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Business Traveller Poland

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

Redaktor naczelna Marzena Mróz
m.mroz@businesstraveller.pl

Sekretarz redakcji Joanna Kadej-Krzyczkowska
j.krzyczkowska@businesstraveller.pl

Dyrektor artystyczny Barbara Scharf
b.scharf@businesstraveller.pl

Skład/tamianie LACRIMA
lacrima.barbarascharf@gmail.com

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

Wydawca Robert Grzybowski
robertg@businesstraveller.pl

Szef serwisu
www.businesstraveller.pl Filip Gawrys
f.gawrys@businesstraveller.pl

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BUSINESS TRAVEL

A business trip is a special thing. You're still at work, but away from your desk and the comforts related to stationary work.

You're on your own, without a personal assistant and instant access to necessary equipment. To make matters worse, you often need to cross several time zones within one day risking terrible jet lag, spend whole days at conferences in air-conditioned rooms and order unhealthy, late dinners. That's why it's so important for frequent travellers to be able to choose best airlines, book hotels with the most comfortable beds, know which airports have the most convenient business lounges, buy a good laptop to substitute their office computer on a business trip, and purchase a good suitcase.

Trying to identify the brands that best cater to the needs of business travellers, last year, for the first time in its history BT Poland organized an opinion poll among its readers, to find out their views in this matter. I recommend you our cover article entitled "The Best of the Best" in which we listed companies that know how to please frequent travellers. Enjoy your reading and have a wonderful experience while testing the products that we recommend.

Marzena Mróz

Marzena Mróz
Editor-in-Chief



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TY WYZNACZASZ KIERUNEK



Tourism

Stubai Valley

SPRING SKIING

The warm spring sun doesn't seem to bother skiing aficionados who enjoy the charms of the Stubai Valley. Schlick 2000, Serles and the Elfer resorts, offer good skiing conditions mainly owing to their location on Austria's largest glacier – Stubai.

In lower regions snow melts with high temperatures, revealing green meadows. However, for skiers and snowboarders in the Stubai Valley it just means that they can replace their winter goggles for sunglasses and that they should use sunscreen when they go for a ride on the glacier. That's why it's not really surprising to see here skiers wearing only T-shirts. Ski resorts of the Stubai Valley offer good snow conditions until Easter, and on the glacier even until June.

Snow glistening in the sun on the Stubai Glacier attracts ski enthusiasts of all sorts. They can use as many as 35 well-groomed slopes and numerous pistes. Valuable advice and information about snow conditions can be obtained in Powder Department at the website: www.powder-department.com.

Airlines

Finnair

NEW FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Finnair's new summer flight schedule is set to begin March 30, 2014, offering flights to three new seasonal destinations including, Pisa, Biarritz and Alanya. Popular destinations returning to the summer schedule include Toronto, operating with upgraded Airbus 330 aircraft from June 1st to September 21st, and Chicago as a codeshare with oneworld partner American Airlines. Flights to Xi'an in China continue on March 30 and to Hanoi in Vietnam on June 2.



From midsummer, the carrier will operate two weekly flights each to Pisa and Biarritz. From midsummer, the carrier will operate two weekly flights each to Pisa and Biarritz. It is also doubling its daily frequencies to Düsseldorf and Zürich from two to four. Three weekly flights to Alanya will be operated from April to August.

In response to higher demand, extra frequencies are also being added to Copenhagen, Dubrovnik, Malaga, Paris, Rome and Tel Aviv, between June and August.

Popular destinations returning to the schedule include Toronto, upgraded to an A330 flight, and Chicago, as a codeshare with oneworld partner, American Airlines. The carrier has also announced an addition to its winter schedule, with flights to Tromsø to run three times a week from Helsinki between January 1 and March 28, 2014.



Technology

New app

AURORA HUNTERS

Do you want to know when to go to Northern Norway to see the Northern Lights? Now it's much easier with a smartphone app making it easier to predict the appearance of the aurora borealis. The application is free to download and use.

"We are happy to see that an increasing number of tourists are coming to Norway to chase the mysterious Northern Lights for themselves. We hope that our new free app, NorwayLights, will make it even easier to spot the northern lights this winter," says the director of tourism in Norway, Per-Arne Tuftin.

According to scientists, 2013 is said to be a record year for the Northern Lights. Now researchers predict the winter season of 2014/2015 to be another good year for spotting the northern lights as well. According to readers of Lonely Planet magazine, Norway is the best and most easily accessible country in which you can observe the aurora. The occurrence of auroral belt covers an area of Northern Norway, from Lofoten Islands to the North Cape.

The application for smartphones that will help you find the Northern Lights is named "Norway Lights" and is available for Android and iOS. It predicts the occurrence of the phenomenon even a few days ahead.

KUP BILET LOTNICZY

na www.centrumlotow.pl

WYGRAJ NAGRODY!

Wygraj: dwuosobowy rejs po Karaibach, Morzu Śródziemnym, dwuosobowy bilet do Barcelony, dwuosobowy bilet do Pragi i wiele innych nagród. Szczegóły na www.centrumlotow.pl



Airline

Austrian Airlines

ADDITIONAL CONNECTIONS

Austrian Airlines have introduced six additional weekly connections from Cracow to Vienna.

The extra flights will be integrated into the carrier's route network starting 30 March 2014.

In total passengers of Austrian Airlines will be able to choose the most convenient connections among as many as 13 flights a week from Cracow to Vienna.

Also on intercontinental Austrian Airlines care about the comfort of travellers, offering them fully reclining seats in Business Class, new seats in Economy Class and a completely new in-flight entertainment system.

Partners

airberlin i Etihad Airways

A UNIQUE AIRCRAFT

Etihad Airways and airberlin unveiled an Airbus A320 aircraft in specially designed joint livery, symbolizing the close ties between the two airlines and marking the launch of a new Moving Forward media campaign. At the event in Berlin, Wolfgang Prock-Schauer, airberlin's CEO, and James Hogan, Etihad Airways' president and CEO and vice-chairman of airberlin, gave details of how air travellers will continue to benefit from the special partnership and the progress made in the first two years.

Prock-Schauer, said: "The comprehensive commercial partnership with Etihad Airways has brought many benefits to airberlin, including our shares of joint revenues of 200 million euro, which is an integral part of our turnaround program." He added: "Partnerships are vital in today's aviation industry. Our partnership provides significant benefits to Etihad Airways, airberlin, as well as to our guests. Not only do we provide an expanded offering of destinations and services, we also have developed synergies through the entire value chain."



Technology

PHILIPS

A NEW DIMENSION OF COMMUNICATION

MMD, the leading technology company and brand license partner for Philips Monitors, is introducing into the Polish market the new 23-inch Philips 231C5 SmoothTouch display with 10-point capacitive touch. The model resonates clearly with the way people work and play nowadays, providing a natural fluid response to gestures, and also features a web-cam and microphone to keep users connected with the people that matter in their lives.

Tap, grab, pinch, rotate, zoom and swipe: users who appreciate smartphone and tablet touch features no longer have to sacrifice these abilities on a desktop-sized screen. With the natural, fluid response of the 23-inch screen, users can look forward to a whole new way of engaging with their computer. The display features 10 point capacitive touch – for 10-finger control – and edge-to-edge glass for a brilliant interactive display experience.

Tourism

Switzerland

SAASPASS

Saaspass is an indispensable travel companion. It guarantees free access to the largest ice cave in the world and a free trip by Allalino train. With Saaspass even the audio-guides are free. In addition, you receive a 50% discount for night tobogganing in Hannig and 15% discount for skiers when you purchase a 3-day ski pass. The list of the benefits and discounts is long and attractive.

Saas-Fee, in turn, is an offer for non-skiers or those looking for new adventures. The pass entitles you to the use of cableways in Saastal. It's valid for four or six consecutive days. The 4-day pass costs CHF 133. Note that the Saas-Fee isn't a ski pass. For more info contact:

Saastal Bergbahnen AG;
www.saas-fee.ch/bergbahnen



Airline

Qatar Airways

THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY

It's been a year since a new major airline entered the Polish aviation market. It's the only five-star carrier, offering direct, regular service to and from Poland.

Initially, flights on Doha-Warsaw route were operated four times a week and two months later the number of connections was increased to one a day. The route is now operated by Airbus A320 aircraft, offering 12 seats in business class and 132 in economy.

Qatar Airways was the first to offer Polish passengers fast and convenient connections to numerous destinations, including the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Australia.

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Tourism

Georgia for everyone

NEW WIZZ AIR CONNECTIONS

Approximately 1,400 km in a straight line from Poland, among the Caucasus Mountains, lies a magical land of wine and honey, which for years has been conquering the hearts of tourists from all over the world. Georgia is also becoming an increasingly popular destination among Poles, who go there for a holiday or even weekend trips. A wide range of winter resorts (Bakuriani and Gudauri) makes it also a perfect place for skiers. With the launch of Wizz Air's low-cost flights to Georgia, the country is becoming even more open and available for Polish tourists. Wizz Air flies to Georgia from Warsaw (on Saturdays and Sundays) and from Katowice (on Tuesdays and Saturdays) twice a week. After a nearly three-hour journey, the planes from Poland land at the airport situated 15 km from Kutaisi, the second largest city of Georgia, which is known for its beautiful monasteries. Its location allows you to easily move around the country and enjoy its charms. Wizz Air fares for Georgia flights (one way including taxes and a booking charge) start at PLN 99 from Katowice and PLN 119 from Warsaw. You can book them at www.wizzair.com. It's good to know that Wizz Air allows you to take 32 kg of hold luggage (at a fee), as well as purchase additional legroom. Members of Wizz Discount Club can save money when going on family trips with Wizz Air.



Hotel

Novotel Łódź Centrum

HOSPITABLE HAVEN

Novotel Łódź Centrum is famous for its hospitality. It's a good place for both business travellers and families with children. Rooms are comfortably furnished and executive rooms offer extra space and a comfortable armchair. The hotel service is perfect and each guest is treated individually. The hotel has recently introduced a new menu. The chef recommends such appetizers as: beef tartare, Polish herring trio, quich of goat cheese, and smoked salmon rolls. The choice of salads is also large, including the delicious Caesar salad with chicken, with roast duck breast, spinach and tomatoes, or caprese with garlic bruschetta. The choice of soups includes: heather borscht with duck, sour żurek soup with white sausage, or the intriguingly sounding vichyssoise - a delicate cream of leeks and potatoes. As for the mains, you can choose among cod fillet on a salad of fresh spinach, fillet of salmon with mushroom risotto, sirloin steak with vegetables, pork medallions layered with grilled vegetables and chicken fillet. Don't forget to try the restaurant's specialties, available only in Novotel, such as Novotel burger or club sandwich. More info at www.accorhotels.com



Airline

LOT

SUMMER TIMETABLE

LOT Polish Airlines has updated the flight schedule for the upcoming summer season in their booking systems. The schedule now includes new flight frequencies, as well as changes resulting from the requirements of the European Commission with regard to the carrier's restructuring plan. The new offer also includes additional connections to Rome for John Paul II canonisation, by Dreamliner! The carrier actively responds to market demand and - starting this spring - offers additional frequencies on European flights. As compared to the 2013 summer schedule, summer of 2014 will bring the "second wave" of afternoon flights from Warsaw. In the Central and Eastern Europe it will cover airports in Budapest, Prague, Sofia, Bucharest, Belgrade, Moscow, Lviv, Odessa, Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn. This means that new frequencies will emerge on these routes. Changes in the schedule for the Western Europe relate to Copenhagen (additional flights with the aircraft staying overnight 6 times a week). There will be also additional weekly frequencies to Milan, Stockholm and Brussels. Modifications also concern flights to Paris, Hamburg and Amsterdam. Besides, it will be possible to fly to these cities more frequently. Additional wave of departures from and arrivals to LOT hub in Warsaw allows to offer transit passengers more convenient stopovers for carrier's transatlantic flights and for Beijing.

Rajskie Wakacje
na Malediwach dla Dwojga

SCUBASPA

SCUBASPA zaprasza na niezapomniane rejsy po Malediwach na pokładzie nowego 50 m statku **SCUBASPA YING**, zbudowanego w całości przy udziale polskiego kapitału. Do dyspozycji Gości profesjonalne centrum nurkowe i 300 m² Spa w azjatyckim stylu.

Pakiety wakacyjne typu all inclusive:
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WHAT'S ON

The most interesting cultural events

LEMON FESTIVAL OF MENTON

15 February – 5 March 2014 – The Sea of Citrus – for the 81st time!

Located on the French Cote d'Azur, 300 years ago, the town of Menton was once a European superpower when it came to growing lemons. Sadly, today only five growers are in the business, but the memory of this tradition is still alive thanks to local specialties such as lemon olive oil, lemon ice cream or lemon preserves. There's also a beautiful arboretum in the Carnolès palace garden with 140 species of citrus trees. Since 1934, during the carnival, the city goes crazy about this citrus fruit and the annual Lemon Festival (Fête du Citron®) is held here.

Each edition of the festival has a theme. In previous years, guests could admire the Eiffel Tower or Taj Mahal made of lemons. This year's inspiration comes from Jules Verne's novel, "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea". Over 130 tons of citrus is to be used for decorating the festival float, alluding to the underwater world and the adventures of the main character. Tickets for individual festival events cost from €5 to €25, you can book them online at www.fete-du-citron.com.

For information about accommodation and tourist attractions in the neighbourhood go to www.tourisme-menton.fr.



WARSAW THE ORDINARY 1934

24 January – 6 April 2014 History Meeting House

The exhibition features about 150 photographs by Willem van de Poll, a Dutch photographer and photojournalist, who came to Poland in 1934. Photographs stored in the National Archives in The Hague show a vibrant and colourful country, which is both safe and prosperous.

"That was the last this ordinary year of the Second Polish Republic," says Professor Ryszard Żelichowski, the author of the exhibition, and a historian from the Institute of Political Studies.



WARSAW STILL LIFE

13 February – 20 April 2014 – Polish Army Museum

Polish Army Museum in Warsaw would like to present to the public a recently found painting by an excellent Gdańsk painter Andreas Stech (1635-1697). It is probably the best-preserved example of floral still life from the Polish art of the 17th century.

The painting delights with its beauty and stimulates reflection. "Still Life Flower in a Glass Vase" is now one of the most valuable paintings in the collection of the museum and entered a list of treasures of culture and national heritage. The exhibition features portraits of Gdańsk patricians and a self-portrait of the artist. Lotto is a partner of the exhibition.



VALENCIA OLDEST SPANISH FIESTA

2 – 6 February 2014 Bocairent, province of Valencia.

The town Bocairent in the province of Valencia celebrates the feast of its patron saint - St. Blaise hosting the festival Moros y Cristianos (Moors and Christians). It's true, native Spanish fiesta, where the streets are the scene of many colourful parades and processions involving bands playing paso doble music and groups recreating historical events. It is accompanied by firework displays. The feast starts with the Entra parade – richly ornamented floats flow through the medieval streets of the city.

GÓRA RORAIMA, 2810m.



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THE BEST OF THE BEST!

2013 Business Traveller Awards
Winners Announced!





Lufthansa, LOT Polish Airlines, Star Alliance, Best Western, Accor, Hilton, Dell, Toyota and Audi – these are just some of the well-known brands that have been awarded in the very first edition of Business Traveller Poland Awards. The awards ceremony was held on Wednesday in Sobański Palace, Warsaw.

Business Traveller Awards have a long and rich history. Many national editions of Business Traveller magazine organize their own award ceremonies. These include Business Traveller China, Business Traveller Middle East, Business Traveller America, and Business Traveller Africa. The UK-based Business Traveller magazine, which was founded in 1976 in London, organizes its annual Business Traveller Awards event that attracts major airlines and hotel chains around the world. The same was true for our event in Warsaw.

This year, for the first time in its history, BT Poland organized its own event based on reader voting. Almost 1,000 people, including business travellers and travel managers, took part in the online survey which contained questions related to products and

services. The survey results were then analysed by consultancy firm Deloitte.

