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| 9,60 zł (8% VAT included) | N° 11/2017 (88) NOVEMBER 2017 |

CAPPADOCIA FOR ACTIVE TRAVELLERS



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Editorial	4
On Top	
• Hotel, restaurant, and airline news	6
Cover Story	
• Cappadocia for active travellers	12
Tried&Tested	
• Signiel Hotel Seoul	18
• Grand InterContinental Seoul Parnas	20
Report	
• Marriage of convenience	24
Hotels	
• Feel at home	32
• Meet Well	
Meetings in Warsaw's Business Centre	34
Destinations	
• Madrid rising	36
• The interest in the Dominican Republic is breaking records	42
• A feast for the eyes	44
• 4 hours in... Frankfurt	64
Fashion	
• Got it covered	50
Business	
• BCD Travel takes over Air Club Shares	52
• Hotels and conferences	54
Moto&Techno	
• Get creative	56
Interview	
• Frankfurt Airport meets all passenger needs	62
Ask Peter	66

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41-43 Maddox Street
London
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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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A CITY OF MANY FACES

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.

Whenever I'm visiting Madrid, I always stay in the bohemian district of Malasaña. It's quite easy to find, as it's located just north of Gran Vía - the city's main thoroughfare. Since the fall of the Franco's 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 movie movement, which was the Spanish response to American Beatnik culture. With numerous second-hand and vintage shops, the atmosphere of Malasaña resembles that 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 nightcrawl around the local bars. 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. If you wish to find out even more about the Spanish capital and its economic potential, read our cover story.

Marzena Mróz

Marzena Mróz
editor-in-chief



#NIEOGRANICZONARD

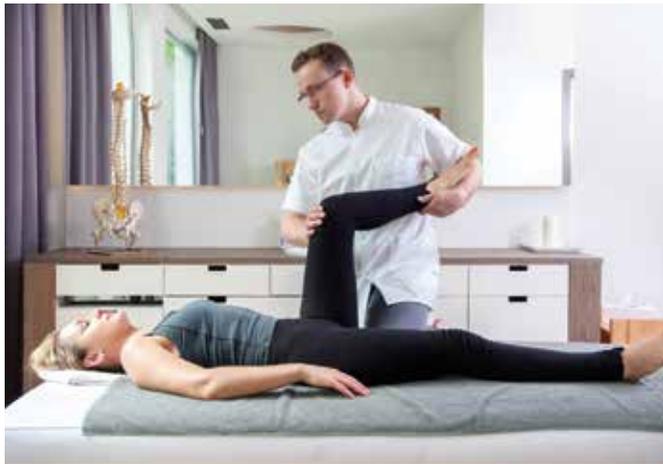


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Health

Ciechocinek

REHABILITATION CLINIC AT VILLA PARK HOTEL

The Rehabilitation Clinic at Villa Park Hotel uses manual therapy techniques based on structural integration work on the body (KMI). It's Europe's only centre that utilizes the knowledge and experience of a team of five Structural Body Workers, led by Wojciech Cackowski, a trainer and mentor of KMI therapy. Manual therapy is a complex treatment aimed at long-term reduction of musculo-skeletal disorders. A key element in the therapy is a detailed diagnosis based on taking the patient's medical history, as well as the postural and functional analysis of the whole body. The obtained information enables the therapist to identify the primary cause of the problem, often located far from the ailing part of the body, and to use precise and effective techniques to heal it. The treatment is recommended mainly for people suffering unbearable pain and with restricted spine and joint mobility, as well as those with muscle pain, headaches, postural defects and post-traumatic conditions. The clinic treats successfully chronic pain and restricted mobility in joints, the spine, muscles and the head. Pre- and post-operative rehabilitation: ligament reconstructions, meniscus damage, arthroplasty, injuries of muscles and tendons, fractures, manual work with scars after surgery. Within the limbic area: conditions after ligament damage, restricted mobility within the ankle joint, Achilles tendon disorders, trochanteric bursitis, tennis and golfer elbow syndrome, carpal tunnel syndrome. Within the spine and head: spinal disc herniation, sciatica, scoliosis, wry neck. villapark.pl

Technology

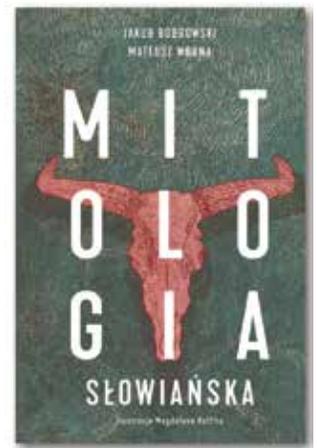
Philips

DAILY CLEANING

Have you ever wondered how to make your daily cleaning routine much easier? Simply, go for a handy, cordless vacuum cleaner that can be always at your fingertips.

Our recommendation is Philips PowerPro Aqua 3in1. This new powerful cordless vacuum cleaner and mop is a real friend of those who struggle with the daily mess at home. This innovative appliance enables simultaneous vacuuming floors or carpets and wet cleaning of dry stains from hard floors. All this is possible thanks to the detachable water tank. PowerPro Aqua also has a built-in hand-held vacuum cleaner for furniture, which will effectively vacuum crumbs from your sofa, table and other hard-to-reach areas. Luckily for dog owners, the FC6409 model is also equipped with a mini turbo brush for removing pet hair and lint from mattresses and other delicate surfaces.

The cordless vacuum cleaner is convenient to use and can be reached at any time without having to fold it out and turning on. In addition, PowerPro Aqua takes up little space and looks quite elegant, so you don't really have to hide it in your wardrobe. It's also distinguished by eye-catching, futuristic design and distinctive colour. Price: from PLN1,259 philips.pl



Book

Travel

SLAVIC MYTHOLOGY

"Slavic Mythology" is the first literary work on Slavic legends and tales. Based on current scientific publications in the field of history, religious studies and linguistics, the book presents in a colourful and imaginative fashion the profiles of ancient gods, heroes and figures from Slavic demonology. The publication is a collection of stories presenting the Slavic myths, enriched with original illustrations by Magdalena Boffito. It's distinguished by a friendly language, devoid of scientific terminology that is difficult to understand, in combination with an imaginative storyline of texts, which makes it a pure pleasure to read.



ZAPROJEKTOWANA SPECJALNIE DLA CIEBIE
Nowa Business Class



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

Zakopane

Aries Hotel & SPA

AUTUMN IN THE TATRAS

What's the best place to stay this autumn in Zakopane? The choice is simple. If you are looking for the perfect venue either for a romantic weekend or simply to relax, then look no further and book a room at the four-star Aries Hotel & SPA. The Aries is a unique wellness property, located in the very heart of Zakopane, with views of the Tatra mountains. The hotel is well known for its Alpine décor, unique hospitality and excellent cuisine. Interestingly, Aries Hotel & SPA is a modern facility, but at the same time offers the atmosphere of tradition and history. It's also a perfect choice for families and business.

Other amenities of the hotel include the wellness zone with a thermal pool, the biggest hot tub in the area, a spa with DR Irena Eris Beauty Partner treatment rooms, a perfectly-equipped conference centre and Halka restaurant. hotelaries.pl



Watch

Certina

ONLY FOR THE CHOSEN ONES

One day at sea is enough to lose the sense of time. The new Certina DS Action, harking back to the rich heritage of Swiss watchmaking, you won't miss any moment of your active life. The sporty and elegant three-hand model with quartz movement combines water resistance up to 20 bar (200 m) with certified chronometer precision - and flawless good looks. The innovative and reliable Precidrive™ movement offers absolute precision, which is 10 times greater than other quartz models available on the market. The brushed stainless-steel case and the bezel are complemented by a screw-on case-back with the legendary CERTINA turtle logo. The sun-brushed dial attracts attention both day and night thanks to Super-LumiNova® layer on the hands and indexes. certina.com



Airlines

Qatar Airways

TWO DAILY FLIGHTS FROM WARSAW

Beginning 14 December there will be two daily flights on Warsaw-Doha route. However, the increased frequency will only apply for the winter period, until March 2018.

At present, these flights are operated by Airbuses A330-200, which will fly now serve the Poland-Qatar route 14 times a week. Flight numbers QR 261/262 will be operated by the A320s, while the other ones by A330-200. The carrier will also increase the frequency of flights from Doha to Prague, currently operated by A320s.

The airline continues to expand into the Central and Eastern European market. In July 2017, it reported an increase in the number of flights from the Russian capital (to 21). At the end of August Qatar Airways aircraft also launched routes to Skopje and Prague. qatarairways.com

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Switzerland

Rhaetian Railway

JOURNEY BY THE MOONLIGHT

It's hard to believe but the Rhaetian Railway has been there for more than 125 years! It all started with the launch of Landquart-Klosters route in 1889, and today the RhB network is 384 kilometres long. The railway tracks running through spectacular viaducts and circular tunnels, have deeply etched into the Swiss landscape. Interestingly, the Bernina and Albula sections have been UNESCO World Heritage areas since 2008. Operated by the RhB the Bernina and Glacier express panoramic trains, fascinate guests from all over the world. The Albula Valley and the Bernina section of the Valley are particularly picturesque in wintertime. Passing through the UNESCO World Heritage Site, the train travels 1,000 metres of height difference, crossing the Landwasser viaduct and circular tunnels. For just SFr 5 you can admire the fairytale-like, snow-covered landscapes through exceptionally large windows. The famous stretch between Thusis and St. Moritz is also a part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site. In winter the panoramic carriages run almost every hour on regional trains. Particularly popular with tourists are special train runs, e.g. by the moonlight. Booking is recommended, but if you like to wing it, you can always purchase a ticket from the conductor.

However, the most beautiful experience in the Alps is the route leading up to the glittering glaciers, and then down to the palm tree paradise of Italy. You can take such a journey with the Bernina Express, the highest railway line in the Alps, which connects the north with the south of Europe.

berninaexpress.ch



MICE

Meet The Bidder

MICE HUB IS US!

The largest edition of B2B fairs for the MICE industry, called "Meet The Bidder Grand Edition: SMART Fairs for MICE and Luxury Travel", is round the corner - this year with a record number of exhibitors. On 22 November, at the Sound Garden Hotel in Warsaw, the Travel Bidder team will present new business partners from various countries to Polish MICE organisers. The main partner of the event is the Polish Chamber of Tourism, and the leading theme of this edition is the power of trade associations. The primary goal of the event is to help both parties - the buyers and the bidders - to get to know each other during the whole day of meetings. Polish tour organisers can participate in the event free of charge. To register, go to: meet-the-bidder.com/zgloszenie.html



Airlines

LOT

WE WILL FLY TO OSLO

On 25 March 2018, LOT Polish Airlines will launch a new connection to the capital of Norway. Ticket sales are now under way. Overall, the Polish flag carrier will offer passengers a total of 13 weekly flights between Warsaw and Oslo. The route will be served twice a day: in the morning and late afternoon, every day of the week except Saturday. The flights will be operated by Embraer 195 aircraft, which seats 112 passengers in three fare classes: Business, Premium Economy and Economy. The flight time is two hours. The connection, which is aimed at both business and leisure travellers, has been well integrated into the LOT's route network, allowing passengers to swiftly connect to other flight. lot.com



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Book of Lists
A Guide to Polish Business & Industry



World Tax
The comprehensive guide to the world's leading tax firms



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CAPPADOCIA FOR ACTIVE TRAVELLERS

I first learned about Cappadocia when, as a child, I saw a picture of dozens of balloons hovering over the fancy rocks. When I finally got a chance to visit the place, courtesy of the Turkish Culture and Information Office at the Turkish Embassy in Warsaw, I knew that I was going to fulfil my childhood dream. And, as it turned out on the spot, not just one dream.





FOTOLIA

Cappadocia proved to be not only a beautiful land that can be admired from air. Through most of the trails set between the plateaux and steeply cut colourful valleys, I rode on horseback. Other ones I hiked or cycled through. I also stopped in places that boasted fascinating history or made me feel a real thrill of emotions. Many travel agencies in the area offer two-day trips to Cappadocia, where the main attraction is a hot-air balloon flight at sunrise. Overall, I spent in Cappadocia seven days and I'm quite sure that I will be back there soon, as there are still a lot of treasures and mysteries I need to explore.

HORSEBACK RIDING

One of the theories explaining the name "Cappadocia", dates back to Persian times, when the place was described as the "land of beautiful horses". After my first day there, I couldn't agree more. Beautiful, slender Arabian horses, or in fact, their more refined type, should definitely be the hallmark of this place. Accustomed to poor quality equestrian equipment in various countries, I was taken aback by the professional atti-

tude at Cappadocian equestrian properties. On most Polish stud farms you wouldn't find as many saddles and bridles as here. Add to this, the guides who can speak English (to varying degrees) and German, and who genuinely care about the guests, selecting for them appropriate horses and trails that match the rider's skills. The horses themselves were eager to run, sometimes a bit skittish, but as for my moderate equestrian skills, simply perfect.

Knowing that I wanted to see as much as possible and I will manage physically, my guide Musa planned for me quite long horseback tours that would take a few days. The closest route leading from Göreme, the region's main tourist destination, runs through the Meskendir Valley from the Göreme Museum to the village of Çavuşin. The trail forks into several smaller ones that enable you to explore the area's deep caves and the first Christian churches that were hollowed in them. Just in front of the entrance to Çavuşin there is a picturesquely located Muslim cemetery.

