

Business Traveller Poland

www.businesstraveller.pl

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AWARDS 2014 WINNERS

BEST

- AIRPORTS
- AIRLINES
- HOTELS
- CAR RENTAL COMPANIES AND CARS
- ELECTRONICS LUGGAGE & LEISURE



BEST SHORT-HAUL AIRLINE
LOT POLISH AIRLINES

THE *Six friends* THEORY

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THE BEST OF THE BEST!

At the recent gala that took place in Sobański Palace in Warsaw, we presented the prestigious 2014 Business Traveller Poland Awards. We were very happy to host the 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. Lufthansa, LOT Polish Airlines, Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, KLM, Air France, Star Alliance, Best Western, Accor, Hilton, Dr. Irena Eris, Samsung, TUI, Wittchen, Toyota and Škoda - these are just some of the well-known brands that have been awarded in the second edition of Business Traveller Poland Awards. More than 700 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.

Our magazine is an inspiration both for business and leisure travellers. I hope that the presented awards will be a source of ideas for the next trips in 2015. We appreciate the independent choice of our readers, which makes the Business Traveller Poland Awards truly exceptional.

Marzena Mróz

Marzena Mróz
Editor-in-Chief





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Airlines

Lufthansa

MORE FLIGHTS TO LUBLIN

Beginning 31 March Lufthansa will increase the number of connections from its main hub in Frankfurt to Lublin. On Tuesdays the German carrier's aircraft will depart Frankfurt at 10.10 am and from Lublin at 12.55. Lufthansa has offered an increased number of seats in response to the growing demand by passengers in the region. The flights are operated by modern and efficient aircraft featuring business and economy class cabins.

Lufthansa's route network enables passengers flying via Frankfurt to reach almost any country in the world. At Frankfurt Airport they can use 15 comfortable business lounges with offices, quiet work and relaxation zones, as well as good restaurants.

Lufthansa believes in the business potential of the Lublin region. The carrier cooperates with more than 6,000 companies from all over Poland as part of the Partner Plus Benefit programme which makes Lufthansa the first choice for business customers in Poland.

This winter, the Lufthansa Group airlines will be linking 260 destinations in 100 countries on four continents via its hubs in Frankfurt, Munich, Zurich, Vienna and Brussels. Lufthansa successfully competes and continues to strengthen its position of the leading traditional carrier with continuous investments in new technologies, efficiency, passenger comfort and modernisation of its fleet.

Restaurant

Hotel Bristol

NOWY SZEF KUCHNI



Warsaw has a new, extremely talented chef. Carlos Teixeira has been appointed the head chef of Hotel Bristol, where he is responsible for the development of the concept of restaurants, bars, cafes and the new banquet offerings. He has gained international experience in several five-star hotels and their restaurants. Among the awards he has received are Rosette stars (2AA), and the prestigious London Afternoon Tea Award.

Teixeira was born in Portugal to a family with culinary traditions. He began his career in culinary business when he was 17, and worked in a number of hotels including Sheraton, Le Meridien, and the famous Ritz in Lisbon.

"Creating flavours for the place that is deeply rooted in people's minds is not only my honour, but also a great challenge," he says. "I know that Bristol is an important hotel for people of Warsaw and that my actions will be closely observed. Luckily, understanding the culinary heritage of this place has only boosted my motivation".



Airlines

PLL LOT

CHECK-IN COUNTERS.

The Polish national airline raises the standard of service at Warsaw Chopin Airport. LOT Business Class passengers can now check in at new counters located in a specially dedicated and smartly arranged zone.

The carrier continues to implement new solutions that greatly improve the quality of service. In recent months significant changes have been introduced on board LOT's aircraft. These include the new LOT Economy Plus class on short-haul flights, and the new catering service on board the airline's Dreamliners. LOT Business Class, LOT Economy Plus and LOT Premium Class passengers can also now enjoy a dedicated check-in and passport control area. LOT Polish Airlines is the first airline to apply this solution in Poland. Interestingly, similar solutions are offered by some other carriers, but only for First Class passengers.

"Our fleet includes the state-of-the-art B787 Dreamliner aircraft that offer the ultimate in comfort for passengers. We would also like to raise the quality of our service on other stages of our journey – hence the new dedicated area for fast and convenient check-in," said Michał Leman, Director Marketing and Product Department at LOT Polish Airlines.



Discover Poland with Discovery Travel

Grupy MICE w Polsce

Konferencje i bankiety firmowe

Rezerwacje hotelowe

Wieloletnie doświadczenie oraz wysoka jakość usług





Tourism

France

CARNIVAL OF NICE

From 13 February to 1 March, one of the biggest carnivals in the world offers a programme of unforgettable performances. The parades, which are famous for the giant decoration on Masséna Square, will be attended by 18 chariots that will tell the story of the King of Music. These grandiose and colourful performances held from dusk until dawn, are attended by 1,000 musicians and dancers who come to Nice from all over the world. For more than 15 days the city will live to the rhythm of the event. Flower battle on the Promenades Anglais are an integral part of the carnival. The chariots will be decorated with the most beautiful floral compositions and characters dressed in extravagant costumes will be dropping mimosa, gerberas and lilies.

Hotel

Wrocław

THE IDEA FOR VALENTINE'S DAY

There is a place that combines the atmosphere of Parisian cafes and a romantic streets of Verona. Wrocław – the meeting venue, the city of 100 bridges and a vibrant Old Town. In the very heart of this beautiful place lies Art Hotel. So, what about inviting your loved one to a weekend full of fulfilled wishes? The sense-inspiring décor of the room and its intimate atmosphere are a guarantee of fantastic memories. The Valentine's evening will start with a romantic dinner for two. On that day Art Restaurant will feature a special menu and buffet full of sweet delicacies. Excellent service guaranteed. Guests of Art Hotel will also receive Valentine's surprises; arthotel.pl/walentyнки-we-wroclawiu



Warsaw

Chopin Airport

WORLD CLASS PUNCTUALITY

Almost 90 per cent of all flights at Chopin Airport arrive and depart on time, making it one of the most punctual airports in the world, says the latest OAG Punctuality Report.

OAG, a global flight scheduling company, placed Chopin Airport 18th in the "small airports" category, with an 87.6 per cent punctuality rate. Small airports are defined as handling fewer than 10 million passengers annually, even though Chopin Airport actually welcomed over 10.5 million travellers in 2014. In the "small airports" category, Bristol topped the ranking (94.4 per cent punctuality rate), followed by Charleroi (93.1 per cent), Berlin-Schönefeld (92.3 per cent). In the "medium airports" category, where airports served between 10-20 million passengers annually, Osaka came out top (93.2 per cent), followed by Moscow-Sheremetyevo and Copenhagen (both 89.8 per cent).

PRZYWILEJE DLA ZARZĄDÓW
I RAD NADZORCZYCH

LEADERS
NETWORK
CLUBS



Tylko nieliczni w biznesie
naprawdę wiele mogą.

A Ty?

W którym jesteś Klubie?

Jesteś członkiem zarządu, rady nadzorczej lub właścicielem spółki, która odniosła sukces?

Chcesz dać swojej spółce przewagę nad konkurencją? Potwierdzić należny Ci status, budować wizerunek i wpływy, zabezpieczyć karierę? Pragniesz rozwijać sieć kontaktów z top menedżerami z tej samej ligi biznesu, lokalnie i w całej Polsce? Móc na nich liczyć w potrzebie, wymieniać się radami i wiedzą? Czy interesuje Cię wygoda i przywileje dla Ciebie i Twojej rodziny, a jednocześnie chcesz dbać o innych? Pragniesz to wszystko realizować bez wysiłku, przez 365 dni w roku? **Wejdź** na www.leaders.pl, **wybierz** swój Klub i w 2 minuty **potwierdź** przynależność do zamkniętej grupy decydentów. Fantastyczna cena za elitarne usługi. Liczba miejsc ograniczona.

Leaders Network Clubs. Społeczność ludzi sukcesu, przywileje, misja społeczna.



Iceland

The Land of Ice and Fire

THE PHOTO EXPEDITION

Iceland is a special place, known as the land of fire and ice, where glaciers are adjacent to volcanoes. West of the country has some mysterious places like the most photographed mountain in Iceland, Mount Kirkjufell. North has beautiful harbours like the one in Húsavík with a stunning background. East charms with its fiords. South will simply blow your mind through black sand beaches and deserts, impressive lava fields, glaciers and lagoons and even caves made of ice! And of course all the centre of the Island offers incredible sights during summer when the interior roads are open back again.

Summer is perfect for long hikes, going round around the island. You can even witness the Midnight Sun bouncing above the horizon during the Summer Solstice when up North. Winter offers stunning snow covered landscapes and can show some incredible Northern Lights displays for the lucky ones ready to fight the all-relative cold in the middle of a dark night. Réza Kalfane - aka Rezzzzzzz Photography - and Jérôme Pitault are two French photographers with an infinite passion for Iceland and would love to share it with you through photo tours, contacts with local people and why not some crazy concerts in Reykjavík or around. Be crazy and join them for a great experience you will never forget! Information and registration: Aleksandra Trojnar +48 693 693 800; mediabroker.pl



Zurich

New Hotel

KAMEHA GRAND

Shopping aficionado and gourmets who come to Zurich to fill their senses and empty their pockets, have now access to a new sophisticated and luxurious hotel. Its name ("Kameha") derives from the Hawaiian language and means "unique". One must admit that the name truly captures the style and grandiose with which Kameha Grand has been designed and decorated.

Its guests can enjoy 224 Premium and Deluxe room, two Executive suites, six Business suites, the roomy Space suite, as well as 11 themed suites including: Poker Face, Fair Play, Serenity, Diva, Watchmaker, Workout, and truly unusual King Kameha suite located on the top floor. The interior was created by the

famous designer Marcel Wanders, while Robert Knorr designed the building. The strong point of the hotel is its location in the city centre, next to the best shops and designer boutiques. The hotel also boasts gourmet restaurants: L'unico serves best Italian cuisine, and Yu Nijyo specializes in Japanese dishes. There is also a special chocolate bar, Puregold Bar & Lounge, Smoker's Lounge and Shisha Lounge. Another attraction is Kameha Spa where you can rejuvenate in a modern and well-equipped fitness room.

Kameha Grand is also a great place for a private reception and conferences which can be held in a stylishly designed ballroom; kamehagrandzuerich.com





AMBER ROOM

RESTAURANT



INGREDIENTS OF CULINARY EXCELLENCE



Michelin Guide Recommendation

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Pałac Sobańskich, Al. Ujazdowskie 13, 00 - 567 Warsaw



AWARDS FOR THE BEST

It's the second time we presented Business Traveller Awards.

Among the undisputed winners were Lufthansa, LOT Polish Airlines, Singapore Airlines, Wizz Air, Singapore Changi Airport, Warsaw Chopin Airport, and the Frankfurt-based multihub. Our readers rated highest Avis and Hertz car rental companies, as well as Škoda, Toyota, Samsung and Sony brands. Among hotels the award went to Accor, Radisson Blu and spa hotels owned by the well-known Dr Irena Eris brand. TUI was selected the best among travel agencies, while Vistula won the award for best fashion brand.

The gala was held on 15 January 2015 in Sobański Palace, Warsaw. It was attended

by almost 100 guests, including airline managers, CEOs of Polish airports, international and Polish hotel chains, as well as representatives of car rental companies, business electronics brands and Polish travel agencies.

FOR THE CHOSEN ONES

Business Traveller Awards boast 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.

"This is the second edition of the Polish award ceremony. My congratulations to all the award winners. We are deeply committed to providing business travellers with a credible and high quality monthly magazine that has an unbiased approach to testing airlines, hotels, new technologies, and offers attractive lifestyle topics. Business Traveller Awards are a reliable guide to successful trips in these challenging times," said Robert Grzybowski, the publisher of the Polish edition of the monthly.



Business Traveller Poland is now five years old and boasts the circulation of 20,000 printed copies available in best Polish hotel chains, as well as in Business Class on board aircraft departing Poland. BTP is also available as an e-edition on board LOT Polish Airlines Dreamliners, as well as online on Media Box of several airlines and hotel chains in Poland and all over the world. The website businessstraveller.pl has 70,000 unique users per month. BTP has also a group of loyal readers of its fully digital editions of BTP available on iPads and Android tablets.

TRAVELLERS ARE CHOOSERS

The online survey carried out for Business Traveller Poland by consultancy firm Deloitte (which also prepared the final report), we asked you, among others, about the best airports, hotel chains and airlines. The survey was taken by almost 750 people. These included readers of BT Poland, its subscribers – the members of the Polish Business Roundtable, as well as business travellers served by major business travel organizers in Poland: HRG, Carlson Wagonlit, Airclub and Weco Travel.

The respondents are a representative group of Polish business travellers. More than half



Business Traveller Awards are a reliable guide to successful trips in these challenging times," said Robert Grzybowski, the publisher of the Polish edition of the monthly.

of them (52%) are aged 40-59 and almost one-third (31%) fall into age bracket of 26-39. 57% are men, while the remaining 43% are women. The vast majority – almost 84% - live in the largest Polish cities. Our readers are primarily managers (33%), corporate executives (CEOs and board members – 22%), specialists and freelancers (22%), as well as company owners (13%) and entrepreneurs (10%). More than two-thirds of them declare earnings of more than PLN 5,000 per month. They mainly spend their holiday in Europe (39%) and exotic countries (39%). Mere 14% choose Poland as their holiday destination. Their hobbies are primarily skiing (28%), new technologies (20%) and sailing (15%).

ON BOARD AND IN THE HOTEL

Our survey shows that our readers are frequent air travellers and hotel guests. Within the last year, two-thirds of them took between 10 and 19 flights (both for business and leisure), while almost one-fifth of those surveyed boarded planes more than 20 times. The same is true for hotel stays – last year almost a quarter of our readers spent between 8 and 14 nights in hotels, while one in ten stayed in for more than 50 nights.

Filip Gawryś



Awards 2014

WINNERS

AIRPORTS

Best Airport in Poland

1. Warsaw Chopin Airport
2. Wrocław-Strachowice.
3. Katowice Pyrzowice

Best Regional Airport in Poland

1. Wrocław-Strachowice.
2. Katowice Pyrzowice
3. Gdańsk Lech Walesa Airport

Best Airport in Europe

1. Frankfurt
2. Amsterdam Schiphol
3. Munich

Best Airport in the World

1. Singapore Changi
2. Amsterdam Schiphol
3. Dubai International

AIRLINES

Best Short-Haul Airline

1. LOT Polish Airlines
2. Lufthansa
3. Airberlin

Best Long-Haul Airline

1. Lufthansa
2. Emirates
3. Qatar Airways

Best Economy Class

1. Lufthansa
2. Airberlin
3. LOT Polish Airlines

Best Premium Economy Class

1. Air France
2. KLM
3. British Airways

Best Business Class

1. Singapore Airlines
2. Qatar Airways
3. Lufthansa

Best Low-Cost Airline

1. Wizzair
2. Ryanair
3. Norwegian



The Gala of Business Traveller Awards 2014 was held in the historic Sobański Palace, Warsaw – the seat of the Polish Business Roundtable.