“We have decided to organize this event, because we strongly believe that it is worth writing about and awarding good products. Despite the economic downturn there always is and will be demand for luxury products for business travellers. Never before have hotels rooms offered as many amenities as today, and the offer of airlines is equally impressive,” says Robert Grzybowski, the publisher of Business Traveller Poland. “The results of our survey, which was aimed at business travellers and travel managers, say a lot, indeed,” continues Mr Grzybowski. Congratulations to the winners. “Our magazine is an inspiration both for business and leisure travellers. I hope that the presented awards will be a source of ideas for travel in 2014. We appreciate the independent choice of our readers, which makes the Business Traveller Poland Awards truly exceptional,” emphasizes Marzena Mróz, the editor-in-chief of Business Traveller Poland. During the gala, which was attended by more than 70 representatives of the nominated companies, we awarded winners in

22 categories. The statuettes were presented to Warsaw Chopin Airport (Best Airport in Poland), Changi Airport in Singapore (Best Airport Worldwide), Frankfurt Airport (Best Airport in Europe), Lufthansa (Best Long-haul Airlines and Best Business Class), Miles And More (Best Loyalty Programme), Star Alliance (Best Air Alliance), LOT Polish Airlines (Best Economy Class and Best Short-haul Airline), Wizzair (Best Low-Cost Airline), British Airways (Best Premium Economy Class), Hilton (Best Business Hotel Chain Worldwide, Best Business Hotel in Poland), and Accor (Best Business Hotel Chain in Poland).

The award for the best car rental company both in Poland and in Europe went to AVIS, while Samsonite received the statuette for the most favourite luggage brand. Apple was the hands-down winner in the Best Business Smartphone category, while Dell was awarded for the Best Laptop. Toyota won in the Best Fleet Car category for its Avenis model, while the award for the Best Executive Car went to Audi for its A8.

Here is the complete list of winners of 2013 Business Traveller Poland Awards:



2013 Business Traveller Poland Awards ceremony took place in Sobański Palace, Warsaw.



Awards

2013

WINNERS

AIRPORTS

Best Airport in Poland

1. WARSAW Chopin Airport
2. WROCLAW Strachowice
3. CRACOW Balice

Best Airport in Europe

1. FRANKFURT am Main
2. MUNICH Franz Josef Strauss
3. AMSTERDAM Schiphol

Best Airport in the World

1. SINGAPORE Changi
2. DUBAI International
3. HONG KONG Chek Lap Kok

AIRLINES

Best Short-Haul Airline

1. LOT POLISH AIRLINES
2. LUFTHANSA
3. SWISS

Best Long-Haul Airline

1. LUFTHANSA
2. SINGAPORE AIRLINES
3. BRITISH AIRWAYS

Best Economy Class

1. LOT POLISH AIRLINES
2. LUFTHANSA
3. BRITISH AIRWAYS

Best Premium Economy

1. BRITISH AIRWAYS
2. AIR FRANCE
3. KLM

Best Business Class

1. LUFTHANSA
2. BRITISH AIRWAYS
3. EMIRATES

Best Low-Cost Airline

1. WIZZAIR

Best Frequent Flyer Programme

1. MILES AND MORE (LUFTHANSA)
2. EXECUTIVE CLUB (BRITISH AIRWAYS)
3. EUROBONUS (SAS)

Best Air Alliance

1. STAR ALLIANCE

HOTELS

Best Business Hotel Chain Worldwide

1. HILTON
2. RADISSON BLU
3. BEST WESTERN

Best Business Hotel Chain In The Poland

1. ACCOR
2. HILTON
3. HYATT

Best Business Hotel In Poland

1. HILTON WARSAW
2. SHERATON WARSAW
3. HILTON GDAŃSK

Best Hotel Loyalty Programme

1. BEST WESTERN REWARDS
2. MARRIOTT REWARDS
3. LE CLUB ACCORHOTELS

CAR RENTAL, LUGGAGE, CARS AND ELECTRONICS

Best Car Rental Company Worldwide

1. AVIS
2. HERTZ
3. EUROPCAR

Best Car Rental Company In Poland

1. AVIS
2. EUROPCAR
3. EXPRESS

Favourite Luggage Brand

1. SAMSONITE
2. WITTCHEN
3. TRAVELITE

Best Business Smartphone

1. APPLE
2. SAMSUNG
3. NOKIA

Best Laptop

1. DELL
2. APPLE
3. SONY

Best Fleet Car

1. TOYOTA AVENSIS
2. SKODA OCTAVIA
3. FORD MONDEO

Best Executive Car

1. AUDI A8
2. BMW 7 SERIES
3. VOLVO S80





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Michelin Guide Recommendation

The awards have been presented



Robert Grzybowski, the publisher of Business Traveller Poland and Marzena Mróz, the editor-in-chief.

The 2013 Business Traveller Poland Awards ceremony took place in Sobański Palace, Warsaw. The event was attended by heads of airlines, hotels, and airports from Poland and around the world, as well as representatives of the automotive industry, car rental companies, manufacturers of electronics and luggage.



Chloe Marchand, General Manager of Air France and KLM in Poland



Ada Rusowicz, Radisson Blu



Agnieszka Róg-Skrzyniarz, Sheraton Warsaw



Piotr Lenczewski, Marriott Warsaw



Katarzyna Gospodarek, BMW Poland



Krzysztof Kołodzyński, Skoda



Jarosław Wróblewski, Vice-President of the board of Wrocław Strachowice Airport



Kamil Krzywański, Sony



Szymon Zaliński, SAS



Olaf Krynicki, Samsung



Maciej Pyrka, Emirates Country Manager Poland



Bart Buyse, General Manager Passenger Sales Poland, Lufthansa



David Henry, Sales Director for Poland, Orbis-Accor



Martin Mueller, Star Alliance



Erwin Verhoog, General Manager, Hilton Warsaw Hotel



Winfried Hartmann, Frankfurt am Main Airport



Barbara Grabowska, Singapore Airlines



Przemysław Przybylski, Spokesman at Warsaw Chopin Airport



Michał Leman, Product and Marketing Director at LOT Polish Airlines



Magdalena Gniadek, Miles and More



Leszek Kempniński, Audi



Gheorghe Cristecu, Best Western



Katarzyna Dobrzyńska, Avis



Marta Orlof, British Airways



Robert Grosiak, Dell



Aleksandra Wiśniewska, Wizzair

Airline

WARSAW-DUBAI-WARSAW

EMIRATES AIRBUS 330-200 BUSINESS CLASS

**CONTACT**www.emirates.com/pl**PRICE**

from PLN 7,026

Those who have never been to Dubai, should definitely visit that country and the best way to go to this amazing, futuristic, exotic and luxurious place, is to fly there with Emirates - the national carrier of Dubai. The direct flight from Warsaw takes just 5 hours and 25 minutes. If you choose business class, you can be sure that you will be served truly like a king and in accordance with the carrier's slogan "Hello Tomorrow".

BOARDING

Gate 19 at Warsaw Airport, from which the plane departs every day, is situated close to Bolero lounge, where prior to your de-

parture you can have a cup of tea or coffee, and check your email. Business class passengers can use fast track boarding, getting onto the plane without having to wait in the queue. The seat configuration on the plane 2x3x2 and I my seat was 9B next to a window. Beautiful, smiling flight attendants dressed in beige uniforms with ruby red accents and pillbox hats, know the names of the passengers and greet them with a welcome drink: water, orange juice or champagne Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label. A few minutes later they bring warm wet hand towels. On each flight departing from Warsaw there's at least one flight attendant who speaks Pol-

ish, although the cabin crew is international. It's immediately obvious that they are extremely professional with a personal touch towards each passenger. Sometimes these are minute details like the fact that flight attendants during a conversation with passengers don't lean or stand upright, but they squat to shorten the distance.

The décor of the cabin also attracts attention with cream leather seats with wooden trim, and fresh flowers in vases attached to the wall. Other amenities available in business class include cotton duvet, a pillow in white pillowcase, travel socks, as well as eye mask. Bathrooms feature Rochas toiletries.

WARSAW-DUBAI

We took off promptly at 1.50 pm. When we reached the cruising altitude, the flight attendants once again offered drinks and a selection of nuts. For mu lunch I chose zucchini soup with fish and chicken with vegetables breaded in thyme. Other choices were fish and grilled lamb. As for dessert, I opted for fresh fruit salad.

Emirates is renowned for its selection of wines. In business class you can taste white Meursault Marc Rougeot-Dupin 2011 from Burgundy and Rhine Riesling Dreissigacker Bechtheimer 2012, while the choice of red wines includes French Chateau La Tour du Pin Figeac 2005 and Spanish Pintia 2007. At the end of the meal it's worth ordering Porto Cruz LBV Port 2001, which perfectly harmonizes both with cheeses and chocolate. After the meal there was time for another pleasure – the in-flight duty free shopping. I was truly amazed how thick the catalogue was. There wasn't much time left before landing, but I managed to recline my seat to almost flat position and browsed through the offer of the in-flight entertainment system for which Emirates has won numerous awards. Indeed, the choice of 1,400 channels is impressive. We landed in Dubai at 10.15 pm local time.

DUBAI-WARSAW

On the way back I got to the airport two hours before the scheduled departure at 7.30. Each business class passenger is assisted by a dedicated member of the staff who escorts them from the very entrance to the terminal to check-in procedure. The airport is very modern and offers a cornucopia of designer shops, bars and restaurants. It takes at least 15 minutes to get to your gate from the check-in desk and security control. The plane to Warsaw departed from Gate C-26, but before I reached it, I decided to visit the legendary Emirates Business Lounge.



It's enormous and features numerous seats with reading lights, several computer stations, and floor-to-ceiling windows which offer an unlimited view of planes taking off and landing. Although I got there early, at 6.30 am, there was already a wide selection of dishes available, starting with English breakfast, the specialties of the Middle East, Indian cuisine, Japanese miso, Arabic pickles and of course champagne. There were even fresh raspberries, blackberries and strawberries, imported here in immaculate condition.

On the plane I took seat 6A in a cosy (as I initially thought) nook right behind the first class cabin. This, however, isn't the best choice, because here you can hear noises coming from the plane's galley. During the 6-hour flight I had delicious

lunch: vegetable soup with coconut milk, roasted chicken breast with broccoli and strawberry cream. I also watched a film – one of the latest productions that has recently been released in cinemas.

VERDICT

The flight offers luxury and comfort, as well as a good price for the highest quality. It's worth flying with Emirates for the very pleasure of the travel. The airline is renowned for its professional service, excellent catering, punctuality, and the unique individual approach to each passenger. Purchasing a business class ticket, you can also use the chauffeur service. A BMW 5 will take you to the airport and collect you after your arrival. It's a very convenient solution. I definitely recommend it!

Marzena Mróz

It's worth flying with Emirates for the very pleasure of the travel. On each flight departing from Warsaw there's at least one flight attendant who speaks Polish, although the cabin crew is international.

Hotel Le Meridien

DUBAI

DUBAI & CONFERENCE CENTRE



CONTACT

Le Meridien
Dubai & Conference Centre
Airport Road
PO Box 10001
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
www.starwoodhotels.com

PRICES

starting at €280

Le Meridien Dubai, which belongs to the prestigious Starwood group, is situated in a beautiful, large garden. It's extremely luxurious and cosmopolitan, only 25-minute drive away from the city centre with shops, restaurants, and fascinating skyscrapers of Dubai. It's also only a 5-minute drive from the international airport. Le Meridien features a conference centre, a ballroom for 1,200 guests, 4 swimming pools, spa, fitness centre, tennis courts and 18 restaurants.

ROOMS

Each of the 386 rooms has a terrace or a balcony and is spacious

and well-equipped. Some of the amenities include a king size bed, a desk with an office chair, wardrobe, luggage rack, as well as the mini-bar. The walls are lined with dark wood.

It's undoubtedly a hotel for businesspeople, lacking in sophisticated décor, but also very functional and offering free internet access, large LCD TVs with a DVD player, as well as excellent buffet breakfast with traditional dishes and delicacies of Arabic, Chinese, Hindu cuisine. There's also a wide selection of soft drinks, including freshly squeezed orange, pineapple and grapefruit juice, as well as pastries from around the world.

In addition to the standard rooms, there are also Royal Club Rooms and suites with free daily delivery of fresh fruit, juices, sandwiches, and in the evening - chocolate chip cookies.

Guests who choose to stay in superior rooms can also enjoy the Royal Club Lounge - a non-smoking room, which offers daily press and magazines from all over the world. You can also have your breakfast here, enjoy coffee or tea during the day, or go for a small snack in the afternoon.

Executive Club Rooms are equipped with coffeemakers and have a view of the garden or one of the pools. Their bathrooms feature tropical rain showers as well as sensors

which automatically switch on and off the light.

BUSINESS CENTRE, FITNESS CENTRE

The business centre is available 24/7. It's equipped with computers, printers, scanners, a fax machine which can be freely used by hotel guests. You can also borrow here a mobile phone, order booking air tickets or a restaurant table. The place also offers other office services, such as re-writing texts or stenotyping. The hotel's Fitness Centre caters for the needs of all guests. First of all, it features a sophisticated spa where treatments performed on the face and body are based on Pevonia Botanica cosmetics. The hotel has 7 treatment rooms and a standard 2 "wet" ones where hydrotherapy and pedi spa treatments are performed. You can also relax here during light treatment or aromatherapy, as well as buy cosmetics.

The staff are international, while the décor is simple and natural. Those who like the daily training under the guidance of the instructor, may continue their training regime at Le Meridien Dubai. Other activities available in the hotel include spinning, boxing, tbc, or yoga.

RESTAURANTS

There are 18 of them and I must admit that I had a great dilemma which one to go to for lunch or dinner. The hotel offers a culinary journey through nearly every continent, ranging from the most interesting Thai, Japanese, Cantonese and Sichuan cuisines, to Italian and Argentine dishes, as well as delicacies from Ireland or France. I especially recommend the Seafood Market, where guests – almost like at a market in France or in Asia – can personally choose seafood, which is then prepared for them. In L'atelier des Chefs restaurant, guests are involved in the cooking process, and the dishes are created in front of them. I also recommend the Thai Suko-

tai restaurant, M's Beef Bistro (a typical steak house), and the Mexican Jules Bar, where you can listen to live music. Kiku is a Japanese restaurant with sushi section, Teppanyaki table, Tatami room and a bar, where you can drink sake. Casa Mia has a wood-burning stove for baking pizza which is as tasty as the one from Naples. Mahec restaurant attracts with intense aromas of turmeric, coriander, and cumin, typical of Indian cuisine. Long Yin specializes in hot and aromatic dishes from Canton, while The Dubliner's

is a traditional Irish pub. The choice is simply mind-blowing!

VERDICT

It's a good hotel for business travellers, located near the airport and offering a comfortable stay. After a busy day you can unwind in one of the four pools, relax in the spa, or go for delicious dinner that you'll never forget. A major advantage of the place is its well-functioning business centre, which can be a great help when you're on a business trip.

Marzena Mróz



It's a great business hotel, without refined décor,
but very comfortable and functional.



RADISSON BLU ZURICH AIRPORT



CONTACT

Radisson Blu Zurich Airport****
Flughafen Zurich,
PO Box 295 – 8058 –
Zurich Switzerland
tel. +41 44 800 40 40
fax +41 44 800 40 50
e-mail:
Info.Zurich@Radissonblu.com
www.radissonblu.com

PRICE

Standard Room
-from about PLN 850
(with breakfast)

From a distance it looks like a futuristic sculpture. The rows of giant windows reflect the sky and planes taking off literally at your fingertips, because the hotel is located only 200 metres from the airport. You can watch this fascinating spectacle from the window of your room, and passers-by have an impression that they are watching a film displayed on a huge screen. The hotel is located between two flyovers carrying thousands of vehicles every day, but it's well soundproofed, so its guests can enjoy total peace and quiet. The city centre is a 10-minute drive, and there's a railway station nearby from which you can get to the main Zürich Hauptbahnhof station.

