

# Business Traveller Poland

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| 9,60 zł (8% VAT included) | N°5/2016 (73) MAY 2016 |



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NEW BENCHMARK  
IN LAUNDRY CARE

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**Business Traveller** Julian Gregory  
**Managing Director** Panacea Publishing  
International Limited  
Warwick House  
25/27 Buckingham Palace Road  
London  
SW1W 0PP  
tel.: +44 20 7821 2700  
www.panaceapublishing.com  
www.businesstraveller.com

In the US "Business Traveller" is published at 303 Fifth Avenue, 1308, NY 10016, tel.: 1 212 725 3500. In Germany "Business Traveller" is published at Schulstrasse 34, 80634 Munich, tel.: 89 167 9971, fax: 89 167 9937. In Denmark "Business Traveller" is published at Rymarksvej 46, 2900 Hellerup, tel.: 45 3311 4413, fax: 45 3311 4414. In Hungary "Business Traveller" is published at 1074 Budapest, Munkas utca 9, tel.: 36 1266 5853. In Hong Kong "Business Traveller Asia-Pacific and China" are published at Suite 405 4/F Chinachem Exchange Square, 1 Hoi Wan Street, Quarry Bay, tel.: 852 2594 9300, fax: 852 2519 6846. In the Middle East "Business Traveller Middle East" is published jointly by Motivate Publishing, PO Box 2331, Dubai UAE, tel.: 9714 282 4060, and Perry Publications. In Africa "Business Traveller Africa" is published by Future Publishing (Pty) Ltd, PO Box 3355, Rivonia 2128, South Africa, tel.: 27 11 803 2040.

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VIEW COSMOPOLITAN WARSZAWA

## NEW TIMES FOR PERSIA

**W**ill there be a fourth major Gulf airline? With Iran now removed from the sanctions list, it seems national carrier Iran Air is looking to join the ranks of Emirates, Etihad and Qatar Airways.

As soon as the restrictions were lifted on January 16, Iran Air agreed to receive a large fleet of aircraft worth the head-spinning US\$27 billion. The initial deal was for no fewer than 118 aircraft from European manufacturer Airbus, but it seems more and more probable that a future order may also go to Boeing. Iran Air also signed an agreement to purchase 72 ATR commuter planes from French-Italian manufacturer ATR, 12 of which are firm orders and are expected to be in service later this year. But it's not the end of the crazy shopping spree of the Iranians. Now a further contract has been signed to acquire 50 aircraft from Brazilian manufacturer Embraer. Nevertheless, it seems that Airbus has won the lion's share of potential business. Provided everything goes according to plan, Iran Air will be taking delivery of 73 long-haul and 45 short-haul aircraft.

For more details, please read our report entitled "Persian potential" that may inspire you to travel - not only to the East.

Marzena Mróz

Marzena Mróz  
redaktor naczelna

  
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Airlines

Lufthansa

JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT

The new commercial joint venture which was concluded between the Lufthansa Group and Singapore Airlines in November 2015 is bearing its first fruit. Collaboration partners Lufthansa, Singapore Airlines (SIA) and Swiss International Air Lines (Swiss) are expanding their codeshare agreements. As a result, customers of all three airlines are now offered even more destinations and even more connections.

In addition to the Lufthansa Group's Frankfurt hub, SIA's expanded codeshare connections now offer customers more than 20 convenient codeshare routings via the Group's Munich and Zurich hubs to and from various points in Austria, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland.

Lufthansa and Swiss, meanwhile, are adding the following new codeshare connections in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific to their timetables: Denpasar and Jakarta. Swiss from Zurich via Singapore now also to: Australia: Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney; Indonesia: Jakarta; Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur; New Zealand: Auckland and Christchurch.

Travelers to these destinations can now fly Lufthansa from Frankfurt or Swiss from Zurich to Singapore and then change seamlessly onto their connecting Singapore Airlines flight with a Lufthansa/Swiss flight number. Any registered baggage checked-in in Germany or Switzerland will be checked right through to their final destination. And, as before, travelers can earn and redeem miles with the partner airline concerned under Miles & More and other Star Alliance frequent flyer programs.

Health Supplements

VITAMINS AND TEA FOR TRAVELLERS

With its sublingual application, the easy to use vitamin B<sub>12</sub> Boost Pure Energy by BetterYou is supplied directly to the bloodstream. It contributes to reducing fatigue and stress, improving memory and concentration. Boost B<sub>12</sub> Pure Energy by BetterYou is well assimilated by the body and convenient to use. It's ideal for active people, those who often suffer from fatigue, as well as frequent travelers. The product comes in 350 mg spray bottles in an easily absorbable form. One bottle contains 160 doses; 25 ml - PLN 69; biowitalni.pl



Even superheroes happen to lose their power and if they do so, they simply drink green tea. We recommend pure, emerald Matcha powder - a magic ingredient mixed with 3 tea blends that boast fair trade certification. These are Chinese Sencha, Indian Oothu and Vietnamese Oothu Suoi Gang. Such a powerful mixture will definitely breathe new life into even the most exhausted business traveler. All Pukka products have certifications of European Organic Farming and Soil Association; 20 sachets - PLN 19.90; biowitalni.pl



Restaurant

InAzia

ORIENTAL CUISINE

According to users of TripAdvisor website, InAzia is considered one of the best restaurants in Warsaw. Its menu features a number of refined dishes that represent the variety of flavours and aromas of Thai, Chinese and Vietnamese cuisines, as well as delicacies from Indonesia and Singapore.

InAzia's head chef Marcin Sasin recommends in particular his signature dish - halibut prepared in coconut milk with green peas and lemon grass.

Visiting InAzia, you should also try Tom Yam Kung soup with shrimp, coriander, tomatoes and chilli pepper; wok dishes prepared by an experienced wok master from Bali; as well as desserts with mango that the restaurant is renowned for. The menu is flexible - you can compose your own meal, as well as create a tasting menu at promotional prices; restauracja-inazia.pl



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## Tourism

### Nice

#### THE CITY FOR SUMMER

The sunny Nice - the largest city of the Côte d'Azur situated on a narrow stretch of land between steep hills and a 7-kilometre beach on the Baie des Anges, has its die-hard fans. Swimmers, sailing enthusiasts, gourmets, artists and fashion aficionados - are very fond of this unique city. You can now fly to Nice directly from Warsaw with LOT Polish Airlines, and if you do, you should definitely visit its famous Marc Chagall Museum that features a vast collection of great paintings by this artist. Then head towards the port where the world's most splendid boats are moored, stroll along the popular Promenade des Anglais and have lunch or dinner in one of France's finest restaurants located in the Old Town.



## Sports

### Racing excitement

#### “BUSINESS TRAVELLER” AS A MEDIA PARTNER FOR SAILING REGATTA

On 21 May in Rybnik starts the first event of the Grand Prix Series in Scandinavia 650/ Skippi 650 sailing class. It's a truly unique class, being the only Polish construction that has achieved the rank of an international class with the right to organize its own European Cup events. The main goal of the class and the association is to race identical yachts, whose specifications are determined by class regulations. Taking part in the regatta is a great way to spend your weekend in an active way. The price of a yacht built by Scandinavia Yachts is attractive and oscillates around PLN 50,000. Those wishing to try their hand at sailing Scandinavia 650 can take part in a training course organized by Johnny Black Sailing Team - one of the teams competing in the Grand Prix Series. The classes run by Johnny Black are a part of the Regatta Academy licensed by Scandinavia-Skippi 650; [scandinavia650.org](http://scandinavia650.org), [scandinavia-yachts.com](http://scandinavia-yachts.com)

## Airline

### Finnair

#### LONGER STOPOVER IN HELSINKI

Finnair has presented a quicker and easier way for customers to schedule their stopovers in Finland. In this way they can discover two destinations during one trip. Customers can now book a stopover for their connecting flight to or from Helsinki on the recently launched [stopover.finnair.com](http://stopover.finnair.com) website. Finnair customers will also have the possibility of selecting between a wide variety of activities and tours in Finland thanks to the StopOver Finland project, which is led by Visit Finland and is operated in cooperation with Primera Holidays. Just half an hour away from Helsinki Airport, stopover customers will be able to enjoy the relaxed vibe of Finland's capital with its seaside atmosphere, design district, cozy cafés and unique restaurants and hotels.



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# SAMSUNG NEW BENCHMARK IN LAUNDRY CARE

A smart home is no longer  
a far-fetched concept, but a whole  
ecosystem of solutions that are now  
available for all of us.





When you fall asleep, your TV and air conditioning turn off automatically. When you return home after a hard day, you don't need to do shopping, as the refrigerator will order it for you. The “smart home” concept means a system of devices connected to the Internet via WiFi. Those seemingly simple gadgets that you can brag about in front of your friends who love technological innovations are, in fact, a real convenience for household members. If you are still sceptical about the idea of e.g. house monitoring systems, let's have a closer look at a device that all of us use on a regular basis and its operation can sometimes be time-consuming.

**WIFI IN SAMSUNG WASHING MACHINES AddWash: SAVE YOUR TIME AND LEAVE STRESS BEHIND**

A smart washing machine will certainly appeal to all those busy bees who work a lot

and sometimes wish to have a little time for themselves. With Smart Home mobile app on Samsung mobile devices, you can remotely set wash programmes. Simply use the app's intuitive interface to choose the type of laundry waiting in the machine to be washed. You can also set the start time of washing, so that when you return home, the clean laundry is ready and you can hang it to dry.

How many of you have experienced the situation when after turning on the washing machine, you realize that in the laundry bin there is still a shirt you were planning to wear for dinner, sports clothes your kid will need for tomorrow's training, or an odd sock that you somehow haven't noticed before? According to research conducted by Samsung, about 90% of consumers in Europe say they wanted to put more clothes in the washing machine after a wash cycle had started. But with the front-loading washing machines so popular in Europe, it's not the easiest thing to do; the door is opened only

when the water level inside the drum is low enough, and most people are unsure how to go about it. In fact, more than half of those surveyed were concerned that opening the washer door might cause a water spill or even cause the washing machine to break down.

**AddWash - AN EXTRA DOOR**

Samsung has come up with a unique and painless solution to tackle this annoying problem. The Samsung AddWash utilizes a very simple, yet effective solution - an extra door located on the upper part of the main door. Now you can add any missed pieces of clothing – and even extra detergent or fabric softener - at any point during the wash cycle. The washer also informs the user how much time is left to add the forgotten items or when the spin-dry process will finish. In the new Samsung machine, all it takes is a push of the Pause button, and in a second the extra door opens, and it's big enough to add a sweater or even a pair of jeans. Users

can also put in hand-wash items or add extra amount of fabric softener at the start of the rinse cycle.

**SUPERSPEED CYCLE WITH SPEEDSPRAY TECHNOLOGY**

The new AddWash model offers a range of innovative technologies introduced to the market by Samsung. With SuperSpeed cycle that utilizes the SpeedSpray technology, you can substantially reduce the washing time (to 59 minutes). The washing machine comes with many other functions available through Android and iOS mobile devices to monitor the whole washing process.

Samsung also equips its washing machines with the Eco Bubble technology for much more effective dirt removal. The appliance's bubble generator produces special foam that rapidly penetrates into the fabric. This solution allows washing at low temperatures, which is extremely beneficial for clothes. The new washing machine also utilized the Digital Inverter motor to provide excellent energy efficiency and minimize noises, which in turn translates into a long life of the appliance.



With Smart Home mobile app on Samsung mobile devices, you can remotely set the wash programmes.

**A DEFECT? A SMART WASHING MACHINE WILL SOLVE THE PROBLEM**

The washing machine with WiFi on board, also features an extensive maintenance function to notify the user in an understandable form about any problems. You no longer need to read a thick instruction manual, because both the diagnosis and the solution to the problem are displayed on the screen of your smartphone. More often than not the problem can be solved without the assistance of a service technician. Such a solution is a big time-saver helps you avoid unnecessary stress.

Samsung AddWash has been designed for all those users who like all the novelties that make their lives easier, as well as those who wish to save time and money.

When building a smart home ecosystem, you should start with a washing machine and then extend it by other appliances, e.g. a WiFi controlled oven or a device that measures the quality of your sleep. After all, we all want our lives to be healthier, more pleasant and much more interesting.

When building a smart home ecosystem, you should start with a washing machine and then extend it by other appliances.





## Hotel

## TOKYO

## PALACE HOTEL TOKYO



Opposite the ancient Otemon gate of Edo Castle in the business and shopping district of Marunouchi.

**T**his extremely stylish and modern property boasts more than 1,000 paintings, metalwork and other pieces from Japanese contemporary artists. The entrance is constructed from Aji stone – the same material that lines the moats around the Imperial Palace opposite. There are also lots of references to nature, from the leaf-shaped bar to the deep green carpets.

**WHERE IS IT?**

Opposite the ancient Otemon gate of Edo Castle in the business and shopping district of Marunouchi. It's a good hour by limousine bus to Narita airport, 70km away. Haneda airport is a 20km journey. The hotel has a direct link via the basement retail arcade to Otemachi subway station, or it's a pleasant ten-minute walk to Tokyo station.