Ofer Kisch, Regional Director Central and Eastern Europe, Lufthansa



Małgorzata Kozieł, Spokesperson for LOT Polish Airlines



Łukasz Gruchalski, Qatar Airways



Christoph Heberer, Market Development Manager, Singapore Airlines



Maciej Pyrka, Country Manager Emirates in Poland



Agnieszka Plewczyńska, Marketing Coordinator at Air France-KLM



Christoph Horak, Country Manager Poland, airberlin



Marta Orlof, British Airways



Szymon Żaliński, Manager Direct Sales and Support, SAS



Aleksandra Wiśniewska,
PR Wizz Air



Barbara Grabowska,
Manager Poland, Singapore
Airlines



Winfried Hartmann, Senior Vice
President Sales & Customer
Relations Frankfurt Airport

Best Frequent Flyer Programme

1. Miles and More (Lufthansa)
2. Eurobonus (SAS)
3. Executive Club (British Airways)

Best Air Alliance

1. Star Alliance
2. One World
3. Sky Team

HOTELS

Best Hotel Brand in the World

1. Radisson Blu
2. Best Western
3. Hilton

Best Business Hotel Chain in Poland

1. Accor
2. Rezidor
1. Starwood

Best Business Hotel in Poland

1. Radisson Blu Cracow
2. Sofitel Grand Sopot
3. Sofitel Victoria Warsaw

Best Hotel Loyalty Scheme

1. Le Club Accorhotels
2. Best Western Rewards
3. Starwood Preferred Guest



Przemysław Przybylski,
Spokesperson for Warsaw
Chopin Airport



Dariusz Kuś,
President of the Management
Board Wrocław Airport.



Anna Filip,
Airline Relations Specialist
at Katowice-Pyrzowice Airport



Michał Dargacz,
Spokesperson for Gdańsk
Lech Wałęsa Airport



Marzena Mróz, the editor-in-chief of Business Traveller, together with
Accor team.



The participants of the Gala willingly posed for group photos.



Magdalena Gniadek,
Loyalty Programmes Department
Manager at LOT



Business Traveller Awards boast a long and rich history. Many national editions of Business Traveller magazine organize their own award ceremonies.

Best Hotel Spa in Poland

1. Dr Irena Eris, Hotel Spa Dylewskie Hills
2. Sheraton Sopot Hotel Conference Center & Spa
3. Dr Irena Eris Hotel Spa Krynica

CAR RENTAL COMPANIES AND CARS

Best Car Rental Worldwide

1. Hertz
2. Avis
1. Europcar

Best Car Rental Company in Poland

1. Avis
2. Hertz
3. Europcar

Best Fleet Car

1. Toyota Avensis
2. Škoda Octavia
3. Ford Mondeo

Best Executive Car

1. Škoda Superb
2. Audi A8
3. BMW 7 Series

ELECTRONICS LUGGAGE & LEISURE

Best Smartphone for Business

1. Samsung
2. Nokia
3. Apple

Best Laptop for Business

1. Sony
2. Dell
3. Samsung

Favourite Luggage Brand

1. Wittchen
2. Samsonite
3. Victorinox

Best Clothing Brand for Business

1. Vistula
2. Hugo Boss
3. Wólczanka

Best Leisure Tour Operator

1. TUI
2. Itaka
3. Rainbow Tours

Data collection and final report:



Time the survey was taken: from 4 December 2014 to 7 January 2015., the number of participants: 731



The Gala was attended by nearly one hundred guests.



Joanna Świerkosz, Deputy Director of the Sales, Distribution, Marketing and Revenue Management, Accor



Gheorghe Cristescu, Country Sales Director for Poland, Best Western



Tomasz Pieniążek, CEO at Irena Eris Spa Hotels



Malwina Karalus, Marketing & Administration Coordinator Cluster Warsaw, Radisson Blu



Agnieszka Róg-Skrzyniarz, PR & Communication Director, Starwood Hotels & Resorts for Poland



Aleksandra Defitowska, Sales Director of B2B Products, Wittchen



Katarzyna Okraszewska, Sales Manager, Hertz



Radosław Lesiak, Vice President of Avis Poland



Katarzyna Dobrzyńska, PR Manager Avis Poland



Magdalena Swoboda-Młynarczyk,
PR Skoda



Mariusz Jasiński,
PR Manager Ford Polska



Rafał Znyk, Corporate Sales
Manager BMW



Leszek Kempirski,
PR Manager Audi



Rafał Urtate,
TUI



Katarzyna Konecka,
Itaka



Katarzyna Szczepaniak,
Rainbow Tours



Justyna Kościuk,
PR Manager, Vistula



Grzegorz Piwowar,
Sony



Marta Buler, Communications
Manager, Microsoft



Behind the scenes the guests were actively commenting the Gala and congratulated the winners.



Business Traveller Poland

HOTEL ICON



French botanist and artist Patrick Blanc created and installed the lavish 18-meter vertical garden in the Hotel ICON lobby. Measuring 230 sqm, the verdant garden wall is the largest of its kind in Asia.

The upscale Hong Kong hotel located in the heart of Tsim Sha Tsui East is a special place, which represents the combined efforts of Hong Kong's most creative talents. With 262 guest rooms ranging in size from 36 to 80m², Hotel ICON ranks among Hong Kong's most symbolic landmarks.

DESIGNED WITH PASSION

Rocco Yim of the Hong Kong-based Rocco Design Architects Ltd oversaw the hotel's architectural design. William Lim, Managing Director of Hong Kong's CLB Architects, designed the contemporary interiors, including the guestrooms, the Silverbox ballroom and the lobby's grand sweeping staircase. Fusing innovative design and classic style, Lim's goal was to create spaces of ultimate comfort. Fashion doyenne Vivienne Tam also contributed to the project, designing the remarkable Designer Suite by Vivienne Tam. Hotel ICON's commitment to local creativity and innovation extends to the staff uniforms. Award-winning Hong Kong designer Barney Cheng fashioned the stylishly clean-cut outfits. They are worn by students and apprentices of one of the best tourism schools in Asia, because, interestingly, ICON is owned by a university. Tommy Li, one of Hong Kong's most prominent graphic designers, created Hotel ICON's eye-catching logo. Fluid and evolving, the logo signifies the hotel's central location as well as its outreach and commitment to the community.

ART AND USABILITY

The renowned Hong Kong designer Freeman Lau curated the hotel's eclectic art collection.

Conran & Partners designed Hotel ICON's restaurants, including 'Above & Beyond', the sleek-and-chic private members' facility on Level 28, and The Market, an open-plan restaurant offering a tempting selection of pan-Asian and Western favourites. French botanist and artist Patrick Blanc created and installed the lavish 18-meter vertical garden in the Hotel ICON lobby. Measuring 230 sqm, the verdant garden wall is the largest of its kind in Asia.

RESTAURANTS

Located on the top floor of the hotel and featuring panoramic views of Victoria Harbour, Above & Beyond provides gourmet lovers with traditional dim sum and the best of seasonal Cantonese cuisine. It evokes the mood of a private club with hand-picked books and eclectic Asian artefacts line the library shelves, creating an intimate, relaxed space. Three ultra-stylish private dining rooms, one with a functioning kitchen, are also available for guests to invite a private chef to serve customised meals. Inspired by the Hong Kong's iconic wet-markets, The Market offers a wide range of top-quality Asian and international delicacies. It can accommodate up to 160 people. GREEN, situated on the lobby level, provides guests with a neighbourhood cafe by day and tapas bar by night.

ROOMS AND SUITES

Standard features include a complimentary mini-bar, iPhone/iPod docking station, complimentary wired and Wi-Fi internet connections and an ultra-slim 40" Ultra High Definition LED TV. ICON 36 rooms have an area of 36 sq m. Club 38 Harbour rooms are even roomier with a separate work area, a spacious bathroom with deep soaking bathtub and separate walk-in rainshower. If you are ever tempted to leave your room, you can enjoy all the privileges of the hotel's lounge, Above & Beyond. ICON also of-



fers its guests online access to more than 2,000 newspapers and magazines. With space to relax, Club Suite 65 offers stunning panoramic views of Hong Kong island - and more. They are perfect for guests looking for a longer stay in the city. Each suite consists of a comfortable living room, bedroom and a marble bathroom. Smartphones with free mobile data and IDD are also available. The height of luxury, the huge Club Suite 80 offers stunning panoramic views of Victoria Harbour and Hong Kong. The wide range of equipment offered here includes Blu-ray player and Bose sound dock. The suite was created by world renowned fashion designer and one of Hong Kong's icons - Vivienne Tam and reflects the artists signature look of unforced elegance and chic simplicity.

The high ceilings resemble Chinese screens, the portrait entitled "The Opera Girl" is made of Swarovski crystals, while the whole bedroom is inspired by the Shanghai Art Deco. There is even a porcelain plaque personally selected from the designer's New York apartment, and the whole is accentuated by a table made of Japanese cherry wood.

VERDICT

It is a truly modern and unique property. Excellent service and restaurants. On the 9th floor of the hotel there is an outdoor swimming pool, fitness centre and a bar where guests can enjoy a cocktail, while admiring the vibrant city of Hong Kong. Hotel ICON's grand Silverbox ballroom for up to 480 people is the ideal venue for a celebration or theatre-style conference.

Rafał Sobiech

CONTACT

Science Museum Road
Tsim Sha Tsui East, Kowloon
Hong Kong
www.hotel-icon.com

PRICE

Prices for the rooms start at about PLN 9000 per night.

INTERCONTINENTAL HONG KONG



CONTACT

InterContinental Hongkong
18 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui
Hongkong
+852 2721 1211
www.hongkong-ic.intercontinental.com

PRICE

Prices start at about PLN 1000 per night.

This five-star hotel is one of the best addresses in the city. The windows of its 503 rooms and 87 suites offer stunning panoramic views of Victoria Harbour and Hong Kong. Whether you are gazing over the skyline from your suite or the infinity spa pools, all of Hong Kong is literally at your feet.

ROOMS AND SUITES

The interiors are modern, with Asian influences. They stand out - in addition to the amazing view - with advanced electronics. From 37 inch Sharp Aquos LCD televisions and Bose DVD/CD home entertainment sound systems with iPod docking stations to high-speed wireless broadband internet, guests can make the most of their leisure

time and conduct business at the touch of a button. Large marble bathrooms with sunken tubs and separate stall showers provide the ultimate luxury. With 24-hour in-room dining and butler service, as well as around-the-clock concierge and business service, the hotel staff are always on hand to assist guests both day and night.

Deluxe Junior Suites with harbour views, feature a spacious room with either a king-size bed or twin beds with no partition between the sitting and sleeping areas. There is a walk-in closet and a spacious bathroom with large sunken tub and separate glass-enclosed shower.

Executive Suites consist of one large room with a king-size bed at one end and a spacious living area with a sofa and armchairs,

plus a working desk at the other. They also feature a dressing room and a marble bathroom. Each Deluxe Suite has a large living room, complete with a spacious lounge area and dining table for four. The spacious white marble bathroom has an oversized Jacuzzi bathtub with views of Victoria Harbour. The 4,500 square foot Terrace Suite is a contemporary and elegant one-bedroom suite with a large outdoor terrace with a Jacuzzi. The living room features creme marble floors and walnut custom-designed furniture, while the bedroom's most distinctive feature is a four-poster bed. The Presidential Suite is recognised as Asia's most spectacular. Set against the stunning backdrop of Victoria Harbour and Hong Kong Island, this exclusive 7,000



square foot duplex offers extraordinary facilities and services, with a personal butler on call around-the-clock. In addition to the five bedrooms, dining room, private study and gym, the Suite has a 2,500 square foot rooftop terrace with an infinity swimming pool. Guests can also indulge in the master bedroom's luxurious bathroom with its large Jacuzzi and rain forest shower with views of the harbour, as well as a private sauna and steam room.

RESTAURANTS

With three restaurants Michelin-starred restaurants, InterContinental Hongkong is an ideal place for gourmets. Spoon (one star) offers French cuisine inspired by the ideas of Alain Ducasse. NOBU InterContinental Hong Kong showcases Nobu's signature dishes, as well as new creations using local ingredients and

drawing upon Nobu Matsuhisa's classical training as a sushi chef in Tokyo, his life abroad in Peru and Argentina and his travels around the world.

Recipient of 2-Michelin Stars, Yan Toh Heen is recognized as one of the world's finest Chinese restaurants specializing in Cantonese cuisine.

The Steak House winebar + grill (one star) apart from meat offers a salad bar and an extensive wine list (450 items). Perched directly at the harbour's edge, Harbourside offers casual all-day dining with both a la carte and buffet options. The Lobby Lounge, with its impressive wall of windows, showcases a mesmerising panorama of Victoria Harbour and Hong Kong Island, truly one of the world's most magnificent views. You can relax here over the hotel's signature cocktails, as the skyline transforms into a kaleidoscope of vibrant colours and

during the nightly "Symphony of Lights" laser show.

CONFERENCE AND SPA

The hotel's conference facilities are thoughtfully designed and equipped with the most modern equipment. The ballroom features Hong Kong's largest hotel LED wall for show stopping presentations. You can also indulge your senses and let the pressures of the day melt away at the feng shui inspired I-Spa.

VERDICT

It is a very good hotel with the best views in the city. Lying in bed and watching the impressive panorama, you may get an impression that the ships in the bay in a few moments will barge into your room. Fantastic restaurants, a lot of space and excellent service make Intercontinental Hongkong a place you would like to return to as soon as possible.

Rafał Sobiech

The windows offer stunning panoramic views of Victoria Harbour and Hong Kong. Whether you are gazing over the skyline from your suite or the infinity spa pools, all of Hong Kong is literally at your feet.