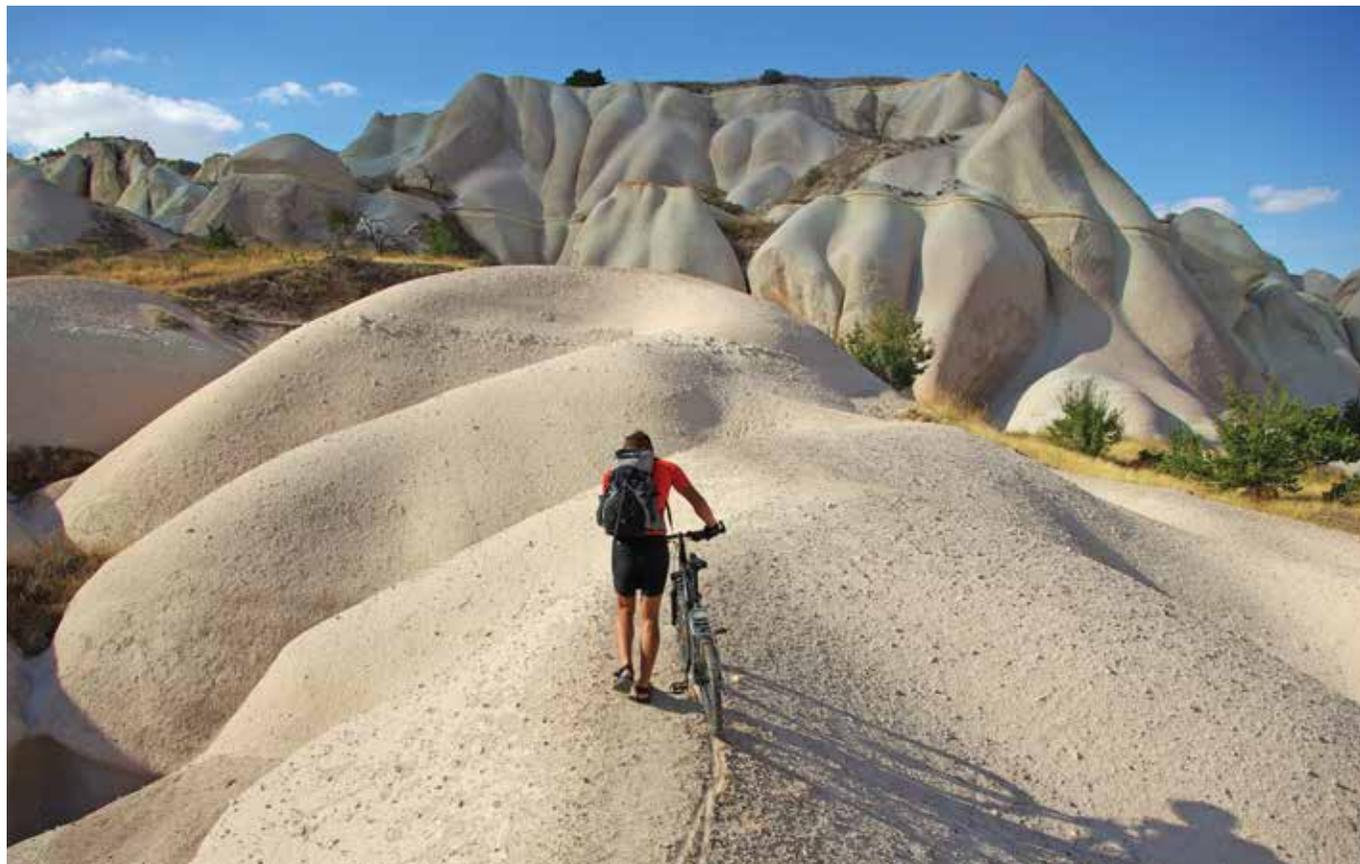
One of the most spectacular trails of my life was definitely the Pink Valley Trail, which I also visited later while trekking and

cycling. For a few days we travelled both the typical mountain trails, with horses perfectly coping with the steep slopes of the valleys, as well as meadows, where we could gallop through open fields.

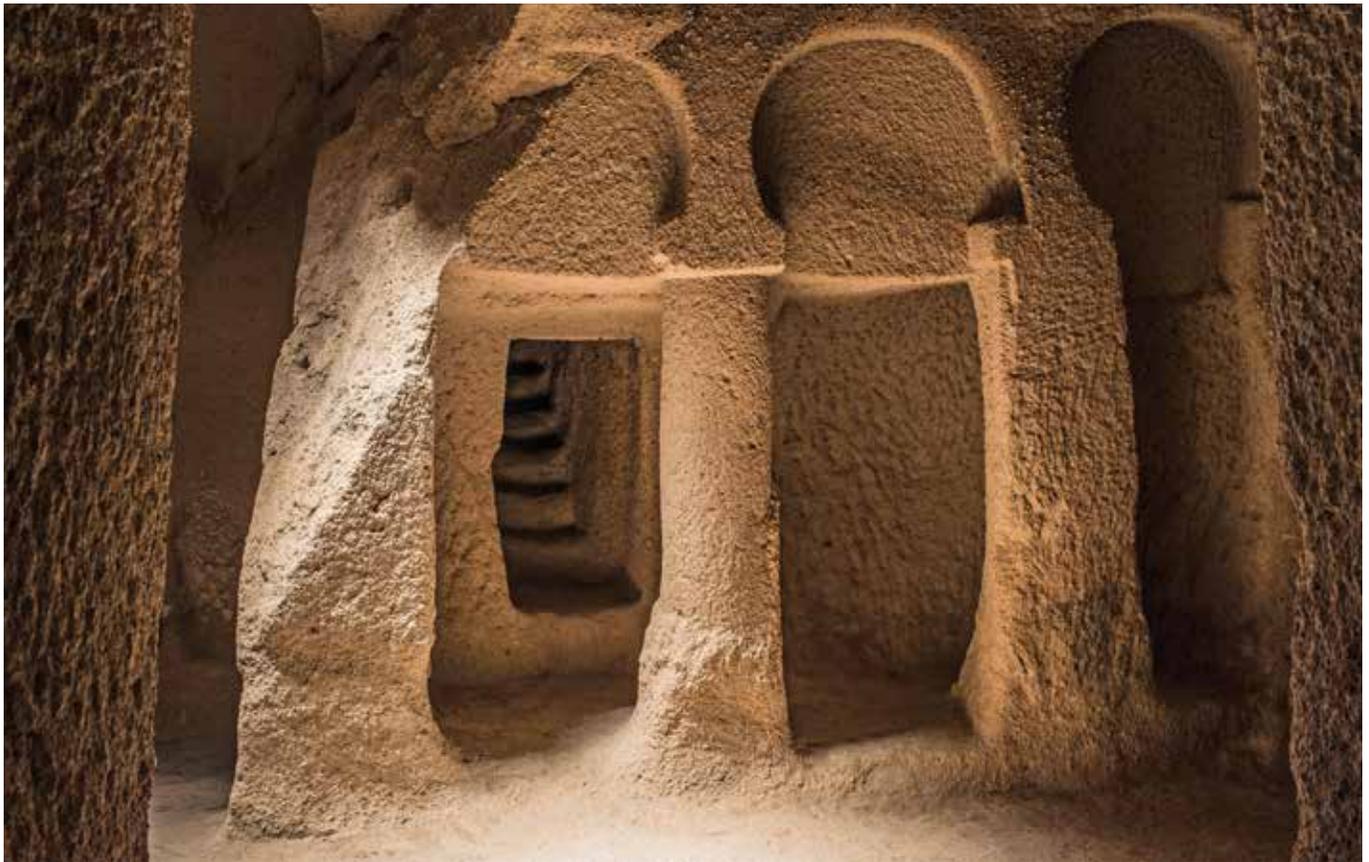
Equestrian tourism is very popular in the area. The stud farms offer a wide choice of horses and there on the trails are occasional bars and restaurants where riders can quench their thirst with freshly-squeezed orange and pomegranate juice, as well as try Turkish delicacies.

TREKKING TRAILS

However, hiking trails near Göreme offer much more than just breathtaking views. There are almost 40 underground rock towns in the area. Trail markings are very clear - on large stones situated at the forks of roads you can find detailed information about several destinations, including the remaining distance to each of them. Apart from the Pink Valley, you should also see the Red Valley, characterized by darker rocks and lush vegetation. It's also worth going a bit further, beyond the village of Çavuşin, towards the rock town of Zelve, and then to Aktepe.

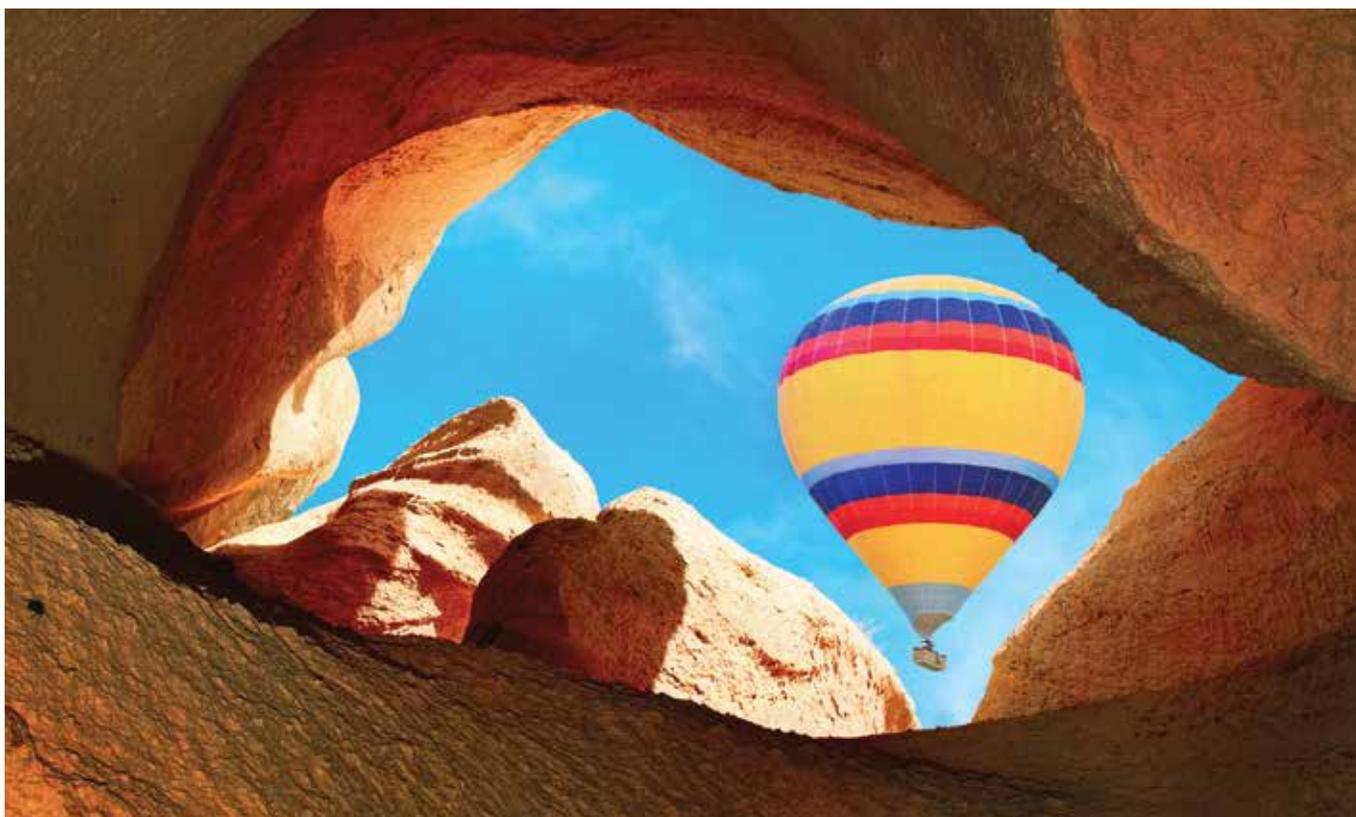


You can explore the trails set between the plateaux and steeply cut colourful valleys, on foot, a bike or on horseback.



Hiking trails near Göreme offer much more than just breathtaking views.
There are almost 40 underground rock towns in the area.





Many travel agencies in the area offer two-day trips to Cappadocia, where the main attraction is a hot-air balloon flight at sunrise.

The region of Göreme, as well as other areas of Cappadocia, are abundant in meadows, rock labyrinths, plateaux and climbing grounds. If you have strong legs and stamina you won't be bored here, too. In hotels, museums and tourist centres in Avanos, Göreme, you will find good maps with marked major attractions and rock towns. They also include viewpoints and small roadside bars.

BALLOON FLIGHT

I woke up at 4 am and went to the reception desk where I met a representative of a hot-air balloon company. Unfortunately, he had just been informed about the red flag warning, which meant a ban on flights for that day. The message was short and clear: "Unfavourable weather conditions, the wind is too strong." The next day, just before leaving my room, I got a phone call from the reception desk with the same message. "Three times a charm," I said to myself. The following day we were brought to the company's office and offered sumptuous breakfast. This time the flag was yellow, meaning the flight was on hold due to unstable conditions, so we had to wait almost 40 minutes for the measurement to be taken again. Un-

fortunately, after that time the yellow flag turned to red, and disappointed we returned to the hotel. On the fourth day and our arrival at the company's office, we learned about the green flag announcement. Finally! We headed towards the rocks at Göreme, where the balloons were being prepared for the flight. The landscape was filled with the huge envelopes, which lit by fire every now and then, sparkled with vivid colours. Lazily, the balloons began to soar to the sky. The excitement on the faces of those getting into the basket was at its highest. And up we went. The basket of the balloon was divided into four sections, which together accommodated 18 passengers and the pilot. We flew over Göreme and the nearby valley, where we met complete silence, broken at times by a blast of fire that would take us a little higher. We would go there, where the wind would take us - no need to plan and worries - just a blissful state of elation. Seeing from above the trails I had hiked, cycled and ridden on horseback, I realized how much more there is still to be seen there.

The flight took one hour. When the first balloons landed, our pilot contacted the drivers from the company, who then came and collected us right from the meadow.

Then there was a glass of cold champagne and disbelief that what we had experienced wasn't a dream.

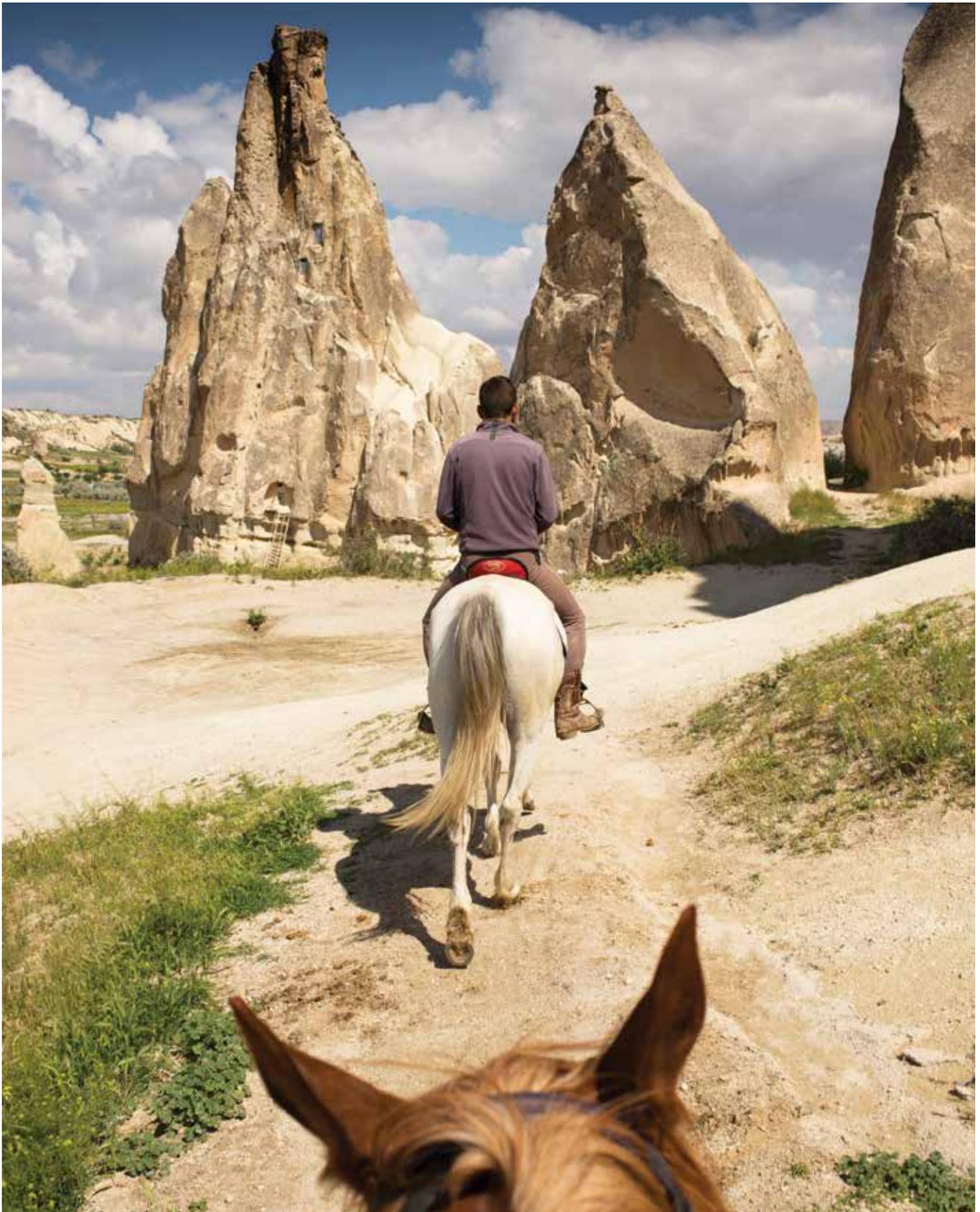
But although I tried to make the most of my visit to Cappadocia, I still feel unsatisfied. I feel unsatisfied, because I know there's so much more to see, experience and taste there. Enchanted by the unusual mountain landscapes, horses, local ceramics, traditions, varied cuisine and hospitable people, I'm sure I will return there more than once.

