

Business Traveller Poland

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THE FUTURE OF LUXURY NEW TRAVEL TRENDS

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LUXURY ON THE GO

What are the trends in luxury travel? The economic crisis has changed somewhat, our approach to this subject. Some turn to it in a bid to escape, while others have had to curb their excesses or found their desires are no longer satisfied by conspicuous consumption. But whatever the perception, luxury – in all its evolving forms – is here to stay. In addition to holiday in the most fashionable resorts in the world, the ability to travel on board a private jet or business dinner at a fancy restaurant, luxury is more and more often understood as something immeasurable in terms of money or contacts. We appreciate the highest quality of service, exceeding our expectations, knowledge of our preferences, as well as the ability to calm down and chill out in a secluded, beautiful spot. Do you know what "wabi sabi" is? This Japanese philosophy of aesthetics taps into people's desire for things that have authenticity and provenance, that are vintage, organic, artisan, handcrafted or natural. The sentiment has been dubbed "luxury shame", as people react against ostentatious displays of wealth. Health has been a concern of the luxury travel sphere for some time, but Swedish massages, swimming pools and low-calorie minibar snacks just do not cut it anymore. Good physical well-being is now a serious matter - more and more people opt for special treatment abroad, and there is a growing number of enthusiasts of extreme sports as well as those who take parts in marathons or triathlons. Enjoy your reading and have a fantastic holiday!

Marzena Mróz

Marzena Mróz
Editor-in-Chief



SINGAPORE AIRLINES BUSINESS CLASS

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JUNE 2013

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Hotel

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group

CARBON NEUTRAL MEETINGS AT CLUB CARLSON

Club CarlsonSM, the global loyalty programme for Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, announced today, Earth Day, that Club Carlson has become the first loyalty programme in the hospitality industry to be carbon neutral. Carlson Rezidor launched carbon neutral meetings for all Club Carlson For Planners meetings and events across the group's six global hotel brands totalling 1,077 hotels in operation worldwide. The carbon offsetting – a free service for the meeting planners – will be managed through Carlson Rezidor's new partner, Carbon Footprint Ltd. Each contribution will be used to invest in renewable energy in India; and will be combined with the planting of one tree for every ton of carbon offset through Club Carlson For Planners events in the Great Rift Valley in Kenya. As a result, any Club Carlson For Planners event held at a Carlson Rezidor hotel globally has no net impact on the global environment. "Carlson Rezidor takes sustainability seriously. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization-United National Environment Program (UNWTO-UNEP), hotels generate about 20 percent of tourism's total carbon footprint. This innovative offsetting solution is a unique service of Club Carlson, and will help to reduce our hotels' and our customers' carbon footprint", said Suzanne Riesterer, Chief Commercial Officer. "In addition to Club Carlson For Planners members, individual Club Carlson members will have the opportunity to redeem their Gold Points to offset the carbon of their personal travel and to support the wind farms in India and the tree planting in Kenya." The Carbon Neutral meetings programme launched at the end of 2012 at Radisson Blu hotels in Europe, the Middle East and Africa led to 433 tons being offset and 433 trees planted in Kenya. For more info contact: Christiane Reiter, Senior Director Corporate Communication, EMEA, Christiane.Reiter@carlsonrezidor.com; Renu Snehi, Senior Director Corporate Communication, EMEA: Renu.Snehi@carlsonrezidor.com; www.carlsonrezidor.com; www.rezidor.com

Beauty

Dr Brandt

RADIANCE AND YOUTH

Over time, skin loses its lustre and freshness. Environmental pollution, stress, poor diet ... – our skin struggles on daily basis with the negative effects of environmental stress and the aging process. To help us cope with this problem, the world-renowned dermatologist, Dr. Frederic Brandt, developed Glow by dr.brandt™ cosmetics (with retinol), which counteract these processes. The Overnight Re-surfacing Serum (for the night) stimulates cell renewal, while Ruby Crystal Retinol Hydrac-rème (for the day), offsets discoloration and wrinkles, restoring the skin to its natural glow. Price: PLN 299/ 60 ml.



Airline

SAS

20 YEARS OF SAS IN POLAND

On 28 March 1993, the first aircraft of SAS Scandinavian Airlines took off into the sky, initiating a direct connection from Copenhagen to Gdańsk. Currently, passengers travelling with SAS from Gdańsk can choose among 25 weekly direct flights to Copenhagen. "We are grateful for the trust that our passengers have placed in us for so many years. We are also pleased that they appreciate the quality of our service and transfer options we provide. We are planning several changes to make our customers even more satisfied with our offer," says Wanda Brociek, General Manager Poland at SAS airline.



Airline

British Airways

FIRST CLASS

British Airways' 90-year heritage in bringing glamour to the skies has reached a new milestone with its new First class cabin launched in February 2010. The new cabin, with a £100 million price tag, is the ultimate in luxury. The cabin brings together luxury, privacy, comfort, space and design. It draws on the airline's heritage, focusing on quality and attention to detail. The largest of these is the lie flat seat which turns into a flat-bed at the touch of a button. First Class passengers also receive stylish traveller's kits with luxurious beauty products and sleeping accessories. The luxury First Class product also means excellent onboard gourmet menu, while on the ground at the airports, First customers can enjoy a dedicated check-in area, Fast Track security, and are allowed three items of luggage, weighing up to 32 kgs each. Flyers can relax before their flight in one of over 60 dedicated British Airways lounges and 90 partner lounges worldwide. More details at ba.com



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Tourism

Germany

TOP 10

15,000 international visitors pick the top 100 places of interest in Germany. The most popular among them is Neuschwanstein Castle (Schwangau/Füssen, Bavaria). Number two on the list is Europa-Park, followed at number three by Cologne Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The other top 10 attractions are: Brandenburg Gate and the Berlin Wall (Berlin); Loreley Rock (Upper Middle Rhine Valley, Rhineland-Palatinate); Nature Reserves in the Black Forest (Baden-Württemberg); Heidelberg Castle and Lake Constance (Baden-Württemberg), and the Museum Island in Berlin. More details at: www.germany.travel/top100

Airline

Finnair

MARIMEKKO FABRICS AND TABLEWARE ON BOARD FINNAIR PLANES

The design collaboration between Marimekko and Finnair enters a new phase as Marimekko textiles and tableware are brought to the Finnish airline's aircraft starting May 15. As an emblem of the cooperation, a Finnair Airbus 330 was unveiled today with a blue-forest livery based on the Marimekko print Metsänväki ("forest dwellers"). The plane will fly from Finnair's Helsinki hub to the airline's 13 Asian destinations plus New York, joining a sister aircraft painted in Marimekko's Unikko ("poppy") print last October.

"With our Marimekko cooperation, we want to bring timeless yet modern Finnish design to the travel experience of Finnair customers," says Anssi Komulainen, Senior Vice President, Customer Service.

As part of the collaboration, a selection of Marimekko for Finnair items is also available for purchase, both through in-flight sales and the Finnair PlusShop.




Airline

Lufthansa

CULINARY INNOVATION AND A NEW QUALITY OF SERVICE

Lufthansa has upgraded in-flight service on long and short-haul flights. Since 1 May, cabin staff have been indulging First and Business-Class passengers with new service ideas, creative menus served on quality tableware and further sophisticated details. Only a few months ago, the exclusive Lufthansa First Class rated top marks in the Skytrax Star Ranking. Guests in First Class can now enjoy new culinary highlights. On flights from Germany, Lufthansa is offering "Culinary Delights" in a new programme, a step on from the popular Star Chefs concept. The gastronomic concept in Lufthansa Business Class has also been upgraded with more freshness and variety in the dishes served in the cabin, pastries and beverages. The offerings cater for every taste: New varieties of tea, fresh milk for tea and coffee, plus a wider choice of juices as well as 'Weißbier' (wheat beer) and 'Altbier' (dark beer).



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Hotel

Pieniny

MODRZEWIE PARK HOTEL*****

Modrzewie Park Hotel is a five star hotel located in Pieniny Mountains, which combines home atmosphere with contemporary comfort and European standards. It is located in a stylish building, which was erected in 1938 by Adam Stadnicki. Its name comes from the surrounding majestic, old larch trees, which surround the building, and whose soothing rustling sound has been an ever-present element of the hotel's environment. The building, which was renovated in 2005 by the Mańkowski family, was beautifully integrated into the surrounding greenery. Regardless of the season, it impresses with its style and elegance. The air, filled with the scent of larch woods, lets guests unwind from the hustle and hassles of everyday life. The hotel offers 17 exclusive Superior rooms and Suites, a restaurant, a bar, a business centre, and Spa Suite. For corporate guests there is a fully equipped conference room which can accommodate up to 16 people. All rooms of the hotel are arranged in harmony with the surrounding countryside, so the views from the balconies and the loggia allow you for a close contact with the beauty of the nature. It is an ideal place for guests who appreciate comfort, luxury and look for a peaceful and friendly atmosphere.

Travel Holiday

LOT Polish Airlines and the tour operator Rainbow Tours have signed a contract for charter flights from Warsaw to the most popular tourist destinations in the world, among others, to the capital of Thailand, Bangkok. The agreement will ensure the fastest and the most comfortable flights to tourists traveling from Warsaw to such remote parts of the world.



Airlines

EuroLOT

ŚWINOUJŚCIE IN JUST ONE DAY

Throughout the whole summer, every Saturday at 7.30 am, EuroLOT passengers can fly from Warsaw to Heringsdorf, Germany. The return flight also departs on Saturday, at 8.00 pm. The connection seems especially attractive since in this way you can spend a whole Saturday on the beach in Świnoujście, and return to Warsaw on the same day. Passengers arriving at Heringsdorf, can get to Świnoujście by a paid shuttle bus.



Airlines

Air France/KLM

LONG-HAUL FLIGHTS IN COMFORT

Both Air France and KLM are well-known European long-haul carriers. Long-hour flights tend to be tiring, but both airlines provide a high level of comfort and a range of amenities that meet the expectations of even the most demanding Business Class passengers. The Business Class products offered by Air France and KLM have a lot in common. For example, both airlines provide their premium passengers with exclusive access to business lounges worldwide. Some of them offer additional services, such as complimentary spa treatments. Business Class travellers are also guaranteed the so-called "Sky Priority", which in practice means separate check-in counters, priority fast lane at security control, as well as priority at boarding and at luggage drop-off points. Business Class fare includes two pieces of luggage up to 32 kilograms and a carry-on baggage up to 18 kg. A Business Class ticket entitles passengers to join the Klub VIP and to receive a Gold Card in Flying Blue loyalty programme. Klub VIP is a Polish initiative, not available anywhere else in this unique formula. Its members, in addition to a limousine transfer or accommodation at a Warsaw hotel prior or after their intercontinental journey, may also use a dedicated phone hotline to deal with all matters related to their journey.



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Dz. 133



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Przeznaczenie: usługowo - handlowe,
rekreacyjno - wypoczynkowe, mieszkaniowe
Cena wywoławcza: 3 100 000 PLN
Przetarg: lipiec 2013 r.

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WHAT'S ON

The Most Anticipated Events

MARK ROTHKO. NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART PAINTINGS

National Museum in Warsaw has prepared a major attraction - an exhibition documenting the entire lifetime of work of one of the most prominent painters of the 20th century, Mark Rothko (1903–1970). It shows the artist as a painter looking for his own style - from the late 1920's, when he decided to become a painter, until the end of his artistic career. It includes all the periods of work - from early realist paintings to surreal biomorphic ones from the late 1930's and early 1940's as well as abstract multi-forms and large-format works from his prime time in 1950's and 1960's described as colour field painting. A close look at carefully-selected paintings will give you an idea of how the unique artistic career looked like.



EXTRAORDINARY MUSIC FROM EXTRAORDINARY CITIES

The latest album by the famous Polish violin player Patrycja Piekutowska entitled "My Journey" is a reflection of her artistic and sentimental journeys, which became a permanent element of her life. It's a story about the cities which have a special place in the artist's memory and heart. Scattered across four continents constantly appear in her thoughts and memories. Marcin Nierubiec, the author of the music (written specially for the artist), has created an unique illustration of 12 cities with a pop, and sometimes rock beat. The album is a ticket for a flight to many countries taken with "Imagination" airlines. It will take you on a magnificent journey.



GANYMED GOES EUROPE

Rehearsals to the "Ganymed goes Europe" performance has started in National Museum in Wrocław. It's a project combining art, literature and theatre. The script, inspired by paintings from National Museum in Wrocław, has been written by famous Polish and Austrian writers, such as Marek Bieńczyk, Agnieszka Drotkiewicz, Małgorzata Sikorska-Miszczuk as well as Nobel prize winner Elfriede Jelinek. The performances will take place every Friday (until 5th July). Tickets are available from the front desk in the National Museum in Wrocław



THE EUROPE OF RUBENS

From 22nd May, the newly-opened Louvre-Lens museum will host a temporary exhibition devoted to the works of one of the most prominent Baroque painters - Peter Rubens. You will be able to see 170 works by the artist, his mentors (e.g. Titian) as well as a few works by other contemporary painters (e.g. Van Dyke). You will find here paintings from the most famous European and American museums. The whole exhibition is divided into themes to convey a clear message. The first section shows a fine gallery of portraits of the most prominent personas in the Baroque era. The second is entitled "Religious emotions and Baroque faith", while the third one is devoted to celebrations, feasts and ceremonies. You will also see Ruben's works depicting human anatomy. Louvre-Lens Museum is open every day except Tuesday from 10am to 6pm, the tickets cost €9.



UŁATWIAMY PODRÓŻOWANIE.

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THE FUTURE OF LUXURY

For the average person, travel in itself is a luxury, but for the frequent flyer who traverses the globe on a regular basis – often staying in the best hotels and sitting at the front of the plane – it takes more to be impressed. **Jenny Southan** and **Marzena Mróz** reveal the trends that are shaping your travel experience.

But as the economy continues to struggle, people’s relationship to luxury is shifting – some turn to it in a bid to escape, while others have had to curb their excesses or found their desires are no longer satisfied by conspicuous consumption. Of course, there are those who are so wealthy that spending money is as easy as breathing, but whatever the perception, luxury – in all its evolving forms – is here to stay.

So what does luxury mean to you? For Arrigo Cipriani, owner of the eponymous chain of high-end restaurants, bars and hotels across the world, it is many things. “It is a jewel, a car, a watch – any object that is made into a beautiful shape by love and intelligence. But often one can discover luxury in small things – it is to be 80 and still realise you can run up the steps of a bridge in Venice. Luxury is to dance in the bedroom and have a naked lady in the bathtub. It is to believe in what you want. It is freedom when you did not have it for a long time. It is an old bottle of red wine that has been waiting for you for ten years.”

As one top-level executive I spoke to points out: “One person’s luxury will be another person’s ordinary.” But for him, when it comes to travel, it’s all about the location, the accommodation, the level of service and the attention to detail. “I have a ‘highest cabin only policy’ whenever I fly and, if I could afford it, I would love to take private jet holidays. I try to choose properties where there is a smaller number of guests and a higher emphasis placed on personal service and experiences. I also want everything to be as easy and stress-free as possible, from the airport to the destination, so that can include little things like having private car transfers, rather than having to queue for a taxi.”

