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Frankfurt ● Beijing ● Estonia ● Seychelles ● Airbus A380 ● Ford Focus

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HOTELS THAT LOVE TO SAY YES!



38



18



76



74



24

4 EDITORIAL

6 ON TOP

Hotel and airline news

14 TRIED&TESTED

Granary – La Suite Wrocław;
Ibis Łódź; RiverWiev Wellness
Centre Warsaw; Sony Vaio S
Series; Czarci Jar Restaurant,
Zakopane

24 THE EVENT

Lufthansa's Airbus A380
at Warsaw Okęcie

REPORTS

26 APPLICATIONS

96 travel applications for a phone,
a smartphone, or a tablet

32 LOT POLISH AIRLINES

First Minute promotional fares

34 HEALTH

We are a community
of amateur-doctors who more
and more often turn to various
power pills

38 REPORT

Helipads – rare in Poland,
a common sight anywhere
else in the world

42 GUIDE

Frankfurt – the main hub
of the German air carrier

45 A DAY IN THE LIFE

...of Elżbieta Mischczyk –
a concierge in Warsaw's
Marriott hotel

46 ORBIS

Promotional offers for Easter
holidays

50 HOTELS

The largest hotel chains launch
more and more new brands. Is this
necessary?

54 REZIDOR

The hotels belonging to the
chain and their culinary offer

DESTINATIONS

56 BEIJING

The Chinese capital two years

after the Olympic Games is still
rapidly developing

60 ESTONIA

A small country with big potential,
also for incentive trips

LIFESTYLE

62 A BUSINESSPER- SON ON HOLIDAY

Seychelles – a journey to a real
paradise

66 GOLF

Excellent golf courses
in Portuguese Algarve

68 TECHNO

Hot news on latest electronic
novelties

71 TASTES OF THE WORLD

Hungarian cuisine

72 WINE

Pinot Noir – wine with slightly
dark character

74 BUSINESS MOTO

Ford Focus

76 DOHA

4 hours in the Qatari capital

78 BT POLAND IN ENGLISH

82 ASK PETER

We answer all your questions
regarding travelling



There is a nice word in English – “ubiquitous”, which roughly speaking means “omnipresent”. This word is also often used in the world of the modern technologies, especially in the context of access to information, independently of the fact where we are at the moment. Without any doubt, we are experiencing now a big revolution in terms of new hardware and software which is supposed to make our lives easier. In this issue we look closer at computer and telephone applications which can be useful while on a business trip.

The means of communications are changing rapidly and so are planes. Recently the Warsaw airport hosted the new Airbus A380. Since we also were there, we share here our impressions on this huge machine. That's not the only aviation-related articles you will find in this issue. I especially recommend the feature on helicopter landing pads (in short “helipads”) both in Poland and worldwide. We also visit the airport in Frankfurt, the main hub of Lufthansa and one of the most dynamically expanding airports in the world.

Of course, travel is not only about aircraft. This month we also write about hotels in Łódź and Wrocław, describe the new, business-friendly face of Beijing, visit Seychelles – the islands which are excellent for a holiday rest, and also have a closer look at Estonia – a country which is so close to us, but still unknown to most Poles, although it is a great place to organize an incentive trip. As for golf, this month we visit the golf courses of

Algarve, Portugal. Those who are interested in Qatar and its cities, will find here an interesting piece on Doha.

As always, we haven't forgotten about other topics related to the life of a businessperson. We have tested for you a few laptops which can be especially useful at your work, visited the wellness centre of Warsaw's InterContinental hotel, and checked the latest novelties from the automotive industry. Finally, we have visited Hungary to see whether their cuisine can satisfy our tastes. Ubiquitous. We are omnipresent.

Enjoy your reading.



Robert Grzybowski
Publisher BT Poland



Read more details! Visit businessstraveller.pl

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Transfer Centers at Okęcie

LOT has opened two new LOT Transfer Centers desks for transit passengers who land at Okęcie airport in Warsaw. One of the desks is situated in the area for passengers from Schengen zone, near gates 25 and 26. The other one can be found near gates 19 and 20. The new centres enable transit passen-

gers to change their tickets as well as their route, receive a boarding pass for the rest of their journey, complete information needed for US immigration authorities, and in case of flight delays – receive services they are entitled to without the need to reclaim their luggage or leave the transit zone.



The Dreamliner Is Coming

LOT Polish Airlines has been officially notified of the new delivery date for the Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft. According to the notification, the first Dreamliner will be delivered to the Polish carrier in April of 2012, and

the next four aircraft will arrive at LOT Polish Airlines between August and November 2012. The Polish air carrier is in a real need to replace its fleet, so let's keep our fingers crossed for the seamless transition.

A New Route To Donetsk

LOT Polish Airlines is opening a new route between Warsaw and the city of Donetsk in Ukraine. The inaugural flight to Donetsk will take place on the 3rd of June this year. The opening of the new route to Donetsk is the latest step in the new corporate strategy adopted by the Board of LOT Polish Airlines, which assumes the construction of a network of LOT connections in the East. Flights on the Warsaw-Donetsk route will take place

three times a week. The route will be served by Embraer 170 and 175 aircraft. The flight time to Donetsk will be 2 hours and 10 minutes, while the return trip to Warsaw will take 2 hours and 30 minutes.

Tickets on the Warsaw-Donetsk route are available for 329 PLN in either direction with the First Minute fares offer (depending on the date of purchase and seat availability for a given flight).



The Catering Show in Expo XXI

Mazurkas Catering has prepared a big gala called The Catering Show 2011.

The event took place in spacious Expo XXI complex centre in Warsaw and was attended by over 700 guests. The main goal of the gala was to prove that good catering service is nowadays an independent business activity, which is capable not only of preparing delicious and well served meals, but also providing a wealth of attractions and entertainment to the customers.

The event was filled with a number of elements from the theatre, artist performances, art auctions, opera songs, and, most importantly, dishes served in the most refined way. Those guests who sat

down at the tables, had an opportunity to experience a top-class waiter service, and then try one of numerous theme buffets. There was the Japanese buffet with the ever-present sushi and sake, a table with Greek delicacies, a wide selection of fish (e. g. a 2-metre swordfish) and seafood, as well as delicacies of the Polish cuisine and excellent confectioneries.

Overall, the guests could try over 150 various dishes, such as turkey stuffed with rocket, tomatoes, and dried ham with lemon sauce, or squids stuffed with crayfish mousse, aromatic brandy with a shrimp and zucchini. Although the event lasted several hours, it was still too little to try all the delicacies.





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AIRFRANCE Novelties Onboard B777

In January 2010, Air France launched a new version of the Boeing 777-300ER on its route between Paris and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam. Apart from a thoroughly remodelled cabin, the passengers can also use the new in-flight entertainment system. The system has a USB socket enabling passengers to download free programmes. Also, passengers can read audio, photo and video files and consult and modify work documents such as Word, Excel or Powerpoint files. Thanks to an intuitive navigation system, all passengers can enjoy the Video On Demand (VOD) system with some 600 hours of programmes in 15

different languages. As for music, passengers can choose from some 3,000 pieces of music and can also draw up their personal play list. In all cabins, wider touch-sensitive screens are now in 16:9 format and have a faster response time. Among the other Air France exclusive new features, passengers will soon have access to an interactive meal service menu and be able to download recipes as well as take part in a discussion forum, where they can exchange with other passengers on the flight.

You can fly from Warsaw to Ho Chi Minh five times a week. The price for a roundtrip tickets starts at PLN 3,800.

A NEW CHEF IN MARRIOTT

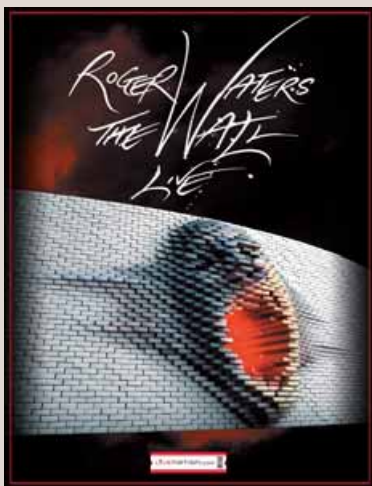
Gavin Baxter comes from Australia, has toured the whole world, cooked for 5-star hotels, top restaurants in Norway and Austria, and even aboard luxurious cruise ships. Now he has been chosen as the new chef of Warsaw's Marriott hotel. Baxter supervises all dining facilities in the hotel i. e. Parmizzano's, Lilla Weneda and Chopstix restaurants, Lobby Bar, Panorama Bar & Lounge, Champions Sports Bar, Vienna Café, and La Patisserie. It's worth adding that Gavin Baxter's travel experiences were a basis for a culinary book which will hit the Polish bookstores in May this year.



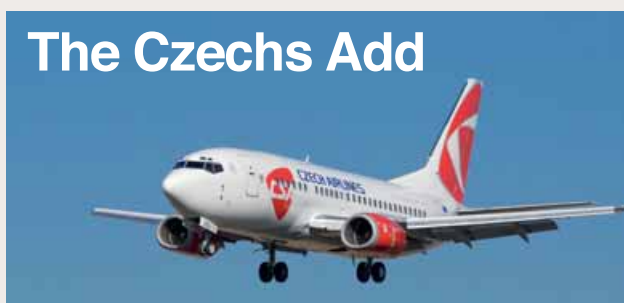
BT ABOUT CULTURE

THE WALL IN ŁÓDŹ

There is perhaps still a chance to get tickets to see it, but you can't really count on seats in the first row – that's for sure. It doesn't really matter though, because being there is a must. On 18/19 April, the new Arena hall in Łódź will be the venue for Roger Waters' show called «The Wall». Those who aren't familiar with the name, must have really spent the last 3 decades in a nuclear bunker, not leaving it for even a moment. The concerts are especially worth seeing, because the visual effects prepared for that occasion are as important as music itself, and Waters has recently stated that this tour will probably be his final.



The Czechs Add



During the main summer season, Czech Airlines is planning to commence regular service to destinations such as Lvov, Donetsk, and Kharkov in Ukraine, Baku in Azerbaijan, and Bordeaux in France. Other connections, such as from Prague to Kazan in Russia, or from Karlovy Vary to Baku, will be added to the Czech Airlines offer through planned code-share cooperation with partner airlines. The airline is also exploring the possibility of opening up regular air service to the Middle East and Central Asia in the future. In this context, Czech Airlines is analysing the possibility of flying to Riyadh, Teheran and Ashkhabad in Turkmenistan, as well as to Baghdad and on several other routes.

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RECORD RESULTS OF TAP

TAP Portugal said it achieved “the best result ever in the history of the company”, reporting a net profit of €62.3 million (\$86 million) for 2010, up from income of €59 million reported in 2009. It noted the positive performance was achieved despite a 45% hike in fuel costs, the Icelandic volcano ash cloud crisis, strikes by French and Spanish air

traffic controllers, and floods in Madeira. Network-wide load factor last year improved six points to 74.5%. At year end, the carrier's network comprised 64 destinations in 30 countries worldwide.

TAP also flies on Warsaw – Lisbon route five times a week, but since this connection is particularly popular, soon one more flight will be added.

Anniversary E-Class



Mercedes Benz celebrates the 125th anniversary of the automobile. It's 125 years since Carl Benz, a German engine designer, patented his first vehicle with "gas-engine drive". Mercedes has decided to celebrate this anniversary by launching a special edition of Mercedes E-class. The German manufacturer will produce 125 cars of the 125! Edition, featuring a diesel engine, AMG's Avantgarde package, automatic transmission, Parktronic automatic parking system, and metallic paint. The car, which now looks extremely attractive, has also a promotional price of PLN 199,125.

Pure Sky Club Launched

The first luxurious business club, which occupies the 22nd floor of the Skylight office building in Warsaw's Złote Tarasy, has been awarded the title of the "Discovery of the Year" at "Personalities of 2010" gala in Warsaw. The award was presented to James Balfour and Tony Cowen – the owners of the club.

Pure Sky Club is the first private member club in Poland. It was launched merely four months ago, but it has managed to gain over 700 members. The club offers its members an interesting formula which involves combining their business activities with relaxation – a complete novelty in Poland. The club features 9 conference rooms, a small cinema room for 18 people, a two-level cocktail bar with a panoramic view over the centre of Warsaw, a restaurant serving dishes from various cuisines, and a Spa & Relaxation centre.



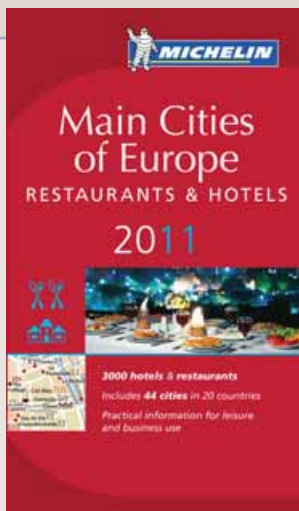
Dictate As You Wish

They are easy to operate, feature an intelligent noise cut function, a USB connector, and a memory card slot. These are just a few advantages of Sony's new ICD-SX Series digital voice recorder.

The device is ideal for recording voice notes, doing interviews or re-recording live music. The recorder has a built-in microphone and 2GB of memory. Intelligent Noise Cut function reduces ambient noise allowing for clearer audio playback. In contrast to other voice recorders, which only cut high or low frequencies, this function analyses the nature of the ambient noise and then eliminates unwanted frequencies, leaving clear and more natural sound of the recorded speech. The most advanced model ICD-SX712D has an unprecedented 6-star certification for dictation accuracy.



* Plaža, siesta, tapas, fiesta....
Ależ ciężka praca!



Anniversary Red Michelin

Michelin released their 30th edition of the Main Cities of Europe guide. The guide describes the best restaurants and hotels across Europe, including 36 restaurants located in two Polish cities of Cracow and Warsaw. Unfortunately, none of them has earned yet the first star, and the only one which in 2010 had Bib Gourmand rating for offering “good food at moderate prices”, this time has lost the recommendation. However, the mere presence of a restaurant in the guide is already a great honour and a signal that the place is definitely worth visiting. In Warsaw the highest marks

(4 fork and spoons) were awarded to Pod Ggantami and Amber Room restaurants, with the latter one debuting in the guide. The new restaurants included in the guide are also Platter by Okrasa, Concept, La Rotisserie, La Table, and Michel’s Brasserie (unfortunately closed now). This year’s guide doesn’t include any new restaurants from Cracow, and the highest marks (3 forks and spoons) were awarded to Wentzl, Copernicus, Cyrano de Bergerac, Pod Różą, and Trzy Rybki restaurants. The best Polish hotel according to the Michelin Guide is Warsaw’s InterContinental (5 pavilions).

FINNAIR Everyday To Singapore

Finnair will begin scheduled flights on 30 May to the sparkling, pulsating five million inhabitant metropolis of Singapore. Singapore will be Finnair’s tenth scheduled flight destination in Asia. Next Summer Finnair will

fly a record number of 74 flights per week to 10 Asian cities: to Hong Kong 12 flights per week, to Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Seoul, Beijing, Shanghai, Bangkok and Singapore daily and to Delhi six flights per week.

Finnair will add Gdansk to its route network on March 28, in cooperation with Finncomm airlines. Finnair’s seasonal Krakow-Helsinki flights will in turn commence on March 31 and will continue operating until October 2.



Branson’s Angels

Business is important, but money isn’t the only thing an average man thinks about, especially during a long flight. On such an occasion everybody will appreciate the assistance of nice, and competent flight attendants, especially if they are remarkably beautiful.

According to the survey of 1,000 people by the Business Travel and Meetings Show, Virgin Atlantic scooped the pool for the most attractive cabin crew. Virgin’s “red hotties” beat competition from Singapore Airlines and Etihad. The top five cabin crews were: Virgin with 53 percent; Singapore with 18 percent; Etihad with 12 percent; Emirates with 11 percent, and Aer Lingus with 6 percent.

The Orchid in Radisson Blu Cracow

This March Radisson Blu in Cracow launched its modern beauty and massage studio named Blue Orchid Spa. The studio offers the whole range of healing and relaxation massages involving aromatherapy and acupuncture. Among them especially interesting seems to be so-called OxyJet – a face oxygen therapy during which the skin absorbs pure oxygen combined with various exfoliating, moisturizing or nourishing components. The tired skin will be able to rejuvenate thanks to Amazonas Spa treatment. Thanks to the knowledge of nature – where, almost every plant can be used as remedy, the treatment uses extracts from plants and fruit to rejuvenate the skin and restore its natural firmness, protecting it against free radicals. We can also opt for Sencha Spa which is a treatment based on green tea which slows down the ageing process, or go for a bit of chocolate madness with White Chocolate Cherry – a treatment which combines beneficial properties of white chocolate and cherry, and which nourishes and rejuvenates our skin.



B747-8 Has Departed



Having obtained all necessary certificates in order to perform its first test, Boeing 747-8 Intercontinental has finally taken off and enjoyed its first successful flight.

The test flight was made from Everett to Seattle. The aircraft spent in the air almost 4.5 hours. Everything went smoothly and according to the plan.

Now, the new jumbo jet will be slowly preparing to its first passenger flights with... a 600-hour testing programme. The first airline to receive the new B747-8 will be German Lufthansa, and soon Air China and Korean Air will follow suit.

The new Boeing 747 is the American answer to Airbus A380. It features a completely new interior, consumes less fuel, while its range allows the machine to fly between any two cities without any refueling stop. The aircraft will take a total number of 467 passengers on board in its 3 cabin classes.

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HOTEL: WROCLAW

The Granary – La Suite Hotel

WHAT'S IT LIKE? As the name suggests, the building is a reconstruction of a 16th century granary. The investor bought the land in an attractive area of the city, but was obliged to renovate the old construction. This task wasn't easy, because back in 1970 the building had been badly damaged by the fire. All that was left were cellars, two walls, and thick bushes in between. It is a mediaeval construction which has preserved its original spirit, with very modern and functional design – a combination which is usually difficult to achieve. That is why the project was made by a well known designing company from Paris – Gottesman Szmelcman Architecture. They accepted the offer, but it was quite a challenge, as they had never designed a hotel, especially one located in a building of historical value.

Now the building looks stunning. In November 2009 a unique boutique hotel was launched here. You might be surprised, as in order to get to the reception area, you need to go down the wide stairs just behind the front door. There is also a lift for disabled guests. The reception area is located in the basement, and the omnipresent brick arched vaults as well as dark floors contrasting with pastel colours of the walls, make you think about a knight's castle. You can sense this feel of mystery almost everywhere.

Granary, although was opened merely couple of months ago, has already managed to receive a few awards for the best hotel in the city. It is also listed in the Small Luxury Hotels of the World.

WHERE IS IT? The hotel is situated in the very centre of Wrocław, but on a narrow mediaeval street, which guarantees

intimate atmosphere and peace and quiet. The railway station is only a kilometre away, so you can even take a walk to get there, while the airport is within the distance of 13 km. and a taxi drive should take no more than 25 minutes. There is a hotel car park for guests who arrive by car, but you can also book a transport service in a private limousine with a driver.

ROOM FACILITIES In Granary each suite is different – both in terms of configuration and the area. Altogether, there are 47 of them, including two-storey ones – not to be found anywhere else in the city. Each one comes with a separate working and resting space, and the interior design was based on natural materials: glass, wood and stone. The subdued colours of the decor neatly compose with the furniture, and the rooms on the upper floors look even more interesting, thanks to the



CONTACT The Granary – La Suite Hotel;

ul. Mennicza 24, 50-057 Wrocław;

tel. + 48 71 395 26 00; thegranaryhotel.com

PRICE Internet rates for the Executive room for the end of March (in the early booking system – 2 weeks before arriving) started at PLN 389.50.



architecture – there is a sloping roof made of glass. The decor is minimalistic, well thought out and in line with the overall austerity of the building.

As you would expect in five-star hotels, each room comes with individually-adjusted air conditioning, a comfortable hand-made bed with anti-allergic pillows, a mini bar, tea and coffee making facilities, flat TV screens, satellite TV, a laptop safe and bathrobes, slippers and hairdryers in spacious bathrooms. Wifi is accessible in the whole of hotel free of charge, and in the rooms you have a free access to wired internet. There are no twin rooms in the hotel, but each room comes with convertible sofas, which is an excellent solution if you're planning a family stay.

The suites are much more spacious, the standard Executive is between 34 – 45 sq m. The so called Garden rooms, located behind the restaurant on the -1 level, are quite interesting (33 – 41 sq m). You can see there magnificent brick vaults, and use the private terraces. Premium suites are of similar quality but bigger in size (up to 50 sqm). However, the most impressive are the two-storey Deluxe suites, located on the upper floors of the hotel. These are up to 80 sq m, and come with separate bedroom and lounge sections, as well as a kitchenette, because they are often booked for longer stays. This is, however, not surprising.

Thanks to the glass roof, the suite has access to the natural light, but they can also be darkened completely – a useful thing for a business traveller. Another advantage is the possibility to open the windows – a rare privilege in the hotels nowadays.

BUSINESS FACILITIES There are two rooms (12 and 28 sq m) intended for business meetings. They are usually let for boards of directors, but also private business dinners are held there.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS The quality of food are of great value in Granary. The restaurant is close to the reception area, and has only six tables, but it is regularly frequented, not only by guests, but also the citizens of Wrocław. Its name (Mennicza Fusion) should give you a clue about what kind of dishes are served here by the young, but experienced and adventurous chef Mateusz Malinowski. The short menu is changed every three months, so when coming to the hotel, you can always find something new, like Bavarian spatzle with Prosciutto ham and smoked celery root or parpadele with mushrooms and Grana Padano cheese, sprinkled with rosemary leaves.

The restaurant also serves breakfasts in the form of buffet, and in the evenings, you can have an informal meeting at the counter by a couple of drinks.

LEISURE FACILITIES The guests have access to the wellness zone with a fitness room featuring equipment by Precor company, a sauna and a massage room (you can also order it in your own room). You can also use the jacuzzi room, equipped with a huge TV screen – a nice place to have some rest in the evening.

VERDICT The 5-star establishment located in the very centre of Wrocław, guarantees a top-quality service and excellent cuisine.

Wojciech Chelchowski





HOTEL: ŁÓDŹ

Ibis Centrum

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Ibis hotels are usually associated with a particular quality, some even suggests they are quite alike. However, they could not be more wrong. Ibis Centrum hotel in Łódź can really surprise with its design – so different than in other hotels of this chain. In the interior, you can see a multi-storey, glass-roofed atrium, surrounded by floors with the guest rooms. In the middle, there is a spacious French restaurant, with the furniture and umbrellas making you think about Paris, an open space reception desk, and a mini club area.

