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STYLE PERFECT

First impressions
count

SILVER SHADOW

ASIAN EXPERIENCE

LOT CARGO

FLYING A CARGO BIRD



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We all know how important part style plays in the life of a businessperson. A style-conscious person should look fashionable and classy. This, of course, requires at least basic knowledge of the current fashion trends. However, very often we don't have enough time to observe the latest trends. That is why, our feature article will tell you what to do in order to become a stylish businessperson without devoting too much time to learning the elaborate complexities of fashion and without spending a fortune (although some stylists can be quite pricey).

I hope you have noticed that our magazine is devoting more and more space to articles on style, fashion, and the likes, since they seem an indispensable in the life of a businessperson. We write about technical novelties, interesting cars, wine, as well as about fashion, and cuisine. In this issue we will have a closer look at Tuscan delicacies. The choice is not accidental as the Italian cuisine seems to be the most dominant at various business meetings.

Also in this issue, you will find out more about various stylish places such as elegant Hilton Hotel in Gdańsk, Czarny Potok in Zakopane, Cavalieri in Rome, Hyatt Regency in Kyoto, or Ritz-Carlton in Tokyo. We also write about an excellent connection to Tokyo, and ad regards European destinations, we recommend a connection from Budapest. We also visit the airport in Brussels, and check the latest news

from LOT Polish Airlines, Finnair, and Royal Air Maroc. As for exotic journeys, we encourage you to visit Dubai which seems to be an excellent spot to organize one of your incentive trips.

In this issue, however, we haven't forgotten about some less serious topics, such as relaxation. We all know how important it is to take a short break from all our business duties. That is why, we recommend a cruise aboard a luxurious Silver Shadow cruiser, and a visit to one of two elegant Club Med's villages in Mexico.

Enjoy your reading.



Robert Grzybowski
Publisher BT Poland



Read more details! Visit businessstraveller.pl

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Business Traveller Awards LOT

The British edition of *Business Traveller* has announced this year's awards. The award for the best Eastern European airline was presented to LOT Polish Airlines. It's worth noting that this is the thirteenth time LOT was distinguished by *Business Traveller* UK.

— "Our satisfaction from receiving this award is all the greater that our services and high standards are appreciated by the passengers themselves. This only motivates us to do even more and it is my hope that we will receive this award again next year," said Sebastian Mikosz, President of the Management Board of LOT Polish Airlines.

Business Traveller is a leading magazine in the British market among periodicals dedicated to business-class travellers. Its readers are predominantly top managers and experts from fields such as finance. It is published in 55,000 issue editions.



Positive Results

LOT's net results for the first seven months of the year are almost 60 million higher than for the previous year. The airline has not only carried significantly more passengers than planned, but has also successfully achieved its scheduled income for the year. LOT continues both to head the airlines operating in Poland and to record a more dynamic rise in numbers than its equals in Europe.

— The positive effects of restructuring are visible to the naked eye. Despite the crisis which persists on the airline carrier market, the negative impact of the exchange rates and the considerable increase in aviation fuel prices, LOT has succeeded in improving its average mean returns. It has also maintained its position as the leader on the Polish market and is making good the losses of previous years, says Sebastian Mikosz, the Chairman of the LOT Polish Airlines. What pleases us the most is the fact that passengers are returning to board our planes so readily.

New Destinations

On 15 September LOT Polish Airlines opened a new connection between Warsaw and the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi. This destination is the latest step in the expansion of the Polish carrier's rich 'Eastern' route network, which has been in progress since the beginning of 2010. The prices of return tickets start at PLN 1137. Flights on the Warsaw-Tbilisi route will take place three times a week. The flight on board Embraer 175 will take 3 hours and 20 minutes.

On 27 October, LOT will launch a direct connection to Cairo. The prices for a roundtrip ticket start at PLN 1167. The Warsaw-Cairo flight lasts 3 hours and 50 minutes and 3 departures a week are scheduled. The route will be flown by Boeing 737-400. The flights are operated by Embraer 175 aircraft and last 3 hours.

Following the success of the Warsaw-Beirut connection, LOT Polish Airlines is to open a new connection to the Middle East on 2 November. The journey from Warsaw to Damascus - Syrian capital will take 3 hours and 40 minutes and will be available three times a week: on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. The prices of round-trip tickets start at PLN 1184. The flights will be operated using Embraer 175 aircraft.

A New Interior of Warsaw's **SomePlace Else**

The renowned bar and restaurant located in Sheraton in Warsaw has been completely refurbished and now attracts admirers of beautiful objects, good sound, and original interior.



It was a real challenge for the designers to create interior which would be both appealing to the tastes of regular customers who remember the previous decor of the place, and also fresh in terms of quality.

The main idea for the new interior of SomePlace Else was to create a wall with several recesses to remind the customers of the previous image of the place. That is why, you will find there old radios, musical instruments, as well as gold records and gramophones.

The brand new bar of SomePlace Else is located centrally. It consists of a steel block covered with metal mosaics and with a glass top. The bar was finished with black walnut and in its middle there is a display of large alcohol display. All of these complemented with shiny aluminium bar stools designed by Starck.

The friendly atmosphere of SomePlace Else is also retained thanks to huge 1.5 metre Santa Cole chandeliers and mirror balls designed by Tom Dixon. The place is also unique thanks to the sound which is provided by Electro Voice audio system which will definitely add more quality to concerts of various bands.

SomePlace Else is also known for its excellent food and cocktails. One of the novelties is so-called "menu lights" with a selection of low-calorie dishes such as crocodile steak, roasted ostrich salad, or various types of fish.

The bar and the restaurant SomePlace Else is located in Warsaw's Sheraton and is open Monday-Thursday from noon to 1 am, Friday-Saturday from noon to 3.00 am, and on Sunday from noon to midnight.

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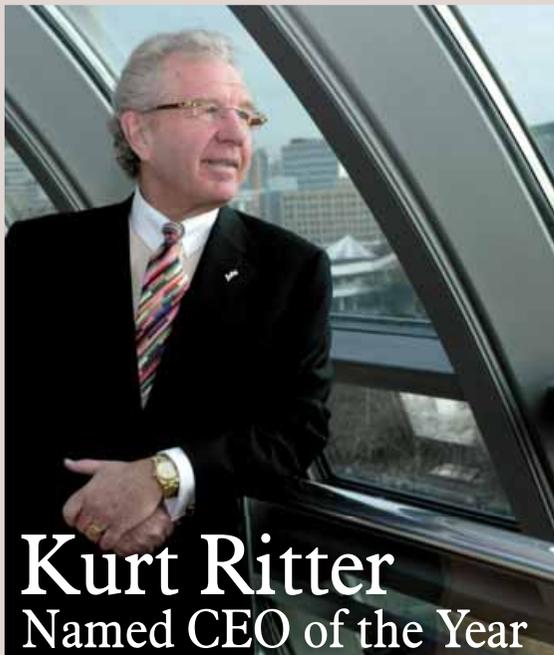
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Kurt Ritter Named CEO of the Year

Kurt Ritter, the president and CEO of the Rezidor Hotel Group, has received the award of “CEO of the year – Hospitality & Tourism” at the CEO Middle East awards. The CEO Middle East award has been presented for five years in fifteen categories for innovation, business excellence and ethics across Middle Eastern business. This time, the award ceremony was held in Dubai.

Kurt Ritter has been at the head of The Rezidor Hotel Group as President & CEO for more than 20 years. He has managed to build a remarkable brand and has been honoured with a number of awards, being a real icon in the hotel industry.

The Rezidor Hotel Group is one of the fastest growing hotel companies in the world. The group features a portfolio of more than 400 hotels in operation and under development with more than 86,300 rooms in over 60 countries.



LAN and TAM Merge into LATAM

Chile's Lan Airlines and Brazil's Tam Linhas Aereas announced they have entered into a non-binding MOU that outlines their intentions to combine their holdings under a single parent entity. The new group will be known as LATAM Airlines Group. The combined airline group would provide passenger services to more than 115 destinations in 23 countries while providing cargo services throughout Latin America and across much of the globe. The combined airline group would provide passenger services to more than 115 destinations in 23 countries while providing cargo services throughout Latin America and across much of the globe. Each of the airlines in the group would continue to operate under their existing operating certificates and brands.

FINNAIR NEWS

The Finnish air carrier has for long forgotten about the economic downturn. Now the basic aim of the company is its development and attracting new passengers. Journalists, gathered at Vantaa airport which is now being expanded, were presented with the new vision of the airline's development.

The presentation was given by Finnair's CEO Mika Vehviläinen who stated that the strategy pursued by the company is successful. Finnair has become the largest air carrier in the Northern Europe. The airline is also highly placed in Skytrax rankings according to which Finnair is Europe's best air carrier.

The main aim of Finnair is now to consolidate its position and further develop new Asian connections. That is why Vantaa airport is being expanded with a new spa and an ultramodern Via Lounge available for passengers flying to Asian destinations via Helsinki. Presently the number of passengers travelling to Asian destinations reaches 1 million a year. Another aim of the expansion is to establish strong connections between India and North America via Helsinki.



Novotel Rio de Janeiro

New Accor Hotels

Accor chain – a strategic partner of Orbis Hotel Group, has opened five new hotels. They are three Mercure hotels in Egypt, one Novotel in Rio de Janeiro, and one Etap hotel in Berlin.

Mercure Cairo Sphinx, Mercure Hurgada, Mercure Dahab Bay View are the three hotels open in Egypt. All the hotels provide good international quality, but each of them has its own character which derives from the local tradition. The first one is located 35 kilometres from Cairo, close to pyramids – the country's greatest tourist attraction. Mercure Cairo Sphinx attracts its customers with a large outdoor swimming pool, recreational facilities, three restaurants, bars, and a disco. It also has fully equipped conference facilities. Two other hotels are an ideal option for beach and water sport lovers, as they are located near the beaches of the Red Sea. Presently, Accor has 5 Mercure brand

hotels located in Egypt. Novotel Rio de Janeiro Santos Daumont is the first hotel of this brand in the city and the 12th in the whole Brazil. It's a modern establishment, equipped in the cutting edge technological solutions which will cater to the needs of the most demanding tourists and business people. It can be a perfect venue for organizing business events, at the same time offering numerous entertainments for the whole family. Etap Hotel Berlin Alexanderplatz is the 7th hotel of this brand in Berlin and 69th in Germany. Its main advantages are a good value for money and its location close to the city centre.

Presently, Accor chain has 4,100 hotels in 90 countries around the world.

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Testing a Dreamliner

The testing fleet of Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft is undergoing more and more certification tests. This time, four out of five aircraft were tested at rejected take-off conditions. The second 787 is conducting high-latitude and cold-weather testing at Keflavik Airport in Iceland. The hot weather in Yuma, Ariz., with temperatures in excess of 38 degrees Celsius, has provided the necessary conditions for another set of tests happening on ZA003. Its deployment is expected to last about another week. ZA004 has spent an extended time operating out of Victorville, Calif., conducting flight loads survey testing. The 787 flight test fleet has conducted more than 1,650 hours of flying over more than 540 flights.



BOEING

New Aircraft of British Airways



On 14 September, British Airways' first long-range super fuel efficient Boeing 777-300ER, with an all-new interior, departed Heathrow Airport with its first long-haul flight to Mumbai. The airline is the first UK operator to fly the 777-300ER, and will have six into service by 2012.

The aircraft has a range of 7,600 nautical miles and will fly regularly to Dubai, Mumbai, New Delhi and Chicago.

The new in-flight entertainment system features more than 230 TV programmes, 70 films and 400 CDs - providing customers with 50% more choice on movies and doubling the range of TV and music options - plus plug and play technology, as well as up to 60% bigger high-resolution screens.

NEWCAST

The Art of Adaptation

Skross - a Swiss-based company manufactures travel adapters which allow travellers to use power sockets in over 150 countries worldwide. The adapters ensure that our laptop, telephone charger, or shaver will never become suddenly useless because their plug doesn't fit the power socket.

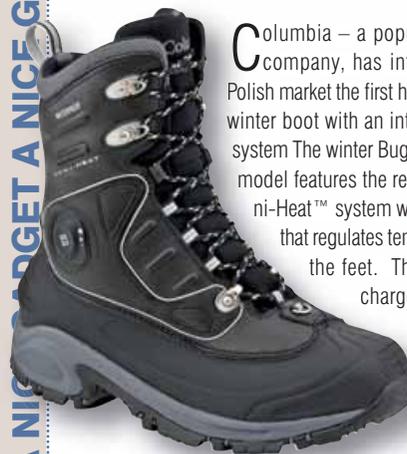
Skross provides lifetime guarantee for its products, whose construction is based on four sliding mechanisms that release the different country-specific charging plugs from the adapter. There are 3 models of Skross adapters available on the Polish market. Skross World Travel Adapter 3 is a model which was awarded the prestigious "reddot design award 2010" for product design - one of the most important design awards worldwide.



Electric Boots

Columbia - a popular sportswear company, has introduced to the Polish market the first high-performance winter boot with an integrated heating system. The winter Bugathermo Techlite model features the revolutionary Omni-Heat™ system with a heat setting that regulates temperature around the feet.

The boots can be charged via a USB or electrical outlet. The boots are also lined with Thinsulate insulation.



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New Hilton Opens in Gdańsk

It's one of the most important events in the Polish hotel industry and was one of the most important events of the year in the hotel industry.

The hotel served the first guests as early as in June this year, but the grand opening ceremony, which took place in the first weekend of September was very festive. The second hotel of Hilton chain in Poland looks very impressive. It's excellent

location and the range of offered service will undoubtedly contribute to its success (a detailed description in Tried&Tested section).

Hundreds of guests enjoyed the gala, admiring new Mercedes models, watching Max Mara fashion show, and partici-



pating in a charity art auction, the proceeds from which supported a new project by 'Friends of Autistic People Association' in Gdańsk, which is planning to build a group home—a small friendly place of stay for autistic adults.

The event finished with a cameral, but very energetic concert of Kayah.

BT had an opportunity to interview **Uli Widmer – Hilton Hotel's Vice President for Development, Central & Eastern Europe.**

The hotel in Gdańsk is Hilton's second establishment in Poland. How important is Poland and Central Europe for the ex-



pansion strategy of Hilton Hotels?

Poland occupies a very important position in our plans to develop the chain with a varied portfolio of brands. In 2007 we successfully opened our first hotel in Poland—Hilton Warsaw Hotel & Convention Centre, now we are launching Hilton Gdańsk, and in the near future—by the end of 2010—we will be able to serve our first guests in a new Hilton Garden Inn in Cracow. We are also looking forward to launching other hotels: Doubletree by Hilton Warsaw Convention Centre, Doubletree by Hilton Łódź and

Hilton Garden Inn in Wrocław - all of them are due to be open in 2012.

What is currently the biggest problem of the hotel industry? Can we say that the economic downturn, which so strongly affected the global economy, is now over?

Although Hilton Worldwide didn't take any special measures to prepare to the incoming crisis, we were pleasantly surprised with the strength of business. We left our competition far behind and gained satisfying share in the market. The development of our chain in Europe is strategically important, but for now we prefer to be cautious optimists, and await the future economic results.

Is the business customer now the most important for the hotel industry?

The hotels which belong to Hilton Worldwide chain address their offer both to business customers and tourists. Both these customer groups are equally important.

What is an idea of a perfect hotel according to your customers? What trends are the most popular, these days?

The main principle we have tried to follow for years is the motto by Conrad Hilton who said: "Our main aim is to fill the world with light and warmth of hospitality." Each of our brands caters to the needs of our clients, combining the spirit of hospitality, warm welcome, and a wide range of services and amenities to provide a comfortable stay. The clients choose hotels according to their preferences and needs, and we try to meet their needs, for example by making the booking process easier and less time consuming. We also implement new solutions, like Hilton i-Phone applications which are already accessible on some markets.



Air Berlin Joins Oneworld

The oneworld airline alliance and Air Berlin, Germany's second largest airline, have agreed that the airline will become a member of the alliance. Air Berlin is expected to join the alliance at the beginning of 2012. At the same time Finnair and Air Berlin also agreed on bilateral cooperation. Finnair and Air

Berlin begin a code-share cooperation in November 2010. This will provide Air Berlin passengers with access to the important American market and, via the Helsinki hub, to the rapidly growing Asian markets. The codeshare flights will be available in time for the winter schedule 2010/11.





LUFTHANSA'S ORDERS

Lufthansa's supervisory board has approved the acquisition of 40 Airbus aircraft worth approximately 4.3 billion dollars. The planes are to be used by Lufthansa – Europe's biggest airline – as well as its Swiss and Germanwings subsidiaries.

Airbus stated that with the order Lufthansa, its biggest airline customer, will have acquired a combined total of 410 Airbus aircraft. The new order consists of 24 A320 planes, eight A330-300s, and eight A319s.

The Airbus A320 family is a family of short- to medium-range, narrow body, commercial passenger jet airliners. Meanwhile, the versatile A330 Family specialises in medium to long ranges and combines high comfort standards, interior flexibility and superior economics with exceptional operational reliability exceeding 99 per cent.



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INFO The flights from Warsaw to Helsinki are run three times daily. The first scheduled flight takes off at 9.40 am, the second one at 1.05 pm, while the last one departs at 7.05 pm (on Sundays at 8.05 pm).

CHECK-IN I decided to go for the last flight which departs in the evening to kick off my long journey with the final destination point set in Tokyo. I had checked-in online the day before, so I was spared waiting in the queue at the airport. The day before I had used online check, so now I was spared waiting in the queue at the airport. The seat I had booked was 1C.

I arrived at the airport a few minutes before 6 pm when the wave of evening departures was at its peak. The last aircraft were taking off to their destinations and the whole airport was quite crowded. I experienced it personally, while waiting at security control. I didn't have to check in my luggage, so I went straight to the security checkpoints only to find out that there was a long queue of people. I had a business class boarding pass and the airport in Warsaw provides a special express lane for the business passengers – this time, however, this lane was as busy as the one for the economy class.

BOARDING When I finally forced my way through the security control and entered the departure lounge, it was already half past six. I reached Gate 1, through which I was about to enter the aircraft, and after a short while the final call was announced. I produced my boarding pass and my ID.

We boarded the apron bus which took us to the shapely figure of Embraer 190 with

the characteristic Finnair logo. A minute or two later, we were able to embark the plane and take our seats.

THE SEAT There are three rows of seats for business class passengers – their configuration is 2+2 (12 seats altogether). My seat, 1C, was located next to the aisle, and I must admit it was one of the best in the whole plane. When you are sitting in the first row, there's much more leg space despite the fact that your vision is obstructed by the wall right in front of you. It seemed beneficial even during the short journey to Helsinki.

THE FLIGHT Taxiing took us exactly 9 minutes and the aircraft took off at 7.07 pm. Surprisingly fast – 5 minutes into the flight – the “fasten your seatbelts” lights turned off and the cabin crew started the in-flight service. The meals consisted of salmon with bread and blueberry mousse. The selection of drinks included white and red wine, juices, water, and tea and coffee. An hour into the flight, the captain informed us on our scheduled route.

ARRIVAL We landed at Vantaa airport at 9.28 pm – that is a few minutes before the scheduled time. A bus took us from the plane to the terminal, and after a while I made for my hotel.

VERDICT A solid, short connection from Warsaw to the Finnish capital.

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES Flight AY073 to Tokyo departs Helsinki daily at 5.31 (from 31 October – the departure time is 5.36).

CHECK-IN Once again, I decided to take advantage of the online check-in option where I chose seat 7J. I didn't check in any

luggage as I had only my hand bag with me, so on entrance to Terminal 2 I made for the security control. It was 3.30 pm. The afternoon rush hour was at its height, and although the terminal is a huge building, the place was rather crowded. Luckily, I was able to take advantage of the express security lane for business customers. The whole process took about 15 minutes. Then, as I was leaving Europe, I had to leave Schengen area zone and undergo an additional passport control.

THE LOUNGE After a short while I arrived at gate 37C where boarding was due to begin. I found a business lounge located nearby. It was a stylish, spacious room, decorated in a truly Scandinavian manner. The buffet was quite average and consisted mainly of fruits, salad, and olives. As for drinks, there was some beer and only one type of wine. While registering in business lounge, you receive a special drink coupon. Other types of alcohol are charged extra.

BOARDING Once again, I chose the fast lane and after showing my boarding pass and passport I entered the corridor which led me to the bus. After a short bus trip we were able to embark the aircraft. Everything went smoothly and without any problems.

THE SEAT The business class in Airbus 340-300, which was about to take me to Tokyo, has two sections. Right next to the entrance, behind the front door, there are five rows of seats in 2+2+2 configuration. Behind them, there is a galley and toilets (interestingly enough, the toilets have windows, and you can find their also various toiletries), and two following business class



seats. The economy class seats are located behind and are separated from the business class by a portable partition. I must admit that this solution is quite interesting. I was sitting in the smaller section, which provides more intimacy, as there are only 12 seats. On the downside, the air-flight service reaches this section a little bit later.

On long-haul aircraft Finnair is presently installing a brand new type of business class seats. Not all aircraft have been modernised in such a way, yet, so I was travelling on on a 340-300 with older seats.

The seat is 52 cm wide and quite comfortable. It has 5 pre-defined settings thanks to which your journey becomes much more convenient. A large tray unfolds from the armrest, and between the seats there is an electrical socket to plug your laptop in. It is impossible to fully recline the seat – the maximum angle is 169 degrees.