David Johnstone, founder of Key-2 Luxury – an elite lifestyle accessory that gives beneficiaries access to VIP privileges with brands such as Shangri-La and Krug – feels people’s aspirations are higher today. “There is a big difference between ‘premium’ and ‘luxury’,” he says. “Luxury gives an element of exclusivity and uniqueness and, in today’s mass market, that is something people want and are willing to pay for. It is the effect of having a service or access to something that money cannot buy.”

To Jason Philips, manager of two of London’s top restaurants, Franco’s and Wilton’s, luxury is about “exceeding expectations”. “This could come in a variety of forms, from the tangible elements – quality of the food,

airline seat and toiletries – to the intangible, such as the welcome, and how well your request is received and ultimately managed and delivered,” he says.

But Philips notes that each aspect of the experience needs to be interlinked. “No matter how much has been spent on a hotel’s reception, lobby and fixtures in the rooms, if there is nobody to greet the guest on arrival, the check-in is slow and room service is delivered with mistakes, the experience will no longer be a luxurious one,” he says. Whatever your stance, Business Traveller has identified five luxury trends that are shaping your travel experience.

1. DATA-BASED SERVICE

Impeccable service has always been a luxury, but now it’s getting personal. For years, hotels and airlines have been able to build a profile of guests based on the information they provide when signing up to loyalty schemes, and sometimes they put it to good use – making sure your room preferences or dietary requests are taken into account, for instance, or welcoming you on board by name. However, at the top end of the market, as more and more data is collected, travellers can expect this to be taken further (though the cost may be to their privacy). Following the roll-out of iPads to senior cabin crew, British Airways unveiled its “Know Me” initiative last July, allowing staff to access important passengers’ Executive Club status, onward journey, meal preferences and previous travel experiences. It also enables them to find out what passengers look like on Google Images so they can recognise



them. Chennai’s ITC Grand Chola hotel, meanwhile, has installed RFID scanners in the corridors that read your room key as you walk by, simultaneously sending an alert to the mobile phones of nearby staff with your name, photo and other “useful” personal details.

Greater choice and bespoke experiences are also being enabled by information the customer provides in advance. Premium passengers can often eat when they want, and some carriers give them the option of ordering online from an extended menu up to 24 hours before departure. Top five-star hotels are asking guests to complete detailed questionnaires in advance that highlight their interests, allergies, favourite bathing products, pillow types, snacks, drinks and even preferred level of service (discreet or indulgent, for example).

2.. BRAIN BOOSTING

From brain training games to smart drugs, one of the new trends in luxury travel taps into the idea that “grey matter is the new black”, with amenities and experiences that boost the intellect. Forbes magazine has tipped IQ enhancement as being the next trillion-dollar industry and, according to Intercontinental Hotels Group’s Trend Report 2012, “the market for goods and services responding to new demand for mental stimulation is expected to grow between US\$1 billion and US\$5 billion by 2015”.

Inspired by our thirst for the likes of online TED Talks (as of November 2012, ted.com’s videos had been viewed more than one billion times), IHG predicts that travellers will soon be checking into “brain spas” – “city-centre sites of learning where you can take a lecture or debate, or follow a structured course in a stylish, relaxed environment”. And there is every likelihood these could be affiliated with high-end hotels.

Consider Morgans Hotel Group, which partnered with London’s the School of Life to provide guests with a “minibar for the mind” to help make travel more fulfilling. The box contained 250 conversation starters, a volume of collected thoughts and “reduce and relax” reading prescriptions. In the Maldives, Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru resort offers marine biology courses, and the Shangri-La Villingli recently launched cultural tours of nearby islands. Provençal wine estate La Verrière invites guests to become a wine expert in six days, while Design Hotels member the Library, on Thailand’s Koh Samui, has a collection of more than 1,300 books to borrow or buy.



Top five-star hotels are asking guests to complete detailed questionnaires in advance that highlight their interests, allergies, favourite bathing products, pillow types, snacks, drinks and even preferred level of service

The trend for offering bespoke book collections has been quietly catching on, with Philip Blackwell’s Ultimate Library at the forefront. His company has been supplying brands such as Six Senses, the Dorchester Collection and Fairmont with life-enhancing literature for five years. “Research shows that for busy people, reading for pleasure is a luxury saved for going on holiday, so a well-chosen library can surprise and delight,” he says. If you are travelling on business, you may not have time to read that copy of Plato’s Republic placed by your bed, but people like to be surrounded by books. “Whether stacked on a coffee table or in a library, they add warmth, texture and soul to a room,” says Blackwell.

3. WABI SABI

Forget “green”, “eco” and “sustainable”, the buzzword of the future is going to be “wabi sabi”. This Japanese philosophy of

aesthetics is already beginning to take off in the West, and taps into people’s desire for things that have authenticity and provenance, that are vintage, organic, artisan, handcrafted or natural. The sentiment has been dubbed “luxury shame”, as people react against ostentatious displays of wealth. According to wabi sabi, beauty is found in imperfection, transience, incompleteness, unpretentiousness, simplicity, modesty and integrity. With regard to objects or environments, it could refer to something that has been weathered and aged, or designed to have a certain understated elegance. Boutique properties lend themselves well to this zeitgeist, opting to sensitively restore or convert buildings to maintain their original features and flaws – think historic mountain lodges, industrial warehouses and Mediterranean villas. New-build wabi sabi properties could incorporate unpolished, natural, raw or recycled materials. Inte-

riors may be furnished with pared-down Scandinavian furniture, indigenous folk art or hand-woven carpets, while restaurants would serve homegrown vegetables from kitchen gardens on plates made by local ceramicists. They would also have good eco-accreditations.

Properties that have a wabi sabi flavour include the Alila Villas Uluwatu in Bali (lava rock roofs, bamboo ceilings and pools of water), the Beresheet hotel in Israel’s Ramon Crater (nomadic wall hangings, repurposed timber railway sleepers and carefully excavated natural rocks) and the Waterhouse at South Bund in Shanghai (a converted warehouse with exposed brickwork, raw cement and distressed paintwork).

It can also, believe it or not, be found in Las Vegas, in the five-star Nobu hotel, open since February. It was designed by David Rockwell under the authorship of Japanese chef Nobu Matsuhisa, who was inspired by



If you wish for peace, tranquillity and a good night's rest, you can now book yourself into a "black hole resort" or go on a "digital detox".

wabi sabi principles. Upon arrival, guests are presented with a cup of fresh green tea, served at the perfect temperature, and a rice cracker. The tranquil interiors are a blend of metal, bamboo, rice paper, grass cloth, stone, fir, ebony and oak, and rooms are neutral with Umi tiles from Japan, traditional teak bathing stools and coffee tables made from slices of tree trunks.

4. EXTREME WELL-BEING

Health has been a concern of the luxury travel sphere for some time, but Swedish massages, swimming pools and low-calorie minibar snacks just don't cut it anymore. These days, well-being is a serious matter – an increasing number of people are travelling abroad for medical treatment (about 60,000 a year from the UK alone), and taking on extreme sports and fitness challenges such as mountain climbing, marathons and triathlons – in the UK, the London triathlon has grown from 1,000 competitors to 13,000 in just over a decade.

High-end hotels are starting to capitalise on this – from Champneys Tring, the only UK resort to feature a full-body cryotherapy chamber that freezes you to minus 135°C (see our next issue for a report on how this writer survived it), to St Lucia's Le Sport, which offers bespoke workout holidays co-ordinated by Olympic champion Da-

ley Thompson. London's Bulgari has embraced "holistic lifestyle approach" Bodyism (a favourite among celebrities), with personal training and Bodyism-approved dishes on its restaurant menu, while over in Spain you can do a macrobiotic weight-loss detox at Sha Wellness Clinic, or, in Germany, check in to Dusseldorf's Breidenbacher Hof hotel for some plastic surgery, laser treatment or aesthetic dentistry in its underground clinic.

It is also becoming common to combine overseas business trips with a fitness bootcamp or medical procedure, allowing time to recover afterwards. Switzerland's Grand Resort Bad Ragaz has a health centre offering everything from metabolic optimising and in-depth examinations to monastic remedies and physiotherapy, while Buccament Bay in the Caribbean runs multi-activity training weeks to whip you into shape.

5. QUIET

Do you find it hard to switch off? Are you addicted to checking your emails and social media platforms? If so, you're not alone. Smartphones and tablets are becoming such a problem for us that we are willing to spend money on ways to get peace, tranquillity and a good night's rest.

A lack of online distractions helps us to be more focused, creative and grounded, and

the luxury travel market has picked up on this. Nowadays, you can book yourself into a "black hole resort" or go on a "digital detox", where you check your devices in at reception and there is no wifi in the rooms. In California, tech junkies can go cold turkey at Camp Grounded (thedigitaldetox.org), building campfires and sleeping in bunk beds.

According to the Institute of Circadian Psychology in Boston, sleep problems cost US businesses \$70 billion a year in lost productivity, accidents and medical bills. London's Milestone hotel offers a £1,170-per-night "Sound Sleep" package including a private consultation with cognitive behavioural specialist Tej Semani, a spa treatment and aromatherapy oils. IHG predicts: "A hotel group entering the debate and developing its own sleep research centre could allow it to become a market leader in what is evidently a growing trend."

Raymond Kollau, founder of airlinetrends.com, notes that, along with space, sleep and silence are two of the most significant luxuries you can enjoy when flying. Lufthansa claims its A380s and B747-800s have the quietest first class cabins ever, with sound-absorbing curtains and carpet. That said, planes are no longer the last bastions of digital silence, as more are installing in-flight wifi – all the more reason for that detox when you land

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A return ticket in Club Europe class on Warsaw-London route, plus a ticket in Club World class on London-Las Vegas cost PLN 6,923.

Weekend in Las Vegas? Why not? Now when British Airways offers a convenient connection from Warsaw via London to the entertainment capital of the world, it is easier than you might think. It is also worth choosing a business class ticket (Club Europe or Club World), which guarantees you a journey in real comfort and luxury. After several hours you arrive in Las Vegas as fresh as a daisy and ready to enjoy the attractions of this amazing city.

WARSAW-LONDON
Since BA plane to London leaves at 12.05 pm, I arrived at Okęcie airport at about 11.00 am. I knew that with my Club Europe ticket I was entitled to fast-track check-in at a desk for business

class passengers. I also went through fast-track security control which was another advantage of the Club Europe class. Before boarding, which was scheduled at 11.45 am, I even managed to have a cup of coffee in Bolero lounge. My seat on board was 4A, next to the window. We took off on time. After 15 minutes we reached the cruising altitude, the flight attendants brought us refreshing towels. They also offered us a glass of juice or champagne and served peanuts. Then we were served dinner – a salad as an appetizer, and for the main course lamb tandoori or chicken salad. For dessert we received hand-made chocolates. Less than a two-hour journey to London went quickly, and was not particularly tiring. At Heathrow airport we disembarked the plane at Terminal 3 and I headed for Terminal 5 where flights to Las Vegas depart. I know Terminal 5 quite well, and I really like this place. It is a good place to do some shopping in stores of such brands as Prada, Gucci, or Tiffany. You can also visit one of the terminal's lavish lounges. I especially recommend the Galleries Club Lounge and Galleries Arrivals Lounge I, however, headed for Elemis Travel Spa, where I received a relaxing 20-minute face massage which was included in the price of my ticket. Then I had a cup of tea in the area close to the BT Business Lounge and ate one of the Moroccan dishes offered there.

LONDON - LAS VEGAS
I took the 11-hour journey from London to Las Vegas on board

Boeing B747-400, which is a wide body aircraft and the best-selling model of the 747 family. The interior volume of the airplane is 876 cubic metres and you can truly feel this space. Boarding went very smoothly. Once again, I took the priority pass available for Club World passengers. My seat was 17A which I was more than satisfied with. It was a window seat, travelling backwards, but it was not any inconvenience, at all. It was separated from the other passenger's seat by an opaque retractable screen. I am a big fan of the seat configuration proposed by BA in Club World class, which on one hand allows you to communicate with your fellow-passengers, but also provides a sense of intimacy. If necessary, you can use the screen to gain more privacy and, for example, rest, read or enjoy a great variety of on-board entertainment, including the current film premieres. BA has always boasted its sophisticated onboard kitchen. This time was no different. The dishes served on the way to Ve-

gas were not only delicious, but also exquisite. For an appetizer I chose rilled prawns with guacamole, and for the main course - vegetarian korma curry that tasted as if it had been prepared in a real Mumbai restaurant. I also had a light dessert which comprised French cheeses and fresh fruit salad. I was impressed with the on-board wine and alcohol list, which included Champagne Boizel Grand Vintage 2004, through a cornucopia of wines (white – French Pouilly-Fume 2011, Domaine Bardin of the Loire Valley, and Californian Reata Chardonnay 2010 Carneros; red - Cru Bourgeois Medoc of Bordeaux, and California Hahn Winery Pinot Noir 2011), to cognac and different types of whisky. During the flight, passengers could freely use the Club Kitchen, which offered hot and cold drinks as well as snacks. In the fridge, which was available to all premium passengers, there were sandwiches, yogurt, sliced fruit, or strawberry mousse. After dinner I reclined my seat

into flat-bed position (it is 201 cm long!), turned on the reading light, tucked myself in a blue cotton quilt, and took out a sleeping mask and earplugs from the travel kit business passengers received before the flight. I decided to have some sleep. I woke up totally refreshed, just as we were flying over Salt Lake City. Stewards were serving the afternoon tea which consisted of chicken sandwiches, cookies with fruit and mango jelly. Several minutes later we landed in Las Vegas.

VERDICT
The motto of British Airways: "To fly. To serve" is treated very seriously by BA staff. I was particularly impressed with the excellent onboard service, the comfort of the Club World cabin, the punctuality and convenient flight times. At the airport in Vegas, where we arrived at sunset, I felt relaxed and rested. I dare say that the flight with BA to the world's capital of entertainment is definitely NOT a gamble.

Marzena Mróz



I am a big fan of the seat configuration proposed by BA in Club World class, which on one hand allows you to communicate with your fellow-passengers, but also provides a sense of intimacy.

Train

PERU

ANDEAN EXPLORER CUSCO-PUNO



Travelling through the Andes on this legendary train, is a real experience. The 364 km journey takes 10 hours, with the top elevation reaching 4,300 m above sea level. The Andean Explorer departs from Cusco - the Incan capital at 8.00 am, and at about 6.00 pm it reaches Titicaca - the highest navigable lake in the world.

THE COMPARTMENT

Boarding started promptly at 7.30 am. Prior to this, the passengers waiting in the departures lounge were welcomed with traditional Peruvian dances performed by artists wearing regional costumes. The train consists of 6 cars, two of which are luggage and observation cars, while the other four are passenger carriages with comfortable seats with configuration enabling convenient travel to families of four, couples, as well as individuals.

Every passenger sits at a narrow, cloth-covered table with a stylish lamp and a vase with a red rose in it. The seats have comfortable headrests and do not recline. The interiors are decorated with dark wood, while the walls are adorned with photographs of old Peru. In other words, the journey through the Andes, is also a journey through time...

SERVICE

The Andean Explorer offers its passengers complimentary American breakfast or continental one at an extra charge. There is also coffee, tea, chocolate or freshly squeezed orange juice. I especially recommended the coca tea, which helps prevent altitude sickness.



