

Business Traveller Poland

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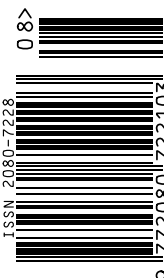
DREAMLINER DREAMS TO FULFIL



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We answer all your questions regarding travel and journeys



Welcome on board. We are truly pleased to say those words. This is because Business Traveller Poland has for long been present on LOT's aircraft, but so far only in the Business Class cabin. In the following weeks, however, we will also be available for all LOT's passengers.

We admit, we really like big planes, and if they are even larger and more impressive, we like them even more. Our sympathy isn't of course the only reason why the cover of this issue features the famous Dreamliner, wearing the new livery of our national air carrier. Boeing's new aircraft arrived in Warsaw just for a day, but it's expected to join LOT's fleet next year. We are looking forward to it.

Let's stick with aircraft, or more specifically, with airports, as this month we write a report on a very special place. No matter what airport ranking you look into, you will always see Singapore Changi airport around the top of the list. This is hardly surprising, because it's a place which in just 30 years of its existence has become not only a transportation hub, but also a huge attraction by itself.

Let's now go to the ground and see what's going on in hotels, because we like them, as well. Sometimes, however, we are totally fed up with the conditions they offer. Do you want to know more? Check the article where we list 101 reasons why people hate hotels. In this issue we also describe our (mostly positive) impressions on Radisson Blu Elizabete in Riga, Crowne Plaza in Hong Kong, Havet – a seaside hotel in Dźwirzyno, and Angelo hotel in Katowice.

Club Med is a chain that offers all-inclusive vacations at its resorts around the world. This month we look closer at the luxurious Da Balaia resort in Portugal. We also write about the tricks of trade of online travel agencies, and analyze the issues related to currency conversion. You will learn here how to exchange your money without unnecessary losses.

Finally, we invite you to London, Amsterdam and Seoul, recommending you the best way of spending 4 hours there. I hope that you will also enjoy reading other articles we have prepared in this issue. Have a nice and peaceful flight.



Robert Grzybowski
Publisher BT Poland



Read more details! Visit businesstraveller.pl

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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

Skorzystaj z połączenia: z Gdańska, Poznania, Wrocławia, Krakowa, Katowic, Rzeszowa i Warszawy przez Frankfurt – dwa razy dziennie, przez Monachium – raz dziennie; z Warszawy przez Amsterdam, Mediolan lub Zurich – rejsy codziennie – do Singapuru i dalej na Daleki Wschód, do Australii i Nowej Zelandii.

LOT TELEGRAM LOT TELEGRAM LOT TELEGRAM LOT

A New Route To Donetsk

In the early June LOT Polish Airlines launched a new route from Warsaw to the Donetsk, Ukraine. Donetsk, with a population of over 500,000, is the fourth largest city of Ukraine. The Polish carrier assumes that the connection will mostly be used by transit passengers travelling through Warsaw to Western Europe and North America. Not to mention the fact that Donetsk is one of the four host cities for Euro 2012. The investment made to launch this connection is a further

proof of our carrier's policy of pushing toward the East.

Flights between Warsaw and Donetsk will be held three times a week (on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 10.30 pm, returning on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays at 4.50 am). The flights will be operated by Embraer 170 or Embraer 175 aircraft. The flight to Donetsk will take 2 hours and 10 minutes, while the return flight to Warsaw 2 hours and 30 minutes. The price for a roundtrip ticket starts at PLN 329.



Poland Promoted

LOT Polish Airlines and Polish Tourist Organisation agreed on the design of a special livery for the newest Embraer 195, which has recently joined our

carrier's fleet. The machine will simply advertise Poland. This is a continuation of the „Move Your Imagination” campaign, popularizing our country, which sparked a sensation at the fair in Berlin. Probably prior to Euro 2012 Cup, there will be more such promotional campaigns. That's a very good idea.

A New Hotel In Wrocław

A new three-star Marshal hotel located just the opposite of Wrocław's main railway station, has just begun its operation. This intimate place features 33 exclusive rooms which feature the widest beds among the hotels of similar standard in Wrocław. Marshal is also a conference and banquet centre, consisting of three rooms with a total area of 150 square metres. In other words, the hotel is friendly for both business and individual tourists, thanks to a wide range of room types - from standard through large family rooms, up to the mysterious Room of the Marshal, which hides a story of Marshal Józef Piłsudski himself. Promotional prices prepared for the opening of the hotel start at PLN 279.



Sheraton Celebrates

1.5 million guests have visited Warsaw's Sheraton Hotel during its 15 years of operation. To celebrate the hotel's anniversary a Crystal Gala was held, which gathered Sheraton's customers, friends and business partners. Among the guests were: Eve Kuklińska, Beata Tadla, Karina Kunciewicz, Peter Zelt, Alexander Nieśpielak and Jacek Karnowski. The gala was complimented by the live music by Me, Myself & I, and Kind of Blue bands.



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Summer In The Hotels Of Orbis Group

There are beautiful beaches, lakes, forests and mountain trails, waiting for all those who long for a moment of relaxation. Hotels of Orbis Group have prepared a unique offer which will satisfy even the most demanding tourists.

Mercury Kasprowy Zakopane will provide its guests with the highland hospitality combined with exciting adventures. The stay will start with a welcome campfire with snacks. The „Heavenly Holidays” package includes ATV rides, as well as white water rafting. The guests of the hotel will also be able to relax in the indoor or outdoor swimming pool. The youngest ones will have a lot of fun at Mini Club, while teenagers may join Junior Club.

Those who love the Giant Mountains, will always feel welcome at Skalny Karpacz hotel. „The Summer in the Giant Mountains” package includes aqua aerobics, Nordic walking and cycling tours. The guests of the hotel will also go on off-road rides or rock climbing. The youngest will have fun taking part in various active events.



Two tickets to Multikino cinema and a double ticket to a cruise aboard „Dragon” boat or a visit to Gdynia Aquarium - these are some of the attractions prepared for the guests of Orbis Gdynia hotel. The package „Precious moments by the sea” includes renting a bicycle or free use of an indoor swimming pool. The guests will also receive a one-off voucher to the sauna.

Those who love Masurian atmosphere are warmly welcomed at Mercure Mrongovia Resort & Spa. The hotel's summer offer everyday features different activities such as music workshops, driving on a kart track, and concerts. There will also be family outings with roasting sausages by the fire. For more information go to accorhotels.com

COOL GADGET COOL GADGET COOL GADGET COOL GADGET



Wet Work

Sony Ericsson carries on its quick development of Xperia smartphones series. At recent electronics fair in Singapore, the Japanese manufacturer has shown a model called active. It's a rugged, sturdy telephone designed for those who like to live fast and hard. Apart from the traditional advantages, the smartphone is dust and water resistant, and can be operated even with wet hands.

The device has pre-installed sports applications that will help you control your physical fitness. The users will be able to plan their own training route, using the built-in GPS, barometer and compass. Also your heart rate and pulse can be monitored here in real-time.

Wizzair Growing In Strength



At the beginning of June, the carrier's fleet consisted of 36 Airbus A320 - one of the most popular aircraft in the world. At the end of the month, the number increased to 38. Another plane has just taken off from the airport in Toulouse in southern France, where all machines undergo commissioning, directly to Budapest. The airline wants to expand its fleet over the next 5 years to the head-spinning number of 132 aircraft. The Hungarian low-cost carrier now serves an average of 10.2 million passengers a year. Being the largest airline in the Central and Eastern Europe, it offers 214 routes to 26 countries. All of this to cater to a very fast growing market. It turns out that every 15 years, the number of passengers travelling by air increases two-fold.



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Singapore To Codeshare

With Australia

Singapore Airlines and Virgin Group Australia have signed an agreement that will enable them to establish a long term co-operation. The agreement will enable both carriers to codeshare on each others' international and domestic flights. It will also provide passengers with the benefits of participation in loyalty programmes, business lounges at airports, and coordinate flight schedules

between Singapore and Australia as well as further routes to provide convenient connections. The carriers also plan to take a joint action in the field of sales, marketing and distribution. The alliance will link the extensive network of international connections offered by Singapore Airlines with a number of cities throughout Australia and the Pacific, where Virgin Australia operates.

PKP: BEER AND EURO 2012

For those who like to drink beer while travelling by train, we have very good news. Legislative changes have now allowed for the introduction of this drink to bars of WARS catering service. It will happen already this summer.

That's a nice change, but the most important challenge facing the Polish rail service is the incoming Euro 2012. There's merely one year left to the championship, and the great countdown began with a Warsaw event called „One Year To UEFA Euro 2012.” Some of the attractions of the event were the „Illuminated Bridge” show, a parade of steam locomotives, and a concert of Afro-mental pop group.



Qbik In Warsaw



Woronicza Qbik is a project by Ghelamco Residential at Mokotów district in Warsaw. The investment is the first housing complex created according to the concept of soft lofts, or flats looking like traditional lofts, but built from scratch. There will be 350 apartments, including 183 two-story ones, ranging in size from 32 sq m to 206 sq m. Qbik Woronicza complex will be opened in 2012.

Finnair: More Traffic

The traffic on Finnair's routes from Poland has grown by 36% in the first 4 months of this year. A particularly large increase has been noted in the number of passengers flying to Asia. From January to April this number increased by 45 percent in relation to the same period last year. The most popular were the flights to Bangkok, Seoul, Hong Kong and Shanghai. More passengers (up by 117 percent) benefited from Finnair's business class. It's worth noting that starting March 2011, Finnair offers daily flights from Gdańsk to Helsinki, thanks to which Asian cities have become more accessible for passengers departing from the north of Poland. The airline also offer flights to Helsinki three times a day from Warsaw and twice a week from Cracow.

Golden Tulip In Warsaw

Louvre Hotels Group, the new hotel group created at the beginning of April 2011 through a merger of Louvre Hotels and Golden Tulip Hospitality Group, focuses on intensive development of the Golden Tulip brand. The first hotel of this chain, which is called the Golden Tulip Centre Warsaw, will appear on the Polish market through the conversion of Kyriad Prestige Warsaw hotel. The hotel will be thoroughly renovated during the summer months and will be the flagship facility of Louvre Hotels Group in Poland. The hotel chain has 10 hotels in Poland, three of which are located in Warsaw (Première Classe, Campanile and Golden Tulip



Warsaw's Centre). The other seven are Campanile hotels. In Wrocław, Louvre Hotels Group has started the construction of a complex consisting of the Campanile and Première Classe hotels. Together they will offer 280 rooms, and the opening is scheduled for the end of the first quarter of 2012.

Fru For Holiday

The results of a survey carried out by fru.pl Internet portal indicate that Spain, Italy and, surprisingly the U.S. are the holiday destinations which are the most often chosen by the Poles. More than half of several hundred participants in the survey want to spend the holiday abroad. Our favourite cities are Barcelona, Rome, Venice, Paris and London. For two years now there has been a growing interest in flights to the United States, especially to cities such as Miami, New York, Chicago or San Francisco, as well as the Far East – mainly China and India. This year almost 20 % of users of fru.pl will spend their holiday in one of those countries.

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To nie wszystkie korzyści, jakie płyną z posiadania karty World MasterCard! Klienci wybranych banków mogą brać udział w wyjątkowym Programie World MasterCard Rewards, w którym gromadzone punkty można wymieniać na markowe produkty i niezapomniane wrażenia!



Organizatorem loterii promocyjnej „Podwodna restauracja” jest agencja reklamowa McCann Erickson Polska Sp. z o.o. z siedzibą w Warszawie, ul. Cybernetyki 19, działająca na zlecenie MasterCard Europe SpA, Oddział w Polsce. Zgłoszenia do udziału w loterii można dokonać za pośrednictwem strony www.worldpromocja.pl. Loteria jest organizowana na terytorium Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej i dotyczy transakcji niebankomatowych w złotych polskich, dokonanych za pomocą karty World MasterCard. Materiały reklamowo-promocyjne mają charakter jedynie informacyjny. Wiążącą moc prawną mają wyłącznie postanowienia regulaminu loterii. Więcej szczegółów w regulaminie loterii dostępnym na www.worldpromocja.pl.

Szczegóły Programu World MasterCard Rewards dostępne na www.mastercard.pl/rewards oraz w oddziałach wybranych banków. Organizatorem Programu jest MasterCard Europe SpA z siedzibą w Belgii.



Chile And Ecuador With



LAN Airlines – one of the leading air carriers in South America, which serves 76 destinations across the world, actively supports cultural activities in Poland.

In June, the Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw and “Pro Chile” Trade Commission at the Chilean Embassy, organized a seminar named “Fly With Us To Chile”.

Tour operators and travel agency representatives were provided with information on Chile, its tourist attractions, and how to get there with the Chilean airline. The seminar ended with handicrafts exhibition, named “Mapuche – the seeds of Chile”.

A gala concert, an exhibition of photographs, a film show and food tasting were some of the attractions to celebrate the National Day of Ecuador. This is a reminder of two events: the Pichincha Volcano Battle (24 May 1822), which ended 13 years of struggle for independence in Latin America, and an event called Primer Grito Libertario (the First Cry of Independence) of 10 August 1809. In Quito, the troops led by Antonio José de Sucre defeated the army of the King of Spain and forcing him to grant Ecuador its independence.

A Guide For Parents

Lufthansa has prepared an online guide for parents, traveling by plane with children. The guide contains a set of practical guidelines and tips to make the flight as trouble free as possible. Some of the topics covered by the guide include the tips on booking a ticket, preparation of baggage, and alleviating anxiety caused by our child’s first air journey. Each year, about 1.5 million children travel on board Lufthansa’s aircraft. Special beds for babies are available at no additional charge on all intercontinental flights of the German carrier. For young passengers travelling through Frankfurt airport, Lufthansa has prepared a special zone with playpens, painting tables and consoles, as well as games for older children.



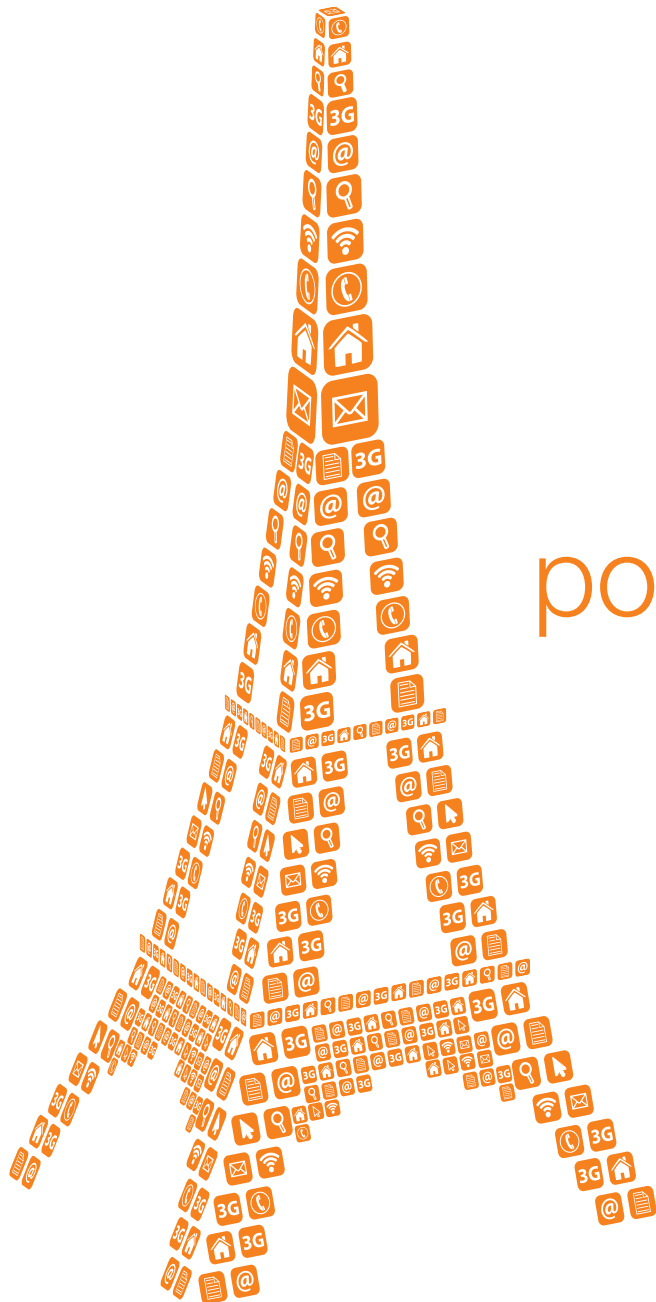
Morocco Differently

Travellers may now discover new areas of Morocco. Until now, the most popular route was the one to Casablanca and Agadir on the coast, as well as trips to the fabulous Marrakech.

Now you can venture north of the country, just below the border with Algeria to the area of of Saidia on the Mediterranean. The climate is very pleasant there, providing a perfect holiday. The town, which once was a large fishing village, will soon become a new holiday resort. As the Moroccans say them-

selves, the king has decided that in a few years time the resort will offer thousands of beds in high quality hotels. Today, there are only three five-star hotels there. They are new, located next to each other and work in the all inclusive formula. You can spend there a week or two, using the offer prepared by Exim Tours office. Tourists fly by a chartered plane to the town of Oujda, where a modern airport has recently been built. Then there’s an hour long bus transfer to the hotel.





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ON BOARD: WARSAW - AMSTERDAM - KILIMANJARO

KLM Boeing 737-400/777-200 Business Class

INFO KLM flies from Warsaw to Amsterdam three times a day. The first flight takes off at 6.05 am, while the other ones at 12.45 pm, and 5.05 pm. The flight to Schiphol Airport takes two hours.

CHECK-IN I chose the first of the aforementioned connections (KL 1362), as I was about to take another flight from Amsterdam. I turned up at Okęcie just after 5.00, which was definitely a good time to avoid the street congestion. I had a booking in business class, and although you can easily check-in online, I didn't do that. I headed towards the Business Class check-in counter. There wasn't any queue at the counter and I didn't check in any luggage, so just a moment later I was able to collect my boarding pass with seat 2C.

BOARDING The security control procedure went very smoothly, especially because I took the fast track for business passengers. I didn't have time to visit the business lounge since boarding, which was set for 5.30 pm, had already begun. When I arrived at Gate 24, I handed my boarding pass and went through the boarding bridge on board Boeing 737-400.

THE FLIGHT The business class on the plane consisted of 15 seats. My seat, 2C, was an aisle one. The seats in the business section are arranged in 3+3 configuration, however, all the middle ones are left unoccupied. The wide, comfortable seat offers a lot of space (the seat pitch is almost 82 centimetres). We were warmly welcomed by the cabin crew and offered water and orange juice.

Nearly 15 minutes before the scheduled departure, all passengers were on board, so the captain asked for permission to start and we headed towards the runway. 15 minutes into the flight, the "fasten your seatbelts" lights turned off and the in-flight service began. The early breakfast consisted of a casserole with zucchini, potatoes, tomatoes and mushrooms. This was served with cheese, ham, yogurt, jam and bread. The cabin crew were very nice and friendly, addressed everyone by name, offering drinks and asking the passengers about their next flights. Those who continued their trip from Amsterdam, received the information on which gate they should go to. This is how I learned that my next aircraft departs from gate D 14.

The two hours passed quickly and at exactly 7.43 am, we landed at Schiphol Airport (almost half an hour before the scheduled time).

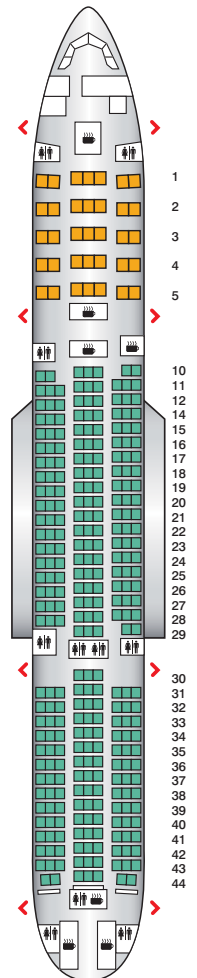
THE TRANSFER But before I got to the gate, I had to leave Schengen zone and go to the transfer desk to collect my boarding card (you can also print a boarding pass for yourself by using one of the user-friendly self-service transfer machines). The transfer also meant an additional passport control. The flight to Kilimanjaro takes off from Amsterdam every day at 10.20 am, but depending on the day of the week it's assigned one of three numbers (0567, 0569, 0571), and takes nearly 8,5 hours. The destination port is one of the largest international airports in Tanzania, which is visited each year by nearly half a million passengers.

BOARDING On collecting my boarding pass with seat 4D, I had a little time left to wander about the airport in Amsterdam, which is considered to be one of the nicest in Europe. However, once again, I had no time to visit any business lounge. Boarding started at 9.15 am, and business-class passengers had a priority access to embark the plane.

THE SEAT World Business Class on KLM's B777-200 is a new solution. The large blue seats which are typical of this airline, occupy the front part of the cabin. They are configured 2+3+2 across five rows. The state-of-the-art seats are 51 centimetres wide and the seat pitch reaches 152 cm, so there's enough space provided. The seat reclines 175 degrees into an almost flat bed which is 190 centimetres long. It's electrically adjustable, and has 3 pre-set positions: upright (for take-off and landing), a "z-shaped" relax position, and a sleeping position.

The seat has an adjustable headrest, lumbar support with massage function,

Boeing 777-200



personal reading light, cup holders and its own phone, in-seat power and an in-arm video screen measuring 10.4 inches (26cm). State-of-the-art AVOD is also in place with handheld (seat-based) control units and access to over 60 movies.

THE FLIGHT Business passengers were welcomed on board with champagne or freshly squeezed orange juice. Each of us also received a free amenity kit consisting of an eye mask, socks, lip balm, pen, comb, ear plugs, toothpaste and toothbrush. We also received blankets and headphones.