**ROOMS**

The floor-to-ceiling windows of the hotel's Deluxe Rooms reveal the Imperial Palace's ancient Otemon Gate and Uchibori Dori avenue. The rooms offer ample living space that comes with a separate seating area which can be used as either a dining table or a work space. The bathroom is open-style with separate soaking tub and shower and complete with dual rain and handheld shower heads.

Executive Suites are perfect for families, larger groups or those who simply love added space, services and amenities. Each features a spacious balcony, entirely separate bedroom and living areas, and the flexibility to be expanded into a two-bedroom, apartment-style residence by combining it with the adjoining Deluxe King with Balcony room. A near-identical twin of the Park Suite, it's decorated in warm, earthy hues accented by



soft greens and a deep lavender. Palace Suite, which is the most luxury suite in the hotel, is shaded in earthy tones and decorated with contemporary furnishings and exquisite textiles and artwork throughout. Its spacious living room and dining area are accented with hints of muted gold, soft greys and a splash of apricot, while warm hues of gold and aubergine intermingle. The master bedroom features a separate vanity area, spacious dressing room and a marble-clad bathroom with dual sinks, a shower and separate window-side soaking tub with built-in jets. Those desiring added comfort can request the connecting Club Deluxe King room – with separate entrance and balcony – to create a luxurious two-bedroom residence.

**BARS AND RESTAURANTS**

Crown restaurant is collaboration between Chef Manabu Ichizuka with Patrick Henrrioux, Grand Chef of the Michelin-starred La Pyramide in Vienne, France. It offers seasonal menus which reflect a celebration of traditional French cooking presented with refined Japanese culinary aesthetics.

The interiors of the meticulously designed Wadakura restaurant are as inspired as its menus. You will find here textured walls elegantly crafted by master plasterer Naoki Kusumi to the intricate naguri-style woodwork on the floors of the beautifully appointed tatami-style private dining areas. Tsumi tempura bar plates up some of the freshest seafood from Tokyo's famed Tsukiji Fish Mar-



ket in a delightfully cozy alcove off of Wadakura's main dining room.

At his Marunouchi outpost, Michelin-starred Chef Shinji Kanesaka directs a top-flight team of some of the city's most skilled celebrants of sushi.

Located on the main lobby level and discreetly tucked away behind a single door, Royal Bar is as classic as a martini. Indeed, the bar counter itself is a meticulous restoration of the one from the original Royal Bar first opened at Palace Hotel in 1961. The dark-wood, deep-leather, plush-velvet alcove's brooding appeal draws serious aficionados of the finest cigars and top-shelf liquors.

The Palace Lounge offers a luxuriously cozy and convivial setting – whether for cocktails

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## Hotel



There are also lots of references to nature, from the leaf-shaped bar to the deep green carpets.



## TOKYO

or afternoon tea. A larger-than-life fireplace commands one side of the lofty living space while a grand white Steinway provides a grace note just opposite. By day, kimono-clad staff offer 48 varieties of tea to accompany the afternoon tea service, while sunset cues the space's transformation into a lively champagne & cocktail lounge with live Jazz accompaniment each evening.

Elegantly illuminated by its 18 individual chandeliers in addition to the abundance of natural light that pours in, the signature flourish of Palace Hotel Tokyo's main ballroom is its 7-meter tall by 22-meter (22 x 72 feet) wide window looking out on to Wadakura moat and the Imperial Palace plaza beyond. The vast space effortlessly impresses audiences with its three built-in projection screens which, when side-by-side, span the width of the ballroom's wall of windows. Sophisticated projection, lighting and sound systems as well as impeccable service add the final touch.

Capable of accommodating up to 132 with a classroom-style set-up or up to 210 in theater-style, the Ume room looks westwardly and overlooks Uchibori Dori avenue below. Divisible into two parts, Ume is ideal for hosting breakout sessions in conjunction with larger events taking place in the Aoi ballroom, which is located on the same floor.

### VERDICT

Open since May last year, the 23-storey Palace, a member of the Leading Hotels of the World, is on the site of the old Palace hotel that was originally unveiled in 1961. The construction of this 230-room property cost nearly \$800 million, but one has to admit that the investment was worth that price. I recommend it for both business and leisure travellers.

**Marzena Mróz**



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JAGDHOF SPA HOTEL



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**PRICE**  
From €700 for two nights  
with half-board and spa package

Located in the centre of Stubai valley the 5-star Jagdhof SPA Hotel is a perfect place for a luxury stay for those guests who love skiing in winter and spring, while in summer wish to hike in the Tyrolean Alps.

**WHERE IS IT?**  
Jagdhof SPA is a member of Relais & Châteaux association, bringing together several hundred unique 5-star properties that are renowned for their excellent cuisine and architecture. The hotel is situated in Neustift am Stubaital, a half an hour drive from Innsbruck airport and approximately in the middle of the well-known Stubaital valley. It's also a good starting point for Austria's largest glacier area - the Stubai Glacier, where the skiing season lasts

from September to late spring. Getting from the hotel to the glacier takes merely half an hour; other skiing, cycling and trekking areas are just 15 minutes away.

**ROOMS**  
The cosy Jagdhof SPA offers 79 rooms and suites, with each of them decorated in an individual fashion. The smallest rooms called Burgstall and Habicht are just 40 sqm., while slightly larger Deluxe Double Rooms offer more than 54 sqm. Each comes with a private balcony, a bathtub, double wash basins, a separate toilet, as well as a state-of-the-art home cinema system. For larger families, the property has prepared comfortable suites. The smallest one called Junior Suite ranges from 45 to 55 sqm and can easily accommodate four guests. The largest - Family Suite - offers the impressive 115 sqm of floor area and can be used by up to 5 people.

**RESTAURANTS**  
The cuisine offered by Jagdhof SPA is one of the biggest advantages of the property and fully deserves five stars. The hotel boasts six excellent restaurants, serving buffet and a la carte dishes. The chefs do their best to guarantee that the served food has its local colour - you can be sure that the eggs come from Tyrolean hens, and cheeses are produced by local farmers. Five-course dinners served here include game dishes.

Hubertusstube restaurant specializes in typical Tyrolean dishes. Another interesting



ing eatery is Austria's smallest gourmet restaurant named Gondel. It's simply a ski gondola standing on a terrace and arranged to accommodate up to six guests in this luxury micro-restaurant. This winter season its flagship dish is a selection of fondues, while in summer the chef recommends the Tyrolean schmankerl.

The heavenly culinary experience can be completed by a visit to the Wine Cellar decorated in a slightly rustic style. The place features more than 20,000 bottles of the world's best wine, including French Châteaux Mouton-Rothschild.

**SPA AND WELLNESS**  
The hotel boasts its vast spa and wellness offer, which includes

two sizable swimming pools (indoor and outdoor that can be used even in winter), but primarily the Vitality World with its 20 various saunas and baths. You will find here the traditional Russian banya, Finnish sauna, as well as several types of baths. To relax, you can go to Aqua Meditation Room, Tepidarium or salt and herbal grotto. After visiting saunas, you can opt for a foot massage in special pools lined with tiny pebbles and containing hot and cold water alternately.

Then there is the SPA Chalet - a specially dedicated place near the hotel with more than 700 sqm of aquatic attraction and leisure zones. You can also book a spa suite for couples only. The spa offer is complemented by

an impressive range of treatments - from various massages, through aromatic and medicinal baths to professional beauty procedures for ladies.

**VERDICT**  
Jagdhof SPA hotel truly deserves its five stars. The service is quick and discreet and rooms are cleaned twice a day. Another highlight of the hotel is its excellent cuisine. Not to mention, the impressive spa facilities where you can easily recharge your batteries, as well as the excellent location of the property - in the very centre of the Austria's most impressive glacial valley, near Innsbruck airport and the Innsbruck-Brennero motorway.

*Filip Gawrys*



The cuisine offered by Jagdhof SPA is one of the biggest advantages of the property and fully deserves five stars. The chefs do their best to guarantee that the served food has its local colour.





Hotel

MIKOŁAJKI

MIKOŁAJKI HOTEL



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**PRICES**  
From PLN 400 per night per person in a double room with breakfast

The 5-star Mikołajki Hotel is a unique place on the hotel map of Poland. Located on Ptasia Wyspa (Bird Island) on Mikołajskie Lake, it's a perfect place for a luxury rest and will appeal especially to water sports aficionados.

**WHERE IS IT?**  
If you love water, sail and at the same time seek intimate luxury, then Mikołajki Hotel is the place to go. Over the years, the island situated on Mikołajskie Lake drew away sailors who navigated the waterway of Great Masurian Lakes with an unfinished

development project. Luckily, three years ago, a development company Inpro built here from scratch a luxury 5-star hotel. The property is divided into two parts. On the shore of the lake there is a reception zone together with the main restaurant and a night club, as well as two closed car parks. The main hotel building is situated in the centre of Ptasia Wyspa. The island is connected with the mainland by means of two footbridges (open and enclosed one). On request, hotel guests can be transported between the island and the mainland with noiseless buggies.

**ROOMS AND SUITES**  
The hotel offers 78 rooms of two categories: Premium Twin and Superior Twin. All are equipped with the latest AV equipment, air conditioning, minibar, as well as an iron with ironing board. Each room also comes with a private balcony with views of the lake and an outdoor leisure set.

The property also offers 24 remarkable suites. In my opinion, the most interesting is the 50 sqm Lake View Apartment with a separate spacious bedroom with a view of the lake, a fully-equipped kitchen, a large table and a comfortable seating area.

The floor of the large terrace is almost at water level. Guests can use a private quay where they can moor their own boat. It also gives them a direct access to their suites.

The upper floors of the hotel feature several types of larger and more luxury suites, including Tower Suite and the Penthouse. On the lower floors there are several Executive suites. All can easily accommodate two couples or a larger family and come with a separate kitchen.

To ensure full satisfaction of its guests, the hotel offers services of a concierge who will be happy to rent a bike for you, book a table in a restaurant or a ticket for a trip aboard the tour ships that operate here.

**RESTAURANTS**  
There are two restaurants in the hotel. The main eatery is Yachtowa that can accommodate up to 160 people (it also features a vast terrace overlooking the lake) and is used mainly for serving breakfasts and buffet style dinners. The other restaurant - the New Island Pub - is located in the hotel building on Ptasia Wyspa and serves mainly a la carte dishes.

The head chef Tomasz Milewski says that he is a cook by profession, but it's also his great life passion. Milewski has won numerous Polish and foreign culinary competitions, including The Polish Cuisine Festival and the Culinary World Cup in Luxembourg.

In his cuisine he mainly relies on local, Masurian food.

"We buy fruit and vegetables from the local producers. The choice on our offer include the unique types made by a Polish cheese-maker based in Rozogi. We also serve fish - mostly zander and perch - that were caught in Masurian lakes," says Milewski.

In the upcoming season the top local dishes will be the beef tartare made with home-made seasoned tenderloin greased with clarified butter, fresh veg-



Each room comes with a private balcony with views of the lake and an outdoor leisure set.



etables in brine, and pork loin of suckling pig with young fried cabbage.

**SPA AND WELLNESS**  
The impressive area of 1,000 sqm features a complex of saunas, 10 treatment rooms, a swimming pool with water massage zones, two steam baths, a fitness room and two jacuzzi pools.

The choice of cosmetic procedures includes Decus Aque - a full body massage that takes 50 minutes and utilizes special oil with lemon, tea and mint extracts.

"We treat our visitors holistically," explains Karolina Witkowska, the manager at Spa & Wellness. "We specialize in Ayurvedic treatments with the





Staying at Mikołajki Hotel is a perfect cure for boredom. You can hire a sailing boat or a motorboat from Akademia 180.pl that operates at the hotel's marina. On special request you can also book a cruise aboard the double-deck yacht Meridian 391.

use of genuine Indian cosmetics and herbs," she adds.

The enthusiasts of Ayurveda can try here abhyanga - a classic Ayurvedic massage with the use of fragrant oils, or shirodhara - which involves pouring a stream of warm oil on the forehead where the "third eye" is believed to be situated.

Another interesting offer is the Sauna Night. During the event guests can try Finnish, infrared and salt sauna, as well as steam, mud and aromatic baths. The Sauna Night usually lasts from 10 pm to 2 am, with up to 50 participants. The event guests are served frozen fruit and beverages and can undergo complimentary mud scrub. You



can also take part in aqua aerobics classes in the hotel swimming pool. The upcoming dates of the Sauna Night are 27 May, 15 June and 13 July.

#### NUMEROUS ATTRACTIONS

Staying at Mikołajki Hotel is a perfect cure for boredom. You can, for example, hire a sailing boat or a motorboat from Akademia 180.pl that operates at the hotel's marina. On special request you can also book a cruise aboard the double-deck yacht Meridian 391.

