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Латвия, Рига, Старая Рига, Вальню, 21

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Латвия, Рига, Центр, Тербатас, 38

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Martin Alexander Gauss
Chief Executive Officer *airBaltic*

Dear Customer,

This year, we are seeing somewhat more of the spring than usual in the Baltic region. Firstly, there is a lot of spring-like enthusiasm in the vibrant city of Riga, which opened the year as a European Capital of Culture in 2014. Throughout the year, visitors will be able to enjoy hundreds of special cultural events, including music, cinema and theatre performances, as well as diverse art exhibitions and shows in museums. This action-packed calendar has brought an extra dose of vitality to Riga's already fresh and lively atmosphere.

In addition to spring in the cultural scene, we are bringing more of it by resuming flights to warm-weather destinations on the Mediterranean, Black Sea and Caspian coasts. This year, we are offering a longer season and more flights to improve convenience for you as our customer.

We are delighted to feature Palma de Mallorca as our new summer island destination in the Mediterranean off the Spanish coast. Located on the southern shores of the island, Mallorca's capital city looks out over the sparkling blue seas of the Mediterranean and offers a diverse mix of history, culture and nightlife. Stylish and intimate, yet bursting with life, Palma provides ready access to nearby beach

resorts within minutes from the airport and the city centre. We truly hope that you will enjoy this new destination in all of its diversity.

In March we also launched a brand new bus service to link our Riga hub with regional centres in the Baltics. This will greatly improve regional accessibility, as leisure travellers and business people from Barcelona, London, Moscow and other cities will be able to travel conveniently to these regional centres, thus supporting their economies. At the same time, residents of Valmiera, Jēkabpils, Jelgava and Daugavpils in Latvia, Tartu in Estonia and Šiauliai in Lithuania will have a bus schedule synchronised with *airBaltic* flight arrival and departure times, enjoying convenient connections to other airports in Europe, the Middle East, Russia and the CIS.

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Yours,
Martin Alexander Gauss



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The spirit of the sixties

A day's drive north of San Francisco was a ranch called *Englewood*. It was neither a cattle ranch nor a "dude" ranch for urbanites. It had been acquired in the late 19th century by an Irish family as a summer retreat in the redwoods, away from the cold, foggy California coast where the family lived. Over time, the family branched out into five distinct entities, their houses scattered in the ample redwood and meadow landscape. Except for a swimming pool and a tennis court with cracks in it, there was no visible ostentation. Eventually, a new generation of youths took over.

During the 1960s, *Englewood* became a lively social centre, especially on weekends. "Straight" older folk freely mixed with counterculture hippies as well as with students from Berkeley and Stanford universities. A barbecue grill, carefully constructed from river stones, was the focus for evening dinners, which took place at a table not far from an old redwood stump the size of a small cottage. After gin and tonics, wine and food, everyone gathered around a campfire. Conversations that had begun at dinner, humorous or contentious, continued here. Sometimes there were passionate outbursts but never any ugliness.

The sixties were a time of culture wars between generations. "Never trust



NEVER TRUST ANYONE OVER THIRTY WAS A COMMON SLOGAN

anyone over thirty" was a common slogan. Nevertheless, all sorts of individuals were accepted at *Englewood*. Some hippies wore no clothing in the benign, silken warmth of the local climate to provoke proper "uptight" citizens (to no effect). The tone for the nightly dinners was set by the bearded patriarch Charlie, a department store owner with a Stanford University degree in the

TEXT BY EDMUNDS VALDEMARS BUNKŠE,
PROFESSOR EMERITUS AND GEOGRAPHER
PHOTO BY EMILS DESJATNIKOVŠ, F64

Classics and once a near-Olympian in the hundred-metre dash. Charlie read European and American history, had a biting sense of humour and was a liberal at heart. He was proud to be the only Democrat among Republican offspring of former Northern California redwood lumber barons. Charlie attracted visitors from near and far. Among the young generation were future writers, poets and professionals as well as one or two ne'er-do-wells.

Charlie loved to play pranks, especially on the visiting boyfriends of his three daughters. One was a tall, muscular member of the Stanford water polo team. He was asked to chop madrone firewood for the barbecue; a wood harder than oak that took special skill to split. Everyone pretended not to smirk at his mighty yet futile travails. I was tested on a former cowboy Quarter Horse (fastest horse over a quarter mile) named Snappy Jack. The moment I put one foot in a stirrup, the horse wheeled sharply the other way and I fell flat on my back.

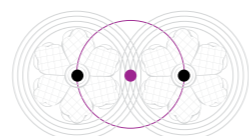
After the evening revelries, I often went with my Alsatian dog into the darkness of the adjacent redwood forest without a flashlight. I could barely make out the sinuous back of the dog in front of me and the looming shapes of 3000-year-old living trees. Thus I developed a powerful sense of time travel into the past. **BO**



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TEXT AND PHOTO BY UNA MEISTERE,
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Sinful Turkish sweet

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Baklava is one of Turkey's best-known sinful sweets and could even be called a defining culinary dish of that country.

The history of this delectable snack goes back at least to the times of the Ottoman Empire, when it was served as a dessert at the sultan's sumptuous meals. True, the neighbouring Greeks claim that the dish actually originated in their country, since the phyllo dough used to make the sweet snack stems from the Greek word for "leaf". The Greeks are also said to have refined the technique for making the unleavened dough, whose layers are rolled into light and airy paper-thin sheets.

However, the roots of the word *baklava* are Turkic, and the Turkish pastry chef of French queen Marie Antoinette is credited with inventing a new technique for cutting and folding the baklava squares. Baklava has been served at countless rituals, including religious ones, and is a ritual in itself – from its preparation to its presentation.

The incredibly sweet and tasty layered treat is made from special phyllo dough, nuts (usually pistachios or walnuts) and syrup or honey. First it is fried in a large pan, then syrup or honey is poured over it, and then it is cut into squares, triangles or hexagons. It is also cooled before being served. Formerly only the rich could afford to buy this luxurious sweet, and the saying that "I am not rich enough to eat baklava every day" can still be heard in Turkey.

The mecca of baklava-making is the city of Gaziantep in southeastern Turkey,

while the most famous spot for enjoying the treat is the *Karaköy Güllüoğlu* baklava shop and café in Istanbul. It can be found in the trendy Karaköy district, not far from the Galata Bridge. The shop is owned by the Güllü family, which has excelled in baklava-making for five generations. As with many of the best baklava pastry chefs, the family's roots also extend to the city of Gaziantep, which was formerly called Antep and is one of the oldest continually inhabited settlements in the world.

The ornate interior at *Karaköy Güllüoğlu* recalls the hedonistic majesty of the bygone Ottoman era. The place is always packed, mostly with locals, who will proudly recommend it to you in conversations elsewhere, and the small tables set outside by the entrance make it practically impossible to miss. On top of that, the wave of sweet fragrances wafting from the premises is as fatefully tempting as the beckoning calls of the mythical Greek sirens. The baklava here is fresher than fresh, for it is prepared right nearby, just a few minutes away on foot. At least a dozen different forms of the treat are on offer, along with other Turkish delicacies. It's easy to lose your head here, so start with the classical pistachio baklava. If you do fall into temptation and overindulge, then don't feel too bad, for baklava symbolizes and embodies an absolute sense of gastronomic bliss.

① www.karakoygulluoglu.com



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TEXT BY ZANE NIKODEMUSA AND ROGER NORUM
PUBLICITY PHOTOS AND COURTESY OF F64

SPOTLIGHT ON THE SPRING AWAKENING
Five things that you should do in Latvia in March

- Look for pussy willow branches and snowdrops in the countryside
- Attend the *Riga Wine & Champagne* gourmet festival (March 7-9, www.rigawinechampagne.lv)
- Enjoy the *Romani Rat* (Gypsy Night) concerts by charming Latvian singer Marija Naumova (March 5-9, www.marijanaumova.lv)
- Get your picture taken at a unique art installation consisting of four alternating monuments. Each of the monuments rises up from the ground in succession at ten-minute intervals. (Corner of Brivibas and Elizabetes streets in Riga, starting from March 27, www.riga2014.org)
- Register for a juice therapy programme to cleanse your body (www.dagniabrुvere.com, www.jaunkemeru.lv)

ON THIS MONTH'S MENU

Celebrate life in all of its splendour with some tips by *Baltic Outlook*

THE TREND:

Gadgets

Againer is a sensational ski innovation, designed for avid skiers who want to spend more time on the slopes with less fatigue. The system takes pressure off the knees and offers great support for the back. While this is the first season that the product is available in the skiing shops of the Alps, the innovative idea has been developed and tested for more than 10 years (www.againer-ski.com).



Music

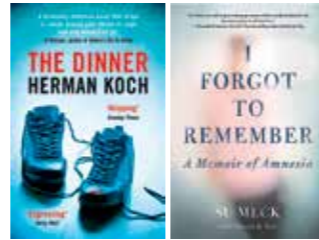
A multitude of rock fans have fallen in love with the latest album by grunge band *Pearl Jam*. The Seattle group's 11-date European tour will kick off on June 16 in Amsterdam and make its way through Italy, Austria, Germany, Sweden and other countries before wrapping on July 11 in the United Kingdom. The tour includes two festival dates: Poland's *Open'er Festival* on July 3 and Belgium's *Rock Werchter* on July 5.



Travel

To make your flights particularly memorable this year and to avoid getting confused among the jumble of similar-looking luggage at the airport, pack your belongings in elegant suitcases from the *Classic Flight*® collection by the German brand *RIMOWA*. These suitcases stand out with their original design and shiny silver metal surface (EUR 489 at *Begis*, *Mols* shopping centre in Riga).

READING LIST



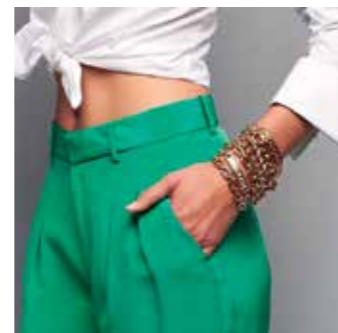
Herman Koch, *The Dinner* (EUR 7.90, www.atlantic-books.co.uk)

If you've been living in a cave over the past year, then you've probably missed the global publishing phenomenon created by Herman Koch, the latest Dutch literary sensation. The deftly-narrated story follows a single evening's dinner conversation between two couples, whose teenage sons have jointly committed a despicable act of violence.

Su Meck, Daniel de Vise, *I Forgot to Remember: A Memoir of Amnesia* (EUR 18.10, www.amazon.de)

What would you do if you lost your past? In 1988, Su Meck was 22 and married with two children when a ceiling fan in her kitchen fell and struck her on the head, leaving her with a brain injury that erased all the memories of her life up to that point. Although her body healed rapidly, her memories never returned. Piercing, heartbreaking, but finally uplifting, this book is the true story of a woman determined to live life on her own terms.

INSTAFASHION



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DESIGN FOR YOUR HOME

The new Latvian design brand *MUNIO HOME* is about people and their homes, and about cosy interiors. *MUNIO HOME*'s household items have been designed by Zane Tetera, one of Latvia's most talented architects. She says that she wanted to combine the joie de vivre of the city with her Latvian sense of fortitude and northern identity. These items stand out with their smart and discrete finishes, rather than bright colours, and are made of materials like clay, birch bark and linen from the untamed northern countryside. The new design collection is available at the *MUNIO HOME* showroom in Riga (Andrejostas iela 4a, www.munihome.com).



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Jan Lauwers theatre performance



TEXT BY ZANE NIKODEMUSA
PUBLICITY PHOTOS

**Ķīpsala Exhibition Hall
(Ķīpsalas izstāžu zāle), Riga
March 19 and 20**

Riga is a European Capital of Culture this year, and in honour of this occasion the *forte forte* contemporary theatre programme is presenting performances by some of Europe's best directors all year long. In March, Flemish director Jan Lauwers and his *Needcompany* troupe will visit the Latvian capital. Lauwers is considered to be a pioneer of visual, eclectic and international theatre, and it is therefore no surprise that the latest play under his direction, *Isabella's Room*, leaves a powerful emotional impact. Not only do the actors tell Isabella's story, they also sing it.

Tickets at www.bilesuparadize.lv
Price: EUR 10 – 15
Ķīpsalas iela 8

MARCH 2014



**Mireille Mathieu concert
Arena Riga, Riga
March 8**

In 2008, one of the most charming and most famous French singers, Mireille Mathieu, returned to the stage after a lengthy hiatus. She has enjoyed immense popularity outside of her native country, selling more gold and platinum albums than any other French musician. During a career that has lasted almost five decades, Mathieu has released more than 70 albums and recorded over 1200 songs. Her concerts are noteworthy musical events and each song that she sings is legendary, as listeners will be able to hear for themselves on March 8 in Riga.

Tickets at www.bilesuseriviss.lv
Price: EUR 28.46 – 71.14
Skanstes iela 21

**Re: visited
exhibition**

**Riga Art Space
(Rīgas Mākslas telpa)
March 15 – April 27**



Jumana
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& Sille
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screenshot
from the
video *The
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2013

This grandiose exhibition features artworks that have been presented over the past two years at the Venice, Paris, Moscow, Berlin and other significant art biennials, providing a unique opportunity to gain an insight into global art trends. The featured artists come from numerous countries, including Mexico, Brazil, the United Kingdom and Sweden. Their different cultural backgrounds and diverse life experiences provide the perfect backdrop for enjoying a truly rich display of contemporary art.

More information at www.lcca.lv
Kungu iela 3

**VTB United
League basketball
game between
VEF Riga (Latvia)
and Astana
(Kazakhstan)**

**Arena Riga, Riga
March 24**



Basketball has brought worldwide sports fame to Latvia on several occasions. One of the country's most renowned and illustrious teams was *VEF Riga*, which successfully played in various tournaments from 1958 to 1992. Talented Latvian basketball player Valdis Valters spent most of his sports career playing for the team, and in 2007 he managed to revive it. The reborn *VEF Riga* now plays in both the Latvian Basketball League and the VTB United League. On March 24, *VEF Riga* hosts a match against the Kazakh team *Astana*.

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Catherine's room, 2011

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Bill Viola
Grand Palais (Grand Palace)
March 5 - July 28

Bill Viola's name always draws attention, regardless of whether he is performing yet another wonder on the stage of a world-renowned opera theatre or in an exhibition hall. Viola is a pioneer of video art, whose installations are designed to stimulate both the visual and hearing senses of the viewer, generating a hallucinatory effect. The themes of his works focus on such fundamental human issues as birth, life and death, drawing from the art and traditions of both the West and the East. The comprehensive retrospective at the Grand Palais features works that the artist has created from 1977 to the present, including moving paintings and monumental installations.

3 Avenue du Général Eisenhower
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Hanna Shygulla, Traumprotokolle (Dream Protocols)

Akademie der Künste (Academy of Arts)
Until March 30

Actress Hanna Shygulla is a legend. For more than a decade, she was one of the main heroines in a number of films by New German Cinema director Rainer Werner Fassbinder, including *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*, *Katzelmacher*, *The Merchant of Four Seasons*, *The Marriage of Maria Braun* and *Lili Marleen*. Shygulla portrayed anguished individuals experiencing complicated human relationships in films that Fassbinder claimed were centred on love.

Shortly before the death of the movie director in 1982 at the age of 37, Shygulla moved to Paris, where she established a new career as a chanson singer, performing in the French capital and in many other European cities. She has also created a number of her own short films, which can now be seen at the Academy of Arts in Berlin.

Pariser Platz 4
www.adk.de



Schwester, 1979/2005
Filmstill

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Matthew Barney: River of Fundament
Haus der Kunst (House of Art)
March 16 - August 17

Matthew Barney and Jonathan Bepler, *River of Fundament*, 2014
Production Still

San Francisco-born Matthew Barney (1967) is a media darling and one of the best-known artists of his generation. The former medical student, athlete, actor and model lived together with Icelandic singer Björk for more than a decade and is the father of their daughter Isidora (b. 2002). A veritable multimedia artist, Barney employs painting, sculpture and film in his works. His previous monumental project, *Cremaster Cycle*, was made over an eight-year period (1994-2002) and was presented not only in some of the world's best-known exhibition halls, but also at movie festivals.

Now Barney is returning to the art scene with a new multimedia mega-project, *Matthew Barney: River of Fundament*, which he has

created in cooperation with Berlin-based American composer Jonathan Bepler. *River of Fundament* is Barney's largest and most ambitious project to date, consisting of a five-hour-long film that will premiere on March 16 at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, as well as sculptures, drawings, photographs, vitrines and other media. The artist has described this project as the culmination of seven years of meditation about death, rebirth, transformation and transcendence.

Barney created 15 large-scale sculptures for the installation, replacing the plastic and petroleum jelly that he previously used with metal, sulphur and salt.
Prinzregentenstraße 1
www.hausderkunst.de

INGREDIENTS
2 ORANGES, PEELED
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1/3 CUP FRESH CONTINENTAL PARSLEY LEAVES
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375G SKINLESS SALMON FILLET
OLIVE OIL SPRAY
50G BABY ROCKET LEAVES
LEMON WEDGES, TO SERVE

DIRECTIONS
HOLDING 1 ORANGE OVER A LARGE BOWL TO CATCH ANY JUICE, USE A SHARP KNIFE TO CUT ALONG EITHER SIDE OF THE WHITE MEMBRANE TO REMOVE THE SEGMENTS. ADD TO THE BOWL. USE YOUR HANDS TO SQUEEZE THE JUICE FROM THE REMAINING FLESH. REPEAT WITH REMAINING ORANGE. ADD THE FENNEL, CHICKPEAS, ONION, PARSLEY AND DILL TO THE BOWL. SEASON WITH PEPPER. TOSS TO COMBINE.
CUT SALMON LENGTHWAYS INTO 8 SLICES. SPRAY LIGHTLY WITH OLIVE OIL SPRAY AND SEASON WITH PEPPER. COOK ON BARBECUE FOR 1 MINUTE EACH SIDE FOR MEDIUM. FLAKE INTO BITE-SIZED PIECES. ADD SALMON AND ROCKET TO THE ORANGE MIXTURE AND TOSS TO COMBINE. DIVIDE AMONG SERVING DISHES AND SERVE WITH LEMON WEDGES.

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Bailey's Stardust National Portrait Gallery Until June 1



Mick Jagger by David Bailey, 1964

This collection of 250 photographs is the largest exhibition ever devoted to legendary British photographer David Bailey, whose illustrious career has spanned more than five decades. As the name of the showing implies, Bailey's pictures feature portraits of a star-studded array of musicians, actors and models, including Mick Jagger, Jack Nicholson, Helmut Newton, Kate Moss, Johnny Depp and Boy George.

One cannot fail to mention the photographer's images of Jean Shrimpton, who became Bailey's first *Vogue* cover girl in 1961 and consequently rose to fashion stardom. The couple's romantic relationship, which lasted for four years, has since become the stuff of legend. Shrimpton was Bailey's muse, while he helped to turn her into one of the world's first supermodels.

Bailey has stood out with his uncanny ability to capture special moments. He was an icon of the Swinging London fashion and cultural scene of the 1960s and served as the prototype for Michelangelo Antonioni's legendary film *Blowup* (1966). The exhibition also features photographs that Bailey took in 1974 during an expedition to Papua New Guinea as well as pictures from a charity mission in West Africa.

St Martin's Place
www.npg.org.uk

Charlottenlund

Friction of Ideas:
Van Gogh,
Gauguin, Bernard
Ordrupgaard, until June 22

The dramatic story of the stormy relationship between the famous artists Vincent van Gogh and Paul Gauguin has practically become a legend in the art world and has been subject to countless interpretations. Everything seems to have started out innocently enough: in 1888, two little-known artists, the Dutchman Van Gogh and the Frenchman Gauguin, moved into the so-called Yellow House in the French city of Arles. They ate, drank and painted together for nine weeks, also engaging in discussions about art and other subjects.

Shortly before Christmas, one of these discussions allegedly became so animated that Van Gogh sliced off a portion of his own ear. He was hospitalised and then placed in a psychiatric institution. Gauguin, for his part, left without saying goodbye and took the first train back to Paris. The two men never saw each other again. A third artist, Émile Bernard, was also supposedly involved in the argument and was a friend of both painters. The works dating from that period are considered to be among the best in the careers of all three artists, and some of these paintings can now be viewed together for the first time in the current exhibition at the Ordrupgaard museum north of Copenhagen.

Vilvordevej 110
www.ordrupgaard.dk



Emile Bernard, Iron Bridges at Asnieres, 1887

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TEXT BY KRISTINE MIHALOVA
PHOTOS BY ALAMY AND NATURE PICTURE LIBRARY (ALL OVER PRESS)

Little Black Book

Rome

Rome is popularly known as a city of romance. Accordingly, here are few local experiences that may very well bring back that special feeling of falling in love again.



