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> PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT Inside gluten-free Bruxelles, je t'adore

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Editor's LETTER

Together: Inspiring you to reach your dreams...

ON THE COVER



Together fashion shoot: Grand Hôtel

PUTTING YOUR FEET UP

For the first half of 2015 it appeared that we watched one horrendous event after another unfold on our TV screens or iPhones, an endless flow of suffering. For me, it was tough watching refugees across the global stranded in stricken boats they had paid to board – in the hope of finding a better life for them and their families.

And I had a very small taste of it when I was blocked in London, because the Eurostar couldn't operate due to strikers blocking the exit on the French side (when I lived in France I quickly realized that French strikers take striking very seriously). And this is a very problematic spot in the lives of Europeans, a border that helps protect the UK from migrants who appear to believe that the promised lands beyond, beyond the Schengen line. The scenes that followed – of migrants prepared to do anything to get across – were harrowing.

Don't be surprised if the notion of Europe united comes under even heavier flak from all sides, but sometimes you just have to look at almost any country – or countries with strong ties – to realize that, as the French say: "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose."

Many of us are lucky enough to escape – at least for a fortnight. So whether you are spending your wellearned summer break baking on a southern beach, climbing in the mountains or just putting your sandals up on a deckchair in the garden, have a very happy holiday!

Paul Morris EDITOR



f/togethermagazine

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- **11 Editor's letter**
- 14 Contents and Contributors
- 20 Starring in Belgium



Nutrition Gluten- free?



Self-help Spreading the risk

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

22 Charity: Greenpeace
27 Fitness: Loving the sun
29 Nutrition: Gluten- free?
34 Health: Meal by Meal
39 Self-help: Spreading the risk
43 Politics: Energy grid
49 Money: Invest wisely





Fashion shoot Grand Hôtel

LIFESTYLE

54 Luxury: Eco Chique Range Rover
58 Antwerp: Hot designers
63 Beauty: Hello summer!
66 Fashion shoot: Grand Hôtel
77 Shopping: Polo plus

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Travel Wallonia, your adventure

LIFE OF LEISURE

83 Interview: Emily Blunt 90 Travel: Weekend in Dublin 94 Travel: Belambra luxury 97 Travel: Wallonia, your adventure 100 Dining: Design and grub 103 Vin du mois: Les Belges 107 What's On Belgium 108 What's on Cinema 111 What's on International 113 Le chat: Quick unpack



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Preparing for an endurance run — the smart way Don't sabotage yourself at the starting line.

@ FASHION



Belgian fashion: Mad about shoes Martin Banks chatted with the man behind

@ TECHNOLOGY



Apps to help you keep your resolutions Our tech guy Colin Moors runs the rule over some apps that may just bolster your resolve

@ LIFESTYLE



Cate Blanchett: Finding your way Together met up with the luminous Cate Blanchett to talk about ...

@ TRAVEL



Wallonia: Les Lacs de l'Eau d'Heure Martin Banks offers the low-down on Wallonia's most popular holiday destination

@ TRAVEL



My Dubai Dave Deruytter recalls a family trip to Dubai

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Starring in Belgium



Richard Thompson

"The finest rock songwriter after Dylan and the best electric guitarist since Hendrix," according to Los Angeles Times. After almost five years, Thompson is back in AB. After forty or so releases, from Fairport Convention onwards, Richard Thompson's new album was released on June 23rd, produced by Jeff Tweedy. **7 October**. Ancienne Belgique. **€28** www.abconcerts.be



Dave Matthews Band

Dave & Co are back in Europe for the first time since 2010. The American press said: "Even when it's Dave Matthews opening for Dave Matthews, there can't be enough Dave Matthews in a night." **4 November**. Forest National. Tickets from **€55** www.forestnational.be



Randy Newman

Mr Newman is famous for: Short People, Mama Told Me Not To Come,

You Can Leave Your Hat On, Rider In The Rain, Naked Man, Simon Smith And The Amazing Dancing Bear, Rednecks, Birmingham, Sail Away... plus Toy Story, A Bug's Life, Monsters, Cars. **17 October**. Ancienne Belgique. **€39** www.abconcerts.be



Editors

On a new European and with a new album *No Harm*, the boys from Birmingham will rock the Palais with standards such as *All Sparks*, *An End Has A Start*, *Papillon* and *A Ton Of Love*. **31 October**. Palais 12 - Brussels Expo. **€40** www.livenation.be

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CHARITY

Greenpeace: Warriors of the Rainbow still rising

A forty-five-year-old rebel with a cause

ccording to Greenpeace it "exists because this fragile earth deserves a voice. It needs solutions. It needs change. It needs action". The organization is all about protection by brining about energy revolution, defending of the oceans (what it's best known for publicity-wise), looking after what's left of ancient forests, working to eliminate all nuclear weapons and something that more and more people can relate to and tune in to through their daily diet – sustainable agriculture.

Like many others in this area, the challenge is to change attitudes. Since 1971, when a small boat of volunteers and journalists sailed into Amchitka, an area north of Alaska where the US Government was conducting underground nuclear tests, Greenpeace has been taking to the waves to make people sit up and take notice of how we have been destroying the planet of which we are fortunate enough to be one of caretakers.

The organization's influence is impressive with a presence in more than 55 countries across the planet.

How can they support such an infracture?

By donations. It is against its ethos to accept donations from governments or corporations and so relies heavily on contributions from individual supporters and foundation grants.

They are at pains to state: "In pursuing our mission, we have no permanent allies or enemies. We promote open, informed debate



about society's environmental choices. We use research, lobbying and quiet diplomacy to pursue our goals, as well as high-profile, non-violent conflict to raise the level and quality of public debate.

"And we believe that the struggle to preserve the future of our planet is not about us. It's about you. Greenpeace speaks for 2.8 million supporters worldwide, and encourages many millions more than that to take action every day.

As one of the longest banners Greenpeace has ever made summed things up, "When the last tree is cut, the last river poisoned, and the last fish dead, we will discover that we can't eat money..." But they could do with some of your cash to keep up the good fight.

www.greenpeace.org

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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Although I won't go as far as to say that Brussels is my spiritual home, it's definitely got a hold over me

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Here comes the sun!

Lionel Gonnet, Personal Trainer at Aspria, offers vital advice on summer skin protection

Fitness

PERSONAL

DEVELOPMENT

Vitamin D against sunburn

People with high levels of vitamin D are less susceptible to sunburn and develop a flattering tan more easily than those who lack the vitamin.

How can you protect yourself naturally?

Explaining the protective effect of vitamin D is very simple: if your body has produced too much vitamin D, it automatically starts to create more melanin, the dark pigment responsible for tanning which protects against ultra-violet radiation.

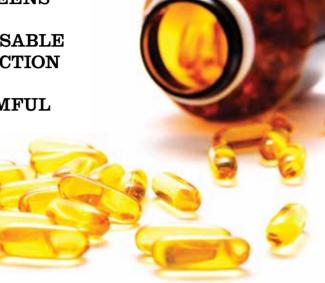
That's why it's important to maintain a high level of vitamin D, and there are two main ways of enhancing your level: supplements and... the sup.

The vital role of the sun...

Vitamin D is produced in the skin when it's exposed to sunlight, which consequently plays a preventive role before the summer. The sun, therefore, plays a vital role, emphasising the importance of taking part in physical activity outdoors whenever possible. One must, however, bear in mind that sunscreen lotions reduce the production of this vitamin. This reduction is more significant the higher the sun protection factor (SPF 30).

Sunscreens are indispensable as protection against the harmful rays of the sun, so vitamin D

" SUNSCREENS ARE INDISPENSABLE AS PROTECTION AGAINST THE HARMFUL RAYS "



tablets can be taken to restore any deficit.

Vitamin supplements

Thanks to the climate in our part of the world, most of the population of Belgium is deficient in vitamin D, unless they're taking supplements. That probably includes you. To benefit from protection against sunburn, your vitamin D levels should be at the top of the range: between 80 and 100 mg/ml. To reach that level quickly, you'll need to take higher doses than those officially recommended. We're talking about 5,000 international units of vitamin D3 per day for several months, obviously after establishing your levels and monitoring them every two months.

Vitamin D deficiency can also be a cause of various disorders such as type 2 diabetes, muscular dystrophy, cardiac complaints, infectious and/or chronic illnesses or even cancer.



The truth behind gluten-free

Sophie Bruno digs a little deeper into what's behind the rise of glutenfree products

Nutrition

he aim of these series of articles will be to explore the hot diets trending in 2015 and to provide you with an expert appraisal of the pros and cons of each diet. This will empower you by allowing you to make informed decisions whilst navigating this complex minefield in search of weight loss. This article will take a closer look at the already mainstream gluten-free diet fashion which celebrities are glamourizing. Does gluten-free really deserve the popularity it receives, and is there sound scientific evidence to back the conferred health effects everyone is raving about?

What is gluten?