THE FLIGHT The pushback procedure started at 5.29, which means that we had a few minute delay. Just before the take-off we were informed that the flight would take 9 hours and 5 minutes (although according to the schedule it was supposed to take 9h20m). Bearing in mind the distance from Europe to the Japanese capital, this deserves a real praise.

The “fasten your seatbelts” lights turned off a few minutes into the flight. A moment later the cabin crew in tasteful blue uniforms appeared and offered us warm wipes, sachets with a set of toiletries such as a toothbrush and toothpaste, facial cream, lip moisturizer, a sleep mask, and slippers.

Thanks to the camera installed in the undercarriage, we could watch on the LCD screens in front of us (10.6-inch each) not only the take-off, but also the whole flight. There is also so-called “the Airshow” – i.e. an animation showing the route of the aircraft and its progress.

The in-flight entertainment system (IFE) provides you with numerous ways of spending time if you don't feel like working or sleeping. Multi-media entertainment consists of films, TV series, music videos, and even 16 computer games. You can also make your own playlist, choosing the songs among several dozen CDs. Every passenger has access to satellite telephone, which has the option of chatting with other passengers, but more practically you can make a phone call or send a text message outside.

MENU A business class passenger receives two well-printed menus. The meals are tasty and quite nutritious. I chose smoked salmon, ravioli with goat cheese in herb sauce, and a chocolate dessert. Other options included reindeer cream soup, or a roast chicken in balsamic sauce with lemon risotto.

The wine list is quite interesting, just to mention excellent champagne Perrier Cuvee Royale Brut Vintage 2003, white Rully 2007, or red Carm Reserva 2007. The passengers could also order other types of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages served in very original glasses.

Between the two business class sections there was also a buffet table with a selection of snacks and beverages.

ARRIVAL We arrived at Narita airport at 8.46 am and the journey passed very quickly. An hour before the landing we were served breakfast (I chose cereal with natural yoghurt, and orange juice). However, the short flight time can be a little bit treacherous. When a passenger starts working or is absorbed with the in-flight entertainment system, suddenly he realizes that there's not much time left for sleeping. It's worth remembering about that.

VERDICT Excellent and convenient connection from Europe to Japan. The short flight time allows the airline to operate the aircraft more frequently which is later reflected in a lower price of a ticket.

Jakub Olgiewicz



Facts

SEAT CONFIGURATION 2+2+2
SEAT PITCH 160 cm
SEAT WIDTH 52 cm
PRICE The price for a business class ticket booked online for the last week of September was €3837.
CONTACT finnair.com



ing. The Polish air carrier was the first airline which ordered the machines. They turned out to be very reliable, so no wonder several new ones were ordered. The seats have 2+2 configuration and are quite wide (almost 47 centimetres) which allows you to enjoy your journey – especially because there’s also much leg space (seat pitch is almost 79 centimetres).

THE FLIGHT The plane took off a few minutes after the scheduled departure time. We reached the cruise speed and altitude after about 10 minutes, but the “fasten your seatbelts” lights didn’t turn off until a few minutes later. When it finally happened, the in-flight service began. I was sitting in one of the first rows, so the sandwich, a glass of orange juice, and a small chocolate bar appeared quite quickly on my tray. The passengers were also served coffee and tea on their request.

Somewhere in the middle of our flight we were welcomed by the captain and informed on our route as well as the temperature outside. We also learnt the estimated arrival time, and soon the cabin crew began the necessary preparation.

ARRIVAL We arrived at Okęcie airport on time. Luckily, this was one of those September weekends when the repair of two runways almost completely curtailed the air traffic at the airport. We got on an apron bus which was waiting for us near the plane, and after a short while we approached the baggage reclaim area. I collected my bag and several moments later I left the terminal.

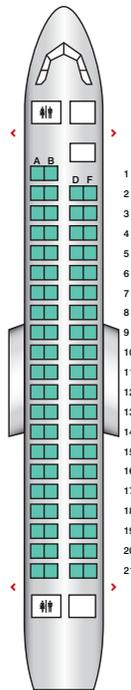
VERDICT A solid connection from Budapest to Warsaw, a nice service.

Jakub Olgiewicz

ON BOARD: BUDAPEST – WARSAW

LOT POLISH AIRLINES

Embraer 175 economy class



ECONOMY CLASS



INFO The Polish air carrier flies from the Hungarian capital to Warsaw twice a day. The first flight takes off at 9.30 am, while the other one (the one I chose) departs at 7.40 pm.

CHECK-IN I was leaving Budapest late in the afternoon. I knew that Ferighy airport (although these days Hungarians prefer to call it just Budapest Airport), is often very crowded and even in the evening I would have to struggle to survive. I was right. Terminal 2A is quite modern, but not without its faults.

Those came to light just after I received my boarding pass with seat 5B in economy class. A few minutes later all the hell broke loose. The luggage control at the Hungarian airport is a troublesome thing. It takes ages and immediately brings to mind the pictures from Okęcie airport. The queues, which we so often used to complain about in Business Traveller, suddenly seemed just tiny in comparison to the Hungarian airport.

BOARDING When I reached the security control checkpoint, I put the contents of my pockets into plastic contain-

ers and a few seconds later I was allowed to enter the departure lounge. I didn’t have time to visit the shops, although there are many of them at the airport, because I simply didn’t have enough time as my departure time was approaching.

I turned up at the gate almost exactly at the moment when the boarding of the aircraft to Warsaw was announced. This, luckily, went quite smoothly. The passengers had their boarding passes and ID’s checked. The apron bus took us to the aircraft and a few moments later I was able to take my seat.

THE SEAT 5B is an aisle seat. Embraer 175 is a very pleasant aircraft to fly and I’m not alone in this think-



FACTS **SEAT CONFIGURATION** 2+2

SEAT PITCH 78,7 cm

SEAT WIDTH 46,3 cm

PRICE A ticket booked online for the end of September (for a Monday flight) cost PLN 704 (€170) without promotion.

CONTACT lot.com

Poczuj historię



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HOTEL: GDAŃSK

Hilton

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The Gdańsk Crane, SS Sołdek, Hilton. Soon, the city visited each year by hundred thousands of tourists will be described this way. Why? The hotel building was designed by professor Stefan Kuryłowicz, currently one of the most important figures in the Polish functional architecture. It has perfectly blended into the existing architecture. It's modern, but not very much, so it does not look like a spacecraft on a market place.

It's the second Hilton in Poland, the first one being in Warsaw. The chain is a global giant, it has 3,600 hotels in 81 countries all over the world. Gdańsk hotel is a franchise, and the Hilton's first undertaking of this sort in this part of the continent. The owner is Jan Wójcikiewicz, the precursor of the private hotel industry in our country, managing the family company, which has also three other hotels.

Upon passing through the sliding doors, you see a huge lobby with the reception desk on the left and the gastronomic area on the right. In front of you,

there are two lifts carrying the guests on the upper floors. Behind the lifts there is an open atrium which reaches the glass roof. In the atrium there is a gigantic chandelier, or rather a sculpture called Seaflowers, built with 2,500 man-made glass elements threaded on 9 kilometres of fibre-optic cables. The sculpture was created by Edyta Barańska. The exhibit weighs more than a ton, is spread across several floors, and looks very impressive.

The hotel was launched last June, however, the opening ceremony took place on 4 September (the report in this issue of BT).

WHERE IS IT? The location could not have been better. The hotel is situated along the Motława riverside. It's the heart of the Old Gdańsk. It is 15 kilometres from the local airport in Rębiechowo, and it takes about 40 minutes to get from there by taxi – the city centre is usually extremely jammed. The railway station is over a kilometre further away – it takes 5 minutes to get there by taxi, and 15 minutes – on foot.

ROOM FACILITIES The Gdańsk Hilton has 150 rooms, including 105 Guest Rooms of 32 sq m, 40 Deluxe Rooms of 37 sq m overlooking the waters, 4 suites and one presidential suite. The rooms come with two single beds or one double king size bed.

The suites are of 61 sq m and are decorated in light colours. The separate area with bathroom, for guests can be also used



for small business meetings. The big bedroom has a separate bathroom and is completely separated from the lounge.

The presidential suite (127 sq m) is decorated in good taste, all the furniture – from the harmonious light and dark sofas to the solid workdesk – were designed specifically for the interior. A perfectly-equipped kitchen, a conference area and another room, e.g. for the security, are other bonuses of the place.

I lived in a room on the third floor. The corridors are wallpapered in light grey, and the flooring is brown with yellow ornaments. From the spacious room you walk into a not-so-long corridor leading





Next to the desk there is a mini bar. By the window, there are two comfortable armchairs and a round table, where each morning you find two bottles of water. The room also comes with a chest with three large drawers and a flat LCD screen with a huge clock on top of it.

In the bathroom there is both a shower and a bathtub and a set of La Source cosmetics by Crabtree&Evelyn.

BUSINESS FACILITIES The conference area in Gdańsk Hilton is to be found on the ground floor. It is of almost 600 sq m, which makes it the biggest in the city. Thus, you could organize an event for more than 500 people here. The three rooms: Beaufort, Fahrenheit and Pascal have access to natural light. There is also the Richter room which could be combined with the other three into a bigger space. The exclusive Boardroom (40 sq m) is intended for meetings of boards of directors.

All the rooms are equipped with modern audio and video systems.

In the atrium there is also a business centre with the access to the Internet, open 24 hours.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS The breakfasts, in the form of buffet, are served in a restaurant on the ground floor between 6.30 and 10.30 am (on weekends 30 minutes longer). Next to it, there is an a la carte Mercato restaurant (open between noon and 11.00 pm.) which serves the specialties of the international cuisine with a Polish accent. Available not only to the hotel guests. The chief is Adam Woźniak. His flagship dish is Japanese Kobe tenderloin glazed in mirin and miso.

Next to the restaurant there is the F32 bar, and on the top floor there is the High 5 bar with a huge terrace. Both are open between 11.00 am and 1.00 pm and offer excellent cocktails served in casual atmosphere.

LEISURE FACILITIES On the top, fifth floor, there is a huge glassed swimming pool (50 sq m) and a unique urban beach with deckchairs, situated on the roof and available only for the hotel guests. The guests may also use the Turkish bath, a sauna and a fitness salon, equipped, according to Hilton standards, with the Precor equipment. There are also a Spa centre offering treatments.

VERDICT Five stars in the heart of Gdańsk – an excellent business and leisure destination.

Wojciech Chelchowski



CONTACT Hilton Gdańsk; Targ Rybny 1, 80-838 Gdańsk; tel. 48 58 778 71 00; hilton.com

PRICE Internet rate for a stay at the end of September was 378 PLN for a standard room.

to the bathroom and a wardrobe. Inside, there is a baggage rack, an ironing desk and an iron. Next to it, there is a cabinet with a laptop safe, coffee and tea making facilities and two pretty cups.

Upon entering, you need to place your magnetic door card in the reader, to turn the electricity on. On your left, there is the air-conditioning control panel.

The lounge is painted steel purple, and the striped flooring makes it look longer than it really is. On the walls, instead of pictures, like in the whole of the hotel, there are interesting glass patterns. The dark furniture perfectly match the interior.

The central part of the room there is a huge bed with comfortable mattress and six huge cushions, designed especially for the Hilton hotels. Next to it, there is a table with a brand radio with alarm clock. What's interesting the radio has special buttons to programme radio stations. In the alcove, there is a huge desk with a modern lamp, and a mid-back chair, thanks to which you will not be tired after working for a long time. On the desk, there is a telephone with a number of direct phone numbers (room service, wellness, the emergency or the conference section) and a cable for wireless internet connection. The WiFi is also available. The internet is free of charge, but if you need a faster connection, you can buy it extra (an hour costs 19 PLN, a day – 60 PLN).





HOTEL: KIOTO

Hyatt Regency

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Kyoto is one of the biggest Japanese cities, and a former capital of the empire (for a thousand years!). It is here, where you can find the luxurious Hyatt Regency hotel. It belongs to a company, which manages the hotel buildings and other commercial real estates – it owns nearly 500 properties around the whole world. Hyatt is known for its care about the high quality of service and comfort. You can find all of these in the hotel located in Kyoto. The lobby, is decorated in the typical motives of the land of the rising sun, and it looks impressive. The rooms are also elegant, spacious and comfortable, equipped in all the amenities necessary for a traveller visiting Japan on business.

WHERE IS IT? The hotel is situated 515 kilometres from the railway station in Tokyo. Is it close or far away? It depends on how you look at it, given that it takes 2.5 hour to cover such a distance by train (the local railway station is 1.5 kilometre from the hotel). Naturally, you do not have to land in Tokyo to get to the Hyatt Regency. The international Kansai airport is about 80 minutes» train ride (100 kilometres) away. The ho-

tel is situated in the Higashiyama Shichijo district, in the heart of the city. It's close to a few of the local attractions. Sanjusangendo is a Buddhist temple from the 12th century. Its name means «a hall with thirty three spaces between the columns», and it's sufficient a reason to visit it. Those, interested in the local craft, should go to Nishiki, a 400-metre long commercial street. Everyone should pay a visit to a geisha district called Gion, full of ochaya (teashops, where the gei-

sha girls work; remember they are not prostitutes, but artists!), theatres and restaurants.

ROOM FACILITIES Hyatt Regency Kyoto has 189 rooms and luxurious, comfortable and spacious suits. The smallest room is 28 sq m, the biggest suit is over 90 sq m large. All the rooms can come in two varieties: with one king size bed or two single beds. The interior differs depending on the category, but all the rooms are very elegant and classy.



The decor is simple – the minimalistic furniture contributes to the calm atmosphere, which is sometimes broken by unassuming typical Japanese ornaments (like pictures of flowers). All the rooms are equipped with a desk and a bathroom with a separate bathtub and a shower. They also come with a LCD TV set (32-42 inches), a DVD player, a hair-dryer, a few telephones, adjusted air-conditioning, bathrobes and a safe. The guests have access to wired internet (in the public areas of the hotel the wireless internet is also available). The windows in the hotel can be opened – a useful piece of information for those who do not like the air conditioning. Deluxe rooms have also a separate space with a sofa, an armchair and an ottoman. Deluxe Corner rooms are also equipped with a fridge (besides a mini bar). Deluxe Balcony suites come with a terrace, a something which appeals to all the guests – a Japanese wooden Hiba bathtub, used not for taking a bath, but to relax. You enter it after a bath, and then because of the temperature, the oils and minerals, similar to those used in cosmetics production, are given off by the wood. Relaxation guaranteed. In the suites of higher category, you will find a bathroom (with a Hiba), a lounge with tatami (Japanese mat) on the floor, and a tea room with traditional table and seats – naturally, with very short legs. An interesting offer is the e-concierge service: before arrival at the hotel, the guests fills in an online form and states his expectations and needs – the hotel staff works untiringly to cater for the guests» needs.

BUSINESS FACILITIES The conference possibilities (or generally organizing meetings) in the Hyatt Regency hotel are really vast. There are 5 rooms and a wedding chapel, where quite often wedding ceremonies take place. The biggest is the ballroom – 820 sq m – and it can hold up to 500 guests. It can be divided into two parts, and the Regency room – into three. There is also a room intended for smaller meetings. It's called Boardroom, and its 41 sq m. As a luxurious hotel, Hyatt Regency offers the organizers all kinds of facilities, including broadband internet connection and high quality audio-visual equipment.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS The culinary facilities in the Kyoto hotel include three restaurants and one bar. The Grill, as the name suggests, is



a place where we can taste grilled food, prepared in an open kitchen, right before your eyes – the sight of the food being prepared in the stove always whets the appetite. The Grill offers breakfasts, lunches and dinners – you can also sit by a glass table. The Restaurant is open from 6.00 am. to 10.00 pm. If you are a fan of Italian cuisine, go to the Trattoria Sete, open from 11.00 am. to 10.00 pm. There is also a shop, where you can buy bread, chocolate bars and cakes – all beautifully wrapped, so it would make a nice gift. The Touzan restaurant (open from 11.30 am. to 2.30 pm., and from 5.30 pm. to 10.00 pm.) serves typical Japanese food, and their sushi is really worth a trip to Japan. In the hotel there is also the Touzan Bar (interesting antique interior), open from 5.00 pm until midnight.

RECREATION The Riraku Spa & Fitness comprises the recreational facilities of the Hyatt hotel. You will find here

a gym with modern equipment, saunas (Turkish bath for women, sauna for men; the logic of such division is hard to comprehend), a huge Jacuzzi and showers. What makes this place unique, however, it is the local spa. It consists of 10 rooms, where the guests can relax under the supervision of the well-trained staff. The treatments include: hot stones massages, aromatherapy, a wide range of massages, and sticking needles into the body (literarily) – naturally as a part of an acupuncture session.

VERDICT Luxury, class, style and all the amenities – an ideal hotel for a person, coming to Japan on business.

Tomasz Wiczcerek



CONTACT Hyatt Regency Kyoto; 644-2 Sanjusangendo-mawari, Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto, Japan 605-0941; tel. + 81 75 541 1234; kyoto.regency.hyatt.com
PRICE Internet rates for a stay in the middle of October started from 21,250 yens for a King Room (€190).



HOTEL: ZAKOPANE

Czarny Potok



WHAT'S IT LIKE? Some time ago there was simply a guesthouse with 20 rooms. But the owners of the TRIP group, to which Czarny Potok belongs, thought that this location would be much more suitable for a hotel. The name of the place was also inspired by the location – next to the hotel, in a strengthened channel, there is a fast flowing mountain stream.

The alteration was quite costly – the number of rooms was increased, and new business and leisure facilities were added. Currently, it is a characteristic, typically “highland” complex with sloping roofs and magnificent views from the windows.

WHERE IS IT? It is situated on the Tetmajer street, only a few minutes walk from the Krupówki street – the most popular place in Zakopane. It takes less than 15 minutes to get there from the railway station. It is situated 115 kilometres away from the Cracow Balice airport – if you're lucky you can cover this route, along the usually crowded «Zakopianka» road in more or less two hours. It is much closer to the Slovakian Poprad airport – it takes no more than 70 minutes drive to get there.

ROOM FACILITIES There are 44 rooms in the hotel, including 3 single rooms, 8 higher category rooms, while all of the remaining ones are double rooms. In 20 of them, however, it is possible to put an additional bed (one king size bed plus a single one). The rooms are spacious (much more than 20 sq m), and, what's interesting, each of them is unique as regards the furniture and colour of the details. The decor is characterised by wood and the local folklore. Each room comes with a TV set, a telephone, a mini bar and a safe. The access to the Wifi is free of charge.



CONTACT Hotel Czarny Potok; ul. Tetmajera 20, 34-500 Zakopane; tel. 48 18 202 27 60; czarnypotok.pl
PRICE Internet rate for a double room starts from 210 PLN.

The bathrooms come with showers, underfloor heating, a tower heater and a set of Pure Herbs cosmetics.

BUSINESS FACILITIES There are four air-conditioned rooms dedicated for conference use, all named with the letters of the alphabet. Three of them are located on the first floor – the A room is 50 sq m, and the B room is 35 sq m large – they can be combined together into one room for 60 people. The smaller C room is 9 sq m and can be used for small business meetings for 15 participants. Downstairs there is one more room, the D, which is 25 sq m and is ideal for a meeting of 20 people.

All rooms have access to daylight and are equipped with all the necessary conference facilities.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS The hotel restaurant situated on the ground floor serves breakfasts in a form of buffet. Dinners are à la carte, and you can find there diet or vegetarian dishes as well. The restaurant has a wooden terrace, where grilled dishes are served in summer.

By the reception desk there is also the hotel Bar – open 24 hours a day, so you can have a rest in a relaxing atmosphere there any time you want.

LEISURE FACILITIES The guests may use the hotel swimming pool, the Turkish bath or a sauna and a huge jacuzzi. The gym is currently being refurbished.

VERDICT A three-star hotel not only for business meetings, but also winter holidays.

Wojciech Chelchowski





HOTEL: HELSINKI

Hilton Helsinki-Vantaa Airport

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The huge and modern airport in Helsinki has numerous facilities. The Hilton hotel is one of the biggest. The six-storey building sparkling with the glassy blue colours was open in 2007. The first impression you get on entering the hotel, is the feeling of sheer splendour. The lobby, decorated in light colours, is impressive. The space is huge, so the armchairs and small tables situated by the side are barely visible. There is also a white colonnade. Behind the reception desk there is a bar and restaurant area, and the lifts are right next to it. In the corner, there is a self check-in machine, and the screens on the wall display necessary airport information.

WHERE IS IT? Slightly more than 100 metres from the arrivals hall. The road is well-marked and roofed, as to get to the hotel you have to go outside. At the end of the road, before the tunnel, you can take a lift, to get to the hotel entrance level. You may leave your luggage cart there as well.

It is about 20 kilometres from the centre of Helsinki. It takes slightly more than 40 minutes to get there.