Party lovers can go to Klub After Dark whose main attractions are a full-sized bowling alley and two billiard tables. On special request - especially for


groups - the hotel can organize outdoor activities, such as quad rides or paintball battles. Mikołajki Hotel offers three meeting rooms with a total area of 350 sqm, that combined with the spacious banquet hall can be converted into a vast 650 sqm venue for a corporate event.



#### VERDICT

With its unique location, Mikołajki Hotel is simply a one-of-a-kind property. It will appeal not only to sailors, but also those for whom luxury is of utmost importance. The hotel's discreet and attentive staff, as well as excellent cuisine, make this 5-star property a place not to miss.

*Filip Gawryś*



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# PERSIAN POTENTIAL

The ending of sanctions has cleared the way for Iran  
Air to become a major force in the Gulf,  
says **Alex McWhirter**





Will there be a fourth major Gulf airline? With Iran now removed from the sanctions list, it seems national carrier Iran Air is looking to join the ranks of Emirates, Etihad and Qatar Airways.

As soon as the restrictions were lifted on January 16, Iran Air agreed to receive a large fleet of aircraft worth US\$27 billion. Until now, the flag carrier had been flying with ageing planes, some of which were 35 years old.

NEW AIRCRAFT FOR NEW TIMES

The initial deal was for no fewer than 118 aircraft from European manufacturer Airbus. A future order may go to Boeing. This was followed soon after by an agreement to purchase 72 ATR commuter planes from French-Italian manufacturer ATR. Twenty of these are firm orders and are expected to be in service later this year. Now a further contract has been signed to acquire 50 aircraft from Brazilian manufacturer Embraer. Airbus won the lion's share of potential business. Provided everything goes accord-

ing to plan, Iran Air will be taking delivery of 73 long-haul and 45 short-haul aircraft. These comprise 12 A380s, 16 A350s and 45 A330s. Short-haul planes are all sourced from the A320 family. Deliveries are not likely to be completed until 2023.

GLORY DAYS

Whether or not Iran Air might become a major Gulf carrier is up for debate. On the plus side, Iran has a large population of almost 80 million, and a good number will wish to travel.

Iran Air also has history on its side. Back in the 1970s, in the era of the Shah, it was a small version of Emirates beginning to expand its global reach thanks to some mentoring from US carrier Pan Am. An IATA (International Air Transport Association) member, at the time it was the most glamorous and most Westernised of the Middle Eastern airlines. Unlike the others, it had an attractive livery and fashionable uniforms (especially for female cabin staff). Onboard food and drink and in-flight service were to Western standards.

In 1972, I managed to fly the former Iran Air from London Heathrow to Tehran on a B727. There were no nonstop flights in those days. It was a US pilot (on secondment from Pan Am) and stops were made en route at Paris Orly (Charles de Gaulle had yet to be built) and Istanbul.

In the early 1970s, Bahrain-based Gulf Air was primarily a regional carrier, controlled by our state-owned BOAC until the middle of that decade, while the likes of Dubai-based Emirates, Abu Dhabi's Etihad and Doha-based Qatar Airways simply didn't exist. Emirates – the first of today's large Gulf carriers – did not appear until 1985. In fact, it could be claimed that the rise of the Gulf carriers came about through the absence of Iran Air and, to a lesser extent, Iraqi Airways, which was also developing a long-haul network.

When Iran Air does return, it will face a totally different market. In the 1970s, fares and competition were controlled by IATA. The idea was for members to have a level playing field. It didn't always happen, but it did lead to an orderly, albeit expensive,



Whether or not Iran Air might become a major Gulf carrier is up for debate. On the plus side, Iran has a large population of almost 80 million, and a good number will wish to travel.



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To compete with foreign carriers, Iran Air must meet the needs of global travellers. That means free drinks in all classes, along with attractive, modern in-flight entertainment and fully-flat seating in the premium cabins.

marketplace for the traveller. IATA controlled onboard service standards to the nth degree. Member airlines were allowed to serve free drinks only in first class, while economy passengers had to pay. IATA even prescribed an “IATA sandwich”, which had to be of a certain size and composition. And it would not agree to members having business class, so Iran Air, like its rivals, operated two-class flights.

WORK TO DO

Today’s Iran Air will have a state-of-the-art fleet but that’s no guarantee for success. It is true that many Iranians will prefer their national carrier, but the younger members of society will want a taste of the West. In this case, the airline will be entering a dog-eat-dog marketplace – especially in the Gulf, where standards are high.

For a number of years, the Gulf carriers have been the unofficial “national airlines” of Iran. With Iran Air restricted to using 35-year-old aircraft and limited in where it could fly (Iran still has no aviation treaty with the US), the Gulf airlines have been free to syphon off huge numbers of passengers from Tehran and regional Iranian cities. Emirates has already operated an A380 into Tehran to prove it could handle the superjumbo. Iran will have to invest in huge

infrastructure projects to stand any chance of competing. Many thousands of flight crew, engineers and onboard staff will need to be trained to handle modern, sophisticated planes.

If the country’s national airline wants to succeed globally in today’s conditions, it will need to recruit top-class expatriates to share best practice and develop up-to-date products. To compete with foreign carriers, Iran Air must meet the needs of global travellers. Whether the government likes it or not, that means free drinks in all classes, along with attractive, modern in-flight entertainment and fully-flat seating in the premium cabins. Otherwise, it will end up as a niche airline rather than a global player.

It is safe to assume that commuter planes will be used to develop domestic and regional routes. Long-haul aircraft will service Europe and Asia. Its A380s will be rostered on US and busy European routes, assuming that the traffic rights can be obtained.

THE COMPETITION

Iran boasts several other airlines, large and small. Privately owned Mahan Air is the nearest rival to state-owned Iran Air. But unlike the latter, Mahan Air circumvented sanctions by obtaining eight ex-Virgin Atlantic A340s from third parties, which

angered the US government. Although US sanctions remain in place, Mahan Air is slowly expanding its long-haul network and has begun flying to Europe and Asia.

No North American or Asian airline has yet announced definite plans for Tehran, so it’s left to the Europeans to lead the way. Most foreign carriers (except those from the Gulf) withdrew from Tehran during the period of sanctions. Only Lufthansa and Austrian Airlines retained a limited service.

In March, Austrian added extra flights, while Air France will restart services from Paris CDG this month. British Airways will launch six flights a week from Heathrow in July using a four-class B777-200. Last month, Iran and the UK signed an aviation treaty allowing up to 21 weekly flights between the two nations. Lufthansa was due to launch Munich-Tehran flights last month but this has been pushed back to July, while its budget subsidiary, Eurowings, has put its planned Cologne-Tehran route on hold.

If Iran Air succeeds in developing a competitive product, it will have to hone its marketing skills, as the region’s airlines are not sitting still. Most of them (including Turkish Airlines, with Istanbul New airport on the way) intend to boost capacity imminently.

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# LUFTHANSA GROUP FOR SUMMER



In the coming 2016 summer schedules, which enter into effect on 27 March, the airlines of the Lufthansa Group will offer one of the most comprehensive networks of air services in the world, with over 23,140 weekly flights. Via their Frankfurt, Munich, Zurich, Vienna and Brussels hubs, and also with numerous point-to-point connections, the Group's airlines will serve 316 destinations in 101 countries.

This vast range of services will be further supplemented by over 18,000 codeshare flights offered in collaboration with some 30 partner airlines. The summer timetable period runs from 27 March to 29 October 2016.

**LUFTHANSA**  
New to the intercontinental network is San Jose (USA), which

receives five-times-weekly service from 1 July. Lufthansa is also adding two new European destinations to its Frankfurt-based network: Alicante (Spain), which receives a new weekly service, and Tirana (Albania). In addition to its Frankfurt services, Lufthansa will be offering new long-haul flights to Denver (USA) and Tehran (Iran) from its Munich hub. Denver will receive five weekly services from 11 May, while Tehran will enjoy thrice-weekly service from 4 July. Denver will receive five weekly services from 11 May, while Tehran will enjoy thrice-weekly service from 4 July. Demand for travel to and from Eastern Europe is clearly on the rise. And in view of this, Lufthansa will be offering its first flights from Munich to Debrecen (Hungary) and Rzeszów

in Southeast Poland. Odessa (Ukraine) also returns to the Munich-based network, served with two weekly flights from 31 March. Tallinn is yet another new destination available from Munich. Flights to the Estonian capital are being offered twice a day in conjunction with Adria Airways.

**AUSTRIAN AIRLINES**  
Austrian Airlines will offer its customers an extensive network of 130 destinations in 55 countries in its 2016 summer schedules. Services include almost daily flights to all North American destinations: seven times weekly to New York, Washington, Toronto and Chicago, and six times weekly to Miami. Austrian Airlines will also operate 31 weekly non-stop services from Vienna to Asia in



its summer schedules: a five-times-weekly Boeing 767 service to Beijing, up to daily Boeing 777 services to Shanghai, Bangkok and Tokyo, and five weekly flights to Hong Kong.

**BRUSSELS AIRLINES**  
Brussels Airlines will serve no fewer than nine new destinations in its summer schedules. Toronto (Canada) joins the growing long-haul network, served five times a week from the end of March. The new service also offers numerous onward domestic connections from and to Toronto, thanks to Brussels Airlines' close collaboration with Star Alliance partner Air Canada. Accra (Ghana), to which service was launched this winter, remains in the network for the summer schedules. The new additions here for Summer 2016 include Nantes (France), Heraklion and Thessaloniki (Greece) and Jerez, Tenerife and Gran Canaria (Spain). The new service to Belfast (UK) City Airport, meanwhile, is a first within the Lufthansa Group.



**EUROWINGS**  
New to the Eurowings long-haul network will be Boston (USA) and Mauritius, both served from Cologne. The further long-haul destinations of Bangkok and Phuket (Thailand), Punta Cana and Puerto Plata (Dominican Republic) and Varadero (Cuba) also receive their first summer Eurowings service. New services will further be introduced from Cologne to Varna (Bulgaria), Mahon (Spain) and Brindisi (Italy), which will all be newly served from Düsseldorf, too. Two new points in Turkey – Bodrum and Samsun – will be served from Cologne, while Hanover-Antalya and Düsseldorf-Kutahya Zafer further expand Eurowings' summer coverage of the Turkish travel market. Eurowings Stuttgart will offer a new route to Pula (Croatia), while Cagliari (Italy) will be newly served from both Hamburg and Berlin. The Italian market will be further served by flights on the Vienna-Rome and Hamburg-Pisa routes. Summer-schedule desti-

nations from Hamburg include Ibiza (Spain), while Eurowings Düsseldorf offers services to Edinburgh and East Midlands (UK), and to Lisbon (Portugal) and Kavala (Greece). In further developments, Alicante (Spain) and Bastia (France) will be newly served from Düsseldorf and Vienna this summer. And flights from Vienna to Faro (Portugal) and Valencia (Spain) further supplement Eurowings' extensive 2016 summer schedules.

**SWISS**  
Alicante (Spain) receives a new thrice-weekly service from Zurich, while the vacation destination of Lamezia Terme (Italy) will be served weekly from Geneva. The new schedules also see frequencies increased to various existing European and intercontinental destinations. And SWISS's new flagship Boeing 777-300ER will be introduced onto a number of routes in the course of the timetable period. SWISS will serve 102 destinations in 46 countries in its new summer schedules.

In the coming 2016 summer schedules, which enter into effect on 27 March, the airlines of the Lufthansa Group will offer one of the most comprehensive networks of air services in the world, with over 23,140 weekly flights.





# THE SWEET SIDE OF MERCURE HOTELS



MORE INFO AT  
[www.mercure.com](http://www.mercure.com)

It's the fourth time when guests of Mercure hotels can enjoy the heavenly chocolate flavours during their stay. Every year customers are invited to take part in this unique offer at one of the brand's hotels. As part of "Sweet Secret by Mercure"

they are offered discounts and can treat their palates to hand-made pralines.

### NEVER ENOUGH CHOCOLATE

Everybody knows that in addition to being a heavenly treat for the palate, chocolate is also

good for the body and the soul. The very thought of just a piece of chocolate makes most people smile, and tasting this delicacy can cheer up even the biggest grumbler. It's safe to say then that chocolate is a real key to happiness. This unique advantage has been exploited by Mer-

cure hotel chain that treats its guests to chocolate delicacies for the fourth time. "Sweet Secret by Mercure" is a unique offer, where customers are asked to indulge on hand-made pralines. However, there is much more to the event that just eating sweets. This year's offer is available in Mercure hotels in Poland and Eastern Europe.

### CHOCOLATE MENU

This year's edition will last until 31 May. Guests who decide to book for at least two nights during that time, are given 30% discount for the stay. In their rooms, they will find unique dedicated Mercure pralines. What is more, you can find a range of chocolate desserts in the menu of the hotel restaurants. These include delicious chocolate cake with ice cream and Gourmand coffee served with pralines. Those who would like to enjoy all the flavours available can opt for special packages of 9 or 16 exquisite pralines prepared by a Polish chocolate maker Karmello, known for their passion for hand-made chocolate delicacies. The manufacturer offers only products of the highest quality, produced under the supervision of experienced chocolatiers. This year's selection includes three pralines prepared especially for Mercure with aromatic dark chocolate and fig, apple-pie or sea-buckthorn filling.

