton.com

CARLSON REZIDOR: QUORVUS COLLECTION

Last summer, Carlson Rezidor announced the arrival of the Quorvus Collection, "a new generation of expertly curated luxury, five-star hotels that offer a truly distinctive experience".

Properties will be "individual in style, design, heritage, history and architecture", and reflect the location and culture they are in. The first members are the G&V Royal Mile hotel in Edinburgh, the Symphony

Style hotel in Kuwait and the May Fair in London. (Both Edinburgh and Kuwait properties were formerly Missoni Hotels under a partnership with Carlson Rezidor and the Italian fashion house.)

Rezidor is aiming to have 20 member hotels by 2020. quorvuscollection.com

LOEWS HOTELS

AND RESORTS: OE COLLECTION

"A curated collection of intimate, original experiences," OE states it does not adhere to anyone's definition of "boutique". Instead, properties simply have to be "unique".

Other than that, the brand gives little away, despite the concept being announced at the beginning of the year.

The first property will be Bisha Hotel and Residences in Toronto's entertainment district, which will have 100 rooms and 300 apartments.

According to hotelchatter.com, the collection is attractive to join because owners don't have to use Loews or OE branding, and management contracts are seven years as opposed to 20 or 25. oecollection.com



It might seem today that chains are everywhere, but hospitality research group MKG Global reports that out of 19.5 million hotel rooms in the world, only 7.85 million are part of a chain.



TALARIA LADIES SPA

Wyjątkowe miejsce dla kobiety!

Talaria Ladies SPA to nowe miejsce gościnne na mapie Polski i pierwszy w Polsce obiekt hotelowy wellness i spa, którego oferta pobytowa skierowana jest wyłącznie dla kobiet. Zapraszamy do Talaria Ladies SPA, wyjątkowego miejsca dla kobiet. Wyjątkowego, bo kobiety są wyjątkowe, ze swoimi potrzebami zależnymi od czasu i miejsca, w którym się znajdują oraz ludzi i emocji, które je otaczają. Talaria Ladies SPA to coś więcej niż Hotel & SPA. To miejsce stworzone

z myślą o kobietach. Tu Wy, Kobiety, poczujecie się wyjątkowo w każdym calu – niezależnie, czy chcecie się ukryć przed światem czy zabłyszczeć, aktywnie spędzić czas, poradzić się specjalistą, czy też po prostu poleniuchować i dokończyć jedną z tych, wyczekiwanych książek. Może potrzebujecie chwili wytchnienia od obowiązków lub szukacie miejsca na organizację spotkania biznesowego czy konferencję dla innych kobiet? Chcecie zadbać o kondycję i urodę, nauczyć

się czegoś nowego lub zwyczajnie poplotkować z przyjaciółkami? A może tylko porozmyślać leżąc na trawie, zmęczyć się na siłowni, zrelaksować podczas masażu, odżywić skórę czy zlikwidować kilka zmarszczek? Niezależnie od tego, czy chcecie poczuć znów smak domowego soku z malin, czy delektować się Dom Perignon – w Talaria Ladies SPA to Wy, KOBIETY, jesteście zawsze dla nas najważniejsze i Wasze lepsze samopoczucie staviamy na pierwszym miejscu!



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TRUMP OCEAN CLUB

International Hotel & Tower Panama



Hotel Trump Ocean Club International Hotel & Tower Panama surprises with its avant-garde design that has made it a landmark of the region.

Commanding the oceanfront on the exclusive peninsula of Punta Pacifica, Trump Ocean Club International Hotel & Tower Panama rises 70 stories above Panama Bay, with views extending to the Pearl Islands and the Pacific Ocean. It is walking distance from Punta Pacifica's exclusive shops and the city's financial district and just 15 minutes away from the airport.

DESIGN AND STYLE

Trump Ocean Club International Hotel & Tower Panama is owned by Eric Trump - the son of the famous Donald Trump who is now running for the president of the US. The property has made its Central American debut with a vanguard design that is destined to become a famed landmark and architectural icon for the Central American region. The majestic Trump Ocean Club tower was planned and built by Arias, Serna and Saravia, an architectural firm from Colombia. The interior design was performed by Hirsch Bedner Associates (HBA), a luxury hospitality design firm with offices in Los Angeles, Dubai, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. The main focus of both firms was to create something unique that represented Panama at its best. They accomplished their goal! Trump Ocean Club International Hotel & Tower Panama isn't just a beautiful building enhancing the sky line of a cosmopolitan city; it combines the autochthonous of the country with the modernity and luxury of the Trump Brand.

The spectacular tower evokes the illusion of a majestic sail fully deployed in the wind, set

above a 13-story base topped by an expansive platform. From this platform overlooking the ocean, guests can access an impressive three-story sky lobby, as well as a magnificent pool deck and oceanfront dining that serves as the backbone of the complex. Sleek modern décor prevails throughout the whole building. Especially impressive are the soaring ceilings and the sweeping views of the bay and ocean. The decorative tables in the Hotel Lobby, Convention Center Foyer and bar in Tejas Restaurant are made from a wood called cedro espino “cedar pine” that was underwater at Lake Gatun for more than 95 years since the construction of the Canal when the Gatun town flooded.

In addition to its spacious hotel rooms and suites, Trump Panama features exclusive-brand boutiques. Guests have access to all of the exceptional amenities and hallmarks of the Trump Hotel Collection, including world-class dining, fitness center, business center, and the signature services of Trump Attaché.

ROOMS AND SUITES

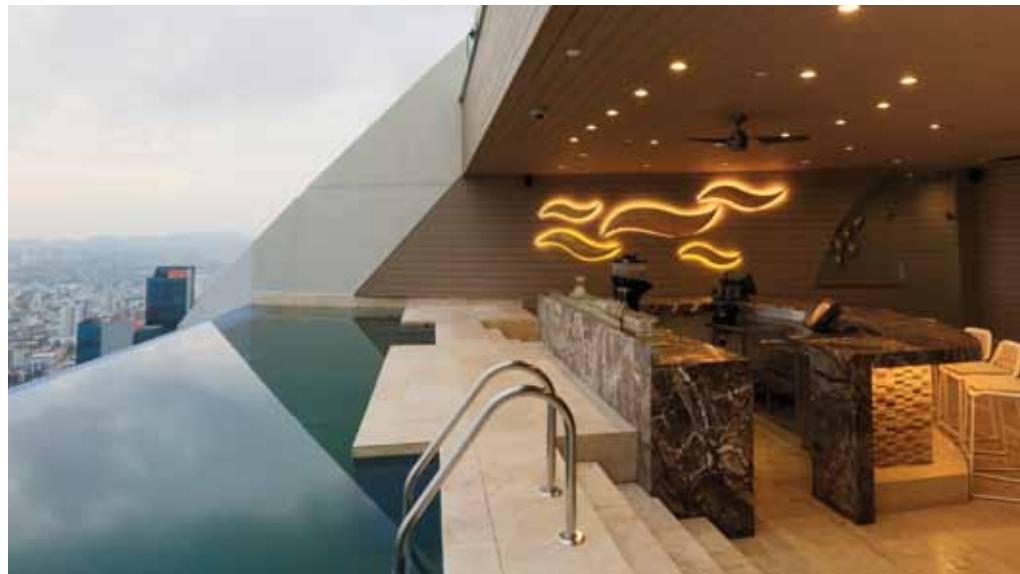
The 369 guest rooms and luxury suites of the hotel are immaculately designed for the most discerning traveller. Trump Panama's guest rooms range from approximately 48 to 145 sqm and feature floor-to-ceiling windows that allow the extraordinary cityscape to take centre stage. Private balconies in all rooms invite guests to savour their morning coffee while overlooking the sailboats in the bay. Add to this luxurious bathrooms with granite countertops, marble floors and frameless showers. The rooms also feature the latest in business and entertainment technology, including HD flat screen TVs and wifi.

TRUMP ATTACHE

The signature Trump Attaché hotel services are available to all



The 369 guest rooms and luxury suites of the hotel are immaculately designed for the most discerning traveller.



Trump Hotel Collection guests, providing each visitor an uncompromising service throughout his or her stay. The Attaché meticulously records each guest's preferences and maintains a detailed guest history to ensure that every stay feels like the first one.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS

Guests of Trump Panama enjoy an unmatched culinary experience that ranges from world-class oceanfront dining to a chic pool deck bar and grill. The

hotel boasts imaginative cuisine inspired by local, international and Latin American gastronomy. The hotel's signature open-kitchen restaurant Tejas Restaurant & Bar, offers traditional seafood recipes with a cutting edge innovative spirit. Tejas restaurant received its name from the ceramic roof tiles encrusted in the restaurant's main wall. For a more casual experience, guests can dine at BARcelona Tapas Restaurant & Bar that serves Panamanian specialties. For wine lovers, Trump

CONTACT

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Punta Pacífica, Panamá
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www.trumppanamahotel.com



Panama's intimate wine lounge Cava 15 Wine Bar is located in the spacious sky lobby, offering hundreds of wine labels to choose from. Azul Pool Bar & Grill serves lighter fare and drinks at the hotel's pool deck overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

POOLS AND THE OCEAN SUN CASINO

Perched on a platform atop the 13th floor, Trump Panama's stunning pool deck features five pools, including two spectacular infinity pools, private cabanas and poolside loungers. The 23,000 sqm international casino is owned and operated by Sun International. The casino includes 32 gaming tables for

blackjack, poker, roulette and baccarat, along with a superior collection of 600 slot machines showcasing numerous diversions for both the amateur and experienced gamer. It also includes an elite restaurant and lounge with private suites available on the 65th floor. On the 66th level, visitors will find Panaviera, an exclusive gaming space reserved for VIP guests.

SHOPPING AND CONFERENCES

World-renowned brands and elite boutiques on Trump Panama's first floor offer guests a sophisticated, exclusive shopping experience without ever leaving the hotel. The tower's 8,000 sqm

of meeting space is backed by state-of-the-art technology for polished presentations and sophisticated meetings.

Verdict

The hotel is a perfect choice for European tourist who wish to visit Panama. It is a luxury, stylish and an incredibly convenient property that stands out with its excellent service and high quality. The bars and restaurants will certainly satisfy the expectations of even the most refined gourmets. All in all, a great place both for business meetings and family holidays. It is also ideally located on the oceanfront, just a 15-minute drive from the international airport.

Rafat Sobiech

The 70-storey Trump Ocean Club International Hotel & Tower Panama offers its guests views extending from the Pearl Islands to the blue waters of the Pacific Ocean.





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BRISTOL ART & MEDICAL SPA



CONTACT

Hotel Bristol Art & Medical Spa
ul. 1 Maja 1, 28-100 Busko-Zdrój
tel.: (+48) 413 303 033
e-mail: info@bristolbusko.pl
www.bristolbusko.pl

PRICE

single room: from PLN 290
(about €65.5),
double room: from PLN 350
(about €79)

The history of Willa Bristol, which was entered into the register of monuments in Busko-Zdrój, dates back to the early 1920s. The former owners, the Zukerman family, were found in Israel by entrepreneurs from Kielce, Dorota and Tomasz Tworek who decided to buy the property and create the most modern spa complex in Busko or possibly in Poland. Bristol ART & Medical SPA complex is no doubt a jewel of architecture. A new Medical Spa extension was added, combining the harmonious Art Nouveau with modern architecture. Therapeutic treatments, based on natural resources in Busko were also skilfully combined with the most modern equipment and treatment techniques. The owners, however, added much more to the place. With their passion and sensitiv-

ity to art, they have managed to create not only a unique hotel, but also a place, where you can experience the beauty with every sense. This, in turn, promotes healing. Art therapy is a holistic vision that is implemented here in a comprehensive manner. On a hill above the car park, there is an installation by Zbigniew Frączkiewicz entitled "The People of Iron", by the entrance you will see "The Cyclists" by Bronisław Chromy, as well as several sculptures by Sylwester Ambroziak. Another gem is the unique installation that hangs from the ceiling and was created with hundreds of pieces of crystal by artist Ludwika Ogorzelec.

WHERE IS IT?

The hotel is located in the centre of Busko-Zdrój, next to the main gate leading to one of the oldest spa parks in Poland and by a

modern promenade. It is situated about 500 metres from the coach terminal, and 700 metres from the market square. The nearest airport is in Cracow.