**Dinner and entertainment:
Tram Jazz**

Go out for dinner on the *Tram Jazz*, which will transport you through time and space. The original cable car from 1947 has been transformed into a mobile restaurant. During your exquisite candlelight meal, you can enjoy the sights of Rome sliding past you at night, with live contemporary jazz music in the background. This experience should satisfy all of your senses, and who knows how the evening will end?

**▲ Market:
Campo dei Fiori**

Of course, one of the best places to visit is the market. Early birds will enjoy shopping at the colourful *Campo dei Fiori* (Field of Flowers – borrowing its name from times when the square was a meadow). This is the oldest market in Rome and used to be a centre of social life in medieval and Renaissance times.

Today, you can buy fresh fish and vegetables to the tune of an energetic *"Dai! Prego, solo oggi un*

prezzo speciale!" (Come on, only today a special price!), just like in the old days. So as not to get carried away with the gossip of the marketplace, refresh yourself at the ancient fountain (which nowadays is a copy of the original one). It warns you with a wise engraving: *"Fa del bene lassa dire"* (Do good and let them talk). The mercantile nature of the square is represented by the names of the outgoing streets: *Balestrari* (crossbow makers), *Baullari* (trunk and luggage manufacturers), *Cappelari* (hatmakers), *Chiavari* (locksmiths) and *Giubbbonari* (tailors).



**▼ Bridge:
Ponte Sant'Angelo
(Bridge of the Holy Angel)**

On your way to St. Peter's Basilica, you can witness another beautiful sight. A bridge guarded by ten angels links the Eternal City with the Vatican. Commissioned by Roman Emperor Hadrian to connect the left bank of the Tiber River with his mausoleum, it was meant to be fit for an imperial funeral. Try to pass by in the late afternoon; you might get the chance to observe the burning orange sunlight reflect into the river as street musicians perform nearby.

**▼ Park:
Aventino area: Parco delle Rose –
Giardino degli Aranci – Piazza dei
Cavalieri di Malta**

Once you start to get tired of the crowds, it is time to visit Aventino (one of the seven hills of Rome). The *Parco delle Rose* (Park of Roses) is probably the most romantic garden in Rome, where the noise and stress of the city seem light years away. Breathe deeply and savour the scent of almost 1100 different types of roses from all over the world. Just a few steps away is the *Giardino degli Aranci* (Garden of Oranges). Filled with a multitude of orange trees, the park immediately overpowers you with its leisurely atmosphere so typical of the south.

Are you a good keeper of secrets? Then don't forget to pay a visit to the *Piazza dei Cavalieri di Malta* (Square of the Knights of Malta). There, through the famous *Buco di Roma* (Hole of Rome), a keyhole in the front door of the Priory of Malta, you can have a sneak peak at the cupola of St. Peter's Basilica.



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TEXT BY KRISTINE BUDZE, PASTAIGA
PUBLICITY PHOTO

Springtime tea

Although the European furniture industry is still experiencing a cool state of semi-hibernation induced by the economic crisis, an artificially induced early spring has already arrived in furniture design fashion.



Porcelain pastry serving dish from the Tea with Georg collection, designed by Scholten & Baijings and manufactured by Georg Jensen.

This spring, soft pastel tones are in style, imbuing a sense of fashionable straightforwardness to interiors that should do without extravagance, ostentation and hedonistic luxury. The interiors should be simple and true to nature, using such natural materials as light-coloured wood in the place of exotic species with expressive lines and patterns, along with plain, modestly shiny fabrics of linen, wool or silk.

Soft pastel tones are appropriate for adding a touch of extra colour in our current ascetic period. However, try not to exaggerate with sweet caramel tones, for example, or else you risk making your interior space look like a doll's house. Such tones should be used as small accents that add extra spice. In the painting of separate details, pastel tones are always used in combination with naturally neutral colours. Currently all pastel tones are in fashion. They are usually portrayed with long and poetic descriptions, such as the green of fresh peppermint caramel, the

pearly grey of pigeon feathers, the pink of a budding apple blossom, the light blue tone of melting snow in the early spring, or the yellow of lemon-flavoured ice cream.

Modern-day designers must be able to juggle with all of the tones that are in fashion, without for a moment falling into extremes. Among the most skilful "circus artists" in putting refined tones together is the Dutch designer duo Scholten & Baijings,

SOFT PASTEL TONES ARE APPROPRIATE FOR ADDING A TOUCH OF EXTRA COLOUR IN OUR CURRENT ASCETIC PERIOD

which has been successfully working together since the year 2000. The renowned pair consists of Design Academy Eindhoven graduate Stefan Scholten and self-taught designer Carole Baijings. The two add a touch of personal charm to otherwise ordinary objects by choosing unusual tones, usually through the combination of various colours with extremely fine-lined geometric patterns.

According to the designers, "there are hundreds of yellow and red tones to choose from, but for each object or interior, only one will do." Scholten & Baijings items are known for their transparently glazed tones, which are combined with a web of geometric patterns arranged in several layers, often with the addition of fluorescent colours, but never to the point of excess.

Such is the Tea with Georg collection

created by Scholten & Baijings and presented by the exclusive Danish silverware brand Georg Jensen. The collection features stainless steel tableware made with a combination of brightly polished and matted metal surfaces, along with porcelain plates, saucers and cups in the nuanced white and blue of spring clouds. One or two of these items will suffice to bring in a fresh spring breeze and thaw out the winter chill. **BO**



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STYLE BY LIGA VEKMANE
PHOTOS BY REINIS HOFMANIS, F64 AND BY CORBIS

Trench coat

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Karen Millen – Galleria Riga shopping centre, Dzirnāvu iela 67;
Guess by Marciano, Massimo Dutti and Marc O'Polo – Galerija Centrs shopping centre, Audēju iela 16.

For Her



Women's trench coat, EUR 398, Karen Millen



Handbag, EUR 267, Karen Millen



Shoes, EUR 94.60, Guess by Marciano

For Him



Men's trench coat, EUR 205, Massimo Dutti



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Marijas iela 21, Riga

TEXT BY AGRA LIEGE
PUBLICITY PHOTO

Rufus Wainwright. Back in the game

Rufus Wainwright returns to the pop world with *Out of the Game*

The life of Rufus Wainwright, a youthful Canadian-American singer, composer and pianist who celebrated his 40th birthday last year, has experienced numerous dramatic turns. His mother, Canadian singer Kate McGarrigle, had a significant influence on him. When she passed away four years ago, he was devastated.

However, a new beginning and a more stable adult life followed. The star, who has a history of drug abuse and difficult relationships with his family members, conceived a daughter named Viva Katherine with his childhood friend, Lorca Cohen (daughter of singer Leonard Cohen) in 2011. And last, but not least, Rufus finally tied the knot with his long-term boyfriend Jörn Weisbrodt a year later.

The musician, who displayed musical talent at an early age, began playing the piano when he was 6 and joined the family ensemble *The McGarrigle Sisters and Family* in his early teens. However, his mother also encouraged Rufus to establish a solo career, so he composed his first song, *I'm A-Runnin'*, at the age of 14, which earned him both Juno and Genie award nominations. He

then decided to give the academic world a go and entered McGill University to study music composition, but he soon quit school to pursue a full-time musical career. Rufus' big break came with the release of his eponymous debut album, *Rufus Wainwright*, in 1998. The tired-of-life tone in his young voice, backed by piano and strings, sets him apart from other pop singers.

Wainwright has seven albums of original music to his credit, along with a Grammy-nominated recreation of a Judy Garland concert at Carnegie Hall. Having set out to explore new horizons in the late 2000s – notably by composing an opera, *Prima Donna*, which was first performed in 2009 – the musician later returned to his well-explored pop and folk roots. His latest album, *Out of the Game*, was recorded with producer Mark Ronson. One of its tracks, *Montauk*, is devoted to his young daughter Viva. Although light and easy-going, the song

THE TIRED-OF-LIFE TONE IN HIS YOUNG VOICE, BACKED BY PIANO AND STRINGS, SETS HIM APART FROM OTHER POP SINGERS

conveys a strong introspective vibe. To Wainwright, it was an attempt to reconcile his former, unpredictable and promiscuous existence with being reborn as a settled family man.

The musician's success in the pop arena hasn't stopped him from beginning work on his second opera, *Hadrian*, which is to premiere in 2018 at the *Canadian Opera Company*. Once known to be on the road almost constantly, the reformed singer has changed his habits. Thus, it will be all the more exciting to see him perform in Riga on March 19 during his current world tour. Hardly out of the game! **BO**

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DETAILS / THING OF THE MONTH

TEXT BY ZANE NIKODEMUSA | PHOTOS BY ACTION PRESS, SPLASH NEWS AND COURTESY OF EVERETT COLLECTION (ALL OVER PRESS)

High fashion sneakers

When Dior and Chanel sent sneakers down the runway, women everywhere were flabbergasted

The Christian Dior Spring 2014 haute couture show opened with its usual elegance. Each piece was subtly suggestive, with garter-esque heel straps, circular cutouts, and romantic floral petals throughout. And then, with the equivalent of a record scratch, somewhere halfway through the show, a model strode out in a strapless blue eyelet dress with ... cosmic sneakers.

The models who showed off Chanel's latest couture collection in Paris also had an extra spring in their step. Karl Lagerfeld,



Legendary American actress Carole Lombard appreciated low heels already back in the 1930s



Chanel

Chanel

Christian Dior

OFTEN HIGH FASHION COLLECTIONS ARE INSPIRED BY POP CULTURE AND STREET FASHION

the French fashion house's creative director, decided to pair each of his looks with matching, upscale running shoes. But the sneakers were so much more than just your everyday shoes. These were bespoke shoes from the prestigious house of Massaro, made of python skin and then veiled with lace, tweed and pearls. They came in shades of pale pink, white and black – and each pair reportedly took approximately 30 hours to make. They will reportedly cost more than 3,000 euros and are sure to become a fetish object amongst design aficionados.

"In the history of fashion, from around

1800 to 1840 or 1845, women had flat shoes. Even with a ball gown, they had flat shoes," Lagerfeld said in a video interview posted on Chanel's website.

Does this mean that high heels are officially over and done with? Designer Artis Štamgūts, a lecturer at the Department of Fashion Design at the Art Academy of Latvia, doesn't think so:

"Sneakers are just one of the fashion trends this spring and will be relevant not only this season. This means that while stores will most certainly be offering a larger selection of running and other sports shoes,

women won't be rushing to get rid of their high-heeled shoes. Furthermore, the target audience in high fashion is very rich women, who are often from the nobility. I doubt if we will be seeing countesses wearing Chanel sneakers to a ball. The fashion houses are adding sneakers to their collections in order to attract younger clients. The change of generations is a problematic issue in high fashion circles."

Incidentally, Chanel and Dior's enthusiasm for sneakers is nothing unique or new in the fashion industry. In 2009, for example, Balenciaga's models showed off the fashion house's summer collection wearing dresses and running shoes. What's more, sneakers paired with evening dresses have been a favourite look for celebrities like actress Kirsten Stewart.

"Often high fashion collections are inspired by pop culture and street fashion," says Štamgūts.

If you nevertheless get tempted to add some more sneakers to your wardrobe, then Štamgūts recommends wearing them with casual wear like jeans and sports-style clothing:

"Not everyone will be able to combine sneakers with an evening dress or classical-style women's suit and look convincing. In order for a woman to look great in that combination, she needs to have a strong personality and be very sure of herself." BO



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Ingredients

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1/2 red onion
4 quail eggs
4 green asparagus shoots
1 tbsp. trout roe
1 tbsp. butter

For the dill cream:

100 g whole milk cottage cheese
1 tbsp. sour cream
1 tbsp. Greek yogurt
1/3 tsp. sea salt
2 tbsp. chopped dill

Preparation

Cut the asparagus shoots into three parts and blanch them in boiling water for a couple of minutes. Pan-fry them in the butter. Boil the quail eggs. Cut the onion into thin rings. In another bowl, layer the salad greens, sprouts, dill and asparagus, together with the butter in which it was fried. Prepare the dill cream by mixing together the cottage cheese, sour cream, yogurt, salt and dill with a blender. Pour the dill cream over the salad and sprinkle with trout roe.

BREAKFAST BREAD

Ingredients

4 tsp. dry yeast
1 1/3 cups warm water
1 1/2 cups wheat flour
1 1/2 cups whole grain oat flour
1 tsp. sea salt
1 tsp. brown sugar
1/2 tsp. white wine vinegar
1 tbsp. oat flakes
1 tbsp. butter

Preparation

Pour the yeast into a bowl, add the warm water, stir and let the mixture sit for 10 minutes. In another bowl, mix the wheat and oat flour with the salt and brown sugar. Stir the flour mixture into the yeast solution, pour in the vinegar and knead the dough, adding some more flour or warm water as needed, until the dough becomes stretchy.

Cover the bowl of dough with a towel and let it rise for an hour. Knead the dough again and shape it into a loaf. Put the loaf in a baking pan that has been lined with baking paper, cover with a towel and let it sit for another hour. Then use your hands to moisten the surface of the loaf with water and sprinkle with oat flakes. Bake in the oven at 200°C for 25-30 minutes.



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Milan

TEXT BY UNA MEISTERE,
WWW.ANOTHERTRAVELGUIDE.COM
PHOTOS BY AINARS ERGLIS

Bad luck, somebody has already taken the AnotherTravelGuide brochure about Milan, but don't worry, all the information is also available at ANOTHERTRAVELGUIDE.COM in cooperation with airBaltic.

ANOTHERTRAVELGUIDE.COM

Even though the *Brera Garden Roof* bar on the rooftop of the *Hotel Milano Scala* is officially closed in the winter, we get special permission to see it. This is the ideal vantage point from which to view the city that is getting ready to host the 2015 *Expo*. Milan's silhouette of red-tiled roofs and churches encircled in wintery haze is dotted with skyscrapers designed by a string of illustrious architects: Arata Isozaki, Zaha Hadid, Daniel Libeskind and so on. Some of the skyscrapers are almost finished, and *Corso Como* – a once small, charming pedestrian street that is known as the home of Milan's most stylish shop, *10 Corso Como* – now looks like a forgotten orphan in the shadow of the new glass and steel skyscrapers.

The foundations for most of the *Expo* projects were laid before the financial crisis, which explains their ambitiousness. Of course, discussions about the future continue. What will happen to these buildings after the *Expo* and how will they change Milan's image? Come what may, Milan is currently one of the most intriguing urban construction sites in Europe, and only time will tell what its new skin will look like. One thing, however, is certain: Milan is rippling and roiling with so many eccentric projects that, at least outwardly, they cover up much of the reality of an Italy in crisis.

Six months ago, the Italian fashion house *Prada*, which celebrated its 100th anniversary last year, ambitiously presented its newest fashion/art/lifestyle project. Called *Prada Galleria*, the project will symbolically occupy the area surrounding the brand's first store, opened in 1913 by Miuccia Prada's grandfather and located in *Vittorio Emanuele II*, the world's oldest glass-enclosed shopping gallery. The *Prada* project involves the restoration of a whole complex that will house not only the *Prada Group* headquarters, but also the *Fondazione Prada* art gallery, a restaurant and shops. The first part of the project – a



Palazzo Parigi hotel



Villa Necchi Campiglio



The Small restaurant

new men's fashion store – was opened in 2013. Even though a final opening date for the *Prada Galleria* has yet to be announced, it will likely coincide with the *Expo* in 2015.

Milan has also recently gotten its own little piece of Paris, namely, the new five-star *Palazzo Parigi* hotel. The hotel is located in the artsy Brera neighbourhood, and its luxurious interior combines the refined chic-ness of Paris with the minimalism of Milan. Marble floors, vintage mirrors from Naples, a winter garden, a fountain...in other words, everything that befits a hotel located in a 17th-century palace. The *Palazzo Parigi* has 65 guest rooms and 33 apartments. And for a complete catharsis of luxury, the hotel offers dining at *Cracco at Palazzo*, the restaurant of Milan's own star chef Carlo Cracco. A spa and pool will also open at the hotel at the end of this year. Who said Italy is in crisis?

MILAN IS A CITY WHERE ALL THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A METROPOLIS LIVE SIDE BY SIDE IN AN ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE INTIMACY

We are accustomed to Milan being the place to go to search for whatever is new, be it in fashion or design. But the longer one stays in Milan, the more one begins to see that the city's real charm may actually lie in the exact opposite of newness, in the traditions passed down from generation to generation and in the footprints of history that can only be seen when traversing by foot instead of dashing from one brand-name store to the next in a taxi. In addition, I wonder whether there is any other city in Europe where so much attention is paid to details and staging. Milan is a city where all the characteristics of a metropolis live side by side in an almost unbelievable intimacy.

A trip to the old Milan

Just a 10-15 minute walk from the historic cathedral in central Milan and the luxury shopping on Via Montenapoleone is the so-called *Silent Quadrilateral*. This area is like a jewel box of Old Milan, a concentration of gems all contained within a small quadrant of

streets. It's a residential neighbourhood with relatively empty streets and only a few tourists. Most of those who come to Milan on shopping pilgrimages, hysterically making the rounds of *Prada*, *Gucci* and *Dolce & Gabbana*, do not bother to visit the *Silent Quadrilateral*. The highlight of the neighbourhood is *Villa Necchi Campiglio*, a Modernist-style villa built in the 1930s that once belonged to a wealthy manufacturing family from Lombardy. Nestled in a park, the villa is easy to miss. Only the former gatekeeper's house – now the ticket office – can be seen from the street. A narrow garden path leads past a vegetable garden to the villa itself. The home has been open to the public since 2008, and visits are by guided tour only. The tour is one hour long, and if you're lucky, you may even get a private tour and wander through the villa practically on your own.

The sight of the laconic façade of the villa emerging from the surrounding trees and sculpture garden is at once breath-taking and surprising. Across from the villa is a swimming pool – the first heated swimming pool in Milan. At the time it was built, only a few such pools existed in Italy, most located on the estates of wealthy families and not in the middle of cities. The foundation of the Necchi and Campiglio families' wealth was the manufacture of sewing machines.

The former owner of the villa, Angelo Campiglio, his wife Gigina Necchi and her sister Nedda owned several manufacturing plants south of Milan and often came to the northern Italian metropolis to shop. On one such occasion they saw an advertisement for land for sale. Located in the very centre of the city – and in a green area at that – it was hard to find a better location. The couple had no children, and they envisioned a new villa as both a home and a stage (that is, a status symbol). They invited Piero Portaluppi, Milan's best architect at the time, to design the project.

Portaluppi was already known in local elite circles for his innovative and extravagant style, and for embracing all things new. The Necchi-Campiglio family gave him complete freedom to design the villa. The resulting four-storey Modernist-style edifice, which is defined by simple and clear geometric lines, became one of the best examples of Milanese Rationalist architecture and a highlight of the architect's career.

Today, Italian fashion icon Giorgio Armani often refers to the villa as a source of inspiration for his *Armani Casa* line. The villa has also served as the setting for Luca Guadagnino's 2010 film *I Am Love*, featuring British actress Tilda Swinton. In the film, Swinton plays the wife of the Milanese industrialist, and the story is about the well-known subjects of wealth, status, loyalty, love and betrayal.

A more fitting setting for the glitter of the bourgeoisie and the drama of destruction could not be imagined. The former inhabitants of the *Villa Necchi Campiglio* loved to live grandly, and their spacious Italian-marble-tiled entrance hall and walnut-wood walls served as backdrops to a veritable *Who's Who* of the Italian high society. Another example of the scope of the Necchi-Campiglios can be seen in the leather panels that are customarily used for desktops, used here to panel the dining room walls.

The first to pass away was Angelo Campiglio, in 1984. Then his sister-in-law died, and in 2001 Gigina Necchi died at the age of 99. They had no descendants, so the villa was bequeathed to Italy's national trust for the restoration and preservation of historical buildings, which took over management of the villa almost immediately following Gigina's death, thereby preserving the home as it had been during the owners' lifetimes.

The villa still feels like a "flesh-and-blood" home instead of a museum. Reflecting on the course of a lifetime, one can still see how the home evolved along with changing priorities in the couple's lives.

At first, the interior of the *Villa Necchi Campiglio* reflected a strict Modernism style in which every detail, including the furniture design, was carefully planned by Portaluppi. The large sliding doors that divide the rooms of the house date back to that era. The entrance hall side of the doors is covered in walnut, while the other side is covered with rosewood and matches the library walls. Another 1930s innovation is the use of diffuse lighting in place of, for example, a classic ceiling lamp in the library. In other places, miniature kettlebell-shaped accessories keep doors from unnecessarily swinging open and closed. The ceiling in each room is decorated with a unique stucco plaster design, and an Art-Deco-style railing adorns the majestic staircase leading to the second floor.

The scope, asceticism and discipline of the villa's original interior exuded true elegance and supremely embodied the feel of modern, pre-war Italy, which was obsessed with perfectionism. There were rumours of the Campiglio family's connections with dictator Benito Mussolini. When the Second World War began, the family left the villa and moved to the country. For a while, the villa served as a headquarters for the Republican Fascist Party, and, when the family returned after the war, it had the interior of the building completely changed.