HOW TO GET THERE?

How to get to Cappadocia? The fastest, but also the priciest option is to fly with Turkish Airlines from Warsaw to Atatürk Airport in Istanbul and then to Kayseri, from where you can take a bus or rent a car to Göreme, Çavuşin or the city of Avanos, the cradle of local ceramics, where my base was.

A cheaper alternative (if you book your ticket in advance) is to travel with LOT Polish Airlines to Tbilisi or Yerevan, where you can take a bus to Avanos. You can also fly with Wizzair to Kutaisi in Georgia and then take a bus to Avanos. This is by far the cheapest option that will cost you PLN400 one way.

Magdalena Konik



Equestrian tourism is very popular in the area. There on the trails are occasional bars and restaurants where riders can quench their thirst with freshly-squeezed orange and pomegranate juice.

SIGNIEL HOTEL SEOUL



CONTACT

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Signiel Hotel Seoul is located in Lotte World Tower, the tallest building in South Korea and the sixth largest in the world. It has 123 floors and is 555 meters high. Stretching from the 76th to the 101st floor of the building, the all-suite Signiel Seoul overlooks Seoul's sprawl and mountainous Bukhansan National Park—an unprecedented view in South Korea, given that the tower is nearly twice the height of any structure nearby.

Although the tower was officially opened in April 2017, its characteristic shape, seen from a distance of many kilometres, has already been permanently incorporated into the skyline of Seoul. Lotte World Tower also houses a large shopping centre with a duty-free zone, the World Aquar-

ium, a vast concert hall and the world's largest indoor theme park Lotte World Adventure.

INTERIORS

Signiel Seoul impresses guests with its grandeur style and attention to detail. The lobby features artistic installation inspired by the shape of a mugunghwa flower, the national symbol of Korea, while the staircase with its unique openwork construction leads directly to a bar offering the largest selection of champagne in Asia. Its unique features include a rock installation enclosed in glass and white and gold crystal orbs hanging from the ceiling to simulate champagne bubbles. The hotel has 235 luxuriously furnished suites, designed to combine modern ascetic décor

with Korean motifs of cherry blossoms and a magnolia shrub. They all offer panoramic views of Seoul and the Han River. The Royal Suite, located on the 100th floor, boasts 353 sqm of floor area and 6-metre high ceilings. It's presently South Korea's most pricey hotel accommodation, which can be booked for just US\$18,000 per night.

No wonder then that with its exceptional level of luxury Signiel is advertised as a six-star property. Guests can enjoy the services of a private butler, helicopter transfer or an assistance of a professional stylist who can accompany them while shopping. During the day, you can relax in Salon de Signiel zone, which serves sweet and salty snacks, as well as fruit and drinks, and champagne in the evening.



RESTAURANTS

Gourmets will be delighted with the wealth of culinary options at Signiel Seoul. A three-Michelin-starred chef and the winner of the “French Cook of the Year” Yannick Alleno, manages Stay restaurant located on the 81st floor. Stay serves mainly European dishes accentuated with Far East flavours and although the food here is quite pricey, you need to book a table well in advance. If you feel like trying Korean regional cuisine in a modern form, visit Bicena restaurant, which is known for its specially custom-developed methodology of serving dishes based on appropriate temperature.

ATTRACTIONS

The hotel also attracts guests with its offer of “Weddings

in Heaven”, organized by one of the most famous American wedding planners Kristin Banta. Taking into account the fact that the hotel's ballroom, located on the 76th floor, is the highest ballroom in the world (with almost 8-meter tall ceilings!) and the culinary offer is prepared by Yannick Alleno himself, it's safe to say that a wedding reception organized at Signiel must be an unforgettable experience.

The hotel is also known for its splendid wellness centre. The Evian Spa is the brand's third facility in Asia after Tokyo and Hanoi. Professional treatments offered here focus on the healing properties of water from Alpine springs as well as moisturising and rejuvenating rituals. It's also worth visiting the highest swimming pool in



Korea, lined with jade-coloured ceramics. For fitness enthusiasts the hotel has launched a modern gym with Technogym Artis equipment, with separate cardio, weights and pilates/yoga zones. A lot of guests take advantage of the offer of private training under the guidance of a personal trainer.

VERDICT

Signiel Hotel Seoul is one of the world's most modern properties, offering a luxurious six-star interiors. Its excellent location and amazing panorama of the city that can be viewed from the 76th floor of the hotel, guarantee unforgettable experiences. Direct access to other attractions of Lotte Tower makes Signiel Hotel Seoul a fantastic place for a few days stay.

Anna Drozdowska

Signiel Hotel Seoul is one of the world's most modern properties, offering a luxurious six-star interiors. Its excellent location and amazing panorama of the city guarantee unforgettable experiences.



GRAND INTERCONTINENTAL SEOUL PARNAS



CONTACT

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www.grandicparnas.com

Grand InterContinental Seoul Parnas is a modern, excellent hotel offering spacious rooms overlooking the city's panorama. One of the most popular business hotels in Seoul, the property has excellent transport links and is widely praised for its world-class services.

Grand InterContinental Seoul Parnas is situated in the trendy Gangnam neighborhood, in a building directly connected to Parnas Mall (the city's second largest shopping venue) and to the underground line. An un-

derground passage leads directly to the COEX convention centre with another InterContinental hotel nearby, as well as the Korea City Air Terminal, an underground station and the famous Bongeunsa temple. In this way, you can combine your business trip with sightseeing and shopping, and commuting from here to central Seoul is effortless, regardless of the time of day.

INTERIORS

The property's décor is a tasteful blend of classic elegance and local character. The hotel lobby is lined with black marble

and the shape of chandeliers is inspired by traditional Korean lanterns. The shapes of the windows and furniture also take hints from the local style. In the centre of the lobby there is a bar, at the entrance of which guests are greeted by a member of staff wearing traditional Korean costume called hanbok. The vast space above is very impressive, but not overwhelming thanks to the use of subdued decorative elements.

ROOMS

I recommend booking a room with the access to the Club



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Hotel

SEOUL



Grand InterContinental Seoul Parnas is, undoubtedly, one of the most appealing offers for business travellers. Excellent location combined with the world-class service.

Lounge, where you can organize a meeting in one of its two conference rooms, have à la carte breakfast, use wifi and personal concierge service. During the day you can pop in for a drink or sweet and salty snacks, while from 5 to 8pm guests enjoy there hot and cold appetizers along with a wide selection of wines and stronger spirits.

RESTAURANTS

Grand InterContinental Seoul Parnas has a wide culinary offer, ranging from various Asian dishes to international cuisine. Table 34 restaurant is a fine dining concept a la France. Wei Lou will suit the tastes of Chinese

food lovers. The restaurant is famous for its Shandong and Beijing dishes, including the Peking Duck. Hakone specializes in Japanese kaiseki cuisine and offers a head-spinning choice of sake, while the Grand Kitchen dishes up tradition European cuisine, prepared at live cooking stations.

ATTRACTIONS

With one of the largest ballrooms in Seoul accommodating up to 1,500 people, Grand Parnas is also a perfect venue for a large prestigious conference and other events. Fitness Club Metropolitan is a combination of a fitness club and a wellness centre. Admission is

free of charge for hotel guests, and there is a sauna, as well as a 25-metre indoor swimming pool, a cardio room and a gym equipped with modern training facilities. You can also try your hand at also a golf simulator, which enables you to practise your swing indoors.

VERDICT

Grand InterContinental Seoul Parnas is, undoubtedly, one of the most appealing offers for business travellers. The property's excellent location combined with the world-class service, are a guarantee of a perfect stay both on business and for leisure.

Anna Drozdowska





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MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE



Polygamy has become the secret to success among legacy carriers. **Jenny Southan** reports on why airlines are joining forces and what it means for travellers

Exchanging vows with your arch rival is not common among people, but for airlines, strategic knot-tying ceremonies have become more and more popular. Stronger than a codeshare but weaker than a merger, the first joint venture (JV) was between Northwest Airlines and KLM in 1997, and since then the wedding bells have rung nonstop, although there's been a fair amount of infidelity on the way. According to research from global management consulting firm LEK, JVs made up only 5 per cent of global long-haul airline traffic a decade ago, yet by the end of 2016 it was 25 per cent. In its report *Reaching New Heights Together in 2017: How Airlines Can Maximise the Value of Joint Ventures* it states: "We believe that deeper integration between JV partners of all sizes is inevitable, and that 'virtual mergers' will become increasingly popular. By 2021, 35 per cent of all global long-haul traffic could be part of an immunised joint venture." Some experts believe it could reach 50 per cent. Whatever happens, consolidation will continue.

NUMEROUS BENEFITS

What are the benefits? For airlines, many. Marcel Fuchs is vice-president of Atlantic and Pacific sales for United, which has joint ventures with ANA, Air New Zealand and Lufthansa. "Through these government-approved partnerships, we jointly co-ordinate our schedules, sales, marketing and customer service to offer many more travel options than we would otherwise be able to by ourselves. By co-operating closely and sharing the economic benefits in these relation-

ships, we provide much better access for all customers."

A spokesperson for BA agrees: "Joint ventures allow carriers to launch new routes that otherwise would not be viable if only operated by one carrier – for example, some of our recently launched services to the US [San Jose, New Orleans and Austin] are as a result of our joint business with American Airlines. They also ensure better competition in certain markets, which is good for customers."

Lufthansa is equally reaping the benefits of a transatlantic partnership with United, with new upcoming joint venture routes from Frankfurt to San Diego and San Jose in Costa Rica in 2018.

New routes, co-ordinated schedules, more choice, and a greater variety of fares are all JV advantages for travellers, says Ignazio Strano, vice-president, head of joint ventures and Star Alliance for the Lufthansa Group. "We are able to offer the consumer a whole range of fares irrespective of whether they are flying with United or Lufthansa. In a codeshare environment, when you put the Lufthansa code on a Thai Airways flight, for example, I can only offer what Thai offers me to sell. In a JV, you are talking to each other about prices and tying up contracts that allow each other to actually sell from the highest to the very lowest prices. This gives more opportunity to customers to travel on low fares on both airlines."

GREATER FLEXIBILITY

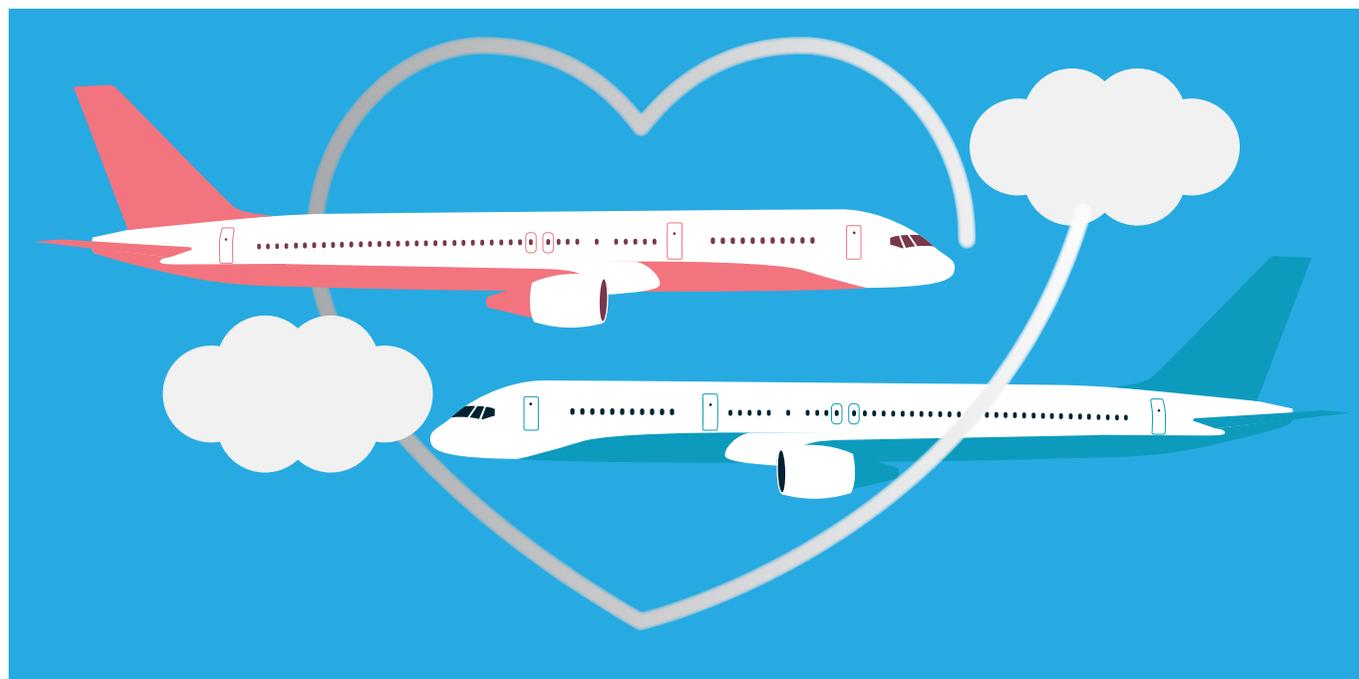
Like marriages, not all JVs are the same. In fact, whisper it, they are not always the mar-

riage of equals. They can be major, headline-grabbing tie-ups between airlines – such as Qantas and Emirates, which between them have the biggest fleets of A380 superjumbos in the world and a combined network of 2,000 routes – or they can be smaller, more strategic partnerships between the likes of Delta and Korean Air, for example. For the passenger, they promise "anywhere to anywhere" tickets, with connections available on multiple airlines through just one booking channel, as well as reciprocal frequent flyer benefits such as lounge access and miles earning and redemption.