SOFITEL MACAU AT PONTE 16



CONTACT

Sofitel Macau At Ponte 16
Rua do Visconde Paco de Arco 16
Macau
www.sofitelmacau.com

PRICE

From about €155 per room
per night

Sofitel at Ponte 16 hotel in Macau, China fits perfectly in the good tradition of this famous hotel chain. Macau is a very interesting place on the map of Asia. This former Portuguese colony - the official languages here are Cantonese and Portuguese (although less and less people continue to speak this European language) - covers an area of 24 sq km. Macau extends on the peninsula bordering with mainland China and two islands - Taipa and Coloane, connected together with the Cotai area, which came into being as a result of drying out the land. The peninsula was originally an island, but the shoal connecting it with the mainland gradually evolved into an isthmus chang-

ing the island into a peninsula. Macau shared the fate of Hong Kong. In 1999 the Chinese and the Portuguese signed a declaration stating that Macau would be incorporated into China, but as it was the case with Hong Kong, for the next 30 years, it was going to be the subject to the principle of "one country, two systems". Macau has its own currency, although the Hong Kong dollar is commonly used here. Although Poland signed a visa-free traffic agreement, if you want to enter the mainland China through two borders, you need to have a Chinese visa.

LOCATION

5-star Sofitel Macau is located in the historic part of the city, on

the waterfront of the Pearl River, separating the mainland China from Macau. It's a modern and spacious 18-storey building resembling modern Portuguese palaces. A stone's throw away, there is an old low-rise city centre. Here you can see the way the locals have lived here for decades, before Macau became the world's gambling capital, and one of the richest places in the world, next to Hong Kong. Basically, you can get to know the whole of Macau within a shorter or a longer walk. It takes 10 minutes to walk to the Senado square and 15 - to the ruins of historic St. Paul's Cathedral. A thirty minute-walk will take you to the old fort of Guia and A-Ma temple. Getting to the new business district, which, similarly to

Hong Kong, is distinguished by modern skyscrapers and ubiquitous casinos, will take you the same amount of time.

ROOMS

The hotel offers several types of rooms: Superior, Luxury, Junior Suite, and Prestige Suite, as well as luxurious 120-262 sq m suites (Mansions) with kitchen. All rooms come with air-conditioning, a flat flat-screen TV and a DVD player. Bathrooms in Superior and Luxury rooms feature toiletries by L'Occitane, while in Club and rooms of higher category, you'll find sets of luxurious cosmetics by Hermès.

RESTAURANTS

The local Macau cuisine is a combination of traditional Cantonese and Portuguese cuisines. Dishes served here are a result of intertwined culinary traditions from Europe, China and the whole of Asia. That's why you will find here the aromas of turmeric, coconut milk, cinnamon and bacalhau. Common specialties are chicken à la Portuguese (galinha à portuguesa) and fried crabs.

Since Sofitel is a French hotel chain, Prive restaurant serves fine French cuisine à la carte. While dining here, you can enjoy the views of the historic part of Macau. Le Chinois, located on the top floor of the hotel and overlooking the Pearl River, serves typical Cantonese dishes. Mistral Restaurant, which is close to the hotel pools, is a typical restaurant with an international menu that will satisfy the palates of those used to European cuisine. And if you feel like having a good cocktail or a snack, visit the hotel's Rendezvous Lounge.

SPA AND BUSINESS MEETINGS

Wi-Fi is available throughout the hotel. There are also a few spacious conference rooms. The staff in Business Center will assist you with all translations, you may need. You can also pre-

pare or print various presentations on the spot. All meeting rooms are equipped with state-of-the-art wireless public address system.

The hotel's So Spa, which uses cosmetics by a well-known French company L'Occitane, offers relaxing baths, massages and Asian medicine body treatments. In the fitness centre overlooking the hotel pool the guests have access to a wealth of fitness equipment: from stationary bikes to step machines. Guests staying in standard rooms can use the main outdoor pool. Those staying in

suites in the more exclusive Mansion area, can use a private and quiet pool.

VERDICT

The five stars of Sofitel in Macau are a guarantee of excellent quality. It's an ideal venue for individual guests who have come to Macau for business or leisure. The place not only guarantees European comfort of the highest level, but also gives an opportunity to take a look at the local life and customs of Chinese people from a close distance.

Rafał Sobiech

5-star Sofitel Macau is located in the historic part of the city, on the waterfront of the Pearl River, separating the mainland China from Macau.



PASSAGE TO ASIA

A good location and top-quality facilities make Helsinki airport a winning option for Asia-bound flyers, says **Tom Otley**.





NTAA HELSINGFORS-VANDA

Lufthansa

D AIZB III

If you had to design a perfect hub airport, Helsinki would come close. First, it is small – much smaller than most hubs, and smaller than many airports that have no aspirations to be a hub.

Located under one roof (the airport map shows two terminals, but it's still effectively one building), Helsinki served 15 million passengers last year and is aiming for 20 million by 2020. With three operational runways, it has plenty of capacity to spare, and firm plans for expanding its operations. Second, it's reliable. Despite sharing a latitude with Anchorage in Alaska, it has closed only once in the past ten years or so – for less than an hour in 2003, owing to a snowstorm.

It also boasts of having 98.5 per cent on-time departures, although these figures are from the airport, which records only delays that it is responsible for. Flight data specialist OAG rates punctuality at the airport as “average”.

Third, it is focused on being a hub. Yes, it offers plenty of direct flights, both for those flying to and from Helsinki within the region and Europe as a whole, but its main strategic objective is connecting traffic. As chief executive Kari Savolainen says: “Finland does not have a big enough domestic population for point-to-point traffic to be the real focus for us.”

Instead, it encourages airlines to use it as a hub by keeping its costs down, partly because it owns the airport land, and partly through efficiency. “We are very integrated and have a multi-skilled model so the same guys can do different types of work during the day, from security check-in in the morning to something else in human resources later,” Savolainen says.

Fourth is its location. Savolainen points out that the focus on connecting traffic is an obvious one “when you look at the map”.

“Within 12 hours’ flight from the airport, look at where you can reach,” he says. “We

are an epicentre for Asia, but also for Russia. St Petersburg is only three or four hours from Helsinki, so it's in our catchment area. Russian passengers are important for us, as is connecting to Russia for passengers from elsewhere, with Finnair flying to Kazan, Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, Samara, St Petersburg and Yekaterinburg.”

Helsinki is in the right place for European travellers wishing to fly to Asia, being positioned on the Great Circle Route between the continents.

This led national airline Finnair to claim that flying via Helsinki was good for the environment. The reasoning was that it could save up to 10 per cent in carbon dioxide emissions compared with flying through other hubs – since the route is shorter, it can carry less fuel and therefore fly more efficiently, aided by a modern fleet and less congested airspace.

Needless to say, this wasn't perhaps an argument that played well with the environ-



The airport in Helsinki is doing its best to become the perfect hub. It offers plenty of direct flights, both for those flying to and from Helsinki within the region and Europe as a whole, but its main strategic objective is connecting traffic from Europe and the rest of the world.



The airport has trialled everything from yoga classes at the departure gate to skateboarding competitions, not to mention the free, multilingual consumer magazine “Via Helsinki”.

mental lobby, nor had much effect on frequent flyers.

Nevertheless, the shared aims of Finnair and the airport to capture Asian traffic provide Helsinki’s fifth key advantage.

THE AIRPORT AND FINNAIR

The two work together more closely than, for instance, Heathrow and British Airways are ever likely to, and since half of Finnair’s capacity is on Asian routes, airline president and chief executive Pekka Vauramo is unequivocal about the airport’s importance. When I interviewed him earlier this year, he even admitted that for most travellers, Finnair’s product was “a transfer via Helsinki”. Yes, the fully-flat bed being rolled out across the airline’s business class cabins is important, as is the Finnish design aesthetic, and good food and wine on board. In the end, however, it’s quick transfer times, competitive prices and a hub that facilitates journeys to and from Asia that are the main selling points.

Yet the airport does have its challenges – for one, being tied to the fortunes of its national airline. No matter how important the air-

port is to Finnair, the airline is even more vital to the airport.

For the moment, Finnair is sticking to its plans, with Vauramo ruling out joining the International Airlines Group (IAG), parent company of fellow Oneworld carriers BA and Iberia, “in the near future”, or “changing strategy”. (Finnair became part of BA and Iberia’s transatlantic joint business with American Airlines last year.)

In any case, it would need the government to change its ownership rules before it could do so. Still, it’s not impossible to think of a situation where Helsinki’s importance as a hub to Asia could be threatened.

Savolainen says it is natural that the strategy of the airport and the national airline should closely converge.

“It is not an exceptional situation,” he says. “Most hubs have a main customer, and on the other hand we have other important customers such as Japan Airlines [with whom Finnair has a joint agreement on Europe-Asia flights, along with BA]. Our strategy vectors are parallel with Finnair, but that is a strength.” The airport is, of course, aware of the im-

portance not only of being an efficient hub, but also of marketing itself as such. It is a small airport, not only in worldwide terms but even in Europe.

OAG ranks the airport 27th in terms of the number of flights it operates, and 31st in terms of the number of seats it offers (although this reflects the slightly smaller aircraft sizes operated).

Strolling through the airport, you’ll see plenty of copies of its consumer magazine, *Via Helsinki*, available in several languages.

FLYVIAHELSINKI

The airport has trialled everything from yoga classes at the departure gate to skateboarding competitions. Some of these gimmicks work – I tried a yoga class when I was last there and found it a pleasant way to spend 20 minutes. There is also a dedicated YouTube channel called “FlyViaHelsinki”. The facilities are constantly being improved, and, certainly for top-tier passengers with access to the lounges, the recent upgrade has made a good situation even better. The sauna in the Finnair lounge may be another gimmick (nothing wrong with that),

but the lounges are clean, large and easy to reach from everywhere in the airport.

Economy passengers can access the lounges of Finnair (gates 22 and 36) and SAS (Gate 13) for a fee, as well as using the paid-for Almost@home (Gate 32) and Aspire facilities (27-28). Kainuu lounge is free of charge, although it offers no food or beverages.

There are good shops, and restaurants include Fly Inn Restaurant and Deli, which serves traditional Finnish dishes with a modern twist, and Two Tigers Sushi and Noodle for Asian food. There's also plenty of modern art, including a gallery currently showing "Views en Route", an exhibition of contemporary works by 14 Finnish artists.

Still, both Finnair and the airport need to convince those who can fly direct that not every transfer is a bad thing.

Frederik Charpentier, sales director for Finnair in the UK, recognises that one of the main challenges is overcoming preconceptions.

"People have had poor transfer experiences at the mega-hubs in Europe or the Middle East," he says. "Helsinki is very different. For those coming from London, we empha-

Helsinki in numbers

- 115 million passengers (2013)
- 1.2 million transferring passengers
- 1.1 million transferring to and from Asia
- 1130 direct flights
- 112 daily connecting flights to Asia
- 1 Minimum connecting times
- 1 Flights within Finland: 25–35 minutes
- 1 Within Schengen area: 35 minutes
- 1 From Schengen to non-Schengen area: 40 minutes

size that, unlike at Heathrow, with its two runways, here there are three. Helsinki is a hassle-free transfer experience."

It's an enviable position to have spare capacity, the political will for expansion and a clear strategy supported by the national airline. For those planning trips to and from Asia, Helsinki will remain a serious alternative to hubs and direct routes.

THE MASTERPLAN

Helsinki is determined to remain an attractive international hub, and has outlined an

expansion programme continuing until 2020. The main point is that transfer traffic capacity will be increased while remaining all under one roof, in one single building, "keeping distances short and services easily accessible and provid[ing] a customer-friendly airport experience", as the proposal puts it.

Airport director Ville Haapasaari says the facility's owner, Finavia, studied dozens of scenarios and took into account the views and suggestions of airlines and other operators when formulating its masterplan, which will take place from this year in three stages and is scheduled to be completed by 2017: Finavia will enlarge the facilities for long-haul passengers and increase the number of spots for wide-bodied aircraft for transit traffic.

Transit capacity will then be further increased and the service level for European and domestic flights improved.

Terminal 2 will be expanded so that check-in, security control and baggage drop will all take place in one departure/arrival hall.

In addition, train services from central Helsinki, located about 20km south of the airport, will start next July.



It's an enviable position to have spare capacity, the political will for expansion and a clear strategy supported by the national airline. There is no doubt that the airport in Helsinki is as close as it can be to being perfect.



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LUFTHANSA PREMIUM QUALITY



2015 should bring increasingly good news for customers and passengers of the Lufthansa Group, according to the plans of the Deutsche Lufthansa AG Executive Board.

The first quarter of 2015 will see Lufthansa German Airlines conclude the installation of its new First Class throughout its long-haul fleet; the second quarter will witness the completion of the new Business Class installation program. The third quarter will see the new Premium Economy available on all of Lufthansa's intercontinental aircraft. All the new long-haul aircraft of which Lufthansa will take delivery next year will have all the new cabins already installed. And the modernization of the long-haul fleet will be further pursued in 2015 with the arrival of two more Airbus A380s and four new Boeing

747-8s. Also slated for delivery next year are a further Boeing 777F for Lufthansa Cargo and ten short- and medium-haul aircraft of the Airbus A320 family. "2015 will be the year of 'Lufthansa Premium Quality'," said Carsten Spohr, Chairman & CEO of the Deutsche Lufthansa AG Executive Board, on the occasion of the meeting of the company's Supervisory Board today. "Whichever cabin they travel in, our inflight guests will be able to see and feel that Lufthansa is a premium-service airline which is one of the leaders in its field by any global benchmark".

NEW EUROWINGS

Carsten Spohr believes that the New Eurowings airline is the answer to one of the biggest challenges faced by the European aviation market. "For sev-

eral years now we've been facing fierce competition from the rapidly-growing low-cost carriers in the point-to-point travel segment, not only in Germany but throughout Europe, too. And we are sure to see this competition extend more and more to the long-haul travel segment in the years ahead. Our 'New Eurowings' is our innovative response, which will enable us to fashion our own markets here," he explains. "Innovative concepts with substantially lower costs combined with the strengths, skills and expertise of the Lufthansa Group: that's our recipe for success and our 'New Eurowings' product will offer both outstanding value for money and the strongest quality, reliability and safety credentials."

In an initial step, the two already-existing airlines Germanwings and Eurowings



2015 will be the year for Lufthansa Premium Quality. Regardless of travel class passengers will feel that Lufthansa provides the highest quality service, remaining a global benchmark in its area of business.



will continue to perform their flight operations with their current networks and crews, under the umbrella of the new concept. For the new European operations the present Eurowings fleet, which consists of 23 Bombardier CRJ900 jets, will be replaced with up to 23 Airbus A320s between February 2015 and March 2017. Ten new A320s have been ordered to this end, while up to 13 further A320s will be reassigned to Eurowings from existing orders held by the Lufthansa Group. This will give the 'New Eurowings' a standardized fleet of Airbus A320 aircraft by the end of 2017, along with the further cost benefits that will derive from these advanced aircraft's fuel-efficient credentials. Further routes will also be added to the Eurowings network, operated from a new Eurowings base outside Germany, in the course of 2015.