Gluten is a protein that is found in grains such as wheat, barley and rye and is ubiquitous in a broad range of foods, particularly cereal-based products such as pasta, bread, flour, cakes and breakfast cereals: beware, gluten also lurks in sauces, soups, ready meals and processed meats. It is also important to note that gluten is frequently present in beer derived from barley. Gluten, meaning 'glue' in Latin, confers functional properties by providing its renowned elasticity attributes that allow bread and cakes

" THIS MEANS THEY DO NOT NEED TO BUY GLUTEN-FREE PRODUCTS "

People may convert to a gluten-free diet for a number of reasons. The most well-known motive includes being diagnosed with celiac disease. Some people believe they have gluten or wheat intolerance, promoting them to follow

or wheat intolerance, prompting them to follow a gluten-free diet. However, a growing portion of the population mistakenly believe that gluten is unhealthy, fattening and that by removing this component from the diet it will promote weight loss or confer health benefits.

A closer look at celiac disease

GLUTEN

FREE

to stretch and rise.

Celiac disease is an autoimmune condition. This is where the immune system – the body's defence against infection – mistakes gluten as a threat and attacks healthy tissue. This damages the lining of the small intestine, disrupting the body's ability to absorb nutrients from the food. It is important to note that celiac disease is not an intolerance or allergic reaction to gluten. The exact cause of celiac disease is not entirely clear, although a combination of genes and the environment appear to play a role. Strict adherence to a gluten-free diet brings complete resolution of symptoms. Potential long-term

1.1

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complications of celiac disease, if the condition is not managed properly, include osteoporosis and several types of anaemia. Less common and more serious complications include those affecting pregnancy, such as having a low-birth weight baby and some types of cancer, such as bowel cancer.

Wheat intolerance

Wheat intolerance has a different aetiology to celiac disease, although the symptoms are similar; it is usually caused by sensitivity to the fermentation of a carbohydrate in wheat rather than gluten. People with wheat intolerance are usually much less sensitive than those suffering from celiac disease and only need to exclude major sauces of wheat. Nevertheless, those with wheat intolerance will still experience adverse symptoms from gluten-free products, as the remaining part of the wheat will still affect them. This means they do not need to buy gluten-free products or be concerned about small traces of wheat or gluten in foods; wheatfree is usually sufficient.

Symptoms such as abdominal bloating, pain and diarrhoea are very common and are usually

caused by overeating rather than food intolerance. If you overeat, with any type food, you may feel bloated and uncomfortable. Many, though, erroneously attribute symptoms of overeating to gluten which is present in many foods, and therefore likely to be consumed every time you overeat. Symptoms may also be caused by irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). It can be challenging to pinpoint the exact cause of the symptoms.

Gluten-free and weight loss

It is becoming common belief that gluten makes you fat. However, apart from the small portion of the population who have celiac disease, there is no scientific evidence to support that eliminating gluten promotes weight loss. However, gluten is often found in high energy containing foods such as cakes, biscuits, pastries and pies. It is these products, high in energy, which will lead to weight gain if eaten regularly – not the wheat or gluten. The reason some people lose weight by following a glutenfree diet is because they reduce their intake of these energy-dense foods as well as reducing their overall food intake due to the restrictiveness of the permitted foods imposed

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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Nutrition



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by the diet. One would obtain the same result by reducing portion sizes and decreasing the frequency of consumption of such food items. In fact, many gluten-free products contain higher levels of fat, sugar and overall calories than their gluten-containing alternatives as manufacturers have to compensate for the lack of taste and texture experienced by gluten removal. This may explain why often people gain weight on a gluten-free diet.

Risks of going gluten-free

The risks associated with a gluten-free diet need to be considered if you do not have a specific medical requirement to follow such a stringent diet. Gluten-free diets may result in nutritional inadequacies as they are highly restrictive. Furthermore, wholegrain breads and cereals, which contain gluten, are an important source of dietary fibre. Many following glutenfree diets tend to eat inadequate amounts of fibre, which may lead to constipation and some cancers of the digestive system. Another important negative attribute of gluten-free is the cost; gluten-free products are usually considerably more pricy than gluten-containing products.

Verdict: Is it advisable to follow a aluten-free diet?

Unless it is strictly necessary and you have been clinically diagnosed with celiac disease, then it is advisable not to embark on glutenfree. If you wish to lose weight, do it wisely: cut down on the 'indulgence' foods, eat smaller portions and get moving. Going gluten-free with no medical prerequisite will not promote weight loss and may actually be detrimental due to the possible nutritional inadequacy of the diet. And it may be tough on your pocket. Never assume that you are automatically improving your health by jumping on the gluten-free bandwagon. If you are seeking a healthy and effective weight loss plan or if you suspect that you may have a wheat intolerance or celiac disease, seek medical advice to ensure that you are meeting all of your nutrition needs. This will also help to systematically identify the causes of your symptoms without leading to unnecessary restriction of foods such as gluten.

Sophie is a certified UK and Belgian registered dietician. You can consult Sophie's services at the following website: www. expertnutritionadvicebrussels.com

For more information visit www.britishschool.be

Learning together inspiring success

Health

Super healthy week menu

vital, attractive lifestyle aided by responsible weight loss products.

Tony Robbins has a plan to stop us neglecting our health, by taking us through it blow by blow, meal by meal

He says: "Most people don't give vitality and health the critical level of focus it deserves. It's more than what you eat or how often you exercise. It's even more than just essential steps to wellness. It's energy to fully live the game of life."

To help you take control and actively pursue the health, energy and vitality that you've been looking for, here is a super healthy plan.

MEAL BY MEAL: BREAKFAST

In the morning, break your fast

Start your day off right with green vegetables and/or juices of alkalizing foods. When you wake up, you want to cleanse, not clog. For example, try vegetable broth or low-sugar juices.

Monday

Steamed broccoli with olive oil and lemon juice.

Miso soup and spinach and fresh greens with lemon and lime juice and Udo's Choice Perfected Oil Blend.

Tuesday

Open-faced avocado sandwich on toasted sprouted bread with avocado, tomato and seasoning (e.g., Mrs. Dash)

Vegetable juice (blend of carrot, celery, parsley and wheatgrass juice)

Wednesday

Roasted vegetable broth soup (diced courgette and yellow squash) and green salad with crunchy chow mein noodles and green peas

Basmati rice with sliced avocado and tomato with lemon juice

Thursday

Tomato, cucumber and avocado salad with olive oil and lemon juice

Mix of fresh melons and/or grapefruit (after 30 days of healthful living and cleansing, and only on an empty stomach)

Friday

Stir-fry broccoli with sesame oil, Bragg Liquid Aminos, Chinese 5-spice powder, sesame seeds

Basmati rice with broccoli and cauliflower

seasoned with olive oil and real salt and pepper

Saturday

Stir-fry vegetables and hash browns with green peppers and onions

Vegetable juice (a blend of celery, cucumber, parsley and spinach) and tomato, cucumber and avocado salad with olive oil and lemon juice

Sunday

Steamed broccoli with olive oil and lemon juice

Miso soup and cucumber, tomato and avocado salad

PERSONAL

DEVELOPMENT

Health

MEAL BY MEAL: LUNCH

If you're going to eat foods that clog you, like meat and sugar, this is the time to do it.

Then you'll give your body a chance to digest and cleanse itself for the remainder of the day.

Monday

Vegetable wrap (sprouted tortilla with peppers, raw vegetables, sun-dried tomatoes, almonds, etc.)

Grilled courgette, peppers, cauliflower and broccoli over millet

Tuesday

Tuna burger on a sprouted wheat bun with fresh tomato and lettuce and mixed greens salad

Roasted aubergine sandwich on whole wheat focaccia bread with roasted peppers and pesto and tomato-spinach soup

Wednesday

Warm spinach salad with falafel

Chopped salad (finely chopped romaine lettuce, tomato, cucumber, pine nuts, sun-dried tomatoes, chopped herbs, olive oil and basil)

Thursday

Roasted vegetable wrap with hummus and tabbouleh

Nicoise salad (tuna, red-skinned potatoes, green beans, olives, romaine lettuce with lemon dressing)

Friday

Lentil soup with field greens salad and no-yeast crackers

Soft tortilla fish tacos (halibut, vegetables, guacamole and tomato salsa)

Saturday

Vegetable burger on sprouted wheat bun with avocado, lettuce, tomato and sweet potato chips

Ginger/carrot soup with courgette salad (courgette, red leaf and romaine lettuce, radishes and onions with flaxseed oil, real salt and garlic dressing)

Sunday

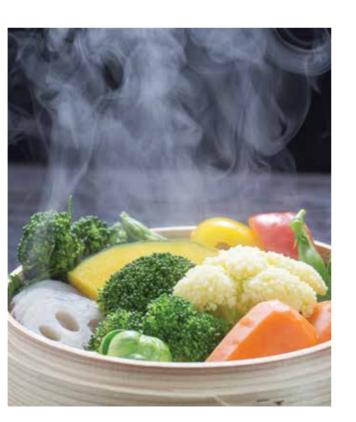
Vegetarian chilli and yellow squash

Salad wrap in a pita with vegetables and hummus

Child's play

Some yummy and fun ideas for a brown-bag lunch or afternoon snack:

Mini tortilla rollups with hummus and veggies
Pre-made salad bags of spinach, carrots, cucumbers and walnuts with lemon
Cut-up celery with a small contained of almond butter for dipping



MEAL BY MEAL: DINNER

Eat several hours before you retire

Sleep should be a restful state; you don't want your body working overtime during the night to digest your food (resulting in a fitful night of sleep). In addition, don't eat cooked foods late at night — instead make your snack something fresh and easier to digest.