### SOPHISTICATED BRAND

Mercure is a top quality brand of hotels from the middle segment, characterised by original interior design and a unique charm. The properties belong to AccorHotels group, the world's biggest hotel operator, with hotels in 92 countries. All Mercure hotels offer the same standard and quality of service, although each one is unique due to the local approach of the brand. Because of the location in city centres, by the seaside

or in the mountains, they provide excellent accommodation for both business travellers and holiday makers. The network includes 740 properties in 56 countries worldwide and

is an attractive alternative for other hotel brands, combining additional benefits from being part of a multinational hotel group and high quality mobile services.



Mercure Gdańsk Posejdon



Mercure Bucharest City Center



# 7 FACES OF THE BURGER

## *world's burgers in Bristol, Sheraton and Westin hotel restaurants*



Jack & Burger menu features seven hamburgers - each one filled with juicy beef and the best ingredients specific to individual regions of the world.

Until 29 May 2016 five different bars and restaurants at Starwood hotels feature Jack & Burger offer that involves pairing hamburgers with whiskey. As a part of the promotion, the good, old meat patty will be offered in seven different incarnations. Enthusiasts of culinary adventures can enjoy the above promotion in SomePlace Else at Sheraton Warsaw, SomePlace Else at Sheraton Krakow, SomePlace Else at Sheraton Poznań, JP's Bar at Westin Warsaw, as well as Bar Kolumnowy at Hotel Bristol in Warsaw.

Jack & Burger menu features seven hamburgers - each one filled with juicy beef and the best ingredients specific to individual regions of the world.

"I wanted to add a little more variety to a traditional burger, so I thought that presenting it from different geographical perspectives can be truly interesting. That's why, we have created several burgers, but I think that Dark Knight is the most unique. It consists of tuna pickled in whiskey and served in black bun with squid ink," says Artur Grajber, the head chef at Sheraton Warsaw who has designed the menu.

Hamburger aficionado should definitely try Mount Everest - probably the biggest burger in Poland. It consists almost 500 grams of juicy Polish seasoned beef, enrobed in grilled oscypek cheese, bacon and tartar sauce.

### HISTORY OF THE HAMBURGER

Hamburger as a dish and a word derives from German

city of Hamburg. Everything started with Hamburg beefsteak, that is hand chopped beef patty. The dish was then brought to the US by immigrants from Germany, and the whole America has gone crazy about it. In 1904, a potter named Fletcher Davis, who also ran a bar in Texas, came up with an idea to serve the Hamburg beefsteak with lettuce, mustard and mayo to guests visiting pottery exhibitions.

A typical hamburger is a flat patty made of chopped beef which is roasted or grilled. A typical hamburger is a flat meat patty made of chopped or minced beef, which is then grilled or barbecued. According to the original recipe, the meat should be seasoned only with salt, pepper, and mustard, but for years the recipe has evolved, providing burger lovers with new taste sensations. What's interesting - the famous steak from Hamburg didn't include a bun.

Meat used for a perfect burger can't be too lean, because it's not fried on fat. The burger's natural fat makes it juicy, plump, and soft. The ideal meat for hamburgers is entrecote, which isn't as delicate as sirloin. And one last thing - a real hamburger must be cooked on a grill or barbecue - never fried in a pan.

### JACK & BURGER IN SHERATON AND WESTIN HOTELS

Until the end of May in SomePlace Else at Sheraton hotels in Warsaw, Cracow and Poznań, as well as JP's Bar at Westin and Bark Kolumnowy at Bristol will serve Jack & Burger menu. The offered burgers cost from PLN 30 to PLN 45, while the largest one - Mount Everest with its name inspired by the world's highest mountain, costs PLN 69. More information can be found at [spgpolka.pl](http://spgpolka.pl)



According to the original recipe, the meat should be seasoned only with salt, pepper, and mustard, but for years the recipe has evolved, providing burger lovers with new taste sensations.





# THE BEST ADDRESS IN WARSAW



**Marzena Mróz**  
interviews  
**Karolina Kaim**  
- the Chairwoman  
Of The Board  
at Tacit Investment  
and a premium real  
estate specialist

**Warsaw's premium real estate market is steadily growing. Now, there is a new prestigious address on the map - the Park Lane Apartments on Podchorążych Street.**

It's a truly unique place. Park Lane is an elite, cosy, 7-storey apartment building that boasts a high standard of finish. It is well equipped, elegant, sophisticated and classy. With its location close to the city centre, it offers its residents a truly tranquil atmosphere, as well as a lot of greenery and the view of the Royal Baths. It provides you with an opportunity to enjoy all the delights of Warsaw, but at the same time it offers life away from the hustle and bustle of the big city. Park Lane features 12 apartments with the floor area ranging from 170 to 330 square metres. The interiors have been designed to allow their future users for maximum flexibility in arranging the space. We truly believe that it is the customers who add character to their apartments, by putting there their favourite couch, photos of their loved ones or souvenirs from their trips, so the interior finish must be quite reserved. In this way, while maintaining very high quality and comforts, we enable our customers to express their individuality through their personal belongings. We opted for a comprehensive interior finish of all the apartments, in line with our philosophy that a luxury product is a finished one. We offer our customers apartments that are ready to be move into. We want them to say: "Yes, I like this place a lot and I want to live here."

**Can you fall in love with the place the very moment you enter it?**

Yes, you can. That is all you need to do.

**What is so unique about the Park Lane?**

First of all, its one-of-a-kind location, cosiness, as well as a thorough selection of the potential future owners of the apartments, which is still a rarity in Poland. We also make sure that all the non-residential spaces in the building never diverge from the expected quality. That is why, we have decided not to sell the spaces located on the ground floor in order not to lose control over them. Obtaining relatively small income from their rental or sale is not our top priority. Instead, we want Tacit brand to be a real proof that our apartment buildings are and always will be The Best. On the very day a building is completed, you can move in and enjoy peace and quiet, without having to worry that the next two years you will spend on a construction site.

**Until recently, almost all real estate investors in the Polish market were heavily dependent on pre-sale of their products. But then Tacit Investment joined the party.**

Pre-sales of course translate into cash flow, a better return on investment and a greater piece of mind of investors. Very often they are also one of the requirements made by a bank that finances the investment as it needs to see that there is a demand for the apartments. I personally believe that a luxury product should not be sold in a form of a promise on paper, but only when it is finished. When a customer knows what they are buying, they can visit the apartment, sit on the sofa, and sip coffee to eventually realize that

this is their place on earth. Of course, not every investor can afford to use such a strategy. This only applies to companies that have a strong capital, are reliable and know perfectly how to do their business.

**Such a luxury, turnkey finished apartment can be compared to a work of art, signed by an artist.**

It is as unique as a painting, a luxury car or an expensive watch.

**Tacit Investment constructed Park Lane, but is also the mastermind behind the Cosmopolitan Twarda 4 apartment building in Warsaw. Can you compare these two prestigious properties?**

Only to such an extent that both of them are - if we follow the art analogy - true pieces of art. In line with our philosophy, the apartments in both Cosmopolitan and Park Lane are sold in a fully finished state and equipped to the highest standard. However, if you look at them as products and take into consideration the relations their residents have with the city - then these two are absolutely different. Residents of the Cosmopolitan building like the urban feel. They want to live in the very centre of the capital and take advantage of the fact at any time of the day and night. On the other hand, a resident of Park Lane is fond of living close to the city, but doesn't necessarily want to be in the centre of the action. That is why, you can say that each of these products is aimed at two completely different personalities who share the need to seek the best and highest quality.

**Thank you for the interview.**



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# START PARKING STORY



This year START Parking has introduced the offer for the most discerning customers, that is business travellers.

**I**n 2016 the founders of START Parking will help 400,000 travellers to get to airports. They will also present a special offer aimed at business customers. Will it be a new revolution?

They met 15 years ago at the world's largest Disney park where they worked as trainees, observing and learning the secrets behind the Disney's world-famous quality of service.

After the training they returned to Poland full of energy and enthusiasm. They landed at Okęcie airport and then spent more than an hour waiting for a minibus that would take them to a nearby park where they had left their car. Przemysław Witkowski, one of the co-founders of START Parking, says that this striking contrast between Disney standards and the customer service at the airport car park was so shocking that they decided to do something about it and in consequence came up with a brilliant idea.

## AIRPORT PARKS

They started by creating an online comparison service that list-

ed car parks located near Polish airports and established successful partnerships with their owners. In 2014 they served more than 150,000 users, but then they seemed to have reached the proverbial glass ceiling. Unfortunately it turned out that most car park owners didn't want to make further investment in convenience and improving customer service. "There was only one way out and that was to open our own car park," says Piotr Macierzyński, the co-founder and CEO of START Parking. The investment was so successful that already in the first year of its operation the company doubled the number of the handled passengers and soon started opening new facilities. This year START Parking has introduced the offer for the most discerning customers, that is business travellers.

## SERVICE FOR BUSINESS CUSTOMERS

The choice of three Biznes START subscriptions is a simple yet effective answer to the needs of all business customers. The new solutions not only increase

the availability of such services with the offered price of just PLN 39 per month for the basic package, but also introduce innovative solutions that help you save time. The best example of such a solution is the Vip START service. Designed specifically for senior staff members of companies, it enables you to leave your car right at the airport terminal. START Parking then takes the vehicle to the company's car park, where it's cleaned and on the day of arrival of its owner is delivered near the arrivals terminal. It's a truly comfortable solution that also saves a lot of time.

## START INTO THE FUTURE

The new solutions and close cooperation of START Parking with airports that naturally complement this interesting offer, indicate that the new services for business can be as successful as the offer addressed to tourists. If that happens, then START Parking may serve even 500,000 customers in 2017 and, as its founders promise, seek the opportunities to introduce its innovative and proven solutions also to other European markets.

## MODA NA MŁODYCH ARTYSTÓW TRWA!

Zapisz się na private view.

To wyjątkowa możliwość obejrzenia wystawy przedaukcyjnej z naszym ekspertem, poznania kontekstu poszczególnych prac i życiorysów artystów.

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17 maja godz. 19

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Salon Wystawowy Marchand, Warszawa, Pl. Konstytucji 2

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# BON VOYAGE!



Travel inspires, encourages us to explore distant and exotic countries, as well as local spots. They stimulate the imagination and encourage you to have fun with fashion. Combining our passion for fashion and travelling, we present this year's spring trends.

**R**omantic pastels are simply a must have this season. Suffice to say, that this very feminine colour palette has dominated this year's catwalks. The trend is dictated by powder pink, light blue and pale beige colours - light, fresh and spring-like. The richness of colours and shades is reflected in the choice of accessories: shoes, handbags and jewellery.

#### MODE ART DESIGN

Apart from the marketing job, the advertising agency Mode Art Design is implementing its independent project: an e-gallery of artistic jewellery. The aim is to promote Polish jewellery artists and contemporary Polish design abroad.

The offer is aimed at the most demanding clients, who more and more often look for original and unique items that can reflect

their individual style and make them stand out in the crowd.

The jewellery presented in the gallery shows that the imagination has no boundaries and can change reality.

"Our offer combines new trends and modern design with diverse materials. This makes the jewellery unique or produced in very short, limited series. All the products are handmade. They are genuine pieces of art," say the gallery owners. For more inspiration go to [www.modeartdesign.com](http://www.modeartdesign.com)

#### DOROTHÉ

It was founded by the end of 2012. The originator and creative director is Dorota Gawron, a fashion model, the first runner-up of the 2006 Miss Polonia beauty pageant, and an editor of "Ślub Marzeń" - a wedding fashion magazine. Dorothé is all about classics with modern

and practical touch, aimed at women who appreciate individual and unique style, love the urban chic and live life to the fullest.

The image styling is a combination of sport elegance inspired by travel and nature. [www.dorothe.pl](http://www.dorothe.pl)

#### THE COLORS

The Colors boutique was created out of love for colourful accessories and a desire to share some of the Italian energy with Polish women.

Why Italy? Because the colours look best in the bright sunlight, Italian leather is considered the world's best, and comfort and design are also important.