ROOMS

The hotel offers Standard and Business Class double rooms, as well as suites, including the Presidential Suite. If you are travelling with children, instead of booking two rooms you can ask for a family room (2+2). This is a convenient, yet rarely seen

solution, and the rooms are so spacious (with an additional sofa bed), that they can easily accommodate four adults as well. All rooms are equipped with nice, comfortable furniture. Business Class rooms come with Nespresso machines, daily newspapers, as well as free soft drinks and snacks in the minibar. You can also start a day with a super-delicious buffet breakfast served in the hotel's restaurant.

RESTAURANTS

The food served at Radisson Blu Airport Hotel is a sufficient reason to stay here for a longer time. It's worth visiting Filini restaurant, not only to taste its excellent Italian dishes, but also to see the two famous crystal chandeliers. Located on the outdoor terrace of the Filini Restaurant, Giardino Blu offers alfresco dining with a wide array of tempting meals and drinks. You can also order here a bottle of wine from Angel's Wine Tower Bar, which is the awe-inspiring highlight of the hotel's atrium lobby housing over 4,000 bottles of wine and

Champagne. Exquisite Wine Angels soar around this spectacular glass structure as they retrieve each wine selection. At dinnertime, the angels perform an impressive artistic show for guests to enjoy.

FITNESS & WELLNESS

The hotel's Pace Fitness Club is the place to go if you want to maintain your training routine on the go. You can use there a variety of cardio equipment, high-tech treadmill, and after the training unwind in sauna or steam bath. Hotel guests can visit the deluxe Airport Fitness & Wellness Club situated in the basement floor of Zurich Airport.

VERDICT

It's a great place for both business travellers and tourists. With Zurich public transportation working like a Swiss watch (pun intended), getting to the city centre is fairly simple. Great business facilities. Good discounts for early booking and for weekend stays.

Rafał Sobiech

NISSAN NOTE FROM AVIS

Avis car rental is a brand with more than half-century of history. Founded in Detroit in 1946, it started with just 3 cars, to become a huge international company with more than 4,000 rental stations in 170 countries. In Poland, Avis is present in all major cities with a fleet of approximately 1,500 cars of all segments - from small city cars (Nissan Micra), through compact cars like city hatchbacks (Nissan Note, Ford Focus), to larger vehicles (Toyota Avensis, VW Passat) and luxury limousines like Audi A6 or Volvo S80. The choice is wide and everyone should find here something that they like.

FORMALITIES

The fastest and most convenient way to rent a car is to do it online, on the official website of the company (www.avis.pl). However this option bears a risk that you won't receive a specific model you want, but just a car from the group you've selected. Of course you can also order the car by telephone or in person at a rental station of your choice. When you pick up your vehicle, you'll be asked for documents proving the right to rent a car

in a particular vehicle group. IN accordance with the rules of the company, to rent a small and medium-sized car, you must be at least 21 years old and possess at least one credit card, while for the other groups you must be at least 28 years old, be a holder of at least two credit cards, and have had your driving license for at least 1 full year.

THE CAR

The tested model is the second-generation Nissan Note with 1,2 litre petrol engine and 80 horsepower. The car accelerates from 0 to 100 km/h in 13.7 seconds and its maximum speed is 168 km/h. This may not be an F1-spec vehicle, but this shortcoming is fully compensated with fuel economy. The Note II consumes only 5.7 litres of petrol in city mode. The new generation of the Note isn't just the facelift of what was actually a good car. The exterior has been changed radically, although the dimensions of both generations are roughly the same. The interior houses an impressive instrument panel, which displays useful information such as current fuel consumption, estimated maximum range, outside temperature, and the suggested gear.

Add to this precise and quite transmission, as well as the excellent power steering, and you have a car that is easy and fun to drive.

RETURNING THE CAR

The return procedure is fairly simple. You return the car, the keys and the documents, and an Avis employee checks visually the condition of the car and the amount of fuel left in the tank.

VERDICT

AVIS has a large fleet and friendly attitude to the customer. You can return the rented car to other station than the one you collected it from or ask for the car to be delivered at a specific address.

The cars on the offer are the latest models by well-known and respected manufacturers, and they are no older than 12 months. The Note II we tested had a mileage of only 100 km. In addition, Avis offers very good deals on rental of this model. For example, renting the care for the entire weekend costs PLN 324 net, while monthly rental is only PLN 72 net per day (rental for at least 30 days, mileage limit 2,000 km).

Aleksander Dobkowski



CONTACT

www.avis.pl

The origins of Avis date back to 1946, when the American Warren Avis, foreseeing the post-war demand for travel, opened at Willow Run Airport in Detroit, Michigan, the first car rental station.



THE HOTTEST PLACE IN THE TATRA MOUNTAINS



CONTACT

BUKOVINA
Terma Hotel SPA****
ul. Sportowa 22
34-530 Bukowina Tatrzańska
tel. +48 18 20 25 400
fax +48 18 20 25 405
e-mail: info@hotelbukovina.pl;
rezerwacje@hotelbukovina.pl
www.hotelbukovina.pl

PRICES

2014 Holidays Special offer –
from PLN 406/person

When you feel like skiing, but also miss the atmosphere of the Caribbean Beach, the choice is simple. In the very heart of the Tatra Mountains, in a picturesque valley, there's a unique place, full of life, like a spring with crystalline water.

THERMAL BATHS AND SPA

This might just be a metaphor, but you can interpret these words literally. This is because both BUKOVINA hotel and Poland's largest thermal pools belong to the same complex. So why don't you go to your room to change into the swimsuit, wrap yourself in a soft hotel bathrobe and take the lift downstairs to the thermal pools. It's impossible to try out all the attractions there, even if you wanted

to spend there a whole day. Altogether there are 20 pools, including six outdoor ones. But don't worry – you won't be cold. The water temperature ranges between 28 and 38°C, and the outdoor pools come with underwater deckchairs, where you can sit and admire the snow-covered mountain peaks. One of the most extraordinary attractions is a pool where you can listen to music – but only when diving underneath the surface of water. "Bulgotnik" pool will show you the power of bubbles, if you enjoy blissful laziness – head for Jacuzzi, while if adventure is your thing, you should definitely try out the giant water slides. Hot weather fans can bask in the warmth of one of eight saunas – from Roman, through Finnish, highland, flower to the infrared one. The tempera-

tures range from modern 40° to almost infernal 110°C.

The water in the pools is mineralized and is also beneficial to health: it reduces stress level and sleeplessness.

The nearby spa will double this effect if you choose one of the relaxation treatments from Ayurvedic Massage to the so called "highland robbers' massage" (Zbójnickie masowanie). The 16 treatment rooms offer beauty rituals, aesthetic medicine treatments, manicure, pedicure and there is even an exclusive hairdressing salon.

ROOMS

The hotel offers 152 guestrooms and suites (including ones adapted to the needs of people with disabilities). On the fourth floor you'll find higher category rooms and suites. Their guests

will automatically join the elite Bukovina Club and gain access to the additional facilities.

But even the Standard rooms are fully-equipped. Soft, cozy flooring and a huge bed – you can sense that comfort is the general theme here. I have no idea who supplies the hotel with mattresses, but this one was more comfortable than my own.

The bathrooms are spacious, finished with attention to detail and simply beautiful. Crystal clear water in the taps comes from the thermal springs and thanks to the white fluffy towels the morning shower fills you up with optimism for the whole day.

RESTAURANTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Bathing in the pool will surely whet your appetite, and Sylwester Lis, the chef of two hotel restaurants "Morskie Oko" and "Zbójecki Łygotnik" has unlimited culinary imagination. Thanks to it, you will be able to try out such delicacies like horseradish powder or beetroot jelly, as well as more traditional highland treats. What I find particularly amazing, is that everything, from bakery products to cold meats, is produced on the spot.

Guests have also access to various bars and clubs. Bukovina Club Bar is worth a visit if only



for the view – behind the glass wall you will see a breath-taking view of the Tatra National Park valleys.

If you are an active lifestyle enthusiast, you shouldn't miss Active Bar. It's a nice place you catch your breath after a workout in the gym, or just to savour the healthy snacks, freshly-squeezed fruit and vegetable juices and refreshing cocktails. In Jazz Club you can have a glass of fantastic cocktails to live piano music. And if you want to go crazy until the morning hours – the disco is on site. So is the 4-track bowling alley and a billiards room.

Despite those treats, which, admittedly, involve a certain level of noise, you don't need to worry about your comfort. The hotel is

soundproofed in such a way that nothing can spoil your stay, even if other guests eagerly conquer the dance floor or when the hurricane rages outside.

There is also a playroom for the youngest guests. While the little ones run wildly among themselves under the supervision of babysitters, their parents may head for the spa or enjoy a romantic dinner.

VERDICT:

An ideal place for rest for both the body and the soul. Here the time flows differently. The mountain air, stunning landscapes and omnipresent luxury make you leave your daily worries behind and enjoy your stay.

Zuzanna Krzyczkowska



Everything was arranged so as you provide the guests with excellent fun and rest. After a whole day in the pools and spa treatments, you can relax in the silence zone. And the hotel restaurants offer not only delicious food, but also spectacular views which will leave you speechless.

A STONE'S THROW FROM THE AIRPORT



CONTACT

Sheraton Milan Malpensa
Airport Hotel & Conference
Centre
Milan Malpensa Airport
Terminal 1
tel. (39)(02)23351
www.starwoodhotels.com

PRICES

starting at €230

WHERE'S IT?

Luxurious, functional and can compete with hotels in the centre of Milan – both when it comes to the quality and price. It's a good base for trips to the nearby Alps and outlets.

This is the only Malpensa airport hotel directly connected with Terminal 1 and it's situated only 100 metres away from the runway. Its windows overlook beautiful mountains, including the peak of Monte Rosa which is visible in good weather.

The hotel was founded especially for passengers travelling to Milan from faraway places and who wish to have some rest while waiting for another flight. It's considered one of the best airport hotels in the world. There is a special train which will take you to the centre of Milan and the trip takes mere 30 minutes. Sforza Castle or a magnificent Milan cathedral are about 45 kilometres, and the famous Armani boutique in the city centre - 50 kilometres away.

WHAT'S IT LIKE?

The hotel is built from concrete and glass. It's 420 metres long. It's spacious, modern and makes good impression from the very beginning. Perhaps it

doesn't look too cosy, but it's not the most important thing when you pick a place where you want to have a rest for the next several hours. Standard rooms are located on the lower floor, while club rooms - on upper floors. They differ only in location and window view. The suites have a fitness corner, where you can do exercise, prepared by professionals engaged in the FIT programme organized by Sheraton. The third floor houses an open-plan business lounge, visible from every corner. There are also well-equipped conference rooms of a total space of 2,000 sq m as well as 30 smaller meeting rooms. Guests have also access to a swimming pool, although it seems a bit too small as for a huge hotel like this one.

ROOMS

The hotel offers 433 rooms and 19 suites. The furnishing is very modern and includes comfortable beds, bedside tables with lamps giving dimmed light, spacious wardrobes, tables, chairs, comfortable armchairs, bars and suitcase stands. Then there's the famous Sheraton Sweet Sleeper Bed, designed and improved by the most prominent specialists in the

world. This legendary bed was indeed so comfortable, that I fell into a deep sleep and, as a result, almost missed my plane. The bathroom is quite big and has branded toiletries, a hair-dryer and soft towels.

BAR, RESTAURANTS AND SPA

The most spectacular place in the hotel is Monte Rosa Bar, open from 7.00 am to 2.00 am. You can have there a light snack and excellent cocktails. A long table illuminated with red lights, and comfortable chairs make you want to stay here for as long as it gets. You can also visit Il Canotto restaurant offering Mediterranean cuisine, open between 6.00 - 10.00 am, 12.00 - 14.30 pm and 22.00 pm to 23.00 pm. If you feel tired, you can have some rest in the spa, which offers numerous relaxing treatments and covers the area of 1,000 sq m.

VERDICT

I recommend Malpensa Sheraton hotel to everybody, not only tired travellers. You can have a rest here, eat a fantastic dinner or go to spa. The hotel is within a distance of only 1,000 metres from the airport's runway. That's a real advantage.

Rafał Sobiech

Mercure Piotrków Trybunalski Vestil

PIOTRKÓW TRYBUNALSKI

A HOTEL WITH A VIEW

Piotrków Trybunalski is a city with traditions, its history dates back to the 8th century. It's here that the royal elections or gentry meetings were held and the Peace of Thorn was also ratified here. Today Piotrków can attract not only history lovers, but also tourists and business people. And especially for them, a new Hotel Mercure Piotrków Trybunalski Vestil was opened, offering numerous attractions. Mercure hotels are well-known all over Poland. Its business and leisure travellers certainly make it an attractive alternative to other hotel chains and independent hotels. The hotel is situated quite close to the city centre, but also not far away from the exit roads, making it the most convenient facility for both travellers and those who want to stay there for a little longer.

ROOMS

The hotel offers 63 comfortable rooms for 124 guests. More demanding guests can also stay in Diamond Apartment – a three-room spacious studio of 100 sq m with a winter garden, a see-through glass wall overlooking the city and other attractions.

The suite is perfect for long rental – it can be a convenient substitute for home for those, who come to Piotrków for a longer business trip.

MEETING FACILITIES

Mercure Piotrków Trybunalski Vestil hotel was created primarily for the business people. On the one hand, it's well prepared for group events, on the other – it has a calm and discreet atmosphere and it's a perfect place to work.

There is a modern business centre with seven conference rooms. As a result several events can be held here at the same time. What's more, the arrangement of the rooms makes it possible to adjust them to clients' needs.

THE BEER BATH

After a hard day, it's worth relaxing in the local spa, whose main attraction is the beer bath. Having a bath in the golden liquid while drinking a pint of unfiltered beer will unwind you and make you forget about daily worries. The hotel's soothing music and the atmosphere of a medieval wine cellar make you feel as if you have travelled back

in time and relax in an unforgettable way.

RESTAURANT

On the rooftop you will find Pepper & Salt restaurant, whose spacious terrace overlooking the city is a real asset, especially in summer. Here, under the blue sky, you can try excellent beef tenderloin, shrimps that just melt in your mouth or pâté with cranberries. The chef Marcin Kuśmierski guarantees that the other dishes taste just as great, especially with a glass of superb wine from the restaurant's extensive wine list.

VERDICT:

Mercure hotels stand out because of high standards of a multinational chain and a reference to local traditions. Mercure Piotrków Trybunalski Vestil serves here as a perfect example. Even the most demanding guests will feel good here. The main assets are simplicity, good design and functionality. The hotel is perfect for organizing meetings, conferences and business events, while at the same time it's a cosy place to stay and relax.

Klara Kochańska



CONTACT

Mercure Piotrków Trybunalski Vestil Hotel***
ul. Armii Krajowej 22c,
97-300 Piotrków Tryb.
tel. +48 44 684 00 00,
+48 44 684 00 01
fax +48 44 616 00 44
e-mail: H9077@accor.com
mercure.com

PRICES

Single room - from PLN 150
Double room - from PLN 240



A FRENCH ARISTOCRAT



CONTACT
www.peugeot.pl

PRICES
from PLN 136,800

Peugeot 508 GT is the largest and most luxurious limousine in the fleet of the French brand. It charmed me at first sight. If I had to personify the 508, I'd say that the car is a real gentleman – the epitome of charm, best manners and firmness.

AT FIRST GLANCE

From the very first moment when "Monsieur Peugeot" invited me to his interior, I felt thrilled like a kid. Everything here is made from the highest quality materials, perfectly fitted, and each element is placed where it should be. You won't find here any mess or the excess of gimmicks straight from a disco-car.

The seats are fantastic – comfortable, heated and adjusted electronically in all possible ways. There's also so much space both in the front and at the back, so even tall passengers will travel in comfort.

In terms of appearance, the 508 GT is a true breakthrough in the history of Peugeot. Rounded lines combined with side ribs form the ideal dynamic and

slightly aggressive whole.

It turns out, however, that – like everything – also this car's beauty has its dark side. When you open the bonnet, the lid is lifted high into the sky... The hydraulic cylinder works fine, but then what? I couldn't close the lid while standing in front of the car, because ... I'm not 2 metres tall. Eventually, I managed to close it standing from the side, but this was a small though slightly annoying flaw to otherwise perfect car. Luckily, I quickly forgot about that problem, when I saw the huge boot of the car with 515 litres of space which can accommodate almost any luggage.