Monday

Grilled halibut in pesto sauce with asparagus and tomato, cucumber and avocado salad

Curried tofu and vegetables (peppers, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, onion, garlic, etc.) with wild rice

Tuesday

Grilled salmon, asparagus, spinach salad and lemon tofu cheesecake

Cream of broccoli soup (with soy milk) and roasted vegetable wrap

Wednesday

Vegetable stir-fry seasoned with Bragg Liquid Aminos, wild rice and miso soup

Vegetable fajitas with guacamole and salsa, gazpacho soup and mixed greens salad with clover sprouts, pine nuts, herbs, roasted peppers and olive oil

Thursday

Minestrone soup and spaghetti squash with a tomato-basil sauce

Baked salmon with olive oil, rosemary, salt and pepper, sautéed spinach with garlic and green salad with olive oil and lemon juice

Friday

Split pea soup and soft tortilla fish tacos with lettuce, tomato, guacamole and salsa (optional: soy sour cream)

Wonton soup (no egg, no mushrooms), Szechwan shrimp and snap peas with black bean sauce (no Monosodium Glutamate)

Saturday

Grilled vegetable pizza with rice mozzarella and tomato sauce on a yeast-free crust

Lentil soup with pita chips and a mixed greens salad (baby greens, flax seeds, lentil sprouts, tomato, cucumber)

Sunday

Broiled herbed mahi mahi, vegetable medley and baby greens salad with flaxseeds, lemon juice and olive oil

Rice or spelt pasta in pesto sauce with cabbage, carrots and pine nuts, garlic toast and mixed greens salad with tomato, cucumber, flaxseeds and avocado

Try this...

Add some zing to your water with a slice of lemon or a bit of mint. These small touches will awaken your taste buds and help cleanse your body.





Self-help Spreading the risk

PERSONAL Development

Gemma Rose tries to make the most out of expat life by devising a strategy to cope with its highs and lows

h Bruxelles ie t'adore! ave been : Bruxelloise for well over three years now and although I won't go as far as to say that Brussels is my spiritual home, it's definitely got a hold over me. But believe it or not, not all expats feel the same way as do about Brussels. Maybe it's the nonexistent customer service: the smell of pee on boulevard Anspach: or perhaps it's because of the insurmountable strata

of bureaucracy, to cater for the gargantuan population of one million people.

Some expats tend to focus on the negative aspects of Brussels living without giving this charming city a proper chance. I met one expat who would hop on the Eurostar any chance he would get, another who had spent seven years in Brussels and hadn't yet mastered ordering a drink in French and a woman who spent a lot of time comparing Brussels unfavourably to her hometown, Vienna.

I started to think about the deeper reasons as to why people felt this way about the city – and these three people were certainly no exception.



Having gotten pretty well-acquainted with the Eurobubble environment, I noticed that whenever there was a holiday, the European quarter would empty out quicker than a run on an Argentine bank in the 1990s. Airports and trains stations would be crammed with expats, trying to make a break for the border.

From observation and enquiry over the years, I think one of the reasons why some expats don't tend to feel settled or at home here is due to this Eurobubble. One can spend their whole time life completely absorbed in it and separate to Belgian society. Since Brussels has a large EU community and the lingua franca is English, with so many services catered for expats, it is

PERSONAL Development

Self-help

very easy to live here without ever having much or any contact with the native languages, Belgians or Belgian society.

The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology published in 2012 a study conducted jointly by Tel Aviv University, Northwestern University and INSEAD. The study found that to bolster creative and professional success, merely living abroad was insufficient. Such success depended on both identifying with one's native culture as well as that of the host culture simultaneously. "Unlike patterns of cultural identification in which individuals endorse only one of the two cultures, bicultural identification requires individuals to take into account and combine the perspectives of both old and new cultures." explains Dr. Carmit Tadmor of TAU's Recanati School of Business in a consequent Science Daily article, "Over time, this information processing capability, or 'integrative complexity'. becomes a tool for making sense of the world and will help individuals perform better in both creative and professional domains."

Does the absence of biculturalism play a role in as to why some expats don't like living here? Dr Tadmor notes that being bicultural is not easy – and sticking with expats is both comfortable and safe – but biculturalism is the more enriching in the long run: "The road to biculturalism is fraught with internal conflicts, in which two cultural identities struggle to coexist. It's much easier to surround yourself with your expat community than to straddle two separate worlds. But bypassing the conflicts means giving up the best benefits. Integrative complexity, which is responsible for creative and professional success, evolves through the repetitive resolution of these internal conflicts."

Integrating oneself in Belgian society not only makes you successful, it can also act as a safeguarding device against the heartbreak of expat friends leaving. At least your Belgian friends will be sticking around. Yet to miss out on expat friendships because of the inevitably that one of you will leave is also a missed opportunity. An American friend recounted to me that her neighbours didn't want to get too close to her because she would leave in a



" THE EXPAT EXPERIENCE IS ABOUT OPENNESS AND FLEXIBILITY "

couple of years! Even if these neighbours could be reproached for their attitude, I sympathize with it since they too may have had their heart broken. Like with any strategy, I recommend spreading the risk by mixing up your portfolio of friends: Belgians, short-term and long-term expats.

Acceptance is the antidote to so many of life's ups and downs and here it is no exception. Accept that people come and go; that Brussels is not Paris, London, or Vienna; and that the annoying things that you left behind will still pop up in your host country (e.g. unavoidable bills, unavailable plumbers, unreliable men, etc.).

Making the most out of the expat experience is about openness and flexibility. By being so, you may become more creative at work and at play; discover a whole new world or change your perspective. You may even be just a tad more accepting of that stench on boulevard Anspach.

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DEVELOPMENT **TTIP: A silver bullet** or a Trojan horse?

PERSONAL

Gerry Callaghan wonders if this four letter plan really will be the answer to our economic problems

Politics



" THE AGREEMENT **AIMS TO** INFLUENCE WORLD TRADE **RULES**"

he Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is peddled as a cure for the current financial stagnation plaquing the US and Europe. It is heralded as a way of boosting employment and foster economic growth, while cutting the costs of doing business and offering European citizens "more choice". Campaigners have raised issues of democracy, transparency, privatization and deregulation. Despite widespread opposition, and no public or national parliamentary consultation, the EU is pressing ahead with the deal.

The main purpose of TTIP is to minimize discrepancies in transatlantic rules, regulations and standards on food and consumer product safety, environmental protection, biotechnology and toxic chemicals management, financial services and banking, domestic regulation of services, pharmaceutical patent terms, alongside other policy areas. EU and US governments will retain a "right to regulate" but this will be at odds with the overall objective of reducing barriers to investment for multinational corporations.

According to the TTIP website, the agreement aims to "influence world trade rules" and "protect our values globally", acknowledgement of the EU's higher standards in regulation to ensure citizens are protected against substandard products entering the European market. Rules are more robust in Brussels than in Washington, especially in areas of data protection, toxic chemicals and genetic modification. Therefore, if the EU and US differ but an agreement must be met, then it must

PERSONAL **DEVELOPMENT**



result in one country reducing their standards. Unless, that is, if the countries involved in the deal agree to make the standards higher, well. standard - a move that would result in substantial costs for American companies looking to export to the EU market.

The European Commission has repeatedly tried to reassure the public that EU standards will not be lowered. If the EU manages to retain its higher standards then could we see an exile of European companies looking to take advantage of the lower labour costs, looser environmental regulation and cheaper production costs in the US? Business will still have access to the same EU market but can substantially reduce expenditure. Precedence has been set. Under NAFTA. US companies moved south of the border to Mexico to take advantage of more relaxed labour and environmental regulation resulting in job losses in the US. That may sound beneficial to Mexico through a rise in employment, but since the inception of NAFTA, poverty levels in the country have remained the same, but inequality has risen.

Cecilia Malmström, the EU Trade Commissioner, attempted to reassure citizens that the deal would not lead to the privatization of their public services by saying that "governments do not have to open up any of their public services markets, such as publiclyfunded health services, to private operators if they do not want to, and that should they choose to do so, there is nothing to prevent them reversing this decision in future". However,

through TTIP, foreign and domestic companies will be granted the right to legally challenge a state under the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism. The arbitration proceedings take place in secret, even though public interest is hugely affected, because states can be ordered to make large compensation payments at considerable cost to taxpayers. If a government makes a decision in the public interest but this results in a disadvantage or a loss in profit then ISDS would allow companies to sue for compensation. At the

moment the Swedish energy giant Vattenfall is suing the German government for its decision to withdraw from nuclear energy and is claiming 3.7bn euros in damages. This will, therefore, alter the way policies are formulated resulting in a loss of democratic principles as it may deter attempts to formulate policy in the public interest. It affords investors the luxury of applying pressure on policy decisions through the threat of costly proceedings.