Just over 20 minutes after the take-off, when we reached the cruising altitude, the cabin crew offered us a drink. The drink list was remarkably long. You could order a Billecart-Salmon champagne, Chilean white wine Lapostolle Casablanca Valley, French Domaine de Lery, Spanish Verdejo Cimbbrone; red Pinot Noire Villa Maria 2009 from New Zealand, French Gayda Cuvee Occitane 2007 or the Australian Lillipilly Sweet Harvest. There was also a vast selection of tasty spirits, juices

and beverages. KLM has recently employed Therese Boer – a well known Dutch figure – to be the airline's sommelier. What's more, her husband, a culinary master Jonnie Boer, has created the present menu for KLM. They both run De Librije restaurant which has been awarded three Michelin stars, which means that it's one of the top 50 restaurants in the world. The dishes are served on tableware designed specifically by Marcel Wanders.

As an appetizer we were served smoked lamb ham with marinated white asparagus, while for the main course we could choose among chicken stew in Zwolle mustard with vegetables, fried cod in coconut sauce, or chopped beef with parsnips, onions and olives. This, of course, followed by cakes, ice cream, and beverages. About an hour before landing, we a second hot meal was served – this time in an Indonesian style.

The flight went in a great atmosphere, as KLM's cabin crew is really well prepared and extremely helpful. For many years now, KLM offers every World Busi-



FACTS
SEAT CONFIGURATION 2+3+2
SEAT WIDTH 51 cm
SEAT PITCH 152 cm
CONTACT swiss.com

ness Class passenger a gift; a Delft Blue miniature Dutch canal house, filled with jenever – a traditional Dutch, juniper-flavoured gin. A nice souvenir.

ARRIVAL We landed a few minutes ahead of the schedule. A few moments later I was already standing in the queue to get my visa, which costs \$ 60.

VERDICT It's a good connection from Europe to Africa, with excellent cuisine and service.

Jakub Olgiewicz

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HOTEL: KATOWICE

angelo

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Hotel can be seen from a long distance, because it has a unique design. It's hard not to notice its name that adorns the entire building. Angelo Katowice was launched last year, and is the 6th hotel of the chain in Europe. It is managed by Vienna International Hotels & Resorts. You can find here references to contemporary design, latest technology and distinctive colours inspired by the Far East. All this makes a very positive impression.

The décor was designed by Veronica Jurkowsch. The atmosphere of openness and the feel of the Orient can be felt from the very moment of entering the hotel. The spacious lobby was created with bold colour combinations – anthracite black, coral red, warm yellow and white. Oriental chandeliers are eye-catching, and the black and white jazz wallpaper highlights the fact of the hotel's connection to this style of music. Jazz motifs also appear in the photographs which are displayed in the lobby, as well as in the dining and conference area. The corridors feature artistic photos of tourist attractions in Katowice and the region.

WHERE IS IT? angelo Katowice Hotel is located in the city centre, just 500 meters from the famous Spodek arena and the main railway station. Getting there from the airport in Katowice Pyrzowice takes about 35 minutes, depending on the traffic. Near the hotel there are 3 main trunk roads out of Katowice. This guarantees quick access to all the cities of the Silesian agglomeration. Motorized



guests can use the hotel car park which can accommodate up to 148 vehicles.

ROOM FACILITIES The hotel has 181 well-equipped double rooms, as well as 17 suites and 5 junior suites. There are no rooms 9 and 13 which is a tribute international prejudices.

All rooms are decorated in the typical angelo style, with the dominance of yellow, red, white and black. Room amenities include air conditioning, coffee and tea making facilities, the Internet access, an LCD TV, a DVD player, a mini bar, safe suitable for laptop, a chair and a desk. The spacious bathrooms are equipped with underfloor heating and a shower or bath. You will also find there a hair dryer and carefully selected sets of cosmetics.

For the most demanding business guests, angelo offers two executive floors. They are equipped with computer stations with Internet access, coffee stations and bar with fresh fruit. The suites, thanks to their kitchenettes, are not only an option for guests longing for a bit of luxury, but also for those wishing to stay for a longer period of time. The hotel is accessible for the disabled.



BUSINESS FACILITIES angelo also stands out thanks to its spacious and modern conference and business centre, which is the largest in the region. All the rooms (there are 12 of them) cover the area of 1,350 sq m, have access to the daylight, and are adjacent to a spacious foyer. They can accommodate up to 700 people and feature modern equipment necessary for business meetings. There's also free Internet access there.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS Sunlight restaurant serves buffet breakfast from 6.30 am to 10.30 am. From 4 pm on weekdays and Saturdays and from noon on Sundays, the restaurant offers a light menu of international dishes and regional specialties. The menu is seasonal, so the dishes change every three months.

JazzBar is a place where, you can relax in the atmosphere of the 70s, ordering from a wide selection of drinks and snacks. The place is also a winter garden, where small meetings and dancing parties are organized.

LEISURE FACILITIES The jazz relations of the hotel, which are highlighted in the interior design, are also strengthened by the "Jazz Thursdays" with live music. Hotel guests can also relax in the Fitness Studio which features extensive cardio equipment section and a sauna.

VERDICT angelo Hotel Katowice appeared on the map of Katowice one year ago and has since become the leading hotel in Silesia. This four star hotel combines a stylish design and high quality service.

Jan Janowski

CONTACT Angelo Hotel Katowice, ul. Sokolska 24, 40-086 Katowice, tel.: +48 32 783 81 00; angelo-katowice.pl
PRICE A single room costs 114 EURO.

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HOTEL: RIGA

Radisson Blu Elizabete

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Riga is a beautiful city. It attracts more tourists and business guests. No wonder then, that a new 5-star Radisson Blue hotel was built here. The multi-story building is one of several hotels belonging to the chain in the capital of Latvia. It's consistent with the policy of Rezidor Group, the brand owner, which strongly emphasizes its presence in the Baltic region. Hotel Elizabete is a modern place, with architecturally very interesting glass atrium, which is extremely spacious and which makes a huge and instant impression on the guests.

WHERE IS IT? The Radisson in Riga is located in the heart of the Latvian capital, near the Daugava river. It's very closely located to the very charming Old Town, and the most important business centres in the city. The airport is only 15 kilometres away from the hotel, and getting there takes only 20 minutes. The railway station and the central bus station are also situated quite close – around 2 kilometres from the hotel. The hotel provides very fast access to many attractions in Riga (and there is a lot to visit), because the city has a very rich history. It's certainly worth immersing yourself in the charm of small, old town streets, visiting the cathedral, and seeing the Statue of Liberty, which stands in place of a former monument of Tsar Peter I.

ROOM FACILITIES Radisson Blu in Riga offers 228 comfortable rooms. All of them feature air conditioning, free WiFi, cable and pay TV, a work desk, a minibar, a safe, a hairdryer, as well as toiletries in the bathroom. The rooms are divided into four categories: Standard, Business Class (there are 18 of them), Junior Suite (3 such bedrooms), and 1 Suite. The standard rooms are decorated in quiet colours with colourful elements. They are 29 sq m large. Business Class rooms are slight-



CONTACT Radisson Blu Elizabete Hotel Riga, Elizabetes Street 73, Riga, LV-1050, Latvia
Tel. +371 6 778 5555
radissonblue.com

PRICE The price for a standard room with breakfast, booked online at the end of June, started at €87.

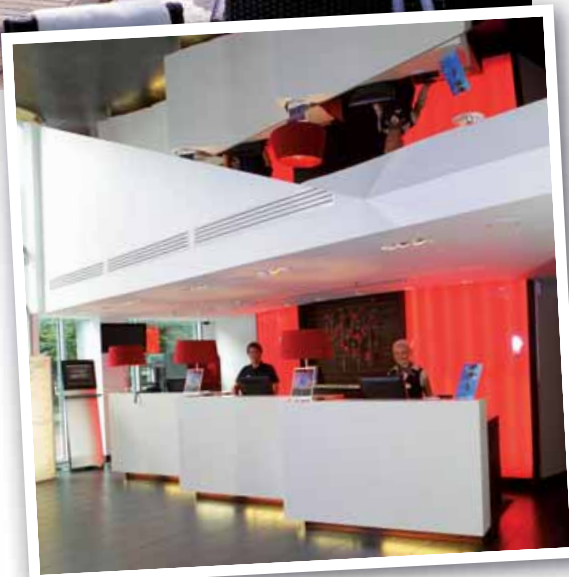


ly larger. Guests in these rooms will relish in special touches like complimentary in-room breakfast, bathrobe and slippers and free movies. The bathroom in Business Class rooms is larger, with a large bathtub and a comfortable shower. The guests to the rooms can also take advantage of the turndown service. Junior Suite is a spacious place with a separate living room. The wooden floors blend perfectly with the modern furniture. The bathroom is much larger here and the guests will find there various luxury cosmetics. Junior Suites also feature Nespresso coffee machines. The Suite of Elizabete hotel is the room of the highest category. It's, in fact, a spacious apartment with the floor area of 70 sq m. The table and chairs, as well as other furniture in the suite resemble the design of the 60s. The apartment has a separate, cosy bedroom, as well as a living room, with separate work and leisure corners. There is also a dining table. The large bathroom, apart from the bath and the shower, also features a sauna.

BUSINESS FACILITIES The business facilities of Elizabete Hotel may not be huge, but the quality of service for business meetings is very high. The hotel is an

ideal venue for smaller events. It features two elegant conference rooms equipped with high quality audio and video equipment. A large TV screen is ideal for conference calls and presentations. Of course, also here the guests have access to free broadband Internet access. The hotel provides a dedicated service staff and catering.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS C.U.T restaurant is a modern place where we can have breakfast served from 6.30 am to 10.30 am (on weekends from 7.00 am to 11.00 am), lunch (the restaurant has a special offer Business Lunch from noon until 3.00 pm) as well as dinner. The menu is varied, with an international flair. You will find here a selection of Italian, Asian and grilled dishes. C.U.T also serves delicious scallops, grilled salmon steaks, and great Argentine beef steaks. There are also great desserts and wines, especially those made in the New World. The restaurant's bar is open from 9.00 am to 1.00 am. It serves various snacks, as well as beer, wine and cocktails. The hotel offers early breakfast for those who depart from the capital of Latvia in the morning – they can order a meal as early as 4.30 am.



LEISURE FACILITIES Elizabete hotel aims mostly at business guests who are busy with their everyday activities, so the fitness offer isn't particularly extensive here. The guests will find here a well-equipped exercise room, equipped with high-quality machines, and a Finnish sauna.

OCENA It's a luxury hotel for those coming to Riga for business. Convenience, Internet access, fine dining.

Ryszard Kownacki



HOTEL: HONGKONG

Crowne Plaza Causeway Bay

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The 28-storey Crowne Plaza hotel, which opened last November features luxurious guest rooms, a rooftop swimming pool, a fitness centre, and a restaurant. The hotel lobby features an illuminated waterfall with orchids symbolizing peace and contentment, as opposed to the sculpture presenting the chaos of the city. The rest of the hotel also refers to the aesthetics of yin yang.

WHERE IS IT? The building is located a few minutes walk from Causeway Bay station. This provides easy access to the city centre, historic sites, shops and tourist attractions.

ROOM FACILITIES The hotel has 263 rooms, ranging in size from 34sq m to 84 sq m (among them 10 suites), occupying floors 6-26. Superior rooms show a sensible use of space and, thanks to large windows and mirrors seem to be even greater. Some rooms have glass walls between the bathroom and the bedroom, but the sliding doors provide privacy, comfort and freedom. All of the hotel bathrooms have both a bath and a shower. Other bathroom amenities include a bathrobe and a decent-sized set of bathroom cosmetics. Obviously, each room has workspace with both WiFi and wired Internet access (charged about PLN 70 daily), a fully stocked minibar, a universal charger for mobile phones and MP3

players of various brands, a 42-inch TV (Philips HD LCD), a DVD player, and an iPod docking port. Each of the rooms also has a telephone which we can use to make local calls free of charge. The hotel's suites and Club rooms are located on floors 21-26 (there are 88 of them). Guests have free access to the Club Lounge, which is located on the second floor. It's open 7.00 am-11.00 pm, and offers free Internet access, early dinner (until 5.00 pm), and daily „happy hours” between 5.30 pm and 7.30 pm. All guests can visit Kudos restaurant, which is located on the first floor of the hotel. Some of the amenities to be found in Club rooms include free Internet access, two bottles of mineral water, and Hermes cosmetics in the bathrooms.

BUSINESS FACILITIES The hotel has seven conference rooms located on the second floor. They aren't too spacious – the largest one can accommodate up to 120 people. This is quite unusual for a hotel belonging to Crowne Plaza chain, which generally boasts its rich conference facilities. It seems that the modest business offer is a result of the limited size of the hotel's building. There is also a small business centre, located next to the Club Lounge, with three computers and a printer, as well as a free, four-person conference room for guests of Club rooms.



FACTS **CONTACT** Crowne Plaza, 8 Leighton Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong; tel. +852 3980 3980; cphongkong.com
PRICE Prices for a Superior room booked online start at around PLN 600.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS Kudos restaurant serves daily buffet and a la carte breakfast and is open 6.30 am-11.00 pm. On the ground floor there's also a café, and on the 28th floor a club – with slightly kitschy decor (blue chandeliers, backlit bottles). From there you can get to the swimming pool, and the stairs will lead us also to a spacious pavilion situated on the 27th floor, where you can relax and sip a drink away from the noise and flashing neon signs.

LEISURE FACILITIES Apart from the pool at the hotel there is also a cosy gym (open from 5.30 am-11.00 am) on the top floor. It provides a wonderful view of the racetrack and the mountains surrounding the city.

OCENA It's an excellently situated hotel, offering superb views, delicious food, and a 5-star service.

Tom Otley

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HOTEL: DŹWIRZYNO

Havet Hotel Resort & Spa



WHAT'S IT LIKE? Havet hotel located in the seaside town of Dźwirzyno is a modern facility, which was created for families to provide them with a comfortable stay, as well as a number of attractions. The very fact that the hotel is situated in a pine forest, makes visitors immediately indulge in the relaxing atmosphere of the place. There are a number of reasons to do so, since the hotel is a Spa complex with a Thermal Centre, so apart from us-

ing the swimming pools and saunas, you can also receive various types of rejuvenating treatment. Havet gained a reputation not only in Poland (it's visited by a number of public figures), but also abroad, especially among visitors from Germany.

WHERE IS IT? Havet hotel is located just a mile from the centre of Dźwirzyno, a nice town which lies just 12 kilometres from Kołobrzeg. The easiest way to get

here is by car, because the nearest airport is in Goleniów near Szczecin (about 100 kilometres away). The hotel itself is located near the Baltic Sea, just 100 meters from the shore. From Kołobrzeg you can take a trip to the Danish island of Bornholm where ferries run every 4 hours. It's worth visiting the island if only for its numerous cycling paths, as well as extremely interesting artistic ceramics.

ROOM FACILITIES The hotel has 133 guest rooms. All of them have balconies, air conditioning, and computers with wireless Internet access (WiFi is available throughout the hotel). Other amenities include a refrigerator, an LCD TV, a king size bed, a desk, a minibar and a safe. Each bathroom has a hairdryer and bathrobes for the guests. It's possible to order a rollaway bed. The rooms come in several categories. The Standard category comprises basic rooms with an area of 25 sq m, and they can be rented for a single person. Some of them have a sea view, but you must pay extra for this. More space (33 sq m) is provided in De Luxe rooms. They have no view on the Baltic Sea, unless we pay extra for one of the two De Luxe rooms with a very comfortable steam bath installed on the terrace (there's one more room like this in the hotel, but without the sea view). Family rooms are offered to families with children, have an area of 38 sq m and can go with two rollaway beds. The two-room suite consists of a lounge and a bedroom, has an area of 45 sq m and an additional sofa which can serve as an extra bed. There are also suites with jacuzzi on the terrace. Havet also offers three-



CONTACT Havet Hotel Resort & Spa, ul. Wyzwolenia 29 78-131 Dźwirzyno, tel. + 48 94 713 60 70, havethotel.pl

PRICE It's best to plan your stay at Havet, taking advantage of the packages prepared by the hotel. The price for a six-day holiday package started at PLN 1,710 in June, PLN 2,580 in July, and PLN 1,420 in the first half of September. Children under 6 years stay in the hotel free of charge.

room suites (60 sq m), consisting of two bedrooms and a lounge.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS Havet is a hotel geared towards leisure stays, so Moonlight restaurant must be adapted to this rhythm. It's open from 7.30 am to 10.30 am, and then since noon until 9.00 pm. It offers a large selection of meals in the form of a buffet, as well as a la carte dishes. There is also a special menu for children. The hotel's cafe operates from 10.00 am to 10.00 pm, and serves eat delicious desserts and drinks. In summer the hotel opens Beach Bar. There's also Madoosa Night Club.

BUSINESS FACILITIES Five air-conditioned conference rooms comprise the hotel's offer addressed to companies. The rooms have culinary names (Vanilla, Milk & Coffee, Salt & Pepper) and a total of 480 sq m, which allows to accommodate up to 270 people. All the rooms are equipped with modern equipment like electric screens, overhead projectors etc. The hotel offers assistance of a specialist support staff, as well as wide catering options.

LEISURE FACILITIES The great advan-

tage of Havet hotel is its Thermal Centre. It's a water complex with a pool of over 300 sq m, jacuzzi, whirlpool, and other attractions. Interestingly, the whole facility has heated floor, and the guests can also rest in the orangery which overlooks the beach. There are a lot of events taking place at the pool area, such as night film screenings, parties, aqua aerobics classes, and swimming lessons. You can also relax and pamper yourself at Hi Tech Medical Spa La Perla, which offers a wide range of massages and various beauty treatment. La Perla is often visited by such celebrities as Anna Mucha, Katarzyna Cichopek and Ewa Gawryluk. Havet promotes cycling tours, so not surprisingly it has its own bike rental shop (PLN 35 per 4 hours). The offer aimed at the youngest ones includes the Junior Club with a playroom, Wii consoles, a cinema and animators who do their best to entertain kids with a variety of activities.

VERDICT It's a comfortable place to relax at the Polish seaside. Some of the biggest advantages are the Thermal Centre and the Spa.

Adam Walczak





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RESTAURANT: WARSAW

Belvedere

INFO For almost twenty years Belvedere restaurant has been one of the most interesting places on the culinary map of Warsaw. Located within the area of the renowned Royal Bath Gardens, the restaurant occupies the New Orangery – a building which is over 150 years old. Originally built as a garden for orange trees, it was designed by Adam Adolf Loeve and Józef Orłowski. The Orangery is an example of a very interesting architecture – large glazed surfaces give the massive structure remarkable lightness and style. Since 2008, the restaurant has been present on the list of recommended places by the Michelin Guide.

WHERE IS IT? Belvedere is located in the Royal Bath Gardens, a truly prestigious place. There are many government offices nearby, as well as embassies and the Parliament, so it's not surprising then that the restaurant is popular among many personalities of the public life. Although it's located in the very centre of Warsaw, it's still cosy, quiet and free of the hubbub of the city life. A large car park offers the restaurant guests a lot of parking space – the value which is much appreciated in the congested Polish capital.

DECOR The interior is without any doubt one of the strongest points of Belvedere restaurant. Thanks to the large glazed surfaces of the walls, the restaurant is always filled with light. The view from the window is soothing, especially in spring and summer seasons, when we can admire the garden. There's a lot of greenery inside as well. It's a truly pleasant experience to have your lunch or dinner surrounded by tropical plants. Belvedere can accommodate up to 300 people (for banquets), and the main room can be divided into four parts. The restaurant, however, isn't the only place available for guests. Right next to the main room

there's Venue lounge, and Cavallo Club, which is also located nearby, is an interesting place designed in the Old English style and offered through special reservations. It's a very good choice for anyone who wants to honour their guests in a unique and interesting way.

MENU Belvedere always offers dishes which are delicious and attractively composed. The menu includes dishes of Polish and international cuisine, with the elements of fusion which has been so popular in recent times. The ideas for the dishes were prepared by chefs Henryk Nieciejowski and Adam Komar. The restaurant offers two menus – the Polish Menu and Chef's Signature Menu. The Polish one offers such hors d'oeuvres as the plate of traditional Polish starters including herring with baked potato, beef loin tartar, venison pate with cranberry and roulade of local cottage cheese with tomato. There are also traditional Polish dumplings stuffed with sauerkraut and mushrooms, duck with ashberry, or lettuce with smoked venison loin and blackberry vinaigrette. The soups are the best examples of or national cuisine. You will find here the traditional Polish „Żurek”, classic Polish boletus soup, as well as crayfish broth. One of the most delicious main course dishes is something called „beef tenderloin with boletus according to a recipe by Tremo the Head Chef of King Stanislas Augustus”. Other dishes include Masurian pike perch served with vegetables, or duck roasted in marjoram with redcurrant confiture and pear mousse.

The Chef's Signature Menu has been designed for those who like a little experiment with flavours. Scallop tartar with halibut sashimi and ginger dressing with coriander, or Foie gras foam with Sauternes jelly



and sweet brioche – these are some of the hors d'oeuvres. Main dishes include risotto with green asparagus and fried boletus, catfish baked with ginger, served on vegetable julienne with black sesame, seabass served with Wakame seaweed salad, leek stuffed with crayfish and celery mousse, or Beef cheeks with Jus sauce served with ricotta and parmesan noodles and stewed red cabbage. Among desserts you will find traditional Polish hot apple pie with ice-cream, melon cold soup with lime sorbet and delicate wild strawberry mousse, as well as white chocolate mousse flavoured with Bison vodka, served with Amaretto cherries and pear ice-cream.