Lunch is served at noon and is also included in the price of the ticket. On my trip it consisted of two entrees to choose from: qinosa porridge soup with chicken and vegetables seasoned with herbs, or a traditional Andean Peruvian dish – a potato stuffed with mushrooms with chilli sauce. As for the main course, there was a choice of a steak or trout with cherry tomatoes and caper sauce. The meal finished with mousse of white and dark chocolate for dessert. At about 5.00 pm, the passengers were served tea, aperitifs and snacks - sandwiches and sweets. We were also offered Peruvian Tabernero-Maltec Merlot or Intipalka Syrah, as well as wines from the nearby Argentina and Chile. During the whole trip the train crew were doing their best to entertain the passengers. Waiters, like models on the catwalk presented sweaters, coats, scarves, which could then be bought at quite reasonable prices.

ROUTE

The route goes through a very interesting part of the Andes, from Cusco located at 3,400

meters above sea level, via Urco, Sicuani to La Raya, which is the highest section of the railroad located 4,313 meters above sea level! This is where the train stops for 20 minutes. You can enjoy the view of snow-capped peaks of the Andes in the background, as well as... do some shopping. When the train arrives, people of the neighbouring villages approach the passengers, offering them alpaca and vicuña wool sweaters, llama fur hats and embroidered tapestries.

A stop at La Raya marks the halfway point of the journey. The train then goes to Ayaviri, Calapuja and Juliaca, where it runs through the middle of a marketplace situated in the town centre. At 8.00 pm we arrived in Puno – a city which lies at Lake Titicaca at an altitude of 3,810 meters above sea level, only 260 km from La Paz in Bolivia.

From there, you can get a taxi to spend a relaxing night at one of the city's luxury hotels, before embarking on another eventful day of adventures. The area offers a cornucopia of attractions, including a visit to the floating

islands made of reeds, a trip to the island of Amantani, bird watching, fishing.

VERDICT

The adventure is worth taking the 10-hour train journey, during which there is no time for boredom. It is a truly interesting alternative to a plane, and it is very relaxing, especially when you have spent a few active days exploring the area around Cusco and the Secret Valley. You can spend this time in a comfortable seat or in the observation car which is adjacent to the bar, where you can enjoy the views from the panoramic windows. During a stop at La Raya you can stretch your legs and refresh in the pure mountain air which is much colder than in Cusco. Some passengers of the Andean Explorer may suffer from the altitude sickness. The train crew know a good remedy to this. Waiters offer passengers coca tea or coca leaves to chew. The leaves contain vitamin B, calcium and thiamine, and have for long been used by the inhabitants of these areas.

Marzena Mróz



CONTACT

www.condortravel.com



PRICE

\$ 186

Travelling through the Andes on this legendary train, is a real experience. You can spend this time in a comfortable seat or in the observation car which is adjacent to the bar, where you can enjoy the views from the panoramic windows.

Ayurveda Resort

KERALA, INDIA

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age started from €1,470.
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WHAT'S IT LIKE?
After a 10-hour flight from War-
saw through Doha to Trivan-
dram with QATAR AIRWAYS,
I found myself in Kerala. This
southern region of India called
the "God's Own Country" is as-
sociated in Europe with palm
trees and cultivation of ginger,
vanilla, cinnamon, curcuma,
pepper and cloves. Most of
all, it is known for the oldest
Ayurveda clinics. This complex
physical, mental, and spiritual
health concept has been prac-
tised mainly in Kerala for over
5,000 years. In 1979, it was offi-
cially approved by WHO. I could
not wait to get to Somatheeram,
the first Ayurveda Centre in the
world and one of six centres be-

longing to Somatheeram Ayur-
veda Group. It lived up to and
beyond my expectations. I saw
wooden eco huts, each with a
separate garden and a ham-
mock, furnished with a solid
bed with a mosquito-curtain, a
desk, a fan in the ceiling or air-
conditioning and natural cos-
metics prepared in the centre
- all this amid lush greenery. It
is all I ever needed. A stunning
view over the ocean and roar of
the waves gave you a sense of re-
laxation and peace.
Somatheeram is located on a
cliff, which overlooks fairy-tale
like views over endless beaches.
A sister centre Manaltheeram
is located about 200 metres fur-
ther sway. You can either walk

along the beach to get there, or
take a free taxi, which goes from
one centre to the other through-
out the day.
The place gives you a chance
to admire the ocean from a dif-
ferent perspective, take walks,
watch the sun rise above the
ocean, take a look at fishermen's
work, visit fabulous and colour-
ful Hindu temples, chapels,
Catholic churches and mosques
or do yoga. Here, culture, faith,
and health have a completely
different dimension than in
Europe. There is magic, calm
atmosphere, kind interest, ful-
filment, and mystery. Now I un-
derstand why so many people in
Europe love India and goes back
there whenever they can.

WHERE IS IT?

Both centres are located in the
middle of lush greenery, among
coconut palm trees, mangrove
trees and jack trees with the
biggest fruit in the world called
jackfruit. You will find here a
wealth of flower and bush spe-
cies of incredible colours and
fragrances and about 600 differ-
ent herbs used for production of
medicines, creams, ointments,
balms and seasoning the food
in restaurants.

Both centres are located by
the Indian Ocean, next to a
600-kilometre long beach, 21
kilometres from Trivandrum
airport, 130 kilometres from
Back Waters - the biggest tour-
ist attractions in the region -
river pools that are home to
various birds and plants, and
200 kilometres from Periyar
National Park with a tiger res-
ervation and many other fasci-
nating places.

Apart from the Ayurveda clin-
ic, you will find here dental
clinics and pharmacies; you
can order tailor-made cotton
clothes or buy artworks and
jewellery.

HUTS

The centres offer standard
rooms and a few categories of
huts. In Somatheeram there
are 79 huts, in Manaltheeram
- 61. All of them feature fans,
and some are air-conditioned. I
stayed in Special Cottage with a
beautiful wooden ceiling, huge
wooden red with a mosquito-
curtain, with air-conditioning,
which was hard to underap-
preciate with the temperatures
between 38-40 °C.

I also enjoyed the 24-hour ser-
vice. Anytime you could order
a coffee, herbal tea in thermos
flask or boiled water with lime
juice and honey - an excellent
drink to quench your thirst.
According to Ayurveda doctors
during heatwaves you should
drink warm fluids, which in-
crease well-being and are good
for digestive system. Cold
drinks and ice are not healthy
for the organism.

AYURVEDA CLINICS

Ayurveda clinics are located
in wooden eco buildings in
both centres. There are 20 doc-
tors and 120 therapists work-
ing there and over 60 massage
rooms.

You enter the clinic barefoot
with special green cotton cov-
erings. In the reception area I
was welcomed by Dr Nair and
Dr Chitra, who asked me eve-
rything about the diseases I
had, my habits and various be-
haviours. Thanks to that, they
could estimate my dosha - that
is my bioenergy.

According to Ayurveda medi-
cine, human body came into
being as a combination of 5 hu-
mours, and has been developed
thanks to three bioenergies:
WATA (wind and ether), PITTA
(fire), KAPHA (earth and water).
My dosha is KAPHA-PITTA.
Doctors advise a different series
of treatment and diet according
to your dosha. People coming to
the clinic can also purify their
organisms from toxins, or un-
dergo slimming or beautifying
treatment. All depends on how
long you are planning to stay.
Every day, once your pressure



Both centres are located by the Indian Ocean, amid palm trees, mangrove
trees and jack trees producing the largest fruit in the world - the jackfruit.





Awards

RECEIVED

- Kerala State award 2010-2011
The best Ayurveda centre in Kerala

and pulse are examined, you can start treatments lasting between 60 to 90 minutes. Each patient has a personal therapist. They also get herbal therapy prescribed by the doctors.

Because my stay was too short, I was unable to try out the full purifying treatment, the so-called Pancha Karma - I could only have some of the treatments, including head massage (shiroabhyanga), a body massage with warm oils applied with hands and feet, face massage

and "Shirodhara", which is pouring warm oils over the "third eye" area. The treatment gives excellent relaxation and a sense of peace. The therapists use between 3.5 to 5 litres of oil for each massage on average. After each treatment, patients drink coconut milk and are asked to rest for a while. Once the treatment is over, you receive information on how to continue it at home, as well as herbal medicines for three months.

YOGA

You can complement the Ayurveda treatments and diet with meditation and yoga. Yoga creates a connection between body and mind, between consciousness and soul. The aim of the exercise is to achieve harmony and balance, getting rid of stress and working on a nice figure. Ayurveda and yoga are unity in both centres you can do yoga with a coach or meditate every day. There are classes for beginners and advanced participants. I took part in Ha-tha yoga class. Ha - is the sun, energy, warmth, activity, and the masculine element, while tha - is passivity, coldness, the moon and the feminine element. The class lasted for 90 minutes.

RESTAURANT

Restaurants in both centres were excellent, preparing special meals for guests three times a day. There were about 250 vegetarian dishes. Meals might be prepared according to your diet if that is recommended by the doctor and requested in advance. Each dish comes with information about the food and who it is aimed at (dosha type). I especially recommend lemon and carrot rice, corn and rice soup with ginger, cheeran thoran (red spinach with coconut), Paratha bread and wheat dosa, steamed vegetables as well as juices: beetroot and pineapple and pomegranate ones. It is recommended to drink herbal water, that is an extract from herbs, which cools and purifies the organism.

VERDICT

A paradise sanatorium. An extensive and unusual choice of treatments together with a unique chance to purify your body and change your eating habits. An excellent selection of vegetarian dishes. Complete relaxation and a sense of peace. Professional 24-hour service.

Katarzyna Siekierzyńska

Komfortowy sen podczas lotu.

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HOTEL AQUA DOME TIROL THERME LANGENFELD



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PRICE
from €165 per person in a double room with half-board

An alpine valley, excellent thermal springs, high quality business facilities, and mountainous and skiing attractions - no wonder Aqua Dome hotel in Langenfeld is so popular with tourists.

Aqua Dome is a two-wing, five-star hotel, located in a remote area of Otztal valley in the Austrian Tyrol. It is surrounded by a few hectares of green areas also belonging to the hotel, a huge pool complex, and a spa. Aqua Dome offers 13 categories of rooms, starting from 35-metre standard one (each comes with

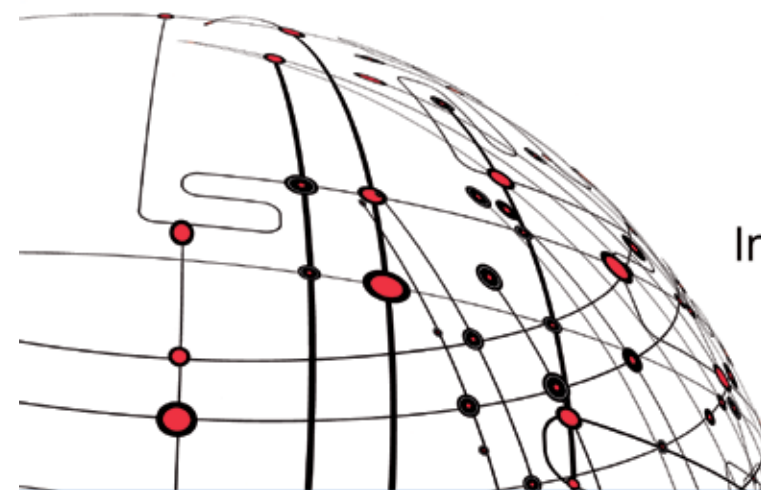
a large balcony overlooking the mountains) to luxurious suites of over a hundred sq m. The interior is warm, dominated by white colour and elements made from pine and spruce wood. The lobby is spacious, the reception area long, and there are always a few staff members at the same time. A few restaurants offer very good food, including local organic produce. The menu features local lamb, fish, or speck. A well-equipped wine bar offers a selection of over 300 types of wine, including the best Austrian Zweigelt and Italian Tuscan wines.

AQUADOME AND SPA

The biggest Aqua Dome landmark, attracting guests from around Innsbruck, is one of the biggest and most interesting pool complexes in Austria. Inside there are 2 indoor pools, waterfalls and a 90-metre slide. Outside there is a long pool with heated water, alongside with three characteristic bowl-shaped pools, in which we can enjoy hot, cold or salty water with artificial currents - all this several metres above the ground. The complex features several types of sauna and Turkish bath. Among many treatments



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Hotel

AUSTRIA

The biggest Aqua Dome landmark is one of the biggest and most interesting pool complexes in Austria. Aqua Dome is an ideal place to organize both small and huge conferences and business meetings.



offered by the newly-opened Spa 3000 complex, some are genuinely unique, like wine treatment, which is treatment with vine extracts, as well as many original types of massage.

CONFERENCE FACILITIES

Aqua Dome is an ideal place to organize both small and huge conferences and business meetings. It offers several meeting rooms that can accommodate from 40 to 350 people. Stein-weise (over 400 sq m) is perfect for bigger conferences and it can be arranged according to you needs: regular, horseshoe or theatre style. Presentations

usually take place in Foyer Rubinglanz - it is a large almost 200 sq m space in the hotel foyer. There are also nine smaller rooms from 25 to 128 sq m. If an organizer books at least 20 guest rooms, they will get an additional conference room free of charge. The regular Aqua Dome conference package includes access to an air-conditioned conference room with access to the Internet, a coffee break, 2 drinks per participant as well as audio/video system.

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS

From the end of September to the end of June, the biggest at-

traction is skiing on Tiefenbach and Rettenbach (3,250 m. above the sea) glaciers, located by Sölden, one of the most popular skiing stations in Austria. A bustling with nightlife town located several kilometres from Langenfeld (1,377 metres above the sea) is a perfect holiday destination for thousands of skiers from all over the world, Poland included. In winter season, you can ski on almost 120 kilometres of ski runs, while late in spring and in early autumn take walks along the several kilometres of glacial tourist routes. During your trip, you can climb the Big 3, that is the three three-thousanders towering above Sölden, Schwarze Schneide (3,340 m), Tiefenbachkogel (3,250 m) and Gaislachkogel (3,058 m).

If you go there in April, you will have a chance to take part in "Hannibal" performance created by an Austrian director Herbert Lepka. All this takes place high in the mountains on Rettenbach glacier, and the audience can find out what it looked like when Hannibal crossed the Alps together with his army. The performance is delivered by about a hundred actors at night, the slopes are illuminated, there are airplanes and helicopters in the sky, and snow sculptures of elephants.

If you come in October, you cannot miss another attraction: The FIS Alpine Ski World Cup - you will have a chance to see giant slalom on Rettenbach glacier.

Filip Gawryś



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Michelin Guide Recommendation

BRIDGING THE GAP

Although travellers can book premium economy with most major carriers, standards often vary considerably. With US carriers finally getting in on the act, premium economy is now a truly global product, say **Alex McWhirter** and **Marzena Mróz**.



It's taken a long time but premium economy has come of age. Introduced 20 years ago by Taiwan's Eva Air and our very own Virgin Atlantic, the more spacious seats in this superior economy cabin bridge the gap between regular economy and business class.