ROOM FACILITIES There are 246 rooms altogether. The standard Guest Room is spacious, as its floor area is 28 sq m. You can feel the Scandinavian style and tidiness there. The room is decorated in pastel subdued colours. On the floor you will find real wooden panels (I feel pity for the staff who must keep the floor in good condition), light furniture – simple and extremely functional. The rooms come with a huge bed (a model designed and ordered especially for the Hilton group), or two single beds, a workdesk and a white swivel chair. On a cylinder-shaped cupboard with a mini bar inside, there is a 26-inch LCD TV set. Internet access is charged in the rooms, however there is



CONTACT Hilton Helsinki-Vantaa Airport Hotel; Lentajankuja 1, Vantaa, Finland 1530; tel. 358-9-73220; hilton.com

PRICE The Internet rate for a stay at the end of September was PLN 558 (€140) for a Guest Room.



free Internet available in the lobby. Under the window – which is completely soundproof, despite the hotel's location on the apron area – there is a small round table, an armchair and a floor lamp. The windows can be covered with thick curtains, which is useful if you want to sleep through your jet lag. Room amenities include a safe, manually-adjusted air conditioning, tea and coffee making facilities, an ironing board and an iron, a bathrobe, and a pair of slippers.

The bathroom is well-lit and quite big: there is both a bathtub and a shower adjacent to it. Guests also receive cosmetics by Crabtree&Evelyn.

Junior Suites – there are five of them – are 58 sq m and come with a separate lounge furnished with a nice sofa, a table and armchairs. The bedroom comes with a separate bathroom and a small private sauna.

Upstairs there is the Executive floor with its own reception desk (quick check-in) and a lounge, where you can spend your time, but also have a business meeting with your partners over a cocktail. The rooms here are similar to the Guest Rooms.

BUSINESS FACILITIES There are 10 conference rooms here – situated on the ground floor of the hotel. The Ballroom is 373 sq m and can accommodate up to 340 people, and may be divided into three smaller rooms. Similarly the Fenix room (182 sq m) can be divided into four smaller rooms, when need arises. You can also make use of the Colibri room (18 sq m) and Boardroom (35 sq m) both equipped with all the amenities. Next to the reception area there is also a two-post business centre, open 24 hours a day.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS Lavish and sumptuous breakfasts in a form of buffet are served in a restaurant on the ground floor. There is also the Bar Gui, where you can buy a glass of champagne. A restaurant under the same name serves a fusion of international and local cuisine. Fish dishes are especially worth recommending.

LEISURE FACILITIES A huge fitness room with equipment by the Precor company, open 24/7 and a sauna are available for all the guests.

VERDICT The airport Hilton deserves each one of its 5 stars.

Wojciech Chelchowski



HOTEL: ROME

Rome Cavalieri



WHAT'S IT LIKE? It's a massive building with separate wings, situated on a hill and partly hidden behind the greenery. Such information is vital in Rome. It means, you can expect a stunning and moving view from your window, especially in the evening. And it is so, indeed.

If you walk past the high flagpoles, on which you can see the country flags of the guests who the most frequently visit the hotel, you feel like in a different world. There are couple of reasons to describe it: splendour, luxury, distinction, class and quality. You can see all of these in Cavalieri right upon arrival. The hotel has been property of Waldorf Astoria Collection for several years. A porter dressed in brown suit and golden tie opens the glass door. The reception area makes you think of a light plinth. It is immaculately clean and there are pictures on the walls – the hotel resembles a gallery. There are plenty of masterpieces here, not only paintings – these comprise a genuinely unique collection. Among them there are works from 18th century by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo or Alessandro Magnasco, but also “Dollars” by Andy Warhol. Apart from paintings, there are mosaics, ceramics, sculptures (including “The Kiss” by Antonio Tantardini) and furniture – the most unique piece is the richly ornamented chest of drawers from the mid-18th century, once the property of the Polish king Frederick Augustus II (Augustus III the Saxon).

WHERE IS IT? Rome Cavalieri is situated in the north-western part of the city. Located in the huge, 6 hectare park with an outdoor swimming pool and a helicopter landing built in a forest clearing between the trees. The city centre is a few kilometres away. You can get there by a taxi or a special free hotel shuttle bus, which stops at the end of Via Veneto, a famous street with luxurious boutiques. The Vatican City is a few minutes» walk away.

It is 35 kilometres away from the Fiumicino airport. It takes about 50 minutes to get there by a taxi, and the trip costs about 50 euro.

ROOM FACILITIES The hotel has 365 rooms, including 25 luxurious suites. The rooms are divided into two categories: Deluxe and Imperial. Both categories are similar. Standard rooms are 50 sq.m. They come with a bedroom area with a huge

comfortable bed, a workdesk and a stylized chair and a lounge with a table, two chairs and a satin sofa for the guests. The rooms are air-conditioned, there is a mini bar, a laptop safe, fresh flowers in vases, and an access to wireless broadband internet. The door is soundproof, and each room also has a balcony overlooking the city panorama, or hotel gardens.

What's characteristic about Imperial rooms, spread over two Executive floors, is that instead of LCD TV sets, the guests are provided with 42-inch plasma TVs. More importantly, however, they are a part of a special Imperial section with a separate reception desk (express check-in) and an access to the Imperial Club. It's an area with a stylish fireplace, above which there is a magnificent mosaic depicting the Coliseum, comfortable armchairs covered with green leather, where you can spend time



having a small breakfast, a business meeting over a cocktail or working on your computer in a club atmosphere.

The guests living in the suites also have the access to the Imperial Club, open between 7.00 am and 11.00 pm.

But the suites are a different story at the Cavalieri. Each one is different, designed with both splendour and good taste. The Penthouse Suite (200 sq m) is the pride of the hotel. It comes with two bedrooms, Three bathrooms and a private terrace (25 sq m) located on the roof of the building.

Among the pieces of art to be found in the suite, there are paintings by Andy Warhol, or a sofa by Karl Lagerfeld in the lounge, originally designed to be a piece of furniture in this house in Paris. In the lounge there is a 62-inch plasma TV set with a home theatre system (bedroom TV set is «only» 43-inch) and a humidor with selected cigars. Marble bathrooms are ornamented with Svarovski crystals and on request, the suite can be enlarged by an ad-

ditional bedroom (e.g. for the security) and a private gym.

of them could be used for business meetings. The biggest is the Salone dei Cavalieri room – 1540 sq m – and it comes with a huge scene, technological facilities. It is almost 6-metre-high and could be divided into 4 independent sections. In ideal conditions, it could hold a meeting for over 2 thousands participants. A huge lobby guarantees perfect conditions for a coffee break and a moment of relaxation. The other rooms – all of them are air-conditioned and equipped with the most modern conference facilities, including sound system and fast internet connection – are: The Michelangelo room (540 sq m), The San Pietro room (240 sq m), The Leonardo room (100 sq m), The Caravaggio room (113 sq m), The Cavalieri di San Giovanni room (72 sq m) and The Terazza Monte Mario (270 sq m).

There are also many smaller rooms with the are from 25 (The Cavalieri di Malta B



with vegetable minestrone, are especially worth recommending. In the cellar there are over 53,000 bottles of excellent wine.

The hotel restaurant, where sumptuous breakfasts are served is also impressive – I have visited several hotels and I have to admit that this one made quite an impression on me. To support my opinion with some evidence, I can tell you they offer 27 sorts of jam alone.

The guests can also visit a few bars (including the one by the pool) and the Grand Spa Cafe in the hotel Spa.



ditional bedroom (e.g. for the security) and a private gym.

You get to the floor by the stairs, leading to the glass roof. On the huge terrace there are a lot of lush greenery and a mini pool on a small platform. The city panorama is breathtaking.

The other suites are also perfectly equipped. It's worth mentioning the Planetarium suite (133 sq m: 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, and a 140 sq m of a private terrace) or the Petronius suite (246 sq m: a dining room for 8 people, two separate entrances and four big balconies).

BUSINESS FACILITIES As for the conferences and conventions, the organizational possibilities in Cavalieri are virtually unlimited. If a need arises, there are 20 rooms, gardens and a roof garden and all

room), through 34 (The Cavalieri di San Giorgio room) to 55 sq m (The Rome room), where in cosy environment, you can organize a small meeting.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS Cavalieri boasts one of the best restaurants in the world. Located on the roof, La Pergola restaurant has been awarded three stars by Michelin Guide – the only one in the whole Rome. What contributes to the unique atmosphere are pieces of art, china and candelabrum from the 18th century. Heinz Beck has been the chief here for 15 years and has been awarded for his artistry in the whole world. The dishes enchant with their looks, aroma and taste. Deeply roasted zucchini with caviar and fish and saffron sauce, risotto with oysters and champagne or veal marinated in citrus fruits

LEISURE FACILITIES The aforementioned Spa is also well reputed. Spread on the area of 2,500 sq m there are 10 treatment rooms with a wide range of treatments and Ayurveda. This great offer is complemented with the perfectly-equipped Technogym, the fitness centre and two pools, one indoor and one outdoor. **VERDICT** The highest quality hotel with excellent service and the world's finest cuisine. You won't regret!

Jakub Olgiewicz

CONTACT Rome Cavalieri; Via Alberto Cadlolo 101, 00136 Rome, Italy; tel. +39 06 350 91; romecavalieri.com
PRICE The internet rate for a stay at the end of September was 465 euro for a Deluxe room.

HOTEL: TOKIO

Ritz-Carlton



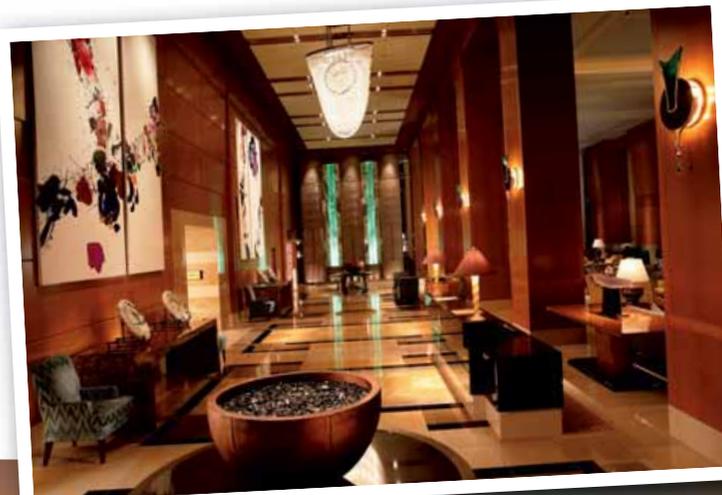
WHAT'S IT LIKE? Tokyo always makes quite an impression on Europeans. The Ritz-Carlton evokes exactly the same feelings – the hotel is situated in the Roppongi district, where the meet the paths of business, diplomacy, modern cuisine, mad entertainment and oriental tradition. The hotel, the owner of which is the big investment group – Mitsui Fudosan, has been open since March 2007 and is spread across 9 top (and the three lowest) floors of the highest skyscraper in the city. Midtown Tower is 248-metre high and has 53 floors. The sight of the city panorama or Mount Fuji seen from the huge windows is a real feast for the eyes. The price of the luxurious Ritz-Carlton Suite, which you can ask about in the hotel, is another record. It's the most expensive suite in Japan and the fifth one in the world – one night spent in this 300-sq m luxurious place costs about 2 million yens – which is about €17,000.

The person responsible for the design is Frank Nicholson who is well known in the hotel business. In the lobby, guests can admire four enormous (4-metre high each) canvasses by an American painter, Sam Francis. In Poland, this 20th century artist and precursor of the so-called action painting style, is known only to the connoisseurs, while in Japan he is popular and widely recognized. The atmosphere of the lobby is complemented with Venetian candlesticks or hand-woven carpets.

WHERE IS IT? The heart of the city. Tokyo is one of the biggest metropolises in the world. It's 75 kilometres from the international airport of Narita, and it takes over an hour and a half to get there by taxi. You can also order transport to the hotel in a limousine – these are 3-year-old Rolls Royce Phantom or BMW cars, 7 series. The Haneda airport is closer – 21 kilometres. It takes about 40 minute's drive to get to the hotel from there. The train journey from the airport to the Hamamatsu-cho station with a transfer to the Oeda underground line, which leads to the Roppongi station last more or less the same amount of time, and it's close to the hotel.

ROOM FACILITIES The Ritz-Carlton hotel has 248 rooms, including 36 suites. The two top floors has been separated as, business-dedicated, Ritz-Carlton Club.

Guest Rooms – the rooms considered as standard – called Deluxe and Tower Deluxe (because of the widow view) are



the most spacious rooms in this category in the whole city, they are of 52 sq m. They are spread between 47th and 51st floor. The walls are painted white and pastel tones, and numerous light points contribute to the atmosphere. In each room there is a comfortable king size bed or two single beds.

Guest room comes with a small corridor – that's where the bathroom entrance is, a table with 2 armchairs, a mini bar, a locker with a 40-inch flat TV set, a laptop safe and floor lamps. The marble bathroom is very spacious. It comes with a bathtub and a shower, and the guest is also given a bathrobe and slippers.

The suites are 80 sq m (Executive Suite, Millenia Suite) through 100 sq m (Tower Suite and Japanese Carlton Suite) to 120 sq m (Carlton Suite). The Presidential Suite (220 sq m) and the aforementioned record Ritz-Carlton Suite are situated on the 53th floor. All the rooms provide luxurious conditions in the sumptuously-furnished interiors.

The rooms spread over 53rd and 53th floor are called club rooms, and apart from all the amenities, they guarantee intimacy (to get to the floor by the lift is only possible after inserting a code card) and the access to a special club lounge. You spend there time resting or working. The staff dressed in kimonos

serves there excellent meals five times a day.

BUSINESS FACILITIES The area of all the rooms intended for conferences is over 1100 sq m. The biggest one – the 550 sq m Ballroom – is suitable for a meeting with up to 500 participants. If such a need arises, the room can be divided into four independent sections. The conference equipment is of the highest quality, from the sound system to the broadband internet.

The sizes of other rooms vary from 220 sq m (Parkview Room) to 35 sq m (Magnolia Room, Maple Room). A 300 sq m terrace is also available.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS The culinary pride of the Tokyo Ritz-Carlton was the Hinokiaka restaurant, awarded a star in the Michelin book. However, last July it was transformed into four separate restaurants – each having a specific specialization. The Hinokizaka name has been restored for the main eatery currently serving a traditional set of meals in Japanese cuisine (a soup and three-course meal) kaiseki – the of-

fer is changed monthly. Excellent sushi is served in the Arita restaurant, tempura is a specialty of Shimizu, while Kutani is known for the grilled teppanyaki.

In September two new restaurants were opened. Azure 45 specializes in French seafood, while Towers Grill is a typical American steakhouse.

In The Lobby Lounge & Bar, on the 45th floor, you can spend some nice time over a fabulous cocktail, like Diamonds Are Forever Martini, for instance. James Bond would definitely love that. The cocktail is served with a one carat diamond (be careful not to swallow it), and costs 18 thousand dollars. For over three years, since the place was opened, the bartender made the cocktail twice..

LEISURE FACILITIES The whole 46th floor occupies the Ritz-Carlton Spa & Fitness by ESPA. This 2,000 sq m area accommodates a pool with heated water, saunas, 9 treatment rooms, where you can indulge yourself with massages as well as beauty and refreshment treatments. A 100 sq m duo room for tandem treatments offers a big fitness studio with modern equipment and intimate atmosphere.

VERDICT Situated in the heart of the metropolis, 5-star luxurious hotel offering high quality of service.

Kuba Rams

FACTS **KONTAKT** Ritz-Carlton Tokio; Tokyo Midtown, 9-7-1, Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-6245 Japan; tel. +81 334 23 800; ritzcarlton.com
PRICE The internet rate for a one night's stay in a Deluxe room was 43 thousand yens (€400).



early in the morning, but since I had slept so well at night, now I was starting to feel a bit peckish. It turned out that all First Class passengers holding their EuroCity tickets can have free breakfast in QBB Club Lounge. We were offered a wide selection of croissants, cookies and various snacks. As for drinks, we could choose among coffee, tea, juices, or water. That's what I call a warm welcome.

VERDICT The sleeping compartments are an ideal solution for a night travel. They are an excellent alternative for those who don't want to or don't have to travel by plane. The compartments are comfortable, and provide enough space to relax, but are also surprisingly good for those who feel like spending the time working.

Olga Chelchowska

ON THE TRAIN: WARSAW – VIENNA

PKP EuroCity Chopin

INFO Each year PKP Intercity opens new connections between Warsaw and European capitals, gradually becoming a real competition for air carriers. The price is considerably lower and, as it turns out, it doesn't have to mean a lower quality of service. I went on a journey from Warsaw to Vienna by EuroCity Chopin night train.

BOARDING THE TRAIN Despite the late hour, Warsaw Central Rail Station was alive and buzzing. The platforms are well marked, so I had no problems finding the proper one, where my train appeared just a moment later. Buying a ticket is also a child's play – the best idea is to purchase it online and print at home.

The train left promptly at 6 pm and headed towards Austria. You can choose a car of your own liking – the one with seats only, a couchette, or a sleeping one. Taking into consideration the time it would take us to reach the destination, I chose the last option.

THE JOURNEY The sleeping car is located in the mid-section of the train. The compartments accommodate 2 passengers, but in exceptional cases it's possible to unfold the third bed.

The compartments of the sleeping car are very nice, air-conditioned rooms with relatively much space. After a while a waiter from Wars restaurant service knocked on the door, asking me and my fellow-passenger what drinks we would like to be served in the morning, and informed us that the restaurant car would be closed for the night. The compartments in the sleeping car were far from what I remembered from the old times of travelling by train.

In the middle of the compartment there is a bunk bed, a wardrobe where you can hang your coat or jacket, two shelves and a fold out seat. Behind the wardrobe there is an extendable ladder leading to the top bed. Next to the wall, there is a small washbasin. On closing its cover, the washbasin becomes a convenient shelf where you can place a few smaller objects. On the side of the wardrobe there is a smaller shelf where you will find bottles of mineral water, a croissant, and various toiletries for the passengers.

When you open the door of the shelf completely, the mirror which is mounted to the interior part of the door is positioned right above the washbasin, creating in this way a convenient bathroom corner. Both beds have a cup stand and 230 V electrical sockets which allow you to plug in your laptop and get down to work. The large window and the thought out design of the place contribute to the fact that despite relatively small space, the whole compartment leaves a quite positive impression. Especially because some of the compartments come with their own bathrooms. It's very clean, has a fair-sized shower, and a liquid soap dispenser located above the tap.

ARRIVAL The train was due to arrive in Vienna at 6.22 am. A few minutes before 6 o'clock, a waiter knocked on our door to make sure that all passengers had already woken up and are ready to leave the train. A while later, the same waiter turned up with the coffee I had ordered the previous evening. The train drew into a platform of Vienna Westbahnhof in time. It was still



FACTS **PRICE** Depend on the chosen compartment: €29 for a sitting one, €39 for a couchette, €59 for a sleeping car.
BED CONFIGURATION bunk beds (with an optional third bed)
MATRESS WIDTH 60 cm.
CONTACT intercity.pl



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MENU The menu of Miód Malina reflects its interior. You will find here Polish dishes, as well as some specialties of the Italian cuisine. It's a common fusion, it is often that in the best restaurants the local menu is mixed with some other, usually Italian cuisine. And that's no surprise – the Italian cuisine is considered one of the best. That's why in this Cracow eatery you will find a bruschetta, but in order to be faithful to the tradition, we recommend you order a crunchy *osyppek* with cranberries, mushrooms with cream and rosemary or crunchy potato cakes with cream or mushroom sauce as a starter. Among the starters you will also find salted herring with beetroots and sour cream, but there is also carpaccio and Parma ham with melon and rocket. As for soups, I recommend delicious home-made broth with noodles and fresh parsley or wild mushroom soup served in a loaf of bread. Tomato cream with parmesan dumplings and rocket is also worth a try. Miód Malina offers a wide variety of delicious dumplings, so it's a good idea to order a mix of them. The rich offer of main dishes attracts the attention especially with roasted specialties: pork hock with fried cabbage, bigos, ribs marinated with honey, or a roasted leg of veal in chanterelle sauce. There are also delicious fish and other dishes, including beef tenderloin steak with Parma ham and marinated onions. Add to this a selection of Italian pasta, and desserts, among which there is a delicious apple pie served with vanilla ice cream.

PRICES Starters cost between PLN 10 and PLN 17, cold starters: PLN 8-26, and salads between PLN 19 and PLN 25. You can order soups for PLN 12-19 and dumplings for PLN 18 (a large mix costs PLN 62). Roasted specialties start at PLN 9 for 100 g of pork hock to PLN 32 for ribs with honey. Fish dishes cost between PLN 28 and PLN 38, while main dishes start at PLN 37 for grilled chicken breast with mozzarella and Parma ham, to PLN 61 for beef tenderloin steak. Pasta is slightly more than PLN 20, while desserts cost about PLN 15.

VERDICT A stylish restaurant which attracts thanks to the decor, atmosphere and great cuisine. ■

CONTACT
 Restauracja Miód Malina
 ul. Grodzka 40, 31-044 Kraków
 +48 12 430 04 11, miodmalina.pl

RESTAURANT: KRAKÓW
Miód Malina

INFO Cracow is full of all sorts of eateries, including many stylish restaurants. The competition is so big, that the restaurant owners have to try to surpass others as for the decor and atmosphere of the place, to attract customers. And they surely must be attracted to one place with a pleasant and delicious name – Miód Malina (honey raspberry). As the name suggests, the food here is delicious and the atmosphere is informal. Any guests who comes here is given both of these “specialties”. It pays well, as you can read in the visitor’s book. “After such a good meal, writing doesn’t come easy...” - admits Ewa Wachowicz, and Danny De Vito confesses: “I want to start eating again”. You can believe his words – it’s no accident that the restaurant has been rewarded by the Michelin guide three times already.

