

Business Traveller Poland

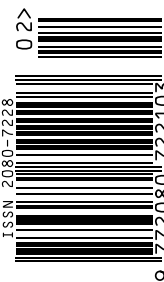
CENA: 9,60 zł (w tym 8% VAT)

NR 2/2011 (14) FEBRUARY 2011

INTERNET
in the Sky

ON THE SLOPES
until late spring

INDEKS 256765



Bydgoszcz ● Prague ● Bali ● Gomera ● Amsterdam ● Peugeot 508

Club Med

WAKACJE MARZEŃ

ZIMA 2010/2011

- Najlepsze regiony narciarskie
- Nowe, wygodne pokoje i piękne wnętrza
- Oferta „All inclusive”
- Szkółka narciarska dla dzieci od 4 lat

www.clubmed.pl



62



58



28



74



66

6 EDITORIAL

8 ON TOP

Hotel and airline news

16 TRIED&TESTED

Warsaw – Frankfurt – Warsaw,
Lufthansa, business class;
Heathrow Star Alliance Lounge;
Holiday Inn Bydgoszcz; Augustine
Prague; Radisson Royal Moscow;
Sony Nex-5; Mielżyński Restaurant
Wine Bar Warsaw

REPORTS

28 STAY CONNECTED

The Internet on the plane
is becoming a standard feature

32 WINTER ATTACKS

A few days which froze Europe

34 HOW-TO

Save money when organizing
a meeting

36 LOT POLISH AIRLINES

A new business lounge
at Okęcie airport

38 ORBIS

Winter attractions for the skiers

40 ECO CAR

Electric cars can be the future
of car rental companies

44 STRETCH YOUR LEGS

Airlines offer extra leg space
for an additional fee

48 REZIDOR

The recent investments
of the hotel chain

52 BT INTERVIEWS

Rafał Jerzy, the owner of Focus
hotel chain

DESTINATIONS

54 BALI

An incredible place to organize
an incentive trip

LIFESTYLE

58 CANARY ISLANDS

Rest in Tenerife
and Gomera

62 ON THE HILL

Places where skiing may be
an unforgettable adventure

66 GOLF

Excellent golf courses
in Abu Dhabi

68 TECHNO

The era of tablets

71 TASTES OF THE WORLD

Icelandic cuisine

72 WINE

Secrets of maceration

74 BUSINESS MOTO

New Peugeot 508

76 AMSTERDAM

4 hours in the Dutch capital

78 BT POLAND IN ENGLISH

82 ASK PETER

We answer all your questions
regarding travelling





Nowy Passat Variant. Wszystko jest innowacją.

W nowym Passacie Variancie znajdziesz wszystkie najbardziej innowacyjne rozwiązania Volkswagena. Zwróć uwagę na system wykrywający zmęczenie kierowcy, aktywny tempomat z Front Assist, automatycznie utrzymujący bezpieczną odległość od poprzedzającego pojazdu oraz funkcję hamowania awaryjnego w mieście. Przekonaj się, jak wiele daje system Light Assist, automatycznie zmieniający światła drogowe na mijania tak, by nie oślepiać innych kierowców. Sprawdź, jak działa Park Assist nowej generacji, parkujący równolegle i prostopadle do osi drogi. Poznaj wszystkie innowacje Passata Varianta. Umów się na jazdę próbną.



**SAM PARKUJE, ZAPOBIEGA ZDERZENIU, WYKRYWA ZMĘCZENIE.
TYLKO PRZYJEMNOŚĆ JAZDY MUSISZ WZIĄĆ NA SIEBIE.**



Das Auto.

Everyone who has ever happened to work in a place with too little space, knows how difficult it may be. Those special needs of business passengers have finally been addressed by airlines which more and more often offer us more leg space – obviously at an extra charge. We have decided to have a closer look at such offers and try to find out whether they are worth the money. For more details, read our feature in this issue.

This is, however, not the only advice here. You will also learn here how to save money when organizing business meetings – there are as many as 20 tips on this subject. We advise you where to go to find more sun and relaxation - this time we have chosen Tenerife and Gomera, but, as you might have already guessed from the cover this issue, we also check the best places to go skiing, recommending the resorts which are perhaps less popular, but still worth visiting.

As for T&T section, we checked for you the flight from Warsaw to Frankfurt, and hotels in Bydgoszcz, Moscow, and Prague. The popular T&T section is growing larger – this time we have also tested for you a new digital camera. You will also be taken to another culinary trip to the place which is quite mysterious regarding its cuisine. However, Iceland has more to offer than we might think. Similarly to one of the most 'intense' cities of Europe – Amsterdam, where we advise you how to spend there effectively 4 hours of free time.

We all know how important role plays a business lounge at an airport. That is why I would like you to read our article on the newest one, recently opened at Okęcie airport, and named Business Lounge Polonez.

Finally, in this issue we try to predict the future of car rental companies with more and more electric cars entering the market, and we check the novelties in the world of tablets.

Enjoy your reading...



Robert Grzybowski
Publisher BT Poland



Read more details! Visit businessstraveller.pl

Business Traveller Poland

Business Traveller Poland
ul. Świętokrzyska 36, 00-116 Warszawa
tel. +48 22 455 38 14, +fax +48 22 455 38 13
www.businessstraveller.pl

Editor-in-Chief Wojciech Chelchowski
wojtekc@businessstraveller.pl

Deputy Editor-in-Chief / Editorial Assistant
Andrzej Czuba
andrzejc@businessstraveller.pl

Art Director Dejan Gospodarek
dejan@dwb.pl

DTP studio CARRY

Wydawnictwo R & S Media Sp. z o.o.
ul. Świętokrzyska 36, 00 -116 Warszawa
tel. +48 22 455 38 33, fax+ 48 22 455 38 13

Publisher Robert Grzybowski
robertg@businessstraveller.pl

Coordinator Wojciech Tyński
wojtekt@businessstraveller.pl

Advertising, sponsorship
Wydawnictwo G+J Gruner+Jahr Polska
Sp. z o.o. & Co. Sp. Komandytowa

Agnieszka Wierzbicka-Baxter
Sales and Business Development Manager /
Project Manager
baxter.a@gjpoland.com.pl

Elżbieta Holubka
Advertising Director, G+J
holubka.e@gjpoland.com.pl

Małgorzata Pawłowska-Babut
Advertising Director, Business Traveller
Poland
pawłowska.m@gjpoland.com.pl

Małgorzata Antoniewicz
antoniewicz.m@gjpoland.com.pl

Sylvia Stochmialek-Osekowska
osekowska.s@gjpoland.com.pl

Subscription
redakcja@businessstraveller.pl

Printing house
Drukarnia TINTA

Business Traveller

Managing director Julian Gregory
Perry Publications, Cardinal House,
39-40 Albemarle Street, London, W1S 4TE
tel. +44 (0)20 76 47 63 30
www.businessstraveller.com

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

© 2009 Perry Publications Ltd –
a subsidiary of Panacea Publishing
International Ltd, United Kingdom





SINGAPORE AIRLINES BUSINESS CLASS

NAJBARDZIEJ PRZESTRONNA JAKĄ WIDZIAŁ ŚWIAT



Nasza Business Class – najbardziej obszerna w swojej kategorii, zapewnia luksus wypoczynku w czasie lotu. Wyjątkowy fotel rozkłada się w idealnie płaskie, największe podniebne łóżko, gdzie możesz swobodnie się wyciągnąć.

Zasmakuj komfortu na pokładach samolotów typu A380, Boeing 777-300ER i A340-500.



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.

DE IAN GOSPODAREK

ATR 42 can seat up to 46 passengers, but during our flight from Warsaw to Bydgoszcz there were 17 people on board and only 10 during the return trip. We hope, however, that this connection will remain for longer in LOT's flight schedule.

LOT With Yet Another Award

the award for "Best Airline in Eastern Europe". The award was presented to Dorota Haller - the Marketing and Product Manager in LOT Polish Airlines.

Mamaison In the Rythm Of Carnival

and magic thanks to colourful costumes, masks, actors, excellent cuisine, and splendid music. Mamaison Suite Hotel Pachtuv Palace offers a 10% room discount for the time of the festival.



POŁĄCZ
PRZEPIĘKNE MIEJSCE W SAMYM SERCU WARSZAWY,
ELEGANCKIE WNĘTRZA PAŁACU SOBAŃSKICH,
SZEFA KUCHNI ZE ŚWIATOWYM DOŚWIADCZENIEM.
DODAJ NAJWYŻSZEJ JAKOŚCI MIĘSO OD POLSKICH HODOWCÓW
I RYBY Z MAZURSKICH JEZIOR.
PODLEJ ŁYKIEM WYBORNEGO WINA.
POŁĄCZ Z ZESTAWEM TRZECH DAŃ W CENIE 79 ZŁ*.
UDEKORUJ UŚMIECHNIĘTYMI KELNERAMI
Z NAJLEPSZYMI MANIERAMI W WARSZAWIE ...
... I PODAJ DO STOŁU.



SKŁADNIKI KULINARNEJ DOSKONAŁOŚCI.



AMBER ROOM
RESTAURACJA



PAŁAC SOBAŃSKICH, ALEJE UJAZDOWSKIE 13, 00-567 WARSZAWA
+48 22 523 66 64 WWW.KPRB.PL/AMBER

*3-DANIOWY BIZNES LUNCH (PRZYSTAWKA, DANIE GŁÓWNE I DESER) 79PLN. OD PONIEDZIAŁKU DO PIĄTKU OD 12.00 DO 15.00.

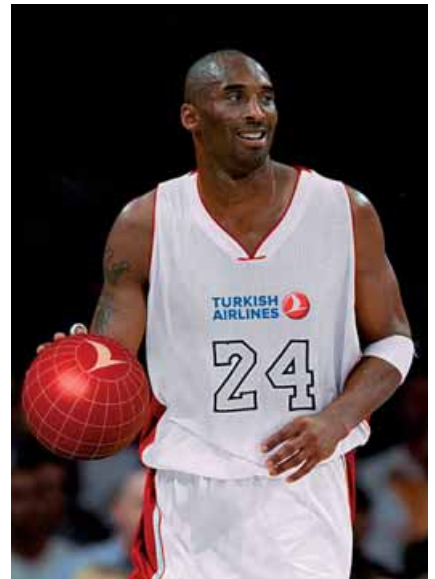
SPORTY TURKISH AIRLINES



Turkish Airlines - a fast-developing and presently one of the most profitable airlines in Europe (although just a few years ago many predicted its collapse) has chosen their new advertising faces. In the recent past the company changed its logo and the livery on its

aircraft – now Turkish Airlines has reached a three-year deal with Caroline Wozniacki – the world's number one ranked tennis player – to endorse THY's new business class concept. The deal makes Wozniacki – a Dane with the Polish roots – the latest top sports figure to become associated with Turkey's national carrier.

It has also been recently announced that LA Lakers Kobe Bryant signed a two-year deal to promote Turkish Airlines in the USA. Bryant has been named Most Valuable Player of the NBA finals for the past two years, and has won five NBA championships in his career. He is scheduled to make several appearances on behalf of Turkish Airlines in the coming year, including for the planned Los Angeles launch.



Finnair Ecologically



Finnair has for long been focusing on implementing various pro-ecological solutions. The airline has just launched a new Corporate Responsibility web pages. The new pages show in a fresh and a creative way how an airline can be a responsible actor in society and what actions and decisions a passenger can take to travel responsibly and reduce travel-related emissions.

Finnair flies one of the most modern fleets in the world. The average age of Finnair's aircraft is less than 7 years and under 4 for the long-haul fleet. The company aims to reduce emissions between 2009 and 2017 by 24 per cent. Total emissions per seat will be reduced by 41 per cent for the period from 1999 to 2017.



Condohotels in Ostróda

The end of January marked the launch of Willa Port Conference Resort & Spa in Masurian Ostróda. The complex, which is owned by Condohotels, offers luxurious suites in condo system. In the system, which is quite well known in Western Europe, a person purchases a hotel suite and then placed under the management of a specialized company. The rental agreement, which is signed for 10 years, stipulates that for the first three years the investor is guaranteed to receive a 25% return of the invested net capital. The money is paid in quarterly payments. Afterwards, the income generated



rated by all the suites in the hotel is divided between the investors and the managing company in 50/50 ratio.

The hotel in Ostróda features 83 suites, two restaurants, conference facilities, and a spa & wellness complex.

**PRZYJEMNOŚĆ
LATANIA
“MADE IN ITALY”.**



Odkryj całe Włochy z Alitalia – dzięki lotom do 28 włoskich miast zabierzemy Cię tam gdzie tylko chcesz.



alitalia.pl

Alitalia SKYTEAM

NEW BOEING 777 For Air France



Air France has put to service a new-version Boeing 777-300ER equipped with one more business-class cabin and new in-flight products. The latest version of the Boeing 777-300ER seats up to 383 passengers, in a 3-cabin configuration, which includes 42 seats in business class, 24 seats in the premium Voyageur class and 317 seats in the Voyageur class. The aircraft has been operating on Paris-Ho Chi Minh since January.

The B777-300ER is the 200th Boeing aircraft to be delivered to Air France since 1955, when Air France purchased its first Boeing 707.

The new features on board the B777-300ER include: the new Business class seat which offers more comfort thanks to various new innovations including a new seat struc-

ture which reclines into a two metre-long seat bed, seat controls which are easier to use, new storage space, a 15-inch (38 cm) wide video screen in 16:9 format. Specially developed for Air France by Panasonic, the new in-flight entertainment system available in all cabins has a USB socket enabling passengers to download free programmes or read audio, photos and video files on a USB key. Air France also offers its customers access to an interactive meal service menu with the option to download recipes. In all cabins, new bars with fridge/freezer display cabinets are available for passengers to help themselves to drinks and ice-creams (Haagen Dasz) depending on the flight duration.

Out of the eleven B777 aircraft on order, Air France will have received four by May 2011.

New Menu In The Oriental

The Oriental restaurant, located in Sheraton Warsaw hotel and highly appraised by the Varsovians, has presented a new menu. It contains a choice of aromatic dishes from South-East Asia.

Lovers of oriental cuisine will find there a wide choice of seafood and fish, as well as excellent Kobe beef, and the Argentine rib steak. Artur Gajber – the chef of the restaurant recommends especially: a scallop shashlik with bok choy cabbage and garlic and pepper sauce (PLN95); baramundi fish with garlic and green pepper served with green beans and lemon grass (PLN 85); oceanic soup of seafood with chilli, mushrooms, lemon grass, and ba-

sil (PLN 33); or golden, oriental pie with filling of prawn, crab, and green curry, served with home-made pineapple sauce (PLN 45).



A NICE GADGET A NICE GADGET A NICE GADGET

Apple In the Wall

Skross has introduced a new, useful gadget aimed at users of all type of devices with a logo of a bitten apple. Skross World USB Charger with iPod Cable is a nice duo consisting of an AC adapter and a USB cable for various Apple mobile devices. The adapter produced by the Swiss company, enables us to charge our iPads, iPhones, and iPods in over 150 countries worldwide, independently of the type of a socket used in a given country. All you need is electricity.



The Champions' League

Nothing adds more prestige to a restaurant than the fact that it's included in Michelin culinary guide. As it is the case each year, Michelin published its prestigious Michelin Stars. Anonymous Michelin inspectors granted the stars, which are so much desired by so many in the culinary world, to 2409 restaurants worldwide. French restaurants dominate, but, according to the guide, this year Tokyo is "the most delicious" city.

Apart from the stars granted for quality, Michelin also announced the restaurants which were awarded "Bib Gourmand" rating for offering "good food at moderate prices". Once again, France dominated the ranking.

The criteria of awarding stars haven't changed for 75 years. The guide awards one to three stars to a small number of restaurants of outstanding quality. One star indicates a "very good cuisine in its category", a two-star ranking represents "excellent cuisine, worth a detour," and three stars are awarded to restaurants offering "exceptional cuisine, worth a special journey".

Among 32 Polish restaurants, which appeared in the latest European guide, only one – Warsaw's "U Kucharczy" restaurant was awarded Bib Gourmand rating.



REZYDENCJA
FOKSAL



KLEJNOT WŚRÓD APARTAMENTÓW



Luksusowe apartamenty, stylowe biura i ekskluzywne lokale usługowe w wyjątkowej rezydencji tuż przy Trakcie Królewskim.

Rezydencja Foksal mieści najwyższej klasy apartamenty, ekskluzywny salon spa & wellness z basenem, jacuzzi oraz salą do squasha i piwnicę do starzenia wina. O komfort i wygodę mieszkańców troszczy się dedykowany konsjerż.

Parter zajmują wysokiej klasy lokale usługowe, których witryny wychodzą na sąsiadujący z ulicą Foksal fragment ulicy Kopernika. Do kameralnych biur na pierwszym piętrze prowadzi osobna recepcja przy głównym wejściu do budynku.

Najwyższy standard architektury, wysmakowane wnętrza art déco i najlepsza lokalizacja w sercu dawnej Warszawy – to gwarancja nienagannego stylu, prestiżu i wyjątkowości.

Developer



BBI Development

www.rezydencjafoksal.pl

Projektant



Biuro Sprzedaży: BBI DEVELOPMENT NFI SA ul. Emilii Plater 28
VI piętro, 00-688 Warszawa, tel.: (22) 630 33 55, www.bbidevelopment.pl

JUVENES PROJEKT Sp. z o.o., 03-717 Warszawa, ul. I. Kłopotowskiego 22

Lufthansa With New Seats

Lufthansa is undergoing a 170 million euro investment programme of enhancements to its cabins and in-flight products. The airline is to install some 32,000 new seats on more than 180 aircraft in its short and medium-haul fleet, within the space of just one year.

As the newly designed Recaro seats take up less room than the previous seats, up to two additional rows of seats can be installed on each aircraft. The new cabin on European routes will thus raise levels of passenger



comfort and make a substantial contribution towards improving cost efficiency. The slimmer seats will also enable to increase the legroom by 4 centimetres. It seems little, but on a flight which takes over 3 hours, it might make a difference. Lufthansa will thus be able to offer about 2,000 additional seats, which is equivalent to the capacity of twelve Airbus A320s.

Lufthansa is also making innovations in its inflight service. Economy Class passengers travelling on domestic routes will not just be offered the usual wide selection of beverages, but will also be served a snack. On cross-border European services with a flight time of more than two hours, they will be offered a hot meal. In future, on its European

routes, Lufthansa will cooperate with renowned chefs. The first one to create menus as part of Lufthansa's new inflight service is the German star-rated chef Heiko Antoniewicz.



Airbus x 10,000

Airbus announced this morning its 10,000th order with a firm contract from Virgin America for 60 A320s, including 30 A320neo aircraft.

That's quite a success, taking into consideration the fact that with the new year the prices for the new Airbus went up. The average increase in prices is 4.4 %. A380 is an exception here, as the increment in case of this model was 8.4 per cent. "As we continue to ramp-up production rates to meet the unprecedented global demand

for Airbus aircraft, the required industrial investments we are making, coupled with a weak Dollar, necessitates raising our aircraft prices across the board," said John Leahy, Airbus Chief Operating Officer, Customers. "Moreover, the A380's further price adjustment reflects the type's exceptional value it clearly generates for its operators, with whom it has exceeded all expectations in service," Leahy said.

The company's single-aisle planes will now cost from \$65.2 million for the A318 to \$99.7 million for the A321. The A350 widebody, will be priced at between \$236.6 million and \$299.7 million, depending on the size variant. The new catalogue will have the 525-seat A380 superjumbo up by 8.4 per cent, or \$29 million, for a total new price of \$375 million.



Sky Team Is Growing

Sky Team which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, is planning to conquer new markets. Presently, the alliance has 13 member airlines, providing its passengers with 420 lounges worldwide, and offering 12,500 flights daily to almost 900 destinations. In January 2011 Saudi Arabian Airlines was the first member from the Middle East to announce its membership in the alliance. Adding MEA as the second member from this region complements the network offer to SkyTeam customers and illustrates the continuing global expansion that SkyTeam accelerated last year.



®
F I F T H A V E N U E
R e a l E s t a t e & I n v e s t m e n t

Oferujemy tylko słoneczne nieruchomości



• www.Fifthavenue.pl •

FIFTH AVENUE Sp.j.
ul. Nowy Świat 38/4
00-363 Warszawa
tel. 22 828 63 63

ON BOARD: WARSAW – FRANKFURT – WARSAW

Lufthansa Boeing 737 Business class

INFO Lufthansa closely collaborates with LOT Polish Airlines as both the airlines are members of Star Alliance. This is particularly beneficial for passengers, who can reach Frankfurt from Warsaw using one of a few daily connections offered by both air carriers. The first flight takes off at 6.25 am (excluding Sundays), another one at 9.40 am (excluding Mondays and Sundays), while the other ones at 11.25 am, 2.10 pm, 6.15 pm, and 7.30 pm.

CHECK-IN Who might have thought that at the end of December Warsaw would be covered with snow? Usually, such situation catches our road services off guard. This time it was the same, so the roads leading to the capital's airport were completely jammed. That's why I deci-

ded to turn up at the airport a few hours in advance, to avoid problems. I didn't know that those would be the last hours before many airports in our part of Europe would be closed. Several hours later, a real ordeal of thousands of passengers stuck at airport terminals, was a front page news. This was somewhat signalled by omnipresent snowploughs on the runway of the airport.

There was not a living creature at the desk of Lufthansa, when I arrived there for my 7.30 pm flight. I had checked myself in online the day before (it's possible to do it up to 23 hours before the flight), and had selected my seat. However, I hadn't printed out my boarding pass and had to collect it at the desk, which took just

a few seconds. A boarding pass can also be downloaded on your mobile, to show it at the check-in.

The luggage control went swiftly, although the scanner for business customers was also available for passengers from economy class. A few minutes later I entered the departure lounge and made for the gate. Initially, we were informed that we would leave from Gate 5, but it was still occupied by passengers flying to Copenhagen. Owing to that we were redirected



LUFTHANSA / DEJAN GOSPODAREK



to Gate 24 and informed that our departure would be delayed by 2 minutes. It wasn't surprising, though, as our plane had merely arrived from Frankfurt and it was now approaching the boarding bridge to disembark the passengers.

BOARDING Finally, when we were called to board the plane, all the procedures were limited to the basics. The first passengers to board were those with seats in rows 14-24. Those travelling in business class could board at any moment.

After a short while I found myself on board Boeing 737 and took my seat 4A. A steward took my jacket and put it in the locker. We were waiting impatiently for the take-off, however the captain announced that our plane must first be de-iced. As a result, we took off at 8.37 – over an hour after the scheduled time.

THE SEAT The seats in B737 are configured 3+3. Business class consists of four first rows (plus 3 additional seats at the front row). The backrests between seats A-C and D-F are folded permanently and serve as tables for trays and drinks. The seats, upholstered with soft grey leather, are very comfortable and provide a lot of space, because the pitch is 80 centimetres, so you can easily stretch your legs. Taking into consideration the fact that this fleet operates only on short-haul flights, there's enough space on board Lufthansa's plane.

THE FLIGHT Before the take-off each of us was offered a bar of chocolate. This made the additional waiting time more palatable. We reached the cruising altitude quite swiftly and the flight attendants began the in-flight service. Just a few days earlier Lufthansa had introduced a new menu in its aircraft. The menu was prepared by Heiko Antoniewicz – an expert in molecular cuisine. His salad with strips of veal and a sauce of pumpkin seeds was excellent. For dessert we were served an apple pie and a box with two pralines to somewhat enhance the Christmas atmo-

sphere. As for the drinks, there was a wide selection of alcohols as well as coffee and tea.

A few minutes before landing, the passengers who continued their trip were informed of a change of gates for their further flights. At 9.43 the "fasten your seatbelts" lights came on and the procedure of landing began.

ARRIVAL The airport in Frankfurt is a well-organized place. When we arrived there, the airport was heavily covered with snow, but the crew managed to minimize the initial delay.

RETURN INFO The return flights from Frankfurt to Warsaw take off as early as 7.20 am (except Sundays). Other flights are operated together by LOT and Lufthansa at 9.15 am (except Sundays), 11.45 am (except Wednesdays and Saturdays), 2.10 pm, 5.05 pm (only on working days), and at 8.55.

CHECK-IN I was returning to Warsaw with flight LH1350 at 5.05 pm. In Terminal 1, where several check-in desks are located, I decided to use a special zone for business class. The formalities take there only a short while. I checked in my luggage, collected my boarding pass with seat 3F, and after an express security control I entered the departure area with enough time to visit a Business Lounge.

THE LOUNGE Terminal 1 features several Lufthansa Lounges, including a few called "Senator" and open only for first class passengers. I visited a lounge close to Gate A51. On entrance you show your boarding pass or a gold/platinum Miles&More membership card. That lounge is open for the longest period of time; it opens at 5.30 am and closes at 10 pm.

Since it was afternoon, the lounge was quite busy. Almost all seats were occupied, including the ones in front of large TV screens and even the bar stools at tall tables. However there wasn't any queue at the self-service bar, although people

used it quite frequently. The selection of food included fresh fruit, vegetable cream soup, frankfurter sausages with hot dog buns. There was also a choice of snacks as well as alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.