ONE LABEL, DIFFERENT MEANINGS

Although travellers can book premium economy with most major carriers, standards vary hugely from airline to airline, route to route and even within an airline's own fleet. Book Air New Zealand's premium economy on one of its flagship B777-300ERs and you might believe you've booked business class in error. At the other end of the scale, choose Delta or United and you might wonder what all the fuss was about. These carriers mainly add more legroom to economy class. But that's not to denigrate what the US airlines offer. Premium economy pricing relates to the comfort and space that a particular airline provides. So when you book Air New Zealand, you will be paying far more than if you were to choose a US carrier on the same route.

STRONG OPPOSITION

Still, despite its global acceptance, three major carriers – Emirates, Lufthansa and Singapore Airlines (SIA) – remain aloof from the concept. Speaking to Business Traveller Middle East editor Dominic Ellis in Dubai in February, Emirates president Tim Clark appeared to rule out adding the cabin to his airline any time soon.

"I would never say never but we continue to pride ourselves that our economy cabin would be premium economy for many airlines, particularly on the A380," he said. "I don't know what economy seats on another airline offer a TV [up to 12.1 inches in size] with thousands of movies, or who spends as much we do on food."

"If we were to go to premium economy I would suggest we leave our economy cabin as is, and create a section that's economy and compress pitch and put more seats across, do less on in-flight entertainment, food and so on – and we don't want to go down that path."

In previous years, SIA has maintained that its economy cabin is a match for other carriers' premium economy classes. But with its market share under pressure, can the carrier afford to be complacent? Speaking to The Australian newspaper a few months ago, Tan Pee Teck, SIA's senior vice-president of product and services, said: "Although pre-

mium economy is not a closed matter for us... we are not getting the sense that it's a truly successful product."

Lufthansa says it is looking closely at the concept. Like SIA, it faces price competition in its home market. The addition of a premium economy cabin would enable Lufthansa to be more competitive. A well-informed source told us that Lufthansa is planning to launch premium economy class at the ITB fair in Berlin in March 2014. It's then likely to debut on board Lufthansa's planes in the second quarter of 2014.

THE SEAT LIKE A HAMMOCK

The new premium economy cabin on the B777-300ER has up to 44 seats across six rows in a 2-4-2 configuration (A-B, D-E-F-G, J-K). The product has a 38-inch (96.5cm) pitch – the same as before – and fully adjustable head and foot rests. The headrest sports a new "hammock" style that consists



of two fixed side wings with a fabric and foam support stretched between them – it is designed to provide more neck support and can be adjusted in height.

There are also upgraded soft furnishings, such as fleece blankets and new pillows featuring a heritage design. Services include free newspapers, hot towels, amenity kits in a reusable pouch, and an increased baggage allowance on selected routes. The personal video screens measure 10.6 inches, 60 per cent larger than the existing premium economy ones, and all seats have individual power sockets compatible with UK, US and European plugs, two USB ports and an RCA port so customers can link their electronic devices to the IFE system.

The new Thales system is being fitted across all cabins and features more than 230 TV programmes, 70 films and 400 CDs – 50 per cent more movies, and double the range of TV shows and music options. It also features plug-and-play technology with the remote control allowing passengers to play games against each other.

A BIG DIFFERENCE

Air France also offers premium economy class, describing it as "a big difference in the comfort of travelling for a small price difference." The French product, dubbed Premium Voyageur, is available on all intercontinental routes operated by Air France (except for flights to the Caribbean and the island on the Indian Ocean) in such aircraft as B777, A330, A340 and A380. These include such popular destinations as: New York, Singapore, Shanghai, Beijing, Buenos Aires, and many more. The exceptional feature of the PremiumVoyageur is the personal space, which is totally protected thanks to a fixed-shell seat offering 40 more room than in the economy cabin.

The cabin features generally about 20 seats as opposed to 40 in standard economy class. The choice of a fixed-shell seat, generally reserved for the best Business class cabins, makes Air France the first European airline to offer such a comfortable seat in an intermediate cabin. Passengers who choose this class are also offered better catering options than those in standard economy. Premium Voyageur also offers services on the ground that make time in the airport much easier. The passengers of travelling in that class may check in at priority desks in Paris and throughout the world.

LOT AND PREMIUM ECONOMY

The Premium Club class offered by LOT Polish Airlines features 21 seats which can

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Premium economy certainly adds a great alternative for those willing to pay more for greater in-flight seating comfort but who cannot make the great leap to business class for nonstop flights.

be reclined by 6 inches. They resemble seats from the "old" business class, have a retractable footrest, a special headrest, and a 12-inch display of the IFE which pops up from the right armrest. The choice of entertainment includes films, games and music. Luggage allowance for Premium Club passengers is twice as big as for those flying in economy. They can also check in at separate desks for business class passengers. Passengers of both classes are taken care of by a specially trained cabin crew named Elite Fleet".

PROS AND CONS

So what are the drawbacks? As I have said on these pages many times, space on a plane is precious. So as premium economy improves then one or two things will happen – either fares will rise or those seated in standard economy will have to sacrifice space. In some cases, both scenarios occur. Andrew Solum, director at travel and event management company TIA Global, says: "Space is being taken from general economy to create these zones. It means some carriers are switching from nine-abreast to a ten-abreast layout on their B777s. This

means a reduction in seat width of up to an inch, if not more, which is quite tough if you are the unlucky individual in the middle seat. Perhaps the higher density of economy is a method being used by the airlines to encourage people to pay more money and fly in premium economy." It can also be a costly class to fly. Solum says: "Premium economy used to be a relatively obtainable product for those willing to pay 20 per cent or 30 per cent more than economy class. But now the airlines seem to be raising their fares considerably. A peek at the Virgin Atlantic website for a flight to San Francisco [at the time of writing] shows economy flights priced at £539 and premium economy almost double, at £1,142. But the latter comes with restrictions so a fully flexible ticket would cost over £3,000. Not many will pay this rate but a company booking at the last minute and with no corporate deal just might." With fares being so high, it's tempting for canny travellers to shun a direct flight in premium economy and instead shop around for discounted business class fares with indirect carriers.

When I checked in February, a return non-stop London-Tokyo premium economy flight with JAL for the next month cost £3,110 (without a weekend stay), whereas business class returns were available with Air France, Asiana, Emirates, Finnair and Qatar Airways through opodo.co.uk over the same dates for between £2,400 and £2,800. Solum says: "Premium economy certainly adds a great alternative for those willing to pay more for greater in-flight seating comfort but who cannot make the great leap to business class [for nonstop flights]. Or for those whose companies' travel budgets prohibit business class." But he laments the fact that higher prices do not lead to a rise in catering standards. "I wish more carriers would invest in offering an improved food and beverage selection like Air New Zealand does, which makes it a different experience from regular economy. But I also understand the reluctance on the part of the airlines to make it too much like business class so as not to encourage downgrading. But I do feel premium economy is here to stay and fingers crossed it will only get better and better."



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FIVE STARS FOR LUFTHANSA



Agata Janicka interviews **Bart Buyse**, General Manager for Poland at Lufthansa German Airlines

Lufthansa's first class was recently awarded five stars in Skytrax ranking. How important is this award for the airline?

Bart Buyse: Lufthansa has had many years of experience in providing services of the highest quality. This award confirms that our First Class is the world's leading premium service. I am very pleased that we can offer our customers the opportunity to travel in one of the world's best seats and access to an exceptional on board service. Skytrax also granted five stars to our luxury terminal for First Class passengers at Frankfurt airport. This all proves that our strategy is to maintain the number one position in Europe.

What steps does Lufthansa take to further develop its offer in the premium category?

BB.: A large number of initiatives to improve the quality of service on the board, carefully selected wines and dishes created by top chefs, as well as fully reclining business class seats which we install on our aircraft, make Lufthansa one of the leading premium airlines. Our improved on-board entertainment system now offers larger screens and a wide range of options: films, TV shows, audiobooks, radio programmes, games and language courses - to name just a few. By 2015, the modernization of passenger cabins on all our aircraft will cost €50 million.

What investment are you planning for the nearest future?

BB.: We continue installing Fly-Net, which is access to broadband internet on board, across our fleet serving interconti-



ental connections. Currently, the service is available in more than 80 aircraft. The service includes access to Sport 24 channel, which broadcasts live most interesting sports events from around the world, including matches of German Bundesliga, and Formula 1 races.

Will there be any new products for the Polish passengers of Lufthansa?

BB.: Recently, Lufthansa's Supervisory Board has approved the purchase of 100 Airbus A320 aircraft and two A380s. By 2015, Lufthansa will have also received 20 Boeing 747-8s. By the end of 2025, aircraft manufacturers will have delivered 236 planes for Lufthansa. This means that more and more Polish passengers flying with Lufthansa on intercontinental routes will be able to experience

an even higher quality of service during air travel.

For several years now Lufthansa has been recording a steady increase in the number of passengers flying from Poland. What are the key factors for this growth?

BB.: Undoubtedly, increased business contacts between Poland and Germany play an important role in this phenomenon, but I would also add to this the increasing competitiveness of Poland and the Polish economy for foreign investors. Today, more than 70 per cent of business class tickets are purchased by Polish companies. Polish passengers who choose business class most often travel in business to New York, Tokyo, Shanghai, Chicago, and Delhi. More than 5,000 Polish companies have joined our special incentive programme for businesses called PartnerPlus-Benefit.

How many cities in the world does Lufthansa fly to?

BB.: Thanks to our main hubs in Frankfurt and Munich, we are able to offer an excellent connectivity with the world. In Poland we operate nearly 230 flights per week from seven cities (Warsaw, Gdańsk, Poznań, Wrocław, Katowice, Cracow and Rzeszów), which provides Polish travellers with excellent opportunities for the use of our global route network. Overall, in the summer timetable, Lufthansa customers will have a choice of flights to 218 Lufthansa destinations in 82 countries. I am very pleased that we can offer Polish business customers access to the best route network among all international carriers operating in Poland.

What trends in business air travel can we expect in Poland over the next five years?

BB.: One of the trends that we are already seeing is a rise in popularity of private jet charters.

With private jets businesspeople can fly anywhere in the world at any time convenient to them, without having to change planes in between their journey. Lufthansa Private Jet offers flights to more than 1,000 cities in Europe, Russia, America and North Africa. Customers who use the services of Lufthansa Private Jet, have access to the infrastruc-

ture of the leading European carrier and flexibility in planning their trip. In Poland, we observe a large increase in interest in the services of Lufthansa Private Jet. Last year was a record one in terms of ticket sales in our First Class as well as in Lufthansa Private Jet charters.

Thank you for the interview.



Thanks to our main hubs in Frankfurt and Munich, we are able to offer an excellent connectivity with the world.



ibis WARSAW OLD TOWN THE AVANZI CONCEPT



CONTACT
ibis.com
accorhotels.com



Orbis Hotel Group and Accor are implementing the next phase of the plan to modernize the new ibis family, dubbed the Avanzi project. The projects involves modernization of public areas in ibis hotels, thus increasing the comfort of stay without a change in the price per night. In Poland, the process starts with the renovation of ibis Warsaw Old Town, with other Polish hotels to soon follow suit with the change in their décor.

AVANZI - A NEW STRATEGIC PHASE FOR THE IBIS FAMILY
Avanzi project aims to adapt the design of ibis hotels to changing expectations of customers who nowadays often choose hotels with a more modern, but

also a more individual and original style. The innovative design and the use of public space as proposed in the Avanzi project, are to create the atmosphere of homely cosiness.

COMFORT AND INNOVATION IBIS WARSAW OLD TOWN
The first hotel in Poland, where the Avanzi project was carried

out, is ibis Warsaw Old Town, where the new décor was presented in April this year. The concept has utterly transformed the public areas of the hotel. Currently, the lobby is a multi-functional, well-equipped space, which is "the heart of the hotel" and a focal point where guests can meet, work, relax or have a meal. It is also a place with a friendly, welcoming atmosphere. The interior has been designed in a fashionable style with vivid tones and the addition of wooden details, warm colour accents and prints on the walls and the ceiling. The atmosphere of cosiness and comfort is further enhanced thanks to rocking chairs, large sofas and tables with tops for board games, where guests can relax after work. The hotel restaurant will also be renovated in the near future, in line with this new concept.

RECEPTION – THE PLACE FOR INTERACTION
One of the main premises of the Avanzi project is interaction. The upgraded spaces are to encouraged both the hotel staff and guests to spend time there and socialize. This has been achieved by merging spaces where form serves function. According to this assumption, the reception is an open area. A specially designed modern display panel shows useful information such as room rates, currency exchange rates, the weather and special offers. Typically, this type of modernization takes about six weeks. The application of new, optimized systems, including the use of printed boards and recycled materials, reduced that time by almost half, and the upgrade work had no significant effect on the functioning of the guest's stay and the hotel. Renovation of public areas will also be carried out later this year in ibis Warsaw Centrum, ibis Warsaw Ostrobramska, and ibis Łódź Centrum.

"With the Anvanzi project, ibis family wants to show that not



The interior has been designed in a fashionable style with vivid tones and the addition of wooden details, warm colour accents and prints on the walls and the ceiling.



only large luxury hotels, but also budget ones can feature modern, unconventional décor. The introduced changes have enhanced the level of comfort offered to our guests, without changing the price of the stay", says Stephen Hadley, the Manager of ibis Warsaw Old Town. Ibis Warsaw Old Town is situated

close to the picturesque Old Town of the capital of Poland. It is only 3 km away from the Central Railway Station and 12 km from the Frederic Chopin Airport. The hotel offers 333 comfortable guest rooms with wireless internet access, six fully equipped meeting rooms and a covered car park.

WESTIN LIKES MONDAYS

Westin hotels introduce Westin Weekends programme



Westin has been consistently building up its offer of services and products to guarantee that the stay in any of the brand's hotels will be an unforgettable experience. Following the introduction of the Gear Lending programme at the end of last year, Westin has recently come up with another novelty. This time the hotels of the brand focus on providing a truly unique weekend experience for their guests. The new initiative dubbed 'Westin Weekends', has just been launched in 193 hotels around the world (including Warsaw) and its goal is to give

guests more flexibility and time to make the most out of their weekend getaway. Under the programme, hotel guests will be able to take advantage of the 3.00 pm Sunday checkout option (instead of the usual 12.00). Saturday and Sunday breakfast times have also been extended, so now guest can take their time, enjoying their energizing SuperFoodsRX delicacies. "Our research shows consumers are craving more leisure time but taking less and less vacation so we wanted to develop a dedicated program that makes taking a well-deserved weekend break seamless and stress free," said Brian Povinelli, Global

Brand Leader for Westin Hotels & Resorts. "Westin Weekends is designed to help our guests get the most out of their weekend with late check-out and special, instinctive programming that makes it easy to plan the perfect, personalized getaway. And, we are thrilled to kick-off this new program by giving back to hundreds of members of the community who truly deserve a great weekend getaway."

WESTIN WEEKEND TRANSFORMATION

To set the stage for the new program all Westin hotels will signal the weekend has arrived



through a variety of subtle sensory cues including changes in lighting, music and décor. Each guestroom will feature the brand's signature Heavenly Bed bathrobe placed on the bed accompanied by a list of favourite local attractions to officially welcome guests to their weekend. This will clearly signal the start of the weekend mood. Hotel associates are also part of the transformation, leaving behind weekday ties and customary uniforms for a more relaxed and casual weekend look.