WHERE IS IT? The hotel is located in the very heart of Łódź, on the crossroads of Piłsudski Alley and Piotrkowska Street. The crossroad is a part of one of the main exit roads in Łódź. Nearby there is a large Galeria Łódzka shopping mall, surrounded by office buildings. The building is only 7 kilometres away from the Władysław Reymont airport, and merely 1 kilometre away from two railway stations. The city's most representative street – Piotrkowska – is just 100 metres away. The hotel has its own car park with 83 parking spaces.

ROOM FACILITIES There are 208 bedrooms in the hotel. All the rooms – single or double ones – are of the same quality (only beds are arranged in a different way). They come with a workdesk, an LCD TV set, a wardrobe and a bathroom with a shower. All the rooms are air-conditioned and five of them have been adapted for disabled guests. Broadband internet is accessible throughout the hotel. Bathrooms are not equipped with hairdryers – but you can get them

at the reception desk, where you have also an access to a safe.

BUSINESS FACILITIES There are two conference rooms in the hotel. The bigger one can accommodate up to 40 people, the smaller one is used for small meetings, up to 6 people – that is why it is a perfect place to organize a job interview. The conference organizers will have access to an overhead projector, flipcharts and audio and video equipment. There is also a possibility to organize a video conference.

BARS AND RESTAURANTS Breakfast is served between 6.30 am-10.00 am. It is called “buffet do woli” (“eat your fill”), and as the name suggests, you can have anything, that is usually served during a traditional continental breakfast. L'Estaminet hotel restaurant is open be-

tween 12.00-10.30 pm. The guests have also access to a nice French bistro. The menu includes French, Polish and Italian dishes – for more demanding guests there is a special gourmet menu – at reasonable prices, around PLN 20. What attracts attention is a wide selection of wine. The hotel bar is also a rather pleasant place, also situated in the open space of the atrium. Open between 10.30 am-1.00 am.

LEISURE FACILITIES In general, Ibis hotels don't have facilities like a fitness club or a spa. Instead, the guests have access to a fitness centre, situated across the Piłsudski Alley. There is also a squash club.

VERDICT A comfortable hotel situated in the centre of Łódź. Impressive interior décor.

Andrzej Czuba



CONTACT Hotel Focus, ul. Łąkowa 23/25, 90-554 Łódź, tel. +48 42 637 12 00, hotelfocus.com.pl
PRICE From PLN 139 when booked 20 days in advance before the arrival date.



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alitalia.pl

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WELLNESS CENTRE: WARSAW

RiverView

INFO RiverView centre, located in 5-star InterContinental hotel, was launched in November 2003 and ever since it has enjoyed an enormous popularity, especially among businesspeople. The facility is available for the hotel guests as well as the public. Both casual and regular visitors with member cards have access to the centre's gym, sauna, Turkish bath, the exercise room, the swimming pool, jacuzzi, and the solarium.

WHERE IS IT? There's no better place for a proper fitness centre than the two highest floors of one of the most appreciated hotels, located in the very heart of the Polish capital. Getting here is not a problem, as the hotel is situated in Emilia Plater street, with an easy access to almost all means of public transport. Those who prefer to travel by car, can use the hotel's underground car park. The first 3 hours of parking are free of charge.

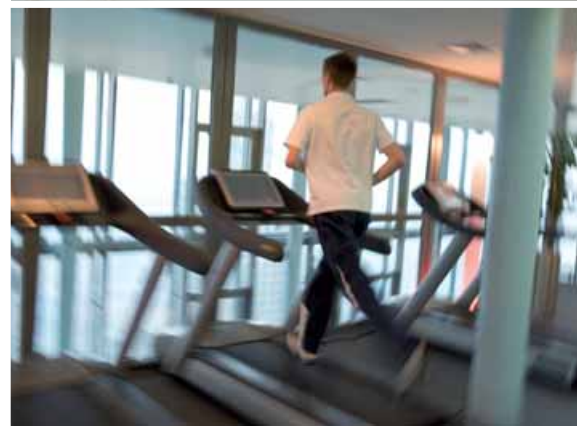
WHAT'S IT LIKE? After reaching the 43th floor of the hotel and looking outside the window, we might feel you are standing above everything else. Contrary to what you may think, the incredible view over the clock of the Palace of Culture will somehow help you slow down your daily pace.

The club is attended mostly by people aged 28-70, so the atmosphere of the place is calm and soaked with a sort of maturity. Screams and shouts, which are so typical of public swimming pools, are nowhere to be found here. This cosy atmosphere is mostly retained owing to the number of membership cards

which is limited to 400. The entrance fee includes the changing room, beverages, towels and a bathrobe. It seems to be very convenient because you don't have to plan your visit to the centre in advance and take anything with you. RiverView is open 6.00 am-11.00 pm at weekdays and 7.00-9.00 pm at weekends. A lot of people come here in the morning before breakfast or a business meeting to get a boost for the rest of the day.

WELLNESS Wellness means "the state of being in good physical and mental health", which truly reflects the feeling you may have in this place. It helps you relax and take your mind off your daily duties for a moment. You can choose to have your own personal trainer to individually adjust your training to your needs. This is more and more popular form of training among business members of the centre. The offer of the centre includes: strength training, yoga, aqua fitness, schwinn cycling, natural stretch or pilates, and even salsa. The gym is equipped with Technogym equipment, and the pool as well as jacuzzi located 156 metres over the sea level, offer a splendid panoramic view over the city which can satisfy the needs of the most demanding customers.

PRICES At weekdays until 5.00 pm the single entrance fee is PLN 100. After 5.00 pm and at weekends the fee is PLN 150. Membership card can be purchased for 6 or 12 months with an option of monthly payments. The cost of the membership depends on the chosen



programme. The solarium is paid extra – PLN 2.5 per minute. Hotel guests can use the centre free of charge.

VERDICT A cosy, but at the same time spacious place with nice atmosphere, and good equipment. The centre is ideal for those who need to take their minds off the problems of the fast-paced city life.

■ RiverView Wellness Centre,
InterContinental Warszawa,
ul. Emilii Plater 49, 00-125
Warszawa; tel. +48 (22) 328 864
riverview.com.pl

Olga Chelchowska



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



LAPTOP: SONY Vaio S

INFO Users of Sony products claim that Vaio personal computers have revolutionized the laptop market and made the typical home PC look a bit obsolete. Indeed, millions of business users have already turned to the slim laptop offering a multi-role functionality.

It's hard to believe, but Vaio is now 15 years old. The acronym, which initially meant "Video Audio Integrated Operation" and then "Visual Audio Intelligence Organizer" was first used for laptops of 1996 series.

Over those years Sony has released several dozens of personal computers, varying in screen size, or components useful for Web browsing, personal entertainment, or business use. The most recent model – Vaio S has been designed mostly with business users in mind.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The black chassis made of hard, resistant, but also quite elegant magnesium alloy, immediately puts the product on the higher shelf, although it's just a younger and potentially slightly lighter and more affordable brother of the powerful Z series. Without round edges and unnecessary embellishments, it wins us over with its simplicity and sturdy looks. Another impressive thing is the device's thickness, or rather thinness – as the new Vaio S is only 24 mm thick (or thin?). What's more, the width of the laptop is only 33 centimetres, so it fits perfectly a pull-down tray in the cabin of a plane. Add to this the potential hidden in the powerful battery, and the computer turns out to be an invaluable help during a business trip.

FUNCTIONALITY The sturdy build of the chassis with reinforced hinges is also accompanied by functional and clear layout of the whole panel. The keys are located in a slight backlit niche, have a distinct pressure point and, what's very important, they are well spaced. In this way, working with the computer becomes convenient, as we are less likely to

press wrong keys. The aluminium palm rest is wide enough to prevent hand fatigue and palm pain.

The screen is 13.3 inch (1366 x 768) and there's nothing about it to pick on. Vaio Display Plus produces excellent bright, crisp picture. The display has also anti-reflective finish and provides a wider viewing angle than before. The touchpad is large (3.3 x 1.8 inch) and convenient. Two function keys are very useful, although many users prefer to tap the pad twice rather than use them.

The sound, which comes from the speakers hidden behind a large grille above the keyboard, is perhaps a bit metallic, but let's face it: this computer is not aimed at audiophiles. However, if we connect to it sufficiently powerful external speakers, the dance party is guaranteed.



The device's startup time is very short, but it can be even shorter by pushing the WEB button. In this way the computer starts immediately and connects to the Web via its onboard mobile modem which uses a SIM card.

One of the biggest advantages of the new Vaio S is its weight. The laptop weighs mere 1,750 grams, so carrying it around, even for the whole day, isn't too tiring. Another thing worth appraisal is the computers cooling system thanks to which the machine doesn't heat as much as its competitors.

HARDWARE The Vaio S uses now a very decent processor that is Sandy Bridge Intel Core i5-2410M (the most powerful computes of the series will feature i7 processors), has a 500 GB hard drive, 4 GB DDR3 SDRAM memory (1333 MHz), and a hybrid graphics card AMD Radeon HD 6630M + Intel HD Graphics. The hybrid system allows for switching off the useless elements of the card which translates into better work efficiency and longer battery life. As for the battery life, there's also nothing to complain about. The internal battery enables us to work with the computer for 7 hours between charges, and if we add an external battery, this result can even be doubled.

The laptop is powered by Windows 7 operating system. It will probably be possible to replace the standard optical DVD drive with a BlueRay drive.

Other features are similar to the previous models: 3 USB ports (one more than before), HDMI socket, FireWire, Ethernet and two memory slots (SD, Memory Stick) – in other words, there's everything we would expect from a laptop to work efficiently everyday.

SUMMARY It's fast, convenient, light, and distinguished. The new Sony Vaio S series seems to be the best device ever produced by Sony. It can definitely compete with Apple's MacBook.

Jakub Olgiewicz

POŁĄCZ
PRZEPIĘKNE MIEJSCE W SAMYM SERCU WARSZAWY,
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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*.
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RESTAURANT: ZAKOPANE Czarci Jar

WHAT IS IT? This year the tavern in Zakopane celebrates its 10th anniversary. The building of Czarci Jar may not be very original, as it blends into the local atmosphere (and righteously so), and there are numerous similar establishments around. However, the tavern's design was awarded by the government of the Małopolska province in the competition for the application of regional traditions in modern architecture. Indeed, the hospitality of the Polish highlanders and the multitude of leisure activities make the property one of a kind.

WHERE IS IT? Located on the Mała Żywczańska Street, with the swiftly flowing Biały Potok (the White Stream) in the nearby, the eatery offers a peaceful retreat, yet the famous Krupówki (the central and most representative street of Zakopane) are just within a few minutes' walk. In the summer, the building is set amidst extensive grounds of lush greenery.

WHAT IS IT LIKE? On entering the tavern from the car park through the arched door, there is a set of stairs leading to one



FACTS **CONTACT** Karczma Czarci Jar; ul. Mała Żywczańska 11A, 34-500 Zakopane; tel. (018) 20 641-78, czarci.jar.pl
VERDICT A unique place situated in the capital of Polish mountains. A good choice for an original business event.

floor of the tavern. The tables, chairs and other elements are made of light-coloured wood. The lower floor opens into a large space, with the bar area on left side and a kind of a small in-room highlander's chalet in the corner. On climbing a few steps, there are two tables inside the hut, which is perfect for those who look for some privacy. The interior is strewn with sheepskin rugs which, together with a large roaring log fire, earthenware crockery, some barrels, and a wide range of other objects, sets a warm homely ambience. There is a set of wooden stairs leading to the upper floor, where you can sit on the wooden benches while listening to the traditional folk music.

The staff at the «Czarci Jar» are the Polish highlanders through and through – they are proud to be wearing their traditional costumes of white linen shirts, colourful skirts and serdaks (a kind of traditional waistcoat worn over a shirt), plus they are always ready to help you with your choice of dish and they treat their guests to fabulous nalewka (traditional Polish alcoholic beverage).

MENU The head chef, Krystyna Styrzula, has created menu which is most expected on entering a place like the «Czarci Jar» Inn – the popular locals meals are served in a traditional way, in huge portions.

The items on the menu will take you on a journey of discovery of authentic regional cooking, as it is written in the local dialect – you will be enticed by the appetisers like wybór syrów od nasego bacy (the local cheese selection traditionally prepared by the local shepherds), surowizna z kurzym jojkiem (beef tartare) or the inn's speciality – rydz z cornego boru (red pine mushrooms in butter). The signature polywki (soups) include cortno zupa (goulash soup), kisone zyto z kełbasą podane (sour

rye soup with pork sausage and egg), and polywka z grzybów przez ciotkę zbieraną (porcini mushroom soup).

Let us now proceed to chrupe jadlo (main course) – particularly worthy of recommendation are: ziebra swińska z metra ciynte (glazed roast ribs of beef), siuto łowca w sabaśniku dusono (roast mutton with gravy), jagniy przez juhasa ciupane (New Zealand lamb cutlets with garlic sauce), skłusowana rogacizna spod Wielkiej Krokwi (saddle of deer in St-Hubert sauce), kuze cycki z zielskimi (chicken preast with herbs), jadlo kłusioza (potatoe pancakes with goulash), łodymiono duzo ryba z grulanom tarciznom (tender smoked salmon quiches with double cream). If you come here with a company, the Czarci Jar has an offer which would lure their rumbling stomachs into a state of content – from troske od Kryśki, Renaty i Babci (barbecue mix of sirloin, pork neck and chicken breast fillet with roasted onion) to solidne czarcicy koryto na styry, cześć gamb (a set for 4-6 people, including an assortment of dumplings, shepherd's salad, roast potatoes, rib, roasted pork hock, barbecued pork neck, barbecued chicken and sausage).

PRICES You can order a variety of appetisers from PLN 8 – PLN 32 (the cheese selection), the soup prices range from PLN 7 (tomato soup) – PLN 14 (goulash soup). The main course prices vary greatly, from PLN 24 for the gazed ribs, PLN 45 for the saddle of deer, to PLN 55 for New Zealand lamb cutlets. When it comes to Czarci koryto, you would pay PLN 160 for 4-people feast, and PLN 240 for 6-people feast. Fish dishes cost between PLN 22 – PLN 27, one portion of dumplings prices from PLN 15 – PLN 18, and you can also enjoy a dessert for PLN 5 – PLN 13.

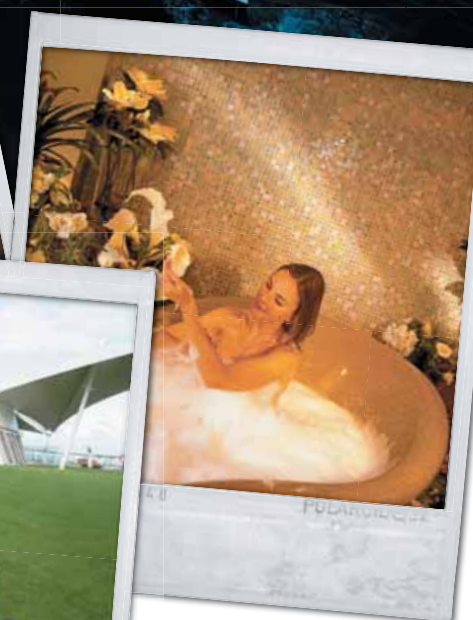
Wojciech Chelchowski



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Airbus A380 At Okęcie

The world's largest passenger aircraft has landed in Warszawa Okęcie airport. The event was a part of Lufthansa's action to promote the airline's intercontinental routes.



We had waited for long for this moment. The morning of 19 March was remarkably awful because of the snow and rain, as well as the fog which covered the area around the airport. This was especially inconvenient for the hundreds of spotters who had come here from all over Poland.

But it was worth waiting, because when Lufthansa's A380 touch the runway of the airport, everybody could see how impressive the machine is. A380 is a real giant. Due to its length of 73 metres, it moves majestically and "follow me" vehicles look in its company like toy cars. The aircraft's wingspan is almost 79 metres while its height is 24 metres – like a decent-sized tenement building. An additional, and very pleasant surprise for the guests and journalists gathered at the airport, was the fact that captain Jürgen Raps (a member of Lufthansa's board, and one of the world's first four airline pilots to acquire a license to fly the Airbus A380) decided to hang a Polish flag out of the plane's cockpit. This was a real icebreaker.

The appearance of Lufthansa's A380 at Okęcie had a symbolic connotation. Bart Buyse, the General Manager of

Lufthansa Poland said that this was supposed to be a sort of a birthday present, celebrating the 40th anniversary of the presence of the German airline in Poland, as well as a promotion of the airline's long-haul flights to New York and Asia.

Indeed, Lufthansa carried the first passengers from the Polish airport on Warsaw – Frankfurt route, on 2 April 1971. Gradually new flights were launched, with the newest ones introduced several months ago on Gdańsk – Dusseldorf and Warsaw – Milan routes (Lufthansa Italia). Today Lufthansa runs over 200 daily flights each week, joining its main hubs in Frankfurt, Dusseldorf and Munich with our cities: Warsaw, Gdańsk, Cracow, Katowice, Wrocław, Poznań, and Rzeszów. Michał Marzec, the general director of Warsaw airport added that Lufthansa is one of the most important partners of the Warsaw's airport and that we are prepared to host such large aircraft on a regular basis.

526 REASONS

The Airbus which visited Warsaw is called "Frankfurt am Main" is one of five such machines operating on Lufthansa's routes from Frankfurt to Tokyo, Beijing,



Lufthansa has been present in Poland for 40 years



Bart Buyse – Dyrektor Generalny Lufthansy w Polsce



Johannesburg, and New York. Soon San Francisco will join the company. Ultimately, Lufthansa will possess 15 aircrafts of this type.

The entrance through the door near the pilot's cabin opens to a long corridor of the lower deck where economy class is situated, as well as the steps leading to the upper deck with first class and business class seats.

A380's configuration, which has been prepared especially for Lufthansa, allows for carrying 526 passengers on board. Eight of them can fly in the luxurious first class salon. The carrier claims that this is the world's quietest first class thanks to sound-absorbing

curtains partition off the rest of the cabin, special sound-insulating material in the aircraft's outer skin and sound-absorbing carpeting block footstep noise. The seats are 80 centimetres wide and recline into a flatbed which is 207 centimetres long. The interior features high-gloss wood veneers and brown and beige leather. Each passenger has access to a 17-inch touchpanel offering a variety of VODs and music CDs.

The aircraft's galley and toilet (very spacious and not resembling a typical aircraft toilet), are located behind the first class cabin, separating it from the business class cabin. The business class cabin features 98 seats with dark blue up-

holstery, configured 2+2+2. The backrests of the seats in front of each passenger have 10.6 screens installed, and the seat itself can recline almost fully with just one button. Also each seat features a power socket to plug in our laptop if it is necessary.

The economy class has 420 seats in quite a convenient 3+4+3 configuration, which feature light blue upholstery with yellow piping. The new design of the seats makes them more comfortable and they provide the passengers with extra 5 centimetres of space – theoretically not much, but anyone who had to spend about 12 hours on board of a plane, knows how beneficial it can be. ■



96 TRAVEL APPS

With the proliferation of smartphones and tablets has come an explosion of apps to make your travelling life easier. **Mark Prigg** and **Andy Tweddle** select the best

Planning

1 The perfect app for the disorganised traveller, **Packing Pro** comes pre-populated with lists of things to put in your suitcase. It can also be customised with your own list so you don't forget your essentials.
£1.79; iPhone, iPad

2 If you are always forgetting your flight details, **TripIt** could be the answer. Email it your itinerary and it will format it in an easy-to-read app that you can even access offline. It allows you to record every part of your trip, including hotels and car hire.
Free; iPhone, Android, Blackberry

3 An essential app for frequent travellers, **Flight Track** not only offers a map with live flight tracking but also gives information on departures, gate numbers and cancellations. It will even help you rebook if you miss your flight.
£2.99; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry, Palm, Android

4 **Accuweather** shows up-to-the-minute forecasts for cities around the world. Rather than the free apps on most phones, it also provides hour-by-hour forecasts – it looks great to boot.
Free (ad-free version 59p); iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry

5 The popular **Tripadvisor** site doesn't disappoint with its app, which gives you access to hotels, restaurants, flights and things to do. You can access the extensive reviews database, and many places let you book online straight from your handset.
Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Palm

6 Guidebooks transfer well to the small screen, and the **Lonely Planet** range is among the best. Hundreds of major cities are covered, and the apps include tips on what to do and see, offline maps, high-quality images, and listings.
£3.49 per city; iPhone, iPad

7 Tablets and smartphones can really help with language learning, and the **Lastminute.com Talking Phrasebooks** are the best we've seen. With dozens available, they contain not just common phrases but also audio files so you can bemuse locals by holding up your phone and getting it to speak.
Free; iPhone, iPad

8 The **XE Currency** app lists more than 180 currencies and is updated live with the latest exchange rates. It will also work offline, so you can check rates without racking up a huge bill for using your mobile abroad.
Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry

Navigation

9 Not content with providing maps of the Earth, **Google Sky Map** lets you hold your phone up and identify the stars you are looking at. It's accurate and fascinating, particularly if you're in a city where you can actually see the sky clearly.
Free; Android

10 Dedicated satnav software often costs a fortune, so **AA Route Planner** is handy for those who only need directions in the UK now and again. It's simple to use and is also great for providing live updates of any problems on your way.
£1.79; iPhone, iPad

11 By far the best cheap satnav software out there, **Forever Map by Skobbler** may not have the bells and whistles of its more expensive colleagues,

but it works very well for occasional drivers or those lost in a new country. It downloads maps so you don't have to pay roaming charges, and is great for walking directions.
59p; iPhone, iPad, Android

12 The **Google Places** app is a clever offering from the search engine giant, letting you find nearby restaurants, coffee shops, ATMs and useful services. It's linked to thousands of user reviews, and integrates with Google's brilliant Maps app to get you there.
Free; iPhone, iPad, Android

13 Not content with providing maps of the Earth, **Google Sky Map** lets you hold your phone up and identify the stars you are looking at. It's accurate, particularly if you're in a city where you can actually see the sky clearly.
Free; Android

14 It's a great way to while away the hours on a desktop PC, but **Google Earth** has now gone mobile with the same amazing "flying" animations, letting you zoom in anywhere on the globe to see satellite imagery.
Free; iPhone, Android

15 Perfect for when you're running late and faced with a sign in another language, **Word Lens** can translate text if you point your phone's camera at it (in Spanish at the moment). Translations aren't always perfect, but you should make it to your meeting on time.
Free; iPhone

16 Download the **RAC Traffic** app for up-to-the-second UK traffic information. It shows you nearby incidents and even live updates from other drivers nearby.
Free; iPhone, iPad, Android

Communication

17 **Wi-Fi Finder** is great for anyone looking to avoid data roaming charges when travelling abroad. The app will tell you where to find free wireless hotspots in 340,000 locations in 140 countries by using GPS.
Free; iPhone, iPad

18 An astonishing demonstration of how far technology has come, **Google Translate** lets you translate text between 57 languages,

and spoken word into 15. Options include Japanese, Polish and Dutch.
Free; iPhone, iPad, Android