The lounge doesn't have any display informing passengers of their flights, so you must observe the clock on the wall to be sure you won't leave the place too late.

BOARDING The boarding began on time. We had been informed earlier that the plane had overbooking, so the regulations on hand luggage will be closely observed. That is why we had to present our luggage to make sure that it can be taken to the cabin. It turned out that some passengers had to check in their bags as checked luggage.

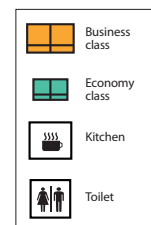
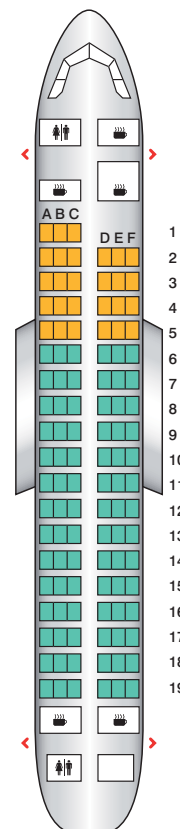
THE FLIGHT We were leaving Frankfurt which was covered with snow, but not to such an extent as was Warsaw. However two days later the situation at the airport changed dramatically. The air traffic at the place stopped completely.

We took off at 5.10 pm. My seat (3F), was a window one and very comfortable, so I was able to focus only on work. The flight went in a pleasant atmosphere, without any incidents. Once again the on board menu was excellent. I was served a chicken fricassee with sweet potatoes in spiced sesame sauce, feta cheese with figs, and fresh vegetable salad.

We arrive in Warsaw according to the scheduled time. The only thing left was to wait for our luggage at the carousel.

VERDICT The business class on short haul flight is Lufthansa's strong point.

Wojciech Chelchowski



FACTS

SEAT CONFIGURATION 3+3
SEAT WIDTH 45,7 cm
SEAT PITCH 85 cm
PRICE A business class ticket booked online at the airline's website (for the second half of January) cost PLN 3,285.
CONTACT Lufthansa.pl



AT AIRPORT: LONDYN, HEATHROW T1

Star Alliance Lounge

BACKGROUND The new Star Alliance lounge at Terminal 1 opened in July last year, the same day member carriers United and Air New Zealand moved into the terminal from T3. Other Star carriers followed from Terminals 2 and 3.

WHERE IS IT? On the same floor as departures, in the former British Airways lounge, to the right of the duty-free area.

WHO CAN USE IT? First and business class passengers, invited guests and Star Alliance gold-card holders travelling on any member carrier from Terminal 1.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Business class is to the left of reception, with a self-service dining area with high chairs and tables immediately past the entrance. There is a good range of food options, including sandwiches, salads, curries, fresh fruit and cakes, and a choice of beverages including fruit juice, alcohol and mixers, and a coffee machine.

Décor in the lounge is smart, with slate-coloured flooring, white walls and two-tone wood panelling. Past the dining area is a TV zone with flatscreen televisions (showing BBC news when I was there), a co-

uple of seating areas (one raised section with lots of natural light, and another with wooden artwork on the walls), and a children's area in one corner. There are also 13 shower cubicles with hairdryers and Gilchrist and Soames amenities.

At the opposite end of the lounge is another seating area and a business centre with ten booths. Facilities here include a photocopier/fax/printer, power sockets and wired internet inputs. Computer terminals are due to be added in the near future for those without laptops. There is wifi internet access throughout the lounge through T-Mobile, free for first class and Global Services passengers (United's highest tier in its frequent flyer scheme), and chargeable for business class customers.

Other features include several shelves with a good selection of newspapers and magazines, bowls of fresh fruit, departu-

res boards in each seating area, and the odd flower arrangement. When I arrived on a Monday afternoon at 1530, the lounge was almost empty, although it had filled up considerably by the time I left at 1700.

The separate first class lounge is to the right of reception, and is smaller but fairly similar in feel. The premium lounge has its own shower facilities, and a slightly enhanced choice of food and drink. There is a total of 300 seats across the two lounges, which occupy 1,650 sqm of space.

VERDICT Modern and bright with a good range of eating and drinking options, lots of showers, and plenty of separate areas to either work, relax, eat or watch TV in. My only gripe would be that wifi internet access is chargeable for business class.

Mark Caswell





Rejsy największymi statkami wycieczkowymi świata!

**Morze Śródziemne, Karaiby, Alaska, Australia
i inne egzotyczne miejsca**

Telefon 022 455 38 48

www.rccl.pl





HOTEL: BYDGOSZCZ

Holiday Inn

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The hotel was opened in October 2010, so it is a very fresh enterprise. I must admit it makes a very positive impression. The modern, but at the same time simple body of the building, has been perfectly integrated into the old town of Bydgoszcz. Especially because the hotel's character is even more emphasized by its brick-red walls. The hotel debuted as a host venue to Camerimage film festival, so it really kicked off on a high note.

Holiday Inn is the first hotel investment by Budizol group, which is keen on developing this kind of activity quite soon.

It is a historical place where once, centuries ago, stood a castle. The excavation works, which were held before the construction of the hotel started, revealed numerous interesting showpieces found on site. These were handed over to the National Museum, but the hotel wants to organize a special exhibition some time in the future.

A spacious foyer with a reception area on the left, and a gastronomic one on the right, tells you to expect an austere, but rustic atmosphere. There are round tables of bright orange colour by the reception desk. The corridor walls are painted in steel colours with bright, contrasting ornaments.

WHERE IS IT? In the very centre of Bydgoszcz, by the Brda river. That's an excellent location for a business trip with accommodation, or for an evening walk along the river to the city centre. It takes about 15 minutes to get there in a taxi from Paderewski airport, situated about 4 kilometres away. The railway station is even closer (2.5 km), and getting there takes only a few minutes.

ROOM FACILITIES Holiday Inn in Bydgoszcz has 134 rooms and offers abo-



ut 266 places altogether. It is the biggest four-star hotel in the city.

The standard room is about 20 sq m. Pastel-hued walls, dark and modern furniture, a big and characteristic bedhead and relaxing, soft lighting make quite an impression, when you enter the room.

The Executive rooms are of higher quality (there are 17), offer bigger space; the equipment is similar to the Standard room, but here a guests can also have a bathrobe, cordless phones in the room, and a different and bigger set of toiletries in the bathroom. There are 8 spacious suites in the hotel.

Each room comes with an individually-adjusted air conditioning, a mini bar, a laptop safe, tea and coffee making facilities and satellite TV. In many places around the hotel, there plexiglass paintings with etched ornaments and pictures promoting the city. There is an access to broadband, wireless Internet throughout the hotel. It is free of charge. In the rooms you can also connect to the wired net.

An additional bonus is the so-called pillow service (you can choose between soft, hard and an anti-allergic one) and a very comfortable bed with a triple mattress. Exceptionally tall guests can have their beds lengthened up to 240 centimetres.

Three rooms have been adapted for the needs of allergy sufferers, and ano-

ther three - for the needs of disabled people.

BUSINESS FACILITIES The total area of all the conference rooms in the hotel is 600 square metres. There are six business rooms, and thanks to the moveable walls, they can be combined together to suit bigger events. Opera, the biggest one (the other ones also have names connected with music: Puccini, Verdi, Aida, Traviata and Tosca) is 340 square metres and can hold 350 participants. Each room has access to natural light and fast internet connection, professional sound system and in-ceiling screens and projectors. The conference room has a separate entrance and a reception area.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS The main restaurant in Holiday Inn is Bole-ro, situated on level -1. The chef is Jacek Szczepański, a well-known cook in the business (for the past few years he worked for president Aleksander Kwaśniewski and his guests). In his menu, you will find, for example, lamb chops in wine sauce with grilled vegetables, or a sturgeon with cucumber sauce and potatoes.

If you need to relax, grab a drink at Libretto Lounge Bar. On the top floor, there is Sky Café, which can also be used for less formal business meetings.

LEISURE FACILITIES You will find here a wellness centre with fitness equipment and a sauna.

VERDICT A good four-star accommodation for a businessperson travelling to Bydgoszcz.



CONTACT Holiday Inn Bydgoszcz; Grodzka 36, 85-109 Bydgoszcz; Tel. 52 34 77 007; holiday.hgb.com.pl

PRICE Internet rates for a standard room booked for the end of January started at PLN 409.50.

Wojciech Chelchowski

Celebrity **X** Cruises®



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





HOTEL: PRAGUE

Augustine

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Open since May last year, the Rocco Forte Collection's five-star Augustine hotel has been seamlessly created from seven buildings, one of which is the still-functioning 13th-century monastery after which the hotel is named. It is a member of the Leading Hotels of the World. Like the Collection's other properties, the interior décor is by Sir Rocco's sister Olga Polizzi, and she has been inspired here by the Czech Cubist movement, with striking art pieces on display in the public areas and guestrooms.

The lobby is bright and elegant with a marble floor, a skylight that lets in the sunshine, deep red and black leather armchairs and a big fireplace. Reception is to your right as you go in, to the left is a corridor leading to the restaurant, and ahead is the entrance to the ballroom. A peaceful monasterial feeling is created through – in some hallways, alternate fake doors mimic the original layout of the monks' quarters, while prints of the monks hang on the walls.

WHERE IS IT? In Mala Strana, a charming district with cobbled streets a few minutes' walk from Charles Bridge and the Old Town. The airport is about a 30-minute drive.

ROOM FACILITIES The 101 rooms start from 32 sqm in size and come in a range of categories – Classic, Executive, Deluxe and Superior Deluxe Castle View, Studio and a selection of suites. They look on to the hotel courtyards, the monastery chapel or Prague Castle, and the three-storey Tower suite in particular offers stunning 360-degree views. Facilities that come as standard include air conditioning, wired internet access priced at Kc600 (£20) per 24 hours – wifi is available in the public areas – marble bathrooms with

REN toiletries, minibar, flatscreen TV, safe, 24-hour room service, twice-daily maid service, two free bottles of mineral water, free shoeshine service and a pillow menu.

I stayed in a Superior Deluxe Castle View room on the third floor. It was spacious and beautifully decorated with rich furnishings and fabrics in greens, mosses and browns. The floor was wooden and a little hard underfoot, so I was glad of the slippers supplied. A comfy king-size bed was dressed with 100 per cent linen sheets. Marble-topped dark wooden chests sat on either side of the bed, and opposite was a larger chest with the TV on top. There were also two lime green armchairs, a footstool, a circular thick wooden table and attractive vases and lamps. The windows opened to a lovely view of the terracotta roofs surrounding the property and, beyond them, Prague Castle. Books by Wodehouse, Woolf and Dickens were provided for those in a literary mood. The minibar was well stocked but I missed not having tea and coffee-making facilities in the room.

The bedroom led on to a working and dressing area with a dark wood desk, a Bose iPod dock and a wardrobe with plenty of hanging space. There weren't many plugs, and as the internet is wired, you are restricted to using your laptop at the desk. This area led on to the bathroom, which was elegant with a walk-in rainshower, bath, twin sinks and bird-inspired art pieces.

BUSINESS AND MEETING FACILITIES Leading off from the lobby is a 200-capacity ballroom – it has no daylight but is bright with a high vaulted ceiling and a pre-function space opposite. Also on the lobby level, down a quiet corridor, are a 24-hour business centre and three stylish meeting rooms. Two of these can be joined together to offer 71 sqm

of space – don't be surprised to see a tram whipping past the window. Coffee breaks can be held in the corridor. In the basement is a larger meeting room holding 60 people theatre-style and 90 for a reception – again, it benefits from a vaulted ceiling, and features attractive wall drapes. All the meeting spaces are wifi equipped.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS The bright, glass-walled Monastery restaurant is a relaxed space with a mixture of seating. It opens on to a spacious outdoor terrace with a big old tree in the centre and a covered arcade section with sofas – this in turn leads on to the monks' Sundial garden and the elegant, laidback Tom's bar. A la carte and buffet breakfast options are available, and the service is excellent, with the friendly staff remembering my choices from the day before. The restaurant is also open for lunch and dinner, serving well presented European fare. An excellent three-course set lunch is available for Kc650 (£22).

Tom's bar is a lovely spot for cocktails, with a high vaulted ceiling and relaxing music, while in the basement is the Brewery bar, housed in the cave where the resident monks made their own beer, St Thomas, until 1953. The beer is back in production off-site and is exclusive to the bar, so you can sample it while looking at the original 17th-century stalactites and stalagmites. Tom's is open Mon-Sun 11am-midnight and the Brewery Tue-Sat 3.30pm-11pm.

LEISURE FACILITIES There is a spa in the basement with four treatment rooms, a steam room, a manicure station and what the hotel says is the only Turkish hammam in Prague. There is also a small gym with Technogym equipment.

VERDICT A beautifully designed luxury hotel, as you would expect from a member of the Rocco Forte Collection. Excellent dining facilities, a tranquil atmosphere and welcoming staff.

Michelle Mannion



CONTACT S12/33 Letenska; tel +42 026 6112 233; roccofortecollection.com

PRICE Internet rates for a midweek stay in August started from €297 for a Classic room.

Potęga smaku i aromatu.
Nowa era dla koneserów kawy.

sensoFlow System aromaPressure System aromaDouble Shot singlePortion Cleaning autoWhirl Plus directWhirl creamCleaner
oneTouch Function® individualCup Volume creamCenter creamCenter Cleaner autoValve System silentCeram Drive ceramDrive

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.

The future moving in.

SIEMENS



HOTEL: MOSCOW

Radisson Royal

BACKGROUND The imposing Stalin-era Radisson Royal is in one of Moscow's Seven Sisters towers – it opened as the Hotel Ukraina during the 1950s and is still often referred to by this name despite a large-scale three-year revamp by the Rezidor Hotel Group. It became the Radisson Royal in April, and both monikers are now installed above the entrance.

WHAT'S IT LIKE The 34-storey tiered edifice is a fine example of Soviet might, and the rococo interiors continue the theme of Russian opulence, with plenty of marble, yellow gold, floral upholstery, plush carpets, murals and chandeliers. The Tatler Club restaurant and some of the Executive rooms have a more modern look. About 1,200 paintings by prominent 20th-century Russian artists are displayed in the public spaces and bedrooms. The five-star service is formal yet friendly.

WHERE IS IT On the southerly banks of the Moskva River – it is easy to spot from almost any point in the city centre. The nearest metro station is Smolenskaya, about 15–20 minutes' walk, but there are plenty of taxis outside the hotel – agree a fare beforehand. Traffic permitting, it is about 15 minutes' drive to Red Square and 45 minutes to Domodedovo airport.

ROOM FACILITIES I stayed in a standard Classic room (23–25 sqm) – it had river views, heavy curtains, a small workdesk, free wifi/wired internet, a flatscreen TV, robes and slippers, a safe, minibar and

small wardrobe. The modest-sized bathroom had a combined tub/shower, bidet and Penhaligon's toiletries. There are smoking and non-smoking floors and although my room didn't smell of cigarettes, the corridors did. A motion-sensitive light in the entry hall of the room went on and off unnecessarily. Iron/ironing boards are not provided, but when I called reception for one it was brought up promptly. Room service is available 24 hours.

Executive bedrooms are on levels ten and 11 and provide more space (from 34 sqm), a free daily newspaper, Frette robes, espresso machines, bullet-proof windows and access to the 11th-floor lounge. This offers private check-in and check-out, a restaurant serving a buffet breakfast, and snacks and drinks throughout the day.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS Veranda serves an extensive buffet breakfast (6.30am–11am daily) and informal lunches (12pm–4pm Mon–Fri) – expect white tablecloths, bright lighting and opulent décor. There is also a 24-hour lobby bar offering snacks, pastries, coffee and cocktails. On the 29th floor is the fine-dining Italian eatery Bono, which has stunning views of the city at night – it is open from 12pm until late. The 31st-floor Trobadour karaoke bar opened in July.

The independently run Tatler Club on the ground floor has an eclectic menu offering everything from Russian to Spanish cuisine, and is lauded as one of the hottest new dining spots in the city – judging by the fashionable clientele and flash cars driving up in the evening, this is probably true. However, when I ate there one

evening, none of the impossibly attractive staff understood any English. I was given a different main dish to the vegetarian one I had ordered, before my companions had even finished their starters, and then had to explain what I wanted to several people. When my truffle linguine did eventually arrive, it was small but delicious. Hopefully any teething problems have now been overcome.

BUSINESS AND MEETING FACILITIES The conference venues are all on the second floor and include four meeting rooms for ten to 28 delegates, a 160-capacity hall with columns, an oak floor and natural light, and two spaces holding up to 350 theatre-style in each. Veranda can also be used for events, and there is a grand business centre, known as the Library, with workdesks and about a dozen PCs and laptops. It's open 7am–12am but guests can also use it after hours.

LEISURE FACILITIES The sleek Royal Wellness Club, is in the basement – it has a 50-metre pool, sports bar, large fitness centre with Technogym equipment, two spa baths, a training room with body balls, wet and dry saunas, and 12 treatment rooms. The gym and pool are open 7am–12am (from 8am weekends), and the spa 10am–10pm. The hotel has its own fleet of river cruisers offering twice-daily two-hour trips with optional lunch or dinner.

VERDICT An impressive historical hotel that has benefited considerably from an extensive refurbishment. It offers excellent facilities for business travellers, from well-equipped Executive rooms to the luxurious wellness club. A very good choice.

Jenny Southan





CONTACT Radisson Royal Hotel
Moscow, 2/1, Building 1, Kutuzovsky
Prospekt; tel +7 495 221 5555;
radissonblu.com

RATES Internet rates for a midweek
stay in December started from
15,930 rubles (£334).



DIGITAL CAMERA: SONY NEX-5

INFO The Alpha range was introduced by Sony five years ago. In May 2010, the company introduced to it two compact digital cameras with removable lens and a sensor of the same size as in regular Sony DSLRs. The series has been named NEX and its flagship product is Sony NEX-5. The camera is remarkably small in size, has a magnesium alloy body and a cutting edge 14.2 MP APS-C sensor. The versatility of the camera is even bigger thanks to removable lenses and ability to record HD 1080i videos. Another interesting function is ability to record in 3D sweep panorama.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The first thing that catches our attention is surprisingly thin body of the camera (24 mm in the narrowest point). In this way NEX-5 is presently the smallest compact camera with removable lenses. There's also nothing to complain about the quality of the fabrics and of their assembly. Sony boasts about the cameras magnesium alloy body, but its back part is made of plastic. A slightly deeper grip provides more stability.

The tested kit was actually named NEX-5D, and it's not the only configuration available on the market. The camera can also be purchased with a 16 mm lens or 18-200/3.5-6.3 OSS. The lenses can, obviously, be also purchased separately.

BUILD AND DESIGN The camera has a magnesium alloy body, an anti-slip handgrip and a piece of rubber under the

thumb. The bodies and the bayonets of the lenses are made of metal and were designed with a sense of taste

The body of the camera doesn't feature a lot of buttons and sockets – with such a small device featuring a large display, nothing more would fit anyway. The power switch, replay, shutter and dedicated movie capture buttons adorn the top of the body. There is also a “MOVIE” button which is used for viewing photos and recording videos. On the right of the back panel there are two other buttons: one of them switches the menu, while the other one can be manually configured to our needs. There's also a combined four-way controller/jog dial with three “soft” buttons. Their use is easy and intuitive: first we press a button assigned to a given option, and then choose an item by turning the jog dial or using one of the upper or lower button.

Sony NEX-5 also features a 3-inch flip up TruBlack LCD screen with 640×480 resolution. It's not a typical swivelling screen as it can be hinged upwards by 80 degrees or downwards by 45 degrees for waist-level or overhead shooting. This allows a more stable hold for movie shooting in particular.

MENU AND MODES There are various shooting modes, including Intelligent Auto – a mode which automatically matches exposure parameters to selected predefined settings: Portrait, Sports, Macro, Landscape, Sunset, Night View, Night Portrait and Hand-held Night Shot modes. The Anti-Motion Blur function captures six images in a fraction of a second. Combining the data from all six creates a single image that minimizes subject blur. A Sweep Panorama function Capture allows for taking panoramic pictures by stitching together several images. 3D Panorama Captures scenic vistas in spectacular 3D. As you sweep across the panorama, the camera records separate ri-

ght-eye and left-eye images that make landscapes come alive on your 3D television. The NEX-5 also offers a full range of controls from the beginner's iAUTO mode to P/A/S/M: Program, Aperture Priority, Shutter Priority and Manual. On-screen prompts help you refine your skills, build your confidence and exercise greater creative control.

Moving around the menu is smooth and there aren't any annoying lags. On the other hand, some of the options might have been more logically grouped. This can be particularly seen in Panorama mode – the direction of taking the photos is set in “Camera” menu, while the size of the images in “Image Size” menu.

I expected the video function to be a mere addition to the camera, because now each good camera must offer an HD video recording. However, NEX-5 can record a video in a very good quality (Full HD 1920 x 1080i, 30 fps in MP4 or AVCHD format). Autofocus is accessible while recording a video, and the camera records stereo sound even without an external microphone.

SUMMARY Sony NEX-5 is presently one of the most interesting offers in its class. For around PLN 2,000 we receive a camera which is truly versatile. It's as small as a compact camera, but it offers surprisingly good quality of images (like a good lower-shelf DSLR), thanks to its APS-C (crop 1.5x) sensor. It handles noise well, and decently renders details, at the same time offering a wide ISO range up to 12,800.

The designers of this mirrorless camera made sure that it wouldn't be too heavy, so NEX-5 offers a firm and steady grip. The camera is user-friendly with the most important elements at the user's hand. Alfa NEX has recently debuted on the market, so the selection of lenses is still quite narrow. As of now, there are 3 of them available: a light and small 16 mm F2.8 pancake, a quiet and universal 18-55 mm F3.5-5.6, and a new 18 – 200 mm F3.5-6.3 telephoto zoom lens. It should be more than enough for amateurs, but in the future Sony will definitely present several other lenses with E bayonet.

Piotr Walicki

FACTS	DIMENSIONS	111 x 59 x 38 mm
	WEIGHT	287 g (without the battery and card)
	BODY	magnesium alloy
	BATTERY	lithium-ion NP-FW50
	RESOLUTION	14,2 Mp

RESTAURANT: WARSAW

Mielżyński Wine Bar

INFO Mielżyński restaurant is, in fact, two things in one. First of all, it is a wine bar offering wines from all over the world. All European wines are stored in the old part, whereas those produced in the New World are exhibited in the new section. Those sections perform roles of both a store and a shop. Varsovians have been meeting here for lunches and busi-



ness dinners for over 7 years. The expensive cars, which stop at the front door of the restaurant, tell us a lot of the status of its guests. It's worth mentioning that another Mielżyński restaurant was launched in Poznań last year.

WHERE IS IT? The wine bar is situated in a remarkably climatic part of Warsaw, in Burakowska Street, in Żoliborz district. It is a very inspiring and mysterious place owing to the old factories which stood here in the past. Getting to the closed area, requires entering through a barrier. This allows you to park your car comfortably without wondering whether or not you have blocked the whole width of a pavement in the city centre.

INTERIOR The interior consists of the three sections mentioned above. The central section is a dining-room with a large, open kitchen thanks to which the air is filled with delicious smells of various dishes made on the spot. The kitchen is surrounded on three sides by the bar where you can eat, taste wine, and gorge yourself on home-made bread dipped in olive oil specially imported by the restaurant. One wall is mostly made of windows, which makes the place look bigger than it really is. Calm colours of brown, beige and bright wood are dominant here. The lights are dimmed, contributing to a remarkable atmosphere of relaxation and rest – so useful after a hard working day. Add to this the beautiful paintings on the walls and your evening must be successful.

MENU You won't find a typical set menu here, as the list of dishes is changed on a daily basis. The place obviously specializes in serving high-quality wines. They are arranged in "walls" eaching the ceiling, and they look truly impressive (the owner, who returned to Poland following

several years spent in Canada, seems to be a real wine-lover).