Guests are encouraged to linger in bed longer with a late, 3pm Sunday check-out and extended breakfast hours on Saturday and Sunday. Westin Weekends are designed to inspire well-being, from a good night's sleep on the Heavenly Bed and SuperFoodsRX dining options to convenient exercise through the RunWESTIN and New Balance gear-lending programmes. For Westin hotels the well-being of guests is of paramount importance. Westin's motto is "For a Better You", so the main objective of the brand's hotels is to help their guests relax and enjoy their trip. Earlier, Westin hotels introduced SuperFoodsRX programme, which, through a good diet helps guests improve their concentration, boost energy, but also provides the body with all necessary nutrients. All Westin hotels are also

equipped with Westin WORK-OUT studios which combine state-of-the-art equipment and high-performance workouts for guests who are committed to maintaining an active lifestyle during their travels. Jogging enthusiasts will find recommendations for the best routes in the vicinity of the hotel. Selected hotels also provide RunWESTIN programme in which the so-called Run Concierge shares

interesting facts about the area as you get energized for the day ahead or shake off the stress of the day. After a hard day of work or workout, it's good take a relaxing massage in the comfort of your own room. The in room spa service, involves massage procedure carried out in the room, which helps to achieve complete relaxation.

Joanna Krajewska



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A REVOLUTION IN COLOUR BLUE

The iconic blue colour of SAS airline will soon become a more familiar sight at Polish airports.



Marzena Mróz talks to **Wanda Brociek**, General Manager Poland at SAS airline.

Last year SAS began a large reorganization process and a new action plan was implemented. What does it involve?

There are a lot of changes. We are in the process of reduction of SAS main offices - ultimately there will be only one, in Stockholm. We have sold or integrated the airlines which are fully owned by SAS (Wideroe and Blue 1). We are also reducing the number of employees from 15,000 to 9,000, and we have recently purchased several new aircraft which have already been operating on European routes. As regards our reorganization, the plan of changes is to be implemented by the end of 2013. The airline's branches are regularly updated on the successive stages and the progress of the plan.

Reorganization is often followed by expansion. Does SAS have a recipe for successful development?

SAS carries mainly business passengers in Europe and, of

course, in Scandinavia. Now we also would like to carry our regular customers for the holidays. This year, we offer flight to almost 40 summer destinations, including Dubrovnik, Split and Palermo. We believe, for example, that the Scandinavians, who are our loyal customers and collect points in our Eurobonus loyalty programme, will decide to use our service also in July and August, when planning their holiday trips.

There is a growing number of SAS planes at Polish airports. Is this your personal goal and intention?

The aim of our whole team is to establish more SAS connections to and from Poland. Two years ago, SAS Poland offered about 40 flights a week. This year, for summer 2013, we were able to double the route network, extending it to more than 80 flights per week. Our aircraft fly from Gdańsk to Copenhagen four times a day, six times a week on Gdańsk-Oslo route, three times a day on Poznań

- Copenhagen and Warsaw - Copenhagen routes, as well as twice a day from Wrocław to Copenhagen. We are also planning to expand the Łódź-Copenhagen connection, which is now operated five times a week. In Łódź, SAS is the only flagship carrier. We also want our blue colour to be more visible at Polish airports with our check-in kiosks, lounges, and fast-track check-in desks.

What aircraft serve the European routes?

Polish destinations are operated by smaller CRJ200 and CRJ900 jets. Other routes within Europe are operated by Boeing and Airbus aircraft while the older MDs are being gradually replaced by the new Airbus A320 neo planes with their base in Copenhagen. B737 will have their base in Stockholm and Oslo. In 2011 we ordered 30 Airbus A320 neo and 9 Boeing B737 aircraft with an option for additional 21.

On 1 June SAS presented a new commercial offer.



Indeed, SAS has decided to introduce substantial changes to its offer. First, we analysed the needs of our customers. We wanted to make sure that both our passengers and travel agencies selling our tickets, clearly understand our pricing policy and know what they pay for. What is more, we have decided to offer two instead of three service classes in Europe.

This sounds like a real revolution. Any details?

SAS asked the largest Scandinavian companies and travel agencies what conditions we should meet in order to become their carrier of choice. Based on the responses, we were able to distinguish two groups of customers. The first one comprises passengers who choose traditional airlines, as they are transported to airports located closer to city centres. They also have no problems with baggage allowances, do not require such conveniences as lounges, fast track lanes, or flexible fares, but instead seek affordable deals. The second group are the customers who are frequent flyers and who put it bluntly: "we will fly with SAS, but we need to have access to all the conveniences". What counts for them is priority on standby lists, lounge access, and a good onboard meal. There was also one more condition - they wanted to pay less than they did before. That is why, for the first group on flights within Scandinavia and the rest of Europe, we have prepared the SAS GO service class, where the fare includes one piece of checked baggage up

to 23 kg and complimentary tea and coffee. The ticket is non-refundable and must be purchased within 24 hours from the time of the reservation. Passengers can check themselves in online, as well as collect points in our loyalty programs: SAS EuroBonus for individual passengers, and SAS Credits for businesses. As I have mentioned, the second group expects more, so for them we have prepared a package of additional privileges, jointly called SAS PLUS.

My guess is that a passenger choosing the SAS PLUS option, can enjoy all the benefits both at the airport and on board?

Exactly. He can purchase a ticket just before the departure, he may return it, change the date of his flight without any extra charge, take two pieces of checked luggage up to 23 kg each, enjoy a delicious onboard meal, take advantage of the fast track check-in and security control, as well as visit our lounges.

What is the price difference between the two classes?

This is where the customer will see the difference. Our typical customer who decides to take a flight a few days before the departure date, will have access to the SAS GO offer almost to the last day before the scheduled departure date, but at the same time we will offer him all the conveniences in the form of SAS PLUS option, at a very attractive price. What is the price? This will vary depending on the



route, the time of purchase, but in many cases the price difference will be €50 on a single ticket and €100 on a round-trip one. The difference is small, considering the benefits. You just need to make the right decision.

Many passengers may come to the conclusion that it does not pay to fly in GO class.

The revolution lies in the fact that SAS no longer offers business class as you know it. All the privileges of the class are now available to a passenger who until recently could not afford them. The benefits of business class are still available, but for completely different money, in the form of the SAS PLUS offer.

What about your new approach to onboard meals?

We offer organic meals in Scandinavian-style: dark bread, as well as lots of healthy and fresh vegetables. A PLUS class passenger will choose from our offer whatever he likes, while meals for GO class passengers will be offered at an extra charge. That is what I call the freedom of choice!

The airline has clearly changed its profile.

That is correct. We no longer present ourselves as a Businessman's Airline. Starting this June, SAS is a Travel Class Airline, because we give passengers the opportunity to choose how they want to travel.

Thank you for the interview.

The revolution lies in the fact that SAS no longer offers business class as you know it. All the privileges of the class are now available to a passenger who until recently could not afford them.



THE INCREDIBLE PERU

Peru delights, amazes and intrigues. Can 10 days spent in this remarkable country be enough to learn about its beauty and traditions? **Marzena Mróz**, who has just returned from the kingdom of the Incas, says that it is, in fact, possible.





Peru is widely considered one of the world's most beautiful places, and it is famous for its diverse natural environment. Out of a total of 103 ecological zones, 84 zones and 28 types of climates can be found in Peru, placing it within the top five countries with the most biological diversity on earth.



The raw and seemingly inaccessible landscape of Peru is the birthplace of one of the world's oldest civilizations. The history, together with the culture and customs of the Incas – who were known as “the Children of the Sun” – dates back thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans on the South American continent. To learn a little bit more about this extraordinary country and its people, you need to visit at least a few sites in Peru. If you fly to Peru from Europe, you will most likely arrive in the country's capital – Lima, where it is worth staying for a couple of days. Then, you need to visit Cuzco –the last capital of the Incas – to see the legendary Machu Picchu and go boating on the turquoise waters of Lake Titicaca. It is also worth noting that Peru is widely considered one of the world's most beautiful places, and it is famous for its diverse natural environment. Out of a total of 103 ecological zones, 84 zones and 28 types of climates can be found in Peru, placing it within the top five countries with the most biological diversity on earth.

THE LAND OF GREATNESS

Peru is known for its geographical extremes. The Amazon river, which flows through the country, forms the world's largest basin, Lake Titicaca is the highest navigable lake in the world (3,856 m), the Colca and Cotahuasi canyons, which can be reached from Arequipa, are the deepest on the planet. Furthermore, Lima is considered to be the city which features the most beautiful balconies in this part of the world, while Mount Huascaran is the highest peak in the Peruvian Andes as well as the fourth highest in South America. Peru also boasts a record number of potato varieties - 3,600 of them have been named, and 400 still remain nameless!

LIMA - A CITY OF BALCONIES

Most Europeans begin their adventure with Peru in Lima - the capital of the country, which has at least three faces: the colonial centre with the Plaza de Armas; the green and prosperous district of Miraflores by the Pacific Ocean, and the suburbs inhabited by the poorest people. Whether you are a resident of Lima or just a tourist visiting the city, you can be certain that the place will not leave you indifferent. And I must admit that it arouses conflicting emotions - from admiration to resentment. Everything depends on when you visit the Peruvian capital for the first time. I got there in late March, during the Peruvian early fall, which is a very friendly season to tourists. At that time of the year the days are sunny,



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The history, together with the culture and customs of the Incas – who were known as “the Children of the Sun” – dates back thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans on the South American continent.

the temperature and the humidity bearable, and the charming residents of Lima listen to tango in the city’s numerous cafes. What can I say - I fell in love with this city. What do you need to see in Lima, then? You can start with the very centre of the city and the Plaza Mayor, as well as the cathedral where the founder of Lima - the legendary conquistador Francisco Pizarro is buried. It is also a good idea to visit the area around the University of San Marcos, the boulevards and parks of Miraflores, as well as Rafael Larco Herrera Museum which has a collection of pre-Columbian ceramics, and where you can enjoy delicious lunch. As for ideal accommodation, there is only one perfect choice – Miraflores. I recommend the new Hilton Lima Miraflores (hilton.com), which is well located and serves delicious breakfasts. It is close to Salazar Park, as well as the most beautiful beaches, such as Chorrillos, Aqua Dulce and Waikiki. The art district of Barranco, as well as cafes and bookshops are also a short walk from here. There are numerous dining options in the Peruvian capital, but I especially recommend the lovely Rosa Nautica restaurant.


CUSCO – THE CENTRE OF THE WORLD
This ancient capital of the Incas, located 3,300 meters above sea level, is the jewel of the Inca and colonial architecture, as well as a city of numerous churches, and a mecca of... modern day hippies who hang out in this resplendent place for months, gorging in the local delicacies (e.g. fried guinea pig) and sipping pisco sour. In the language of Quechua “qosqo” literally means “the navel of the world”, and the Incas believed that their beautiful city was

the source of life. It is worth visiting the town’s several churches, including the cathedral which is an example of Spanish Renaissance and the local style, with an altar made of pure silver. One of the most interesting places is the church of the Dominicans, formerly called “Qoricancha”, that is “the Temple of the Sun”, whose walls were once covered with 700 sheets of gold studded with emeralds and turquoise. In the past, the courtyard featured cast in gold life-size statues of llamas, the sculptures of trees, and flowers, as well as ears of wheat. Although the wealth of the Inca temple is quite legendary, its architecture still arouses admiration. In Cuzco, which probably is the most beautiful at sunset, it is worth staying at Aranwa hotel (aranwahotels.com). If you decided to take a trip to the nearby Sacred Valley, the best option for accommodation would be the Sol & Luna hotel (hotelsolyluna.com).

MACHU PICCHU - A CITY IN THE SKY
To get to this most famous of the Inca cities situated in the depths of the Sacred Valley and hidden from the world until 1911, you can take a train and a bus going along the Urubamba river. The view, which appears at the end of this trip, is truly unforgettable. The romantic ruins of the prehistoric city with mist-covered green mountains of the Andes in the background... Recent archaeological research has proved the theory that Machu Picchu used to be a ceremonial as well as administrative centre of probably a large and densely populated region. Wandering among the ruins, it is worth stopping for a while at the Temple of the Sun, the palace of the Princess, the House of the

Guardians, the Main Temple and the Temple of the Three Windows. As for your stay, I recommend the town of Aguas Calientes, where you can enjoy the view of Machu Picchu at sunrise and sunset.

TITICACA – CRADLE OF CULTURES
A legend has it that Titicaca lake was the cradle of the Inca civilization. You can reach it by train from Cuzco to Puno, or simply by plane. Its calm waters covered with reeds change colour depending on the time of day, bringing peace and solace. Hotel Libertador (libertador.com), which is situated right by the lake, is a perfect base to set off by boat to the Floating Islands, that is the Islas de los Uros. The 71 islands, which are built of reeds, are inhabited by 2600 people. Every 15 days, each island must be covered with a new layer of reeds so that it does not sunken, and after 20 years, when the island touches the bottom of the lake, people leave it to build a new one. The inhabitants of Uros live in huts made of reeds, and use self-made boats. The fish, hunt ducks and ibises, embroider tapestries, create ornaments and warmly welcome tourists visiting their homes. Throughout their life, they walk around barefoot, and they almost never suffer from depression, although many of them are troubled with rheumatism. It is also worth going to the island of Amantani (2.5 hours from Puno) to stay for in a small hut for a few days. It is a perfect place to observe the landscape of the neighbouring Bolivia.

Trips around Peru are organized by Condor Travel.
www.condortravel.com  **CondorTravel**





ISLANDS OF COLOURFUL ROCKS

The archipelago of the Canary Islands is a game of nature's forces. Scattered amid the Atlantic Ocean, partly in Europe and partly in Africa, they tempt with their unusual location on the edge of the world.



They were formed when Africa's tectonic plate came across the so-called "hotspot" while moving away from America. The hot magma found its way through the bottom of the Atlantic and appeared as volcanic islands on the surface of the ocean. The first to appear 25 million years ago were Lanzarote and Fuerteventura joined together. Then Gran Canaria, Tenerife, with La Palma and El Hierro to form last. The islands are constantly forming so it is definitely not over. I decided to get familiar with the archipelago in the chronological order, starting from the oldest islands. The islands of Fuerteventura and Lanzarote are located closest to Africa, 100 km from the coastline of Morocco. That is why, they feature a relatively dry climate as for the Atlantic Ocean. I was surprised because Fuerteventura welcomed me with a moon-like empty landscape and the Sirocco wind bringing clouds of dust from Africa. It was not supposed to rain, and sand is not the same thing, after all.

THE KINGDOM OF WIND AND WAVES.