COOPERATION WITH SUNEXPRESS

In addition to its European network, the 'New Eurowings' will also begin to add long-haul services to its low-fare product range from the end of 2015 onwards, in collaboration with

German-Turkish airline SunExpress. To this end, a Letter of Intent has been signed with SunExpress, a joint-venture company of Lufthansa and Turkish Airlines, under which the intercontinental services to be offered under the Eurowings brand will be flown under the air operator certificate (AOC) of SunExpress Deutschland and with SunExpress Deutschland cockpit and cabin crews. The first intercontinental destinations to be served will include points in Florida, Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean. The new flights will initially be operated by a fleet of three Airbus A330-200 aircraft each offering 310 seats. The Eurowings long-haul fleet should then be gradually expanded to up to seven A330-200s over the next few years.

As with the already-successful Germanwings concept, the new Eurowings long-haul products will offer customers a choice of 'Best', 'Basic' and 'Smart' fares. Home base for the new long-haul fleet will initially be Cologne/Bonn Airport; and Cologne will also be the home of the Wings carriers' commercial management operations.

STRUCTURES AND INDICATORS

The Lufthansa Group will be realigning the field sales structures of its member airlines with effect from 1 March 2015, in response to the new demands of the world's sales markets. In future, all the Group's global field sales will be the responsibility of a single Group wide entity. The new arrangement should provide greater field sales harmony within the Lufthansa Group, in both product and distribution-technology terms.

The Deutsche Lufthansa AG Executive Board also presented the Supervisory Board with a new value-based management concept at the latter's meeting today which should be adopted at Deutsche Lufthansa AG in the course of the coming year. The new concept will see two new key financial indicators – earnings after cost of capital (EACC) and return on capital employed (ROCE) – replace the key financial indicator of cash value added (CVA) which is currently used in all decision-making processes and for the remuneration of executive staff from 2015 onwards.

The Lufthansa Group will be realigning the field sales structures of its member airlines with effect from 1 March 2015, in response to the new demands of the world's sales markets. In future, all the Group's global field sales will be the responsibility of a single Group wide entity.

EXPLORE THE WORLD WITH MERCURE AND SEARCH FOR FRIENDS!



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Link to apply:
MercureHotels.polska



Mercure has decided to check the well-known six-degrees-of-separation theory, which claims that we are all only six people away from everyone else on the planet. Mercure is introducing a worldwide digital operation, “The Six Friends Theory”, based on this principle. The worldwide selection process will run on Facebook.

UNPRECEDENTED HISTORY

The goal is to select a candidate, somewhere around the world, and take him or her to meet an Aboriginal from the Bundjalung tribe in Australia, and prove that they are only 6 degrees of separation away from each other! They do not know each other yet but will be meeting via a chain of friends, and of “friends’ friends” that connects them.

GLOBAL QUALIFIERS FOR EVERYONE

The process to take part in this all-new experiment is simple. Starting on January 20th, internet users will be welcome to post a video up to 1 minute long on Facebook, capturing their personality, what they like, what drives them, their plans, their talents and so forth. Candidates will need to appear in their vid-

eos and explain why they believe they are the Once the videos are up on Mercure's Facebook page, the 50 candidates with the most votes will be shortlisted for the final recruitment phase. Then a panel of 6 people will select the winner among the 50 selected candidates, after a final interview. The casting will run from January 20th to February 10th, 2015 and the results will be announced between February 17th and February 24th, 2015.

facebook.com/MercureHotels.polska

FRIENDS PLOTTING

A TRIP AROUND THE WORLD

The winner will spend 7 weeks on the road starting at the beginning of March! "The Six Friends Theory" will encompass 6 encounters, 6 trips and 6 Mercure hotels around the world. At each stop, the Mercure hotelier will welcome the winning candidate and tell them where to find their

next friend. And friends will then treat the candidate on an unprecedented experience, immersed in their local culture, or the friend's pursuits, and then point him/her towards the next step towards the Aborigine. "The Six Friend Theory" will be proved during a 30-day journey scheduled for March 2015. Throughout the journey, the winning candidate will be escorted by a filmmaking team led by Jean-François Julian. His job will be to capture these first-ever encounters between the winning candidate and his friends, for posterity. There will also be something for the other 49 short-listed candidates: they can win nights at Mercure hotels, Samsung tablets or "The Six Friends Theory" prizes.

SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF FRIENDSHIP

This operation will also serve as an opportunity for Mercure

to research the question of human bonds in the digital era, through an international societal study of friendship carried out by research institute TNS Sofres.

Mercure is definitely one of the most recognizable brands, which is widely acclaimed and enjoys good reputation. The Mercure network spans 707 hotels in 53 countries around the globe, represents a real alternative to standardized or independent hotels, and combines the power of an international network with professional and digital expertise. The brand is dynamically expanding, basing on the franchise model, but also because the hotels of the chain draw on the local tradition and culture. Mercure's professional and friendly hoteliers are deeply committed to providing highest quality of your stay.



Mercure is introducing a worldwide digital operation, "The Six Friends Theory", based on the principle which claims that we are all only six people away from everyone else on the planet.



EAT WELL AT WESTIN WARSAW



MORE DETAILS AT
www.westin.pl

More than half of the travellers surveyed by Westin has stated that they would like to eat healthy meals when they travel, while 41% of the respondents dread gaining weight during a trip. Westin hotels are coming to their aid by launching a campaign entitled “Eat Well”, whose aim is to inspire guests to eat healthy well-balanced meals.

Fusion restaurant in The Westin Warsaw hotel has joined the project not only by introducing a new menu in which dishes made using SuperFoods products are prevailing, but also by inviting guests to restored in-

teriors decorated by a London-based designer Anita Rosato.

MORE SUPERFOODS IN FUSION RESTAURANT

Janusz Korzyński, the head chef at The Westin Warsaw hotel, together with his assistant Michał Truskawka have prepared a new menu for Fusion, which now includes numerous dishes based on SuperFoods products. The novelties in the menu include: rice paper, spinach, vegetables, coriander; crispy lettuce leaves, turkey breast, asparagus, mango, cucumber, mint; tuna, cilantro, avocado, sesame, lime; rice noodles, vegetables, nuts, tofu and chives. The chefs haven't forgotten about healthy

desserts and prepared fluffy carrot cake served with raspberries, oranges and pomegranate. The restaurant guests will be able to scan an image in the menu using Digimarc Discover application to learn more about selected SuperFoods dishes. They will be informed about the ingredients, nutritional value and the number of calories. All of this is designed to help restaurant guests make informed dietary choices and monitor the number of calories they consume.

The launch of the menu coincides with the end of the renovation works in the restaurant and the hotel lobby. Culinary sensations will be complemented

by beautiful, newly-renovated interiors designed by a famous London-based designer Anita Rosato, who strongly highlighted some of the aspects that are of great importance for Westin in her project. The new interiors are therefore spacious, bright and allude to nature. Wood, stone and other natural resources are prevailing among the used materials. But above all, what distinguishes the restaurant, are the lamps and numerous mirrors imported from New York and London, which add more splendour and make the interiors permeate one another.

“EAT WELL” CAMPAIGN IN WESTIN HOTELS

Westin Hotels & Resorts is presenting another stage of their “Well-Being Movement” campaign and announces two new partnerships, with which the hotel guests will be able to benefit from the knowledge of experts from SuperChefs™ and The Juicery, as well as a new member of the Westin Well-being council – a dietician Ashley Koff.

As a propagator of healthy lifestyle and nutrition, Westin has teamed up with SuperChefs™, a group of doctors, dentists, dieticians and chefs who educated children on how to eat well while having fun at the same time. Westin Healthy Kids Menu is a new product of their cooperation. The kids menu comprises eight spectacular dishes created and tested by children, including the biggest picky eaters. The Healthy Kids Menu further encourages children to discover SuperFoods products by engaging them into interesting activities placed on a colourful mat.

WESTIN SERVES FRESHLY-SQUEEZED JUICED BY THE JUICERY.

Westin and The Juicery have partnered with the leading dieticians to create an offer including a number of energizing juices and smoothies, Westin Fresh by The Juicery, which will contribute to your well-be-



Fusion restaurant in The Westin Warsaw hotel has joined the project not only by introducing a new menu in which dishes made using SuperFoods products are prevailing, but also by inviting guests to its restored interiors.



ing and provide energy for the whole day.

It turns out that as much as 95% of vitamins and enzymes needed for the functioning of the human body, can be found in raw vegetables and fruit juices. Westin Fresh juices and smoothies by the Juicery has been composed in such a way, to nourish the body and mind with

good, healthy ingredients found in beetroots, cabbage, açai, pomegranate, mint, spinach and berries. The cocktail menu will be available in all Westin hotels around the world at the beginning of 2015. The Westin Warsaw has been chosen as one of the first to present the new menu, and already has the cocktails and smoothies on its offer.

HELPING HAND



A taxi ride can cause stress and unpleasant surprises, such as, for example, exorbitantly high fares. So why not hire a chauffeur and save yourself a lot of wasted time and grief?

To avoid taxi traumas and surprise surcharges on your travels, Valerian Ho recommends some reliable chauffeur services in Asian cities

A taxi is usually the first option that comes to mind when travelling in Asia. However, cabs aren't always easy to hail, especially during peak hours or inclement weather – and in some places fares are so high that they can eat up your budget.

Then there is the language barrier – being taken to the wrong destination because you haven't been able to explain yourself properly must rank as one of the most frustrating experiences for any out-of-towner.

So why not hire a chauffeur and save yourself a lot of wasted time and grief? Here are some recommended operators in major Asian cities.

SINGAPORE

Flagging down a taxi in the city-state during peak hours may prove to be a bit of a challenge and, if you succeed, the standard surcharge could add more than 25 per cent to your bill.

At midnight, the rate goes up by 50 per cent, and travel to and from the airport and central business district at any time incurs an additional S\$3 to S\$5 (£1.50 to £2.50).

Fees also differ among companies. Flag-down rates for Comfort and City Cab vehicles start at S\$3.20 (£1.60) and charge S\$0.22 (£0.12) for every 400 metres. Chrysler starts at S\$5 (£2.50) and charges S\$0.33 (£0.16) for every 400 metres.

- **Recommended operator** In addition to the standard chauffeur services, Sixt can provide a personal concierge. Emirates loyalty members can earn 50 Skywards miles per hour (enter the membership number in the

“other notes/special requests” section for online booking).

- **Fleet** From Toyota Camry to Mercedes-Benz E200, Nissan Elgrand and Toyota Hiace Com-muter.

- **Amenities** Free wifi.

- **Reservation** Online only. Clients will receive instant confirmation. The company will then send an email providing contact details for the chauffeur, as well as a receipt, 24 hours before the arranged pick-up time. Reservations should be made at least a day in advance, but there may be availability if you book later.

- **Rates** Airport transfer or point-to-point pick-up and drop-off costs between \$60 and \$125 (£30-£62). sg.sixt.com

BEIJING

Other than being infamously congested, China’s capital is known for impolite cabbies with little or no English.

Often they are recent migrants to the city and are not all that familiar with it, and they will pick and choose destinations because they warrant higher fares or are located on a route that the driver prefers to take. Even a printed map and an address written in Chinese may not solve the problem.

- **Recommended operator** Beijing Central Chauffeur has a list of services that are designed specifically for business travellers and can help clients to optimise their itinerary. The staff can also provide helpful tips on doing business in the country.

- **Fleet** From Hyundai Elantra and Volkswagen Jetta to Audi A6L and Mercedes-Benz S320/S350/S500; Lincoln limousine or Golden Dragon bus for bigger groups.

- **Amenities** Each vehicle is equipped with a CD player and a mobile phone. Mercedes-Benz S-Class vehicles have leather seats, reading lamps and vanity mirrors. The stretch limo comes with a wine decanter and glasses, a stocked bar, mood lighting and a TV with a DVD



player. Vans and minibuses have bench seats and reading lights.

- **Reservation** Either by telephone on +86 106 7586 625 Mon-Sun 9.30am-12am (GMT 1.30am-4pm) or by filling in the online reservation form.

- **Rate** Daily rates range from US\$100 to US\$330 for eight hours, and from US\$8 to US\$15 per hour thereafter. bccrental.com/about.html

TOKYO

Cab fares are expensive in the Japanese capital. For a standard four-passenger taxi, they start at about ¥700 (£3.80) for the first 2km and increase by ¥80 to ¥90 (£0.44 to £0.50) for every additional 300 metres to 400 metres. From 10pm to 5am, there is a rate surcharge of 20 per cent. Since Tokyo is so spread out, a

taxi ride can easily exceed £20. It may make more economic sense to use a chauffeur if you need to hop around the city.

- **Recommended operator** Out-ech offers a “Planner” service that formulates your itinerary. The driver can wait for a meeting to finish, and the service includes pick-up and drop-off of a client’s guests.

- **Fleet Ranges** from Toyota Crown and Nissan Fuga to Toyota Lexus LS460L and Mercedes-Benz S550L; Mitsubishi Rosa and Toyota Coaster for bigger groups.

- **Amenities** Each vehicle is equipped with bottled water, coffee, hand towels, wifi, newspapers, umbrellas and an iPad. There is a control panel for passengers in the rear to recline seats and control air conditioning and window shades.

A taxi is usually the first option that comes to mind when travelling in Asia. However, cabs aren’t always easy to hail, especially during peak hours or inclement weather – and in some places fares are so high that they can eat up your budget.



Other

GLOBAL OPTIONS

Hertz

- Network covers 145 countries
- Hourly, full-day or nine-hour service available in select countries

- Book 48 hours in advance

hertz.com

Olympus

- Network covers 65 countries
- Chauffeur service available 24 hours, seven days a week
- Last-minute requests possible, but booking 24 hours in advance is advisable

olympus.com

Tristar

- Covers more than 80 countries
- Free wifi
- Can provide non-fleet vehicle models for special events

ap.tristarworldwide.com

Driven Worldwide

- Network covers more than 100 countries
- Ad hoc requests such as collecting lunch or documents upon request

drivenworldwide.com

- **Reservation** The company accepts last-minute reservations, as long as there is availability. If you want to use the vehicle for the whole day, book as early as possible. Tel +81 368 801 290, 24 hours.