The family invited another architect, Tomaso Buzzi, to replace the cool Modernist interior with a something more decorative, including elements of 19th-century luxury, 18th-century antiques and replicas of Louis XV and Louis XVI furniture. Although

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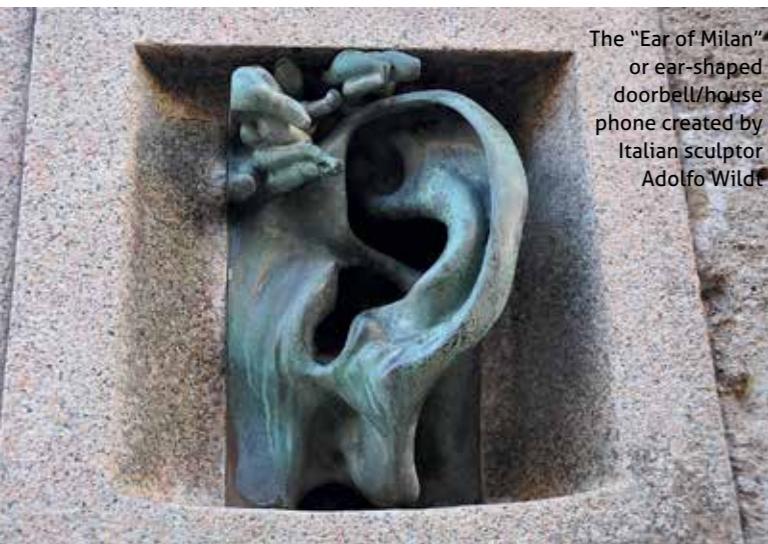
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YOUR NEXT DESTINATION



The "Ear of Milan" or ear-shaped doorbell/house phone created by Italian sculptor Adolfo Wildt

was allowed to live in the villa permanently. Her bedroom, large enough to make even a luxury hotel-goer envious, was also located on this same floor. The rest of the staff was allowed to enter the villa only when summoned. In order for the staff to remain unnoticed, a separate staircase and elevator were installed. One of the closets is still full of the servants' clothing – one change for morning, another for afternoon and a third for evening, as befitted the staff of a castle.

The long hallway leading to the master bedroom is another of the building's architectural gems. Doors on both sides open

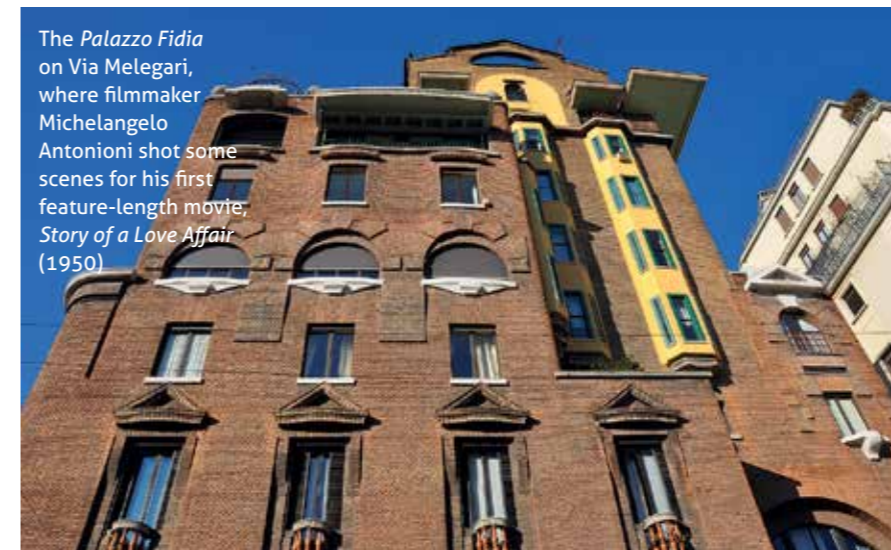
ALMOST EVERY DAY SOMETHING MUST BE RETOUCHE OR FIXED. OLD CLOCKS MUST CONSTANTLY RUN, OTHERWISE THEY STOP FOREVER

there are theories as to why the family suddenly embraced this *petit bourgeois* style, most likely its members believed that such a style best exuded wealth and the good life in the post-war period. However, it could also be that they just wanted to clear out the traces of their previous lives and begin anew. The laconic Portaluppi lamps were replaced with large crystal chandeliers or antique lamps. The clean window lines were covered in brightly coloured drapes with silk embroidery. The only room that still has the original Portaluppi furniture is the orangerie, which the architect had envisioned as a transitional space between the house and garden.

The master bedrooms, guest apartments and servants' rooms were located on the second floor, or *piano nobile*. Only one maid

to rooms and built-in closets, in which the owners of the house kept their entire wardrobes. When all of the doors are closed, the hallway and large window at the end resembles the austerity of a monastery. At the time of our visit, one of the museum employees was carefully dusting the statuettes on a small dressing table. "Almost every day something must be retouched or fixed. For example, all that one of my colleagues does is adjust clocks. Old clocks must constantly run, otherwise they stop forever," says our guide.

The villa takes pride in its impressive collection of artworks, and one of the most valuable pieces of furniture is the 19th-century Empire-style mahogany work table. The table was made by



The Palazzo Fidia on Via Melegari, where filmmaker Michelangelo Antonioni shot some scenes for his first feature-length movie, *Story of a Love Affair* (1950)

a legendary Florentine master whose works were famous for the special mechanism that allowed them to be folded almost completely flat. Even the accompanying chair is located on a fixed panel that allows it to slide into the rest of the construction for easy transportation. This same master also made two similar tables for Napoleon, one of which is now located in the Palazzo Pitti in France.

In one sense, the *Villa Necchi Campiglio* is like a piece of an Italy and a Milan now lost, fragments of which are increasingly difficult to find today. The interior of the villa embodies an absolute beauty and refinement of detail for which we simply do not have the time in our stressful and hurried modern lives.

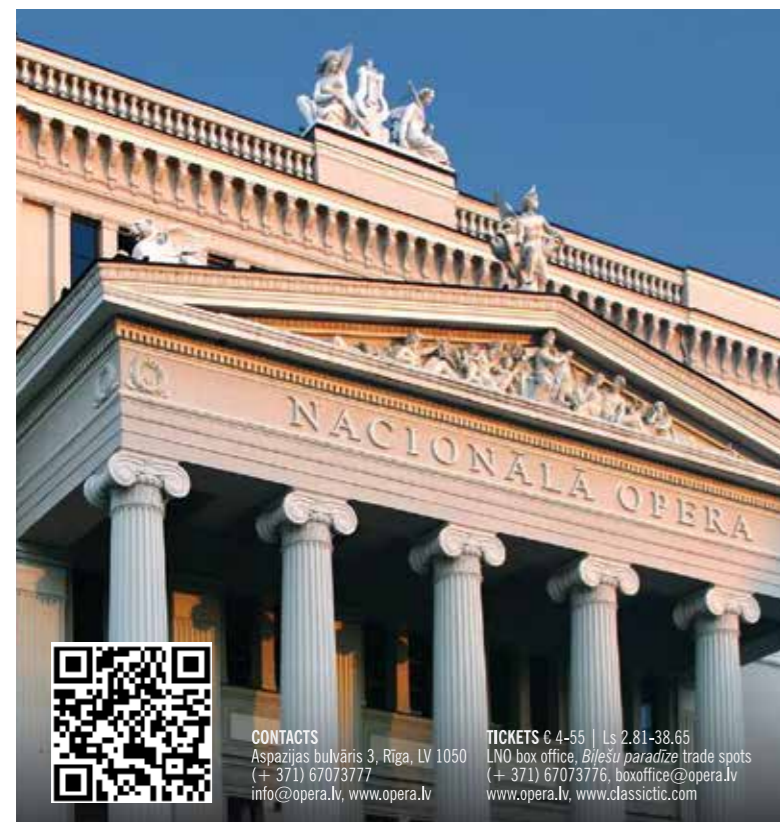
which was commissioned by the dictator's mistress and is now in the *Guggenheim Museum* in New York.

On the corner of Via Melegari and Via Serbelloni is a colourful, ornate Art Nouveau apartment building constructed in the late 1920s. Its asymmetric façade resembles a whipped cream cake with accents of colour between the red Lombardy brick, and at first glance each window and balcony looks different from the next. Despite its eclectic style, the building exudes a strange happiness, eliciting a smile from nearly all passers-by. The building is also on the must-see list for cinemaphiles, having been where Michelangelo Antonioni's first full-length film, *Story of a Love Affair* (1950), was filmed. The well known Neorealist Italian actress Lucia Bosè played the lead, which was one of her first roles.

Continuing a slightly surreal stroll through the neighbourhood, it is also worth visiting the building at Via dei Cappuccini 9, in whose courtyard, completely undisturbed by the surrounding urban environment, live not one or two, but a whole flock of pink flamingos. A few have coyly hidden their heads under their wings, while others have gracefully stepped into the pool and try to ignore the curious onlookers staring at them through the courtyard gate. This is a private building and the courtyard is not open to the public, but the owners have cleverly cut keyhole-shaped openings in the hedge so that passers-by may also take delight in the exotic birds. Actually, Milan is full of such surprises at "hidden"

An ear on a wall and pink flamingos

Right across from the *Villa Necchi Campiglio*, at Via Serbelloni 10, is a bizarre building that has become a tourist attraction thanks to its unusual ear-shaped doorbell/housephone. Here, the walls really do have ears! The "Ear of Milan" was created by Italian sculptor Adolfo Wildt (1868-1931), but has since been disconnected – too many people were activating it out of pure curiosity, making the inhabitants of the building quite weary. The ear is made of bronze and is an anatomically correct copy of the human body part. In his day, Wildt was quite well-known in local art circles as a virtuoso of marble, but today he is mostly remembered as legendary Italian painter and sculptor Lucio Fontana's teacher and the creator of a brutal bust of Mussolini,



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- 16 ballet THE NUTCRACKER
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- 20 opera CARMEN
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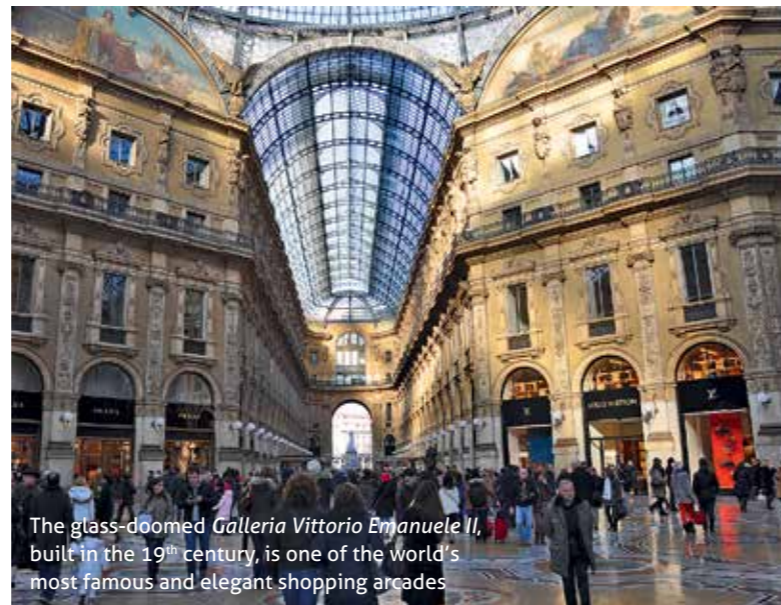
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YOUR NEXT DESTINATION



The glass-domed Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II, built in the 19th century, is one of the world's most famous and elegant shopping arcades

THE WHOLE PLACE SMELLS HEAVENLY, CREATING A DECADENTLY ROMANTIC ATMOSPHERE THAT HAS NOTHING IN COMMON WITH OUR HURRIED 21ST CENTURY

addresses that provide a needed and valuable contrast to the city's culture of consumerism.

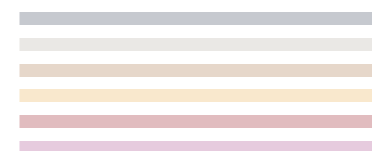
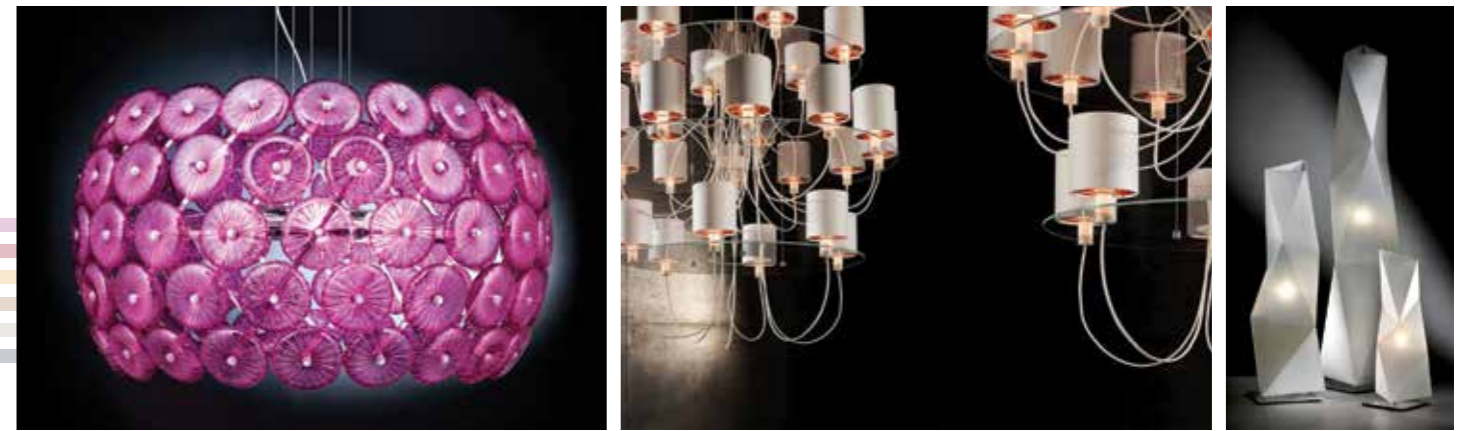
A café in a flower shop...and a restaurant in a living room

There's a flower shop in the artsy neighbourhood of Brera that is also a café. Located at Via Montebello 7, it's called the *Fioraio Bianchi Caffè* and is a favourite spot for locals to enjoy an aperitif or even dinner. The tables are set amidst the flower pots and flower arrangements, and the whole place smells heavenly, creating a decadently romantic atmosphere that has nothing in common with our hurried 21st century.

Also in the neighbourhood, near the famous Academy of Fine Arts of Brera (Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera), Lucio Fontana's alma mater, is the legendary *Cesare Crespi* (Via Brera 28/A), a shop adored by generations of artists. It's filled to the gills with paints, papers, pencils, canvases and other art supplies. The store opened in 1880 and has been run by the same family for four generations. Some of the best artists have bought supplies there, and *Cesare Crespi* stocks only the best. The owner often has a story to tell about each item, from the paints to the pencils.

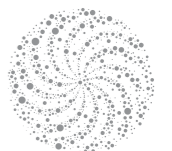
G. Lorenzi at Via Montenapoleone 9, on the other hand, has gained a reputation among distinguished gentlemen (of whom there are precious few left nowadays) as a classic; a store that sells only shaving supplies and tools for cutting, such as scissors and knives. *Lorenzi's* philosophy of keeping the old, traditional crafts and workmanship alive and bringing genuine value, instead of price, to the forefront is particularly blessed in this day and age.

And in what other European city will you find a store specialising only in uniforms? *Mercatores* (Via Turati 3) opened its doors in 1943, when the bombs of the Second World War were still exploding

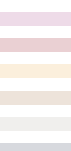


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YOUR NEXT DESTINATION

across Milan. But, as we know, life continued, and Italy's *haute bourgeoisie* could not give up its customs. *Mercatores* sold uniforms for maids, butlers, waiters and later also bartenders, doctors, nurses and even fashion house employees. In fact, actress Ingrid Bergman and singer Maria Callas dressed their staff in clothes from this shop.

What true resident of Milan does not know of *La Latteria*? The small restaurant near San Marco Square has only seven tables. Its interior design feels like residential living room kitsch, with the walls covered in photos and paintings of roses (a passion of the owner, Maria). With a characteristic string of pearls around her neck, Maria always greets guests to the restaurant herself. Her husband, Arturo Maggi, on the other hand, works in the kitchen and usually only comes out into the dining room toward the end of a meal. Their two sons, Roberto and Marco, are also always at the restaurant.

SOMETIMES THE FOOD ON YOUR PLATE MAY GENERATE AS MUCH SURPRISE AS AN ELEMENT IN THE INTERIOR DESIGN

The menu offers the best of what is currently in season and the best in home-style cooking. In addition, everything at *La Latteria* is made in silver or aluminium cookware, and most of the ingredients are grown by the family itself or by friends. Whether it's lunch or dinner time, there's almost always a line at the door, which is no surprise, because the restaurant does not take reservations. It doesn't matter whether you're just a normal person or your picture regularly shows up on the covers of glamorous magazines – everybody waits in line here. Oh yes, *La Latteria* also does not accept credit cards...and the toilet is somewhat inconveniently located in the courtyard of the neighbouring building.

Another small, charming eatery – *The Small* – has recently joined the bunch in Milan. This restaurant is like sugar syrup, albeit in the pleasing, sinful sense rather than the queasy, unhealthy meaning

of the word. Every once in a while, a person needs something sweet among all the rationality and bitterness of everyday life. In other words, a sinful little treat to forget the pains of this world! On the outside, *The Small* looks like a large apartment instead of a restaurant, and everything there has been made to make you instantly feel like a long-awaited and spoiled guest.

The interior design is pure kitsch, creating the impression that this comfortable apartment/restaurant is owned by an artist who has filled it with all of his or her eccentric sources of inspiration. All of the walls, corners and shelves are filled with a mixture of flea market finds and modern art, including a portrait of Anna Wintour with flirty, demonic horns and a plaster cast of Harry Potter's "Dobby" on the bar counter, which turns out to be one of *Warner Bros.*' seven originals. "Dobby" found its way here thanks to the restaurant owners' family tree, whose meandering branches happen to reach all the way to Hollywood's film studios.

The walls in one room of the restaurant are grey, in the next room they're bright red, and in the third room the layers of many former lives form an interesting type of patinated camouflage. Each table has a different tablecloth, there are few matching chairs, and the food is served on fine French porcelain plates as you might find in a grandmother's dowry chest.

Even though the foundation of *The Small's* cuisine is Italian, the dishes are interpreted in a truly contemporary fashion. Sometimes the food on your plate may generate as much surprise as an element in the interior design. But do not fear; everything here is simple, uncomplicated and purely positive. And, like any home living room, every evening you are bound to meet one of the owners. Most often this is Alexander Lo Piccolo, who is of Sicilian and Israeli descent. With a thick scarf draped casually around his neck, Lo Piccolo oozes hospitality from every pore. His partner, Giancarlo Petriglia, a respected Milanese jewellery and accessory designer, is responsible for the interior design at *The Small*. In short, the two men create the perfect background for an unforgettable dinner. There's even candlelight at the tables. Spend an evening at *The Small* and you will see that, despite the jagged skyscrapers in Milan's silhouette, the city has no intention of losing its soul!



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ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION MAY HAVE ADVERSE EFFECTS

Milan is a city that beckons discovery



Uberta Zambelletti

Uberta Zambelletti is a fashion designer, stylist, interior decorator and design consultant who has worked for such well-known brands as *Missoni*, *Max Mara*, *Anna Molinari*, *Etro*, *Pinko*, *Sinv* and *Gruppo Rinascente*. She opened her small and charming concept store, *Wait and See*, in 2010. Located in a former monastery in Milan's historic 5 VIE neighbourhood, it has quickly become a cult favourite among locals.

However, don't even think of looking for loud and flashy labels there, since there are already more than enough of those in Milan already. *Wait and See* features merchandise with a personality – clothing, accessories and the odd design

or lifestyle knick-knack. Basically, bohemian luxuries for both adults and children alike. Everything has a little something that makes it special, but nothing is too intense or over-the-top both in terms of style and price.

The interior of *Wait and See* is just as vibrant. Clothes and accessories are arranged on vintage furniture pieces that have been fastened to the wall and given a new lease on life, while the old monastery's original ceiling, door and shutters have been kept in place. Just as special as the detailed interior design of *Wait and See* is the urban savvy of its owner, Uberta Zambelletti. We present Zambelletti's tips on finding the soul of Milan.

What do you love most about living in Milan?

I love the fact that it's in Italy and I love its size: big enough for one to never cease exploring and discovering it, but small enough to avoid travelling long distances between one place and another. I also love the fact that it is busy and international, with plenty of novelties to explore.

Is there anything that you hate about Milan?

Its pollution.

What should one definitely do to catch the nerve of Milan in all its diversity?

Follow my list of tips!

Which is your favourite Milan neighbourhood and why?