ROOMS

The hotel offers 71 luxurious rooms and suites: de luxe, superior and classic, each with a balcony overlooking the promenade or park. The standard amenities in all the rooms include a safe, a mini bar, coffee and tea making facilities, a TV set and wireless Internet. The suites are all bright and spacious, but they differ in colours and furnishings. The entire hotel and restaurant space is moisturized and ionized, which makes recovery easier for those suffering from allergies and respiratory diseases. It is the only spa in Poland, where such an electrostatic air purification



system was implemented. I stayed in the spa section, in a large sunny room with a terrace overlooking the promenade and the spa park. The furniture was simple and modern with a work desk, an office chair and warm lighting.

BAR AND RESTAURANT

The hotel restaurant with Mariusz Kotkowski at the helm, serves sophisticated dishes, healthy, low-calorie buffet breakfasts, lunch and dinners. The menu, including original dishes, starters, soups, main courses and desserts, changes on a daily basis. The menu is also complemented with an array of appropriately selected wines and local mineral waters.

THE SPA

On the three floors in Medical and Spa sections there are 42 treatment rooms, where patients can enjoy numerous therapies including the rehabilitation of the locomotor system, but also orthopaedic, anti-rheumatic and neurological therapies. The treatment rooms come with top notch equipment, including an anti-gravity treadmill, cryochamber and a swimming pool purified with nano-silver. Medical offers balneo- and physical therapy with sulphides and peloids, thermotherapy, hydrotherapy with brine massages, as well as individual and group physiotherapy. Therapy retreats last from 7 to 21 days.

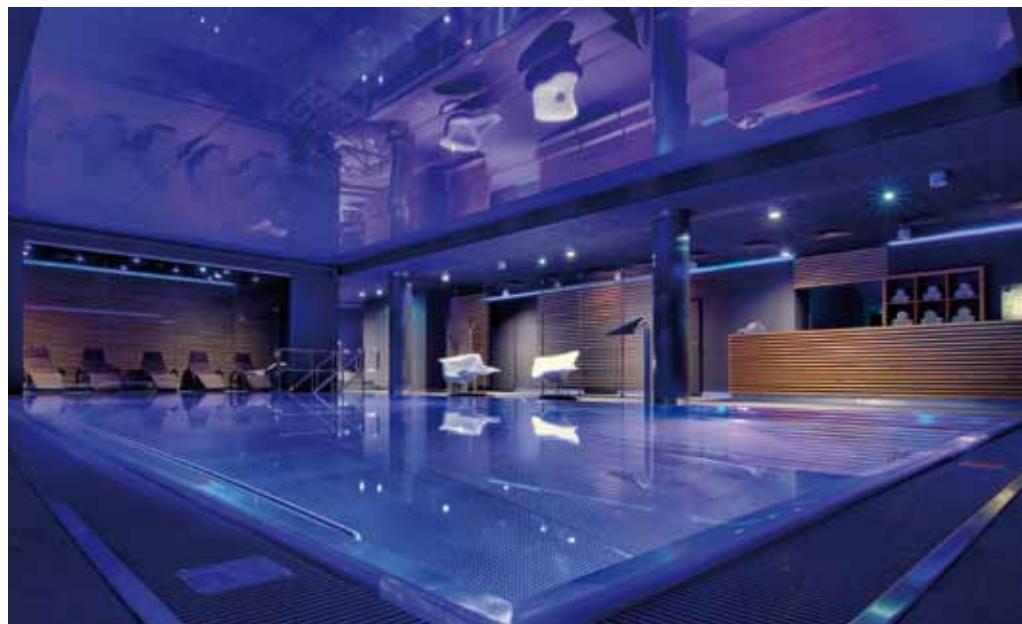


VERDICT

Bristol ART & Medical SPA is Poland only spa property that boasts electrostatic air purification system both in the rooms and in the restaurant section. It is also equipped with one of the few anti-gravity treadmills in Poland, with unique technology developed at NASA. Not to forget about the only swimming pool in Poland that is purified with nano-silver. What is more, the hotel has a unique collection of modern paintings and sculptures available to all hotel visitors. The medical care is professional and individual, with rehabilitation care at the highest European level. I can recommend it for longer spa retreats, holidays or weekend getaways to regenerate your body.

AWARDS

- TripAdvisor Travelers' Quality Certificate 2015



Bristol ART & Medical SPA complex is a jewel of architecture. A new Medical Spa extension was added, thus combining the harmonious Art Nouveau with modern architecture.

SPA AND VINOTHERAPY



Głęboczek Vine Resort & SPA is a unique place where peace, luxury and the closeness of the nature come together in a perfect harmony. The hotel is located in a charming spot of Brodnickie Lakeland, on the shore of Forbin lake. The unique design of the resort is a combination of the historic manor and farmstead architecture with the elements of ethno style and modern technological solutions. It is the only place in Poland where the brand philosophy is entirely based on the wine culture. The quality of services at Głęboczek has been recognized with numerous awards, including the 2015 Diamond Wellness Hotel and the Certificate of Excellence by Tripadvisor.

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS
Głęboczek Vine Resort & SPA is a perfect place to organize various conferences and team-building events. The hotel has a separate business zone called Winnica II that was created especially for business guests. The zone features 23 comfortable rooms, meeting and banquet rooms with catering facilities, as well as Pinot Nero nightclub. The largest room is called Barolo and can accommodate up to

300 people. Another advantage of Głęboczek Vine Resort & SPA is its extensive choice of accompanying events. Conference organizers can rely on the professional assistance of the sales staff that make sure that every event taking place in the hotel is a big success.

WINE COSMETICS

Wine is also present in the SPA zone and Vine SPA is Poland's first treatment facility to use vinotherapy. You will find there swimming and vitality pools, as well as Brodnickie Baths zone with an aromatherapeutic sauna, a floral steam bath and a peat and mud bath. A unique form of relaxation is guaranteed by a session spent in the Alpha-Lounger that promotes creative thinking and helps develop imagination. A rich offer of spa rituals using positive effects of wine will certainly satisfy even the most discerning guests.

SIGNATURE BRAND

The resort has recently introduced a new, signature brand called Vine SPA Exclusive Line, which is based on four unique products made with grapes. The line consists of a scrub, oil, facial mask and a lotion. The cosmetics are used in all spa body rituals at

Głęboczek. One of the most favourite treatments is the deeply relaxing and moisturising ritual for two, called the Taste of Shiraz. Merlot Wine ritual combines full body scrub with an aromatic bath in grape extract. It is an excellent option for single guests, as well as couples. There is also SPA Głęboczek Vine treatment to moisturize and beautify the whole body. All the cosmetics contain an active ingredient called Viniderm, which is produced from shiraz, merlot and carignan varieties from Languedoc, France. This helps rejuvenate, regenerate and actively nourish the skin, while rebuilding its lipid barrier.

CHEF RECOMMENDS

Głęboczek Vine Resort & SPA offers a truly refined cuisine. The head chef of the hotel has created a signature menu based on high quality seasonal products. Guests are especially keen on dining on the sunny terrace of the restaurant overlooking Forbin lake. Morellino restaurant boasts a slow food certificate. Wine lovers will also enjoy here a professional assistance of a sommelier and an option to take advantage of the unique "Wine Academy" offer. gleboczek.pl

Rafał Sobiech



GŁĘBOCZEK

VINE RESORT & SPA



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MEETING IN THE MIDDLE

In an unlikely twist, low-cost carriers are talking to full-service airlines about feeding their long-haul networks.

Alex McWhirter reports



N

ot so long ago, the idea that a full-service carrier would rely on a no-frills airline to provide it with passengers would have been laughable. The difference in service standards between, say, British Airways on the one hand and Ryanair on the other are as different as chalk and cheese.

A DIFFICULT TASK

However, over the past few years the service gap between carriers such as BA and Lufthansa compared with the likes of Ryanair and Easyjet has narrowed. All airlines are anxious to keep cutting costs while continuing to attract passengers.

As a result, and with a fair amount of secrecy, discussions are taking place between a number of full-service airlines and their low-cost counterparts as to how they can benefit one another.

That's because Ryanair and its ilk offer a cheaper way to feed short-haul passengers on to the conventional carriers' long-haul networks.

Traditional carriers either lose money on European feeders or break even, if lucky. At the same time, the more efficient low-cost airlines not only make money but also manage profitably to serve many secondary points in mainland Europe, Scandinavia

and the Nordic countries. Taken together, these smaller airports can feed many thousands of new passengers to the hubs of long-haul airlines.

Both parties need each other. The low-cost carriers' business models are built on continual growth, while legacy carriers such as BA, Lufthansa and Air France seek to protect their market share from rivals such as Turkish Airlines and those based in the Gulf, which are all moving into Europe's secondary points.

Ryanair and Aer Lingus have been the most open about discussions. Aer Lingus chief operating officer Mike Rutter confirmed to the Irish Independent that his carrier and Ryanair had talked about operating a codeshare arrangement. This would feed Ryanair passengers on to Aer Lingus's transatlantic flights.

FILLING THE SEATS

Aer Lingus will need more transfer passengers to fill seats on the many new transatlantic routes it intends to operate in the coming years. Three routes alone – from Dublin to Newark, Los Angeles and Hartford in Connecticut – will start next year.

Rutter said: "I think it would be a good deal for both airlines, providing the economics are right. It opens up the places

that from an Aer Lingus perspective we wouldn't get to serve in the long run. So, for example, another airline might have a great network in Poland [or] in the Baltic states – [where] we don't have an extensive network."

Aer Lingus chief executive Stephen Kavanagh told Reuters: "We are looking at opportunities to extend our reach. There are markets that Ryanair serves but we don't. So we are having those discussions about what is currently happening on an ad hoc basis. If we get the right price in terms of the capacity from Ryanair, then we would be very interested in doing business. If the commercial agreements are reached in time, then summer 2016 is a possibility."

Ryanair chief executive Michael O'Leary has also been in talks with his Lufthansa counterpart, Carsten Spohr, about feeding short-haul passengers on to Lufthansa's long-haul routes, as reported by Berlin's Der Tagesspiegel.

According to reports, O'Leary has also spoken with TAP Portugal, Norwegian's long-haul division and Virgin Atlantic. The last of these is disadvantaged by having no European feeder flights of its own.

To this end, Ryanair has begun extending its presence into main airports while maintaining its secondary ones. Already



Traditional carriers either lose money on European feeders or break even, if lucky. At the same time low-cost airlines not only make money but also manage profitably to serve many secondary points.



established at Milan Malpensa, Rome Fiumicino and Brussels, it has just moved into Amsterdam Schiphol and wants to expand into Paris CDG, Dusseldorf and Munich next year.

AMBITIOUS PLANS

The budget carrier has ambitious expansion plans for Germany, where it wants to increase its market share from 4 per cent to 20 per cent by 2020, and replace Air Berlin as Germany's second airline, hence the interest in feeding Lufthansa.

Norwegian is another carrier, albeit a low-cost one, attempting to link its schedules with those of Ryanair at its bases around Europe. That was confirmed by its chief executive, Bjorn Kjos, and doubtless relates to Norwegian's expansion at Cork in 2016 – it plans to launch flights to Boston in May and New York in 2017.

Easyjet has also been in discussions about providing feeder flights. The airline's chief executive, Carolyn McCall, said: "We've been looking at it for some time and we are in discussion with other airlines. The thing that has happened here is that for legacy [carriers] to do short-haul Europe it is prohibitively expensive. They are losing a lot of money in Europe and that is why they are interested in talking to us."

In September, news emerged from Germany that Lufthansa's Spohr had been talking to Easyjet about feeding passengers

from one carrier to the other. At the time, Easyjet would not comment, but a month later it told Business Traveller: "We are always looking at new opportunities to build [our] network, but without adding cost or complexity to our business."

Whatever they might say, budget carriers are already interlining passengers, either between themselves or other carriers, in a limited way. Take the new flight transfer scheme at Gatwick promoted under "Gatwick Connects". Here, Easyjet works with Wow Air and Norwegian. The programme is promoted by Gatwick and bookings are made through Skyscanner.

The main advantage is the peace of mind that passengers will be looked after if a connection is lost. But this comes at a price. Unlike proper interlining procedures, passengers using Gatwick Connects have to pay a fee of £27.50 for a one-way trip. Eurowings (formerly Germanwings) has flight transfer facilities for passengers passing through its main German airports. Now it has emerged that ANA (an exacting airline, like all Japanese carriers) has agreed to interline with the carrier for flights between Tokyo and Dusseldorf via hubs such as London Heathrow.