LOCATION We got used to the fact that all the best things in Cracow are located in close proximity to The Main Market Square, and it is so indeed. Miód Malina is situated on the corner of Grodzka and Poselska streets near the Main Market Square and the Planty Park. The location is not just random – a tenement from the 14th century really contributes to the atmosphere of the place

THE INTERIOR On entering the restaurant, you get an impression that the interior “embraces” you, and that’s because of the wooden sideboards with numerous clay jugs and jars with honey, woven tablecloths, a huge stove with a pile of firewood behind it, or pictures on the walls depicting strawberries or wild flowers all painted in warm colours. The arched vault of the ceiling, dry and fresh flowers, herbs, bunches of flax, cereal and catkins also contribute to the atmosphere. The stove is used on request of the guests – the staff prepares dumplings, ribs or pork hock in it. In the evening the interior is lit with candles. Some could say, that the interior of Miód Malina is visually overloaded, but it is somewhat pleasant to the eye, and it emphasizes the rustic and Polish atmosphere of the place.



Tomasz Wilczewski



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Style conscious

In the first of a series on personal styling, **Christina Kautzky** consults the experts from three fashion capitals of the world about making that first impression count

For most people, the idea of a personal stylist or shopper is relegated to daydreams or brushed aside as an unnecessary expense, especially at a time of financial uncertainty around the world. However, personal styling is key to making that all-important first impression and continuing to impress both personally and professionally.

While it may come as a surprise, employing a personal stylist will not actually break your bank. Consultations are generally free and half-, full- or multi-day shopping trips come at a nominal (and reasonable) fee—no commission involved—compared with the benefits of having an expert on hand to retool a tired or outdated wardrobe. Personal shoppers and stylists at department stores are paid—by the store—on commission, so there is no pressure on clients to purchase anything they don't want.

If, as Paris-based personal shopper Heather Price says, “looking at your wardrobe makes you want to cry”, if personal style hasn't changed in years, or if purchasing the same clothes at the same shops year after year has become habit, it is well worthwhile to consult a personal shopper, where individual needs, requests and the overall look are the first priority.

Style tip #1

SHOP WITH THE FASHION-CONSCIOUS

Everyone has a friend that oozes style, sophistication and individuality. So why not just take that person along on a shopping trip instead of seeking out a personal shopper?

Explains Susan Dresner, veteran personal shopper and founder of Ways & Means in New York City: “A friend may know you or see you in a particular way, but they won't necessarily know how to stretch you. My job is to stretch you and have you look at things that you wouldn't necessarily choose for yourself, while remaining true to who you are and how you want to be presented.”

In the context of a one-stop-shop like Harvey Nichols in London, a personal stylist has the resources of the entire Knightsbridge department store at her fingertips. And, with a newly redesigned Personal Shopping department, clients receive star treatment in a relaxing and sophisticated environment. Rebecca Haynes, manager, personal shopping at Harvey Nichols, says: “A personal shopper can offer professional advice, knowledge of stock within the store and advice on alterations. She can book appointments for hair, make-up or consultations, together with handling deliveries and/or postage.”



“Have some suggestions about things you are looking for and also be prepared to try on a few pieces that you think initially you may not like”.
 – *Rebecca Haynes (above), Harvey Nichols, London*



Effectively, a personal shopper makes life easy and takes the worry and hassle of choosing a perfect outfit off the client's shoulders. At department stores like Lane Crawford found in Hongkong and Beijing, a personal shopper also makes it easier to check for sizes, snag pieces as soon as they come in, and keep clients apprised of developments in stock and trends.

Style tip #2

KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND

When it comes to creating an image and presenting a look, an informed opinion, based on years of experience, goes a long way not only in making each and every client look good, but in simplifying and streamlining the shopping experience.

For those who want to shop abroad but don't have the time to spend days and days looking for the perfect outfit, personal shoppers will pre-shop and plan your itinerary, researching before the client even lands in the country. Professional shoppers are the only way to finding one-of-a-kind shops and local designer boutiques, and they can even arrange for stores to open at special times to fit into your busy schedules.

Former model-turned-stylist Heather Price has lived and worked in Europe for a decade and has on-the-ground knowl-

Above: accessorise, accessorise, accessorise



“Your measurements may not be what you think or like, but accuracy is essential to a good fit. Buying a size too small just to satisfy your pride isn’t going to give you a look to be proud of” .
 – Heather Price (left), based in Paris

edge of a variety of shops and boutiques, which makes her an invaluable resource. In addition to being able to take clients to major department stores and popular stores in Paris, Milan and London, she says: “If you prefer the more discreet, smaller gems and secret addresses, I can guarantee you a very exclusive itinerary. I know the secret boutiques... and most of the boutique owners know me so we can make special arrangements.”

Similarly, in and around the shopping metropolis of Manhattan, Dresner says: “I always pre-shop for my clients. Based on their style, personality and comfort trying new things, I choose neighbourhoods they may or may not know about, so we see local designers, shops that carry certain labels and specialty stores that I know have your size, your kind of pieces, and clothing that is within your budget.”

Style tip #3

BEFRIEND YOUR STYLIST

As with any service-oriented relationship, personal shoppers rely on the client to set the tone. Honest, open responses to written or verbal questionnaires are key to a successful experience. “It’s not a test,” says Dresner. “Just because you don’t have a favourite designer doesn’t mean you can’t have a successful shopping trip, but I need to understand where you are coming from when we meet.”

Similar to the way that Dresner and Price have established their own businesses, consultants in-house for clients at Lane Crawford are “on hand to provide personalised advice, including complimentary personal styling services like consultations in private styling suiters, gift selection ideas and home styling,” says the department store’s concierge service.

“There is a full consultation in our suite prior to the appointment,” says Haynes of Harvey Nichols relationship style. During this time, a form is filled out and the details are discussed. The consultant will then accompany the client around the store so that they can select items for the client together. This also gives them time to chat and get to know each other.

Responses and updated style profiles are kept on hand so that personal shoppers can reference them whenever the client makes an appointment. Price’s website requests: “Please use the comment boxes (in this online form) to tell me about certain styles, colours, etc, that you do not like, as this is equally important”. For all personal shoppers, as much detail as they can glean makes the experience that much more successful.

Opposite page: shoes to complete an outfit



live and breathe fashion, trends and styles that last over time.

Says Dresner: "I had a client recently from Shanghai who came in and purchased a lot of things, and some in colours or styles she wouldn't have normally tried. It was the biggest compliment to me that when she got back to Shanghai, she emailed me saying she had tried on all the clothes and had decided to keep all of them. That means I've done my job well – when a client is happy with their purchases".

Keeping in touch over time as styles, preferences or desires change is also essential to keeping personal shoppers in the loop and ensuring that they meet

individual needs time after time. Says Harvey Nichols Haynes: "Our consultants communicate by telephone, email (sometimes together with emailed photographs) and mail order. The client can request the consultant keep their eye out for certain pieces each season, while some clients are seasonal shoppers and some (purchase only for special) events".

But she touches on the one point that is key to the personal shopping experience, and the reason that an investment in style is well worth it. Haynes says: "It all depends upon individual needs". ■



Style tip #4

INVEST IN A LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP

Throughout the shopping experience and over the course of time, personal shoppers focus on the ultimate goal, and that is to give each client the time, energy and individualised attention that will come together in a wardrobe, an outfit, or a few new key pieces to update their look.

For a one-time shopping experience, seasonal upkeep, or finding something special for an event, personal shoppers

THE PROFESSIONALS

Susan Dresner

Ways & Means, New York City
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email susan@susandresner.com

Heather Price

Paris, Milan and London
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www.priceparis.com

Harvey Nichols

Knightsbridge, London
tel 44 20 7259 6638
www.harveynichols.com/output/
Page183.asp

Lane Crawford

IFC, Hongkong
Concierge services/personal styling
tel 852 2118 7777
www.lanecrawford.com



"Never hire a stylist who won't give you references. Pretending like your clients are so VIP that you can't reveal them is usually a sign that you aren't as established as you are claiming".
– Susan Dresner (left), Ways & Means, New York

Last year, Brussels International Airport handled almost 17 million passengers.

In this issue, Tomasz Koniecki checks the offers of the place which – due to its location – can be called the Gate to Europe.

Welcome to Europe—says the logo of Brussels Airport. It's definitely a catchy slogan – all the more so, because Brussels is, in fact, the continent's capital with more and more visitors arriving in the city from overseas countries. This can be seen in a considerable growth in transatlantic traffic at the airport. In July this year, it handled a record 1.6 million passengers. A fair share of this amount are passengers from other continents.

The airport in Brussels is run by The Brussels Airport Company which is 25% owned by the Belgian government. In 2009 airport served 17 million passengers. The most popular European destinations are Madrid, London, Rome, Barcelona, and Genoa, while the

intercontinental routes include New York, Monastir, Hurghada, Washington, and Tel Aviv. In October 2007 work has started on the construction of an underground rail link between the train station at the airport and the new railway line Schaarbeek – Mechelen. It is due to be ready by 2012.

A BIT OF HISTORY

In August 1914, Germans invaded Belgium and immediately started to seek a place for their military airfield, which would constitute a perfect air force base for future invasion of France. Finally, they found an ideal spot in the town of Haren. After WWI, the airfield was taken over by the Belgian government. The Belgian royalty was deeply keen on developing civil aviation and King Albert I signed the memorandum of association of SNETA – the precursor of SABENA. The first civil flight took off in 1923 – the aircraft carried 2 passengers from Brussels to London and back via Paris (the overall time of the flight was 7.5 hours).



The airport in Brussels is a gate to Europe. It handles 17 million passengers a year.

The air traffic over Belgium was increasing steadily, and the airfield also expanded with time. However, up to the 1930s, the airfield had only a grass runway with a large white circle (50 m in diameter) and a large arrow pointing North painted on the ground. In the middle of the circle there was a smoke pot indicating the wind direction. In February 1935, Haren saw the start of the first scheduled flight to Congo, which was Belgian colony at that time.

Brussels



The airport's expansion stopped with the outbreak of WWII, and the Germans started building a new airport in the town of Melsbroek which, when the war ended, became a centre of Belgian civil aviation until 1958 when a new airport in Zaventem was opened.

To learn more about the history of Belgian aviation (and to see the airport itself), you can join a guided tour which is organised several times a day. The prices for such a start with €130 for a group of 30 people – so it's not fairly expensive.

LOCATION AND TRANSPORT

The airport is located in Zaventem – which is only 12 km away from Brussels. It's easy to get there by car – it's just enough to follow the signposts scattered all around the Brussels R0 ring road. The car parks can accommodate up to 10,600 vehicles. The parking fee is €5 per hour.

You can also reach the airport by bus – the bus station is situated near the cen-



tre of the airport, and operates several lines including De Lijn (which also stops at Brussels North railway station), or MIVB/STIB which provides express connections with the centre of Belgian capital (the fare is €3). Other bus destinations include Antwerp (€10), and Amsterdam (€30 for a one-way and €50 for a roundtrip ticket). On level -1 of the airport there is a railway station from which depart trains heading towards several stations around Brussels and other parts of Belgium. The taxi fare from the airport to the centre is around €35 – the certified taxi service has blue and yellow logos.

TOWARDS BUSINESS

The Brussels airport is a popular venue for organizing various meetings, conferences, discussion panels, promotional events, or even concerts and other performances. The largest is Sky Hall – a spacious conference centre located within the area of the airport. It can accommodate up to 1,200 guests. The airport has a specialized personnel which will assist you in organizing your event.

Meetings can also be organized in Regus Skyport Meeting Centre Airport Hotel or Sheraton Brussels Airport Hotel – the former has 10 conference rooms ▶

Airport





for 2-80 people; the latter possesses 22 room and is the only 5-star hotel located at the airport.

There is no other airport in Europe which handles such a large number of VIP passengers. It's not surprising, though, as Brussels is the centre of European politics. The airport personnel adheres to all requirements of the diplomatic protocol.

Business passengers can take advantage of so-called fast lane for check-in and luggage control – this is available only for passengers of certain airlines (including LOT), and owners of Miles&More Gold cards. Of course they can also use business lounges operated by various airlines. Such lounge is also located in Regus Skyport Meeting Center. There are also two other lounges located at the airport. Both are called Diamond Lounge and their guests will find their alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, snacks, newspapers, broadband Internet connection, personal computers with printers, faxes, and telephones. They can also order breakfast there.

TERMINALS

The airport consists of two main buildings: Terminal A and Terminal B – the former has four levels while the latter five. Terminal B is also much more spacious. The arrivals hall is located on level +2 while the departures hall is to be found on level +3. The gates have symbols A, B, and T. On level 0 in Terminal B there is the entrance to the bus station. In Terminal B, on level 0 there are various shops and restaurants. There are 13 check-in desks located on level 3 and a spacious departure lounge.

The airport in Brussels has over 50 stores and numerous restaurants scattered all over the place. Among them we will find Beauvevin wine and tapas bar which offers Mediterranean snacks, Déliciance cafe with fresh sandwiches and French breakfast, or Seafood & Wine restaurant which serves quality wine and delicious seafood.

On level 4 we will find a pharmacy while on level 2 in arrivals hall there are offices of European car rental companies: Hertz, Avis, Europcar, and Sixt. The air-

CONTACT

Brussels International Airport Company (BIAC)

Brussels Airport,
B-1930 Zaventem,
Belgium
Telephone: (0)2 753
4200 or (0)900 70000
(from Belgium)
Fax: (0)2 753 4250
E-mail: info@biac.be
www.brusselsairport.be

port features Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Orthodox and Protestant places of worship (located on level 4). There is also a meditation area provided for humanists.

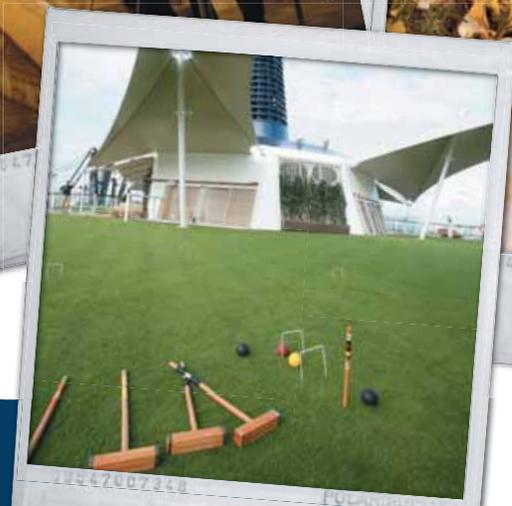
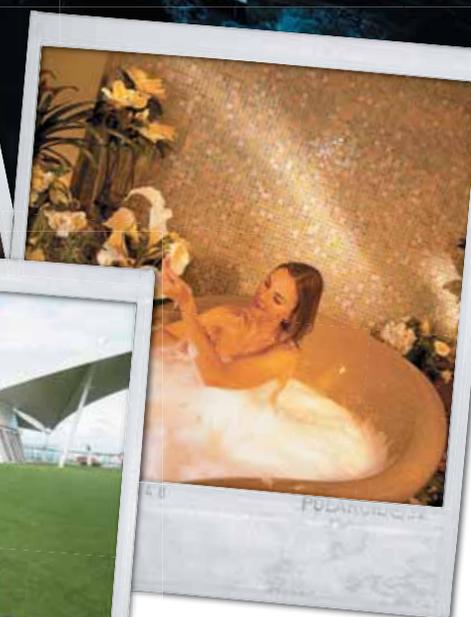
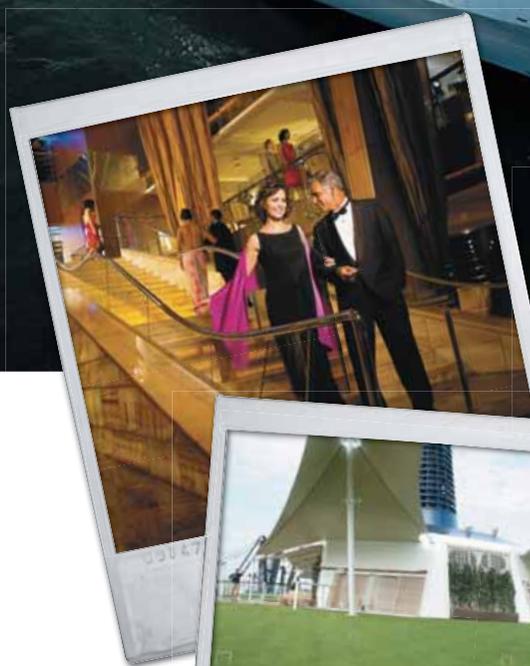
Wi-Fi access is widely available: in all waiting areas and most of the public areas. All you need is a Wi-Fi laptop or smartphone. You can buy your Wi-Fi access at rent2connect or online on the Wi-Fi portal page.

ACCOMMODATION

There is Sheraton hotel located opposite the airport's terminals. It's considerably close, so you can simply get there on foot. There are also a number of other hotels located in the vicinity of the airport and offering accommodation at various prices. Among them are Holiday Inn, Pullmann, Ibis, Novotel, Courtyard by Marriott. ■

Tomasz Koniecki

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- ▶ WYCIECZKI



Flying a Cargo Bird



A good airline specializes not only in carrying passengers, but also makes money on cargo transport. This can, in fact, be a very profitable business.

LOT Polish Airlines was established in 1929. Just 10 years later the airline decided to launch its own cargo shipping service. In the following years, air freight became an essential element of airline business for those air carriers which wanted to become important players on the market.

That's why the Polish air carrier decided in 1995 to establish Cargo and Mail Bureau at LOT Polish Airlines. Today LOT Cargo is an integral part of the Polish airline, and operates within a designated cargo space of LOT's passenger aircraft. In other words: the whole fleet of the Polish airline is available for airfreight offered by LOT Cargo. The fleet consists of 51 aircraft, which presently allows for airfreight of up to 120 tons. The largest Boeing aircraft have a range of 11,700 kilometres. The situation will dramatically improve when the Polish airline receives its ordered Boeing 787 Dreamliner. When it happens, the range will rise to almost 16,000 kilometres, and the transport time on the longest routes will drop by one hour.

THE PLANS

Presently, LOT Cargo has its offices in Cracow, Katowice, Wrocław, Poznań, Szczecin, and Gdańsk. Foreign offices are located in Minsk, New York, Chicago, and Toronto. A worldwide network of agents which collaborate with LOT Cargo enables the Polish air carrier to offer its services in the Middle East, Europe, Africa, as well as in North and South America. The quality of the service provided by the airline was awarded already in 2002 when the Quality Management System implemented by LOT Cargo was approved by Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance to be applicable to ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management System Standards.

Last year, LOT Cargo carried 20,251 tons of cargo. Responding to the increasing demand for professional cargo transport, LOT Cargo decided to establish two regular airfreight connections. The first one was launched on 7 November 2009 in collaboration with Canadian Cargojet air carrier. The Boeing 767-200 ER Freighter, which can accommodate 45 tons of cargo, flights once a week on Toronto-Katowice-Toronto route. The interline agreements which LOT Cargo signed with other airlines have made it possible for the Polish air carrier to transport cargo not only to all ports in the United States, but also to ports in Middle and South Americas. Several months ago the agreement for airfreight connections with Canada was renewed up to 2011.

The second airfreight connection was launched on 2 March 2010 on Warsaw-Minsk route. The flights are operated twice weekly on Tuesdays and Fridays by Antonow An-26 aircraft with total cargo capacity of 5 tons.

Cargo and Mail Bureau at LOT Polish Airlines also develops systems of electronic support and parcel tracking which the customers may access via website at lot.pl/cargo.

LOT ON THE ROAD

Apart from the typical airfreight services, another important business activity carried out by LOT Cargo is a regular road transport. The Road Feeder Service is used for transporting very heavy or large loads, as well as for those which cannot be transported by air due to their nature (mostly because they are dangerous). The schedule is updated seasonally. Apart from scheduled routes, LOT Cargo also offers routes on Client's request. This season, LOT offers domestic routes from Warsaw to Katowice, Krakow, Gdansk, Szczecin, Poznan and Wrocław and also a connection from Katowice to Krakow. On international routes, LOT offers connections to Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Minsk, Riga, St. Petersburg, Kaliningrad, Tallinn and Prague.

LOT Cargo also plans to launch a regular airfreight service with Ukraine. ■

Jakub Olgiewicz

www.centrum lotow.pl

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Moroccan Birds

Huge experience, modern fleet, electronic facilities for passengers and almost 150 operated routes, including one to Warsaw – these are undoubtedly the strongest points of Royal Air Maroc.



airline which flies to 75 countries across Africa, Europe, and other parts of the world.

FROM JUNKERS TO AIRBUS

Royal Air Maroc airline was established in 1953 as Compagnie Cherifienne des Transports Aériens, with its first aircraft being Junkers JU-52 flying solely on domestic routes. The new name was given four years later, when Morocco gained its independence. Also at that time, the air carrier launched its first international routes.

In 1960, Royal Air Maroc introduced SE-210 Caravelles – the first jet aircraft in its fleet. They were part of RAM's fleet until mid-70s, operating mainly on Casablanca-Paris and Casablanca-Ma-

drid routes. They were later replaced by Boeing 727 together with 707 and 737 models, which considerably improved the Moroccan airline's competitiveness. In late 70s, Royal Air Maroc flew to numerous countries across Europe, America, Africa, and to the Middle East.