Each night is followed by a day. And the one spent on a long golden sand beach by the azure sea is a day with a capital "D". Each of the Canary Islands is different and characteristic for its own reason. Fuerteventura is famous for its beaches, wind and waves. It

is always windy here, but it is a warm and pleasant wind. That is why surfers from all over the world consider the island their home, because its waves are high and the water - pleasantly warm. On the eastern side, the beaches are wide, flat, sandy and... colourful. Due to diverse material that forms its sands, you can choose the beach that would go well with your swimming costume. I must warn you, however, that there will not be too much of an audience. The place gets crowded only around the tourist resorts and seaside towns, especially popular with the German and English. You will find there all the mod cons of the civilizations: pools, cocktails, water jets, and vast marinas. The zones for leisure swimming situated by the island's hotels are also very nice. Huge tides create large natural pools with shallow water and flat bottom, where you can swim safely. The western coastline is a whole different story. It is dominated by wild and raw beauty of steep cliffs and rough sea. In narrow bays you can find mysterious grottos accessible only during the low tide. I feasted my eyes on the beauty of the landscape in the southern part of the island in Cofete, amid the mountain ridges. Initially, the landscape of the island struck me as moon-like and empty. Upon a closer look, however, I was surprised by both the diverse forms of the natural landscape and

cultural attractions. To fully appreciate it, it is worth renting a car or a mountain bike. If you choose the latter, be careful not to damage the tyres on the pointed rocks. However, the majority of roads are new and safe to ride on.

A SCULPTOR'S DREAM

The inland are of the 100-kilometre long island is mountainous and upland. The diversity of forms, structures and colours of volcanic rocks resemble a gallery full of avant-garde sculptures. The "exhibits" are clearly visible, as there are not too many plants here. There are no rivers either, but the underground water is easily accessible. It is enough to build a mill, drill an opening, install a pump, and here we go – you have gallons of fresh water. Those who can't afford such an investment, have to filter sea water in traditional pumice containers or collect rainwater. Luckily, the most profitable crop here does not require too much water. I am talking about the opuntia, or rather its insect pests. Their bodies are used to extract the natural red dye - the carminic acid. Water is indispensable to grow corn and tomatoes, as watered volcanic soil is exceptionally fertile. Grains of corn are ground in traditional mills – the tall ones are called molinos, while the broad ones - molinas. The flour is then roasted in stone ovens by



All this makes you think of paintings by Kapists. The diversity of forms, structures and colours of volcanic rocks resemble a gallery full of avant-garde sculptures.

the houses to make gofio pancakes, a local delicacy. The houses themselves are built from whitewashed stone, decorated with dark mosaic and a clay roof.

GOAT RULE ON ISLANDS OF THE DOGS

Farmyards are guarded by skinny dogs which are also used for hunting. Apparently, the islands were named after the dogs. Although ancient Romans called them Happy Islands, Pliny the Elder wrote about multitudes of wild dogs that used to live here. That is why the islands were renamed many years later as Canary Islands, after the Latin 'canis' which simply means 'a dog'. Canary birds, on the other hand, were named after the islands, not the other way round. Today, the islands are ruled by a different animal - the goat. Herds of goats roam all over the island. Goat cheese – both the hard type and the soft called majorero, are traditional local food. I recommend soft cheese freshly pressed against palm tree leaves. Due to its short expiry date, it is available

only directly from its manufacturers. You can eat it with papas arrugadas, little jacket potatoes boiled in a small amount of salty water. Season it with local sauces mojo rojo i mojo verde. After washing it down with strong carajillo coffee with a drop of alcohol, you can continue your journey through history. How about choosing a camel as your method of transportation? How did camels get to Fuerteventura? Together with Berbers, the native people of the islands, from Sahara desert. Berbers died out because of European diseases, but camels seem to prosper, carrying Europeans on their backs. The diseases were brought here by the Normans, who started colonizing the islands from Fuerteventura. In 1404 Jean de Bethencourt, a French explorer in the service of the King of Spain, came here and founded the first city on Canary Islands - Betancuria. Located further towards mainland - for protection against pirates - it became the capital and has preserved its traditional Mediterranean looks to this day. The sleepy, pic-

turesque narrow streets with white houses, huge palm trees and Santa Maria de Betancuria church from 1410, reflect the former lifestyle. All this, however, is nothing more than history. About 40 years ago the island became a popular tourist destination, which has changed the source of income of most of the native dwellers. The locals began to cater for the tourists' needs and traditional farms can now be seen only in La Alcobida heritage park or in the richer area of Casa de los Coroneles. In La Lajita there is a zoo called 'the Oasis Park', where cages are so large that you need to enter them in order to see animals. You will see there ring-tailed lemurs, a variety of birds and tortoises. Unfortunately, for some reason, crocodiles are not allowed to have guests over...Equal rights, huh? At the same time, the most unwelcome guests stay at liberty. These are African ground squirrels, which, without any consent from the EU, appeared on the island, and multiply rapidly in this non-predatory environment.

ALL THE COLOURS OF LAVA

Time to move to the next island - Lanzarote. A few million years ago the islands were separated, but now I had to take a 40-minute ferry journey from Corralejo port. This time the landscape was nothing like the moon, and more like Mars. There are about 100 volcanoes on the island with three hundred craters, all this scattered on the area 60 by 25 km. Last bigger eruptions were reported in 1730, and lasted for 6 years non-stop, flooding 14 villages with lava and covering 1/3 of the island with a thick layer of ash. The magma chamber is still active, you can feel the warmth if you put your hand in a rock crevice. Wherever you look, you can see the beautiful lava. All the shades of colours the Earth can produce is there in the diverse forms of lava tongues, tunnels, corridors, grottos and craters. And there is much more to it than just colour - depending on the gas content, there are different types of lava: pahoehoe - has an undulating surface, while a'a - is characterized by a rough or rubbly surface.

All this makes you think of paintings of Kapists with their play with colours - bright greenery of algae-filled water contrasts with red and black rocks. Even the asphalt roads look very natural here, blending into the plains covered with basalt rubble. You can follow special tourist pathways to explore this cosmic landscape. Taking a bus, you can get to Timanfaya Park, where on the slopes of Montanas del Fuego you can see all the rock formations mentioned above. Various volcano-themed activities are held here. Someone puts a bunch of dry twigs into a crevice only to see a fire spurting out of it. Or they pour water from a bucket into a hole and wait for a geyser to erupt. Feeling hungry? Just put a grill over a hole in lava and the dinner is almost ready.

A CESAR'S WORK

Buildings in the back of the park are really interesting. Avant-garde in form, thanks to glass and black walls, they fit well into the volcanic atmosphere. They were designed by a truly mad artist named Cesar Manrique. He is highly regarded here as his influences are visible all over Lanzarote. As a young person, the artist left the island in pursue of fame and fortune. In 1968 he returned to create artistic, architectural and tourist image of today's Lanzarote, giving it recognition and 2 million tourists a year. Fascinated with volcanic formations, Manrique designed the park Jameos del Agua. A series of grottos combined together form de Atlantida lava tunnel can take you below the bottom of the ocean where you can ad-



Surfers from all over the world consider the island their home, because the waves are high and the water - pleasantly warm.





You can see here the influence of Cesar Manrique, who treated the island as one volcanic gallery. He created artistic, architectural and tourist image of today's Lanzarote, giving it recognition and 2 million tourists a year.

mire rock surfaces, the light beams, ponds with palm trees, or an underground lake with albino crabs. On the top of a volcanic rock there is an interactive museum showing how volcano works and were eruption is simulated. In one of the grottos there is a concert hall with fine natural acoustics. Another project by the artists is Jardin de Cactus - a rock amphitheatre, with 20,000 cactuses "sitting" in the audience. It is an ever-blooming pointy little paradise. Manrique treated the whole of Lanzarote like a gallery, and created miradors - vantage points with avant-garde buildings merged into the rocks. His own house was also built in this style. It is very spacious with walls, huge windows and multi-storey rooms incorporated into the landscape. The pool on his patio is surrounded with evergreen plants. Some of the rooms were created out of empty gas bubbles in lava, others were just carved in it. Lava tongues crawl through the windows into the interior.. This gives the impression of a sci-fi construction or a space object from another planet. Thanks to the artist, there are uni-

form architectural regulations all over the island. Buildings cannot be higher than two storeys and the colour palette of the facades was also regulated. As a result, the island gained a homogenous character, where black volcanoes contrast with whitewashed little houses. Almost nothing stands out against the background.

Where to go

- Princesa Yaiza, Playa Blanca Lanzarote
info@princesayaiza.com
+34 928 519 222
www.princesayaiza.com
- Gran Castillo, Playa Blanca Lanzarote
+34 902 210 902
www.dreampalacehotels.com
- Barceló Jandía Playa, Fuerteventura
+34 928 54 60 00;
jandiaplaya@barcelo.com
www.barcelo.com/jandiaplaya
- Meliá Playa Barca, Fuerteventura
+34 928 547025 www.melia.com

In some areas grapevine is grown, to make use of the fertile volcanic soil. Because of strong winds, each vine has to be sheltered with a stone wall, and the ash bottom is covered with volcanic gravel called picon, which absorbs humidity. The end results of this effort is a very sweet Malvasia wine.

A TAX PARADISE

Now a handful of practical information. Canary Islands, as a southwesternmost part of the EU have a status of an autonomous area, as well as their own government. They also boast a favourable taxation system: a 7% local sales tax instead of VAT, tax allowances for investors (e.g. 4% income tax for companies operating in ZEC zone) as well as a low tax on petrol (€1 euro) and alcohol. All this together with warm climate, where the temperatures in winter does not fall below 20° C, in summer never exceeds 30° C, and there are 340 sunny days in the year. Perhaps we should all go back to calling Canaries by its ancient name – the Happy Islands.

Barbara Scharf

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MEET IN... BERLIN

The German capital's cool, quirky character extends to its event spaces, find **Rose Dykins** and **Agata Janicka**.

It seems bold for a mayor to label his city “poor but sexy”, but Klaus Wowereit’s choice of words sums up Berlin’s spirit rather brilliantly. The destruction the city witnessed in the 20th century cannot be ignored, but this has resulted in a tangible sense of history and intrigue, a reputation for cutting-edge design, and a forward-looking attitude that attracts curious, creative minds.

The city’s allure as a meetings destination is also well founded. In May 2012, the International Congress and Convention Association ranked Berlin the fourth-most popular location for meetings, ahead of London. The German capital’s overall meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) sector is also enjoying healthy growth – it accounted for 3.1 million room nights in the first six

months of 2012, a 3 per cent increase on the same period in 2011. During this time, 57,800 events took place (an 8 per cent increase), catering for 4.6 million guests (up 7 per cent). The delayed opening of Brandenburg airport is now set for October 2013. Not only will it serve as a new hub for the city, but surrounding hotels will add to Berlin’s meetings offering – the 322-room Steigenberger, located directly in front of the new terminal, will launch when the airport opens for business, offering 1,500 sqm of meeting space. Downtown, a 232-room Waldorf Astoria with a 330 sqm ballroom was set to have its soft opening in December, with the official launch in February 2013.

Perhaps the most significant MICE development for the city is Citycube Berlin, which is on track to open in 2014. It will be situated

a short walk from the city’s ICC – one of the largest congress centres in Europe – on the expansive grounds of Messe Berlin. The ICC will close for renovation at the end of 2013, and Citycube will become its substitute for large-scale conferences. “Because it’s a new venue, it will be very flexible, with more than 70 breakout rooms,” says Heike Mahmoud, director of conventions at the Berlin Convention Office. “After the renovation of ICC Berlin at the end of 2017-18, Berlin will have doubled its conference capacity.”

Away from the big spaces, the capital is brimming with unusual event facilities and incentive activities that reflect its quirky character. “Clients want venues that bring the atmosphere of Berlin to their conference,” Mahmoud says.

Visit visitberlin.de

TEMPELHOF AIRPORT

Once described as “the mother of all airports” by Lord Foster, Berlin’s former city-centre hub – a 15-minute drive from Alexanderplatz – is perfect for large-scale events. The sprawling concrete 1930s structure has about 9,000 rooms totalling 300,000 sqm of space, plus the 300-hectare airfield, which is now a public park. There are seven 16-metre-tall aircraft hangars (the largest holds up to 3,800 visitors) with steel scaffold ceilings. These can be combined into a single 39,000 sqm space, which works well for exhibitions. The former terminal area of the Main Hall can accommodate 900 people for a banquet. Other spaces include the former airport canteens, the endless transit corridors and the control tower, which offers panoramic views. Columbiadamm 10; tempelhoferfreiheit.de

CURRYWURST MUSEUM

A warm atmosphere resonates in this fun, bright museum, in which the history of

Berlin’s well-loved dish is presented in imaginative ways. At the centre of the red and yellow-themed museum is a seating area shaped like a blob of sauce (with a drop shape dangling from the ceiling), a sausage sofa, and a replica of a currywurst van, which can be used as a platform for giving speeches. The interactive exhibitions encourage socialising – the spice chamber has several “sniffing stations” where visitors try to guess which spice is which – and there’s a small screening area. The museum can be hired exclusively for champagne receptions with currywurst canapés for 150 people. Guided tours can be arranged. Schutzenstrasse 70; currywurstmuseum.de/en

FERNSEHTURM

A 40-second elevator ride takes you to the observation area of the 368-metre-tall TV Tower, where it’s possible to hire the whole floor and its bar for 120 people – or a section of it for about 60 people – for network-

ing among the clouds. A further 21 steps up take you to the recently refurbished rotating restaurant, which can be used exclusively in the low season (November to March) for 200 guests. The indigo ceiling glitters with tiny spotlights, and the central stationary core that the tables and chairs slowly revolve around is a shimmering blue, gold and green piece of DDR artwork entitled Milky Way. The fixed tables can be combined into arrangements of six or eight, and groups can enjoy international gourmet cuisine as a buffet dinner or set menu. Panoramastrasse 1A, Alexanderplatz; tv-turm.de

AXICA

The monolithic sandstone exterior of the Axica bank at Brandenburg Gate is rather nondescript, which makes what’s inside all the more surprising. The Frank Gehry-designed atrium is instilled with expressionist energy, and flooded with natural light. The giant Plenum “walk-in sculpture” looks like

It seems bold for a mayor to label his city “poor but sexy”, but the choice of words sums up Berlin’s spirit rather brilliantly.





an oyster shell with its silvery steel exterior – inside, there's not a straight line in sight, and the biomorphic shapes of the pine ceiling and seating are said to be conducive to creative thinking. The space can hold 90 people for a meeting and is equipped with video-conferencing technology and 108-inch flatscreen TVs. The rest of Axica's meeting and event spaces is on the floor below the Plenum – the glass ceilinged, red-carpeted Forum is the largest, and can accommodate 500 delegates theatre-style or 350 for a banquet.

Pariser Platz 3; axica.de

SCANDIC BERLIN POTSDAMER PLATZ

Situated right in the city centre, this innovative hotel is powered entirely by renewable energy from Norwegian hydroelectric power stations. The eco-friendly ethos also runs throughout the property's meeting spaces – from the motion sensor lights to the prohibition of plastic water bottles. The contemporary décor is centred around the four seasons, while the thoughtfully designed conference lobby, which holds 180 people, transmits daylight to the other meeting rooms via translucent walls adorned with leaf patterns. The largest space is the green-carpeted Aurora Borealis, which can host 600 people theatre-style, is divisible by three, and has an out-

door terrace running along one side. The other 16 rooms hold 15-100 people theatre-style in each. All are wifi equipped. The 563 guestrooms are homely yet striking in design. Visit businesstraveller.com/trying-and-tested for a review.