- **Rate** Hourly rates from ¥6,500 (£36). Airport runs are more expensive than taxis – ¥30,000 (£164) from Narita and ¥18,000 (£99) from Haneda to the city centre, compared with ¥24,237 (£133) from Narita or ¥8,577 (£47) from Haneda in a taxi. outech.co.jp/en

JAKARTA

The Indonesian capital is notorious for its unscrupulous taxi drivers, many of whom refuse to use the meter (claiming that it's broken) and charge an exorbitant rate. This is particularly common at the airport.

They may also refuse to take passengers wanting to go somewhere nearby. Blue Bird taxis is the most reliable operator and also offers a chauffeur service, which – given the chaotic traffic – is certainly worth considering.

- **Recommended operator** Blue Bird operates executive taxis (Silver Bird) and charter buses (Big Bird). It also offers limousine and car rental services through subsidiary Golden Bird, with a selection of vehi-

cles available for short- and long-term rental. Pusaka Prima Transport, operated by the Blue Bird Group, caters to corporate clients who require a fleet of vehicles for extended periods.

- **Fleet** From Toyota Camry Altise, Vellfire and Alphard to Mercedes-Benz C200 CGI, C230 ELG, E200 CGI and E200 K.

- **Amenities** Newspapers.

- **Reservation** Fax a request letter with a copy of the credit card to +62 217 985 388 at least three days before hiring. By telephone on +62 217 944 444.

- **Rate** Prices vary depending on the car model; you can choose hourly or daily rates. A minimum of four hours is required for the hourly rate, starting from US\$64 with US\$16 per extra hour. The daily rate is for 12 hours and costs from US\$144, with US\$16 for each additional hour.

bluebirdgroup.com

DELHI/MUMBAI/ BANGALORE

Taxis in India are low-end. Most vehicles are old and don't have seatbelts – dangerous, given that drivers tend to travel at a rapid clip.

- **Recommended operator** Luxury Limo is experienced in dealing with top-end clients. It provides tailor-made tours

and shuttle services for trade shows and corporate hospitality events. A concierge service and personal bodyguards are also available.

- **Fleet** Includes Audi A6, Toyota Camry, Volvo S60, Jaguar XF, Mercedes S320 and BMW 7 Series. Rolls-Royce Ghost, bullet-proof vehicles and Chrysler 300 Limousine are also available.

- **Amenities** All vehicles have leather seats, surround-sound systems with varied playlists, blinds and heat reduction sun films, a first-aid kit, a mobile phone charger, newspapers, magazines, an iPod, and USB and SD card slots. They are also equipped with iPads, noise-cancelling headsets and wifi.

- **Reservation** Book online at least 90 minutes to two hours before the journey. An email will be sent with a link to make a down payment of 50 per cent of the total bill. You will then receive another email stating the chauffeur's details.

- **Rate** There are four packages – four hours or 40km, eight hours or 80km, 12 hours or 80km, and 24 hours or 250km. Depending on the car model, packages cost from Rs1,000 (£10) with Rs18 (£0.19) per extra km, and Rs180 (£1.90) for every additional hour. luxurylimo.in





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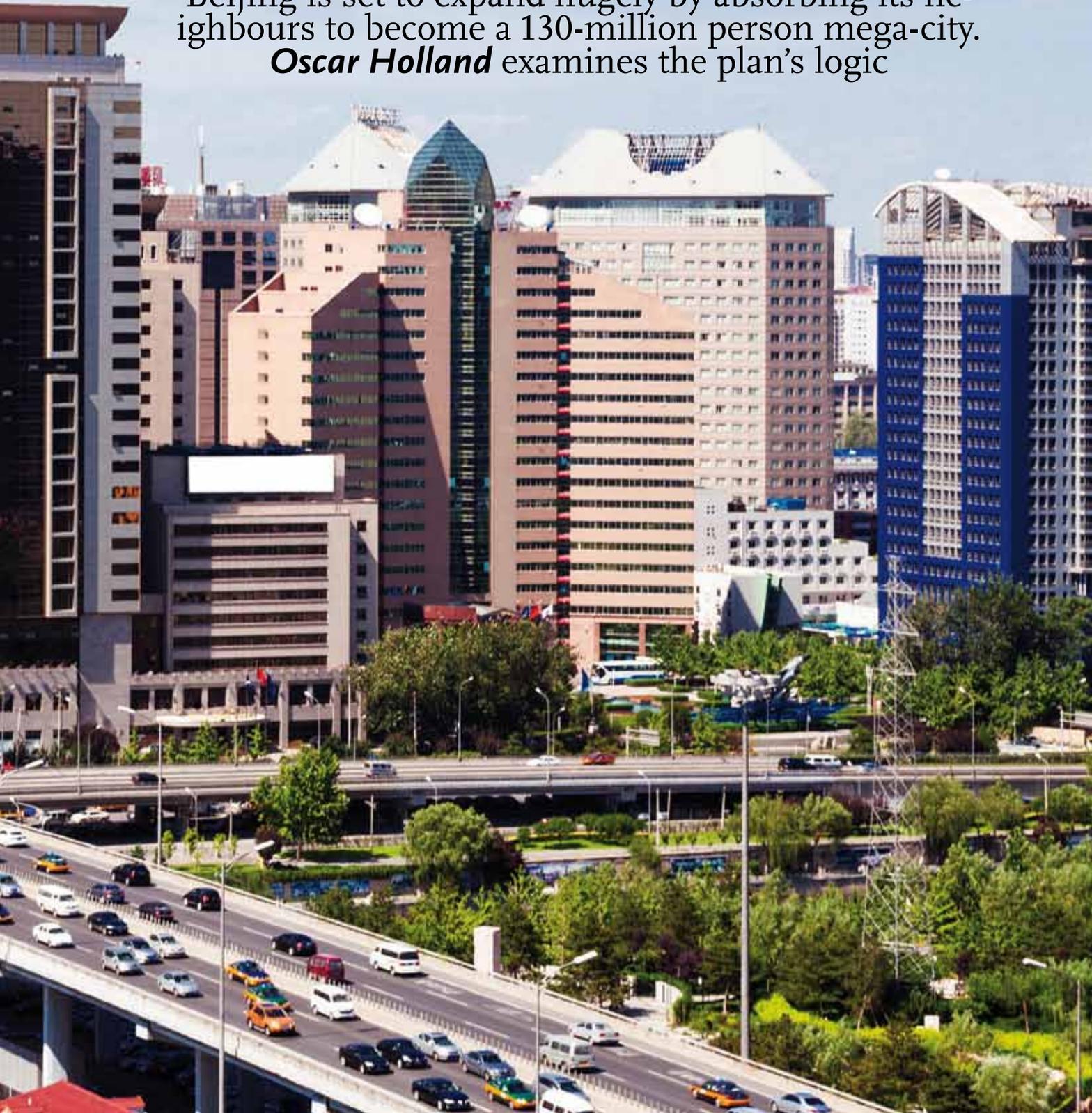
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BEIJING 130 MILLION!

Beijing is set to expand hugely by absorbing its neighbours to become a 130-million person mega-city. **Oscar Holland** examines the plan's logic



From now on people won't have to ask which province you are from, they will just ask which ring you are in," claimed one sarcastic netizen in response to news that Beijing was to begin work on a so-called "Seventh Ring Road". Set to open in 2017, the latest – and largest – of the concentric highways that loop the Chinese capital will run for over 2,000km, with around 90 percent of its length being built through neighbouring Hebei Province.

NEW MEGALOPOLIS

But as well as further expanding the definition of "Beijing", the expressway is being billed as the backbone of a colossal 130-million-person megalopolis. The Capital Economic Circle (nicknamed "Jing-Jin-Ji") will see Beijing absorb eight large cities in Hebei and link the Chinese capital with Tianjin, itself one of the country's largest metropolitan areas (with more than 10 million residents). Ostensibly, the plan is one of necessity.

Rapid urbanisation has placed a huge strain on Beijing's infrastructure, services and economy. The city suffers from water shortages, severe traffic, soaring property prices and a well-documented battle with pollution. With as many as 600,000 new migrants arriving each year, the government is now backing a Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei megalopolis as the most effective way to curb the seemingly unsustainable rate of expansion. But rather than becoming a megacity in the sense of being a continuous urban area, planners see Jing-Jin-Ji encompassing an interconnected network of cities that operate as a single entity. Transport infrastructure features heavily, with an additional 9,000km of expressways and 9,500km of railways expected to be built by 2020. New business zones and residential areas will also be constructed to better distribute the population across the 216,000 sq km region.

BENEFITS FOR THE CAPITAL

Under the government's strategy, each area of the megalopolis will take on its own set

of specialised roles to encourage industries (especially heavy-polluting ones) to flow out from Beijing. Few details have been disclosed since the plan was formally announced in April, but it appears that Hebei will act as an industrial satellite with affordable housing, while Tianjin will expand in sectors such as shipping, logistics and technology, offering lower operational and labour costs than in the capital.

Where sectors overlap, different cities will take responsibility for individual parts of the production chain. It is hoped the creation of distinct economic functions can reduce competition for resources, while increasing productivity and freeing up Beijing to act as a centre for culture, politics, international business and innovation. It is the capital that will feel most of the benefits, according to Chen Chen, an architect and partner at the urban design firm Remix.

"I think for Beijing itself, (the megalopolis) is definitely a good idea because it moves some of the negative elements of the city out to Hebei and Tianjin. This means that we



Rather than becoming a megacity in the sense of being a continuous urban area, planners see Jing-Jin-Ji encompassing an interconnected network of cities that operate as a single entity.

will see more clean and innovative industries headquartered in Beijing, with all the production lines and manufacturing shifting outwards.”

BETTER THAN TOKYO

Although critics believe the strategy merely moves problems, rather than solving them, officials argue that balancing the economies of northeast China will benefit the region as a whole. Moreover, it is hoped that the cities’ collective economic clout can boost the area’s global standing and attract more outside investment. Already accounting for 11 per cent of the country’s GDP, the region’s joint output will surpass that of New York and Tokyo by 2025.

Such optimism stems from the success of similar projects elsewhere in China, Chen said.

“This idea of a megalopolis is about the northeast trying to catch up with fast emerging city clusters in the Pearl River and Yangtze River Deltas,” she said. “But they each managed to develop in an evenly-distributed manner with a high GDP across both areas. But so far, Beijing has been sucking the resources from surrounding cities and has become an obstacle to their development.”

What makes the challenge in the northeast distinct from projects in the south is the huge development gap between Beijing and elsewhere in the megalopolis. This is particularly the case for Hebei, a poor, steel-making province, heavily dependent on coal and unable to stem the flow of talent to the capital. Given this disparity, the project may exacerbate rather than alleviate Beijing’s problems, said Jan Wampler, a professor of architecture at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

“If the government goes ahead with what it is planning then it is only going to increase the number of people moving to Beijing hoping – or thinking – they are going to find a better job,” he said.

WALL STREET REPLICA

Convincing companies and individuals to relocate away from the city will require more than just efficient transportation. Tianjin has been linked to Beijing via high speed rail since 2008 (the 30-minute journey time is significantly shorter than many commutes across the capital), yet it has failed to attract the interest that government planners had hoped for.



Megalopolis is definitely a good idea for Beijing, because it moves some of the negative elements of the city out to Hebei and Tianjin.





With a further 100 million rural migrants set to move to cities by 2020, China faces huge challenges in coping with urbanisation.

In fact, the city's unfulfilled promise is symbolised by its 47-building replica of Wall Street, Yujiapu Financial District, which lies empty and, in parts, unfinished. Tianjin may continue to experience above-average GDP growth, but it has accrued huge amounts of debt in the process and there is scant evidence that it has relieved any of the pressure on Beijing.

Nonetheless, after decades of indecision, the project now appears to be in full motion. With political observers suggesting that President Xi Jinping sees the megalopolis as a crucial part of his administration's legacy, the northeast of China is set to transform radically over the next decade. Whether the cluster eases or worsens the burden on the capital remains to be seen.

INTEGRATION TRUMPS REGIONALISATION

With a further 100 million rural migrants set to move to cities by 2020, China faces huge challenges in coping with urbanisation. The previous strategy of building brand new metropolises has proved troublesome and the resulting "ghost" cities have failed to draw the investment required to provide jobs and justify construction costs.

The answer now appears to be the megalopolis, and recent announcements have



signalled the government's intention to push ahead with major integration projects. Perhaps the only city cluster to match the proposed Beijing megalopolis in scale, the Yangtze River Delta Economic Zone is made up of 16 cities and accounts for about a sixth of the country's GDP. With Shanghai at its centre, the other cities in the region - including Nanjing, Suzhou and Ningbo - are being built up as hubs for specific manufacturing and technology industries. Five major railway lines are planned to increase the region's physical infrastructure.

This may only be the start. In April, Premier Li Keqiang outlined an even more expansive vision for the region - an economic "super zone" for 600 million people, almost half of China's population. Details remain scarce, but the project is intended to connect the

Yangtze Delta economies with the Silk Road Economic Belt, China's gateway to Central Asia and the West.

The Pearl River Delta, meanwhile, is arguably China's post-Mao success story. With Hong Kong already a powerhouse of global finance and services, government backing has seen cities in Guangdong Province - such as Guangzhou and Shenzhen - develop around manufacturing and electronics in a "front shop, back factory" model. While more integrated than other clusters in China, there is now increased pressure to strengthen ties. Rumours of a venture called "Turn the Pearl River Delta into One" emerged in 2011, with a reported 150 infrastructure projects being planned to connect transport, telecommunications and energy networks. Officials deny knowledge of the scheme, but there are signs that Guangdong's smaller cities are being pulled into the orbit of larger ones. Last year, the leaders of Shenzhen, Dongguan and Huzhou signed an agreement to link their cities' metro systems by 2020.

The coming decades are likely to see many other megalopolises develop in China, with state media reporting that there will be 32 completed by 2030. Among them, the Central Liaoning area is expected to transform into an eight-city, 28 million-person cluster centred around Shenyang.



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URBAN LANDSCAPING

Christopher Beanland explores the sprawling city of Sao Paulo and the influences behind its eclectic architecture

If you were in Sao Paulo for business and wanted to extend your Brazilian trip across the weekend, you might be forgiven for heading for the beaches of Rio de Janeiro.

But if you're a fan of art and architecture, Sao Paulo is where you need to be. The

gallery scene is exemplary, as is the array of world-class buildings, and exploring it all makes for a fascinating couple of days' break. This youthful, rich, sybaritic city is enormous – the largest of the Americas and one of the biggest on Earth, with a population of almost 20 million. So it sprawls.

