

NOVEMBER 2013 #43

# Together

magazine

**FASHION  
& BEAUTY**  
Look great on  
a wintertime beach

**WINTER SUN**  
Ski and cruise

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**INTERVIEW**  
Benedict  
Cumberbatch

**JEAN-PIERRE  
LUTGEN**  
Reaching  
your dreams

**WHAT'S ON**  
Unveiling India

Deux grands noms de la gastronomie belge, Bart De Pooter, chef du restaurant « De Pastorale », et Pascal Devalkeneer, chef du restaurant « Le Chalet de la Forêt », ont à nouveau mis le Gruyère AOP suisse à l'honneur en concoctant deux recettes aussi succulentes qu'originales.

Ces créations pourront être dégustées par tous les gourmands de différentes villes en Belgique du 6 novembre 2013 au 7 décembre 2013. Rendez-vous sur le site [www.gruyere.be](http://www.gruyere.be) afin de découvrir les dates de dégustation dans votre ville.

### Délice de potimarron

 **Préparation: 10 min**  
**Cuisson: 30 min**

#### Ingrédients pour 4 personnes:

- 40 gr de gingembre, râpé
- 1 gr de cardamome verte
- 500 gr sucre de canne
- 800 gr de jus de pamplemousse
- 2 dl de Campari
- 2 kg potimarron, pelés, en gros dés
- 18 gr de sel

Faites infuser le gingembre, les graines de cardamome, le sucre de canne et le sel dans le jus de pamplemousse et le Campari. Passez le potimarron. Assemblez le tout.

### Chutney de mangues et figues

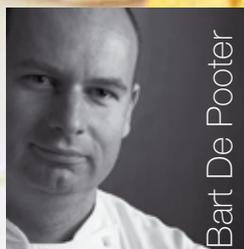
 **Préparation: 15 min**  
**Cuisson: 20 min**

#### Ingrédients pour 4 personnes:

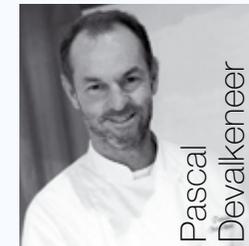
- 2 mangues dures, en dés
- 100 gr figues sèches, en quarts
- 2 échalotes, émincées
- 1 piment chili, épépiné, émincé
- 1 pointe de cumin
- 1 càs miel
- 1 dl vinaigre de vin blanc (Chardonnay)
- 1 dl vinaigre de Xérès
- 5 gr de sel

Dans une casserole à fond épais, faites mijoter la mangue avec les figues, les échalotes, le chili, le cumin, le miel, le vinaigre de vin blanc et le vinaigre de Xérès pendant 20 minutes à feu doux.

## Délice de potimarron et chutney de mangues et figues pour accompagner **Le Gruyère AOP suisse**



Bart De Pooter



Pascal  
Devalkeneer

## Dentelle de pain d'épices et sa mousseline de carotte, neige de **Gruyère d'alpage AOP**

 **Préparation: 20 min**  
**Cuisson: 20 min**

### Dentelle de pain d'épices

#### Ingrédients pour 10 personnes:

- 1 pain d'épices artisanal ou maison de 450 gr

Mettre le pain d'épices au réfrigérateur, le trancher le plus finement possible à la trancheuse, puis le parer à l'aide d'un couteau. Déposer sur assiette et dresser les garnitures.

### Mousseline de carotte

#### Ingrédients pour 10 personnes:

- 500 gr de carottes des sables
- 1 càc poivre cubèbe
- 1 càc de coriandre en grain
- 1 fleur de badiane
- 1 graine de cardamome
- 1 clou de girofle
- 1 càs de curry Madras
- 50 gr crème épaisse d'Isigny
- 1 noix de beurre frais
- 100 gr fond de volaille
- Sel et poivre du moulin

Laver et éplucher les carottes et les couper à la mandoline en fines rondelles. Faire revenir dans une casserole le curry et le beurre, puis ajouter les carottes émincées et toutes les épices préalablement emballées dans une étamine. Ajouter le fond de volaille et cuire 20' à couvert. Retirer les épices et mixer les carottes avec la crème, puis passer au chinois fin et rectifier l'assaisonnement. Débarrasser en pipette afin de pouvoir effectuer un beau dressage.

### Neige de Gruyère d'alpage AOP

#### Ingrédient pour 10 personnes:

- 1 bloc de Gruyère d'alpage AOP de 200 gr

Mettre le bloc au réfrigérateur et le passer à la râpe microplane (fine) au dernier moment.