The 5 VIE neighbourhood, Milan's oldest and culturally richest area in the historical city centre. It covers the area between the Sant'Ambrogio and Cordusio metro stops. It looks and feels like a village, yet it is very central, just five minutes away from the Duomo. I love it so much that I chose to open my store, *Wait and See*, here.



Wait and See

Which are your favourite design and architecture landmarks in Milan?

- The Duomo, or the Gothic cathedral that marks Milan's city centre.
- Piazza del Duomo.
- The Piazza Affari, a typical example of fascist architecture with Maurizio Cattelan's famous and controversial L.O.V.E. sculpture at its centre.
- The Chiesa Santa Maria delle Grazie (Via Giuseppe Antonio Sassi 3) is a magnificent

Renaissance basilica that houses Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*.

- The Torre Velasca (Piazza Velasca 9), a revolutionary example of 1950s architecture.
- The Rotonda della Besana (Via Enrico Besana 12), a 15th-century cemetery that now hosts MUBA, a museum for children.
- The Chiesa di Santa Maria presso San Satiro (Via Torino 17-19), built in the 15th century by Donato Bramante, is a real gem.
- The Colonne di san Lorenzo are the remains of a Roman bath house from the 3rd century. These are now part of a pedestrian area leading onto Corso di Porta Ticinese. Bars, restaurants and shops populate this buzzing area.
- Orto Botanico di Brera (Via Brera 28). These botanical gardens have recently been reopened to the public.

What are your five favourite restaurants/café in Milan?

- *Fioraio Bianchi* (Via Montebello 7) – exquisite, revisited Italian cuisine in a florist's shop.
- *Trattoria Milanese* (Via Santa Marta 11). The best Milanese risotto in Italy is found here in one of Milan's oldest and most traditional restaurants.
- *The Small* (Via Paganini Niccolo 3) has a beautifully charming setting and delicious, all-Italian food.
- *Cucchi Pasticceria* (Corso Genova 1), great from breakfast through happy hour.
- *La Specialità* (Via Pietro Calvi 29). Open 364 days of the year. You must try the pizza – it's the best in the world!

What are your favourite shops in Milan and why?

- Besides, obviously, my own (*Wait and See* on Via Santa Marta 14; www.waitandsee.it), I love:
- *Co Co* (Via Varese 4) for a great and eclectic selection of clothes.
 - *Madame Pauline* (Foro Buonaparte 74), for its great vintage selection.
 - *Ottica Grasso* (Via san Maurizio 14), for its sophisticated selection of eyewear.
 - *David Sorgato* (Via Sant'Orsola 13), for rare and refined antique textiles and carpets.
 - *BDDW* (Via Santa Marta 19). The best of contemporary American furniture design has just opened its European headquarters in Milan's 5 VIE district.
 - *Eral 33* (Piazza XXV Aprile) – a wonderful

selection of menswear.

- *Rossana Orlandi* (Via Matteo Bandello 14-16), Milan's famous design shop in the setting of an old textile factory.
- *Salumaio Peck* (Via Spadari 9). Open since 1886, it's the best food store for premium-quality Italian delicacies. It also has a bar and a restaurant.

What is something that you have never done in Milan, but you would love to do?

Spend a summer day at Idroscalo, Milan's man-made beach from the 1920s.

What is the most prevalent stereotype about Milan? And is it true or not?

Milan is known to be an industrial city, for that is what it became in the 19th century. However, it has its roots in the Roman Empire and was a very prominent city during the Renaissance. Later, it became Italy's capital under Napoleon. A lot of history has run through the streets of Milan, and this is not immediately apparent.

Part of Milan currently resembles a huge construction site, and soon the city will be transformed beyond recognition. There is a lot of controversy about how the Expo will change the face of the city. How will these sleek structures co-exist with what Milan has accumulated throughout its different eras, that is, its historic architecture, which includes numerous beauties and beasts? Will the Milan that we know today become lost?

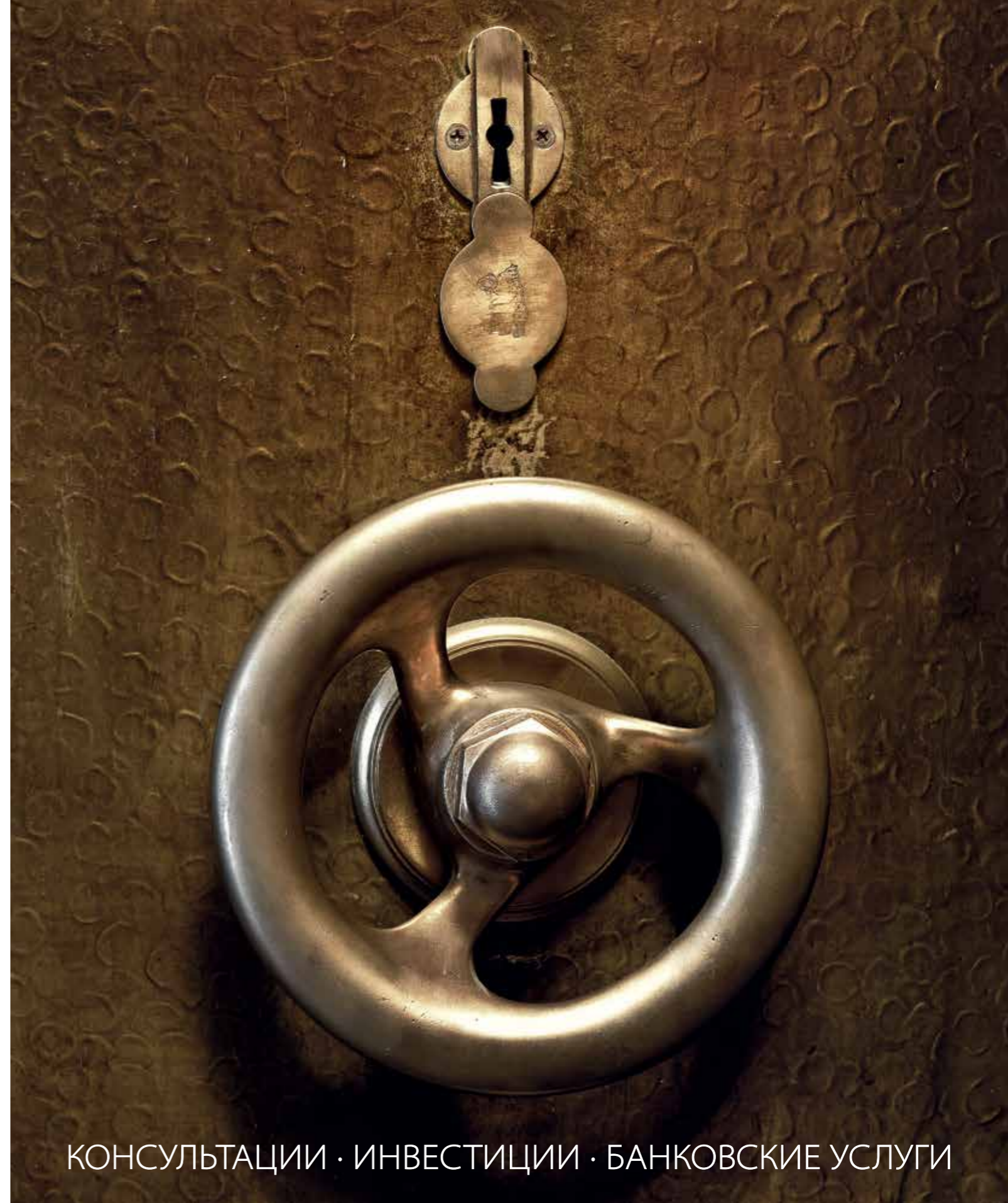
I am always very much for improvement, which inevitably comes with change and modernisation. For the *Expo*, Milan is not only changing its skyline with innovative examples of modern architecture, but it's also restoring its existing monuments. Even our long-gone river will be running like new.

How do you characterize the true Milanese people?

The Milanese are a severe, quiet and hard-working people. But that's only the visible surface. It just takes a little bit of digging to get through to their shy and loving hearts.

Can you tell us a secret about Milan?

Behind every door in the city centre is an incredibly beautiful courtyard to be found. Milan is a city that beckons discovery. **BO**



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A great bag, big heart and lofty dreams

Ernest Alexander Sabine, founder of Ernest Alexander, was named one of America's best new menswear designers by GQ magazine in 2013. Last year he also created a collection with the global fashion retailer GAP.

Alexander Sabine, who was named one of the best new menswear designers by *GQ* magazine last year, has a photograph of his grandfather's homestead in pre-war Latvia hanging on the wall of his New York apartment. Maybe it's pride. An almost intangible mixture of feelings that makes us feel he is one of us.

Ernest's family history is similar to that of tens of thousands of other Latvians who fled their country at the end of the Second World War and who wound up living in displaced persons camps in Germany for several years. Ernest's maternal grandparents eventually settled near Boston, Massachusetts, where Ernest was born and where he grew up.

"Although my father is American, my family wanted me to have a Latvian upbringing," he says. "They initially thought that Latvia would soon be free again and that they would be able to return home, but that didn't happen." Instead, émigré Latvians set up their own schools, church parishes and summer camps. While Ernest's friends played American football outside, he had to spend his Saturdays learning Latvian grammar, history and folklore.

"A Latvian atmosphere reigned in our home and I grew up with certain preconceptions about the country," he adds. "My first visit to Latvia in 2001 was a pivotal event. At last, I was in the country that I had read about so much and seen in pictures. The language, the songs, the places, the people, the cities and the street names all left a very deep impression on me. Finally, I could see, hear and feel all of this for myself."

The last time that Ernest visited Latvia was just a couple of months ago, when *Ernest Alexander* launched a new knitted men's accessory and leather goods collection together with *MAMMU*, a Latvian fashion company that employs young mothers in need. Since *Ernest Alexander* is well known for using handcrafted heritage materials and authentic finishes, this joint project has proven to be fruitful.

"We met Ernest when he was giving a speech at a TED [*Technology, Entertainment, Design*] conference in Riga last summer," says Andris Rubins, the director of *MAMMU*. "We then invited him to visit the *MAMMU* studio and told him about our socially responsible business principles. Ernest was so inspired that he agreed right away to set up a joint accessory collection, which he would design and which the young mothers in Latvia would make."

As a small nation, we have a certain weakness to feel proud when one of our own has made it big abroad. That is why we know how well our only NHL player fared during last night's hockey game; we know where our opera singers are performing and how the audiences received them. We know which of our supermodels has walked down which catwalks. We know that the real king of skeleton sledding is Martins Dukurs, and we know exactly how far ahead he is of his closest competitors. We know that Ernest



ONE OF ERNEST'S FIRST IDEAS WAS TO MAKE THE PERFECT MEN'S BAG, AS HE COULDN'T FIND ANY FOR HIMSELF

Ernest began by sending some product blueprints to Riga, which were made into product prototypes and then into a full-fledged collection of accessories. The quality of their work was so high that Ernest is seriously considering the manufacture of other products in cooperation with MAMMU. In any case, the first collection that he made together with MAMMU was a smashing success. Everything that he brought to New York sold out in a matter of days, while in Riga MAMMU also broke all of its previous sales records. GQ wrote about the collection, as did numerous bloggers.

"I was surprised at how receptive Ernest was," says Andris. "With all of the success and titles that he has obtained, he could afford to be bossy and conceited, and cooperate with only the world's leading brands. Nevertheless, he showed a great deal of enthusiasm about working together with MAMMU and even flew to Riga when we presented his new collection here."

Ernest says that he founded Ernest Alexander with the simple dream of making men's accessories in the old tradition, using the finest skills and craftsmanship. Since his Latvian grandmother

and great-grandmother were both seamstresses, he remembers his family home being filled with patterns, sewing machines and heaps of colourful thread. All of this certainly left its imprint on him.

One of Ernest's first ideas was to make the perfect men's bag, as he couldn't find any for himself. It took him almost a year to develop his first product, the Hudson Messenger. He wanted something refined enough for the office but rugged enough to stand the test of time. Clean lines, functionality and traditional materials blended with a slightly modern aesthetic.

Ernest chose to manufacture this line in America, in New York City's Garment District, to be precise. Since the early 20th century, it's been known as the main centre for fashion manufacturing and design in New York. Numerous showrooms and workshops – along with the offices of many major fashion labels, designers and suppliers – can be found there. Now the Garment District has become Ernest's neighbourhood as well. He first got to know it by knocking at every door, trying to find out who could supply him with the best leather. Literally. This was during the peak of the economic

crisis, when launching a new product line was quite... risky. However, Ernest succeeded. In this conversation, we spoke at length about the business side of his work and how to cross the line between a fashion project and a fashion business.

At last year's TED conference in Riga, you asked the members of the audience if they felt miserable in their jobs. Was the beginning of your story also connected with feelings of misery?

Yes, five years ago I felt a bit lost in my life. My career choices had been heavily dictated by what I thought was valued in society: a job at a top finance company or a lawyer's position. In America there is a strong tendency to think of success in terms of money, power or certain job roles, at least for men. I had let other people decide my career choices for me and didn't have the courage to look inside myself, to do what I really value and what I desire. I was always considering what other people would think. But you can only do that for so long before making yourself unhappy. Five years ago, while at business school, I started looking inwards. I thought about who I really was and what made me happy, especially in my working life. That was triggered by the leadership classes that I was taking, where we looked at these questions very, very hard. I started not to care about what other people thought of me. This was also when the economic crisis started, which showed quite clearly that no job is safe. I said to myself: 'This is my life! Why go on feeling miserable? Why not take a chance and start doing something that I really love?'

What were you doing at the time?

I had just spent the summer working at a management consulting company, doing Power Point presentations and making Excel spread sheets. I was also doing equity research in the stock market. I think that anybody who has some abilities and is halfway smart can do a lot of things. You analyse the stocks, do the math, look at the spread sheets... The money was pretty good, but to me this job didn't have any soul and I didn't derive much enjoyment from it. However, this situation did push me in the direction of finding my true self.

But designing is a different field altogether. Did that come naturally?

Well, yes. At the beginning no, of course, because I had no fashion designing experience. However, I had spent a few years working in the advertising business for fashion and clothing-related companies. I had a creative sense of how to market things. I also knew what things look good, and I definitely had a specific sense of style and taste, which I have further developed. But the designing part was a self-taught process from the beginning. I literally sat down with a plain piece of paper and started sketching. It was pretty terrible at first. (Laughs.) I had no idea how to do things, not only with the design sketches, but also in terms of making the product. Where do you get fabrics from? Where do you get leather and buckles? Where do you find a manufacturer? It was all completely new to me.

I had to really step outside of my normal self and push myself very hard to find out everything that I needed to know. It was extremely difficult. I used all of my contacts trying to find someone who might know somebody else who knows where to get good leather and tell me that this is the best place for obtaining lining. I made a lot of mistakes earlier on, but I've learned from them. New York City still has a decent Garment District, and I spent a lot of time going in and talking to the factory owners and suppliers. That was something completely new to me, I almost had to hypnotise myself to go out and do it. It was quite exhausting.

What kept driving you on?

I think it was my inner voice telling me to break out of the mode of my current life, to do something much more exciting and to do it for myself. 'Move on, you can do it!' It was quite scary, also financially, to take such a risk and to use my savings for materials and labour, without knowing how it would all work out. A great deal of credit goes to my wife and my family, who really supported me and lifted me up, picking me up emotionally when I thought that I should stop and go out to look for a real job. My daughter had just been born, but since my wife was working, she was able to support us. She kept saying that I should keep going at it and that I had all

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of her support, that I should maybe do it for a year and see how things work out. So I owe a lot to her and others who lifted me up when things got really down. I couldn't have done it by myself. The beginning was really hard, but things get easier once you get the first project going and start building it up as you learn and understand more.

When was the first time that you felt things are taking off and everything will be fine?

I still don't feel that. (Laughs.) I never feel comfortable. I think that if you feel comfortable, that's a bad thing. If your business is growing, you always have to be ready to work harder and harder.

But there must have been moments when you felt that you're on the right track and that people like what you do.

Yes, one of the first moments was when GQ put us on its website. To me it was a very big deal that a major men's magazine like GQ had recognised us and highlighted our products for other people to look at. This was a clear signal that trend-makers appreciate what we are doing. It was a very big moment to receive this stamp of approval.

The other big moment – and I love it – was the first time I saw somebody on the street actually carrying one of our bags. It still gives me a thrill! (Laughs.) You see a total stranger, somebody who is not your friend, and he isn't carrying your bag just because he knows you. I remember sneaking around, trying to take pictures of him on the street.

When you speak about your family, you also sometimes mention your grandfather, who apparently was a great dresser.

Yes, he was, although I never knew him. My grandfather passed away before I was born. My mother had saved a lot of his clothing. The attic of our house had a long rack with all of his suits. In the old photos that I've seen of him, he always looks his best, wearing a three-piece suit, a beautiful tie and a hat. I remember going through his clothes as a kid. The suits were probably from the 1940s and 1950s. It was very inspiring to me, a whole different time, a beautiful era when men really paid attention to how they dressed. When I started my company, my mother sent me my grandfather's old satchel bag. A lot of his stuff was still in it, including some old maps from when he arrived to the US, some pencils and rulers. I keep the bag here in the office as a little reminder.

Was Belmont Hill School also an important place for you?

Subconsciously, it influenced the way that I dress. I grew up in a nice suburban community outside of Boston. My parents wanted to make sure that my brother and I got a good education. They put all of their savings into sending us to a good private school. I went to Belmont Hill, an all boys' traditional school outside of Boston. Very American and very preppy. We had to wear a coat and a tie every day. In fact, we could get Saturday detention if we didn't have our ties done all the way up. If you've seen *Scent of a Woman*, for example, then you can imagine how it was. I took Latin for four years, marching outside in the schoolyard and reciting all of the Latin lessons dressed in a coat and tie. The point is, I learned to put myself together every day and not to look like a bum. I think this had an impact on the designs that I make and on the shapes and colours that I choose. We use traditional wools for our

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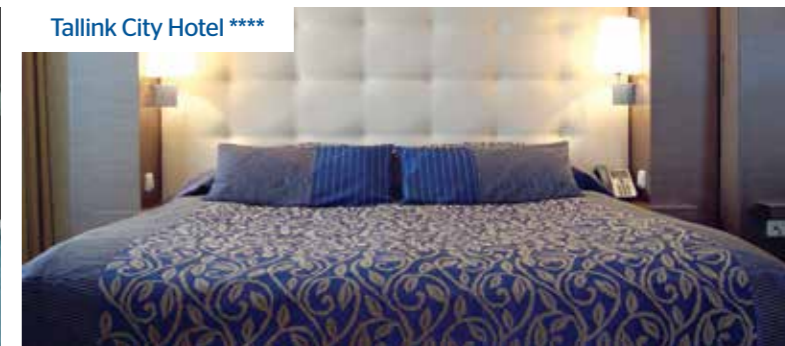
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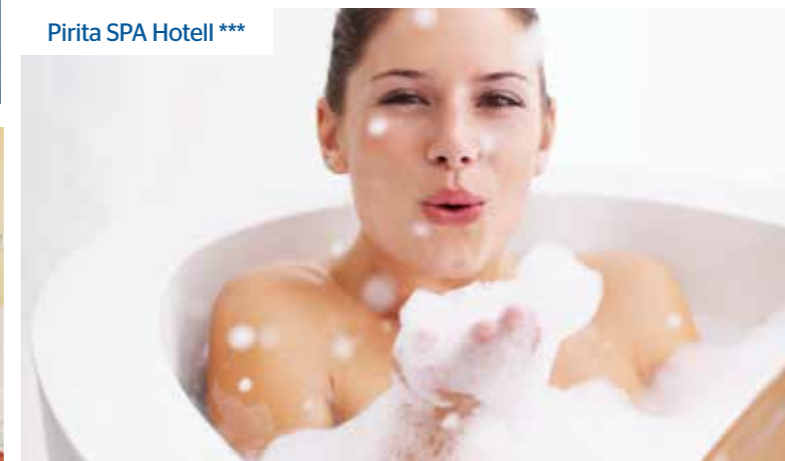
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MAMMU and Ernest Alexander collection

jackets and neckties, and a classic wax canvas material for our bags.

Why did you choose to manufacture your products in New York City's Garment District?

That was a conscious decision made already at the beginning. The economy was still going down, and in a way I felt that I could do my part to reenergise American manufacturing. My contribution would be small, but I wanted to do whatever I could to help. So, I made the decision to manufacture our products here. Part of it was also to ensure that I could keep an

eye on the production process. There definitely are other advantages. By doing things locally, you can take smaller orders, you can test ideas, you can do things faster. The downside is that it costs a lot more, as we give pretty good wages to all of our workers.

Do you know the people who make your bags?

Yes, I do. Our main factory is just a block away from our office, which is pretty incredible in New York. So I know the guys who cut the leather and who sew up the bags. I can walk in and chat with them, I can see how things are going. We can all work as a team, which wouldn't be possible in a big concern. It's pretty sweet to have this little eco system of our own here in New York.