WHAT'S UNDER THE BONNET?

The drive unit on board the car I tested was a 2.2 litre diesel motor producing decent 204 hp and 450 Nm of torque, which works perfectly with a 6-speed automatic transmission. I especially liked the possibility of changing gears with paddle shifters mounted behind the steering wheel. This solution not only improves driving dynamics, but

also reduces fuel consumption.

I didn't manage to obtain the consumption as claimed by the manufacturer (6.9 l/100 km in city mode, 4.5 l/100 km on the highway), but the differences were too small to be bothered.

However, I was able to confirm the manufacturer's claim that the 508 GT accelerates from 0 to 100 km/h in 8.2 seconds. The dynamic power unit in combination with a sensitive hydraulic power steering and the advanced design of the front suspension (only available on the GT), result in a car that drives really well. It's fast and stable both on straights and in corners.

VERDICT

In conclusion, the 508 is a truly remarkable car on the offer of the French manufacturer. It's hard to call the 508 GT a successor to the 607, because this car has set completely new standards in precision and perfection. It has created a class of its own. It's not surprising though. After all, it's not that easy to compete with a real gentleman!

Zuzanna Krzyczkowska

**ALITALIA,
GDZIE WITAM
ZMIENIA SIĘ
W BENVENUTO.**





PACK TO THE FUTURE

The nostalgic appeal of a Goyard steamer trunk with its chevron-patterned canvas exterior, buckles, studs and leather trim may never die, but in reality the needs of modern travellers have moved on. Today we have utterly different requirements.



Modern suitcase must be sturdy - to withstand relentless treatment at airports, lightweight - so that you don't have to carry unnecessary weight, as well as easy to manoeuvre around even the most crowded railway stations and airports. It should also be equipped with a laptop compartment because for a growing group of passengers it's much more than a gimmick, but rather an indispensable device, especially on a business trip. Other important features include cabin-friendly dimensions business-like aesthetics and built-in TSA locks. As luggage design evolves, manufacturers are beginning to come up with more high-tech innovations.

A SUITCASE STRAIGHT FROM JAMES BOND MOVIES!

Luggage manufacturers are trying to meet all the above expectations and keep up with technological progress. They must have been envious of films Agent 007 movies where Q - the head of research and development division of British Secret Service - comes up with new and utterly incredible gadget for James Bond. And although so far suitcases haven't been present on the Agent 007's list of gimmicks, this seems to be just a matter of time. Especially that more and more luggage manufacturers are introducing products that feature quite interesting solutions.

Some are more useful than others, of course. No businessperson is going to buy a suitcase that turns into a scooter or a sound-system, but we may be interested in a bag with a built-in solar panel or tracking device. The latter is of particular interest to both the industry and the consumer, with 26 million cases being mishandled by airlines every year.

In light of this, there are numerous projects underway to come up with a solution. One example is Tile (thetileapp.com), a tiny plastic homing device that can be attached to your luggage and wirelessly connects to a smartphone app via Bluetooth (scan this page with the free Blippar app to see a demo video). Another, Bag2Go, is an "intelligent suitcase" being created in collaboration with Airbus, Rimowa, information communication technology company T-Systems and trade body IATA.

Bag2Go is fitted with a computer chip that syncs with a smartphone app to tell you where it is at any point on the journey (except during the flight) using GPS. It also has a built-in digital scale, a system that will

notify you if your case has been opened or tampered with, and an e-ink display (like on a Kindle) with two barcodes - one containing your personal information and flight details, the other a unique identifier to replace the need for a separate bag tag at check-in. In the future, all this may mean you can even have your case delivered to your hotel on arrival without you having to wait for it at the airport (scan page with free Blippar app to see a demo video). Jan Reh, innovation cell manager for Airbus says: "We have built the first prototypes and are entering a try-out phase with airlines. We believe this will change the world in the next decade and we are targeting a price that is attractive to passengers."

British Airways joined forces with design consultancy Designworks earlier this year to come up with an electronic bag tag (also with an e-ink screen). Although the product won't be able to track your suitcase, customer trials among Microsoft employees using Nokia Lumia Windows phones began in October, in Heathrow T5. The phones all have a specially adapted version of the BA app on them, which automatically updates the tag in a single swipe with a unique barcode containing new flight details and the case's destination.

IT'S TRAVELLERS WHO WILL DECIDE

Premium luggage manufacturer Tumi has also been busy. "We are looking at tracking devices and will be introducing something in the spring," says Alan Krantzler, senior vice-president of brand management for Tumi. "We are also looking at technologies that help our customers stay powered." But not everything catches on.

"We actually did a solar backpack in collaboration with [sculptor] Anish Kapoor [in 2006]," says Krantzler. "But solar panels are not yet at the point where they are getting huge acceptance in the market mainly because they take a very long time to charge and our customers don't have the patience and aren't outdoors enough."

"We have also looked at built-in scales but have not yet found a solution that is durable enough, and we have stayed away from bags that are self-powered because there is a balance between adding too much technology to something that either raises the price or increases the weight."

Here, we round-up ten luggage innovations that could make your travelling life easier...



For gimmick lovers

ANTLER JUNO

Price: £119

antler.co.uk

INNOVATION: Ribbed, injection-moulded shell - in white

Distinctly futuristic to look at (making it much easier to find it on the luggage carousel at an airport), Antler's Juno suitcase is made from two ribbed, injection-moulded shells made from polypropylene (the same material as used for car bumpers). This makes it highly durable, flexing gently when pressure is applied, and comes with a guarantee of ten years.

Also available in black, the white option looks the most striking, but runs the risk of attracting lots of scuffs and marks. With a packing capacity of 45 litres, and measuring 56cm x 35cm x 23cm, the Juno, which was launched in August, is also very light at 2.4kg (the largest version weighs just 4.2kg).

VERDICT: Injection moulded polypropylene suitcases have been around since the late sixties, but the bone-like ribbed design of the Juno makes this Antler unique.



For absent-minded ladies

NOMO SCALA NORTH/SOUTH

Price: £239

knomobags.com

INNOVATION: ID registration code
As with all Knomo products, the Scala North-South cabin case from the new Fitzrovia range for women comes with a unique "Myknomo" ID number. This can be registered online so that if it goes missing and someone finds it, they can contact the British luggage manufacturer direct (online or via the international telephone number on the label) who will reunite you with your luggage free of charge.

Tumi has a similar product recovery programme called Tumi Tracer with cases inscribed with a unique 20-digit number, while Booq's extensive range of bags and iPad cases have Terralingq (booqbags.com). Knomo's carry-on cases come in cherry, black and marine, and also feature a front compartment for a 15-inch laptop, an external pocket for a mobile or keys, double-stitched diamond quilting, EVA foam padding, a zip-away telescopic handle and a magnetic clasp that wraps around the leather handles to keep them together (a nice touch).

VERDICT: A useful layer of online support combined with attractive, well-thought-through design across the Knomo range. The Myknomo system is reliant on the honesty of the finder. A tracking device might be better.



For globetrotters

PLECAK CROSSKASE SOLAR 15

Price: £140

crosskase.com

INNOVATION: Solar panel

It can be inconvenient, if not disastrous, to find your electronic devices have run out of power at a crucial moment, but this rucksack can help ease your worries thanks to its built-in three-watt solar panel and internal battery.

Made from ballistic nylon, making it durable, the bag has numerous pouches and compartments for phones, tablets, cameras and laptops up to 15.6 inches in size. It's a little on the heavy side at 1.7kg, but this isn't so perceptible when worn over two shoulders.

Inside is a charging cable and a pack of eight connectors that can be fitted to your handheld gadgets. To charge the battery to 50 per cent, you will need to leave the backpack in bright sunlight for six to eight hours (or plug it into the mains), but this will only be enough to juice up a smartphone. The Crosskase is also unable to recharge larger devices such as laptops, notebooks or iPads, which is disappointing.

VERDICT: A handy innovation, especially when travelling in hot countries or working outdoors with sporadic access to electricity. Even if you are based in a city, it is useful to be able to charge your smartphone while on your way to a meeting.



For supermen

TUMI TEGRA-LITE INTERNATIONAL

Price: £595

uk.tumi.com

INNOVATION: Bullet-proof plastic

Since 2012, Tumi has had an exclusive partnership with US army textile and chemical manufacturer, Milliken, to engineer a range of Tegra-Lite hard-shell suitcases made from a "revolutionary polypropylene thermoplastic composite" called Tegrin. The material is used in protective gear for NFL players, body armour and NASCAR racing cars, which means this case is light (2.9kg) and tough. Tegrin provides a two to 15 times improvement in impact resistance [compared with] typical thermoplastics and composites. Its performance is so good that it is being used as armour against ballistic threats." If you happen to be in a war zone, you can use your suitcase as a shield – failing that, it will have no problem enduring every-day knocks and bumps.

The Tegra-Lite four-wheeled International Carry-on also has an aircraft-grade aluminium X-Brace 45 telescopic handle, TSA integrated locks and break-off zips that come away from the body of the zipper and can be replaced free of charge.

VERDICT: These suitcases are expensive – ranging from £595 to £995, but they will last for years, look seriously sophisticated, and score highly on design and performance.



Durable

LAT 56° BACKPACK

Price: £149

lat56.com

INNOVATION: Military-grade materials
Specially designed for business travellers, the “Urban Warrior” range from Scottish brand Lat 56° sees the use of “bombproof NASA-spec memory foam” on the inside and a “shock absorbing dual layer of military-spec moulded EVA foam” on the outside to eye-catching effect. So much so that the black exteriors of the briefcases, laptop bags and backpacks (look like rubbery armadillo shells, which aren’t exactly chic. Still, appearing to be fashionable doesn’t seem to be the objective here, as Lat 56° describes the products as looking and performing like a piece of armour. The backpack weighs 1.3kg, has a 35-litre volume and can handle anything from acid rain to a tropical typhoon” so is essentially waterproof.

VERDICT: The materials used have actually been around for decades – NASA invented memory foam in the 1960s and EVA foam is commonly used in everything from ski boots to bike saddles. What’s unique are the ergonomics and aesthetics of this unusual-looking, high-performance range of luggage.



For those who like comfort

I-STAY LAPTOP BAG

Price: £40

i-stayput.com

INNOVATION: Non-slip strap
I-Stay entered the market in 2012 with a series of nonslip straps and business luggage. The webbed rubber shoulder pad may only be a small design tweak but it does make a difference. This clever innovation prevents that from happening by ensuring that the weight of the load is spread evenly across the shoulder and the webbing grips to clothing. It has even earned I-Stay a commendation from the College of Chiropractors. Not only can the strap (available in red, black, white and grey) be bought as part of an I-Stay-designed piece of luggage, but purchased separately to replace your own bag’s disobedient strap.

VERDICT: If you have neck or back problems, you are probably better off not carrying weight on one side of your body – distributing it across both shoulders with a back pack would be better.



For practical people

SCOTTEVEST REVOLUTION PLUS JACKET

Price: US\$200

scottevest.com

INNOVATION: Lots of pockets
Everyone who has to endure short-haul flights on budget carriers knows the perils of the one-bag policy, so the idea of a multi-pocket jacket for your belongings is both amusing and credible. US company Scottevest offers jackets, coats, trousers and even underwear, all with numerous hidden compartments. Business Traveller tried the Sport Jacket for men and the women’s Travel Vest, but no one could bring themselves to wear them, so nul points for fashion appeal. But the Revolution Plus, designed for cold weather, looks bulky anyway and has 26 pockets, including ones specially designed to accommodate iPads, Bluetooth headsets, water bottles, money and smartphones, as well as loops for headphone wires and slots to hide the in-ear buds. The sleeves and hood are also detachable.

VERDICT: Not the most stylish of garments but a good idea if you can only travel with one small case. Remembering where you put your passport could be a problem, though.

WEIRD

MICRO 3-IN-1 LUGGAGE SCOOTER

micro-scooters.co.uk

This cabin-size suitcase transforms into a scooter so you can glide effortlessly across the departure hall to check-in.



CONCEPTS

HEYS USA BIOCASE

brookstone.com

Finger-print technology is moving into luggage locks. The near indestructible polycarbonate Biocase has a biometric locking system that means you can only open it if your fingerprints match one of the eight it can store in its memory.



TRIP SOUND

travelteq.com/trip-sound

Not only does the silver suitcase transform into a chair via pop out spring-operated legs and telescopic tubes for back support, it also has built-in speakers so you can have your own portable party.

For careful travellers

TUMI TICON PASSPORT COVER

Price: £75

uk.tumi.com

INNOVATION: RFID protection

Luxury luggage brand Tumi launched its Ticon collection earlier this year, with bags and wallets woven with a layer of metallic thread to protect ID documents and credit cards that are RFID- (radio-frequency identification) readable.

This passport cover is only useful to those of us with a biometric passport (in the UK, that's anyone issued with a passport since 2006) or contactless payment debit and credit cards. These contain electronic chips that store all your personal information and can be hacked with a handheld scanning device. But, by keeping them in a Ticon wallet with "Tumi ID Lock" technology, a wireless RFID reader will not be able to access it.

VERDICT: Good for peace-of-mind but in reality it seems pretty hard to steal your data with an RFID scanner, unless criminals have more powerful readers that can detect your biometric passports and credit cards through your bag (which they might).



For frequent travellers

TRAKDOT

Price: US\$50

store.trakdot.com

INNOVATION: Cellular-based tracking

This newly launched palm-sized device (128g) is designed to be placed inside your suitcase before check in. The Trakdot then employs "newly patented micro-electronics and ground-based cellular telephone technologies" (as opposed to GPS) to inform you of its whereabouts.

To comply with FAA (US Federal Aviation Administration) regulations, the gadget automatically enters "flight mode" when it senses the plane taking-off. Upon touching down, it will switch back on and report its new location via SMS or email. (Despite requests, Trakdot was unable to send one to Business Traveller to test so we can't comment on its accuracy.) You can track it via free iPhone and Android smartphone apps, as well as on your computer. There is a one-off activation fee of US\$9 and an annual service fee of US\$13.

VERDICT: Knowing your case has arrived is reassuring, and being able to prove that it is elsewhere in the world could be very useful. A unique and compelling proposition for business travellers, Trakdot complements existing measures in place to prevent you from losing your case.



Just in case

REBOUND TAG

Price: £35

reboundtag.com

INNOVATION: RFID microchip

Lost luggage is a problem that most frequent flyers have experienced at one time or another, but by attaching a Rebound Tag to your suitcase, if the worst does happen there is a better chance you will be reunited with your belongings.

The tag is fitted with two RFID microchips – one is rewritable and designed to be encoded with flight information each time you fly, and the other is for permanent personal information linked to your account. The tag is also printed with a barcode and a unique ID number, so if a member of the public finds it, they can visit reboundtag.com, enter the digits and send you a message. If an airline or airport retrieves your bags, you will automatically be alerted by email or SMS. Tags need to be registered online and the £35 fee includes one year's membership for unlimited flights (renewal is £10 a year). Unveiled in 2010, the Rebound Tag can be customised with your company logo, and could even replace paper labels in the future.

VERDICT: A handy piece of kit with the added advantage of being able to use the online "Members Area" to update personal information on the RFID chip, including where you are staying and whether any medication is inside your bag.



GIFTMANIA

Valentine's Day is round the corner, but do you really need a special occasion to give your beloved ones something nice? Something that improves the mood, brings pleasure, and above all is a testament to our feelings. Here are some of our suggestions.

Full Exposure Smashbox

This versatile palette includes 14 must-have neutral shades—from nudes to blacks. Available at Sephora perfumeries. Price: PLN 215

Always Sharp 3D Smashbox

Waterproof eyeliner with reflective, 3D pearls that glides on and self-sharpens every time you twist the cap off. Available at Sephora perfumeries. Price: PLN 85

Dr Irena Eris Prosystem Home Care CC INTENSIVE FORMULA

Healing face cream for the day combines the advantages of active ingredients of the cream and fluid which masks any skin imperfections. Price: PLN 89/30 ml

Lifting Contour Serum

The modelling serum
Serum by La Mer stimulates the production of collagen and elastin making the skin regain its natural ability to renew cells. Price: PLN 1,095/30 ml

LOVE AFFAIR Homme

The smell of a passionate adventure!
Head notes: White Flowers, Currant Fruit;
Heart notes: Jasmine, Rose, Heliotrope;
Base Notes: White Musk, Sandalwood, Tobacco. Price: PLN 399/50 ml





LANCASTER SUN SPORT

A special range of sun care products for athletes and active individuals
Price: gel PLN 109/75 ml; mist PLN 119 /125 ml

TERRE D'HERMÈS.