19 Thanks to **Cisco WebEx Meeting Center**. It lets you tap into video-conferences, and even watch Power Point presentations on the go.
Free; iPhone, Blackberry

20 Typing on your phone can be tricky, so why not try **Dragon Dictation**, which automatical-

ly turns your speech into text. It's surprisingly good, and you can even train it to recognise your voice. Your text can then be cut and pasted into SMSs, emails and apps.
Free; iPhone, iPad

21 While editing a huge spreadsheet or Powerpoint file on a mobile phone isn't ideal, **Documents to Go** makes it bearable, allowing you to take the office with you. You can copy files easily, it works with all major formats (PDF, Xls, Power-



point and Doc), and it is simple to sync documents when you get back home.
£5.99; iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry, Windows Mobile, Palm

22 Perfect for creating retro-looking snaps on the road, camera app **Instagram** is linked to a blog site so you can easily post your pictures online and share them on social networking sites. There are more than a dozen filters to choose from, and you can attach other information such as reviews.
Free; iPhone

23 Already hugely popular on desktop PCs, **Skype** has now wholly made the move to mobile with text, voice and video calls (depending on your phone). Not only can it help you to stay in touch with family, but it could also save your firm a small fortune.
Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry, Android, Nokia

24 Instant messaging has traditionally been a little fiddly on a mobile device, but **Meebo** manages to bring all the most popular services, including MSN, Yahoo and Google Talk, into one app, and make it clean and simple.
Free; iPhone, Android, Blackberry

25 A godsend for points-obsessed frequent flyers, **Top Guest** allows you to earn 20-25 real points each time you "check in" electronically to locations around the world. It has already signed up many of the big reward schemes, such as Intercontinental's Priority Club and Hilton's HHonors.
Free; iPhone, Android

26 **Foursquare** has become really useful for travellers, showing recommendations and special offers for nearby places to eat and drink. If you're competitive, you can even take on your colleagues by earning points when you electronically check in at locations.
Free; iPhone, Android, Blackberry, Windows Phone, Palm, Nokia

27 Another "check-in" app, **Gowalla** is well worth trying for its brilliant cartoon-like interface and, increasingly, its offers and tips for local places.
Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry, Palm

28 The **Facebook** app has gradually expanded into an amazing resource for those on the move. Not only can you wow your friends by boasting about your location, the Places feature is handy for finding your way around.
Free; iPhone, Android, Blackberry

29 It's taken the web by storm but the **Twitter** app is also an incredibly polished, easy-to-use service. You can see all of your tweets, lists and mentions, and it constantly updates.
Free; iPhone, Android, Blackberry

30 One of the most impressive apps for the iPad, **Flipboard** takes your Twitter, Facebook and web feeds and turns them into a gorgeous personalised magazine that even works offline, so you can use those long flights to catch up.
Free; iPad

31 If keeping up with all your social networking sites is getting too much, **Hootsuite** could be the answer. It brings them all together in one app and is easy to customise.
Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry, Android

32 **Moonpig's** app is useful for that moment when you're away and realise you've forgotten to send someone a card. You can even upload your own pictures.
Free; iPhone, iPad

Airports

48 On top of live flight tracking, news via Twitter feed, and retail and restaurant information, Heathrow's official **Heathrow Airport Guide Pro** app includes termi-

nal maps, security information, weather forecasts for 220 destinations around the world, and airline contact details.
Free; iPhone, iPad

49 Real-time flight data, restaurant details and terminal maps make **Gatwick Airport Assistant** a handy download – with one tap, you can also call any of the airport's shops to check they have items in stock. Online check-in is available with selected carriers, and there's advice on how to get there using public transport.
£1.19; iPhone, iPad

50 Along with live flight updates, the official app for **Stansted** provides up-to-the-minute train, tube, bus and traffic information. You can also pre-book parking, view terminal maps and find out about special offers in the airport's shops, bars and restaurants.
Free; iPhone, iPad

51 Shake your handset while using **iPlane London City Airport** to refresh the screen with the latest flight information, or share your flight details with colleagues via SMS or email with one tap. There are iPlane apps for most other global airports.
£1.19; iPhone, iPad

52 **London Airports Pro** pools all the arrival and departure details for Heathrow, Gatwick, Luton, Stansted and London City.
£3.99; iPhone, iPad

53 The official **Manchester Airport** app allows users to view maps of each terminal, get airport directions and pre-book parking. Travellers can also access real-time air traffic information and search for flights.
Free; iPhone, iPad

Well-being

33 If staying in shape while travelling is tough, the **Calorie Tracker Lite** **livestrong.com** app could help. It has a vast database of food from around the world complete with calorific breakdowns, and can even track your weight.
Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry

34 The **Nike+ GPS** app is a great motivator. It uses GPS to map your run, track your progress, play power songs when you're flagging, and gives feedback on how you are doing. You can also connect it to Twitter and Facebook to let everyone back home know how fit you are. **£1.19; iPhone**

35 Concerned about how much you drink on the road? The **NHS Drinks Tracker** is a simple app that allows you to input the individual drinks you have consumed. It then presents these in units on a graph to make it easier to see your progress (if you haven't had too many...).
Free; iPhone, iPad



Downtime

36 **Instapaper** is the frequent traveller's best friend, allowing to mark web pages to read later, then download them all in one go to read on a long flight. **£2.99; iPhone, iPad, Kindle**

37 If you're constantly forgetting things you've seen online, then **Evernote** is for you. It's a kind of electronic scrapbook that lets you collect text, pictures and web pages, then read and view them on your PC or phone – a good way of getting through that long-haul flight. **Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry, Windows Mobile, Palm**

38 If you are shopping in a foreign country, **Red Laser** is a useful app to have at your disposal. Simply point your phone's camera at the barcode on your potential purchase, and you'll be shown prices from across the web. **Free; iPhone, iPad, Android**

39 Finding somewhere decent to eat in a new place can be hard, but **Urbanspoon** makes the process easier. With databases spanning most major cities, it can recommend and help you book. **Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry**

40 Superb for securing last-minute bookings at restaurants around the UK and Europe, **Toptable** is a well thought-out, user-friendly app with a vast database of eateries behind it. It's great for finding the best-reviewed places, and frequently has online-only offers. **Free; iPhone, iPad**

41 Avoid the shame of under- or over-tipping in a foreign country with **Tipulator**. Simply choose your currency then tell it what percentage you want to tip. It's simple, sadly, it doesn't advise you on what the local customs for tipping are. **59p; iPhone**

42 The best way to get music on a mobile device, **Spotify** allows you to stream from a ten-million track database, and download playlists to your device for offline playing. **£9.99 per month; iPhone, Android, Windows Phone, Nokia, Palm**

43 If you have enough spare time to catch a film, **Movies Flixster** tells you what's on at local cinemas in most major cities. You can also read reviews and buy tickets. **Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry**

44 The BBC's **iPlayer** app allows you to bring Auntie on the road, with full access to TV and radio programmes, the ability to save favourites and also the option of high-quality video if your hotel has a decent wifi network. You can't, however, download programmes for offline viewing. Note that it works only in the UK. **Free; iPad, Android**

45 **Slingplayer Mobile** lets you watch your home TV wherever there is a decent internet connection. You'll need a special box at home, but it works brilliantly, and you can even control your Sky box remotely, causing no end of annoyance to the family back home. **£17.99; iPhone, iPad, Nokia, Blackberry, Android, Palm**

46 Never miss your favourite shows again with the **Sky+** app, which lets you view listings and programme your Sky box from anywhere in the world. **Free; iPhone, iPad, Android**

47 Electronic books are becoming a viable alternative to paper, and Amazon's **Kindle** app is the best, working across multiple devices so you can start reading on your phone then switch to a Kindle or iPad without losing your place. There are thousands of books to download. **Free; iPhone, iPad, Android**



54 Frequent travellers to Amsterdam will benefit from **Schiphol Plus**. By registering your flight with the app, you'll receive push notifications when the gate opens and boarding begins. Sadly, for this vast airport, there are no maps or retail information. **Free; iPhone, iPad**

55 **Fly New York** is a simple but helpful app for JFK that allows you to search for your flight by number, airline or destination to find out its status and access your gate number. **59p; iPhone, iPad**

56 **Fly Los Angeles**, like its East Coast counterpart, gives the basic details you'll need to catch your flight, such as flight updates and gate details. **59p; iPhone, iPad**

57 Use **Dubai Flight Tracker** to track flights to and from the emirate's international airport. If you input your flight number,

you will get push messages when the status changes. **£1.19; iPhone, iPad**

58 Last year, *Business Traveler* readers voted Singapore Changi airport the world's best, and its **iChangi** app is up there with it. Flight times, gate information, real-time push updates, shopping and dining listings, airline contacts and a special offer section make this app world class. **Free; iPhone, iPad, Android**

59 By saving your flight info with **Live Airport Hong Kong (HKG Airport)**, you'll receive push alerts on its status and potential gate changes and delays. Information on terminal transfers, zoomable maps and transport listings are included. **£1.19; iPhone, iPad**

60 Find a quiet corner in the airport with the **Priority Pass** app, which allows you to search its network of 600-plus lounges in more than 300 airports. It uses GPS technology to locate the nearest one to

you, and you can search offline to save on roaming fees.

Free; iPhone, iPad (Blackberry/Android versions in development)

Hotels

61 Owners of iPads can get more from their trip with **Intercontinental Insider Concierge Guides**. Tips on restaurants, attractions and local culture are provided by the group's concierges at more than 120 destinations. Video tours hosted by each concierge add a personal touch. **Free; iPad**

62 With the **Hilton** app, you can book a room at more than 520 properties in 76 countries, and browse information on the full 3,000-plus Hilton Worldwide portfolio. HHonors members can check their points balance. **Free; iPhone, iPad**

63 Members of Starwood's loyalty scheme can check their balance with the **SPG (Starwood Preferred Guest) Mobile App**, as well

as reserve stays and check out actual promotions at the group's 1,000-plus properties.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry

64 Book a room at any of the 4,000-plus properties in the Accor group portfolio with the **Accorhotels.com** app. After booking, the app pinpoints your location and calculates the best route to get there. You can also view videos of each hotel.

Free; iPhone, iPad

65 Members of Intercontinental Hotels Group's loyalty programme can use the **Priority Club Rewards** app to book a room at any hotel in the portfolio, amend their booking, get directions and redeem rewards. A gallery has photos of every hotel.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Android

66 After you've confirmed room availability with the **Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts** app, you can peruse spa treatments or take a virtual tour of the property. One tap connects you to customer services.

Free; iPhone, iPad

67 Leave your guidebook at home and download **MO Hotels Mandarin Oriental**. The app's "Cities by MO" feature provides suggestions on where to shop, eat and visit from the group's concierge team. You can also make room bookings.

Free; iPhone, iPad

68 With **Choice Hotels Locator** you can book stays at any of the 6,000-plus Choice Hotels International properties, which include the Clarion and Quality brands

(for more on Choice see page 44). GPS mapping will pinpoint your location and direct you to the nearest hotel, and customer service contact details are provided. Street-view images and details of the available facilities and amenities are also displayed, and Choice Privileges members can log on to their account.

Free; iPhone, iPad

(Blackberry, Android and Microsoft versions are being developed)

69 The **Fairmont Hotels and Resorts** app allows you to manage, but not book, your stays and find nearby eateries. You can browse by location, view hotel profiles, and check what facilities they offer, while the "Share Stories" feature allows you to upload photos and swap tips with other guests. President's Club members can also access their accounts.

Free; iPhone, iPad



Airlines

70 Access flight schedules, book, check in and select your seat on board with the **Air Asia** app. You can also get discounts on in-flight meals.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry, Android

71 As well as flight tracking, check-in and mobile boarding, the **Air Canada** app offers last-minute upgrades to the airline's Executive cabin and same-day flight changes where available.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry

72 **Air France Mobile** allows you to book and manage your journey, and request extra legroom on long-haul flights. It also offers real-time flight updates, online check-in, seat selection and mobile boarding. Flying Blue members can also access their account.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry

73 The **Air New Zealand Mpass** app lets you manage your booking, download your boarding pass and get up-to-date flight information. Frequent flyers who use the Airpoints system can view bookings.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Android

74 The **Alitalia** app allows you to view arrival and departure information and store your e-boarding pass. Mille Miglia members can also access their accounts.

Free; iPhone, iPad

75 Get arrival and departure details, and check in to your flight with the **British Airways** app. Executive Club members can view tier points and BA miles, plus use their e-pass to board the plane on select routes.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry

76 After you've booked a flight through your **American Airlines**

app, checked in and used the maps to find your gate, you can enjoy a game of Sudoku. AAdvantage members can track their mileage.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Android

77 As well as providing check-in, flight schedules and updates, Cathay Pacific's **CX Mobile** provides city guides for 70 destinations and even invites you to "Meet the Team". Marco Polo members can access their account. Flight booking is only available on the iPad.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry, Android, Samsung, Sony Ericsson, LG, Windows Mobile, Nokia

78 **Continental Airlines** has packed its app full of useful features, from booking, check-in and e-boarding passes to upgrade priority lists, seat maps and in-flight entertainment schedules. One Pass members can access their account.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Android

79 **Fly Delta** lets you check in, download a mobile boarding pass and check your flight status. You can also re-book flights. Skymiles members can gain access to their account.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry

80 Exclusive to **Etihad Guest** members, the airline's app allows travellers to search for ways to earn and redeem miles, check their balance and see how many points they need to reach the next tier level.

Free; iPhone, iPad

81 With the **KLM** application passengers can check in and find out the status of their flight. E-boarding passes are available for services to and from Europe, North Africa and Israel. Flying Blue members can also log in to their accounts.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry

82 Flight schedules, fare searches and booking management are all

Car and rail

91 With the **Heathrow Express** app, you can book and pay for your journey and the ticket will be sent to your handset with a 2D barcode—staff will then scan it on board to validate travel. Live service updates are also available.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry, Android and Java-enabled devices

92 Download **thetrainline** to plan journeys and buy tickets for collection at UK stations. The neat “next train home” feature can find your best route.

Free; iPhone, Blackberry, Nokia, Android, Samsung, Sony Ericsson

93 The **iSixt** app allows you to book rental vehicles and receive confirmation by SMS, email or screenshot.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Bada

94 With **Avis Rent A Car** you can reserve a vehicle from any of its 5,000 locations in 114 countries—you can then modify or cancel the booking if needed. It can also connect you to roadside assistance.

Free; iPhone, iPad

95 Find your nearest **Hertz Car Rental** branch and make a booking with its app. You can save your favourite locations, and exclusive deals for app users are added every week.

Free; iPhone, iPad

96 Use the **Europcar** app and receive confirmation of your booking via SMS or email when hiring a vehicle with any of the 200 participating Europcar branches.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Samsung Wave

Download apps at:

- apple.com/itunes (iPod, iPad)
- android.com/market
- appworld.blackberry.com
- microsoft.com/windowsphone
- ovi.com (Nokia)

- bada.com (Samsung)
- playnow-arena.com (Sony Ericsson)
- Do you have a favourite app that we haven't covered? Let us know at business traveller.com/discussion

available on the **Korean Air** app. Links to its Facebook and Twitter pages allow you to get the latest news updates, while Skypass members can check their miles.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Android

83 A great feature of the **Lufthansa** application is its lounge directory, which includes details of all the facilities available in them. You can also book flights, check in, select your seat and get an e-boarding pass. Miles and More members can check their account.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Nokia, Android, Blackberry

84 The **Qantas Frequent Flyer** app, which is exclusive to loyalty scheme members, can be used to buy a wide selection of products such as flights and gadgets.

Free; iPhone, iPad

85 Book your flight, check in, choose a seat and download your mobile boarding pass with the **Swiss** app. You can also keep an eye on your flight status.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry

86 **Thai M Service** from Thai Airways allows you to view your bookings, access flight information, check in and access your Royal Orchid Plus loyalty scheme account. (You cannot book flights.)

Free; iPhone, iPad

87 The spinnable globe on the **Virgin Atlantic Flight Tracker** app shows the near real-time location of all the carrier's aircraft—tap on a plane to get departure and arrival information. You can also check in and select your seat. Flying Club members can view their

points. Play the “Where's Richard?” game if you're bored.

Free; iPhone, iPad

88 With **Fly Turkish**, the app from Turkish Airlines, you can make reservations, track baggage and save your booking information for future transactions.

Free; iPhone, iPad

89 Use **Oneworld Flight Search** to view routes for the alliance's 12 airlines. You can view arrival and departure times and flight duration.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Blackberry

90 The **Skyteam** app displays flight information for all its 13 member airlines. The eSky Guide also offers access to schedules in flight mode.

Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry



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The Sooner, the Cheaper

The Polish national air carrier is facing new challenges. Luckily, the airline has a number of new, creative ideas on how to attract new passengers. Apart from its long-term strategy, LOT also often prepares attractive promotional offers. First Minute is one of them.

March was a very important month for LOT Polish Airlines. Boeing informed our airline on the final date of delivery of the first Dreamliner for LOT. The date had been put off so many times that some people started to have some doubts if this ultra-modern machine will ever join the fleet of the Polish airline. The latest news is that the new Boeing 787 will arrive in Warsaw in the first months of 2012.

The stakes are high. Morgan Stanley, a privatization advisor to Poland's national airline PLL LOT has recently presented a privatization plan for the airline to the Polish Treasury Ministry. Aleksander Grad, the minister of State Treasury says that the privatization process may start in the second half of 2011. Presently the airline is undergoing the necessary restructuring, selling its assets, conducting lay-offs and reorganizing the company. The process is necessary if the privatization is to receive a green light.

LOT's Supervisory Board has recently approved the Corporate Development Strategy. This is an important phase in the process of restructuring of the company and in the improvement of the financial results for the Polish carrier (last year the airline carried 4.5 million passengers which is 0.5 million more in comparison to 2009. On the other hand, in 2010 LOT had an operational loss of PLN 160 million). That is why long-haul flights, especially the ones to Asia, are so important and Dreamliner is to operate on those routes. Especially because Porty Lotnicze in alliance with LOT wants to turn Okęcie into a strong hub which would be able to compete with other Euro-

pean airports. This is a part of "East Meets West" strategy which is now designed. According to aviation industry experts, there is still some place for such an undertaking in our part of Europe, so we must try to take this chance.

FIRST MINUTE EVERYWHERE

Before the new connections appear in the airline's network, LOT has prepared new promotional fares for almost all flights in its offer. In March a new campaign to promote the First Minute fares was launched. The campaign replaces the previous one called "Promolot".

The aim of the newest promotion is to encourage travellers to buy tickets for LOT flights much earlier, but at considerably lower prices. The offer is mainly aimed at passengers who are already planning their summer holidays and are searching for attractively priced flights for July and August. The tickets offered at promotional prices will be available both in business and economy class.

The new fares in economy class include round-trip tickets for PLN 329 to all European cities in the connection network, round trip tickets for PLN 629 to cities in the Middle East (Cairo, Damascus, Beirut and Tel Aviv) and round-trip tickets for LOT's long-distance flights (New York, Chicago, Toronto, and Hanoi) for PLN 1529.

Business passengers can count on a fixed price on those routes in business class. A round-trip ticket to all European cities in First Minute fares will cost PLN 2296, to the Middle East PLN 2529, and for long-haul flights PLN 6529.

The "First Minute" tickets can be booked at the lowest price at lot.com website or via the airline's Call Center. The offer is definitely worth consideration. ■



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POWER PILLS

We live in an age of self-medication, says **Sally Brown**, but what pills – prescription, over-the-counter or herbal – are your fellow travellers taking to stay well and perform better?



Remember your last hanger at work, when you felt like your IQ had dropped 20 points overnight? Or the time you nearly nodded off in a meeting because you were jet-lagged? Wouldn't it be great if you could take a pill and instantly click back to your normal eight-hours-a-night self?

Well, now you can. Modafinil – known as Provigil in the US – is one of a new breed of “smart” pills that boosts concentration and eliminates jet lag with no jittery side effects, and it's available to buy with just a few clicks of your mouse.

“Recently I casually mentioned to a colleague that I was jet-lagged and had a big presentation to give”, says Barbara Sahakian, professor of clinical neuropsychology at the University of Cambridge. “The response was immediate: ‘Do you want some Modafinil?’ They were surprised I hadn't already taken it”.

Thanks to online access to medical knowledge, we're becoming a nation of amateur pharmacologists. Want to feel calmer, smarter or more focused? There's a pill that can help. According to *Social Science and Medicine* journal, Brits are twice as likely to turn to medicine today as 20 years ago. In a knowledge-based economy, “cosmetic neurology” – or the desire to improve the brain power you were born with – is set to be a health buzzword in the next few years, according to trend-spotters at consultancy the Futures Company.

A recent survey of UK readers of scientific journal *Nature* found that 20 per cent had already taken a so-called “smart” drug to help their concentration. And according to a report by the British Medical Association (bma.org.uk), they'll soon be as “common as coffee”.

But it's not just about boosting brain power – savvy self-medicators know the right drugs to fight jet lag, get some sleep on an economy flight, and even feel calmer and more confident. Self-medication is the fastest way to self-improve-

ment, they believe, and there's a word-of-mouth buzz that certain prescription drugs, licensed for use to treat anxiety or sleep disorders, have bonus benefits when taken by healthy users.

The fact that the drugs have gone through the stringent testing process required of any licensed medicine means there's an in-built element of safety. Atholl Johnston, professor of clinical pharmacology at Queen Mary, University of London, says: “Occasional self-medication is highly unlikely to be dangerous”.

According to the British Medical Association, ‘smart’ drugs will soon be as ‘common as coffee’



Even so, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (rpsgb.org.uk) urges caution. “These are potent medicines and they're prescription-only for a reason”, says Neal Patel, spokesperson and pharmacist at the society. “If they were risk-free, they'd be available over the counter”.

According to Cephalon, the manufacturer of Modafinil, the list of possible side-effects in use among narcoleptics includes psychosis, and it's not recommended for anyone with a history of depression. Half of the regular users in the *Nature* survey reported side effects including headaches, jitteriness, anxiety and insomnia.

“There's a risk/benefit equation with any drug”, Patel says. “Your doctor will prescribe a drug if they think the benefits outweigh the potential side effects. If you're self-medicating, you need to weigh that up yourself. And don't forget

that drugs react with each other, so people on long-term medication or with an existing health condition such as high blood pressure need to be particularly cautious”.

Taking drugs off-licence is unlikely to get you into trouble with the law. Although it's illegal to sell licensed drugs without a prescription, it's not illegal to buy them, or to take what you need for personal use through customs. “Unless a drug is controlled, like Ritalin, the police are unlikely to get involved”, Johnston says. And a sympathetic GP can prescribe any drug “off-licence” if they feel there is a clinical need. “So you could, in theory, ask your doctor for Modafinil for jet lag”, he says, “although most people think it's easier to buy from the internet”.