You once said that it is no longer possible to make something and hope that everyone will see it. Yet you still have to fight hard for yourself and show what you've done. What did you do to get out there and display your accomplishments?

It's not a real business unless you can sell your products. I can speak only from my experience and from what I've done. I know that you need people to know about you. You need to get your name out there and you need customers. That's where I think a lot of people struggle. I also had to push myself to contact magazine editors and tell them about our products. At the beginning you tend to think that these people are unreachable and that there is no way to get in touch with them. But they are normal people, just like yourself. I had to step outside of my natural shyness and promote myself. I was e-mailing magazine editors and persistent about them coming to see us.

Looking back, it now sounds very basic, but it's a very important thing to do. If that doesn't come naturally, then I would suggest hiring someone who is



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IF YOU ARE TRYING TO MAKE EVERYBODY HAPPY, THEN YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE NOBODY HAPPY

good at it or asking your business partner to do it for you. But do it. Now we have a PR company pushing our story out there, telling people about us. It costs a lot of money, but that allows me to focus on the design aspect. We also got a bit lucky in the sense that men's fashion here in New York and across the world was experiencing a renaissance. That helped us in some ways.

At the end of the day, if you are serious about having a fashion business – not a fashion design project, but a

business – then you have to think about how you are going to market your products and your brand. You have to get over the fear of selling out to someone, even though you might think that your artistic work is so precious and important. Honestly, people won't give two hoots about you unless you manage to tell them your story. You need a story to tell and you can't be selling total crap.

Is your biggest challenge now the competition or something else?

Our biggest challenge is remaining different from the others and maintaining our appeal, as fashion is so subjective. It really comes down to taste. If you are trying to make everybody happy, then you're going to make nobody happy. If you are designing to please everybody, then it's just going to look confusing. How to really stand out, how to maintain people's awareness? How to get people to buy into your idea? How to increase sales without spending a lot of money on advertising? The challenge is to stay true to your philosophy, to have a clear vision and not to get distracted. For us, it's about staying true to our ideals, both in terms of design and in terms of how do we do things – manufacturing our products ethically, following the highest standards, and treating our customers in the best way possible.

There are so many good designers around, but what does one need to stand out from the others? How do you make the change from a small and unknown commodity to a big name?

There are a ton of designers here in New York who make good things, but they have problems turning their ideas into successful businesses. A big part of it is definitely the marketing that we just talked about. The product itself has to be very good, no doubt about that.



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But there is also an element of being smart about the business. It's crazy to think that once you have made a really nice product, it's going to sell itself without any financial backing. That's why you have to make serious considerations about your financing. Being under-financed will just kill everything. Somehow – whether it's through your friends or your family or your personal savings, or a bank loan or private investors – you need to raise money to make money. That is a plain fact. This might be especially hard for creative people, who usually don't like to talk about such things as money.

Understanding the market is also important. I've been very lucky to live and work in New York, where there are so many people with money, and so many people who are willing to spend some of this money on nice things. You can market your product locally, but if that's not enough, then go further and think globally. If you're looking to market a product abroad, then find out where your style would be appreciated. It doesn't matter what you are actually making. Be smart about it. Launching a brand on the Internet and online sales can bring so many possibilities in terms of global reach.

IT'S CRAZY TO THINK THAT ONCE YOU HAVE MADE A REALLY NICE PRODUCT, IT'S GOING TO SELL ITSELF WITHOUT ANY FINANCIAL BACKING

What type of customer are you looking for nowadays? And what do your customers want?

It's very confusing, actually. There are so many options available, and people are constantly bombarded by marketing messages from thousands of companies. Customers are definitely smarter now, especially because of the Internet, where they can compare different products and prices. I see a market where

people are mixing brands, and they are shopping both high and low. They might have some pieces from *H&M* and *Zara*, and they might spend a lot of money on a good pair of shoes or on a really beautiful jacket, which is more likely to be an investment. I think men especially are ready to spend more money on clothes with the view that these will last a long time, like a really great suit or a pair of shoes or a bag. The dress shirts and T-shirts that they buy might be less expensive.

We've chosen to focus more on the higher end of the market. I wouldn't call it luxury, as our products are not that expensive. It's higher end due to our emphasis on quality. Our products are very well-made and will last a long time. As a small company, we are better off doing things that way. If we had chosen to operate like *H&M* and work in the same price range, then we would just get crushed. They are so much bigger, with all of their resources and factories.

Can you name three things that every man should invest in?

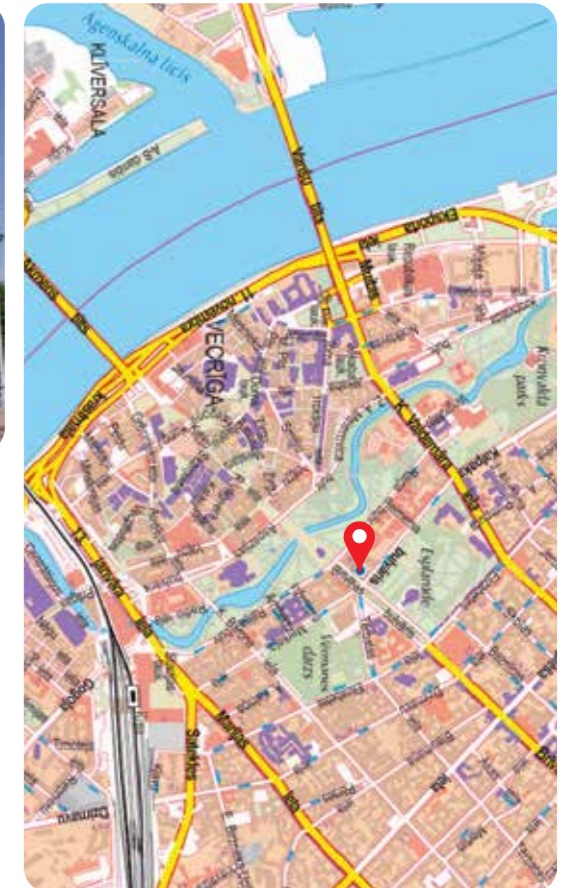
A great bag, of course! I think it's worthwhile to invest in a really good everyday briefcase or messenger bag. It's something that you carry around with you almost every day, so in a way it says something about who you are. A man who carries a great bag shows that he appreciates style.

The second thing every man should own is a very well-made suit. There is nothing worse than wearing a suit that does not fit, with collars that are too big or trousers that are too baggy. That's one of the worst looks that a man can have. Buy a good suit, even if you don't wear it every day, but only on special occasions. The third thing would be a good pair of denim jeans that don't make your butt look big and fat. They should be slim and fit through the legs and go well with your shoes. **BO**

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It's a mid-January evening and I'm in an open-air swimming pool in the centre of a park in Budapest. The daylight is fading, but the atmosphere in the water remains like at a marketplace at daybreak. Couples are lazed out over steps, older local men lean philosophically over chess boards, and groups of tourists are in their element. Steam rises into the air from the water, but it's not from the mouths of shivering swimmers. Instead, the thick mist is the result of the 77°C geothermic water that's been naturally heated deeper in the earth's crust, pumped up and then cooled by about 30 to 40 degrees. Many locations in Budapest host such natural thermal springs.

The *Széchenyi Baths*, a Neo-Baroque construction in City Park dating from 1913, is perhaps the most well-known and most public bath complex in Budapest. It survives as one of five revamped relics from the times of the Ottoman Turks (1541-1699). It's also the



largest in Europe. State-funded, the *Széchenyi Baths* draw Hungarians and foreigners alike throughout the year, although, of course, summer signifies the busiest time. The relaxed pace, decorative columns and hedonistic air all conspire to produce a scene reminiscent of the bygone era of Ottoman rule.

The building is one of Hungary's postcard images, an emblem of national pride in thermal bath culture. *Széchenyi* seems to be everyone's favourite – a place capable of straddling the line between the younger and older generations.

History in a nutshell

Hungary's naturally stable subterranean springs contrast sharply with the country's turbulent history. The ancestral Magyar tribe settled there; the Mongols, Ottomans, Nazis and Soviets later invaded, and the Danube River has swollen to flood levels on a few occasions. However, the omnipresent springs have stood the test of time, inspiring both natives and visitors alike.

Since the Romans first tapped the springs as early as the 2nd century, people in the City of Spas (so named in the 1920s in recognition of their economic potential) have been praising the virtues of its mineral-rich waters. The Turks popularised the culture in the 16th and 17th centuries, drawing on Roman traditions and building a network of ornate bathhouses about town. In the 20th century, spas were swallowed up by postwar Soviet architectural ideology, before the swinging 1960s and 1970s saw a new boom in the establishment of spa hotels and services.

Modern Hungarians, like their predecessors, have a passion for bathing that is reflected in their enjoyment of the spas and in their summer quests for coastal recreation. While thermal lakes are present elsewhere in the country, it is Budapest that has evolved into a hotbed of baths and spa treatment facilities. The city's 123 thermal springs churn out 70 million litres of water each day, at temperatures that vary from 21°C to 78°C.

Behind the postcard images

The *Danubius Health Spa Resort* (www.danubius-hotels.com) is another prominent Budapest spa. Built in 1979, the building can be found in an idyllic location on Margaret Island, a 2.5-kilometre land mass in the Danube River, and has views of both the Buda and Pest sides of the city. Named after Princess Margaret, daughter of King Bela IV, the island is now a picturesque mecca for joggers and sports aficionados, with specialised running tracks skirting swimming pools and stadiums. The *Danubius Health*

Spa Resort, linked by a heated underground passage to its sister hotel, the *Danubius Grand*, is a palatial retreat at the north end of the island. It offers the sanctity of a monastery, a panorama fit for a Hapsburg emperor surveying his realm and a cut-off slice of quiet close to the easily accessible urban hustle and bustle.

The sprawling spa complex sits on a mineral spring that surfaces at 38°C and is then siphoned off to pools of various temperatures. Along with bathing, the complex features a range of therapeutic treatments such as mud packs and lava rocks, reflexology and electrotherapy. You can also detoxify your insides at the natural water bar. Among many other mineral elements, Margaret Island's spring water is laden with dissolved sulphur, calcium and magnesium.



The *Széchenyi Baths* make up the largest thermal bath complex in Budapest

MODERN HUNGARIANS, LIKE THEIR PREDECESSORS, HAVE A PASSION FOR BATHING THAT IS REFLECTED IN THEIR ENJOYMENT OF THE SPAS

In this vein, the spas in Budapest serve not just as pools in which to be pampered, but also to provide rehabilitation for a multitude of ailments that include rheumatism, muscle tension and blood circulation problems. The *Gellért Hotel and Spa* (www.gellertbath.com) embodies this spa-as-hospital idea. Along with rooms for overnight stays, the four-star Art Nouveau construction, sitting like a Buda palace on the banks of the river, doubles up as a day hospital and dental clinic as well as a thermal bathing facility. This means that doctors can hand out prescriptions and therapists can further aid guests at the hotel.

The *Gellért's* cathedral-like arches and stained-glass dome in the entrance hall are captivating, while the main bathing hall is a paradise of warmth, relaxation

and striking symmetry, as testified to by the many film crews that have filmed here. The *Gellért* has also seen many famous people pass through its doors, including former US president Richard Nixon.

Lofty history and ornate décor notwithstanding, bathing at the *Gellért* is quite

the baths went towards maintaining a hospital in which the knights treated the sick and the poor.

Despite the popularity of spas in the country, the *Veli Bej*, like other water treatment centres, is entering a phase where it needs to appeal to the city's younger inhabitants, who are less inclined to sit in thermal water pools and soak away the



Chess players bathing in hot springs



The Gellért Baths

THE GELLÉRT HAS ALSO SEEN MANY FAMOUS PEOPLE PASS THROUGH ITS DOORS, INCLUDING FORMER US PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON

down-to-earth. The retractable roof of the main pool and outdoor terrace make this a popular summer choice for regular Budapestians. Intimate, personalised baths, jacuzzis and pampering are also available for couples.

Turkish legacy

The restored original Turkish baths truly set Budapest aside as a destination for spas, and the *Veli Bej Baths* (www.irgalmas.hu/veli-bej-furdo) – also known as the *Császár Baths* – are a prime example. Built in 1574, they were taken over by the Knights Hospitaller of the Order of Saint John (*Ordo Hospitalarius*) in 1806. The income from

day's troubles. Eszter Palotás, who worked as an architectural engineer during the *Veli Bej's* recent facelift, is keen to bridge the gap between the old and the new in terms of clientele. For one, she's actively taken over a *Facebook* page to promote the baths. Now, upon entering the *Veli Bej*, the youthful atmosphere and customers are evident. Eszter also organises lectures and concerts in the premises.

The integration of the ancient and the modern is also visible in the architecture of the *Veli Bej*. An art gallery, reception hall and café give way to crisp, clean corridors inside a glassy, modern extension that snakes around the magnificent



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OUTLOOK / TRAVEL

copper domes of the original bathhouse in the courtyard. Inside, a small central pool is dimly lit by wall lamps and tiled in splendid ceramics. Two jacuzzis simmer away in the corners.

According to Eszter, spa culture has moved away from the segregated male and female bathing of the past to a more mixed approach. Several places used to offer special nude days or sessions in which people could bathe in a special apron, but those days are now gone. A fair percentage of visitors to Budapest's spas arrive from abroad, flocking to baths like Széchenyi during the summer months, which are rich with festivals.

Cinetrip (www.spartybooking.com) is well-positioned to know about Budapest's spa culture. Established in 1998, the company organises and runs many of the city's increasingly-famous 'spa parties', or *sparties*: after-dark aquatic fiestas that feature spectacular entertainment such as DJs, fire jugglers, air acrobats, water ballet artists and traditional belly dancers. The events started out in 1998 to provide soundtracks to silent movies at the Turkish baths of Rudas before making the switch to Lukács (winter) and Széchenyi (June-September). Now, weekly Saturday *sparties* promise a dreamscape with cutting-edge DJs, futuristic lasers and lights in ancient surroundings.

That's not to say that these special parties are out of control. The turnaround between a *sparty*, which usually ends at 3 AM, and the morning spa opening at 6 AM has to be efficient, which means that the *sparties'* events are well-managed and supervised.

Luxury beauty

In addition to feeding thermal oases and ceramic steam rooms, Hungary's geothermic springs and lakes also yield minerals that are used in the making of luxury beauty and skincare products. While most public baths offer some kind of treatment along these lines, it's more of a sideshow. However, private clinics such as the more upmarket *Omorovicza Spa* (www.omorovicza.eu) make such luxury and quality their star attraction. The self-titled line of products used at the *Omorovicza* can be bought for facials and massages. Here, natural Hungarian

minerals are combined with the luxurious likes of almond oil, beeswax and gold. You can get the rubs, essential oils and sprays soothingly explained to you during an hour-long facial. People travel from far and wide for this well-established brand.

Of the many spas in Budapest, the *Magnolia Day Spa* (www.magnoliadayspa.hu) is surely one of the most luxurious and lavish of its kind.



WEEKLY SATURDAY SPARTIES PROMISE A DREAMSCAPE WITH CUTTING-EDGE DJs AND FUTURISTIC LASERS IN ANCIENT SURROUNDINGS

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Budapest's thermal spas are as diverse in their character, appearance and services as Hungary's capital city is in its makeup and history. While the Romans and particularly the Ottomans helped to cement the baths in the hearts and minds of the populace, it is the constant flow of Budapestians to the baths for socialising and for discussing the ideas of the day that has been the culture's lifeblood. Without a doubt, the springs have irreversibly affected anyone who's come into contact with them. Once you've dipped even a toe into Hungary's hot, re-energising mineral waters, you won't imagine life being any other way.

ЭКСКЛЮЗИВНОЕ И ДОСТУПНОЕ ЖИЛЬЕ В Юрмале и Риге



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OUTLOOK / TRAVEL

Make it happen *Five places for your Budapest spa experience*



Gellért Hotel

Grandiose Art Nouveau architecture greets you in the huge main hall and continues into the main thermal bath, with the ornate tiling and overhanging plants combining to give a subtropical feel. During the warmer months, the roof is drawn back and the doors to a summer terrace are flung open.
Adults: EUR 15-18;
children: EUR 10-11. Open daily from 6:00-20:00 (www.gellertbath.com)

Veli Bej

Further north on the Buda side of the river is the most talked-about Turkish bathhouse in town. An Ottoman relic, the *Veli Bej* offers the best of both worlds: ancient charm coupled with progressive architecture, design and treatment.
Entrance: EUR 6.50 for adults and children over 14. Younger children not admitted. Open daily from 6:00-12:00 / 15:00-21:00 (www.irgalmas.hu/veli-bej-furdo)

Magnolia

The ultimate in self-indulgence, and you won't have to lift a finger. *Magnolia's* expertly designed private underground spa will make you feel like you've been invited into a sultan's boudoir. It's meditative and disarming, and that's before you've even looked at the treatment menu.
Prices vary according to service. Open daily from 9:00-21:00 (www.magnoliadayspa.hu)



Széchenyi

No doubt the centrepiece of Budapest's bath network, *Széchenyi's* position in Pest's City Park, plentiful open-air thermal pools and spacious premises make it a top draw for visitors over the summer months. You'll find men and women, young and old, Hungarian and foreign in a real hustle and bustle spa scene.
Day ticket: EUR 15-16. Open daily from 6:00-22:00 (www.szecenyibath.hu)

Aquaworld

Situated a little out of central Budapest, *Aquaworld* is one of Europe's largest indoor water theme parks and consists of 17 thermally heated pools (including swimming pools, a wave pool and a surf pool), 11 waterslides ranging from tame to daredevil and a "kids' world" section. Take sauna sessions, spread out in a hammam or simply kick back and relax. The *Ramada Hotel* is next door.
Adults (basic day ticket): EUR 16-18; children: EUR 8-9. Open daily from 6:00-21:30 (www.aqua-world.hu)

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Speed and glitz

TEXT BY NORMUNDS AVOTINS
PHOTOS BY ALAMY

When you think of Formula 1 racing, you think of posh venues, fast cars and beautiful women, so why not make a weekend of the world's greatest motor race? Here are some examples of what Europe is bringing to the table this year.



Lotus driver Mario Andretti celebrates his victory in a Lotus-Cosworth at the Dutch Grand Prix in 1978

Spanish Grand Prix

Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya
Barcelona, Spain
May 9-11

Circuit length: 4.655 km
Number of turns: 16
Number of laps: 66
Race distance: 307.024 km
Spectator capacity: 140,700
Established: 1991
Most victories: Michael Schumacher (GER) - 6
Ticket prices: Starting from EUR 117* in the general admittance area; starting from EUR 171 in the grandstand (Sunday).

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This circuit is a favourite for out-of-season Formula 1 (F1) tests, mainly because the mild climate permits its use practically all year long. Speeds on the long and wide turns can even be taken at about 240 km/h, providing good opportunities for tyre and aerodynamic testing.

However, because so much testing is done at this circuit, Formula 1 drivers and mechanics are intimately familiar with it. This has led to criticism that the track has lacked dramatic race action over the years. Nevertheless, unstable wind and temperature conditions arising from the proximity of the sea present extra challenges to F1 aerodynamics specialists and make the course unpredictable.

As a result of changes to

F1 technical specifications, overtaking manoeuvres on the Catalonian racetrack became more difficult in the 2000s, making the course less exciting to watch for viewers. Thus, in 2007 slight modifications were made to the track, but so far without any notable results. The course is known for high driving speeds that have reached 305 km/h, with close to 60% of the race driven at full throttle. Maximum speed is reached on the front straight, which has seen some dramatic moments over the years. At the inaugural F1 race in 1991, Ayrton Senna (BRA) and Nigel Mansell (GBR) fought tooth and nail for second place, racing side by side. Mansell eventually won the race, while Senna finished fifth.

Monaco Grand Prix

Circuit de Monaco
Monte Carlo, Monaco
May 22-25

Circuit length: 3.34 km
Number of turns: 19
Number of laps: 78
Race distance: 260.52 km
Spectator capacity: 120,000
Established: 1929; first F1 race: 1950
Most victories: Ayrton Senna (BRA) - 6
Ticket prices: Starting from 75 EUR, grandstand starting from EUR 159, VIP terraces starting from EUR 1600

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been held there. Being the only street circuit in the Formula 1 series, it is also the slowest and most demanding, as well as the only Grand Prix race to cover less than the minimum distance of 305 km required by FIA regulations. It takes six weeks to build the circuit and three weeks to dismantle it.

If not for the Monaco circuit's illustrious history and magical ability to make spectators spend fantastic

barriers that line the track are just a few centimetres away from the cars. Three-time F1 world champion Nelson Piquet (BRA) described racing through Monte Carlo as similar to "trying to cycle round your living room", adding that for this reason, a victory in Monaco is worth two victories elsewhere.