PRICES The hors d'oeuvres from the Polish Menu of the restaurant cost PLN 26-44, soups PLN 26-36, while the pleasure of tasting dishes will cost you from PLN 49 to PLN 86 (the latter price for the beef tenderloin with boletus). The prices of dishes from the Chef's Signature Menu are similar. From Monday to Friday the restaurant serves so called Bellunches which cost PLN 55 (for two courses) or PLN 65 (for three courses).

Jan Niewodzki



CONTACT Belvedere Restaurant

ul. Agrykoli 1, 00 – 460 Warszawa

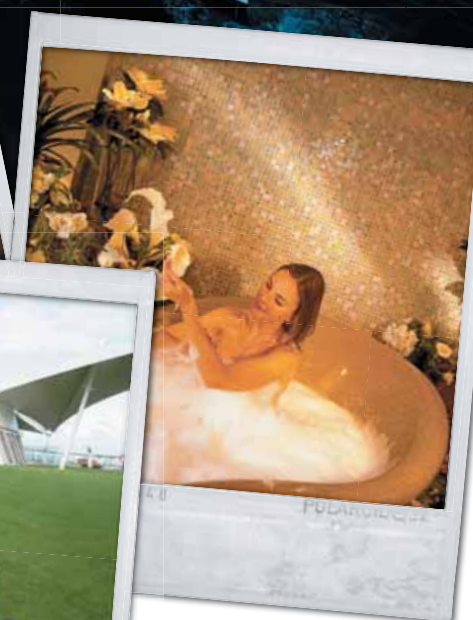
tel. + 48 22 558 67 00, www.belvedere.com.pl

VERDICT It's an elegant restaurant with an interesting menu, great service, located in a very interesting place. It's a great choice for a business meeting.

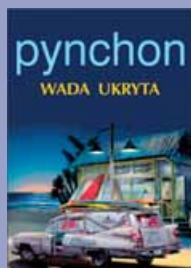
Celebrity **X** Cruises®



- NAJPIĘKNIEJSZE STATKI
- SPA NA POKŁADZIE
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Z NATURALNĄ TRAWĄ
- UCZTY KULINARNE
- WYCIECZKI



BT About Culture



MARLOWE ON DRUGS

Those who like entertaining literature and fondly remember Chandler's novels, will sure be amused reading the latest novel by Thomas Pynchon called „Inherent Vice”. Its main character seems like the private detective Marlowe who has been moved in time to

Los Angeles of the late 60s. Instead of a hat and a suit, he has long hair and wears sandals on bare feet. Instead of a glass of whisky, he prefers a marijuana joint, sniffing and swallowing whatever he can. He's seemingly runs an investigation, but, in fact, we don't really know which of his adventures really happen and which are the products of his tormented mind. Strong language, a string of crazy twists and turns, as well as ironic and sarcastic view of the world, make this book a great read.

Those who know a thing or two about the „higher” literature, know that Pynchon is one of the most important contemporary American writers and one of the founding fathers of the literary postmodernism. They will read this novel, expecting that in the end the whole world will go crazy, as it does in the writer's most important novel „The Gravity's Rainbow.” They will, however, be surprised now.

Thomas Pynchon: „Inherent Vice”.

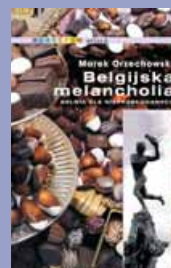
Albatros A. Kuryłowicz; 464 pages.

HOW TO FALL IN LOVE WITH BELGIUM

Marek Orzechowski was for many years a correspondent for TVP in Brussels. Now, he has written a book on Belgium, a divided country, which seems invisible among its potent neighbours, but at the same time is enclosed and independent. He managed to combine a colourful (and in places a serious) story about the history of this country with a description of its contemporary life, sharing with the reader his personal admiration for the Belgians and their lifestyle. The whole book forms a sort of a confession that you can easily fall in love with Belgium.

Marek Orzechowski: „Belgijska melancholia”.

(„The Belgian Melancholy”). Muza SA.; 288 pages



THE JOURNAL OF A MOCKER

The book comprises short texts, small notes, and witty bon mots. For the whole previous year, the renowned film director Jerzy Gruza noted – as he defined it – „anecdotes, stories, rumours”, commented on various political events, and watched his friends, making up so-called words of wisdom. All this formed a book which with great sense of humour and ironic distance describes Poland AD 2010 with its political follies, people trying to live wisely and calmly, and the author himself – a man who is becoming increasingly convinced that the world is going crazy. It's funny and sad at the same time.

Jerzy Gruza: „Rok osła” („A year of the donkey”).

Świat Książki, 336 pages.

MUSIC



FOO FIGHTERS WASTING LIGHT

Rock is not dead – it's alive and kicking! The new album of Dave Grohl's band debuted at the very top of many music charts. No surprise here, because „Wasting Light” is a piece of extremely good music.

MYSLOVITZ NIEWAŻNE JAK WYSOKO JESTEŚMY

No matter how high we are». Basically, there's not much to dwell on here. The latest album of the Polish band is another portion of touching, truthful and meaningful music.



GAME

F. E. A. R 3

Several years ago, the first part of this game occasionally caused cardiac arrests. This was because danger lurked there in almost every corner, and the psychedelic atmosphere kept you on the edge. This is, however, the whole „charm” of the computer gaming entertainment, so F. E. A. R immediately gained millions of fans and became a cult video game. The third part of the FPP, which has just appeared on the market, gives us another dose of the darkest horror, and the main heroine – Alma – is back and ready to face the evil.





INSTYTUT ZDROWIA I URODY
MEDICAL SPA

*Najlepszy salon urody w Polsce ostatniego X-lecia
Laureat Konkursu Warszawski Znak Jakości*

■ Nowoczesne zabiegi laserowe

Epilacja laserowa - Lasery Light Sheer - nowość

Trwale - dzięki zastosowaniu diody o bardzo wysokiej mocy i o długim czasie trwania impulsu.

Bezpiecznie - wysokie bezpieczeństwo zabiegu zapewnia unikalny system chłodzenia kontaktową końcówką szafirową.

Szybko - ma dwa razy większą "głowicę" - tzw. plamkę celującą (12x12mm) co pozwala na szybsze wykonanie zabiegu.

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Usuwanie blizn potrądzikowych, usuwanie przebarwień, wygładzanie zmarszczek, poprawa tekstury skóry, poprawa owalu twarzy.

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Podkreśla kształt i kolor ust, nadaje piękny kształt brwiom, zagęszcza linię rzęs.

Linergistki Sharley - wielokrotne mistrzynie z tytułem ELITE.

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Sauny: sucha, parowa z aromaterapią;

Sauna na podczerwień - nowość w terapii otyłości; Masaż podwodny z solami morskimi; Zabiegi pielęgnacyjne i relaksujące.

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■ Ekskluzywne zabiegi kosmetyczne

ThermaClinic - bezbolesny i bezpieczny system poprawy napięcia skóry i spłykania zmarszczek;

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Dermatologiczno-kosmetyczna terapia trądziku;

Konsultacje wizażystki i stylistki.

■ Pielęgnacja ciała

Lipo Shock - szokujące efekty odchudzania, długoetapowe efekty redukujące tkankę tłuszczową;

Therma Lipo - alternatywa dla chirurgii plastycznej; redukcja tkanki tłuszczowej, cellulitu i ujędrnienie skóry;

Elektrostymulacja, Ultradźwięki;

Body mix - wyszczuplenie, modelowanie sylwetki;

Laser, krioterapia, fotostymulacja, masaż ciśnieniowy;

Zabiegi relaksujące - winoterapia, czekoladoterapia;

Mezoterapia - kondycjonowanie skóry, terapie cellulitu.

■ Medycyna estetyczna

Leczenie przebarwień - peelingi, **Cosmelan** - terapia na przebarwienia hormonalne;

Usuwanie zmarszczek - botulina, wypełniacze;

Mezoterapia - kondycjonowanie skóry, poprawianie owalu twarzy;

Poprawa owalu twarzy - najnowocześniejsze zabiegi.

Leczenie nadpotliwości - botulina.

Zamykanie naczynek - twarz, nogi.



www.sharley.pl

ul. Jana Pawła II 75, Warszawa

tel: 22 636 46 66, 636 46 64

e-mail: sharley@sharley.pl



Business Traveller investigates the pitfalls of foreign currency exchange and discovers ways in which travellers can get the most from their transactions

Money exchange is something globetrotters have to deal with all the time, but the issue is a little more complicated in Asia where, within a week, you may have to deal with three or four currencies. Regardless of where you are travelling to, however, one rule holds up: Unless it is a currency that you are likely to use again soon, you should avoid buying too much as changing it back means losing out on exchange rates again and paying more fees.

To change or not to change

In Europe many countries now use a shared currency, but no such system has so far been established in Asia – at least not officially. There are some special cases to note, however.

In some Indochinese countries, particularly Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, the US dollar is accepted and even preferred. Merchandise is often priced in American dollars. Ironically, this gives you the buyer more bargaining power.

For example, tuk tuk drivers in Phnom Penh ask for more when quoting a price in riels, the local currency. If you are from a country where you can get hold of US dollars easily, you should bring them as your main currency.

Since the exchange rate of China's renminbi went from strictly controlled to "a managed floating exchange rate system" based on "market supply and demand with reference to a basket of currencies", the value of the currency has risen substantially. An increasing number of shops in Hong Kong and Macau accept it, albeit often with a high conversion rate. But renminbi is still a long way from universal acceptance in the Special Administrative Regions, so when visiting Hong Kong it is still necessary to change to Hong Kong dollars, which are also accepted in Macau. (The Macau pataca, however, is of no use in Hong Kong or mainland China, and it enjoys little recognition internationally. Shops or taxi drivers in Macau might give it to you as change. You can ask to have the change given in Hong Kong dollars

but if that fails, remember to spend it before you leave).

Hong Kong and Singapore are two of the most open markets for money exchange in the world, and most currencies can be bought there. If you are travelling around the region and these cities are among your stops, make use of the opportunity to get currencies for your subsequent destinations. Trying to buy renminbi with Philippine pesos in Shanghai will be much trickier.

The plastic

There was once a time when travellers' cheques were a popular means of carrying foreign currencies securely while overseas, but as banking has become more global their advantages seem slight in comparison to ATMs which, although they charge a higher fee, provide a great deal of convenience. Many shops no longer accept travellers' cheques, and cashing them at the bank requires queuing up and catching the bank's opening hours – you cannot do it over the weekend, and in some small towns banks are closed by 3pm. The cashier at major hotels can cash travellers' cheques, but there is often a ceiling on how much.

On Business Traveller Asia-Pacific's online forum (<http://asia.business-traveller.com/discussion/topic/Best-exchange-rates>), a majority of readers opt for cash from ATMs when travelling. One of them, Martyn Sinclair, wrote: «I always use an ATM machine, I might not get the most efficient rate and there are charges, but for the amounts involved, quite frankly, it's far easier and far less hassle.» Also, since you can better control how much money you actually need to withdraw, you save by not having to change a large chunk of foreign banknotes back to your home currency after the trip.

Naturally, if you use the ATM of an overseas branch of your bank, you are likely to enjoy savings as well. «Transactions done by DBS Singapore ATM cardholders at DBS Hongkong, DBS Indonesia and DBS Taiwan ATMs shall be free of the usual S\$5 service charge levied on international ATM withdrawals,» says a DBS spokesperson. DBS Singapore cardholders also pay a preferential flat fee of S\$2 when they use their Visa/PLUS ATM cards at the cash points of Bank Danamon and Bank Central Asia in Indonesia, HDFC in India and Bank of the Philippine Islands.

But ATMs aren't a convenient solution everywhere. In Japan, the banking system is very localised and many ATMs do not accept foreign debit cards. Citibank is one of the few banks with a notable presence there, but they are still far from being ubiquitous. Make sure you research their locations before visiting.

In China, withdrawing from an ATM requires some caution: reports have surfaced that fake bank machines have been found to steal private information from bank customers. Make sure that you are using a machine at the branch of an established bank.

As with debit cards, a lot of (but not all) credit card companies will charge you a foreign exchange fee on transactions in a foreign currency. According to a spokesperson from Hang Seng Bank, «Foreign currency transactions will be converted into Hong Kong dollars at a rate selected by the relevant card association from the range of rates available in wholesale currency markets for the applicable conversion date or the government-mandated rate in effect for the applicable conversion date, in each instance plus 1.2 percent to 1.95 percent, subject to different card products.»

And using an overseas credit card in China can be a hassle. In some cities such as Shenzhen, if you go to a mall and want to pay for something with a foreign credit card, you will be led to a special cashier – often miles away – where there is a very slow machine that takes a few attempts to get through to the approval system.

Costly convenience

The option of changing money at the airport can be tempting, but this is one of the most expensive options as it is a «distress» purchase – charges are high and rates unfavourable. Even if you are at the airport already without the currency for your next destination, try to find out whether you will be better off changing money at the arrival airport. For example, the Hong Kong dollar-to-Thai baht exchange rate is much more favourable at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport than at Hong Kong International Airport, where Travelex has a monopoly.

To provide an example, on February 20, Travelex at the Hong Kong airport offered THB24.7 to US\$1, but Business Traveller got THB29.6 from the Siam Commercial Bank exchange centre at the Bangkok airport. That's quite a margin.

But the company's online pre-ordering service promises best online rates and they do compare to other online sources we have checked. To use the service, you must order a minimum of HK\$1,000, and up to HK\$12,000 equivalent. The order needs to be placed at least three hours before pick-up at the airport.

Equally, watch out for so-called «deals» with affiliates. Asia Miles has teamed up with Travelex so its members can earn miles when they buy currency at a Travelex centre in Hong Kong. Here you'll get 20 to 59 Asia Miles when changing HK\$1,000-HK\$2,999, 75 to 124 miles for HK\$3,000-HK\$4,999, 166 to 333 miles for HK\$5,000-HK\$9,999, and 500 to 2,499 miles when changing HK\$10,000-HK\$49,999.

But since a night at Four Points by Sheraton in Bangkok requires 16,000 miles, and even a lunch buffet at SkyCity Bistro at SkyCity Marriott Hotel, Hong Kong costs 5,000 miles, one can't help but wonder if the «loss in conversion» isn't more than the worth of the redeemed product.

Planning is key

For the large proportion of business travellers who organise their own foreign exchange, the best advice is to order your currency in advance and in bulk. This is especially true for larger companies where staff do a lot of travel.

One of the benefits of using a corporate foreign exchange service such as Amex is that they can get their clients better rates as they regularly order large amounts of currency. Terry Perrin, American Express's director of wholesale currency services,

says: «In terms of the rates we apply it depends specifically on each client, how frequently they travel, what their spend is and how many orders they place. We can put limits around what individuals order, and companies can track that.»

Also, your average high street bank frequently – if not always – gives pretty de-risory rates compared with what you can get from specialists and travel companies.

Who offers the best deal?

Most currency services have an online offering that will give better rates simply because they are not paying for a high-street office. But even among money-changing shops there are marked differences between rates, depending on location. Chungking Mansions in Tsim Sha Tsui may have a tainted image from times past as a mini-ghetto, but it has cleaned up its act a lot in recent years. What has not changed is its continued popularity among budget travellers in need of affordable accommodation at guesthouses. Money Changer HK, near the building's entrance, thrives on offering good rates to travellers while profiting from the sheer volume of business. According to its owner Kenny Gianani, his shop is paying a much lower rent than counterparts taking up costly premises in luxury malls and prime facilities, which allows him to lower the profit margin and offer better rates.


Money exchange is a business, so as a traveller you have to expect to pay a little for the service. With planning and research you can find good deals, but without such foresight more often than not you will end up getting ripped off. ■

“I always use an ATM machine, I might not get the most efficient rate but for the amounts involved, it's far less hassle.”



DREAMLINER™

Dreams To Fulfil



We had waited for this moment for so long. Malcontents claimed that it will all go bad and the Polish carrier will lose not only a modern aircraft but, what's worse, its position on the market. There is hope, however, that everything will go well. Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, came to Warsaw to present the machine that in a few months will join the fleet of LOT Polish Airlines. What's more, it will also receive a brand new livery.

That June morning was full of emotion. The apron in front of a hangar was full of bystanders, dignitaries and journalists. The arrival of the Dreamliner has become the top news in radio and television services, and the whole event was broadcast live.

ZULU ALFA 001

At exactly 10.11 am, the aircraft appeared over the airport. Earlier, it had received permission to fly low, so now with a re-

tracted landing gear, it was gliding majestically over the runway. The first impression on seeing the B787 in the sky was one. It's a beautiful and really quiet machine. Indeed, the two huge Rolls Royce engines powering the aircraft don't cause the noise which is so typical in these conditions. When the blue Dreamliner touched the runway, it was greeted with a water salute, and after a few minutes towed towards the hangar where hundreds of people had gathered. That was a proper time to have a closer look at the plane. You could also

go on board, but ZA001 is the first of several testing models, so its interior looked more like a research laboratory, with monitors and mysterious measuring devices, and it didn't resemble a typical passenger aircraft.

The machine arrived at Okęcie directly from the Paris air show, with captain Mike Carriker, a man who knows everything about these machines, since he had flown the 787 for hundreds of hours and is still testing it. The ultimate goal is to obtain all the necessary certificates and ►



BOEING / DEJAN GOSPODAREK





Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner

length	56,7 M	seats	210 – 250
height	16,9 M	width of the cabin	5,49 m
wing span	60 m	service ceiling	13100 m
wing area	325 m ²	range	4 650 – 15 750 km
crew	2 pilots	max. speed	1050 km/h



Business class cabin will look like this



The novelty – Premium Economy class



Economy class cabin

permissions, so that the delivery date to LOT, this time set at the turn of April and May 2012, won't be postponed anymore.

THREE CLASSES OF CRANES

Marcin Piróg, the CEO of LOT Polish Airlines was hoping the same, saying: – We are proud that we will be the first European carrier to offer its passengers completely new quality and comfort of flight.

Let's now move on to the quality of the Polish version of the aircraft. For the first time in the history of LOT, its aircraft will be divided into 3 cabin classes, with the interior kept in different shades of blue. The front of the cabin will be occupied by the seats for business class. It will be possible to set the seats into a lying position, and the service, menu, as well as other amenities (which can't be revealed yet), will make LOT's business class a real competition for first class, which is recognized as the highest, among many other carriers. These are very ambitious plans. A completely new solution, which is gaining more and more popularity among air-

lines and which LOT hasn't had so far on its offer, is the Premium Economy class. It's quite a fresh idea, now being implemented by many air carriers and a solution which fills the gap between expensive business class and the budget economy class. Of course, it also provides a much greater comfort of travel. There will be 21 seats of this class on the Dreamliner. The remaining 213 seats are reserved for the economy class. The Polish version of B787 will seat 251 passengers. Each passenger will have their own screen for the on-board entertainment system.

The visit of B787 was also a perfect occasion to present the new livery of LOT's aircraft. The airline didn't want to make revolutionary changes here, but only conduct a well thought out refinement of the existing idea. The changes relate primarily to the tail (it will now be dark blue with the symbol of a crane and the white and red stripes on the bottom) and the cheat line running down the windows which will now disappear. The livery does not break with the tradition but is rather a project that combines



The arrival of B787, which is considered the most modern aircraft in the world, sparked a sensation. However, its interior is still more like a flying laboratory



the glorious past of the national carrier with a modern design. You can decide for yourselves if you like the new livery, looking at the photographs published in our magazine. We do like it.

COMPOSITE MIRACLES

The delay, reaching almost four years, was really nerve racking for the Polish national air carrier. Did this waiting pay off? It seems that it did, because the compensation that Boeing had to pay to LOT reached almost the cost of one aircraft (this we, of course, write unofficially). Since LOT had ordered eight B787s, the answer seems to be simple.

Most of these delays are a result of protracted work on entirely new solutions in civil aviation. The Boeing 787 makes greater use of composite materials in its airframe and primary structure than any previous Boeing commercial airplane. Carbon fibres used in the production process provide much greater strength and lightness of the construction. However, the use of such materials means applying processes, which so far haven't been

tested on passenger planes. The plane's fuel economy, which results from the application of cutting edge solutions (for example the plane's wing is a one-piece element whose mounting took much more time than expected), will definitely be a key value for the carriers who have already ordered more than 800 Dreamliners. Passengers, in turn, can travel in far better, more comfortable conditions, for example thanks to a higher air pressure on board, or the windows which are now much larger and can be dimmed electronically at the touch of a button.

The skyrocketing increase in the range of this ultramodern machine, provides air carriers with new opportunities. LOT Polish Airlines also seem to understand them as Mr Piróg told us that now the Polish airline will try to „attack” Asian destinations. Soon after the Dreamliner joins the Polish fleet, the airline wants to launch connections to Tokyo and Beijing. Some other new destinations may include those in the North America. Let's keep our fingers crossed and wait patiently another few months. ■





Fast Travel

Flight tickets, hotel rooms and rental cars can all be booked online, so who needs an agent?

Erica Rae Chong and **Reggie Ho** pose this question to various industry players

How the world has changed. Just 10 years ago, most people would still be visiting a travel agent to book an upcoming trip. Frequent travellers might have their agents on speed-dial, but that's about as streamlined as it got in most cases. Then it became very much conversation-free. You'd send an email to your agent, who would then send you all the flight and hotel options, sometimes alongside additional information about the destination. You'd transfer the money online and, on the same day, receive an e-ticket by email.

But today, booking travel products doesn't even require the involvement of an agent, at least not a human one. Online travel websites such as Expedia, Travelocity, Opodo, Priceline and Orbitz have really picked up speed. These companies ring up billions of US dollars in revenue every year, thanks to their increasingly loyal clientele.