Unsurprisingly, counterfeit medication is an issue. “In research, we find that 50 per cent of drugs ordered from internet sites are fake”, Johnston says. In the UK, legitimate internet pharmacies must be an offshoot of an existing bricks-and-mortar pharmacy.

Patel says: “It's simple – any site that allows you to buy prescription drugs without a prescription isn't a pharmacy. And once you've stepped outside the normal supply chain, you have no way of knowing what you are taking. Counterfeiting is sophisticated and the look of the drugs and packaging can be exact copies. But you have no way of knowing what's in a drug, whether it's a harmless sugar pill or something more sinister”.

Patel recommends you do a risk/benefit analysis before popping any pill. “Ask yourself: ‘Am I prepared to take a risk for what are unproven benefits?’” he says. And keep an eye on how often you use them. “If you have to rely on pharmacology to live your life, you may have a problem”, Johnston says. “And it's easy to develop a tolerance so you start taking more to get the same effect. With ▶

any drug there is a tendency to think: one is good, so half a dozen must be even better”.

Cautions aside, here's what the guy sitting next to you on the plane could be on...

MODAFINIL

ALSO KNOWN AS Provigil

Officially prescribed to keep narcoleptics awake during the day, it makes healthy users process information more effectively, and multitask without getting stressed, according to a University of Cambridge study. It's the “first real smart drug”, according to the university's Barbara Sahakian, and will be licensed for general cognitive enhancement in the future.

PROS It helps you to deal with tiredness without affecting concentration or interfering with natural sleep patterns. Some find it reduces appetite and aids weight loss.

CONS The effect has been described as so mild that you don't notice it. “It didn't seem to make me any more productive than usual, but it did give me a headache”, says one user.

PRICE About £4 a pill

WHERE TO BUY UK pharmacies with a prescription; internet without a prescription

PREGABALIN

ALSO KNOWN AS Lyrica

Licensed in Europe for generalised anxiety disorder and in the US as an anti-convulsive drug, Pregabalin calms nerve activity in the brain – ideal for pre-presentation jitters.

PROS It's like Valium minus the addiction, as you are not as likely to build up dependence to it. Plus, it treats neuropathic pain so it could sort out your sciatica.

CONS Possible side effects include dizziness, drowsiness and slurred speech – never a particularly impressive look at work.

PRICE £1.50 a pill

WHERE TO BUY UK pharmacies with a prescription; internet without

RITALIN

ALSO KNOWN AS Kiddie Coke

It's the new Pro-Plus – without the caffeine jitters. Although licensed to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children, Ritalin is easily available over the internet for those looking for a mental edge. Studies show it improves some cognitive functions, including planning.

PROS An end to unproductive “hangover” days – it focuses the mind even when it's frazzled.

CONS Ritalin is a controlled drug so it's technically illegal to take it off-licence. “It could get you into trouble with customs”, clinical pharmacologist Johnston warns. It's also an amphetamine-type compound, so you could get hooked.

PRICE £8 for 30 pills

WHERE TO BUY UK pharmacies with a prescription; internet without

MELATONIN

ALSO KNOWN AS Circadin

The best-known jet lag “cure”, melatonin is a hormone made by the pineal gland, a structure in the brain, and it regulates the body's circadian rhythm. It was banned from sale in health food shops in the UK in 1995, when it was classified as a medicine rather than a food supplement.

PROS A “natural” supplement that's also a powerful antioxidant, and said to stave off ageing.

CONS Can cause restlessness and irritation – so you'll be awake, but nasty. “Plus, there's little convincing evidence that it works”, Johnston says.

PRICE About £8-10 for 60 tablets

WHERE TO BUY Health food stores in the US, internet pharmacies

BETA-BLOCKERS

ALSO KNOWN AS Sectral, Propranolol

Beta-blockers are prescribed for hypertension but have been hijacked as instant tranquillisers. By blocking the effect of the stress hormones norepinephrine and epinephrine, beta-blockers will reduce the physical symptoms of anxiety such as palpitations. “Snooker players

like them because they also steady the hands”, Johnston says.

PROS They could reduce your blood pressure and the risk of heart attack.

CONS Can cause health issues for asthma and angina sufferers. “They can also cause impotence with long-term use”, Johnston says.

PRICE About 10p a pill with a prescription, and £2 without

WHERE TO BUY UK pharmacies with a prescription; internet without

ZOLPIDEM

ALSO KNOWN AS Ambien

The world's favourite sleeping pill is licensed for treatment of ongoing insomnia,



nia, but is popular for one-off use (overnight flight in economy, anyone?). It works by enhancing the effect of the neurotransmitter GABA at receptor sites in the brain, easing you into sleep.

PROS “Zolpidem is one of a class of drugs called non-benzodiazepine that have a short duration of action – you can

take it, sleep for six hours and you won't feel groggy when you wake up", Johnston says.

CONS It's also used as a date-rape drug so could take some explaining if you're found with some in a bar. It doesn't mix well with alcohol, and makes some people hallucinate and sleepwalk, which never goes down well with fellow passengers. (Put "Ambien" into You Tube's search engine for classic examples.)

PRICE About £12 for 30 pills

WHERE TO BUY UK pharmacies with a prescription; internet without

PROZAC

ALSO KNOWN AS Fluoxetine

Those in the know don't pop Prozac for its antidepressant qualities but because

'If you have to rely on pharmacology to live your life, you may have a problem'



it helps to focus the mind, dull the appetite and improve athletic performance.

PROS It can make sex last longer.

CONS It is prescription-only so you will need to convince your doctor you're depressed. It can also kill your sex drive altogether, and the positive effects can stop working after a few weeks, which is



NATURAL BOOSTERS

Need to feel on top of your game? Get a boost without the side-effects by trying these natural alternatives...

VITANO is a licensed herbal medicine made from rhodiola rosea root extract that has been traditionally used to treat stress, fatigue and mild anxiety. (Manufactured by Schwabe Pharma, £13 for 30 pills from pharmacies, health food stores and schwabepharma.co.uk.)

ST JOHN'S WORT is back in favour – a recent review of all the studies on St John's wort by the respected Cochrane Collaboration (cochrane.org) found the herbal remedy was as effective as Prozac in treating mild to moderate depression (£25.50 for 90 tablets from Boots, boots.com).

If you need to improve your concentration, early research suggests that extracts of the tree

GINKGO BILOBA can improve short-term memory, probably because it dilates blood vessels and reduces blood's stickiness, boosting circulation to the brain (Actimind, £10 for 30 from pharmacies).

Take a **B COMPLEX SUPPLEMENT** – at least ten different B vitamins can affect the neurotransmitters in your brain and several clinical trials are under way to further investigate preliminary research that suggests B vitamin supplements improve cognitive function. Take a B complex if you're under pressure or drink regularly (stress and alcohol both use up B vitamins). Try Boots' Sustained Release Vitamin B Complex (£6.50 for 90).

FISH has been known as "brain food" for centuries and two of the polyunsaturated fatty acids in fish oils, EPA and DHA, are involved in chemical messaging in the brain. The jury is still out on whether taking fish oils really does boost brain power, but if you don't eat fish, a supplement is good health insurance. Try Seven Seas Pulse Pure Fish Oil capsules, £9 for 120 from pharmacies.

For energy, **MIKEI RED REISHI ESSENCE** is a mushroom extract traditionally used in Chinese medicine – it's gaining such a reputation that even Cancer Research UK wants to see clinical trials on its use in cancer patients (£40 for 30 from haeon.com).



known as "Prozac-poop-out".

PRICE About 60p a pill

WHERE TO BUY UK pharmacies with a prescription; internet without

TOPAMAX

ALSO KNOWN AS Topiramate

An anti-epileptic drug also used to treat migraines, it has the unexpected side effect of making you stop craving things

that are bad for you. It enhances the activity of the neurotransmitter GABA in the brain, which acts as a natural calming agent.

PROS Could be a painless way to cut out all that boozing and binge-eating.

CONS Can play havoc with your temperature control, inducing a menopause-style hot flush without any warning.

PRICE About 80p a pill

WHERE TO BUY UK pharmacies with a prescription; internet without ■

Helicopters are an excellent means of transport for businesspeople, especially in large cities. They can quickly carry passengers to their destination and never get stuck in traffic jams. However in Poland this form of transport is still at a nascent stage.

Wojciech Chelchowski reports.

A Sky Taxi



This must have been a great event, indeed. About 50 years ago Warsaw's Hotel Grand in Krucza Street not only had an indoor swimming pool built on an upper floor (which was hard to imagine for a common socialist man), but it also had a real helicopter landing pad. It was set on the roof, just like in American movies. However, it all ended as quickly as it began. A helicopter landed there only once, because it turned out that the roof was too weak to support the weight of the machine.

Later attempts to set helipads in Poland were no better. Even today in our country a landing helicopter is a somewhat unusual sight, and it's easier to charter a machine than to find a proper place to land with it. In fact, there are only a few good helipads in Poland. These are mostly the ones located near hospitals and they are used solely by medical helicopters. As for private helipads – these are a rare sight, mostly to be found near luxurious hotels.

LIKE ICING ON A CAKE

There are also only a few companies which charter helicopters. One of them is Sky Poland – a company with its headquarters in Konstancin near Warsaw.

Its fleet
c o n -

sists of several Robinson helicopters, including Błękitny 24 belonging to TVN group, which can also be chartered if it's not used by the TV station. Another one is Piotr Jafernik's Normal – a company based in Bielsko.

Zbigniew Podermański from Air Charter Professional – a broker company specializing in chartering aircrafts in passenger air traffic – says that generally inquires about chartering a helicopter are quite rare, although recently they have become slightly more frequent.

In other countries helicopters are often used for short business and tourist trips. They are simply treated like a sky taxi and in big cities, where getting through the congested streets takes literally hours, they are a real godsend and a reasonable solution.

In Poland, however, this is still a future prospect, mostly due to relatively high prices. One hour flight on board a good helicopter may cost up to €1,300.

For example, a flight from Warsaw

to Poznań takes almost two hours. Add to this the parking fee (which is quite low – around €50 per hour), and the total cost of the charter amounts to a few thousand euro for a trip in conditions which are far from comfortable. That's why sometimes it's better to charter a small jet plane, on condition that there is an airfield near the place we want to go to.

One of the first Polish private helicopter landing pads was created near Gołębiewski hotel in Mikołajki. The guests of the hotel could charter the helicopter parked near the hotel for a short ▶





Peninsula Hongkong



Gołębiewski Mikołajki

scenic tour around the area. The flight took about 15 minutes and was operated by an external company which leased the land near the hotel.

Now, when the hotel complex has expanded, the helipad is a professionally prepared place with stone paving, an appropriately adapted hangar, and lighting – which is a really rare sight.

The helipad is available for emergency air ambulance service if such need arises, and obviously for the guests – especially the business ones who visit the hotel for various congresses and conferences. Tadeusz Gołębiewski – the owner of the chain, which comprises hotels in Mikołajki, Karpacz, Wisła, and Białystok, leased a helicopter in 2006 and now quite often uses this form of transport.

Nosalowy Dwór Resort & Spa – a complex which was launched in 2009 in Zakopane – consists of two hotels (3- and 4-star), and the helipad has always been an integral part of it.

“We have always targeted our offer at premium customers, so a helicopter landing pad was one of the most obvious things when designing the hotels, especially because the helipad quickly became in great demand”, says Tymoteusz Mróz, the marketing manager in Nosalowy Dwór. “This is especially important due to Zakopane’s location and the infamous «zakopianka» (the Cracow – Zakopane route) which is often jammed. We are planning to introduce

special packages for hotel guests which will enable them to reach the hotel from Balice airport by helicopter. In this way they will get here much faster”.

He adds that the helipad is not only immensely popular among business guests, but also among those ones who arrive at the hotel for rest and relaxation. There are months when there are several take offs and landings a day, and sometimes the helipad is occupied by 2-3 machines at the same time. This is, in fact, the only helipad in the area where we can land without too much procedural hassle – it’s just enough to call the hotel’s reception in advance. What’s more, the hotel’s guests can use the helipad free of charge.

There are also several helipads prepared in other parts of Poland. For example, next to SPA Dr Irena Eris hotels. The one situated on Wzgórza Dylewskie, has a designated landing area and handles helicopters which have

requested landing clearance at least 3 hours in advance. The offer also includes flights from the hotel to any place within Poland. SPA Krynica Zdrój also offers this service – the cost of the transfer from Balice airport to the hotel is PLN 10,400.

Helipads can also be found in other places such as: Witaszyce Palace near Jarocin with a hotel for 80 guests, Ryn Castle hotel, or Mierzęcin Palace which offers 150 beds and impressive conference facilities.

WE ARE LAGGING BEHIND

However, all of these pale in comparison to what we can see in Europe and the rest of the world. Large hotels manage helicopter traffic without any problems, flying their guests to airports as well as anywhere they wish. They often have their own helicopters which serve as air limousines.

Burj Al Arab in Dubai – one of the world’s most luxurious hotels has a remarkable helipad. It’s located at the height of 211 metres and protrudes from the side of the roof of the hotel, resembling a flying saucer. It’s most famous for the event which took place there 6 years ago when Andre Agassi and Roger Federer played there a showpiece tennis match to promote the local tournament. Two Augusta 109 helicopters carry the hotel guests to the Dubai Airport which takes only 9 minutes and costs mere US\$ 3,000.

Peninsula Hongkong hotel also has its own fleet. It carries the hotel guests to and from the airport, as well as offers scenic tours. Businesspeople are especially glad to use “Fly & Dine” offer which is a 15-minute helicopter trip over the city combined with lunch in the hotel’s restaurant. All for US\$ 700.

Hyatt Regency Kathmandu – one of the few 5-star hotels in Nepal, organizes breathtaking flight in the Himalayas. One favoured option is to book the helicopter for an early morning flight to the lower reaches of Mount Everest for a breakfast that will be unforgettable. Peninsula hotel in Manila is in the process of developing aerial tours to two popular tourist attractions, one to the tiny island of Corregidor and one to Taal, the smallest volcano in the world. These are just a few examples. Who knows, perhaps in Poland a helicopter will also soon become a form of a daily transport for businesspeople. ■

Some hotels around the world treat helicopters like air cabs. They are quick and don't have to stand in traffic jams



Nosalowy Dwór Zakopane

The Polish Success In Berlin

A combination of tradition and the world's latest trends in design, innovative animations and 3D journeys across Poland – all this was used to promote Poland and Euro 2012 during the ITB fair in Berlin.



POLSKA
ORGANIZACJA
TURYSTYCZNA

Move Your Imagination was the central slogan in the image campaign organized by the Polish Tourist Organization during the biggest international tourist fair ITB in Berlin. Indeed, the campaign moved the imagination of the viewers. The main point was to arouse interest in our country and emphasize changes that has been made within the last year. Both the slogan and the new branding, used at the Polish stand, was meant to break the stereotypes about Poland. The main emphasis was put on the fact that Poland is a modern country, and Polish people have a sense of humour as well as distance to themselves. It was a combination of various elements: the modern design and traditional Polish motives, innovating animation and the latest 3D technology, was used to show, that Poland is not reluctant to apply the latest and original promotional, marketing and artistic solutions.

Young artists from Platige Image studio were invited to prepare an original concept. The main attraction were colourful creatures, based on the world popular "vinyl toys" The creator of the 3D film concept was Tomasz Bagiński, an artist nominated to the Oscar for the animation called "the Cathedral".

The most important element of the Berlin campaign was the opening ceremony of ITB fair, attended by 4,000 representatives of tourism industry from all over the world. Lech Wałęsa was the guest of honour. The main



item of the programme was a multimedia 3D show about Poland, and the climax included a spectacular dancing performance choreographed by Agustino Egurrola.

This year Poland was an Official Partner Country, which involved being given some public space for a marketing campaign. Our advertisements were displayed on the biggest Hauptbahnhof railway station and a few-metre high creatures aroused interest, as they walked along the main Berlin street – Kurfuerstendamm. During the fair, you could also see many gadgets connected with football. Thanks to this we could show Poland as the host of the European Cup to the thousands of viewers.

A significant success related to ITB fair, was the first prize presented to Polish promotional film "Move Your Imagination" at the prestigious "The Golden City Gate" film festival. The festival jury chose the Polish film over 20 other productions proposed by other countries. The film was produced in 2010, it consists of 7 etudes, presenting how Poland is seen through the eyes of foreigner visiting the country. The action of the film combines emotions with particular places: youth – Warsaw, love – Cracow, creativity – Poznań, freedom – Gdańsk, passion – Łódź, friendship – the Masuria, music – Wrocław.

It is also worth noticing that one of the notable effects of Polish partnership in ITB fair, was the wide coverage

that our country received in the German media. The total worth of the media coverage on ITB 2011 and on its current partner country (Poland), in the period between March 2010 and March 2011 was (according to the advertising rates) about €55 million.

ITB fair is highly popular not only among the Germans, but also visitors from other countries and tourism business representatives from all over the world. This year, because of the official Polish partnership, the fair was also attended by presidents of many Polish cities – among them, there was Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz – and marshals and vice-marshals of voivodeships. Among the members of the Polish Partnership Honour Committee ITB Berlin 2011 were Lech Wałęsa, Jerzy Buzek and Władysław Bartoszewski.

Promotion of the Polish tourism, launched during Berlin ITB fair was part of the campaign organized by POT and the project called "Promujmy Polskę Razem" (Let's Promote Poland Together). Its "Move Your Imagination" slogan was also used during last year's promotional campaign around the "Fryderyk Chopin" sailing ship's cruise to several European ports. In the following years the POT's campaign will be continued with the same slogan in Germany, and then in France and Great Britain. ●



It's hard to downplay the importance of this port. Rhein Main Flughafen has for long impressed passengers coming here from all over the world. However, calling this place "an airport" seems to be an affront to its dignity. This is because the Frankfurt hub is, in fact, like a big city, which has plans for an even bigger expansion. In 2017, Mönchhof – a huge business-logistics centre (spanning over the area of 110 ha) is to be launched, while by 2020 a new district called Gateway Gardens will have been built over the area of 35 hectares with space for offices and services, hotels, conference centres, shops, bars, restaurants and research institutions. Even the recent economic downfall didn't halt those investments. On the contrary, the predicted future boom in the aviation industry forces the airport management to move forward and offer more and new services.

THE AIRPORT CRAB

On the map, Fraport (as it is sometimes called) looks like a huge crab with its claws spread wide. Its left arm is Terminal 2, while the trunk and the right arm constitute Terminal 1. The airport has three levels, with a railway station located underground and serving local as well as long-distance trains.

The history of Frankfurt Airport dates back to 1924 when Südwestdeutschen Luftverkehrs AG company came into existence. The port started to expand dynamically after WWII – in 1972 a new, modern Terminal 1 was opened together with the underground railway station, while 20 years later Terminal 2 was launched with a Sky Line railway which provides a regular free transfer service between Terminals 1 and 2. In 2000 the company which manages the airport, changed its name to Fraport and became listed on stock exchange. 5 years ago, construction work on the new maintenance base for Airbus A380 aircraft began.

Of course, the airport is expanding all the time. Presently, it is used by 120 airlines operating weekly 4,650 direct flights to 307 destinations in 109 countries. Annually almost 53 million passengers pass through the airport. Therefore, as regards the number of served passengers, it is the 3rd busiest in Europe (after London and Paris) and 9th busiest in the world.

For many years the main idea behind the airport's expansion has been to create a large hub which would be easily reached

FRANKFURT AIRPORT

THE HEART OF EUROPE

If you often fly internationally, you sure know this airport, because it's one of the world's largest hubs, serving almost 150,000 passengers daily. Our correspondent, **Hubert Kasprzyk**, was one of them, trying to find out how the airport is doing in the post-crisis time.





by air and land. This idea has been consistently implemented. As a result, 30% of all passengers arriving at the airport use railway trains to reach both terminals. Of course reaching the airport by motorways is not a problem either, as it is conveniently located near A3 and A5 Autobahns.

JUST LIKE A CITY

Fraport has great investment plans regarding the airport's infrastructure. Some of them include building a new runway and the 3rd passenger terminal, as well as a new cargo base since Frankfurt is Europe's largest freight gateway. Following the expansion, the traffic is expected to increase from today's 80 takeoffs and landings per hour to 126 air operations. The number of passengers passing through the airport is also expected to rise to 88 million yearly.

In accordance with present tendencies regarding airport expansion, the Frankfurt hub is aiming at becoming a large airport city. According to those plans, not only will the airport be serving passengers, but will also become a business and leisure centre. After all, a family trip to the airport combined with a shopping spree or a visit to the cinema, can be quite an attractive form of spending free time. That's why, one of the most important goals of the airport is to provide the best possible conditions for functioning private businesses. Even now, there are over 220 shops, bars, and restaurants located within the area of the airport. By 2015 the airport's retail space will be expanded by 15,000 sq m to 42,000 sq m.

Airport City is a set of projects aiming at transformation of the airport into a hybrid complex service provider that develops and caters to community needs for business, shopping and leisure, whilst contributing to the overall economic well-being of the airport. AirRail Cent-





er Frankfurt is to become an exemplary model of the airport's investments, with its numerous shops, restaurants, conference rooms, and two Hilton hotels. Another ambitious investment is the new district of Gateway Gardens, taking shape on a total of 35 hectares in plain view of Frankfurt Airport's Terminal 2. Featuring modern architecture and plenty of soothing greenery, it opens up diverse possibilities in a high-quality urban atmosphere. Meanwhile the Mönchhof site, comprising a total area of 11 hectares and 725,000 sqm of office and building space, is the jewel in the crown of Fraport's Airport City development and is focused on logistics, offices and trading lots.

The success of all those investments will be determined not only by their technological advantage or appropriate infrastructure, but also by the very location of the airport – in the region which is developing dynamically. Frankfurt is inhabited by 5.5 million people representing 195 nations. There are numerous research centres, financial institutions, and high-tech companies. 73% of people employed in the city, work in the service industry.

BUSINESS WITH THE SKIES

Arrive in a city, do your business, relax for a moment, and then return home as soon as possible. This simple regularity was noticed by people who specialize in designing and expanding airports. They found out that a great number of business travellers don't feel like moving from the airport to the city centre, as it takes too much time which can be used in a more effective way. Their business partners also find it



more convenient to get to the airport rather than to a venue somewhere in the congested city. That's why they often decide to set up one of their offices near the airport. Many airports have noticed this fact and now they offer numerous services for businesspeople.

Even today Frankfurt Airport can boast quite a large office complex comprising office buildings called 570 and 201 (the former is used for cargo management, while the latter has over 20,000 sqm of office space), or the architecturally impressive The Squire building, which resembles a ship. It is 660 metres long, 65 metres wide, 45 metres high, and rests on 86 col-

umns. It also has over 140,000 sqm of office space, a conference centre, and as many as 97 lifts.