The history of alchemy and fragrance, which equips man with the ability to transform raw materials from the earth into the air, and from air to water.
Price: PLN 288/50 ml

CLEANSING MASK BY EISENBERG

Creamy mask enriched with green clay and kaolin. Already after the first application pores are narrowed and the skin becomes toned and smooth.
Price: PLN 245/75 ml

The Art of the Second Polish Republic - artistic and cultural life of Poland during the 1920s and 1930s.

Bosch publishing house
Price: PLN 64.90

WedLOVE pralines

Chocolates wrapped in a beautiful package. A perfect Valentine's gift.
Price: PLN 10 / 117g

Dreamskin Dior

First skin perfecter with global anti-aging action to reduce wrinkles, pores, and discoloration. Price: PLN 409/30 ml

CERTINA DS-2

Chronograph – a watch with the new Swiss quartz movement ETA PRECIDRIVE, which enables measurements with an accuracy of 1/100 of a second. Suggested price: PLN 2,490.

WITH SWISS ON WINTER HOLIDAYS



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PRICES

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SWISS airline, known for its reliability and the high quality of service, has prepared a truly good offer for skier flying from Poland. No extra charge for your ski gear! SWISS will transport your first set of skis/snowboard, one helmet, ski poles and boots (even in a separate bag), free of charge in addition to your standard free baggage allowance. Note, however, that for the ski gear to be transported free of charge, the flight must be operated by SWISS – not a codeshare – which means that the offer applies only to connections from Poland that fly via Zurich.

You can fly to Zurich from Warsaw (also in business class) three times a day, in very convenient hours: at 9.40 am (ar-

rival at 11.50 am), 2.35 pm (arrival in Zurich at 4.35 pm), and at 7.45 pm (landing at 9.55 pm). This schedule is valid for 7 days a week. Of course, we can also check-in online.

THE BEST WINTER IS HERE!

The winter in Switzerland is second to none, with the country's vast mountain panoramas, blue sky and snow shimmering in the sun. Only in the Swiss Alps can you see as many as 48 mountains of 4,000 metres or over. The high elevation and numerous glaciers are a guarantee of excellent conditions from November until the end of March. As many as 29 Swiss winter sport resorts are situated above 2,800 meters above sea

level, and the highest elevated ski slopes reach as high as 3,800 metres. Also only in Switzerland ski runs can be even 17 kilometres long, which is yet another Alpine record.

But these aren't all the numbers that may amaze you about this small country: \

Switzerland has 7,300 kilometres of ski runs, 5,000 kilometres of cross-country trails, 2,500 kilometres of winter hiking trails and 500 kilometres of toboggan runs. Skiing, snowboarding, sledding, thermal springs, wining and dining, tradition... That's simply winter offer for everyone! Swiss ski resorts are among the most popular, most beautiful and most recognizable places in the world.

In Portes du Soleil skiing aficionados can use 650 km of pistes, those who choose the famous Four Valleys - 412 km, in Zermatt-Cervinia the total length of pistes is 360 km, in St.Moritz-Engadin 350 km, in Davos -Klosters 320 km, in Samnaun-Ischgl 238 km, in Flims Laax 235 km, in Arosa-Lenzerheide 225 km, in Gstaad-Saanenland 220 km, and in Jungfrau - 213 km.

DAVOS OR WENGEN?

Which of the Swiss resorts is worth a visit? Davos is the highest city in Europe (1,540 m esl). The highlight of its tourist offer are five ski areas: Schatzalp/Strela, Parsenn, Pischa, Rinerhorn, and Jakobshorn. Pischa and Jakobshorn are intermediate and easy runs, while seasoned skiers will be pleased with Parsenn run which is 12 km long with altitude difference of almost 2,000 metres.

Wengen, in turn, is one of the most famous resorts in the Bernese Alps. Each skier sooner or later will want to go down the slope of Lauberhorn mountain. Wengen is the site of Alpine Ski World Cup races, but it also offers numerous pistes for intermediate skiers.

NOT ONLY FOR THE RICH

The famous St. Moritz is one of the most important ski areas in Switzerland offers many kilometres of ski runs for every level of difficulty.

In addition to alpine slopes, the place offers also other attractions, such as the snow park located between the Corviglia and Marguns. It's equipped with various jumps, rails and other obstacles that you could only dream of, as well as a half pipe and quarter pipe.

Winter in St. Moritz also means good conditions for skiers. The region even features trails for night cross-country skiing. There's also a whole network of hiking trails in the region St. Moritz Engadin. Crans Montana (1,500 m) is surrounded by



such four-thousanders as Mont-Blanc, Cervin, Weisshorn, and Dent-Blanche. It's famous not only for its beautiful name and designer stores, but also for its rich skiing infrastructure and over 160 km of pistes. Most of them are located on the southern slopes, which means skiing in the sun.

The ski season is the longest in Zermatt – a wonderful village at the foot of the Matterhorn. You will find here three vast and varied ski areas: Gornergrat/Stockhorn, Schwarzsee/Trockener, Steg/Klein Matterhorn, and Sunnegga/Blauherd/Unterhorn.

Gornergrat is the oldest, and skiing here provides real emotions - the slopes are located just opposite the Matterhorn and several four-thousanders. The area isn't reachable by personal vehicles. You can take your car as far as Tasch (5 km from

Zermatt), where you must take a train or an electric car. In this way, this car-free town is a guarantee of a peaceful holiday.

ALWAYS VIA ZURICH

Switzerland isn't a large country, so all the attractions are always at hand. You just need to get to Zurich. The airport in the Swiss capital is considered to be extremely friendly to passengers. It's well marked and boasts one of the largest shopping galleries in Switzerland. It's also an excellent hub, offering connections to 150 destinations worldwide. And if you have a little time waiting for your flight, it's worth going to the observation deck or take a bus tour round the airport. I can guarantee that it's a great thing to do and there's not much that can beat the view of a plane landing right over your head.

Agata Janicka

You can fly to Zurich from Warsaw (also in business class) three times a day, in very convenient hours.

This schedule is valid for 7 days a week. Of course, you can also check-in online.

"YOU SET THE COURSE"

- ambitious plans and changes in LOT



Elite Lounge



Business Lounge „Polonez”

The jubilee year for LOT begins with a strong accent - an opportunity to change the communication platform. You set the course" is a new slogan that will appear in LOT campaigns.



What changes can we expect from LOT Polish Airlines in the following months? The new LOT slogan "You set the course" is featured among others in a new offer of the carrier - already at the beginning of February, the passengers will be able to draw travel inspirations from a special service platform launched by LOT. The first edition will cover, of course, "Winter Inspirations", and passengers may be inspired by four subjects: summer extension, winter and winter sports, culinary travels and sales. New inspirations will be added in subsequent quarters (Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn Inspirations), and new features will appear, such as a mobile application, new categories of inspirations or an option of full packages and tours offers. But that's not the end of the news - starting from the beginning of February, an offer of in-flight entertainment on Dreamliners will be extended. There will appear new titles of newspapers and magazines to considerably increase the variety of the press for passengers.

ELITE CLUB LOUNGE

Starting from the New Year, the carrier has also extended the

LOT Business Lounge „Polonez” at the Warsaw airport. A new part, the "Elite Club Lounge", has been separated, with additional 50 seats. It is designated for passengers travelling in Elite Club on board Dreamliners and for persons with SEN and HON cards in the Miles&More programme. Passengers have at their disposal a recreational area with individual lighting, a separate place for relaxation with four comfortable reclining seats and a work place with four computers, with Internet and printer access. Everyday domestic and foreign press will be also available, both in paper form and on tablets, as well as free Wi-Fi. The "Elite Club Lounge" will have a different catering offer for passengers: they will be offered hot meals throughout the day and a wider range of drinks and fine spirits.

SWIFTLY AND DYNAMICALLY

Beside the product changes, the largest 2014 challenges for LOT Polish Airlines include the need to maintain liquidity and dynamic restructuring pace as well as to strengthen operational effectiveness, inter alia by enlarging the range of non-aviation services that

generate the revenue (ancillary revenue). Operations should be based on the long-term strategy of the company, which is in preparation. It will assess not only future business opportunities of LOT, but also its rate of growth, the market role and will verify process effectiveness, in particular in terms of sales, in relations with the passengers. The strategy is also designed as a starting point for future privatisation and for attracting investors. Negotiations with the European Commission on the Restructuring Plan assumptions and decisions on applying for the second tranche of public aid will be also of key importance. LOT does not plan to request the second tranche of aid in the forthcoming months. The second tranche was originally assumed to be paid in August 2013. However, due to much better company results, it has not been launched yet. In early spring, LOT fleet will be joined by the sixth Dreamliner, which is planned to be leased to other airlines or to be dedicated to charter flights on behalf of travel agencies. This solution will generate additional revenue for the Company.

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GOING THE DISTANCE



Such carriers make money on every sector they fly. So within Europe, an LCC might operate up to eight flights a day. That means it has eight opportunities a day to benefit from lower operating costs and the revenue from ancillary fees.

Can a low-cost work long-haul? It depends where you're flying to – and what plane you use for the job, says Alex McWhirter

History has shown that flights lasting over eight hours are a “no go” area for low-cost carriers (LCCs). Air Asia X, Canada's Zoom and Hong Kong's Oasis all thought they had a magic formula but all three failed. Now Scandinavian low-cost carrier Norwegian believes it has solved the problem of how to make long-haul flights viable.

8 CHANCES FOR PROFIT

Why haven't LCCs in Europe and North America been able to make a success of long-haul routes? According to aviation consultant John Strickland, it's simply because “there's a lack of productivity when [they] fly long-haul”.

Such carriers make money on every sector they fly. So within Europe, an LCC might operate up to eight flights a day. That means it has eight opportunities a day to benefit from lower operating costs and the revenue from ancillary fees (see “Strings attached”).

But as Strickland points out: “When flying long-haul, a low-cost carrier incurs the same costs as everyone else. It can't avoid paying for fuel and en route navigational charges. And when flying to Asia, an LCC will be lucky if it can fit in two sectors a day.”

PRICE IS THE KEY

He adds: “It is true that an LCC could boost utilisation by operating with one aircraft [as Air Asia X did when it first started flying to Europe], but then the scheduling will be erratic as that plane will need a certain amount of ‘downtime’ during the week for maintenance. So

the business model [for long-haul] is not proven.”

There are further complications. On those long routes between Europe and Asia, there are many indirect carriers along the way who compete on price. They have different marketing objectives, and price keenly to encourage passengers to make an en route change.

Crucially, they provide passengers with many more departure possibilities. For example, when Air Asia X flew from Europe its passengers could depart only from London or Paris, while the indirect carriers could offer services to Kuala Lumpur from airports located the length and breadth of Europe.

But surely passengers would prefer to pay more for a direct or nonstop flight? Not necessarily. There is little loyalty at the budget end of the market; price is all-important.

So if an indirect traditional carrier can offer the convenience of your local airport, a nicer onboard product, free food and drink, free baggage handling and so on at the same price or less, then it will get the business, even with a longer journey time.

BIG HOPES

Nevertheless, Norwegian believes its new B787 Dreamliners will enable it to come out on top.

Interviewed by industry publication flightglobal.com in May, chief executive Bjorn Kjos said: “I think the A350 and B787 are the only ones you can fly low-cost long-haul because their operating costs are so much lower. We looked at older aircraft like the B767, A340 and A330 but the figures didn’t add up.” The A330 may be viable for short flights but not for Norwegian’s 11-hour Oslo-Bangkok service.

To this end, Norwegian is taking delivery of eight fuel-efficient 291-seat B787s to operate its long-haul flights. Not only that but it will keep costs down by taking the revolutionary step (for a European airline) of setting up a Bangkok base for B787 crew. Basing staff overseas allows Norwegian to avoid paying Scandinavian wages and social security fees.

Ryanair says it, too, is looking at flying transatlantic. But Ryanair is talking about operating a sizeable fleet of 30 wide-bodied jets, which could take time to acquire. Chief executive Mi-

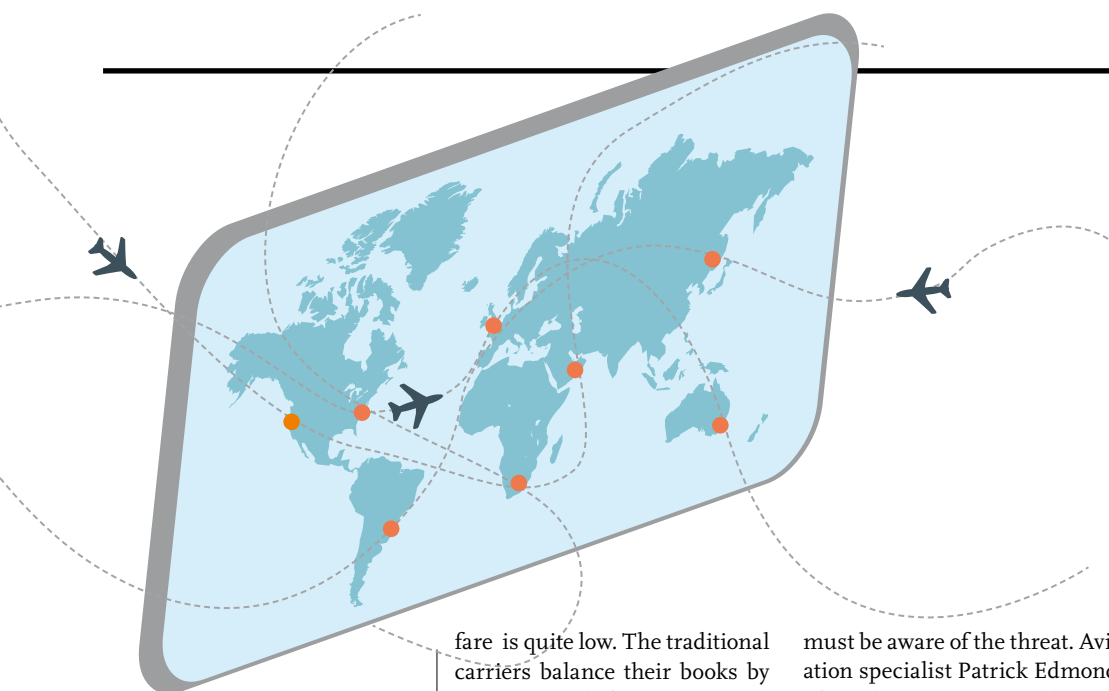
chael O’Leary is fond of striking deals with manufacturers, but fuel-efficient wide-bodies are in demand.

Will Ryanair succeed over the Atlantic where Canada’s Zoom failed? Possibly. Analysts expect it to shun big city airports and carve out a new market by operating from those regional points in Europe and Scandinavia not currently served by transatlantic flights. Chosen airports would have good rail and road links, making them available to passengers within a wide catchment area. But Ryanair would have to price keenly, and there would only be limited opportunities for ancillary fees.

A REAL CHALLENGE

Why are low-cost transatlantic flights a challenge when LCCs succeed on equivalent sector lengths between South East Asia and Australia? The marketplace is different – first, there is far less competition from traditional airlines when compared with transatlantic routes. And, second, transatlantic fares, especially from the UK, are inflated by taxes, fees and charges. It means the base





But surely passengers would prefer to pay more for a direct or nonstop flight? Not necessarily. There is little loyalty at the budget end of the market; price is all-important.

fare is quite low. The traditional carriers balance their books by charging high fares in the premium cabins.