BA says: "Joint ventures allow customers to mix and match bookings on a wider network to best suit their travel needs. For example, if you are searching for a flight from London to New York on *ba.com*, it will give you up to 16 choices of flights between BA and AA – this allows you to get the best possible combination of airport, flight times and price.

"Once you purchase a ticket, you can use either of the airlines' websites to check in. If you are a transfer customer moving between the two airlines at one of the big hub airports such as London Heathrow or New York JFK, then there are dedicated facilities and global support teams on hand."

Strangely, for airlines that spend so much marketing their distinctive brand, in a JV you often don't know which airline you are flying on. Known as "metal neutrality", for trade body IATA, this is "perhaps the defining feature of a JV; the airlines involved share revenue and costs on a given route no matter which is doing the actual flying".



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JOINT VENTURE

♥ Virgin Atlantic + Delta + Air France-KLM + Alitalia

This five-way love affair covers more than 200 destinations in North America, six in the UK, and 100 in Europe. There are nine daily flights between London and New York, 39 flights a day between the UK and North America, and more than 300 flights a day between Europe and the US. Air France-KLM, Delta and Alitalia are members of Skyteam. Virgin Atlantic prefers to maintain its independence and is not a member of an alliance.

♥ Air France-KLM + Delta + Alitalia

The Italian airline joined the Air France-KLM-Delta JV in 2010 to create a three-way partnership. Together, they offer 250 transatlantic flights, with 300 destinations in North America and 250 in Europe, Asia and Latin America combined. It operates out of seven key hubs – Amsterdam, Atlanta, Detroit, Minneapolis, New York JFK, Paris CDG and Rome Fiumicino – together with Cincinnati, Salt Lake City and Seattle. Skyteam shareholders approved the sale of a 10 per cent stake in Air France-KLM to China Eastern in September.

♥ British Airways + Iberia + American Airlines + Finnair

Not content with all being part of Oneworld, this enhanced British-Spanish-American-Finnish four-way covers more than 160 cities in Europe and 240 in the US. It offers 120-plus transatlantic flights a day, including up to 17 between London and New York. BA, Iberia and AA put a ring on it in 2010. Finnair was invited to the party in 2013. Together they have hubs at Chicago O'Hare, Dallas-Fort Worth, Helsinki, London Heathrow, Madrid and New York JFK.

♥ British Airways + Japan Airlines + Finnair + Iberia

British Airways entered into a Siberian joint venture with Japan Airlines, also a member of the Oneworld family, in 2012. After feeling left out in the cold, Finnair was welcomed with a warm embrace two years later, followed by Iberia in 2016. The four airlines now align prices and schedules on flights between Europe and Japan.

♥ British Airways + Qatar Airways

Last year, BA extended a hand to Oneworld carrier Qatar Airways, to create a combined network of 70 destinations. In a similar way to people double-barrelling their surnames, the two airlines now codeshare (BA/QR) on services between London and Doha, as well as connecting flights worldwide.



It has been estimated that last year's summer flight schedule saw almost 80 per cent of available seat kilometres across the North Atlantic flown by airlines in joint ventures.

We've listed ten significant JVs, but it is a fast-moving space. To take one example, in 2012, Virgin sold a 49 per cent stake to Delta; this year it handed Air France-KLM an additional 31 per cent of the pie in return for £220 million, leaving Virgin with only 20 per cent, and no majority control. (To complete the circle, Delta is buying a 10 per cent stake in Air France-KLM.)

What does this mean for travellers? Shai Weiss, chief commercial officer for Virgin Atlantic, says: "Before the Delta joint venture we were simply a point-to-point carrier between the UK and North America. Post-transaction, we can connect to over 200 destinations in the US out of the major hubs both in New York, Atlanta and newly launched Portland, Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles. For Virgin and Delta consumers, we will also be the first JV airline to offer wifi across all its long-haul fleets."

Despite losing majority control of his airline, Sir Richard Branson was clear about the effect for travellers. In an open letter on virgin.com on July 27, he wrote: "One of the best moves we made nearly five years ago was tying up with Delta Air Lines, to create a joint venture across the Atlantic. Part of the rationale was to provide a competitive alternative to BA and American Airlines' alliance and it has created a strong platform for us to promote and support our brand in this highly competitive market."

"Delta has helped us considerably with feed from America, but because we don't have more slots at Heathrow or Gatwick we're unable to enjoy feed from Europe or provide extra onward journeys for those customers we are now carrying to London. Today, I'm delighted to say that we've agreed with Air France-KLM and Delta our collective intention to form an enhanced joint venture, including Alitalia, which will be extremely beneficial to our airline, our customers and the brand."

LOW-COST RIVALS

While JVs have been used to combat competition from Gulf airlines for some years, they are now also a reaction to rivalry from low-cost carriers, which have been eating into the profits of traditional airlines for some years. More recently, the emergence of low-cost long-haul operations across the Atlantic has created even more of a shake-up, with the likes of Norwegian, Westjet and Iceland's Wow siphoning off customers who might otherwise have flown with BA or Virgin Atlantic, for instance, to the US.

The battle is set to continue as budget airlines seek out their own partners. Ryanair announced a tie-up with Air Europa earlier this year, allowing customers to connect to 20 destinations from the Spanish airline's long-haul network of destinations (including Boston, Miami and New York) via Madrid, and make Air Europa bookings on ryanair.com.

Ryanair chief executive Michael O'Leary said: "This partnership is the latest en-

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♥ Lufthansa + Austrian + Swiss + ANA

The German and Japanese carriers were given antitrust immunity to allow them to join hands in 2011, but the following year decided they wanted Austrian and Swiss to get in on the action too, and their plans were formalised in 2013. Today this JV covers all 196 weekly flights on 11 of the participating airlines' routes between Japan and Europe. They are all part of Star Alliance.

♥ Lufthansa + Austrian Airlines + Swiss + Brussels Airlines + United + Air Canada

This is a veritable gang-bang of a JV, with the Lufthansa Group joining forces with North American carrier United and Air Canada. It came about from relationships between Air Canada, Lufthansa and United in 2009 (Austrian, Brussels and Swiss came later), and now encompasses 10,000 daily flights to 570 destinations.

♥ Lufthansa + Swiss + Austrian + Air China

After two years of wrangling, these four airlines tied the knot in 2016 with a polyamorous route- and revenue-sharing deal between Europe and China that started this summer. If they wanted to get any closer, they would have to merge.

♥ **Lufthansa + Swiss + Singapore Airlines** Papers were signed for this union back in 2015. Today, the joint venture provides passengers with 20 codeshare routes from Zurich and Munich to South East Asia and the South West Pacific.

♥ Qantas + Emirates

These two airlines set up a mutually beneficial partnership in 2013 and now have a combined network of 2,000 routes via three hubs – Perth, Singapore and Dubai. Today it is reapplying to extend its JV for another five years, with 2018 plans for the reintroduction of London to Australia via Singapore in March. From Europe, passengers can fly to Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney via Dubai. Also in March 2018 will be the world's longest nonstop Dreamliner B787-9 flight, from London to Perth.



hancement as we continue our journey to becoming the 'Amazon of travel'. We continue to speak to a number of other long-haul airlines about potential connecting flight partnerships and we look forward to offering our 130 million customers an even greater choice and range of long-haul services in 2018."

Meanwhile, Norwegian has announced a new relationship with Easyjet to get feeder flights from across Europe on to its low-cost services to US cities such as Las Vegas, LA and Oakland-San Francisco (see Upfront, page 8). In the East, low-cost airline Air Asia has now signed a memorandum of understanding with Air China to launch a new budget carrier called Air Asia China. Air Asia chief executive Tony Fernandes was reported as saying: "This Chinese venture represents the final piece of the Air Asia puzzle" as it "closes the loop" in the region. Whether it is the last marriage of convenience remains to be seen, but for airlines, while there may be an occasional mention of love, signing that bit of paper is all about business.

JV JARGON BUSTER

- **Alliances** – there are three airline alliances, Oneworld, Star Alliance and Skyteam. Although these allow for partnerships between member airlines, they don't have the same regulatory approval as joint ventures so relationships don't go as deep.
- **Antitrust immunity** – status granted by authorities such as the US Federal Aviation Authority that ensures joint ventures don't create a monopoly and remain in the customer's interests.

- **Codeshares** – a weaker agreement whereby two or more airlines market and sell the same flight. For example, you could fly on a BA plane booked on aa.com, earning the same points and paying the same price as on ba.com. The code for this flight shows up as both BA6138 and AA6138. Joint ventures often include codeshares.

- **Interline agreements** – JVs allow passengers to buy connecting flights with partner airlines in the same booking. Both or all airlines have shared duty-of-care responsibilities towards the traveller so if the first flight from Frankfurt to Chicago with Lufthansa is severely delayed, for example, then United guarantees to get you on your onward connection to Detroit for free. Airlines call this "seamless connectivity".

- **Metal neutrality** – within a joint venture, it doesn't matter which airline's aircraft (or "metal") you physically fly on. Prices, schedules, frequent flyer miles, routes and connections are all aligned, and the airlines share the revenue.

- **Open Skies** – government agreement made in 2008 to allow EU airlines to fly without restriction to any city in the US, and vice-versa.

- **Reciprocal benefits** – passengers are granted the same frequent flyer miles and lounge access rights regardless of the airline they actually fly on.

- **Wing-to-wing flights** – when flights with two different airlines depart at the same time. Within a codeshare, airlines can't work together to avoid this, but within a joint venture they can. They can optimise their schedules so flights depart at different times throughout the day to give passengers more choice.

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FEEL AT HOME

Marzena Mróz talks to **Hanna Bernakiewicz**, the Economy Segment Manager for Poland and Eastern Europe at Orbis S.A.



This September ibis hotels have launched the “ibis. where music lives” campaign. Where did you get the idea to make the brand communicate through music?

Our guests include both business customers and leisure travellers. We assume that music is a universal form of art that can reach both groups and evoke positive emotions, regardless of the purpose of their visit. This is the value we care most about. We want to provide genuine experiences to all our guests and build a positive atmosphere during their stay at the hotel. Therefore, the music campaign is intended as a universal message that will convey these values to a wider audience.

What is the “ibis. where music lives” project about?

With “ibis. where music lives” campaign we were able to reach original, but little-known artists, giving them a chance to

develop their music career. Its main elements were the ibis.com/tumieszkamuzyka contest and web platform, where novice artists uploaded their own songs or covers. Then internet users voted online to select the top 30 most interesting performers. Out of that group, the four winners were chosen by Sarsa - the campaign’s ambassador Sarsa also selected one additional ‘wild card’ winner from outside the final 30. The winners took part in recording sessions in a studio arranged at the hotel and were given a full support by music producers from Universal Music. In addition, the finalists will perform together with Sarsa at a unique final concert.

Why did you decide to collaborate with Sarsa?

Through music our offer can reach a much wider audience. Sarsa is a young but already

very recognizable artist, which is why she is perfectly suited to represent our campaign. Her main asset is that despite the popularity she has gained in recent years, she is consistently shaping her own original style. Sarsa’s modern image blends in well with the style of our hotels, because each of them has its own unique character. It is also not without significance that Sarsa was propelled to stardom, partly thanks to a popular reality talent show. That is why, she perfectly understands the needs of young artists and the challenges they face.

What do we know about the winners of the contest? How do you assess their chances for a professional music career?

The choice that Sarsa had to make, was far from easy. A total of 267 recordings were submitted to the contest and the



participants came from various musical backgrounds - from pop to hard rock. Ultimately, the winners have made up a very interesting bunch. The band Birches plays music which is a fusion of funk, indie and rock. Redford are inspired by British guitar music. Paweł Danielak is vocally reminiscent of Ian Curtis of Joy Division. Patrycja Rószczyk surprised everyone with her outstanding interesting interpretation of Shawn Mendes. Marta Bedyńska, in turn, attracting listeners with her lyrical, melancholic voice. This great diversity is a real strength of the winning five, and I hope that soon these musicians will have faithful groups of fans. Our role is to present their talent to a wider audience.



How does this contest differ from others? What prize has ibis family offered to the winners?

The prize for the winners of “ibis. where music lives” contest was a studio recording session under the guidance of prominent music producers. Those are the first professional singles ever made by those young artists. They will also perform alongside Sarsa in a special concert held in one of ibis hotels. Additionally, the winning songs will be put on a playlist of the Jukebox by Deezer system, which is available in our hotels. It is a great opportunity for the beginners to show their work to a wider audience. As an international network, we also have the opportunity to promote those young people on a European and global scale.

You have mentioned that as part of the project, you have arranged a professional recording studio in one of your hotels. It is quite an unusual idea. How will it work?

The construction of the recording studio in one of our hotels is in line with the “ibis. where music lives” slogan. In the past, artists wrote their songs in ho-

Sarsa’s modern image blends in well with the style of our hotels, because each of them has its own unique character.



tels and now they will be able to record in one of them. The studio was built in ibis Warszawa Ostrobramska hotel. For this purpose we had to combine two rooms. One of them houses the master control room, while the other is a recording booth. The studio is fully equipped to make professional recordings and it is operated by recognized Pol-

ish music producers. We have already noticed how good this concept works. Many participants of our contest record their songs at home. That is why, building a professional recording studio in our hotel rooms we wanted to tell them that they can feel their at home, too.

Thank you for the interview.

MEET WELL

Meetings in Warsaw's Business Centre



The stylish, modern architecture and a panoramic lift are two of the standout features of The Westin Warsaw.

Modern design, a wide range of amenities, original interiors, and a breath of fresh air in the very centre of Warsaw. These are only a few of many advantages of The Westin Warsaw. Other standout features of the property include stylish modern architecture and a panoramic lift. The hotel has prepared a number of amenities for event organizers.

LEGENDARY HOSPITALITY

The hotel has 12 conference and banquet rooms, ranging from 27 to 455 sqm, as well as a ballroom with a 6-metre high ceiling. All the rooms have recently been thoroughly renovated. From a private meeting for a

few people to a huge gala - the hotel can host any type of event for up to 600 participants at the same time.

The hotel's banquet and conference offering guarantees a pleasant break from daily life: a perfectly balanced combination of holistic functionality, energetic business environment in the downtown area of Warsaw, and a unique culinary experience focused on sustainable lifestyle and health.