Within the area of the airport we will also find The Main Airport Center (named after the river Main), located between the airport and the municipal forest. At this gateway to the world yet close to nature, this image-enhancing, efficient office building with ten floors and about 51,000 square meters of office space offers optimum accessibility and a high-quality working environment. The Frankfurt Airport Center (FAC) offers first-class office and conference facilities, uniquely situated right at Frankfurt Airport. It's the perfect location for companies wishing to combine excellent connections and mobility with a special ambience.

Airport City West is a business centre which will be built in the area where once Ticon chemical factory existed. The area's highlight is the Airport City West office building, which was completed in 2002.

Another interesting project of this type is lot H near Gate 3, which will be home to a new office complex that is now under construction. Among other things, it will accommodate the new group headquarters of Fraport AG. A construction called "Propeller" will be built in the northeast of the Airport City, with bridges linking together the three separate buildings forming the Propeller.

Add to this the expansion of the cargo centre, the new Airbus A380 maintenance centre, and the renovation of the already existing infrastructure. We can be sure of one thing – the airport in Frankfurt will always surprise us with something new. ■

The airport in Frankfurt is changing into a huge airport city



Elżbieta Miszczyk,
a Concierge in the
Warsaw Marriott hotel.

A Day In the Life of...

CONCIERGE

5:30 I work in a two-shift system. The morning shift starts exactly at 5.30. I get up at 4.45. It is really early, but I am lucky enough to live quite close to the hotel. Some of my friends commute from outside Warsaw, and have to get up much earlier, to get to work on time.

My first task is to help with the preparation of breakfast in Executive Lounge, situated on the 38th floor. It starts at 6.30 am from Monday to Friday, and at 8.00 am at weekends.

8:00 After breakfast I go down to my work place on the ground floor, just before 8 o'clock. Usually, in hotels a concierge has to be easily accessible, so my workdesk is located in an open space. But first, I need to go to the safe, to get a key, as my desk is locked, and I have to open it. I unlock my phone, which, outside my working hours (between 10.00 pm and 8.00 am) is connected to the At Your Service department, available 24 hours a day. A guest who calls us, is never all by himself.

I switch on the computer and check my mailbox. It is essential, as very often I get various e-mails at night – for example requests from the guests, who are already planning a stay in the hotel. I also look through the so called logbook, which is the night shift record. Usually these are important things I have to see to in the first place. The list of “pick ups”, the guests who need to be transferred from the airport, is also very vital for me. Each week the head of cab drivers who park outside our hotel, selects one of them to be responsible for this matter for the next 7 days. He also has the list, and I have to verify it, as it sometimes happens that some guests cancel their arrival.

8:30 In the time between the morning activities and the end of my shift, I usually deal with the errands for the guests. Concierge is a person who is supposed to answer every request. Guests call and come with var-

ious problems. When a person's luggage got lost during a flight, I have to check when it will reach the hotel. Somebody else asks to book a table in a restaurant for an evening. Yet another person asks about places worth visiting in Warsaw. Some prefer to do the sightseeing on their own, some expect to have a guide, and others would like to have an organized tour around the city with a group. We cooperate with travel agencies, every day at 10.00 am and 2.00 pm a couch arrives to pick up the guests for a 3.5-hour tour. Sometimes, I organize a trip outside Warsaw. Once, I achieved quite a “success”. There was an elderly man – a pilot of a Liberator during WWII. He came here with his daughter who didn't speak Polish. He told me, he would love to find some traces of his family, but he was sure that they didn't live in his hometown anymore. I called the local authorities, and they sent me to a hundred-year-old parish priest, who remembered and knew this family very well. The priest found their documents, our guests went there to collect them. Everything turned out well and it was actually very moving.

10:00 Theoretically, I should have a coffee break, but sometimes the reality is quite different. There are a lot of things to do. Sometimes there is a queue of people who need my help, and meanwhile I have to answer the phones or call somewhere, trying to deal with another guest's problem. I advise on good restaurants if a guests decides to dine out. I arrange theatre and concert tickets, or



sometimes book train tickets. I advise on what souvenirs to buy. I also help guests, who have got lost at the airport, or in the city.

12:00 It is a time when guests check-out. Whenever a need arises, and I don't have any urgent things to do, I help at the reception desk – on the ground floor, or in Executive Lounge on the 38th floor. I also help when guest check-in.

14:30 I finish work with a brief summary of the day, and I prepare information for the second shift, who continue with the things I didn't managed to get done. The night shift ends at 10.00 pm. ■



Mercure Kasprowy Zakopane

Relax At Easter



Mercure Mrongovia Resort & Spa

A trip to the Tatras, the Karkonosze, the Masuria, or to the seaside? What about a tour of the major Polish cities? Easter is a good time for relaxation and forgetting about everyday problems.

Especially because this year the holiday is only a few days away from the long May weekend. It seems to be an ideal occasion then, to take a few days off and take advantage of the offer prepared by Orbis Hotel Group.

At the end of April and the beginning of May – when it is not too difficult to arrange a few days off – it is a good time to get away for a few days with family or friends. You don't have to wait until holidays, as everyone can find something for themselves in the offers of the hotels. The Tatra and the Karkonosze are charming not only in winter. The seaside and Masuria are also abound in attractions in spring.

EASTER TATRA MOUNTAINS AND KINGS OF THE WEEKENDS

Mercure Kasprowy Zakopane promises its guests unforgettable moments in picturesque mountains. If you spend Easter here, you will be welcomed with the magical traditions of Podhale, hospitality of highlanders and tables groaning under the weight of local delicacies. As part of the holiday “Easter Tatra Mountains” package, the guests can expect sumptuous Eastern breakfast. Other available attractions include: a traditional egg hunt-

ing game, chocolate race and a “How much does an egg weigh?” competition. The main prize is a voucher for a stay in one of Orbis hotels. The offer is valid between 22.04 and 25.04. The cost of a three-day stay in a double room per person, begins at PLN 744.

The tatra mountains are also an excellent place for weekend trips, not necessarily during Easter time. **Mercure Kasprowy Zakopane** has an attractive “King of the Weekends” package, which includes a welcoming bonfire event with regional delicacies and a trip in the picturesque Tatra mountains. There is also a special surprise for the youngest ones – a Junior Club and film shows in the Kasprowy cinema. The package is available 29.04 -08.05, and 22.06 – 26.06. The two-day stay in a double room per person costs PLN 421.

HOLIDAY WEEKEND ON ŚNIEŻKA

Plenty of attractions, comfortable conditions, family-like atmosphere and the clean mountain air. All of this is avail-



Mercure Skalny Karpacz



Mercure Mrongovia Resort & Spa

able for the guests of **Mercure Skalny Karpacz** hotel in Giant Mountains. On Good Friday the hotel has planned painting Easter eggs, on Good Saturday a “Little Prince” performance, and on Sunday – a traditional Easter breakfast over the live music. All the guests have a free access to the swimming pool, the paddling pool for children, the jacuzzi, as well as a professional fitness room, a Turkish bath and a sauna. The price of the three-day package (21.04-26.04) starts at PLN 1319 for a double-room.

Mercure Jelenia Góra hotel has also prepared interesting Easter attractions. Following the festive breakfast in a family-like atmosphere, the guests are to take part in a show and an Easter egg painting course. All the guests can also expect a sweet surprise from the Easter Rabbit. The price of the three-day package starts at PLN 899 for a double-room.

If you also want to spend the long May weekend in the Karkonosze, you will have plenty to do as well. Both Mercure hotels in the area have prepared packages full of surprises. In **Mercure Skalny Karpacz** both children and adults will take part in a circus festival, and see an “Entliczek Pentliczek” performance, based on the most well known poems by J. Brzechwa. Parents will listen to a music quartet recital organized outdoors in the hotel area. Ladies will be able to take advantage of a special offer – a presentation of the latest trends in the spring season, and ask the make-up artist for some advice. The price

of the three-day package for 29.04-4.05, starts at PLN 1309 for a double room.

Mercure Jelenia Góra has also prepared a special offer for the first weekend in May, aimed especially at active leisure enthusiasts. The guests have access to aqua aerobics sessions on Friday night, a grill and a bonfire by nice music and hotel jacuzzi and a sauna. The price of the two-day package starts at PLN 669 for a double-room.

EASTER IN MASURIA

Easter time with some adrenaline flow among the forests and lakes is an ideal offer for Masuria enthusiasts. If you are one of them, **Mercure Mrongovia Resort & Spa** hotel is the very place you are looking for. Apart from the attractions like a trip to Święta Lipka for blessing of Easter baskets, festive Easter breakfast, a family rabbit hunting trip in quads, or a contest for the most beautiful egg. The package also includes aerobics sessions for

The offer, presented by Orbis for Easter holiday and the long May weekend, is very extensive

adults and access to the Wellness Centre with recreational and swimming pools, a jacuzzi, a sauna and a gym. A three-day stay (21-26.04) for two people in a double room costs PLN 1696.

A TASTE OF SUMMER ON THE SEA WAVES

The first sunny moments and the holiday season are an opportunity to take a trip to the seaside, where you can feel the summer already in the early spring. Marine climate and some charming spots in Gdańsk will help you relax and recharge your batteries for the next few weeks. The Easter package in **Mercure Hevelius Gdańsk** hotel includes the Easter breakfast, a welcoming surprise, 20% discount in the bar and restaurant, access to broadband internet and Fitness Centre, as well as a ticket for two films in the 5D FUNMOTION™ cinema for only PLN 10. The package is available between 22-28.04 and costs PLN 1055. Similar attractions are prepared for the long weekend in May.

Novotel Gdańsk Marina hotel also offers unforgettable moments for all the enthusiasts of the marine climate. You can expect a welcoming surprise in the room, decoded TV channels in Pay TV with no limit, horseshoe throw tournament or aqua aerobics sessions for adults – and many more. Children will definitely enjoy drawing competitions, mini aqua aerobics sessions in the pool, and a cooking course for kids. The guests are also given 20% discount in the restaurant and bar, and offered lower prices of treatments in the Recreation Centre. The price of a three-day package for 22.04-26.04, starts at PLN 1295 for a family room.

The long May weekend is also a great opportunity to visit Polish cities. You can use the “City Breaks” offer, available in all 11 Novotel hotels in Poland – in Gdańsk, Katowice, Cracow, Poznań, Szczecin and Warsaw. If you book for at least 2 days, you can get even 40% discount. Hotels are convenient accommodation, especially for families with children. As a part of the Family & Novotel programme, both the children and adults might expect various attractions like welcoming gifts, free baby equipment, and only Xbox game consoles. A great number of these hotels have beautiful gardens and swimming pools, both indoor and outdoor. ■

www.accorhotels.com



La Première – the First Class Experience



Even the longest journey does not have to be tiring. Air France has prepared a special offer for its most demanding passengers. The flight in a first class cabin is a unique experience.

If you are an owner of Air France's First Class ticket who travels via Paris on board one of the numerous long-haul aircraft, you can feel the privileged treatment already in Warsaw, even before reaching the airport. This is because you can order a limousine with a driver to take you to Okęcie (from within the limits of the city), and at the airport there is a separate check-in desk and security control checkpoint prepared for you. For your checked baggage, you are allowed one extra baggage item, for a total of 3 baggage items of 23 kg each, and you may also take 2 cabin hand baggage items up to a maximum of 18 kg. Of course, you also have an unlimited access to the business lounge at the Warsaw's airport. Additionally, on arrival each passenger receives a small gift in form of free newspaper package, and even a single purchase of a ticket in La Première class makes you eligible to obtain a Gold





card of Air France's Flying Blue frequent flyer programme (on condition you send your application no later than 7 days before the departure). Miles earned in Flying Blue can be redeemed for one free prize ticket in Business class on an intercontinental flight or two Business class tickets in promo awards programme on certain European routes.

You Will Be Escorted

On your arrival in Paris things get even more interesting. Being a La Première passenger, you are welcomed by a special staff member who is always at your service. If you have more time on your hands, you may visit the luxurious La Première Lounge which has recently been renovated and refurbished, as well as expanded by 1,000 sq m. This comfortable place is available only for first class passengers. The new airport lounge offers an exclusive setting to enjoy meals, unwind in our relaxation area, read or work peacefully. Our partner, Biologique Recherche, offers you a range of exceptional personalized treatments. Facial treatments, body treatments, and massages are specially designed to meet the needs of frequent travellers. Also, take a moment to savour incomparable cuisine, conceived by Alain Ducasse for Air France. You'll appreciate the harmony of flavours and refined details, including elegant table sets, tableware, floral arrangements, and a special wine list. Visit the bar and discover an original menu created for Air France by the head bartender of the Plaza Athénée.

Passengers are escorted in the lounge's private lift to one of the prestigious cars which take them to the foot of the aircraft. The La Première passenger boards the plane just a few minutes before the doors are closed, and is introduced to the crew.

Ultimate Comfort

The 2-metre seat-bed seat folds out into a real bed, ensuring a good night's rest. The comfortable bed has an additional mattress with a feather duvet, a pure Merino wool blanket, a "boudoir" cushion, an anti-allergy feather pillow. In addition to a wide tray table, the seat has a number of discreetly integrated functions: back massage, an interactive video screen, a noise-reducing hi-fi headset, on-demand video, a PC power outlet, an individual telephone, soft lighting and a private fibre optic reading light. For even greater travelling comfort, La Première passengers are given pyjamas, a shoe bag, slippers and an amenity kit that includes five Clarins skincare products for men or for women, a relaxing eye mask and

toiletries. To perfect this experience, Air France has called upon the "Studio Culinaire Servair", headed by Joël Robuchon, the chef who earned the most Michelin stars worldwide in 2009, with Guy Martin, Michelin-starred chef of the renowned Paris restaurant Le Grand Véfour, and Jacques Le Divellec, Servair consulting chef.

The in-flight entertainment has been adapted to the needs of the travellers, who now can choose among 16 music channels with high quality audio, films, TV programmes, stock market news, or learn one of 23 available foreign languages, as well as choose a magazine of their interest.

Obviously, passengers are served and treated with equally much attention after arriving at the airport of their destination. They are accompanied by the personnel until the moment they leave the airport.

La Première cabin, depending on the model of an aircraft, accommodates 8 passengers on board Boeing B777-300, and 4 on board Boeing B777-200. Soon, after the integration of the whole system with the equipment of the newest Airbus A380, half of Air France's long-haul fleet will have La Première class. In this way, a journey in unique conditions will be available on routes from Paris to Houston, Los Angeles, Montreal, New York, Washington, Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Santiago de Chile, Sao Paulo, Beijing, Hong-Kong, Bangkok, Osaka, Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore, Tokyo, Beirut, Dakar, Dubai, Johannesburg, Cairo, Libreville, Luanda, and Abidjan. The choice is truly wide. ●





The number of brands operated by hotel groups is expanding at a dizzying rate, but do travellers really need them all, asks **Sara Turner**

What do Edition, Venu and Vivanta have in common? They are just a few examples of new brands launched in the past year by established hotel companies – Marriott, Jumeirah and Taj respectively. The number of hotel brands available around the world today is astonishing, and as the recent legal spat between Hilton and Starwood goes to show, the importance of branding should not be underestimated.

Late last year it emerged that Hilton Worldwide had accepted a ban on launching a new “lifestyle” brand after quietly agreeing a settlement with its rival, Starwood Hotels and Resorts, over claims of corporate espionage. Hilton had attempted to launch Deni-

zen Hotels in March 2009, announcing that the name would be seen in key cities throughout the globe. The following month, Starwood launched a lawsuit, accusing Hilton of stealing documents relating to Starwood’s boutique brand, W – the two top executives behind the creation of “Denizen” had previously worked for Starwood on the development of W hotels. Denizen has now been scrapped.

If the hit US television series *Mad Men* has taught us anything, it’s that a brand is hot property. The top five hotel groups by room count, according to consultancy MKG Hospitality, are Intercontinental Hotels Group (IHG), Wyndham, Marriott, Hilton and Accor. They have more than 50 brands between them, many of which have only been launched in

the past few years (see panel overleaf). Meanwhile, more established brands are now entering new markets.

Take French hotel group Accor and its budget All Seasons portfolio. First launched in France in 2007, there are now more than 80 All Seasons hotels in eight countries. The UK gained its second one in December, the All Seasons London Leyton, and another three are due to open within the M25 by the end of the year. Accor has 15 hotel brands, four of which – Pullman, MGallery, Adagio City Aparthotel and All Seasons – have been launched in the past five years.

Meanwhile, US-based Marriott launched its 12th brand, Edition, in Waikiki in October (see “First Edition”, business traveller.com/archive/2010/december-2010-january-2011). A sec-

ond property is due to open in Istanbul this spring, and it is working on projects for a further 23 international gateway cities, including London, Mexico City and Bangkok. Edition represents Marriott's first attempt at a global "lifestyle" brand – its own answer to W, if you like.

Hilton has nine brands in its portfolio. While its up-and-coming marque Doubletree has been around for some time – it first launched in the US in 1969 – it came to the UK only in 2008. Two years on, there are eight Doubletrees here and in the next three years Hilton aims to have another in the UK and ten more in Europe. At the same level of luxury as the classic Hilton brand, which are new-builds, Doubletree differs in that its buildings are either conversions or revamps of existing hotels.

IHG's boutique Indigo brand continues to extend its reach. The portfolio includes properties of different shapes and sizes, designed to reflect local culture and architecture, with unique murals in each standing alongside other individual design features. After launching in the US in 2004, it came to the UK in 2009 with the Indigo London Paddington, followed by a Tower Hill property in July last year. Two further British hotels are under development in Glasgow and Liverpool (both to open this spring), with more likely – IHG plans to open 37 new hotels in the UK across its portfolio of seven brands over the next few years.

In the Middle East and Asia, a similar pace of development can be seen with Dubai's Jumeirah and India's Taj. Jumeirah was set to launch its new Venu brand in Shanghai on January 31, with a second property in Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, by the summer. More art- and design-focused than the existing Jumeirah hotels, Venu will still be a five-star offering, one that the group claims will "express the local soul for those who seek a sophisticated immersion in the destination".

Taj, meanwhile, launched its third brand, Vivanta by Taj, in Bengaluru in September, swiftly followed by the conversion of 18 of its existing properties to the new offering. An "upper upscale" brand, it is positioned alongside

Hilton, Intercontinental and Marriott hotels, a notch above Taj's second brand, Gateway.

The list of new brands seems to be never-ending, and the dividing lines between them confusing – so why do hotel companies do it? Other than appealing to the full range of customers in terms of budget and taste, it can be a necessity for groups that are growing fast.

Ajoy Misra, senior vice-president of sales and marketing for Taj, says: "We grew opportunistically as a company over the past few decades, and almost


Taj, Vivanta or Gateway, depending on the services and standard of the property.

That's understandable for Taj, with three brands, or Jumeirah, with two – but what about Accor, with 15? Spanning everything from budget (Etap) to high-end luxury (Sofitel), the group's portfolio allows it not only to capture the full range of guests but also to work with different types of buildings. According to Jean-Jacques Dessors, chief operating officer of Accor UK and Ireland, this means there is no need to "stretch the brand".

For example, All Seasons has been developed to go into existing properties – vital for cities such as London, where building space is at a premium – while fellow budget brand Ibis is better suited to new-build projects. Similarly, Novotel is a standardised brand in the mid-scale segment, meaning all rooms need to be the same size and shape, while Mercure, positioned at the same level, can go into an existing building so can offer a more unique experience.

"Today we have the brands needed to really cover the market," Dessors says. That may be so, but do travellers really need them all? He maintains they are necessary so that guests will know exactly what they are getting if they stay at a particular chain anywhere in the world. In contrast, he says, with some other hotel companies "the guest doesn't understand the difference between one brand and another because there has been the temptation to stretch the brand down or up".

This blurring of boundaries is something travellers continue to struggle with, according to Margaret Bowler, director of global hotel relations at travel management company HRG. "A lot of the brands are now trying to catch up in terms of making sure there is a consistent level of service", she says. The biggest problem is in how a brand varies between regions. "There are different requirements for the North America market than in Europe, for example. [And that is an] issue when you've got an international client thinking they're going to get the same experience in Zurich as in Chicago, when often they won't". ▶



Launching new brands can be a necessity for hotel groups that are growing fast

all hotels of varying sizes and quality became Taj something or other. In the process, the customer was not quite clear what Taj stood for". Now that Taj is developing outside of India, Misra says it is important to "sharply define" the flagship brand and launch others to accommodate its portfolio better. Hotels have been retrospectively rebranded under the most appropriate name, whether

Courtyard by Marriott has been cited as one example of this lack of consistency, with its European properties attaining higher standards than those in the US. Osama Hirzalla, Marriott International's vice-president of brand marketing and e-commerce for Europe, admits: "We recognise that Courtyard in the US needs development in terms of the product." But he points out that in the US, where the properties are much older, "some hotels I've been in are outstanding as they've just been renovated".

IHG has spent US\$1 billion to bring one of its classic brands, Holiday Inn, up to standard, a process that saw some 2,800 hotels get a refurbishment, while others were forced to leave the brand. "If you want to maintain consistency you need to monitor your brand standards," says IHG's vice-president of development, Andrew Gill. Hirzalla agrees: "Brands need to work harder on differentiating themselves. I think the real hard work that needs to be done is in making sure each is positioned correctly".

But for Thomas Magnuson, chief executive of Magnuson Hotels, which provides marketing and distribution for independent hotels in the US and the UK, creating so many brands is unnecessary. "Brand is less relevant than ever in the hotel industry", he says. He estimates that about half of hotels in the UK are independent, and that they are likely to stay that way.

"Travel is one of the least brand-loyal of any industries", Magnuson says, adding that travellers simply use internet search engines to find properties with the right location, quality standard and price. Because of this, independent hotel owners are faring better today than in the past. "There are so many more ways to access customers", he says.