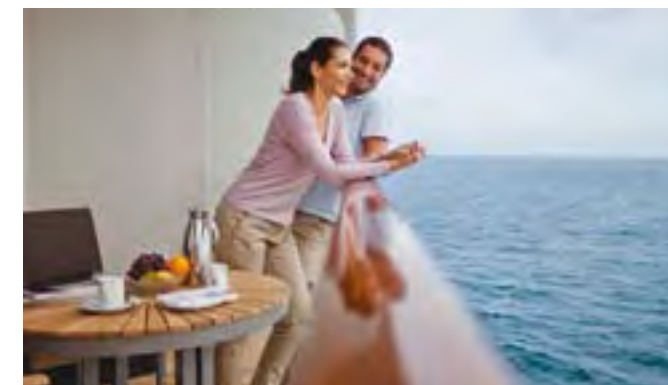
"Each piece of accessory is unique, as I know how important it's for women to look original and stand out," explains Sylwia Grzegorek, the owner. [www.facebook.com/thecolors.new](http://www.facebook.com/thecolors.new)



[www.celebritycruises.pl](http://www.celebritycruises.pl)

ul. Świętokrzyska 36, 00-116 Warszawa

tel. 004822 455 38 48





# RIDING HIGH

From surfing to drinking, **Jenny Southan** discovers the powerful business city of Munich is adept at balancing work with play



Spring may be here, but on a crisp March day in Munich there are still piles of snow at the side of the road. Still, the chill has not dissuaded a group of men from donning wetsuits and climbing into the churning Eisbach, which flows through the expansive Englischer Garten public park. Running parallel to the Isar River, this manmade waterway is famous – believe it or not – for surfing.

One by one, the men cautiously hold their boards at the base of the permanent roiling wave forged at the entrance to the Prinzregentenstrasse Bridge. And, one by one, they wipe out – their boards whipped from under them by the violent current, ripping them downstream by the ankle. After a short while, a woman plunges in – she catches the wave perfectly, riding it back and forth with ease as onlookers applaud.

Not just a pastime for a few crazy hobbyists, for the past decade international surf contests have been held in the landlocked city – even at the airport in a temporary wave pool. (A 2009 film called Keep Surf-

ing cemented its position as one of the top river surfing spots in Europe.) One guy who grew up riding the Eisbach was Quirin Rohleder – now a pro, he has earned a name for himself on the scene. “It’s crazy how this river has had so much influence on my life. Some might say this wave is boring. However, it still amazes me,” he says on his Instagram feed.

I first hear about Rohleder at the Flushing Meadows hotel, a small but decidedly trendy 16-room property in the Glockenbachviertel district, about 4km south of the park. Along with ten other collaborators – including local heroes DJ Hell and rapper Michael Beck – Rohleder was tasked with designing one of the hotel’s 11 feature rooms. His cosy loft has a mezzanine sleeping level, a hammock and an oversized monochrome print of him surfing.

“Since the river was cleaned up, people use it to get around. They jump in, flow downstream and then take the ‘bikini’ tram back into town,” says Niels Jaeger, co-founder of the hotel’s parent company, Arnold Jaeger Werner (AJW).

And there was me thinking Munich was all about beer and BMWs. (Which it is – but more about that later.) Opened in 2014, the Flushing Meadows is essentially a long-term pop-up – the owner of the building was looking for someone to take a seven-year lease on the top two floors of a Deutsche Telecomms office building. AJW now has a branch of its Super Danke green smoothie chain downstairs, and the hotel is proving a hit not only among tourists but business people representing industries from fashion to insurance.

Wearing a black T-shirt, grey jeans and black Adidas trainers, general manager Eike Gethmann says: “The whole travel industry has changed – travellers want to meet local people. We are very informal and our bar is buzzing in the evening. People come for the roof terrace.”

With a background in traditional five-stars – Gethmann was previously at the city’s Charles hotel, part of Rocco Forte – he says it’s just as difficult to fill 16 rooms as it is 160, but Flushing Meadows tends



Not just a pastime for a few crazy hobbyists, for the past decade international surf contests have been held in the landlocked city – even at the airport in a temporary wave pool.



No single industry is so predominant that the livelihood of the city depends on it. A healthy blend of companies of all shapes and sizes makes the Bavarian capital highly resistant to crises.



to run at 90 per cent occupancy. In an effort to support the community, the Design Hotels member serves Munich’s very own Aqua Monaco glacier water, displays flowers from a nearby florist and publishes its own printed guide to the city, Outside.

#### STAY IN STYLE

In the past year or so, new hotel launches have included Starwood’s Aloft, Accor’s Novotel Muenchen Arnulfpark and Wyndham’s Super 8, as well as “budget design” concepts from Nordic Pure and Bold. Airport hotels from Ibis and Marriott’s Moxy have just opened, and coming soon is a 287-room property from luxury German brand Roomers, a 25 Hours hotel and a 274-room Andaz from Hyatt in 2017.

At the top end, anyone familiar with Munich will know the Sofitel Munich Bayerpost, Vier Jahreszeiten Kempinski and Mandarin Oriental, but the 175-year-old family-run Bayerischer Hof is the grande dame. Wander along the pedestrianised boulevard from Marienplatz and you’ll see its entrance signposted by an unofficial memorial to Michael Jackson. Here, the base of a statue of composer Roland de Lattre has been adorned with photos of the King of Pop. (The musical tastes of Munchners have shifted since the 1500s.)

Today, the Bayerischer Hof is run by Inegrit Volkhardt, who took over operations from her father, Falk, in 1994. Almost completely destroyed during the Second World War, the hotel has been ever expanding and renovating – 2005 saw the addition of a spa, a glass-walled rooftop restaurant and an outdoor terrace. Along with six bars and five restaurants (including the underground Bavarian Palais Keller, Polynesian-style Trader Vic’s and two Michelin-starred Atelier), it has 340 rooms and suites sporting a variety of themes, from floral Laura Ashley to gold-heavy Graf Pilati.

Soren Huber, the property’s director of business development, says the plan for the next 12 months is to rebuild the G wing at the back of the property – it will go from 20 rooms to 28 with the addition of two new floors and a penthouse. The ballroom and event spaces in the Palais Montgelas wing will also be given a facelift. In February, the hotel held the 52nd annual Munich Security Conference, with high-profile attendees ranging from King Abdullah II of Jordan to US Secretary of State John Kerry.

#### FORWARD MOTION

Munich airport is the seventh-largest in Europe, offering direct connections to almost 250 cities. It handles more than 40 million

passengers a year but the addition of the new Satellite Terminal 2 this spring will enable it to cope with another 11 million.

Rita Roeder, director of marketing and communication for the city’s Department of Labour and Economic Development, says: “Expansion of the public transport system and the airport is of key significance to Munich, as both are straining at their limits. Plans to build a second east-west S-Bahn commuter rail line tunnel through the city centre have already reached an advanced stage.” Munich’s underground U-Bahn system is among the world’s best, with eight lines connecting 96 stations that often sport futuristic interior design.

Although much of the old town is pedestrianised, take a stroll down designer shopping avenue Maximilianstrasse and you will see countless luxury cars cruising by. The automotive industry is a central pillar of the economy, generating sales revenues of €80 billion a year, and Audi and BMW are both based here. The latter was founded in Munich as Bavarian Motor Works 100 years ago and has its headquarters in a quirky “four-cylinder” tower just outside the city centre.

Next to it is the equally eye-catching, bowl-shaped BMW Museum and, on the other side of the road, near the Olym-



piapark, is BMW Welt, a huge showroom. Built in 2007 and featuring a striking “double-cone” vortex of glass and steel attached to a sweeping auditorium, it welcomes more than three million visitors a year who come to see the latest cars and motorbikes, BMWi electric vehicles, Rolls-Royce and Mini fleets. The company has come a long way since it began building aircraft engines in 1916.

As well as a Michelin-starred restaurant and extensive event space for hire, BMW Welt also houses the company’s European delivery centre, from which 22,000 cars a year are collected by buyers from around the world. As part of its centenary celebrations, designers unveiled the BMW car of the future (pictured above right) but unfortunately for petrol-heads the “Vision Next 100” will be self-driving.

Opposite Welt, the BMW Plant manufactures more than 950 cars a day with the help of 7,700 employees and hundreds of dexterous robots. Down the road in the Milbertshofen district, BMW Group Classic will next month relocate to a 13,000 sqm venue in the former Knorr-Bremse AG factory. It will house vintage cars, workshops and space for corporate functions.

Another striking building – home to Bayern Munich football club – is the 71,000-seat Allianz Arena (pictured on our cover). It is encased in thousands of inflated plastic panels that change colour, and was designed by Herzog and de Meuron.

**BIG BUSINESS**

Frankfurt may be the financial capital of Germany, but in terms of the top 50 companies on the German stock exchange, Roeder says Munich holds the largest number of headquarters in the country. “This is a healthy and prosperous market,” she says. “As well as BMW, the biggest players are Allianz, Munich Re and Siemens. LVMH, Microsoft and Google have also moved here.”

Compared with other German cities, Munich has the lowest unemployment rate (4.6 per cent) and the highest per-capita income (30,800 Euros). Other firms located here include Apple, Accenture, Sky, Starbucks, Vodafone, Wrigley, Yahoo and Airbus Defence and Space, just outside in Ottobrunn. In December, IBM set up a global innovation centre in Munich for its new Watson IoT (Internet of Things) business line, creating 1,000 jobs. The city’s economic strength not only rests on manufacturing, high-tech and large corporations, but start-ups (of which there are 95,000), traditional crafts and family-run businesses. Walking around, I come across the elegant Bohmle family interiors shop, gourmet food court Dallmayr and hip Brot und Butter, which sells kitchenware and home-baked bread (there is a line out of the door). Roeder says: “No single industry is so predominant that the livelihood of the city depends on it. A healthy blend of companies of all shapes and sizes – known in Germany as the ‘Munich mix’ – makes the Bavarian capital highly resistant to crises.”

**BREW MASTER**

Munich pulls in 70 million visitors a year for both business and leisure, but the annual Oktoberfest (in fact held in September) attracts six million on its own. Last year, revellers glugged down 7.3 million litres of beer. Even if you are here at any other time of the year, “you need to be prepared to drink”, says AJW’s Jaeger. Traditional beer halls such as the lively Hofbrauhaus are frequented by everyone from lederhosen-wearing locals to high-flying professionals. Oompah bands play daily.

My tour guide, Susanna Steensma, says: “Beer is an important part of culture here. There are six breweries in Munich and they are the only ones that can serve beer at Oktoberfest. Hofbrau is the government beer, for example, while Augustiner is a private enterprise.” The other four are Lowenbrau, Paulaner, Hacker-Pschorr and Spaten – you can see their coats of arms on the maypole in Viktualienmarkt square.

In summer, there are plenty of places to sit outside and enjoy a stein. Roeder says: “Munich’s beer garden culture is symbolic of the city’s down-to-earth lifestyle. It reflects a basic undercurrent of laid-back conviviality. Visits to beer gardens are not just a great way to end the working day, but also ideal for a relaxed business lunch, or to celebrate the signing of a new contract or the acquisition of an important customer.” If you really want to make an impression, you may also want to pack a wetsuit.

This is a healthy and prosperous market. As well as BMW, the biggest players here are Allianz, Munich Re and Siemens.



The 175-year-old family-run Bayerischer Hof is the grande dame of the hotel scene. Wander along the pedestrianised boulevard from Marienplatz and you’ll see its entrance.





# ENTER THE DRAGON

Want to make waves in China? You'll need a patient mind, open eyes and a strong drinking arm, says **Mark Graham**

Everyone who does business regularly in China has a baijiu story to relate, usually one that involves a scenario of smoky cloistered banquet rooms and early-hours karaoke sessions.

Despite the numerous changes in the country, and the increasing popularity of red wine, the instinct after a deal is sealed, or a friendship cemented, is to call for a celebratory bottle of baijiu. Ducking out is not re-

ally an option, unless you can cite a medical condition, or are teetotal.

Although it is essentially a male bonding ritual, women are also expected to slug back the clear spirit. Frenchwoman Helene

Ponty, one of a new breed of foreign entrepreneurs who has spotted opportunities in China and capitalised on them in a major way, does not really have a choice, given that she is peddling alcohol – albeit classy Bordeaux rather than rotgut rice-based baijiu.

During her four years in China, she has expanded her family's business, Ponty Winery, so rapidly that sales now account for more than half of the Bordeaux vine-

yard's annual output. The savvy US business school graduate rebranded the wines Le Ponty to give more of an instant French connotation for Chinese consumers, and learnt to speak the language.

"You have to toast many times to celebrate a business deal," Ponty says. "But it is also important that people who are lower in the hierarchy stand up and toast to people who are higher on the hierarchy, or there as a guest. One time, I had lunch with a potential client, with around ten people at the table – me and my assistant and him and his seven employees – and we were drinking ... baijiu. His employees, to be respectful to me, had to come one by one and toast with me. It meant I had to drink eight glasses of baijiu when they each only had one. As it was at noon, it did not make for a good afternoon! It was, of course, impossible to refuse, as it would have been seen as very impolite."

She adds: "Etiquette in general is important, although some aspects are becoming less so with the younger generation. As a foreigner, some mistakes will be accepted."

## KNOW THE ROPES

The number one rule for newcomers, Ponty says, is to understand fully the administrative, legal and taxation landscape when setting up a company, or expanding an existing one. "China is a great market, but it takes a lot of time and financial investment to understand how things work here," she says. "If you do not have that time or money, you might want to consider another market. Estimate the time and money you will need to get started, and multiply it by two."