INNOVATION AND COMFORT

All the rooms are equipped with the newest technology, AV systems, projectors, screens and wifi, giving the participants full control over the course of the

meeting. The rooms also come with 16:9 widescreens, while the highest quality of videos and presentations is provided by state-of-the-art projectors with a powerful 4000-lumen light source. In addition, the hotel offers an integrated PA system and the assistance of AV professionals. If necessary, The Westin Warsaw can also arrange for professional conference interpreting services. The whole event is always overseen by the hotel's highly qualified planning department.

INSPIRED BY NATURE

The Westin Warsaw is a truly tranquil space filled with contemporary architecture and nature-inspired elements. The

hotel's décor is dominated by relaxing combinations of earth tone shades, while wallpapers, cloth panels and chairs have bright neutral colours to better highlight the elements made of cherry wood. Custom-made carpets look elegant with intertwining colours of grey, brown and copper. The curtains are in natural colours, providing a link with the outside world.

SUPERFOODS

Take a moment to restore your energy. Each SuperFoodsRx coffee break is enriched with healthy ingredients that stimulate the energy required to function effectively. For even more convenience, you can customize your menu online. For organizers opting for the hotel's standard offering, chef Janusz Korzyński has prepared four SuperFoodsRx breaks called Micro-elements, Refreshment, Fit-Bio, and Fruit and Grains.

FEEL GOOD AT THE WESTIN WARSAW

Apart from the conference rooms, the recent renovation work also saw improvements made to the lobby, Fusion Restaurant and JP's Bar, as well as the Executive Club Lounge. The interior design created by Anita Rosato, involves the use of such natural materials as wood, leather and stone, with earth colours - brown, grey and toned down white.

The hotel's comfortable and quiet rooms come with the famous Heavenly Bed and unrivalled views of the city centre. The rooms with access to the Executive Club Lounge also include free drinks and snacks, as well as evening cocktails.

Westin promotes a healthy lifestyle, and as part of the "Well-Being Movement" guests can now enjoy even more healthy SuperFoods in the breakfast offer and restaurant menus. Fusion restaurant features an open kitchen where food is prepared right in front of your eyes.



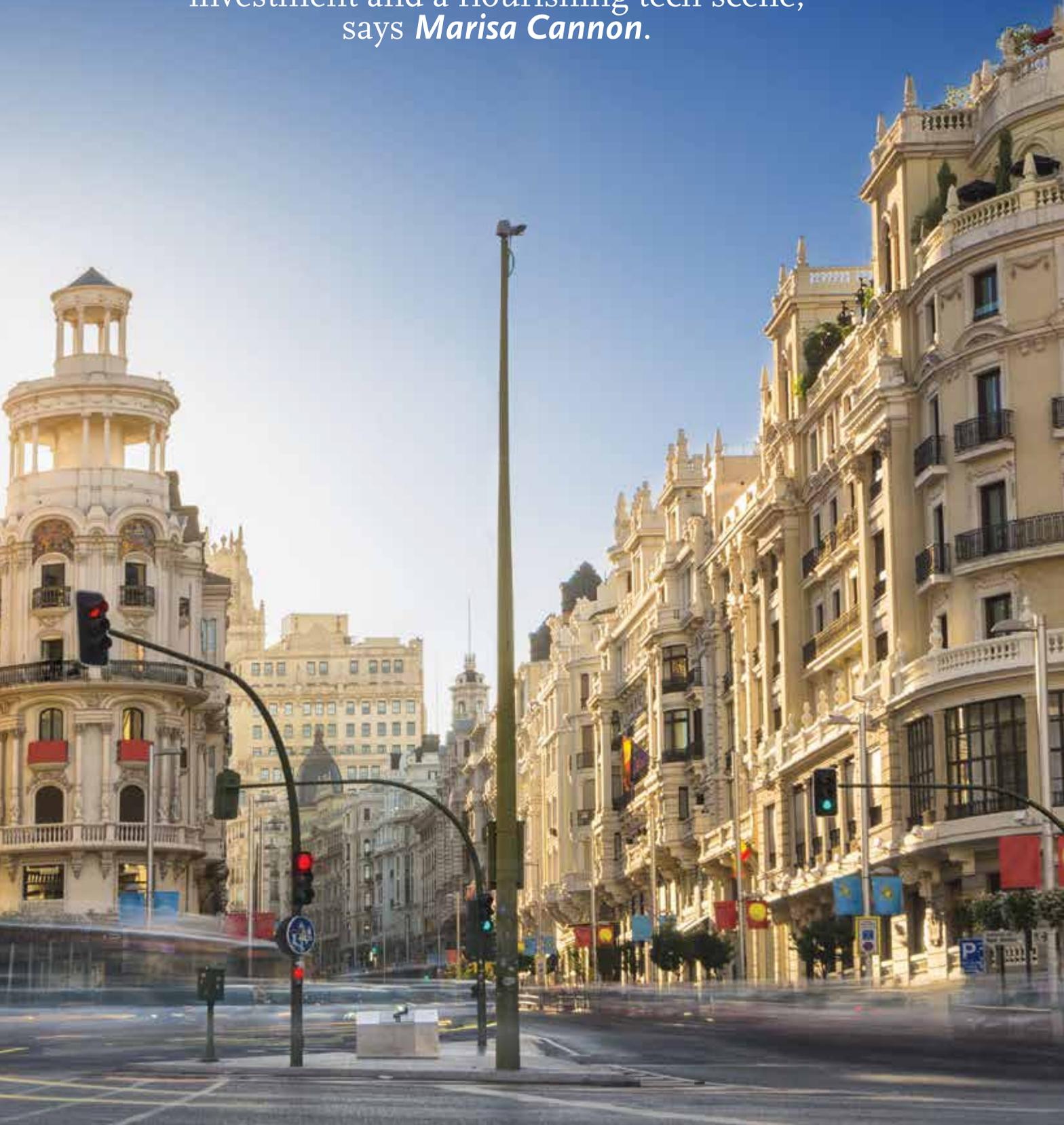
The hotel's banquet and conference offering guarantees guests a pleasant break from daily life.





MADRID RISING

After almost a decade of recession, the Spanish capital is back on its feet thanks to foreign investment and a flourishing tech scene, says **Marisa Cannon**.



It's late afternoon when I arrive in Madrid and, heaving my case up the Metro steps, I'm welcomed by a blast of hot, musty air and the toot of a trumpet somewhere not too far away. A group of burly men in fluorescent mesh string vests stroll past, and, hoping to get my bearings, I follow them towards the sound of swelling chatter.

As we approach the square of Puerta del Sol, with its surrounding buildings draped in rainbow flags, it dawns on me that I've arrived for the final hours of World Pride – a week of open-air concerts, flotilla parades and street parties in the name of LGBT rights.

Back in 2008, these celebrations might have been tainted by the grim reality of the global financial crisis. Spain was hit particularly hard, prompted by the collapse of its property market, which had boomed ever since the launch of the euro in 1999. Austerity followed, along with a series of bank failures and a spike in unemployment, at its height in 2013 reaching 26 per cent.

END OF RECESSION?

Today, the darkest days of recession are over thanks to a combination of quantitative easing, falling oil prices and growing exports from large Spanish companies such as Inditex, owner of Zara and Massimo Dutti, and infrastructure firm Ferrovial, which developed Heathrow's T5 and new T2 and is now working on a joint venture with London's Crossrail.

Smart government policies have also helped to attract foreign investment – from e-commerce giants Alibaba and Amazon, alongside digital and fintech providers such as UST Global, Ebury and Ria, among others.

The capital has done particularly well in appealing to overseas investors, drawing as much as €51 billion in foreign direct investment between 2012 and 2016. “Ever since Spain and Madrid left the economic crisis behind, investment has grown rapidly,” says Rocio Guemes, director of government agency Invest in Madrid. “In 2016, Madrid received investment worth €11.5 billion, up 11.5 per cent on the previous year. This was 47.5 per cent of the total investment received in Spain.”

Much of this funding has been ploughed back into real estate, financial services and construction, as investor confidence grows in the property sector. The country's GDP is now rising steadily, up 0.7 per cent at the end of last year compared with the first quarter of 2017, while unemployment has fallen to a post-crisis low of 18 per cent.

START-UP HOTSPOT

Before the effects of the extra cash could be felt, glimmers of hope began to emerge from the city's tech scene. While the downturn ravaged Madrid's housing and construction sectors, young entrepreneurs capitalised on the low rents and living costs. Support for start-ups began to appear in the capital, with

Spanish telecoms group Telefonica opening its global small business accelerator Wayra in 2012, followed by the 2015 launch of Google's third European outpost for entrepreneurs (after London), offering a space for people to work and collaborate.

“Spain has always been a country of entrepreneurs, but the crisis was a wake-up call,” says Sofia Benjumea, head of Google's Campus Madrid and co-founder of the South Summit start-up conference. “Since 2012, the start-up ecosystem has developed tremendously, both in Madrid and Barcelona, along with new hubs like Valencia and Malaga.”

At that time, Google Campus was present only in London and Tel Aviv (it now has hubs in Warsaw, Seoul and Sao Paulo), so why did it choose Madrid next? “The answer is, why not?” Benjumea says. “Spaniards are not the best at selling themselves, but we have a high level of engineers, a great quality of life, access to talent, and our start-ups have received interest from a lot of major venture capital funds.”

Now in its third year, Campus Madrid has amassed 32,000 members from across Spain, Europe, the US and Latin America, all of whom can use it to work, meet, and host demo days and workshops, for free. Housed in a 19th-century battery factory, the space is bright and airy with colourful murals, a café and clusters of Scandi furniture where pairs of 20- and 30-somethings huddle over their laptops.



The top floor is reserved for late-stage start-ups that have gained residency – there are currently seven of these, from a grocery shopping and delivery app to one that monitors your fertility if you are trying to conceive. Since opening, Campus start-ups have created 2,500 jobs and raised more than €37 million in funding.

FOSTERING INNOVATION

Last year, the European Commission oversaw the launch of a pilot initiative called Madrid Startup House, which is working to establish a one-stop-shop to provide support and guidance for fledgling enterprises. It has been mobilised by communications agency Hugin and Munin and investment facilitator Socios Inversores, whose directors established the project.

Asier Basterretxea-Gomez and Victor Teodosio co-founded Madrid Startup House in 2016. “While we know there is a lot of growth and investment, Madrid’s start-up scene is dispersed – you have something here and there, instead of a nice, thick gravy where you can see who is part of the ecosystem and community,” Basterretxea-Gomez says.

The foundation is working to integrate these parts, as well as to create useful tools such as a start-up community map, an events platform and advice on funding. It has also recently joined Startup City Alliance Europe (SCALE) – an alliance of 19 start-up organisations in 11 cities aimed at creating a broad ecosystem while offering support to firms that are ready to scale up and leverage their European neighbours. Mem-



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About Us

The Balaji Palace Playa Grande is an entirely new full-service luxury experience on the Dominican Republic’s exclusive north coast. Set amidst lush private gardens overlooking a private stretch of beach, this luxury villa features the finest contemporary amenities and services for guests seeking an idyllic retreat.



Campus Madrid has amassed 32,000 members. Housed in a 19th-century battery factory, the space is bright and airy with colourful murals, a café and clusters of Scandi furniture occupied by young people with laptops.

bers include Amsterdam, Helsinki, Paris, Rome and London.

Young start-ups with a great idea but no cash are in luck. One of the foundation's key programmes aims to improve the often demoralising and restrictive process of finding investors. Basterretxea-Gomez says that they are creating an online stage where the country's most popular crowd-funding platforms can facilitate their projects, tap into capital and get in touch with private investors.

"This has uncovered a huge amount of talent," he adds. "We presumed this existed in Spain and Madrid, but it was hidden because [new start-ups] couldn't find ways to fund themselves."

But it isn't only start-ups that have found fertile ground in Madrid's tech sector. Since launching in Spain in 2011, Amazon has opened new locations across the country each year, and, in 2016, unveiled a technology centre in the capital. At the launch, Terry Hanold, vice-president of technology for Amazon EU, said: "Over the past five years we have proven that Spain is an ideal place to innovate. We have found professionals with incredible talent."

Andreu Castellano, corporate communications manager at Amazon Spain, says: "This year, Amazon will create more than 600 new fixed jobs in Spain, which means that in just one year, its workforce will increase by more than 50 per cent."

This autumn, the group's Spanish headquarters plans to relocate to a larger 12,000 sqm space in downtown Madrid with capac-

ity for more than 1,000 staff. The new tech hub will also move here, along with the first team outside of the US that develops software for Amazon Business, the group's B2B marketplace.

A new Amazon logistics centre is also due to open next year in Illescas, Toledo, 40km south of the capital, and is expected to create more than 900 jobs in its first three years.

TOURISM TRENDS

Despite growing security concerns across the continent, tourism here remains strong, with just over nine million visitors in 2016, up almost 2 per cent on the year before. Brands such as Hyatt, W and Four Seasons are set to open hotels in the next two years, while recent city-centre launches include properties from Only You, Melia and NH Hotels.

Monica Torres is general manager of the 83-room NH Collection Palacio de Tepa, which is housed in an 19th-century palace that was once home to the last viceroy of Spain in Mexico. "The next few years are going to be quite challenging, with the opening of Four Seasons and W nearby, so this area is going to be a hot spot," she says.

Meanwhile, an ambitious regeneration project in northern Madrid is likely to up the ante for many businesses when it eventually sees the light of day. Designed to rival international financial hubs such as Canary Wharf and La Défense in Paris, the Madrid Nuevo Norte project plans to transform 268 hectares of industrial wasteland into a busi-

ness zone also encompassing homes, parkland and a metro extension.

While this should be cause for excitement, no one is holding their breath for a timely delivery – the project was first announced in 1994 and has been held up by years of bureaucratic and political wrangling. This summer, a revised version of the project was finally approved and, when work begins late next year, it will be one of the largest urban regeneration projects in Europe, with proposed funding in the region of €6 billion.

"We have studied other projects in Europe to decide which features to replicate and errors to avoid," says a project spokesperson. "Several studies indicate that there is a lack of high-quality offices here. We want big companies to choose Madrid as their headquarters. All companies will be welcome." Although in its early stages, the project has allocated 149 of the 268 hectares to commercial use, and expects to build close to 11,000 new homes.

All of this will aid Madrid in its attempts to attract UK business as Brexit draws near. Invest in Madrid's Rocio Guemes says that the Madrid Nuevo Norte development will be one of the most advanced business zones in Europe.

"We are perceiving interest in the project from foreign companies and, once it is launched, there will be excellent opportunities for investment," she says. Having weathered the storm, it's clear that, today, Madrid is open for business.



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THE INTEREST IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IS BREAKING RECORDS

The Dominican Republic is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Caribbean, which clearly confirm the increasing statistics. In addition, the interest in holiday in the Dominican Republic increases year-round not only during the winter season, but also during summer and other months of the year as well.