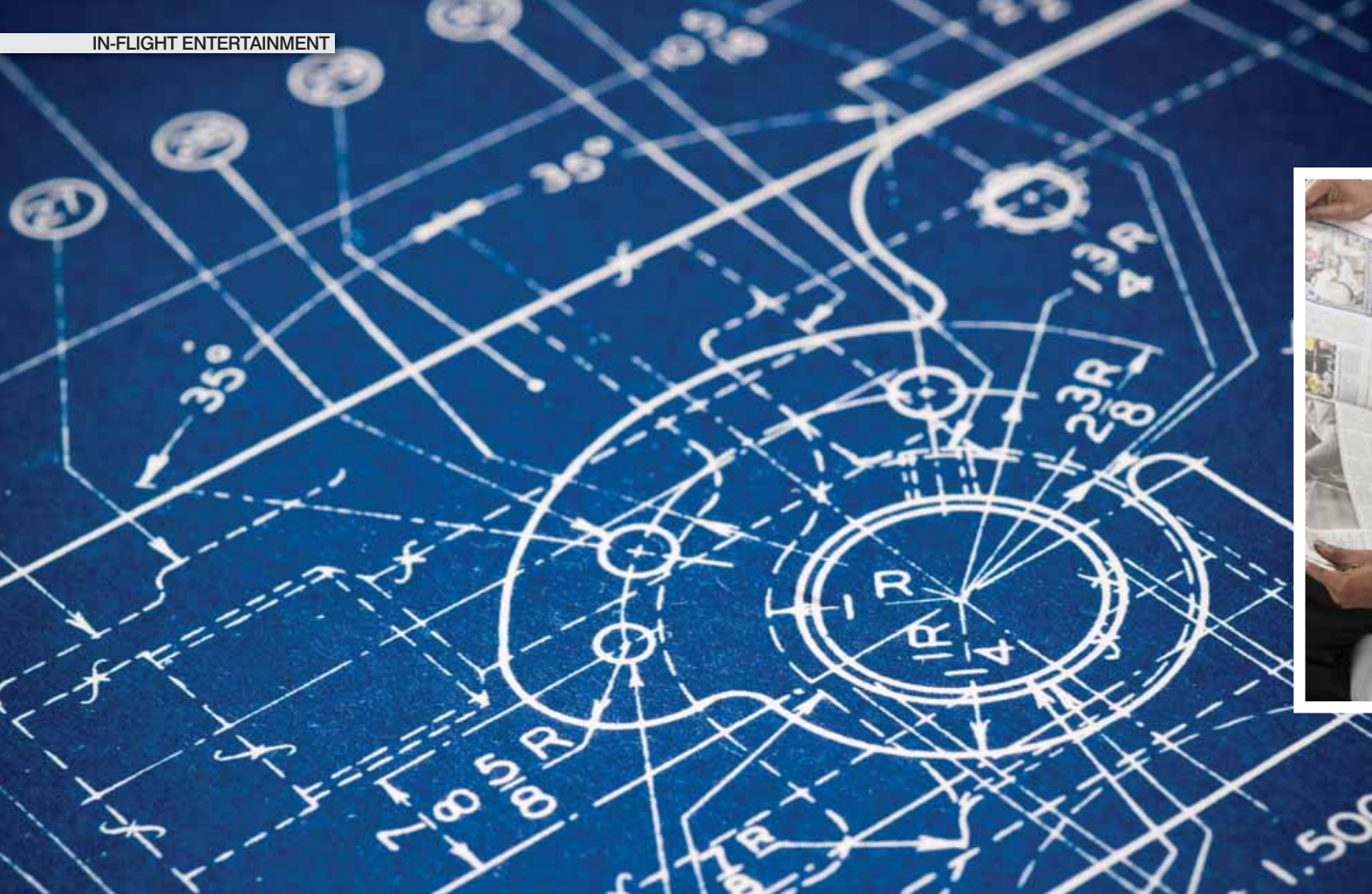
You can often get here loin or venison, prepared in various ways. The restaurant serves mostly seasonal vegetables and whenever it's possible they try not to use frozen ones. Once a year, black truffles are imported from Italy. Regular guests are informed of this fact by an e-mail, so as to know where to go for their dinner on that day. The owner of the restaurant and the waiting staff will help you choose appropriate wine to each dish. I found out that many guests on finishing their meal don't buy just one bottle of wine, but often a whole box.

PRICES Cold cuts are the only one constant element of the menu. A dessert plate of pecorino cheese costs PLN 12, a small plate of Prosciutto di Parma costs PLN 18, a large one PLN 29. For basic, warm drinks we will pay PLN 7-10, with espresso coffee being cheaper than latte. Soups cost between PLN 16-20. The prices of main dishes start at PLN 20 (a chicken tortilla costs PLN 24), depending on the daily offer (the beef carpaccio with black truffles which I tasted costs PLN 55). The prices of wines start at PLN 20, with the most expensive ones well over PLN 1,000.

VERDICT It is a very pleasant place, not overstated, and with appropriate atmosphere. It is great for business lunches and for evening discussions about business over a glass of delicious wine.

■ Mielżyński Wine Bar
Stara Fabryka Koronek
ul. Burakowska 5/7
01-066 Warszawa
Tel: + 22 636 87 09,
mielzynski.pl

Olga Chelchowska



Stay connected

More and more airlines are offering internet and mobile phone capability on board. **Tom Otley** reveals what's on offer, and how much you can expect to pay for it

Other than babies in business class, nothing causes such division among business travellers as the issue of mobile phone use on board planes. Some like the idea, most hate it, but the ability to use mobiles is only part of a raft of capabilities summed up in one word – connectivity. It's been a long time coming, but the next year or so will see more aircraft fitted with equipment that allows both internet browsing and phone use.

In most cases, connectivity comes at a charge to the traveller, although there are several different pricing models and all the airlines are keen to emphasise that this is not a revenue proposition but a product enhancement. In other

words, they aren't making much money out of it.

Why are they doing it then? These innovations have come not only because there is a demand for connectivity but also as a way for full-service airlines to differentiate themselves from their low-cost rivals. Such systems require millions of dollars in investment for each aircraft so are out of reach of the budget airlines, or simply not part of their business model.

What about the hardware? On full-service airlines, the in-flight entertainment (IFE) systems vary, but the chances are that most new ones will have the same underlying hardware – either by Thales or Panasonic Avionics Corporation. The advent of systems that you can pause (audio-video on-demand, or

AVOD) is now being superseded by connectivity – not just the ability to log on to the internet but also to make voice calls. In this, there are two main companies working with airlines to offer the service – Onair and Aeromobile – although Aircell has partnered with Delta, in addition to a number of other US and Canadian carriers, to cover more than 1,000 aircraft.

American Airlines

Mainline domestic fleets in the US have been quick to install wifi using Aircell's Gogo Inflight Internet. On AA, the fee-based service is available on all its 15 B767-200ERs and select MD80s. Its B737-800 fleet is being fitted out at the moment.

From the sign-in page you can enjoy free access to aa.com, the *Wall Street Journal's* online headlines and *Frommer's* destination guides, and then choose from a menu of pricing options offering either



mobile-only or full internet connection via your laptop. The latter costs from US\$5 for a single flight of up to 1.5 hours, US\$10 for a flight between 1.5 and three hours, and US\$13 for a flight over three hours. Each session includes full internet, VPN and email access.

If you are doing a lot of flying in the US then the 30-day pass is worth considering – it costs US\$20 for mobile-only or US\$30 for full internet access. You can also pay a slightly higher fee of US\$40 for 30 days full access on any airline equipped with Gogo technology.

The service works with all wifi-enabled devices such as smartphones, with platforms supported including BlackBerry, Windows Mobile, Apple and Nokia (Symbian S60). Mobile calls and VoIP (Voice-over Internet Protocol) services such as Skype are not available.

Cathay Pacific and Dragonair

Both of these airlines will offer onboard phone calls and unlimited wifi access on their long- and short-haul fleets from 2012. Passengers will be able to access the internet for free using the onboard IFE system. BlackBerry and PDA messaging will be enabled, along with calls, and the charge for doing so will be levied on customers own phone bills at normal or close to normal billing rates.

For users of iPads and laptops, a limited number of websites will be available free of charge, including cathaypacific.com and its partners, as well as social media services. Full internet access will be

enabled, with only video-streaming and VoIP calls such as Skype disabled.

Cathay's pricing hasn't been released but will have flat rates on mid- and long-haul flights. For smartphone users, there is a purpose-built portal that enables internet access for a charge. For the laptop and iPad, your browser will redirect you to the Cathay portal where there is free information from the airlines and a button for internet access. The charge for going online through an iPhone or smartphone is less as it involves a smaller volume of data.

On the controversial topic of mobile phone use on board, Alex McGowan, Cathay's head of product, says: "We've thought long and hard about this. A good proportion of our frequent business traveller community hate the idea and we are very sensitive to that. But other airlines offer mobile phone use and they haven't had problems. Emirates has 76 aircraft fitted and it has had one complaint in the past two and a half years. The ambient noise of the aircraft, the fact that people chat to each other in their seats and some very clear usage and etiquette guidelines all help to control that environment".

A code of conduct will be introduced to request that passengers turn their phones to vibrate and speak at a normal volume, and voice calling can be restricted by crew

A code of conduct will be introduced to request that passengers turn their phones to vibrate and speak at a normal volume. Voice calling can be restricted by cabin crew, who will be trained to intercede if necessary. If further issues arise, the airline may disable voice calling altogether, while keeping the internet accessible.

Delta Air Lines

Delta has wifi on most of its domestic fleet. As it is also powered by Aircell's Gogo Inflight Internet, the pricing is the same as that of AA. Visit delta.com

Egyptair

Egyptair already offers full wifi connectivity on its new A330-300 aircraft serving Cairo-London through a partnership with Onair, the Airbus/SITA-owned company. Described by Onair as "the full suite of connectivity solutions for cabin and cockpit – GSM/GPRS and wifi internet with global coverage", the system uses Inmarsat Swiftbroadband and allows wifi access via laptops, as well as the ability via mobile phones and smartphones to make and receive calls, send and receive

Germany's flag carrier was one of the early pioneers of broadband internet connection on aircraft with its Connexion by Boeing service



text messages and emails, and access the internet. Despite contacting Egyptair, we've been unable to obtain the pricing for these. Visit egyptair.com

Emirates

The Middle Eastern carrier has confirmed that it will offer broadband internet access on one of its A380 aircraft in the first half of next year, and will then have the capability on all subsequent aircraft deliveries. It currently has mobile phone call capability on more than 75 of its long-haul aircraft using Aeromobile (charges are based on international roaming rates set by mobile service providers), but the new internet capability will involve a switch to competitor Onair. Meanwhile, using Aeromobile, Emirates is about to introduce BlackBerry internet capability for the first time on a new B777-300ER entering service. Visit emirates.com

Lufthansa

Germany's flag carrier was one of the early pioneers of broadband internet connection on aircraft with its Connexion by

Boeing service. Although that was popular with a small number of travellers, it was unsuccessful in terms of revenue, and was withdrawn in 2006.

Undaunted, the airline is having a second go, installing its Flynet service under a new deal with Panasonic. As with Emirates, Aeromobile is a component of the new system – Lufthansa is installing Panasonic's Global Communications Suite (GCS) on its long-range aircraft and an integral part of the GCS is eX-Phone, which is essentially Aeromobile and allows passenger to make calls, send SMS messages, and use data services.

Lufthansa is reported to be planning "various price models" for the service, such as an hourly charge or a flat monthly rate. Passengers may also be able to redeem Miles and More reward points on the service. Lufthansa says it hopes to equip a "major part" of its long-haul fleet with Flynet in the first year of operation. Visit lufthansa.com

Oman Air

Oman Air was the first airline to offer both mobile voice calls and broadband

THE MAIN PLAYERS OFFERING CONNECTIVITY ONBOARD

AEROMOBILE

The Aeromobile system is available through Panasonic as an integrated Inflight Communications System, branded eXPhone. It is currently in operation on Emirates flights and Malaysian Airlines, while carriers that have committed to using it include Lufthansa, V Australia, Virgin Atlantic, Air New Zealand, Cathay Pacific and Turkish Airlines. Visit aeromobile.net

AIRCELL

Gogo Inflight Internet, powered by Aircell, has systems on Air Canada, Alaskan Airlines, Air Tran, American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, United, US Airways and Virgin America, among others. Visit gogoinflight.com

ONAIR

As well as Oman Air, Egyptair and Singapore Airlines, other Onair airline customers include TAP Portugal, Wataniya Airways, Royal Jordanian, Qatar Airways, Saudi Arabian Airlines, Air Asia, Libyan Airlines, Hong Kong Airlines, TAM Airlines, Aeroflot and Finnair. Visit onair.aero

internet when it launched the service on its fleet of A330s earlier this year. With Onair's system, passengers can use their mobile phones at all times except during take-off and landing. Mobile calls are of a "roaming nature, as on a foreign network", so international dialling codes must be used.

An onboard wifi hotspot will also be provided by Onair, allowing passengers to access high-speed broadband internet on their laptops or wifi-enabled smart-



“If you can get these data services competitively priced and appearing on your bill then that is where the revolution will come”

phones and PDAs. Emails, via a web-based client, and web-chat will incur an extra cost. Oman Air's internet package costs US\$30 for 26MB per flight. Web-mail and unlimited web-chat will cost US\$10 and US\$5 respectively. Visit omanair.com

Singapore Airlines

SIA will offer wifi and mobile telephony services from the first half of next year, teaming up with Onair. It will be introduced progressively on flights operated by the airline's A380, A340-500 and B777-300ERs.

The mobile services will enable customers to send and receive text messages on GSM-compatible phones, send and receive emails on smartphones and Blackberries, and make and receive voice calls. Usage will be added to their own monthly phone bills, with international GSM roaming rates set by their provider applying. For internet, passengers can sign up for an access package on logging in to the system. Details of the charges will be announced closer to the launch in 2011. Visit singaporeair.com

United Airlines

All United's premium service transcontinental flights between New York JFK

and both Los Angeles and San Francisco have the Gogo Inflight Internet service. The prices are the same as those quoted for AA. Visit united.com

Virgin Atlantic

Virgin's new A330s, which are set to arrive next year, will feature a new IFE system with live news updates and instant messaging between seats, as well as mobile phone and email access through a partnership with Panasonic and Aeromobile.

Details of the pricing are yet to be revealed but it is likely that passengers will be billed through their mobile phone provider. Richard Branson says: “If you can get these data services competitively priced and appearing on your own bill then that is where the revolution will come and that is what we are enabling to happen”.

Virgin says it is also working on introducing seat-back e-readers to display digital newspapers and magazines, and enhanced connectivity features including internet access. The carrier has ordered ten A330 aircraft, with the first due to be delivered in the spring. Note that Virgin America currently offers the Gogo Inflight service. Visit virgin-atlantic.com ■

BRITISH AIRWAYS

BA's new IFE system has appeared on the first of its B777-300ER aircraft and will gradually be introduced to some 24 aircraft over the next couple of years. It will appear on both the new B777-300ER deliveries (six of these) as well as being retrofitted to 18 of the B777-200ERs (the ones currently without audio-video on-demand systems).

The i5000 system from Thales is a definite improvement on the Rockwell Collins system most BA passengers will be familiar with. It has more than 230 TV programmes, 70 films and 400 CDs on demand, as well as new handsets allowing for easier gaming (these do not double up as a phone anymore).

The screens in World Traveller and World Traveller Plus are larger, and are touch sensitive, although those in Club World may find it easier to use the handset because the screen is further away to reach.

The i5000 can support connectivity but BA is waiting to see whether there is demand for it. Gemma Conlon, BA's customer experience development manager, says the airline has had “very little demand for voice communication” on the A318 flying out of London City, despite the Onair system being capable of supporting it. Visit ba.com. For more on the B777-300ERs see “New seats for some”, business-traveler.com/archive/2010/october-2010

Snow like a Volcano

A sense of helplessness - this was the term which would often come to our mind at the end of the last year. Most of the largest European airports were defeated by the white fluff and the passengers were grounded.



ved that we are still helpless when confronting the forces of nature.

We immediately remembered the events from a few months earlier when a cloud of volcanic ash from Island has brought shame to all institutions, norms, and arrangements. Everything came to a halt and the financial losses were colossal. The December standstill due to snow didn't bring about such dramatic results, but was damaging anyway.

THE GROUNDED

The list of airports which weren't operating and serving passengers included the largest and most important ones in London, Frankfurt, or Amsterdam. The Polish Okęcie and other smaller airports were able to operate, but majority of aircraft simply couldn't reach Poland, anyway.

Terminals across Europe were full of waiting passengers. They were stranded for many hours, not knowing whether and when they would be able to depart. The

It's mid-November 2010. The management of the world's second largest airport – Heathrow – announces proudly that it has invested additional half a million pounds to buy more snowploughs and cope with potential winter attacks. "Heathrow was the only major airport in the UK to not close last winter", reassured the information at the airport's website. They added that Heathrow's specialist teams – which include 50 highly trained staff and more than 60 hi-tech vehicles, had spent the summer refreshing their training with plans being discussed with airlines, baggage handlers and air traffic control to ensure a coordinated

response. The information also said that the team would do everything they could to minimise delays in the face of wintry conditions.

Several days later, all those assurances were worth nothing. Other large airports across Europe, which earlier had made it clear that they were prepared for winter, also had to cancel most of their operations. The nature, as always, turned out to be more powerful and wasn't at all bothered about the large armies of de-icing and de-snowing specialists aided by the newest technological solutions purchased at the expense of millions of euro. The white fluff from the sky successfully pro-

A few days of heavy snowfall was enough for airports to cancel all their operations



Departures

Time	To	Flight no.	Gate	Remarks
19:35	AMSTERDAM	TK2164	A1	CANCELLED
19:40	WASHINGTON	LN3211	C3	CANCELLED
19:45	BERLIN	GT4638	A2	CANCELLED
19:45	MIAMI	KV3323	B4	CANCELLED
19:50	STOCKHOLM	LX3100	A2	CANCELLED
19:55	MADRID	LV2317	A5	CANCELLED
20:05	SEATTLE	BD9032	B1	CANCELLED
20:15	RIO DE JANEIRO	FB5610	C4	CANCELLED
20:20	MILAN	EN4267	A4	CANCELLED
20:25	TORONTO	GC5433	C1	CANCELLED
20:35	DENVER	LY4488	B2	CANCELLED
20:40	PARIS	KF3280	B4	CANCELLED
20:50	CHICAGO	TK7252	A4	CANCELLED
20:55	LISBON	TK3946	A1	CANCELLED
21:05	TOKYO	RZ1408	B3	CANCELLED
21:10	LAS VEGAS	EK4319	A1	CANCELLED

TV news were dominated with news about devastated fiancées who were just about to fly to their own wedding, or about families which hadn't seen each other for years and for which Christmas spent together was supposed to be the most wonderful time of the year.

What about businesspeople? Our readers were also grounded. The most unusual story happened to Robert who told us that the heavy snowfalls found him in Geneva. He had a ticket to Warsaw with a change in Paris. When he finally found a person able to provide him with any information, he learnt that he could either stay in Geneva, or fly to Paris in hope of finding any plane flying to Warsaw, but in principle it would have been better if he hadn't flown anywhere. Such an answer took him aback, but soon he found out more. The airport in Paris, although it handled the difficult conditions quite well, became a kind of an alternate hub for the besieged Heathrow and Gatwick.

All wide body aircraft, which were unable to land in London, were directed to Paris. That's why, there was no personnel left to serve connection flights. Luckily, Air France bought our reader a ticket for a direct flight on Geneva – Warsaw route.

Less dramatic, but more time-consuming was the adventure of Tomasz. He, in turn, got trapped at Frankfurt airport. Following several hours of waiting, when all his business plans for the day fell through and he was unable to obtain any information whether he would be able to fly back home, he decided to rent a car and drive himself to Poland.

COUNTING THE LOSSES

In January British Airways calculated the losses following the few days of heavy snowfalls. According to the airline, the big freeze cost it around 50 million pounds. Other airlines also lost considerable sums. Airports in Western Europe must get used to the thought of lower revenues. Two thousand flights were cancelled at Heathrow

only. However, people were enraged the most on finding out that the management of the giant which earns yearly hundreds of millions of pounds, hadn't predicted the fact that it would need more de-icing liquid (during the most difficult moments almost 100,000 litres were used daily – but the airport had assumed that 35,000 would be enough). The airport ran out of the liquid very fast and there was no way out. That wasn't the only thing which irritated the passengers. The British government informed that it would introduce a law which could see the biggest airport operators granted licences that they risk losing if they fail to cope with emergencies such as extreme weather.

Everyone counts their losses, hoping that such a disaster won't happen again soon, and if it does, they will be better prepared. This was, after all, just normal snow... ■

Jakub Olgiewicz

21 WAYS TO... SAVE MONEY ON MEETINGS

Business Traveller

suggests ways to cut the cost of holding events

1 Stage the meeting over a day so you don't have to put delegates up in a hotel for the night.

2 Schedule it to start after the morning rush so attendees can qualify for off-peak air and rail fares. Similarly, finish up before or after rush hour.

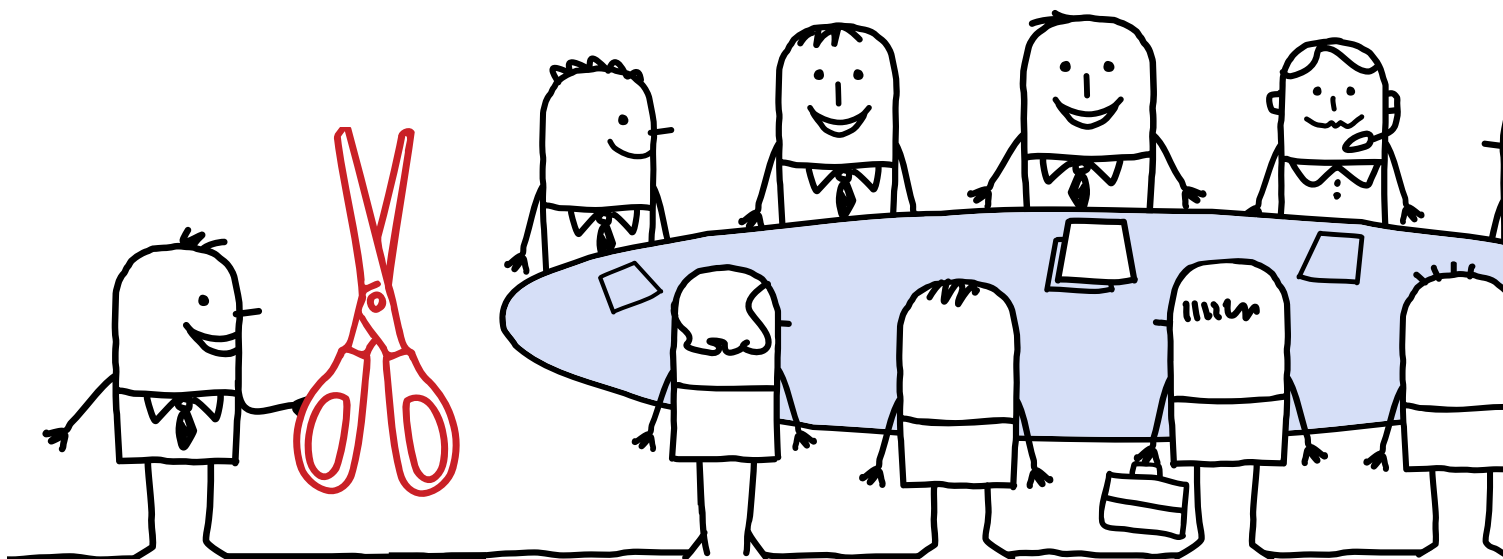
3 Hold the meeting at a hotel near the airport or train station to save on onward travel costs.

4 Be flexible with your dates. Weekend events will cost less as hotels have more room, assuming they're in a business location. Sweeten the pill by allowing staff to bring their partners. Otherwise, hold it on a Monday or a Friday. "The middle of the week is busier and costlier", says Ben Hoeksma, business development manager at travel management company CWT UK. "It can also be cheaper at different times of the year", says Paul Harnedy, regional director of hotel chain Barceló UK. "Good periods to consider are August and straight after Christmas".

5 Upgrade to an executive hotel room. In many cases this gives you free access to an executive floor and lounge, which often includes a conference room. Most hotels will allow you to invite non-executive guests to the meeting.

6 Plan the meeting carefully to get the most out of your time – this will reduce the number of sessions you need to host and cut down on hire costs. Set objectives and discussion points in advance, stick to fixed time limits for making decisions, and keep people focused with frequent short breaks and energy food. Take a look at Von Essen Hotels' "brain food" meeting package – see businesstraveller.com/tags/von+essen for a review.

7 Negotiate rates with hotels and look out for packages and deals – many will give you free delegate spaces when you pay for a certain amount. A number of hotels also offer loyalty deals and rewards for meeting organisers.



8 Pay attention to what's included in the package. "Don't fall for "added value" items if you don't need them," says Paul Hussey, director of business development for meetings and events at online booking agency BSI. "You may be better off negotiating for the items you do want – maybe not pastries on arrival, but the inclusion of orange juice with lunch, for example."

9 Use a travel management company to book your meeting from end to end. "By consolidating all aspects of the event – venue, travel, accommodation and other logistics – TMCs achieve significant savings for clients," says Christer Nordlund, director of events for northern Europe at HRG. "And with all elements under one central point of control, it's easier to see what you're spending".

There are other benefits too: "What happens if you have to pull out at the last moment?" asks Mark Douglas, vice-president and head of sales for UK and Ireland at American Express Business Travel. "If you use a TMC they can often fill the space with an event from another client, saving you the charges".

10 Make use of new video-conferencing technology. The latest telepresence suites will make you feel the other participants are in the room with you. Investing in your own is very expensive, but hotel chains such as Starwood, Taj and Marriott have them for hire in selected cities around the world.

Taj's six-person suite at its London property, 51 Buckingham Gate, is available for £190 per end point, per hour – a big saving on travelling overseas. Even cheaper are some of the web-conferencing options on the market, such as Citrix's Go To Meeting (US\$49 per month) or Cisco's Webex (from £30 per month) – see the March edition of *Business Traveller* for reviews.

11 Plan ahead – you will save if you book travel and accommodation early. Also, book a series of meetings in advance. "This will strengthen your buying power with the venue and other suppliers," says Ben Hoeksma at CWT UK.