One of the most difficult and fastest parts of the course is the famous



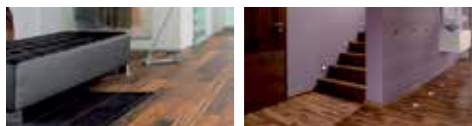
The Monaco Grand Prix is possibly the most famous circuit on the F1 calendar, with the country's first GP car race taking place back in 1929. Monaco was included in the first Formula 1 world championship season in 1950 and has been an ever-present feature on the calendar since 1955. To date, 60 F1 races have

sums of money for tickets and expensive hotel rooms, it would never have made it onto the Formula 1 calendar for safety reasons. Driving on the difficult and dangerous course requires great skill and a cool head, as in some places the

tunnel section, involving a quick switch from daylight to darkness, then back to daylight again, demanding maximum concentration and skill from the drivers as they continue racing along the seaside promenade.

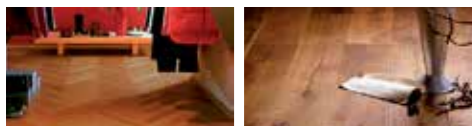


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OUTLOOK / SPECIAL

Austrian Grand Prix

**Red Bull Ring
Spielberg, Austria
June 20-22**

Circuit length: 4.326 km
Number of turns: 7
Number of laps: 71
Race distance: 307.146 km
Spectator capacity: 225,000
Established: 1969
Most victories: Alain Prost (FRA) – 3
Ticket prices: Starting from EUR 349 in the grandstand (general admission and most other tickets already sold out)

Set into an Austrian hillside and formerly known as the Österreichring, this track has gone down in F1 folklore as one of the sport's most exciting circuits. Dramatic elevation changes, fast sweeping curves and small runoff areas made it a real drivers' circuit, not to mention exceptionally dangerous. Thus, for safety reasons, Formula 1 racing was discontinued on the course from 1988-1996. In 1997, the Grand Prix returned to a rebuilt track designed by Hermann Tilke and was renamed the A1 Ring. However, by 2003, changing F1 standards had again rendered the Austrian

course obsolete. When its grandstand and pit buildings were demolished in 2004, the circuit's future looked bleaker than ever. However, Red Bull owner Dietrich Mateschitz stepped in to buy the facility, and following an investment of approximately 85 million euros, the course is once again ready to host Formula 1 races.

Renamed the Red Bull Ring, the new circuit now has only seven turns and promises to be as fast as ever. On June 22, it will host the first Austrian Grand Prix since 2003. Small wonder that most of the tickets to this event have already been sold out.

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British Grand Prix

**Silverstone Circuit
Silverstone, Great Britain
July 4-6**

Circuit length: 5.141 km
Number of turns: 17
Number of laps: 51
Race distance: 306.332 km
Spectator capacity: 150,000
Established: 1947; first F1 race: 1950
Most victories: Alain Prost (FRA) – 5
Ticket prices: Sunday general admission GBP 150, grandstand starting from GBP 190

the first Grand Prix race was held there in the presence of King George VI.

Silverstone's layout remained largely unchanged for the following 35 years. To deal with the rising speeds of the race cars, some minor

lap and who finished fourth) a lift back to the pits on the side pod of his car, a now iconic F1 image.

Silverstone has been the site of various record-making events. When Alain Prost (FRA) garnered his fifth British



safety modifications were made in the 1980s. After the 1990 Grand Prix, Silverstone underwent a major redesign in time for the 1991 race, which proved popular with fans, in part because local hero Nigel Mansell triumphed at the event. At the end of the race, Mansell stopped to give stranded Ayrton Senna (whose car had run out of fuel during the final

Grand Prix victory 1993, he became the first F1 driver to experience such a large number of wins on one and the same circuit. Regarding team victories at Silverstone, Ferrari holds the record at 11. The British Williams team, for its part, celebrated its first win at Silverstone in 1979 and its 100th victory on the same track in 1997.



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German Grand Prix

Hockenheimring
Hockenheim, Baden-Württemberg, Germany
July 18-20

Circuit length: 4.574 km
Number of turns: 13
Number of laps: 67
Race distance: 306.458 km
Spectator capacity: 130,000
Established: 1932; first F1 race: 1970
Most victories: Michael Schumacher - 4
Ticket prices: Starting from EUR 191.40 (general admission)*

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Built in the 1930s, this circuit was initially used for motorcycle races. However, in 1936, Mercedes-Benz and Auto Union began using it as a test track for their race cars. Hockenheim hosted its first F1 race in 1970, when drivers threatened to boycott the German Grand Prix at the rival Nürburgring course on safety grounds. The Hockenheimring was considered to be safer, as it had already introduced measures to lower speeds following the death of Formula 2 driver Jim Clark in 1968.

Nevertheless, the Grand Prix returned to the better-known Nürburgring from 1971-1976. Hockenheim then resumed hosting the German Grand Prix almost every year thereafter, from 1977 to 2006. However, since 2007, the Hockenheim and Nürburgring circuits have been co-hosting the German Formula 1 race on alternate years. This is an even-numbered year, which means that this season's event will take place at the Hockenheimring, which is considered to be the safest course in Europe, but a very exciting one just the same.

Hungarian Grand Prix

Hungaroring
Mogyoród, Hungary
July 25-27

Circuit length: 4.381 km
Number of turns: 14
Number of laps: 70
Race distance: 306.63 km
Spectator capacity: 120,000
Established: 1986
Most victories: Michael Schumacher / Lewis Hamilton - 5
Ticket prices: Starting from EUR 76 (general admission)

Although the first Grand Prix car race took place in Hungary during the 1930s, the Iron Curtain shut off Central and Eastern Europe from Formula 1 racing for four decades. During the 1980s, "F1 Supremo" Bernie Ecclestone tried to break through the curtain and organise an F1 race in the Soviet Union, preferably in Moscow. However, a friend recommended that he try out Budapest instead, which he did. Within the space of eight months, a completely new race track was built approximately 20 km from the city centre. To the benefit of spectators, around 80% of the circuit is visible from any vantage point. A little-known fact is that Ecclestone had initially considered running the race along the streets in Budapest's city centre, as is the case with the Monaco Grand

Prix in Monte Carlo.

The first Hungarian Formula 1 race was held in 1986 and drew nearly 200,000 spectators. The course is tight and twisty, making overtaking manoeuvres risky and difficult to undertake. In that sense, the Hungaroring is in keeping with the initial idea of a circuit in the city proper. Despite being physically demanding on the drivers, the course is a favourite among some champions.

"I won my first Formula One race at this circuit with a Renault in 2003 and it's a place where I have always done well. There are lots of spectators, the people are very kind, and we always receive a warm welcome. That is why I enjoy coming back to Budapest each year," two-time world champion Fernando Alonso (SPA) has said of the Hungaroring.

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Saturday, April 12 19:00 Great Guild Concert Hall

Bach and Spanish Music

Ricardo Gallen (guitar, Spain), RIGA Professional Symphonic Band, conductor Kaspars Adamsons
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Windstream



International Composers' Competition WINDSTREAM 2014

Thursday, April 17 19:00 Great Guild Concert Hall

Jury Concert

RIGA Professional Symphonic Band, conductors Jan Van der Roost (Belgium), Franco Cesarini (Switzerland), Mārtiņš Ozoliņš (Latvia), soloist Oskars Petrauskis (alto saxophone)
Programme: T. Mashima, F. Cesarini, J. Van der Roost, A. Dzenitis
Tickets: www.bilesuparadize.lv

Saturday, April 19 19:00 Great Guild Concert Hall

Final Round

RIGA Professional Symphonic Band, conductor Mārtiņš Ozoliņš

Sunday, April 20 19:00 Great Guild Concert Hall

Awards Ceremony and Laureate Concert

Information:
www.music.lv/riga



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Belgian Grand Prix

Spa-Francorchamps
Francorchamps, Spa, Belgium
August 22-24

Circuit length: 7.004 km
Number of turns: 19
Number of laps: 44
Race distance: 308.052 km
Spectator capacity: 90,000
Established: 1920; first F1 race: 1950
Most victories: Michael Schumacher – 6
Ticket prices: Starting from EUR 150 (general admission)*

Belgium's Spa circuit is one of the oldest on the F1 calendar as well as the longest. Spanning 14.9 km, it was initially more than two times longer than it is today (at 7 km), incorporating narrow public roads. The course was fast, but the constricted space for driving meant that it had a poor safety record. In 1960, Cooper team driver Chris Bristow (GBR) lost control of his vehicle at the Burnenville corner, crashed into an embankment and was hurled into a barbed wire fence that decapitated him. Minutes later, fellow British driver Alan Stacey was killed in close proximity to Bristow after apparently being hit in the face by a flying bird.

In 1970, the old Spa track hosted its final F1 race, a year after drivers boycotted it. A new and shortened version returned to the racing calendar only in 1983. Its mix of long straights and fast corners, combined with a picturesque setting and notoriously changeable weather means that the new track has managed to retain some of its old magic and remain a favourite of both drivers and spectators.

The circuit's fast nature is attested to by the fact that nearly three quarters of it (72%) is driven at full throttle, second only to the F1 track at Monza, where racers cover 76% of the course distance with the pedal to the metal.

Italian Grand Prix

Autodromo Nazionale Monza
Monza, Italy
September 5-7

Circuit length: 5.793 km
Number of turns: 11
Number of laps: 53
Race distance: 306.72 km
Spectator capacity: 115,000
Established: 1922; first F1 race: 1950
Most victories: Michael Schumacher – 5
Ticket prices: Starting from EUR 105 (general admission presale)*

Located not far from Milan, Monza is the fastest and most dangerous circuit on the F1 calendar, with a past history of terrible accidents that have cost dozens of lives. Monza was the first purpose-built venue to stage a Grand Prix-style race and the first to charge for entry. It quickly became very popular but was an extremely treacherous race course. In 1928, a driver and 27 spectators were killed, and the casualty rate continued to rise even after safety modifications were made.

Although safety for both drivers and spectators has definitely improved, the circuit still faces criticism for its excessive speeds and lack of runoff lanes, especially at the Variante della Roggia corner. The top Formula 1 speed record of



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372.6 km/h and a maximum g-force of 3.8 have both been registered at Monza. However, despite the ongoing safety debate, the circuit remains a firm favourite with fans, who can always expect an action-packed high-speed race. The Italians often refer to Monza as "La Pista

Magica" or the magic track, and Ferrari fans, known as Tifosi, turn the stands into a sea of red on race day as they cheer on their team at their local circuit. If you want to experience a genuine Grand Prix atmosphere with maximum car speeds, then Monza is a must-see.

*Three-day entry ticket for the entire weekend.

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Brandstock shops where different operators offer past-season items and collections from famous-maker brands and labels, for very attractive prices indeed.

Origo Summer Stage

Origo Summer Stage is a cultural spot situated in the centre of Riga, and reflects all of the cultural events and festivals taking place in Latvia. It grants a unique opportunity to observe Latvian music festivals like Rigas Ritmi, Saulkrasti Jazz and New Wave. It also gives an opportunity to see high-class musicians and their performances for free.

Open-air terraces

Visitors are welcome to chill-out and enjoy summer evenings by tasting the delicious cuisine of open-air restaurants with their comfortable and vast terraces, or by just having some drinks while listening to various jazz, blues and rock'n'roll performances.

Large-scale gallery

Origo has also provided for your enjoyment a 450 square-metre open-air photo gallery, filled



with large-scale photos of Latvian events and everyday life that are sure to delight everyone.

Design object Sundial – Origo Universi

A new feature is the meeting place called The Sundial -- Origo Universi, which lies in front of the Origo shopping centre. It is a 9 metre-large interactive and educational design object that invites one to determine what time it is, as well as encourages exploration of Latvia's medieval castles and major sights found in other European cities.





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Driven: the Jeep Grand Cherokee

The Jeep Grand Cherokee has always lagged behind such rivals as the BMW X5 and Volkswagen Touareg for on-road finesse, but this updated car could change that.

The biggest news is the arrival of a new eight-speed automatic gearbox for both the 190 HP diesel (available exclusively in the entry-level Laredo trim), and the more popular 243 HP version. A V8 petrol SRT8 model is also available, although this will appeal only to the very extravagant.

The revised *Grand Cherokee* gets sharper exterior styling, including LED running lights, while the interior has been freshened up with digital driver readouts and an 8.7-inch touch-screen.

There are four trims: Laredo, Limited, Overland and Summit. Depending on the trim level, you can obtain steel springs and a four-wheel-drive system, which can send up to 100% of the engine's torque to either the front or the rear wheels. Pricier versions get air suspension and a more sophisticated four-wheel-drive setup that uses torque vectoring to shuffle power between individual wheels as needed.

All diesel *Grand Cherokee* models come with a low-ratio gearbox and a Selec-Terrain system that allows you to optimise the car's electronics for different types of terrain.

What's it like to drive?

The new eight-speed automatic gearbox is much better than the five-speed box it replaces. The closer ratios and silky changes allow you to make smoother progress, and kickdown is also sharper when you ask for a sudden surge of acceleration. There is a Sport mode, but this is barely worth using. It makes the gearbox hold on to ratios for longer and



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CARS



only serves to highlight how clattery the diesel engine can become at high revs.

In fact, even with the gearbox in its standard setting, the *Grand Cherokee* is not the quietest big SUV. Some engine noise enters the cabin at motorway speeds, although neither wind nor tyre noise are too much of a problem.

Our test drive was restricted to air-sprung Overland and Summit models, and these do a better job of controlling the car's considerable weight. That said, the *Grand Cherokee* still isn't as sharp to drive as a *BMW X5*, and the damping isn't effective enough to make the ride truly comfortable. There's some body float on undulating roads as well, and the steering is a bit slow. All of this doesn't mean that the *Grand Cherokee* is unpleasant to drive; for unhurried cruising it's relaxing enough. However, on any remotely taxing road, it feels decidedly cumbersome.

What's it like inside?

The spacious interior has been thoroughly modernised. The big new touch-screen is simple to use and brightens up the whole dash, while a colourful, crisp readout now displays a digital speedometer and rev-counter, along with a mind-boggling array of extra info, from weather conditions to fuel economy.

However, there are still some cheap-feeling materials in the cabin, so the *Grand Cherokee* lacks the sense of exacting quality that most people buying in this class will expect.

Rear space remains unchanged, which means there's plenty of leg- and headroom. The boot is big, too, at 782 litres, although it's a shame that the load floor is so high and that there's no option for a third row of seats.

Even the Limited trim option has plenty of equipment, while the Overland and Summit take you to an even higher level, adding extra safety features, including a blind-spot monitor and adaptive cruise control with forward collision detection as well as a better audio system. In fact, Summit has all the extras one could imagine.

Should I buy one?

The *Grand Cherokee* has a certain charm, and the new automatic gearbox has made *Jeep's* butch-looking SUV more pleasant to drive and more fuel-efficient than ever before. Perhaps for the first time, and certainly since the very first *Grand Cherokee* was introduced in 1993, *Jeep* has a fully competitive and credible full-sized, all-purpose SUV.

It's a formidable off-roader, too, and is undoubtedly cheaper spec-for-spec than almost all of its rivals. Prices start at EUR 42,900 for the base Laredo trim.

Yet, for all this, the *Grand Cherokee* feels too far off the pace when it comes to on-road composure and interior quality, while many of its rivals offer extra seating capacity. With an entry-level TDV6 version of the impressive *Range Rover Sport* and a new *BMW X5*, things are only set to get tougher for the big *Jeep*. **BO**

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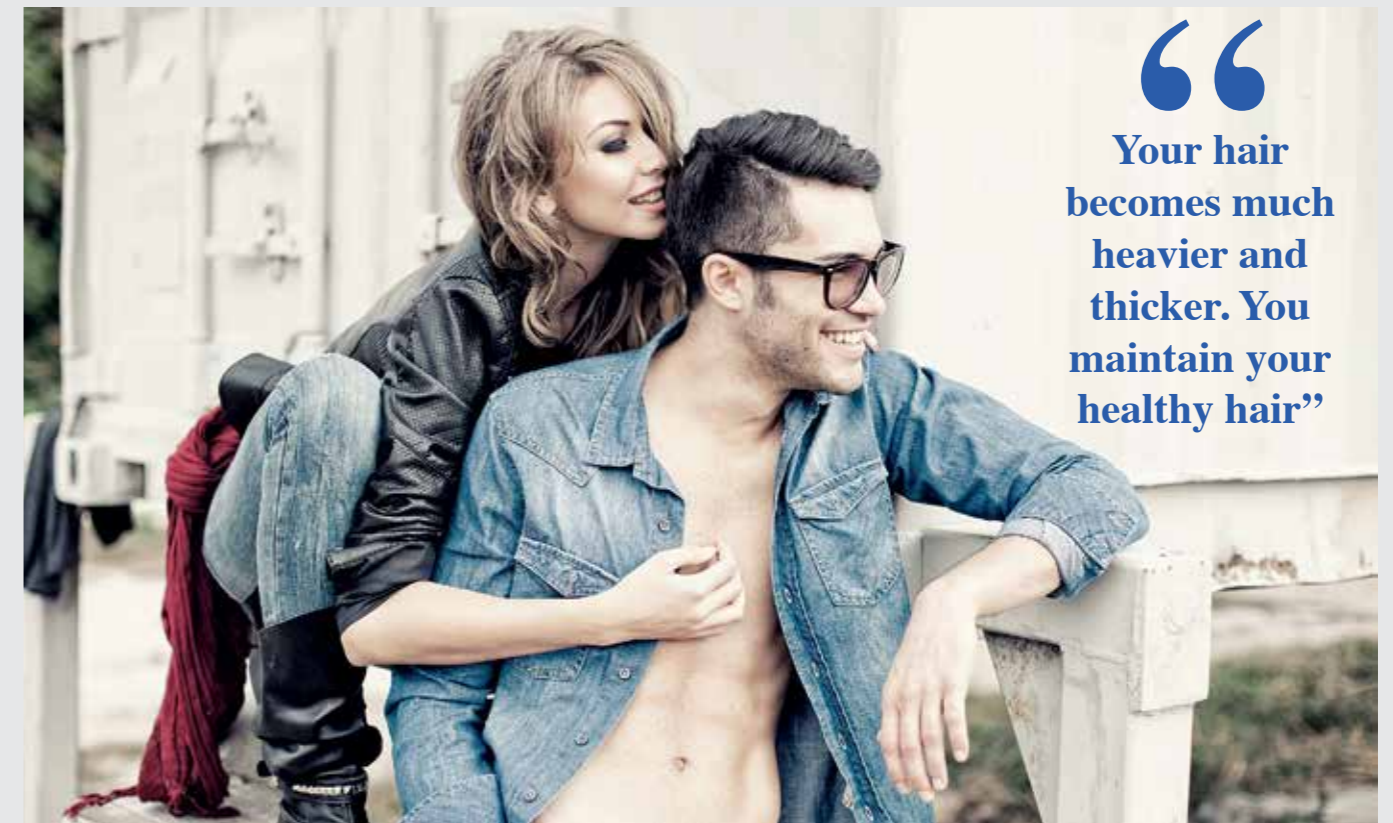
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Blaumaņa iela 10 (between Brīvības
bulvāris and Tērbatas iela)
Information centre
Tel. (+371) 67307000
info@galleriariga.lv
www.galleriariga.lv/en

The Galleria Riga is located in a thriving business area – the Tērbatas Street quarter – in the centre of the Latvian capital. A wide variety of shops line the seven storeys of the building, providing visitors with a broad selection of items. Here you'll find necessities for both daily life and celebrations.

At the Galleria Riga you can purchase items by such famous brands as Mango, Tommy Hilfiger, Guess, MAX&Co, Diesel, Stefanel, women'secret, Marella and many more. In addition, a number of talented Latvian designers are also making their mark on the fashion scene. Thanks to their refined sense of style, good taste, lively imagination and high-quality craftsmanship, they have gained international recognition in a short period of time. The latest collections of clothing and accessories by some of Latvia's best designers are available at 8 rooms, OT Ogres Trikotāža and other shops at the Galleria Riga.

To better serve its customers, the shopping centre has a built-in parking garage (free parking for two hours on Sundays) and special stands for bicycles. Guests have use of free Wi-Fi and can take full advantage of Global Blue tax-free benefits. If you are into a healthy lifestyle, then a yoga session with an English-speaking instructor at the Urban Yoga studio might be just the right way to end the shopping day.

Other useful services at the Galleria Riga include umbrella rental for up to seven days, free stylist's services, a post office, dry-cleaning, currency exchange and beauty salons. A favourite spot for guests to stop for a moment's rest is the centre's fountain, which offers a great view of the building's elegant architecture. **BO**



SUIT supply

Men's fashion

The European brand Suitsupply has created an entirely new market in men's fashion that sets it apart from other boutique retailers. Its use of only the finest Italian fabrics, combined with European styling and unbeatable in-store service – all within an attainable price bracket – represents a revolutionary approach to menswear and leaves retailers asking: "How do they do that?" Small wonder that customers keep coming back for more.