According to the statistics of the Central Bank of the Dominican Republic a total of 4 400 124 tourists arrived to the country from January to August 2017. It is 234,926 more than in the same period of 2016, which represents an increase of 5.6%.

Poland received 18 377 visitors in this period that represents an increase of 20.44%. Moreover, only during August there was an

increase of 47.06% in case of Poles. According to the data from the Dominican Civil Aviation Institute (IDAC), airport operations in the Dominican Republic increased by 27% from January to August, with a total of 72 403 international flights.

There are currently 200 airlines flying to the country, and other airlines are interested in establishing routes. Several charter flights operate between Poland and

the Dominican Republic throughout the year. Between June and October, there is a charter flight from Warsaw to Punta Cana once a week and from June to November from Katowice to Punta Cana.

In the winter season from November to March, two charter flights will be operated from Warsaw to Punta Cana, two flights from Warsaw to Puerto Plata and one from Poznań to Punta Cana. From November to

April, there will be operating also one flight from Katowice to Punta Cana.

FAVORITE DESTINATIONS

The popular destination is Cana-Bávaro in the east and La Romana-Bayahibe on the southeast Caribbean coast. From January to August, a total of 2 616 152 passengers landed at the Punta Cana International Airport, which represents 67.7% of all passengers.

In connection with the modernization of Gregorio Luperón Airport and the opening of the port of Amber Cove, there is also a growing demand for the North Coast. Besides Puerto Plata, Cabarete is popular (where international competitions in extreme water sports are held) and the Samana peninsula (that still retains a certain authentic character). Here you can see the Los Haitises National Park or Rincón Beach. In winter, the humpback whales are coming to the Samaná Bay.

GROWING INTEREST IN THE LESS KNOWN LOCATIONS

In recent years, there has been a growing demand from individual travelers. There are many beautiful places in the country that are not widely visited and still remain outside of the main tourist stream. The Ministry

of Tourism of the Dominican Republic is targeting today's campaign to promote less-known locations.

For example, we can mention Bahía de las Águilas beach in the Pedernales region or the desert dunes in Baní. The Islands of Seven Brothers in Montecristi, or the Dudu Lagoon near Cabrera, are also beautiful. To see the American crocodiles, head out to Lake Enriquillo, the largest salt lake in the Caribbean. In the Cordillera Central mountains, there are fascinating Aguas Blancas or Jimenoa waterfalls, and Pico Duarte, the highest peak of the Caribbean (3 087 m above sea level).

The Dominican Government improves the infrastructure and background for tourists in these areas, building of new roads, renovating and expanding airport terminals and ports.

Hotel occupancy averaged around 73.3% in 2012-2017. While in 2012 it reached 70.3%, in 2016 it was 78% and this year 88% already. The destination attracts foreign investors who build here, among other things, hotel chains. Over the past five years, 9,167 new hotel rooms have been constructed in the Dominican Republic and another 15,000 have been approved to start construction. Last year, there were a

total of 75,205 hotel rooms, and another 6,000 will be added this year.

NEW HOTELS

New hotels have been opened, for example, the Real Intercontinental Santo Domingo, the Secrets Cap Cana Resort and Spa, Luxury Bahia Príncipe Fantasía, Riu República Punta Cana, El Carmen Excellence, Azul Sensatori and Now Onix at Uvero Alto, Amanera and Hemingway in San Pedro de Macorís.

MICE DESTINATIONS

The Dominican Republic also has a strong position in the MICE segment thanks to its perfect background for meetings, incentives, congresses and events. For large events of more than 1000 people, Punta Cana and the capital of Santo Domingo suit the best. For medium-sized groups, the Puerto Plata region or La Romana are the ideal choice. Smaller meetings should be targeted to the Samana peninsula, the mountain towns of Jarabacoa - Constanza or to Barahona region.

All information about the Dominican Republic: www.GoDominicanRepublic.pl





A FEAST FOR THE EYES

Samanta Wood tries out a selection of Abu Dhabi's finest restaurants, which offer splendid views of the Arabian Gulf and city skyline.

The UAE capital lies on a T-shaped island jutting into the Arabian Gulf, with hundreds of smaller islands dotted across the seascape. Such a setting makes for some

stunning backdrops, in particular when the sun goes down – from marina and canal to sea and rooftop vistas. Here are eight of Abu Dhabi's best restaurants with a view.

CIPRIANI

This Italian institution is the restaurant to pick for a view of the Formula One Grand Prix racetrack from its circular terrace and window tables. Reservations for the last F1

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V COLLECTION



Sambusek is a popular Lebanese restaurant with a large outdoor terrace overlooking the Al Maryyah waterfront and city skyline.



event of the season (November 24-26) must be made well in advance – otherwise, grabbing a table is easy. The lively boat-themed restaurant perched on Yas Island’s marina serves the traditional dishes Cipriani is known for worldwide – from baked tagliolini and risotto primavera to carpaccio alla Cipriani and eggplant alla Parmigiana. Save room for the vanilla meringue – and don’t forget to start your meal with a Bellini aperitif made with fresh peach purée and prosecco, à la Harry’s Bar.

Open 6pm-12am daily. Three courses Dhs 450 (£94). Yas Marina, Yas Island; tel +971 2657 5400; ciprianiyasisland.com

BUTCHER AND STILL

Abu Dhabi’s latest steakhouse, on Al Maryyah Island in the Four Seasons hotel, boasts a retractable wall that opens up to a patio and a panoramic view across the water to the glittering-by-night Corniche skyline. This 1920s Chicago-themed restaurant echoes the era of Al Capone, complete with bullet casings. The steaks and chops are all USDA natural Black Angus sustainably sourced from a Kansas farm. Try the 1.2kg Tomahawk rib eye, easily shared between two people, if not more.

A pre- or post-dinner cocktail in the buzzing bar is mandatory, if only to have the bartender knock up a martini in a human-sized “Tanqueray No 10 Imperial Martini Shaker”, one of only five in the world. A lift descends two floors to a private dining room reminiscent of a speakeasy, which features a vintage whiskey collection.

Open daily 6pm-12am. Three courses Dhs 500 (£104). Four Seasons Abu Dhabi at Al Maryyah Island; tel +971 2333 2222; butcherandstill.com

SAMBUSEK

Diners can enjoy the outdoor terrace of this popular Lebanese restaurant during Abu Dhabi’s cooler months, overlooking the Al Maryyah waterfront and city skyline. Located in the Rosewood hotel, it is a pristine, elegant space for a quiet lunch, but transforms itself into an upbeat restaurant frequented by Lebanese socialites in the evening. As its name suggests (sambusek is a mini Lebanese savoury pastry), the food is traditional, with the kitchen helmed

PRESS MATERIALS, ARCHIVES



www.royalcaribbeancruises.pl

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by a Lebanese chef. Aside from a business lunch menu, dinner service offers a choice of four set menus, plus the à la carte. Visit with an empty stomach. 12pm-3.30pm, 7pm-12.30am daily. Three courses Dhs 270 (£56). Rosewood Abu Dhabi; tel +971 2813 5550; rosewoodhotels.com

COYA

The contemporary Peruvian restaurant with two locations in London, plus another in Dubai, opened in March this year on Al Maryah Island. Whether opting for a terrace or window table, the views across the capital's skyline are breathtaking, in particular at night. The Incan-designed dining room and separate pisco lounge with a Latino band encourages guests to take to the dancefloor – all adding to Coya's vibrancy. The food mimics the ambience, with dishes oozing punchy flavour and playful presentation, ranging from delicious ceviches, tiraditos (raw seafood in a spicy sauce) and tacos to anticucho skewers and cazuela iron pot dishes. Open daily 12.30pm-5pm, 7pm-12am. Three courses Dhs 300 (£62). The Galleria, Al Maryah Island; tel +971 2306 7000; coyarestaurant.com



CATCH

As the name implies, this restaurant overlooking Abu Dhabi's main white sandy beach and turquoise waters is all about seafood. Mother-of-pearl inspiration embodies the UAE's age-old diving tradition, and enhances a modern interior with a glass-encased open kitchen and a patio. Dishes are Middle Eastern with an Asian twist. Apart from typical fish and seafood dishes, the selection also includes sushi, sashimi, caviar and oysters – with plenty of meat options for carnivores, too. The jumbo crab tartare with a yellow tomato and lime dressing balances texture with flavour. 12pm-1am daily. Three courses Dhs 320 (£67). Nation Riviera Beach Club, Abu Dhabi Corniche (opposite the St Regis); tel +971 2611 0909; catch.ae

Butcher and Still is Abu Dhabi's latest steakhouse, on Al Maryah Island in the Four Seasons hotel.



ASIA DE CUBA

Sitting next to Catch in the same beach club is London and New York concept Asia de Cuba. The view across the Arabian Gulf may be similar, but the terrace is much more expansive with a cocktail bar, beach deck and cabanas that diners can choose to eat in. The flavours and cooking techniques de-

PRESS MATERIALS, ARCHIVES

veloped by the Cuban-born global corporate chef marry Asian with Latino. Ceviche, small plates, salads, signature wok dishes and main courses make up an intriguing à la carte menu. View aside, the shrimp churros and Cuban chicken bao buns are worth a visit alone.

Open daily 6pm-12am, plus 12pm-3pm Fri-Sat. Three courses Dhs 270 (£56). Nation Riviera Beach Club; tel +971 2699 3333; asiadecuba.com/abu_dhabi

RAY'S GRILL

The 360-degree wraparound views of Abu Dhabi and the Arabian Gulf ensure this contemporary steakhouse on the 63rd floor of Jumeirah at Etihad Towers is a prime lunch and dinner bucket list venue. At night, the city's twinkling lights make a mesmerising accompaniment to the steak cuts.

The meat is sourced from around the world – from Argentina and Australia to New Zealand, France and the US, with all cuts dry-aged for 28 days and chargrilled. On top of the steak, a top menu pick is the beef tartare prepared tableside.

Open 7pm-11pm daily. Three courses Dhs 400 (£83). Jumeirah at Etihad Towers; tel +971 2811 5666; jumeirah.com

INAKAYA

The capital's Venetian Village, part of the sprawling Ritz-Carlton complex, mimics a charming neighbourhood with Renaissance-style buildings. Restaurants dot the courtyard, one of which is the Japanese transplant from Japan and New York, Inakaya. Its quaint terrace offers uninterrupted vistas of the canal and the rippling waters. Round the corner and you may just glimpse the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in all its glory, a stunning architectural masterpiece that rivals the Taj Mahal. Dining at Inakaya is interactive theatre. The focus is on robatayaki – the Japanese art of grilling, which is as much about performance as it is about cooking style – as well as sushi and sashimi rolled and sliced by the chefs mastering their knife skills.

Open daily 12.30pm-11pm. Three courses Dhs 260 (£54). Venetian Village, Ritz-Carlton Abu Dhabi Grand Canal; tel +971 2404 1921; venetianvillage.ae/inakaya



NEW OPENINGS

Abu Dhabi has several new and forthcoming restaurant openings, all with a view:

- Cho Gao (pictured) at Intercontinental Abu Dhabi's Marina Walk opened in the summer, serving pan-Asian cuisine from Indonesia, Japan, Vietnam and Thailand.
- Toro Toro, chef Richard Sandoval's Latin American concept (also present in Dubai) opened last month at Jumeirah at Etihad Towers.
- This month sees two very different openings at Al Maryah Island – imported casual sushi concept 99 Sushi Bar and acclaimed French-Mediterranean restaurant La Petite Maison.
- The first ever Buddha Bar Beach will open before the end of the year at the St Regis Saadiyat Island, offering pan-Asian cuisine in a beach club setting.

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GOT IT COVERED

Stuart Husband recommends five coats for the colder season.



Almost every man looks more so in a belted trench coat, said the American journalist and wisecracker Sydney J Harris. It's true that the topcoat, as well as being a practical necessity for the less temperate of seasons, leads from the front in setting the tone for an autumn-winter wardrobe.

So what should you look for when choosing this key piece of kit? First, go for a timeless style; if you buy on-trend, you'll be doing it all over again next year. Second, think versatility; you want something that complements casual Friday – or even lazy Sunday – as well as sprucing up the working week. Third, pay attention to fit; size up if it's too snug with a jacket or jumper beneath it, and get the sleeves tailored if necessary.

If you want to look “more so” this season, then these five coats – from a cashmere covert to, yes, a belted trench – are your essential enhancers.

◀ DIGGING FOR VICTORY

The trench coat is a big story this season, but Boss ploughs its own furrow with a sharply fitted, plum-toned, tonic-sheened take on the classic. The double-breasted fastening, notch lapels, self-fabric belt and water-repellent coating all lend refined polish; whether you're layering over tailoring or enriching a weekend wardrobe, it more than makes the cut.

Price: £530; hugoboss.com

► **COVETABLE COVERT**

The covert was originally designed as an equestrian coat, which makes the camel and brown “Blakeney” from Turnbull and Asser a decided thoroughbred; made in the UK from ultra-luxe Scottish cashmere, the fitted camel-toned body is offset by a rich chocolate-brown velvet collar. Guaranteed to upgrade any outfit to business class – at a gallop.

Price: £1,950; turnbullandasser.co.uk



◀ **CHECK MATE**

Designer Lucas Ossendrijver's pieces for Lanvin always aim to “elevate the everyday”, and this double-breasted checked wool coat, tailored in Italy, is no exception. Cut narrow and long, with breezy peak lapels and a sumptuous black satin lining, it will frame a shirt and tie or a cashmere roll neck with equally effortless facility.

Price: £2,080; matchesfashion.com

► **REVERSING INTO TOMORROW**

A mac is an essential weapon in your armoury as inclemency returns, and this reversible single-breasted number from Gieves and Hawkes gives you two for one – Side A features a sharp navy and burgundy-checked wool for brighter days, while Side B brings a showerproof cotton canvas to the fore. Wear as your mood – and the forecast – dictates.

Price: £1,495; gievesandhawkes.com



◀ **PEA SUPER**

There's nothing petty about Paul Smith's version of the staple that was originally designed for the British navy's petty officers; this double-breasted, navy wool-cashmere version, with its modern cut and throat-tab fastening, makes for a softer but no less smart alternative to a traditional topcoat, whether you're splicing a mainbrace or submitting to the morning commute.

Price: £395; paulsmith.com

BCD TRAVEL TAKES OVER AIR CLUB SHARES



Over the past 12 years, we have gotten to know each other's culture and growth goals very well," said Stewart Harvey, BCD Travel's president of Europe, Middle East and Africa.



BCD Travel has acquired Polish-based travel agency Air Club Travel, established in Warsaw in 1990. This acquisition is aimed at extending BCD Travel's global network and fitting into the company's pursuit of growth opportunities.

"We have a long-standing partnership with Air Club Travel, based on mutual trust and a shared commitment to quality. Over the past 12 years, we have gotten to know each other's culture and growth goals very well," said Stewart Harvey, BCD Travel's president of Europe, Middle East and Africa.