At the time, widespread opposition to NAFTA fell on deaf ears in each of the ratifving countries. The EU is in danger of doing the same; that is, rushing ahead with the deal despite strong opposition. Not only did anti-EU parties make huge gains at the last EU elections, but the election was later confirmed as having the lowest voter turnout since it began in 1979. The EU cannot afford to further disconnect itself from the electorate. Previously, anti-EU rhetoric was largely confined to the Right, however pushing ahead with TTIP and ignoring the environmental and social concerns of the Left will create a headache for the EU on both sides of the political spectrum.

Despite concerns surrounding the deal, in a speech to parliament. German Chancellor Angela Merkel said that the deal would reap "enormous economic benefits" and will therefore go ahead. Merkel said that Berlin was still aiming to reach a framework for a comprehensive trade deal between the Europe and the US by the end of 2015.

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Discover a dream investment

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Investing with people on your side

James Drew talks with Jean-Marc Michelet and Yves Colot, the two key players in global asset manager Eurinvest Partners, based in Luxembourg and Brussels.

Money

ounded in 1992 in Luxembourg, and regulated by the CSSF (Commission de Surveillance du Secteur Financier), Eurinvest Partners (EIP) is an independent and privately owned global asset manager. with head offices in Luxembourg and their Belgian branch, which was opened in July 2014.

So, if you were after asset management, what exactly would you be after, for those who are interested, and those who have vet to dip their toe into the world of personal finance management and speculation?

CEO Jean-Marc Michelet puts it simply: "We are a pure asset manager, and we are able to concentrate all our energy and resources on our core business. We believe this is key to our performance."

And just what is their 'core business'? Essentially, Eurinvest are active managers of financial assets, offering four flexible asset-allocation strategies through discretionary or advisory mandates for private and institutional clients. These entail:

1. A flexible asset allocation strategy (Hotep Global Flexible).

2. A flexible stock picking strategy with a bias on familyowned holdings (managed accounts). 3. A structured bonds strategy (Global Opportunities and Global Opportunities High). 4. A bond alternative based on very short-term options strategies (Solid Future Vega Delta).

Any clearer? As Belgian branch manager Yves Colot explains: "We work in close partnership with first-class custodian banks and use first-hand research to make our investment decisions."

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PERSONAL Development

Money

experienced professionals from various banking backgrounds (including senior investment bankers, senior private bankers, head of derivatives and structured solutions) and their long experience in financial markets has convinced the team that active asset allocation is the key to success in present and future volatile markets.

As Yves adds: "You must remember, mine and Jean-Marc's generation has only really known financial crisis after financial crisis, from 2008 onwards, and I think this is what gives us the edge, to understand just how volatile the markets can become, and thus make our investment decisions accordingly."

Both bring 15 years of experience at Bank Degroof to their Eurinvest roles, and both have served their time in the trading rooms and encourage a simple, transparent and very flexible asset-allocation approach based on selecting, among others, multinational familyowned holding companies.

"We both came from large bank backgrounds," says Jean-Marc, "and we both realized around the same time that the personal touch was being lost in investing with such financial institutions. We realized that what was most important to investors was knowing that they had people on their side.

"Now, we tend to attract family-based investors, who need to know that their concerns are our concerns. We have a large team of experts, so are able to devote time and effort to individual clients, something that is increasingly lost these days with the large banks.

"We can examine each situation, each turn in the market as it occurs, and then, only then, make the very best decisions for our clients."

Yves chips in: "Don't forget, as I say, we are very much the crisis generation, so we have found that we have had to adapt a very flexible approach – in the late 90s, we had the internet bubble, which was very soon to burst, then three years later we had 9/11, then of course we have had the credit crunch from 2008 onwards, and we now have Greece, which is going on today.

"So, we are talking very, very volatile markets, so we have a flexible approach; our client usually gives us a mandate, a flexible mandate, which means that we can take risks from 20-80% equity exposure. We have people with experience of private banking and asset management on our team, but the key is this – we will take risks but, if we know it is time to get out, we will get out."

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A still-young country comprising many radically different cultural identities was a natural breeding ground

the state of the second second second

Motoring

Luxury: A sustainable approach

Martin Banks spent the day been driven in a Land Rover to meet some eco-conscious entrepreneurs



he link between a €100,000 car and a Flemish camp site may not seem immediately obvious. But, contrary to what you might think, there is rather more connecting the two than meets the eye. Here's a clue: Ecology.

Respect for the environment is at the heart of the said camp site – it's rather chic, up market 'glamping' (glamourous camping), and the same applies to the latest model from Range Rover.

The glamorous 'Eco-Chique' glamping, at Westouter, near Ypres, seeks to promote an ecologically-friendly approach to holidaying and camping. It does so, for instance, by using only recycled water and local products. Even the grass is allowed to grow as that is considered better for the environment.

Range Rover, the most luxurious Land Rover, is

doing much the same, albeit in a slightly different way with its new Hybrid and Sport models. A luxury brand it may be, but this doesn't mean these vehicles, both with off-road capabilities, cannot incorporate the latest environmentally-friendly features. And they very much do.

The Hybrid, for example, boasts a new, smallerthan-normal electric engine that only kicks in when you accelerate. This energy-saving facility is good for one's pocket and the environment alike. About 600,000 vehicles roll off the famous carmaker's assembly lines each year and ecology is fast becoming a top priority for the company, which is now, after an unsuccessful flirtation with Ford, owned by an Indian conglomerate.

Range Rover and Eco-Chique are not alone when it comes to combining luxury and

ecology. One other Belgian company doing exactly the same thing is Gribani, which produces exclusive small hand-made leather accessories such as wallets, key rings, belts and I-phone cases. The unique selling point here is that the leather it uses is naturally tanned, meaning that chemicals are not used at any part of the production process. The items it produces at a factory in Tuscany are simple in design but, according to German-born Grit Nijhof, who co-founded the company with her husband in 2010, "very careful to respect nature."

Across West Flanders is another prime example of how a quality product can be made whilst fully respecting the environment. Entre-deuxmonts (so named because it is situated between red and black hills) is a 13-hectare vineyard run by winemaker Yves Bacquaert and his son Martin.

As Martin explains, their "environmental protection" business model is not dissimilar to Range Rover.

"Our belief is that all of us should try to work in a sustainable way," he says, adding, "and with everything we do here we are trying to minimize our ecological footprint".

How do they do that? Well, Yves and Martin use the lightest possible bottles for their white and sparkling wines, only solar energy is used in all their "energy efficient" buildings and all production is free from the use of insecticides or pesticides. "It all makes for sustainable winegrowing," says 66-year-old Yves.

At present, Entre-deux-monts produces 30,000 bottles of wine annually. Some 30% is sold on the estate itself, 30% to restaurants and 30% to specialized wine shops.

Yves, who planted his first vines on the site ten years ago, expects this to rise to 60,000 bottles per annum.

His near neighbour is the go-ahead Robert Du Wolf who runs the aforementioned Eco-Chique which comprises 10 'domes', or tents, in a spacious Flemish meadow. Opened four years ago, the site is primarily a holiday destination for couples (and families) but has increasingly become attractive for business clients who also want to sample its eco-friendly approach to tourism.

48-year-old Dutch-born Robert, who quit his staid white-collar management job in pursuit of The Great Outdoors, is particularly keen to promote the site's dependence on a special natural water filter system which produces water for everything from the wellness centre to sanitary units.

"Like a hotel we have a swimming pool for guests but we call it a bio pool. Its water is so pure and natural that even the birds drink from it," he says. Anyone tempted to try this hotel in the nature (motto: "glamping with a smile") should beware: Eco-Chique is already heavily booked for summer.

On a smaller scale, but still flying the flag for the environment, is Eduard Bartels who has produced an eco-novelty – heated outdoor benches. Apart from being rather useful in our inclement weather, the 'Eddyboy' benches are heated (up to 30°C) from water which is sourced from things like dishwashers and central heating.

The stylish benches are intended both for the catering and hospitality sectors and private use. Eduard says: "Many of us are familiar with those outdoor heated appliances used in restaurants and cafes but I think this offers something new and different. The costs are low and is it also energy-friendly so I guess it ticks all the boxes."

Building company EX-IT is yet another striking example of a Belgian company showcasing an excellent version of eco-luxury. In this case, the end result is what the company calls "energy neutral" buildings. In layman's language, this means newly-constructed buildings that incorporate energy-efficient materials, such as solar power and geothermal heating systems.

Such materials are less sensitive to the passage of time and, as such, allow its

Motoring

constructions to enjoy a longer lifespan. One typical example is an EX-IT guest house at Lokeren, constructed by the company and where the use and even colour of its building materials are in perfect harmony with the local wooded surroundings.

Range Rover is keen to highlight the efforts it and companies like EX-IT are making to protect our increasingly-threatened climate. Its large, luxury four-wheel drive sport utility vehicle is the flagship model of the Tata Group. Launched in 1970, it is now in its fourth generation.