12 Lunches are cheaper than dinners, and buffets generally cost less than plated meals.

13 Plan your meeting in a city that has plenty of entertainment options close by – instead of paying for activities for delegates, you can schedule free time instead.

14 Put jugs of water on the tables rather than bottles – it costs nothing and is more environmentally friendly. If you do have to order mineral water, ask to be charged on consumption only rather than setting an allocation per person, and ensure the venue's staff are told to finish each bottle before opening another.

15 Want bubbles? Serve prosecco instead of champagne.

16 Find a sponsor for your meeting to help offset the cost.

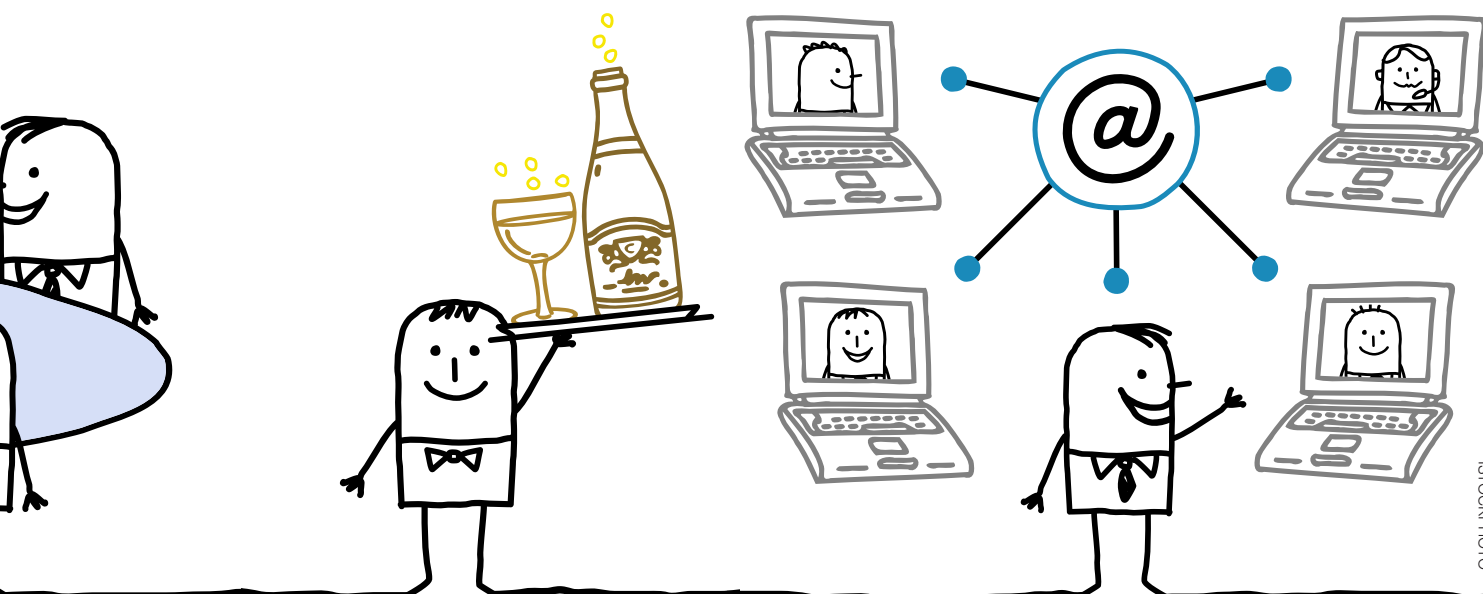
17 For bigger functions such as award ceremonies, try to find out who has booked your space on the days before and after you – some venues allow you to share audio-visual and production costs with other organisers.

18 Where you can, leave the date off printed material such as signs, as you can reuse them for the same event at a later date.

19 Consider bringing your own LCD projector. "Some hotels and venues still charge high rental rates for these," Ben Hoeksma at CWT UK says.

20 Switch your room layout. "For example, theatre-style requires less space than cabaret so you may be allocated a smaller room, which could mean a lower hire charge," says Catherine Hutchings, sales manager at London's Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms.

21 Subscribe to *Business Traveller* and receive a free Regus Businessworld gold card worth £199. This will provide free walk-in access for you and a guest to 1,000 business lounges worldwide – great for one-to-ones, with free internet and refreshments – as well as a 10 per cent discount on meeting rooms, day offices and video-conferencing. Visit businesstraveller.com/regus



A lounge a la **polonaise**

Warsaw's Okęcie airport has finally opened a proper business lounge. Polonez terminal has the necessary space, prestige and class.

Such an enterprise requires significant funding. However, in this case the money was well invested. LOT Business Lounge Polonez was built by LOT Polish Airlines with cooperation of Polskie Linie Lotnicze – the owner of the airport. A quite modest opening ceremony took place just before Christmas, when the December weather paralyzed air traffic at most European airports for many hours and drove crazy thousands of passengers who stuck there without any information. Luckily, Okęcie wasn't too much affected by the weather conditions. A few days later, the lounge was opened to first air travellers.

As the names suggests, business travellers of all LOT's flights have the priority access to the lounge, as well as those travelling with airlines belonging to Star Alliance. The lounge is also available to holders of Star Alliance Gold cards, HON, Senator, and Fre-



quent Traveler members of Miles & More loyalty programme, and those with PPL Dobry Start cards.

As regards money, we were informed that the expenses related to the design and construction of the lounge were fully covered by Porty Lotnicze (Polish Airports). PPL signed the agreement with LOT to run the lounge on behalf of the air carrier. LOT Business Lounge Polonez will be available to all passengers of Star Alliance airlines, travelling from Warsaw or with a stopover in Warsaw, within the area of Schengen, and for Non Schengen – Schengen transfers. The passengers who will not be able to use LOT Business Lounge Polonez due to visa or passport related issues, will have access to Executive Lounge Bolero located in Non Schengen area, and belonging to PPL. Now the passengers of the Polish air carrier will be able to use only those two lounges: LOT Business Lounge Polonez and Bolero.

You can reach the Polonez by using the stairs or lift – choose the +2 level in the new Terminal. The lounge covers the area of 527 sq m.

Behind the frosted-glass door there is a huge reception section. The interior is decorated in light pastel beige and brown colours. The furniture is extremely modern. It has access to a large amount of natural light, but the place is also lit by dozens of light points. The greenery takes up almost whole of the left wall, which is seven-

The guests may use 30 iPads with up-to-date issues of newspapers

metres. There are also square-shaped backlit coffers resembling marble blocks, with water falling down like from the waterfalls. It's beyond doubt that his simple detail makes a huge impression. If you need to work, there are a couple of computers with the Internet connection. WiFi is free of charge and available in the whole lounge.

Further on, there is a vast resting section, a huge bar and rooms for people travelling with children – including a small play area. On top of that there are showers and neat toilets.

The Lounge Polonez can hold up to 80 passengers at a time. There

are 60 comfortable leather armchairs and 10 sofas.

On a bookshelf in the centre of the room, there is something you will not find in any other business lounge. The passengers may use 30 iPads filled with up-to-date newspaper issues from all over the world. Among them you will find The Times, Daily Telegraph, El Pais, but also China Daily or The Sun. Marcin Piróg – the president of LOT Polish Airlines, who has recently travelled around Europe a lot and visited business lounges in many European cities, commented that with the new lounge we have nothing to be ashamed of. He was absolutely right. ■





Mountainous slopes and Masurian ski runs are awaiting ski lovers

Unforgettable views, numerous ski runs and comfortable hotels - all of these are available to lovers of winter sports who will take advantage of the winter prepared by Orbis Hotel Group.

Skiers and snowboarders can use not only slopes and trails in the Tatra Mountains and the Karkonosze, but also in Masuria. The hotels offer both winter attractions and the option to take advantage of SPA facilities.

WINTER IN ZAKOPANE

The winter's Polish capital is full of attractions for ski lovers. Numerous ski runs, lifts, and an option to ski also in the Slovakian part of the Tatras, each year attract to Zakopane thousands of tourists for whom Orbis Hotel Group has now prepared special promotional packages.

The beautifully located 3-star **Mercurie Kasprowy Zakopane** which offers a splendid views of the Tatras, offers its guests an access to over 160 km of ski runs. The skiers have also access to the hotel's skiing equipment storage facility and a ski rental shop. The beginners can take paid skiing lessons. Mercurie Kasprowy Zakopane has also prepared a special winter holiday offer. The promotion called "Winter in Zakopane" is valid until the end of February and is packed with various attractions. The guests who will take advantage of the pro-

motion, will receive a 15% discount for ski passes to two ski slopes in the immediate proximity of the hotel and an option to use the skiing equipment storage facility. For an extra charge they will be transported by a shuttle to Białka and Bukowina Tatrzańska.

Breakfasts are served in a form of a buffet, and dinners are served from a themed menu. In the evening, the exhausted skiers will surely be willing to relax in the hotel's wellness centre with an indoor swimming pool, a sauna, a solarium, and a massage facility. The youngest ones will find a lot of attractions in the Junior's Club with a professional chaperone service. The swimming pool also features a paddling pool. The price of the package is PLN 1653 for 3 nights in a double room.

Mercurie Kasprowy Zakopane also encourages skiers to take advantage of the hotel's offer when the winter holiday is over. For the period from 1 March through 20 April, the lovers of active leisure will be able to stay in a comfortable room with breakfast and receive a 25% discount for the Szymoszkowa ski slope. The package also includes a free access to the hotel's swimming pool, and a 30% discount in Panorama Bar and Alpejska Restaurant. The price for the stay is PLN 359 for one person (2 nights in a double room).

Those who would like to spend their free time not merely on the ski slopes and who wouldn't prefer to be separated from the hustle and bustle of the city, will be especially interested in the offer prepared by **Orbis Giewont Zakopane**



which is a hotel located in the very centre of Zakopane, near Krupówki. The hotel offers accommodation in comfortable rooms, breakfast in the form of a buffet, delicious dinners, and mini-fitness. There is an option to take a paid shuttle to Mercure Kasprowy Zakopane hotel, as well as Bukowina and Białka Tatrzańska, where the skiers will receive a 15% discount to the Szymbarkowa ski slope, and access to skiing equipment storage facility. There is also a paid shuttle which takes skiers to Kasprowy Wierch and which departs from the hotel. Until the end of the winter holiday the price of the package is PLN 1155 for 3 nights in a double room.

THE CHARM OF THE GIANT MOUNTAINS

The Tatras are not the only mountains which are appreciated by skiers. They also like to visit the Karkonosze – the highest mountain range of the Sudety which lies on the Czech-Polish border. It is an excellent place to rest, not only during the holidays. There are a number of ski runs for beginners which are also ideal for the youngest skiers. **Mercure Skalny Karpacz** offers all of these attractions. It is located at the foot of the highest mountain range – Śnieżka – among the spruce forest, but only 300 metres away from the town centre. Opposite the hotel, beginners can practise skiing on two slopes. More advanced ski lovers will definitely be interested in visiting Kopa skiing centre which is located 3 kilometres from the hotel. Numerous skiing centres in the Czech Republic within 50 kilometres from the hotel, as well as cross country skiing trails in Polana Jakuszycka, will guarantee enjoyment for even the keenest ski lovers.

The hotel has prepared a special winter holiday package which includes

a 7-night accommodation in a cosy and comfortable room, substantial breakfasts and dinners in form of a buffet, including the specialties from Polish and international cuisine. Skiers will be able to use the equipment storage facility free of charge, and for an extra charge take skiing or snowboarding lessons from an experienced instructor. The hotel also provides a 15% discount for renting skiing equipment. When the winter sport craze is over, the guests can enjoy the hotel's jacuzzi and sauna – which are included in the price of the package. On Saturday evenings **Mercure Skalny Karpacz** organizes music recitals in the hotel's bar. For the youngest ones the hotel has prepared a playing room with a swimming pool, a slide, and various toys. Twice a week the hotel organizes special events for children aiming at developing creativity and providing lots of fun. The price of the package starts at PLN 2709.

Mercure Jelenia Góra, a hotel located near the Polish borders with the Czech Republic and Germany, has prepared a special offer of ski and snowboard lovers which is valid until 3 April. The hotel is an excellent base for skiers willing to explore the ski runs nearby. Łysa Góra, located in Kaczawskie Mountains, is especially attractive as it is only 10 kilometres from the hotel and offers several ski runs, including the ones for children, as well as the runs with artificial lighting and snowmaking equipment. Cross country skiers will also find attractive trails in Jakuszyce, 30 kilometres away from the hotel, where each year Bieg Piastów race is organized. Other numerous trails and slopes can be found in Karpacz and Szklarska Poręba – only 20 kilometres away from Jelenia Góra. Szklarska Poręba takes pride in its Ski Arena – one of the best and most modern skiing

centres in Poland. Some of the ski runs are equipped with snow guns, and one of them features artificial lighting. The package includes free of charge skiing equipment storage facility, transport to and from skiing centres once a day, and a 10% discount for ski passes. Those who are keen on other activities besides winter sports, can take advantage of the heated indoor swimming pool, a paddling pool for children, a sauna, and a jacuzzi. The price of the package – PLN 979 (5 nights per person).

SKIING MADNESS IN MASURIA

However winter does not always mean the mountains. Masuria also features a number of places where skiers or snowboarders can show what they can do. Those who prefer the Masurian atmosphere, will be more than charmed with **Mercure Mrongovia Resort & Spa** hotel located near Czos lake. Nearby, on one of the peninsulas, is located Góra Czterech Wiatrów. skiing centre. Skiers can use here two T-bar lifts, five ski runs with a varied degree of difficulty. Their total length is 2,000 metres and all runs conform with the requirements of GOPR (Mountain Volunteer Rescue Service). The centre also features a Snowpark – a special place for snowboarders. The youngest ones will be able to learn how to ski on a special beginners' slope. There are two rental shops offering equipment both for skiers and snowboarders. The centre is artificially lit. **Mercure Mrongovia Resort & Spa** hotel, which is located nearby, has prepared a special winter holiday offer aimed at families. All hotel guests will receive special discounts for ski passes. Each day is packed with various attractions. Some of them include a hiking trip, a "man hunt" game with a bonfire and sledge races, dancing classes for both children and adults under the supervision of instructors from Egurrola Dance Studio, and a snowman making competition. Ladies will take part in make-up classes, while gentlemen will surely attend honeywine tasting. Another special attraction for the adults is "Spa by night" in mineral pools. The guests can take advantage of a special promotional price for SPA treatment and cosmetics offered by the hotel. The price of the package is PLN 1620 for 4 nights in a double room. The promotion is valid until 27 February. The price includes breakfasts and dinners with drinks. ■

www.accorhotels.com

The winter skiing madness is possible not only in Zakopane, but also in Karkonosze Masuria is another option



Greendrive

New technology means electric vehicles may be the way forward.

Felicity Cousins asks what this means for the car rental market

Electric cars are finally in fashion. This year Nissan announced its plans to mass-produce the first electric five-door family hatchback, the Nissan Leaf, for the European market, and Renault will expand its zero-emission offerings with a range of electric vehicles.

These developments in car manufacturing have not happened overnight – the 11-year-old Renault-Nissan alliance has invested some €200 million a year on the research and development of electric cars. As with previous ground-breaking designs, such as the hybrid Toyota Prius, it won't be long before business travellers will be seeing these new eco-friendly models on the fleets of car rental companies.

Andy Lewis, head of marketing and e-commerce in Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) for Budget Rent-a-Car, says: "In the next two years there will be a supply of electric cars from Nissan and Renault, and most of the major players will be heading in that direction. So from a rental perspective I expect these cars to be [in fleets] within two years".

Avis has announced a partnership with both Renault and Nissan for electric cars to be available to its customers by next year, and Europcar, which piloted electric cars in Paris as early as 1999, confirmed it was pre-ordering 500 Renault electric vehicles (as well as the infrastructure needed to recharge batteries at rental points) for delivery in Europe's largest cities from autumn 2011.

Hertz also has an agreement with Nissan for the Leaf to be introduced to its fleets in the US and Europe by early next year. In January Hertz also introduced a Citroën C1 Evie electric car to its car-sharing club, Connect by Hertz, in London's Camden (see panel overleaf).

Electric cars have huge benefits for business travellers and companies looking to reduce their carbon footprints. They are carbon neutral – apart from the charging process – so fit in with the EU's regulations on minimising emissions, and

can be run for as little as €2 per 100km. But there are a few challenges, not least that even when they are fully charged, they only have a range of about 110km-160km, and charging stations are not yet widespread.

Budget's Lewis says: "Electric cars make a lot of sense for short trips but more hybrid technologies will be best for longer journeys. The main issue for the mass introduction of electric cars will be the re-charging infrastructure and the reach of the battery".

Anthony Ainsworth, UK sales director for Avis, agrees. "It's not a matter of plugging it in at home. Car rental users typically drive 110km-160km so they would need to have the infrastructure to support them", he says.

At the end of April the European Commission launched its "European strategy on clean and energy efficient vehicles". Commission vice-president Antonio Tajani says: "The strategy aims to achieve common standards for electric cars so they can be charged everywhere in the EU".

Neil Cunningham, general manager of Hertz UK and European strategic projects, explains that there are currently about 200 charging points in London, which is not enough to support widespread use of electric vehicles, but this should change with the government's "Plugged-in Places" scheme. This is a new £30 million initiative to provide 11,000 charging points across the UK in the next three years. The first three "plugged-in places" are London, Milton Keynes and the north-east.

Mayor of London Boris Johnson says: "Over the next 12 months Londoners will see 1,600 electric vehicle charge points being installed across the city. By 2013 this will become 7,500 and by 2015 we want 25,000 in place".

The West Midlands, Cornwall, Sheffield, the Lake District, Greater Manchester and Northern Ireland have confirmed their intention to bid for funding later this year.

'In the next two years there will be a supply of electric cars from Nissan and Renault'

Cunningham explains there are different types of electric car batteries, which will affect how long vehicles need to charge for. "The slow-charge batteries take about eight hours to be fully charged, and the quick-charge ones take about 20 minutes", he says.

The batteries for electric cars are also very expensive (costly materials include nickel and cobalt). So how will this affect the price of renting electric cars? Budget's Lewis says: "I don't think we can say definitively yet but unless car manufacturers make electric cars affordable then they won't take off. But if the end-user sees that it is going to cost them more to drive a petrol car, they will look for cheaper alternatives".

As a result of EU regulations on carbon emissions – the fleet average to be achieved by cars registered in the EU is 130g of CO₂ per km – manufacturers have already produced more eco-friendly products, and this has filtered down to the car rental firms. The Avis Eco Collection's most recent addition is the Volkswagen Golf Blue Motion, with a carbon emission as low as 99g of CO₂ per km. Ainsworth says: "There are 100 or so on fleet at the moment and people can directly choose that particular car". Avis offers its





The facts

- Globally, road vehicles generate one fifth of CO₂ emissions.
- Widespread adoption of electric vehicles could halve these emissions.
- 50,000 Nissan Leafs will be produced each year from the company's Sunderland plant starting in 2013. The Nissan Leaf can go 160km between charges.
- Other electric cars to look out for include Ford's plug-in version of the new Focus in 2011 and a "next-generation" hybrid in 2012.
- Toyota is building plug-in hybrids and fuel-cell vehicles to complement the Prius.
- BMW has made an electric-powered test Mini, and has similar intentions for the Concept Active E, a plug-in version of the Series Coupé.
- Audi recently debuted its second E-tron vehicle, the A1 – it can go from 0 mph to 62 mph in 10.2 seconds.

Budget has offered low-emission cars such as the Honda Civic Hybrid: "We found that even though there was a novelty interest and people were keen to try them, they wouldn't if it cost them an extra £10 a day". Budget also has bioethanol fuel vehicles, but only in Scandinavia. Lewis says: "Half the fleet in Sweden is the bioethanol type but the availability of that fuel and the infrastructure for it is not really in the UK yet".

He adds: "There are accusations of 'green washing'. Cars are not environmentally friendly. There are some that are less damaging but transport clearly has an impact and our desire is to minimise it in the interest of business. [However], it's natural that our emissions have come down as manufacturers have reduced the emissions in the vehicles".

So are people actually asking for green cars? Lewis says: "Individuals? Probably not, but our customers are being fed more green vehicles anyway [because of advances in green technology]. Corporates are definitely asking for it, and asking general green questions they may not have asked five years ago".

Hertz's Cunningham says: "People are very aware of [green options] and for our corporate customers it's high on their agenda. There is not a corporate tender that comes in that doesn't request green credentials".

Europcar's Farnon agrees: "In the past year Europcar has seen an increase in the number of business customers requesting smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles. This is, of course, partly down to cost reductions but also to help [compliance with] green policies being introduced by more companies. Europcar's vehicles are on average only six months old, and utilise the latest technologies to make them more fuel efficient".

Eco Collection in 21 locations across the UK, mainly at airports, stations and major cities.

Hertz relaunched its Green Collection in June last year with 70 locations for hiring eco-friendly cars at airports and primary cities across Europe. Its fleet has an output of less than or equal to 140g of CO₂ per km, with more than half the vehicles emitting 120g or less.

Lorraine Farnon, Europcar UK sales director, says: "Our customers can quickly make an assessment of the impact of their rental on the environment, as well as the fuel efficiency. Vehicles in the lowest emissions group emit an average 130g of CO₂ per km. This typically includes mini three-door hatchbacks such as the Ford Ka".

The Europcar green fleet is available in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the UK, but not all car rental companies have a green collection. Lewis says the concept would not work for Budget. "Some of our competitors have actively marketed a green collection – we have chosen not to do that but it is partly because of the operational challenges. To be able to guarantee availability for a specific make and model at an exact location would increase costs", he explains.

'The main issue for the mass introduction of electric cars will be the reach of the battery'

In recent years, the change in attitudes towards the environment has also helped the shift towards eco-cars. Budget's Lewis explains: "A lot of the move towards greener car rental will be down to people's social conscience. The products are out there. There is a general move towards the 3.8-litre engine, which is an indication that big, fat engines are not now so socially acceptable".

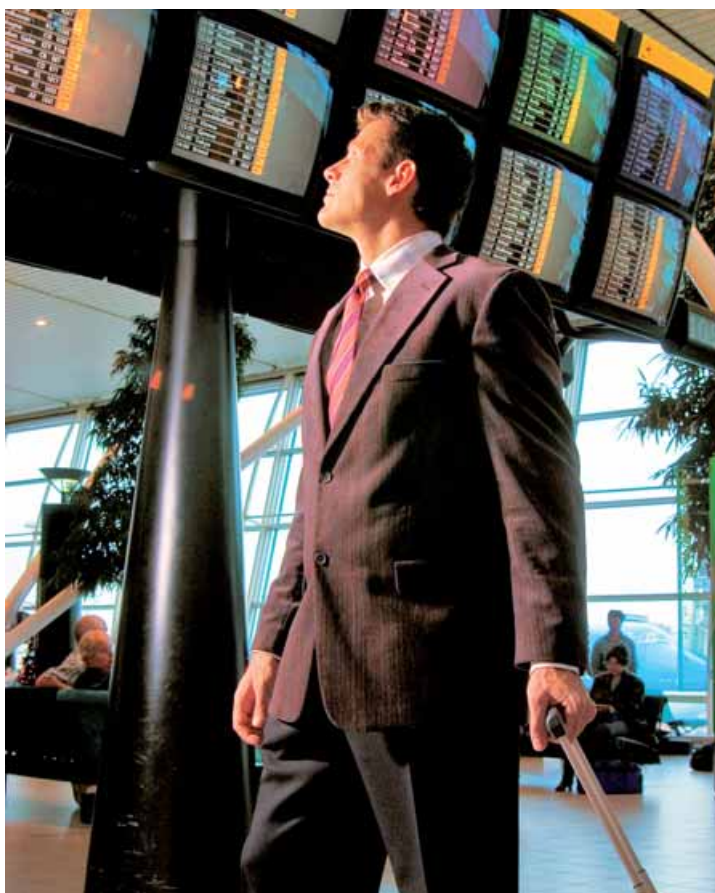
The European Commission's strategy for clean and efficient vehicles estimates that by 2050, electric vehicles could represent more than 60 per cent of new sales and constitute up to 25 per cent of the global car fleet. Whether this takes off among car users in general depends very much on a cultural shift.

Lewis says: "Vehicle supply and the mass introduction of electric vehicles will be prevalent in the next couple of years. I suspect [electric cars] will probably be a little bit like the internet and 3G mobile phones. They will be widespread, and over ten years the market will have changed dramatically". ■

For further information visit avis.co.uk, budget.co.uk, ec.europa.eu/transport, europcar.co.uk, hertz.co.uk

A business trip with bonuses

Polish businesspeople travel more often and on longer distances, which means that they need to optimize their costs related to business trips. It's worth having a closer look at the advantages of BlueBiz loyalty programme offered by AIR FRANCE and KLM.



The programme has very simple rules: when you purchase plane tickets for AIR FRANCE or KLM flights, you earn credits at your BlueBiz account. The longer the route is and the more expensive the ticket, the more credits are earned. The credits can later be converted into awards. Membership in the programme offers measurable benefits with discounts up to 10%.