BIGSTOCK / DREAMTIME

A one-way stree

Some even say once you have gone online, you never go back. “My experiences are great, and I am quite sure that I will keep on using online travel agencies instead of physically going to the traditional ones,” says Victoria Wai-yee Chan, who works in television. One of her colleagues advised her to use an online agent and she liked it immediately. “I find the prices much cheaper than those from a conventional agent or the airlines, probably because I always travel alone so don’t get to enjoy package deals.”

Some like the fact all rules and conditions are out in the open with travel websites. “Traditional agents are reluctant to refund when you want to make changes, while the online ones make it clear at the very beginning about the refund policy,” Hong Kong-based freelance journalist Chow Chung-wah says. She books travel products online at least once a month.

But for 20-something Pavan Shamdasani, it’s about spontaneity. “You just book and go in the span of 10 minutes – which you can’t really do with an agent,” he says. “I hate planning in advance and worrying for weeks about a trip – it completely ruins the idea of a vacation. That, and the prices are starting to equal out in comparison.”

Shamdasani’s favourite travel website is Hipmunk.com, which features a simple interface and allows you to search for up to three legs at a time. Options can be

In achieving that speed, users have also started to take short-cuts in the messages that they send

listed according to many different criteria, including “agony”. If you are willing to endure a really early flight, make an extra stopover and fly any airline, just look at the top of the “agony” list.

Competition between travel websites is also heating up. Their online content is increasingly rich, and they include lifestyle advice such as ideal beach vacations, where to enjoy the best food and wine and, of course, reviews from fellow travellers. Agencies such as Travelocity.com offer users increasing flexibility when conducting a search. You used to be able to view flight options for only three days either side of your specified departure date, but now the limit is up to 10 days.

All of which is in addition to the fact that online agents are highly accessible and open for business 24 hours a day, seven days a week – a big draw for today’s city dweller, whose attention span is rapidly shortening.

Amadeus, the leading transaction processor for the global travel and tourism industry, reports that in 2009, 39 percent of outbound trips in European travel were booked online, versus 24 percent

using face-to-face agents. This number is expected to rise to 64 percent by 2015.

Embracing the future

Are the days of traditional travel agents numbered? Will they, like multilayered paper plane tickets, become a thing of the past?

“Traditional travel agents still play an important role in Asian markets, especially in highly centralised cities like Hong Kong and Singapore, where travellers can easily access these travel agents as compared to the US,” says Jason Wong, director and general manager of Hong Thai Travel Services, one of Hong Kong’s oldest names in the business. “Moreover, Asian travellers value travel agents as they need face-to-face contact, more tailor-made services and professional opinions from their travel consultants.”

David Brett, president of Amadeus Asia Pacific, also thinks that online services cannot totally replace human travel agents, at least not yet. “There are so many online sites and you end up spending far too much time going through these options. I think it gets to a point where you need someone to help manage all this,” he says, adding that the role travel agents need to play is “expert”, one who not only knows where to get information and how to access it, but also tells customers what is believable and what isn’t. “The role of an expert is ex- ▶

GOING TO EXTREMES

Travel websites and online booking systems by hotels and airlines allow people to be spontaneous and flexible with travel, but is that enough? Apparently not, according to a study by Amadeus, a transaction processor for the global travel and tourism industry. Research conducted for the company’s leisure travel technology business has revealed that 70 percent of people planning to take a vacation do not have a firm idea of where they want to go when they start looking. With most of the online booking systems, you still need to decide the destination and date of your trip before searching.

But a new technology is available to allow travellers to skip that thinking process – all they need is the urge to travel. It is called Affinity Shopper and is currently used by Lufthansa and Croatian Airlines.

“You can name a budget, for example, of US\$200 and ask ‘Where can I go?’ The search shows you all the places and sometimes even special offers you’ve never thought of,” David Brett of Amadeus says.

Amadeus is the technology provider behind many major airlines’ websites that allow customers to conduct online booking and itinerary management, including that of Cathay Pacific. But this “extreme search” option, as Brett calls it, is expected to give travellers a whole new level of control.

Affinity Shopper is available on the Germany, UK and US portals of Lufthansa and is called Lufthansa Trip Finder (pictured). Once inside, you can choose your budget with the sliding dial and type in the name of the ci-



ty you intend to depart from, and pointers will appear on the map indicating choices available to you. You can narrow down the options by ticking boxes such as “Beach”, “Diving”, “Golf”, “Gourmet”, “Outdoor”, “Historical sites”, “Cities”, “Museums” and “Shopping”. Once you have spotted what appeals to you, just click on the pointer and you will be led to more details and the booking system.

According to Amadeus, the technology will continue to evolve to offer more capabilities.

tremely important; I think we need to see more management, not just provision of information.”

But traditional agents do need to adapt to a changing world in order to remain competitive. “One thing the agent has to do is embrace the internet,” adds Brett. “A few years ago people would walk into an agency and ask directly, ‘I want to do so and so.’ These days, most will already have investigated it on the internet. That means the agent must be aware that customers will come in with a certain amount of knowledge. But this doesn’t mean they become less valuable. The difference is the customers already have a more focused idea and the agent can use that information to provide a service.”

Lily Agony, general manager at Farrington American Express Travel Services, says: “Traditional travel agents will become a thing of the past only if they do not embrace change and innovation. If they do, for instance, combine technology with their experience, knowledge and good service standards, it will definitely enhance their competitiveness in the market place.”

Hong Thai was one of the first traditional agents to develop an online booking engine for air tickets and hotels in 2007, and is working on extending the online service to group tour bookings as well. Its online site even offers a live chat feature where visitors can have an online conversation with a travel consultant.

Farrington American Express Travel and Travel Expert have, too, set up their own websites with an online booking system for customers to book “free and easy” products. Other agencies, such as Cadogan, which has been in the travel business for 60 years, set themselves apart from general online agents by specialising in niche sectors of travel and offering clients tailor-made luxury holidays. Its website has an online booking tool featuring packages and special offers for trips to 23 locations.

The personal touch

While travel agencies may be branching out, they are still firmly rooted in providing personalised service. Traditional shopfronts will not be completely abolished simply because there are certain aspects of the business that online agents cannot offer or match. “Traditional travel agents provide personalised or cus-

PUNCH IT IN

You would have thought that by now most online travel agents would have mobile sites for people to access with their smart phones, but Orbitz and Voyages-sncf.com are the only two larger ones that do. However, things are set to change very soon.

Expedia announced at the end of last year that it has acquired Mobiata, the creator of popular mobile travel application FlightTrack, alongside others such as TripDeck, HotelPal, FlightBoard and FareCompare. FlightTrack lets users check flight status, access information about delays or rescheduling, locate the flight’s gate and see real-time tracking maps of flights, and has proven to be a real hit – it has been a best-selling iPhone travel app in the App Store.

Expedia states that this acquisition represents the company’s “most significant investment to date in addressing the mobile travel market”. At the time of the announcement, Expedia was only seeing 4 percent of its traffic coming from mobile browsers or apps – not surprising given how difficult it is to use a full site with a smart phone. When mobile-friendly capabilities have been developed, the number should see a surge.

Some companies are already reaping benefits. Wotif.com, a well-established travel website in Australia and New Zealand that sells deals up to six months in advance across 57 countries, is one of them. Through mobile.wotif.com, smart-phone users can access a range of offers that cover a wide budget spectrum, and book a stay with instant confirmation. Although only a small percentage of the company’s business comes through mobile browsers, the use of the site saw a five-fold increase from October 2009 to the end of 2010, indicating a potential for further growth.

According to Matthew Varley, the company’s executive general manager of Asia, the site stays competitive by keeping a low commission rate and working closely with hotel partners to come up with special deals.

Last year, Apple filed a patent for a travel app that not only books flights, hotels and car reservations but also works as an electronic ticket, boarding pass and even passport. On arrival, it helps users find their RFID-tagged luggage. It is unclear when this application will become commercially available, but one thing is for sure, it will not be the only thing travellers can look forward to.

tomised service, customer care and crisis management,” says Agony.

Traditional agents are also the go-to medium for complicated travel plans. For example, if you are trying to arrange an around-the-world trip or are planning to travel to countries where getting a visa is far from simple, consulting a traditional travel agent would be a good idea.

As there is greater face-to-face contact, traditional agents can tailor your trip according to your needs and budget and are usually more reliable when it comes to special requests as compared to online agents. Some online booking engines may not provide smaller budget airline options like JetBlue or Jeju Air. Traditional agents can personalise your trip in a variety of ways, from handling macro details such as arranging affordable flights and accommodation, providing insights and planning your itinerary, to smaller details such as finding out how far away the train station or air-

Traditional travel agents will become a thing of the past only if they do not embrace change and innovation

port is from your hotel, or arranging vegetarian meals on flights.

“It’s clearly a trend that people will continue to use online booking tools,” David Brett says. “But it does not suit everybody or all itineraries. For simple transactions, people will do it themselves. But the way in which people travel is maturing, and there is always the opportunity for an expert to come in to gather more information. Business travellers have needs and requirements, too; I travel three weeks out of four and I want my agent to know me and what I want.”

It seems the personal touch is still a valuable commodity. ■



Travel Miniatures

It's the time for summer trips, but also for business trips. However, packing your cosmetics can be a real nuisance. That's why, it's worth turning to cosmetic travel sets which have been prepared especially for this occasion.

You can, for example, visit one of the numerous health & beauty stores of Rossmann chain (there are over 600 in Poland, so it's not difficult to find them). The section with travel-size products is really huge and it's mostly aimed at those who are about to go away on their holiday and who value every single inch of space in their suitcase, but don't want to get rid of the cosmetics they use on daily basis. The several shelves are packed with various cosmetics, which you can combine to make your own travel amenity kit. The complexity, or rather the extent of the problem, can be seen perfectly, when you gather all the necessary cosmetics you intend to take with you on your journey. It turns out then, that they occupy much space, and, what's more, they weigh quite a bit.

AIRPORT SURPRISES

Travel-size cosmetics are also an excellent option for business people. If you travel light and take with you only your carry-on luggage with all your cosmetics, you'd better be set up for unpleasant surprises. This is because strict air regulations don't allow for taking on board cosmetics in containers which exceed 100 millilitres. Suddenly, an inconspicuous-looking container of shaving

foam or gel becomes a dangerous tool and must be dumped into a special container, although it has never been used before. Never mind, you can always buy a new can of shaving foam at your destination point. Of course, border guards at the airport will take this one as well, on your way back home. The same thing goes with deodorants, creams, conditioners, shampoos – in other words, with almost everything we need.

SMALL IS... PRACTICAL

Rossmann has for many years prepared travel size cosmetics whose dimensions make them ideal to take with us on holiday or on a business trip. Every season Rossmann launches some novelties to make the offer even larger. The cosmetics for men include shaving foam, shampoos and conditioners, while the offer for ladies comprises a wide range of products including nail removers, bath gels, hair conditioners, and shampoos.

The newest products on Rossmann's offer include: Prokudent – gentle gum care mouth rinse, which is especially useful on long trips when it's barely possible to brush your teeth; Isana set – shower gel (it has delicate floral smell and contains extracts of silk thank to which the skin becomes smooth and nourished),



Rossmann shops have separate sections with miniature products

hair shampoo (with vitamin B3 and wheat protein from) and conditioner (for dry and damaged hair – apricot kernel oil and panthenol used in the conditioner make your hair nourished and smooth); Sun Ozon – waterproof lotion with UVA and UVB filters, providing optimum protection against the sun; Fusswohl – foot lotion with menthol and eucalyptus. After a long journey, the lotion effectively eliminates any swelling; Domol – stain remover stick which can save your clothes in an emergency situation. The product removes fresh stains from coffee, lemonade, fruit juice, yoghurt, ink, grease or oil. At the same time, it doesn't fade colours and fabrics, and it can be used on all types of surfaces.

The list of travel-size products that you can take with you on holiday or on a business trip is really long. One thing is for sure: it's definitely worth visiting a Rossmann store. ■

Olga Chelchowska

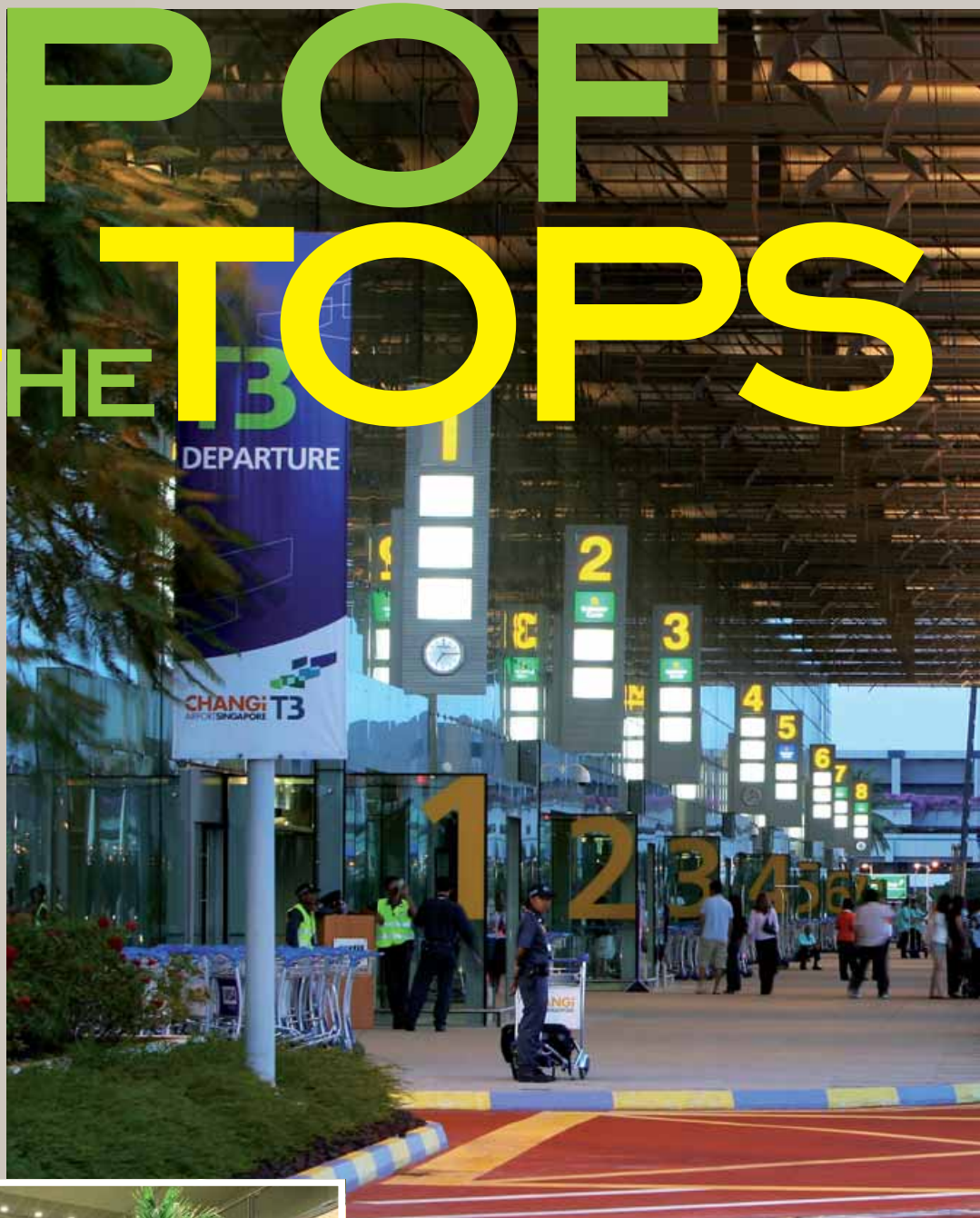
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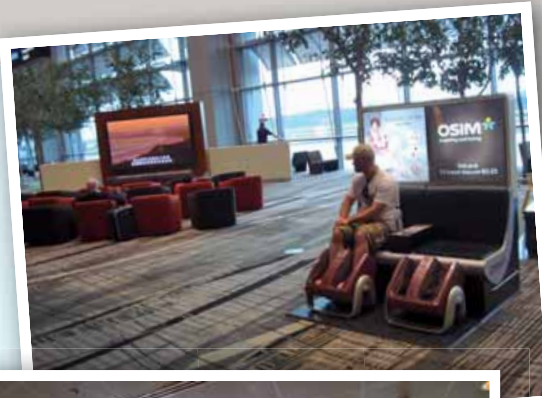
When you look at the results of any airport ranking, you can be sure that somewhere at the top you will always see Changi. For thirty years of its existence the airport in Singapore has become a role model. So far, unattainable.

Anyone who has ever had the opportunity to visit the airport in Singapore, must admit one thing: this place is simply different. Changi stands out regarding virtually everything – from efficient and extremely courteous service, through a wide range of services for business guests, to ideas on how to make passengers enjoy the time spent at the airport. Can you think of any other airport with original decor, gardens, and even a special room with tropical butterflies? Nearly 400 awards in different rankings are definitely not undeserved – since 1988 our magazine has been regularly awarding the Singapore airport. But awards aren't everything. Changi is just nice and friendly place.



THREE DECADES OF EXPANSION

When in the mid-70s a decision was made to build a new airport in Singapore, nobody expected that the place would become the 6th airport in the world in terms of number of passengers. Even if you briefly trace the history of Changi, you will see that the last 30 years were the time of its enormous success. The construction work began in 1975, and in 1981 first passengers appeared in Terminal 1. Five years later, Singapore served a 10 million passenger. Also that year, the work on the expansion port began. Terminal 2 opened



its doors in 1991. In the mid-90s Terminal 1 was thoroughly refurbished at the cost S\$170 million. Another S\$ 330 million were spent to expand Terminal 2. In later years, the airport was further expanded. Some of the milestones in the history of Changi were: opening of the Changi Airport Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) station (\$850 million), launching Budget Terminal for low cost carriers, and opening Terminal 3 in 2008. Recent years have been marked with further investments, such as the installation of a cutting edge system for detecting foreign objects on run-

ways, S\$500 million was spent for further expansion of Terminal 1 while other huge sums were invested to increase the capacity of the Budget Terminal from 2.7 million to 7 million passengers annually. In December 2009, the airport established a new record, serving 140,000 passengers in one day. Of course, for the last three decades Changi has also expanded its cargo infrastructure as well as facilities devoted for private aviation which is served in a separate terminal, called JetQuay.

Today, Singapore's port is a host to 100 airlines which offer flights to 200 cities

The number of passengers that Changi handles each year is 8 times bigger than the number of Singaporeans

in 60 countries across the world. Changi handles 42 million passengers a year, which is 8 times more than the number of residents of the city.

IN THE WORLD OF GARDENS

The large terminals of the airport in Singapore are always impeccably clean. The entire place is filled with lush greenery which perfectly harmonizes with various sculptures set in various areas. An impressive 5-storey high vertical garden called the "Green Wall" spans 300 metres across the main hall of Terminal 3.

Another brilliant idea was the Butterfly Garden, which is also located in Terminal 3. It stretches over 330 sq m on two floors and is a refuge for over 1,000 butterflies (the garden also features a 6-meter high waterfall).

Those aren't the only gardens at Changi airport. The Cactus Garden presents the most interesting species of this plant from Africa and both Americas. In the Garden of Ferns at Terminal 2, you will see huge tree ferns, which is probably a survivor of the dinosaur era and are known to live for more than 400 years. The Orchid Garden gives us the opportunity to learn more about these beautiful and colourful flowers. The Garden of Sunflowers is a flower garden by day and a light-themed garden by night. Also the Budget Terminal has its own tropical garden. According to the plans for the airport's expansion, Terminal 1 will change into something called Tropical City, with a completely redesigned interior. This will have happened by 2014.

A notable highlight is the large number of places where you can relax – there are a number of so-called Free Rest Areas, where you can comfortably lie down on specially-designed snooze chairs and just doze off! Passengers staying at the Ambassador Transit Hotel may use the pool and jacuzzi for free. Otherwise, a small fee of \$13.91 is charged to non-residents for the use of the swimming pool and jacuzzi, including the use of



the shower facilities, a towel and a complimentary non-alcoholic drink from the bar. Of course, there's also a spa which offers a whole lot of relaxing treatments. Talking about relaxation, the Singapore airport also has a fitness centre, several hair salons, and two bars with live acoustic music.

WORK AND RELAX

Just as with every other type of service, Changi Airport has a lot to offer for busi-

ness passengers. Those who fly business or first class, can use SATS lounge (Singapore Airport Terminal Services) if their airline is on the list of carriers whose passengers have access to the lounge. Passengers get to enjoy here the luxurious facilities, which include lounge seating, light refreshments, television and a variety of newspapers and periodicals. Of course, there are more business lounges at the airport, but they are operated mostly by individual airlines.

There are also three business centres open 24/7 where you can send faxes, use photocopiers, as well as hold a meeting or a mini-conference. They are located in each of the three terminals. Staying connected is easy at Changi Airport, with many free and paid options available at all our Terminals. If you have a laptop, simply plug in to numerous dial-up PC Connection or Ethernet LAN points for free access. You can also use Free Internet Corners for a quick internet session. However, faster Internet connections are charged.





or Cultural Tour. Registration is based on first-come-first-serve basis.

A CITY WITHIN A CITY

The airport in Singapore is also a huge shopping and entertainment centre. However, here the word “entertainment” has a completely different dimension in comparison to other airports. Changi offers a whole lot of entertainment. The 3D Xperience Zone features three-dimensional games and movies. The Changi Aviation Gallery located at Changi Airport’s Terminal 2 and Terminal 3 provides aviation enthusiasts and members of the public with interesting insights into Changi’s ground operations and the eventful history of aviation in Singapore. The Entertainment Deck is multi-media entertainment centre with something to thrill everyone: there’s a dedicated area for music lovers to spin and scratch songs into unique mixes, newly upgraded Movie Theatre with its cosy seats and latest picture projection and sound technology, as well as game consoles with exciting games. You can also take a ride on The Slide@T3, the world’s tallest slide in an airport. Standing at a height of 12 metres high or four storeys tall, shriek your way down the slide while reaching top speeds of up to 6 metres per second! The airport also features numerous children’s playgrounds, amusement arcades, and all sorts of organized activities.