The reduced weight of the new Hybrid model (average price €100,000) reduces consumption. It is made, mostly, from aluminum which also extends the lifespan of each vehicle. Even interior features, such as the carefully hand-stitched leather dashboard, seek to be eco-friendly.

Isabelle Michiels, PR Manager for Jaguar Land Rover Belux, said: "We are very proud to introduce the Hybrid models on Range Rover and Range Rover Sport which each have impressive consumption figures of 6.4 litres/100km.

"Our commitment to be a sustainable business reaches far beyond the improvement of the environmental performances of our cars. Land Rover invests in sustainability on all levels of its business and proves that luxury and environmental responsibility do not exclude one another. It is a real pleasure to tell this story with the help of Gribani, Eco Chique, Eddyboy, Entre Deux Monts and EX-IT, all beautiful luxury brands led by passionate people with a heart for the environment."

Comparisons between Range Rover and some of its informal, eco-friendly "partners" may, at first, seem tenuous and, of course, firms like Eddyboy can only dream of becoming the design icons of Range Rover. Even so, each in their own way is trying to bring a sustainable approach to the way they operate and that can only be a good thing.



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Beauties and heroes

LIFE OF

Sarah Walsh gives us the lowdown on five of Antwerp's foremost fashion houses

ntwerp has ranked among Europe's foremost fashion destinations since the early 1980s, when a group of avant-garde designers known at the Antwerp Six made their debut with raw, simple designs that challenged the loud, decorative aesthetic of the new decade. European journalists at the time seemed surprised that such an influential sensibility could emerge from such a quiet nation, but Vogue columnist Suzy Menkes wrote in 2013 that they shouldn't have been: Belgium, a still-young country comprising many radically different cultural identities, was a natural breeding ground for striking new interpretations of fashion favorites. The deconstructive designs of the Antwerp Six — who would later gain a plus-one in Martin Margiela — distinguished themselves through the incorporation of recycled materials, raw seams, oversizing and what Menkes called "a cerebral attitude" toward couture.

Many of the Six later established their company headquarters in Antwerp, and the city remains a thriving hub for all things elegant and eclectic. Here's a look at some of the haute houses that call the city home:

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GERETTI

JEWELLERY & DIAMONDS

Dries van Noten

Despite his international acclaim, the founder of this house retains a refreshingly anti-elitist approach to fashion: nearly all of the bright, colourful designs that appear on his runways are available for retail purchase. DvN's celebrity client list includes Queen Mathilde, Maggie Gyllenhaal and Cate Blanchett, but ordinary trendsetters (with some cash to burn, of course) can patronize his Antwerp location Het Modepaleis. *www.driesvannoten.be*



Photo © Dries van Noten Men 2015



Antwerp fashion

Raf Simons

After running his own Antwerp-based fashion label for 14 years, Simons took on a series of consulting positions at other firms that ultimately led to an appointment as Christian Dior's creative director. Much of his attention now revolves around creating collections for fashion's coveted prima donna brands, but his namesake brand now serves as an outlet for the designer's more experimental offerings — now including furniture! - www.rafsimons.com



Photo © Raf Simons for Adidas

Ann Demeulemeester

Demeulemeester lost its founder, one of the original Antwerp Six, to retirement in 2013, but still headquarters in the city under the management of Sebastien Meunier. Ann Demeulemeester, once described as "fashion's gothic poet", focused on creating simple designs in stark colors - mostly black, white and red. Despite her departure, her namesake brand continues to produce minimalistic designs that utilize draping and layering to create elegant silhouettes. www.anndemeulemeester.be





Wijnant is one of the younger designers on our list, but

International Woolmark Prize (other winners of which include Yves Saint-Laurent and Karl Lagerfeld) in 2013.

and his brand now deftly blends cultural influences to create one-of-a-kind collections with a particular focus

his position is well-earned: he took home the

Photo © Dirk Van Saene Men 201

Christian Wijnants

Dirk van Saene

Van Saene named his first shop Beauties and Heroes, and the lofty title captures his philosophy as a designer. He produces a small number of painstakingly designed pieces each year, splitting his time between fashion and other creative endeavours such as ceramics and painting. - www.dirkvansaene.com

> " A CEREBRAL ATTITUDE TOWARD COUTURE "



Photo © Christian Wijnants Woolmark Prize

Beauty

Hello summer!

Our beauty expert **Delphine Stefens** has been looking out for what looks after our skin

s temperatures are heating up and clothes are coming off, don't let skin damage and premature aging be a fun spoiler. Whether you relax in the shade or soak up the sun during a business lunch or a pool party, wear sunscreen and lots of it.

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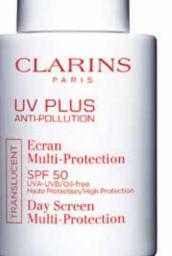
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Beauty

Summer at the beach

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Dress: Sister Jane @ Francis Ferent Dior Svelte body desire - integral perfection care

Dress: Diane von furstenberg Eyes: Eyes Reviver - Backtage pro's illuminating neutrals eye palette 001 Dior iconic overeurl - spectacular volume & curling professional maseara Lips: Rouge Dior baume 628 Palais

Bikini top: Eres Shorts: Sister Jane @ Francis Ferent Jewel: Wouters and Hendrix Tennis shoes: Adidas Dior Hydra Life-pro-youth Sorbet creme Dior Svelte body desire - integral perfection care

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Suit & shoes: Zadig & Voltaire Ring: Dinh van Impression collection Jewel: Wouters&Hendrix Bikini: Hermès Top: Sister Jane @ Francis Ferent Ring : dinh van Impression collection Dior Svelte body desire integral perfection care

ALC: NO.

Total look: Parosh @ Cachemire Coton Soie

Silk Shirt Stella Jean @ Cachemire Coton Soie Trousers: Diane von furstenberg

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Total look: Parosh @ Cache Gre Coton Soie

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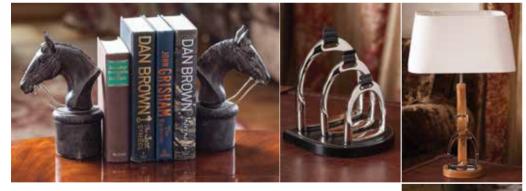
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Emily Blunt: The laid-back movie star

LIFE OF



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Together chats to Emily Blunt about taking on a Mexican hitman

mily Blunt has always had a relaxed attitude towards her acting career. She doesn't take herself that seriously and she doesn't live or die with every role. That has made her time as a top Hollywood actress all the more enjoyable and that is why she seems to be smiling all the time. She is comfortable in all sorts of film genres and roles, and films like *Edge of Tomorrow, Looper*, and *The Adjustment Bureau* have shown that she can play very determined and strong women.

In her new film *Sicario*, (Mexican slang for hitman) which enjoyed its world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival. Blunt plays FBI agent Kate Macer who is transferred from the hostage rescue division into a covert CIA paramilitary unit assigned to wage war against the Mexican drug cartels. Is this confirmation that Blunt thrives on tough female roles?

"I get told that a lot," Blunt observed. "But I don't really see them as tough. I think there are plenty of strong women out there and I don't think they can be compartmentalized as being one thing. 'You're tough.' What, because I have a gun? I found (my *Sicario*) character strangely quite damaged and vulnerable and she is struggling with this role of being a female cop. Certainly, the morally questionable things that she is having to experience with these guys. It's not safe. And you see this girl going through pretty much the worst three days of her life and trying to maintain face through most of it. After doing one scene I couldn't sleep for three or four days afterwards. It was a tough story to tell."

The 32-year-old Emily Blunt initially hesitated about taking on the role because as a new mother her "head wasn't in that space" but ultimately Quebec film director Denis Villeneuve Interview





(Prisoners, Incendies) convinced her to take on the difficult role when they met four weeks after she had given birth to her daughter, Hazel, now 16 months old. "I was feeling the opposite of the character (and) it seemed like a bad fit for me to be doing at that point in my life. I thought: This is a really good to put (this character) out there for my daughter for her to see. It's not only a really fantastic role for a woman, it's an intelligent argument."

Josh Brolin co-stars as Matt Graver, her FBI boss determined to unleash hell on the Juarez cartel leaders, while Benicio Del Toro plays a ruthless agent and master torturer/assassin.

Emily Blunt lives in Los Angeles with her husband John Krasinski (*The Office*) and their I never thought the baby daughter Hazel. They were married four **"I'M ENJOYING**

They were married four years ago at their friend George Clooney's villa on Lake Como after Krasinski has starred in Clooney's football comedy, Leatherheads,

Together: Emily, what were your impressions of your FBI agent character in Sicario?

Emily Blunt: She's a very complex woman. She has many different sides to her. One aspect to her personality is this steely exterior and this strong sense of justice and approaches her work with great integrity and serious sense of purpose. But she also has a shy, lonely side and she has to find the strength to deal with suddenly being thrown into this totally new assignment. She finds herself dealing with this incoherent and very violent world (of the Mexican drug cartels) and she feels very vulnerable. She was never trained for this kind of a job and she finds that unsettling.