For example, if you travel from Poland to New York at least once a month in economy class, you receive 180 credits for each flight (so-called Blue Credits), so in 12 months they will accumulate to 2160. Since each point equals

PLN 1, you can take our next flight free of charge, assuming that you want to redeem you Blue Credits in such a way. The credits can also be converted into a bigger luggage allowance, or an upgrade to a higher cabin class. You can redeem your credits into tickets in any class and tariff – all taxes are already included in the cost.

EASILY AND SIMPLY

In order to become a member of the programme, you must only fill in a short form at www.airfrance.pl or www.klm.pl. On receiving a unique membership number in the programme, you can log in the system and observe the state of your account, as well as order your awards. The due amount is automatically deducted from your BlueBiz account. Another important thing is the option of earning your mile retroactively, for the journeys already made. Remember to provide you BlueBiz number at any ticket booking. You can do it in a travel office, offices of AIR FRANCE and KLM, as well as online.

The membership in BlueBiz translates into benefits for both a company and the travelling employees, as for the same flight the company is awarded credits in BlueBiz programme, while the passenger earns his miles in Flying Blue loyalty programme (new members are awarded premium credits on condition they join the programme no later than 31 March). The awarded credits are valid for 2 years from the moment of their receiving, so even companies whose employees travel less frequently have a chance to redeem them.

Members of BlueBiz programme are also granted other amenities: a priority at the standby list in business and first class, a guarantee for a seat in economy class, or an option to change the name of the travelling passenger.

Mile earning programmes are different as are the needs of business travellers. However, it's always good to check whether their rules are clear and what real benefits they offer. ●





STRETCH YOUR LEGS

In these cost-conscious times, more and more airlines are offering extra legroom at a price. **Jenny Southan** asks what you get for your money

Finding one's knees pressed up against the seat in front of you, while sitting hunched over a laptop that barely fits on the fold-down table, is a familiar scenario for the frequent flyer downgraded to cattle class. Travelling at the back of the plane is uncomfortable enough for most of us, but for those who are taller than average – in the UK, the average height for a man is five-foot nine (1.75 metres) and a woman five-foot four (1.6 metres) – it can be unbearable, especially on long-haul flights. So the option of pre-booking a seat with extra legroom can make all the difference.

How to get hold of one of these sought-after seats will depend on which airline you are flying with, and many of them now charge for the privilege (see pan-

el overleaf). The number of seats offering extra legroom – because they are behind a bulkhead, by an emergency exit or there is more space between rows – also depends on the aircraft. On one of Virgin's A340-300s, you could expect only four exit row seats and 12 bulkhead seats in economy, while its B747s have 18 exit row seats and eight by a bulkhead.

How much legroom a standard economy seat gives you can differ greatly from airline to airline – a short-haul carrier might provide only a 28- or 29-inch pitch (the measurement from one point on your seat to the same point on the seat in front), while most long-haul airlines offer 30-33 inches.

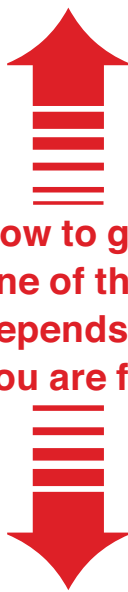
On a no-frills flight operated by the likes of Easyjet, where seats are not pre-assigned, the only way you can try to se-

cure an exit row position is either to pay for Speedy Boarding or to arrive at the gate early and fight your way on to the plane first. Where carriers offer the option of paying to pre-select your seat, it is a matter of weighing up the cost with the

length of your journey and how uncomfortable you think you will be.

Again, take Virgin, which introduced this policy about six years ago, as an example. Exit row seats are only available at check-in on the

day of departure (other airlines may allow you to pre-book them online up to 24 hours before you fly) and cost £50 to £125 each way depending on your destination (a seat with three extra inches



How to get hold of one of these seats depends on who you are flying with



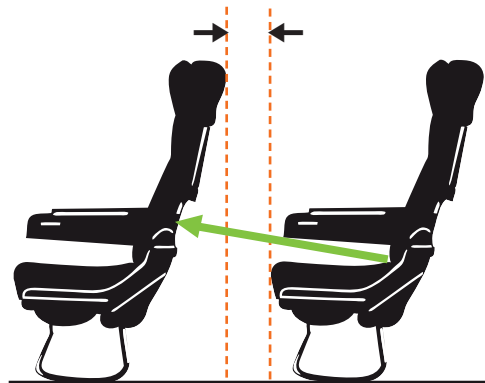
THE LAW OF LEGROOM

These days, as cabin comfort improves, it is easy to forget the safety implications associated with where you sit and the amount of space you have. Positioning yourself by an emergency exit is about more than getting the most legroom possible – if there is a situation where people need to evacuate, you will be the one opening the hatch. The space between rows is also something that has been carefully considered – while it is in the airline's economic interests to install as many seats as possible, for the aircraft to be certified it will have to meet the manufacturer's guidelines on how many people can be safely accommodated.

While economy seating may feel cramped sometimes, tests have to prove that passengers can be evacuated within 90 seconds, so the minimum amount of legroom you get will be affected by this. After the British Airtours accident at Manchester airport in 1985, in which 55 people died in a fire that broke out on board a B737 during take-off, legislation was brought in to ensure rows weren't packed too closely together. Further regulations have since been introduced to improve in-flight safety.

According to the Civil Aviation Authority's 1992 *Mandatory Requirements for Airworthiness*, the minimum distance between the back support cushion of a seat and the back of the seat or other fixed structure in front is 26 inch-

es (roughly a 28-inch pitch). While this is still quite tight, Simon Evans at the Air Transport Users Council says it is not as dense as the configuration on the British Airtours B737. He adds: "Litigation is so tight now that if there was a crash and it was found that airlines were packing people in ridiculously, there would be an investigation – and, boy, would there be lawsuits".



of legroom will cost you from £30 each way). So if you are flying from London to Sydney, the most expensive journey, you would be looking at paying an extra £250 return to sit by an exit.

To illustrate, when we checked the price of an economy flight departing in mid-January it was £1,707, including the exit row supplement, while a premium economy seat with a 38-inch pitch (seven inches more than in standard economy, but less than that offered in an exit row) cost £2,304 – almost £600 more. So if legroom is your primary concern, paying a supplement to secure an exit row seat is the better option.

The benefits to carriers of charging for this service are obvious. While most are reluctant to reveal how much revenue per year they make from it, Continental Airlines, which started offering extra legroom for a price in March, says it typically generates US\$120,000-US\$140,000 a day – about US\$50 million a year. A Continental spokesperson says: “We have exceeded our financial expectations with this programme, despite the fact that our Elite frequent flyers get these seat assignments for free. Seats with additional legroom are now the most sought-after after upgrades to Business First [business class].”

But what about the passengers? Most airlines say it has been a popular move with them too. A Virgin spokesperson says: “We hoped that by implementing a charge for these seats, they would remain available for those who valued them the most. In doing this we did not reduce the legroom offered in the remaining economy seats. We tend to sell the vast majority of extra legroom seats – if passengers didn’t want to pay for them, they wouldn’t.”

The people “valuing them the most” presumably being tall people with little option. But, according to BA, at least this gives them a way of ensuring a more comfortable journey. “You will always

have some people who are very tall or are bigger, and aircraft seats are made for the average person,” a spokesperson says. “But with emergency exit seats, the idea was to give [taller passengers] the chance to guarantee they could get one.”

Continental agrees: “Seats with additional legroom are higher-value, and we want to offer them to customers who recognise that value. It made no sense commercially to give away the best economy seats on the aircraft when certain customers valued those seats strongly enough to pay extra for them. It could be argued that the introduction of charges has discouraged those customers who least require the extra legroom from booking them, thus increasing their availability to tall customers.”

So what would happen if you had paid

‘It made no sense commercially to give away the best economy seats on the aircraft’

for extra space but for one reason or another – a change of aircraft, for example, or a decision by crew that you were not fit to sit by an exit – you were not granted it? Simon Evans, chief executive of con-

sumer watchdog the Air Transport Users Council, says that in such cases the airline simply refunds the supplement and that is the end of the matter.

Some airlines are taking their extra legroom offering a step further, offering more spacious “zones” where the economy seat is the same but the pitch has been increased. KLM’s Economy Comfort option offers an extra four inches of legroom for €80-€150 each way (for a review see businessstraveller.com/try-and-tested), while United’s Economy Plus seats offer up to five extra inches of legroom from about US\$9 to US\$59 depending on the route. While Air New Zealand’s economy “Sky Couch” has got everyone talking (available only on the B777-300ERs), it doesn’t actually offer a greater pitch, instead providing passengers with more space to stretch out horizontally.

So would you pay for more legroom? A recent businessstraveller.com poll of more



WHO CHARGES FOR LEGROOM?

- **Air Canada** Depends on route – from Europe to Canada costs CA\$50 each way. aircanada.com
- **Air France** €50 each way for journeys of nine hours or less, or €70 per flight for journeys over nine hours. airfrance.co.uk
- **British Airways** Short-haul £10 and long-haul from £20 each way up to 25 hours before departure; long-haul £50 for exit row seats from 14 to four days before departure. Free seat choice at check-in from 24 hours beforehand. ba.com
- **Cathay Pacific** Long-haul US\$100 or 20,000 Asia Miles, short-haul US\$25 or 5,000 Asia Miles. cathaypacific.com
- **Continental Airlines** Price depends on type of seat, journey time, date and route. A lower levy may apply for extra legroom seats with limited or no recline. continental.com
- **Finnair** €60 each way on intercontinental flights. finnair.com
- **Flybe** £15 (£18 at the airport) each way for exit or bulkhead seats. flybe.com
- **KLM** €20-€70 each way. Seats in the Economy Comfort zone cost €80-€150 each way. klm.com
- **Qantas** AU\$40 short-haul, AU\$80 medium-haul, AU\$160 long-haul. qantas.com.au
- **Singapore Airlines** US\$50 each way. singaporeair.com
- **United Airlines** From about US\$9-US\$59 each way for Economy Plus seats depending on route. united.com
- **Virgin Atlantic** From £30 each way for extra legroom. £50-£125 for an exit seat each way. virginatlantic.com
- **Air New Zealand, American Airlines, ANA, Delta Air Lines, Etihad Airways, Jet Airways, Korean Air, Lufthansa, Oman Air, Qatar Airways, Swiss, South African Airways and Thai Airways** are among the airlines that do not charge for extra legroom.

than 500 flyers revealed that 37 per cent had shelled out for it, showing the market is there. Though whether it proved to be worth the money was probably determined by how tall they were... ■

Agnieszka Manterys,
Front Desk Manager
in Warsaw's Westin hotel

Jeden dzień z życia...

A HOTEL'S FRONT DESK MANAGER

6:30 I don't like getting up too early, so I always do it at the very last moment. I prepare myself, send my daughter to school and, without having breakfast or even the morning coffee, I go to work.

8:00 I arrive at the hotel. I take a short while to have coffee and at 9.00 am go to the first meeting of the managers. Each of us informs our boss on the important events planned for the day. I tell him about the number of occupied rooms in the hotel, and discuss the list of important guests who need to be specially welcomed. Such a briefing takes about half an hour.

In the meantime, since our Westin has 361 rooms, I check out the business customers who are leaving our hotel. Except for the weekends, each morning is very busy in this aspect, as the guests want to leave the hotel as soon as possible. I ask them how they liked their stay, what they liked the most, and if they have any reservations. In this way, I am able to get to know our regular guests better, which I find very important.

10:00 I sit down to the computer to check my mail. I reply to all messages from the guests, arrange all the matters related to their stay, comments and remarks, and forward the messages which need further assistance.

Once again I look through the list of the expected guests, checking which rooms they have been assigned and if they suit their preferences. For all VIP guests I try to assign rooms of a higher category than the ones they have chosen. During the course of the day, I welcome all the guests who arrive at the hotel. I always have my mobile phone with me as it rings quite often.

I also take part in a meeting to discuss group arrivals and the guests who participate in the banquets organized by the hotel. Such events are quite frequent, so we exchange information as to how many guests will

stay for the night, who will attend the banquet only, who needs additional services like, for instance, a room for a business meeting.

13:00 It's the lunchtime for our personnel and a time for the next shift at the reception desk. There are usually three employees on each shift, but sometimes we need more – for example when they need to deal with 200 check-ins and check-outs at the same time. I do a short briefing for my personnel, telling them important news and discussing matters they may have to deal with during the afternoon and the evening. At the same time we discuss the previous day and analyse what things need improvement.

I am also present at the reception desk, if necessary. In the afternoon

many guests arrive at the hotel – I talked to them, welcome our regular guests, and help them in their check in. I also coordinate the collaboration with sales and marketing departments, as our colleagues often show our clients around the hotels.

18:00 This is the time when generally my working day ends. I make an inspection – checking how many guests are still to arrive, if everything works properly, and what things should be prepared for tomorrow. On my leaving the hotel, I hand over my duties to my assistant or supervisor. If a very important guest, who frequently visits our hotel (there are a lot of such guests), arrives at our hotel late in the evening, I try to stay longer and welcome him in person. ■



The Room Record





The Rezidor Hotel Group has quite a reason to announce that they are the fastest developing company in the hotel business. Their financial results and successive investments only support the claim. The previous year was quite successful for Rezidor in this respect.

Last year the Rezidor Group broke the record in the number of rooms available to guests. In 2010 the group put 7,200 bedrooms into use, beating their record from the previous year (7,100 rooms), and the year before (6,500 rooms). “We’ve registered an increase, despite the global crisis. We’ve managed to create a business model, which ensures profit and stable growth”, says Puneet Chhatwal, the Senior Vice President and Chief Development Officer of The Rezidor Hotel Group.

In April 2010, Rezidor signed an agreement, taking over the Reval hotel chain, the biggest hotel company in the Baltic post-Soviet Republics. The company has also opened eighteen hotels under the name of Park Inn - some located in Europe (Frankfurt, Oslo, Stockholm). “We are very well prepared for the time of economic growth”, says Chhatwal. - Radisson Blu and Park Inn are the biggest in their segments on the European market.”

Rezidor is planning to open 20,000 rooms in Europe, the Middle East and Africa within the next three years. “Our strategy for the next few years is to focus on those markets, which are likely to develop really fast, like Russia or Africa. From our perspective, they offer huge potential, as the per capita income in those regions is increasing, and there are hardly any international hotels”, says Puneet Chhatwal. Rezidor’s plans for this year include launching Misso-

ni Hotel in Kuwait, with a truly unique architectural style. Another big opening is to take place in Sweden. Soon enough Stockholm will attract tourists to its Radisson Blu Waterfront hotel (414 bedrooms and the biggest conference centre in the whole Sweden), while in Malmö a new Park Inn is to be launched.

Last year in Poland, Rezidor took over Rezydent hotel in Sopot. Since December, this stylish place belongs to the international chain. Rezydent hotel offers 64 rooms, including eight high quality ones and one luxurious Sopot Suite (the hotel has preserved its original name). It is a relatively new hotel, as it was open 10 years ago. Its guests can enjoy a restaurant, a conference room and a small, but well-equipped Spa. What makes it unique is the stylish décor which refers to the best traditions of the pre-war Sopot. Tasteful drapes, columns, wooden furniture – all of these contribute to the feeling of harmony and solidity. The most representative place in Rezydent is the Sopot Suite - a complex of rooms with two bedrooms and two bathrooms, designed in such a way, to guarantee comfort and convenience. Some elements of the decor were made of noble materials, imported from different parts of the world. The furniture was upholstered with Dutch and Danish cloth. Marble bathroom makes us think of the Ancient Greece. Cashmere blankets, mirrors framed with exotic wood hand-carved in Philippines, or original graphics arts and sculptures add its interior more class.

Another interesting idea are the so called “dinners with commentary”. It’s an evening event proposal, which gives you a chance to get to know how to eat the so-called difficult foods which are not consumed on a regular basis. Savoir vivre, wine selection, cutlery usage, appropriate place setting – all this contributes to an unforgettable dinner. All the information is provided by the experts from the Rezydent hotel. What makes the hotel even more unique, is the fact that you can find there an atelier of a famous fashion designer Piotr Gajda, and an art gallery, the Proarte exhibition salon.

In Poland we can enjoy Rezidor hotels thanks to two hotel brands: Radisson Blu and Park Inn. There are eight Rezidor hotels in Poland, offering 1,594 rooms altogether. Worldwide, there are 400 hotels in 60 countries belonging to the Rezidor Group. ■

Marek Zaciemski

The past year was a record one for Rezidor. The group put 7,200 bedrooms into use.



A Sense Of Style

A white dice that fits into a hand, nice creatures smiling to the passers-by in Berlin, 3D technology and a spectacular film show – all this is included in the plan of a campaign promoting Polish tourism in Germany. Its purpose is to present our country as diverse, creative and modern.

Move Your Imagination



POLSKA
ORGANIZACJA
TURYSTYCZNA

P
olish™

TO FIRE THE IMAGINATION

The slogan, which is used to promote the Polish tourism, reads: "Fire your Imagination". „The purpose of this campaign is to show Poland as an intriguing and original country, with unique advantages in the field of tourism, when compared to other European countries. It is a young and inspiring country, boldly employing modern solutions", says Szmytko. "We take advantage of the international character of ITB fair, to tell everyone that the two following years belong to Poland. In 2011 we will hold the presidency in the EU, and a year later we are organizing the Euro 2012 Cup. The quality of our tourism is a factor, which will influence the perception of the two events", says Katarzyna Sobierajska, the junior minister in the Ministry of Sports and Tourism.

The campaign was prepared by Tomasz Bagiński and Marcin Kobylecki from Platige Image studio. "Our aim was to find a way to say something about Poland in a clear, happy and quite spectacular way", says Marcin Kobylecki from Platige Image. The studio uses the most modern visual technologies and non-standard forms of promotion. "If we want to catch attention at a event like ITB, we have to do something extraordinary", says Tomasz Bagiński. „In the basis of the whole project lies an assumption that we should avoid all the cliches. We will promote Poland with animation, modern dance and interactive games. - We do not use any associations that were previously used at this kind of events. We try to keep everything in a very good style, but we do it the other way round. Poland has to be thought of as colourful, young, a bit crazy and creative".

HOLDING A DICE

In this campaign Poland is symbolized by a little white dice, which easily fits into a hand. The use of this

commonly known and simple object is supposed to mean that we are an accessible, and open country, whose messages are easily conveyed to everyone. The dice has the same meaning for everyone - everywhere in the world it is seen as an element of any game that brings people together. In the campaign, it plays the role of a "guide" that shows many faces of Poland, presented in films, prepared especially for the occasion. By moving the die, you can interact with the 3D world, created by means of computer animation, and choose a virtual tour around Poland, to see the films presenting the advantages of the country.

Jakub Jabłoński from Platige Image is responsible for the visual aspect of the campaign, and has designed original characters to be seen in the streets of Berlin. "We don't have clear and modern national graphical symbols. We need something fresh, up-to-date and fashionable, and - most of all - catchy. That's why we've combined simple, ethnic motives with the style of designer toys, known all over the world. As a result, what we get an avant-garde, original and attractive graphic mix, which is very clear to everyone", says Jabłoński.

During the ITB fair, huge billboards will be set up in the most important areas of the city. They will display the "fire your imagination" slogan along with cheerful creatures promoting Poland. These are inspired by the "urban toys" fashion, which has been quite successful all over the world. They evoke great interest in adults, but are popular among children and teenagers as well. That is why, they have become a universal and globally-recognized icon. What makes them different from typical toys, is their original shape, mixture of colours, the fact that they are not mass-produced, and an individual story behind every each one of them. Produced on a relatively small scale, they are associated with a particular artist or an event.

YOUTH AND CREATIVITY

The creatures prepared by Platige Image will promote Poland's characteristics – creativity, modernity and youth – in a non-standard way. On the torso of each toy there will be a letter – together they will form the word POLEN. All of them will also have footballs – which is an allusion to the Euro 2012 held in Poland. The characters show Poland as a diverse country, both in terms of culture, landscapes and entertainment, a place associated with vitality, passion



and creative energy. The image of each of the five characters will be a crucial element of the coherent promotional campaign, including outdoor and press activities, as well as public performances in the streets of Berlin.

The key element of the image-building campaign in Berlin is preparation for the ITB entrance ceremony, which will be attended by about 4,500 representatives of tourism industry from all over the world. Poland, as the guest of honour, the ITB Official Partner Country is responsible for the performance, which will open the fair. The main item of the programme is a multimedia 3D show prepared by Platige Image. It will be an interactive and breathtaking story about Poland. By moving the white dice, the audience will be able to interact with the 3D world created by means of computer animation. Moving the dice will set the 3D elements in motion, and thus the audience will be able to choose a sightseeing tour around Poland and see a video presenting our country. All the videos will be prepared in stereoscopic technology. The style of the videos will vary depending on the subject. There is a video made in the style of a modern cartoon, a poetic and picturesque one presenting the Polish nature, a video about Euro 2012 in a style of a sports commercial, a designer video about Polish culture and a huge dance performance employing the motive of the changing seasons of the year – apart from the dance itself, much emphasis was put here on 3D animation and big screen. "We would like to make other people - business people as well as regular tourists – ask themselves why they haven't visited such a fascinating country", says Tomasz Bagiński. i. ■



The conscious brand building

In his interview with Business Traveller, **Rafał Jerzy**, reveals the ups and downs associated with the establishing of his Poland-based Focus hotel chain.



Being the chairman of the board of Marum SA, you have significant experience in the production of machinery for offshore mining industry and heavy steel constructions. Knowing that these sectors have little in common with hotel industry, can you explain what were the origins of the idea for establishing the hotel chain through Immobile?

It all started in 1997 when my company entered the commercial property market – in the early stages of development we were dealing in real estate, plus we were providing commercial property consulting services. The property located in Bydgoszcz was one of the largest commercial facility acquired by Immobile in 2000, and towards the end of 2003 the company came into possession of another significant property – the workers’ house, which was also located in Bydgoszcz. The building underwent extensive renovation and a year later modern “Sporting Hotel” was launched. The name was inspired by my passion for sport and, to a lesser extent, by the facility’s locations near Zawisza stadium, which is the largest stadium in the city. Our company has become involved in the hotel industry also due to a considerable gap in the Polish market for budget hotels.

Can you tell us about the beginnings of the enterprise? Did you have to learn a lot?

When our hotel in Bydgoszcz proved to be a profitable venture, I undertook a comprehensive study in order to estimate the potential of the sector and to create the strategic plan for the development of the hotel chain. We decided to expand our business activities, and this was supported by the detailed market analysis conducted by McKinsey, which showed that the hotel market in Poland would develop, since the Polish hotel industry belonged to one of the poorest in Europe. In March 2005 we acquired the former Kindermann’s factory on Łakowa Street in Łódź city – after one year of renovation



works a century old corduroy factory was turned into a hotel, with the first guests checking-in in September 2006. The hotel in Łódź and Bydgoszcz also acquired the name "Sporting," and this is how our hotel chain was born.

Nevertheless, the hotel industry is much more complicated, and the achievement of the commercial success involves paying attention to a number of details – here the most important factor is confidence, consistency in performance and a clear philosophy, which motivated our business activity from the very beginning.

Hotel industry is known for the specific character of the services it provides. What was your biggest obstacle?

In any business sector, the beginnings are the most difficult part. Poland hasn't got a rich tradition in the hospitality industry, and we also didn't have too much of an experience in this field, so we had to learn everything from the scratch – recruiting of qualified personnel was the most formidable task, but we've managed to successfully complete it.

When and where did the first "Focus Hotel" began to operate?

After our acquisitions in Bydgoszcz and Łódź we came into possession of another property the former House of the Fisherman on Małopolska Street 23. It underwent renovation, which took 2 years, and in May 2007 it was ready to enter the market. It was at that time that all of our three hotels acquired a new name "Focus" – it seemed more adequate since it illustrates the development strategy and assets of our hotel chain, which places a lot of emphasis on the needs of our guests and the high quality of the services. "Focus" is our very own idea.

Did your company feel the effects of the crisis which came soon afterwards, severely affecting the hotel industry?

I do believe that the hotel market in Po-

land will be thriving despite the consequences of the downfall, knowing that there is still a gap in the market for decent 3-star business facilities. Moreover, Poland is becoming more and more attractive destination for those travelling on business. We didn't experience a fall in profits in 2009 and 2010, even though towards the beginning of 2009 the number of guests had decreased, which concerns the customers especially from the financial services and banking sector.

With the consequences of the downfall becoming less visible, what is the current offer of the Focus chain?

Currently, we own three hotels operating in Bydgoszcz, Łódź and Szczecin, with the total of 430 hotel rooms. Each of the hotels boasts conference facilities with high quality equipment and complimentary Internet access, and there is also a sauna area and gym facility, which our guests may take advantage of. Moreover, the hotels in Łódź and Szczecin offer restaurants where the meals are prepared from fresh products and the menu changes daily.

What is your main priority and what are the trends currently present in the hotel industry?

The commercial success of each hotel and hotel chain is a result of a number of factors. Surely, location is of the utmost importance, and it helps when a facility belongs to a hotel chain, since central management significantly lowers the total cost and it enables us to maintain standards that are consistent over time. We also make sure that the provided services are of the highest possible quality – "never say no" has been our motto, thus whenever a guest turns to us for help, we are always ready to help and to solve any problem. We provide our guests with comfort, and most of the services like Internet access, breakfast "to go," sauna area and gym facility or mobile office are included in the price.