That advice certainly rings true with another, rather larger, wine importer. Miguel Torres, head of the Bodegas Torres Spanish wine company, made an initial foray into China in the 1990s. Myriad problems with partners and distribution channels meant the company lost an estimated US\$1 million. Still, Torres persevered and the now-retired patriarch, who hired a tutor in Spain to teach him basic Chinese, was proved right – revenues now amount to more than US\$38.5 million annually with offices in most major cities and a staff count of about 300.

"My advice is simple," he says. "Your own people are your most valuable asset, but choose the right partners. I remember saying we will treat our partners as friends, and it turned out to be successful – people became much more receptive."

## LAW OF THE LAND

When Jim Spear first came to China as an expat, there was not much in the way of

FOT: FOTOLIA (2)





fine wine. The former corporate warrior has travelled the length and breadth of the country, speaks fluent Chinese and knows all the potential pitfalls. Or thought he did...

During a post-retirement project to renovate the family holiday home out by the Great Wall, the American encountered a whole new range of challenges. In fact he learnt so much about construction, land leases and dealing with rural officials that it metamorphosed into a whole new later-life career. The self-taught interior designer now specialises in turning once-derelect village homes into dream residences for city dwellers.

The affable Spear cheerfully admits he was probably ripped off in the early days, but has now acquired the realpolitik skills necessary to deal with local officials, peasant farmers and tradesmen. As well as home conversions, Spear also runs the Brickyard hotel at Mutianyu (brickyardatmutianyu.com), a boutique property with stellar views of the Great Wall from all of its rooms.

An example he cites is a vivid – and amusing – example of the idiosyncrasies of China. When Spear converted his first house, a neighbour complained that pear tree roots

were being compressed and damaged by the newcomer's jeep; the problem was solved with a small annual payment. A neighbour at another conversion property had a problem with building slabs being placed close to his chestnut tree.

"We had to have that case adjudicated in the village hall – it was urban meets rural, foreigner meets Chinese," Spear recalls. "We eventually got a settlement that was fair. I originally thought it was just ripping people off, but these people are stewards of the trees. When you live out here, you can see the other side of the story. People here are suspicious of city folk, as they come out and steal fruit from the orchard – it's a lack of respect. I have seen people come out and bang on doors and demand that the peasants cook them lunch."

The fruit-tree episodes took place in a small village, but similar scenarios are repeated daily, on a larger scale, in the big cities. Every visitor will, at some stage, encounter the phrase, "This is the Chinese way" – a saying that invariably involves trying to bodyswerve, or ignore, international protocols. The "Chinese way" tends to be a route that loads the dice firmly against investors

from outside; it most certainly does not involve Western-style rule of law, as China, for all its superficial modernity, is indisputably a one-party state.

#### GET CREATIVE

As China opens up, it finds itself increasingly having to adopt and accept outside influences and methods. Long-term resident Dominic Johnson-Hill, founder of T-shirt company Plastered 8, is an individual who manages to move fluidly between expat and Chinese societies, celebrating cultural similarities, rather than differences.

He has even managed to find a commercial market for irony – not a commodity much evident in China at large – with his business, which depicts Beijing icons, everyday consumables and memorabilia on colourful T-shirts. Johnson-Hill is a regular on Chinese TV talk shows and The Apprentice-style reality programmes and has a store in the popular Nanluoguxiang hutong (alleyway), which has seen a visit from Led Zepelin's Jimmy Page.

"I'm fortunate enough to be in the creative market, which is really untapped," says Johnson-Hill, a father of four who origi-

nally came to China as a backpacker. "We generate artwork for graphic T-shirts, and the more creative and bonkers we get, the more we sell. In this very pragmatic society, they love creativity, so that's what we try our best to deliver – it took a while to work it out."

Australian entrepreneur Campbell Thompson runs the Wine Republic, which focuses on importing wine from family-owned vineyards. He boasts nearly two decades of experience in China, and is equally bullish about the opportunities presented by the creative industries, believing savvy players can exploit areas such as new media and entertainment as long as they are aware of the potential pitfalls.

"Anything involving culture is a double-edged sword," Thompson says. "There are tremendous opportunities, but it can be a very sensitive area. I would advise people to take time, do some good research. The days are gone when China was seen as the El Dorado, where projects were rushed so you could get to market quickly."

Former journalist Sarah Keenlyside developed her business along those lines, growing slowly and aiming for a niche market, in her case high-end travellers looking for personally escorted tours. The Bespoke Travel Company puts together itineraries that focus on art, history or food, featuring local personalities, little-known venues and English-speaking guides – along with some humour and quirkiness.

But, as Keenlyside can testify, it is rarely a breeze doing business in China. The regular moving of goalposts, and general opacity, are two of the prime inhibitors. "Almost no one escapes the woolly changes to legislation," she says. "Sudden closures, shutdowns, changes in public opinion, or the knock-on effect of any number of factors. No matter the issue, it can happen with lightning speed, rendering much that you've been working on or planning towards irrelevant in a heartbeat."

"Aside from that, cultural differences can be vast," she adds. "Time and time again I see newcomers being naive about how different China is – repeatedly willing their own norms and ways of doing things on to the local population because 'surely that's just the common sense/fair/most obvious way of operating, right?' Everything you think you know is wrong – I can't put it more simply than that. If you have the patience and fortitude to deal with the fact that China is not the West, you may just crack it and learn to be more open-minded in the process. I'm still working on that – it takes a conscious daily effort."



In China the instinct after a deal is sealed, or a friendship cemented, is to call for a celebratory bottle of baijiu.



China is a great market, but it takes a lot of time and financial investment to understand how things work here. If you do not have that time or money, you might want to consider another market.





# CAPITAL CUISINE

Business Traveller tries out the latest arrivals on the London dining scene

**SEXY FISH**

Probably the most talked-about restaurant opening in the past 12 months, Sexy Fish is the new Mayfair opening from Caprice Holdings (behind the likes of the Ivy and J Sheekey). Unveiled in October, the spectacular project is said to have cost £15 million,

and you can see why. Designed by Martin Brudnizki, the interiors feature swirling green marble floors, a Matisse-style seaweed ceiling mural by Michael Roberts, and sculptures of ocean-dwelling creatures by both Frank Gehry and Damien Hirst. Downstairs is a 48-seat lair walled in by luminous tropical fishtanks.

In the evening, the main 190-cover dining room is bathed in golden light just low enough that everyone looks good but you can't Instagram your food (deliberate, no doubt). Frequented by celebrities, bankers and other wealthy business professionals, it can be hard to get a table so book ahead. Apart from the odd anomaly, such as Beluga

FOT: ARCHIVUM



caviar blinis (£320 for 50g) and gorgonzola tortilla skewers, the menu is heavily Japanese and the idea is to share. Artistic dishes are whipped up with speed in the open kitchen and delivered to your table in no particular order. Journey from delicate rectangles of deep-pink seared yellowfin tuna (£16.50) and grilled avocado with crispy tofu (£11.50) to moreish miso-glazed Chilean sea bass (£30) and house-smoked Ora King salmon with yuzu (£25) from the robata grill. If there are two or more of you, go for the vanilla cheesecake topped with macerated cherries (£19); failing that, the four chocolate and praline fondant (£9.50) is pure hedonism.

- **Open** 12pm-11.30pm (11pm Sun)
- Sharing plates average £10-£25, wines from £7 by the glass, from £25 by the bottle

Berkeley Square House  
tel +44 (0)20 3764 2000  
sexyfish.com

**M VICTORIA STREET**

The second venue for Martin Williams' luxury dining and drinking brand (the other is in the City), M opened in December. Executive chef Michael Reid is previously of Le Gavroche, Restaurant Gordon Ramsay and the Skinny Duck. The entrance is through the M wine store – there are more than 300 labels on the list,

sourced from the six countries that the restaurant's steaks are from – Argentina, Australia, France, Italy, South Africa and the US. More than 100 wines are available by the glass. Downstairs is the bar, a private members' room and the restaurant, which is divided into M Raw, offering a lighter Asian style of cooking, and M Grill, a two-tiered oval-shaped room in muted greens and greys.

M Grill is all about the meat. Glass-fronted fridges showcase aged joints of beef, homemade salami and biltong. Smoked Wagyu tartare (£15) is a speciality – arriving under a smoke-filled cloche, it is subtly smoky, rich and delicious. The steak range is impressive, from Australian Blackmore Wagyu to the flavoursome 48-day matured US Creekstone Farm T-bone for two (£90). The Argentinian Colome Estate Malbec 2013 (£66) is a fruity accompaniment, and the staff are well-briefed and passionate. A great addition to Victoria's food scene.

- **Open** 7am-12am (from 10am Sat-Sun)
- Starters £7-£11.50, mains £16-£95. Wine from £6 by the glass, from £30 by the bottle

Zig Zag Building, 70 Victoria Street  
tel +44 (0)20 3327 7776  
mrestaurants.co.uk



**SARTORIA**

D&D London reopened its Mayfair Italian restaurant in December with a new chef patron at the helm – Francesco Mazzei, formerly of L'Anima in the City – and fully refurbished interiors. Designer David d'Almada was inspired by classic Italian style and the Savile Row location, using luxurious leathers, silks and velvets in the soft furnishings. It's chic and immediately inviting – the place had a delightfully warm buzz on the cold winter evening we stepped in. A bar has been installed at the front, with high stools to sit up and enjoy an Italian cocktail – try the smoky, potent Zucca Bar (Professor Cornelius Old Tom gin, Carpano Punt e Mes, Rabarbaro Zucca; £9.50) – and the luscious-looking salads on display on the cicchetti counter. The elegant dining room features warm lighting, thick carpeting and well-spaced tables, and there are two private rooms and a terrace.

Mazzei's menu includes dishes from his native Calabria – including some signatures from his L'Anima tenure – as well as other regions in Italy. The lobster tagliolini (£26.50) is exquisite – fragrant, plump chunks of meat served in the shell with sweet broth and delicate ribbons of pasta – as is the home-cured baccala (salt cod) marinated in liquorice (pictured above; £26.50), and the terrine-like southern Italian lasagne



(£15.50), featuring flavour-packed layers of sausage, aubergine and quail's egg. Service is warm, knowledgeable and intuitive. A splendid relaunch for Sartoria.

- **Open** 7am-12am Mon-Fri, 9am-12am Sat
  - Starters £9.50-£22.50, mains £9.50-£29; two-course set lunch £26.50, three courses £32.50. Wines from £5 by the glass, from £18 by the bottle
- 20 Savile Row  
tel +44 (0)20 7534 7000  
sartoria-restaurant.co.uk

THE NINTH

TV chef Jun Tanaka opened his first solo venture on Fitzrovia's Charlotte Street last November (it's the ninth restaurant he has worked in, hence the name). Set across two floors, with a small terrace, it's an intimate, welcoming Manhattan-styled space with exposed brick, unusual iron wine racks and a mixture of long leather banquettes and smaller tables.

Tanaka has created a stylish and uncomplicated menu that is designed for sharing – still, to say the food is simple is misleading. This is modern Mediterranean food at its best: elegant, unfussy and thoughtfully put together, using the best seasonal ingredients. The oxtail croquettes (£5.50) are a tempting opening snack – crisp, meaty and savoury – while starters include succulent Ossobuco tortellini with bone marrow (£9), and rabbit confit lasagne (£9): layers of rich pasta and

meat topped with a creamy mustard sauce. From the mains, the crisp-skinned whole roast sea bream with lemon, miso, and smoked aubergine (£19.50) paired with pommes cocotte with roasted garlic (£4.50) was stunning, with soft and buttery flakes inside the caramelised exterior. Vegetable dishes share centre-stage on this menu – the rich and earthy beetroot tarte tatin (£5) is perfectly balanced by crumbly feta and pine nuts. For dessert, there is a sweet version, the classic apple tarte tatin (£14), which is great to share and, paired with rosemary ice cream, is the perfect end to a meal. Good cocktails, too.

- **Open** Mon-Sat 12pm-2.30pm, 5.30pm-10.30pm
  - Starters £5.50-£14, mains £17.50-£23; wine from £6.50 by the glass, from £20 by the bottle
- 22 Charlotte Street  
theninthlondon.com

THE IVY KENSINGTON BRASSERIE

This is Caprice Holdings' fourth Ivy offshoot, the others being the Ivy Market Grill in Covent Garden, the Ivy Chelsea Garden and the Ivy Café in Marylebone. Open since December, it already feels like a favourite local haunt – busy but relaxed with a nice buzz. Tables are held back for walk-ins. The interior very much reflects the Ivy's character, with mirrored panels, a diamond-patterned marble floor, dark green leather

banquettes and a gleaming antique pewter bar. Last month it added a 40-cover outdoor terrace with a retractable roof.

The menu is modern British comfort food and you will find a few Ivy classics, such as shepherd's pie (£13.50). Starters include a smooth chicken liver parfait (£6.75), easily a meal in itself, and moreish truffle arancini (£5.50).