A different price structure applies with flights linking Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Australia. There's a narrower price gap between the premium and economy cabins so not only is the coach fare higher when compared with a transatlantic sector, but the taxes, fees and charges also form a smaller component. It means the base fare revenue per economy seat is higher. Nevertheless, Norwegian stands a good chance of transatlantic success because there are far fewer competitors out of Scandinavia. And, as Strickland points out, "the US market is easier for short-term development".

Asia will be a different story. Strickland says: "The potential for Asia may develop but the competitive challenge for Norwegian cannot be underestimated."

Scandinavia is Thai's most important single destination in Europe. It provides 77 per cent of seat capacity (as against Norwegian's 15 per cent) between Scandinavia and Bangkok, according to Sydney-based consultancy CAPA. (The remaining 8 per cent of seats would be provided by SAS, which will restart its Bangkok flights later this year.)

Carriers such as Emirates and Qatar Airways are expanding into Scandinavia but Norwegian

must be aware of the threat. Aviation specialist Patrick Edmond of Dublin-based e2consult says: "I can't imagine Norwegian didn't build Gulf carrier competition into its business case."

IS THERE

Thai will defend its market share. It will price keenly through the travel trade and, as a further bonus, will upgrade premium economy passengers (this product is offered only on Scandinavian routes) to business class (fully-flat beds on newish B777-300ERs now rostered for all Scandinavian capitals), while passengers paying business class fares get to go first class.

In the early days, Norwegian showed naivety with Bangkok. It failed to realise that Asian passengers were not as clued up in the ways of LCCs as their Scandinavian counterparts. Asian travellers wondered why they were not offered what they considered the basics, namely a free blanket and a bottle of water. When offering to buy those items with cash, they discovered that Norwegian would only accept onboard payment by credit card. Credit card use among Asians is much lower than in Scandinavia so some went without food and water on the long flights to Europe. Following complaints, Norwegian has amended its policies.

Rival Asian low-cost carriers such as Air Asia X and Scoot will be looking to see how Nor-

wegian fares. If Norwegian does succeed with efficient B787s then it is likely they will head for Europe once they take delivery of B787s (in the case of Scoot) and A350s (Air Asia X).

Why Air Asia X failed in Europe Malaysia's Air Asia X was supposed to make air travel between Europe and South East Asia affordable. It launched flights to London in March 2009 with fares starting at £198 return, a fraction of those charged by its rivals. Like all LCCs, the introductory fares were deliberately pitched low to generate publicity. It meant prices were quickly hiked after the route launch. When Business Traveller checked prices for the month of June 2009, we were quoted £645.

With hindsight, Air Asia X was using the wrong aircraft for the job. Its A340s were acquired from Air Canada and not only were these four-engined planes fuel-inefficient but they came with the latter's spacious seating.

In a final attempt to make the service viable, the carrier switched from Stansted to Gatwick to "improve connectivity". But as we reported in December 2011, the losses continued. We quoted a report in The Malaysian Insider that claimed Air Asia X was losing RM20 million (£4 million) a year on the London route alone.

The inevitable happened a few months later. At the beginning of April last year, the airline wound down its operations and retreated from Europe. The A340s were grounded and it axed all routes longer than eight hours, which meant Christchurch in New Zealand also disappeared from the network.

Will Air Asia X return? Well, much depends on the success or otherwise of Norwegian. If the Malaysian carrier does restart flights in the next few years it says it will use A350s. But don't get too excited – while the A350s are designed for nine-across (3-3-3) seating, Air Asia X has said it would go ten-abreast (3-4-3).

SONY

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* Informacja aktualna na dzień 16 października 2013 r., odnosi się do dostępnych w sprzedaży produktów przeznaczonych do użytku konsumenckiego.
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THE ULTIMATE SLEEP EXPEDITION

ibis goes on a voyage. An experience that pushes the boundaries of Sweet Bed by ibis™



MORE INFO AT
ibis-expedition.com

As a way of demonstrating to as many people as possible the absolute comfort guaranteed by Sweet Bed ibis™, ibis (<http://www.accor.com>) came up with the ultimate test: sleeping where no-one has ever dared to sleep before. It persuaded adventurer Aaron Chervenak to accept the extraordinary challenge of sleeping at the top of Devil's Mountain in the heart of the Amazonian jungle. Ibis invites web users to share the expedition via an immersive website devised and designed by the agency BETC. The ultimate

sleep will take Aaron and Sweet Bed by ibis™ to the highest point of this forbidding mountain for the most ultimate "torture test" a bed has ever known!

THE EXPEDITION

At the heart of the ibis expedition, a team led by Aaron Chervenak and his friend Gareth Jones to put Sweet Bed by ibis™ to the test. The challenge? To show that that the new Sweet Bed concept guarantees ultimate comfort and a peerless night's sleep even in this very isolated and particularly incongruous setting.

The place chosen was le Mont Roraima (Devil's Mountain), reputedly one of the most hostile and inaccessible places on the planet. Aaron and Gareth gathered a team of professionals around them: a doctor, Joe Wiesenburger, a producer, Hayley Edmonds, and her assistant Sylla Saint-Guily. All the team's equipment will be provided by Columbia, the world reference for technical outdoor clothing and accessories and partner to the expedition.

The result: a genuine reportage filmed on a day-to-day basis by Vice Productions teams and

available for viewing on the site. An adventure that from its start in Manaus to its final destination reserve unexpected developments, obstacles and surprises for our heroes that web users can follow thanks to the digital platform specially developed by BETC Digital.

A UNIQUE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

Web users can live this adventure through an innovative and immersive site. Developed in HTML 5 and available in 11 languages, the site offers a particularly gripping experience on PC/Mac – but also on tablets. Intuitive and playful, it allows web users to live the adventure and discover what goes on behind the scenes as and when they wish through a richly diverse browsing experience. Right throughout the adventure, special functions and content will be proposed to let web users live the expedition as intensely as possible:

- scenes filmed in multi-camera where web users can choose their viewing angle, notably thanks to Go-Pros
 - aerial cameras
 - a 360° view of the summit of Devil's Mountain that can be controlled by the web user
 - hidden content right throughout the adventure: interviews, unusual and edited scenes,
- The platform as well as the additional, emotionally charged content can be shared on the social networks (Twitter, Facebook, Google+). Everything has been designed so that everyone can take ownership of the adventure.

ULTIMATE COMFORT: SWEET BED BY IBIS™

"The ibis network, which today has 1,000 hotels in 58 countries (34 hotels in 11 African countries), makes the following promise to its customers: "now, the best place to sleep is everywhere!" We wanted to provide a concrete illustration of this commitment by staging



the tangible proof of this absolute comfort: the Sweet Bed by ibis™. - This digital experience was thought and built with the desire of being bold and decidedly modern to bring ibis where no one expects it – explains Lara Fagua, Advertising Strategy and Media, in charge of Accor's economy operations.

Will the Sweet Bed by ibis™ keep its promises? Will our adventurers enjoy a peaceful night's sleep on the summit of Devil's Mountain?

To find out, web users just need to go to this website: www.ibis-expedition.com

ABOUT IBIS

In line with the strategy of revitalizing the economy brands of Accor (<http://www.accor.com>), the world's leading hotel operator, active in 90 countries with more than 3,500 hotels, ibis is modernizing. One of

the brand's chief innovations is a revolutionary bedding concept – Sweet Bed by ibis™ – that guarantees unparalleled comfort in economy hospitality and new modern and welcoming common areas that reflect the ibis spirit of service and its values of simplicity, modernity and wellbeing. Ibis is the first hotel brand to have obtained ISO 9001 certification – 86% of the network certified – for its professionalism and reliability. In addition, 58% of the ibis network is ISO 14001 - certified, concrete proof of the brand's environmental commitment. Created in 1974, today ibis is European leader in economy hotels and in 4th place in its category worldwide, with 1,000 hotels and over 124,000 rooms in 59 countries.

You can access all the information concerning ibis hotels on the website www.ibishotel.com

The platform as well as the additional, emotionally charged content can be shared on the social networks. Everything has been designed so that everyone can take ownership of the adventure.



FUSION OF FLAVOURS IN WESTIN



MORE DETAILS AT
www.restauracjafusion.pl

Excellent cuisine has been for many years the flagship of The Westin Warsaw hotel, and the chef, Janusz Korzyński, is considered a real culinary revolutionary. Each season he surprises the visitors to Fusion restaurant with products that he imports from far corners of the world. One thing, however, doesn't change at all - Korzyński serves here beautiful, creative, and very healthy dishes.

When a few years ago, the chef at the Westin discovered SuperFoods concept, it got him hooked completely. But what is SuperFoods exactly? It's not a draconian diet, as some of you

might think, but just products that have a positive influence on our health, and what's more - eaten together create synergy which, in turn, increases their nutritional value. SuperFoods are rich in antioxidants, good fatty acids and other valuable compounds. Among them are such delights as wild salmon, Brazil nuts, honey, avocado, and many others, which are skilfully combined together by the restaurant's chefs so that the guests can enjoy the feast for their palates combined with a healthy diet.

MANDATORY LIST

So what dishes is it worth trying in Fusion restaurant? Let's

start with the appetizers. The plate, which lands on the table, looks like a mini piece of art, with each ingredient thoughtfully placed where it should be. It tastes just as delicious. But what's that exactly? Seared scallops, mousse of roasted artichokes, salad of lamb's lettuce, crunchy bacon, and coffee-flavoured foam. Everything is delicate, aromatic and simply melts in your mouth. My companion opts for the renowned foie gras mousse which has been hailed as the best entre AD 2013. The mousse is served with toasted almonds, brioche bread with cumin, and vanilla balsamic syrup. Now it's time

for the first course. Westin is famous for its soup with coconut milk. –It's slightly spicy and wonderfully aromatic. We also tried the mushroom cream. The velvet-like soup served with lemon mousse mascarpone, and pumpkin seed oil – it turned out to be a right choice on a cold day.

You should also try roasted beef filet accompanied by potatoes au gratin, fried boletus and gravy sauce with bison grass.

Now it's time for fish, but the choice is so difficult. Should we go for a delicate halibut whose charm is highlighted with ginger, or rather try the Atlantic cod served with crayfish sauce and grilled vegetables? After long deliberations we order ... wild salmon. It has a very firm structure, intense color and tastes delicious. It's served with marinated cherry tomatoes and spinach gnocchi with ginger and artichokes.

THE LIST OF "SINS"

Desserts are the hidden gems of the restaurant, making your dining experience at Fusion reach the truly heavenly level. These creative compositions often break typical stereotypes about food. Hats off to the restaurant's patissier for his creativity and courage in exploring new taste horizons. If we could, this whole article would be devoted to sweet masterpieces and their creator, who with his passion and modesty has conquered our hearts. We tried the lemon-flavoured pudding with flakes of dark chocolate, peach purée

A trip to Fusion restaurant is a feast for the palate and ... a must for the real enthusiasts of sophisticated cuisine. Those who like to try several flavours during one visit, should go there for Sunday brunch, and the fans of seafood and fish are warmly invited by Janusz Korzyński on fish Thursdays named Fish@Fusion.

Karolina Borecka



Every season, Janusz Korzyński, a culinary revolutionary and the head chef at The Westin Warsaw, surprises with new compositions and products.





DUBAI SPREADS ITS WINGS

Almost 24 percent of the world's construction cranes are now in Dubai. Soon there will be even more of them, because the recent news about the Expo 2020 being awarded to Dubai, is bringing even more prosperity in this part of the world. **Marzena Mróz** takes you to this remarkable emirate.



It's one of the richest and fastest-growing places in the world. To say that the human imagination is the only limit, in Dubai seems to be true. Although the city has 600 hotels, over the next six years 80 new ones are going to be built - all of them bigger, better and even more spectacular. Dubai will also receive a new airport (Al Maktoum International), as well as the City of Wonders with copies of all the Seven Wonders of the Worlds - all in one place!

SHEIKH WITH A VISION

Only 30 years ago, the area was dominated by one-storey houses, and people earned their living off pearl diving and the trade. It was only after the discovery of oil deposits in 1966, the emirate has undergone an incredible transformation. The Sheikh who ruled Dubai at that time, decided that the region should focus on tourism industry and he started investing in the infrastructure and the promotion of the area, realizing that one day the oil supplies will run out.

When in the late 1960s the British withdrew from the Middle East, six emirates - Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Umm Al Quwain, Aj-

man and Al-Fujairah merged in 1971, forming the United Arab Emirates. One year later they were joined by the seventh emirate - Ras al-Khaimah. Abu Dhabi was chosen to be the country's capital and its emir was the president.

The emir of the second wealthiest emirate, which is Dubai, is also the vice-president and the prime minister of the country. Presently, the function is held by Muhammad Rashid Ibn Said al-Maktoum who is loved by his subjects. He's said to be a visionary, a man of generosity and open to new horizons. He's known for being a sports enthusiast, especially horse races in which he participates. Not to mention the fact, that he's a poet and an advocate of Arab culture. He has two wives and 23 children, of which the most popular is his son Hamdan ibn Muhamad Al Maktoum- appointed as heir to the throne: he is a handsome, rich, and a well-educated poet and a sportsman, loved by ladies.

TRADE, OIL, TOURISM

Today, the main sources of income of over 2 million Dubai citizens are services, the duty-free zone (the duty-free seaport), trade

(foreign companies are exempt from tax), tourism and international investment, transport and export of crude oil.

It's interesting to know that this is the place where many cultures interact with one another, of which only 16% are the local "emirati", that is the descendants of Bedouins. Admittedly, they have problems with preserving the identity, the language and the culture, but also possess an entire range of privileges: they don't pay bills for electricity and water, they are offered free education up to undergraduate level, receive council houses (villas with a garden) or a plot of land with an interest-free loan to build a house and after a few years the loan debt is cancelled. Then there's so-called "martial fund"- 20,000 dollars that both spouses receive on their wedding day from the government, granted they are both the citizens of UAE.

Other residents are people coming here from all over the world, attracted by the unusual dynamics of this place, tax exemptions and remarkably high salaries offered in Dubai. You can find here expats from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afganistan, Philippines, Thailand, Syria, and Liban, but also from the USA and almost all European countries.



FOT: FOTOLIA (3)



Dubai is primarily the most modern and most luxurious metropolis you can only imagine. In 1979 the city's first skyscraper - Dubai World Trade Centre – was built, and in subsequent years, the main street of Sheikh Zayed Road was created.

well-educated professionals are especially appreciated here, and the Sheikh spares no money for the education of his subjects. Under current law, the residents of Dubai, who aren't nationals, may remain in the country until they reach retirement age, but then they must return to their homeland.

THE LAND TAKEN FROM THE DESERT

Dubai covers an area of 4,111 sq km, of which 200 sq km is the land reclaimed from the sea. Particularly spectacular are the artificial islands - the Palm Jumeirah – often referred to as the eighth wonder of the world, or The World – an artificial archipelago of almost 300 islands constructed in the rough shape of a world map and located 4 kilometres off the coast of Dubai. Most of them have already been sold. Other future investments seem equally impressive, with the Heritage Island, which will be home to the museum of Arab culture and history; the Blue Water Island or the Universe – a range of islands arranged in the shape of the solar system. The southern part of the emirate is primarily desert.

It lies on a patch of Al-Rab al-Chali, which means "the empty area", and is a part of the world's largest Arabian Desert. Closer to the Oman, the desert landscape changes into the mountainous one. Although it might seem that the land isn't conducive to plants and animals, in Dubai there are more than 100 species of birds such as flamingos, cranes, cormorants, herons, kingfishers and hoopoes. Mountains are home to desert foxes, sand cats, lynxes, and numerous rodents, while in the Persian Gulf you can watch pods of dolphins and whales.

THE WORLD'S HIGHEST

But Dubai is primarily the most modern and most luxurious metropolis you can only imagine. In 1979 the city's first skyscraper - Dubai World Trade Centre – was built, and in subsequent years, the main street of Sheikh Zayed Road was created. Especially impressive are the new high-rise structures, including the world's tallest building Burj Khalifa that measures 828 meters and has 163 habitable floors! Who would have thought that the highest land structure ever

built on Earth will grow in the desert... The building is named after Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan (the emir of Abu Dhabi and the president of the UAE), who supported this mammoth undertaking, leading to its successful completion. It was designed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill architectural firm that also designed the One World Trade Centre in New York. The skyscraper topped by a spire which literally reaches the clouds, can accommodate up to 35,000 people. Its 160 floors are home to apartments, a hotel (whose décor was designed by Giorgio Armani himself), offices, and several swimming pools.