What were your impressions when you were offered the role?

When I read the script I saw immediately that it had an uncompromising and dark tone. It's an interesting movie where you have complex female character like Kate and it's wonderful to play someone with a moral quandary. It's also unusual to see a film present this kind of a female character. Even though there are a lot of women working in law enforcement, you rarely get to see their lives explored the way this film does.

The part was originally written for a man. Were you aware of that?

Yes, I knew about that, but it didn't affect the way I played the part. This woman experiences the three worst days of her life and tries to hold up under the pressure. She is very vulnerable and struggles as a woman in a very masculine environment.

I never thought that I needed to make her

SEEMS TO BE

EVOLVING"

"I'M ENJOYING
 MY LIFE AND THE
 WAY MY CAREER
 appear tougher to suit the film. Of course, in her job, there are more men than women, and she has to adapt to that environment.

Did you speak to other female FBI agents in preparing for the film? Yes. Lhad a friend who

Yes. I had a triend who had a connection with the FBI, and I spoke to

three or four female FBI agents to see what that life as a woman in a male-dominated organization would be like. They helped me understand how your marriage suffers, how much sleep you get, and what your emotions are when you prepare for a SWAT team assault. What was also interesting is that I discovered that these women are like me: they go home at night and watch Godford Park and Downton Abbey! (Smiles) They are great women. You want to have a beer with them and those discussions helped me identify with this agent.

Benicio Del Toro plays a very fierce kind of character. What was it like working with him? I have known Benicio for eight years and we had already worked together (The Wolfman, 2010). I also knew Josh (Brolin, who plays her boss in *Sicario*) and it was a real pleasure





working with them. It's a dark story, but we had great fun on the set. Denis Villeneuve (the director) was like the head of a kindergarten and had to tell us to shut up all the time! (Laughs)

You've said in the past that acting is one part of your life and you keep your perspective as a woman and mother very separate. What drew you to acting as a profession?

It's hard to say. I was originally set on going to university when I was 18 but then I got a call from an agent who had seen me in a school play and wanted to represent me. That's how it all began.

But my interest in acting probably grew out of that fact that I once had a really bad speech impediment (she stuttered) as a child, so I used to do impressions all the time, mimicking family members or teachers. I found whenever I did a sillv voice. I could speak more fluently. I had a teacher who saw that and encouraged me to take acting lessons and that helped even more. There

was something quite liberating about being able to throw yourself into another character, not having to worry about whatever was going to come out of your mouth next...

I confess, though, that being on the phone can still be agony for me sometimes, but drama classes were an enormous help and I do recommend them. I've also been part of the American Institute for Stuttering for years, too, and I always point people in their direction; they have done some remarkable, revolutionary work, for children and adults.

You seem to have a very positive and gregarious attitude towards life. What's your secret? (Laughs) I don't know. I suppose I get that from my family, I grew up in a house where we were always entertaining each other. But apart from that, I'm enjoying my life and the way my career seems to be evolving. I don't find myself suffering very much anxiety now about waiting for the next job to come around.

When you're starting out, you're so determined to get the really good stuff, the best roles that are out there. So it's very reassuring to find yourself in a position where you are able to be part of really good films and do interesting work. But it's also important to have a life apart from your work and that's the best kind of balance you can have to things.

"IT'S ALSO

UNUSUAL TO SEE

A FILM PRESENT

THIS KIND OF A

FEMALE

CHARACTER "

What's the downside of celebrity for you?

It's not celebrity per se, but the fact that as an actress you're always expected to look perfect, wear the latest design and always look your best. Sometimes you want to wear a T-shirt and jeans when you go to the grocery store or to a café and read a book or magazine.

You've described yourself in the past

as having both a practical and a dreamer side?

I have this very practical, rational side which enables me to take stock of things and make good decisions without letting emotions get the better of you. I find it's a good quality to have, especially when you're making your way in a very unpredictable kind of business. But I also have a very hopeful and optimistic way of looking at the world. I like to dream big and I think as an actor you need to have a vivid imagination and throw yourself into your characters with complete abandon. So you need to dream big but also be able to organize things and work to realise those dreams.

In many of your films you come off as



Interview

very sassy and energetic. Is that an apt description of you?

(Laughs) I'm quite a positive and energetic person although I'm also overly sensitive. I'm someone who will start sobbing at different moments in sad or especially romantic films at all the key sentimental moments. Even when I watch the news or an athletic competition I can get very wound up and emotionally involved in the moment. I also worry too much about all sorts of nonsense but I won't tell you about what!

You're someone who's known for having a very ironic sense of humour and relaxed attitude about the film business. Is that your way of cutting through all the hype and superficiality of Hollywood?

Yeah, and even though it can creep up on you sometimes, I find it quite easy to disengage from it. The job is what I do, it's not who I am. It never has been and so I feel like I do have somewhat of a jewelled existence in some way. I've always managed to see acting as a very magical job that I'm very lucky to do. Some of the bullshit you have to develop a thick skin for so that it bounces off you, you know?

As a young mother, what makes you happiest these days?

If I were to choose a perfect day, actually, it'd probably be something very quiet, having a barbecue with my little one and my husband and a few good friends. And a margarita. I do love a good margarita. ●











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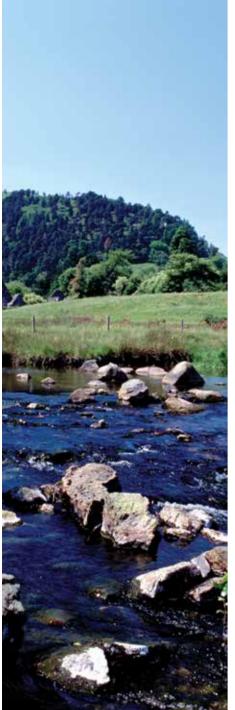
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A weekend in Dublin

Last weekend Ava Strowel went in search of the black stuff

ot only does Dublin offer a delicious pint of traditional lrishness, Irish society has entwined itself with other cultures, creating the illusion of a society living in a magical dimension.

Saturday

10:08

LIFE

LEISURE

OF

My plane had landed in Dublin airport, and I couldn't wait to begin exploring. I got my suitcase and headed towards the exit. I then jumped into a traditional European taxi to find a not so typical greeting from the cheerful driver, who exclaimed: "Top of the morning, pet!" It was official; I had plunged into a mysterious, yet enchanting world where strangers gleefully greeted each other with beaming smiles, so I decided I would head quickly to my hotel.

The Clarence hotel was the perfect place to begin my journey - it offered a mixture of archaic and modern features, and also generated a rock n' roll vibe. The staff were helpful and appeared happy to help their clientele. I travelled to the top floor to find my room; it had a cute terrace where I could enjoy my morning coffee. The view from the balcony was breathtaking. The river Liffey was only a few metres in front of my room. The city was beginning to awaken, as the birds created a full-blown orchestra of symphonies.

12:42

I began my weekend like any other typical tourist. The first activity on my agenda a visit the Guinness Storehouse, near St. James' Gate. On a warm summer day this journey could have been an enjoyable walk, however, in winter's peek month the 22-minute walk was not ideal. I decided I would take public transport, which is always an intriguing way to come into contact with a new culture.

I was so excited - I felt like I was a ten-year-old waiting for Christmas Day. Except in this case I was excited about tasting Guinness and not about a chubby man who would leave presents in my house. The Storehouse's Brewers' Dining Hall has kept its Irish roots, with a wood-covered interior influenced by the 18th and 19th century. Since I wanted to experience a complete Irish lunch, I wallowed in the luxury of (obviously) ordering a Guinness and the Storehouse's signature Beef and Guinness stew, served with mash. It was absolutely delicious.

13:35

I headed towards the main desk and embarked on my guided tour of the Storehouse. The tour opened by leading us inside the largest pint glass in the world, the Atrium. Founder Arthur Guinness signed this huge crystal cylinder 9,000 years ago, which marked the pioneering moment of the Guinness journey. I was then informed the glass could hold 14.3 million pints of Guinness, followed by a cringe-worthy joke by our guide who implied all Irishmen (thus including himself) could easily drink that.

15:00

My tour was now over, however, I had still planned to learn how to pour a pint at the "pour your perfect pint" bar. After six steps I became a certified master of pouring pints. That's a qualification I never thought I could include on my résumé!

16:45

My next stop was the Trinity College Library to visit the Book of Kells Exhibition. I took the bus 40 direction Finglas. The college grounds are great, once again the Dublin community had retained its 18th century roots in the design. The Trinity library is like a palace with volume after and volume of works of art - the Gothic halls are filled with shelves of books and the spiraled stairs are immense It's the perfect place to display a very famous medieval manuscript. The Book of Kells is a religious manuscript written in the 9th century revealing colourful art on the life of Jesus Christ.



Sunday 9:30

I arrived at the Glendalough Monastic site and I booked a guided tour so I could have a complete contextual understanding. The Glendalough Monastic site, founded in the 6th century by St. Kevin, it is set in a peaceful rural area in a valley and is decorated by lakes and wildlife. Through generations the Monastic has remained a tall round tower and churches, and is a Dublin must-see.