My main, roasted cod fillet with creamed leeks, bacon and haricot beans with champagne and clam sauce (pictured below right; £16.95), was nice and chunky, if a little overcooked, although the sauce was lovely, and a side of truffle and parmesan chips (£4.50) was definitely worth the extra calories. The slow-roasted shoulder of lamb on Parmesan polenta, roasted peppers and rosemary sauce (£16.25) was meltingly tender, the sauce rich and flavoursome. The lemon meringue Alaska (£7.50) was a triumph.

The wine list is well chosen, with something to suit everyone's pocket, and the sommelier was well informed and helpful, as were the rest of the team, who went out of their way to ensure you had a good experience. I would definitely return.

- **Open** 7.30am-11pm Mon-Thurs (12am Fri), 8am-11.30pm Sat, 9am-10.30pm Sun
  - Starters £6.50-£12.50; mains £13.50-£34; wine from £5.50 by the glass, from £19.50 by the bottle
- 96 Kensington High Street  
tel +44 (0)20 3301 0500  
theivykensingtonbrasserie.com



The Ninth is the first solo venture of TV chef Jun Tanaka. Set across two floors, with a small terrace, it's an intimate, welcoming Manhattan-styled space.

SHOTGUN

Mississippi-born chef Brad McDonald, who runs the Lockhart in Marylebone and has previously worked at Copenhagen's Noma, headed to Soho for his second London venue, open since October.

Barbecue joints are popping up all over London, but Shotgun is something a bit different. More a bar-restaurant than a restaurant-bar, as the staff tell me, it nevertheless takes a more elegant approach to the Southern US genre. The room itself is lovely – narrow and intimate, all dark-wood panelling and potted palms, while the spirits behind the long marble-topped bar point to the serious cocktails made behind it, using the likes of rye whiskey, cognac and absinthe. Even on a Monday, every stool along it was taken, along with all the cosy booths for two or four.

The food menu is quite compact, consisting mainly of snacks and meats cooked low and slow over whole logs. A signature small plate is pig's ear with sour pancakes (£8); we, being conscious of the meat feast to come, opt to go veggie. The salad of smoked goat's curd, heirloom carrot, pearl barley and buttermilk sauce (£9) is a standout – a sweet and subtle combination of textures.

But it's really all about the main event here – beef brisket so tender you could cut it with a spoon, juicily flavoursome Middle White suckling pig, and chilli-tinged baby

back ribs, all perfectly abetted by sides of buttery baked potato purée and tangy coleslaw. Service was speedy and welcoming, and the retro soul soundtrack made for a suitably mellow backdrop.

- **Open** 12pm-12am (Sun 11am-5pm)
  - Snacks/small plates £1.50-£9; meats £9-£22 depending on size ordered. Wine from £4.50 by the glass, from £28 by the bottle.
- 26 Kingly Street  
tel +44 (0)20 3137 7252  
shotgunbbq.com

JUST OPENED

- **PITT CUE** has moved from its Soho premises to a larger venue on Devonshire Square in the City. The American barbecue specialist, which started life as a food van, has expanded its menu (although no more pulled pork) and now takes reservations. [pittcue.co.uk](http://pittcue.co.uk)
- **SOSHARU** is the seventh London venture from Jason Atherton's the Social Company. Launched last month, it's a Japanese izakaya-style restaurant serving casual yet high-end small dishes. It's located in the Turnmill building in Clerkenwell. [sosharulondon.com](http://sosharulondon.com)
- **PHARMACY 2**, the second incarnation of Damien Hirst's restaurant, which closed in Notting Hill in 2003, opened in the artist's new Newport Street Gallery in Vauxhall in February. Launched in partnership with

Mark Hix, it serves classic British and European dishes. [pharmacyrestaurant.com](http://pharmacyrestaurant.com)

- **100 WARDOUR STREET** opened in the Soho space formerly occupied by Floridita and the Marquee Club in January. Part of D&D London, the restaurant, bar and music venue serves food until 2am and holds 425 diners or 870 for events. [100wardourst.com](http://100wardourst.com)
- **DICKIE FITZ** launched in the former home of Fitzrovia's Newman Street Tavern in February. The all-day brasserie offers Pacific-inspired cuisine and New World wines in an art deco-inspired setting. [dickiefitz.co.uk](http://dickiefitz.co.uk)

- **LOW, SLOW AND JUKE** opened in Victoria in February. The American barbecue restaurant and bar serves up meats hand-rubbed and smoked for up to 16 hours, along with bourbons, cocktails and craft beers. [lowslowandjuke.com](http://lowslowandjuke.com)
- **THE LIGHTERMAN** opened on Granary Square in King's Cross last month. The bar and dining room is housed in a three-floor new-build overlooking the Regent's Canal, with outdoor seating. It serves a modern British all-day menu. [thelighterman.co.uk](http://thelighterman.co.uk)
- **TOM'S KITCHEN** was set to launch its fifth London venue at the end of March, at HMS Belfast. It comprises a 58-cover rooftop bar and a 46-seat deli serving sandwiches, salads and platters. [tomskitchen.co.uk](http://tomskitchen.co.uk)



# NEXT TOP MODELS

From fantasy buys to family carriers – Nat Barnes reveals the best new cars unveiled at March's Geneva Motor Show. Which one looks more promising: Audi or Porsche? Let's have a closer look.



## ASTON MARTIN DB11

- **On sale:** October
- **Price:** £154,900

Get with the times, 007, your company car has already been superseded. The Spectre-starring Aston Martin DB10 might have been pure celluloid fantasy, but this new DB11 is very real. And very popular, if the crowds swarming over the Aston Martin stand at Geneva were anything to go by. The successor to the ageing DB9, the best-selling Aston of all time, the DB11 is the fastest DB model ever, with a 5.2-litre V12 engine giving it a zero to 60mph time of just 3.9 seconds and a 200mph top speed.

Inside, the DB11 offers the latest thin-film transistor (TFT) digital displays for the driver's screen and main dashboard, but cosseted in Aston's usual gorgeous craftsmanship. A waiting list already a year long suggests plenty of those in the Swiss crowd had deposit cheques burning holes in their pockets, too.

## BUGATTI CHIRON

- **On sale:** autumn
- **Price:** £1.9 million

Hands up just how many people thought that the old tarmac-rippling Bugatti Veyron was too slow, or not powerful enough? That's right, none. However, Bugatti boss Wolfgang Durheimer doesn't agree, taking the wraps off this new Chiron at the Geneva Motor Show.

The Chiron is a bottomless pit of superlatives. Under the bonnet is an eight-litre,

16-cylinder engine with an eye-watering 1500bhp (the outgoing Veyron's 987bhp pales in comparison). This will get it from zero to 60mph in 2.5 seconds. Bugatti has "restricted" the top speed to just 261mph. Despite a £1.9 million price tag, more than a third of the planned 500 vehicles have already been pre-ordered. Yes, we're shaking our heads in disbelief at that last sentence, too...

## VOLVO V90

- **On sale:** September
- **Price:** from £34,000

In your head, you're racing down a beautiful twisty road in the Chiron or DB11 on a clear summer's day with Jennifer Aniston or David Gandy (delete as applicable) in the passenger seat. In reality, it's a drizzly Sunday

morning and you're trying to find a space in the B&Q car park, listening to The Wheels on the Bus for the 476th time from the vocal chords of your offspring in the back seat of this Volvo V90.

Previously, the introduction of a new Volvo estate like this V90 would have been unremarkable, but with the arrival of the XC90 off-roader and the forthcoming new S90 saloon, Volvo is a brand on the way up – as the trebling of its profits in 2015 attests.

Volvo insists there's still a strong market for traditional estates, despite the proliferation of crossovers and 4x4s at this level and, to be fair, the V90 is gorgeous. With the same stunning interior as the XC90 dominated by the large portrait touchscreen and up to 1,526 litres of boot space, it strikes the balance between practicality and desirability.





**PORSCHE 718 BOXSTER**

- **On sale:** April
- **Price:** from £41,739

It might look familiar but, aside from its windscreen, the Porsche 718 Boxster is all-new. While on the outside all the changes are fairly minor, under the skin it's a different matter – and one that will no doubt have plenty of enthusiasts rustling their anoraks in disgust.

For the first time in more than 20 years (since the 968 of the 1990s), Porsche has introduced a car with a turbocharged four-cylinder engine in standard and “S” forms. For some, that will be news akin to learning that the Daleks have learnt how to climb stairs; others will be focused on the numbers, and these are very impressive indeed. Faster, cleaner and more economical than the outgoing six-cylinder model, the proof will be in the driving. Porsche's Cayman coupe will get the same engines this summer.

**BMW M760LI**

- **On sale:** winter 2016
- **Price:** est. £115,000

The new BMW 7-Series, as featured in our March issue, is hardly short of the latest high-tech gadgets, including gesture control and remote parking via the key fob.

Just in case all that isn't enough, however, BMW has unveiled this new flagship 760Li model with a 6.6-litre, turbocharged V12 engine with 600bhp, four-wheel drive and a host of M Performance extras from BMW's sports department.

The Bavarian firm wants this to be the go-to luxury saloon for the go-faster CEO, but just how many board members need a car with four doors that can leave many supercars standing? The only thing matching the 760Li's pace is the speed of your bank balance in the opposite direction, thanks to its likely six-figure price tag.

**MASERATI LEVANTE**

- **On sale:** October
- **Price:** est. £53,000

There's no doubt that this new Maserati Levante has its sights firmly set on the Porsche Cayenne. The Cayenne has reformed the German firm's sales, fortunes and profits almost alone, and Maserati needs a similar injection of all three if it is to fulfil plans to double its sales by 2017. The aggressively-styled Levante looks good

inside and out, even if the sloping roof line and narrow windows make the rear seats a little claustrophobic. Demand may be limited given that UK buyers will only have the choice of a single three-litre turbo-diesel, with neither of the two petrol V6s on offer to those in mainland Europe. But in time it might be joined by a petrol-electric hybrid, which has been hinted at for the future.

**AUDI Q2**

- **On sale:** November
- **Price:** est. £22,000

With its seemingly never-ending plethora of models to fill each and every niche, it's no mistake that Audi couldn't resist leaving the small crossover market untouched, hence the arrival of this new Q2.

As the name suggests, the Q2 sits just below the Q3, and its broad and chunky looks are actually better in the metal than pictures suggest, with the C-pillar between the rear door and tailgate finished in silver or grey. It also introduces some sharper-edged styling to the “cookie-cutter” look of some of Audi's current range.

Unlike many rivals, it will be offered in two- or four-wheel drive and there will be a host of engine choices, including a new one-litre, three-cylinder turbo. Expect an A2 hatchback to join the range in the future, in the non-existent gap between the current A1 and A3.

**RENAULT SCENIC**

- **On sale:** November
- **Price:** est. £18,500

After 4.9 million worldwide sales, 2016 sees the Renault Scenic celebrating its 20th anniversary. That's some history for this fourth-generation model to live up to, but the new Scenic also arrives at a time when most buyers have deserted MPVs in favour of crossovers and larger 4x4s.

Can this incarnation win those family drivers back? On first sight, you'd have to say yes. With more purposeful, less practical styling, the Renault boasts vastly improved build quality and some clever family-friendly touches inside, including a moveable cubby box, sliding and folding rear seats, and underfloor storage. You heard it here first – the new Scenic is going to put Renault firmly back on family shopping list







# DYNAMIC MECHANICS

*Caramel Quin* reviews the latest laptops, including convertibles that transform into tablets with the help of a hinge.

Competition for the humble laptop comes in many forms – smartphones, “phablets” (phone-tablet hybrids), iPads and even smart-watches. But manufacturers continue to

up their game. The most interesting laptop trend for 2016 is mechanical – some boast a 360-degree hinge so that the screen can be completely folded back on itself. This lets you prop the device up for presentations and

movies but, more impressively, allows it to become a tablet.

When buying, whatever your size preference, look for a screen with as many pixels as possible – some have 4K ultra high-defi-

nition displays or better. Apple’s Macbook Pro now has 5K (five million pixels) for razor-sharp images. This doesn’t just mean pristine movie performance, but pin-sharp text. Apple is also leading the way with its use of IPS LCD technology for brighter colours.

As always, consider battery life. How long are you on the road for and will you have access to power? Eight hours of longevity is now pretty common, but one laptop featured here (from Dell) offers up to 17 hours.