Another interesting service, which is available at Changi, is the access to world financial news from cable channels like BBC World, CNBC, Channel News Asia and CNN news service. There are four lounges with plasma TVs located in Terminals 2 and 3 where you can catch up on the latest stock and equities information provided by Bridge Information Systems and Reuters. At Changi you can make hotel reservations at any Singapore Visitors Centre, or Hotel Reservation Counters at the arrivals level. A deposit of \$10 per reservation, deductible from the hotel bill at the end of stay, is payable. You can also use the services of a comfortable hotel located in the airport’s transit zone – a single room costs S\$69.

If you feel like visiting the city, it’s a good idea to go to one of many Information and Customer Service Counters. If you have at least 5 hours to spare before your connecting flight, you can register for a 2 hour sightseeing tour of Singapore, with a choice of a Colonial Tour

Not surprisingly, the Singapore airport is packed with various stores and restaurants to cater for all tastes. Over 40,000 sq m of retail space may make your head spin, especially if you love shopping. It’s impossible to even list here all the categories of stores, because in Singapore you can buy just about anything. The culinary offer is similarly impressive. There are cafes, fast food restaurants, bistros and fancy restaurants, offering a cornucopia of flavours. No need to move from Changi to find out about the Asian cuisine and taste flavours from many countries around the world.

You could write books about the airport in Singapore. It’s one of few airports which is widely praised by passengers from various parts of the world. It is also one of few places which is the closest to the ideal pursued by airports around the world – to create a mini city with entertainment centres, which would attract not only passengers, but also those who seek entertainment and relaxation. Changi seems to be a model to copy from. ■

Tomasz Malkowski



There's a lot to love about hotels – but when they get it wrong, a hell of a lot to loathe too. We reveal the things that irk us

101 things we hate about hotels

We hate hotels when...

- 1** The doormen would rather chat among themselves than greet you.
- 2** There's a long queue at reception for check-in...
- 3** And an even longer one for check-out, when you have a plane to catch...
- 4** And the reception staff don't think it sensible to fast-track you past the 50-strong crew of conference delegates ahead of you...
- 5** And when you finally reach the front, they are stropky.
- 6** You've arrived in the evening but your room's not ready...
- 7** Or just before the official check-in time but they can't accommodate you.
- 8** The electronic room key doesn't work first time, or at all, so you have to traipse back downstairs to get it activated.
- 9** Once inside, you quickly discover that the room bears no resemblance to the pictures on the website...

10 And you can't swing a kitten, let alone a cat...

11 And everything is beige, or fussy pink with velvet lampshades that attract dust.

12 You've booked a non-smoking room but discover it's a smoking one that's been doused with air freshener.

13 Turning on your laptop, you discover you need to go back down to reception to get a scratch card to access the wifi...

14 And then you have to pay through the nose for it...

15 And having paid for it in the room, you find you need to pay another provider to use it in the meeting rooms and lobby...

16 And every time your computer goes to sleep, you have to log back on.



17 There's only wired internet access but no cable is provided.

18 It takes half an hour for your bags to make it up to the room, and then the bell boy wants a tip, having previously refused to take no for an answer when you said you wanted to carry your bag yourself.

19 No one answers the telephone at room service, housekeeping or reception...

20 And after finally getting through, the food arrives cold, and you have to stand around looking busy while the room service guy slowly lays out the items.

21 What is really meant by "24-hour room service" is a stale sandwich after 11pm...

22 Which will cost double the advertised cost once you've added on all the charges to deliver it.

23 You lie back on the bed, turn on the TV and find the previous occupant's movie choice is still there, and it is a porn movie.

24 Style is put before function, so it all looks nice but nothing works logically...

25 And all the furniture has hard corners that you bang into every time you get up in the middle of the night.

26 The curtains don't keep out the light.

27 The walls don't keep out the noise.

28 The bed is so soft that you disappear into the middle...

29 Or is a "double" composed of two singles...

30 Dressed with nasty, bouncy foam pillows, polyester bedding, scratchy blankets and a plastic undersheet...

31 And the duvet or top sheet is so tightly folded over the corners of the mattress that when you try to pull it out, you accidentally punch your own face.

32 The coat hangers are chained to the rail.

33 The room doesn't have enough light (what are they trying to hide?).

34 There is no laptop safe, or the laptop safe is too small for a laptop.

35 The chair is uncomfortable and not set to the same height as the desk...

36 Or there is no desk at all, only a tiny table.

37 There are no tea- and coffee-making facilities in the room, as they want to fleece you for it via room service.

38 You have to call down for an iron and ironing board...

39 And when it arrives, the iron is attached to the board and doesn't have a steam setting, so you still can't get the creases out of your clothes.

40 The key card powers the room so that the air con turns off whenever you leave...

41 And since your laptop and iPod were being charged by the same power, you return to find they have flat batteries...

42 Yet every time you come back to the room, the TV is on, very loudly, showing the corporate video.

43 The phone flashes that you have a message but you can't work out how to pick it up...

44 And it costs the GDP of a small nation to make a call.

45 Someone knocks on the door while you're naked, and even after you've shouted "In a minute", they walk straight in.

46 The staff ring to tell you they'd like to clean the room when your privacy light is on.



47 You return to the room in the middle of the day to find the maid hasn't been, or has tidied so overzealously that you can't find your shoes.

48 You leave out some laundry and it still hasn't been returned three days later.

49 The air conditioning is noisy but too complicated to work out how to switch off...

50 Or it is set by reception and is too hot or cold...

51 And you can't open the windows to let some proper air in.

52 There is a stereo provided but no iPod dock...

53 And there are 100 TV channels but only one in English, and you have to scroll through all the others to get to it.

54 The hotel information can only be accessed via the TV and it takes an age to go through the ridiculously complicated menus.

55 The headboard in the neighbouring room is back to back with yours, and your neighbours are an amorous couple.

56 The windows sound like they are going to blow in when you are on a high floor.

57 There's no complimentary bottle of water.

58 The robe is older than you, and starched like cardboard.

59 You get into bed at night and have to get back up to turn all

the lights off, then go all around the room flicking switches.

60 In the middle of the night, the phone rings, but there's no one there...

61 Then the fire alarm goes off, and stops just as you step out into the corridor.

62 The lift pings every few minutes all night.

63 The minibar hums all night, doesn't keep anything cold and charges you for things you never had (and let's not even mention the price).

64 The red power light on the TV illuminates the whole room...

65 As does the display on the clock radio...

66 And the smoke alarm located directly above the bed, except it flashes.

67 The clock is located on the far side of the room, and was set to go off at 4am by the previous occupant.

68 The wake-up call you've requested doesn't come.

69 The hot water is only tepid at best.



70 There's no plug in the bath, or when you run one, the hair of the previous occupant rises to the surface.

71 The bath has no showerhead, so you have to transfer to the shower to wash your hair...

72 To find they've given you a mini-bottle of shampoo but no conditioner...

73 And having used only half the bottle, they replace it the next day, despite declaring themselves to be a "green" hotel.

74 The shower is impossible to work out and, when you've got it started, the water either comes out in a useless trickle or floods the bathroom.

75 The shower curtain smells of mildew.

76 You are supplied with every toiletry you could ever feasibly need—but never toothpaste.

77 The bathroom mirror steams up whenever you turn on the hot tap.

78 A note says to hang up your towel to save on washing, but there are no hooks.

79 The towels won't wrap around your head, let alone your backside.

80 The soap has a cellophane wrapper you can't remove.

81 There is no mirror for shaving or doing your make-up, and no full-length mirror anywhere in the room.

82 The hairdryer is stuck to the bathroom wall and only works when you hold the button down, offering the blast power of a child's toy.



83 There is no socket next to the dressing table or mirror to plug your own in...

84 Or there is only one free socket in the whole room, and it's so close to the floor you can't get the plug into it.

85 The lift is slow in coming, then stops on every floor on the way down, but no one gets in.

86 The business centre doesn't operate 24 hours, and has only one computer, which is always taken...

87 And when you finally get on to it, you are charged an extortionate rate to print a single sheet of paper.

88 The gym is a box with one cycling machine and no air conditioning or ventilation.

89 The so-called "spa" complex consists of one treatment room and a sauna.

90 The "lap" pool is a lap pool for midgets.

91 There are no changing facilities so you have to do the walk of shame back to your room in your running gear, red-faced and still sweating.

92 The corridors are never-ending and so dark you can barely make your way down them.

93 There is hardly any signage in the hotel so you end up walking around in circles.

94 You only want to grab toast and tea but they charge you for a whole continental breakfast...

95 Or there's only dregs left at the buffet, even though it's due to go on for another half-hour.

96 At dinner, the staff pounce on you as soon as you sit down, then don't come back at all when you ask for a few more minutes to look at the menu, which consists solely of bland "international" dishes.

97 The only thing to eat in the executive lounge are some dodgy-looking hors d'oeuvres that have been sitting there all day.

98 The meeting rooms are drab and have no daylight.

99 You are offered a choice of currencies in which to pay your bill, or are automatically charged in your local currency.

100 You book a cab to take you to the airport but find a pricey limo waiting instead

101 Your points aren't credited to your loyalty programme account. ■



Wymagający Najemcy – Najlepsze Usługi Telekomunikacyjne dla Biznesu

- Telefonia ISDN oraz VoIP
- Szerokopasmowy Internet
- Infrastruktura teleinformatyczna
- Systemy telekomunikacyjne
- IT Outsourcing

- Kompleksowość (usługi + infrastruktura + sprzęt)
- 365/7/24 – dyspozycyjni zawsze i o każdej porze
- Dedykowany opiekun dla każdego Klienta
- Gwarantowana jakość i dostępność usług
- Wieloletnie doświadczenie w obsłudze najbardziej wymagających klientów biznesowych
- Obsługa wiodących ośrodków biznesowych
- Najszybszy czas realizacji projektów telekomunikacyjnych na rynku
- Nowoczesna i stabilna sieć teleinformatyczna
- Elastyczne podejście do indywidualnych potrzeb Klienta
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Welcome To The Club



There is no doubt that the desire to be the best has become the target of many people. However, the best ones also require the highest quality and the service which best suits their needs and expectations. That is why, Air France and KLM airlines have aimed their joint offer at such demanding customers.

VIP Sky Club is a prestigious package of exclusive services, facilities and benefits aimed at the best customers of Air France and KLM. This doesn't mean, however, that the privileges are available only for those who have been using the services of both carriers for months, hoping for a bonus. It's just enough to take only one round trip in First or Business Class on intercontinental route with one of the carriers. This automatically entitles you to receive a gold card in the Flying Blue loyalty programme and the membership in the VIP Sky Club. The offer is addressed to all passengers using the services of the AF/KLM, so of course also for the customers travelling from Poland.

A gold business A GOLD BUSINESS

Gold Card provides the holder with many additional privileges. These are: free access to business lounges at all airports in the world, regardless of the class in which you currently travel; an option to take on board an extra item of baggage, weighing a maximum of 23 kg; separate check-in desks to make sure the procedure is quick and painless; priority boarding and fast tracking of baggage after landing; a high priority on standby lists; priority seating on board to ensure as much comfort as possible – with Air France you may choose Seat Plus option for free, while with KLM you receive a 50% discount on the price of a seat in the Economy



Comfort zone and an additional 75 percent bonus miles for each flight – in this way, the gold card owner is entitled much earlier to reward tickets for earned miles.

Polish members of VIP Sky Club also receive a welcome PLN 400 discount coupon. You can pay with it for any intercontinental flight in La Première or Business classes. Another gift is the option to spend one night, before or after the travel in a luxury hotel in Warsaw, including breakfast and transfers to/from the airport. In fact, each passenger of Air France / KLM, travelling in first or business class on transcontinental routes, is entitled in Warsaw to a limousine which will take him to the Okęcie airport, or take home after his arrival in Warsaw.

The right class THE RIGHT CLASS

The first class of Air France is called La Première. For anyone who experiences it for the first time, it will actually be “a premiere” of exceptional travel experience in new, different, and unique conditions. The conditions which might be expected by the most demanding passengers, who are aware of their needs. Of course this offer is, to a large extent, aimed at business people for whom air travel is a substantial part of their professional life. At the modern Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport they can use a special La Première Lounge, which is dedicated exclusively for first-class passengers.

In addition to the luxurious, tranquil, and relaxing working environment, you can enjoy there the delicacies created by top chefs and take advantage of treatment provided by Biologique Recherche beauty salon. For the smoothest boarding possible, a La Première staff member accompanies you directly to your aircraft in an individual vehicle. Once on board, you are introduced to the crew.

The cabin is designed as a haven of well-being, combining aesthetics and technology. The cabin comprises between 4 and 9 gently curved seats in elegant hues. The meal service is the art of hosting à la française. Enjoy a unique culinary experience that embodies pleasure and elegance. Currently, La Première is available for Air France flights to 30 cities on 4 continents, including to Hong Kong, New York, Johannesburg, Buenos Aires, Bombay and Dubai.

Also, the passengers travelling in business class can take advantage of many interesting amenities. Some of them include priority handling at airports, both before and after the flight. There’s also a special, separate cabin with excellent service, cuisine and spirits, comfortable seats which can be reclined into a flat bed, 15-inch TV screens, personal entertainment system and access to the global network of business lounges worldwide.

If you are interested in VIP Sky Club programme in Poland, for more information call 22 55 66 410. ●



Sheraton Hotel Spa in Sopot welcomes to the world of ultimate relaxation

Situated next to the beach of the Baltic Sea, Sheraton Sopot Hotel is facing the longest pier in Europe. Its luxurious Spa truly is a unique place offering a holistic approach to relaxation. A full range of beauty treatments, yoga classes and training programmes designed by the international fitness instructors are just some of the attractions awaiting you at Sheraton Sopot Spa.



Both business and family travellers who appreciate spas and luxury will find it impossible not to fall in love with Sheraton Sopot Spa – what makes this place unique is its architecture and a holistic approach to relaxation. The spa's treatments not only pamper your body, but also nurture your mind and soul. In Sopot you will restore your balance and tap into your eternal store of energy, no matter if you're travelling on business or leisure. Our staff will not only guide you through the treatments and exercises to suit your individual needs, but it will also educate you on the importance on leading a healthy lifestyle.

Sheraton Sopot Spa offers one of the best and most effective products and treatments designed to enhance your beauty and uplift your spirit. The products of the two cosmetic lines used at the spa, Anne Semonin and Dermalogica, guarantee visible results in a short period of time.

The professional therapists apply their expertise to ensure that the treatments are tailored to your needs, depending on the type of your skin. To complement your stay, the spa also offers a host of other services, like hairdressing salon and the Nail Bar by OPI.

The professionals of Sheraton Sopot Spa place strong emphasis on a healthy lifestyle, hence the importance of physical exercise. The spa is in a strategic partnership with Core Performance, which has designed health and fitness programmes in order to ensure long-lasting effects and fully meet the demands of the business travellers with time constraints and the rest of the guests.

Sheraton Fitness Programmed by Core Performance is designed with the travellers needs in mind and guarantees top quality services. For the comfort of the guests, there is a gymnasium open around the clock with a state-of-the-art equipment and an extensive Cardio area.

Furthermore, the club also offers Sheraton's Gym in a Bag available for those of guests who prefer to work out in the privacy of their hotel room.

Created in conjunction with a dietitian, the menu of the hotel restaurant gives plenty of healthy options in response to the needs of the gym participants.

FOUR MAXIMS

Depending on the individual needs and time constraints, Sheraton Fitness Programmed by Core Performance offers three kinds of training sessions: to regenerate (30min.), boost your power (45min.) or a total body power training (60min.). Performance methodology focuses on four maxims which help you establish a healthy lifestyle well beyond your stay. "Prepare for it" – when preparing for training, the attitude and mindset are of vital importance as the awareness and intentions motivate, thus helping to achieve the results you are looking for. An essential part of any exercise is a warm-up, the aim of which is to get your whole body prepared for work. "Fuel for it" – proper nutrition is essential not only in training, but also in life in general. Our dietary habits affect our wellbeing, health and physical fitness. If the training is designed to help you lose some weight, a professional dietician should create an individual nutrition plan that would reflect your goals. "Train for it" – movement is the key element of the whole programme. However, the emphasis is placed not only on regular exercise but, above all, on being active throughout the whole day. For the daily commute use your bike instead of driving a car, and spend your free time playing volleyball on a beach or taking a walk with your loved ones.

Sheraton Hotel Spa offers a personalised training programme, which is extremely popular among the visitors. Each guest is provided with an individual trainer, who designs a training programme that suits you, motivates you to exercise,

corrects your mistakes and offers nutritional guidance. Moreover, group training sessions at the Activity Studio leave the guests full of happiness and energy. The spa offers a host of classes, including Yoga, Pilates, Stretching, Body Art, Boxing for men and Latin solo dance workshops. The last maxim, "Rest for it", concerns a truly important element, namely regeneration. There is a reason why specialists advise to exercise every other day, rather than every day, as you should give your body time to rest and regenerate. Sheraton Hotel Spa provides you with a perfect place where you can soothe your tense muscles – "the Spa Experience" offers swimming pool or hydrotherapy pool with Sopot brine inspired by the Roman tradition, Hamam (low steam), Finnish sauna, brine bath, ice fountain, sensual rain showers and tepidarium with heated loungers.

The massages and other relaxation techniques helps to soothe tense muscles and induce relaxation. The spa offers a wide selection of massage treatments, including classic, oriental, therapeutic, relaxation and sports massages. For ultimate indulgence, try Sheraton Signature Massage with aromatherapy oils which comprises of movements designed by the best therapists at Sheraton Hotel Sopot Spa – the massage involves a series of gentle and relaxing strokes, and is carried out on the whole body to improve your well-being.

The Spa Lounge and Library are truly unique – here you can relax in your robe, sipping herbal tea or eating light organic food. The Spa Lounge provides you with the opportunity to make new acquaintances or cultivate those already made, and all that is accompanied by a stunning sea view. In the Spa Lounge area you can participate in a wide variety of meetings, lectures and workshops concerning nutrition, public relations, aesthetic medicine and other issues that modern society can relate to. ■

Marta Siekierska

Summer with *Family & NOVOTEL* – holidays for families with children



It's a real challenge to arrange a nice holiday with children. Even more so, because the youngest tourists are very demanding – especially when it comes to attractions. What can we do to make sure that our kids won't be bored? A holiday stay in one of 11 Novotel hotels located in Poland seems to be a perfect solution for a successful family holiday. Children can expect a whole lot of surprises connected with the characters of the latest Disney/Pixar production, called „Cars 2”, but adults will also appreciate the programme, as no charge is made for children's stay and breakfast.

The offer is especially popular this season, when the majority of Polish people are going on holidays in the country, and looking for original ways of spending time with their children. www.novotel.com **Family&Novotel** is an integrated leisure programme. On arrival, the youngest guests are greeted with a welcome gift, and with every step they discover a whole new way of spending their free time. At the same time, parents can expect a comfortable stay and top quality service. Novotel hotels are therefore a perfect place for both a long stay by the Polish coast, as well as spending a holiday weekend. With the programme you and your children can visit such cities as: Warsaw, Gdańsk, Katowice, Cracow, Poznań, Szczecin and Wrocław. Many of the hotels have beautiful gardens and swimming pools where you can relax with your whole family.

PACKAGES FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

Some Novotel hotels have prepared packages for families with children. Novotel Gdańsk Marina, situated a few metres from the beach, near the pier in Sopot invites you for “Holidays at the Baltic Sea with grandchildren” and “Family Holidays by the Baltic Sea” In addition to the usual services provided in “Family & Novotel”, programme, the guests can also expect discounts in Sopot's aquapark and Helios cinema in Gdańsk. “Active weekend on Malta” – a package by Novotel Poznań Malta hotel – is in turn an opportunity to explore the capital city of the Greater Poland together with your kids. Dinghy sailing, bicycle safari in zoo, roller skating paths and rental points, and a climbing frame – thanks to these attractions

boredom will never take the best of you or your family.

In Family& Novotel programme two children under 16 years of age can expect free accommodation and breakfast, provided they share a room with their parents. However, if you prefer to stay on your own – you will get a 50% discount on the room for your children. Baby accessories, such as bottle heaters, cribs, high chairs and baby change tables are also available free of charge. Additional facilities include a possibility to check out until 5.00 pm on Sunday.

XBOX 360 AND OTHER GAMES FOR TEENAGERS

Teenagers will probably be glad to know, that the hotel is equipped with Xbox 360 gaming consoles. They are to be found in the lobby, built in comfortable game terminals which perfectly match the hotel interiors. They are popular not only with little children. Teenagers or adults can also play, e. g. car racing or football games in the virtual world or other games based on Disney films. Each Novotel hotel comes with specially arranged modern and colourful playgrounds for children. These are located in the hotel lobby and have been furnished with functional furniture and educational toys. Novotel brand cooperates with Kaplan, a company producing building blocks, so children can create here various constructions and develop their imagination.

In the summer season young guests will be pleased to discover that many attractions and gifts refer to “Cars 2” – the latest production by Disney / Pixar because Novotel collaborates with Disney Company worldwide. The playgrounds have been equipped with special car racing tracks, so children can organize real car racing competition on their own.