The 80s were another stage in development of the Moroccan airline thanks to introduction of Boeing 757 aircraft and the expansion of Mohammed V Airport, which had gained importance since 1984. The last decade of the 20th century was marked for Royal Moroccan Air by replacing old Boeing 707 models by new Boeing 737.

The new machines had to be ordered, because the number of passengers willing to fly with Air Maroc increased dramatically. In 2000, the airline ordered 20 new Boeing 737 of the new generation, and 4 Airbus A321. The first decade of the 21st century turned out to be a peri-

You don't have to be a hardcore movie freak to know the name Casablanca. Today, the city is a popular destination, but this time mostly because it's one of the major centres of Northwest Africa, rather than a location of the famous film starring Humphrey Bogart. It is here where the Moroccan airline is based at Mohammed V International Airport. The airport in Casablanca is itself an impressive business – last year it handled unbelievable 6.4 million passengers. This shows the significance of the airport, but also of Royal Air Maroc



of new challenges such as the growing number of tourists arriving in Morocco. This resulted in further fleet modernization and increasing the number of flights on already existing routes. In 2007 RAM carried 6.3 million passengers, having already ordered a number of new Boeing 787 aircraft. In 2004 Royal Air Maroc also set-up a no-thrills subsidiary named Atlas Blue. The Moroccan government is the owner of 96% of Royal Moroccan Air with the remaining 3% belonging to Air France and 1% to Spanish Iberia.

MOROCCO FOR BUSINESS

Royal Air Maroc offers a number of services and products aimed mainly at business travellers. These include new Premium and Executive classes, created to provide their passengers with the highest quality of service, numerous comforts, and top notch dining experience. You can experience the privileges already at the stage of booking their tickets where Premium and Executive passengers are given priority treatment and provided an exclusive telephone line with priori-

ty call processing. At the airport, to gain time and for more comfort, at departure you are entitled to dedicated check-in and access to VIP lounges, genuine places for relaxation and work fitted out to meet your every need, in an elegant, calm and welcoming environment. You also benefit from priority disembarkation and baggage delivery upon arrival.

On board, you will benefit from a spacious seat, designed and fitted out to help you relax comfortably, to read or work in full tranquillity. A pillow and blanket will be offered for resting, and on our long and medium haul night time routes, a comfort kit will be offered.

Gastronomy is available on board offering refined Moroccan and international cooking, served on utility table adding a festive and warm element to your flights. The menu consists of a starter, a choice of three hot dishes, including one "light meal", cheese and fresh fruit, pastry, tea and coffee. Also a welcome drink consisting of Champaign is offered on all RAM flights. Executive class passengers also benefit from an allowance of 40kg and priority delivery upon arrival.

It's also worth mentioning the Inter+ card which is particularly useful for business travellers as it offers them ex-

ceptional advantages. First of all, 50% reduction on all our flights inside Morocco without restriction. Moreover, they will be given more flexibility for the pricing conditions: cancellations, authorized reimbursements, and changes in reservation without penalties. The Inter+ card is a paid card established in a personal name and valid for 2 years.

Royal Air Maroc also invites its passengers to join Safar Flyer loyalty programme. For each journey on Royal Air Maroc, or with any of our partners, Safar Flyer Miles are convertible into bonus air tickets, upgrades or excess luggage benefits.

"E" services? They seem to be quite a usual thing today, but not all airlines seem to treat them seriously. The newest technologies which are used in the process of passenger handling, are not always willingly used by all airlines. Of course, we are



Royal Air Maroc knows well how to cater for the needs of business travellers

talking here about smaller air carriers, not the largest ones. However RAM has a lot to offer in this aspect. The airline is currently setting up self-service check-in terminals at Mohammed V Airport. These terminals can be used for check-in if you carry an e-ticket or a conventional ticket. If you are carrying only hand luggage, all you need to do is enter your air ticket. The terminal will immediately issue your boarding pass. That way, you will not have to go to the check-in desk and access to the boarding areas will be quicker. Royal Air Maroc is Africa's first airline to be fitted out with self-service terminals for facilitating travel.

Useful? Of course – and it's not the only reason why you should consider taking advantage of Air Maroc services. ■



FOUR FINNAIR RIDERS

FINNAIR 

For the whole of September the Finnish air carrier was trying to find unique “private detectives”. Their secret mission has just begun.

On 1 September, Finnair’s website presented an advertisement which looked somewhat like an April Fool’s joke. The airline announced that it wanted to hire four Quality Hunters—independent advisors, whose only task would be travelling to various destinations across Europe, Asia, and the US in search of quality experiences. This is what I call a dream job. Not surprisingly then, this news has spurred mass reaction from people all over the world and Finnair received thousands of applications.

HUNTING FOR QUALITY

The hunters will travel thousands of kilometres throughout October and November, on board various aircraft, assessing flights, airports, their business lounges, eateries, and destinations. They will also have a closer look at check-in and security control at airports, and evaluate the work of airport personnel and the cabin crew

on both short and long haul flights. All of these to learn more about the expectations and wishes of passengers, and to find out which aspects need some improvement.

“The recruitment of the Quality Hunters is one means for Finnair to focus more closely on issues that are important to today’s travellers,” said Antti Nieminen, Global Marketing Communications Manager at Finnair Plc. He explained that the efforts are part of the company’s commitment to continuously improve its service proposition. “We believe that the Quality Hunters’ blogs will promote interesting and constructive discussions about travel,” Nieminen said.

WHAT’S YOUR OPINION?

As independent advisors to Finnair, they are expected to communicate their im-

partial views and recommendations to the company on a regular basis throughout the two-month period.

In addition, the Quality Hunters will share their thoughts and adventures with the public through personal blogs on Rethink Quality, a website to be launched for this purpose on 1 September.

Of course the response to such an advertisement was huge. Within 26 days of September several thousands of applications were submitted, including a number of those submitted from Poland. Everyone could have a peek at the profiles of the applicants to learn that they came from different walks of life: some were old, some very young, women, men, people living in different parts of the world, and representing different professions: from students to market analysts and game programmers. The panel of judges, which had to make the final decision and choose the winners, had a hard nut to crack.

The lucky winners have just set off on their first journeys. We are now waiting for the first results of their work and will be eager to check website finnair.com/rethinkquality to read the blogs of the QHs. Towards the end of their journey, the readers will be able to vote for the Top Quality Hunter and get a chance to win return flights for two between Europe and Asia with Finnair. ■



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Comfort for the most **discerning of guests**



Those for whom courteous staff and cosy comfortable room with en suite bathroom are simply not enough may now take the advantage of the Privilege Rooms that Mercure Hotel has to offer.

These are rooms of a higher standard, designed to cater to the needs of businessmen and clients in search of luxury. In brief, Privilege Room is the first-class type of accommodation where, as the very name suggests, guests can enjoy special privileges. Not only comfort and convenience, but also the additional services and advantages are the elements that make it so unique.

TIME TO RELAX

You will immediately notice the luxury of the Privilege Room, with a soft bathrobe awaiting guests on a comfortable wide bed and a complimentary newspaper on a chest of drawers. After a tiring journey you may quench your thirst with mineral water or relax while sipping freshly brewed coffee or tea thanks to in-room facilities. Moreover, guests may use the mini-bar stocked with beverages and take a bath in the luxurious bathroom where they will also find a full range of "Mercure&Me" toiletries as well as slippers provided by the hotel. However, the benefits of the Privilege Room go beyond its luxurious amenities – the additional services give guests the feeling of being special. For instance, the ho-



Privilege rooms are an excellent choice for those who seek more luxury

tel reception features a separate counter for guests staying in the Privilege Room to ensure express check-in, and there is also a specially designated Privilege area at the hotel restaurant, where they can enjoy their breakfast. Some of the Mercure Hotels also give you the possibility of an express check-out at the time of an early morning meal.

WHEN STANDARD MEANS MORE

To the joy of guests, such luxurious accommodation has already been made available at the Mercure Hevelius Hotel in Gdańsk and at the Mercure Hotel

in Poznań. In the near future, Privilege Rooms will also be included in the offer of the Mercure Grand Hotel in Warsaw. The rooms of a higher standard perfectly compliment the range of services for business travellers that Mercure brand has been providing for a long time now.

The Mercure Hevelius Hotel in Gdańsk comprises 281 rooms with modern décor and design, plus there is a specially designated Privilege area that occupies 2 floors of the hotel. Modern business centre is the cherry on the cake, with its comfortable and functional meeting rooms, comprehensive range of multimedia services and high quality of sound system.

At the Mercure Hotel in Poznań guests not only can stay in the Privilege Rooms but also use 9 conference rooms with WiFi. Mercure is one of the world's most recognisable hotel brands, with 690 hotels in 51 countries. All of them are conveniently located in city centres, close to airports or in the places that are perfect for leisure travel – in mountains, at seaside resorts, or near golf courses.

Although the Accor hotel chain owns and operates this hotel brand, there is a total of 13 Mercure establishments in Poland (either 3- or 4-star hotels) that are operated by Orbis – the strategic partner of Accor. ■



ORIGINAL CUISINE BY *Karol Okrasa*

A famous chef returns to the restaurant after a two-year break. However, this time under his own management.

Chances are that the place will become one of the most frequented restaurants both by active business people and foreigners visiting Poland. The restaurant is ideally located, so now all is left in the hand of the new chef. And the chef of Platter restaurant, which has just opened in Intercontinental hotel, is a top-class specialist.

Karol Okrasa is currently known for his TV programmes about cooking. Since 2001 he has been the host of “Cook with Okrasa”, and recently also appeared in a new production entitled “Flavours of the times”. He is also the author of the “Cook with Okrasa” cookery book, where you can find over a hundred original recipes. Karol Okrasa was the co-founder of the chapter of Chefs» Club Foundation – an organisation embracing the best cooking masters in Poland. In 2005 he was awarded a Culinary Oscar Award for the culinary personality of the year, while in 2007 he received a Hermes Award in the category of Culinary Personality.

IN INTERCONTINENTAL

He gained experience in many places, not only in Poland, so now he has moved into the attack with redoubled strength.

POLISH THEREFORE GOOD

Platter was opened in September, in a place where until recently there was another popular eatery called Frida – inspired by the Mexican cuisine. The interior has been utterly changed. It is simple but in style. An open kitchen, the trend which is getting more and more popular in restaurants, enables the guests not only to see what is happening while the dish is made, but also places much more pressure on the cooks – they are in a state of constant readiness.

Karol Okrasa once said, that he did not want the guests to come to his restaurant only to have a meal. He would rather make each dish an individual experience and adventure for them.

The restaurant offers a fusion of Polish cuisine with new flavours and preparation techniques.

There is a menu of light lunches, thanks to which a guest will have a meal within an hour. The menu will change every couple of days. Dinner menu depends on the season, and will change about four times a year.

The autumn menu comes first. «I invite to try the



Polish autumn cuisine the way I see it. You will find here a selection of groats, pickles, and smoked meat with sweet sauces from fruit liqueurs. You will get familiar with regional products from Poland or from abroad, but enriched with Polish garnish», wrote Karol Okrasa in the introduction.

What is there in the menu?

As a starter: Mini pierogi with roasted duck and buckwheat, dipped in a buttery emulsion made of sour rye soup and mushrooms, flavoured with fresh marjoram.

Among soups you will find: ox tail and goose broth served with barley dumplings and Wołoski cheese, or Oxalic Velouté with crispy Parma ham crisps and glazed Klaps pear.

As for main courses, you will find: lightly-grilled deer marinated in acacia liqueur, served with a mushroom pâté made of semolina and roasted linseed, or baked sturgeon marinated in sour milk and fried with thyme, in a composition of glazed salsify, with potato fritters.

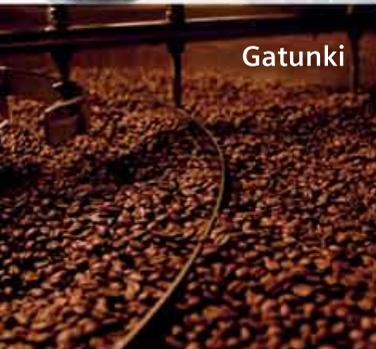
Bon appetite. Platter restaurant is open from 12.00 am. to 11.00 pm. during the week, and from 5.00 pm to 11.00 pm at weekends. ■



Siemens i kawa



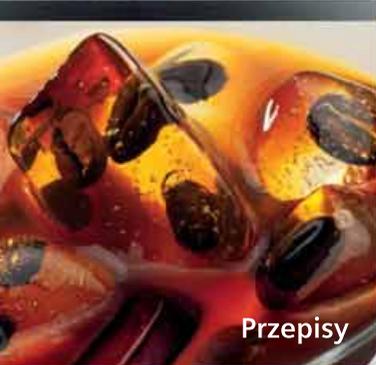
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Ekspres ciśnieniowy EQ.7 to mistrz w profesjonalnym parzeniu kawy. Futurystyczna technologia i wysmakowany design dostarczają wyjątkowej przyjemności – zarówno przy obsłudze, jak i degustacji wyśmienitej kawy. Najnowsze rozwiązania techniczne: **system senso flow**, czy **aroma pressure** pozwalają osiągnąć wyjątkowo głęboki smak i aromat, a w **cream center** powstaje idealna pianka o kremowej konsystencji. **Ruchomy dystrybutor** znakomicie ułatwia serwowanie kawy. Wszystko o ekspresach Siemens zawierają strony naszego **serwisu internetowego**. Znajdziesz tam także kompendium wiedzy o kulturze kawy: jej historii, uprawach, gatunkach oraz przepisy na pyszności z kawy – zarówno słodkie, jak i pikantne! Wejdź na www.siemens-kawa.pl i zanurz się w egzotyczny świat kawy przy filiżance gorącego espresso!

The future moving in.

SIEMENS

Radisson **BLU**

Business **BLU**

Each respectable hotel pays particular attention to business customers. Radisson Blu is no an exception here. Rooms, service, decent customer loyalty programme – in Radisson hotels, business customers can take advantage of various privileges and benefits.



The hotels with characteristic blue underline resembling a brush stroke in their logo, have created a whole approach to handling business customers. The approach is a coherent collection of offers, services and facilities to make business customers feel as comfortable as possible. The guests will experience the above in all five Radisson hotels in Poland, as well as abroad, because the offer for business customers has a global character.

A ROOM FOR A BUSINESS PERSON

In 5-star hotels – and Radissons belong to this category – room quality is at a high level even in standard rooms. However Radisson Blu has also specially Business Class Rooms designed with the needs of business customers in mind. In Warsaw's Radisson those rooms are 28-56 sq m large; in other cities (Szczecin, Wrocław, Cracow, and Gdańsk) their floor area is 23-

35 sq m. All the rooms are spacious, have comfortable beds and workdesks. The guests who stay in one of the rooms will be able to take advantage of free Pay TV, daily newspapers, bathrobe and slippers, and turndown service (bed making, drawing the curtains etc). The rooms also feature a Nespresso coffee and tea maker, a minibar, an ironing kit or/and a trouser press. Decor of the rooms is extremely appealing. Interestingly enough the guest rooms of Radisson Blu offer over 20 different types of décor. The rooms are not only comfortable, but also have distinct visual looks. Those who stay in business rooms have also free of charge access to the hotel's fitness clubs.

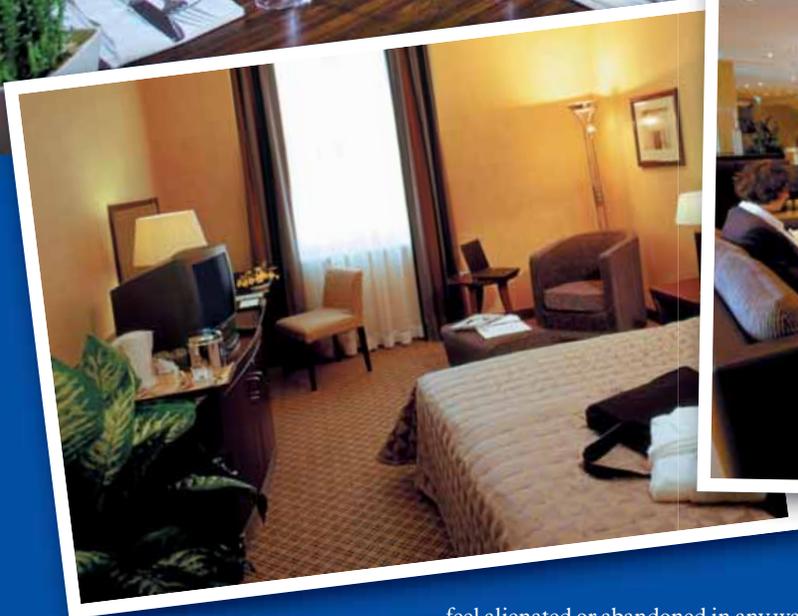
The bathrooms feature high quality toiletries by the French cosmetic brand Anne Semonin which was founded more than 20 years ago in Paris and was the first to combine essential oils and trace elements – and the first to offer “made-to-measure” products and treatments for

a sophisticated clientele. The cosmetics offered in Radissons are developed exclusively for the hotel. There are a number of other extremely useful services offered for the hotel guests, but one – so called “one touch service” – is particularly interesting. It's just enough to push a specific button on the telephone in your room to speak to call the reception desk, waiters, room service, request a wake up call or laundry collection, and discuss any matter related to your stay.

FEEL FREEDOM

E@sy Connect is the name of the concept coined by Radisson to describe free of charge, broadband Internet access available to the hotel guests not only in their rooms or lobby, but throughout the whole building. Regardless of the city – whether in Europe, the Middle East, or in Africa – if you stay in a Radisson hotel, you will be provided with access to free broadband Internet.

The loyalty programme in Radisson Blu hotels provides business guests with additional privileges.



The Internet access is not, however, the only facility which makes our life much easier in Radisson hotels. Take, for example, the so-called 100% Guest Satisfaction Guarantee. As the name suggests, the idea of the guarantee is to ensure that the guests leave the hotel fully satisfied with the service. If, however, they express their dissatisfaction with any feature provided by the hotel, they don't have to pay for it – and if they have already done so – the hotel will return them the money.

It is closely related to other concept of customer service, which is called “Yes, I Can” and has been present in Radisson chain for over a decade. Being hospitable is all about giving guests your undivided attention and when guests stay at a Radisson Blu hotel; the hotel manager, the waiter, the receptionist, the porter- everyone plays a vital role in delivering a memorable guest experience. As a result, none of the hotel guests

feel alienated or abandoned in any way, and can count on the hotel personnel to resolve any problem related to their stay in Radisson. Radisson Blu considers “Yes, I Can” concept to be particularly important for the company, as it involves providing customers with the service of the highest quality. All in all, every hotel wants their customers to be satisfied and return there in the future.

OUT OF TIME

An average guest stays in a hotel for the period of two days or less, which may be a problem for the laundry service, as it won't be able to return the washed clothes in time. Radisson Blu hotels have found a perfect solution called 3-Hour Express Laundry. The clothes to be washed are taken from the rooms before 8 pm, and returned on the same evening.

There's no doubt that business travellers are often busy and lack precious time. Everyone who has ever travelled

in business knows how sometimes time shortage can complicate our plans. Hotels are also aware of this fact. That's why Radisson offers their guests a quick check-out option. The procedure, which allows to save precious time of the guest by offering the options of sending invoice by email, mail or a quick pick-up at the reception desk.

There is also an option of a late check-out – which may sometimes be useful, as well. The guest may check-out from Radisson Blu hotels as late as 6 pm instead of the normal check-out time at no extra cost.

There is one more service offered by Radisson, which may be extremely useful. It's called Grab & Run, which is a takeaway breakfast aimed at guests on the go with no time for a sit-down breakfast. Tea and coffee in disposable cups along with fresh fruits and energy bars are available on a special table in the lobby so that none of our guests miss out on the most important meal of the day. Well, Radisson hotels always provide the best service for their customers. ■

Adam Tomaszewski

The Dubai Paradise

When we talk about Dubai, we think about ambitious architectural projects: artificial islands, a hotel in the shape of a sailing boat, or towering skyscrapers. However, the capital of the emirate has much more to offer. **Marek Pawłowicz** tells us why Dubai is an ideal place to organize an incentive trip.

For the last decade Dubai – a city located in the United Arab Emirates, and the capital of the emirate of the same name – has been trying to convince us that nothing is impossible. The spectacular investment projects, which draw the attention of the whole world to Dubai, are an example of this philosophy. Wherever else in the world would you find the only 7-star hotel on the planet, the archipelagos of artificial islands in the shape of a palm and a map of the world, or a vast business district with incredible 230 skyscrapers? All of these are enough to visit Dubai, although this cosmopolitan (most of the inhabitants are foreigners) and modern city has a lot more to offer, and despite its dominant modern character, the city hasn't forgotten about its local traditions and interesting culture.

Dubai is a real kaleidoscope – within one day you can find yourself in wild mountainous backwoods, by the azure sea,

on desert hills, in parks full of lush greenery, in a super-modern shopping centre, or in an old house built centuries ago. This diversity is, undoubtedly, a magnet which attracts numerous organizers of incentive travel experience. The place is safe, and offers an incredible number of good hotels as well as conference centres. Let's not forget that Dubai is not as distant a place as it might seem. The flight there takes only 6-7 hours, and the weather is always perfect with the sun shining all year round.