## Cool quality

### ASUS ZENBOOK UX305CA

**Price:** £650 [asus.com](#)  
The Zenbook has a svelte, 1.2cm aluminium body but packs a punch, thanks to its 3K, 13.3-inch touchscreen display and Intel’s sixth-generation Core M processor, which promises faster performance but reduced power consumption. It has 128GB-512GB of solid state storage so is completely silent. Battery life is up to ten hours, even with wifi connected, and “Ice Cool” technology keeps the palm rest cool. This Windows 10 machine weighs 1.2kg and is available in a white, metallic or “classic obsidian” finish.  
**Pros** Silent, slim  
**Cons** No 360-degree hinge



## Small, yet powerful

### HP ELITEBOOK FOLIO

**Price:** From £1,000 [hp.com](#)  
The thinnest (1.2cm), lightest (under 1kg) notebook HP has ever created. Running Windows 10, it has a sleek aluminium body and an unusual 180-degree “piano hinge” so that it can be opened flat for collaborative working using the 12.5-inch display. A 4K touchscreen doesn’t come as standard but is available as an upgrade. As with Asus’s Zenbook, it also has ten hours of battery life alongside its noiseless, fan-free solid state drive. But its collaborations give it an edge – it’s certified by Skype for Business (optional extra) and the sound system is by Bang and Olufsen.  
**Pros** Svelte, innovative design  
**Cons** No 4K screen as standard



## Useful on the go

### ACER ASPIRE R11

**Price:** From £299 [acer.com](#)  
A good price for a capable Windows 8.1 laptop. The Aspire R11 is a great option for taking on the road because its clever 360-degree hinge allows you to use it in a variety of positions – as a regular laptop, folded back on itself for use as a tablet, or folded back at an angle for watching movies or giving presentations. The 11.6-inch display has a damage-resistant coating as well as touchscreen capabilities so you can use it just like any Windows tablet. Battery life is a respectable eight hours. The unit weighs 1.6kg and storage is 500GB-1TB.  
**Pros** Converts to a tablet, good value  
**Cons** Screen resolution could be higher



## Hybrid with touchscreen

### TOSHIBA SATELLITE RADIUS 12

**Price:** £700 [toshiba.co.uk](#)  
The world’s first 12.5-inch ultra-HD 4K convertible-hybrid, the Satellite Radius 12 is available with a full- or ultra-HD 4K touchscreen. The latter offers four times the clarity of most laptops for a crystal-clear picture, and sound is handled capably by built-in Harman Kardon speakers with DTS Studio Sound. Storage in its solid state drive isn’t huge (256GB) but is fast. It has Windows Hello for biometric login authentication, including face detection using the built-in HD webcam. Battery life is six to eight hours. It runs Windows 10 and weighs 1.3kg.  
**Pros** Very high-resolution screen  
**Cons** Battery life isn’t great





Quality at a price

APPLE MACBOOK PRO 15-INCH

**Price:** From £1,599 [apple.com](#)  
The latest 15.4-inch Macbook Pro model looks the business, thanks to Apple's legendary "Retina" IPS display, which reduces glare but retains excellent colour quality. This one has 5K resolution, meaning images are crisp, made up of more than five million pixels. It's pricey but powerful and good for creative work. Despite its slim aluminium body, the battery life is a respectable nine hours and its 256GB-512GB solid state storage is quick and quiet. Measuring 1.8cm x 35.9cm x 24.7cm, it weighs a little over 2kg. A 13.3-inch version starts at £999.  
**Pros** 5K display  
**Cons** Expensive, no touchscreen



For a gamer

ALIENWARE 15

**Price:** £1,169 [alienware.co.uk](#)  
This Windows 10 device packs all the power of a serious gaming PC into a 15.6-inch laptop, with up to 1TB of storage. It's not especially slim or light, but it's tiny when you consider the processing power, graphics and sound chips. It also features "dynamic overclocking" to squeeze more out of the processor when it's most needed. You can choose between a 1920 x 1080 pixel display, or upgrade to ultra-HD 4K (3840 x 2160 pixels), but neither is touchscreen. Battery life is just over seven hours and it's a hefty 3.2kg.  
**Pros** Very powerful  
**Cons** Heavy, no touchscreen



Indestructible

LENOVO THINKPAD YOGA 260

**Price:** From £889 [lenovo.com](#)  
This robust business laptop has a 12.5-inch touchscreen display and is designed to withstand the knocks and bumps of airport security. Its 360-degree hinge lets you use it in four positions, including tablet mode. It features a pleasant keyboard with separate "chiclet" keys that stand proud of the case when in use, but cleverly retract into their frame when converted, reducing accidental keystrokes. Battery life is up to ten hours, and there's a fingerprint reader for added security. The Thinkpad runs Windows 10, weighs 1.3kg and, customised, can store up to 512GB.  
**Pros** Convertible, retractable keyboard  
**Cons** Not cheap



When buying, whatever your size preference, look for a screen with as many pixels as possible – some have 4K ultra high-definition displays or better. As always, consider battery life. Eight hours of longevity is now pretty common, but some laptops offer even up to 17 hours.

The one to beat

DELL XPS 15

**Price:** From £1,599 [dell.com](#)  
The XPS 15 claims to be the highest-resolution 15.6-inch laptop on the market, with even more pixels than Apple's Macbook Pro. It features a virtually borderless ultra-HD "Infinity Edge" touchscreen that offers five times the resolution of a standard HD display. Storage options range from a 512GB solid state drive right up to 1TB, but all models contain the latest generation Intel i7 quad-core processor. Most importantly for travellers, battery life is an unbeatable 17 hours. It ships with Windows 10 and weighs 1.8kg.  
**Pros** 17-hour battery life  
**Cons** Not for the budget-conscious



Light and tireless

LENOVO THINKPAD X1 CARBON

**Price:** From £1,042 [lenovo.com](#)  
A tough, lightweight carbon-fibre case helps to make this the lightest, toughest 14-inch ultrabook available at 1.3kg. Impressive when you consider its 11-hour battery life. There are several display options, but top of the range is a 14-inch multi-touchscreen for better than full-HD (2560 x 1440 pixel) resolution. A 128GB-256GB solid state drive comes as standard, but this can be upgraded to 512GB. It's slim (at 1.8cm), Intel-powered and, with Windows 10, is a solid choice for working on the move – a powerful rival to the Dell XPS 15 and Macbook Pro.  
**Pros** Slim, light, good battery life  
**Cons** Less storage than the Dell



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# 4 HOURS IN... MADRID

Madrid, immortalized in films by Luis Buñuel and Pedro Almodóvar, is a city of many faces and unlike any other place in Europe.



But the capital of Spain is now much more than only great sights and historic places; it also boasts new districts with chic bars where red wine is passe and has been replaced with a new version of gin and tonic.

## THE ROYAL PALACE

You can start your short stroll around Madrid at Palacio Real - the official residence of the King of Spain. Interestingly, the royal family moved out of it in 1931, opting for a much smaller and more inconspicuous Palacio de la Zarzuela. The king comes to Palacio Real only for the most important state occasions and ceremonies. The building is where once stood the Mayrit fortress built in the 9th century during the reign of

the Moors. After it was burned in 1734, King Felipe V ordered the construction of a new palace. The work took 17 years, from 1738 to 1755. The first king to officially reside in the palace was Carlos III who moved here in 1764.

Palacio Real is considered to be the largest in Western Europe - suffice to say that it has more than 2,800 rooms with a total area of 135,000 sqm. Visitors, however, have access only to the most important chambers. The interiors are decorated with frescoes by Tiepolo, as well as paintings by Velázquez, Goya, Rubens, El Greco, Juan de Flandes and Caravaggio. The property is surrounded by stunning gardens Jardines del Campo del Moro, Jardines de la Plaza de Oriente and Jardines de Sabatini.

## ARTISTIC MALASAÑA

It's probably the most quintessential of all Madrid's barrios and best described by the capital's slogan: "Madrid - soy yo". It's quite easy to find, too, as it's located just north of Gran Vía - the city's main thoroughfare. Since the fall of the Franco regime that took place more than 40 years ago, Malasaña has been regarded as the district of alternative art and counterculture. In the 1970s it became home to the movida movement, which was the Spanish response to American Beatnik culture. With numerous second-hand and vintage shops, the atmosphere of Malasaña resembles this of Paris or London. Cafes, clubs and shops selling literally everything, also reflect the one-of-a-kind character of this district. One of the most

favourite meeting spots for Spanish intellectuals, artists and hipsters is Cafe Comercial near the Bilbao station. Malasaña is also becoming popular with tourists who spend afternoons in the district's atmospheric restaurants and in the evening go for a night-crawl around the local bars. Apparently, you can spend a whole night, drifting from one bar to another to find out that in each of those places the taste of the popular gin and tonic drink is totally different. During the day, take a walk up the trail of Malasaña's numerous bookshops, craning your neck to see the beautiful classical buildings on both sides of the narrow streets. Life in Malasaña centres around Plaza del Dos de Mayo (the name of the square commemorates the uprising against Napoleonic troops). Even though the place is dominated by alternative, funk and house music, it's not hard to find here also bars and clubs playing rock or Latin standards. Malasaña is also home to stores of many young and budding designers, as well as vintage clothing stores, antique and health food shops. This unique atmosphere of the district is also the reason why Malasaña is often visited by numerous celebrities and film stars. The district has also appeared in several films directed by Pedro Almodóvar.

## ELEGANT SALAMANCA

The district of Salamanca extends between Calle de Maria de Molina in the north, Avenida de la Paz in the east, Calle de Alcalá in the south and Paseo de la Castellana in the west. It came to existence in mid-19th century, following the destruction of the 17th century defensive walls, and was completely developed in the 1920s. The green and sunny Salamanca quickly became a favourite address for Madrid's bourgeoisie and has retained this status to this day. The district's magnificent townhouses say much about the lifestyle of their residents. Salamanca continues to be one of Madrid's wealthiest districts and its Calle de Serrano is the third most expensive street in Spain. In addition to numerous luxury shops located here, it's also home to the US, Swiss and Italian embassies, as well as the IE Business School - one of the most prestigious business schools in the world. Salamanca is also a great place for food - it's huge food market with fresh products will certainly make an impression on all tourists visiting the capital of Spain.

## USEFUL ADDRESSES

• **Ana la Santa restaurant** – a good place for delicious dinner in cosy atmosphere; Plaza de Santa Ana 14.



- **Atico at The Principal hotel**; Calle Marques de Valdeiglesias 1; [restauranteatco.es](http://restauranteatco.es)
- **Celso y Manolo** - one of the most interesting restaurants in Malasaña; [celsoymanolo.es](http://celsoymanolo.es)
- **Platea Madrid** - a modern culinary concept located in a former theatre building. Other notable eateries include the two-Michelin starred Ramon Freixa, and Mama Framboise famous for its excellent sweets.

**Marzena Mróz**





# 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](mailto:redakcja@businesstraveller.pl)

## Car on a business trip

*My boss is going to Barcelona and Marseille for a meeting with contractors. I want to rent him a car close to the hotel in Barcelona. If he drops the car off in Marseille, will it cost much more? I should add that my boss would like to rent a sport car. Why doesn't the company provide the full cost of rental? I have trouble deciding which insurance policy to choose.*

**Kasia**

Dear Kasia,  
Most chain rental companies allow for the so-called “one way rental”, that is, to rent a car in one city/country, and then drop it off in another one. Usually, this, as well as picking up the car in a location other than an airport, is charged extra. It's the so-called “drop off charge”. Not all car types can be dropped off abroad, there also might be some limitations for expensive sports brands.

Quite often passengers have a problem choosing the appropriate insurance package. The general rule is to make sure that the cost of rental is separate from the insurance package. That's why the customers are given two fees, one for the rental, the other one – for the policy. Part of the insurance is obligatory (sometimes included in the rental price). There is also a whole range of additional insurance policy options, which usually causes slight confusion.

With corporate contracts, the VAT is often included in the price, as well as the basic CDW (collision damage waiver), LDW (loss damage waiver) and TP (theft protection). They have many limitations, for example quite a high customer participation cost in case of vehicle loss (an accident, theft, damage, etc.). That's why I suggest that you opt for a full insurance package without any participation costs, as well as an additional PAI (personal accident insurance) and an extended package with legal assistance.

## Closed airport


*I bought a plane ticket from Brussels to Warsaw for €180. The flight was cancelled, as the airport was closed at the time. I wanted to change the ticket for a flight from a different airport, but I couldn't contact the airline. Eventually I bought a budget airline ticket for €380. Can I claim a refund of the difference in price?*

**Jarek**

Dear Jarek,  
Your case is very special, as the cancellation of your flight was a direct consequence of a terrorist attack and the closure of the airport in Brussels. In this case, the liability of the airline, resulting from the Montreal Convention and the EU Regulation 261/2004, is limited, because this is an emergency situation. Due to the circumstances you can't expect the standard care on the part of the airline, because in such situations the priorities are completely different.

Theoretically, you should try to contact the airline, in order to exchange the already-issued ticket free of charge. On the basis of contracts with other airlines (so-called “reprotection agreement”), there was a possibility to change the departure airport or flight date (without incurring the costs of going to another airport by the airline). By buying the new ticket on your own, you entered into a new agreement of carriage with another airline. Your original ticket hasn't been used.

In my opinion, you should be given a full compensation for the unused original ticket, as the airline didn't complete the agreement. However, I wouldn't count on the airline reimbursing the difference in price between the tickets, as your decision to buy a ticket from another carrier wasn't consulted with your original airline. You should place an individual complaint to the airline, describing the whole situation in detail. Instead of cash, the airline can provide you with an equivalent voucher for another flight.



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