Gabriele-Tergit Promenade 19;
scandichotels.com

BABELSBERG FILMPARK

Berlin's answer to Universal Studios is a 40-minute drive from the centre. It is the site where some of Germany's most iconic films were created, including Metropolis, The Pianist and, most recently, Cloud Atlas. Props and backdrops from movies are on display throughout, and on-site professionals can lead group workshops (for up to 30 people) in stucco painting, stunts, pyrotechnics and costume design. Delegates can write, act in, and shoot their own film, and meetings and events can take place in spaces such as the 3,000 sqm Metropolis Hall, which can hold 3,500 people for a reception, and the rustic Prince Valiant restaurant, which can host 300 guests for a banquet and features props from the 1997 film.

Grossbeerenstrasse; filmpark-babelsberg.de

DDR MUSEUM

This bustling museum on the bank of the river Spree, opposite Berlin Cathedral, provides a snapshot of life in the days of the

German Democratic Republic. More than 164,000 artefacts are presented in a way that allows you to interact – such as the replica of a typical East German living room that you walk into, or the cupboard full of clothing that you're free to try on. The museum can be hired exclusively after 8pm on weekdays (10pm Saturdays) for drinks receptions of up to 150 people, while guided tours for up to 20 people can be arranged during opening hours. The 100-seat restaurant, with a colourful DDR mural, serves authentic recipes and cocktails from the era – it can also be hired for groups.

Karl Liebknecht-Strasse 1; ddr-museum.de

BERLINER UNTERWELTEN

For another insight into the Cold War era, delegates can descend to the city's "underworld" of concrete bunkers for this two-hour tour arranged by Berliner Unterwelten. As you explore, you get a sense of the precarious state of the world during the period. The bunker walls display propaganda from the time – such as a government poster advising citizens to put a briefcase over their head to shield themselves from nuclear radiation – while the in-depth knowledge of the charismatic guides brings the tour to life. Up to 30 people can join a tour (three show-rounds can take place at 30-minute intervals).

Brunnenstrasse; berliner-unterwelten.de



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FINANCING FOR THE FUTURE

With the development of the market of financial services, Polish customers have now access to a variety of investment products and solutions offered by global financial institutions on their home markets. Based on years of experience in a number of other countries, PNP Paribas Group has decided to offer in Poland its investment advisory services.

Thanks to our investment advisory services you can, supported by our experts, manage a portfolio of financial instruments and decide on asset allocation. Our assistance is provided both at the stage of selection and analysis of financial instruments, as well as in the later phase when a transaction is to be made. It is for you to decide whether to accept or decline the recommendations presented to you. In other words, it is for you to decide whether to buy, sell or maintain shares, bonds or investment fund participation units held in your portfolio.

CUSTOMER DECIDES

This model of investment advisory, unlike the typical financial advisory which is in fact the mere sale of financial products, is based on an innovative solution where communication with the customer is of utmost importance. Our investment advisory services are provided in compliance with the Trading Act, which means that it is treated as one of well-defined brokerage activities. This in consequence means that each element of our relationship with the customer is strictly regulated by the Financial Supervision Commission. From the perspective of personal requirements, investment recommendations can be given only by a licensed investment advisor or broker with advisory powers. This means, that the investment advisory services are similar to asset management services offered by asset management compa-

nies, at the same time being substantially cheaper. This type of asset management services is cheaper than traditional solutions, as here the customer is more engaged in the process. Our advisor's evaluation of the selected investment strategy is a very useful option which is often used by our customers. Thanks to our experts on financial instruments you will get access to knowledge about very different markets and a wide array of financial instruments, including a variety of asset classes. Considering the enormous number of both the existing financial products and their specific features, thanks to the investment advisory services our customers can reduce the scale of informational chaos and manage their own assets more efficiently. It is also important to know that apart from our experts' support in the analysis of the portfolio, the customer also receives our assistance in placing orders regarding listed instruments.

THE ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

The investment advisory services provided by the Brokerage Office of BNP Paribas Polska are based on a multi-stage analytical process to select financial products that are most appropriate for you taking into account your individual financial situation. Conclusions concerning specific financial instruments are based on a thorough analysis of the current financial situation of the issuer of securities and are consist-



YOUR ASSETS ARE IN GOOD HANDS

Joanna Kadej-Krzyczkowska interviews Jerzy Nikorowski, an investment advisor for BNP Paribas Brokerage Services

Who are the investment advisory services offered by BNP Paribas mainly addressed to?

These services are mainly aimed at customers who prefer to have control over their own investment portfolio. Those investors avoid buying the proverbial "pig in the poke". Since customers make final investment decisions by themselves and we merely advise them on their strategy, it is a formula designed for people who are aware of the rules of the capital market and have their own opinion on what kind of financial instruments they want to avoid. Another category are investors who, with our recommendations, want to expand their knowledge of topics related to the capital market. There are many ways to invest capital. Their choice depends primarily on the customer's financial situation, their expectations about the rate of return, or the level of acceptable risk. You also need adequate capital.

What does it exactly mean?

We assume that in order to maintain an appropriate level of diversification of the portfolio, the optimal level of capital input should be 5 million zł. Some customers start with lower amounts (for example, 2 million), but there are many who manage a much larger portfolio. Lower capital also means lower efficiency of the strategies due to fixed transaction costs.

What are the investment advisory services and what benefits do they bring to your customers?



We provide our customers with a comprehensive list of investment instruments (stocks, bonds, mutual funds) and their suggested allocation in the portfolio, but it is the customer who makes decisions on specific transactions. We also provide professional assistance in placing stock orders. The customer also determines the extent to which he will follow the received recommendations. The benefits of this form of management are substantial. This service is much cheaper than the ones offered by traditional asset management companies. Before making recommendations for a specific investment portfolio, we also collect information from the customer about his experience in investing, as well as his risk tolerance and investment needs. This information helps us recommend a portfolio which is tailored to the needs of our customer.

So this service is not aimed at those who wish to obtain high profits in as little time possible?

Definitely not. Our investment advisory services are unique because instead of a one-off investment we propose you a specific set of actions that facilitate our support for you in every situation irrespective of the current market situation. However, in fact, much depends on the nature of the investment. We have conservative customers who are satisfied with a profit only slightly greater than this offered by deposit accounts, as well as those who decide to have a greater share of aggressive instruments in their portfolio which mean a higher risk but also higher potential profit. We have no minimum investment limits, prohibiting the total sales of risky asset during the decline in the market, and we are much more conservative than the typical asset management companies. However, in our opinion, the effectiveness of our product should be assessed after at least two years.

How are your recommendations created?

In preparing our recommendations we use information available in various information services such as Bloomberg, our own analyses and those made by other experts. We also have a rigorous investment process, starting at the international level. The information on the analyses and meetings of investment committees on various financial markets are taken into account in investment decisions made by Polish experts, and they also determine the course of action in relation to the instruments traded in foreign markets. Another link is the investment committee in Poland which verifies the global strategy and matches it to the Polish market. Finally, licensed investment advisors adapt it to the customer's profile, taking into account the level of acceptable risk, the specific requirements of the customer, etc.



Matching individual investment strategy for a particular customer allows for the effective implementation of the investment objectives, taking into account the risks involved.

ent with the current assessment of trends prevailing on the global financial markets. The investment portfolio and the level of risk can also be changed in the course of our cooperation with the customer.

FACING THE CRISIS

The demand for investment advisory services developed especially dynamically after the subprime crisis in the last few years. The emergence of complex financial instruments and unclear presentation of their specific characteristics, especially the associated risk factors, resulted in severe losses incurred by inexperienced investors. Those events highlighted the importance of expertise in the field of financial instruments.

Another argument in favour of seeking the advice of experts is the present high volatility of stocks, which further enhances investors' uncertainty regarding the future developments in the markets. Large financial institutions often have access to some advanced analytical tools and information typically not available to retail investors

(such as Bloomberg or Reuters news, meetings with issuers, scientific publications). The current reality shows that access to certain information before making an investment decision can be crucial from the perspective of individual investors, effectively reducing their uncertainty with regard to their investments.

The limiting factor in the availability of this service, is the basic knowledge that the customer should have about the functioning of financial markets. Even the best prepared presentation and description of the financial instruments may not always be enough to compensate the lack basic knowledge of finance and economics. Moreover, the fact that capital expenditures for certain financial instruments are relatively high, and a professionally built investment portfolio requires a high level of diversification – the investment advisory services are aimed primarily at customers with an adequate level of assets, so it is mainly addressed to those used Private Banking.

Jerzy Nikorowski

Jerzy Nikorowski
doradca inwestycyjny
Warszawa – BNP Paribas Biuro Maklerskie



Szukasz różnorodnych rozwiązań bankowości prywatnej? Właśnie znalazłeś.

Ewa Łysakowska
zastępca dyrektora
Warszawa – BNP Paribas
Bankowość Prywatna



Yann Quatannens
Senior Investment Advisor
Genewa – BNP Paribas
Wealth Management



Maggie Tsui
Deputy Head
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THE CONSTANT DRIVING PLEASURE

Citroën is continuing the DS line story with the revealing of a new chapter, the DS3 Cabrio. Motorists enjoy the slightest ray of sunlight thanks to the newcomer's intelligent architecture



The DS3, launched just two years ago, has proved an undeniable success, totalling nearly 200,000 registrations. Boasting enhanced personalisation possibilities with a range of roof collections and the Racing, Ultra Prestige and Just Mat models, the DS3 has played a major part in boosting DS line awareness and success. DS line sales have already topped the 300,000 mark. The DS3 Cabrio blazes a trail in the cabriolet segment with a new wave of modernity:

- electrically manoeuvrable roof up to 120 km/h
- the only real 5-seater in the category
- the largest boot in the category

The DS3 Cabrio, produced at the Poissy production site in France, will be launched in early 2013. A version emitting just 99 g/km of CO2 will be available from release.

UNIQUE STYLING

The DS3 Cabrio inherits the strong personality of the hatchback. At 3.95 m long, 1.71 m wide and 1.46 m high, it retains the original's compact proportions, denoting agility and energy. All the customary bold styling choices are present, from the “floating” two-tone roof and shark fin that reinvigorates the car's waist line, to the side recesses that underline the LED daytime running lights and sculpt the car's “face”. The architecture of the DS3 Cabrio is fully in DS3 character. The canvas roof becomes a new source of personalisation with a range of original colours and designs. The new model also features all-new 3D LED lights at the rear and a chrome finished handle that elegantly highlights the top of the tailgate.

A HIGHLY PERSONAL OBJECT

DS3 Cabrio owners can personalise the roof, body, rearview mirror housings and wheels. The DS3 Cabrio is available with three roof colours: black, Infiniti blue and DS Monogramme. CITROËN has maintained the distinctive floating roof feature by colouring the rear side panels black and echoing the colour of the soft top on the upper part of the body sides, the front cross strip and the rear spoiler. The decors on the dashboard insert, air vent surrounds and gear stick handle are also colour-coded with the body paint and soft top. Six decors are available: grey, Brillant black, white, Carbotech, Infiniti blue and Moondust grey.

REFINED DOWN TO THE LAST DETAIL

The highly sophisticated Infiniti blue canvas comprises delicate hues of blue and violet. The visual effect is obtained by a weave

of three different coloured threads, one of which is shiny. Each thread reacts differently to changes in light to further emphasise the singular personality of the DS3 Cabrio. Recalling products from luxury goods companies, the DS logo, synonymous with refinement and elegance, features on the Monogramme canvas roof of the DS3 Cabrio. The subtle design was achieved by contrasting two Jacquard grey tones with Moondust grey.

The atmosphere on board the DS3 Cabrio is just as distinctive as the body styling:

- the ceiling-mounted console, home to the roof opening control, features white LED ambient lighting.
- the instrument cluster and automatic air conditioning displays match the ambient lighting with their white lighting.
- the DS3 Cabrio boasts all-new upholstery, including Granit blue leather and Akinen weft now available in Mistral, Chic brown and Infiniti blue.

HYPNOTIC 3D LED TAIL LIGHTS

The DS3 Cabrio has a three-dimensional light signature based on all-new 3D LED tail-light technology. The design of the lights is inspired by those on the Revolte and Survolt concept cars. The central part of the light comprises a rectangular opaline set of 31 LEDs and an ensemble of semi-reflecting mirrors that reflect the light guide into infinity. A 15-LED blade on the upper part of the light emphasises the 3D unit and serves as a side and stopping light. In an elegant piece of detailing, the 3D light features a chrome-finished DS logo set in an embossed black DS setting.



THE ROAD FEEL

While most convertibles weigh in at some 100 kg more than the regular model, the DS3 Cabrio is just 25 kg heavier than the DS3 hatchback. The optimised architecture of the cabriolet model retains all of the agility and responsiveness of the original. CITROËN engineers have managed to give the DS3 Cabrio the rigidity of the hatchback, notably by using the same architecture for the sides and adding structural reinforcements around the boot.

Equipped with the same technical base as the regular DS3 – i.e. structural components and running gear – the Cabrio keeps all of the eager handling that makes the DS3 such a treat to drive while at the same time offering top notch control and safety.

THE CONCEPT OF A CABRIO

The DS3 Cabrio was designed to bring occupants pleasure with no compromises. It combines the advantages of a classic cabriolet with the strong points of a hatchback. In DS3 you can freely enjoy every single sunray:

- The roof takes just 16 seconds to fully close, at speeds of up to 120 km/h. Motorists open and close the roof with a button in the ceiling console offering three opening positions: intermediate, horizontal and total. Even in horizontal setting, the soft top folds back behind the rear passengers so they get a completely clear view.

Engineers worked particularly hard on acoustics. First, by choosing top-quality canvas, with standard-setting soundproofing, comparable to that of a hatchback when closed. But also by designing an aerodynamic deflector net for optimum acoustic comfort with the canvas roof open. This component springs into action as soon as the roof opens, deflecting air currents and preventing air buffeting.

The design is also less invasive in terms of cabin space. The DS3 Cabrio has five real seats and the largest boot in its category, at 245 litres. In a breakthrough in the segment, it has the same cabin space as its hatchback sister. And even retains the 60/40 split-folding rear bench, handy for a range of everyday needs. The tailgate has a particularly original opening path (circular motion), which enables motorists to fully open the boot no matter what the space behind. Work on aerodynamics has resulted in an SCx of 0.69 m2, identical to that of the hatchback, which enhances performance but also helps to reduce CO2 emissions. More specifically, the impressive result was obtained by adding a long spoiler and aerodynamic deflectors on the quarter-light surrounds.

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Malowniczo położona wśród pienińskich szczytów, Szczawnica stanowi idealne miejsce do organizacji konferencji, kongresów, jak również kameralnych spotkań służbowych.

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OŚRODEK KONFERENCYJNY - HOTEL NAWIGATOR***



Położony jest w samym sercu pienińskiego Uzdrowiska. Dzięki połączeniu 120 wygodnych miejsc noclegowych z czterema dużymi i nowoczesnymi salami konferencyjnymi, hotel stanowi doskonałe miejsce na szkolenia firmowe, konferencje, kongresy oraz imprezy integracyjne i motywacyjne. www.szczawnicanawigator.pl [facebook.com/HotelNawigator](https://www.facebook.com/HotelNawigator)



THE ROYAL ASPARAGUS

Pliny the Elder believed that the tastiest are grown in Ravenna. Cato the Elder perhaps was not so cruel, after all, as he wrote a textbook on their cultivation. In German principalities, they were a dish, which was only reserved for the noble people.