HEALTHY SNACKS BY GUSTIN

The Family & Novotel cares about children's meals. There is a special menu for children including their favourite foods, prepared in line with the principles of healthy eating. A toy animal named Gustino encourages kids to choose something from the menu, and is also a symbol of the highest quality of the food. Waiting for a meal can also be a great fun, as the youngest guests, even in the hotel restaurant, are always taken care of. While waiting they are given



Thanks to the cooperation of Novotel with Disney the summer holiday will be filled with attractions related to “Cars 2” movie.

picture charts and crayons to play with. Novotel provides families with everything they need to make them feel comfortable. Modern, spacious and friendly bedrooms are designed in such a way to make both parents and children feel nice. The bedrooms are equipped with a double bed for the parents, TV with kids channels and an easily-convertible sofa bed.

Those who can't live without computer or the Internet, will be delighted to know that if they have their own laptop, they can benefit from the free wired and wireless internet, both in the rooms, and in the lobby. If you don't have a laptop, that's not a problem, as you might make use of the computer zones located in the hotel lobby. ■

Visit: www.accorhotels.com



stop *the bug*

Getting sick while travelling is annoying and also more common than we would like. Andrea Li talks to health professionals about precautions road warriors can take



A barrage of terms, from “Montezuma’s revenge” to “Delhi Belly”, have been used to describe traveller’s diarrhoea – the most common form of illness affecting travellers around the globe. But whatever name you choose for it, the symptoms of nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramping and diarrhoea are always the same, plaguing tourists at the most inconvenient of times and in exotic and urban locales alike.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention in the US estimates that between 20 and 50 percent of international travellers – or an estimated 10 million individuals – develop diarrhoea each year while on the road. It ranks the developing countries in South America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia as the highest risk destinations.

In fact, one in three or four travellers to Southeast Asia is likely to suffer from the condition at some point during their holiday, according to Dr Hans Schröder, executive medical director at Matilda International Hospital in Hong Kong.

“It is more common in developing rather than developed countries, particularly in places where there is not the infrastructure in place or access to a high standard of hygiene. It has much more to do with poor sanitation than the country itself,” he explains.

The factors underscoring traveller’s diarrhoea and food poisoning are plentiful: from the number of people working in the kitchen to how stringently hygiene rules are observed, whether or not the toilet has been built next to the kitchen or the fresh water tap, and the circumstances under which food has been prepared and controlled.

Food poisoning – which can lead to severe vomiting and diarrhoea – is most often caused by contamination of food through infectious agents that include viruses, bacteria and parasites. Among the most common forms of bacteria is *Staphylococcus aureus*; this produces a toxin that leads to food poisoning, according to Dr Vicki Fong, a lecturer on food science and safety at the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education’s Department of Applied Science. *Staphylo-*

coccus aureus is most often transmitted to food products served or stored at room temperature by a food handler, she adds.

Some types of the *E. coli* bacteria are also problematic if they turn pathogenic. Though any food can become contaminated by this bacteria, *E. coli* food poisoning cases are more often than not related to undercooked meats as this presents an ideal environment for the bacteria to thrive, and then multiply in the body once consumed.

Salmonella is another lethal bacteria found across a range of food groups, most commonly in poultry, eggs, unprocessed milk, meat and water. It attacks the stomach and intestines, leading to diarrhoea, stomach cramps, nausea and even fever. For the vast majority of cases, symptoms become apparent within hours and the condition can last up to 48 hours, says Dr Schröder. The doctor adds that there is no better course of treatment than simply to allow your body to expel the toxins while keeping yourself well hydrated.

Food-borne illnesses can become more serious with the likes of Hepatitis A, an acute liver disease that can last any-



Make sure you get insurance, are up to date with your vaccinations, and bring along some basic anti-diarrhoea medicine, says Dr Schröder



This page: make sure what you eat is well cooked

where from several weeks to a few months, says Dr Schröder. It is most typically passed on by an infected food handler, or, at other times, through seafood cultivated in murky, dirty water.

Typhoid fever is a deadly food-related illness caused by a bacterial infection after ingestion of contaminated food or water. Most commonly found in the developing world, the primary symptoms of a fever, headache and diarrhoea can initially be hard to detect because the condition tends to run in cycles.

Despite the prevalence of food poisoning, doctors and food hygienists say the risks can be minimised if individuals have a good understanding of the origins of food-borne illnesses, and take the necessary precautions. These include choosing with care what and where you eat, opting for well-cooked dishes using the freshest of ingredients and going to busy restaurants buzzing with locals, advises Dr Schröder.

If it doesn't seem right don't eat it, but at the same time, people shouldn't get too paranoid either, says Jason Williams

He also recommends travellers to drink water out of a sealed bottle as opposed to consuming from random open-top glasses, and always be on the alert for food that has been prepared much in advance or frozen items, such as ice cream, that appear to have been defrosted then refrozen.

"You should be well covered if prior to travelling you make sure you get insurance, are up to date with your vac-

inations, and bring along some basic anti-diarrhoea medicine. It is entirely possible to enjoy the local cuisine of a country while minimising the risks of getting sick," he notes.

Jason Williams, who founded Grashopper Adventures, an agency specialising in travel across Asia, adds that, aside from having clean hands, going with your gut instinct is always important: "I always say if it doesn't seem right don't eat it, but at the same time, people shouldn't get too paranoid either. There are still many people who think they will get sick if they aren't eating Western food. The Asian food is the best food they can get, and kitchens in Western restaurants will look no better than those cooking local food." ■



RED FLAGS: THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

- Avoid cold drinks with ice.
- Don't eat fresh or cooked food that has been allowed to stand at room temperature in warm environments.
- Steer clear of takeaway and street food unless it has been thoroughly cooked in front of you.
- Opt to eat fresh fruit and vegetables you have peeled yourself. Be on the alert for pre-peeled fruits on a fruit platter.
- Don't sign up for prepared foods shared with lots of people, in particular buffets.
- Avoid unpasteurised products including milk, cheese and ice cream.
- Beware of undercooked raw fish, meat or shellfish.
- Be cautious with fresh salads, mayonnaise and salad dressings.
- Avoid reheated or refrozen foods.
- Choose eateries that are full of people, particularly locals.

SELF HELP:

- Talk to your doctor prior to travelling.
- Buy travel insurance.
- Update your vaccinations.
- Consider getting a three-day course of antibiotics such as Quinolone in the event a bout of diarrhoea gets very bad.
- Take anti-diarrhoea medicine and oral rehydration salts as a precaution, especially for children.
- Other travel kit must-haves: painkillers for headache and toothache, eye cream for conjunctivitis and anti-inflammatory drugs for sprains and strains.
- Drink plenty of fluids to keep your body hydrated.
- If hit by diarrhoea, eat as plain a diet as possible until your system recovers, for instance easily absorbed and digestible foods like plain rice or bread.
- Consult a doctor if conditions persist or worsen after several days



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Hidden London

From the beautiful to the bizarre, **Alexandra Conroy** and **Jenny Southan** go in search of event venues with a twist in a range of locations across the capital

SUPPERCLUB

This uber-trendy mini chain, which kicked off in Amsterdam in 1999 and can now also be found in San Francisco, Istanbul and LA, offers “a free state of sensual experiences... where unexpected combinations lead to unexpected liberations”. Yes, this might sound pretentious, but the venue offers genuinely good cuisine and exciting options for day or night-time events.

The London branch opened in December 2009 in a hush-hush location in Notting Hill, beneath a railway bridge. It’s essentially a restaurant/nightclub/bar, but one with several intriguing differences – you have to book in advance and arrive by 8pm, diners recline on white beds, and food is served in all manner of bizarre ways, from salads in silver dog bowls to strawberry purée in syringes.

But what makes Supperclub really stand out is its minimalist, space-age interiors, erotic projections, staff in left-field attire, funky music and entertainment you have to see to believe. Acts might include operatic drag queens, burlesque strippers or masochistic clowns with a penchant for stapling things to their body.

For events, you could book out a wall of beds for an office get-together and revel in the full Supperclub experience – the themes of which regularly change, so you never know what you are going to get – or hire the entire place for a daytime exhibition. The ground-floor Le Bar Rouge hosts 150 standing, while the main event space, La Salle Neige, can accommodate 390 standing (including the mezzanine level) or 165 for a “lie-down” dinner. There is an array of lighting and furnish-

Supperclub



ing combinations, as well as a smoking terrace for 30 people.

● **12 Acklam Road;**
tel +44 (0) 20 8964 6600;
supperclub.com

ALBANNACH TAVERN

This contemporary Scottish restaurant and whisky bar is looked down upon by Nelson aloft his column in Trafalgar Square, so enjoys a great central location. Open since 2005 and refurbished in 2009, the Albannach dishes up classics such as haggis or neeps and tatties in a relaxed setting beneath white antler chandeliers. But the real highlight is its impressive collection of single malts – bespoke tasting masterclasses (pitched for the novice to the most experienced connoisseur) for a minimum of ten participants can be arranged, and provide a unique talking point for a corporate get-together or teambuilding event.

The combined ground-floor and mezzanine restaurant areas can be hired for private functions, seating up to 100 guests on glossy white chairs and black leather banquettes. Groups can also take over the bar, which has a capacity of 180 reception-style, or a private dining room (for 20 seated), equipped with a 52-inch plasma screen TV for teleconferencing, a state-of-the-art Harmon Kardon sound system, and wifi.

If you are looking to organise a product launch or networking event, retreat downstairs to the funky, cavernous A Lounge, where up to 170 movers and shakers can sip cocktails in a stylish setting featuring mustard-coloured ottomans, a gold leather-fronted bar, chocolate walls and a life-



size glowing stag. The rest of this level is taken up by the Vaults – there are five arches in total, and each is furnished with velvet seating for 20 to 30 people. It's the perfect spot for a late-night dram.

● **66 Trafalgar Square;**
tel +44 (0) 20 7930 0066;
albannach.co.uk

VANILLA

Located just north of Soho, in the upmarket Fitzrovia district, this cutting-edge restaurant-cum-cocktail bar has hosted everyone from News International and Credit Suisse to Sony and Calvin Klein for private functions. Upon descending the stairs, the signature scent of vanilla first captures the senses, followed by the shine of the silver and white wall designs that entice guests into the sophisticated open white space below. With a standing

capacity of 150, the minimalist interior of Lounge offers the perfect blank canvas for event organisers.

Against a back wall sits the glowing bar, fronted with glass inlaid with coloured lights. Chandeliers hang above each of the tables, and black cushions accent the white leather seating surrounding them. Curtains hanging from the ceiling can be used to separate areas of the room or direct the flow of guests as they move around the venue.

Just off the main space is a second room that holds 40 guests for dinner or 70 for pre-dinner drinks. Up to 30 people can also be accommodated for seated presentations. Black glass light fittings hang

Take clients back to the 1920s for some 'illicit dining and forbidden beverages'

from above, and seating is a mix of plastic mod chairs and leather banquettes. Dark drapes line the entry to the space and can provide added privacy.

Vanilla hosts eight to 12 private hires a month, and guarantees companies exclusive use of its facilities. Projectors, screens, microphones, a PA system, lighting and wifi are provided.

● **131 Great Titchfield Street;**
tel +44 (0) 20 3008 7763;
vanillalondon.co.uk

BLIND TIGER

Take your clients back to the golden days of the 1920s for some "illicit dining and forbidden beverages" at this speak-easy-themed establishment in Battersea, south of the Thames. Groups can dine in one of the themed rooms as Americana records play in the background, or "drink intelligently" at the Library bar, where staff dressed in waistcoats and caps mix forgotten cocktails from the pre- and post-Prohibition eras.

The Blind Tiger opened in September last year and was originally a two-storey barn dating back to the 1500s. It appeared on one of the earliest maps of Clapham, forming part of the Claphampton Manor Estate, and is said to have played host to a banquet for Elizabeth I. Today, the restaurant/bar can be hired for up to 40 people for dinner, and up to 250 for drinks and canapes, and catering and entertainment – from jazz to cabaret – is taken care of in-house. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, sultry singers perform.

Kick off the night with drinks in the Conservatory before dining on clas- ►



Bathhouse



Town Hall

sic British food in the dimly lit Red and Black oriental lounge seating 12, or in the Mezzanine, accessible by stairs and seating up to 20 people. The Black and White bar provides a good space for a small drinks-and-dinner gathering, holding up to 20, while the second-floor ballroom accommodates 45 revellers. Here you will find the original beams of the old barn, maroon walls, brown leather booths and a grand crystal chandelier.

The venue offers a variety of team-building activities, such as cocktail or hat-making classes, and even burlesque lessons for the brave. Note, though, that it is only open for private functions that incorporate food, as it is primarily a restaurant.

● **697 Wandsworth Road;**
tel +44 (0) 20 7498 0974;
blindtigerlondon.co.uk

BATHHOUSE

Built beneath the streets of the City in 1895 as a Victorian bathhouse, this quirky venue was converted into a restaurant in the 1970s and now caters for a variety of events, from parties to concerts, across two rooms. It still retains elements from its days as a Turkish bath, including the original red, blue and white tiling in the stairwell, the columns and arches in the area below ground, and the design of the kiosk, modelled on

the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

It is possible to host up to 80 guests for a drinks reception in the Cocktail room, which features red velvet drapes, disco balls and screens showing illuminated skeletons. The Golden Birdcage restaurant, fitted with a bar and a DJ booth in a giant golden cage, has space for 280 reception-style, while for a more intimate group, two private booths on either side of the bar seat ten to 20 in each. Entertainment from fire-twirling to cabaret can be laid on, with the option to build a stage in the main dining area.

● **7-8 Bishopsgate Churchyard;**
tel +44 (0) 20 7920 9207;
thebathhousevenue.com

TOWN HALL

The up-and-coming East End is home to the Town Hall Hotel and Apartments. As its name suggests, the Edwardian building used to be Bethnal Green council's administrative headquarters, but after its life in public service came to an end in 1993, it was completely revamped and unveiled as one of the area's trendiest, and most upmarket, hotels.

Open since spring last year, the property is a few minutes' walk from Bethnal Green underground station, convenient for access to the City and London City

airport. An unusual choice for a hotel development, it also offers a novel option for meetings – the wood-paneled Council Chamber, which features raised magisterial dark green leather seating for up to 80 people.

The largest room for events is the Bethnal Hall, which is made up of four interconnecting rooms that can be separated with sliding walls of polished wood. It can accommodate up to 188 guests seated. The De Montfort suite, in what was the main council room, accommodates 60 people theatre-style. Like the bedrooms and apartments, it pays homage to fifties design, with original pieces of vintage furniture.

The Town Hall also has a 15-metre swimming pool, a gym and a fine-dining restaurant with cuisine by Portuguese chef Nuno Mendes. All 98 bedrooms come with free wifi internet access, flat-screen TVs and DVD players.

● **Patriot Square;**
tel +44 (0) 20 7871 0460;
townhallhotel.com

GENTING CASINOS

Genting manages five gaming establishments in the capital, including Maxims and Mint in Kensington, and Colony Club in Mayfair. But the two that are best suited for glamorous corporate



events are Crockfords and Palm Beach, both also in Mayfair.

The former dates back to 1828, when it was set up by William Crockford as a high-class members' club, but it has occupied its current position on Curzon Street since 1983. The Grade II-listed Georgian house offers a classy yet home-like setting for banquets, product launches or after-parties.

The highlight is the luscious ballroom, bedecked in gold and crystal chandeliers. It has space for 180 standing and a mezzanine bar adjacent. There is also a first-floor restaurant serviced by five head chefs, each specialising in a particular cuisine, and a private dining room for ten people. The restaurant, which may be moved to the space the ballroom now occupies later this year, can also be used for private events at lunchtime. After dinner, guests can try their luck in a series of rooms fitted out with glossy roulette wheels and black jack tables.

Just down the road on Berkeley Street is the Vegas-style Palm Beach Casino, which is ideal for bespoke corporate poker nights of up to about 50 players (they're said to be popular with the boys in the City). The Berkeley room on the ground floor has a karaoke machine and can accommodate up to 20 delegates for drinks, canapés and private gaming tu-

ition, while the restaurant, which offers direct access to the May Fair hotel next door, can seat 60 people.

After eating, groups can place their bets at one of the 20-odd tables in the 24-hour casino. Organisers should note that visitors do not need to be members to gain access to these venues since regulations have been relaxed.

● **Crockfords, 30 Curzon Street;**
tel +44 (0) 20 7493 7771;
crockfords.com.
Palm Beach, 30 Berkeley Street;
tel +44 (0) 20 7493 6585;
thepalmbeach.co.uk;
gentingcasinos.co.uk/london

CIRCUS

A short walk from Covent Garden tube station and through a set of easy-to-miss heavy steel doors, Circus is the place to bring associates for a bit of razzle dazzle. Open for lunch and dinner, it can also be exclusively rented out for functions.

A bar at the back will mix you up a punch-bowl cocktail (equivalent to 20 glasses) consisting of one bottle of premium spirits, one bottle of champagne and fresh fruit juices, and a VIP area with turquoise seating, but the

'Circus is the place to bring associates for a bit of razzle dazzle'



Crockfords casino



Circus

show table in the main restaurant is where you want to be.

The atrium space can accommodate 30 diners around a long granite slab with steps at either end, you will experience a five-minute performance every hour – so while you are tucking into your Cajun seabass or ginger and green peppercorn chicken, you might also be watching a sequin-spangled contortionist or a fire-breathing trapeze artist gyrate in front of you, or above you in the air. The 300-capacity venue celebrated its first birthday in January, and since opening has hosted companies such as Sega, Louis Vuitton and Charles Worthington. ■

● **27-29 Endell Street;**
tel +44 (0) 20 7420 9302;
circus-london.co.uk

A City Of A Thousand Bridges

A great town of true moral freedom, a huge number of water canals and bikes, offers dozens of memorable attractions for participants of a corporate jolly.

Olga Chelchowska explores Amsterdam.

You can meet there people from almost every corner of the world and hear numerous foreign languages. Such cultural and ethnic melting pot can't be found anywhere else in Europe. Although it's called the Venice of the North, probably only few people realize that Amsterdam has, in fact, far more channels than the renowned Italian city. Amsterdam's name is indicative of the city's origins – i. e. the dam on the Amstel River, and it appears as early as in the 13th century records. Following a gigantic fire of 1452 year, which destroyed much of the buildings, the city's authorities forbade the use of wood as construction material. At that time many wonderful brick tenements appeared and the town grew into one of the most important commercial and administrative centres throughout the continent.

RED LANTERNS

Getting to Amsterdam can't be easier. The simplest way is of course by air. The flight takes less than 2 hours and there are several connections from Warsaw daily. An unforgettable impression is a trip to the Hague with famous Madurodam – a miniature city which is a model of a typical Dutch town. There are about 700 buildings in 1:25 scale, composed of typical Dutch buildings and landmarks, as are found at various locations in the country. They are the canals of Amsterdam, Schiphol Airport, the port, as well as old

houses, canals, mills and windmills. Interestingly enough, the whole venture formed in 1952, wasn't built for delivering profits. The miniature city was founded by parents of a student who had been murdered in the Nazi death camp at Dachau in 1945. A large part of Madurodam's income goes to charity.

On returning to Amsterdam, the best way to start visiting the city is to take a canal cruise. There are well over a hundred of them, allowing you to reach the most remote corners of the metropolis. However the incentive programme provides additional excitement, because the participants jump on water bikes and begin a "treasure hunt" that is a race against time to find a solution to various riddles. The winning team gets a prize and the group goes on a sightseeing tour round the city. A very common means of transportation in Amsterdam is a bicycle, so the group can opt for this way of sightseeing. In the evening there is, of course, a walk through the city's Red Light district. The place doesn't have a particularly good reputation with its state-controlled brothels employing ladies from all continents who wait in illuminated windows for their customers. There also a lot of burlesque theatres offering programmes for adults only.

A BIT OF CULTURE

The fans of another equally popular discipline – football – can fulfil their great dream, visiting the stadium of Ajax Am-





sterdam. Although the Amsterdam Arena was opened in 1996, it's still one of the finest and most modern sports facilities of its kind in the world. It has a capacity of 52,960 seats during football matches and its hallmark is a retractable roof. Ajax plays here their league matches, and the stadium is also a major venue for national football team's matches, as well as many concerts.

Among the dozens of Amsterdam's museums, two are particularly worth visiting. The first one is the Van Gogh Museum with dozens of works by the painter who in his lifetime was barely known to anyone. However, after his tragic death, he became to be considered as one of the greatest artists in history. Vincent van Gogh began to paint in his late twenties, created Post-Impressionist landscapes, genre views, and portraits. Fascinated by Gauguin and his painting, following a quarrel with this great artist, during one of many fits of his mental illness, he cut off his ear. We know him primarily from the famous „Sunflowers” painting. The museum, housed in two buildings, shows paintings and drawings by

In Amsterdam you can meet people from all over the world. The city is famous for its cultural and moral freedom



van Gogh (there are also works of other masters) at the same time describing the different stages of his turbulent life.

Another place to visit is the Rijksmuseum, the national museum of art, collecting thousands of magnificent paintings (by Rembrandt, Vermeer, Hals), sculptures, and works of applied arts. The museum presents not only the Dutch and European art, but there is also a very rich exhibition of works from Asia.

THE TASTE OF DARKNESS

Amsterdam each year is visited by more than 4 million tourists – five times more than the city has residents. Not surprisingly then, there are a lot of attractions there. Apart from the ones mentioned above, you can also go to the famous Heineken brewery, visit the flower market on the oldest canal called Singel, the diamond centre, or the Anne Frank's house, where she was hiding and wrote her memoirs.

A perfect culmination of the expedition to one of the craziest cities in Europe, will be a visit to Taste restaurant. It's a remarkable journey into the land of fragrances and flavours. All thanks to the fact that the meals in the restaurant are served in total darkness. The group is split into teams which follow the waiter (who is either a blind person, or is equipped with an NVD), and sit down at the tables, groping around the table for the cutlery. The dishes appear on the table along with instructions of the personnel, which at all times makes sure that nothing wrong happens to the participants in those unusual conditions. Those who have ever been there, say that it's an unforgettable experience. Just like the entire stay in Amsterdam. ■



Sweet laziness combined with a large number of sports activities, comfortable accommodation, excellent cuisine and hundreds of other attractions included in the price. Sounds like a recipe for a successful holiday. Welcome to the Portuguese Da Balaia Club Med resort.