In future, conventional carriers will likely continue to operate key feeder flights, but it will be the low-cost ones that may end up carrying passengers to and from secondary airports. Whatever happens, do not expect changes overnight.

INTERLINING EXPLAINED

Interlining is recognised as the way in which passengers and their luggage are transferred between conventional airlines. It also means that, in the case of an international transfer, the passenger should remain airside and the transfer can be completed swiftly.

But it's also a costly exercise. Passengers and their luggage need looking after when connections are lost. Budget airlines do not normally interline, even with their own flights. Details remain unclear but what the low-cost carriers are proposing is a less costly, limited form of interlining for when passengers connect to a conventional airline. Reservations would be made through the full-service carrier.

How will the passenger benefit? He or she gets local airport convenience plus the knowledge that they would be looked after if the connection is lost. Right now (Gatwick Connects excepted), that doesn't happen when passengers buy separate tickets.

As reader feedback will testify, each ticket forms a separate contact with the individual airline. Carriers are not obliged to look after passengers who miss their transfers between low-cost and conventional operators. Granted, the transfer process could take longer, but is that a drawback? After all, when connections are missed or baggage goes astray, the likely culprit is too tight a connection.

AIRBUS A320NEO FOR LUFTHANSA



On January 20, 2016 Lufthansa took possession of the first Airbus A320neo. Carsten Spohr, CEO of Deutsche Lufthansa AG, Airbus CEO Fabrice Brégier as well as Robert Leduc, the President of Pratt & Whitney and David Hess, Executive Vice President and Chief Customer Officer Aerospace for United Technologies made a special trip to Hamburg-Finkenwerder to celebrate the handover of the world's first A320neo. The deployment of the Airbus A320neo marks another step Lufthansa is taking towards a "three-liter fleet" (per passenger and 100 kilometers) and significantly contributes

to noise reduction. "We are pleased to be the first airline in the world to take possession of the Airbus A320neo today. The cutting-edge technologies of Airbus and Pratt & Whitney make the A320neo the most efficient and quietest aircraft for short- and medium-haul flights by far. The lower fuel consumption results in lower CO₂ emissions and gives the A320neo a significantly improved carbon footprint. The new engine technology also makes the aircraft significantly quieter," says Carsten Spohr, Chairman of the Board and CEO of Deutsche Lufthansa AG.

"Today we are proving once again that we as an aviation and

airline group are pioneers in the development and introduction of technological innovations. This year alone Lufthansa will take possession of a total of 52 new aircraft for the group's airlines" says Spohr.

NEW, QUIETER AND ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY

What makes the A320neo stand out are the new engines and improved aerodynamics. The addition of "neo" stands for "New Engine Option". The aircraft is 15 percent more fuel efficient than today's comparable models. It also shows impressive figures in terms of noise reduction: the 85 decibel maximum noise-level contour of a starting

A320neo is around 50 per cent lower than that of the current A320. In accordance with certification standards, the cumulative noise emissions are about 29.8 dB below the applicable ICAO limits, which represents a significant advance in terms of noise and emissions reduction compared to the current fleet.

This is possible thanks to the new engine technology. The PW1100G engines feature so-called "Geared Turbofan" technology, which leads to a significant reduction in noise levels and fuel consumption through the transformation of drive power. 60 neo-aircraft with PW1100G engines will be delivered to the Lufthansa Group.

In addition to the new engine technology, all new A320neo and A321neo aircraft will already be equipped with vortex generators on delivery, which have an additional noise-reducing effect. The wings are fitted with the recently newly developed wingtips. The 2.4 meter long winglets (sharklets) lead to less fuel consumption due to the resulting aerodynamic advantages.

AIRCRAFT AT THE BASE

The first Lufthansa Airbus A320neo with the registration D-AINA (MSN 6801) is expected to be transferred to its future home base in Frankfurt later this week, before the aircraft will be used for its first commercial flight to Hamburg on 24 January. In addition to Hamburg, Munich will be the second of the first two destinations for the A320neo.

The A320neo has a total of 180 seats for Business Class and Economy Class passengers. Inside the cabin, the galleys and lavatories in the front and back of the aircraft have been newly arranged, allowing for a more efficient use of available space. Business Class passengers benefit from greater legroom in the front rows, and the new arrangement also creates room for a further two rows with 12 ad-



The PW1100G engines feature so-called "Geared Turbofan" technology, which leads to a significant reduction in noise levels and fuel consumption through the transformation of drive power.



ditional seats in Economy Class.

Targeted investments

The Lufthansa Group has ordered a total of 116 neo-type aircraft, 45 of them the larger A321neo version. These new aircraft are intended for Lufthansa and SWISS. This order represents an investment of 13.3 billion US dollars according to list price. By the end of 2016, a total

of five A320neo aircraft should have been handed over to Lufthansa and also be in use at the Lufthansa hub Frankfurt. The Lufthansa Group fleet is currently undergoing a fundamental renewal. The Group's order shows a total of 251 brand-new aircraft at a list price value of about 30 billion euros to date. These are to be delivered by 2025.

A LOT OF NEW CONNECTIONS



Barcelona, Zurich, Zagreb, Dusseldorf, Kishinev, Belgrade, Yerevan and Venice - these are the new destinations where since January 2016 you can fly with LOT Polish Airlines. The carrier is no longer bound by the restrictions imposed by the European Commission. This means a much larger and even more compelling offer for passengers from Poland and other European countries.

SEVERAL NEW DESTINATIONS

In the first three months of 2016, LOT Polish Airlines will launch and resume several European routes as well as one long-haul connection to Tokyo. The offer is aimed not only at passengers from Warsaw, but also from other Polish and European cities. LOT is the only airline to offer flights with convenient and problem-free transfers via its Warsaw hub that today is

the best alternative for large and congested airports in Western Europe.

"Since the beginning of the year LOT Polish Airlines has been guaranteeing the shortest and the most convenient flights to Barcelona, Zurich, Zagreb, Düsseldorf, Kishinev, Belgrade or Yerevan. We are confident that our new route network will reflect the needs of our passengers and all those who have never tried our services," says Marcin Cele-



jewski, the acting CEO of LOT. "But that is not all. We are continuously expanding the range of additional services. We have opened a new, more convenient check-in zone at Chopin Airport in Warsaw and pay even more attention to the quality of service and passenger care. All this to make their flight with LOT an truly comfortable and a pleasant experience without any trouble," adds Marcin Celejewski.

PASSENGERS AND THE MARKET

Fighting for passengers, the Polish carrier is determined to intensify its efforts in the market. The airline has set itself an ambitious goal to regain the leading position in Poland and then become the largest traditional carrier in the new Europe.

"We are building our offer to appeal to all passengers both

with our offer and fares. With such an attitude we are able to offer a good price for a much more attractive product than those offered by other large carriers. We are closer to our passengers and willing to meet their specific needs. Now, with a larger flight network, we are confident that the number of our passengers will steadily increase," says the acting CEO.

THE POWER OF DREAMLINER

LOT Polish Airlines is Europe's only carrier that on long-haul routes operates the world's most advanced aircraft - Boeing 787 Dreamliner. It is also the only airline that both on short and long distance flights offers three travel classes to meet the needs and expectations of all passengers.

CLASSY CLASSES

Presently, in addition to LOT Business Class, the carrier also

offers LOT Premium Economy Class that combines affordable ticket fares with many services typical of Business Class, such as onboard meals or the priority check-in. For Economy-Class passengers LOT has created a special fare called LOT Economy Simple, with which they can travel only with their carry-on luggage for a price lower by up to 30 percent. In addition, each of the classes comes with a comprehensive portfolio of products and services, such as My Favourite Meal, My Extra Luggage or Duty Free Shopping and the onboard AirKiosk.

Since 13 January 2016, LOT's B787 Dreamliner also flies on the new long-haul route from Warsaw to Tokyo. By the end of March other destinations will follow. These include Athens, Beirut, Nice, Cluj-Napoca, Košice, Palanga, Kharkov, Luxembourg and Ljubljana.



In the first three months of 2016, LOT Polish Airlines will launch and resume several European routes as well as one long-haul connection to Tokyo.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF SOFITEL WARSAW VICTORIA

Time to celebrate!



MORE INFORMATION AT
www.sofitel.com
www.accorhotels.com

Sofitel Warsaw Victoria is a living legend of the Polish hospitality industry, a place with rich history and the ambassador of the French chic.

THE OLD VICTORIA

In 1976 the people of Warsaw saw a shape of a new hotel situated at Królewska Street. It was a real gem of the modernist architecture, whose elegant design beautifully blended into the landscape of the reborn city following the trauma it went through during the WWII. The luxury hotel has quickly become

a legendary venue and one of the symbols of the capital - a place that was famous in Poland and abroad and loved by the locals. Today Sofitel Warsaw Victoria is one of the most recognizable hotels in Poland. Proud of its rich history, it gracefully fulfils the role of the ambassador of the French elegance.

FRENCH STYLE AND ELEGANCE

The hotel owes its name to the then Victoria Square and from the first day of its opening it attracted guests that expected here luxury and the highest

standards of service. It also enjoyed a reputation of one of the trendiest places in Warsaw, visited by celebrities from all over the world as well as the capital's socialites. Nobody expected though, that it was soon to become as famous as its guests. The hotel interiors were used for shooting iconic films and singers created popular songs about Victoria. Without doubt, this glamorous image of the famous hotel became an important element of the Polish culture.

In 2001 Victoria joined the prestigious Sofitel brand. The next chapter in its history

meant a lot of ambitious goals. But drawing from its rich tradition, the hotel is boldly looking into the future. In pursuit of the highest standards, it does its best to continuously exceed the expectations of its guests and set fresh market trends for luxury hotels. In 2013-2014 the property underwent a true metamorphosis under the direction of the world famous designer Didier Gomez. The modernized interiors now combine the modern design with luxurious elegance, blending remarkably well with the modernistic character of the hotel. Sofitel Warsaw Victoria has retained its position of an icon of style, which along with the quality of the offered services puts it in the forefront of the best hotels in Poland.

WIDE OFFER

Located in the very heart of the capital, near Piłsudski Square and the Saxon Garden, between the historic Old Town and the business centre, Sofitel Warsaw Victoria combines history with modernity. The hotel embodies the atmosphere of Warsaw, giving it a hint of French style. Hotel guests can enjoy here luxury rooms and suites with a convenient space for work and relaxation. Each of them comes with Sofitel MyBed beds that guarantee blissful sleep and a perfect rest. The hotel conference centre and its Ballroom, which features a professional stage and dressing rooms, is a perfect venue for various business meetings, as well as galas and banquets. It is a good idea to finish a busy day full of conferences or sightseeing the city, with a visit to the hotel Fitness Centre or SPA, where hotel guests can relax in a flavoured steam bath and a beautifully illuminated indoor pool with a mirrored ceiling, or simply work out in a fully-equipped gym. You might also want to visit the hotel's restaurants. Kitchen Gallery is an excellent place for a family brunch, while



In 2013-2014 the property underwent a true metamorphosis under the direction of the world famous designer Didier Gomez who has worked for many luxury international brands, but also designed properties for such celebrities as Harrison Ford or Pierre Berge.