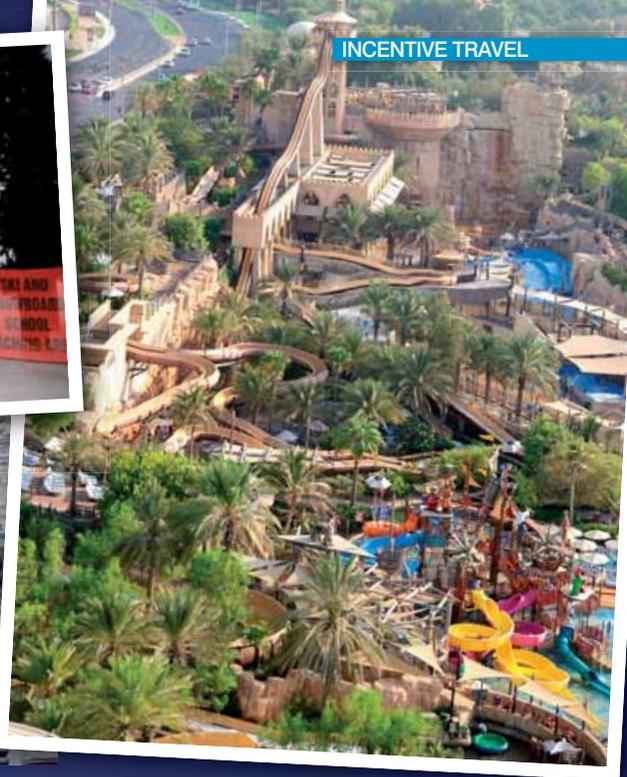
DESERT ADVENTURES

Dubai offers a number of fantastic opportunities for organized groups. Take, for example, the desert – something quite exotic for a European person. A night spent in a camp on the desert is always an unforgettable experience, especially when you travel with a camel caravan. Each animal takes two passengers and the whole caravan can consist of even several dozen camels. When you reach the campsite, you are treated with delicious dates and water. The night is spent in tents (also ones shaped like an igloo) in the desert, under an impossibly star-filled sky. Not to mention the desert sunrise, which is always truly fabulous.

Contrary to a common belief, the desert offers a lot of opportunities for having real fun. If you are an adventure seeker, you can go on a marvellous ride along the desert hills on board a 4x4 vehicle. Riding on the sand is not that easy (as is driving along gravel roads in Hajar mountains), and requires good reflexes and unbelievable concentration. You can also ride quads or practise sandboarding – a sport which resembles snowboarding, but here involves going down sand dunes on a board.

Another interesting experience is a visit to a camel farm where at least 100 camels are kept. You can ride them, observe their feeding and training.





The desert would be nothing without an oasis. A good desert trip must include several stops to rest and relax and oasis is always the best spot. It can be one of Bedouin villages or Hatta Fort Hotel where you can have lunch and use the swimming pool complex. Good rest wouldn't be complete without a lap dance which is performed by a group of extremely beautiful girls to the music played by an Arab band. The participants receive a "dish dash" a traditional Arab dress for men. The dinner consists of various grille delicacies. Let's not forget about the shisha – a water pipe which is traditionally smoked during each feast. Ladies will definitely be interested in henna body art which involves adorning the skin with unusual patterns, or a demonstration of baking traditional Bedouin bread.

SZTUCZNA INTELIGENCJA

After a visit to the desert, you can return to the town and make for one of the local beaches – e.g. the one in Jumeirah Beach Club – a luxurious seaside resort. It's also an excellent starting base for visiting Dubai. No trip would be complete without an appropriate sightseeing tour. Take, for example, The Creek. It looks like a river, but, as the name suggests, it's in fact a salt-water creek which flows through the city with a number of prestigious buildings located nearby. Dubai is also known for the world's tallest skyscraper. The building is called Burj Khalifa and officially opened on 4 January 2010. It's 828 metres high, has 206 floors, and cost over 1.5 billion US dollars.

Burj Al Arab hotel is another world renowned structure. This spectacular build-

ing, whose shape mimics the sail of a ship, was opened in 1999. It's 321 metres high and is the tallest hotel in the world. As for accommodation, the hotel has 202 suites, over dozen restaurants, an observation deck, swimming pools, spa, conference rooms and an amphitheatre on 18th floor. Add to this a several floors high aquarium with real coral reef, and you have a truly remarkable hotel. Its beauty can also be admired at night thanks to its colourful illumination.

Another wonder are Dubai's artificial islands. Palm Islands are three settlements in the shape of a palm tree, which have been constructed since 2001. The settlements, are called Palm Jumeirah, Palm Jebel Ali, and Palm Deirah and each of them will have a number of residential, leisure, and entertainment centres. They will be surrounded by large breakwaters which will protect them from direct wave action. A similar project is called The World – it's a is an artificial archipelago of various small islands constructed in the rough shape of a map of the landmasses of the Earth.

However Dubai is not only famous for its architecture and huge investments. It's also known for Gold Souk – a traditional market which consists of over 300 retailers that trade almost exclusively in jewellery.

HOT AND GOLD

Don't forget to go on a fabulous dhow (a traditional wooden boat) dinner cruise which will allow you to look at the city from a different perspective as well as tasted various local delicacies and listen to wonderful live music. This, of course,

is played on the oud – a traditional Arab lute. You can also choose something far more modern – a super quick catamaran. On the trip you will be able to look closer at the beauty of Palm Islands archipelago, and have time to swim and dive.

It's also a good idea to take your whole group to Wadi Water Park which is located between Burj Al Arab and Jumeirah hotel. There are a number of various water attractions, including 23 twisted slides, wild rivers, waterfalls, and pools with artificial waves. Another unforgettable experience is sliding down the ski slopes in Ski Dubai – a dome which features an 85-meter high indoor mountain with 5 slopes of varying steepness and difficulty, including a 400-meter-long run.

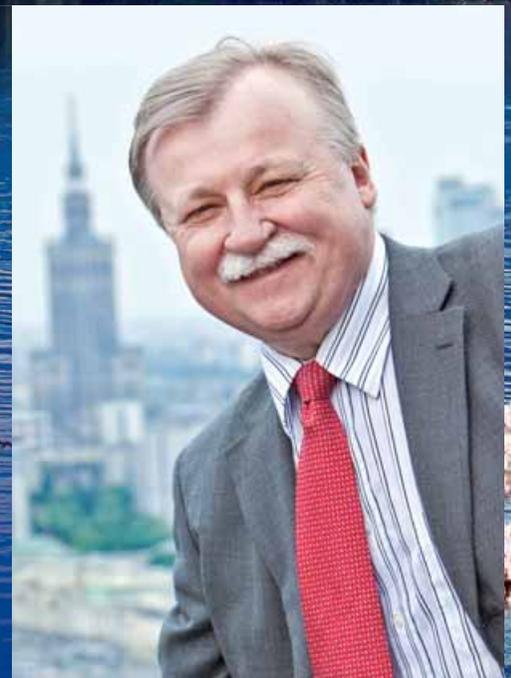
It's a really relaxing activity, but if you want to evoke a bit of competitive spirit, you should visit a karting track located at Dubai Autodrome where you can organize a real kart racing event. For those who prefer something more thrilling, there is an excellent Jebel Ali Shooting Club. This indoor and outdoor shooting academy, built to exacting international safety standards, makes the exciting sport of recreational and competitive shooting easily accessible to all.

Usually, an incentive trip must include at least one formal dress party. If we were to recommend the best venues for such a party, we would definitely go for the 27th floor of Burj Al Arab hotel, with its impressive ballroom called Al Falak. A nice dinner in elegant interior with delicious food and harp music will be a perfect finale to the unforgettable trip to beautiful Dubai. ■



Trip without **breaks**

Business Traveller interviews...
Jarosław Roszkowski,
the president of Crowley Data Poland



I usually travel to...

Currently my main destination is Washington, the headquarters of The Crowley Group. I sometimes also go to the West coast of the USA.

On the plane I like...

The space is the most important thing. Today on long-haul flights there is a lot of space – it's comfortable to read, work on the computer, watch films and you can have some sleep. The main problem are the changing time zones. However, I worked for 25 years in the aircraft business, so I got accustomed to that.

My favourite hotel...

Four Seasons in Las Vegas and in Mandalay Bay, but the Ritz Carlton in Georgetown is also charming – it's calm and the staff are always ready to help, sew on a button, remove a stain. This readiness to help with such trivial things impresses me the most.

My remedy for a long journey...

Going to countries which evoke our curiosity about the place and the local people. No matter if it is a business meeting or negotiations, it is always pleasant to travel if your destination promises adventure, new experiences, a different point of view or a discovery that some of "our" inventions come from the past. It's also nice to travel with children, to see how they're happy. The Grand Canyon, Madrid or Toledo – only with the family, and only for a weekend.

I always take with me...

Good literature. There's no better remedy for stress and tiredness than a good book. I read a couple of works by the same author at a time: Coetzee, Myśliwski, Goethe, Pelikan, then Huelle, Dostoyevski and again Kosinski, and so on... I try to stick to my favourite writers. When travelling, you have to control the risk, and in my suitcase there's no place for poor quality stuff.

During a trip...

Unfortunately, I usually have to read the documents that I didn't have time to read earlier. But there is always some time for book reading as well.

I regret that...

There's no teleportation. Only the Internet gives you the opportunity to travel without leaving home. It has no compe-

tion as a means of getting quickly to different places.

My favourite airport...

I like the Ronald Reagan AP in Washington the most. It's a place where you can admire both beauty and functionality. However, the Arlanda in Stockholm or The Vantaa in Helsinki are also charming. The Scandinavia was once my second home.

What attracts my attention in hotels is...

As I mentioned before, my benchmark is how fast they can sew a button on a jacket. These are details, but they prove the quality of a hotel.

When I have a break, I usually...

When travelling, the most important thing is to get back home as soon as possible, so any break is a waste of time. You should plan to eliminate even the planned breaks!

The greatest holiday so far...

When I was a child I used to travel, because people expect you to do it, as they think it broadens the horizons. In the 1960's I got a book from the BOARC (British Overseas Airlines Corporation) in which all the flights I took were confirmed. The airline run a connection from London through New York, San Francisco, Honolulu, Tokyo, Bangkok, Dubai and back to London. I took the opportunity. I managed to fly 60 thousand miles with these airlines in one year. I was twelve then. Today, nobody would talk me into such a thing. It's better to get into a car and go to Tuscany, or to the Grand Hotel in Sopot, and spend there a week playing golf in Postolowo or in Sierra near Wejherowo. Naterki near Olsztyn are a nice destination as well.

A trip adventure**I'd be willing to forget about...**

I've never had bad experiences, I haven't even lost any baggage. Once they had a delay sending me on of my golf clubs. But I really could do without it.

I know I'm going to visit...

Given how lucky I have been so far when travelling, I would have to think twice, but I think I'd choose Japan and China. I would prefer to do it "in one go". But this time, I think, I may not be able to do it in just two weeks.



Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon

Ten days on a luxurious ship? Sounds delicious, doesn't it? If you enrich this flavour with some Asian seasonings, the Silver Shadow cruise could may turn out to be the journey of your life, as Maciej Kropp describes.

The Silversea company, which owns the Silver Shadow ship, is known for the high quality of service. None of the six ships owned by this shipowner could be referred to as “mass tourist trash”. Silversea’s offer is aimed at those, who expect the highest quality of service during a cruise. If you set off on a journey along Asian seas, you will not be disappointed. You will have a chance not only to travel on a luxurious ship, savour delicious food and wines, see performances in the ship’s theatre or relax in the fitness centre, but also have an opportunity to explore unique places.

HONG KONG

The journey starts in Hong Kong, a city of rich and turbulent history. In the middle of 19th century, as a result of the so called Opium Wars, it was reigned by Great Britain, and remained under the British rule until 1997. China gave great economical autonomy to the local authorities, and as a result Hong Kong became the financial centre of Asia. Its population amounts to 7 million people (one of the world’s most densely populated cities). Hong Kong is a unique mixture of cultures, styles and traditions. Here, you can

find the best hotels, excellent restaurants (the list of flavours seems to never end) and impressive art galleries. What attracts the tourists from all over the world is the duty free zone – you can buy everything here. Even in the Ocean Passenger Terminal, where The Silver Shadow is moored, there are nearly three hundred shops – the shopping enthusiasts should not either forget about the famous outdoor Stanley Market. If you are a fan of flowers and gardening, you should definitely go to the Flower Market.



Luxurious sensations aboard a luxurious cruiser. Silver Shadow leaves its competitors far behind.

XIAMEN

The Silver Shadow sets off in Hong Kong in the afternoon, and the next morning it stays in the Chinese port of Xiamen, formerly known as Amoy. It is situated on an island, connected with the mainland by a causeway. The history of the place starts in the times of the Ming dynasty rule (14th – 16th century). In the 19th and 20th century it was under the British rule, and during the II World War it was occupied by the Japanese. At the beginning of 1980’s Xiamen became one of the first special economic zones in China, which resulted in the development of the region and various international investments.

A visit to Xiamen is an excellent occasion to taste excellent South Chinese cuisine, extremely rich in flavours and in-

THE SILVER SHADOW

The ship was launched in 2001. It takes aboard 382 passengers. It is an oasis of luxury – the soft and delicate interiors, designed by Italian designers, make the guests feel nice and comfortable. The passengers can choose between a few types of cabins, or rather suites - each overlooks the sea, and 80% of them come with a veranda. The standard Vista Suite (28 m²) comes with either one or two beds, a TV set, a DVD player, a telephone, fresh fruits, a bottle of champagne, a mini bar with soft and alcoholic beverages, a wardrobe, a big mirror, a desk, a dressing table, a hair-dryer, and a bathroom with a bathtub. Guest can expect their fresh fruit basket to be refilled daily, and the rooms are cleaned two times a day. The Vista Suites do not have terraces, which are to be found in their identical equivalents, called Terrace Suites. Veranda Suites are slightly bigger (32 sq m) and Medallion Suites, even more spacious (49 sq m), also have a separate lounge with a dining room. A stay in the Silver Suite (60-65 sq m) gives you the opportunity to dine by a officers' table. The suites are also equipped with high quality sound system, a separate dining room and a bathroom with both a bathtub and a shower. Royal Suites are cabins of "considerable" size of 122-126 sq m, they come with two bedrooms, two bathrooms (one equipped with a Jacuzzi), two terraces of 17 sq m each, plasma TV sets, and a coffee express. The guest



may make use of the butler service, and they can also expect a place by the officers' table in the restaurant. The Grand Suite is even more spacious (up to 133 sq m), and the most representative is the Owner's Suite – which comes with a terrace of 26 sq m.

The owner of the Silversea is known for excellent cuisine, which you might try in several restaurants on the ship. The main eatery, The Restaurant, serving breakfasts, lunches and dinners specializes in classical and modern French cuisine. The guests might also go to Le Champagne bar, run in cooperation with the famous luxurious hotel group, Relais&Chateaux - here



ingredients. What's especially worth recommending are fish and all sorts of seafood, like oysters, crabs and shrimps. One very popular starter are peanuts, in every form – e.g. a peanut soup served as a side dish to many main courses.

In Xiamen there are also at least a few noticeable tourist attractions. I recommend a visit to local Wanshi Botanic Garden, where there are about 4 thousands plant species, including a redwood, brought to China by an American president, Richard Nixon. In the local museum we can get familiar with the Xiamen's history, dating 3 thousand years back. On the southern coast of the island, there is the fortress of Hulishan, built in 1823.

SHANGHAI

The third day is spent at sea, and the following two are scheduled for a stay in Shanghai. And it's no surprise, as only one day in the city is definitely not enough. Situated in the strategic place at the mouth of the Yangtze River, it has been playing an important role in the Chinese history since 10th century (cotton harvest was sent from here). It was here, where Mao started his Cultural Revolution. In the 90's, the city entered a period of fast economic growth and today it has a "global" character, has become a modern, rich and the biggest metropolis in China. There are plenty of skyscrapers, the biggest – Shanghai World Finance Center is 492 m high. The famous Jin Mao Tower is not very much shorter.

There's no way you could visit the whole Shanghai in 2 days, but there are a few original places you should see. For instance Bird and Flower Market – one of the most picturesque places of this type in Asia, full of birds, puppies, kitties, fish and various plant species. Shanghai used to be one of the most pro-revolutionary cities in



the times of Mao, it's impossible not to notice the objects connected with the communist leader. One of them is a house, where in 1921 took place a meeting, as a result of which the communist party was founded. Since the foundation of the People's Republic of China until the mid-1970's Zhou Enlai was its prime minister, and his residence is one of the most popular tourist attractions connected with the history of Chinese communism.

Shanghai is, of course, a great place for shopping, it's worth looking for antiques or silk products, you can also taste various Chinese specialties here, like "drunk chicken", cooked in the Shaoxing wine, smoked fish or shrimps roasted with egg white. The best place for culinary expeditions is the district of Yu Yuan (the old city).

NAHA

After two days in noisy and crowded Shanghai, the next one is, again, spent at sea – only on the following day does the ship reach the port of Naha. Which lies in Japan, on the Okinawa island known for fierce fights during the war. The island, situated



you can taste excellent champagne, wines and cocktails. There is also a café and La Terzazza, an Italian restaurant and a grill bar next to the swimming pool. The culinary service is available all day long – the passengers might order meals to their rooms at any time.

During the journey, the guests cannot complain about the lack of entertainment. The Show Lounge, is a concert hall, where in the evenings, you might see performances and

concerts - all of them notable for their high artistic level. In The Bar, you might enjoy the performances of folk and jazz bands. For the dancing enthusiasts it also organizes discos. The club room offers chic atmosphere for the lovers of cigars and cognac. What Silversea is especially famous for, are meetings with experts. Their lectures usually touch upon the places visited along the way, as well as other fields such as oenology or the culinary art.

There is also a possibility to spend your time in an active way – by swimming in a pool, on the 8th deck, or in a perfectly equipped fitness centre connected with a spa salon. The adventure-seekers might spend their evenings in a casino, where playing roulette or blackjack, you can feel a major adrenaline rush.

On the board of the Silver Shadow there are also shops, where you might get yourself new jewellery, perfumes, or souvenirs with the ship-owner's logo. All the products come from the first class producers. The ship cruise is truly a first-class experience in every dimension.



in the South China Sea, for the centuries balanced between political influences of China and Japan, which had a huge impact of the local culture.

Visitors are usually surprised by the weather. Okinawa island has hot, tropical and humid climate, completely different than the rest of Japan. That's why it's worth visiting the local air-conditioned shops. Okinawa is known for the usage of the indigo colour – once in the traditional kimonos, today in clothes, tablecloths, ties and bags. The tourists also buy glass figurines, the most popular, “the shiisa” depict a lion. Of all the culinary specialties seafood, beef steaks and pork with noodles are especially worth recommending.

The Okinawa's most famous monument is the Shurijo castle, originally built in 14th century. During the war it was destroyed, and later meticulously renovated. Grey walls are contrasted with bright red gates decorated with typically Japanese roofs – you have a feeling that a group of samurai might appear any moment. The local museum in Naha, where you can learn about the famous Japanese-American battle, is also worth visiting.

TAJWAN

The next two days of the journey are scheduled for Taiwan cities: Keelung

and Kaohsiung. Taiwan is both an island and a country, independent from China, and founded in 1949 by a general, Chiang Kai-shek. As for the economy, Taiwan is one of the so called Asian Tigers, currently widely known for the export of computers and electronic appliances. The cultural heritage itself is undoubtedly Chinese – for many years the government in Taipei was recognized as the only legal representation of Chinese citizens.

The Chinese would not be themselves, if they had not erect an extraordinary skyscraper on Taiwan as well. Taipei 101 has 101 floors, is 508 m high and is one of the slenderest buildings in the whole world. It boasts a high speed lift – it takes merely 37 seconds to get to the 89th floor, to the viewing centre.

It also a good idea to visit one of the temples on Taiwan. For instance a beautiful Pao An monastery, built nearly 250 years ago. Other places worth visiting are The Chienchin, a catholic cathedral from 1860, a British consulate building from the same time, or the Wanshoushan hill, which overlooks the spectacular port in Kaohsiung – the last attraction of the Silver Shadow cruise. On the last day of the journey, The Silver Shadow returns to Hong Kong and the cruise along the southern seas of Asia comes to an end. ■



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The Two Faces of Mexico

Mexico is usually associated with intensive colour, the tortilla and ancient cultures. Fairly reasonable – you can discover all this, and much more, when spending holidays in one of the two Mexican Club Med centres.

The two Club Med centres, although in the same country, will provide you with totally different types of experience. One of them, Cancún Yucatán is on the Gulf of Mexico, and gives you the opportunity to both relax, and learn about the rich Mexican history. The other one, called Ixtapa Pacific, situated on the coast of the Pacific, and specializes in family holiday. Moreover, as usually with Club Med, each guest has a wide range of attractions to choose from, and most of them are included in the price of their stay.

THE POWER OF CANCÚN

The name Cancún allegedly meant a “snake nest” in the Mayan language, but when you arrive at the nearby Club Med centre, you will be unlikely to have such negative connotations. Situated by the turquoise waters of the Caribbean Sea, it is an oasis of peace and comfort. It has a beautiful beach, impressive gardens and it is an excellent place to recharge your batteries after a whole year.