Poland doesn't have much experience in hospitality industry. We also were new to the business and had to learn everything from the scratch.

And do you rely on the business travelers as the primary source of income?

Currently, our hotels are located in the cities with business potential, with the exception of the Szczecin where the features typical of a business city are blended together with tourism industry. We provide our guests with comprehensive business facilities – conference rooms with professional equipment, mobile office access, Internet access throughout the property and high quality of gastronomic services. We ensure that our guests get the maximum of satisfaction during their stay, and that the standards we set are adequate to our rates. We've also observed that more and more individual guests are choosing to make a stay at our hotel, especially at the weekends – this phenomenon is due to our special offers which are introduced at different times of the year.

We know that the strategic plan for the development of the hotel chain is ambitious. Can you tell us more about them?

We are planning for our hotel chain to operate in every major city throughout Poland. We would like to achieve this goal through the construction of new properties and the extension of the already existing ones, lease and affiliations. We've already prepared the lease and affiliate programs which other hotels can benefit from, if they are only willing to join our hotel chain. In the near future we are planning to extend the already existing hotel in Łódź, with conference rooms, ballrooms and restaurants created in the restored areas.

Going back to the beginning of the whole venture, do you have any regrets?

Working in the hotel industry gives a great satisfaction – it's both working for people and being there for people. Each day brings something new, and I'm happy we were able to achieve so much in such a short time. I do believe that the best is yet to come and this is the most fascinating thing. ■



Many holiday resorts promote themselves using the word „paradise”. If beautiful beaches, comfortable hotels, and many more attractions on offer are what you usually associate with the word, you can safely go to the island of Bali, which is a real paradise for all the participants of incentive trips.

So close — Bali

Bali is one of the most famous islands in the world, and definitely the most famous of all in the Indonesian archipelago. Attracted by superb resorts, the tourists come here for holiday, but they also learn something about local culture. Bali is also a perfect place for organized trips. It offers high quality hotels, extended business facilities, and plenty of ideas on how to spend time in an active way.

TOUR DE BALI

A good incentive trip should be a surprise for the participants from the very beginning. How about a royal welcome already at the airport? A welcoming banner is a standard thing, but a colourful group of Balinese dancers is not something you see every day. Then there is a quick transfer to the hotel – also colourful – in the police cordon, and once you arrive, at the reception desk they will greet you with a cocktail, music, a quick check-in, dinner and an ice breaking party.

It's attractive, dynamic and it gets even better. That's because Bali, an Indonesian island in the Lesser Sunda Islands, is a place of huge cultural and geographical diversity, which translates into a variety of different attractions. With incentive trips they usually come in a form of organized tours. Like the one to the Kintamani area, where you can see a still active Batur volcano. It is not only a paradise for photographers, but it also gives you a chance to get familiar with the Balinese craftwork. The participants will have a chance to visit Goa Gajah, the famous Elephant Cave, where you can see an impressive temple and ancient rock carvings. Tampak Siring with a huge water body in the centre also looks spectacular. The locals believe the water has healing properties.

It is also worth going to Ubud, as the town is considered the cultural capital of Bali, and not for no reason, as the place is abundant in temples, sculptures, paintings – which you can buy, and there is also a spectacular palace. Five kilometres away from Ubud, there is Tegalang, whe-





re you might see the magnificent rice terraces – a really picturesque sight. Do not forget about the Money Forest, inhabited by about 500 of these species. The majority of Bali inhabitants are Hindu worshippers, the Muslims and Christians are minority. Besakih, the biggest temple is to be found in the North-Eastern part of the island. Go there to experience the aesthetic pleasures of seeing the Bedugul lake, situated 1,000 metres above the sea level.

ADVENTURE IS WORTHWHILE

Adventures are the key component of every good incentive trip and in Bali, you can experience a great many of them. A fine idea to make an incentive trip more attractive is rafting down the foaming waters of the local rivers. The Ayung and Telagawaja rivers are especially recommended, as they offer wonderful views of the nature. Rafting can be combined with many other team building events, like canoe racing.

Another excellent choice are group bicycle tours, as local mountains trails give

you plenty of possibilities to spend the time cycling. Horse-riding along the beaches is an unforgettable experience, which will also give you a sense of adventure. One fascinating experience, you should bear in mind, is a trip to Elephant Safari Park in Taro. You will have an opportunity to feed the elephants or see them performing. There is also a restaurant for 200 people, impressive gardens with a collection of orchids and palm trees, and a lake, where you can have a bath.

You may also be attracted by the idea to take a jeep trip in the mountains and local villages. It is an excellent way to see how the real life on the island looks like. Bali is also known for high quality golf courses (there are four of them), where you can have a tournament for all the participants. If you feel like tasting see adventures, take a cruise to Lembongan, an island known for beautiful beaches and the coral reef, where you simply can-



Bali is
a paradise
not only for
tourists You
can organize
fantastic
incentive trip
there

not help but watching the underworld sparkling with a thousand of colours.

If you need to improve the team spirit, try some team building events. Bali is an ideal place, to have them organized here. Playing hare and hounds, river crossing on a rope, beach games, treasure hunting or playing lifeguards are only some of the possibilities to choose from. A very attractive option is a night trip to the active volcano of Batur. It is 1,700 metres above the sea level, and getting to the top will give you not only stunning views, but also enormous satisfaction from the challenge.

BUSINESS AND SPA

Owing to high quality tourists facilities, Bali is perfectly prepared for the arrival of business travellers as well. The island ►



boast a great number of hotels, where you will find excellent conditions to organize both a small meeting, a product presentation or a huge conference. It is worth mentioning that the hotels on this tropical island are usually beautifully located, which is an additional bonus for business people. You will find there hotels belonging to big hotel chains, as well as small local establishments.

Among the five-star hotels there are mostly vast resorts, like Nusa Dusa Beach Hotel – a spectacular place with the décor resembling the Balinese palaces. The offer includes luxurious interior, excellent cuisine, high quality spa (Bali is famous for regeneration and relaxation treatments), a private beach, nume-

rous sports attractions and a possibility to organize a conference for up to a 1000 people. The biggest room can hold 500 people, the smallest – about a dozen. In the hotel, there is also Budaya – an open amphitheatre.

Westin Resort or Grand Mirage Resort are also worth recommending. The former has a ballroom with a ten-metre high ceiling, 20 smaller conference rooms, 2,700 square metres of exhibition space and a stage with the auditorium for 506 people. The latter has its own beach, where conferences and events for up to 1,500 people are organized. It also offers a ballroom, a few conference rooms and gardens, where business meetings are also held. In Bali, you will find numerous four- and three-star hotels, the-



Luxurious hotels provide you with service at the top level Club Med's village in Nusa Dua is a good example [here](#).

refore the island can satisfy everyone's expectations.

An integral part of business meetings are performances and theme dinners. You can choose from Balinese dance performances, fashion shows, cabaret performances, fire dancing and magicians' acts.

A good idea is to end a meeting with a fireworks display.

Bali is famous for its spa centres – and it is a must to take this fact into consideration when planning a group trip. A wide range of treatments, experience and well-trained staff and comfortable conditions are guaranteed. Having a rest in a spa salon after a whole day of outdoor activities is something unforgettable for all the participants – and that is a crucial component of every group incentive trip. ■

Tomasz Kwiatkowski



Business Traveller Poland



THE SUBSCRIPTION
IS THE EASIEST AND
THE FASTEST



Subscription

Half a year (5 issues) – 46 zł
One year (10 issues) – 90 zł
Two years (20 issues) – 175 zł

Order online

www.busesstraveller.pl

Order by e-mail

redakcja@busesstraveller.pl



The Canarian Adventure

It's hard to overestimate the omnipresent sunrays, when it's snowing outside and the thermometer finds it hard to lift its bar over zero degrees. The reliable weather, however, is not the only advantage of a trip to the Canary Islands. **Wojciech Chelchowski** recommends especially two of the islands for a short relaxation

The archipelago located on the Atlantic Ocean consists of several islands, but tourists usually know only seven of them. The other islands depend mainly on agriculture, while many of the smaller ones are simply uninhabited or their dwellers live there for only a few months during a year. The most popular Canarian island is Tenerife. However, we also encourage you to visit Gomera – a smaller island, but equal-

ly charming with its beautiful nature and splendid views.

Centuries ago they were called Fortunate Isles and the name is quite understandable. One thing is for sure: the sun there is guaranteed. What's more, the fiesta is incessant, there are hundreds of various attractions including street festivals, and the locals are friendly and smiling.

Most tourists seem surprised on learning that the present name of the islands comes from the Latin word "canis"

which means "a dog". In the past, large packs of dogs used to prowl the islands, and this is how they took their name. In spite of the appearances the word "canary" appeared much later.

Getting to the Canary Islands from Poland couldn't be easier. LOT Polish Airlines operates one daily connection from Warsaw to Madrid – it's one of the airline's longest European routes. Following a 4-hour flight and landing in Madrid, you can choose among several various connections from the Spanish airport to Tenerife. The island is not the largest one (80 kilometres long, 50 kilometres wide), but being tourism-oriented, it possesses two airports: the northern and southern one. The idea behind such a solution was to enable the visitors to choose the airport which would be closer to their hotel. Accommodation on the island is also excellent. There are dozens of good hotels and B&Bs.

The communication between the largest islands (Tenerife, Gomera, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, Palma, and Hierro) is provided by two ferry companies. Thanks to their competition, passengers have an excellent choice of offers and services. A trip from Tenerife to Gomera takes mere 45 minutes. It's then worth finding some free time to get onto a ferry and visit the nearby islands.



CHASING THE WHALES

When you experience it for the first time, the emotions are powerful. You leave the port aboard a ship which seats about 200 passengers. There are two decks, a bar, and lots of seats, but no one is sitting, because the moment you move away from the shore, all the passengers start watching the sea, keeping their eyes peeled in hope of being the first to see a pod of dolphins or small whales, lazily basking in the warm waters of their natural habitat. When they finally notice them, a human wave moves from one side of the ship to the other and the air is pierced by squeals of delight and the sound of cameras taking hundreds of photos. Dolphins often appear in larger pods, jumping over the waves of the sea. There are times when it seems that they are used to all this hustle and bustle and look as if they were posing for the photos.

Such a “photo hunt” takes about two hours. For smaller groups of a few people you can also rent a motorboat. Then the joy is even bigger, because the motorboat enables you to come even closer to the dolphins and, with a bit of luck, even touch one of them.

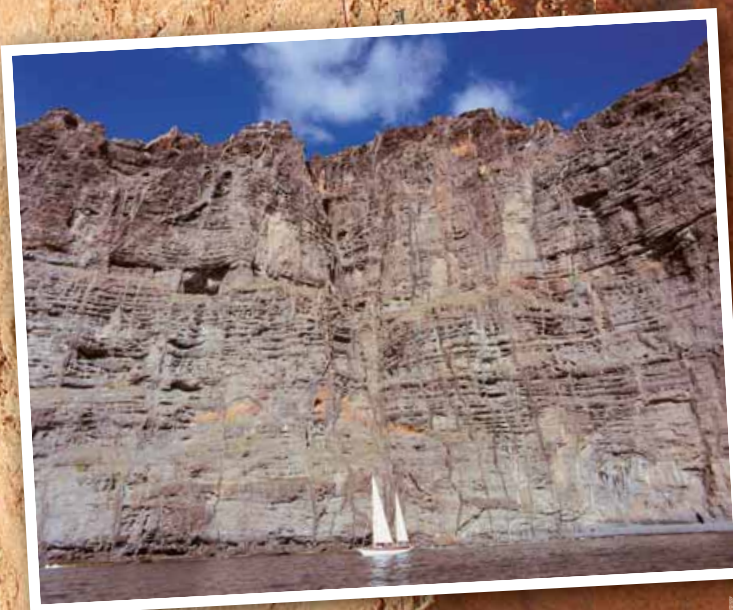
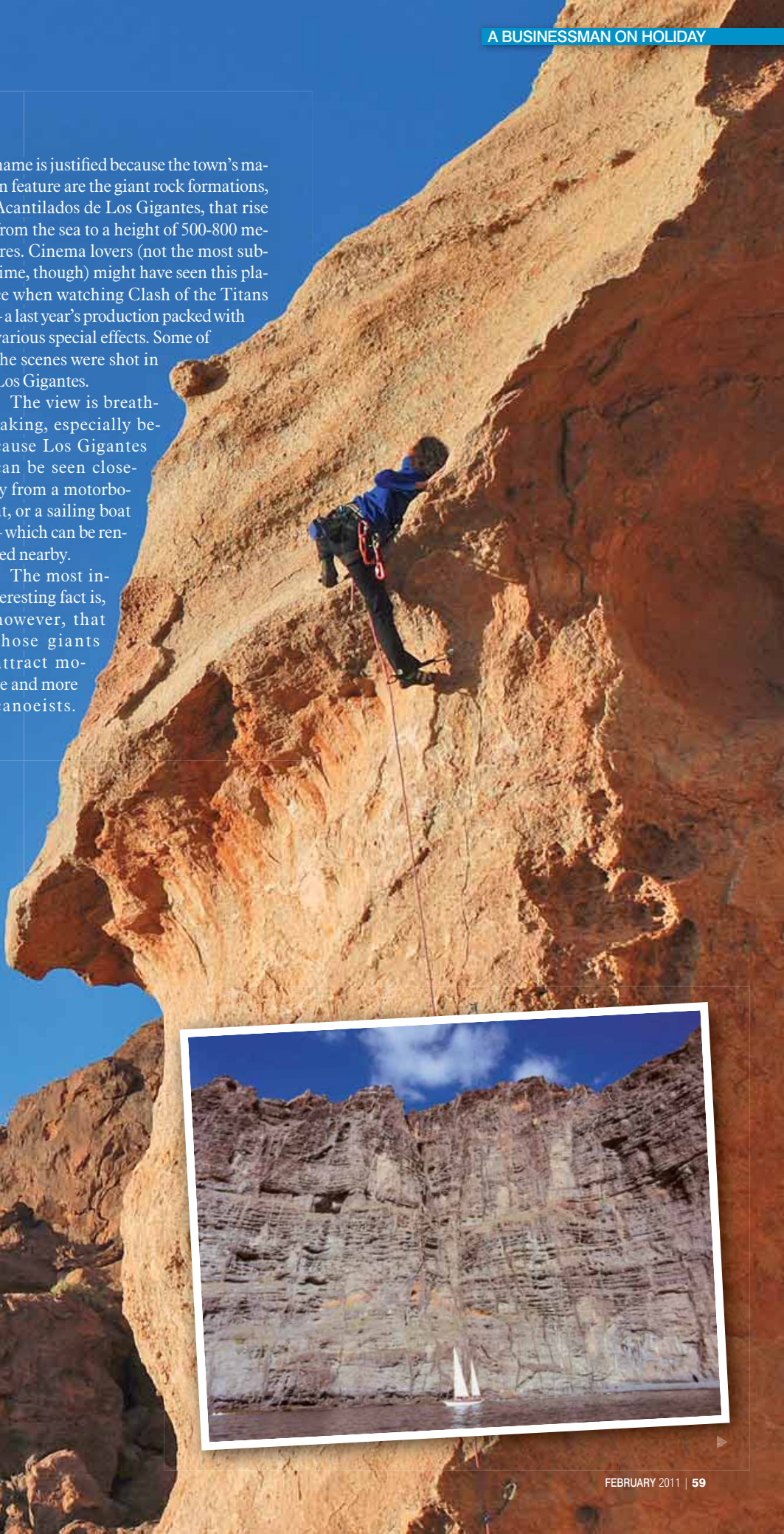
LOS GIGANTES

The western coast of Tenerife is home to a small town named Los Gigantes. The

name is justified because the town’s main feature are the giant rock formations, Acantilados de Los Gigantes, that rise from the sea to a height of 500-800 metres. Cinema lovers (not the most sublime, though) might have seen this place when watching *Clash of the Titans* – a last year’s production packed with various special effects. Some of the scenes were shot in Los Gigantes.

The view is breathtaking, especially because Los Gigantes can be seen closely from a motorboat, or a sailing boat – which can be rented nearby.

The most interesting fact is, however, that those giants attract more and more canoeists.





Marine canoeing is a relatively young discipline, but already gaining respect and popularity all over the world. In Los Gigantes such enjoyable event can be organized – it looks quite dangerous, but under a watchful eye of a guide and some portion of common sense, it will be definitely be an unforgettable adventure.

TEIDE

The highest peak of Spain with its respectable 3718 metres, is a volcanic massif whose last eruption was noted over 100 years ago. The mountain is majestic, and if you land in Tenerife in the late afternoon, it looks fabulously in the sunset. The landscape on Teide is truly lunar and that's why George Lucas used it to shoot some of the scenes of The Star Wars.

You can reach the foot of the mountain by car, driving along a serpentine winding road. A cable car will take you almost to the peak, and on your way there you will definitely admire the stunning views of the whole of the Canary. Once you are there, don't forget to take a photo of a payphone with a notice stating that this is "the highest public phone in Spain". To get to the top of Teide you will need special permission – and those are strictly rationed, so it's good to apply for one even 2-3 months in advance.

The picturesque Canary Islands attract tourists, filmmakers, and adventure seekers.



If you, however, already have your permission, you can cross the control gate to face the last 600 metres of the winding, rocky road leading to the very top of the mountain. It's important to walk this distance with your own pace, as the ascent is not as easy as it may seem. If you force yourself too much, you will soon feel the effects of the rarefied mountain air. Nevertheless, the view from the top and the feeling of overcoming your own weakness, compensate all the pain. Those, who don't have the permission, are left with two other, also very picturesque scenic trails.

The area around the volcano (around 19 ha of land) belongs to the national park which was established half a century ago. You must find some free time (around 3 hours) to enter this mysterious land. Such a visit is a pure relaxation.

MASCA AND LA OROTAVA

There are numerous places which offer stunning views while we are in Tenerife. However, two of them – Masca and Orotava – are the most remarkable. The former lies in a gorge of Teno massif and until several years ago the only way to get there was by boat or on a donkey. Now there is a long and winding road and driving there requires the nerves of steel.

A less dangerous, but also charming is Orotava – a municipality located in the northern part of the island and conside-

red to be an architectural pearl. Today it's a place where settle wealthier residents of the archipelago, businesspeople, and artists. It's also worth visiting one of the town's numerous taverns and try local delicacies.

BODEGAS

Wine lovers won't leave the island empty-handed. The several bodegas (wineries) of Tenerife are a real temptation, especially because tourists are welcome to visit the places and taste their wines. These are mostly family wineries which produce wine in small quantities, but the quality is excellent due thanks to the grapes which ripe in the full sun. On your visit to a bodega, you will be able to see the whole wine making process – from harvesting, through fermentation, to bottling – which sometimes is done almost manually with help of interesting tools.

Such a visit generally finishes at a special shop where you can sit at a table and taste several types of the local product. And, of course, buy a few bottles. We recommend local white wine.

THE CARNIVAL

It's not Rio, for sure – but it doesn't matter, because the emotions and mad partying until the very morning are guaranteed, so you definitely can't skip it! The time of the carnival is packed with so many events that it's hard to see all of them.



This year the carnival starts at the end of February and beginning of March. On 2 March the Queen of the Carnival will be elected on a gala, and two days later Santa Cruz will host a huge parade to finish on the Ash Wednesday with “The Burial of the Sardine” This year the carnival end on 13 March.

MAGMA

Even during the best holiday, people catch themselves thinking about work. I would recommend devoting those moments to a visit to Magma Arte event centre in Adeje. It's a thoroughly modern construction, designed by Fernando Menis and opened five years ago by the Spanish royal couple. To describe it briefly: it's made of concrete and glass, and its remarkably functional. There are dozens of conference rooms able to accommodate from 15 to 2,500 people. The main hall is 2,800 sq m large and has a 300 sq m stage. The centre is often a host to various concerts and exhibitions.

LA GOMERA

Take a short trip (less than an hour) by a ferry to San Sebastian – which is considered the capital of Gomera island. Christopher Columbus made La Gomera his

last port of call before crossing the Atlantic in 1492. The house in San Sebastián, in which he is reputed to have stayed, is now a tourist attraction.

The mountainous and fabulous landscape of Gomera is related to an unusual phenomenon that is a whistled language called “silbo gomero”. Invented by the original inhabitants of the island, the Guanches, was adapted to Spanish by the last Guanches and adopted by the Spanish settlers in the 16th century and thus survived. It's a truly remarkable way of communication, used mainly by shepherds. It is said that this language can convey almost everything, including emotions. However, the local youngsters aren't that much impressed with it, because as a form of retaining tradition the whistled language has recently become an obligatory subject at school. I wonder what a test looks like.

Gomera has almost a circular shape with a diameter of 20 kilometres, which is typical for a volcanic island. For a few hours a day you can visit there Garajonay national park, which is placed on UNESCO's list of world heritage sights, a stunning view from Mirador de Igualero observation deck, or the cliffs Los Organos, which resemble Los Gigantes. In the cen-



tre of the island there is a beautiful peak of Roque de Agando which is often covered with mist.

Gomera offers everything: from majestic peaks to great golden beaches. You can also practise water sports there or master your golfing skills. Similarly to Tenerife, the island offers a lot of hotels and guesthouses. ■



Spain, Scotland, Andorra, Switzerland.
If you haven't been there yet, we would like to invite you
to a ski trip into the unknown.

Skiing With *All Your Heart*

FOTOLIA / ISTOCK / DREAMSTIME

Let's start, however, with the Polish Masuria. There's a small tavern near a Masurian village of Uka – in Kadzidłowo. Its name is "Pod psem" (Under a dog). They serve excellent food there: home made Russian pierogis with fried onion, a delicious deer steak, or heavenly aromatic wholemeal bread. And, of course, goat cheese.

On the very entrance to the tavern you will come across a McDonald's paper bag pinned to the front door with a very meaningful text written on it: "We don't have time for those who don't have time"...

Well, unfortunately, we often don't have much time. But if we do, we want to make the very best of it. Here's our small, unofficial ranking of remarkable places which are worth visiting.

SWITZERLAND: A FREESTYLE WITH YOUR FAMILY

The Swiss resort of Laax is an ideal choice for a short family jaunt with adolescent kids, who additionally love snowboarding. The place is a real Mekka for the lovers of the single board as well as skiing freestyle and off slope fun. Each year, in January Laax hosts the largest European half pipe and slope style competition (with a prize purse of \$125,000) which is a part of Burton European Open (one of five intercontinental events besides New Zealand Open, Canadian Open, Asian Open, and US Open). No wonder, you can see there our snowboarding Olympic athletes such as Mateusz or Paulina Ligocka.

Laax – Flims – Falera, a base station for cableways heading to three small Alpine towns (in winter Laax is an unquestionable leader here), can tire even the toughest ones. The Swiss region of Graubünden offers stunning 220 kilometres of ski runs.

The easiest way to get there is to take a plane from Warsaw directly to Zurich airport and then take a super-punctual (typically Swiss) train to Chur with two changes on your way. There you get into also super-punctual postbus which, within 20 minutes, takes you to Rock Resort. It's one of few skiing centres in Europe where everything is at the reach of your hand. You can choose to stay at a 4-star Signina hotel or in one of several 4-star, three-storey, luxury apartment buildings with rugged stone facades. For those who have chosen to travel to the resort by a car rented at the Zurich airport – there's a huge underground car park with a full service. From there you can get to the hotel using a lift or walking along a short path leading straight to the apartment buildings. You can decide to cook by yourself or buy breakfasts and dinners in a few clubs which serve various cuisines: from Asian to Mediterranean (as well as fusion).

What's important – everything is close from there: the underground ski rental shop, and particularly two cableways which take us to different slopes from 1,200 to over 3,000 metres above sea level. On the top of the mountain there's one of the largest funparks where even double somersault are possible, a half pipe, and Vorab glacier where you can always count on fresh snow – even in unfavourable conditions.

You kids will also find there something for themselves. There's Freestyle Academy Laax – a huge heated practice hall built where once used to be tennis courts. Special springboards are used here to practise jumps and somersaults, you can try a half pipe on a skateboard, or use tall ramps to try various acrobatics on snowboard or skis and landing in soft sponges instead of hard snow. Satisfaction guaranteed.



SCOTLAND: THE LAST MINUTE WITH A TASTE OF SCOTTISH ALE

Skiing in Scotland? We know that it may sound a bit odd. But it's really worth it, although the offer is rather aimed at a group of male friends. A word of explanation: you don't have to ski wearing a Scottish kilt and the attractions you can expect there are nowhere to be seen in the Alps.

The ski centre, which we are recommending, was once known as Aonach Mor (from the name of the mountain nearby). However the name was too difficult to pronounce, especially for foreign tourists, so in 1989 it was changed into Nevis Range. The mountain is only 1,200 metres high, but taking into consideration the insular climate, it's very high.

The ski runs are perhaps not as long as in the Alps, but the longest ones stretch over at least a few kilometres. There are twelve ski lifts (mostly chairlifts) and the only cableway in Great Britain. Add to this several dozens of ski runs which are perfectly prepared by snow groomers.