The historic downtown district is Se, while Avenida Paulista to the south is one of the city's newer business and cultural zones. The area from Avenida Paulista stretching further south, downhill to the Parque Ibirapuera, is where you'll find most of the sights – although this is a city



FOOD AND DRINK

Terraco Italia Built in 1965, this restaurant in the Republica district features kitsch, gentleman's club-style décor and has an outdoor terrace overlooking the city 42 floors below – perfect for sundowners.

Mains R\$80-121 (£20-£30), cocktails R\$20 (£5). Open Mon-Fri 12pm-3pm, 7pm-12am (Sat until 1am), Sun 12pm-4pm, 7pm-11pm. 344 Avenida Ipiranga; tel +55 112 1892 929; terracoitalia.com.br

Figueira Rubaiyat There's a huge tree growing in the middle of Figueira, hence the name (it means fig tree). This Jardins eatery is always popular, thanks to the relaxed, outdoor dining and the fish scooped from the Amazon and tossed over the Brazilian grill.

Mains R\$61-102 (£15-£25). Open Mon-Thurs 12pm-12.30am, Fri-Sat until 1am, Sun until 12am. 1,738 Rua Haddock Lobo; tel +55 113 0871 399; rubaiyat.com.br

Mam restaurant Finish your visit to the Modern Art Museum with a trip to its restaurant, which serves a light lunch of Brazilian delicacies such as palm hearts and mashed corn, as well as salads. Grab a table by the window, overlooking the sculptures in the museum's garden. Buffet lunch R\$49 (£12). Open Tues-Sun 11am-4pm. Parque Ibirapuera; tel +55 115 0851 306; mam.org.br

Brew Dog Scottish bar and beer group Brew Dog opened its Sao Paulo outpost at the start of 2014 in an old mechanic's yard in Pinheiros. It's now one of the hippest places to hang out in the city, offering 15 international beers on tap, including one by Brazilian brewery Way Beer.

Drinks R\$12 (£3). Open Mon-Wed 6pm-12am, Thurs until 1am, Fri until 2am, Sat 2pm-2am, Sun 3pm-11pm. 41 Rua dos Coropes; tel +55 113 0324 007; brewdog.com



of quite loosely defined neighbourhoods. The subway is limited, so taxis can be the easiest way to get around, although be prepared to sit in traffic. Paulistas like to think they live in the New York of South America. Like the Big Apple, Sao Paulo is ethnically diverse. It is home to the largest Japanese community outside Japan, mostly based in Liberdade, where you can get the freshest sushi.

Still, it's the towers along Avenida Paulista that will make you feel as if you're on Broadway. The street follows a ridge line with skyscraper soldiers standing to attention along it – when darkness falls, the sight is mes-

merising. Add in the soaring TV masts and incessantly flashing red lights that warn the helicopters that buzz around the towers like bees to keep away, and it's almost overwhelming.

MECCA FOR ART LOVERS

The best place to see art in the city – and arguably in the whole of Brazil – is MASP, the Museum of Art (1,578 Avenida Paulista; open Tues-Sun 10am-6pm, 8pm on Thurs; masp.art.br). The 1968 Brutalist building itself is the first attraction. Designed by Italy's Lina Bo Bardi – who loved Sao Paulo so much that she made it her home – it sits

on four pillars and looks a little like a robotic shoebox on steroids that's grown legs.

Inside are wonderful works by home-grown artists such as Jose Ferraz de Almeida Junior, one of the country's leading 19th-century painters, as well as pieces by Constable and Turner. Entry is R\$15 (£4), or free on Tuesdays.

The subway is also full of public art. Colourful murals decorate the station at Se, while two stops east at Bras is Amelia Toledo's intriguing Kaleidoscope, a cluster of 25 plates of curved steel and plastic.

It was New York's illegal subway graffiti artists that influenced Sao Paulo's most famous contemporary artists, Osgemeos (the Twins), who have painted everything from a community centre in a Sao Paulo favela to one of Brazilian airline GOL's B737-800 aircraft.

Their work, by its nature, comes and goes, and isn't always easy to find – sometimes in

underpasses, other times on buildings – so check for new work on osgemeos.com.

VARIOUS STYLES

As with Brazil in general, the passion with which people live their lives is evident in Sao Paulo's bars, and also in the sometimes riotous architecture the city displays. Its buildings are about bluster and boasting – an attempt to build manmade landmarks to outdo Rio's natural ones.

Take the 1961-built Edificio Copan (200 Ipiranga; copansp.com.br) in the Republica neighbourhood, west of Se. It's a masterly exercise in "big is better" from Brazil's best-known architect, Oscar Niemeyer, who designed the distinctive buildings of the capital, Brasilia.

From above, this bulky bit of concrete Brutalism has the form of a wave. Its 38 floors stretch 140 metres into the sky – yet its shape and brise-soleil sun blinds, which

run horizontally along the face of the building, give it an elegance. While mainly apartments, you can linger in the wood-panelled foyer, where there are barbers, shops and a café that serves delicious ice cream.

Luz station is also worth seeking out in the vicinity. Designed by Englishman Charles Henry Driver and built by Glaswegians at the turn of the 1900s, its Victorian style and huge size make it a very British-looking addition to the city.

It's this mishmash of styles from around the world – Britain, Japan, the US and the Mediterranean – that marks Sao Paulo's architecture.

There are also buildings from every period – today's modern city gives way to the older Imperial Portuguese city at Se. The cathedral here is beautiful Gothic, while the handsome old coffee merchants' offices and banking halls from the late 1800s show how the city made its money, sating the Europe-



As with Brazil in general, the passion with which people live their lives is evident in Sao Paulo's bars, and also in the sometimes riotous architecture the city displays.



Paulistas like to think they live in the New York of South America – not without reason.
Like the Big Apple, Sao Paulo is ethnically diverse.





Se is the old money of Sao Paulo, and Jardins is the new. This is the most pleasant part of the city to wander around.



an and North American thirst for a morning cup of coffee.

One of the banking halls has been transformed into the Caixa Cultural (111 Praça da Se; Tues-Sun 9am-9pm, free; programas-culturaiscaixa.com.br), which stages travelling exhibitions. It recently presented works by the UK's Banksy.

STROLLING ALONG JARDINS

Se is the old money of Sao Paulo, and Jardins is the new. This is the most pleasant part of the city to wander around. From MASP, stroll through the bucolic Parque Trianon, then downhill on Alameda Casa Branca, past hip boutiques, car showrooms, cocktail bars and trendy eateries.

Two hotels stand out in Jardins. Both are design gems with excellent food and service. The first is the Emiliano (384 Rua Oscar Freire; emiliano.com.br), housed in a skyscraper that boasts a rooftop helipad to whisk guests to the airport or to a polo estancia upcountry.

The other is Hotel Unique (4,700 Avenida Brigadeiro Luis Antonio; hotelunique.com.br). Part of the Design Hotels collection, its rooms and public spaces are pure minimalist class, while the rooftop pool bar is the perfect place to enjoy a cocktail.

The building itself – a distinctive silver semi-circle perched on pillars – was designed by Ruy Ohtake, one of the city's best-known architects. His mother was Japanese artist Tomie Ohtake. In 2001, he built a gallery in her honour, the Instituto Tomie Ohtake, to celebrate the city's inherited Japanese and Oriental culture (201 Avenida Faria Lima; open Tues-Sun 11am-8pm; free; institutotomieohtake.org.br). Located in the cool Pinheiros district, it's a riot of deconstructed purple and pink banners.

Across from the Unique is Ibirapuera park, the city's giant green lung, which opened in 1954 to celebrate Sao Paulo's 400th anniversary. In addition to exploring its lush gardens, you can visit MAM, the Museum of Modern Art, which is located here (open Tues-Sun 10am-6pm; R\$6/£1.50, free on Sundays; mam.org.br). It boasts works by Miro, Chagall and Picasso as well as Brazilian modernist artists.

The park is also home to the Japanese and Biennial pavilions – the latter another Oscar Niemeyer creation. So, too, is the show-stopping Auditorio Ibirapuera (Avenida Pedro Alvares Cabral; auditorioibirapuera.com.br), which looks like a sideways slice of wedding cake with a red dragon's tongue poking out. Like Sao Paulo, it's an attention seeker that you can't stop looking at.



SKIING ON THE SOUTHERN SLOPES

Among the vast slopes covered with fluffy snow, in the shiny white scenery, the Carinthian winter offers its unique charm.

With its favourable climate, which Carinthia owes to its southern location and Adriatic depressions that bring lots of snow, you can enjoy winter sports here until late spring.

SLOPES FOR EVERYONE

Over 30 ski resorts in Carinthia and eastern Tyrol provide tourists with 1,000 km of perfectly groomed slopes, most of which have been awarded with a ski quality mark. You will find here perfect pistes for both novice skiers, real skiing champions, as well as families with children. Although the region is well-known for its low hills and well-maintained pistes throughout the season, there are also numerous slopes with moguls, freeride areas and funparks. Topskipass Karnnten-Osttirol-Gold, regional ski passes and packages including various attractions are offered at a very affordable prices when compared to other regions of the Alps.

NOT ONLY SKIING

There's more to Carinthia than just skiing. In the region there are 200 lakes often fre-

quented by skating and ice golf enthusiasts. The spectacular Weissensee, the biggest natural ice rink in Europe covering an area of 6.5 sq km, is especially popular. Double-track cross-country skiing trails, illuminated toboggan runs, sled dog trips and snowshoe tours – are some of the top winter attractions in Carinthia. Trips to the Hohe Tauern National Park, during which the participants follow the track of ibex under the supervision of professional guides, also provide unforgettable experience.

TAKE A BATHROBE

If you need to regenerate and slow down a bit, we recommend heading for thermal spa, very popular in this part of Austria. Römerbad, Bad Kleinkirchheim covers an area of 4,000 sq m and has 13 saunas on three floors, a separate kids zone and relaxation rooms. A new thermal spa in Warmbad-Villach, Carinthia already has its fans, as do two other newly-opened baths: Carinthian Bath by Lake Millstatt and Werzers Bathing House. All of those places offer panoramic view over the snow-covered Alpine peaks. You don't need to put on any warm winter

clothes to enjoy the water from the lake – a bathrobe will do. All this is complemented with a selection of traditional wellness treatments, such as massages with spikenard, Swiss pine and honey oils.

HOW TO GET THERE, WHERE TO STAY

With the airport in the nearby Klagenfurt, the connection to Carinthia is easy and quick. You can fly from Vienna - several times a day. If you decide to go by car, you can take the highway and the extensive Tauern Tunnel, which is a great convenience. A good place to stay in Carinthia is a charming town of Bad Kleinkirchheim, offering not only skiing pistes, but also cross-country tracks. If you feel like taking a snowshoe trip, head for Feldpanalm. The half-day snowshoeing adventure ends with a toboggan ride down to the valley. You can enjoy winter in Carinthia until Easter, because even when spring returns to the valley, and the first cyclists set off on the road, the skiers in the mountains still schuss down the slopes.

Agata Janicka



A VERY FRENCH FEAST

For a taste of Paris, nothing beats a classic brasserie.

John Brunton suggests six of the best

When you book a table at one of the great Parisian brasseries, be prepared for a lot more than a culinary experience. These eateries are genuine cultural monuments in themselves, dating back to the end of the 19th century, when Alsa-

tians fled to the French capital after their region was annexed by Germany in 1871. With opulent art nouveau and art deco interiors, they ooze history and scandalous stories of famous clients such as Picasso, Josephine Baker and Henry Miller. Packed out from morning until night, these

foodie institutions buzz with noise as waiters theatrically rush to and fro. While the cuisine does not try to attain Michelin-star standards, the produce is always the freshest possible, prices remain reasonable, and every meal ends up being a memorable occasion.

Each neighbourhood of the City of Light has its own landmark eatery, and as most are protected as monuments historiques, these grand brasseries remain a unique slice of Parisian life. Here are six of the best.

BRASSERIE FLO

Hidden away down a tiny cobbled courtyard near the Gare de l'Est train station, Flo is one of the city's oldest and most intimate brasseries.

Sitting at a wood-panelled table for the signature choucroute – sauerkraut braised in Sylvaner wine, topped with frankfurters, sausages, smoked pork and spare ribs – it's difficult to imagine its colourful past.

Opened as Chez Hans in 1886 as a beer depot for barrels that arrived from breweries in Alsace, it became a favourite bohemian rendezvous for theatre people such as Sarah Bernhardt. But that didn't stop an anti-German mob ransacking the place just before the outbreak of the First World War. The owner, Monsieur Floderer, meticulously restored the brasserie as a homage to his native Alsace, diplomatically changing the name to Brasserie Flo.

The surrounding neighbourhood is still very much the lively theatreland of Paris, and music lovers should check out New Morning (newmorning.com), the best venue for live jazz in town.

Open daily 12pm-3pm, 7pm-11pm (12am Fri-Sat). Two-course set menu €28.50.

7 Cour des Petites Ecuries; tel +33 147 701 359; brasserieflo-paris.com



CHEZ JENNY

Chez Jenny is just off Place de la République, a huge square that has recently been restored to its former glory. This brasserie, though, hasn't changed since Robert Jenny opened its doors in 1931 as a "temple of Alsatian gastronomy".

The interiors are worthy of an art deco museum, with hand-painted scenes of rural Alsace on the walls, stained-glass windows, tiled floors and red banquettes, while black-jacketed waiters glide between tables, precariously balancing giant sea-food platters.

Also on the menu are specialities from Alsace such as flammekueche – a wafer-thin pizza topped with crème fraîche, bacon and onions – and desserts like apple strudel and kugelhopf cake, soaked in rum and topped off with cream.

Open daily 12pm-12am (1am Fri-Sat). Starter and main from €21.

39 Boulevard du Temple; tel +33 144 543 900; chez-jenny.com

With opulent art nouveau and art deco interiors, brasseries ooze history and scandalous stories of famous clients such as Picasso, Josephine Baker and Henry Miller.







TERMINUS NORD

The first stop for international travellers arriving into Gard du Nord should be the monumental brasserie right opposite.

What was originally the humble station café, Terminus Nord was transformed in 1925 into perhaps the most grandiose of all the city's brasseries, decorated in a spectacular mix of both art nouveau and art deco styles.

Although the billiard room and the opulent salons that hosted afternoon concerts have gone, diners are still surrounded by ornate Belle Epoque chandeliers and sculptures, music hall posters, advertisements and flamboyant frescoes from the Roaring Twenties.

The cuisine tries to be more gourmet here, with the menu featuring complex dishes such as veal sweetbreads with succulent morel mushrooms.

Still, the best bet – especially if you have a train to catch – is le Plateau du Marayeur, a cornucopia of crab, lobster, langoustines, whelks, shrimps and freshly schucked oysters.