On The Edge Of Europe





Portugal is a very charming country – a fact known not only to the cinema enthusiasts. Portugal is a destination for more and more tourists, including the Polish ones. Algarve, situated to the South, is the main touristic region. It's here, in one of the bays – surrounded by typical in this area, red cliffs, in the close proximity to the town of Albufeira (less than 40 kilometres from the airport in Faro), where the Da Balaia Club Med resort is situated. It's easily-noticeable, as the white building walls sharply contrast with the redness of rocks and azure waters of the Atlantic Ocean. It's an ide-



Da Balaia is an ideal place for family holidays, but it's also a paradise for golf lovers



al place for comfortable leisure, as the resort isn't only beautifully-situated, close to the Ocean, but also has access to its own, 200-metre-long beach. Da Balaia is an ideal place for family holidays, but since there are numerous golf courses in the area, apart from having a rest, you can also learn the secrets of this fascinating sport – unless you haven't had a chance before. Naturally, as usually with Club Med resorts, its visitors can enjoy thousands of attractions included in the price.

THE CLUB LUXURY

Da Balaia resort could hardly be referred to as a "hotel", as it comprises of three ho-

tels, each with a different name. La Tour is situated next to a huge swimming pool basin, Pyramide is located closer to the tennis courts, while the highest, six-storey Golf Hotel is located at some distance from the centre of the resort, near the golf club building.

Visitors can choose from 372 rooms, divided into categories. The basic category is Club Rooms – decorated with subdued colours highlighted with red and brown accents. They come with terraces overlooking the ocean or the garden. Rooms are air-conditioned, and equipped with an LCD TV, a hair-dryer, a mini fridge, a safe, and one or two beds. Larger and ▶

more comfortable Deluxe rooms are to be found in Golf and Le Tour hotels. They come with a completely different colour scheme: vivid yellow and green colours stimulate the energy. But if you wish to have some rest, you can do so on the terrace, equipped with deckchairs. The Deluxe rooms come with an iron and an ironing board, a mini bar and coffee and tea making facilities. Guests have also access to free water, a bathrobe, slippers, and also the turn-down service. But the fancier equipment comes with the biggest, Da Balaia suites. Guests can use a coffee machine and CD/MP3 player. The resort also provides them with a transfer to and from the airport, as well as free lunch for those who come to Da Balaia before 3.00

Restaurant Vasco de Gamma is an ideal place for those, who want to eat a late lunch, for instance, after a trip, or to spend an evening in a more elegant atmosphere. Meals are served a la carte, and the guests have to book tables at reception desk. The restaurant specializes in seafood.

In the evenings, guests usually socialize in bars, whose offer has been divided into to categories. The price of the stay includes snacks and drinks served in glasses, such as water, fruit juices, sodas, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks and cocktails, wine, and some stronger liquor. But if you would like to have some champagne, cognac, soft drinks in bottles or cans, or bottled wine, you will be charged extra. Da Balaia has two bars, the

of the players, 6 days a week. Club Med provides all the equipment. Apart from the free course, you can choose to take part in some extra-chargeable activities, which includes: private sessions for players of different skill level and of various length, access to the nearby golf courses, recording the game and then analyzing the movements together with the coach, and access to a training net, designed especially to train ball hitting (the net stops the ball), any many more.

Naturally, golf isn't the only activity you can engage in. There are many more sports to choose from. The offer includes: petanque, swimming pool, tennis and table tennis, archery, fitness, Pilates classes, kayaking, soccer, volleyball. All the sports activities, as well as evening entertainment, organized by the staff, referred to as GO (Gentle Organizers), are included in the price.

The Da Balaia Spa is called Cinq Mondes. Its offer includes treatments and massages from different parts of the world, with the predominance of Asian countries. It's located in the main building and consists of 8 rooms for individual treatments, one double room, and a Zen tea room a leisure corner and a cloakroom. All of the treatments concentrate around a particular theme. And thus, you can find energy, balancing, beauty, treatments, as well as treatments for two. They can be combined into a few-day packages that provide total relaxation and revitalize the whole organism. Spa treatments are charged extra.

p.m. They also have access to dedicated service. All the hotels are equipped with elevators.

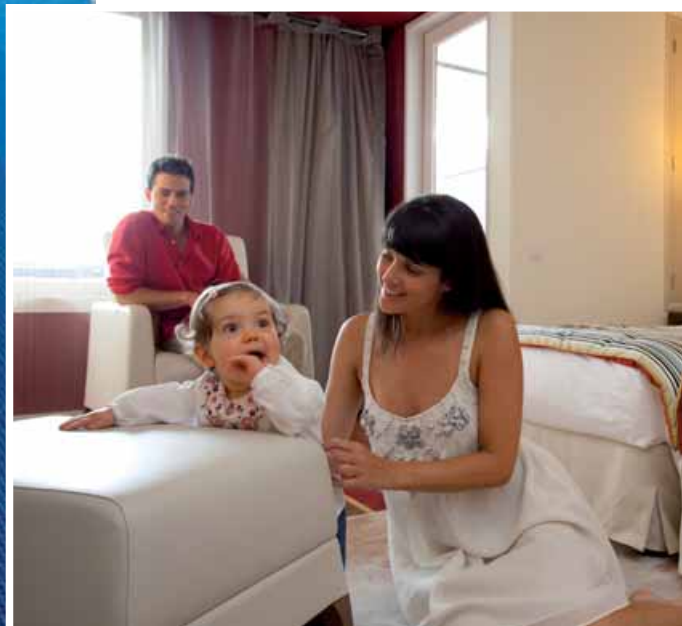
CULINARY ART

The culinary offer is usually a strong point of Club Med resorts. The price of the stay includes breakfast, lunch and dinner. The Balai Restaurant offers international cuisine, and you can eat your meals here while looking at the ocean through the huge windows. The food here is served in the form of a rather rich buffet, thanks to which you have a chance to try thousands of meals from all over the world. Parents, who wish to prepare meals for their children, can benefit from the so-called Baby Zone. Special meals for children are served here, and the place is equipped with a microwave, a bottle heater and a blender.

former – Amalia, is located inside the hotel, while the latter, Falesia is located by the pool and is open throughout the day.

CULINARY

Club Med resorts are known for their extremely intensive promotion of sports activities and the Portuguese resort is no different in this respect. Staying here is a great opportunity to recharge the batteries. In the neighbourhood of Da Balaia, there are several golf clubs, and the resort intensively promotes this interesting and relaxing sport. The price of their stay includes lessons at the Golf Academy. This is a series of courses run by qualified instructors, thanks to whom the beginners can learn the basics of golf, while the more advanced players can improve their skills. Sessions are conducted in groups, divided according to skill





OFFER FOR KIDS

Da Balaia is a very good spot to have a family holiday, especially that Club Med – unlike many other hotels – attach great importance to the kids offer. Children aged 4 months to 2 years are taken care of, in the so called Baby Club Med. Parents can leave their kids here and be sure that they are well looked after. Their day is carefully organized and filled with various activities and meals. At 6.30 pm the Baby Restaurant is opened. It's a spot, where parents can dine together with their children. Petit Club Med, in turn, is a place for children aged 2-4 years. At this age, children behave like little explorers, so the programme contains hundreds of games and outdoor activities. Petit Club Med is also open in the evening, thanks to

which, the parents can engage in their activities. Childcare in Baby Club Med and Petit Club Med is also charged extra. Both of these places are well equipped, and resemble a top class nursery school.

AROUND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The Club Med resort offers a possibility to see countless attractions in the neighbourhood. It's worth taking the chance, as both the town of Albufeira and the whole Algarve area, are fascinating regions. Jeep expedition allows you to explore the region, with its olive groves, vineyards – a half-day trip is also an occasion to taste some of the local products. Another offer is a catamaran sea trip along the coast, which also lasts half a day. It allows you to admire and the unique rock forms and bathe in the pic-

turesque little bays between the cliffs. Another interesting offer is a trip to the ocean-carved caves, in which you can observe unusual light effects. To get there, the visitors get onboard of a small fishing cutter. If you are a fan of sea expeditions, you can go on a one-day yacht trip, and have some barbecue at the beach.

When staying in Da Balaia, you can learn about the history and culture of the area. A one-day trip to Sagres and Lagos will allow you to explore the cliffs of Ponta Piedade, the city of Lagos with its churches, an old slave market and the statue of Henry the Navigator. The Sagres, in turn, is a typical fishing port. You can also go to Lisbon, Faro, Olhao and the fishing town of Tavira, the local bazaar in Loulé, as well as to a marine park to see a dolphin show. ■

Algarve is a very interesting area. You should definitely find some time to go on one of the tours



Dr Irena Eris

Ladies[®] Golf Cup



The final tournament of Dr Irena Eris Ladies Golf Cup was held in mid-June this year. The gold medal of the ladies international Polish golf championship was won by 20-year-old Martyna Mierzwa (KG Toya). The second place went to Czech Dominika Czudkova, and the third one to Katarzyna Selwent (Kalinowe Pola GC).

The three-day tournament, which gathered as many as 88 competing ladies, is the most prestigious event for women golfers in Poland. Dr Irena Eris Ladies» Golf Cup isn't just a sport competition, but also an opportunity to take care of oneself in the full sense of the word. The golf enthusiasts stayed at SPA Dr Irena Eris Dylewskie Hills hotel, and visited Dr Irena Eris

Cosmetic Institute. Ladies competed for cups founded by the Polish Golf Union, and APART company. The best Polish participant of the event received an invitation to the prestigious tournament, Deutsche Bank Ladies» Swiss Open.

Dr Irena Eris Ladies Golf Cup is the second competition in a series of top-level tournaments of SUPER category in DHL Global Forwarding Ranking by PGU.





The weather conditions were rather difficult, contributing to the overall difficulty of the competition. The first day of the tournament was interrupted by three storms. Some competitors had to finish their rounds at dawn the following day. It wasn't easy, but this only brought the winners greater satisfaction. We also have a reason to rejoice. Business Trav-

eller, which as you probably know likes and promotes golf, was one of the media sponsors of the event, and we also sponsored, "the longest drive" played on hole 7.

The tournament has been held since 2007, and each time it's bigger, as well as more and more popular. Next year, it's going to be even better. ■



The summer 'Techno' section in Business Traveller is devoted entirely to photo and video equipment. After all, it will make sure that our holiday memories will stay with us for longer. The presented devices are designed primarily for amateurs, since professionals don't need to be advised. In this month's issue **Darek Zawadzki** has chosen 6 devices which are good both for taking pictures and filming videos. They are simply versatile.



CANON EOS 60D

EOS 60D features a sleek shape of the body, a new button layout that facilitates quick and easy operation and a set of creative features. The device is aimed primarily at advanced amateurs. The camera has a 18-MP CMOS sensor of APS-C size (1.6 x), an efficient DIGIC 4 processor, a 19-point AF system, full aperture metering with 63 zone Dual Layer. The standard ISO 100-6400 sensitivity range can be extended to the 12,800. Canon takes continuous shots at 5.3 fps (up to 58 JPEG images at full resolution in one series). Some of the novelties include a tilted 3-inch LCD Vari-angle widescreen, as well as SDXC memory card support. In addition to great pictures the Canon's SLR also records HD video in manual control mode. Prices: EOS 60D „body”: PLN 4,699, with 18-55IS lens: PLN 4,999, with 17-85IS lens: PLN 5,999.

Summary: The SLR which appeared on the market in August 2010, is relatively small in size and quite easy to operate. A real treat for amateur photographers.



SANYO Xacti VPC-PD1

Sanyo, which is owned by Panasonic, has been targeting amateur cameramen for many years. All this owing to the unusual design of its Xacti camcorders. At first glance, Xacti devices look like digital cameras, but if you read the technical data of the camcorders, you will find out that video recording is their really strong point. Of course, apart from recording video in full HD, model VPC-PD1 also takes high-quality photos (10 MP). It seems that Sanyo itself has a problem with finding an appropriate name for this handy machine, hence the term – Dual Camera – meaning „two functions in one“. Xacti has a F 3.1 – 5.9 lens with 3x optical zoom (4x digital), 1/2.33 „C-MOS sensor, 2" LCD screen, as well as built-in USB and HDMI ports. The camera's dimensions are 63.1 x 22 x 110.8 mm with the weight of 122 g (with battery and SD memory card). Price: around PLN 500.

Summary: Xacti products are aimed at active customers who feel young in the heart. They offer excellent design, high quality at very affordable price. They are a good choice for those who find it difficult to decide whether to take photos or record videos.



Nikon COOLPIX P7000

The flagship Nikon's camera was created in cooperation with professional photographers. The result is a compact, but very advanced device. The very layout of buttons and knobs, such as the steering dial or the AE-L/AF-L memory button, immediately bring into mind similar solutions applied in SLRs. P7000 is equipped with a wide angle 6.0-42.6 mm lens with 7.1-times optical zoom, 1/1, 7-inch 10.1 MP CCD and a 3-inch LCD screen. The camera works well when shooting in low light, has a wide sensitivity range from ISO 100 to 3200 (expandable to 6400 ISO) and a night-shoot-

ing mode with low noise. The Coolpix can save your photos in NRW+ (COOLPIX RAW) format, which allows for later advanced processing of the images on the computer. Of course, the device also records HD videos. The price of this extremely intelligent compact camcorder is about PLN 2100.

Summary: it's a top shelf product, allowing you to experiment with manual settings. Nikon provides the users with a wide range of accessories for this model. The camera is recommended for advanced amateurs for whom typical SLRs are still too difficult to handle.



JVC GS-TD1

You can see at the very first glance, that Victor's device (JVC – Victor Company of Japan) belongs to an exclusive club of 3D cameras. It has, after all, two lenses (HD GT, F 1.2 – 2.28 3D), two 3.32-MP CMOS and a very powerful FALCONBRID image processor, simultaneously processing two HD images – left and right with a resolution of 1920 x 1080i – in a single chip. All this, to record 3D images in Full HD. The quality of this camera is best proved by its price – a head spinning PLN 7499. Onboard: 5x optical zoom 3D, automatic image stabilization (reduces differences, adds depth to 3D images), JVC BIPHONIC technology (dynamic 3D sound), automatic parallax adjustment (optimization of 3D video images). The data is stored on SDHC/SDXC cards and 64 GB of internal memory. The effects of your work can be seen on TVs supporting 3D (glasses required) or directly on the device's 3.5-inch LCD 3D screen (without glasses). The dimensions (102 x 64 x 186 mm) and the weight of 590 grams (without batteries), won't make it the world's smallest camera, but this is the price to pay for the quality of the device.



Summary: the prices of 3D devices are still relatively high, so before buying this type of camera you'd better get acquainted with the 3rd dimension. A visit to a good electronics shop will help you decide whether you should enter the 3D world or rather stick to the good old 2D.



Sony MHS-FS3

Also known as Bloggie 3D – the world's first 3D pocket camera (weighing only 120 g, and merely 17.3 mm thick). It records both movies in Full HD 1920 x 1080 / 30p (2D) and three-dimensional images with stereo sound. All thanks to two F2.8 lenses with autofocus and 4x optical zoom

lens and Exmor image sensor. The device has a dedicated camera button – takes pictures in 2D or 3D with an effective resolution of 5.1 MP. The data is collected on the 8 GB internal memory. Bloggie, as the name suggests, is perfectly integrated with social networking sites. It connects to your computer via the USB interface and sends pictures or videos directly to sites such as Facebook and YouTube. Price PLN 1200.

Summary: *an excellent choice for beginners keen on trying the thrills of 3d technology, and often using social networking sites.*



PANASONIC HDC – SD900

A reasonable price (about PLN 4,000) and impressive specifications make this device one of the best cameras on the market. The camera records the high-quality 1080/50p 2D image – (Full HD 1920 x 1080 pixels, 50 fps) at 28 Mb/s (at a 28-Mbps bit rate it conveys about twice the information of 1,080i), and the optional 3D Conversion Lens (VW-CLT1) allows the camcorder to record 3D images. Of course we shouldn't expect it to produce „Avatar“-like effects, but remember that this is an amateur camcorder designed for home use. The Optional Conversion Lens costs PLN 1,299. The classic chassis of the camcorder features 1/4.1-type MOS x 3 image sensor with 7.59 million effective pixels. This system distributes the light received through the lens into three primary colours (red, green, blue), and then processes each of them independently, providing high-quality colour and gradation. The camcorder features Leica Dicomar lens (F1.5 – 2.8) with a 12x optical zoom. The data is recorded to SD/SDHC/SDXC memory cards. The dimensions of the device are: 66 x 72 x 146 mm, weight approx. 395g (without batteries).

Summary: *it's a great tool for amateur filmmakers who appreciate high quality 2D images, and wish to experience the 3D, but don't have a large budget.*



The cuisine that still awaits its discovery

It is believed that internationalisation has revolutionized cuisine more than any other field of our life. Each one of us is familiar with spaghetti, sushi or camembert. However, not everyone is capable of naming traditional dishes that constitute Polish regional cuisine even though there is a thousand of restaurants with a sign saying "Polish cuisine".



The reality of Polish cuisine perfectly bears out the cliché that "the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence." Although very few amateur chefs find it difficult to define a number of Italian, French or Chinese traditional meals, most of them haven't got the slightest idea how to prepare typically Polish dishes like bryjka, ślepe ryby or forszmak. Well, they are certainly missing out as each of these dishes is both delightful and intriguing.

Let's take the first item "on our menu" – however silly bryjka sounds in Polish, it has a truly rich history dating back over 1,500 years, when it was extremely popular among the early Slavs, as has been established by the researchers of a Warsaw university. Since such heritage carries with it considerable responsibilities it's high time bryjka became popularised. Our ancestors used to prepare it from nettle, sorrel and knotgrass. However, with the time the ingredients have changed and bryjka itself is now listed as a traditional Polish Highlands dish. Although it's easy to make, during the preparation it's necessary that you rely on your gut feel. Add some flour (for instance whole wheat flour) to salted boiling water until the mixture becomes thick and boil it

for 20-25mins. Place the mixture on a plate and spread until even, then make a dent in the centre and fill it with the earlier prepared fat (lard or butter). Depending on the individual preference, you can add some milk to the boiling mixture or even serve bryjka with salo as a condiment.

Let's now take our culinary adventure from the Polish Highlands to Great Poland (a region of west-central Poland) where ślepe ryby (eng. blind fish) await us. Oddly enough, the dish with such unique name has actually nothing to do with fish – it's a simple potato soup that used to be staple food of common folks. Because of its simplicity, in preparation we are allowed for a whole range of variations and configurations, with the basic ingredients of ½ kg potatoes, a combination of vegetables (parsley, celeriac, leek, onion, etc.), salt and pepper. To boiling vegetable stock add the potatoes chopped into cubes. Then prepare roux by mixing flour with the onion, and add everything to the broth, together with the previously cleaned vegetables. Now our dish is ready to be served. For a variety's sake we can make it more unique by adding a range of other vegetables and spices like carrots, marjoram, bay laurel, or allspice. Although original-

ly it was meant as a meatless soup with no globules of fat floating on top (hence the name blind fish) a number of people do add some meat, for instance spare ribs.