The off-piste (freeride) runs on the hillside of Back Corries are a real treat.

"Nevis Range have kept their biggest secret very quiet, so quiet that only a handful of people know about what the "back bowls" (Back Corries) have to offer and how to get in and out" – this is how the Scots advertise the place.

The runs start at the top of Ben Nevis with an almost vertical start from the slope which looks like a big sea wave (you won't experience anything like that in the Alps). You have a real choice of true "black" ski runs – should you luckily reach the valley, you will then be taken on the top by a chairlift. The lifts on the other side of the slope will take you to Ben Nevis.

Nevis Range itself doesn't provide any accommodation – it's just a ski centre.



You can, however easily find a place to stay in Torlunda – a village located 3 kilometres away (mostly comfortable stone houses with a few bedrooms and a fire place), or further away in Fort William – a small town which offers a number of good hotels and a whole lot of great pubs which serve real Scottish ale. And more...

There are a few airports from which you can easily reach Fort William (the best idea would be to rent a car) – those are Inverness, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. You can, of course also get there from London by a train with sleeping cars, but in this way you would lose a few more hours.

You must be wary of one thing only: the weather. The insular climate makes it really difficult to predict the weather for the following days and, consequently, plan your trip in advance. That's why Nevis Range is an offer for the brave ones who love skiing and can decide to go almost on the spot, within 48 hours, when the weather conditions are favourable. You can be sure of one thing: when it starts snowing there – it won't stop soon!

THE ORANGE SNOWS OF SIERRA NEVADA

This is an idea for brave couples which have a little spare time on their hands in the latter half of March, love skiing in unusual places, are fond of Mediterranean cuisine and Spanish culture. A few days spent in Sierra Nevada which is located in the south of Spain, near the Mediterranean Sea, will definitely be exceptional. You can be almost sure of great weather, as there are 300 sunny days there throughout a year. And, of course, there are real mountains. The Sierra range stretches for almost 120 kilometres with the width of almost 40 kilometres. The highest mountain is Mulhacen (3481 metres).

The ski slopes are located between 2,100 and 3,300 metres. The most significant in Sierra Nevada is Pradolano ski centre (located at 2,100 metres) – a charming mountainous town with numerous hotels ranging from 2 to 4 stars, and several low rise apartment buildings. It's a stone's throw from there to two cableways which will take you as high as 2,600 metres – to Borreguiles. From there you can take one of several lifts which go towards Veleta peak (3398 metres) – with the longest one (a chairlift) being almost 3,500 long. The moun-

tain also offer one of the most impressive views over Laguna de Las Yeguas – an area featuring eight long "red" ski runs.

Overall, Sierra offers almost 20 ski lifts and 80 kilometres of ski runs. The season lasts from November until May. The best way to get there is by plane to Granada, Malaga, or Almeria with a change in Madrid.

In Granada you can take a bus or rent a car to get straight to Pradolano. The prices of ski passes and hotels are similar to those in the Alps, but the views are much more impressive. From the slopes of Sierra Nevada you can see the golden sands of Costa del Sol, and when the weather is exceptionally good, you can even see the Gibraltar Strait and the African coast. When you are done with skiing, you can always head for the beach. One more thing: several times during the year, the winds blowing from Africa bring to Sierra microscopic grains of Sahara desert. That's why, at the sunset Nevada often shimmers with orange colours.

INNSBRUCK AND STUBAITAL: SNOW IN THE OLYMPIC SAUCE

A classical winter destination – Innsbruck together with the surrounding glaciers is the leading and the most reliable place in Europe regarding appropriate skiing conditions. Add to this the excellent infrastructure which is a result of the city having been the host of the Winter Olympic Games in 1964 and 1976.

It's an ideal place to go to, especially with small children. We suggest getting there via Vienna. Unfortunately, there are no direct connections to Innsbruck from Poland, but the whole journey shouldn't take more than 4 hours. What's more, you don't have to rent a car in Innsbruck, because the most attractive valley of the area – Stubaital – is only 20 kilometre away, and we can easily get there by postbuses which regularly depart both from the airport and the railway station. There won't also be any problem with moving around Stubai – because you can get to all the main towns in the area – Fulpmes, Neustift, and Mutterberg by free skibuses.

The best idea would be to stay in Neustift – the largest town – located in the very centre of the valley. You will find there numerous 3 and 4 star hotels, an aquapark, and several ski rental shops. It's worth visiting Elfer – a small family ski centre (located at 2,000 metres), and





Sierra Nevada is an idea aimed at adventurous couples that love skiing, Spanish cuisine, and culture.



the town of Fulpmes with a considerably large ski centre Schlick 2000. The highest ski run starts on the top of Senjoch (2190 metres), and finishes next to the car park at the lower station of the cableway. Children will definitely love the 2-kilometre long sledge way.

However the real treat of the region is Stubai – the vast and well adapted Austrian glacier. The lower station is located in Mutterberg – about 14 kilometres from Neustift, where you can get by a ski-bus. The glacier offers 108 kilometres of ski runs of varied degree of difficulty – mostly for intermediate skiers (over 50 kilometres). Add to this several excellent restaurants (garlic cream served in a hollow loaf of wholemeal bread is a local delicacy), and BIG Family Ski-Camp – a special ski station for children. BIG Family Ski-Camp contributed to the fact why last year Stubai was awarded by a prestigious ADAC ski guide for being particularly friendly to families with small children. The kids under 10 years can ski in the company of one of their parents free of charge, and on the top of the slope they are looked after by BIG Family Ski-Camp with a kindergarten, and a special restaurant for children.

THE SMELL OF PINE IN THE PYRENEES

You won't find it even in the best Alpine ski centres. A long day in January (the sun goes down about 7 pm and the ski lifts are open even until 6 pm), and an inexpressible scent of mountain pine releasing its aromatic resin. The Pyrenees, which are slightly overshadowed by the Alps (truly unfairly), are a perfect destination for a jaunt of a group of friends.

The place offers excellent ski runs, delicious seafood, and numerous parties.

The easiest way to get there would be by a plane. The destination is Barcelona, and the flight takes mere 3.5 hours. The best idea is to get there in the morning, which will allow us to visit briefly the most important places in the city of Gaudi, and eat the obligatory paella in La Rambla.

The most interesting centre in Pyrenees is Grandvalira located in the principality of Andorra. To get there, we can either rent a car at the airport in Barcelona or take a special shuttle. The trip to Andorra takes no more than 3 hours.

Grandvalira is a region consisting of a few towns: Soldeu, El Tarter, Encamp, Canillo, El Tarter, Grau Roig, and Pas de la Casa. Each of them has a different character: Pas de la Casa resembles large housing estates similar to those in French Alps, while El Tarter resembles more of an Austrian village.

There are numerous ski runs in Grandvalira and their total length exceeds 200 kilometres. We start at 2,640 metres (Pic Blanc) down to 1,300 metres. There are four cableways in the region, including one of the longest one in Europe which connects Encamp and Cortals. There are also 60 chairlifts and only 4 T-bar lifts. This is because the resort is relatively new – it was built in 2004 and is far more modern than the old and the most renowned French resorts. Most of the runs are ideal for intermediate skiers (almost half of them).

When you're done with skiing, you can take your friend to Caldea thermal pools which are located on the outskirts of Andorra La Vella. It's a real paradise, offering hot waters, saunas, baths in citrus fruit juices, and cocoa massages. But that's not the end of the attractions: the region of Grandvalira has almost 50 good restaurants (serving Spanish, Catalan, and fusion cuisine), as well as 40 clubs where you can party until the morning. It's also worth remembering that, apart from Italian Livigno, Andorra is the best duty-free zone in Europe.

Similarly to Sierra Nevada it's an ideal place to master your French or Spanish language (both these languages are spoken here). And if you miss your compatriots, we can always attend the Polish Days in Andorra (4-8 April). ■

*Filip Gawrys
the author is the editor-in-chief of
Newsweek.pl portal and a keen skier*

TAKE AIM IN ABU DHABI

Minty Clinch discovers lush fairways, tricky lagoons and a whole lot of sand in the emirate



SAADIYAT BEACH GOLF CLUB

WHERE IS IT? 25km north-east of Abu Dhabi

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Located on Saadiyat Island, the ambitious business and leisure development that will include a Guggenheim and a Louvre museum among its cultural attractions, Saadiyat Beach Golf Club (pictured above) opened in March. Designed by Gary Player, it proudly claims seven hectares of sand. By the time you've played the second hole, you may feel you've seen most of it, but you'll be wrong – seven hectares is a hell of a lot of sand, and there's plenty more to come. On several holes, it occupies half the fairway space – on others, it blocks off easy access to the greens. On a few, mostly on the back nine, great swathes combine with lagoons to create landing areas requiring pinpoint accuracy.

As a breeding ground for the Hawksbill turtle, Saadiyat Beach is ecologically sensitive. To protect the wildlife, a new-generation buggy with an artificial intelligence GPS system stops you getting too close to the rough – take it too near and it won't move until you've reversed it out of the danger zone. Fair enough, though rampant machines tearing up the environment to create fairway real-estate invite accusations of hypocrisy. The fifth hole sweeps majestically down to the sea and the sixth runs along the beach.

CONTACT Saadiyat Island; tel +971 2557 8000; sbgolfclub.ae

PRICE £102 Sun-Wed, £140 Thurs-Sat; includes buggy and balls

CLUB HIRE £26 (Callaway X22), £39 with a sleeve of balls

CLUB HOURS 6.30am. Last tee time 4.30pm

MINIMUM HANDICAP None

FACILITIES 18 holes (7,784yds, par 72), driving range, extensive floodlit instruction area and putting green. Golf academy, individual lessons and packages.

AFTER THE GOLF The handsome 18,000 sqm clubhouse was designed by Frank Gehry. The Hawksbill restaurant and bar serves informal international dishes from 6am-10pm daily.

ABU DHABI GOLF CLUB

WHERE IS IT? 20km

east of Abu Dhabi

WHAT'S IT LIKE?

Designed by Peter Harradine and open since 2000, the course hosts the European Tour Abu Dhabi

Championship each January. The magnificent cement falcon, its wings spread across the top of the clubhouse and its talons hooked into a giant golf ball, makes a powerful statement of intent to hang on to the prized tournament in the face of possible challenges from Saadiyat and Yas Links (see facing page). The great bird looks out over 27 holes of lush manicured fairways, seven saltwater lakes and target greens, the same ingredients that underpin the 1980s and '90s courses in neighbouring Dubai. Clumps of palm trees and flowering shrubs add colour and character to a tried-and-tested format.

CONTACT Sas Al Nakhl; tel +971 2558 8990; adgolfclub.com

PRICE Holes one-18 £135 Thurs-Sat, £101 Sun-Wed; holes ten-27 £110 Thurs-Sat, £84 Sun-Wed

CLUB HIRE £38 (Taylor Made) with a free sleeve of balls

HOURS 6.30am until dusk

MINIMUM HANDICAP 28 men, 36 women

FACILITIES Holes one-18 (7,334yds, par 72), holes 19-27 (3,299yds, par 36), plus a championship course, driving range, practice area, putting green, golf institute. 18 holes on-course instruction £155.

AFTER THE GOLF Spike bar has been refurbished with leather armchairs and yesteryear photos. Breakfast from 6am; British favourites served throughout the day. Casa Verde, a new restaurant with a steakhouse and sushi bar, is open until 11pm.



MINTY CLINCH



YAS LINKS

WHERE? 25km east of Abu Dhabi

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The first links course in the Middle East, Yas Links (pictured left) opened on Yas Island in March, adding a new dimension to Emirati golf. Californian designer Kyle Phillips, venerated in the UK for Kingsbarns, has come up with another stunner. On what was flat desert scrub only three years ago, he has created the contoured fairways of the historic Scottish links. All grass courses in the UAE devour water, often inhibiting roll, but the Yas fairways are rewardingly hard and fast – or unrewardingly, when balls head purposefully into designer rough, made especially long and hairy by mixing nine varieties of grass seed.

Bunkers that are strategic rather than invasive mix silica from Germany with the omnipresent local product, and huge sloping greens are a true test of nerve. Best of all, there is no encroaching real estate, just sea and scrub, with the cutting-edge architecture of the Formula One circuit and Ferrari World, the new petrolhead's theme park, in the background. The Yas hotel, built over the F1 track, offers futuristic luxury with seven restaurants, two Georges V concept bars and two rooftop swimming pools, the perfect base for business and leisure golf.

CONTACT Yas Island; tel

+971 2810 7777; yaslinks.com

PRICE £102 Sun-Thurs, £136 Fri-Sat (Oct 1-May 31); £68 Sun-Thurs, £86 Fri-Sat (June 1-Sept 30). Includes buggy and range balls. Academy course £17 for unlimited play on course and range, last tee time 10pm.

CLUB HOURS 6.30am-6.30pm

CLUB HIRE £34 (Nike)

MINIMUM HANDICAP 28 men, 36 women

FACILITIES Championship course, 18 holes (7,450yds, par 72), nine-hole par-three floodlit academy course (86yd-187yd holes), floodlit driving range, practice area and putting green. Golf academy, individual lessons and packages for adults and juniors.

AFTER THE GOLF The airy hacienda-style Hickory's sports bar has a casual all-day restaurant offering a full English breakfast or golfer's hamper from 6.30am, plus snacks, traditional and international dishes from 11am. Last orders at 10.30pm.



AL GHAZAL GOLF CLUB

WHERE IS IT? 30km east of Abu Dhabi, 0.5km from the airport

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Two decades ago sand courses were all you'd find in the Gulf, but in the brave new Emirati world they are now an endangered species. Thankfully, Al Ghazal has displayed the versatility required to survive. In its 13 years, it has accumulated a golf academy equipped with the latest swing improvement hardware, a swimming pool, health club, floodlit tennis courts and a football academy, in addition to the best desert golf in the UAE.

Not that the sand game is to everyone's taste. The sun seems to beat down more harshly than it does on grass, and hitting off stones and grit or a square of artificial turf can produce cruelly random results. The "browns", made of compacted oil and sand, are wonderfully smooth and true, but as every footprint is as prominent as Man Friday's, there's no hiding place from extensive sweeping on every hole. No spikes please – they make too much of a mess. The front nine incorporate an archaeological site, while the homeward stretch features extensive water hazards. Yes, really.

CONTACT Airport Road; tel +971 2575 8040; alghazalgolf.ae

PRICE 18 holes £28 Thurs-Sat, £20 Sun-Wed; buggy £8.50

CLUB HOURS 8am until dusk Sun-Wed, from 6am Thurs-Sat

CLUB HIRE From £10 (various makes)

MINIMUM HANDICAP None

FACILITIES 18-hole sand course (6,711yds, par 71), putting green.

AFTER THE GOLF The English-style clubhouse, with its deep leather Chesterfields, is mercifully cool. There is a 200-seat terrace overlooking the course and a restaurant open 8am-11pm.

GETTING THERE

■ A four-night stay for two at Emirates Palace (emiratespalace.com) with BA flights from Heathrow starts from £955 per person in Jan-Feb and £909 in March. Visit ba.com/abudhabi or call +44 (0)844 493 0758 to book.

■ A one-night stay for two at the Yas hotel (theyashotel.com) including 18 holes at Yas Links and transport to the course costs £205 per person – call +971 2 656 0000 or email reservations@theyashotel.com to book.

■ For more information go to visit-abudhabi.ae

A Year Of a Tablet

Since 2010 – the date when iPad appeared on the market – the world has gone mad about tablet personal computers. When it turned out that this craze is not going to be just a brief fascination, but a true love for life, all major electronics companies got down to designing their own versions of Apple's popular gadget. They are quite versatile: you can use them to surf the Net, watch movies, read e-books, listen to music, and even make phone calls. Darek Zawadzki – our colleague and an electronics whizz, had a closer look at the present offer of tablets and now has chosen six of them which impressed him the most.

Apple iPad

Although it wasn't the world's first tablet, it still turned out to be the most important device of this type on the globe. We could even risk saying that the real history of the tablet started when the first iPad appeared on the market on 3 April 2010. Apple had already used us to thinking that almost every gadget created by the company becomes a real hit. We could even talk about a specific type of cult that surrounds the products made by the company with a bitten apple in its logo. In fact, there is something to celebrate – mostly thanks to the design, innovative applications, and a high quality fabrication. iPad (242.8 x 189.7 x 13.4 mm, weight: 730 g) has all those features and this might be the reason why over 3 mil-

lion of them were sold within the first 80 days. The device has a 9.7 inch LCD display backlit with LED (with 1024 x 768 resolution) and Apple A4 1 GHz processor. It's available in 6 configurations with memory ranging from 16 to 64 GB and various connection capabilities (WiFi or WiFi + 3G). The battery should keep the device alive for at least 10 hours. Apple has also added 12 applications using Multi-Touch technology. Other applications can be downloaded from App Store. The prices, depending on the configuration, vary from PLN 2,099 to PLN 3,299.

Summary

iPad is a really good gadget regarding both the design and applications. It's a shame though, that iPad doesn't feature a built-in camera, which could make the device even more useful. Unfortunately, as it's always the case with Apple's products, also iPad is relatively expensive.



BlackBerry PlayBook

Although the Canadians from RIM company haven't started the official sale of PlayBook when this article was printed, the device has already stirred a lot of interest. This is mainly owing



to the good reputation which "the berries" were able to gain in the past years. They are solid, functional, well assembled, safe. In other words, they have everything you would expect from a tablet. The Blackberry features a 7-inch touchscreen with 1024 x 600 resolution, ARM Cortex A9 1GHz processor, and two digital cameras: 5 MP (back), and 3 MP (front). The device runs on BlackBerry Tablet OS system. According to the company, RIM PlayBook (dimensions: 193 x 130 x 10 mm, weight 400 g) will be a real sprinter – the fastest tablet available on the market. The device will communicate with the world by means of WiFi and Bluetooth. It will be fully compatible with Blackberry's smartphones (enabling us to e.g. view our mail). The price hasn't been announced yet, but from well-informed sources we know that it shouldn't exceed \$500.

Summary

We couldn't test Playbook, so we rely only on the information provided by the manufacturer. Previous Blackberry products didn't let us down, so we are willing to give the company's new tablet the benefit of the doubt. RIM has published a video showing a comparison of Playbook's and iPad's web browsers, and "the berry" left the Apple's device far behind.

Samsung GALAXY Tab

In our opinion this is the most serious competitor to iPad. Galaxy Tab premiered at IFA 2010 – a consumer electronics trade fair – and it immediately aroused attention among both journalists and potential customers. The Koreans have a lot of experience in designing devices based on Android operating system. They are also innovative and quickly adapt to the changing requirements of the market. Model GT-P1000 (that's the full name of the Galaxy Tab) is definitely the beginning of novelties in the area of Smart Media. The device is based on Android 2.2, has a 7-inch TFT-LCD touchscreen offering 1024 x 600 resolution, Cortex A8 1 GHz process, and two cameras (2 MP at the back, 1.3 MP on the front – used mainly for video chats). Samsung has also supplied its tablet with unique applications such as: Readers Hub which provides easy access to a huge digital library of books, Media Hub providing

access to the newest films and videos, and Music Hub with a wide selection of music. There's also access to applications from Android Market and Samsung Apps. The Korean tablet supports 3G HSPA+, WiFi, and Bluetooth 3.0 standards, which guarantees a quick and stable connection in almost every situation. Other specifications: internal memory 16/32 GB, dimensions: 190.09 x 120.45 x 11.98 mm, weight: 380 g, battery: 4000 mAh (up to 7 hours of video playback), price: PLN 2,999.

Summary

Samsung performs well both as a tablet and a mobile phone (although of somewhat odd dimensions as for a phone). The device is reliable and quick, which is typical of Samsung. The only disadvantage is its relatively high price.





Dell Steak

Who ordered a steak? Basing on its dimensions – this one must be well done – it's the smallest of the devices we are presenting here, as it weighs mere 226 grams and is only 10 mm thick, so it seems to be an ideal travel companion. The device could be described either as a large smartphone or a mini tablet. The solid body features WiFi, Bluetooth, 3G, a GPS receiver, 16 GB of internal memory plus a slot for microSD cards, and a 5 MP digital camera. The screen of the Steak is only 5-inch (800 x 480) which may seem slightly inconvenient when browsing the web for a longer while. However, the situation changes to the device's advantage when making phone calls (the Steak also features a text messaging option). In case of other tablets and their size, we must find a safe place to make a call in order to avoid the look of amused passers-by. With the Steak this isn't necessary. The device runs on Android operation system which guarantees access to a great number of applications from Android Market. The price hasn't yet been announced.

Summary

It's a very handy gadget, easily fitting a pocket of a coat, and ideal for those who are interested in middle solutions – something between a smartphone and a tablet.

JooJoo

JooJoo is a real exception on the market of tablets. It is produced by a little known company called Fusion Garage based in Singapore and with a research lab in India. The word JooJoo means "magic" in the language of North-African tribes. Indeed, the gadget has a "magical" 12.1 inch screen! The device's heart is Intel Atom N270 1,6 GHz processor which can connect to the Internet within 9 seconds of switching the tablet on. The battery lasts for about 5 hours of using the device. Unfortunately, connection with the net is only possible via WiFi. On the other hand, the dimensions of the device (325 x 198 x 18.9 mm, weight: 680 g), make it not especially travel-friendly. JooJoo has only 4 GB of internal memory which dramatically limits its usability – mainly as a web browser. Let's hope the newer model of JooJoo will have a larger memory and 3G technology. The tablet can be purchased via the company's website for €359 (plus €15 for shipment to Poland).

Summary

A large, clear screen is perfect for home use. It's an interesting offer by a small manufacturer which decided to face the largest players on the market. Nevertheless, small memory capacity truly limits the tablet's functionality.



Creative ZiiO

Creative is mostly associated with manufacturing multimedia players, computer sound systems, or headphones – not with tablets. Well the stakes are so high that many players, who are outside the mainstream computer technology, have also decided to try their luck. ZiiO is the world's first tablet which implements apt-X audio codec. The device has also a set of applications called Pure Android Audio which provide high quality wireless sound (X-Fi Crystalizer technology enhances the quality of digital audio files, while X-Fi Expand provides surround sound in films and games). The whole device is run on Android 2.1 operating system with Zii ZMS-08 processor (designed by Creative).

ZiiO is equipped with Bluetooth, WiFi and 8 or 16 GB of memory, an SD memory slot, a microphone, and a digital camera (on the front). It's available in two versions: with a 7-inch display (resolution 480 x 800, dimensions: 207.4 x 133 x 13.7 mm, weight: 400 g, price PLN 999), or a 10-inch display (resolution 1024 x 600, dimensions: 262 x 173 x 13.7 mm, weight 650 g, PLN 1,299). The battery gives 5 hours of video playback time and 25 hours of music playback.

Summary

ZiiO is an interesting option for users who expect from their tablet not only excellent video quality, but also solid audio. The sound is definitely the biggest advantage of the tablet.



The Cleanest Food On Earth

The Italians have their pasta, the Spanish have paella, the Polish boast their game dishes, and the French are known for their seafood. Can Iceland, a country situated way off the beaten culinary track of Europe, offer anything interesting to satisfy our palate? Yes, and the menu is quite impressive.

Somebody could wickedly say that if you lack any other concept, you will most probably turn to ecology. But on the other hand, you cannot deny how much Icelandic cuisine is influenced by the natural environment. It is a country, where it would take ages to find chimneys polluting the air. The economy is based on fishery and closely-related food industry. And so, you can be sure that everything is clean, organic, and as a result – tasty.

Another strong point is originality. For example, take the local dish called hákarl. It is just fermented polar shark meat (traditionally, to ferment the meat you have to bury it in sand, and press in down with stones), which is later hung and dried for a few months. It is a delicious dish, although some people might be disgusted by the smell...

In Iceland they don't live by fish alone. The lamb here is just excellent - as the use of any kind of hormones is strictly forbidden - and hangikjöt (smoked meat) is a walking example of this. Quite shocking, but equally tasty dish is the local specialty of svið - roast and boiled sheep head. Iceland can also boast excellent cheese selection, be it for example skyr (resembling thick yoghurt in consistency), which is gaining more and more popularity in the world. Iceland is known for its love for culinary traditions, which is illustrated in the presence of dishes like thorramatur - a plate of traditional snacks including meat, fish, bread and cakes.

It seems that Icelandic cuisine is dependant on local products. Would it be then possible to prepare Icelandic dishes in Poland? Naturally. Obviously, I'm not going to convince you to smoke a shark in

your garden (your neighbours could get alarmed), or chase a sheep with a view to decapitating it. But it is possible to prepare something less sophisticated.

For a start, you can try making Icelandic cakes. You will need 500 grams of flour, 250 grams of sugar, 200 grams of margarine, 1/2 cup of baker's ammonia, a cup of baking powder, an egg, 100 ml of milk, some cardamom and some rhubarb jam. Mix the sugar, powders and flour together, add margarine and keep on

mixing. Add eggs, cardamom and milk. Leave the dough for a whole night in the fridge. Then roll out the dough on the pastry board and cut out cookies. Put a teaspoonful of jam on each cake and bake them in the oven in 200 degrees for about 15 minutes. The cakes should be golden in colour. Naturally, you can add to them some other ingredients, for example nuts.