12:00

I spontaneously decided to take a scenic drive over the Sally Gap in Wicklow National Park, a secluded area allowed me to reflect upon my thoughts and enjoy a moment of calm distraction away from urban Dublin. The mountains were gorgeous, and the view was splendid - this was perhaps the highlight of my trip offering an opportunity to enjoy a rural environment just an hour away from the lively city.

20:15

Back in the city centre, I made my way to the famous Beoga & Big Band at the Button Factory. Known for traditional Irish folk music mixed with different genres, creating an innovative and modern beat, the band have toured the world, performing in festivals and collecting awards. You might not yet be a major fan of the fiddle, the bodhràn or the uilleann pipes but the Beoga is a completely new and exciting sound. Add a pint of the black stuff and it makes quite a heady mix to finish off your weekend.

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Advertorial

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Belambra is a portmanteau of two French words: 'belle' meaning beautiful and 'ambra' for amber. The name evokes images of comfort and opulence — which are exactly what this travel network strives to provide.

Belambra Clubs began its life in 1959, when the concept of luxury vacation villages was shiny and new, as Village Vacances Familie (VVF). Rather than spreading its efforts thinly over multiple countries and continents like its spiritual cousin Club Med, VVF focused on creating sumptuous year-round holiday experiences amid the diverse landscapes of France — from the snowcapped Pyrenees mountain range to the northern river lands and urban bustle of the Île-de-France region. Rebranded as Belambra Clubs in 2007, the company now manages 58 resort villages and hotels within French borders.

Whether visitors hope to find a peaceful holiday on their own or travel with the whole family in tow, Belambra's variety of travel options is sure to provide an experience that matches your unique needs. Your stay may range from a few quick days to a few weeks; either way, you'll find a location and a service that fits your plans. The price of a week-long holiday can range



from €959 at the most luxurious options to €49 for the most economical.

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The highest level of Belambra holiday housing. Each of the 13 Selection Clubs —many of which are located directly on the seaside provides extensive dining options, fullyfurnished suites and a variety of clubsponsored activities, including daily sports and evening entertainment. Selection Club locations include the Giens peninsula (right on the Côte d'Azur), Corsica and Anglet, among others.

Belambra Clubs

The standard tier, with 29 locations for travellers to choose from. Belambra Clubs offer many of the same services as their Selection counterparts at a lower rate, with a greater diversity of settings. Vacationers hoping to stay at one of these resorts can select from options in Brittany, Normandy, the Atlantic Coast and the Ardèche.

Each location within these two uppermost tiers hosts extensive options for solo vacations and business retreats, but the company's most prominent focus revolves around families with children. (As the French-language website boasts, Belambra is "the family's favorite holiday".) Each resort includes daytime childcare options for infants and toddlers, customized play areas for older children and special clubs for visiting teenagers to socialize with one another. In this way, adults can enjoy the full extent of what each region has to offer without struggling to take small children to





" THE CONCEPT OF LUXURY VACATION VILLAGES WAS SHINY AND NEW "

formal locations or coax teenagers into activities they might find uninteresting.

The two remaining tiers focus more on travellers who are vacationing alone or with other adults, providing fewer built-in services but more urban locations and generally a greater degree of independence for guests.

Belambra Hotels

The five Belambra Hotels — one of which is located in the heart of Paris — provide meals for guests and common areas in which boarders can relax during the evening.

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Finally, Belambra Residences (of which there are ten) offer the atmosphere and independence of apartment living in locations ranging from the Northern Alps to the Rhône Valley.

Most of these accommodations are available year-round, with special services offered at some depending on the season. Mountainside clubs provide skiing and end-of-year holiday celebrations, including Christmas Eve and New Year's parties, each winter, while summertime visitors can enjoy specially planned tours through historic areas of their chosen region or classes in summer sports like surfing and horseback riding. The full array of activities available depends on the individual location, so potential travellers with a specific wish-list in mind should research and plan ahead to arrange their dream holiday!

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For groups of more than 10 people, discover an adventurous course in different, unique locations. There's a rope bridge, zip line and kayak for 10km, 14km, or 24km routes on the Ourthe. *www.theoutsidersardennes.be*



The Palogne Domain and Durbuy Adventure also offers a river descent. In Durbuy, you can choose between canoeing, rafting or kayaking, and the Domaine de Palogne offers courses for children in July and August! www.palogne.be, www.durbuyaventure.be

Cycling on the water...do you believe it? At Récréalle, you should try the Aqua-bike! This recreation centre is a haven of fun: there's swimming, Electric Quads, a playground, climbing wall, segway, sports and recreational activities! www.recrealle.com

Just imagine – there's Robin Hood archery, nature expeditions, fire-lighting training, treasure hunts, Wild West games...discover Avenature for an unforgettable experience! *www.avenature.be*

And to ensure the smooth running of all these activities, WANT (Wallonia Adventure Nature Tourism) ensures the quality and safety of all services provided by its members, according to strict regulations. So, you can enjoy in complete safety and confidence all of these great locations and activities that will make you into real adventurers!

www.tourismewallonie.be



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LIFE OF LEISURE

Dining

Le Grand Ryeu, Rue Goette, Grandrieu

Dining

June marked the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo and you can retrace the 94km stretch of the Napoleon Road from Beaumont to Waterloo. If you do, be sure to check out this wonderful restaurant.

In a terrifically atmospheric converted farmhouse, chef-owner Alain Boschman conjures up some fantastic gastronomic dishes.

The delicious homemade bread, in a variety of flavours such as apricot, pesto and dried tomatoes, is almost worth a visit on its own. There are four set menus to choose from, each tremendous, including one, 'Plaisir des Papilles', featuring asparagus-related dishes such as cannelloni de thon and mini carré d'agneau. Another, 'Gourmet and Gourmand' features filet de rouget. There are seven or eight courses on each and two set prices (very reasonable considering the high quality) depending on whether wine is included.

The very talented Alain has a Michelen-starred training, and this delightful family restaurant is one of three he runs in the area, plus a hotel in nearby Chimay. He pays close attention to where his products come from and prefers to use locally-sourced ingredients as much as possible.

For those interested in a master class from Alain it is worth bearing in mind that he also runs cookery classes at selected times.

Ably assisted by his partner Sylvie and a welcoming team of young staff, this is fine dining that won't hit you too hard in the pocket. He's had visitors from as far as Brazil (easy to see why) so it is well worth the short excursion



from Brussels, whether you want to retrace 'la Route Napoleon' or not. - *www.legrandryeu.be*

La Cantina Italiana

The emphasis here is on classic Italian dishes but, as the welcoming Italian owner Lorenzo Di Siervi puts it, these are revisited and presented in a particularly innovative and imaginative way.

There is a great range of homemade pasta, including a mouth watering ravioli with truffle), plus delicious salmon, thon, filet d'agneau and medaillion de veau 'Cantina'. Also recommended is the seafood mixed grill and tartare de boeuf. A great choice of hot and cold starters are priced from a mere €9 (mixed bruschetta), so it's all very affordable.

Tasty starters include the classic carpacio de boeuf, scamorza and Vitello Tonnato, a real house speciality. There is also a wonderful wine list, full of excellent Sicilian red and whites.

La Cantina has become extremely popular since opening, and is fully booked most weekends. Groups and families (there's a 'Little People's Plate' at just €10) are welcome.

If you fancy a short trip out of town this summer on the tram or car, head for this place. You are in for a treat. www.lacantinaitaliana.net

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Photo © Domein Kluisberg

What? We make wine in Belgium?

The news is far from being new, but is still a little bit shocking. Belgium, the beer country, also produces wine. Even more, wine was being produced in Belgium before beer. There was even a time where every abbey produced wine and not beer. It was only after the development of the roads that Belgians stopped producing wines (which was easily transportable from France) and moved their entire energy to beer.

Wine in Belaium

(Size: 150ha, 500,000 litres, 70 winemakers.) The Belgian vineyard has the primary characteristic of being very northerly, and thus has a difficult climate, guite cold and without a lot of sun. Therefore, there were only two options left to the Belgian winegrowers; either plant French grape varieties suited to northern vineyards such as Chardonnay or Pinot Noir or plant inter-specific varieties , often developed in Germany, which were created to allow the cultivation of the vine in a colder and wetter climate. The majority of Belgian winegrowers opted for the latter option, growing vines with poetic names such as Helios, solaris and regent.

There are four AOCs in Belgium: Hagelandse wijn, Heuvellandse wijn, Haspengouwse wijn and Côte d'entre Sambre et Meuse

Development

There is a strong development of Belgian wines in quantity and quality. A few years back, they were only a handful of crazy people trying to

LIFE OF LEISURE

Wine of the month: **Belgium**

Wining

Geoffroy van Lede of vin du mois stays very close to home for this month's choice

make wine. Now with the development of know-how the quality has improved, and because people want to eat, and drink locally, the size of the market is growing as well. It has helped the Belgian wine producers to invest and develop in order to compete with some of the best sparkling and white wine in the world. Of course, the quantity stays very small and prices relatively high, but you can have some very good wines! Every year some new initiatives pop, with new ideas, new grapes. I'm looking forward to taste what they will produce!