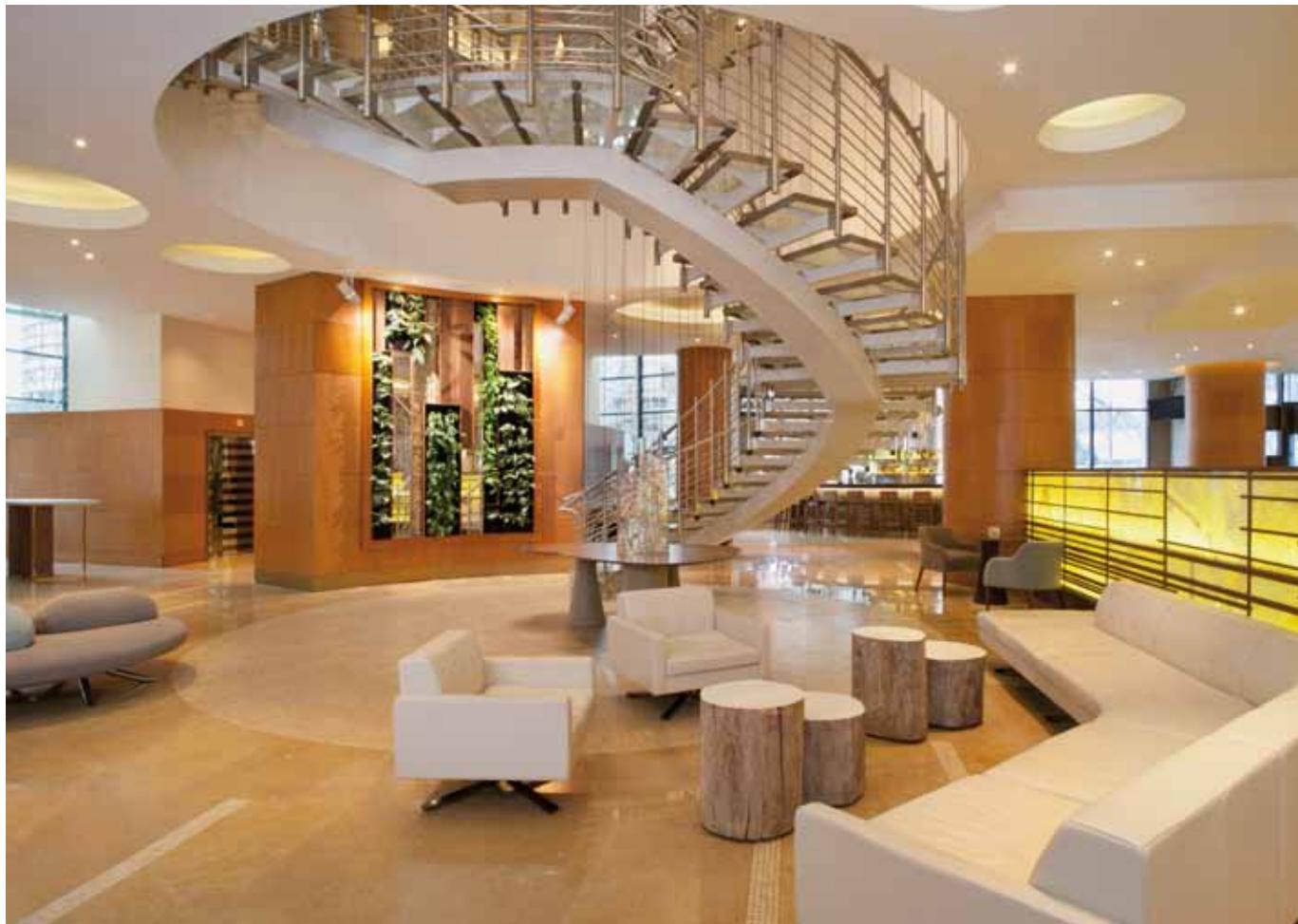


La Brasserie Moderne will certainly appeal to all gourmets. The restaurant is considered one of the best in the city and is famous for its signature menu composed by its head chef Maciej Majewski who perfectly combined french tradition with a modern approach to cuisine. The delicious dishes prepared in an open kitchen are based on the freshest local ingredients, while the chic décor of the

place creates an unforgettable dining experience. The hotel's bar Victoria Lounge situated in stylish interiors, guarantees a pleasant atmosphere during your business lunch or an intimate meeting with friends, offering a wide range of signature cocktails.

In 2016 Sofitel Warsaw Victoria celebrates its 40th anniversary. Come and celebrate this happy occasion with us.

WESTIN LIKES MONDAYS



Westin has been consistently building up its offer of services and products to guarantee that the stay in any of the brand's hotels will be an unforgettable experience. Following the introduction of the Gear Lending programme at the end of last year, Westin has recently come up with another novelty - a weekend rest. In this way all Mondays can become much better.

FOR THE BODY AND SOUL

The new initiative dubbed 'Westin Weekends', has been launched in 193 hotels around

the world (including Warsaw) and its goal is to give guests more flexibility and time to make the most out of their weekend getaway. Under the programme, hotel guests will be able to take advantage of the 3.00 pm Sunday checkout option (instead of the usual 12.00). Saturday and Sunday breakfast times have also been extended, so now guest can take their time, enjoying their energizing SuperFoodsRX delicacies.

"Our research shows consumers are craving more leisure time but taking less and less vacation so we wanted to develop a dedicated program that makes

taking a well-deserved weekend break seamless and stress free," said Brian Povinelli, Global Brand Leader for Westin Hotels & Resorts.

Westin Weekends is designed to help our guests get the most out of their weekend with late check-out and special, instinctive programming that makes it easy to plan the perfect, personalized getaway.

WESTIN WEEKEND TRANSFORMATION

To set the stage for the new program all Westin hotels will signal the weekend has arrived through a variety of subtle sen-

sory cues including changes in lighting, music and décor. Each guestroom will feature the brand's signature Heavenly Bed bathrobe placed on the bed accompanied by a list of favourite local attractions to officially welcome guests to their weekend. Hotel associates are also part of the transformation, leaving behind weekday ties and customary uniforms for a more relaxed and casual weekend look.

Guests are encouraged to linger in bed longer with a late, 3pm Sunday check-out and extended breakfast hours on Saturday and Sunday. Westin Weekends are designed to inspire well-being, from a good night's sleep on the Heavenly Bed and SuperFoodsRX dining options to convenient exercise through the RunWESTIN and New Balance gear-lending programmes.

For Westin hotels the well-being of guests is of paramount importance. Westin's motto is For a Better You, so the main objective of the brand's hotels is to help their guests relax and enjoy their trip. Earlier, Westin hotels introduced SuperFoodsRX programme, which, through a good diet helps guests improve their concentration, boost energy, but also provides the body with all necessary nutrients.

All Westin hotels are also equipped with Westin WORK-OUT studios which combine state-of-the-art equipment and high-performance workouts for guests who are committed to maintaining an active lifestyle during their travels. Jogging enthusiasts will find recommendations for the best routes in the vicinity of the hotel. Selected hotels also provide RunWESTIN programme in which the so-called Run Concierge shares interesting facts about the area as you get energized for the day ahead or shake off the stress of the day.

After a hard day of work or workout, it is good take a relaxing massage in the comfort of your own room. The in room spa service, involves massage pro-



cedure carried out in the room, which helps to achieve complete relaxation. And after the treatment, you can sit back with a cup of tea in your own room and enjoy the rest of the day.

ART ON A PLATE

In addition, Westin Warsaw has composed a menu that features SuperFoods products to positively influence our well-being and health. Janusz Korzyński, the head chef at the hotel, has created dishes that are a feast for both the body and the eye. Mr

Korzyński is famous for designing intricate yet mouth-watering pieces of art on the plates. Everything is well thought out and each ingredient has its proper place. Visiting Westin Warsaw, you cannot miss the opportunity to check the offer of its Fusion restaurant an JP's bar that now offers a wide range of cocktails created by the bartenders of JP's Bar.

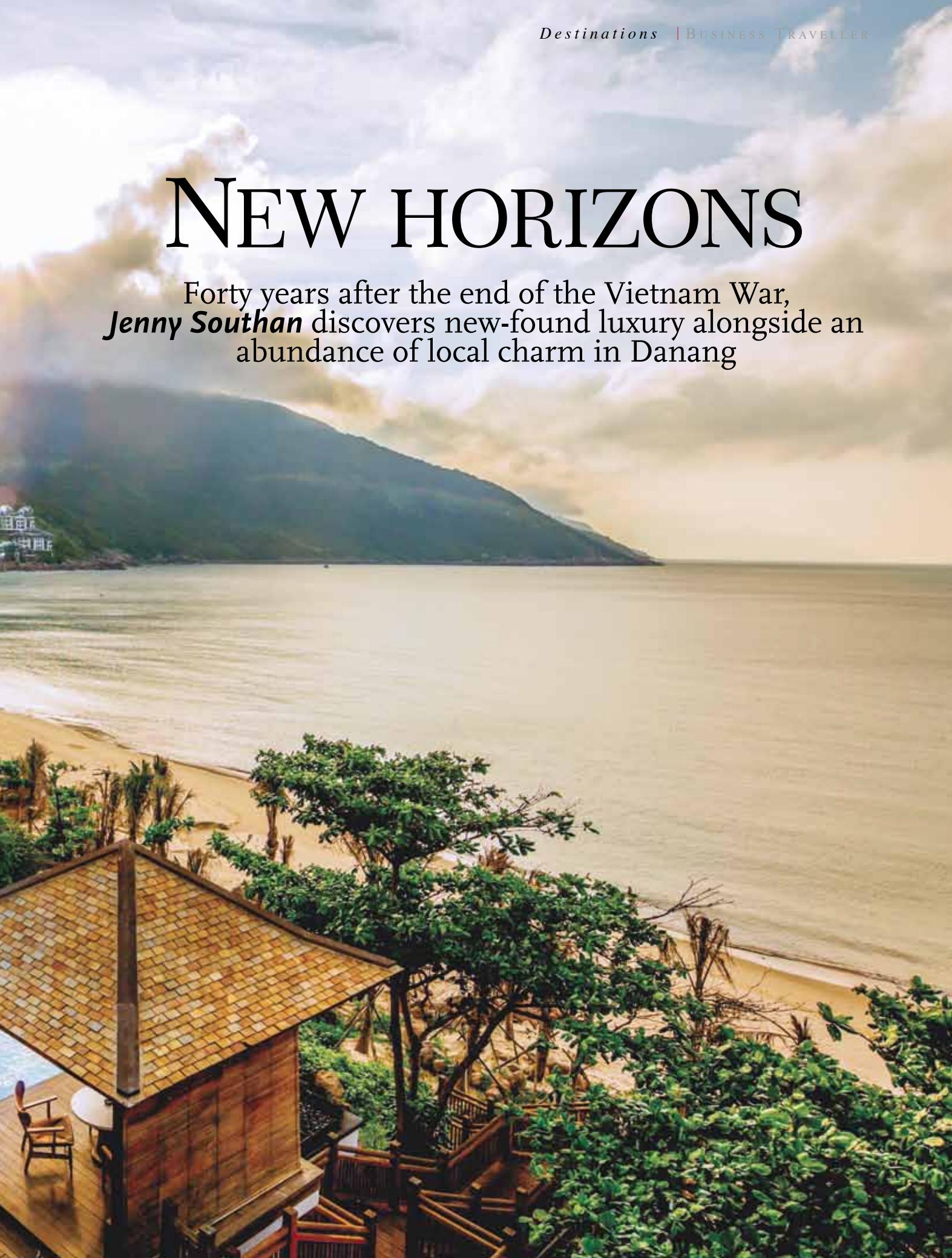
Motorists will be happy to know that at weekends guests of Westin Warsaw can use the hotel car park free of charge.

The head chef Janusz Korzyński has created dishes that are a feast for both the body and the eye.



NEW HORIZONS

Forty years after the end of the Vietnam War,
Jenny Southan discovers new-found luxury alongside an
abundance of local charm in Danang



E

Every Marine in 1 Corps got to spend a few days at China Beach at least once during their 13-month tours," writes journalist Michael Herr in his 1977 book *Dispatches*, a visceral, personal account of the Vietnam War.

"It was a place where they could go swimming or surfing, get drunk, get stoned, get laid, get straight, groove in the scivvie houses, rent sailboats or just sleep."

It was on the sandy shores of Danang that 50 years ago the first US ground troops arrived, striding from their boats through the warm waters of the bay, located midway down Vietnam's S-shaped coastline.

You only have to read *Dispatches* to get a sense of just how senseless the ensuing ten-year war was, one in which 58,000 US soldiers died, and three million Vietnamese, two-thirds of them civilians.

Against this background, you can appreciate how rapidly the country has rebuilt itself, and the incredible capacity of the local people for forgiveness.

WEALTHY VIETNAM

These days, Danang is a thriving port city of over one million people. Down by the surf,

fishermen mend their circular basket boats, just as they have always done, but all along the seafront promenade, glitzy karaoke bars, golf courses and luxury hotels are arriving. Among local brands such as the luxurious Naman Retreat and Fusion Maia, there's a Pullman and a Hyatt Regency. A Sheraton will open in 2018.

Despite the best efforts of the Americans, Vietnam remains a Communist country, but economic reforms have opened it up to the market, resulting in improved living standards and huge strides in development.

Last year, it welcomed 7.8 million visitors from overseas, while much improved relations with the US saw more than US\$36 billion generated in bilateral trade between the two nations.