Open Tues-Sat 7.30am-12am, Sun-Mon 8am-11pm. Seafood platter from €27. 23 Rue de Dunkerque; tel +33 142 850 515; terminusnord.com

LA COUPOLE

Having dinner at La Coupole is like stepping back into the decadent 1920s of the bohemian Left Bank.

Opened in December 1927 as the biggest restaurant in Paris, the size of the dining

room and its emblematic coupole is still breathtaking, not to mention the 32 painted pillars and mosaics.

Since the opening cocktail party – at which invitees of the likes of Hemingway, Cocteau and Man Ray consumed 1,200 bottles of champagne between them – La Coupole has been the favourite meeting place for Le Tout-Paris, from Edith Piaf and Yves Montand to artists such as Matisse and Chagall.

The cuisine, as well as the ambience, differs from other grand brasseries – although an impressive oyster and shellfish display lines the boulevard, habitués tend to order quirky dishes such as lamb curry, beef flambéed in Armagnac, or a simple but delicious grilled sole with steamed potatoes.

Open daily 8.30am-12am (11pm Sun-Mon). Starter and main from €30.

102 Boulevard du Montparnasse; tel +33 143 201 420; lacoupole-paris.com

CHARLOT

With its art deco furnishings, Charlot seems at first like any other brasserie. But look again at the artwork and you'll see that, rather than the traditional rural scenes, everything here has a colourful maritime theme.

The original owner, Charles Lombardo, known as le Roi des Coquillages – the Shellfish King – came to Paris from the south of France and was determined to create a brasserie that promoted Mediterranean cuisine. Located at the edge of Pigalle, a neighbourhood one block from the Moulin Rouge, the main dining room resembles an old-time

cabaret, with mirrors everywhere.

Seafood lovers come here from around the world, drawn by dishes such as sea bass flambéed in Pastis, a gargantuan seafood platter, lobster bisque, and an authentic Marseille bouillabaisse.

Open daily 12pm-3pm, 7pm-1am. Bouillabaisse €81 for two people, starter and main €30.

12 Place de Clichy; tel +33 153 204 800; charlot-paris.com

AU PIED DE COCHON

There are few reminders today that the bustling Les Halles neighbourhood was once, like Covent Garden, the city's central food market – what Emile Zola described as le Ventre de Paris (the stomach of Paris). But amid the fashion boutiques, shopping malls and trendy restaurants, there still stands Au Pied de Cochon (the Pig's Trotter), the market's famous brasserie.

Since the liberation of Paris at the end of the Second World War, the restaurant has never closed its doors – it is one of the few that is open 24 hours and is always full to bursting. The clientele ranges from tourists and businessmen during the day to partygoers arriving from midnight to the early hours.

Adventurous diners should try the nose-to-tail Tentation de Saint-Antoine – breaded pig's tail, ears, snout and trotter with a rich Béarnaise sauce – while there are also great comfort dishes such as traditional soupe à l'oignon and crêpes flambéed at your table.



SPORTY INDIVIDUALIST

MINI Paceman is a unique combination of go-cart driving fun and exceptional functionality. The refreshed version of the first sports activity coupe in the compact premium segment confirms its position as one of the most exciting cars on the market.



Just a glance at this sporty individualist is enough to realize that it will guarantee you remarkable driving experience. The powerful front of the car leaves no doubt on this point. The extravagant and designer look of the Paceman won't leave anybody indifferent. No to mention that its long door literally invite you to get inside, especially behind the wheel.

MINI'S NEW ROAD

The interior of the car follows the path traced by the appearance of the body. Particular emphasis was placed on the sporty character of this model and the fact that it belongs to the premium segment. The road speed and engine speed displays now feature dark dials in the style of the MINI John Cooper Works Paceman. At the same time the maker hasn't forgotten about the aspects affecting the functionality of the vehicle. MINI Center Rail storage system

is now offered as standard, rear backrests are individually foldable - as a result, luggage compartment volume can be expanded from 330 to up to 1,080 litres

PIONEERING CONCEPT

This pioneering concept of the three-door compact car with coupe lines, a unique combination of driving pleasure and functionality - is now even more expressive with the optional four-wheel drive system called ALL4. The raised engine output in MINI Cooper S Paceman leave no doubt: it's an undisputed leader in terms of driving pleasure in the segment.

BEAUTIFUL AND SAFE

The dynamic design that promises unique emotions behind the wheel, doesn't lie even a bit. The new MINI Paceman offers even more go-cart-like fun with optimised efficiency. All engine variants meet the Euro 6

emission standard. This was possible with the extended application of MINIMALISM technology that helps reduce fuel consumption and CO2 emissions. At the same time MINI Paceman can optionally be fitted with tires with reduced rolling resistance, to further reduce fuel consumption.

With a number of innovative solutions used in the Paceman, passengers safety is here as good as in MINI Countryman, which received five stars on the Euro-NCAP crash test. In addition, the four-wheel drive ALL4 provides a high level of safety and functionality on uneven or snowy surfaces.

NEW OPTIONS

The front section has now even more powerful presence including hexagonal radiator grill contour, the long doors feature frameless windows in coupé style, and there is a high opening tailgate, too. The famous roof of MINI sits virtually seamlessly on top of



With a number of innovative solutions used in the Paceman, passengers safety is here as good as in MINI Countryman, which received five stars in Euro-NCAP crash tests.

the car and is optionally available in contrasting colour, which further highlights the elongated silhouette resulting from the flowing roof line and the tapering side window graphic, now additionally emphasised with the new option Piano Black Exterior. Standard and optionally available light alloy wheels on the Paceman have reduced weight and optimised aerodynamic properties. Other optional features include tyres with reduced rolling resistance and the new exterior paint finishes Jungle Green metallic and Midnight Grey metallic.

IS IT A GO-CART?

The unique go-kart feeling has been obtained thanks to high-quality suspension technology with McPherson spring struts and forged wishbones on the front axle, as well as multilink rear axle and electro-

mechanical power steering including Servotronic technology. All model variants boast sports chassis as standard including Dynamic Stability Control (DSC). Dynamic Traction Control (DTC) including Electronic Differential Lock Control is optional, depending on model variant.

MISSION UNDER CONTROL

MINI Paceman is also packed with innovative solutions that enhance the integration of the driver with the car. MINI Connected offers extensive smartphone integration in the vehicle and unique functional diversity with ongoing expansion based on apps such as Mission Control, Dynamic Music, Driving Excitement and MINIMALISM Analyser, as well as the use of Facebook, Twitter, four-square and Glympse, RSS news feed reception and entertainment programs such as

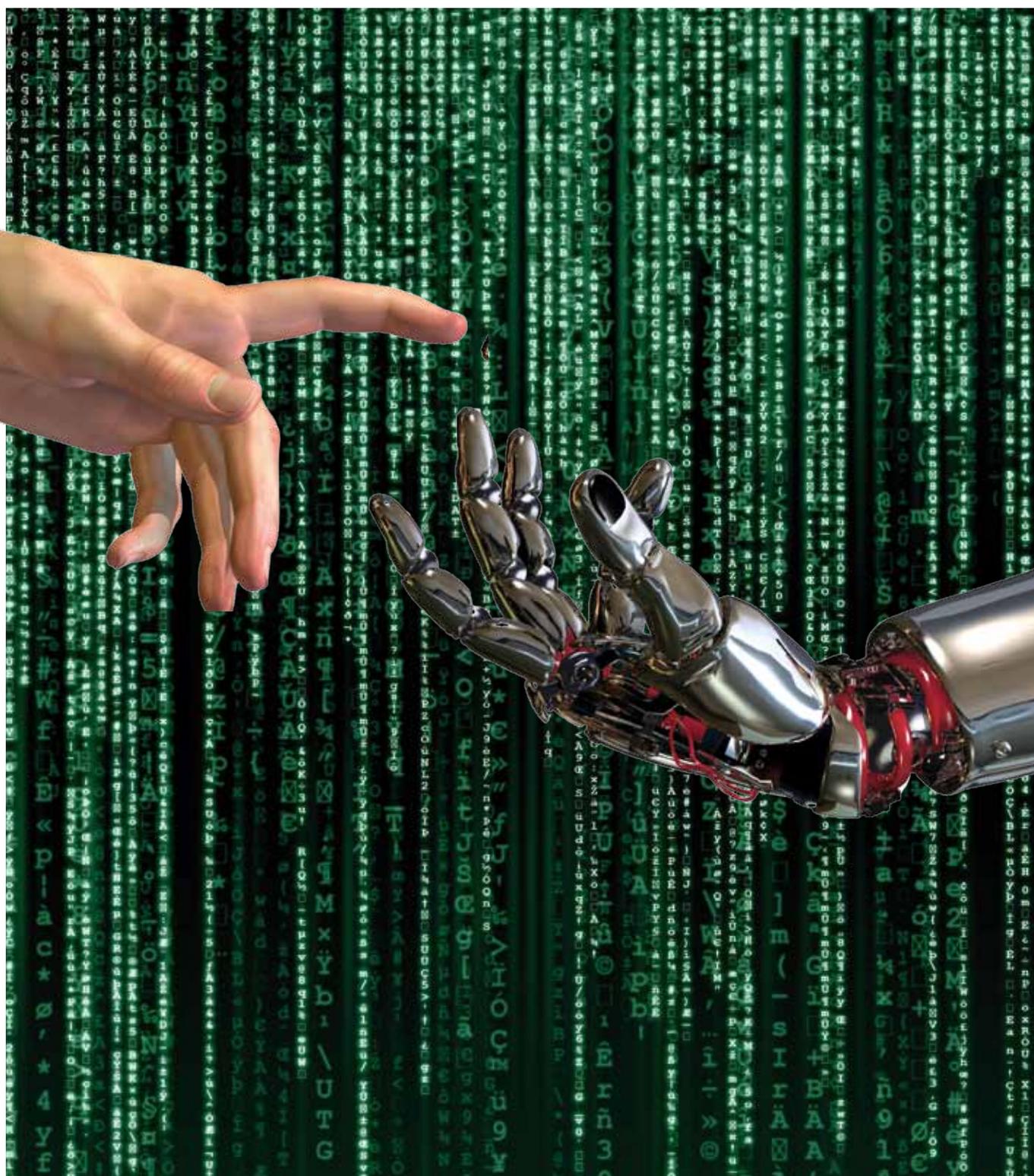
AUPEO!, Stitcher, Deezer, Audible, Napster/Rhapsody and TuneIn.

The go-kart-like driving fun and comfort that is characteristic of the premium segment, have been obtained not only with remarkably rich standard equipment, but also with a varied range of additional options. These include xenon headlamps and adaptive turning light, comfort access, glass push/tilt roof, automatic air conditioning, removable tow hitch with a trailer load of up to 1,200 kilograms, MINI navigation system, Sport Button, sports leather steering wheel with shift paddles for automatic transmission, multifunction steering wheel with cruise control Harman Kardon hi-fi speaker system. Model-specific John Cooper Works accessories also available.

Jacek Wróblewski

The interior of the car follows the path traced by the appearance of the body. Particular emphasis was placed on the sporty character of this model and the fact that it belongs to the premium segment.





MAGIC TOUCH

You may think your tablet is all singing and all dancing – but there is nothing that can't be improved upon. **Caramel Quin** suggests accessories and apps to super-boost your device

Bagged tablet

OSPREY CYBER PORT

Price: £70
ospreyeurope.com

The Cyber Port rucksack lets you use your tablet without taking it out of the bag. Unzip the front flap and the iPad will be facing you, ready to use yet protected behind a touchscreen-friendly window. Whether you're on public transport or queuing at passport control, you won't be in a rush to put it away. The 18-litre bag also has a padded laptop sleeve and plenty of pockets inside.



Positively loaded

RAVPOWER WD02 FILEHUB

Price: £50
ravpower.com

The size of a pack of cards, this versatile gizmo has a 6,000mAh battery, which is enough to recharge your smartphone two or three times over. It also features USB and SD card slots that let your devices wirelessly access memory cards and portable hard drives. Plus, it's a "travel router" – plug it into a wired internet connection in a hotel or conference room and it creates a private wifi network that multiple devices can share at the same time.



In focus

OLLOCLIP 4-IN-1

Price: from £48
ollocclip.com

These clever clip-on lenses are available in various versions to fit recent iPads and iPhones, as well as the Samsung Galaxy S4 and S5. The wide-angle lens doubles the field of vision your camera can capture and the fisheye produces striking 180-degree images. Get close to subjects for stunning detail shots with the 10x and 15x macro lenses – all in a package that fits in the palm of your hand.



Personal bodyguard

GRIFFIN SURVIVOR

Price: from £13
griffintechnology.com

Griffin makes seriously tough cases for iPhones, iPads and all major Android brands. Survivor Slim cases protect against drops of up to two metres and offer screen protection. Survivor All Terrain cases meet military standards thanks to a shatter-resistant polycarbonate frame clad in impact-absorbing silicone – protecting against dirt, sand, rain and vibration.



Loud, louder, the loudest

BOWERS AND WILKINS T7

Price: £300
bowers-wilkins.co.uk

British audio manufacturer Bowers and Wilkins has launched its first-ever Bluetooth speaker, which is compatible with any brand of smartphone or tablet. It's the size of a hardback book, weighs less than 1kg and boasts an impressive 18-hour battery. What's more, the honeycomb design is more than merely an aesthetic addition – it reduces resonance for a cleaner, more precise sound.



Versatile keyboard

BELKIN QODE ULTIMATE PRO

Price: £150
belkin.com/uk

This is both a case and a keyboard for the iPad Air 2, turning your super-slim tablet into a touchscreen laptop. Its small size is perfect for travel, backlit keys let you work in the dark and you can pair it with two devices at once – receive a text on your phone and you can type a response quickly before returning to work on your iPad. You can even rotate the screen. Battery life is incredible – up to a year.



Stylish stylus

SUCK UK SKETCH STYLUS

Price: £5
suck.uk.com

The pencil is mightier than the finger. This stylus from East London designer Suck UK is a leaded pencil at one end and a stylus disguised as a rubber at the other. It works on all touchscreen devices and beats a finger hands-down (excuse the pun), whether you're an artist or a designer, annotating a document with handwritten notes or simply find it easier to navigate the screen with something more precise.



Heat me up!

NEST THERMOSTAT

Price: £249
nest.com/uk

This isn't a gadget to take with you on your travels – it sits in your home and allows you to control the central heating from a distance. Linked to an app on your smartphone or tablet, you can turn it off completely when you're travelling but programme it to turn on a few hours before you get home to warm the place up. You'll save a fortune on bills and need never return to Siberian conditions again.