For safety reasons, pressurized, air-conditioned refuge floors are located approximately every 35 floors where people can shelter on their long walk down to safety in case of an emergency or fire. The building has 57 lifts and washing all its 24,348 windows takes 36 workers nearly four months. The 122nd floor features the highest restaurant in the world – Atmosphere – which obviously offers breath-taking views. Interestingly, getting there by a lift takes only 57 seconds.

SAIL, ATLANTIS AND INFINITY

Burj al-Arab – the seven-star hotel with its distinct sail-like shape, is without a doubt one of the most recognizable buildings in the world. Nicknamed the temple of glamour, it proudly bears the name. It was designed by Tom Wright of Atkins architectural studio, and was built to resemble the sail of a dhow, a type of Arabian vessel. It was built on an artificial island, close to the famous Palm, and is lined with marble and gold. In this 56-storey sanctuary you there's no place for ordinary rooms. Instead, there are 202 two-level suites, the smallest of which is 160 sq m.

The hotel is truly impressive and the luxury level it offers is hard to compare with any other place in the world. The cheapest room costs \$2,000 per person per night, but you can also go to the Burj al-Arab for a pre-ordered lunch. The opening ceremony cost \$20 million and was celebrated with the world's largest fireworks display, which was seven times greater than the one shown during the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics.

The Atlantis Hotel is located at the edge of the Palm and its shape is said to resemble the lost Atlantis. It's a gigantic building, which offers its guests the highest standard of service and a full range of entertainment. Entering the place you may feel as if you

suddenly found yourself in the kingdom of Poseidon, among huge shells, aquariums, and water parks.

Another distinctive building is the Cayan Tower located in Marina Dubai. During the construction stage it was called the Infinity, but the name was rejected once it emerged that other structures already shared the name. The Cayan Tower is definitely one of the most interesting building in Dubai and worldwide. It has a height of 306 metres, but what is unique about it is that it's twisted by 90 degrees, making it the tallest twisting structure in the world. The apartments in the Cayan Tower are among the most expensive in Dubai - who knows, perhaps because the walls inside are also a bit skewed?

SKIING IN DUBAI

Dubai Mall is the largest mall in the world, occupying 1,124,000 sq m and was built in 2008. It has 1,200 shops, 160 cafes (try ice cream made of camel milk!), an ice rink where professional hockey matches are held, a spectacular waterfall, Dubai Aquarium (one of the largest in the world, with 75 cm thick windows over 30,000 marine animals including sharks), the Gold Souk market, and a catwalk for fashion shows.

Mall of the Emirates is admittedly smaller, because it has "only" 600 shops and 95 cafes and restaurants, but it attracts tourists

from all over the world (as well as the locals) with the one-of-a-kind attraction: a ski slope called Ski Dubai and the Snow Park where the temperature is as low as -2 degrees Celsius. To reach the main area you need to go through a series of long corridors which prepare the body to the gradual decrease of the temperature. Ski Dubai features five ski slopes of varying difficulty, the longest of which is 400 m, as well as areas for both beginners and advanced skiers. You can also roll down the mountain in a special transparent bubble-like ball or play with the penguins. Skiers can rent the equipment in a rental shop located in the mall. Every night the whole surface of the slopes is heated to dissolve the snow and to replace it with a new layer for the next day. To isolate the place from the scorching temperatures outside, its walls are 5 metres thick.

It's worth visiting Dubai to see how what once was a small fishing village, has transformed into one of the most modern, luxurious and expensive metropolises in the world. The Sheikh of Dubai - Muhammad Rashid Ibn Said al-Maktoum claims that today's Dubai has achieved only one tenth of what he's setting out to accomplish. But even with today's accomplishments Dubai amazes visitors. It seems like a fairy tale that has come true.





Burj al-Arab or the Arabian Tower – is the world's first hotel has been awarded seven stars. With its distinct sail-like shape, it's without a doubt one of the most recognizable buildings in the world.



THE KINGDOM OF LECH

I was introduced to the beautiful slopes of the Austrian Arlberg region by Harry – a mountain guide and ski instructor born in Salzburg. In summer, he works as a captain on private yachts, while in winter he teaches skiing and has toured the whole world. I asked him why he decided to settle in the tiny village of Lech. “Simply, because it’s the best,” he replied. “The best in Austria?” I inquired. “No, the best in the world!” he said with a grin.

Magdalena Boratyńska

The huge Arlberg region, popularly known as “Lech”, is made up of several old villages such as Oberlech, Lech, Warth, Zurs, St. Anton, St. Christoph, and Stuben. It has 94 modern lifts, as well as 340 ski slopes, which are perfectly groomed since the very first frost in November. The area may not be the world’s best, but it’s still truly remarkable. Each year it’s visited by thousands of off-piste aficionados, athletes, and VIPs from Germany, Switzerland, the UK, Austria, but also from Brazil, RSA, and other exotic places.

Lech belongs mostly to several highland families that have lived here for several hundred years. These include the Pfeffercorns, the Werners, the Moosbruggers, the Strotzes, the Schneiders, and the Jochums. In the

past, their lives were hard and they were practically cut off from the rest of the world. Today the same world uses modern trains, tunnels, and planes to reach Lech and feel the special atmosphere it offers.

The families living in this hermetically isolated world were able to join their forces and develop common policies, in order to create one of the most posh, and luxurious (though maintaining the traditional cosy style) ski resorts. With more than 10,000 beds in four and five-star hotels and luxury villas scattered within a few square kilometres, this is arguably the largest concentration of expensive hotels in the world.

THE NEW MONARCHY

Each hotel or guesthouse looks like a colourful box of chocolates. What makes them

stand out from the crowd is attention to detail, private photos with key personalities, and abundant, yet tasteful décor – it’s not an accident though, since their owners also live there, reinvesting their profits and thinking ahead about future generations. Regular hotels, as we know them, are mainly established with the sheer goal of making a decent profit. In Arlberg, however, the main goal of the families running their businesses is to build a vibrant ski kingdom where hotels are passed to younger generations. And this is where lies Lech’s secret of success, since, truth to be told, ski-wise the region can’t really compete with vast, well-connected regions of France. Lech, however, has something that you could never find in ugly humongous hotels built in French Alps. And it’s not just luxury and architec-

ture I'm talking about. You can think of the Austrian region as a sort of a monarchy where the king takes care of his kingdom thinking about future generations, as opposed to democracy where officials or short-sighted managers often care only about their own interests and not about investments for their descendants.

With this traditional structure, hard work, investment in themselves and their land, the descendants of the shepherds became a sort of highland aristocracy, being the owners of some of the most expensive hotels in the Alps. They also take pride in their tradition, wearing beautiful traditional outfits called *dirndl* (for women) and *janker* (for men). Even their bow ties are... carved out of wood!

THE LAND OF FLAVOURS

The entire region of Lech boasts its exquisite cuisine, and although traditional Austrian food at its best is present in the menu of every restaurant, some hotels have created their own, refined dishes.

Lorunser in Zurs delights with its splendour and hospitality, Alm Hostel features the most beautiful sun terrace - an ideal venue for lunch and fantastic fondue in the evening, while Kristiania relies on the finesse of flavours and an intimate atmosphere.

Add to this fine Austrian wine, which is quite a novelty, as for many years wines from Burgenland, Styria and Vienna were regarded rather thin and poor with inexpensive Gruner Veltliner and Blaufrankish gaining local fame. Those days have gone, however, because today the region is famous for its high quality fullbody red wines and wonderful, fully flavoured white ones, which are superior to many of those produced in traditional European winemaking regions. Hotels in Lech generally don't buy wine from warehouses, but rather from small vineyards run by befriended families, mainly from the prestigious area of Wachau.

UNDER THE RULE OF THE LADY

Skiers who value comfort often choose French and Italian resorts over Austrian ones, since the latter rarely offer accommodation right on the slope, but in villages situated in the valleys, from where you need to walk or drive up to ski lifts. The exception is the snobbish Oberlech situated at around 1,660 meters above sea level, where the highest located hotel is the luxury Goldener Berg that has been run for centuries by Lech families. According to the regional tradition, the family land and house are inherited by the eldest son. However, Franz Pfefferkorn had only three daughters, and the eldest one, Daniele, became the heiress to the fortune.



The entire region of Lech boasts its exquisite cuisine, and although traditional Austrian food at its best is present in the menu of every restaurant, some hotels have created their own, refined dishes.



The outdoor pool in Post hotel



The kingdom of Adi Werner

The families living in this hermetically isolated world were able to join their forces and develop common policies, to create one of the most luxurious ski resorts.



Kaiser suite

This ambitious, energetic, and well-educated Scorpio lady runs the family business with a firm hand. She has extended the hotel, decorating each of the comfortable rooms and suites in a unique, cosy, and feminine style, at the same time combining tradition with modern elements. She has also introduced to the menu light, healthy dishes, freshly squeezed juices for breakfast, and a cornucopia of floral and herbal teas.

In the winter you can't reach Oberlech by car. To get there, you need to leave your vehicle in an underground garage, and take a mountain gondola, which runs regularly until 1 am. Once you get to the hotel, your luggage will be brought to your room before you even manage to finish a welcome glass of Sekt. Until recently, to get from the gondola to one of the few hotels located on the slope, you had to walk a short distance, which might be particularly unpleasant during a snowstorm. Luckily, Daniele and other hotel owners decided to make an incredible investment and build a network of underground tunnels, extending under the ski slopes, and connecting almost every building in Oberlech. You can navigate this underground maze in an electric vehicle. Daniele invited the Chancellor of Austria to officially open the tunnel. The idea and determination to dig through the rocks so as not to spoil the charm of the small village, as well as the perfect execution of the plan, are a phenomenon on a European scale.

THE HOTEL WORTHY OF THE EMPEROR

Post hotel is one of the finest and best-located 5-star establishments in the centre of Lech. It has been run for generations by the family of Moosbrugger and features 48 cosy rooms, as well as one of the most wonder-



ful mountain suites – the Kaiser-suite no. 73., situated on the top, fourth floor, with a direct exit to the hot, outdoor pool. This 114 sq m suite with a breath-taking view of the mountains has been perfectly decorated to the tiniest detail with best quality materials, such as wood, stone, wool, and glass, and features several cutting-edge technological solutions. Its amenities include a high fireplace made of grey slate, cosy sofas, rustic dining table for 10 people, a huge bathroom with an oval free-standing bathtub, a shower, the second toilet, 2 dressing rooms, 2 terraces, a cosy bedroom, 3 flat TVs, and even an Apple player.

In the high season the price for the night with breakfast is €2,140, and if you add to this other meals, ski passes, the spa, and the bar... That's quite a lot, but a Mercedes is also pricey, and the experience from a stay in the Kaiser-suite no.73 is far more pleasant than standing in a traffic jam, irrespectively of how comfortable your car may be. Someone who has never been to such a place, who hasn't swum among the snow-capped mountains in the fresh air in heavenly warm water, who hasn't experienced all these tiny details which delight at every turn, will never understand that it's truly worth spending a fortune to taste all of this. The hotel is an elegant and romantic place for couples or groups of friends. It also caters for families with children, but primarily addresses its offer to those who wish to spend a peaceful holiday. There's even a separate children's swimming pool with a water slide so that kids don't disturb those guests who wish to relax.

**PASSION, CHARISMA
AND THE LARGEST WINE CELLAR**
17 kilometres from Lech, at 1,800 metres above sea level, lies a tiny village of St.

Christoph, where the Werner family established a spacious five-star hotel, located opposite the ski lifts of the resort.

Each room at the Arlberg Hospiz is decorated in a slightly different, rustic Tyrolean style. The hotel offers extensive spa facilities, a swimming pool, a gym, as well as various saunas and steam baths. The prices are slightly lower than in Lech. A comfortable suite (about 50 sq m) for two with breakfast included in the price, costs about €4,000 per week. The closest lift is just 100 metres from the hotel's ski storage facility and the areas of St. Christoph and St. Anton tempt with their slopes. They are a part of the same region as Lech, covered by a single pass, but they aren't yet connected with Lech by ski lifts. Luckily, there are free ski buses that serve the whole region.

Hospitz and located slightly above Hospitz Alm, serve the best cuisine in the area. The incredible hospitality and care about the needs of guests is simply overwhelming. The hotel itself looks like many others, but it has hosted numerous VIPs, including President Putin, the Chancellor of Austria, the Queen of Spain, or the personal assistant to Pope Benedict XVI.

The enormous passion, charisma and diplomacy of its owner Adi Werner, made this small mountain village a significant place on the map of the Alps. This diplomatic mission wouldn't probably have been so successful without a cellar packed with the world's biggest collection of large bottles of Bordeaux wine. At his own request (and expense), the owners of snobbish French Chateaux, help him with this unusual hobby and, for example, deliver wine in huge 30-litre bottles instead of regular 0.7-litre ones.



What you need to know

THE REGION IN FIGURES

- Location: 90 sq km in Vorarlberg, on the border with Tyrol.
- Elevation: Lech 1,450; Zurs 1,720 m above sea level
- Airports: Innsbruck (1.5 hrs), Zurich (2 hrs), Munich (3 hrs), bus transfers
- Region: resorts connected with lifts Warth, Lech, and Zurs; St. Anton and St. Christoph
- Lifts: 94
- Total length of pistes: 340 km, deep powder snow: 200 km
- The longest piste: Madloch 2,444 m
- The first mentions of Lech come from 1059; it was then settled by Walser peasants from the Swiss canton of Valais, who lived off animal husbandry and cultivation of difficult slopes. In 1925 the first Lech ski school was founded. The first lift was built in 1939, and after World War II there was a dynamic development of ski infrastructure in the area.
- Number of residents: Lech 1,429; Zurs 77
- Hotels: about 10,000 beds in Lech and Zurs.



RAV4 CHARMS AGAIN

2013 Geneva Motor Show saw the European premiere of the latest, fourth generation of Toyota RAV4.

The model, whose name stands for “Recreational Active Vehicle with 4 Wheel-Drive”, was one of the pioneers of the SUV market, its first incarnation being a 4-metre vehicle with a 4-wheel drive.



Guided by the experience of our pre-release tests, I dare to suspect that the fourth generation of the RAV4 will confirm that number "4" is a lucky number for Toyota. For Toyota's engineers and designers the model's round birthday was a great opportunity to make significant changes.

BIGGER, STRONGER, SAFER

The new model stands out by far, both in terms of appearance and those features that can't be seen immediately. The car simply looks completely different. From the outside, its design alludes to other Toyota models, by maintaining a common design principles called "Under Priority" and "Keen Look". Being an SUV, the new RAV4 has received a more athletic body with numerous off-road features. It looks dignified and makes a really big impression.

Toyota took care not only about the visual and prestigious aspects of the vehicle, but also about the practicality of the car. For example, the completely new design of pillars has clearly improved visibility while driving. The fourth RAV4 is also much larger than its predecessors. The length of the vehicle has increased by 20 cm, width by about 3

cm, whereas the height decreased by 2.5 cm. The wheelbase is now 266 cm, which is about 10 cm more than in the previous model, which made the interior much more spacious. The car also feels much more stable and combined with a more edgy look, it seems to be stronger and more dynamic.

This is not just an illusion, anyway, because for the new RAV4 Toyota has prepared new, more powerful engines, which also boast lower fuel consumption in comparison to previous generations of the model.

With the new security systems, more stable dimensions, the most modern technical solutions such as the Integrated Dynamic Drive System, the car drives very well, both on fast roads and in challenging mountain terrain where we had the opportunity to test it.

COMFORT ALSO COUNTS

The car is also a perfect travel companion. Comfortable, heated seats, high quality finishes, but most of all the space, make even a very long drive seem less tiring. However comfort isn't reserved here only for those travelling in front seats. The new RAV4 offers most space in the rear in its class, and with the unique, Easy Flat seating system,

the car retains all the practical, flexible versatility its customers have come to expect from the compact SUV.