Forszmak is a thick meat soup from the east regions of Poland. Although some may associate it with goulash, in reality it has nothing to do with this traditional Hungarian meal, despite the fact that sometimes it is served with paprika, which encourages such association. Like the rest of regional specials, forszmak can be prepared in various ways with meat, which constitutes the basic ingredient. As such it can come in any form, from smoked pork loin or bacon to porkneck and

Polish kielbasa. Prepare approximately ½ kg of pork loin (alternatively, use ¼ kg of kielbasa or smoked bacon), chicken or vegetable stock, extra-thick double cream, flour, spices (salt, pepper, allspice and sweet pepper), tomato paste, several pickled cucumbers and an onion). Cut the meat

into cubes and brown in a pan. Then add it together with the chopped cucumbers and tomato pasta to the boiling stock, and season everything. Add enough water so that all ingredients are covered. The soup should be simmered with a lid and then thickened with a roux. The forszmak should always have a thick consistency and is best served with some bread. Is it tasty? – naturally. After all, it is of Polish origin. ■

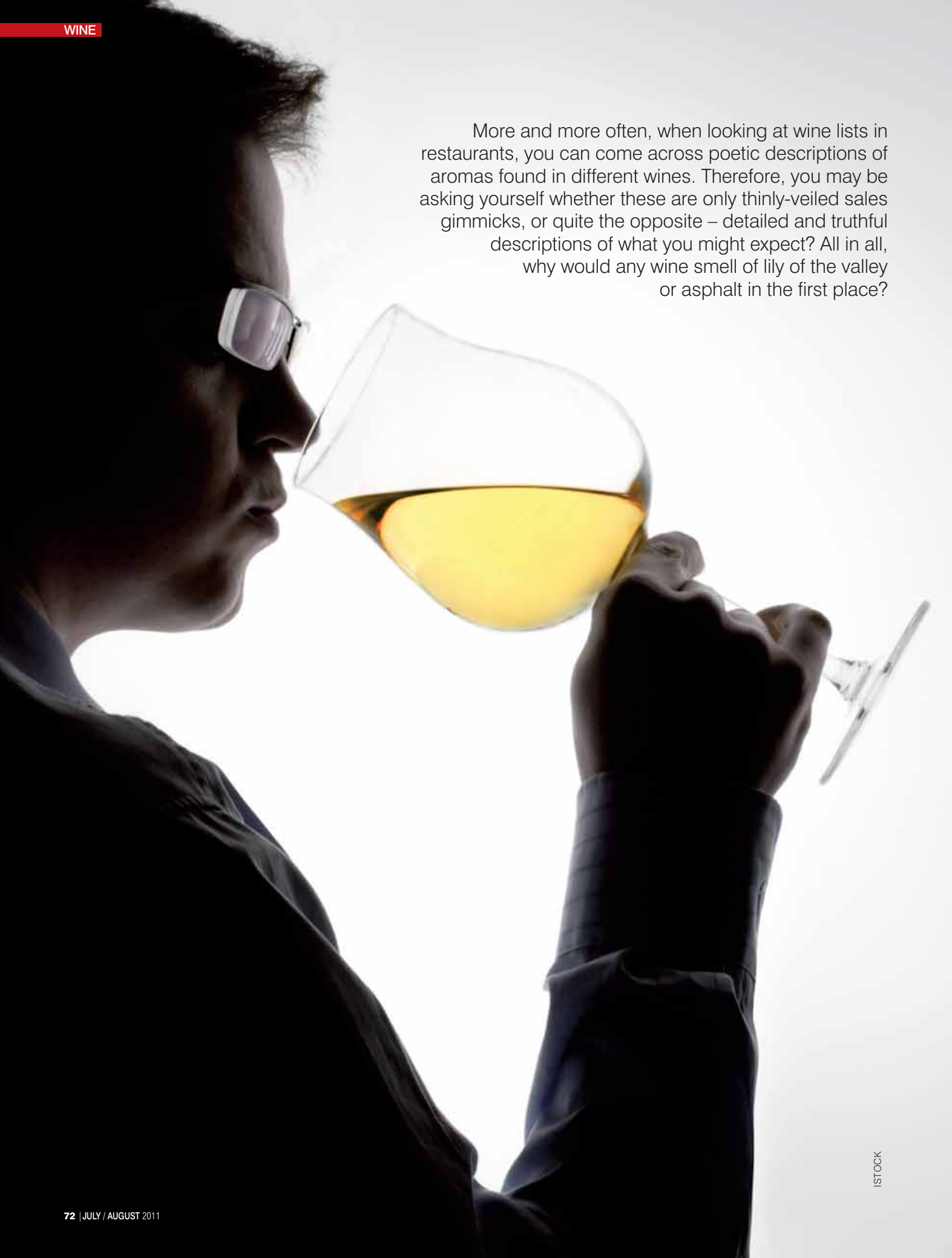
Artur Kolger



We find it more difficult to recognize specialties of our native cuisine than the Italian or French ones



More and more often, when looking at wine lists in restaurants, you can come across poetic descriptions of aromas found in different wines. Therefore, you may be asking yourself whether these are only thinly-veiled sales gimmicks, or quite the opposite – detailed and truthful descriptions of what you might expect? All in all, why would any wine smell of lily of the valley or asphalt in the first place?



Why does wine only rarely *smell of grapes?*

As surprising as it may seem, wine can smell of nearly everything. The mystery lies in the process of fermenting the grape juice, before it turns into wine. Apart from changing sugars into alcohol, the process involves thousands of other minor reactions, which have a major influence on the final effect – the overall character and aroma of a wine. Aromatic substances can be compared to building blocks, which can be used to create almost indefinite number of scents. And so, during the fermentation, grape aromas get broken, and the new elements combine together in a quite chaotic way, creating new forms, and new aromas. That's precisely how we get fruit, flowery, ground, herbal or mineral aromas.

THE RANGE OF AROMAS

There are three factors which have impact on the aromas in wine. First of all, the so called *terroir*, i. e. expression of soil and microclimate, where the grapevine grows. Wine produced in cold climate is more acidic, sophisticated and smells of fresh, native fruit with mineral aromas, making you think of the smell of water from a well or a mountain stream. Warm climate wines, on the other hand, like those from Argentina or Chile, will contain overripe tropi-

cal fruit aromas, very concentrated and much less acidic than their counterparts from Europe – though, you have to admit, they are slightly less sophisticated. The other factor is the variety of a grapevine. Their number amounts to several thousands. Some of them, like French Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc (white) or Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Sarah (red), have gained world-wide recognition, while others are popular only within its native region, like Nero d'Avola from Sicily, or one valley – like Morenillo from Catalonia. Each variety has its own unique character, and is responsible for specific aromas. Sauvignon Blanc is often scented with gooseberry or blackberry overtones. Chardonnay smells of citrus fruit, Nebbiolo – liquorice and cranberries, while Tempranillo – with cherries and rosemary. Naturally, as the climate, where a given variety is grown, gets warmer, the fruity aromas become sweeter and more delicate, which does not necessarily mean that the wine itself gets better. And finally, the third, and most dynamic factor – the method of production. This includes working in a vineyard, pruning, controlling the vine's efficiency and age, as well as selecting the right fermentation and maturing method. If you can take care of grapevine, select grapes and control the fermentation process correctly, you can be sure

the quality of aromas will increase. Aging wine in oak barrels, spices up its final character and contributed to the already great number of aromas. The barrels are produced mainly in France and the USA. American barrels, depending on age and level of toasting, will enrich wine with the aromas of vanilla, cocoa, chocolate, coffee and cream. French ones, in turn, add the aromas of freshly-tanned leather, tobacco, rotten wood or black pepper. The trick is to be able to use the barrel competently. A popular tendency among winemakers from the New World is making up for the poor quality of the fruit, by aging wine for too long in a barrel. As a result, wine loses its character and authenticity. Sometimes it's better not to mature a wine at all, rather than keep it in a barrel for a long time.

All things considered, you can jump at only one conclusion: the range of aromas in wine is indefinite, and so, every time you reach out for a bottle, you may discover something new. Just remember that winemaking involves great deal of care and patience, and your efforts will pay off. I can guarantee you that sooner or later, almost every aroma we invented, will be found in one of the thousands of wine bottles – be it the scent of asphalt in Pinotage by Neethlingshof, year 2003 from South Africa, or a lily of the valley flavour in Gavi 2008 by Villa Sparina. ■

Michał Poddany & Robert Mielżyński

Each of the thousands of varieties has its own character and develops an individual range of tastes



TRANSNATIONAL ROOTS

Pizza is of Neapolitan origin, but its fame spread thanks to emigrants who travelled across the Atlantic to America. The story of the new Fiat Freemont was exactly the opposite – the car had been designed in the USA and for several years was produced under a different name. However, now it has been perfected by the Italians, changed its name and is set to sell well in Europe.



If we look at the technical details, we will see that the new Fiat Freemont – although carrying an Italian name – is eminently American. This is because Freemont is heavily based on Dodge Journey. Have you ever heard about this model? I'm sure you have, because it was also available in Poland. It was, but it won't be anymore. Prepare, there comes Fiat Freemont instead. These are the facts, but Fiat doesn't intend (or even try) to manipulate them. The Italians are, after all, the owners of Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep, and because they wished to create a global automotive concern, they decided to save the American manufacturers from the brink of bankruptcy. Had it not been for Fiat's help, all those great American companies would now be defunct and that's the harsh reality of life. The Italian (albeit American) crossover SUV is now available also in Poland.

ATTENTION TO DETAILS

Many people claim that in case of cars, most of us are visual buyers. In other words, a car doesn't even have to drive well, but only look stunning. In this respect, Journey slightly diverged from European standards. American cars have for long been believed to be "first class and super-duper". However, the reality isn't so rosy. When you compare cars produced in Europe with their American counterparts, you will see that the latter ones are, in fact, huge gas-guzzling monsters, and although they are quite well equipped, their quality of the assembly leaves much to be desired. When the Italians decided to save Chrysler and Dodge, they retained some of the existing models, refining them so that they could be more appealing for the European. The new Freemont is one of those "old-new" revamped mod-



els. You can see at the very first glance that it has been redesigned and now has quite a different, more friendly interior – the plastics are soft and of higher quality.

The Fiat is almost 5 meters long and its wheelbase is 289 cm. That's more than enough space to put there in the seats for the driver and six passengers. They will travel in comfort, because the car, besides the doors which open up to 90 degrees, has also additional layers of insulation to eliminate vibrations, as well as three-zone air conditioning and an "on board" entertainment system with a touch screen. Typically for Fiat's these days, it's also possible to connect your personal music player (using a cable or the Bluetooth mode). What's more, the car is very safe with its 6 airbags and other standard features such as ABS, ESP, Hill-Holder (prevents the car from sliding down on a steep hill), as well as Electronic Rollover Mitigation (ERM) system. Another interesting electronic "assistant" is so-called Trailer Sway Control – a system which will help the driver in towing a trailer.

THOSE TIGHT-FISTED EUROPEANS

Apart from the Italian interior, more pleasant upholstery in comparison to

the previous model, there are also new engines, suspension, and steering. More specifically, it's calibrated so that the Fiat drives more "European-like". For the same reason, a range of completely different engines was used. Initially, Freemont will be powered by a 140 or 170 HP Diesel Multijet engine. At this point the Americans would snarl contemptuously: "Who drives cars with diesel engines?" We prefer strong „gas-guzzlers." You can understand them, because petrol in the U.S. is, after all, much cheaper. But for those who don't feel like having a car powered by a diesel engine, Fiat will soon offer also 276 HP petrol motors (Pentastar V-6 3.6 litres). These cars will also receive automatic transmissions, so you might expect much higher prices here. A diesel engine is perhaps not as nice as a petrol one, but it's certainly more economical, and you don't have to spend a fortune at petrol stations. This is typically European thinking. ■

Rafał Jemielita

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

photos: the manufacturer's materials



4 hours
in...

Seoul

April Hutchinson takes in super views, tranquil temples and ancient palaces in South Korea's capital.

BONGEUNSA TEMPLE

Chances are that after a few days» business in frenetic Seoul, you'll be ready for some peace and quiet, so start with a visit to the Bongeunsa Temple with its giant Buddha looking down over the bustle of the Gangnam district. You can reach it by subway, which is cheap, clean and easy to use with colour-coded and numbered lines – take number seven to Cheongdam then walk from exit two. You will feel the day's strains fade away as you enter the leafy temple complex and look up at all the Buddhist prayer flags pinned overhead, fluttering in the breeze. Free to enter, it is usually open from 4am to 9pm.

Visit bongeun.org

COEX | CHEONGDAM

Back to reality and a walk across the street from the temple is COEX, home to a huge conference centre and hotels such as the super-stylish Park Hyatt and the Intercontinental, as well as Korea's largest aquarium, a 16-theatre Megabox cinema and the largest underground shopping mall in Asia. Stop at Bandi and Luni's for a large range of English-language books and magazines. The mall is also home to well-known fashion brands from American Apparel to Zara, as well as local labels and plenty of stores high on the cute-factor for Korean take-homes. Open around 10am-10pm daily; coex.co.kr/eng

If malls aren't your thing, jump in a cab (cheap and clean but ask your hotel to write place names for you in Korean, just in case) or walk the few blocks up to Apgujeong, a cool area of the city with quirky boutiques and cafes. Next door is the Cheongdam district, which is anchored by the Galleria Department Store as well as being home to glitzy flagships from the likes of Louis Vuitton and Prada.



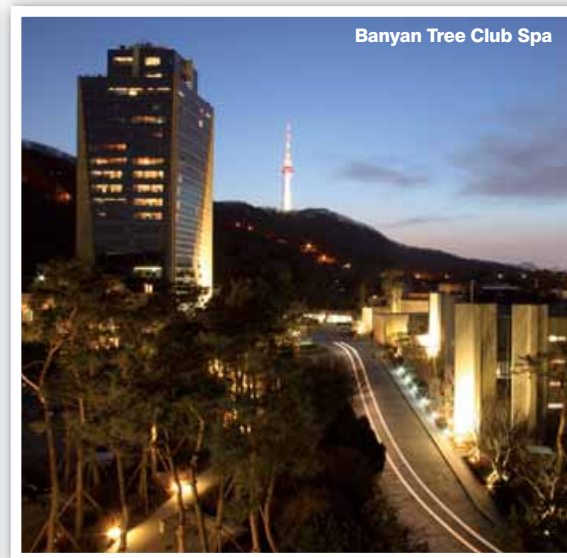
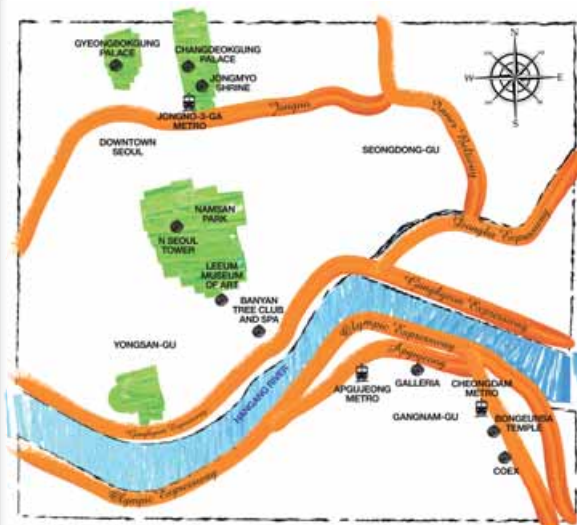
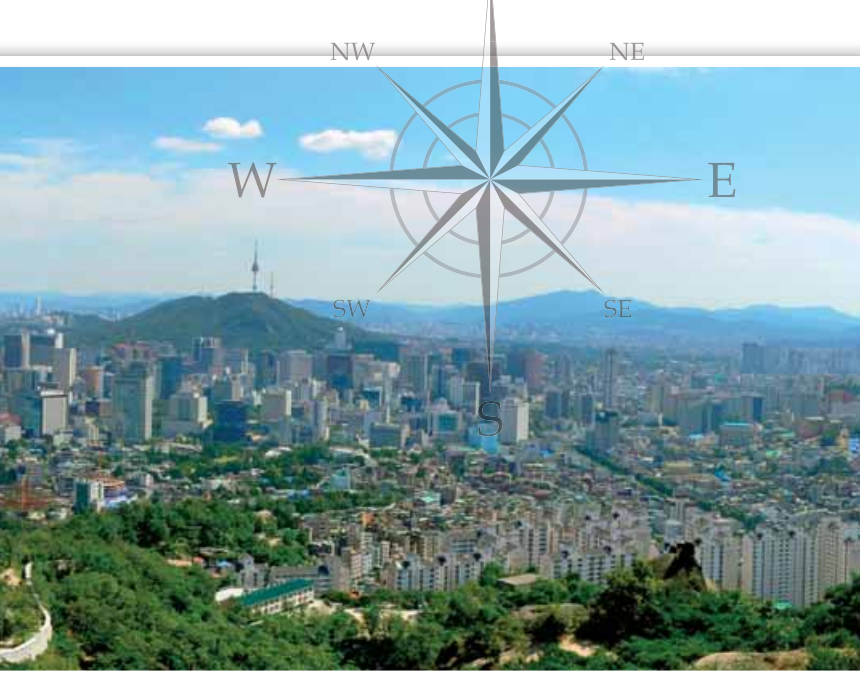
N Seoul Tower

TOP TIP

Seoul is only about 40km from the North Korean border, so if you have the time, take the one-day tour of the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) for a fascinating insight into the conflict, albeit from the South Korean point of view. Security is strict and there are rules for behaviour and dress code.



Changdeokgung Palace



CHANGDEOKGUNG PALACE

Head north to the historic and greener side of the river and one of the city's key palace complexes (seven stops on the subway from Apgujeong to Jongno-3-ga, or a 20-minute cab ride). You can only visit the UNESCO-listed Changdeokgung by guided tour – English-speaking ones take place at 11.30am and 2.30pm each day, so remember to factor this in.

Seen as the quintessential example of ancient Korean architecture, the palace is also home to the biwon, or «secret garden», which adds a fantastic, Zen-like element to the experience. You can visit the Changdeokgung, Gyeongbokgung, Changgyeonggung and Deoksugung palaces and the Jongmyo Shrine in the districts of Jongno-gu and Jung-gu on one ticket for 10,000 won (£5). Closed Mondays.

Visit eng.cdg.go.kr

N SEOUL TOWER

It's a 15-minute taxi ride from the palace to the N Seoul Tower, where you can enjoy great 360-degree views. The tower sits atop Namsan, the city's central mountain, and the vistas from its third-floor observatory are stunning, down to the river and across Seoul's skyscrapers and palaces. There are also slick eateries inside. Open daily 10am-11pm; entry is 7,000 won (£4).

nseoultower.net

LEEUM MUSEUM OF ART

A quick taxi ride away, the Leeum Samsung Museum of Art's collection is housed in three buildings designed by Mario Botta, Jean Nouvel and Rem Koolhaas, and includes a Rodin gallery, Korean and international art. Open 10.30am-6pm Tues-Sun; entry is 10,000 won (£5); leeum.samsung-foundation.org. Nearby is the new Ban-



yan Tree Club and Spa, where you can end the day at the 360 Wine bar. Visit banyantree.com ■ See english.visitkorea.or.kr

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Masz pytanie? – zapytaj Piotra.
Wyślij pytanie na adres: redakcja@businessstraveller.pl



A TICKET FOR POINTS

I have been collecting points in a loyalty programme of a popular airline. Recently, I've tried to redeem them for a plane ticket for my daughter. She wanted to go on a language course during her holidays. However, it wasn't possible, as the plane turned out to be overbooked at the time I chose. It seemed a bit strange, as the tickets were still available online. Following another call, I was informed, that the seats indeed were available – but only at a charge. I could redeem my points for a ticket only after holidays. What is this limit for?

Katarzyna

Dear Katarzyna,

The sooner the holidays, the more questions about tickets for points. And more problems. Holiday season is the most profitable time for any airline. You can't expect they will give away free plane seats to everybody. What's typical of loyalty schemes, is that it's easier to get a point than to spend it. It's because there is a limited number of such prize-tickets. There are only a few of them for each flight, and they are sold in advance. The mechanism of booking is always the same: if you want to use the ticket in a special offer, or get a ticket for points – you have to book it even a couple of months ahead of time.

Otherwise, you might not get the opportunity to use the prize. The tickets you saw on the website were more expensive ones, not those from the promotional offer.

I have thoroughly checked your daughter's date of flight and the availability of free seats. Indeed, the direct flight was fully booked, with no tickets available, but there were some tickets for a flight with a stopover. Your loyalty scheme makes it possible for you to use your points at a time convenient for you. If you prefer to fly directly, I advise you to put your daughter on a standby list, and next year remember to book in advance.

SEA ADVENTURE

I'm planning to go on a sea voyage around Mediterranean sea. What's the best way to get to Venice? Will I have access to the Internet and a phone on-board? Is it true that you can be seasick on such a voyage? Should I be careful with the food? Will I find any workplace there?

Andrzej

Dear Andrzej,

My answer is simple: don't worry too much and have a nice holiday. I've read the description of your ship and the plan of your voyage. Venice is one of the most famous ports in Europe, and many cruise ships from different lines, like Royal Caribbean, Cruise Lines, MSC and NCL start their voyage there. The easiest way is to get there by plane. From the Marco Polo airport you can take a water taxi to the port and ship terminal. Some passengers, mainly those from different continents, go to Milan, and later take a train. It takes 2.5 hours to get to Venice from Milan. You can also take a water taxi from Santa Lucia railway station. As for a walk, it takes about 15 minutes to get to the first terminal, and then you can take a railway ride over the canal. Although I wouldn't recommend this, if your baggage is heavy.

A few-storey cruise ship usually offers the same sort of attractions as a huge hotel. Internet and telephone included. You can buy different tariff plans, when it comes to the Internet access. Some lines provide its passengers with an individual mail address during the cruise. Each ship has its own telephone number you can call from the land, and get

through with a particular cabin. Thanks to satellite connections, mobile phones can also be used throughout the cruise. Of course, you must pay great attention to the prices of calls made this way.

You shouldn't worry about seasickness. Cruise ships are equipped with special systems and stabilizers to prevent excessive rocking. In fact, most of the time you won't even realize you are at sea. I think that you might feel the rocking when getting from the ship to the port in a boat – during your voyage the ship anchors in a bay in Dubrovnik. Huge waves can be encountered during transatlantic voyages, but the Mediterranean Sea is always calm.

Your next question concerns the food. If you should pay attention to anything, it would be the quantity, more than anything else. The quality of food could not be any higher on such a ship. The hygienic standards are also high and the requirements include obligatory hand disinfection every time you get aboard, and enter the ship's restaurant. Ships often provide its passengers with delicacies from all over the world. I'm sure you will find something to your liking. As a precaution, passengers aren't allowed to bring any food from the land.

As for the place to work, you will find it on every ship. It can be a silent workroom, a library or meeting rooms. Contrary to entertainment zones, these places provide ideal conditions for concentration. If you're planning to go with your co-workers, and want to hold there some training, you can use a pre-booked conference room. For bigger events like presentations or lectures, there is a possibility to rent a theatre. All in all, I wish you a wonderful holiday and plans for future cruises.

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Ekspresy EQ.7 Plus i EQ.5 otwierają nowy rozdział w kulturze picia kawy. Ich zadaniem jest precyzyjne spełnianie najbardziej wyszukanych potrzeb miłośników kawowych specjałów. Służą temu innowacje w ekspresie EQ.7 Plus: **individualCup Volume**, **aromaDouble Shot**, czy **oneTouch-Function®**. Te profesjonalne rozwiązania dostarczają nowych doznań ściśle według indywidualnych wymagań. Również ekspres EQ.5 bez trudu zrealizuje wszelkie oczekiwania użytkowników dzięki funkcji **aromaDouble Shot** z dokładną regulacją mocy kawy oraz wbudowanemu systemowi **autoWhirl Plus**, wytwarzającemu idealną mleczną piankę. Przyjemność delektowania się aromatycznymi napojami potęguje też komfort obsługi oraz ekskluzywny design. Wejdź na www.siemens-kawa.pl i zobacz, co znaczy smak, aromat i styl.

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