Keeping things in order

TWELVE SOUTH BOOKBOOK TRAVEL JOURNAL

Price: £75
twelvesouth.com

This travel case has enough pouches and elastic straps to carry all your travel essentials, including an iPad. The neat little package zips up to resemble a vintage leather-bound book. It works with all iPads, whether or not they have a smart cover on, and also has space for chargers and headphones, even large ones, as long as the ear cups fold flat. You'll never have to rummage through your carry-on again.



Small but powerful

MOPHIE JUICE PACK UNIVERSAL RESERVE

Price: £40
amazon.co.uk

Small and stylish, this matchbox-sized emergency battery charger may not have a huge capacity, but its 1,350mAh is enough to get you out of a pickle. Its handy size also means you can always carry it with you (just remember to keep it charged). It is available in two models: Lightning, for recent iPhones and iPads; and Micro, for non-Apple devices that charge via a micro USB.



Wireless music

PLANTRONICS BACKBEAT GO 2

Price: from £59
plantronics.com/uk

Listen to your music or take calls discreetly with these "wireless" earbuds – there's a lead that links them together but they connect to your smartphone or tablet via Bluetooth. The headphones cost £59, or for £64 you can get a pack that includes a ballistic nylon rechargeable case, which has a micro-USB port on the bottom. This handy pouch extends battery life from 4.5 hours to a more long-haul-friendly 14.5 hours.



Best for selfies

SONY DSC QX10

Price: £149
sony.co.uk

This gadget looks like it belongs on a single-lens reflex but it's actually a fully fledged digital camera without the display. You clip it to your phone (Apple or Android) and connect cable-free via NFC or wifi. The QX10 can even be detached for awkward angles and high-quality selfies. Results from its 10x optical zoom, 18-megapixel sensor and high-definition video are vastly superior to a smartphone camera.



Smart charging

GO TRAVEL USB CHARGING CABLES

Price: from £7
go-travelproducts.com

We've all found ourselves buying a charger or adaptor at the airport after a packing fail. If you're going to pick one up, get a retractable one and cut down on tangles. The Go Travel is available as a Lightning-only cable for recent iPhones and iPads, or a Universal one with three interchangeable connectors: micro and mini USB plus 30-pin Apple for older iPhones and iPads.



Well packed

HOLGER BAGST

Price: From £199
holgerbags.com

These bags have a high-tech secret – a built-in 3,600mAh travel charger, so your smartphone or tablet need never run out of juice. The Junior bag is a satchel just big enough for an iPad. The larger, briefcase-style Senior and Backpack can fit a 13-inch laptop. All are made from laminated plastic finished with leather in a choice of five colours.



TRAVEL APPS

- **Uber** Find a taxi in more than 40 countries with Uber's app, which connects passengers with nearby drivers. It even predicts the fare and sorts out billing. It offers luxury vehicles, ordinary cars to rival mini cabs, and now Uber XL for people carriers. Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Windows Phone
- **Quicket** A flight-organising app that books and manages tickets, scans boarding passes and tracks flights. Its most unusual feature is social, allowing you to check in and see your fellow passengers' Facebook profiles. Free; iPhone, iPad, Android
- **Lingua.ly** This innovative application lets you collect and learn new words from any website and access them from every computer and phone you use. You can even create games and flashcards to help you to retain new vocabulary. It supports more than 18 languages. Free; iPhone, iPad, Android
- **Lodgeo** Launched in September, this app allows you to find and book rooms in more than 800,000 hotels, comparing prices from over 100 different websites (such as expedia.com) to get the best deal. Free; iPhone, iPad (Android coming soon)
- **Wifi Finder** Data roaming charges can be extortionate, so fire up this app and spend just a few pennies on data as you use it to find your nearest wifi hotspot. It lists more than 550,000 locations in 144 countries worldwide. Free; iPhone, iPad, Android
- **Emirates** Launched in November, the new Emirates iPhone app allows you to check in online, book flights, download boarding passes, check your Skywards mileage balance and receive push notifications about gate changes. The airline unveiled its iPad app earlier in the year. Free; iPad, iPhone (Android coming soon)
- **PackPoint** Create packing lists for your business trips and holidays, with the option of checking the weather and highlighting the activities you will be doing to ensure you don't forget anything vital. Simply select male or female, your destination and length of stay, and tick the items you want to take. Free; iPhone, iPad, Android
- **Manything** This app turns an old, disused iPhone, iPad or iPod Touch into a security camera for your home or hotel room. It detects movement and streams live video so you can then keep an eye on what's going on via your current Apple device, from wherever you are. Free; iPhone, iPad
- **Audiotrip** When you visit a city for business, you may get only an hour to two to explore it for pleasure. That's where this interesting new app comes in, offering expert audio tours that guide you along a route as they bring the city to life in stories. Free; iPhone, iPad, Android
- **Expensify** An essential app for business travel. Photograph a receipt and Expensify will read the figures and add them instantly to the relevant expense report. It can also track time and mileage, and will even import credit card transaction data. Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Windows Phone, BlackBerry
- **Readly** This new all-you-can-eat service costs £10 a month and gives you access to more than 700 magazines and 9,000 issues in digital version. Your family can also share a single subscription across up to five devices. Free; iPhone, iPad, Android, Microsoft Surface RT, Kindle Fire
- **Quintessentially Lifestyle** Even if you're not a member of this luxury lifestyle management and concierge service, you can benefit from its free app. Its curated lists feature the finest restaurants, hotels, spas, bars and nightclubs, plus the inside scoop on nearby sights and hidden gems. Free; iPhone, iPad, Android
- **Jetsmarter** This free app allows you to hail a private plane the way you'd flag down a taxi – it's Uber but for jets. You can search more than 3,000 aircraft worldwide, request flights and pay. "Empty leg" deals let you fly for up to 70 per cent less than chartering a private jet. Free; iPhone, iPad, Android
- **Pocket Earth** Getting your location via GPS doesn't incur data roaming charges – it's the map downloads that eat up your data allowance. Download Pocket Earth maps in advance or via wifi to give you voice-guided, turn-by-turn navigation. Free; iPhone, iPad

4 HOURS IN... DOHA

Tom Otley finds ancient art and traditional shopping amidst the modernity of the Qatari capital



Qatar is spending big in preparation for the 20 FIFA World Cup, with some US\$20 billion committed to improve its tourism infrastructure.

MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC ART

Doha is gathered around its bay, but intelligent city planning has kept buildings away from the water's edge, allowing great views. To get around, use taxis, which are good value, comfortable and available at most tourist stops.

Start at the I M Pei-designed Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) on the waterfront. The pyramid-like structure has cool, airy interiors that look out on to the bay and along the Corniche.

Open since 2008, it has a stunning collection of pieces dating back more than 1,400 years.

A flagship project of the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, it is probably the leading museum of its kind in the world, with 3,800 sqm of gallery space housing hand-painted ceramics, textiles, manuscripts, jewelled artefacts and scientific instruments from countries including Egypt, India, Iran, Turkey and Syria. It also has temporary exhibitions.

The newer MIA Park, adjacent to the gallery, offers 27 hectares of green space against a backdrop of the stunning Doha skyline. Take a stroll and you'll see Richard Serra's towering 24-metre steel sculpture, *Seven*, the artist's first public work in the Middle East.

Open Wed, Sun, Mon 10.30am-5.30pm; Fri 2pm-8pm; Thurs and Sat 12pm-8pm; free entry. mia.org.qa

OLD SOUKS

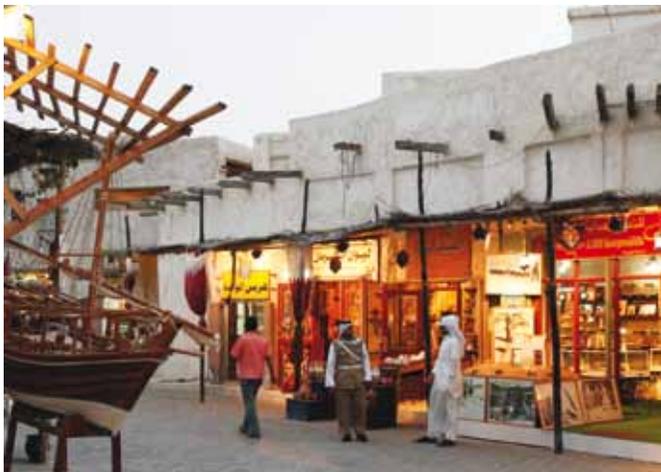
If you need further evidence of how Qatar invests for the future, you'll find it in the way it has recreated its old-style marketplaces of the 19th century, located just over 1km inland from the museum.

Souq Waqif was restored to its former glory as recently as 2008 and, like Souq Al Ahmad, makes for an entertaining place to spend a few hours in the evening, preferably with a good meal at one of its many restaurants.

But it's not just tourists that hang out here – many locals and expats come to shop, too,



The Corniche is a good place to take the measure of Doha – its sculpted grassy verge even has a giant oyster shell containing a pearl on it, a reminder of the country's roots.



be it for jewellery, perfume and spices, or pots and pans.

If you want to soak it up, stay at one of the new Souq Waqif boutique hotels (there are several), which offer five-star air-conditioned accommodation. swbh.com

CORNICHE

Qatar is spending big in preparation for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, with some US\$20 billion committed to improve its tourism infrastructure, including a new Doha Metro and extensive hotel development.

Stand on the 7km stretch of the Corniche and you'll see the distinctive outline of the Sheraton, which was Qatar's first internationally branded hotel and is about to reopen next month after an extensive renovation.



The Corniche is a good place to take the measure of Doha – its sculpted grassy verge even has a giant oyster shell containing a pearl on it, a reminder of the country's roots. The best time for a stroll is after 8pm, when Qatari families arrive, set up their picnic chairs and relax in the cool air. Traditional wooden fishing dhows bob around in the harbour, framed against the modern high-rise hotels at the northern end.

KATARA CULTURAL VILLAGE

About a ten-minute taxi ride from the Corniche is the Cultural Village, which opened in 2010 with the intention of positioning Qatar as an "international cultural lighthouse". It has an array of attractions, such as the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, an opera

house, a theatre, art galleries and a 5,000-seat outdoor amphitheatre. katara.net

THE PEARL

This multibillion-dollar manmade island – located 350 metres from West Bay Lagoon and shaped like a cluster of oyster shells – is one of the very few places foreigners can buy property in Qatar. Organised around a central marina, it's a one-stop shop for boutiques, restaurants and Ferrari-spotting (there's a showroom here, and plenty of residents seem to have bought).

Its 400 hectares include themed districts and lots of high-end townhouses, apartments, penthouses and five-star hotels, including the soon-to-open Marsa Malaz Kempinski (kempinski.com). thepearlqatar.com



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

Baby on board

My boss's son is 10 years old and he will be flying from Chicago to London on board of an American Airlines plane. The travel agency, which makes the reservation informed us that a child cannot take the last flight. Could you please explain me why? Are there any additional charges so that a child can fly without the parents? Are there additional documents required? Why isn't it possible to assign a child a specific seat?

Halina

Dear Halina

Travel agency is partially right in this case. American Airlines indeed do not allow unattended children to take the last connecting flight, but there are no restrictions when it comes to direct flights. This is to avoid the situation, when a child has to stay at the airport overnight if their next flight gets cancelled or delayed. Choosing an earlier connection minimizes this risk. It does not apply to direct flights. Rules for children flying without parents published by American Airlines are only about connecting flights and not direct flights. Therefore there are no reasons why you couldn't book the last direct flight from Chicago to London.

An extra fee for child care is \$150 one-way and is charged at the airport. When making a reservation you should give the personal details of a person who entrusts a child into airline's care at the departure airport. It's also required to provide the details (name, surname, relationship, address, telephone number, e-mail address) of a person who is authorized to pick up the child at the destination airport. The same information should be completed on a special form provided by the airline during the check-in. That's why you should be at the airport at least three hours before departure.

The child remains in the care of the air staff until they are handed over to a guardian at the destination airport. Naturally, the flight attendant doesn't sit by the child all the time during the flight, but they have them within sight. It's different with children under 5 years old, when a flight attendant has a separate ticket purchased for herself and accompanies the child all the time during the travel.

Your boss's son will be assigned a specific seat at the airport during the check-in. Unaccompanied children must remain close to the seats of the plane crew, they are usually given the seats next to families travelling with children.

Failure at the airport

Some time ago, I was travelling back from London to Warsaw. When on the train to the airport, I heard an announcement that the airport was closed due to a power failure in the control tower. When I called my travel agency, they informed me I should go to the airport and wait. It made no sense at all, the planes didn't fly. How to behave in such a situation?

Stefan

Dear Stefan

The power failure took place not in the control tower at the airport, but in the air traffic control agency. Some areas above the UK territory were closed and the air traffic was limited for a few hours. The airports accepted landing planes, but the take-offs were suspended. Some flights were diverted to other airports. At the beginning of the passengers were confused because the information was incomplete.

Airlines have very strict procedures. If no special instructions were issued, the passengers are obliged to follow standard check-in procedures. You have to wait for further information at the airport as the situation is dynamic and may change by the minute.

Your travel agency reacted properly. In a situation when no specific information has been announced by the airline, you should report for check-in according to the travel plan. Your ticket was restrictive and did not allow for any changes and your plane took off with only a one-hour delay. If your ticket allowed changes, you would have been able to change the reservation on general principles.

Making any decision on your own is treated as a unilateral breach of the contract of carriage by a passenger. Failure to report for check-in within the allotted time may result in the loss of validity of the ticket. If your flight had been cancelled, your airline would have changed your reservation for the next available flight according to involuntary rerouting. What's more, according to the EU regulations the airline must provide its passengers with care adequate to the situation.



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SIEMENS

Ekscytujące piękno, futurystyczna technologia.

www.siemens-home.pl

Aktualnie projektanci wnętrz kuchennych coraz częściej proponują proste formy wkomponowane w otwartą, jasną przestrzeń. Najnowsze modele urządzeń Siemens świetnie spełniają te wymagania. Zarówno piekarniki, płyty grzewcze, jak i chłodziarki oraz okapy wyróżniają się ponadczasowym wzornictwem o niezwykle eleganckiej, oszczędnej linii. Ekskluzywna obudowa z materiałów

najwyższej jakości kryje innowacyjne rozwiązania i zaawansowaną automatykę, która zapewnia urządzeniom maksymalną samodzielność i efektywność. Kontrolowane przez elektroniczne systemy sensorowe, pracują oszczędnie i cicho, z gwarancją doskonałych efektów. Dla Twojego komfortu i dla dobra natury. Więcej informacji: www.siemens-home.pl

Siemens. The future moving in.