By 2024, the Knight Frank 2015-2016 Wealth Report predicts that Vietnam will have seen a 159 per cent increase in ultra-high net-worth individuals (those whose net worth is over US\$30 million), the highest forecast growth rate of any country in the world.

"You could fly up and into hot tropic sunsets that would change the way you thought about light forever," writes Herr, who spent

his days being airlifted by helicopter in and out of combat zones.

THE ROAD TO THE RESORT

Nowadays, Danang's former military airbase is a shiny international airport, with flag carrier Vietnam Airlines offering frequent daily services between the coastal city and the capital, Hanoi, out of which it operates a state-of-the-art Dreamliner direct to London.

Disembarking from the one-hour 20-minute flight from Hanoi in the morning, we are greeted in arrivals by a uniformed member of staff from the Intercontinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort, where we will be staying. As he rushes to the baggage carousel to collect our luggage, we take a seat in the hotel's dedicated airport lounge and accept a cup of mint tea.

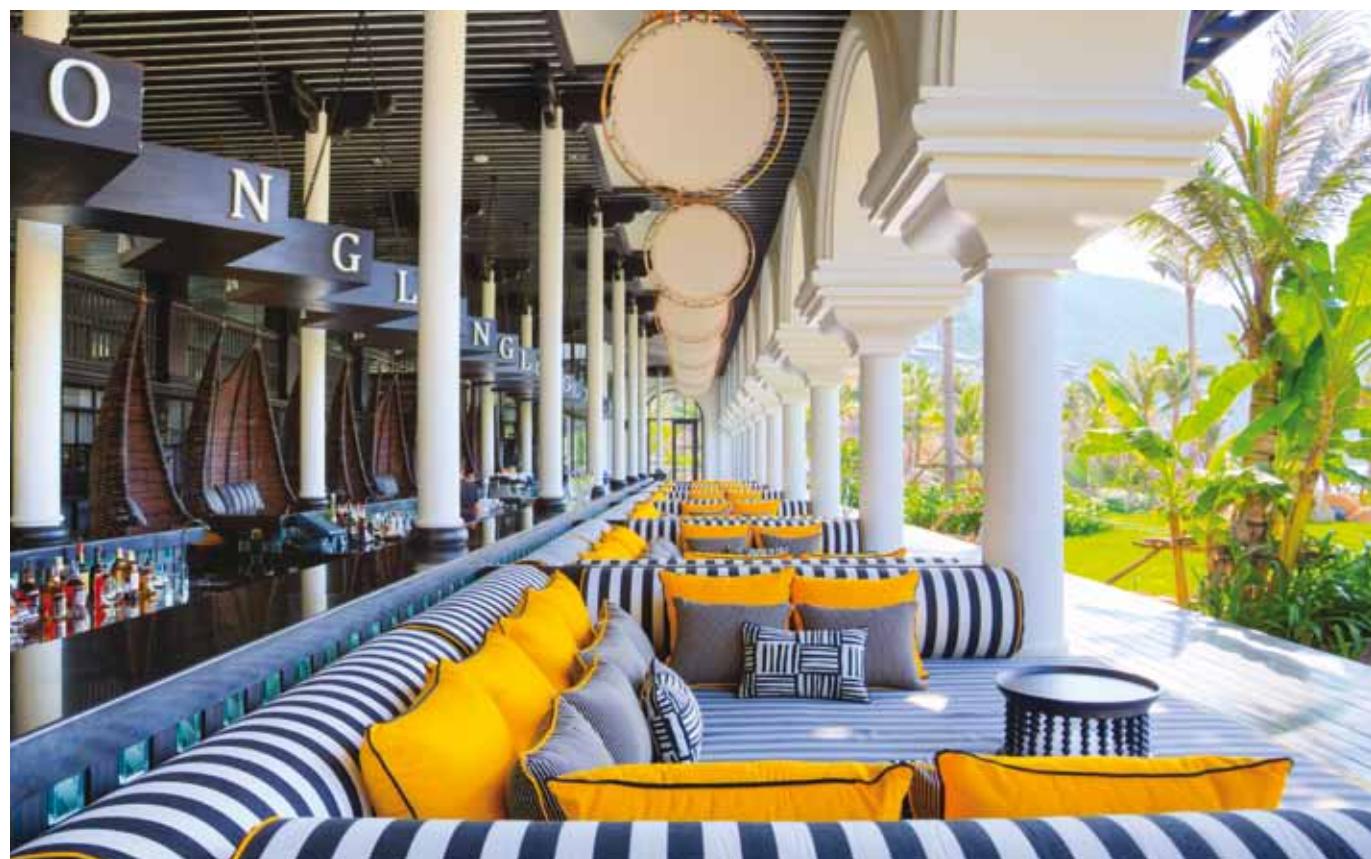
A 40-minute drive takes us through the city – past the Sun Wheel, Danang's answer to the London Eye, which started turning last summer – and across the Han River. From here, a cliff road leads to the Son Tra peninsula, where the resort overlooks its own bay.

Here, rows of villas are set on different levels carved into steep jungled slopes.





Ośrodek Danang Sun Peninsula otworzył swoje podwoje w 2013. Budowa tego 39-hektarowego przybytku, posiadającego 197 stylowo urządzone pokoi, apartamentów i penthouse'ów, trwała siedem lat.





In one direction, the road is lined with women selling vegetables; in the other are lively canal-side bars and restaurants.

From Heaven, at the top, we look down on Sky, Earth and Sea. Our own palatial beachside hideaway is easy to spot in the distance thanks to a long sliver of blue – a private pool.

DANANG SUN PENINSULA

Opened in 2013 and designed by Harvard-educated Bill Bensley – a man described by Time magazine as “the king of exotic luxury resorts” – the 39-hectare site took seven years to complete, bringing 197 stylish rooms, suites and penthouses to an otherwise virgin hillside.

To get around, you can jump in a golf buggy and wend your way through lush gardens of frangipani or take the Nam Tram funicular railway, which shuttles guests down to the palm-fringed 700-metre sandy beach. In the early hours, before the heat sets in, we go for sunrise yoga, followed by a swim in the sapphire sea and breakfast al fresco.

If you can resist room service on your balcony or terrace, Citron restaurant has cantilevered balconies with cushioned banquets, and a magnificent buffet of local delicacies, fruit smoothies and eggs-to-order. (Try a Vietnamese iced coffee made with sweet condensed milk.) Guests staying in Executive rooms or suites also have access to the glass-walled Sun Peninsula Club lounge, which lays on free cocktails and canapés at sundown. They also get their own butler – ours, Ty Na, goes out of her way to make the whole

experience magical, one evening arranging a table for two on the sand, with curries cooked by our own personal chef. Another evening we drink champagne in the moonlit courtyard of the hotel’s fine-dining French restaurant, La Maison 1888, before enjoying a tasting menu conceived by three-Michelin-starred chef Pierre Gagnaire.

SQUID AND RICE CRACKERS

Although it’s tempting to spend most of your holiday by the pool or in the spa, a trip to Hoi An, 45 minutes’ drive away, provides enrichment of a different kind. The old town, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is best explored in the evening, although we arrive earlier to take a scooter tour of the surrounding countryside (Vespa Adventures, US\$76 per person).

Our first stop is a fish market on the banks of the Thu Bon River. Men catch squid at night, luring them to the surface with bright lanterns, and sell them to women in conical straw hats who bring them to the market. A roadside stand sells banh mi, the country’s famous French colonial snack – a baguette filled with shredded pork, fragrant herbs, vegetables and chilli sauce.

Whizzing down dusty alleys, our next stop is the home of a family who make rice crackers. The mother steams them by an open fire, while racks of them dry in the sun, ready to be toasted. Ben, our local guide, tells us she has been doing this for 18

years, and each day needs to spend nine or ten hours to make 600 or 700. Handing us a piece, he tells us they’re best served with green papaya or green mango salad.

It’s great to hear that the tour is bringing money directly to local communities – the weaver couple we visit, for example, will only make US\$5 for a large grass mat that takes three hours to make, but will receive US\$1.50 from Vespa Adventures for a few minutes with tourists.

RICE FIELDS

After paying a visit to a mushroom farm and a boat yard, we zoom on dirt tracks between fields of rice, loofah and corn, and park up for a bite to eat. “Farming is one of Vietnam’s main incomes – we are the second-largest exporter of rice after Thailand,” Ben tells us as he dishes up bowls of cold rice noodles, coriander and smoked aubergine under the shade of an arbour.

At dusk, we make our way back to Hoi An, piling the bikes on to a low wooden ferry that takes us over the river. In one direction, the road is lined with women selling vegetables; in the other are lively canal-side bars and restaurants. We take a seat at one for a cold Larue beer, and a seven-year-old girl comes over selling candlelit paper lanterns – we buy two, and cross the street to place them in the water, watching them join a flickering procession floating downstream, to the sea.

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BUILT TO SUCCEED

Doha's expansion is continuing apace. **Tom Otley** rounds up new hotel openings in the Qatari capital

Doha has always made a good stop-over destination, but as Qatar prepares for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, the scale of its ambition is coming into sharp focus.

The opening of the new Hamad International airport last year will have been welcomed by all travellers passing through Doha. Still, this is only part of an estimated US\$40 billion currently being spent on transport projects – including the Doha Metro and a long-distance passenger and

freight network – and an eventual spend on transport infrastructure of some US\$200 billion before 2022.

Joining the Doha Exhibition Centre and Qatar National Convention Centre is the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre, opening this November. The 90,000 sqm complex has five pillar-free halls holding up to 3,500 delegates in each.

There is also a greater choice of accommodation than ever before. The latest figures available (January to August 2015) show

that average hotel occupancy rates have held steady (at 71 per cent) from the same period last year, despite a 32 per cent increase in the number of hotel rooms.

Year-to-date visitor arrivals neared two million for the first time, up 6 per cent over the same period in 2014, bringing Qatar closer to achieving its goal of three million visitors by the end of this year.

Next year will see the opening of the National Museum of Qatar designed by France's Jean Nouvel.

NEW HOTEL OPENINGS

● Aparthotel Adagio Premium Doha West Bay

Accorhotels opened an Adagio Aparthotel in the city's diplomatic area in October last year. It has 80 units, a combination of studios, two- and three-bedroom apartments ranging from 20 sqm to 59 sqm. All feature fully equipped kitchens, workdesks, free wifi, LCD TVs, docking stations, safes, iron/ironing boards and adjustable air conditioning.

A buffet breakfast is laid on every morning and housekeeping is offered daily, weekly or as requested depending on the length of stay.

There is also a 24-hour reception, a gym, indoor and outdoor pools, and a meeting room. A Lebanese restaurant is planned.

The airport is about a 20-minute drive away. adagio-city.com

● Banana Island Resort Doha by Anantara

Anantara's Banana Island Resort opened in January. Located 11km off Doha's coast, the 13-hectare site can be reached by luxury boat transfer from the port in 20 minutes, or by helicopter from the airport in ten minutes.

The hotel has 141 rooms, suites and villas (some over-water) starting from 55 sqm offering sea views from private balconies or terraces.

Other features include an 800-metre beach, swimming pools, a private marina, spa, tennis court, bowling alley, golf putting course and eight restaurants. Note that no alcohol is served. doha.anantara.com

● Westin Doha Hotel and Spa Starwood is set to open its first Westin property in Qatar this month. The hotel is located in the Bin Mahmoud neighbourhood, a short taxi ride from the city centre.

It houses 365 rooms, suites and villas offering free wifi and Westin's signature Heavenly beds.

There is also more than 3,000 sqm of event space, a spa, pools and a variety of eateries including a steak and seafood grill house and a Thai presentation kitchen. starwoodhotels.com/westin

COMING SOON

● Shangri-La Doha

Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts is due to make its Doha arrival in December (opening date still to be confirmed).

Located in West Bay, the hotel is directly linked to City Centre Mall and is next to the new Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre. It will have 272 rooms starting from 46 sqm.



Doha boasts a wide choice of accommodation. Average hotel occupancy rates oscillate here around 71 per cent.





Other facilities include a health club, pool and spa, eight function rooms and seven restaurants and bars, including Cantonese and Argentine eateries.

There will also be 42 serviced apartments available with access to hotel facilities. shangri-la.com/doha

- **Mondrian Doha** Due to launch by the end of next year, the 270-room Mondrian will be located in a 31-storey tower in the West Bay Lagoon neighbourhood.