The Cancún Yucatán is a 4-trident resort, according to the Club Med’s classification. The price of the stay includes accommodation in comfortable rooms, meals and drinks (including wine and beer to come with the meals) and many recreational and sports attractions, dancing lessons, evening parties, and activities for children organized by special children’s clubs (depending on the age of a child). In Cancún Yucatán there is also a 5-trident area, where the guests can make use of a private swimming pool and a separate beach, an open bar, they can expect a dedicated service, a room with a garden and an unlimited access to all attractions. Naturally, Jade – that is what the luxurious area is called – guarantees the highest quality accommodation. It comprises 18 suites overlooking the sea and 37 Deluxe rooms with private balconies and gardens.

This does not mean that the rest of the resort is of lower comfort – what really distinguishes the 5-trident area is mainly the service. The whole Cancún Yucatán comprises 376 rooms. The standard Club Room has white walls with orange-red

ornaments. They come with dark solid furniture, a LCD TV set, a coffee express, a hair-dryer, an ironing set, a safe, a bathroom with a shower, a telephone and a mini fridge. Naturally, the rooms are air-conditioned. There are plenty of options to choose from: rooms overlooking the sea, or the garden, on ground floor or higher floors. The rooms can also be combined together. In the resort, there are also Deluxe rooms overlooking the sea. They come with the internet access, bathrobes and wider scope of service.

As for culinary sensations, there are a few restaurants available for the guests in this Club Med resort. The main one, is La Hacienda restaurant, comprising 5 rooms and a huge terrace overlooking the pool. The buffet is full of specialties of both Mexican and international cuisine. La Cazuelas restaurant is equally impressive, both when it comes to cuisine (in the evening meals are served à la carte) and the decor – it is situated on the poles with a spectacular view over the sea. In La Pergola restaurant, guests may taste excellent tapas, famous snacks from the Mediterranean area. The offer is complemented by a few bars, available for guests in the Club area.

Club Med is renowned for paying attention to the mental and physical condition of its guests, which translates into a great variety of sports and recreational activities. Most of them, like the Fitness Academy, trapeze sessions, dancing lessons, bowling, snorkelling, volleyball, kayaking, water polo or table tennis are included in the price. Some of them, like



scuba-diving or horse riding lessons are charged extra. The club offers also a wide choice of beauty and relaxation treatments. The local wellness centre comprises 6 treatment rooms, a tea room and a meditation zone.

A stay in the Cancún Yucatán resort is a great opportunity to spend some time sightseeing. And there is a lot to see here, as it is a region full of both contemporary and historical attractions. A visit to The Wet’n Wild park, where you can swim with dolphins is an unforgettable experience and a great fun for the whole family. If you want to learn about history, you can go to Tulum. The trip takes half a day, and you can visit a city built by the Maya peo- ▶



ple, wander its streets while admiring the perfection of the former constructors. The marvellous views are an additional bonus, as the fortifications are situated on a high cliff. A trip to Chichen Itza, a town which, sidered one of the world wonders, could be equally interesting.

BY THE PACIFIC

Considered one of the best prepared Club Med resorts as regards family relaxation facilities, The Ixtapa Pacific offers comfortable conditions and a wide range of attractions for all the guests, regardless of age and preferences. It is situated on the western coast of Mexico, at the foot of the Sierra Madre mountain range, near the town of Zituaheje, by the Pacific Ocean. The 4-trident Ixtapa Pacific has been recently renovated and its architecture makes you think of the colonial style. It boasts a 700-metre long beach, and gardens with luxuriant flora, like coco palms or mango trees.

Like the Cancún Club, here there are also numerous attractions included in the price. They include: basketball, regular and beach volleyball, access to the gym,



football, archery lessons, rock climbing, aerobics classes or sailing lessons – all of them are free of charge. Guests do not pay for the transfer from (and to) the airport, or wine and cocktails served at lunch and dinner time.

Ixtapa Pacific offers 300 rooms, scattered in four 2- or 3-storey buildings with terracotta-covered roofs. A characteristic feature are panoramic pictures with typical Mexican motives, hanging on the walls above the bed. The Club Rooms have sim-

ilar furnishings like those on the Cancún peninsula, while a unique thing about the Deluxe rooms, is the fact that they come with a children's room with a separate play areas. All rooms come with air-conditioning, a coffee express, a LCD TV set, an ironing set, a bathroom with a shower, a mini bar, and a telephone. Deluxe rooms also have bathtubs, some have the balconies. The resort also has suites, and their guests may count on a wide scope of service, including the transfer from the



airport in a limousine, a welcoming gift, dedicated service and priority in booking tables in restaurants.

As for the restaurants, the Pacific Club offers plenty of interesting options to choose from. El Encanto restaurant is the main eatery in the resort – it serves breakfasts, lunches and dinners in the form of buffet. It spreads over 5 rooms, and each is of different decor (there is a room with mirrors). Le Luna Azul restaurant is an interesting option due to its original decor – bright-coloured Mexican motives decorating the walls make the Mexican specialties taste more intense and sensual. The Miramar restaurant specializes in grilled dishes, and The Sirena is a restaurant for children.

Apart from the restaurant, Club Med offers also great childcare possibilities, thanks to a few children's clubs well adapted for different age groups. For babies from 4 months to 2 years old there is The Baby Club Med, The Petit Club Med provides care for children aged 2-4, The Mini Club Med would be ideal for children between 4 and 11, and Junior's Club Med is aimed at teenagers up to 18. The

staff provides the children with all sorts of attractions, including educational and sports activities, depending on their age.

Now, a few words about the instructors. These are called G.O. – Gentle Organizers – and they are highly qualified personnel from all over the world, who know perfectly well how to provide their guest with fun and interesting activities. It was the instructors who made Club Med popular with tourists and set it apart from other resorts of this type in the world.

Sports activities have their fans, but some guests are more willing to make use of the Comfort Zone, the Club's wellness centre. It offers 6 massage and treatment rooms, including one duo treatment room. There is also a meditation room. All the treatments in Comfort Zone have the form of theme programmes, aimed at both women and men. For instance, there is a 3-day-long "Breathe" programme, which includes aromatherapy, and 6 different massages – each lasting 60-120 minutes. It's worth treating oneself to them to come back home from Mexico in a swinging mood and be as fresh as a baby. ■

Andrzej Pawłowicz





dimension

Berlin hosted the 50th consumer electronics trade fair IFA 2010. This year, the exhibition was utterly dominated by 3D technology. Well, following the huge success of “Avatar” movie, such scenario was definitely far from surprising. In order to be in line with this trend, Business Traveller presents an interesting set: a TV screen with a Blu-ray player and a camcorder. All of them tailored specifically for 3D. Our colleague Darek Zawadzki who saw all the novelites up close, found for you several other interesting gadgets including the newest tablet by Samsung which will soon compete against iPad, Acer’s stationary PC with extremely compact size, and wireless “creative” rock which produces music.

SHARP 3D LE925 / BD-HP90S

A perfect duo! The two are remarkably compatible regarding both the design and the quality of the picture. 925 is the top-shelf model of AQUOS 3D with a revolutionary Quattron technology on board. Adding the fourth, yellow subpixel, resulted in excellent colours, which are particularly visible in pictures where yellow and golden colours are dominant. Also Sharp has implemented here F.R.E.D 200 Hz technology (Frame Rate Enhanced Drive) and Side-Mount Scanning LED backlighting (resulting in extremely light picture). The TV screen comes in two sizes: 46 and 60 inches, and can smoothly convert standard TV programmes, and films on Blu-ray and DVD from 2D to 3D format. There are two pairs of 3D glasses included in the set – they also feature an innovative 3D to 2D conversion function. Blu-ray 3D (BD-HP90S) player fully complements the TV. The gadget looks especially impressive when hung on a wall. The BD-HP90S has a built-in wireless LAN function. Using this feature, viewers can establish a wireless connection via DLNA to other devices in the home network in order to transmit music, pho-



tos or videos from PC to TV. You can play YouTube videos directly through the machine. The Internet connection also means you can enable automatic updates of the Blu-ray player software. The price are not the lowest: the player costs around € 400 while the TV screens come for € 3,000 and € 4,500 for a 46-inch and a 60-inch respectively.



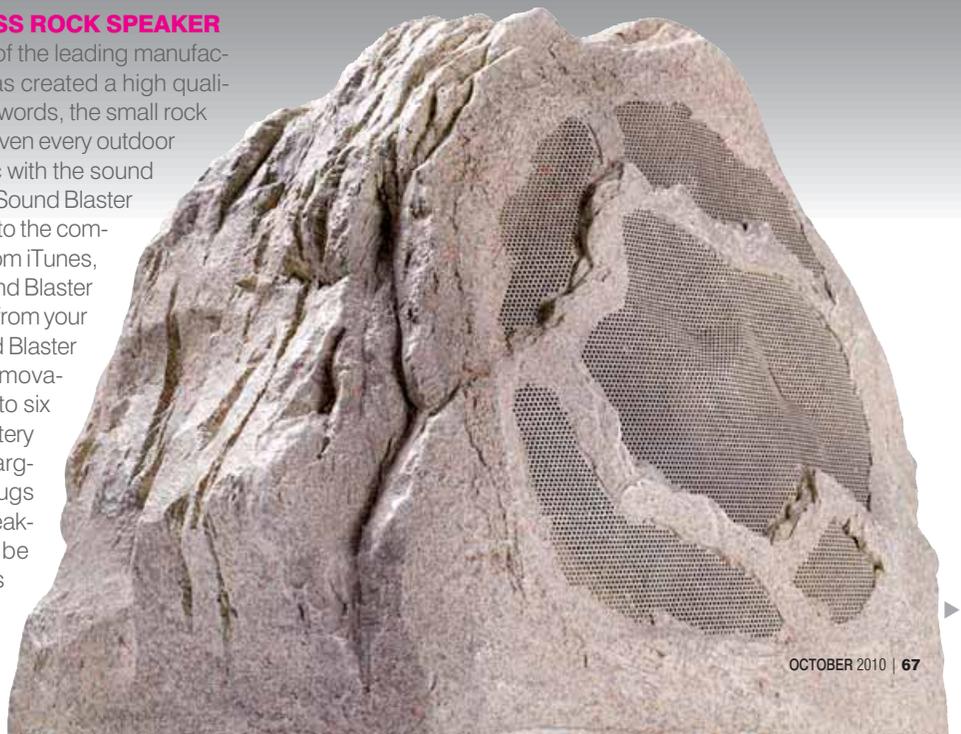
PANASONIC HDC-SDT750

The Osaka-based company has introduced the first consumer 3D camcorder. What does it mean for an average electronics gadget geek? The possibility to record your birthday party or family trips in 3D. The price of the camcorder hasn't been revealed yet, but the model will definitely attract a great number of people willing to pay any money to individually explore the tricks of 3D. The camcorder works in 3MOS system with enhanced noise reduction technology,

records in AVCHD format, and has a new HYBRID O.I.S. system (optical image stabilizer), and a fast Crystal Engine PRO processing unit. Apart from a number of automatic settings HDC-SDT750 allows the user to manually adjust focus, zoom, exposure (iris), shutter speed and white balance settings. The camcorder records images both in 2D and 3D (depending on which lens is attached). In 3D mode the camcorder records the images for both the right and left eye (both in 960 x 1080 resolution), using side-by-side method (one image next to the other). Handling here is very intuitive thanks to the 3-inch LCD screen. Of course, to fully admire the quality of the 3D picture you need a 3D TV set with special glasses for each person watching the video. Looking at what the market has to offer, finding there will be easy.

CREATIVE SOUND BLASTER WIRELESS ROCK SPEAKER

This is what I call rock music! Creative, one of the leading manufacturers of computer multimedia products, has created a high quality wireless speaker for outdoor use. In other words, the small rock standing next to your barbecue grill, may enliven every outdoor family meeting, playing your favourite music with the sound of the highest quality. "The Rock" works with Sound Blaster Wireless USB audio system, which plugged to the computer instantly begins wirelessly streaming from iTunes, Pandora or any other music application. Sound Blaster Wireless Rock Speaker, music can be heard from your PC outside, up to 30 metres away. The Sound Blaster Wireless Rock Speaker is powered by a removable rechargeable battery, which delivers up to six hours of continuous music playback. The battery recharges through a separate powered charging cradle, which is included. The battery plugs easily into the back of the speaker, so the speaker does not have to be moved in order to be charged. The speaker is rainproof and costs around € 200.



SAMSUNG GALAXY TAB

Following the spectacular success of iPad, the competition decided they can't lag behind. Samsung has always quickly reacted to various challenges set by Apple, and, we must admit, it has been quite good at it. GALAXY Tab which is also known as GT-P1000, is powered by Android 2.2 operating system, features a 7-inch TFT-LCD touch screen with 1,024x600 Wide Super VGA (WSVGA) resolution, ARM Cortex A8 1GHz applications processor, tied to a PowerVR SGX540 graphics processor, and two cameras (3 and 1.3 MP). The size is: 190.09 mm x 120.45 mm x 11.98 mm, and the weight 380 g. The 4,000mAh battery allows for a 7 hour movie play. GALAXY has 16G / 32G internal memory with up to 32G external memory slot. Consumers are able to experience PC-like web-browsing and enjoy all forms of multimedia content on the perfectly sized 7-inch display, wherever they go. Moreover, us-



ers can continuously communicate via e-mail, voice and video call, SMS/MMS or social network with the optimized user interface. With 3G HSPA connectivity, 802.11n Wi-Fi, and Bluetooth® 3.0. Unfortunately, Samsung hasn't revealed the date when GALAXY Tab will hit the Polish market, so we still don't know what its price will be.



ACER ASPIRE REVO 3700

In the golden age of laptops, and netbooks, not many users remember about the good, old stationary PCs. Due to its size (the chassis has only 1-litre capacity), Revo doesn't have a powerful processing unit that works in a typical PC – it is more of a classical nettop featuring a dual core Intel Atom D525 processor with 1.9 GHz clock, NVIDIA GeForce G218 graphics card based on ION 2 platform. Additionally the computer has 4 GB RAM and a 500 GB hard disk. Thanks to its elegant design, Revo will suit any interior. Apart from the practical use, the computer allows to download and watch rich HD content, play videos and games, run typical office programs or socialize via the optional webcam. The price for the new Acer hasn't been revealed, yet. According to the Polish representative of the company, the computer should hit the stores already in October this year.

Tuscan Specialities

In Tuscany, the best places to dine out would be the ones frequented by locals, even though the places might not look particularly special at first glance.

After realising they're dealing with a Pole, 9 out of 10 Italians would start talking about John Paul II or exclaim: "Boniek!" but this friendly attitude towards us has also another dimension – after striking up a fast friendship, it is most likely that an Italian will provide you with information about the best places to dine out. However, he will not think of any of those stylish establishments of Florence, Pisa or Siena, but in a whisper verging on conspiracy you will be given directions to a local restaurant, which you wouldn't find in any guidebook. Only by ordering a meal in such a restaurant will you truly experience the authenticity of the world-famous Italian cuisine.

Having once taken advantage of this dinner option, you would have the knowledge of what such place might look like: canteen-like, and with waitresses wearing warm smiles on their faces. If you decide to visit such a restaurant in the afternoon, you will experience the hustle and bustle caused by the members of the multi-generational families sitting at the tables: staid-looking grandmothers (Italian matrons), men with the tan lines caused by the white shirts they wear (if this brings to your mind the scenes from the film directed by Coppola, then you get the picture) and herds of screaming children, with the youngest ones crawling around on all fours, not recognising any territorial divisions. If such a scene comes into your sight, then you can be

certain you found yourself in the right place at the right time.

Italians don't eat but feast – a feature worth imitation since they can transform a simple dinner into a great family social event. What about the food itself? Well, we strongly recommend exposing yourself to culinary madness of such a "canteen" and having a five-course meal with an obligatory glass of a local wine to make this sensational experience complete. Also, after some intensive sightseeing of the monuments in Tuscany (the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Uffizi Gallery in Florence and Piazza del Campo in Siena being some of them) there is nothing better than sit at a table and enjoy a nice meal.

The whole Italy is well-known for relatively simple but delicious meals, and this is the case in Tuscany itself. Olive oil produced in this region is an indispensable ingredient, added to every dish here. Other popular spices include sage, thyme and rosemary, but mushrooms are also important in Tuscan diet, with morchella and champignon mushrooms playing a leading role. Furthermore, vegetables grown locally are truly tasty, plus there is a white truffle that's usually added to pasta and risotto.

Bruschetta appetizer would be the perfect way to start off the Italian style dinner – these famous little sandwiches are incredibly easy to make and really delicious.

Italians don't eat, they feast. You can clearly see it in Tuscany



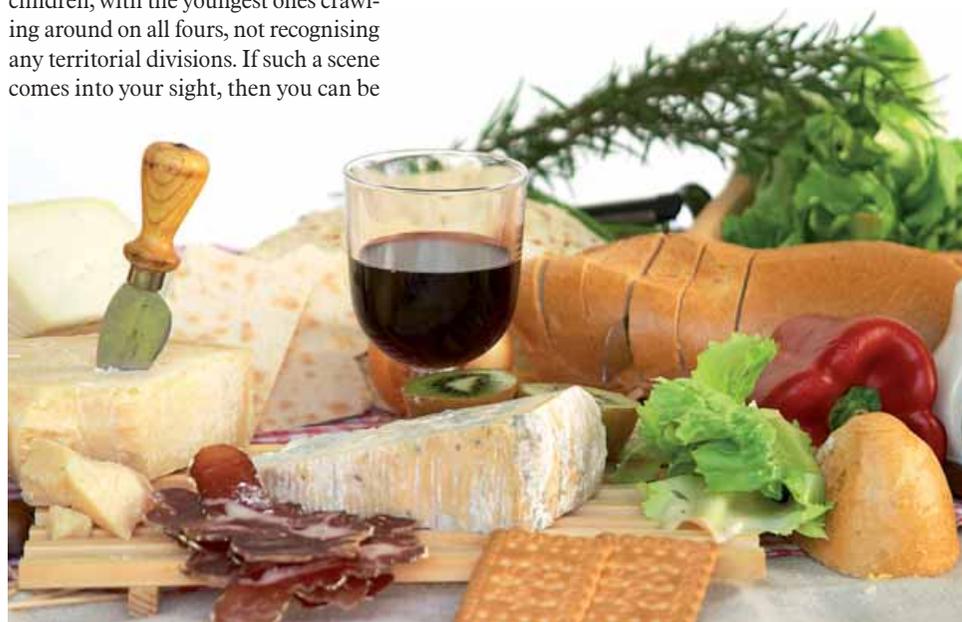
Tuscan bread (baked without addition of salt) is used to make traditional bruschetta but in reality you can use any bread. The ingredients include garlic, salt, pepper and olive oil – the most important ingredient applied generously. Having toasted the bread (grill/toaster required), season it with olive oil and garlic, and apply the toppings – you can literally add anything, depending on your preference.

Another Tuscan speciality is the combination of pears with slightly spicy pecorino cheese made out of ewe's milk. You will need 400 grams of pecorino cheese, 6 pears and black pepper to prepare the dish. Place the cheese and diced pears into a salad bowl, mix all the ingredients together and set aside for about 10 minutes. When ready to serve, sprinkle it with black pepper.

Everyone knows what minestrone tastes like, but this is not the only classic Italian soup – ribollita is a famous Tuscan soup based on bread and vegetables. You will need the following ingredients: 300 grams of potatoes, 1/2 of savoy cabbage, 4 tomatoes, 50-grams of cannellini beans, red onion, 200 grams of chard and 3 cloves of garlic, 2 celery sticks, 2 carrots, 2 courgettes, thyme, salt, pepper and whole-meal bread.

Cook the beans separately until they are tender (they take rather longer to be ready). Chop the rest of vegetables and boil for 40 minutes, then add the beans. Heat the olive oil in a saucepan and add the onion, pepper and thyme. Chop the bread and place it in a pot, then pour the stock over it and add the onion. Boil for about 10 minutes, and then set aside to cool down. After that, add olive oil and boil for another 20 minutes. Now your dish is ready to serve. Is it tasty? – Of course it is. After all, it is a Tuscan speciality. ■

Artur Kolger



Budding **wine**



As the wine drinking culture is getting more and more popular in Poland, we are also dreaming about producing it, even though our climatic conditions are below the minimum in which the grapevine achieves the requested maturity level. Some of the more ambitious people, however, have decided to join the business. Unfortunately, many of them made a mistake in the very beginning.

Looking from the perspective of a lay person, it is difficult to understand the problems, if every other porch is covered with wild grape vines.

However the Common Grape Vine (*Vitis Vinifera*), is different from our self-seeders, which are accustomed to cold weather, but it is impossible to make a decent wine from them. More noble varieties like Sauvignon Blanc or Merlot are much more capricious, sensitive and delicate. They hardly tolerate the spring frost which occur until May, severe winters and maturing in the streams of autumn rain. It would seem a hopeless case, but many Polish winemakers believe they have found a perfect solution – the hybrids.

Hybrids are varieties made from crossing the noble grape vines with wild rootstocks, so that the fruits are of good quality and the vine could tolerate the capricious weather. That is how such exotic varieties like Seyval Bland or Jutrzenka came into existence, and even though we have been experimenting in Poland with the hybrids, so far all attempts have failed. The wines from the old times were criticized for the irritating “fox taste”. Are the new ones any better? The producers claim so, and indeed no fox traces can be found. However, the hybrid is still an imperfect product, and even if we had the knowledge and experience – which we do not – it is not possible to make it better than merely acceptable. So why fighting with the frost, cold, pests, fungus, if all we are able to accomplish is merely acceptable or permissible wine?