In a time where off-the-rack suits have invaded men's closets the world over, Suitsupply is introducing a better option: real suits for real men that really fit. No attention to detail is ever spared, and tailoring is done on-site while you wait, ensuring that no one leaves with anything less than a perfect fit. Suitsupply was founded by Fokke de Jong in 2000, and in 14 years it has grown to over 45 stores in Europe, Asia, and the United States. Suitsupply Riga, Galleria Riga, 2nd floor, Dzirnavu iela 67

Coat OASIS EUR 103

Dress STEFANEL EUR 191

Earrings PARFOIS EUR 6.90

Shoes ECCO EUR 119.99

Shirt MANGO EUR 40

Sweater KAREN MILLEN EUR 108

Trousers MAX&CO EUR 165

Dress MAX&CO EUR 169

Coat MAX&CO EUR 339

Bracelet PARFOIS EUR 12.08

MAX&CO, 3rd floor

Shoes CORTEFIEL EUR 99.95

Necklace MANGO EUR 12.99

BeCarousell dress 8 ROOMS EUR 640

Leather jacket DENIM DREAM EUR 91.06

Top MANGANO EUR 129

Belt BLUES EUR 79

Clutch MOHITO EUR 29.99

Top MANGANO EUR 129

Bracelet MANGO EUR 12.99

Ankle boots DANIJA EUR 21.99

Dress IVO NIKKOLO EUR 119

FREDERIQUE CONSTANT watch LAIKS DE LUXE EUR 970

Eyeglasses PARFOIS EUR 17.06

Necklace OASIS EUR 34

Clutch MOHITO EUR 29.99

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E

Premium Medical clinic

Personalised medicine and genetic testing – your safest bet



**PREMIUM MEDICAL
KLĪNIKA**

Duntes iela 11, 6th floor
Rīga, Latvia
Tel.: (+371) 66011160
E-mail: info@premiummedical.lv
www.premiummedical.lv

Premium Medical is a state-of-the-art ambulatory healthcare clinic with a skilled team of competent medical professionals. It specialises in personalised medicine, offering a holistic approach that is tailored to each individual patient – both for those who need medical assistance in the case of illness or for those seeking a comprehensive health check-up. Founded in 2008, the clinic serves both children and adults and has gained a solid reputation among locals and visitors alike.

This year, the clinic obtained a new and valuable addition to its already wide range of health check-ups and other medical services. The novelty is an extended genetic test designed to detect the client's risk of suffering from cardiovascular disease. Named *CardioRISQ*, the test is one of the latest measures to be made available in preventive medicine. The *Premium Medical* clinic is offering these genetic tests in collaboration with *DiaGenomi Ltd*, a company that specialises in pathology-supported genetic tests.

It is well known that the prevention of a potentially fatal condition is the least invasive and most health-conscious approach for maintaining one's sense of well-being. Cardiovascular disorders are the most common cause of death in many countries and are accountable for

approximately 30% of fatalities worldwide every year. Hence, those who have had a cardiovascular disease-related death in their family would be well advised to take all the necessary steps to protect themselves.



Aija Šnikvalde

At the *Premium Medical* clinic, highly experienced geneticists conduct personalised testing for cardiovascular diseases and physicians provide each client with a prevention action plan. During the first meeting with a doctor – along with an extended medical interview and physical tests – a blood sample for biochemical analysis and a sample of saliva for molecular testing are collected. The *CardioRISQ* test

is linked with conclusions drawn from an evaluation of the patient's medical factors (blood pressure, cholesterol level, medical history, etc.) and lifestyle (eating habits, recreation, smoking, etc.).

Poor lifestyle choices and harmful habits are to blame for the fact that the average age of those who contract a cardiovascular disease is surprisingly low. Luckily, nearly 80% of potential heart attacks and strokes can be prevented. Since cardiovascular afflictions are caused by both genetic and environmental factors, it is crucial to evaluate the impact of genetics in each situation so as to implement the best preventive practices. The doctor analysing the test results at the *Premium Medical* clinic will offer concrete and easily comprehensible suggestions to ensure that each client can implement a personalised prevention action plan.

"The test results and the consultation will ensure that the client's risks for contracting a cardiovascular disease are substantially reduced – provided, of course, that he or she follows the doctor's recommendations. In this regard, there is a clear link between genetics, lifestyle and preventive action, and *Premium Medical* will make this link easily understandable to each client," says doctor Aija Šnikvalde. **BO**



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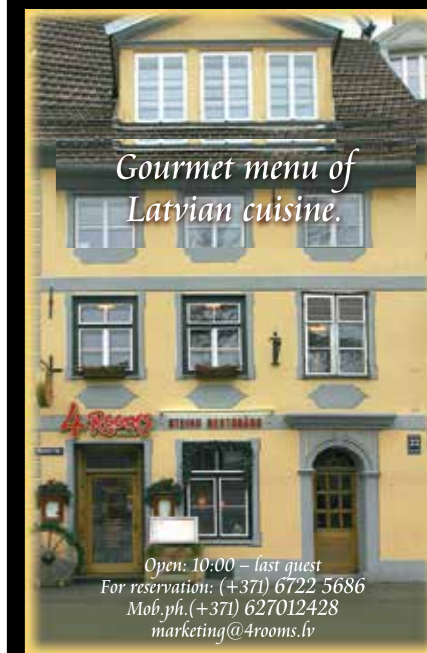
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The KATE furniture store in Riga is proud to present its new QUEEN office chair, which the store's designers have created in cooperation with the leading chair manufacturers *Interstuhl* and *KGS*. The end product is outstanding from both an aesthetic and functional point of view and is available at an affordable price. The chair's design features clean lines, precision and a "polished diamond" effect, forsaking outdated or ambiguous forms. Great importance has been placed on the chair's visual appeal and on generating the impression that the chair's seat and backrest are joined as a single unit, thanks to the fact that the parts linking these two sections cannot be seen.

The chair's perfect ergonomics ensure optimal sitting comfort, regardless of the user's height and build. In order to arrive at the best ergonomic solution, a test was conducted, with several chairs of similar construction and technical parameters presented for evaluation. The goal was to establish people's first impressions of each chair, as often a buyer's choice is based on his or her initial feelings. If a person feels good right away, then the chair's ergonomics are likely to ensure long-term comfort. The QUEEN chair was evaluated most highly in these tests, based on its characteristic features. Among the features:

The chair is offered only with a synchronised mechanism. Depending on the chair model, one can select different angles and positions of the backrest's incline. Both of the QUEEN chair base models have been designed for an eight-hour work day at the desk. They are outstandingly functional and ergonomic.

The slant of the seat's front edge has been designed to ensure that the blood vessels of the thighs are not constricted. When the user is seated, the pressure of

BOTH OF THE QUEEN CHAIR BASE MODELS HAVE BEEN DESIGNED FOR AN EIGHT-HOUR WORK DAY AT THE DESK

the body weight on the thighs is evenly distributed, ensuring free blood circulation to the legs. A chair with this type of seat is appropriate for long working hours and, with a proper seating posture, has a positive effect on the user's health in the long term. The QUEEN 008 model offers the additional option of adjusting the seat, ensuring both maximum comfort and an ergonomically correct sitting position, regardless of the user's physical anatomy.

The height of the chair's backrest can be adjusted, ensuring that the chair can be adapted for people of different sizes.

The height of the chair's armrests can be regulated. The armrests can also be moved forward and backward and turned inward or outward, permitting users to set their own optimal armrest positions. Furthermore, the armrest coverings are made of a soft, elastic and pleasant-feeling material. The chair can be complemented with a headrest for even greater comfort and a slicker appearance. Both the height and angle of the headrest can be adjusted.

The chair's wheels are covered with a soft layer of rubber and equipped with a security braking system to prevent the chair from accidentally rolling away, which can occur on slightly slanted floors. The brakes turn on automatically when the chair is not in use, ensuring that it does not roll away. The brake mechanism is de-activated as soon as someone sits in the chair, permitting the wheels to be used in a normal manner.

QUEEN chairs can also be upholstered with a wide variety of materials, as specified by the client. Buyers can choose between the economical model (QUEEN 003) and the comfort model (QUEEN 008). The base models have a wide range of setup opportunities, and the addition of client-requested extra features ensures that each buyer leaves the store with a superbly designed chair that has been tailored to suit his or her individual needs. What's more, the chair will look smart, right in tune with current design trends. **BO**

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Ribs that really rock

Preparing excellent ribs is laborious, and that's definitely a reason to leave it to the experts. At Ribs & Rock, located right in the heart of Riga's Old Town, the new head chef Renārs Valdmanis treats ribs at a state-of-the-art level – with a new original take that nevertheless stays true to proven values.



Being the only restaurant in Latvia to specialise in lamb, beef, pork and even venison ribs – an exquisite dish that can be relished along with truffle-filled mash and sweet and sour red-bilberry sauce – *Ribs & Rock* knows how to make its customers' mouths water right from the start. In a place like this, it's easy to overrate one's hunger when choosing from an order of either 400 or 800 grams of ribs, especially if you happen to pass the kitchen, from which an irresistible aroma comes forth.

The restaurant offers not only great meat, but also a large menu with a wide range of choices for every palate. When the first *Ribs & Rock* opened in 2011, former head chef Andris Jugāns turned his kitchen into a veritable laboratory, which has now been taken over by the equally passionate Valdmanis. What were once experiments have since become tricks of the trade. Every piece of meat goes through a refined process of marinating and cooking in order to make it particularly soft.

The chef offers a dozen different combinations of flavours for the ribs. In every case, the meat must be marinated for 24 hours, then steamed, then marinated once more and then put into the oven before it goes to the grill, covered in plenty of gravy. Even though the total preparation

process after you order takes only about 15 minutes, the method for preparing excellent ribs is labour-intensive. When you leave it to *Ribs & Rock*, you can be sure that you've addressed the city's best experts.

Among the restaurant chain's specialties are *Dark Side of the Moon*, prepared with the renowned *Riga Black Balsam* and served with rye-bread garlic croutons, as well as *Red Hot Chilli Peppers*, consisting of spicy pork ribs in Tex Mex glazing. Then there is *U2*, an outstanding selection for two.

BEING THE ONLY RESTAURANT IN LATVIA TO SPECIALISE IN LAMB, BEEF AND PORK RIBS, RIBS & ROCK KNOWS HOW TO MAKE ITS CUSTOMERS' MOUTHS WATER RIGHT FROM THE START

The ribs are featured in a separate menu and are served with side dishes, such as variously filled baked potatoes and grilled corn, not to mention diverse sauces like Béarnaise, avocado and cheese guacamole, yoghurt or spicy dried plum – all freshly made in the restaurants' kitchen.

To whet your appetite, the menu features six different kinds of salads along with various cold or hot appetisers, including baked tuna fillet in tempura, frothed goat cheese cream, *vitello tonnato* and beef tartar with pickled black plums.

If you don't fancy ribs, then there are great soups, pastas or fish to choose from as well as a wide range of steaks, including *Sgt. Pepper*, a beef steak in jalapeno marinade. Don't forget to spoil yourself with a sweet treat before you leave. Try the chocolate *fondant* cake with quince marmalade or a classy *crème brûlée* with brown sugar caramel, or perhaps a selection of berries and mint sauce, and you will leave completely satisfied.

Be sure to match a special wine with your main course, such as pork ribs. Believe us, the *Ribs & Rock* restaurant is among the most skilled places in Riga for coupling wine and pork perfectly. Savour a glass of red or one of numerous types of beer, lagers or cocktails on the outdoor terrace, which is a true challenge for any passer-by to overlook. Appetisingly filled plates, relaxed patrons sipping refreshing drinks and listening to live music by Latvian rock groups while soaking up the sun and city charm on the cobbled streets of the Old Town – all this proves very hard to resist during springtime in the Latvian capital. **BO**

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Valtera Restorāns (Valters' Restaurant), Riga A true seasonal dining experience

Valtera Restorāns has found its home in a 300-year-old building on a quiet street in Riga's Old Town. It is owned and run by head chef Valters Zirdziņš, who has dubbed his establishment *the cuisine of Latvian products*. Zirdziņš is quite firm with the distinctions that he makes, pointing out that over the last 100 years, Latvian cuisine has been heavily influenced by foreign traditions and ways of eating. For example, German, Russian, Ukrainian and other culinary vibes have given us the likes of borsch and heavy salads like *rasols*, which is prepared with boiled vegetables, meat and mayonnaise.

"These are not bad dishes," says Zirdziņš. "But they won't be served to the guests of Valtera Restorāns." Nor will patrons be taking their pick from the more exotically flavoured dishes of other foreign cuisines. Zirdziņš notes that Italian cuisine is known for such staple products as tomatoes and olive oil. Greek dishes often feature olives and goat cheese, while French meals might consist of wine and fish from the Normandy region. Accordingly, Zirdziņš serves meals made with local and seasonal Latvian produce. His inspiration comes from

Scandinavia, which has seen the rise of several world-famous restaurants that have been awarded Michelin stars. "These restaurants don't import their food; they offer the best of their own Nordic flavours. We do the same thing here," explains Zirdziņš.

Before opening his own establishment, Zirdziņš spent 15 years working for a number of restaurants in Riga and abroad. During that time, he got to know a large number of local farmers, who now supply everything that he needs at Valtera Restorāns. The menu at the restaurant is succinct and to the point. Each entry gives you a list of the products used,

rather than a description of the dish. Take the pike perch, cauliflower and penny buns as an example, or the beef steak, celeriac and beetroot. The same goes for the desserts, where you will find sea buckthorn, goat cheese and peppermint, or chicory, caramel and cranberry. After you've taken your pick, you'll just have to trust Zirdziņš and his mantra that *"with simplicity goes sincerity"*. And, in his case, also the flavour of what's in season in Latvia.

Address: Miesnieku iela 8

Opening times:

Sun-Thu. 12:00 – 22:00/last order

Fri.-Sat. 12:00 – 23:00/last order

www.valterarestorans.lv



Restaurant "1221" is a historical and cosy family restaurant. The aura of the 300-year-old building can be felt throughout its three floors, and the culinary prowess of internationally-renowned chef Roberts Smilga makes for a delightful dining experience.

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FOOD&DRINK

Mākonis (Cloud), Riga A design powerhouse with decent food

Mākonis is a design powerhouse with tasty coffee served downstairs and decent food on the recently opened second floor. It started off as a small coffee shop with funky design elements such as heavy metallic pans with grids on the walls and a wooden-door-turned-bar-table. The establishment continued to grow, its second-floor kitchen reminding one of an open-plan reality TV show, which can be watched up close on the front-row bathtub-turned-sofa. Along the same lines, the dining tables are kneading troughs covered with glass tops.

Owner Lauris Grass keeps the mill running on weekends and holidays, organizing pop-up cocktail evenings once a month. His creativity manifests itself in numerous ways, including in Mākonis' crockery: Grass recalls that a certain cocktail was once served in a blossoming carnivorous flower.

A side wall on the second floor sports a design outlet that offers original pieces by artists and designers from Latvia as well as Scandinavia and neighbouring countries. The carpet-padded shopping bags, original crockery (no carnivorous flowers, though!) and minimalist jewellery attracts pretty much everyone who has arrived for a meal.

The cuisine is similar to the establishment's design elements, meaning that it is simple, but

prepared so as to make the top qualities of the first-rate products stand out. "You don't have to do much when the raw material is amazing in itself," says Grass. "You just have to help it express the best that it has."

You'll get a simple and hearty club sandwich for a late breakfast or practically any egg dish that you fancy with a good selection of sides. Dinner features a fair representation of veggie dishes like curcuma soup with carrots and bananas, or grilled cheese with onion marmalade. Carnivores might opt for the lamb shoulder square with parsnip puree and caramelized figs or the saltimbocca with prosciutto crudo, salvia and grated potato roasts on a cappuccino stew.

This may all sound tempting, but don't expect any white tablecloths or soothing classical music to accompany your meal here. At Mākonis, you'll be pulled into a cutting-edge design parade, with good food available to make your visit all the more enjoyable.

Address: Palasta iela 7

Opening hours: Mon.-Thu. 9:00 – 21:00

Fri.: 9:00 – 23:00

Sat.: 10:00 – 23:00

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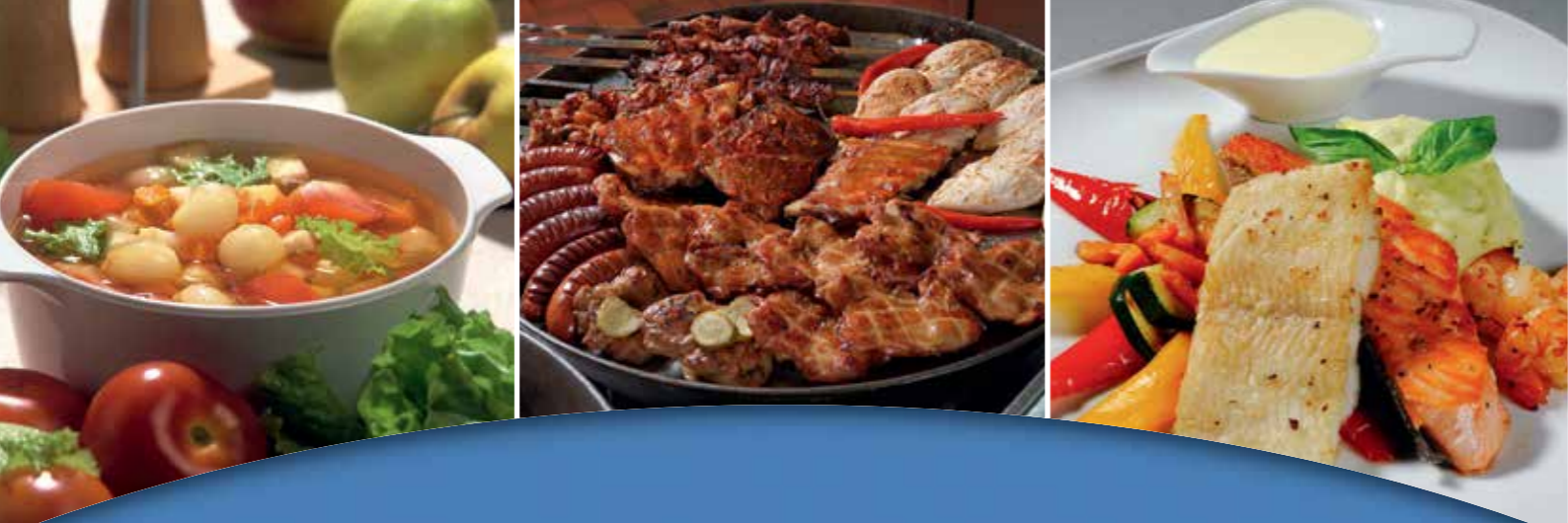
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IN BRIEF

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2/ *airBaltic* aircraft on Latvian postage stamps

3/ New payment method via bank links

4/ Delayed arrival? No worries!

5/ Save time with Fast Track security control!

1/ Long-awaited summer comeback

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2/ *airBaltic* aircraft on Latvian postage stamps

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3/ New payment method via bank links

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5/ Save time with Fast Track security control!

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TEXT BY ZANE NIKODENIUSA
PHOTO BY REINIS HOFMANIS, F64



For those who love to fly

airBaltic Training, a subsidiary of airBaltic, has been offering a wide range of aviation training services in Riga for several years. Ingmārs Kibermanis, the sales and marketing manager at airBaltic Training, allows you to look behind the curtain.

Ingmārs Kibermanis, the sales and marketing manager at airBaltic Training

Going through the airBaltic Training classrooms, I met men and women of various ages and nationalities.

A positive and cosmopolitan atmosphere seems to reign here.

Yes, that's true. We train pilots, flight attendants, airline company managers, flight dispatchers and ground crew personnel from a wide range of countries. On some working days I might receive calls from practically all over the globe. Of course, most of our clients come from Western European countries like France, Italy and Spain as well as Central Europe and Scandinavia.

Which study programmes are in the highest demand?

Most of our trainees are flight attendants. However, every year we provide extensive pilot training to more than 100 civilians who want to upgrade their flight skills, not to mention the personnel who are sent to us by various airlines. A large number of clients also come to conduct specific assignments for maintaining their professional qualifications.

How have you gained the trust of other airlines, which are now sending you their staff for training?

First of all, we ourselves are a subsidiary of a significant airline in the Nordic region. This means that we know how airlines operate and we know their requirements. They want the teaching process and everything else to be run effectively, including the flight arrangements to Riga and the accommodation for their staff. Secondly, our training centre was specifically designed and built to serve its current function. Most training centres like ours are set up in airport hangars. Many of those who see our building for the first time are surprised at its effective design and cosy feel.

Thirdly, we have a very strong teaching staff. They are actual employees of airBaltic, which means that they have a practical and not just a theoretical knowledge about the subjects that they teach. Fourthly, we own one of the best Boeing 737 CLASSIC full flight simulators in the world. We have invested a great deal into it and upgraded it several times. A lot of people appreciate this. For

example, there are three airlines in Ukraine that operate Boeing 737-CL aircraft. All three of them are our clients.