One of the stand-out features of this luxury property will be a semi-outdoor rooftop pool bar. It will also offer restaurants serving regional and international cuisine, a spa and a huge ballroom with space for 1,500 guests. morganshotelgroup.com

- **Me Doha Melia Hotels International** is scheduled to open a second Doha property in 2017 under its trendy ME brand.

The ME Doha will be part of a new complex – Dohalive in the West Bay area – which will house shops, and a rooftop terrace and gardens. The hotel will have 235 rooms, a spa, an outdoor infinity pool, three restaurants and three bars, a nightclub and an open-air cinema. melia.com

- **Wyndham Garden Doha** Wyndham Hotel Group has announced plans to open the Middle East's first Wyndham Garden hotel in the capital.

Set to open in 2017 in the business district, the four-star hotel will have 153 rooms with free wifi, meeting space, a fitness centre and pool.

It will join the Wyndham Grand Regency Doha as Wyndham's second property in Qatar. An airport shuttle service will be provided for guests, together with free parking. wyndham.com

- **Waldorf Astoria Doha West Bay** Hilton Worldwide is expected to bring its Waldorf Astoria brand to Doha in 2017.

Located in a 42-storey tower close to the Qatar Stock Exchange, the 250-room hotel will have a pool, spa, meeting space and a range of dining venues.

There will also be 80 serviced apartments. waldorfastoria3.hilton.com

- **The Oberoi** India's Oberoi Group is to open two Qatar properties – a 250-room luxury hotel in West Bay and a 148-unit serviced apartment property in Lusail, the new planned city being built north of Doha. Construction begins next year, with both properties due to be completed in mid-2018. oberoihotels.com



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SHANGHAI - A DREAM JOURNEY

Only 15 years ago the port city of Shanghai was just a poor relative of the capital city of Beijing. Today, with the largest stock exchange in China, which superseded even Hong Kong and almost 25 million inhabitants, Shanghai is the most prospective city across Asia.

If you have not been there yet, you should definitely put it on your "to visit" list in 2016. It offers everything you might think of: numerous sky-

scrapers and luxury hotels with old bazaars and poor districts at their feet, fantastic cuisine, crazy road traffic, underground railway system that easily eclipses the Lon-

don's Tube, the world's fastest railway line, as well as the stunning historic part that dates back to the times of ancient Chinese dynasties.



CITY OF MASS TRANSPORTATION

You might be surprised, but Shanghai's metro is the most advanced such a system in the world. Its total length is 450 kilometres and it is originally modelled on the best traditions of the London Underground. Launched in 1993 as China's third, after Beijing and Tianjin, it has since been dynamically expanding, and now features as many as 239 stations. What is more, every day it transports about 9 million passengers. If you want to move seamlessly around the city, then the metro would be your best choice. Alternatively you could opt for a cheap taxi whose drivers are skilled in navigating the jungle of cars, scooters and buses. And all this in a scen-

ery reminiscent of science fiction movies. The main thoroughfares crossing the city have three levels - the ground level (usually with four or five lanes), level one with an expressway, and level two with numerous three or four-lane motorways set at the height of an average six-storey building.

MAGNETIC MAGLEV WITH THE SPEED OF LIGHT

Besides the world's most advanced metro system, Shanghai also boasts the fastest railway line on the planet. That is why, a ride by a magnetic levitation train (hence "maglev") is simply a must, when in the city. Shanghai Maglev is the first commercial magnetic rail line in the world. Its construction situated on high concrete pillars is truly

impressive and the line links Pudong International Airport with the Longyang Road in Pudong district, which is a stone's throw from Shanghai's city centre. The construction work began in 2001 and ended three years later. The line is almost 31 kilometres long and has only two stations. The noiseless Maglev accelerates to the speed of 350 kilometres per hour in just two minutes, for a moment reaches over 430 km/h (its record speed is 501 km/h, which is roughly the speed of passenger aircraft on local routes in Poland), to gradually slow down before reaching its final station.

SOMETHING FROM NOTHING

Shanghai owes its stunning development in recent 20 years mainly to the dynamic



growth of the Chinese economy. A thousand years ago, the delta of the Yangtze River was a typical agricultural land. At that time the currently largest transshipment port in the world was in its infancy stage. It was not until 18th and 19th centuries when it began to gain significance due to the growth of export of Chinese cotton and silk. After the second opium war the port opened to the international trade, which also marked the rapid development of the metropolis. The first investors came mostly from Japan, but it was not long before also the British became interested in the city. In the 1920s for the first time in its history Shanghai became the financial centre for the Far East. As it happens in history, periods of prosperity are interspersed with periods of the worst crisis. And this is exactly what happened in the late 1940s when communists seized power in the city. Truth be told, the new government focused on the development of important industries, such as steel, textiles, chemicals and technologies, but it was not until early 1990s when the great Chinese industrial revolution let the city take a new breath. In 1992 Shanghai was granted investment tax credit by the Chinese government and this moment marks the beginning of the great prosperity of this fascinating and the world's most populous city.

VIEW FROM THE TOP

No doubt, the towering skyscrapers of Shanghai are the main landmark of the city. Provided the weather is fine and there is no smog, on your way from the airport you will see a cityscape of high-rise buildings – some with truly bizarre shapes. The most prominent of them is Shanghai Tower (632 metres), which is currently under construction. When it is completed, it will officially become the world's second tallest building, after the Burj Khalifa in Dubai. However, for now the tallest building of the Chinese business capital is the 492-metre Shanghai World Financial Center in Pudong district. The 420-metre Jin Mao Tower as well as the 289-metre Plaza 66 Tower One will also certainly grab your attention. It is worth noting the large scale of the local investment. Until recently China's tallest Shanghai World Financial Center cost US\$1.23 billion. You can easily recognize it from a distance, as at its top part there is a distinctive, trapezoidal hole. Just above it, on the penultimate floor of the building, there is an observation deck. Just above it, on the penultimate floor of the building, there is an observation deck.

THE BUND

The Bund is one of the most beautiful and older districts of Shanghai, where you can truly feel the atmosphere of colonial times.



The Bund is a waterfront area along Huangpu river. There you will have a unique chance to see more than 50 buildings dating from the colonial era.

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GOING PLACES TOGETHER



Yuyuan takes only a few acres, but you will find there several small ponds, temples, as well as old traditional wooden buildings, which can give you an idea on what Shanghai could look like in the past.

In fact, it is a waterfront area along Huangpu river, which stretches over 1.5 kilometres from Waibaidu to Nanpu bridges. There you will have a unique chance to see more than 50 buildings dating from the colonial era, in varied architectural styles – from Baroque through classicism to art deco. The Bund - or simply ‘the coast’ – is the remains of a 19th century British colony. Before the British arrived and built here their own settlement, this riverside area was heavily overgrown and boggy. Unfortunately, following the rise of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Bund lost the status of Shanghai's business district. At the beginning of 21st century the Chinese government decided to restore the area to its former glory. Today the Bund is one of several landmarks of Shanghai and clearly contrasts with the high-rise districts of the city.

YUYUAN GARDENS

For years Shanghai has been called ‘the concrete jungle’ because of the lack of green areas in the city. The very centre features only two gardens, where you can sit for a moment and relax from the bustle of the metropolis.

The first one can be compared in size to a small park in the centre of Warsaw, and is situated next to the building of the 60-storey J.W. Marriot hotel.

The second one is Yuyuan Park situated in the Old City. It was created in the 16th century by order of the governor of Sichuan. After the extinction of the Ming dynasty, the garden fell into disrepair, but was rebuilt in the 18th century. Ironically, it was restored and included in the list of historical monuments, when Chinese communists came to power. Yuyuan takes only a few acres, but you will find there several small ponds, temples, as well as old traditional wooden buildings, which can give you an idea on what Shanghai could look like in the past.

Before you pay a visit to this enormous metropolis, do note that you cannot expect to see here a large number of vestiges of the former glory, sublime architectural monuments and the mood of the traditional, old city. Today, Shanghai is a modern metropolis, where large Chinese and world's corporations trade in big money. The old city quarters make place for the new buildings, so it is worth visiting Shanghai before they go in

oblivion. There are still several historic low-rise settlements that offer the atmosphere of the old Shanghai and are now surrounded by huge multi-storey tower blocks. In the crowd of ordinary Chinese people you can still see bikes loaded up with various goods, the narrow streets are packed with vendors selling local food, live turtles in all possible sizes, and exotic birds.

Filip Gawryś

**Z Warszawy
do ponad
150 miast na
całym świecie.**





WALK THE WALL

Tom Otley traces the remains of Berlin's dividing line through the sprawling and regenerated German capital

Just as it's hard now to imagine Berlin divided, it's also hard to imagine a time when Checkpoint Charlie would have been worth visiting. The stacked sandbags, American flags and actors dressed as soldiers might make for a staged Instagram snap, but it's tourism, pure and simple. The original US border house was removed soon after the fall of the Berlin Wall and from 1990 until 2000 there was nothing here at all. The existing recreation was installed within the regenerated and generally up-market Mitte district to provide something visitors could point their cameras at or, now, a backdrop for selfies. Even this isn't easy, since the circus-like crowds destroy even the illusion of being anywhere significant, and besides, there's a large McDonald's restaurant next to it. If you do go, be sure to go early in the day, and use it as a reminder that unchecked tourism can ruin even a Communist-era border crossing point. Charting the line of the wall, you'll also realise that the Checkpoint Charlie reconstruction isn't in the correct place – that's marked further down the junction by cobblestones.

UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY

To get a real sense of what the wall once was, and now is, simply turn your back on the

whole sorry sight and walk quickly west for five minutes to the Topography of Terror (topographie.de/en).

This alarming and existential name refers to the building at the far end of the empty plot, a documentation centre for the Nazi forced labour regime. It's well worth visiting, but it's the area as a whole that puts the wall into perspective, providing alarming visual evidence.

Beyond the section of wall standing here is part of the "death strip" – the wide section of land dividing East and West Germany that was once soaked with weed killer to give patrol guards the clearest possible view of potential transgressors.

A DISTINCT LINE

The tall building on the far side of the wall is the former Reich Air Ministry of Hermann Goring, home of the Luftwaffe. It's an ex-

ample of how walking the route of the wall provides insight not only into the past 50 years, but also the Nazi period before that.

Notably, this building wasn't designed by Hitler's chief architect, Albert Speer, but by Ernst Sagebiel, the man behind Tempelhof airport. Today it houses the German finance ministry, but it retains Max Lingner's 1950s 18-metre mural made from Meissen porcelain tiles, illustrating the triumph of worker production. In 1965, a family managed to escape from a high window here, via a zip wire, to make a new life in the west.

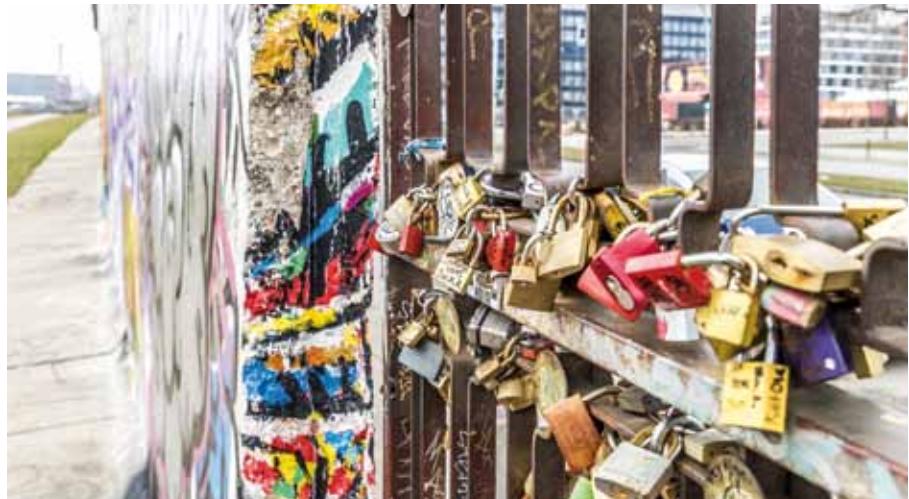
Walk along to Erna Berger Strasse and you can see one of the few remaining watchtowers, still oppressive even with the surrounding widespread renovation, nowhere more comprehensively achieved than in the completely reimagined Potsdamer Platz nearby.