The next obstacle is the lack of wine-making tradition, which was fairly developed in the Middle Ages, but disappeared due to our turbulent history. Now everything starts all over again. Therefore, the easiest solution would be relying on the experience of our West European neighbour countries. It's difficult to say why, but it does not always happens



this way. It is not enough to copy the way vines are grown abroad, you have to adjust it to our conditions, and it takes a lot of knowledge. The grape vines in such cold climate should not be too big, and the woody matter, which uses too much of the plant's energy, should be limited. More energy should be used to produce the fruits. The same goes for the efficiency, which should be drastically limited by the so called green harvest, which is the reduction of the grape bunches to two or three on each vine. In Poland, however, there lingers the farming attitude, whereas a farmer and a winemaker will never come to terms. The prospect of having poor, stony soil and poor harvest will make a farmer cry, while the winemaker would jump for joy. And if we are not competitive on the cheap wine market, we have to try to concentrate on the quality wines, although it is not going to earn us desirable profit at least in the first ten years of production.

What is even worse, the access to the technology in Poland leaves a lot to be desired. The simplest steel wine fermentation tanks, barrels or yeasts have to be imported from abroad, which is more expensive for us than for other winemaking countries.

Hybrids are cross-breeds of the Common Grape Vine and wild ones

For many years the grape growing is going to be more of an expensive hobby, rather than a lucrative business. When the charm of novelty and trips to the Polish vineyards come to an end, the winemakers will have to compete with Western producers and for many of them it will be the end of their winemaking adventure. That is why, those who find it difficult to accept it, should turn to producing something, which is more compatible with our conditions and climate. Be it, for instance, cider production, as in Poland we cannot complain about the lack of good apples. All other producers, who are still determined to grow grapes in Poland, should have patience and prepare themselves for difficult, expensive but fairly satisfactory hobby. ■

Michał Poddany, Robert Mielżyński



Just Julia

Italians have a clearly defined life attitude. They love women, wine, good cuisine, and cars – which, not surprisingly, quite frequently have female names.

Equally often the Italian gentlemen like to invoke the days of the golden past and Alfa Romeo Giulietta is just a proof of it.

The car with the same name was manufactured in the 1950s. That Giulietta was beautiful and stylish. No wonder each man wished to have such a car in his garage. Hard to believe? It's just enough to watch some movies - Alfa Giulietta starred in a number of productions (recently in the great "The Nine" with Daniel Day-Lewis). Giulietta Anno Domini 2010 is a hatchback, but has the size of a compact car with its 350-litre boot, so it's considerably larger than its predecessor. The new Alfa has replaced the 147 - the model whose production has

just ended. The car will suit all those who find "Mito" too small (or too feminine), and "159" a bit too large.

THE WORLD'S SAFEST COMPACT

Crash tests carried out by an independent Euro NCAP institute have proved that Giulietta is a class of its own in compact segment. The car received five stars and 87 out of 100 points for its behaviour during a crash, as it's very well equipped to protect the driver and passengers against the results of an accident. What are those safety features? For example 6 air bags. Additionally, however, there are a bunch of electronic devices which may be useful while driving. Among them are: Vehicle Dynamic Control system, which manages key functions, like Hill Holder, traction control and emergency braking, the MSR (Motor-Schleppmoment-Regelung) system, which prevents wheel locking when the throttle is released, the DST (Dynamic Steering Torque) system, Electronic Q2, which electronically simulates



the presence of a self-locking differential, and the brand-new Prefill system, which alerts the braking system that the accelerator pedal has been released, to decrease intervention time and consequently braking distance.

I AM ITALIAN

Italian all the way. The designers of Alfa Romeo are Italian and it can be seen in every tiny detail of the new car. Giulietta is also beautifully finished, has a good audio equipment (it can also be customized with the BOSE HI-FI system, with radio and CD-MP3 reader), and if you decide to have leather seats, they will come with beautiful stitching. The car is definitely attractive in this aspect. Engines? The new Alfa can also boast here. It must be admitted that Italians build some of the best engines in the world. Alfa's petrol turbocharged engines generate from 120 to 170 hp - at mere 1.4 litre capacity. Not enough? You can also order the Quadrifoglio Verde version with 1750

Tbi engine which generates 235 hp and accelerates from 0-100 km/h in less than 7 seconds! Those who prefer a more economical style or must cover long distances, we recommend two JTDM diesel engines. The less powerful one has only 105 hp, but its torque is incredible 320 Nm - several years ago similar results were achieved by petrol engines of... Jaguars. The more powerful diesel produces 170 hp and it will also suit lots of tastes. The maximum speed of Giulietta with such an engine is 218 km/h, and the acceleration from 0-100 km/h takes mere 8 seconds. Not too bad as for a diesel - bearing in mind the fact that up to recently, speed lovers looked with contempt at cars with such engines. "Diesels are only for truck and taxi drivers," they claimed. But this is a thing of the past - not only in case of Alfa Romeo, anyway. ■

*Rafal Jemielita
author is a journalist for Playboy and a
co-presenter of TVN Turbo's 'Automaniak' -
a motor magazine programme.*





IS THE TRENCH COAT A CLOTHING AIMED ONLY AT MEN?

Absolutely not.

Hubert de Givenchy – the famous classic fashion creator, whose ambassadors were Audrey Hepburn, Grace Kelly and Jacqueline Kennedy, once said: „Everything a woman needs to look elegant is: a raincoat, two woman’s suits, a pair of trousers and a cashmere sweater.”

I am sure that when he said raincoat, he meant... the timeless trench coat.

In a Trench Coat Like a Royalty

When somebody asks me what coats are in fashion this season, I answer without hesitation – the same which were in fashion a hundred years ago.

The answer is especially accurate, when it comes to the coats of classic British cut. Do not trust the stylists, who shout that classic cut is boring. It’s as if somebody criticized the works of Michelangelo or Leonardo da Vinci, which emanate true beauty with simple lines and are characterised by optimal proportions.

The timeless men’s style is mainly associated with London and the whole British tradition. The classics of the British clothing definitely defeats seasonal ideas of the stylists and designers. Today, the Royal court could not do without the raincoat, or rather a trench coat, made in the previous century for the British Army soldiers fighting in the trenches of World War I. Thanks to its practicality and simplicity it has conquered the world.

NICE CLIMATE

The climate zone we live in, requires a man to have a trench coat in his wardrobe, and wear it at least from September to May. The opinion of its temporary character should not be given credence to. It’s not true that only thick sheepskin coats can protect us from the cold, and the trench coat is useful only in spring or autumn, when days become warmer. Today’s winters do not require you to pull the sheepskin coats, which once belonged to your grandparents. The trench coats, apparently only temporary, but in fact they are enough to keep you warm and make you look smart. It does not matter if you just shoulder it, wear it undone or buttoned up to your neck – the trench coat is the symbol of good style and elegance in every form.

THE MATTER OF LENGTH

For this elegant trench to fulfil its role, it surely needs to be well fit. If you are looking for a trench coat for work, which requires a formal outfit, you should try it wearing a suit. You will be sure that you have not picked a smaller size, and when going from the car do the company or to a business meeting, you will feel really comfortable. The longer the coat, the more formal look. The most common length is knee- or mid-calf. The length of the sleeves is also important – they need to be long enough, so that they cover the wrists, when wearing gloves, and at the same time short enough not to reach to the middle of your hand – it looks comical and not really smart. As you may assume – the classics is limited to a small

range of colours. If you want to look smart in a trench coat, you’d better forget about colours other than black, dark blue, grey or beige.

The coat’s cut is the essence of its usefulness. The classic character of the trench is emphasized by the collar, which can be put differently, depending on the weather. On warmer days it plays the role of a lapel (like in a jacket), and when it’s colder – you can be turned up to protect against the wind. The so called yokes in front and in the back, or concealed, often double-breasted fastening protect us against the rain, so common in our climate. When the temperature drops, you can tie yourself with a belt and tighten the stripes of the sleeves, to protect yourself against the cold air.

The raincoat has been the symbol of people living in the hurry, and living actively. Why? Because it can be treated unceremoniously, sling it over your shoulder or chuck it on the back seat of your car. It’s elegant, but not exclusive, so you do not need a hanger. It is also ecological, the real trench coat is made of gabardine, which is natural, thick and diagonally-woven, crease-resistant and always impregnated woollen or cotton material.

The classic elegance is timeless. It is useful at work, at an official party and on social gatherings. And it is all because simple, unpretentious cuts. The modern accessories, on the other hand, make the simplest things look original. ■

TRENCZ – WHAT IS IT?

The word trench refers to the holes in the ground, the soldiers shoot from during a war. But what does it have to do with the trench coat? The same coat, which today is the symbol of the timeless elegance, once was used by the British Army soldiers in the trenches of the I World War to protect against the wind and rain. It did fine on the first testing ground, and that’s why we still wear it today – not necessarily in the warfare conditions.

HAVE YOUR SOAKED YOUR SHOES DURING AN AUTUMN STROLL?

No problem. When you get home, put some crumpled newspaper inside them. The paper (from the traditional daily papers, not colourful magazines!) will absorb water and let you enjoy the shoes next time you go out. Attention! If you do not want to irretrievably deform your favourite brogues, which got defeated by a rain puddle - forget about the radiator!



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Prague

Michelle Mannion

checks out Kafka, the old Jewish ghetto and sacred sites in the Czech capital

MALA STRANA

Start your tour in Mala Strana on the west bank of the Vltava River. Known as the “Little Quarter” or the “Lesser Town”, there is nothing inferior about this part of Prague – it is one of the most picturesque areas, its pretty terracotta-coloured roofs sitting in the shadow of the castle.

It’s a pleasure simply to wander the cobbled streets but there are many things to keep an eye out for. On Nerudova, the road that leads to the castle, have a look at the emblems above many of the buildings» doors, an old tradition – violins mark the House of the Three Fiddles, which used to belong to a family of musicians, while a goblet decorates the House of the Golden Chalice, formerly a goldsmith’s home. The castle itself (hrad.cz/en) is a prime tourist attraction but be prepared for big crowds if you decide to visit.

If you are here at the weekend, stop by the grand Wallenstein Palace. Built in the 1620s by Albrecht von Wallenstein, commander of the Habsburg armies, it now houses the Czech Senate and some rooms are open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays 10am-4pm (5pm in summer). For an insight into the less than modest nature of the man, check out the ceiling of the main hall, where he is shown as the god of war on a chariot. The sculpted Wallenstein garden, open April to October (10am-6pm), is an attractive place for a stroll.

Mala Strana is also home to the Church of Our Lady Victorious, a popular pilgrimage site thanks to its statue of the Infant Jesus of Prague, and the Rocco Forte Augustine and Mandarin Oriental hotels, which offer good set lunches. Visit theaugustine.com, mandarinoriental.com



FRANZ KAFKA MUSEUM

Also on this side of the river is a museum celebrating the life and work of one of Prague’s most famous sons, writer Franz Kafka. Open since 2005, it charts the story from his childhood spent around the Old Town until his premature death from tuberculosis in 1924. Dimly lit rooms and foreboding soundscapes create Kafka’s stifling world and his conflicted relationship with the city of his birth – only in Kafka’s mind could an innocuous walk to school become a thing of nightmares.

Extensive documentation includes pages from his diaries, letters to lovers and documents from his university days and insurance job, while first editions of

most of his books are also on show. It’s a fascinating journey and the innovative way the exhibits are displayed mean you don’t need to be a Kafka fan to enjoy it. Open 10am-6pm daily. Entry is Kc180 (£6). Hergetova Cihelna, Cihelna 2b; kafkamuseum.tyden.cz

OLD TOWN HALL TOWER

Cross Charles Bridge, dodging the crowds and taking in the numerous statues that line it, and make your way into the heart of Prague, Old Town Square. The former marketplace is home to buildings such as the striking St Nicholas and Our Lady Before Tyn churches – take a peek at St Nicholas’s beautiful chandelier.

For excellent 360-degree views of the city’s landmarks, go up the tower of the Old Town Hall – it costs Kc100 (£3) to ascend. Come back down in time to enjoy the fun little performance that happens on the hour at the tower’s mind-bogglingly complicated Astronomical Clock – a landmark of the square since medieval times. As the hour strikes, Death rings his bell, a troubadour plays his horn, the 12 apostles parade above the clock face, and three figures depicting greed, vanity and the infidel shake their heads in defiance.

K



FAST FACTS

- Prague is known as the “City of 100 Spires” but in fact the figure is closer to 500.
- The Czechs drink more beer than anyone else, at about 160 litres per capita. Pils lager was invented here.
- Mala Strana, the Old Town and the New Town are all UNESCO sites.

Municipal House



stones here, all in different styles and jutting out of the ground at odd angles, and it’s estimated that up to ten layers of remains lie beneath the soil. Note that the sites can get very busy. Open daily except Saturdays and Jewish holidays, 9am-6pm (4.30pm in winter). Entry Kc480 (£16) for all sites. Visit jewishmuseum.cz

detailed rooms designed by the leading Czech artists of the day. Take a look at the grand Smetana Hall, where concerts take place regularly, and the Mayor’s Hall, covered in murals by Alphonse Mucha – if you like what you see, there is a museum dedicated to his work in the New Town (visit mucha.tyden.cz). Guided tours take place in English at least twice a day – check the website for timings. Entry is Kc270 (£9). Visit obecnidum.cz

MUNICIPAL HOUSE

Lastly, head a short way east to Republic Square. Prague is home to many examples of fine architecture but Municipal House is hard to beat. Built at the start of the 20th century, the art nouveau building contains a collection of beautifully

Municipal House has two restaurants – one traditional, one fine-dining – but if coffee and cake is all you’re after, take a seat in the bright and friendly café and watch the world go by through its large windows. For something stronger, try Cloud Nine, the Hilton Prague’s sky bar, for great views and cocktails. It’s about ten minutes’ walk from here. Visit hilton.co.uk/prague ■ See czechtourism.com

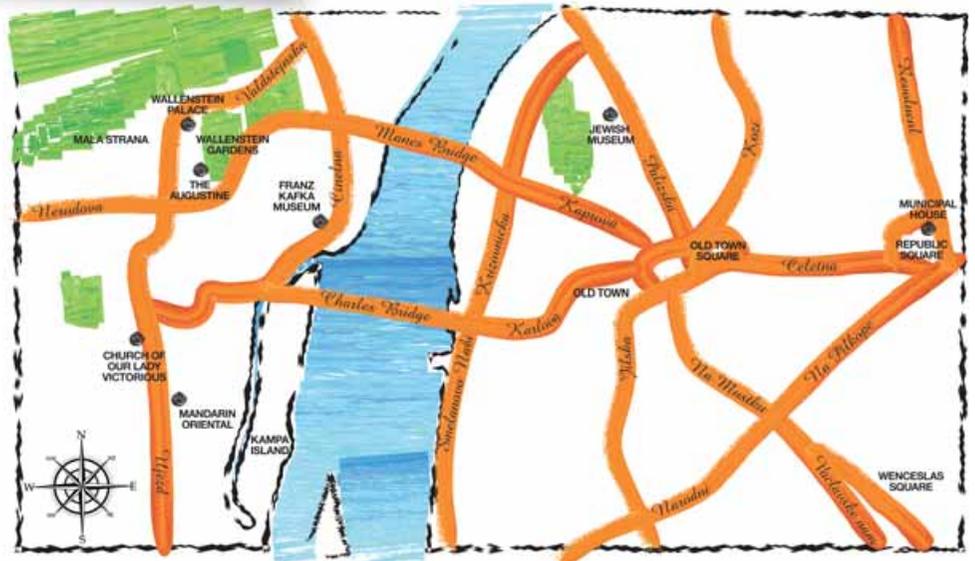


Astronomical clock in the background the church of Our Lady Before Tyn

JEWISH MUSEUM

Not one museum but six sites – four preserved synagogues, a ceremonial hall and a cemetery – scattered around Josefov, the section of the Old Town that used to be the Jewish ghetto. Together they tell the history of the region’s Jewish people. Most of the country’s Jews perished during the Holocaust, and in Pinkas synagogue, the names of 80,000 victims are handwritten on the walls, recording simply their dates of birth and death. It’s a shattering sight. Upstairs is an exhibition of drawings by children sent to the Terezin ghetto, depicting their everyday lives.

Next to Pinkas is the Old Jewish Cemetery, where burials took place until 1787. There are some 12,000 tomb-





Piotr Kalita has been associated with the air travel market for almost 20 years. He specializes in corporate and diplomatic travel. **Do you have any questions?** Ask Peter. Send your question at redakcja@businesstraveller.pl

A VERSATILE CAR

I'm going on a ship cruise with my family. We fly to Los Angeles, and the ship starts the journey in Long Beach. We would like to leave a couple of days earlier to visit California. What's the best way to organize the transport? Can I rent a car at the airport and give it back in the port? Do I need a special driving license? What about the car insurance?

Andrzej

Dear Andrzej,

I strongly recommend renting a car. It is difficult to go around California without a car. There are a lot of offices of car rental companies located at Los Angeles airport. The stations are not in the terminal area, but in a close proximity to the airport. There are special buses which bring the customers from the airport building to a particular company. It is better to make a booking in advance in Poland. If you are going to stay there longer, check whether a weekly fee would not be better than the daily one. Do not take the offer with the mileage limit, as it will be more pricey if you want to explore the state. The best would be one with no limit, referred to as "unlimited mileage rate". Los Angeles itself is so vast, that travelling without a car, is quite a challenge. Travelling along the American highways is comfortable, and the petrol is cheap. If you have a couple more days, you can go to Las Vegas and the Hoover Dam. Adventure seekers can also decide on a trip to the Grand Canyon. There's no problem giving the car back on the Long Beach airport, as long as you state it clearly when making a reservation. When returning the car back in a different city of the same state, the so called drop-off fee will not be taken. At the Long Beach airport you will find shuttle buses, which, at a reasonable price, will take you to the port. Reserve more time for all the formalities related to returning the car (petrol tank needs to be full), going to the port, and checking in for the ship.

When renting a car in the USA you should have an international driving license. In fact, it is just the translation of the Polish document. You can obtain it in your Commune Office. In fact, it is rarely required to present the international driving license (most car rental companies accept the Polish license), but I always recommend completing all the documents.

It is the same with the insurance. Apart from the obligatory insurance such as, the third party insurance, Collision Damage Waiver, or personal injury insurance. I also advise to buy so-called "zero-deductible" option in case of collision or theft, as well as full insurance cover for all passengers from medical expenses. When signing a car rental contract, you can mention who is going to be an additional driver. Buying an insurance can largely contribute to our sense of security on our journey, so it's definitely not worth trying to save on it..

JET LAG – THE TROUBLE OF LONG-HAUL FLIGHTS

Recently, I've been busy organizing a conference in my company. The preparations were really intense, as a few sales managers from different countries were supposed to come. One of my duties was also to pick the guests up from the airport and show them around. I also took care of the managers' wives, trying to entertain them. One lady from Canada told me she wasn't going to take part in the evening performance, as she was tired and suffering from «the jet lag». I've never heard of this before.

Ewa

Dear Ewa,

The term "jet lag" came into use soon after launching jet liners on transatlantic routes. It turned out, the passengers began to feel all sorts of ailments caused not by a disease, but rather as a result of crossing the time zones very quickly. Jet lag is a compound of two English words: jet – a very fast plane and lag – a delay. Jet lag is a condition in which the natural cycle of an organism has been upset. It is not a disease, but a set of conditions which occur when you travel a long distance and you cross several time zones. Our biological clock works in its natural 24-hour rhythm. With a plane flight it can be easily upset. Our organism cannot catch up and adapt to the new time zone. The main symptom of the jet lag is, most of all, the sleeping disorder. Other symptoms include: fatigue, annoyance, headache, problems with concentration and digestive problems. The symptoms of mild depression have also been observed. It rarely occurs when travelling along the same meridian, e.g. from Europe to the North Africa, when we do not readjust the watches.

It is easier to get accustomed to a longer day when travelling from East to West. But a journey in the opposite direction, e.g. from America to Europe, when the day is shortened, is a real challenge for our organism. People, who do not travel regularly, experience the condition twice a year when changing the time. Notice, that our biological clock needs sometimes a few days to fully ad-

just to it. An ideal situation is resting for a number of days corresponding to the hour difference between our time zone and that of our destination. It is especially important for sportspeople, who take part in competitions and need to be in shape. Naturally, there are ways to deal with jet lag. Even before the journey you should go to bed earlier or later. It helps your organism to get accustomed to a different rhythm. A rest and a light diet also help overcoming the symptoms.

If you take medicines at a certain time of a day, you should consult a change with your GP. On the plane, you should avoid drinking alcohol and drink lots of water instead. Drinking coffee is not advisable, as apart from contributing to sleep disorders, it also leads to dehydration. Once on board adjust your watch to the time zone of your destination. Upon arrival you should immediately adjust to the day rhythm. It applies to the meal times, work and resting. Many people find staying outdoors during the day very helpful. The daylight also helps to adjust our biological clock. You should remain cautious when taking pharmacological drugs, such as melatonin. Each organism may react very differently, and such drugs should always be prescribed by a doctor.

Have sympathy for the lady from Canada. There was nothing inappropriate in not taking part in the event. It's just her organism did not catch up with the new time zone.

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