I saw you greet and stop to chat with several of the pilots who are training here. From what you have seen, what characteristics do pilots need to reach the pinnacle of their careers?

They need to be determined and goal-oriented. Some pilots come here and go through the courses just to get their training certificates, while others are really serious and dedicated to their studies. They even come to the training centre during their free time and spend hours sitting inside the wooden training cabins. The younger pilots, by the way, spend quite a lot of time in these cabins, which don't even have any real buttons to press. However, the cabin walls have posters stuck on them to simulate the interior of a real airplane cockpit, with all of the control buttons clearly visible.

To an outsider, the pressing of fake buttons in a fake airplane cabin might look funny, and the pilots might look like boys at play, but this is all part of the learning process and has a sound basis. You have to work very hard to become an airplane pilot. To children and teenagers who are considering this type of career, I strongly recommend studying the exact sciences, as it's very important for pilots to master these subjects.

Do you have any middle-aged clients who have changed their profession, for example, high-level managers who have suddenly decided that they want to become professional airplane pilots?

Yes, actually we have quite a few people like that at our centre. Often this is because flight studies are very expensive. As a result, some of our clients couldn't obtain the necessary funding for these studies while they were young, so they went into other professions without fulfilling their dream of becoming airplane pilots. Later in life, having become highly regarded and highly paid professionals in other fields, they reached the stage where they could use their savings to fulfil the dream of their youth. One of our current clients,

for example, is a high-level engineer at an atomic power plant. airBaltic also has a number of plane captains who started off in the airline as flight attendants and who patiently invested their savings into flight training courses. Now they are working at the airline as extremely professional and well-paid pilots.

By the way, Latvia is one of the few countries in Europe where the demand for pilots is greater than the number of available professionals. That's why the best of those who graduate from our training centre are offered employment at airBaltic. That being said, it is preferable for pilot candidates to have acquired a solid background of knowledge and skills before beginning studies at our training centre. The pilots who graduate from airBaltic Training are taught at a highly advanced level, which could be considered to be the equivalent of a Master's or Doctor's degree. More detailed information about the various study opportunities, the length of the courses and the tuition fees can be found in our home page at www.airbaltictraining.com.

I've heard that the training centre also has its own special rituals and traditions.

Yes, it does. I could mention one nice tradition as an example. On those days when staff members from a particular airline company are training at our centre, we prominently display the flag of their country of origin. It's extremely rare for us not to have any foreign flags on display outside by our headquarters. Lately we have often been flying the flags of Sweden, Denmark, Ukraine and Georgia. It might seem like a small detail, but you should see how proud the pilots of such smaller countries as Georgia and Slovenia are when they see their flags flying outside of our headquarters. We also train the staff of two airlines from Pakistan. Since the flag of that country is very rarely seen in Latvia, people driving past our training centre sometimes even stop and get out of their cars to take pictures of the flag. By the way, our foreign guests can see these flags flying from the moment that their planes touch down on the runway at the Riga airport. **BO**



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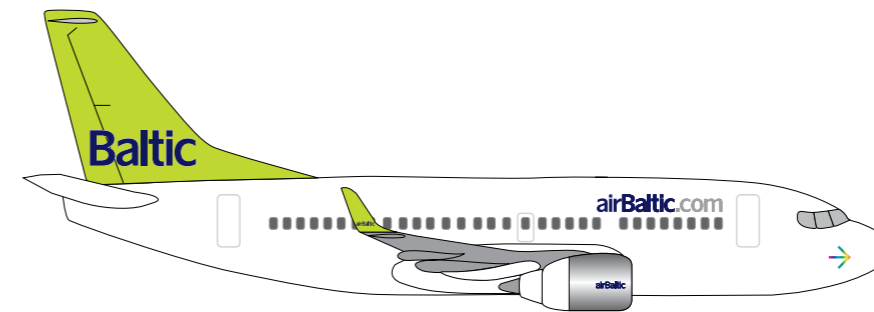
Best Promotion (Airline): for the mobile campaign 'Burn the Miles', where BalticMiles gave members a possibility to collect Points for calories burned

vote.freddieawards.com

Region: Europe

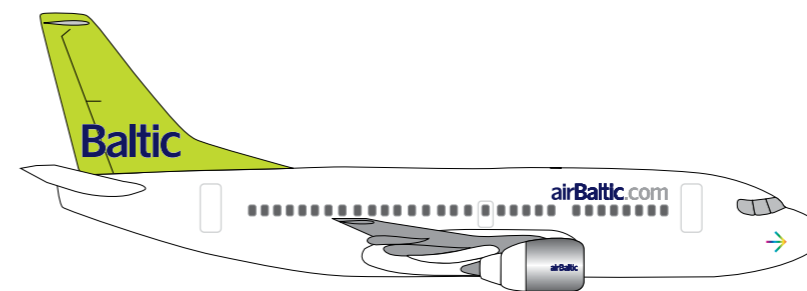
Voting will take place until March 31, 2014

BalticMiles ↗



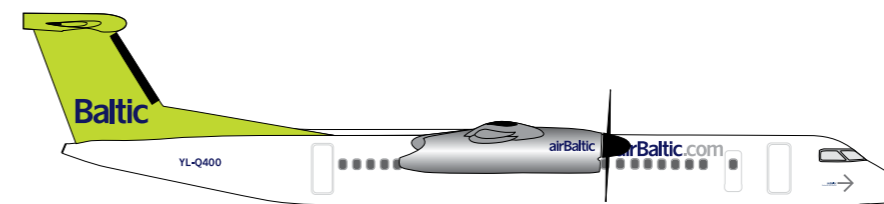
Boeing 737-300

Number of seats	142/144/146
Max take-off weight	63 metric tons
Max payload	14.2 metric tons
Length	32.18 m
Wing span	31.22 m
Cruising speed	800 km/h
Commercial range	3500 km
Fuel consumption	3000 l/h
Engine	CFM56-3C-1



Boeing 737-500

Number of seats	120
Max take-off weight	58 metric tons
Max payload	13.5 metric tons
Length	29.79 m
Wing span	28.9 m
Cruising speed	800 km/h
Commercial range	3500 km
Fuel consumption	3000 l/h
Engine	CFM56-3



Q400 NextGen Bombardier

Number of seats	76
Max take-off weight	29.6 metric tons
Max payload	8.6 metric tons
Length	32.83 m
Wing span	28.42 m
Cruising speed	667 km/h
Commercial range	2084 km
Fuel consumption	1074 l/h
Engine	P&W 150A

Flights from Riga					Flights to Riga				
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival
VILNIUS									
BT 341	RIX	VNO	1234567	09:55 10:50	BT 350	VNO	RIX	1234567	07:50 08:45
BT 343	RIX	VNO	1234567	14:15 15:10	BT 342	VNO	RIX	1234567	11:55 12:50
BT 347	RIX	VNO	1234567	19:10 20:05	BT 344	VNO	RIX	1234567	15:40 16:35
BT 349	RIX	VNO	1234567	22:45 23:40	BT 348	VNO	RIX	1234567	20:35 21:30
PALANGA									
BT 033	RIX	PLQ	1-3-5-7	22:45 23:30	BT 032	PLQ	RIX	12-4-6-	08:00 08:45
TALLINN									
BT 311	RIX	TLL	1234567	09:50 10:45	BT 366	TLL	RIX	1234567	07:50 08:45
BT 313	RIX	TLL	1234567	14:15 15:10	BT 312	TLL	RIX	1234567	11:55 12:50
BT 363	RIX	TLL	1234567	19:05 20:00	BT 314	TLL	RIX	1234567	15:40 16:35
BT 365	RIX	TLL	1234567	22:45 23:40	BT 364	TLL	RIX	1234567	20:30 21:25
STOCKHOLM Arlanda									
BT 101	RIX	ARN	1234567	09:40 09:55	BT 104	ARN	RIX	123456-	06:45 09:00
BT 109	RIX	ARN	1234567	18:45 19:00	BT 102	ARN	RIX	1234567	10:25 12:40
BT 103	RIX	ARN	12345-7	22:35 22:50	BT 110	ARN	RIX	1234567	19:30 21:45
COPENHAGEN									
BT 133	RIX	CPH	1234---	06:05 06:45	BT 134	CPH	RIX	1234---	07:15 09:50
BT 131	RIX	CPH	1234567	09:20 10:00	BT 132	CPH	RIX	1234567	10:50 13:25
BT 139	RIX	CPH	1234567	18:00 18:40	BT 140	CPH	RIX	1234567	19:15 21:50
BILLUND									
BT 145	RIX	BLL	1-3-5-7	22:25 23:25	BT 146	BLL	RIX	12-4-6-	06:05 08:55
OSLO									
BT 151	RIX	OSL	123456-	09:15 10:10	BT 158	OSL	RIX	1-4-567	06:00 08:50
BT 153	RIX	OSL	1234567	17:10 18:05	BT 152	OSL	RIX	123456-	10:45 13:35
BT 157	RIX	OSL	-34567	22:25 23:20	BT 154	OSL	RIX	1234567	18:35 21:25
BERGEN									
BT 171	RIX	BGO	---45-7	22:25 23:50	BT 172	BGO	RIX	1---56-	05:40 09:00
STAVANGER									
BT 177	RIX	SVG	-2-45-7	22:25 23:45	BT 178	SVG	RIX	1-3-56-	05:45 09:00
ALESUND									
BT 175	RIX	AES	---5-7	13:25 14:50	BT 176	AES	RIX	---5-7	15:20 18:35
HELSINKI									
BT 301	RIX	HEL	1234567	09:50 10:55	BT 330	HEL	RIX	1234567	07:50 08:50
BT 303	RIX	HEL	1234567	14:00 15:05	BT 302	HEL	RIX	1234567	11:50 12:50
BT 305	RIX	HEL	1234567	19:05 20:10	BT 304	HEL	RIX	1234567	15:35 16:35
BT 329	RIX	HEL	1234567	22:35 23:40	BT 306	HEL	RIX	1234567	20:40 21:40
TURKU									
BT 359	RIX	TKU	12-45-7	22:35 23:45	BT 360	TKU	RIX	123-56-	07:30 08:35
BERLIN Tegel									
BT 211	RIX	TXL	1234567	09:20 10:15	BT 212	TXL	RIX	1234567	10:45 13:35
BT 213	RIX	TXL	1234567	17:10 18:05	BT 214	TXL	RIX	1234567	18:40 21:30
HAMBURG									
BT 251	RIX	HAM	-2-4---	09:30 10:35	BT 252	HAM	RIX	-2-4---	11:05 14:00
BT 255	RIX	HAM	1-----7	14:05 15:10	BT 256	HAM	RIX	1-----7	15:40 18:35
BT 253	RIX	HAM	--3-5--	17:10 18:15	BT 254	HAM	RIX	--3-5--	18:45 21:40
MUNICH									
BT 221	RIX	MUC	1-3-56-	09:20 11:00	BT 222	MUC	RIX	1-3-56-	11:40 15:10
BT 223	RIX	MUC	12-4567	16:00 17:40	BT 224	MUC	RIX	12-4567	18:20 21:50
FRANKFURT									
BT 243	RIX	FRA	1-3-5-7	09:30 11:15	BT 244	FRA	RIX	1-3-5-7	11:50 15:25
BT 245	RIX	FRA	---4-6-	15:40 17:25	BT 246	FRA	RIX	---4-6-	18:00 21:35
DUSSELDORF									
BT 231	RIX	DUS	1--5--	09:40 11:15	BT 232	DUS	RIX	1--5--	11:45 15:15
BT 233	RIX	DUS	--3--6-	15:55 17:30	BT 234	DUS	RIX	--3--6-	18:00 21:30
VIENNA									
BT 431	RIX	VIE	123456-	09:50 11:15	BT 432	VIE	RIX	123456-	11:50 15:10
BT 433	RIX	VIE	12345-7	16:15 17:40	BT 434	VIE	RIX	12345-7	18:15 21:35
ZURICH									
BT 641	RIX	ZRH	1--5--	09:25 10:55	BT 642	ZRH	RIX	1--5--	11:35 15:10
BT 641	RIX	ZRH	-2---6-	16:15 17:45	BT 642	ZRH	RIX	-2---6-	18:20 21:55

Flights from Riga					Flights to Riga				
Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival	Flight No	From	To	Days	Departure Arrival
MOSCOW Domodedovo									
BT 418	RIX	DME	1234567	09:40 13:50	BT 419	DME	RIX	1234567	14:30 14:45
MOSCOW Sheremetyevo									
BT 422	RIX	SVO	1234567	17:00 20:40	BT 425	SVO	RIX	1234567	08:45 08:35
BT 426	RIX	SVO	1234567	22:20 02:00+1	BT 423	SVO	RIX	1234567	21:40 21:30
ST-PETERSBURG									
BT 442	RIX	LED	123456-	09:40 13:00	BT 443	LED	RIX	123456-	13:35 12:55
BT 444	RIX	LED	12345-7	18:30 21:50	BT 445	LED	RIX	12345-7	22:25 21:45
KALININGRAD									
BT 428	RIX	KGD	1-34--7	22:45 00:40+1	BT 429	KGD	RIX	12-45--	08:40 08:35
MINSK									
BT 412	RIX	MSQ	-----7	09:40 11:50	BT 413	MSQ	RIX	-----7	12:30 12:40
BT 412	RIX	MSQ	1-3----	18:10 20:20	BT 413	MSQ	RIX	1-3----	21:00 21:10
KIEV Borispol									
BT 400	RIX	KBP	1234567	09:30 11:15	BT 407	KBP	RIX	1234567	06:40 08:35
BT 404	RIX	KBP	1234567	16:40 18:30	BT 401	KBP	RIX	1234567	11:45 13:35
BT 406	RIX	KBP	1234567	22:40 00:30+1	BT 405	KBP	RIX	1234567	19:45 21:40
WARSAW									
BT 463	RIX	WAW	12345-7	22:25 22:55	BT 464	WAW	RIX	123456-	06:25 08:50
PRAGUE									
BT 481	RIX	PRG	1-3----	09:25 10:40	BT 482	PRG	RIX	1-3----	11:10 14:15
BT 481	RIX	PRG	---5-7	16:40 17:55	BT 482	PRG	RIX	---5-7	18:25 21:30
BUDAPEST									
BT 491	RIX	BUD	-2---6-	09:50 11:15	BT 492	BUD	RIX	-2---6-	11:45 15:00
BT 491	RIX	BUD	---4---	16:10 17:35	BT 492	BUD	RIX	---4---	18:05 21:20
BRUSSELS									
BT 601	RIX	BRU	12345--	06:30 08:25	BT 602	BRU	RIX	12345--	08:55 12:40
BT 601	RIX	BRU	-----6-	09:40 11:35	BT 602	BRU	RIX	-----6-	12:05 15:50
BT 603	RIX	BRU	-----7	15:30 17:25	BT 604	BRU	RIX	-----7	18:00 21:45
BT 603	RIX	BRU	12345--	17:25 19:20	BT 604	BRU	RIX	12345--	19:50 23:35
AMSTERDAM									
BT 617	RIX	AMS	123456-	09:20 10:45	BT 618	AMS	RIX	123456-	11:30 14:45
BT 619	RIX	AMS	12345-7	16:30 17:55	BT 620	AMS	RIX	12345-7	18:40 21:55
LONDON Gatwick									
BT 651	RIX	LGW	1-34---	09:30 10:20	BT 652	LGW	RIX	1-34---	11:10 15:55
BT 653	RIX	LGW	12-4567	15:20 16:10	BT 654	LGW	RIX	12-4567	16:50 21:35
PARIS Charles de Gaulles									
BT 691	RIX	CDG	123456-	09:30 11:25	BT 692	CDG	RIX	123456-	12:10 15:55
BT 693	RIX	CDG	12345-7	15:20 17:15	BT 694	CDG	RIX	12345-7	18:05 21:50
ROME Leonardo da Vinci Fiumicino									
BT 631	RIX	FCO	-2-4-6-	09:25 11:30	BT 632	FCO	RIX	-2-4-6-	12:15 16:25
BT 633	RIX	FCO	1-3-5-7	14:10 16:15	BT 634	FCO	RIX	1-3-5-7	17:05 21:15
MILAN Malpensa									
BT 629	RIX	MXP	-2-4-6-	09:30 11:15	BT 630	MXP	RIX	-2-4-6-	11:55 15:35
BT 629	RIX	MXP	1-3-5-7	15:45 17:30	BT 630	MXP	RIX	1-3-5-7	18:10 21:50
ISTANBUL Sabiha Gokcen									
BT 711	RIX	SAW	--3--7	09:40 12:45	BT 712	SAW	RIX	--3--7	13:25 16:20
BT 711	RIX	SAW	-2---6-	14:45 17:50	BT 712	SAW	RIX	-2---6-	18:30 21:25
LARNACA									
BT 657	RIX	LCA	-----6-	15:30 19:20	BT 658	LCA	RIX	-----7	12:20 16:25
BARCELONA									
BT 681	RIX	BCN	--3-56-	09:30 12:15	BT 682	BCN	RIX	--3-56-	12:55 17:35
BT 681	RIX	BCN	1-----7	13:35 16:20	BT 682	BCN	RIX	1-----7	16:55 21:35
TBILISI									
BT 722	RIX	TBS	-2--5-7	22:55 04:25+1	BT 723	TBS	RIX	1-3--6-	07:00 08:35
TEL AVIV									
BT 771	RIX	TLV	-2-4-6-	10:00 14:20	BT 772	TLV	RIX	-2-4-6-	16:30 21:00
ABU DHABI									
BT 795	RIX	AUH	1--5--	00:45 09:00	BT 798	AUH	RIX	--3--7	02:00 06:35
BT 797	RIX	AUH	-2---6-	15:35 23:40	BT 796	AUH	RIX	1--5--	10:00 14:35

The given information is a subject to amendments and cancellations taken unilaterally by airBaltic.





- Codeshare partner
- Interline partner

airBaltic codeshare partners



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Vienna airBaltic Germany Hauptstrasse 117, D-10827 Berlin ☎ +49 30 210 9341620 local calls (EUR 0.17/min) service@airbaltic.de	Airport Schwechat Terminal 2 Airport Ticket Office Celebi Ground Handling ☎ +431 700736394
AZERBAIJAN	
Baku Improtrex Travel 16, S. Vurgun Str. Baku AZ1000, Azarbaijan ☎ +994 124989239 info@improtrex-travel.com booking@improtrex-travel.com	Heydar Aliyev International Airport Airport Ticket Office Silk Way Airlines ☎ +994 124972600
BELARUS	
Minsk	Airport Minsk 2 Airport Ticket Office airBaltic
BELGIUM	
Brussels Air Agencies Belgium 153 A Vlivoordeaan 1930 Zaventem ☎ +32 (0) 27126427 airbaltic@airagencies.be	Airport Zaventem Departure Hall Airport Ticket Office ☎ +32 (0) 27230667 Airport Ticket Office Aviapartner
Croatia	
Rijeka	Rijeka Airport Airport Ticket Office Zračna Luka Rijeka ☎ +385 51 841 222
CYPRUS	
Larnaca	Larnaca International Airport Airport Ticket Office airBaltic / LGS Handling
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Prague	Vaclav Havel Prague Airport Terminal T2 Airport Ticket Office CEAS ☎ +420 220117540
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Billund	Billund Airport Departure Hall Airport Ticket Office ☎ +45 76505205
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Turku	Airport Turku Airport Ticket Office Airpro OY
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Nice	Airport Nice Cote D'azur Terminal 1 Airport Ticket Office Lufthansa Ticket Desk
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Tbilisi Discovery Travel Ltd/airBaltic GSA 72 Palastnivi st. Tbilisi ☎ +995 32 2 900900 airbalticgsa@discovery.ge	Airport Tbilisi Airport Ticket Office Discovery Ltd ☎ +995 32 2 900900
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Frankfurt	Airport Frankfurt Airport Ticket Office Havas Germany GmbH Terminal 2, Hall E, Desk 939

Country/City Ticket offices	Airport Ticket Offices
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Munich	Airport Munich Terminal 1 Airport Ticket Office Havas Germany GmbH
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ISRAEL	
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POLAND	
Warsaw	Warsaw Airport Airport Ticket Office BGS

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St. Petersburg	International Airport Domodedovo Airport Ticket Office DAVS Ticketing counters no: 177, 185
Kaliningrad	Airport Khrabrovo Airport Ticket Office airBaltic / Aviapartner
SPAIN	
Barcelona	Airport El Prat de Llobregat Terminal 1 Airport Ticket Office Lufthansa Ticket Desk
SWEDEN	
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Simferopol	Simferopol Airport Airport Ticket Office Airport Handling ☎ +38 065 259 5693
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	
Abu Dhabi	Abu Dhabi International Airport Airport Ticket Office ADAC
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KOBRA PAIGE (KOBRA AND THE LOTUS)**

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LORDI (FIN)

GRUPPIROVKA (RUS) LENINGRAD

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