You also don't have to worry anymore about how to pack all your things when going on a holiday. The load space of the new RAV4 has been increased to 547 litres and the access to luggage compartment is easy with the lowest loading sill in the class. The boot lid now opens upwards instead of sideways, as it did with the previous generations.

CHANGE IS GOOD

Today, after almost 20 years of its presence on the market, the RAV4 is considered a perfect SUV. It is available in more than 150 countries, with total sales of 4.5 million units since its debut (of which 1.2 million have sold in Europe). Taking into consideration quality and price of the car, I think it's a safe bet to say that sales figures of the new RAV4 will soar, only confirming that "4" is a lucky number for Toyota. Although, truth to be told, the manufacturer helped his luck, creating a remarkably good car. The new incarnation of the RAV4 is set to be a great success. Change is good, especially if it brings such effects.

Marta Wilk



The new Toyota RAV4 is a great travel companion. Comfortable, heated seats, high quality finishes, but most of all the space, make even a very long drive seem less tiring.



The car also feels much more stable and combined with a more edgy look, it seems to be stronger and more dynamic.





WIRED FOR WINTER

Being holed up at a hotel for meetings just a stone's throw away from a ski resort is a tease – you'd rather hit the slopes. Sneaking away for a couple of hours isn't hard, it's just that you didn't come prepared. Besides, picking up a two-metre-long ski bag from the carousel would have been a dead giveaway.

But with the right kit, you can pack light and be prepared to spontaneously make the most of your Alpine escape. The trick is to choose

small, feature-packed items that will let you extract maximum pleasure from your down time and keep you safe in unfamiliar places. The latest goggles, for example, have a

heads-up display that enables you to keep an eye on text messages and incoming calls without interrupting your descent. An airbag and transceiver are essentials to

Like Google Glass

OAKLEY AIRWAVE 1.5

Price PLN 2,709 www.store.apple.com

Like Google Glass for winter sports, but cooler. These link wirelessly with your iPhone or Android smartphone and are teamed with a wristband controller for ease of use while wearing gloves. A heads-up display in the bottom-right corner of the goggles lets you see your speed (calculated using GPS satellite signals) and jump analytics, temperature and altitude. You can choose music, read texts and Facebook messages, monitor your calls, look at maps, and even pinpoint where your friends are. Battery life is a respectable five to six hours and the performance lenses are easy to change to suit different conditions. An incredible amount of high-tech functionality is packed into this piece of kit, making Oakley Airwave a great travel companion.



Superbag

SNOKART KABIN BOOT BAG

Price: US\$136 www.snokart.com

Want to travel light but hate hiring boots? This clever new wheelie bag has been designed to meet airline requirements for carry-on luggage (measuring 24.5cm x 36cm x 53cm) and fits in an overhead locker, yet it can accommodate a pair of ski or snowboard boots. The boots nestle nose-to-tail, leaving enough space around them to fit a laptop, clothing, travel documents and more. A telescopic handle and durable wheels make it smart and portable, but you can easily stow the handle and unzip the back panel to reveal a pair of hidden shoulder straps to convert it to a rucksack. A great secret weapon for turning a business trip into a ski break.



Protection Airbag

MAMMUT ROCKER

Price: PLN 2,500 www.sportstore.pl

Airbags increase your chance of surviving an avalanche in two ways: they protect you from trauma and help you come to rest in a safe position – head on top of the surface of the snow, back facing down the slope – so you can breathe and be found. The Mammut Rocker is one of the most versatile avalanche-protection airbags you can buy. The backpack is a compact 15 litres with stowable ski and snowboard carriers, so is ideal for freeriding. What's more, the airbag system is removable, which is doubly handy. First, it means you can remove the airbag if you're riding in non-avalanche areas. Second, it means you can transfer the airbag into a bigger backpack when you need a bit more capacity on a ride.



Camera for Sportsmen

GO PRO HERO3+

Price: from PLN 1,399 www.gopro.com

Film, replay and share your adventures with an action camera. Available in black or silver, it's designed to be tough and durable. It even comes with a waterproof case and helmet mount, plus there are countless optional accessories including a chest harness. Also new for the Hero3+ is "Super View" mode for a wider field of vision without a fish-eye effect, and faster wifi connectivity so you can view and share your videos via smartphone or tablet.



protect you if you're in areas where there's potential for avalanches. We've also found a snowboard that converts into skis, the toughest video cameras for sharing your adventures, and carry-on luggage designed to discreetly fit a pair of ski or snowboard boots and still have room for your laptop and a change of clothes. With these and more, you can stay safe, stay in touch and perform better than ever on the slopes. Just add snow.

For skiing and texting

NORTH FACE ETIP FACET GLOVES

Price: PLN 349 www.trekkersport.com.pl

Smartphone-friendly gloves are nothing new, but the North Face Etip range covers several different styles of glove including the winter sports specific Facet, meaning they are suitable for everything from ski slopes to chilly city streets. The Etip Facet has two layers: a water-proof, breathable inner glove and a highly insulated outer shell with touchscreen conductive leather on each finger – perfect for using your gadgets on the go without frozen thumbs.



Not only a head protection

POC RECEPTOR BUG COMMUNICATION

Price: from PLN 799 www.sportpoint.pl

“Safety by POC and Beats by Dr Dre”, the Receptor Bug is one of POC’s most popular snow sports helmets. Light-weight at 550g, it has a ventilated double shell and expanded polystyrene liner, designed to take the knocks so your noggin doesn’t. This version comes with Beats by Dr Dre headphones built into the neck roll, complete with an iPhone-compatible remote control so you can take calls, switch songs and adjust the volume from the cord. It is available in black or white.



Just in case

MAMMUT ELEMENT BARRYVOX TRANSCIEVER

Price: from PLN 1,159 www.taternicki.pl

An elegantly simple, lime-green digital avalanche transceiver, with one-button operation and a large, clearly laid out display make this device easy to use, gloved, in an emergency. In “send” mode it acts as a beacon so others can find you if you get caught in an avalanche. Switch it to “search” mode and it does the opposite – you use it to find buried companions who have beacons, with an on-screen arrow guiding you to them. Teamed with a shovel and probe (and some training) this is an essential piece of back-country kit. More experienced users may prefer its big brother, the Pulse Barryvox (£350), which is far more complex and includes an analogue mode for a much greater range.



Resistant to cold

NIKON 1 AW1

Price: from PLN 2,999 www.nikon.pl

Capturing the beauty of snow sports is a challenge. Cameras struggle with the cold and the sheer amount of light, smartphone snaps don’t do them justice, and you really don’t want to drop your DSLR on the slopes. Enter the AW1 – one of the first waterproof, shockproof digital cameras to have interchangeable lenses. It’s even freeze-proof to -10°C. Its 14.25-megapixel sensor will give pin-sharp action shots, while low-light sensitivity of up to 6400 ISO means it will snap your après-ski antics equally faithfully. Video quality is impressive too, with hybrid auto-focus to capture all the action.



In case of emergency

ICEDOT CRASH SENSOR

Price: US\$149 <http://icedot.org>

ICE stands for In Case of Emergency because this high-tech sensor contacts your loved ones when you can’t. Suitable for all extreme sports – from cycling to snowmobiling – it has an operating time of 20 hours. It attaches to your helmet and can be paired with an app on your iPhone or Android smartphone. Then, if the sensor detects the G-forces that indicate you’ve crashed, it will initiate a countdown. If you’re unconscious and unable to stop the countdown, it uses your smartphone to send a text message to your chosen emergency contacts, telling them your details and GPS location.

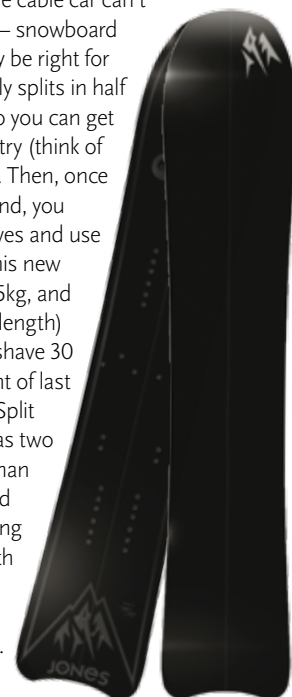


2 in 1

JONES ULTRACRAFT SPLITBOARD

Price: US\$1,119 www.tactics.com

If you hate waiting for lifts or want to explore places that the cable car can’t reach, a “splitboard” – snowboard and skis in one – may be right for you. The board literally splits in half to convert into skis so you can get up into the backcountry (think of them as snowshoes). Then, once you’re ready to descend, you combine the two halves and use it as a snowboard. This new model (weighing 2.55kg, and measuring 156cm in length) uses carbon fibre to shave 30 per cent off the weight of last season’s Hovercraft Split and has been made as two separate skis rather than simply sawing a board in half, vastly improving handling. It works with both strap and plate bindings. Off-piste is your new playground.





Protection airbag and avalanche transceiver teamed with a shovel and probe (and some training), are an essential piece of backcountry kit.

4 HOURS IN... BATUMI

The sunny harbour city located by the Black Sea in the delta of the Chorokhi River in the Ajaria region offers beautiful pebble beaches, monuments, typical Georgian delicacies and the famous tea fields.

Marzena Mróz takes you to Batumi.



There aren't too many places in the world, where you can bathe in the warm sea while looking at the snow-covered mountain peaks at the same time. The first thing that comes to mind is the Canadian Vancouver or – located at the foot of the Small Caucasus – Batumi. It's worth going there already in early spring, when it's still cold in Poland, and the Black Sea is glittering in the sun.

MOSQUE, THE DOLPHINARIUM AND CABLE CARS

The city is charming, friendly and bustling with life both during the day and at night. There are more and more good hotels and great restaurants. Its most important monuments include a Turkish mosque from the second half of the 19th century, eclectic residential buildings, the seaside park, a university located directly at the seafront promenade, a synagogue, an old Catholic church from the beginning of the 20th century, a dolphinarium and numerous museums. While in Batumi, you should see and go through the two most beautiful squares of the city – Era Square and Piazza, have a look at the “statue of love” that is a monument of Ali and Nino by the promenade and take a cable car ride from the city centre to a nearby hill. The panorama of Batumi from there is unforgettable – especially at night.

COLCHIS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

For the first time since the withdrawal of Soviet forces in the 1990s and the “Rose Revolution” during which Mikhail Saakashvili came into power in 2004 - Batumi is developing. In recent years, 350 million pounds have been invested here, that's why it resembles a fashionable seaside resort with a restored Old Town and chain-owned hotels, restaurants and nightclubs. All the more reason why the tourists coming to Batumi feel excited to hear a legend about the times when the places was called Colchis, where Jazon and the Argonauts came to find the golden fleece.



A huge Roman fortress in Gonio located 15 km outside the city, a Gothic cathedral and a Turkish mosque also document its rich history. However, Batumi really changed only after oil deposits were found here. At the beginning of the 19th century, brothers Rothschild and Nobel were one of those who made a fortune by exporting oil extracted from the nearby gulfs. It was possible thanks to technological creativity, about which you can learn in the fascinating Technological Museum.

BOTANICAL GARDEN

This is probably the biggest attraction in the city, apart from beaches and waters of the Black Sea. It's located 6 km northwards from the centre, on the Mtsvane Kontskhi (Cape Verde) outskirts. Located on a hill, from where you can see a spectacular view over the sea. It's the second biggest botanical garden in the world. It was founded by Andrzej Nikołajewicz Krasnow, a Russian botanist and a geographer during the last years of his life (1912-1914). It currently covers the area of 111 ha, and inside there is a

grave and a monument of the founder. The garden is divided into theme sections featuring plants from all over the world. There are specimens of plants typical for the Mediterranean, Caucasus, the Himalayas, New Zealand, North and South Americas, Mexico and East Asia. Especially eucalyp-

tus, Himalayan cedar, bamboo and orchids do great here. There is also an impressive botanical library here.

PIAZZA, THE FOUNTAIN, AND THE SCULPTURE OF LOVE

Piazza square is one of the most beautiful places in Batumi, resembling Italian squares. It's covered with mosaics and stained glass and is often visited by musicians coming to Batumi.

The Dancing Fountain was installed in 2009 by the Ardagani Lake. Daily shows begin at about 9pm. That's when the fountains dance to the music. The other part of the performance is a laser show, telling the story of Batumi and Georgia,

The sculpture of Ali and Nino is a symbol of eternal bond, endless love, and tolerance. Its name comes from a novel – "Ali and Nino" – a story of love between a Muslim and a catholic princess. Both statues move, changing their position every 10 minutes, until they become one. At night the sculptures are lit with changing colours, a magnetically beautiful sight.

What you need to know

- The most convenient way to get to Georgia is by plane from Warsaw and Katowice with Wizz Air. The flights are operated twice a week and land in Kutaisi, 180 km away from Batumi. www.wizzair.com
- Radisson Blu Hotel Batumi – a comfortable, new hotel with rooms overlooking the sea. www.radissonblu.com/batumi
- Batumi has a number of interesting museums including the State Art Museum of Adjara, the Adjara Museum of Tourism, or Nobel Brothers Batumi Technological Museum.



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@businessstraveller.pl

Illusory savings

I bought a plane ticket for a flight from London to Helsinki with a low-cost airline, which cost £253. However, my plans changed and I had to stay in Helsinki for one day longer. The ticket was not subject to change, and as a result, I couldn't use the return ticket and had to buy a new, more expensive one. Often I buy tickets on this route at a similar price, and I've always been able to change the date of the return for a fee. Why was the ticket unchangeable this time? What kind of ticket should I choose next time?

Andrzej

Dear Andrzej,

I checked your ticket carefully. Indeed, it was issued on the basis of a restrictive rate, which doesn't allow refunds or changes, even for a fee. For this reason, you could not change the date of return to the next day and were forced to buy a one-way ticket. Finnair offers two types of cheap rates in every booking class on the London-Helsinki-London route. The price difference is only 30 pounds.

The lower rate is quite restrictive - without the possibility of change or returns. More expensive rate allows for returns prior to departure for 50% of the fare (excluding taxes). Changing a date is charged extra €50 and is possible after paying the difference in the rates.

In this particular situation, you could have bought a ticket with a flexible rate for £283, so only £30 pounds more than the restrictive rate ticket. Changing the date would be possible for extra €50. That's why next time I suggest you buy only tickets with flexible rates. This is especially important for business travels when plans often change. Usually, the savings from buying a more restrictive rate ticket are illusory.

If you flight on this route regularly, it may be useful to check the price of the Helsinki-London flight (round trip) - the return ticket could have been used some other time. It could have also happened that the return ticket was cheaper than a one-way one. Naturally, the regulations specify that all stages of the journey must be completed.

Different prices for the same room

Our finance manager is having a conference in Los Angeles. I booked a hotel for seven nights. The first three nights cost \$160, the fourth and fifth ones - \$180 and \$190 respectively, and the sixth one - again \$160. Why can't I get one price for all the nights? Can he stay in one room throughout the stay, or will he need to move? I'd prefer it if he didn't have to change the room.

Aneta

Dear Aneta,

Hotel chains, like airlines, use systems like Revenue Management and can set difference price levels depending on the expected booking of the hotel.

Therefore, it often happens that the same type of room can be sold at different rates depending on the time. In general, we can get lower prices during weekends, when many of the rooms are vacant. During the week, prices are higher, because of the high business traffic and greater demand. The prices also go up during the conferences and congresses. Therefore, with longer stays situations like yours can happen quite a lot.

Of course we are talking about different rates for the same room type. It's understood that the hotel rates are also additionally varied. There are different prices for standard or executive rooms and suites.

I checked availability of the rates in the hotel, where your manager is staying. Indeed those two nights during his stay are much more expensive, because the occupancy rates at that time is quite high - probably also because of a conference. The rates you books are for an executive room with complementary breakfast. The tax is charged extra. Please remember to tell this to your manager. Booking is guaranteed with a credit card and can be cancelled free of charge for 48 hours prior to arrival, according to the local time. Naturally, your manager can stay in one room, no changes are required.

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