"The take-over is a logical step in our cooperation," he added.

The full team, approximately 100 dedicated employees, will remain located in Warsaw and will keep operating under the Air Club Travel brand. The company has approximately 2,000 customers; many of these clients have been with Air Club Travel since the company's inception. More than 100 global clients are already served in cooperation with BCD Travel. Air Club Travel has also been the official representative of BCD Meetings & Events in Poland since 2016.

"We're very excited by the opportunities that this acquisi-

tion creates for our future," said Stanislaw Modlinski, general manager of Air Club Travel.

"We are used to working together with BCD Travel, so it is with full confidence that we start this new journey. Together we will continue to thrive and add value for our customers and for our staff, who will now benefit from even greater long-term career growth opportunities."

The acquisition of Air Club Travel is the latest in a series of investments BCD Travel has made in recent years to grow its business across the globe. Other acquisitions have included Nordic travel agency Ticket Biz, BCD Travel Brasil Turismo, U.S.-based World Travel Services, U.K.-based international events agency Zibrant and marketing logistics agency Plan 365, Inc. The company has also increased its ownership stake in its operations in China, Hong Kong and Dubai, as well as in U.S.-based Acendas Travel. BCD has also acquired technology assets from mobile technology company GetGoing.

ABOUT BCD TRAVEL

BCD Travel helps companies make the most of what they spend on travel. For travelers,

this means keeping them safe and productive, and equipping them to make good choices on the road. For travel and procurement managers, it means advising them on how to grow the value of their travel program. The company is present in 108 countries with almost 13,000 creative, committed and experienced people. It's also how it's able to maintain the industry's most consistent client retention rate (95% over the past 10 years), with 2016 sales of US\$24.6 billion.

ABOUT BCD GROUP

BCD Group is a market leader in the travel industry. The privately-owned company was founded in 1975 by John Fentener van Vlissingen and consists of BCD Travel (global corporate travel management), Travix (online travel: CheapTickets, Vliegwinkel, BudgetAir, Flugladen and Vayama), Park 'N Fly (off-airport parking), Airtrade Holland (consolidation and fulfillment) and joint venture Parkmobile International (mobile parking applications). BCD Group employs over 14,000 people and operates in 108 countries with total sales of US\$26.4 billion, including US\$10.4 billion partner sales.

Historyczny, doskonale zaadaptowany do potrzeb turystyki obiekt, malownicze otoczenie i szereg atrakcji, to doskonałe miejsce na organizację spotkań biznesowych, szkoleń, sympozjów oraz wyjazdów integracyjnych. Jako prestiżowy hotel konferencyjny gwarantujemy szereg udogodnień dla prelegentów oraz uczestników, pozwalających skutecznie połączyć pracę z aktywnym wypoczynkiem.

Urokliwie położony w samym sercu Borów Dolnośląskich, 12 kilometrów od Bolesławca, Zamek Kliczków stanowi osiągalną dla każdego, a jednocześnie tajemniczą, zieloną enklawę.

Doskonałe połączenie zapewniają autostrady: A4 i A18. To tylko około 100 kilometrów do stolicy regionu, Wrocławia, 50 kilometrów do Górlitz i niecałe 150 kilometrów do Drezna!

Zamek Kliczków znajduje się w odległości od lotnisk:

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- Szlaki rowerowe i piesze w Borach Dolnośląskich

Restauracja zamkowa nadzorowana przez Szefa Kuchni Mariusza Kucharczaka w swoim menu bazuje na lokalnych, tradycyjnych recepturach, zaopatrując się u lokalnych dostawców w produkty najwyższej jakości, dzięki czemu kuchnia zamkowa została uhonorowana certyfikatem **Europejskiej Sieci Regionalnego Dziedzictwa Kulinarnego** przyznawanym przez Unię Europejską.



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HOTELS AND CONFERENCES

To select the best hotel as a venue for a conference, you should consider several factors, with proper location, standard of service and amenities, being on the top of the list.

There are a number of hotels in Poland that offer good conference facilities. But is there a perfect hotel for holding such an event? And what criteria should it meet to satisfy conference organizers?

LOCATION AND QUALITY

To select the best hotel as a venue for a conference, you should consider several factors, with proper location, standard of service and amenities, being on the top of the list. The success of your event depends largely on the location of its venue and this aspect is often mentioned as crucially important for both organizers and delegates. The most essential, however, is the overall appearance and standard of the place, as it often determines how prestigious the event is.

CONFIGURATION OPTIONS

A very important feature of the hotel that turns into a conference centre for a few days, is its versatility. You need to find out in advance if it's possible to arrange the room to your needs and, if necessary, modify its configuration. Also, check what PA system

is offered by the hotel. In this way, even if you are organizing a conference with parallel discussion panels, it will be possible to configure the space to then needs of the event without incurring additional costs.

Conference facilities in many hotels feature state-of-the-art AV equipment and advanced multimedia services. However, it's a good idea to check if the access to all the equipment is included in the price of renting a conference room or if you will have to pay extra for some of it.

MOUNTAINS OR THE SEA?

The choice of a venue for your conference is, by no means, an easy task. Note that the properties situated at the seaside, in the mountains or in popular tourist cities, as well as those set in lush nature, are usually booked up well in advance. Statistics don't lie: delegates and event organizers are primarily attracted to both modern hotels with sophisticated design, and those housed in castles, palaces or mansions.

AMENITIES AND ATTRACTIONS

A conference venue must be comfortable for guests and this

is determined by a number of factors, such as access to daylight with blackout facilities, comfortable furniture, including adjustable ergonomic chairs with breathable fabric, a space to relax during breaks, and access to fast free wifi.

The atmosphere of the hotel, created mainly by its committed staff, is also very important, as is the standard of the whole property, room amenities, as well as restaurant facilities and easy access to the attractions of the city.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Organizing a conference is a great undertaking and a real challenge. Therefore, to make you life a little bit easier, you should ask about additional services offered by the hotel. These can include interpreting equipment hire, hostess training or arranging catering for both the conference and the closing reception or banquet. The participants will also certainly be happy to use the spa and wellness zone, stroll through the park surrounding the hotel, or take part in the night-life of the city where the property is located.

What makes

A CONFERENCE A SUCCESS?

In recent years, we have observed a change in customer attitudes towards the organisation of meetings and other events. Presently, the whole focus is on delegates and their needs. Therefore, all the elements of your event should be customized in such a way that a delegate can be fully involved in it. The multitude of conferences, workshops and seminars forces event organizers to think outside the box to positively surprise their guest and stand out from the competition.

In Vienna House hotels we offer, for example, the so-called "creative meeting concept". This means that the staff can arrange and the room of your choice in an unusual way, using various types of furniture, such as armchairs, pouffes, sofa or even loungers. All this to adjust the décor of the room to the nature and purpose of the meeting. In addition to standard meeting rooms, event organizers like to use the spaces outside the hotel. In summer this can be a garden or an outdoor terrace. Workshops or brainstorming meetings, organised on loungers among lush greenery, evoke positive emotions and positively impact the final impressions of the participants.

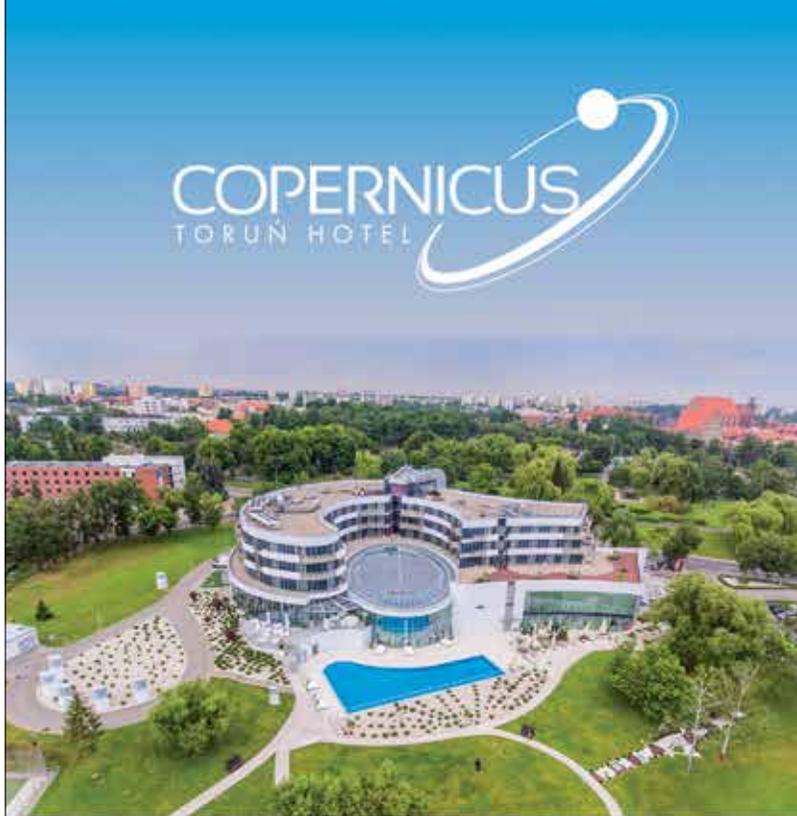
Note that all target groups are different. so the way you set up tables, chairs, extra items, as well as organize coffee breaks, should also vary. Snacks can be placed on

pallets, ladders, unusual buffet tables, and served in fancy containers. Coffee breaks may relate to the specifics of your business and industry. Customers also more and more often opt for healthy coffee breaks, where instead of the traditional croissants, guests are served vegetables, fruits and local specialities. In our hotels, we also offer an unconventional approach to organizing business meetings through the so-called (non)-ordinary (non)-conferences. Knowing the purpose of the meeting, we are able to offer our customers a one-of-the-kind formula, which will get the participants fully involved in the event. Open Fishbowl, Knowledge Café or Speed Geeking. Such meetings, which are very popular abroad, are also slowly catching on in Poland.

Another important factor that contributes to the overall success of a conference is the use of new technologies. Can you imagine attending a business event without access to fast wifi? This is already a standard feature, but one of the latest trends is using special apps that allow you to keep in touch with speakers, evaluate presentations and share materials. Networking is also an important part of every conference. Therefore, it's worth arranging the space close to the conference room, where the participants can feel at ease making new contacts and chatting.

To sum up, a few creative ideas combined with the delegate-oriented approach can make your conference a true success and guarantee that the next event of this type will attract a lot of interest.

Katarzyna Niezgoda, Director of Business Development, Vienna House Poland



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GET CREATIVE

Whether you're a professional or an aspiring creator, there are all manner of devices to help you make music, pictures and videos. **Steve Dinneen** reveals the best.

If you're in the creative industries, travelling can severely eat into your working day. A long-haul flight might be an acceptable mobile office for an accountant or lawyer, but a musician or illustrator may struggle to make any serious progress. The latest creative gadgets, however, offer a range of solutions. Increased processing power has made intensive tasks such as video editing feasible on

devices that would have seemed impossibly small a few years ago, and what would once have required an entire desktop studio can now fit into your carry-on luggage.

The proliferation of smartphones means we now carry powerful computers around in our pockets, which open up all kinds of possibilities for controlling devices such as complex musical instruments that would

once have required a PC to work. Plug a pair of headphones into the Roli Lightpad, for instance, and you can start creating your next electro hit single from the comfort of the first class lounge.

Whether you want to create beautiful photographs, crisp 4K video, sweet music or wonderful illustrations, there is the perfect gadget out there for you – here are some of the best.



Best for... travel snaps

LEICA Q TITANIUM GREY

Price: £3,570

leica-camera.com

This pocket-sized compact camera is a great way of taking professional-quality photographs without having to carry an entire suitcase worth of gear. It has the fastest lens in its class and a full-frame sensor, making it great at shooting in low light; useful if you don't have space for a bulky flash unit. This new version is the same as the hugely popular Leica Q but comes with a classy titanium grey lacquer finish, with a matching strap made from climbing rope. When it comes to taking incredible photos and looking great while you're doing it, Leica is in a class of its own – in the right hands, it's worth every penny.

Best for... iPhone shots

EXOLENS PRO WITH OPTICS BY ZEISS

Price: £190

shop.zeiss.co.uk

The iPhone is already capable of taking great pictures, but this is the device if you're determined to boost your phone photography game. The clip-on lens essentially turns your phone into a telephoto lens, allowing you to take crisp pictures from a distance. Many iPhone camera accessories are little more than gimmicks, but the involvement of Zeiss, which has been making lenses for more than 170 years, suggests otherwise, and the results you can achieve with it are impressive. It's built especially for the iPhone so won't work with Android, and is compatible with the iPhone 7 Plus.

Best for... instant gratification

FUJIFILM INSTAX MINI 90

Price: £119

currys.co.uk

This beautiful little camera (it's only 11.3cm x 9.2cm x 5.7cm) is a brilliant option for those who love the retro aesthetic of instant photography. It has a built-in flash, a rechargeable battery and a host of shooting modes, including double exposure. It also gives you more control over your pictures than most instant cameras, with the ability to control the length of exposure to create effects such as light-streaks. It uses narrow, portrait-oriented film rather than the square film made famous by Polaroid instant cameras, but it's still a great way to capture memories from your trips abroad.



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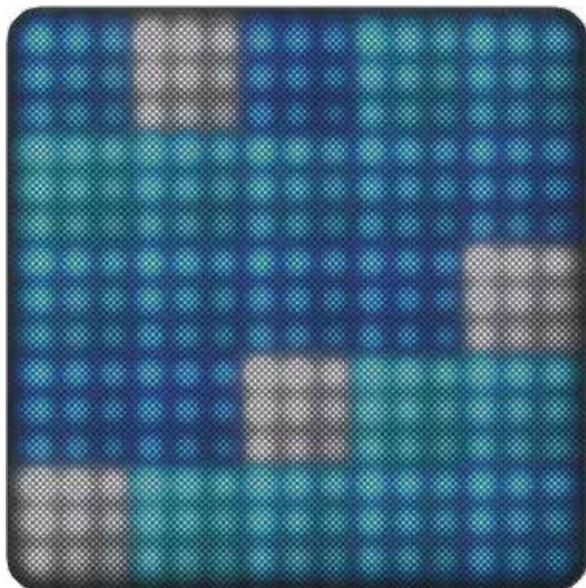
Best for... tunes and podcasts

IMORE H1707 TRIPLE DRIVER OVER-EAR HEADPHONES

Price: £200

Imore.com

Launched this summer, the H1707 headphones from British audio manufacturer IMore promise a “high-fidelity listening experience”. With a Piezo ceramic driver and bass reflex system, they have been approved by Grammy award-winning sound engineer Luca Bignardi. They are built from machined metal in eye-catching black and bronze, and come with an oxygen-free copper cable that you can plug into your laptop, phone or in-flight entertainment system. The cushioned ear pads mean they are comfortable to wear for extended periods and can fold inwards for easy packing. A storage bag is provided.