Of course, as in the neighboring vineyards of Luxembourg or Germany, white wines make the majority of the production. A particular focus is on sparkling wines produced in the traditional method.

Our Selection

Domein Hageling-Bio Cuvée Regent (Red): The best price/quality red wine you can find on the market. Quite close to a pinot noir, it charms with its elegance and finesse. And it's bio!

Domein Kluisberg

Pinot Gris: A real discovery! Once again, a very good price/quality ratio. This wine is suited for all occasions for drinks with family friends. You'll like its fruit and roundness. Drink it very cold.

Find these wines and our subscription concept on our site www.le-vin-du-mois.be or call 0498 586 545

LIFE OF

What's on

What's on Belgium





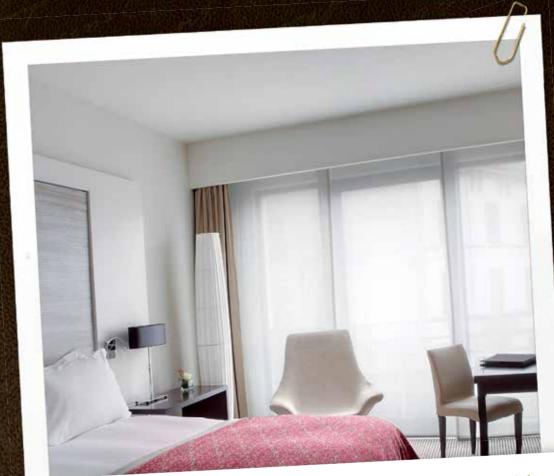
Benjamin Spark

Benjamin Spark is a Franco-Belgian artist born in 1969, who lives and works in Brussels. At 28, he followed drawing training at the National School of Fine Arts in Paris, and then went to perfect it in the United States before settling in Belgium, to devote himself entirely to his art.

Both painter and visual artist, Spark creates phantasmagoric characters from comics, caricature, advertising and ancestral symbols. Spark is one of the driving forces of 'street pop', a movement which is a synthesis of American pop culture and European Urban art. **Until 1 September**. ELV Gallery, Knokke. *www.galleryelv.com*

The Tintin Magazine Rally

Part of The Brussels Comic Strip Festival, which runs from, is organizing the Tintin Rally for the third year in a row. In what has become an essential weekend tradition, the race involving dozens of vintage vehicles will expand this year to more than 80 collector cars. Vintage vehicles found in Tintin Magazine from 1946 to 1988 will stop at the Hergé Museum. The public will then be able to come and admire the cars next to Brussels Park where the Brussels Comic Strip Festival will be in full swing. **4-6 September**. Place des Palais, Brussels Park. *www.museeherge.com*



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www.bozar.be



Scottish Weekend

The Highland Games descend upon the Belgian town of Alden Biesen as 25,000 plaidcovered enthusiasts gather in and around the castle for three days. Tossing the caber and other feats of strength punctuate the day and pipe music fills the nights. 11-13 September. Alden Biesen. www.scottish-weekend.be



Peace revolution

The Peace Revolution European Fellowship focuses on promoting nonviolent actions and aiding individuals to communicate in a peaceful and calm manner, which they believe will lead to a harmonious universal relationship. The event offers numerous activities to achieve this goal, such as yoga, emotional management classes and other group activities. This year, the Revolution starts on 30 August - 5 September Lede, Belgium.

peacerevolution.net



LIFE OF

What's on

What's On Cinema





Picturenose.com's **James Drew** takes his customary pick of the movies being released in the month ahead

Terminator: Genisys

Oh, Lordy, here we go again - let's see if we can keep up, shall we? It is now 2029, and John Connor, leader of the human resistance, leads the war against the machines. At the Los Angeles offensive, John's fears of the unknown future begin to emerge when he is notified by his army unit, Tech-Com, that Skynet will attack him from two fronts, past and future, and will ultimately change warfare forever. On the verge of winning the war against Skynet, Connor sends his trusted lieutenant Kyle Reese back through time to save his mother's life and ensure his own existence. However, Kyle finds the original past changed. In this timeline, a Terminator was sent back in time to kill Sarah Connor as a child and so the Resistance sent their own cyborg back in time to protect her. Of course, the old ally Terminator (Arnold Schwarzenegger) is sent in to help. You will forgive me if this now seems to be officially complete nonsense and more than a bit silly - oh well, at least Arnie's back, 119 mins,

Survivor

Pierce Brosnan's post-Bond revival continues apace with this James McTeigue-directed thriller in which, shock-horror, he plays the heavy – a ruthless government assassin on the tail of a Foreign Service Officer (Milla Jovovich), who has been mysteriously framed for a terrorist bombing, and the real perpetrators have a much bigger and deadlier plan up their sleeves. *96 mins.*

Fantastic Four

And, heaven help us, another Marvel Comics adaptation – for those not in the know, four people teleport to an alternate universe, which alters their physical form and grants them superhuman powers, which they must learn to harness and work together as a team to save the Earth from a former friend turned mortal enemy. Look it's summer, you know how it goes, right? Josh Trank (*Chronicle* (2012)) directs. *94 mins*.

National Diploma

National Diploma follows a group of young Congolese high school students who are about to sit the exam for their National Diploma, the equivalent of the French baccalaureate, in Kisangani, Democratic Republic of Congo. Dieudo Hamadi's camera films them as they prepare for the exam, from the benches of the school that they are regularly ejected from because they haven't paid the 'teachers' fees' to the maquis (a communal house) where they gather to revise and the chaotic streets of the city where they spend their time "looking for a living". *92 mins.*

www.picturenose.com



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LIFE OF LEISURE

What's on

What's On International



I hope you like bacchanals because this is one of the largest beer drinking festivals in Europe! Even though it has been estimated approximately 7 million litres of beer are consumed over this 16-day festival, the German people claim that Oktoberfest is much more than just a wild drunken party. Although you still get the odd 'beer corpses' during the event (known as 'bierlechen'). Oktoberfest offers a huge range of attractions, including music and a chance to plunge back into medieval Germany. 19 September – 4 October, Munich.

www.oktoberfest.de

Oktoberfest



La Tomatina

This is not your typical mediocre food fight at the school lunch tables; La Tomatina takes food fights to a whole new level. Every August, the people of Spain gather into the cramped streets of Buñol waiting for the giant trucks to provide approximately 130,000 kilos of juicy tomatoes, and once the first shot is fired, the massacre begins. The child's play lasts around an hour or until there is nothing left but a carpet of red juice on the pavements. The event will take place on 26

August this summer 2015, and

www.latomatinatours.com

you need a ticket to participate.

The Beer of Bravery!

1815 - 2015



Triple Blond

waterloo-beer.com

En 1815, pendant la Bataille de Waterloo, les troupes furent approvisionnées en bière de haute fermentation, leur donnant force et courage. Deux siècles plus tard, la bière Waterloo est encore aujourd'hui au cœur d'un projet exceptionnel : la rénovation de la «Ferme de Mont-Saint-Jean», haut lieu historique qui abrita l'«Hôpital des Anglais». C'est dans cette ferme classée qu'est revenue la microbrasserie artisanale de Waterloo. Découvrez-y également son orangerie impériale, ses salles de réceptions, son espace dédié aux produits du terroir et son espace expo. Suivez notre histoire sur

waterloo-beer.com

Une bière brassée avec savoir se déguste avec sagesse. La bière de Waterloo, Finest Beers et la Ferme-Brasserie de Mont-Saint-Jean sont des margues déposées,

anthonymartin.be



What's on

Street Parade Zurich

Every year Zurich. Switzerland provides its entire community and neighbouring individuals to participate in their annual Street Parade. This festival, inspired by the no-longer active Berlin's Love Parade, has mastered their event, proclaiming that it's a celebration of love, peace, freedom and music. Join the 'MAGIC MOMENTS' on 29 August and enjoy the international techno line up of artists such as Klingande, The Avener, Otto Knows and Argy. www.streetparade.com



Fête des Lumières

The city of Lyon offers one of the most magical moments for 4 whole nights, from the 5th till the 8th of December 2015, where over 70 different lights are installed to create an array of colours. Millions of native French people and visitors, of all age aroups, come to enjoy the multicoloured attractions. The Fête des Lumières illuminates the streets, parks, museums and buildings which alludes to an enchanting fairytale. You can even enjoy a few activities such as neon/glow in the dark badminton. Don't miss the spectacle! www.en.lyon-france.com/Agenda

Outlook Festival

In Pula, Croatia, there is a perfect way to end your summer - with a mixture of Jamaican reggae and dub smash the Outlook Festival recreates 1970s aura. Additionally, not only does the festival provide several stages for over a thousand artists, there is also a chance to set sail on a party boat featuring a Dj. 2-6 September. www.outlookfestival.com



The quick unpack



LE CHAT by Philippe Geluck

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