Another simple but interesting idea to surprise your guests is treating them with an Icelandic delicacy, called brúnaðar kartöflur. These are caramelized potatoes, which not only look mouth-watering, but also taste heavenly. To prepare them, you need potatoes (one kilogram), 50 grams of butter and 50 grams of sugar. It's better to use small potatoes, or chop bigger ones into pieces. Cleanse them, and then dry. Put sugar on a hot pan, and when it starts getting brown, add butter and mix it together. Lower the temperature and add potatoes. Mix them, so that they are covered with light brown caramelized „sauce”. The sauce shouldn't be dark! If it darkens, you can remove the remaining sugar from the pan, add some water and boil it up. The potatoes are a perfect side dish for any kind of meat.

Naturally, there are many more interesting dishes in Icelandic cuisine. The most avid cooks, can try smoking hangikjöt - which is lamb prepared according to Icelandic recipes. But to do it correctly, you either need to have a smoking chamber, or know somebody who has one (a smoking barrel would do as well). It's better to use willow, birch or juniper wood. The rule number one, when smoking is getting the biggest amount of smoke from the lowest fire possible (desired temperature varies between 20-25 degrees). Smoking small pieces of meat takes no more than a few hours. Beforehand, you should keep it in brine for 3-4 days (20 litres of water, 10 kilos of salt, 500 grams of sugar and 100 grams of saltpetre). When smoking meat, you ought to focus your attention exclusively on the process – the fire cannot go out, and the smoke should constantly „attack” the meat. After having smoked it, hang the meat in cold and dry place. The final effect? Beyond description. Of course, you should not forget about listening to Björk – after all, she's also an Icelandic treat. ■

Artur Kolger



Expression of wine the production

part III

The times when sole wine tasting was enough to precisely determine the region and variety of wine, are a thing of the past. A contemporary wine maker has a wide range of technological solutions which can make wine taste exactly as we would like it to be.

When we see on TV, or read in books, how sophisticated is the technology used in wine production, it is difficult to imagine, that this delicious beverage can be made almost entirely without human assistance. You only need to put the grapes into a bucket, crush them a bit so that they give off the juice, and the rest will happen by itself. Grapes have everything that is needed to ferment and stabilize within themselves. Water and huge amount of sugar (found in no other fruit) are already present in the juice, while natural yeasts are to be found in the skin.

BIGSTOCK / FOTOLIA

When selecting an appropriate mode of wine production, it is all about adequate proportions. Winemaking and ageing are friendly processes and are supposed to help it reach its maximum potential. That's why too much interference might obscure wine expression, whereas too little – might stop it completely.

FERMENTATION AND MACERATION

I will describe the whole production process on only one grape variety to show the plasticity of the phenomena. Let us imagine an owner of a Pinot Noir vineyard. First, they need to decide what kind of wine they will be making. Dry, or sweet, red, pink, or white, sparkling or still, because all these wines could be produced from this one grape variety only. What may determine the character of wine is the harvest time. If you pick up slightly unripe grapes, you can get excellent sparkling wine, fully ripe grapes are ideal for still dry wine, whereas if you are a fan of sweet flavours, you should wait a bit longer with the harvest, even until the first frostbites, and you will get Eiswein. Sometimes you can also pick up the grapes when ripe and sun-dry them a bit (Tuscan Vin Santo) or in the vineyard loft (Amarone from Valpolicella).

The skin colour does not necessarily affect the wine's colour. Grape juice is, in most cases, colourless, that's why if you first squeeze the juice out of Pinot Noir, and then ferment it, you get white wine, whereas if you fer-

ment it together with the skin, in the process of maceration you get red wine. Pink wine, contrary to what you might think, is not a mixture of white and red wine - except for the worst and the best ones, e.g. most pink champagne varieties - but it is a product of unfinished maceration. When the colourless juice leaches the tannin out of the skin, it sometimes changes colour into rusty or golden, then into pale pink to ruby, carmine and burgundy or claret-coloured. It is the winemaker who decides what colour and taste he wants, and when to stop the maceration and separate the skin, so than the wine ferments only by itself. When producing red wines, the maceration is as long as the whole fermentation process, or even longer – in order to extract the maximum of the tannin and make heavy, bloody and concentrated wine. If you feel like having lighter, more delicate and subtle wine, you can shorten the process of maceration. If there is not enough of the tannin, you can make it up by adding stalks, which are put into the tun together with the fruit and give more green tannins (like in Burgundy, some Barolo and the white, German Riesling).

You have also a wide range of yeasts (native and breeding yeasts), fermentation and maceration types to choose from. There is criomaceration, carbonic maceration, alcoholic fermentation in any temperature – thanks to the computer-controlled radiators – directly into the tuns. You can also choose if the fermentation process is to take place in steel, wood, concrete, clay or laminate, in small barrels, or in huge tuns taking up most of the space in your cellar, whether it should be aerobic or anaerobic. When the process of alcoholic fermentation is finished, the wine cools down, and then the malolactic fermentation begins automatically by itself, and again, this may happen in various environments. There is also a possibility to have a double fermentation, and second fermentation for sparkling wines (Champagne, Prosecco). There is also a number of different degrees of filtration, which you can easily do without. But my point is only to show the possibilities, rather than to lecture on how each of these possibilities affects the wine, and what the subsequent stages are, as this could well turn the article into a winemaker's manual. ■

*Michał Poddany
& Robert Mielżyński*





SIZE 508

If we were to look only at bare figures, the newest Peugeot 508 would have to be classified as a D-segment car. There is, however, something that makes us perceive it as a luxurious limousine. What is it? This “something” is its remarkably beautiful body and unusually large boot.



Peugeot has accustomed us to the fact that in this segment it introduces two body styles – as it was the case in models 406 and 407 (508 is their direct successor). That's why, for the very start the 508 has been launched as a saloon and an estate version. Peugeot spends lots of money on the design, so we must objectively admit that the new model is simply beautiful. Both body types are suitable for work, holiday fun, but also – especially the estate – for carrying quite a big family, with comfort and lots of space both for the driver and his passengers. And this functionality... the boot of the saloon version offers ample 545 litres, while the estate boasts over 660 litres of space.

A STREAMLINED CAR

Let's start with the basics i.e. aerodynamics. Peugeot's engineers have honed it to perfection. Enough to say that the drag coefficient of the 508 is mere 0.26. What are the benefits? To put it simply: driving it is cheaper. Thanks to the improved aerodynamics around the whole body, the 508 doesn't have to utilize powerful engines of large capacity (as of now the ava-

ilable motors produce 112 and 204 BHP). The perfect aerodynamics also translate into low exhaust emission levels. For example the HYbrid4 type produces mere 99 grams of CO₂ per one kilometre. This for a car with 200 BHP and a four wheel drive! Even better, if you're not goosing it, the HYbrid4 can scoot around under electric power, occasionally offering a zero-emissions driving experience. Want more? What about the information that the top shelf Diesel HDI FAP (2.2 litres, V-6, 204 BHP) of the 508 emits 1/3 less fumes than the similar engine of its predecessor?

WHERE TO DRIVE IT?

Everywhere, except for areas of total wilderness. The French engineers predicted that the 508 will often be driven in unfavourable conditions, by drivers with various expectations and temperament. That's why the newest Peugeot will feature two different types of suspension – a regular 508 will have McPherson struts which guarantee comfort and appropriate grip, while GT version will feature – double wishbones. What about the back? Both types will have a multi-link suspension which will

particularly be appreciated on our Polish potholes – I beg your pardon... roads.

BUSINESS CLASS

I'm not talking about flying here. The fact is that Peugeot is equipped with all the possible systems invented in the recent years in the area of safety, communication and comfort. Who would complain, having on board a 4-zone air conditioning (each passengers adjust the temperature and the fan to his own needs), a cutting edge audio system with satnav, Bluetooth and a 7-inch screen, as well as a head up display which presents essential driver information (a solution taken over from aviation), an electric parking brake, and even the CDM system, which measures the parking space and tells the driver whether the space is enough for parking? Not to mention 6 airbags, or ESP with a hill holder. Want more? You can also order leather seats, as well as directional bi-xenon headlights with auto height adjustment. ■

Rafal Jemielita

is a journalist for Playboy

and a co-presenter of TVN Turbo's "Automaniak"

– a motor magazine programme



4 hours
in...

Amsterdam

Felicity Cousins explores the River IJ and the canal-side streets of the Dutch city



where people lounge on comfy sofas and armchairs. Open 11am-10pm; noorderlichtcafe.nl, ndsm.nl

WILHEMINA-DOK

Once the return NDSM ferry has dropped you back at Central station Waterplein West, hop on the free ferry to IJplein. This journey is much shorter – about five minutes. Once you arrive, turn right and walk along the riverside on a small path past a couple of blocks of flats, and you'll soon see an orange building on the waterfront. This is the delightful Wilhemina-Dok restaurant, which serves continental organic fare.

Prices range from about £10 for a starter and £20 for a main – try the delicious carpaccio of smoked beef with sun-dried tomatoes, cheese and pine nuts, or the mackerel with black pasta, beans, capers and carrots. The interior is cosy with wooden tables, candles and a marine theme. The windows overlook the activity on the river and there is also a terrace

TOP TIP

Buy an I Amsterdam Card for free access to more than 40 tourist attractions, discounts and free use of GVB trams, buses and metros. It costs €38 for 24 hours, €48 for 48 hours or €58 for 72 hours. Visit iamsterdam.com

AMSTERDAM NOORD

Just behind Amsterdam Central station, across the River IJ, a whole new world is developing. GVB ferries depart from a small dock free of charge, and their destination is Amsterdam Noord, some 27 hectares of land that used to belong to Shell – the iconic crown-topped tower that used to house its offices is easy to spot. High-end residential properties,

restaurants, bars and a film museum are all planned here. Take the NDSM Werf-bound ferry, which leaves every 15/30 minutes, to the NDSM shipyard, now one of the city's creative centres. Artists have set up workshops in a huge hangar, while on the east side is the Noorderlicht (Northern Lights) café, a good place for a coffee stop – it offers wonderful views over the river and a sprawling garden

Central station





Nemo Science Centre

for fine-weather dining. Open 11am-12am daily – book in advance if you can. Noordwal 1; tel +31 206 323 701; wilhelmina-dok.nl

NEMO SCIENCE CENTRE

Get the ferry back to Amsterdam Central and head for Nemo, the Science Centre, located to the right of the station as you face it and well signposted over a bridge. From the outside it looks like a huge ship jutting out of the water. Inside, there is plenty to do for all ages, with five floors crammed full of interactive displays, machines, experiments and films. Blow a human-sized soap bubble or experiment with electricity and gravity. There are also quizzes, reaction tests and memory games, and at the Age Machine, you lean over a screen that takes your picture and shows what you will look like in years to come, or

what you looked like as a child and teenager – it is surprisingly accurate.

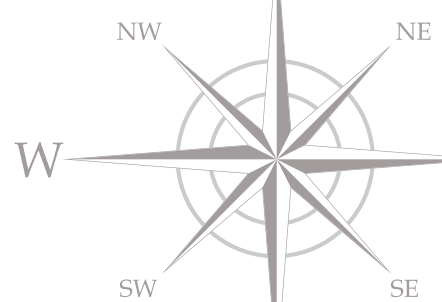
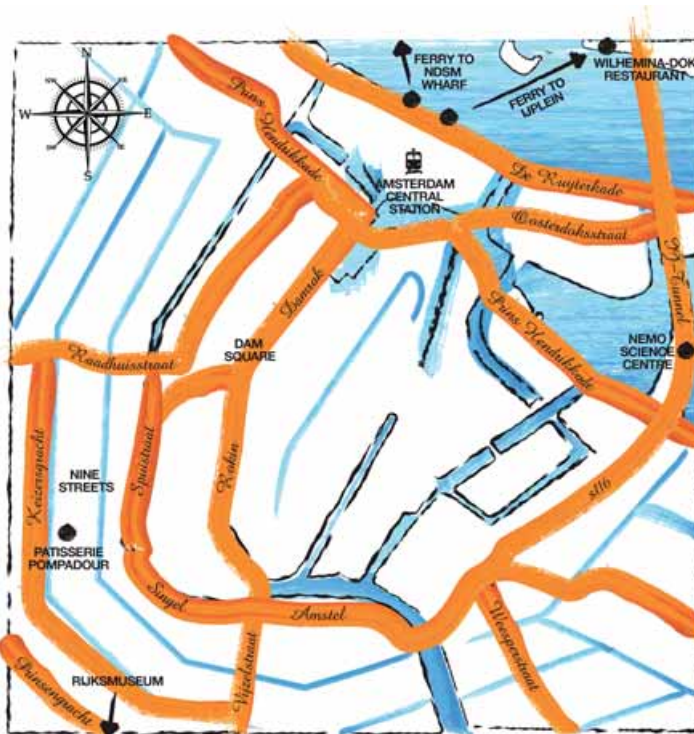
A roof terrace offers good views over the water and the city and is free to visit even if you are not visiting the centre. Nemo can also be hired for corporate events, with eight individual spaces including a ballroom for 600 people and a cinema for 200. Open Tues-Sun 10am-5pm. Entry is €12.50 or free with the I Amsterdam Card (see box, facing page). Visit e-nemo.nl/en

RIJKSMUSEUM

Jump on trams two or five outside the station to Hobbemastraat, for the Rijksmuseum. Built in 1876, this grand



Rijksmuseum



building is the Netherlands' largest museum and has been under extensive renovation for a number of years (to be completed in 2013). Much of its extensive collection has remained available for viewing and as each phase is finished, more will be unveiled.

I headed straight for the Golden Age "Masterpieces" exhibition, in the newly refurbished Philips Wing. The space is bright with plenty of light flooding in from the glass ceiling, which seems to be an appreciative nod to Rembrandt's own use of light. His all-encompassing *The Night Watch* painting is a privilege to see, as is Pieter de Hooch's domestic scenes depicting everyday life in the 1600s. Open daily 9am-6pm; entry is €12.50. Visit rijksmuseum.nl

If you enjoy the museum's pieces then keep in mind that you can see more at Amsterdam Schiphol airport – the Rijksmuseum has a collection on Holland Boulevard, in the area behind passport control (between the E and F piers). Open daily 7am-8pm; free entry.

NINE STREETS

From the museum, follow Spiegelgracht over three canals and turn left on to Prinsengracht, a pretty road with houses, cafés and shops beside the water. You'll soon be in the De Negen Straatjes, the nine roads that run between the main canals. They are full of restaurants and quirky shops that are perfect for an unusual gift. Look out for the cyclists, as they are quiet but speedy.

Bear right and you will join Keizersgracht running parallel – it's another pretty canal street perfect for photographs. Take another right at Huidenstraat and you'll find Patisserie Pampadour – a delightful cake shop with an 18th-century interior and such a glorious array of treats that you won't be able to leave without buying a few chocolates or a carefully crafted tart. If you don't want to sit on a bench outside trying to avoid getting whipped cream on your nose, you can take a seat in the lavish Louis XVI tearoom and gorge yourself in secret. Open Tues-Fri 9am-6pm, Sat 9am-5pm. Huidenstraat 12; tel +31 206 239 554. ■

Visit holland.com/uk

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



ECONOMY CLASS SYNDROME

My boss is flying to Sydney for an annual meeting of financial managers. Until recently, I've always booked for him short-haul flights. The rules in our company don't allow for flying in business class. My manager asked me if I could check the price differences between business and economy class, due to his economy class disease. This was the first time I've heard about something like this, but my friend, who deals with the chairman's flights was also asked about the same thing.

Ewa

Dear Ewa,

The question is very appropriate and I had to consult a physician to be able to give you the answer. Remember that whenever there are some medical issues at stake, it is always worth seeing a doctor, and no how-to book can ever serve as a substitute for this. Your boss most probably suffers from the so called Traveller's Thrombosis or Economy Class Syndrome, often abbreviated into ECS. The term is used with reference to blood clots in veins. It mostly affects veins within the leg area and may occur when legs are immobilized for a long time, when there is not much space and possibility to move. This is also the case when you sit for a long time in a plane seat. As a result, the back of your thighs is pressed, which, in turn causes the blood to flow slower, or - in extreme cases - to stop circulating. If the passenger also suffers from additional cardiovascular diseases, the danger of blood clots may increase.

A few years ago the case of a tourists, who died when flying from Australia to Europe gained much

publicity. The cause of death was thrombosis, but it was not proven that it was a direct consequence of a long-haul flight in economy class. The studies of the connection between thrombosis and the traveller's syndrome were introduced in Great Britain in the late 70's. It was then, when for the first time the term „Economy Class Syndrome" was coined. It turns out, however, that the problems with thrombosis also occur when travelling by car, bus or sitting behind a desk for a long time. Such problems don't spare first and business class passengers, either.

The symptoms include leg heaviness, pain, discoloration of the skin (especially in calves), and swelling. The temperature rise and exceeding heart rate are also possible.

Naturally, there are ways to prevent thrombosis. Many people choose to have a seat by the window, because they hope for a possibility to sleep throughout the flight. I strongly recommend to take a seat by the aisle, as it makes it easier for you to move around. What's more, you can stretch your legs easily and at any moment. It's good to we-

ar loose clothing, which doesn't restrain our movements. The same applies to shoes, which should be taken off during a long journey. On long-haul flights, the airlines often give out sets of toiletries, which also include socks. Some passengers suffering from cardiovascular diseases often have special compression tights, which enable blood flow.

Another very important thing is an appropriate in-flight hydration of the body. Humidity on planes is low, and so the blood thickens. In that case, the risk of thrombosis increases. What's more, alcohol, coffee and other caffeinated drinks contribute to further dehydration of the organism. It is advisable to drink large quantities of mineral water and fruit or vegetable juice. It is also crucial to position yourself in the right way, and not forget about some exercise. Don't cross your legs, as it gives your veins additional pressure. During a long-haul flight it's good to leave your seat and take a short walk along the aisle.

Many airlines have a separate exercise section in their on-board magazines. It is advisable to take such exercise as often as possible.

If your boss suffers from blood circulation problems, I strongly recommend medical consultation. A physician may prescribe some blood-thinning medicines.

We should remember about these exercises and short walks, not only during a long-haul flight, but also during regular office work, whether we suffer from economy class syndrome, or not.

AVIATION STUDIES

Recently I've heard about aviation management studies – do you think it would be a good choice? If yes, would you advise me to study here or somewhere abroad? Which subjects should I concentrate the most on? I would love to broaden my knowledge about civil aviation, and I read lots of information on the websites of some airlines.

Filip

Dear Filip,

I highly appreciate your interest in aviation. It is a field for real enthusiasts of the subject. As you know, the range of different professions connected with aviation, is really wide. There are different requirements in terms of predisposition and training for pilots or flight attendants. Aircraft technical servicing also requires special knowledge and speci-

fic education in the field. Air-traffic control and management is another, narrow specialization. A fair amount of work is connected with planning and sales – creating flight network, market research, on board product, system of tariffs, revenue management, computer systems of distribution (Global Distribution Systems), shopping (crucial fuel contracts), loyalty schemes aimed at different market

segments or customer service section. That's why it is difficult to recommend just one department. However, I suggest choosing a prestigious university with experienced personnel and measurable results (like the number of graduates employed in the aviation field).

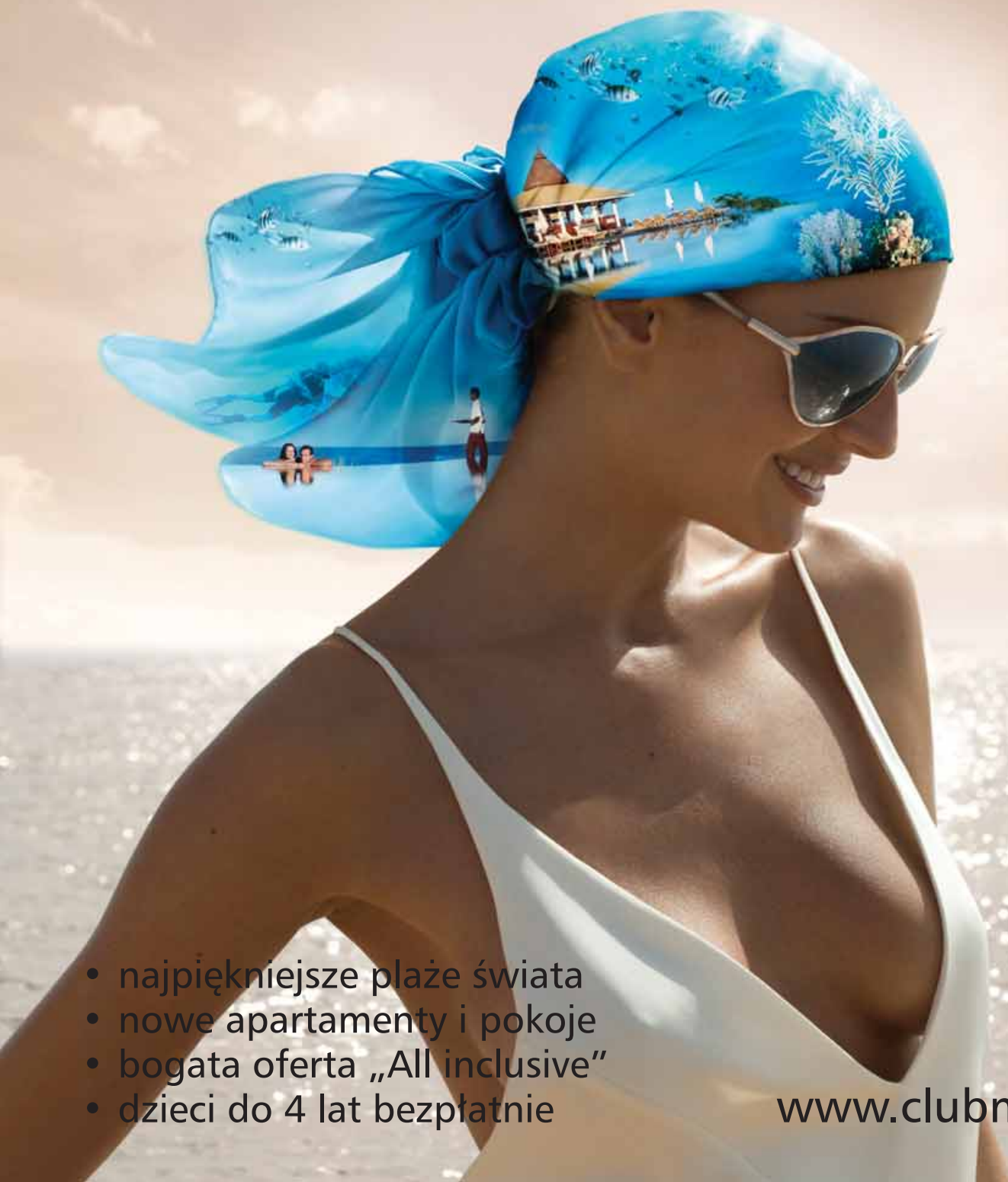
Currently, you should focus on language learning, above all. Proficiency in English is indispensable in every department of the aviation field. You should also have a fair knowledge of maths (introduction to statistics, econometrics, and quantitative impact study), physics (indispensable in navigation and aeronautical technology). Good knowledge of geographical issues is also crucial.

Many airlines organize traineeship for students. I strongly recommend applying for them. You can follow such information systematically.

Club Med

W A K A C J E M A R Z E Ń

L A T O 2 0 1 1



- najpiękniejsze plaże świata
- nowe apartamenty i pokoje
- bogata oferta „All inclusive”
- dzieci do 4 lat bezpłatnie

www.clubmed.pl

OTWÓRZ SIĘ NA PRZYGODĘ Z NOWYM VOLVO V60. ZAŁADUJ
MARZENIA, OPTYMIZM, CIEKAWOŚĆ ŚWIATA I RUSZAJ PRZED
SIEBIE TAM, GDZIE JESZCZE CIĘ NIE BYŁO. OBDARUJ SPOKOJEM
I HARMONIA JAZDY SWOICH NAJBLIŻSZYCH, BO PROWADZISZ
NAJBEZPIECZNIEJSZY MODEL VOLVO W HISTORII. PRZYWIEŹ ZE
SOBĄ MNÓSTWO WSPOMNIEŃ Z PODRÓŻY. ZMIESZCZĄ SIĘ NA
PEWNO. I PODZIEL SIĘ TĄ HISTORIĄ Z TYMI, KTÓRZY DOPIERO
SIĘ NA NIĄ WYBIERAJĄ. **UŚMIECHNIJ SIĘ DO NIEJ, BO WIESZ,**
ŻE ŻYCIE TO COŚ WIĘCEJ.



W zależności od wersji silnika zużycie paliwa w cyklu mieszanym
wynosi od 5,4 do 10,2 l/100 km, emisja CO₂ od 142 do 237 g/km.

NOWE VOLVO V60 JUŻ OD 116 000 ZŁ
WWW.VOLVOCARS.PL

VOLVO CAR FINANCIAL SERVICES – KREDYT, LEASING, UBEZPIECZENIE

Volvo. for life