A line indicates the wall's route though this district, yet now luxury hotels such as the Grand Hyatt, Ritz-Carlton and JW Marriott tower above the U Bahn and S Bahn lines here, and there's even a small section of wall – for so long the centre of attention, but now almost seeming out of place.

Beyond this, you can see parks marking out the line of the wall towards the Tiergarten park.

Useful Websites

- berlinonbike.de/en
- berlin.fattirebiketours.com
- videobustour.de/en
- visitberlin.de/en/welcomecard



As night falls, there are more options for a wall tour. Take the U Bahn out to Warschauer Strasse and head to the East Side Gallery on Muhlenstrasse (eastsidegallery-berlin.com) – it's one of the world's largest open-air "galleries" of street art, presented on a 1.3km section of wall beside the River Spree.

WEEKEND IN THE CITY

Assuming you take time out from your explorations to see museums, nightlife and cultural attractions during a weekend break (this is the home of the Berlin Philharmonic, after all), a visit to the Berlin Wall Memorial on Bernauer Strasse (berlinermauer-gedenkstaette.de/en), accessed from Nordbahnhof S Bahn, will give information not only about the wall but also a full list of other interesting locations you can visit.

Berlin is a sprawling city and, spending a weekend jumping on and off the S-Bahn, it can be difficult to get a sense of its entirety. Still, the remains of the wall provide a thread for exploring it from east to west, especially since it loops around the centre of the city, and sometimes appears when you are least expecting it.

Take a look at the historic Reichstag and newer "Band des Bundes" (collection of federal government buildings), which deliberately chart the course of the wall from east to west in a gesture of connection.

Better still, take a guided tour – there's everything from walking and cycling, to Segway or even Trabant tours. Berlin is constantly changing, but at its heart there is still this shadow line that will never be erased.

A line indicates the wall's route though this district, yet now luxury hotels tower above the U Bahn and S Bahn lines here.





ALPINE BELLE ÉPOQUE

To get to the charming town of Kandersteg situated in the Swiss Alps, most tourists rely on the services of the local train that is said to be never late. It is not surprising though, as we are in Switzerland, after all.

Located at an altitude of 1,179 metres above sea level, Kandersteg is inhabited by merely 1,200 people, but boasts 13 hotels, 20 restaurants and 100 luxury apartments. It is also famous for its great trekking routes, bike and ski touring trails, places where you can practise Nordic skiing, and most importantly for being the venue of the unique Belle Époque Week.

JUST LIKE A CENTURY AGO

Each year in the third week of January, the town transforms beyond recognition. It looks as if you had travelled back in time at least 100 years. For seven days of the festival, tourists that arrive in Kandersteg in their thousands, as well as locals forget about the rest of the world. They

change their pace of life and customs, but often also their clothes and vehicles. Long gowns, frock coats, top hats, cloaks, horse-drawn vehicles and dance parties that start as early as 5 pm, can help you travel in time to the turn of the 19th and 20th century, regarded as the golden age and the period of economic and political prosperity in Western Europe.

FAMOUS VISITORS

Why the Belle Epoque style? The second half of the 19th century marked the construction of the first hotels in Kandersteg that were visited by numerous tourists from England brought here by Thomas Cook - the owner of one of the world's first travel offices. Soon the region became so popular that it started to attract other, more famous adventurers, including Lenin, Picasso, Mark Twain, Edward Whymper and Guy de Maupassant. One of their main targets here was the Gemmi pass, located in the Bernese Alps at the height of 2,314 metres above sea level. It connects Kandersteg in the Canton of Bern in the north with Leukerbad in the Canton of Valais in the south. The pass is literally tucked between Daubernhorn (2,942 m) and Rinderhorn (3,448 m) peaks. Just below its level there is one of the most beautiful Alpine lakes named Daubensee.

Although there is no marked out road leading through Gemmi, it is easily accessible by the cableway from Leukerbad. Its upper terminal is located at 1,934 metres, 10 kilometres from the pass itself.

SUMMER IN THE MOUNTAINS

Summer months in and around Kandersteg are especially attractive for active holidaymakers. They can use here as many as six cableways and, above all, more than 300 kilometres of hiking and climbing trails. Two cableways connect the summer resort near Leukerbad with Gemmi and Torrent hiking areas. A former trade route led from Leukerbad, via Gemmi pass, along the idyllic Daube lake and then straight to Kandersteg. The Gemmi area also offers the longest and most demanding via ferrata in Switzerland.

Setting off from Kandersteg, you should definitely see the picturesque Oeschinen Lake, where you can swim and go boating. Another unique place where it is worth staying for at least one day, is Blausee - the Blue Lake situated in a secluded, magical place. You will also find there a good hotel and a restaurant renowned for its fresh trout. The tranquillity of this spot and its unusual atmosphere will certainly appeal to all Alpine hikers.

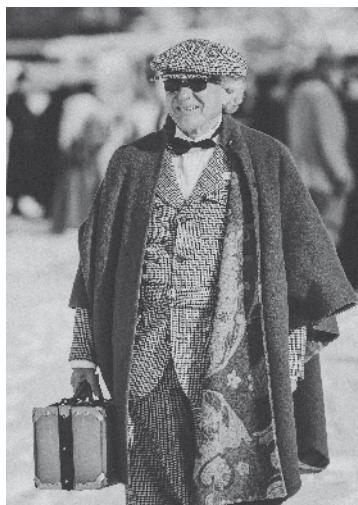
Marzena Mróz

USEFUL ADDRESSES

- Alfa Soleil hotel It offers a fantastic view of the sunny valley. Try here Swiss delicacies served at Nicos restaurant that is considered one of the best in the town; Usseri Hauptstrasse 99 3718 Kandersteg +41 33 675 84 84; hotel@alfasoleil.ch
- Ruedihuus restaurant Located on the outskirts of the town, Ruedihuus boasts its rich 250-year history. Having a meal here is simply a must. The varied menu combined with the unique décor and the perfect staff, guarantee an unforgettable dining experience.
- Blausee & Spa hotel A place for lovers of the nature, Swiss landscapes and trout. Open year-round, it is famous for its unique location and a fish farm; blausee.ch
- Wildstrubel hotel Situated at a height of 2,350 m on Gemmi pass. Especially recommended to those who love hiking in summer; gemmi.ch
- Schwarenbach hotel A good place to spend a night on the trail; schwarenbach.ch



The second half of the 19th century marked the construction of the first hotels in Kandersteg that were visited by numerous tourists from England brought here by Thomas Cook - the owner of one of the world's first travel offices.





REINDEERS IN ALTA PUSTERIA

Imagine that you are enjoying a ski run down a steep slope, when suddenly nearby you spot a small herd of reindeer wandering proudly raised heads. This can happen not only in the far north of Europe, but also in Sexten Dolomites in the Alta Pusteria valley.

More than a dozen of these friendly animals were brought here a few years ago from Finland, and now they live at 1,900 metres near the upper terminal of the Croda Rossa ski lifts. The animals are trusting, eat from the hand, and are fed with litter of special plants imported here from Northern Europe. The reindeers are just one of many unusual attractions waiting for skiers in Sexten Dolomites, in Alta Pusteria. Interestingly, so far it has been one of less known and the least visited areas of the Italian South Tyrol whose main tourist hits include Sella Ronda, Arabba, Alta Badia or Maso Corto. However, it is also worth visiting this tiny valley that lies in the eastern part of the Alto Adige, right next to the border with the Austrian Eastern Tyrol.

The valley is known for its Three Peaks (Drei Zinnen/Tre Cime di Lavaredo) and the Lago di Braies/Pragser Wildsee lake. Ski resorts stretch here for dozens of kilometres along the whole valley. One skipass entitles as to use almost 80 pistes with a total length of nearly 95 kilometres, half of which are the runs for advanced skiers and 13 percent are marked black. The longest piste is 5 kilome-

tres.

Following the trails of Justyna Kowalczyk The most interesting place to ski is San Candido/Innichen with its 3-kilometre long illuminated run. From San Candido you can take a free skibus to Sesto/Sexten that lies at 1,310 m, and is the main base for the longest and most exciting skiing experience in the valley. From here it is quite close to Monte Elmo (2,434 m) or the three lift stations situated at the foot of the typical jagged peaks of the Dolomites. These are Croda Rossa (2,000 m), where you can visit the reindeer, Passo Monte Croce and the area of Val Comelico - the most appealing sites to practise Alpine skiing.

There is also the Dobbiaco/Toblach area that may not have a lot of proper pistes, but in-

stead boasts one of the most famous winter stadiums where Tour de Ski competitions are held regularly. Enough to say that the arena is well-known to Justyna Kowalczyk who has regularly practised and competed here. If you feel like following in her footsteps (or rather ski trails), you can do it everyday until 8 pm.

Stone's throw to Kronplatz

Should you be bored with Alta Pusteria, do not despair - you can always pay a friendly visit to other famous resorts, including Cortina D'Ampezzo or Kronplatz/Plan de Coronas in the South Tyrol, offering more than 200 kilometers of ski runs. Getting there could not be simpler. Just take a train from Dobbiaco to Perca-Plan de Coronas/Ried station. The whole trip takes only 30 minutes. Directly from the platform you can take a gondola that carries you right to the top of Kronplatz. Note, that if you stay in South Tyrol for a minimum of three days, you can obtain here a MobilCard with which you are entitled to free public transport not only in Alta Pusteria, but also in the whole area of South Tyrol.

Useful information

- Prices of skipasses in Alta Pusteria: from €243 (high season) to €213 (low season).
- The region is part of the Dolomiti Super-ski association.
- www.s-dolomiten.com

Filip Gawry

Zadbaj o formę!

Aby zachować dobre samopoczucie, świetną kondycję i cieszyć się zdrowiem – potrzebujemy ruchu. Samemu zmobilizować się do aktywności nie jest łatwo. Rozwiązaniem jest najnowsza linia sprzętu **S-LINE firmy KETTLER**.

Dzięki niej ćwiczenie na domowym ergometrze rowerowym, crosstrainerze czy bieżni zmieni się w efektywny trening pozbawiony monotonnych powtarzań. Dzięki wykorzystaniu – za pomocą smartfona czy tabletu – aplikacji KETTLER S-FIT możliwe stało się pokonywanie wirtualnych tras w towarzystwie innych, dzielenie się wynikami czy robienie online szeroko zakrojonych planów treningowych.

DOMOWE STUDIO FITNESS

Polecamy innowacyjną linię sprzętu S-LINE, a wraz z nią nowe rozwiązania. Produkty, takie jak np. Ergo S, Skylon S czy Racer S pozwalają na trening w każdym wieku i na każdym etapie zaawansowania. Dzięki najnowszej technologii mamy możliwość łączenia się ze społecznością fitness KETTFIT i korzystania z aplikacji KETTLER S-FIT za pośrednictwem smartfona czy tabletu. Na szczególną uwagę zasługuje rower spinningowy Racer S. Rama z ergonomiczną geometrią, możliwość zmiany siodełka i kierownicy, do tego pedały wyposażone w zatrzaski SPD. Największą zaletą jest kokpit pozwalający na przyjęcie aerodynamicznej pozycji jak na rowerze szosowym a także manetki do zmiany obciążenia zamontowane na gripach, które można obsługiwać bez odrywania rąk i sięgania do panelu sterowania.

Za sterowanie w modelu RACER S odpowiada szklany wyświetlacz



z regulowanym kątem nachylenia i przyciskami na dotyk. Najważniejsze funkcje jak (pomiar w Watt, czas treningu, częstotliwość pedałowania i tętno), można ustawić bezpośrednio w Racer S. Po połączeniu ze smartfonem i aplikacją KETTLER S - FIT do dyspozycji są dodatkowe tryby treningowe.

VIRTUALNE TRASY

Dzięki zintegrowanemu oprogramowaniu „WORLD TOURS 2.0”, można jeździć po wirtualnych trasach, organizować zawody online i zapisywać swoje dane treningowe.. Komfort ćwiczenia zapewni nam także SKYLON S. Wyposażony w 22-kilogramowe koło zamachowe gwarantuje równomierną i bezpieczną dla stawów sekwencję ruchów. Po treningu SKYLON S daje się złożyć zaledwie jednym ruchem, co zapewnia oszczędność miejsca. Klasyczny trening cardio umożliwi nam rower ERGO S. Po prostu wejdź – włącz – i ruszaj! Dzięki innowacyjnemu sterowaniu przy pomocy ekranu dotykowego i smartfona, możemy skupić się na tym co najważniejsze, czyli na treningu. Aplikacja KETTLER S-FIT oferuje różnorodne tryby treningowe dla początkujących i zaawansowanych. Więcej o produktach KETTLER na stronie www.kettler.pl



NEW KIA OPTIMA

The engineers and designers at Kia guarantee the new Optima is better in all respects: it is more comfortable, spacious and much safer. We have decided to look closer at the latest iteration of the luxury sedan by the Korean manufacturer.