That said, for the individual hotel owner, being part of a big name can provide invaluable recognition, which may help to explain why most global hotel groups, Accor included, are moving away from owning and operating properties towards management or franchise agreements. Marriott's Hirzalla says: "I think there will be some consolidation going forward. Some of the smaller or more independent brands may find it difficult to survive on their own, as we have seen in the recession – they need

WHO OPERATES WHAT

INTERCONTINENTAL HOTELS GROUP

Intercontinental, Crowne Plaza, Hotel Indigo, Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Staybridge Suites, Candlewood Suites

WYNDHAM HOTEL GROUP

Days Inn, Ramada, Wyndham, Baymont Inn and Suites, Hawthorn Suites, Knights Inn, Microtel Inns and Suites, Super 8, Howard Johnson, Wingate by Wyndham, Travelodge (US/Canada)

MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL

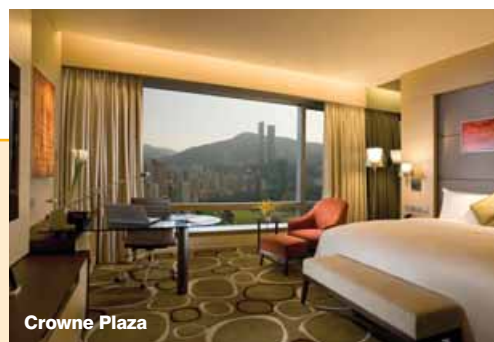
Marriott, JW Marriott, Renaissance, Edition, Autograph Collection, Courtyard, Residence Inn, Fairfield Inn and Suites, Marriott Executive Apartments, Marriott Execustay, Towneplace Suites, Springhill Suites, Ritz-Carlton, Bulgari

HILTON WORLDWIDE

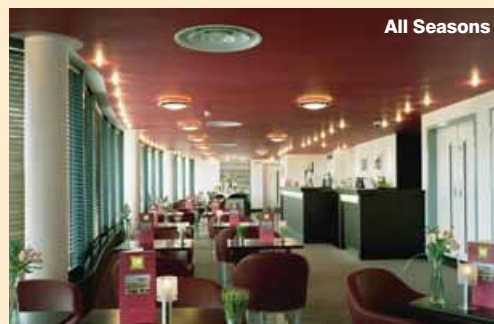
Conrad, Waldorf Astoria, Hilton, Doubletree, Embassy Suites, Garden Inn, Hampton, Homewood Suites, Home2 Suites

ACCOR GROUP

Sofitel, Pullman, MGallery, Novotel, Suite Novotel, Mercure, Grand Mercure, Adagio, All Seasons, Ibis, Etap, Formule 1, Hotel F1, Motel 6, Studio 6



Crowne Plaza



All Seasons



Hampton by Hilton

'Brands need to work harder on differentiating themselves'

to be attached to a more powerful name with a global network and distribution".

Hence, Worldhotels, a collection of almost 450 independent four- and five-star properties and small hotel groups, is now inviting its members to rebrand under its name, with hotels in Hamburg and Munich the first to become Worldhotel-branded properties last month.

Whether necessary or not, if a group launches a new brand, it needs to go far beyond changing the sign on the door, says Pauline Houston, meeting, events and hotel programmes director for the UK and Ireland at travel management company Carlson Wagonlit Travel. "It has to mean something", she says. "There has to be a degree of credibility around it. Consumers are far more educated on that now – they have a level of expectation around what a brand means".

Fulfilling these expectations, then, is half the battle, along with informing travellers about what to expect in the first place – a hefty task with the ever-growing list of names entering the market. ■

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Polonaise, Tango and La Marseillaise

Delicious food is not only a way to win over somebody's heart – the rule also applies to business partners. It happens that a nice dinner by a glass of wine helps to solve the most complicated business matters. Let's check what Residor hotel restaurants have currently on their offer.

We all know that good food often facilitates solving various business matters. This is not only because the atmosphere of a meal is generally more casual, but also because it is a good occasion to have an informal chat about superiority of Argentine steaks, secrets of French cuisine and types of Polish wild game. Radisson and Park Inn restaurants are perfect spots for such conversations.

RENAISSANCE AND EUROPA; RADISSON BLU SZCZECIN

The hotel in Szczecin has two restaurants to choose from – Renaissance and Europa. The first one is an atmospheric place with Renaissance-inspired interior, open in the afternoons and evenings. The other one is open all day long, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Renaissance offers international cuisine and seasonal dishes. The starters include red tuna tartare with horseradish sauce and asparagus, or grilled shrimps wrapped in slices of ham. What really whets the appetite is Tom Kah Gai coconut soup. The restaurant offers also a few types of pasta. A big advantage of the restaurant are fish dishes – you can get halibut with spinach and chanterelle, sturgeon filets with potato spaghetti, and Fish Fantasia: salmon, tuna, pikeperch and seafood served on Thai rice. Game dishes enthusiasts also won't be disappointed.

Europa offers a vast selection of salads, soups like sour rye soup or broth, dumplings, pork cutlet served with fried egg, or pork neck steak. Polish cuisine plays the main role, although in the menu you can also find Italian pasta.



MILK&CO, SOLFEŻ; RADISSON BLU KRAKÓW

The Cracow's Radisson has two restaurants. Solfeż is a place where parties and banquets are organized, and you can also have your breakfast here. Milk&Co serves dishes a la carte. It specializes in Polish and international cuisine. Every month the menu is complemented with dishes from all over the world: India, Germany, Italy or Mexico. The starters include bresaula carpaccio, as well as several types of salads – e. g. one with pan-fried goose livers. Apart from pasta dishes, there are also regional ones, like fried oscypek cheese, dumplings with cottage cheese or pork cutlet with fried cabbage. As for fish, the restaurant offers salmon steak and a salad with rocket and artichokes, while vegetarian dishes include e. g. a plate of grilled vegetables served with oyster sauce. Grilled steak, served with seasonal vegetables and chmichurri sauce, rack of lamb, and beef tenderloin are some of the more sophisticated main courses on offer. Three times a week the restaurant recommends visiting Surf&Turf buffet, where the guests can find the widest selection of seafood, meat, soups, salads, desserts and cocktails in the whole Cracow.



AQUARELLE; RADISSON BLU WROCŁAW

Aquarelle restaurant offers both local and international cuisine. In summer, you can savour the Chef's delicacies, while sitting in the courtyard next to the Academy of Fine Arts. The restaurant is situated on the ground floor. It is a popular place for business meetings, also for visitors from the city. It can seat up to 120 people. Among the soups, there is potato cream with bacon, and chicken soup with coconut milk. The starters include venison carpaccio with pickled mushrooms, and salmon tartare with red caviar. It's possible to compose your own salad — there are numerous ingredients availa-

ble, and the final effect is personalized. As for main courses, Aquarelle offers both Polish cuisine, e. g. pork cutlets with mushrooms, potatoes and carrot with honey, or roasted ribs with fried cabbage – and a wide selection of international cuisine dishes, like Thai veal with black pasta or lamb cutlets with rosemary-and-pumpkin sauce. In the spring season, Aquarelle promotes Canadian cuisine, which is reflected in the menu: you can order buffalo meat carpaccio, mushroom soup with cranberries, grilled lobster in Canadian whisky or maple fondue with fruits.



@FERDY'S; RADISSON BLU WARSZAWA

The name of the restaurant can be associated with "Ferdurke", the title of a novel by Witold Gombrowicz. The interior also alludes to the book, as there are black and white photographs of the author – most of them were given to the restaurant by the writer's widow, Rita Gombrowicz. The menu was also the book-inspired – @ferdy's specializes in the Argentine cuisine. That's why there are a couple of different steak dishes: you can choose between Argentine and Polish meat. Among the grilled dishes, you will find fish, poultry and ribs. As for soups, the Pueblo fish soup is worth recommending, as is the delicious broth. The menu is complemented with veal ravioli with veal ravioli on sautéed spinach in creamy sauce with sun dried tomatoes and pine nuts, as well as dumplings. There is also quite a wide choice of starters, like tiger prawns in coriander butter, or Roasted Aubergine tart with zucchini, bell peppers, oyster mushroom, with goat cheese on rich tomato sauce with fresh basil and thyme. You will also find here a wide selection of salads, cold starters and desserts, as well as excellent wines from Europe and countries in other parts of the world, including Argentina.



RBG; PARK INN KRAKÓW

This very modern restaurant, located in Krakow Park Inn hotel, is called RBG. Its character could be described as diverse. Among grilled dishes, you can find beef tenderloin steak, New Zealand lamb, or Saint Jacob's mussels and a salmon steak. However, the most distinct feature of the place is its wide choice of burgers. Enthusiasts of this kind of food, have many interesting options to choose from, like "a burger with the good old cheddar cheese, tomato and pickled cucumber." I chose the Western burger, with tomato, avocado and chilli mayonnaise, and Portabello burger with goat cheese and mustard-and-mint sauce. RBG also offers regional dishes, like sour soup with smoked ribs, marinated pork neck and vegetables with cream, or braised pork in cumin sauce. As for soups, you should definitely try tomato soup with roasted pepper and pumpkin seeds, or lentils soup with ham, crouton and fried bacon. There is also an impressive selection of salads and pastas – some even with Hindu spices.

VERRES EN VERS; RADISSON BLU GDAŃSK

Radisson in Gdańsk is situated on the Długi Targ Street, which is enough of a reason for the restaurant's immense popularity. It looks like a classic French brasserie and it is not only reflected in the décor, but also in the menu. It should not be surprising then that one of the starters are oysters served on crushed ice. The other dishes are also excellent – you can order French onion soup, foie gras served with apple compote and orange salad, or snails with garlic butter. Some of the most delicious specialties of the place include the rump steak with chips and trimmings, sole meuniere with spinach and potatoes, or roasted lamb shank with vegetables. There is also a wide choice of grilled, fish and poultry dishes, like fried breast of guinea fowl with potatoes. Since it is a French restaurant, there is naturally also a wide selection of French and Polish cheese, served with crackers, as well as desserts resembling crème brulee.



Two years on from the Olympics, China's capital is marching forward in its quest to be a world-class international city, says **Paul Mooney**

A brand new Beijing

Beijing underwent one of the most ambitious urban make-overs the world has seen to host the 2008 Olympics, the most expensive in history. The transformation extended from state-of-the-art athletic facilities and fast-rising residential and business districts to high-tech transportation networks and the renewal of historical sites, significantly remaking the layout of a city that has not changed much since Imperial times.

Foued El Mabrouk, general manager of the Grand Hyatt hotel, has lived in Beijing for more than 20 years. "City planning, infrastructure, transport, roads and landscaping are all better", he says, adding that more attention has also been paid to the environment.

"You can even see it in local authority initiatives – for example, recycling and utility consumption. Awareness has been pushed up since the Olympics, and this will continue because the government has realised the impact it has had on so-

cial stability", he says. "The level of confidence and maturity has also increased – Beijing is moving towards becoming an international city".

Many of the sporting facilities built for the games have been converted for public use. The National Aquatics Centre, popularly known as the Water Cube, has become a public water park following a year of construction work, giving the now sleepy Olympics area a boost. Meanwhile, the impressive National Stadium, otherwise known as the Bird's Nest because of its large outer framework of intertwined steel ribbons, is being used for entertainment and sporting events.

China has so far escaped the full impact of the financial crisis and so Beijing's economy continues to boom. During the first eight months of this year, the city chalked up almost US\$170 billion in foreign trade, up 53 per cent from the same period last year. The total included US\$31 billion in export value, an increase of 18 per cent year-on-year, and US\$139 billion in import value, up 64



Museum of
Beijing City
Planning

Traditional arch bridge in front of Chang'an Road high-rises



per cent. As a result, hotels are enjoying a promising recovery despite concerns about the oversupply that resulted from the Games, and competition from the World Expo in Shanghai, which draws to a close at the end of this month.

Mabrouk says that while occupancy rates remain below 2007 levels, “it’s not because of the downturn but the rise in the number of new hotels”. He adds: “Luckily, the economy in China remained strong and GDP increased. Interest in the Chinese economy grew and the influential economic, financial and political players continued to come here”.

He says the number of visitors is increasing but that arrivals are “spread among too many hotels. The pie is getting bigger but the hotels are too numerous”. And there are more on the way – hotel industry analyst STR Global says 23 hotels are being developed in the capital, contributing 6,267 rooms.

Properties to open recently include Shangri-La’s luxury China World Summit Wing, which launched in Au-

gust, and the Hilton Beijing Capital Airport, which became the fourth Hilton-branded property in the city when it opened in July. Four Seasons, Intercontinental and Mandarin Oriental all also have projects under way. The Four Seasons property is set to open in 2012, while the Intercontinental Beijing City Centre, the third hotel for the brand in the city, is due to launch in 2014. Although the Mandarin was gutted by fire last year, construction began again in August.

Sources say the new supply will be soaked up by the growth in visitors. The Beijing Tourism Administration (visit-beijing.com.cn) says that from January to June this year, the number of tourists arriving in Beijing rose 8 per cent year-on-year, to a record 80 million. And according to the World Tourism Organisation, China will become the world’s hottest tourist destination over the next decade as it enjoys strong expansion.

International hotels are also looking to the domestic market to keep driving

Beijing airport became the world’s second busiest in the first four months of this year

business. At the moment – unlike many other global cities, where locals make up the bulk of guests – China’s big properties still rely on overseas visitors.

“The room for improvement will be in the domestic market”, Mabrouk says. “The top tier hotels are 30 per cent domestic and 70 per cent international, but in the long run the domestic sector will grow. With the increase in wealth and disposable income, the need to use international hotels will rise”.

According to Airports Council International, the sharp increase in visitors meant Beijing Capital International became the world’s second busiest airport in the first four months of this year, with 23 million passengers to Atlanta ►



China World Summit Wing

Ritz-Carlton
Financial Street

Park Hyatt



Grill w Park Hyatt

WHERE TO STAY

■ CHINA WORLD SUMMIT WING

This Shangri-La property is one of Beijing's newest international hotels, having opened in August. Located on the upper floors of the 330-metre China World Tower in the Central Business District, it is also the city's highest property. The rooms are situated on levels 64 to 77, and all 278 of them have floor-to-ceiling windows and stunning city views. Each averages 65 sqm, and has free wired and wireless internet access, 40-inch flatscreen TVs, DVD players, TVs in the bathroom, iPod docking

stations, and Nespresso machines. The hotel also offers an executive floor and conference facilities.

**1 Jianguomenwai Avenue;
tel +86 106 5052 299;
shangri-la.com**

■ PARK HYATT

One of the best hotels in the capital in terms of facilities and ambience, the Park Hyatt is situated opposite the China World Trade Centre in the heart of the Central Business District. The hotel opened in 2008 and has 237 bedrooms ranging from 45 sqm to 240 sqm, and are equipped with comprehensive work-

stations and free wifi. The on-site fitness centre has state-of-the-art equipment and an atrium swimming pool. Xiu, a rooftop bar housed in traditional-style architecture, is one of the city's most popular drinking places.

**2 Jianguomenwai Street;
tel +86 108 5671 234;
beijing.park.hyatt.com**

■ THE OPPOSITE HOUSE

Situated in the booming Sanlitun entertainment district, this two-year-old boutique hotel has loft-like studios and two-level penthouses with a private rooftop terrace.

The 99 rooms are designed to convey a sense of space and warmth by using natural wood, and the sunny atrium lobby is decorated with contemporary artwork. The Opposite House also has some of the best dining venues in the city. Wifi access is free throughout.

**The Village, Building 1,
11 Sanlitun Road;
tel +86 106 4176 688;
theoppositehouse.com**

■ THE YI HOUSE

Open since the spring and located on the grounds of the Dashanzi Art District, this is one of Beijing's more

Hartsfield-Jackson's 27.5 million, having moved up to third place from eighth last year. This boost in numbers has been helped by the opening of Beijing's sprawling Terminal 3 complex, which was built for the Olympic Games and is designed to accommodate the largest of passenger jets.

One of the best results of the Olympics is the high-speed light rail connection that whisks travellers along a 28km stretch between the airport and Dongzhimen station – located close to major embassies and hotels – in less than 20 minutes. Dongzhimen is linked with Beijing's subway system and passengers can check in for their flight and drop off their bags downtown before heading to the airport.

Further projects to improve the city's infrastructure are ongoing, creating "a lasting legacy of the Olympics that will improve movability", according to Helena Fu, sustainability director for China for technical and management support services firm AECOM. Her



Teatr Narodowy

company is working with city planning officials to learn how other world-class cities are dealing with transportation, municipal infrastructure, watershed development and energy.

A high-speed rail connection between Beijing and Shanghai is due to open next year, and the subway system, which has expanded dramatically in the past three years, will add several new lines. A 10km Maglev train line, known as Line S1 and designed for western Beijing's

Mentougou and Shijingshan districts, is awaiting the go-ahead. China will also begin to study the feasibility of a second airport for Beijing later this year. If it goes forward, it is likely to be located in the southern part of the city.

One of the biggest challenges will be finding a way to deal with increasing traffic problems – about 1,000 more cars take to the roads each month. Scott Kronic, president for North Asia at Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, says: "[The government] definitely wants to build up mass transportation – there's real concern about the congestion".

One high-tech proposal that could change the face of mass transportation and put an end to the tailbacks is the Super Bus project, which will be tested in Beijing within a year. It will employ a huge bus that runs on rails straddling the streets, with cars moving freely underneath. The Super Bus will be able to accommodate as many as 1,400 people and move at a speed of 40 kmph, partially using solar power.

Pekin to
niesamowita
mieszanka
starego
i nowego



The Opposite House



Fairmont



Fairmont

interesting concept hotels and is convenient for those doing business in the north-easterly part of the city. The red-brick Bauhaus-style structure, which was once a crystal factory, has a French colonial and deco character. Artwork – from nostalgic black and white photos to the works of avant-garde artist Chi Peng – is displayed around the property.

The 30 bedrooms offer high-quality linen, flatscreen televisions, Nespresso machines in the suites and free wifi internet access. Fennel restaurant features excellent Mediterranean cooking and there is also a gym on-site.

**Jiuxianqiao Lu, 2 Hao Yuan,
798 Yishu Qu;
tel +86 106 4361 818;
yi-house.com**

■ RITZ-CARLTON FINANCIAL STREET

As the name suggests, this Ritz-Carlton is located on the gleaming Financial Street, and since opening in 2006 it has been one of the city's smartest hotels. The 253 rooms are among the largest in Beijing and are brightly decorated with Tang-dynasty wood-block reproductions on the walls. You will find amenities such as LCD TVs and excellent

workstations. Internet is available for free in public areas or 120 yuan (£11.50) per 24 hours in the rooms. The hotel also has a great spa and restaurants.

**1 Jin Cheng Fang Street,
Financial Street;
tel +86 106 6016 666;
ritzcarlton.com**

■ FAIRMONT

The 222-room Fairmont is situated in the heart of the Central Business District. Currently in phased opening stage, most of the hotel is now up and running, although the spa and pool are not yet open

– they should be by the end of the year. The natural light-filled interiors, accented by contemporary Chinese artwork, create a nice “East meets West” feel. Rooms feature state-of-the-art technology, wifi and wired internet (120 yuan for 24 hours), 42-inch plasma TVs with a built-in computer and Bose Wave speakers with iPod docking stations. Conference facilities include a meeting concierge and themed dining rooms. Wood-roasted duck and Wagyu beef are available at the Cut restaurant.

**8 Yong An Dong Li; tel
+86 108 5117 777; fairmont.com**

Plans are also afoot to reorganise the city. The government is developing the Central Business District in the east part of Beijing, where sleek new buildings are providing state-of-the-art offices for multinationals and big-name local companies. Hotel and retail space is also being added – as well as China World Summit Wing, the Park Hyatt opened here two years ago (see panel above). Meanwhile, banking institutions are setting up shop on Financial Street in the west, and new municipal government centres are rising in Tongxian to the east and Fengtai to the south.

The city skyline continues to expand, with well-known international architects coming here to design some of the most daring buildings in the world – a point that has upset many Chinese architects, who feel their foreign counterparts are using the city as playground for experiments.

Structures built in the run-up to the games include the CCTV Tower, designed by Holland's Rem Kool-

haas. Housing China's behemoth state broadcaster and costing an estimated US\$750 million, it stands at 230 metres and is composed of a continuous angular loop of horizontal and vertical sections, leading residents to dub it the “Walking Pants Building”. The National Theatre, an egg-like structure made of titanium and glass that looks like it was set down on Chang'an Avenue from outer space, and is seemingly balanced on a man-made lake, was designed by France's Paul Andreu. Construction of the project was halted several times because of widespread opposition from local architects, who thought it too costly and out of place in a neighbourhood of Stalinist and Imperial architecture. Still, many agree that it's one of the world's most stunning buildings.

“All of the architecture coming up is part of the process of bringing China into the next century”, Kronick says. “The beautiful thing about Beijing is that you have a huge amount of tradition but you also have this ambition to be

seen as a modern world-class city, a juxtaposition of the old and new, all hodgepoded together. That's what I love so much about this city. You can have a guy riding a bike with a monkey in his basket next to a guy driving a BMW”.

Fu at AECOM says that even if the Chinese are bringing in overseas expertise, they will always seek their own path. “China will want its own type of solution, whether buildings or city plans”, she says. “Architectural and tech companies have to be aware of a common thought. It's a matter of referencing local standards and contexts”.

Fu adds that Beijing contrasts markedly with her home in Queens, New York, which she says has not changed much in 20 years. “[In Beijing] you come back and the shopping mall is done over and there's a new one right next to it – it does seem that the city is always shifting.

“I think Beijing is incredibly dynamic – although it's a very old world city, it is also very young. It feels like it's still in its adolescence”. ■

Small Is Beautiful

It's has excellent infrastructure and dynamic economy, so you can expect to be provided with all the facilities and truly high quality of service. Where is this place? It's Estonia – a country we know very little about, although it is not that far away. And it is a really great place for a corporate event.



Poland has a lot in common with Estonia, since our history is intertwined. We shared some tragic events – Estonia, just like Poland, fell victim to the infamous Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, as well as more cheerful ones, as we accessed the EU in the same year. The Estonians have just outrun us, as they have just entered the eurozone, but it only proves the fact, that the country is becoming more and more stable. Besides, it is a fascinating place with very good hotels and conference facilities.

THE LAND OF LAKES AND ISLANDS

Estonia is a multicultural country. Heavily influenced by Scandinavia – although Estonians are a Finno-Ugric nation, and a language so difficult, that even they themselves advise against learning it – but also German culture. There is a huge Russian minority (29%) dating back from the times where Estonia was a part of the Soviet Union. The country borders with Russia and Lithuania, and there is only an inlet of 80 kilometres separating it from Finland.

It is easy to get here by plane from the whole of Europe – in the capital of Tallinn there is the Lennart Meri international

airport. Local cuisine is typically Scandinavian, you can even try a pickled bear, although polar bears do not normally occur in the country. In summer, the temperature reaches 30 degrees and more, but winters are cold. During the time of the midnight sun, you can get even 19 hours of daylight a day. The coastline is almost 400 km long. There are 1,000 islands and 1,000 lakes.

The population of Tallinn is 400,000 people. A huge attraction is a mediaeval castle – it is often the main incentive that makes people want to visit Estonia. The most charming place, is St. Catherine's Passage, a narrow, mediaeval street. What is also worth visiting in Tallinn, is Kardiorig Palace from 18th century with a spectacular museum, the city's defensive walls, Toompea Castle, Old Town Square and fascinating sacred buildings, like St. Mary's Cathedral and St. Olav's Church from 13th century.

Half of the country's territory is occupied by forests, so it would be difficult not to take it into account when organizing a trip. Another huge attractions are ice roads, which are made in winter. When the Baltic Sea freezes, between the mainland part of the country and the islands real highways are made – and driving across the frozen sea is quite an experience.