In the late 1860, a famous painter, Édouard Manet (the author of "Breakfast on the Grass"), painted a bunch of asparagus. The painting was bought by an art collector and connoisseur Charles Ephrussi. He was so impressed with it that he paid 200 francs over the price requested by the artist. Manet, who was a master of elegance and wit, painted one more asparagus and sent it to Ephrussi with a note saying: "There was one missing from your bunch". So much the story, but we know that this vegetable has been highly regarded for centuries. In China, it was regarded as a remedy for cough, and all the ancient (and later) civilizations considered it an aphrodisiac. In the Middle Ages asparagus was used to treat gout, and when the French King Louis XIV acquired a taste for it, it became known as the "royal vegetable".

THE ASPARAGUS TRAIL

From the French cuisine, the asparagus quickly spread across Europe, winning most hearts in German principalities. The famous Baden Asparagus Route is 136 km long and runs from Schwetzingen (considered the world's the most asparagus-loving town), through Reilingen, Karlsruhe, Rastatt, to Scherzheim. There is even a Queen of the Asparagus, chosen each year

in May, at the famous asparagus festival in Neudorf (Neudorfer Spargelfest).

THE COLOURFUL VEGETABLE

The most popular types of asparagus are white and green. Contrary to appearances, it is the same vegetable – but the difference lies in the way it is grown. White asparagus is grown in mounds, covered with soil. It is slightly sharp and crisp in taste. However, it also has one disadvantage - you need to peel it. The green asparagus is allowed to grow over the mound, and is softer and delicate in taste. Less common variety of asparagus is the purple one (specialty of the Italian and English), characterized by a very thick stem and intense-sweet buttery flavour. However the best asparagus, and as you might guess also the rarest, is the wild one, which grows mainly in Siberia and Asia Minor. It is also found in Italy and North America, but experts consider it breeding asparagus, except that it is grown on abandoned, wild-like plantations. Regardless of its colour, the asparagus is a real vitamin bomb. It contains a lot of potassium, folic acid, vitamin A, B group vitamins, vitamin C, calcium, and fibre. It is also low in calories, with mere 18 calories per 100 grams! Thanks to its low sodium content in combination with asparagine (an amino acid) the asparagus has diuretic properties, alleviates

swelling and pain caused by the premenstrual syndrome. The high content of glutathione helps the liver remove toxins from the body, accelerates healing, strengthens the body's defence system, and even plays a part in preventing the growth of cancer cells.

HOW TO BUY AND COOK

Despite all these advantages, the asparagus is primarily eaten for its unique flavour. When it is very fresh, it is firm and has a closed tip. When you rub two of them against each other, they produce a characteristic cracking sound.

Connoisseurs say that you should cook them ... an hour after they have been picked. It is rather unrealistic, but the asparagus, which has been stored for not more than two days in a fridge, should still be quite fresh and tasty. The hard tips of the vegetable should not be cut off, but rather broken off.

Interestingly enough, the asparagus should be boiled vertically (with salt and a pinch of sugar), with tips sticking out above the surface of water. The vegetable can also be steamed, and the green variety roasted in an oven. And after cooking? Top them with butter, sprinkle with browned breadcrumbs and serve with hollandaise or béchamel sauce ... There are endless ways of serving this unique vegetable.



4 HOURS IN... VIENNA

From grand Baroque to modern psychedelia,
Jenny Southan finds the Austrian capital a visual treat.



SECESSION

Vienna celebrated the 150th anniversary of the birth of Gustav Klimt in 2012 with special exhibitions of his work. It is well worth starting your walking tour of his home city at the Secession building, positioned a short walk from the Museum Quarter. The iconic white gallery, with its dome of golden leaves, was built in 1897 as an exhibition house for the Vienna Secessionists. Founded by Klimt and his contemporaries, the art movement advocated a new kind of modernism with an emphasis on abstract design and pure form. Inside, Klimt's Beethoven Frieze is a sensual entangling of gorgons, monsters and female nudes with flowing hair painted on to three walls. It was created for the 14th Vienna Secessionist exhibition of 1902 and is considered one of the artist's most important works.

Entry €8.50. Open Tues-Sun 10am-6pm.
Friedrichstrasse 12; secession.at/e.html

NASCHMARKT

A minute's walk from the Secession is the buzzing, semi-covered Naschmarkt, which has more than 120 stalls, bars and eateries, and free wifi. Open Monday to Saturday, locals have come here to stock up on fruit, vegetables, cheese and bread since the 1700s – these days, you can also sample cuisine from around the world, be it Turkish, Thai, Chinese or Japanese. After forging your way through the crowds, stopping to sample sausages and beer, take a seat at Fisch Viertel (1,060 am Naschmarkt) for a taste of the sea. For €8.90 you can get three oysters and a glass of prosecco, or if you want to go all out, 30g of black caviar with toast, butter and a glass of champagne is

€130. On Saturdays there is a flea market where all manner of dusty trinkets and battered antiques are on sale.

WAGNER APARTMENTS

On the right-hand side of the road (Linke Wienzeile) running parallel with the market are two beautifully decorated apartment buildings – one in gold and the other in pink flowers and green lily pads. Both designed by Otto Wagner of the Secessionists, the latter, at number 40, is called Majolica House and was built in 1899. Its hand-painted ceramic tile exterior in art nouveau style was considered ugly compared with the classical Baroque he was rejecting – in fact, walking around the city, you will see that it continues to be unique. The residence at number 38 is embellished with gold palm fronds and other motifs by fellow Secessionist Koloman Moser.

KARLSKIRCHE

A short distance away in Resselpark is another architectural gem, located in front of a broad shallow pool with a Henry Moore statue in it. With its pair of pale, carved marble towers, mint-green dome and classical entrance, Karlskirche is typical of Viennese Baroque grandeur. There isn't a great deal to see inside the ground-floor chapel, but as the frescos inside the dome are being painstakingly restored over the next few years, the church has erected a lift to take visitors up to a 32-metre-high platform to allow a closer look at them. Providing you don't suffer from vertigo, you can also ascend several sets of steps to the lantern and gaze out across the city.

Entry is €6. Open Mon-Sat 9am-12.30pm, 1pm-6pm, Sun 12pm-5.45pm; karlskirche.at

DANUBE CANAL

From Karlskirche, take the ten- to 15-minute stroll through Stadtpark and down to the Danube canal, which splits the main Innere Stadt part of the city from Leopoldstadt on the other side (this area is actually an island, because beyond it is again divided, this time by the Danube river, to which the canal joins at either end). The banks of the waterway are transformed in summer, when sand is brought in to create manmade beaches, and local hipsters recline in deckchairs. You will also see pop-up bars selling snacks and drinks, and splashes of vibrant graffiti on the walls. In winter, it is still a pleasant stroll down to the Sofitel hotel. If you have time to do a day trip to Bratislava, you can take a boat (twincityliner.com) to the Slovakian capital in 75 to 90 minutes from the dock opposite the property.

SOFITEL HOTEL

If you see this Jean Nouvel-designed hotel from a distance after dark, you will notice the ceiling of its 18th-floor Le Loft bar appearing as a glowing, psychedelic swathe through glass walls at the top. Take the lift up and upon entering the expansive space, which doubles as a restaurant, not only will you be confronted with panoramic views but the Pipilotti Rist creation above you. The artist printed photos of autumn leaves on to canvas panels that are illuminated from behind to create a striking canopy of orange, yellow, magenta and turquoise. Try a signature cocktail – the 18th Floor (€19) mixes Absolut vodka, elderflower, apple juice, sugar and lemon. Open 12pm-2am. Praterstrasse 1; tel +43 1906 160; sofitel.com

Visit austria.info/uk, wien.info/en



In Vienna, fans of great architecture will certainly not complain about boredom. There is something for everyone – those who like original buildings, and the ones who are the fans of more classic designs.





ASK PETER

Letters

Piotr Kalita is related with air transport market for almost 20 years.

He is specializing in corporate and diplomatic travel segment. Have a question? - ask Piotr.

Mail your question to: redakcja@businesstraveller.pl

On a plane with a broken leg

I am planning to fly to Barcelona. A month ago, I broke my leg and I walk with crutches. Rehabilitation is going well and I do not need a wheelchair, but I might still need the crutches during the journey. What are the regulations concerning crutches in my case? Do I have to notify the airline in advance? I am willing to walk on my own.

Katarzyna

Dear Katarzyna,
Naturally, you do not need to worry about travelling with crutches or a cane. Airlines and airports are obliged to enable handicapped passengers to travel and cannot introduce any limitations. Details are available in an EU regulation number 1107/2006 from 5th July 2006.

Remember that there is a difference between the transfer of handicapped passengers (or mobility impaired) and those with serious medical conditions. In the latter case, the passengers have to fill in a MEDA form, and the final decision is taken by an airport doctor.

Handicapped (or mobility-impaired) passengers should notify the airline or their travel agency that they need to book a wheelchair at least 48 hours prior to the departure time. They should also be informed if the passenger is able to get on the plane and take a seat on their own.

In your case, no wheelchair is necessary, as you are able to move around on your own. You do not need a special assistance to reach your seat on the plane. However, you should notify the airline that you will be travelling with crutches, as mobility-impaired passengers are not allowed to take some of the seats, e.g. those next to emergency exits. What's more, the airline may give you a better seat (near the exit or lavatories), and leave the seat next to you empty, provided the flight is not fully booked.

Crutches cannot pose a danger to other passengers. That is why, after you take your seat, a flight attendant might want to put them in the overhead locker or a closet. Crutches are not treated as luggage so do not worry about exceeding your luggage allowance.

This applies to all flights that start or end on the EU territory, regardless of what airline you choose: regular, charter or a budget one.

How to travel through Canada?

I am going on holidays to Canada. I will stay over three weeks there. I want to go from Toronto to Vancouver. Should I take a plane or rent a car? Are there any budget airlines operating in Toronto? Or maybe there are some direct trains or buses? How long is the journey?

Piotr

Dear Piotr,
A journey through the whole of Canada is quite long, but enjoyable, especially in the mountains. Naturally, the quickest and most convenient option is to choose a plane. There are several direct flights from Toronto to Vancouver a day offered by Air Canada or WestJet. A direct flight takes about 5 hours. You can also choose one of the numerous stopover flights, which might be cheaper. Apart from the international hub of Pearson, passengers also travel from the nearby Hamilton airport, where you will find cheap domestic flights.

Travelling by car may at first seem rather monotonous, but the views may be a true compensation for this choice. If you rent a car in Toronto and drop it off at the Western coast, you have to be prepared to pay extra. Renting a car has some advantages, as you are free to choose the preferred route and the duration of stops. When travelling on such long distances, it is recommended to have a reserve driver.

Regular bus connections on this route are provided by the well-known Greyhound Company. Usually, you need to change buses in Calgary. The journey takes three days. The buses are of high quality, but the journey itself is not very comfortable. Taking a bus is a better option if you travel shorter distances. The prices might be tempting, but you will not be able to do much sightseeing, as the stops are very short.

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Taking a train, is surely an interesting option. It is, a very popular, yet not quite cheap, way to visit Canada. The trains go three times a week. The train leaves Toronto late in the evening. The journey takes about three days and a half. Prices vary, according to the seat you want to take. Economy class (a supersaver ticket bought ahead of time) is the cheapest. The most expensive option is an individual sleeper compartment. Each option includes meals provided in the dining car or in your compartment. For detailed information go to the website of VIA Rail Canada.



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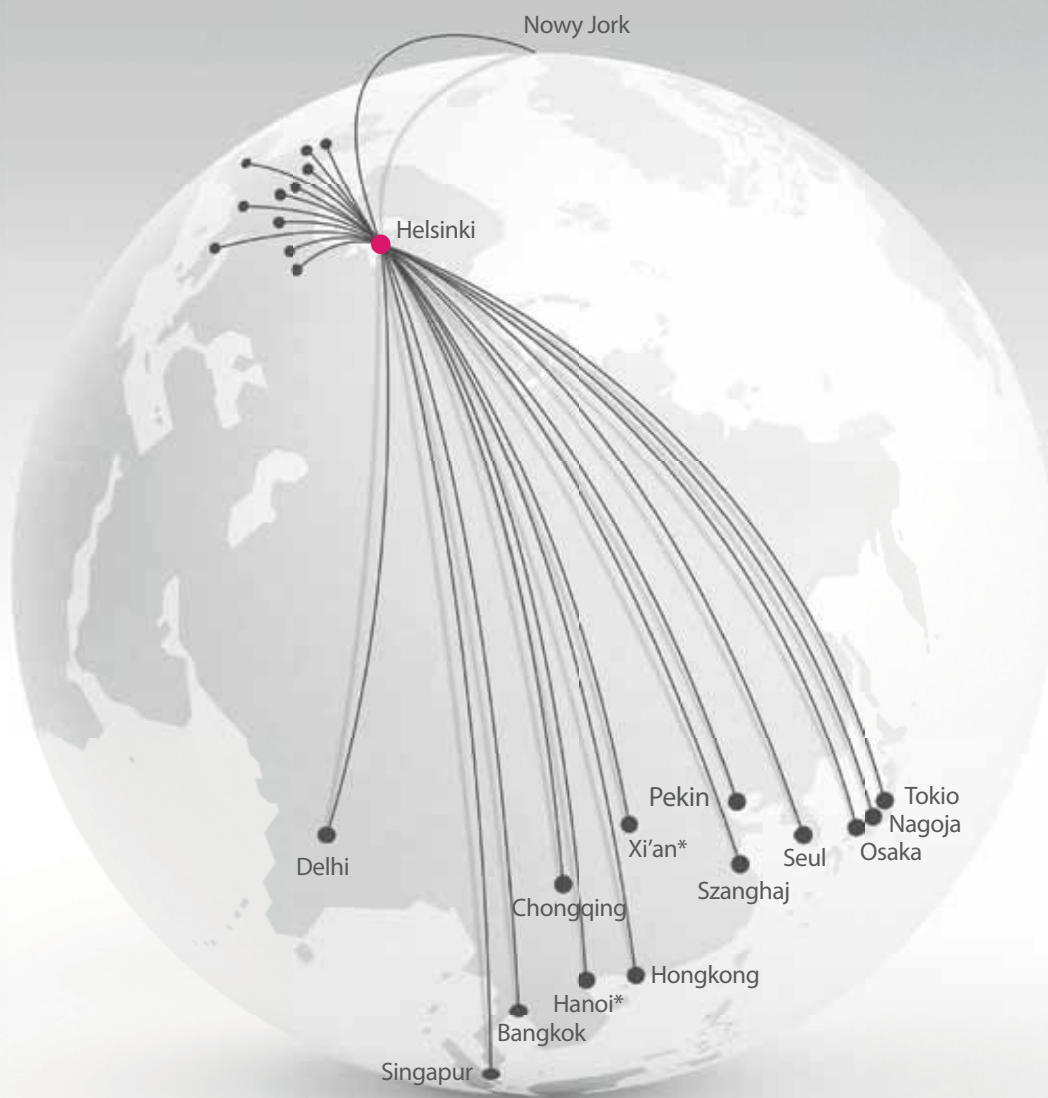
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