Best for... making music

ROLI LIGHTPAD BLOCK

Price: £169.95

store.roli.com

The Block needs to be seen to be believed. In the hands of a keen musician, it can be used to lay down entire electronic tracks using an inbuilt drum machine and more than 100 individual sounds. The tactile silicone rubber surface is sensitive to how hard you press it – a harder jab equals a louder noise. Connecting to the Noise app on your iPhone (there is a beta version on Google Play) allows you to switch the Block into its various sound modes and to change the softly glowing colours so you know which parts of the surface will play what sound. At 9.4cm x 9.4cm, it’s small enough to fit into your pocket, and you can snap multiple Blocks together to create a mobile studio.

Best for... laying backing tracks

ZOOM ARQ AERO RHYTHMTRAK

Price: £499

juno.co.uk

If you want to make beautiful sound on the go, give the Zoom Arq a shake. The instrument, which looks a bit like a tambourine, has 96 velocity and pressure sensitive pads that allow you to play various drum sounds, as well as put on a programmable light display. It’s part drum machine, part looper and reacts in real time to your movements, distorting the sound and triggering new sections of your music. It is composed of two parts – the Base Station, which contains 468 instrument sounds and 70 synthesizer sounds, and the Ring Controller, which you “play” by moving it around (it connects to the Base Station via Bluetooth).





BOSCH

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www.nofrost.pl

Bosch. Marka nr 1 w Europie wśród dużego sprzętu gospodarstwa domowego. Źródło: Euromonitor, ilościowa sprzedaż, 2016.





Best for... action shooting

GOPRO HERO 5 BLACK

Price: £400
shop.gopro.com

The world of home video has come on a lot since the days of *You've Been Framed*. This tiny device – far smaller than your average compact camera – can shoot 4K video and high-resolution stills and can even react to voice commands. With an additional GoPro Plus subscription (£6 per month), you can upload your videos and pictures directly to the cloud so you never need to worry about losing your work. Not that you're likely to break this thing – like all GoPros, it's designed to last, and is completely waterproof. The two-inch display also allows you to edit your clips on the go.

Best for... editing

MACBOOK PRO 13-INCH

Price: £1,749
apple.com

Apple remains the laptop maker of choice for those in the creative industries, and the new version moves it even further ahead of the pack. The latest release features the excellent Touch Bar, a second colour display that runs above the keyboard in place of the F keys (only available on the £1,749 and higher versions). This can be customised to do just about anything, and it's a godsend for video editors, allowing them to scroll effortlessly through footage with the swipe of a finger. It's also a dream to use, with a retina display that's great for both making and watching video.

Best for... VR-ready video

NIKON KEYMISSION 360

Price: £430
europe-nikon.com

With virtual reality becoming increasingly common, the ability to shoot 360-degree video is slowly moving from a niche pursuit to the mainstream. The Nikon KeyMission 360 is a great starting point. The hand-held unit consists of two ultra wide-angle lenses, one on each side, allowing it to capture the entire field of view. The film can then be watched back on a VR headset or on a desktop PC, and directed around by moving the camera with a mouse or trackpad. If you're into extreme sports, this is especially good for capturing the panoramic glory of skydives or ski-runs.



Best for... drawing

WACOM MOBILE STUDIO PRO 13

Price: from £1,400
us-store.wacom.com

This is the pro choice for drawing on the go, and it now comes in a carry-on friendly 13-inch version. Able to run top-end creative software including Photoshop and Adobe Premier, it's an illustrator's dream gadget, meaning you'll be able to work on professional commissions at 35,000ft. The display is excellent and it has virtually no lag when drawing. It has an 8-megapixel rear-facing and 5-megapixel front-facing camera. And while the plastic chassis won't win any design awards, it's robust enough to survive being chucked in a bag. The box includes the industry-leading Wacom Pro Pen 2 stylus, which boasts 8,192 pressure sensitivity levels.



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FRANKFURT AIRPORT MEETS ALL PASSENGER NEEDS



Marzena Mróz
interviews
Thomas Kirner,
Vice President for
Service Quality at
Frankfurt Airport.

Frankfurt Airport is one of the world's largest aviation hubs. How many passengers does it handle daily and per year?

You can truthfully say that the world comes together in Frankfurt, thanks to our excellent airport. In 2016 more than 60 million passengers passed through here, and this year we registered the first September in which the volume exceeded the six million mark, climbing to about 6.2 million. September 29, 2017 was also the busiest day ever, with a total of 225,801 passengers.

What's so unique about this airport?

Many things make us unique, and I'd like to mention a few of them. First of all, Frankfurt Airport is home to 89 airlines that directly serve 262 destinations in 100 countries. Second, Frankfurt Airport ranks among the world's leading

international transportation hubs; it also combines air, rail and road travel and is therefore Germany's intermodal gateway to the world. Among other things, you can get between here and central Frankfurt in just 10 minutes. We also have a new hotel, called the My Cloud Transit Hotel, that's conveniently located inside the transit zone. While we're on the subject, we offer our customers unlimited free Wi-Fi and a wide range of free entertainment in the terminals. I'd also like to cite a couple of impressive figures on Frankfurt Airport: last year 3.2 million vehicles used the parking facilities here, and nearly 27.5 million luggage items passed through our baggage handling system.

What do passengers expect from such a large hub these days? Do you see any changes?

In recent years the average dwell time at airports has increased to about 140 minutes, a trend that has also magnified the expectations of passengers and visitors. This in turn has changed how airports define their role. The focus used to be exclusively on providing transportation services, but today's air travelers also expect a wide range of attractive and personalized services and facilities. In response, airports are reinventing themselves as worlds of experience, moving away from simply being infrastructure and adopting a new customer-centric role with services designed to enhance the passenger experience. Everyone at Frankfurt Airport works hard day in and day out to meet passengers' widely varying wishes and needs.

What does the airport offer families with children?

It can be hard for kids to sit still



during a long flight. It's therefore an excellent idea for them to let off steam beforehand by climbing, running or playing with other children in one of the play areas in the terminals. These facilities are an important place for families to head to at the airport.

Parents of small children know how unpleasant it can get at the airport when excitement about the trip makes them tired and cranky. Fortunately, they can borrow a stroller free of charge in either terminal and comfortably push their child all the way to the gate while preserving their peace of mind. The available strollers are suitable for children six months and older up to a maximum body weight of 15 kilos. Afterward they can simply be left at the gate for airport staff to collect them.

There's a Gaming World where individuals and whole families can burn off excess energy before a flight. It features all sorts of entertaining games, ranging from classic Tetris and dancing games all the way to car racing and table soccer. Multi-player games also let passengers compete against one another.

Cinema enthusiasts can visit one of three Movie Worlds, where they can watch a wide selection of feature-length movies, documentaries and popular series.

What amenities are there for business travelers?

We offer business travelers a wide range of services and facilities. For example, if they want to check their email or polish a presentation while waiting to board a flight they can use one of the well-equipped Work&Connect workbenches that we have installed at every other gate. While enjoying an excellent view of the airport's apron, they can use free Wi-Fi to surf the Internet or take advantage of power sockets and USB ports to recharge their portable electronic devices. There are



Everyone at Frankfurt Airport goes out of their way day in and day out to meet passengers' widely varying wishes and needs.



even inductive charging stations for recharging compatible smartphones without a cable.

Fully equipped offices and conferences rooms can be rented in the THE SQUAIRE Business Center very close to the airport, and appropriate rooms for conferences and meetings are also available both in the Airport Conference Center across from Terminal 1 and in

the Main Airport Center just a few minutes' drive from the airport.

At Frankfurt Airport, we also take a good care of passengers' cars while they are away, and this also applies to business travelers. The parking facility at Terminal 1 includes extra-wide premium spaces for them to take advantage of just a short walk from the check-in hall.



4 HOURS IN... FRANKFURT

Olivia Palamountain discovers experimental art, subterranean speakeasies and hearty cuisine in the German financial capital.



BAHNHOFSVIERTEL

Start in the infamous Bahnhofsviertel, the red light district, which is neatly situated on the doorstep of the Hauptbahnhof station. Lined with sex shops, budget stores, kebab joints and the odd brothel, it's certainly got character – but why bother visiting? Because the “train station quarter” is the city's hottest district, full of edgy coffee shops, clubs and bright young things. For a taste of the scene, check out Amp (Gallusanlage 2;

ampyourself.de), which pumps out caffeine by day and tunes by night, studio-cum-café and bar Plank (Elbestrasse 15; barplank.de), and Maxie Eisen (Munchener Strasse 18; maxieeisen.com), a deli and cocktail bar named after a German-Jewish gangster from Chicago. In true speakeasy style, many of the hippest hangouts are not easy to find. Underground supper haunt Club Michel lies above a thrift and luggage store at 12 Munchener Strasse and is well worth a visit.

If you're lucky, you may also catch the Taunusstrasse Arts and Bites festival (tab-ffm.de), a monthly art market in the 1970s Kaiserpassage.

LOHNINGER

Hungry? Head towards the Untermainbrücke, past Willy Brandt Platz and over the bridge to the south bank, and you'll find Lohninger, one of Frankfurt's best-kept lunchtime secrets. This family-run res-



This year, Portikus is celebrating its 30th birthday with an anniversary project Portikus XXX that aims to connect Frankfurt to the gallery with new works presented in urban spaces throughout the city.

restaurant offers well-heeled locals a concise menu of classic Austrian cuisine, including the best wiener schnitzel in town and a fluffy, caramelised kaiserschmarrn that will make you question everything you thought you knew about pancakes.

The “Radetzky menu”, so called after Strauss’s double-quick march, is the best bet if you’re tight for time, or get stuck into a simple but effective pastrami sandwich with pickles. Schweizer Strasse 1; lohninger.de

FRANKFURTER SENFGALERIE

Continue south on Schweizer Strasse for a couple of minutes and you will arrive at Frankfurter Senfgalerie. An homage to mustard, this tidy shop sells more than 150 varieties of the stuff, along with salts, spices, vinegars, oils and chutneys. All products are of the finest quality and predominantly produced in Germany, with many mustards still made in historic mills around the country.

Local specialities include an apple wine mustard, with added oomph from the city’s famous tippel, and green sauce mustard, a herby bestseller made from parsley, chives, chervil, cress and sorrel, produced exclusively for the shop. Splash out and pimp your next sausage with the perfect Frankfurt souvenir. frankfurter-senfgalerie.de

PORTIKUS

A 12-minute walk along Schaumainkai and north over Frankfurt’s oldest bridge, the Alte Brücke, will lead you to the island home of Portikus. First conceived in 1987 and associated with the renowned art academy Stadelshule, the current space was designed by Christoph Mackler in 2006 and enjoys a reputation as one of the world’s leading centres for experimental art, dedicated to exhibiting, publishing and discussing both emerging and established artists. This year, Portikus is celebrating its 30th birthday with a special programme of exhi-

bitions. Anniversary project Portikus XXX is an evolving show that aims to connect Frankfurt to the gallery with new works presented in urban spaces throughout the city. Open Tues, Thurs-Sun 11am-6pm, Wed 11am-8pm; free entry.

portikus.de/en

CONDIT COUTURE

Continue north over the bridge, take a left on Mainkai and a right on Fahrtoor. It’s only about an eight-minute stroll but should be enough to warrant a cheeky pick-me-up at Condit Couture. This confectioners and bakery creates sweet sensations at haute couture level, fusing traditional French techniques with 21st-century imagination and flair. There’s everything from black forest pies and sachertorte to unicorn meringues and lemon and rosemary gateaux. Warm apple strudel and a creamy hot chocolate is a must.

conditcouture.com



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@businessstraveller.pl

Cancelled flights

I bought several Ryanair tickets, but some of my flights were cancelled, most of them at the last minute. The carrier offered me a refund, but I'm not interested in it, because a new ticket for a flight with a different airline will cost me more. What are my rights? What am I entitled to?

Marcin

Dear Marcin,

A situation when a flight gets cancelled is a very unfortunate one, especially when you have a tight deadline and an important business meeting to attend. Unfortunately, 'cheap' doesn't always mean 'good' and one may wonder if opting for a no-frills airline is a proper solution when planning a business travel.

In the recent months Ryanair has cancelled several hundred flights and has now announced plans for further cancellations for the upcoming season. The carrier admitted frankly that the situation was a result of improper planning and management of the working hours of its pilots. To make matters worse, it took a long time for the Irish airline to publish clear information on passengers rights in such situation. Ryanair did this only after civil aviation authorities of the countries whose citizens were affected threatened to take legal actions against the airline.

Your rights are dependent on the reason for the cancellation of your flight and the time when you were notified of the cancellation.

Cancellation of flights at the last minute for reasons attributable to the airline (such as messing up pilot's holidays) imposes on the carrier's certain obligations under the EU regulation on the protection of the rights of passengers (a refund for the ticket, providing care, free rebooking). If the flight was cancelled well in advance and you were notified of the fact at least two weeks in advance, the carrier's liability is limited, you can only demand a refund of the ticket or a change of your reservation. If you were notified less than two weeks before the departure, the liability of the carrier is bigger and you have the right to change your reservation to another carrier. The regulations also specify in detail the time of arrival at the destination. You should always file a complaint with the airline.

However, the situation is slightly different if a flight with Ryanair was part of a tourist package. In such a case, the travel agent (as a tour operator) is obliged to arrange an alternative service and the cost of it may not be transferred onto the passenger.

Booking for a company

I need to book a room at a hotel, but I still don't know the name of the employee who will stay there. Can I book the room for my company instead of a person? Can I make a pre-payment since our employee won't have a company card? Our travel agency doesn't want to transfer money and it also requires us to provide the name of the person who will take the trip.

Aleksandra

Dear Aleksandra,

Air and hotel bookings are always made for a specific person, so I'm afraid the name is necessary. A certain exception are group bookings when a certain number of seats or rooms are blocked in the system. In this case, however, a final list of names must be sent to the hotel or airline within a fixed period of time before the service is provided. As registration regulations and safety regulations vary from country to country, hotels belonging to the same network may have different procedures.

Some hotels, which cooperate with a company or a travel agency (based on a corporate agreement) can accept bookings without a person's name, using the company's name instead. The name of the employee must be provided before they arrive at the hotel, otherwise the reservation may be cancelled with all the consequences, including cancellation fee. Most hotels allow for a change of the name in the booking, so you can make a standard reservation and change the name at the last minute.

In the era of advanced credit card payments, pre-payments to hotels for business trips stays are being discarded. Some hotels may accept payment by credit card from another person (third party payment). As a rule, to do so, one will need to fill in certain forms and the hotel may also require a scan of the owner's passport and the card itself. Such third person payment may also have fixed maximum limits (e.g. US\$500).

In this particular case, I think it would be the most convenient to ask the hotel to send a pro-forma invoice and make a transfer before the employee arrives at the hotel. Travel agencies make pre-payments for package tours, while payments for individual stays are very rare.

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