Islands, lakes, interesting culture and language which is impossible to learn. Estonia offers a lot of good fun at incentive trips

Estonia is famous from its art, there are many galleries and cultural events, which can be incorporated in your itinerary. Taking part every five years since 1869, the Laulupidu choir festival is a rather spectacular event.

WITH HISTORY IN THE BACKGROUND

The incentive trip offers are heavily influenced by Estonia's history and culture. These, in turn were marked by numerous battles, as Estonians has to defend their country from invaders. The country abounds in mysterious places, which give you the opportunity to organise unforgettable trips. Take for instance the place called the Romantic Western Coast – the islands of Hiiumaa and Saaremaa are full of windmills, ruined churches, lighthouses and thatched houses. In the south of the country, in turn, you can find hills,



Baltic Sea. You can also take a snowmobile trip, and organize a racing competition. It can be also combined with having a bonfire in the forest, and then going to a sauna. In summer and autumn, it is a good idea to take a walking or horse-riding trip along the valley of the Ahja River, to see the spectacular caves of Suur and Väike Taevaskoda.

Estonia is a country known for its works of art and highly regarded artists – both painters and sculptors. Having one of them to work on a piece of art together with your group would surely be an unforgettable experience. The meeting with an artist takes place in a room, where there is a huge canvass – the participants has to paint their own impressions, connected with a stay in Estonia. After lunchtime, a short silk painting and candle making courses are scheduled.

The Estonian coastline is long, and there are numerous lakes, so you can suggest that your group should go on a yacht trip, to one of the very many islands. Another option is a kayaking trip down the waters of Võhandu, combined with other activities, like walking, swimming, or even crawling upon the swamps – espe-

A CONFERENCE IN ESTONIA

Radisson Blu, Tallinn

Nearly 300 bedrooms, 24 floors, two restaurants, two bars and a fitness centre. Fifteen conference rooms with the largest one able to accommodate up to 350 people.

Scandic Hotel Palace, Tallinn

Seven floors, a renovated building dating back to 1937. A restaurant, a lobby bar, 91 bedrooms, a sauna, a conference room able to accommodate 50 people.

Sokos Hotel Viru, Tallinn

Twenty two floors, 516 bedrooms, two restaurants, bars, a nightclub, a sauna. Eight conference rooms, the larger can accommodate up to 500 people.

Reval Hotel Olümpia, Tallinn

Almost 400 bedrooms across 26 floors. A restaurant, bars, a nightclub, a pub, a café, and a separate suite floor. Eleven conference rooms, for 35 to 390 people.

Meriton Grand Hotel, Tallinn

A six-floor building with 164 bedrooms. A restaurant, bars, a café, a casino, a spa fitness centre. Six rooms for 14-100 people.

Domina City Hotel, Tallinn

A stylish building from 1940. Five floors, 68 bedrooms. A restaurant, a lobby bar, a sauna. A conference room for 40 people.

Ammende Villa, Pärnu

A building from 1905. Three floors, 24 bedrooms. A restaurant, a bar, a sauna. Five conference rooms for 15-30 people.

Laulasmaa Spa & Conference, Keila

A modern hotel and a conference centre. Five floors, 150 bedrooms. A restaurant, a bar, a spa centre. Twelve conference rooms for 24-480 people.

Three Sisters Hotel, Tallinn

Located in three sister buildings from 14th century, combined together. Four floors, 23 bedrooms. A restaurant, a library, a garden, a wine cellar. Two conference rooms for 12-60 people.

Saku Arena, Tallinn

Conference centre. Seven conference rooms of various configuration possibilities, able to accommodate between 4 and 350 people.

which are perfect for playing in the snow in winter. In summer the region is a perfect spot for walking trips, kayaking, cycling or fishing. The North of the country is rather flat, and its main attraction is Lahemaa National Park.

If you are looking for group activities, you might be interested in the so called Military Day. The participants arrive at Paldiski, former Soviet military base, where they are separated into groups to take part in various activities, like paintball games. A bonus attraction is ride on board an amphibian.

Tallinn is famous for its sights, so no wonder the city is a perfect place for treasure hunting game. The participants can also take part in other activities, like selling flowers to the passers-by, when dressed in mediaeval costumes.

Winter is a perfect time for organizing driving lessons on the surface of the frozen

cially the latter is an experience impossible to forget.

Another good idea is to spend an evening in one of the atmospheric Estonian restaurants to have some wine tasting. One of the more original places of this sort is are Cigar Lounges – in the times when smoking is largely frowned upon, they provide an excellent place of enjoy the world's best cigars, naturally while having a fabulous dinner and a glass of wine. An additional bonus is a lecture on cigars and a dancing show. Another unforgettable attraction would be a baroque music concert in Kadriorg Palace – erected by the emperor Peter I the Great – combined with a follow-up dinner. What will also impress the participants is a visit to a Tallinnan mediaeval monastery of Dominican order, which was famous for liquor production – well known not only in Estonia. ■



A True Paradise

The mere name of the place speaks to your imagination. You can see beautiful beaches, desert islands, fabulous granite rock forms, the blue sky, the azure of the Indian Ocean, as well as silence and tranquillity – simply the lost paradise. **Przemysław Tarnacki** explores Seychelles.

Perhaps as a former inhabitant of the paradise, I find it hard objectively to say if the island lives up to other people's expectations. I have to admit, however, that all of my guests coming to Seychelles, open their eyes with amazement wishing they could come here again. Most of them do, as the local folk song goes "I'm going back to the Seychelles...".

Staying in Seychelles is a privilege. The number of people coming to the is-

lands is slightly less than 130 thousand a year, which makes about 350 people a day, i. e. one large aircraft. Not many, given the fact there are almost 20 inhabited islands. That's why even in peak season (December/January), groups larger than 10 people are hard to find.

The beaches, islands and bays where you can revel in the beauty of the nature by yourself. And there's a lot to revel in, because over 60% of the area of Seychelles is a natural reserve, where the nature is exceptionally friendly to man. ►

Seaside





You won't find here any snakes, crocodiles, pesky mosquitoes, or dangerous sharks, don't need any special vaccinations, and tap water is the world's purest. What makes life here even more harmonious is the constant temperature of 28-34 degrees (the humidity is about 80% on average) and a delicate ocean breeze (the islands are in the middle of the Indian Ocean, between India and Madagascar, 4 degrees beneath the Equator).

In Seychelles, the weather is influenced by monsoons. The south-eastern one – from May to October – brings rather dry climate. The north-western one – from November to April, provides more humidity, mild rainfalls and clouds to prevent the sun from beating down. The heaviest rainfall is in January, whereas the “sunniest” months are April and May. But those differences are not very important, and should not influence your decision on when to go, as the weather on the island changes rapidly – within a day you can experience a couple of tropical storms and scorching heat (taking a high-factor sun screen is an absolute must), after which... you miss the rain again. Then, the jungle literally bombards you with a wealth of fruit and flowery aromas, impossible to come across anywhere else.

There are a couple of flight connections with Mahe – the main island in the archipelago, where the capital, Victoria is situated, as well as the only international airport in Seychelles. You can get there with Air Seychelles via Paris, with Emirates via Dubai or with Qatar Airways via Doha. The prices of return tickets start at PLN 3,500 (about €876). There are virtually no regular charter flights.

THE WORLD'S SMALLEST CAPITAL

Seychelles are 117 islands which form a central archipelago – the main islands are Mahe, Praslin, La Digue, Silhouette, Curieuse, Fregate, Felicite, and Aride – and distant groups of islands stretching south towards Madagascar – Farquar, Desroches, Alphonse and Aldabra – the biggest atoll in the world. Most of the island in the central archipelago are granite, whereas the Southern groups of islands are mostly coral.

The Creole people of Seychelles are a unique mixture of African, European, Indian and Chinese descent. They are also good-looking, especially the women. The vivid history of Seychelles, which gained independence in 1977, was marked by colonial influences of Portugal, France and Great Britain, and the official languages are Creole, English and French. The Creole people are mostly Catholic.

When visiting the island of Mahe, you should visit Victoria, the smallest capital in the world, with a local market square and a miniature of Ben Ben, a remnant of the British rule. It's worth getting a 4x4 car and going to the mountains – the highest peak – Morne Seychellois – is 905 m above the sea level. Once on the top, you can admire the panorama of Victoria and other islands in the archipelago. The most beautiful beaches in Mahe, are Anse Intendance – well known from the Miss World contest from 1997 – Anse La Mouche and Police Bay. Sailing out of the marina, located on Eden Island, an exclusive artificial island – the only place which resembles European civilization – you will come across St. Anne and Cerf. If you sail further northwards, you will reach the high, granite and monumental island of Silhouette.

On Praslin you will find the Paradise Lost. The natural botanic garden of Valle de Mai, listed by UNESCO, is the only place in the world, where you can find the legendary Coco de Mer palm tree. The fruit is shaped like female bottom, while the male plant bears a striking resemblance to... the male phallus! The legend has it that it was here, where Eve tempted Adam, and the name “coco de mer” had been known long before Arabic ships discovered the islands. At that time, the fruit fell down from the trees in Praslin, and drifted across the ocean towards India. People used to believe they were fruits of some unknown coral, and

had oceanic provenience. In Valle de Mai you can also encounter the very rare Black Parrot.

The smallest of the three main islands, La Digue, has unique charm, as it has been pedestrianized, with the exception made only for bicycles and bullock carts. Its name comes from stories about mediaeval pirates, who especially used it to hide their treasures here – the French command “la digue!” supposedly meant “dig in here!”

When in La Digue, you can rent a bike, and then head southwards to L'Union Estate, which is a copra, vanilla and cinnamon plantation, as these products are – next to the tourism and tuna – the main export goods in Seychelles. Further southward stretches the legendary Anse Source d'Argent beach – a magnificent complex of tiny beaches, hid amidst fabulous granite forms. Surely it is very easy to forget about the outside world in places like that. You can reach the three wonderfully unique beaches at the other side of the island – Grand Anse, Petit Anse and Coco Anse – by bicycle.

The two coral islands: Bird Island – a bird reserve with hundreds of different species and Denis Island, are the outermost islands in the archipelago. Their highest peaks are merely about 1.5 metre above the sea level. The private Fregate island, is the easternmost island, where you can find a unique hotel composed of a couple of bungalow houses – anonymity guaranteed. North Island with its hotel and the Spa centre is also worth recommending.

The best hotels in Seychelles provide its guests with really quality of service. In the archipelago, you will find hotels

of Banyan Tree, Le Meridien, Lemuria Resorts and Hilton. Many smaller and beautifully located hotels belong to the chains of Small Luxury Hotels or Relais & Chateaux. You should notice, however, that prices in Seychelles are higher, than in hotels of similar quality in other destinations.

If you choose to come to Seychelles, make it a 10-day stay. I would recommend spending 5 days sailing a luxurious catamaran, and another 5 days exploring the islands. In this way, you will be able to feel the atmosphere of Seychelles, and not only explore the magnificent beaches, lagoons, rock forms and landscapes, but also learn something about the local inhabitants, their lifestyle and culture. Bear in mind, that the sailing option is also available for people who has never tried doing it before. Delicate breeze, beautiful catamarans with luxurious cabins for two people, and excellent staff make you feel like sailing is nothing more than taking a stroll along the coral reef. You can relish in it with the whole family swimming in the bays available only from the sea, diving, fishing or simply having a rest – knowing you are not going to see anyone today.

In Seychelles you won't find snakes, crocodiles, mosquitoes, or dangerous sharks. It's a remarkably friendly place.

The dusk begins to fall rather quickly in the tropics, around 7.00 p. m., and marvellous sun sets last disappointingly short. Seychelles is an unusually romantic place, ideal for a holiday for two. Nightlife enthusiasts may be slightly disappointed – in the whole of the Seychelles there are 4 discos and only one cinema, and in the evening, the last restaurant closes at 11.00 pm.

It is undoubtedly a luxurious place, but in a totally different way. You can't say a bad word about the quality of hotels or yachts, but the guests are often slightly annoyed with the lack of proper infrastructure. You can't expect the so called value for money – at least not in the European understanding of the phrase. However, after a while your perspective changes, and you begin to think, that what you are given here in exchange, is something unique and valuable, incomparable with anything else. Being close to nature – awe-inspiring but mostly harmless – and admiring its beauty and harmony, enjoying empty beaches in peak season and clear horizons – it is, after all, luxury. ■

Przemysław Tarnacki – a multiple sailing world and Polish champion, a long-standing inhabitant of Seychelles and an organizer of unique trips to the archipelago.



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Minty Clinch tries out courses in the southwestern region of Portugal, popular with tourists and golf enthusiasts.

GOLFING AROUND...

The Algarve

Monte Rei Golf and Country Club

WHERE IS IT? 21 miles east of Faro.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? The Eastern Algarve was relatively golf poor until Jack Nicklaus turned up with a brief to build two of his prized Signature courses. Signature means he shows up rather than delegating to his many minions. The extra money was well spent on the Norte, rated as one of Portugal's finest as soon as it opened in 2007. The terrain, part of a 1000 estate to the north of the Via Infante motorway, is hilly with outstanding views over the countryside and the sea. The course represents Nicklaus at the top of his game, its visible hazards a challenge rather than a trap. Think before you hit is the mantra here. Monte Rei is essentially a posh American real estate project, with villas to buy or rent. Expect excellent service, both in terms of meet and greet and outstanding course preparation. The South course is under construction, along with an 150 room hotel and an equestrian centre.

ADDRESS Sitio de Pocinho, Apartado 118, P-8901-907, Vila Nova de Cacela.

CONTACT DETAILS +351 (0) 281 950 950, monte-rei.com

CLUB HOURS 07.00-18.00

FACILITIES 18 holes, 7182yds, par 72. Covered and grass driving range, practice area, putting green.

PRICE € 180.

MINIMUM HANDICAP 54 (certificate not required).

CAN I HIRE SOME CLUBS? Callaway or Titleist € 45.

AFTER THE GOLF The appropriately grandiose clubhouse has three restaurants masterminded by Jaime Perez who trained at the Michelin-garlanded elBulli near Rosas in Catalunya. Vistas is Portuguese gourmet (dinner only) while the Grill does burgers and snack throughout the day. The Academy Cafe is a casual stop for cool drinks opposite the driving range.





Vale Do Lobo Golf Club

WHERE IS IT? 15 miles west of Faro.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? In its early days in the 1970s, the Royal Course was celebrated for a single hole, the signature 16th played over stunning red gold cliffs. The other 26 in three loops of nine were less impressive, a flaw that led to the construction of nine more holes. When they were completed, they were re-arranged in the existing form, the Royal complemented by the Ocean. For much of its length, the Royal weaves through pretty forests of umbrella pine, fig and orange trees, though the sound of ball striking timber is less attractive. The Ocean is more open, shorter and easier, a good place for high handicappers looking for a relaxing round.

ADDRESS P-8135-864 Vale do Lobo.

CONTACT DETAILS +351 (0) 289 353 535, valedolobo.com

CLUB HOURS 07.00-18.00 (19.00 in summer).

FACILITIES Royal 18 holes, 6610yds, par 72, Ocean 18 holes, 5764yds, par 70. Covered and grass driving range, practice area, putting greens.

PRICE € 130 (small discount off season).

MINIMUM HANDICAP 28 (men), 36 (women), certificate required

CAN I HIRE SOME CLUBS? Taylor Made € 32.

AFTER THE GOLF The Parque do Golfe complex in the heart of the massive Vale do Lobo estate has everything any golfer could need, including Nevada Bob's, a Fitness centre with a sports physiotherapist and an Academy. The club bar and restaurant are open throughout the day. The bar at the 9th on the Royal is a popular pit stop.



Penina Golf and Resort Hotel

WHERE IS IT? 35 miles east of Faro.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? When the grandfather of Algarve golf opened in 1966, no one had an inkling how big the game would become in these parts. Henry Cotton was appointed to turn former rice paddies into a hotel course, a task he completed with panache by planting 500,000 trees and shrubs. He also liked his bunkers, though they are numerous rather than threatening. Beautifully mature after 45 years, the trees provide welcome shade, especially beneficial as the terrain is so flat that walking is a pleasure. Plan intelligently to keep out of trouble, often in the form of lakes and streams. Penina has been outstripped by more ambitious rivals, but it is a great day out, especially with a pause at the Spikes Bar by the 9th green.

ADDRESS P-8501-952 Portimao

CONTACT DETAILS +351 (0) 282 420 200/223, lemeriden-penina.com

CLUB HOURS 07.00-20.00.

FACILITIES 18 holes, 7042yds, par 73. 2 9-hole courses. Covered and grass driving range, practice area, putting green.

PRICE € 85 (peak season – February-May, September-November), twilight € 35. Reductions during the summer.

MINIMUM HANDICAP Certificate not required.

CAN I HIRE SOME CLUBS? Taylor Made € 22.

AFTER THE GOLF 196 room on site hotel, with five restaurants including one by the huge central pool complex. Sir Henry Cotton's Club is a home from home for Brits abroad (10.00-20.00), while l'Arlecchino is intimately Italian (summer only). Make time for at least one fresh catch dinner in the small fishing town of Alvor 3 miles away.

San Lorezo

WHERE IS IT? 11 miles west of Faro.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Opened in 1988, San Lorenzo is a perennial favourite among Algarve regulars. The best of the courses on the Quinta do Lago estate, it is part forest, part seaside. The forest sector is undulating pine, the seaside the estuary of the Ria Formosa on the edge of the nature reserve. Bird watchers find it hard to concentrate on golf in the face of very varied plumage. Likewise foodies are drawn to the long wooden walkway that leads to Gigi's, a stand out fish and seafood restaurant that is only open at lunch time. Those who pass up these attractions to concentrate on their game will enjoy a lovely course in the form of a figure of eight, with the clubhouse at its heart. Expect to use every club in your bag and every shot in the book to keep your scorecard clean.

ADDRESS Le Meridien Dona Felipa, Valle do Lobo, P-8135-901 Almancil.

CONTACT DETAILS +351 (0) 289 396 522, lemeridein-donafelipa.com

CLUB HOURS 07.00-21.00 (summer).

FACILITIES 18 holes, 6822yds, par 72. Driving range, putting green.

PRICE € 120, including buggy and range balls. Reductions for hotel guests.

MINIMUM HANDICAP 28 (men), 36 (women). Certificate required.

CAN I HIRE SOME CLUBS? Callaway € 33.

AFTER THE GOLF The clubhouse bar and restaurant are open throughout the day. Or bask in luxury at the 154 room Dona Felipa, one of the best hotels in the area.



Electronic Novelties

The calendar of events in the electronics industry is very busy. In January Las Vegas hosts CES fair, while in February there's World Mobile Congress in Barcelona. March is a usual time for CeBIT in Hannover, while September is reserved for IFA electronics show. Finally, in October gadget lovers attend CEATEC – the largest Asian event of this type. Besides those huge events, electronics manufacturers organize individually premieres of their products, combined with workshops and conferences. In other words, the life of a journalist specializing in electronics is not that easy. Below, we present a few interesting devices, which attracted our attention at the latest events. Unfortunately, since they are real novelties, we haven't had any opportunity to test them yet, but still they truly impressed us.



CASIO

The Japanese electronics giant has decided that it's high time we started to monitor our mobile phones via our own clocks. For now, the device is just a prototype which was presented at CES, but knowing the determination of the Japanese, the gadget is likely to enter mass production. What does it do? This seemingly classic, sport watch displays text messages sent to our mobile phone, as well as full information on the caller. If we don't feel like talking to a person whose name is displayed on the screen, the Casio's device will turn off the ringtone and the problem is solved. If we have lost or just misplaced our phone, the watch can also send a special signal which will help us locate it. The communication between the devices is based on Bluetooth Low Energy technology, which is likely to be widely implemented in mobile phones this year. One advantage of this technology is its low energy consumption, so the watch's battery life is claimed to be impressive 2 years (assuming the communication function is used for 12 hours per day). Who knows – perhaps another step in the development of this technology will be... a remote control for a watch? The dimensions of the device are: 53.4 x 44.4 x 12.8 mm, weight: about 50 g.

APPLE iPad 2

In March, the "fruit farmers" from California introduced their second-generation iPad. Not surprisingly, as the market of tablets has changed a lot since the premiere of the first generation of the device which has sold so far in 15 million copies. The world has gone crazy about the multimedia pads, so most major players on the electronics market have also decided to introduce their own tablets to keep up with the trend and take a piece of the Apple pie (sic!). As we may expect from the second generation, iPod 2 is faster, lighter (by 15%), thinner (by impressive 33%), and even more elegant than its predecessor. Also the device has a brand-new engine purring beneath its aluminium and glass enclosure: its first dual-core chip, the A5. There are also two cameras – the front-fac-

ing VGA for video-calls, and the rear-facing one for recording video (720p). The screen hasn't changed – iPod 2 still features an excellent 9.7 inch LCD, LED backlit display. The operating system is iOS 4.3 and the device is available in two colours: black and white. iPod 2 has been available in Poland since 25th March.



SONY HDR-TD10E

The fascination with 3D is still at its highest. 3D lovers have now not only special TV sets, digital and video cameras, but also smartphones and portable gaming consoles. In other words, the whole industry has already gone 3D, while an average man is still a 2D creature. It's time to do some shopping! Sony has just introduced the world's first consumer 3D camcorder in "Double Full HD" configuration. The device features two lenses Sony G Lens, two CMOS "Exmor R" sensors, and two BIONZ picture processors. The user can watch the effects of his work on the 3.5 inch Xtra Fine 3D LCD touch panel or by means of special active glasses on TV sets which support displaying 3D images. Sony HDR-TD10E was presented in January at CES in Las Vegas and it will be available in Poland already in April.



NINTENDO 3DS

The newest console by Nintendo hit the Japanese market on 28th of February. The price is 25,000 yen – this may seem exorbitant, but when after converting the amount into the Polish currency – the result is slightly more acceptable – PLN 850. The success of the previous Dual Screen model, which sold in almost 150 million copies, bodes well for its successor. There is much to celebrate as Nintendo 3DS as the name suggests, enables us to watch 3D images, and most importantly, without wearing any special glasses. The third dimension is visible to the bare eye! As if it wasn't enough, the manufacturer equipped the device with so-called "3D Depth Slider" – which allows gamers to instantly change the level of 3D that they want to experience.

The console features two screens: the top one is 3.5 inch large with 800 x 240 resolution and it displays both 3D and 2D images. The bottom screen is a non-3D resistive touch panel with a resolution of 320 x 240 pixels. The console also features a gyroscope and an accelerometer, which add even more fun. Additionally, 3DS has two cameras on the outside of the device, capable of taking 3D photos, as well as a camera positioned above the top screen on the inside of the device which faces the player, stereo speakers with surround sound, and two slots (gaming data + SD card). Initially 15 games will be available when the console hits the stores. Among them such hits as Pro Evolution Soccer 2011 3D, Pilotwings Resort, Super Street Fighter IV (3D edition). The console's battery allows for 3.5 hours of gaming between charges.