T

The more modern styling of the body and the interior, increase space for all passengers, many new technical and technological solutions - these are just some of the novelties offered in the new generation of the Optima.

SUPERIOR QUALITY

And although it retains the typical characteristics of its predecessor, such as neat proportions that combine dynamics with elegance, or narrow headlights and rear lights, it has been, in fact, completely redesigned. The previous generation was known to offer a large, spacious passenger cabin. Now its dimensions have increased even more, making it one of the most spacious in its class. One of the most noticeable changes is the sort of materials used for the dashboard. Now they are of the highest quality and the centre console is angled towards the driver. Even the most basic trim version features a

7-inch touch screen navigation integrated with TomTom services, Bluetooth system and the reversing camera. Importantly, the maps are updated for free for the period of seven years. Kia also offers an extended version of the system that utilizes a 8-inch screen and comes with a DAB tuner as well as Harman Kardon audio system combined with 10 high quality speakers and an amplifier. This guarantees sound experience like in a concert hall!

The seats in the new Optima are wide and firm, which makes them ideal for long-distance journeys. There is also much space at the back, so even tall passengers will travel in comfort. The engineers have also redesigned the chassis of the car. With a button placed on the centre console you can now choose whether you prefer more comfortable or perhaps sporty setting. The boot load is larger than in the previous generation with 510 litres. It is also more function-

al with a wider opening as well as a storage compartment located under the boot floor.

SAFETY

AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

A high level of passive safety of passengers is guaranteed with seven airbags fitted in all versions of the car. And this is just the beginning! The Optima is available with a wide range of standard or optional safety systems. These include KiaLaneAssist system that monitors the position of the vehicle in relation to the line on the road and makes automatic adjustments if you veer out of the lane without activating the indicator; a road sign recognition system as well as blind spot and vehicle detection while reversing. The optional package also offers an active cruise control and automatic braking system capable of detecting pedestrians. It also includes the parking assist system (both parallel and 90°), High Beam Assist (HBA) that can de-



The dashboard is made from high-quality materials. All the onboard systems are clear to read and easy to use. This makes driving the new Optima a remarkably comfortable experience.



If you are looking for a convenient and comfortable car mid-sized car, Kia Optima will be a perfect choice. The car has now been present in dealerships and comes with a 7-year warranty.

tect approaching vehicles and will automatically dim your headlights from high to low beam, as well as the 360° surround view monitor. The new Optima is also equipped with a number of advanced solutions designed to improve usability, comfort and convenience. It is safe to conclude that the car is one of the most innovative vehicles in the European D segment. It is also equipped with a wireless mobile phone/tablet charger. At the back of the passenger compartment there are also USB ports for charging classic mobile devices.

POWER AND ECONOMY

The choice of engines includes a 1.7 CRDI unit producing 141 hp and 340 Nm or petrol 2.0 with 163 hp that comply with Euro 6 emission standard and successfully combine high performance with cost-effective fuel consumption. For both engine, the basic transmission is the manual one. The petrol motor can optionally work with a

six-speed sequential automatic transmission with an option to change gears with paddles behind on the steering column, while the upgraded diesel engine comes with a seven-speed dual clutch automatic transmission. Although both motors are well-known from the third generation of the Optima, now they have been clearly improved. This applies mostly the turbocharged diesel engine that now boasts a better performance as well as a higher power and torque. Incredibly, the engine also offers much better acceleration and lower fuel consumption. Thanks to the properly soundproofed passenger compartment, the unit seems to give only a gentle purr. Up to 100 kmph you can only here the tyre noise and possibly a slight whistle of the air flowing around the body. A dynamic acceleration results in the sound that is characteristic of a diesel engine, but we still we have the feeling that it is happening somewhere else, not in the engine compartment.

OFFER FOR FIRST CUSTOMERS

For first Polish customers the Polish importer offers a service package included in the price of the new Optima. The package is valid for four years of 60,000 kilometres. In practice this means that for the petrol engine you are offered four free warranty inspections while for the diesel unit you get two. The package includes mechanical, body and oil inspections. The programme is valid throughout Poland. The package is assigned to the car, so if you decide to sell it, the next owner can also enjoy the benefits.

If you are still undecided, then perhaps the final argument to buy the new Optima will be the 0 percent leasing option that is available at the beginning of the sale. The cheapest variant of the Kia Optima powered by the petrol engine costs PLN89,900 and with the diesel unit PLN94,900.

Wiktor Łucki

4 HOURS IN... MUMBAI

Tom Otley enlists a local guide to show him around the city's colourful Colaba district.



Churchgate station is a great place to watch the dabbawalas, also known as tiffin walas, who bring hot lunches to office workers

Colaba stretches down the southernmost part of Mumbai's peninsula, and you could spend a day exploring the area. If time is limited, start with Sassoon Dock, which gives you a glimpse of the city at its most real and, well, smelly. The fish market starts in the early hours, so by the time you arrive they will probably be finishing up, sorting out shrimps in the warehouses on either side. It may look half-derelict, but a working fleet brings its catch in here daily, and many five-star hotels and reputable restaurants buy their fish here.

GATEWAY OF INDIA

Completed in 1924, this huge basalt arch on the port side of south Mumbai commemorates the visit of King George V and Queen Mary in 1911, and was then used in ceremonials for the British departing the city. It's a tourist area not least because boats leave here for Elephanta Island, but if you ignore the ticket touts and take a few pictures, it's the one distinctive image of Mumbai that everyone will recognise.

ST THOMAS CATHEDRAL

Mumbai has religious buildings of every variety, from stunning Jain temples – which you will pass later on your way up Walkeshwar Marg on Malabar Hill – to the 1884-built Keneseth Eliyahoo Synagogue. St Thomas's on Veer Nariman Road is one of the oldest British buildings in the city – its construction began in 1672, and it remains a working, and worshipping, cathedral.

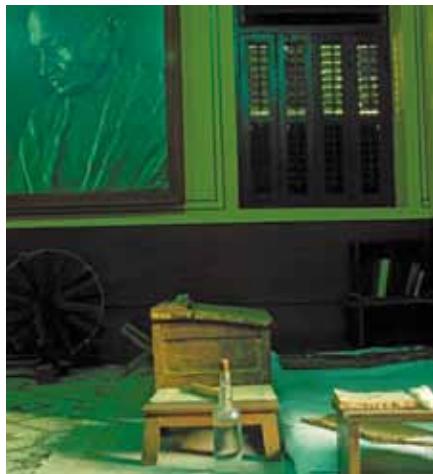
Check out the memorials inside and the myriad fates that befell the colonials in India – including war, pestilence, or just plain exhaustion.

CHURCHGATE DABBAWALAS

The most famous railway station in Mumbai is Victoria Terminus, now known as Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus. Probably the second-best known is Churchgate station – a great place to watch the dab-



Mumbai has religious buildings of every variety, from stunning Jain temples on Malabar Hill – to the 1884-built Keneseth Eliyahoo Synagogue.



bawallas, also known as tiffin walas, who bring hot lunches to office workers throughout the city from their homes in the suburbs.

The boxes are coded with their ultimate destination, and are delivered so accurately, apparently, that business analysts have declared their operation to be six sigma (3.4 defective features per million).

Each Hercules bicycle is loaded with 35 tiffin boxes and off they go through the intense midday heat, or quite often, monsoon rains. It's a uniquely Indian phenomenon.

**MANI BHAVAN
MAHATMA GANDHI MUSEUM**
If there's one Indian everyone has heard of, it's Gandhi.

This house, where the revolutionary lived when he was in Mumbai between 1917 and 1934, is filled with his books, correspondence and possessions – his bedroom is preserved as it would have been, and there are pictures illustrating how his personal style evolved, from a smartly-dressed schoolchild and barrister to the archetypal image we all recognise today.

Open daily 9.30am-6pm; donation recommended. 19 Laburnum Road; gandhimanibhavan.org

THE HANGING GARDENS AND TOWER OF SILENCE

The name might evoke some kind of Babylonian Seventh Wonder but, depending on your guide, it comes either from the terraced nature of the gardens on top of Ma-

labar Hill, or from the ingenious system devised for the huge water cisterns underneath, built by the British, which hangs beneath the gardens and supports them when the cisterns empty during the summer.

The site is a pleasing place to take a stroll. Adjacent, although not accessible, is the intriguing Tower of Silence, the area of Malabar Hill used by the Parsi community, who dispose of their dead by leaving them on the hill to be eaten by the vultures.

It is supposed to be the best way to cleanse the body after death, but recently, because there are fewer vultures around, the Parsis have had to resort to cremations.

You cannot visit the tower (dakhma), as only the dead are allowed in (apart from the pallbearers), but you can catch a glimpse of it over a high wall through the trees.



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

A Canadian visa?

I am organizing a trip to the USA and Canada for 5 workers from my office for a conference in June. I have made sure that everybody has a new passport. Apparently the Canadian visa regulations are about to be changed. Is it necessary for the workers to turn up for an interview with a consul, as it is the case with USA visas?

Marzena

Dear Marzena,

Polish citizens can travel to Canada without a visa since 1st June 2008. However, the biometric passport is absolutely necessary. If you still have the old passport, then it is not possible to cross the border without a visa. But the majority of old passports are invalid anyway.

Following 15th March 2016, it will be obligatory to register all passengers travelling by plane, and each will have to have a valid eTA (electronic Travel Authorization).

A similar document (ESTA) is necessary to travel to the USA, but only for passengers from countries participating in Visa Waiver Program. Unfortunately, Poland is not one of them.

Passengers do not have to turn up for an interview with the consul, but are advised to get an ETA document, which can be generated from the website.

ETA is a great convenience for Canadian immigration services, as it helps to gather information about a passenger ahead of time and streamline the process of crossing the border upon arrival to Canada. The document is assigned to your passport in the electronic database. ETA is valid for 5 years (or less if your passport expires earlier). It costs CAD 7 and can be paid by credit card. The procedure applies to the airlines passengers. When crossing the Canadian border by land or sea, you need to adhere to different regulations.

Delayed flight

My boss was flying from Warsaw to Paris, and unfortunately, his plane was delayed and departed four hours later. In consequence, I had to postpone a meeting for the next day, as my boss was signing an important contract. He was informed that the delayed was due to operational reasons (the pilot said there were some technical issues) and he had to wait for another plane. Is it possible for our company to demand compensation? The ticket was quite costly. Other planes departed with no delay on that day.

Hanna

Dear Hanna,

Cancellation or postponing a business meeting is certainly a big nuisance. But the airline cannot be held responsible for the consequences related to the delay in signing the contract. The liability of the carrier is limited. The contract of carriage was fulfilled. Your company also cannot apply for compensation, although you paid for the ticket.

But you can demand a compensation (as a consumer), according to the 262/04 EU regulation on the protection of passenger rights. On one hand, it was introduced to give passengers travelling to and from UE adequate protection, and on the other hand – to unify the airlines standards in the EU's liberalized aviation market.

The carrier's liability is also excluded in case of force majeure (like weather conditions, strikes, acts of terrorism, natural disasters, unforeseen situations), but operational reasons, in a broad sense, are not grounds for exclusion of liability. The carrier is responsible for keeping the passenger fleet in constant readiness for flights according to the timetable.

In this particular case (delay of more than 2 hours, a cruise up to 1,500 kilometres), the passenger is entitled to compensation of 250 euros. The passenger should make a complaint to the airline (as an individual, not a company), referring to the relevant EU regulations.

Regardless of compensation passengers should be provided with adequate care by the airline: drinks, a meal, a possibility to make a phone call or to send an e-mail.

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kryje innowacyjne rozwiązania i zaawansowaną technologię która zapewnia urządzeniom maksymalną samodzielność i efektywność. Kontrolowane przez elektroniczne systemy sensorowe, pracują oszczędnie i cicho, z gwarancją doskonałych efektów.

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