SONY ERICSSON Xperia

At the World Mobile Congress which took place in Barcelona in February, the Japanese-Swedish phone maker introduced 3 new smartphones which will soon appear on the European market. The one which caused the biggest stir among the visitors to the show was Sony Ericsson Xperia PLAY – the world's first certified PlayStation smartphone. The device features Scorpion ARMv7 1GHz processor, Adreno 205 GPU, a 4 inch screen (480 x 854) and a gaming section – the digital "D pad", 2 analogue touch pads, 2 shoulder buttons, and 4 Playstation icons (circle, cross, square and triangle). The second phone presented by Sony Ericsson is remarkably pro-business. Sony Ericsson Xperia pro features a 3.7-inch touch screen (854 x 480), Qualcomm Snapdragon 1 GHz processor, Sony Mobile BRAVIA Engine technology, and a slider QWERTY keyboard. The last novelty presented by Sony Ericsson is Xperia neo – a classical smartphone with a 3.7 inch touch screen offering 854 x 480 resolution, Qualcomm Snapdragon 1 GHz processor, and a robust digital camera taking photos with 8.1 MP resolution thanks to the acclaimed Exmor R for mobile sensor by Sony. All the smartphones are powered by Google Android 2.3 (Gingerbread) operating system.



Red Hot Hungary

Cuisine

of Hungary

enjoys a well-deserved reputation for being abundant in fiery flavours, as there is probably no other ethnic gastronomy which would care as much about the intense seasoning of the already intense ingredients.

Being a symbol of authentic Hungarian cooking, it seems too obvious for words that without pepper the cuisine of this country virtually does not exist. While most of us labour under the misconception that there are only three varieties of this vegetable (red, green, yellow, and perhaps also the orange one), Hungarian chefs have a much wider selection to choose from. Moreover, having considered Hungarian cuisine as a whole, you will discover that it is the milder varieties that are most frequently used in the preparation of the traditional dishes. Let us take, for instance, *Különleges, edes csemege* or *rózsá* – the consumption of these peppers does not entail gulping gallons of yoghurt to extinguish the fire in your mouth.

Despite a range of vegetables (from lightly to heavily seasoned), Hungarian dishes are abundant in meat, especially pork and beef, although poultry also constitutes an important element of the traditional table. *Pörkölt*, which is Hungarian for Goulash, is a prime example of pure Hungarian cuisine (let us stick to the widely used name of the dish as its native equivalent is impossible to articulate). The origins of this local speciality are closely connected with *puszta* – the vast steppe of the Tisza River valley which has served as a cattle pasture from time immemorial. In this very place the stockmen used to cook over an open fire a simple dish from meat, onion and pepper. With time, goulash gained in popularity and has become a Hungarian speciality, with an infinite number of its versions.

We could say that goulash is a type of soup but, to be more precise, it is more of a stoup (a cross between a stew and soup). In order to prepare this traditional Hungarian dish you will need 300g of

beef, 500g of potatoes, 30g of lard, 1 large chopped onion, ½ tbsp of sweet paprika, ½ tbsp of caraway seeds, a few peppercorns, 1 chopped carrot, 1 chopped parsnip, 1 or 2 whole sweet peppers, 1 bay leaf and some crushed garlic. First, cut the meat and potatoes into 20 mm cubes. Heat the lard in a large pot and cook the onions in it until soft. Set the pot aside and add the pepper, meat, salt and about 1l of water. Add the peppercorns and cumin, preferably in a tea infuser (a ball-shaped metal container with a chain attached to the sphere) so that it's easier to remove the spices later on. After 30 mins. of simmering add the carrot, garlic, bay leaf, parsnip and paprika, then simmer everything for another 20mins., and add the potatoes. When all the ingredients become tender, your goulash is ready to serve.

Culinary delights of Hungary go beyond goulash — yet another worthy of recommendation dish is *Chicken Paprikash*. In order to prepare it you will need: 1 large onion, sliced into rings, 4tbsp of butter, 1½ tbsp of paprika, 1 large chicken breast fillet (cut into



We associate the Hungarians with goulash, although they have a different name for the dish

serving pieces and seasoned with salt), 1 chopped green pepper, 1 chopped tomato, 200g of fresh mushrooms and ½ cup of sour cream. Melt the butter in a pot and use it to fry the onion. Add the paprika, chicken, half the pepper, and half the tomato. Cover and cook everything over low heat for an hour, adding some water if needed. Place all the stewed ingredients into an ovenproof dish and, if there is any onion left in the pot, also scrap it off into the dish. Then add some water, the sour cream, and the remaining bits of pepper and tomato. Cover the dish with tinfoil, place it in the oven, and cook with low heat until ready to serve. ■

Artur Kolger





Pinot Noir

Almost everyone has heard that growing Pinot Noir, the most capricious and delicate of all the grape varieties, is the fondest ambition of every wine maker, giving him the prestige and glory. But collecting grapes and making the wine is not enough. You also have to make sure that the black Pinot has not got lost somewhere along the way, leaving us only the supposed information on the label.



Nowonder why Burgundy Pinot Noir was not quite successful in spreading all over the world, as opposed to Bordeaux varieties — Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot or Malbec. It is out-of-date and orthodox. It does not like changes, and has no trust for any new faces and places. What is more, it does not forgive mistakes.

A TOXIC GENIUS

As Pinot Noir enthusiasts, we are privileged when compared to those who engage in its production. It is like with art – Picasso and Pollock can impress with their talent in safe and quiet environment of a gallery or at homes of people who can afford to buy them. However, much as we love their art, nobody would be happy to live with the artists under the same roof. With the black Pinot – it is no different. Its cultivation is quite a nuisance and winemaking requires great skill and clever ideas. But if success is achieved, it compensates all the efforts. Unfortunately, very few people are this relentless, and others are never given a chance to try.

ZERO TOLERANCE

The most basic factor deciding if a wine is a success or not, is geography. Pinot Noir has the lowest climate tolerance, which barely ranges between 45 and 50 degrees of north latitude. What is more, it prefers cool climate, and does not like sudden changes in temperature. It can bear the coldest winter, but surrenders to the slightest spring frost. In such conditions vegetation does not last for too long, so you should hurry up – but the variety itself prefers to take its time. It matures rather slowly, just like the Piedmont Nebbiolo, from which the famous Barolo

and Barbaresco are produced. The method of green harvest, which further impoverishes the already low efficiency of the variety, was originally invented only to obtain black Pinot. It is also macerated together with stalks, to bring out the additional tannins, which are scarce in the Pinot Noir skin. Wouldn't it be better then to move to a place with a hotter climate, like California, New Zealand or South Africa, like many had done in the past, and forget about all the problems? Why should you keep tossing and turning at night, thinking about frosts, moulds, broken skin, wild fermentation and low level of sugar?

DELICATE AND SPLENDID CHARACTER

It is because the unique character of Pinot Noir comes from nostalgic melancholia lurking somewhere in the background of its production, which seems to be inexplicably intertwined with the aroma of wet, decayed wood, damp hay and old paper and paint peeling off the windows in an old house. In any other circumstances, such a description would be considered pretentious and worthless – but not with the old red Burgundy, which is the essence of Pinot Noir's character. The character dwindles slowly in the abundant aromas of raspberry jam and barrel vanilla – highlighted by the



The decision to grow Pinot Noir must be carefully thought out. It has an exceptionally "dark character"

warm climate and modern methods of production. It does not mean, however, that the black Pinot from the New World cannot be considered excellent wines. They most certainly can, but have little to do with the original Pinot.

For us, the poetry of Pinot Noir has nothing to do with the vitality of Mickiewicz, expression of Witkacy or monumentality of Sienkiewicz. It is more like cautious sensuality of Leśmian, benign wisdom of Norwid and warm whispers of Zagajewski. To fully appreciate Pinot Noir, you need to be patient – to spend half the night savouring the flavour, to discover new ephemeral aromas, and to get used to – and fall for its acidity and slightly depressing character. That's why, on the verge of spring, you should already be longing for Burgundy-scented and wonderfully gloomy autumn. ■

Michał Poddany & Robert Mielżyński

A Compact Hit

A synonym of the word “focus” is “to concentrate”, and it seems that there’s no better word to describe a car which really grasps our attention.

Ford, which has so far sold over 10 million of the popular Ford Focus, has recently unveiled the third generation of the model. The new Focus is more luxurious, safer and – although it’s hard to believe – it drives even better.

Many can doubt if it’s even possible. In case of Focus it’s even harder to believe, because with its drivability Focus set standards exceptionally high already several years ago, and the previous generations of this model were praised by drivers in this aspect. It was appreciated by both individual drivers and those who used the car at work – that is thousands of business users. The compact Ford has been remembered not only for its avant-garde looks, but also for its excellent handling in corners, superb brakes, and low fuel-consumption (especially the variants with diesel engines). The engineers who are in charge of the newest technologies at Ford claim that the newest model is even better.

Let’s start with a very important piece of info. Initially, the new Focus will be offered in 3 different body styles: hatchback, estate car, and saloon. The bodies of the new Focus will now be slightly stiffer than their predecessors. This is thanks to implementation of hardened steel and a thorough redesign of the body’s structure. Suffice to say that the stiff Focus body structure contains 55 percent high-strength steel to add rigidity. The tailor rolled B-pillar in the new

Focus has eight different gauge thicknesses to improve side-impact crash performance, while saving more than three pounds per vehicle.

Before the production started the new model had undergone 80 real crash tests and 2,500 simulated ones? What for? Obviously, because Ford wanted the new Focus to become an unrivalled vehicle in its class, safety-wise.

YOUR OWN ASSISTANT

There’s no doubt that a modern car must be armed with cutting edge technology. Of course, some will disagree with the above, but the truth is that these days we can’t live without all the aids which make driving easier and often force us to drive safer. Focus is no different in this aspect.

Apart from the new generation of airbags (which better protect the driver and passengers), and the TVC stability system (Torque Vectoring Control), also possesses a system which prevent collisions at lower speeds. The system uses infrared laser to detect objects around the vehicle.

The system continuously (100 times per second) monitors the distance to the vehicle in front and the closing speed, to determine the risk of a collision. If a car in front of you stops without you noticing and if you are travelling at 10mph or less it will bring the car to a complete stop without any impact.

There is also an active parking assistant, a system which informs the driver of

departing his lane, and the front camera which recognises road signs.

Additionally, the new Ford automatically switches on and of high beam lights, and checks if the driver is well concentrated. Over all, the amount of technology, and the way it works in the new Ford Focus is seriously impressive and really helpful for drivers.

WHAT IS NEXT?

What about the engines in the new Fords? According to press releases those will be “modern and economical power units with low CO₂, emission levels, including a brand new 1.6 litre Ecoboost petrol engine, and thoroughly redesigned Diesel Duratorq TDCi 1.6 and 2.0 engines”. It’s worth mentioning that the new Focus 1.6 will receive the Auto-Start-Stop system which shuts down the engine when the car is not moving, contributing in this way to even lower fuel consumption. For those who prefer driving something more powerful, there’s good news. Ford has already announced it will release the new ST. Leaving aside all those obvious modifications like sports suspension, unique front- and rear-end designs, huge alloy wheels, an equally monstrous Aston Martin-style front grille, or other details which show the sporty ambitions of the car (bucket seats, metal racing pedals), the new ST will offer impressive 250 BHP. Ideal to drive it to work, weekend getaway, anywhere... Try to convince your boss to buy it. You have still a lot of time, as the new ST will debut next year. ■

Rafał Jemielita

is a journalist for Playboy and a co-presenter of TVN Turbo’s “Automaniak”

– a motor magazine programme.





Doha



Dovecots
in Cultural
Village



Spice Market



Jenny Southan spies long-lashed camels, ancient art and spectacular structures in Qatar's fast-changing capital

CAMEL FARM

In Doha, sights tend to be spread out and can really only be accessed by car – avoid rush-hour if you can and get a driver, as taxis are scarce.

Forget the glitzy shopping malls the city is known for and begin your tour somewhere a bit more authentic – the local camel market. There are two species of camel – the one-hump Arabian and the two-hump Bactrian – and in Qatar, there are two main uses for them, racing and eating. The race season is from October to May, an exciting time for locals, who go to cheer on their favourite beasts. In the past the jockeys were young children but thankfully this has been outlawed and they have been replaced with robots controlled remotely by their owners (although there have been reports of

cheats who fire electricity into their camels to make them run faster).

To get up close and personal with the creatures, head to the market at Ain Khaled on Salwa Road (10km southwest of the centre), where you can observe them as they paw the hot sand in their enclosures and blink their long eyelashes. Be warned that they do smell a bit, and it can be a tad upsetting to see them getting winched into the back of a truck by a small crane before they are led off to slaughter. Open daily except Friday from 8am-2pm.

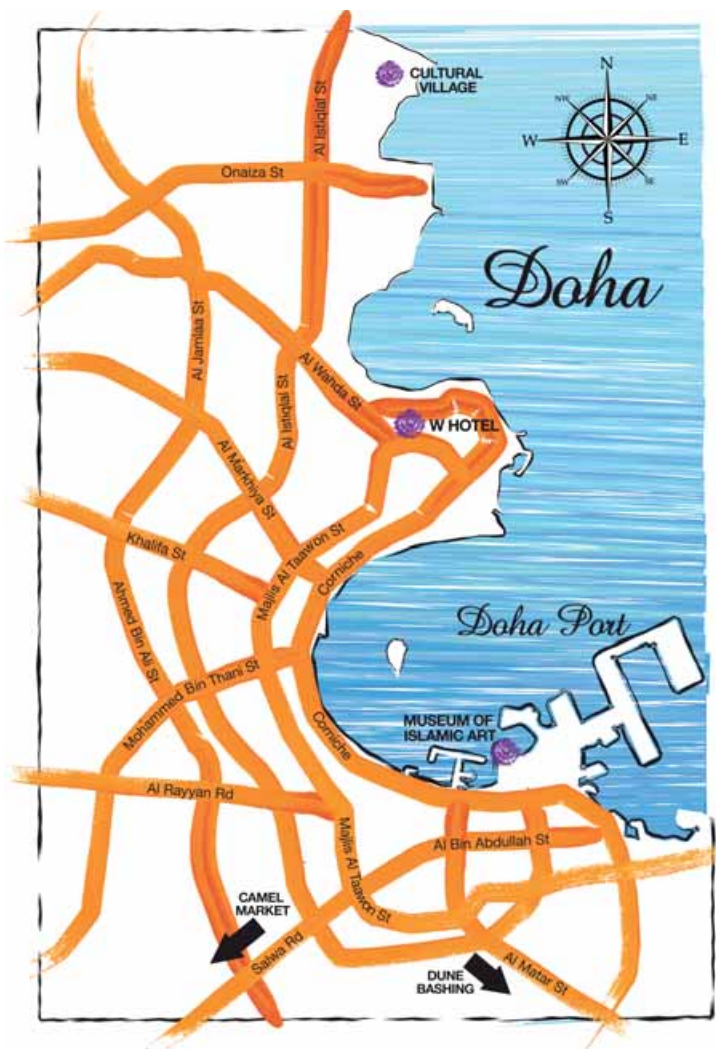
DUNE BASHING

If you have a flexible itinerary, it's worth getting out of the city and into the desert, which is closer than you might think – within half an hour of downtown, the tar-

mac road gives way to sand. Destination management companies such as Gulf Adventures offer a selection of desert safaris, some including swimming in the Inland Sea (Khor Al Udaid) and a barbecue dinner in a traditional Bedouin camp. But if you simply want the thrill of careering up and down the 40-metre-high dunes, with slipfaces of up to 55 degrees, this can also be arranged. It's an adrenalin-fuelled experience, and you will need to strap yourself in and hold on tight as your 4x4 takes on gravity-defying angles in the baking sun. Gulf Adventures; tel +974 4422 1888; gulf-adventures.com

MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC ART

If you don't have time for the dune bashing, head into the city centre. Located on the glittering aquamarine crescent of Doha Port, by the Dhow Harbour and up a palm-lined walkway, is the I M Pei-designed Museum of Islamic Art, which opened in 2008. If you are a fan of



architecture, the building alone will satisfy – its Escher-esque exterior features smooth angled planes, each reflecting the light in a different way. Inside, the airy entrance hall sits beneath a majestic atrium.

The 3,800 sqm of gallery space houses a beautifully presented collection of hand-painted ceramics, textiles, manuscripts, jewelled artefacts and scientific instruments from countries such as Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Iran and India. Open daily except Tuesday 10.30am-5.30pm (Fri 2pm-8pm); entry is free, as are the audio guides. Visit mia.org.qa. For more on the museum, see “Ultimate collection”, business traveller.com/archive/2009/may-2009

SPICE MARKET RESTAURANT

About 3.5km from here is the five-star W hotel, in the West Bay area. It opened in March last year and offers a good selection of bars and restaurants dishing

NIEMAL TAK JAK MIEJSCOWI

■ Spróbuj bliżskowschodniej lemoniady, określanej tutaj jako „lemon mint” – robi się ją ze świeżego soku z cytryny, cukru, wody z kwiatu pomarańczy, kruszonego lodu i świeżej mięty.

■ Ciekawym doświadczeniem jest też palenie sziszy – tytoń miesza się z melasą. Dostępne są smaki: jabłkowy, winogronowy, wiśniowy i brzoskwiński.

up high-quality international, Arabic, French and Asian cuisine. The 270-seat Spice Market specialises in Vietnamese and Thai food, and you can order a 20-minute express bento box lunch for QR80 (£14) if you are pushed for time. Options might include Mongolian lamb satay, chicken in coconut soup, crunchy mango salad, and local hamour fish served with Malaysian chilli sauce. Otherwise, the à la carte menu offers up dishes such as chilled watermelon soup with tomato, cucumber, red pepper and basil (QR35/£6), black pepper lobster dumplings (QR70/£12) and spiced chicken samosas with cilantro yoghurt (QR50/£8.50).

The décor in Spice Market is flash, with cream and orange lighting and red and black furniture and crockery. Japanese-style screens add an exotic feel, and there are private dining areas for groups. Open 12pm-4pm and 6pm until late; tel +974 4453 5000; whoteldoha.com

CULTURAL VILLAGE

Doha is constantly evolving so if you haven't been for a while you will notice some changes to the cityscape, as well as encounter a number of new cultural attractions. One of the newest projects is the US\$82 million Cultural Village, also in West Bay. It occupies a 99-hectare waterside site opposite the Doha Exhibition Centre.

When it opens (officially expected by the end of the year), it will sport a 5,000-seat outdoor amphitheatre overlooking the Gulf, plus shops, restaurants and an opera house. The QMA Gallery (qma.com.qa) was unveiled in September and hosts regular exhibitions of international photography. Open Sat-Thurs 11am-9pm, Fri 2pm-9pm. If you don't have time to take in everything here, it's a pleasure simply to wander around the village and admire the dazzling Arabic architecture. ■ Visit qatartourism.gov.qa

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



COSMETICS ON BOARD

My company sends me to a training to Paris. I'm going to fly a plane for the first time in my life. My friend told me, that you are not allowed to take any cosmetics on board. I cannot fly without my own cosmetics.

Kasia

Dear Kasia,

There is no need to worry – you will be allowed to take your cosmetics, however, not without any limitations. On 6 November 2006, a new law was introduced in the European Union, intending to increase security of flights. The law applies to carrying liquid substances in the hand luggage. The ban is in operation in all EU airports, as well as Iceland, Sweden and Norway. Similar limitations are applied in Great Britain, the USA and Canada.

The ban covers such products as: water and drinks, shaving foam and gel, perfumes, deodorants, shampoo, shower gel, hair gel, toothpaste, mouthwash, mascara and cream. An exception is made to medicines and children's food.

The amount of liquid you are allowed to take on board in your hand luggage is 100 ml in a single container. The containers ought to be put into a transparent carrier bag. The total volume of the carried liquid cannot exceed 1 litre per person. You are obliged to take the bag out of your hand luggage during the security control. Most airports can provide the passengers with the cosmetic bags. Airport shops also sell special sets of cosmetics intended for a flight, which meet the above-mentioned criteria.

If you have a bigger amount of cosmetics, you can put them to your checked luggage. Remember to protect the containers, as during the flight the bottles might pop open because of the changes in the air pressure.

AROUND THE WORLD

I have a question concerning so-called "round the world tickets". Last month I went to Asia, where I met 2 people, who had been travelling for a couple of months, and they had these "round the world tickets". Are such tickets available in Poland? I'm afraid the costs are astronomical. I got inspired by this idea, and would like to take an opportunity.

Artur

Dear Artur,

I'm glad you're asking this question, because only highly experienced travellers usually take advantage of such offers. During one of my journeys I met a married couple from Australia, who had been on a year-long tour. I was also impressed by the idea, and I felt like going together with them. "Round the world tickets" are available in Poland, and are not as expensive as you might think. There are a couple of possibilities, depending on the number of continents visited. I've checked a few "round the world" tariffs, which are available on the Polish market. There is a rule, which says that flights has to be managed by airlines belonging to the same alliance.

I looked closer at the Star Alliance's offer. One of the cheapest "round the world" tariffs costs slightly less than PLN 9500, without the airport tax – which is dependable on a particular route. You can fly from and return to any city in Poland. The maximum number of flights is 16 (surface sectors are also allowed, and they are treated as regular flights). The total distance cannot be longer than 26,000 miles. This should be enough to visit three continents.

The ticket is valid a whole year long – you should get back to Poland within 12 months from your departure. The luggage limit is two items, 23 kilograms each. Remember that all the time you have to fly eastwards, or westwards, and you are allowed to have only one flight over the Atlantic, and one over the Pacific Ocean. Some flights from North America to Asia are run above the North Pole. What is interesting, a flight from Singapore with Singapore Airlines to Newark airport, New York is treated as a transpacific journey, whereas the flight to the JFK airport – as a transatlantic one.

The lowest tariff requires minimum 3 stopovers for at least 24 hours, but the maximum number of stopovers is 5. It is enough to give an exact departure date in the first stage of the tour, the other parts remaining open (no need to specify any reservation dates).

An example of a flight tour you can make with this tariff: Warsaw – Chicago – Los Angeles – Tokyo – Bangkok – Hanoi – Warsaw. The total distance is less than 21 thousand miles. If you want to stop in one of the cities for longer, you can always buy another ticket for a local route.

If you want a longer tour, including more than 3 continents, you can use a higher "round the world tariff". It is relatively more expensive, but the distance may exceed 26,000 miles. More demanding passengers are always welcome to pay extra and can be upgraded to Premium Economy class. There are also "round the world" tariffs in the business class. Congratulations on your idea, and I'm looking forward to your account of the tour.

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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.

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