*Pour le dressage terminer avec quelques pousses de schizo cress.*



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## Editor's LETTER

### ON THE COVER



*Benedict Cumberbatch, currently interpreting Julian Assange in The Fifth Estate*

## THE 'D' WORD

**Y**ou don't get enough of it. You think you can't get enough of it. But the doc says you might already have had too much of it. No, it's not a crazy little thing called Love. It's the prince of vitamins: D. As the nights draw in and chill winds rattle our fragile bones we simply crave it or, rather, we crave its source (a distinctly rare commodity in the winter months): sunlight.

Few among us are impervious to its charms as it beckons us to worship it while it lasts. Chances are you are leafing through our splendid publication at 50° 50' N and 4° 00' (aka somewhere in Belgium) and are fully aware that it has not, indeed, lasted.

If you have the wherewithal (having saved up against the odds through these crisis-stricken economical times) step outside your door, hop on a jet plane and embrace the winter – it's warm, very warm on the other (sunny) side of the street.

**Paul Morris**  
EDITOR



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**PAGE 66:**  
JEAN-PIERRE LUTGEN  
entrepreneur



**PAGE 50:**  
FASHION  
Swimwear

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magazine

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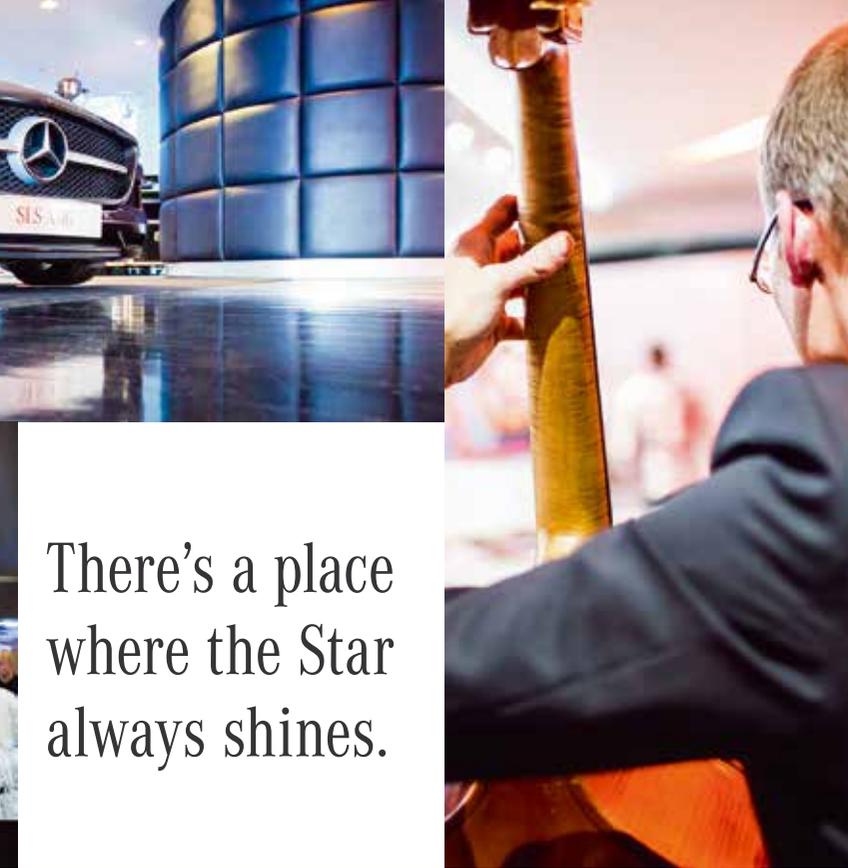
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# Starring in BELGIUM



## Placebo

In September this year Placebo released their seventh studio album, *Loud Like Love* with 10 tracks produced by Adam Noble. The band's European arena tour brings them to Belgium. 7 December. Sportpaleis, Merksem. Tickets from €39 [www.livenation.be](http://www.livenation.be)



Photo: Eva Rinaldi

## Michael Bublé

The 'best crooner in the world' offers up songs from his sixth studio album studio, *To Be Loved*. It follows the phenomenally successful *Christmas*, which sold over seven million copies. Sportpaleis, Merksem. Tickets from €44 [www.livenation.be](http://www.livenation.be)



## Jake Bugg

Another (very) young English singer-songwriter is crossing the channel. Jake will be performing songs from his eponymous debut album which was released in October 2012. 25 November. Cirque Royale. Tickets: €27 [www.livenation.be](http://www.livenation.be)

## BJ Scott

Beverly Jo, born in the swamps of Alabama, was immersed in folk-, blues-, rock- and soul-music from a young age. As relentless vagabond, she roamed between European stages and ended up in Brussels about 20 years ago, her home to this day. She bring her new show *Swamp Cabaret* to the AB; 6 December 2013. Ancienne Belgique. Tickets: €22 [www.abconcerts.be](http://www.abconcerts.be)



PHOTO: SANTINA



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# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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*You will have a greater sense of daily wellbeing if you get outside and experience the elements.*





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# Success in the snow

Personal trainer **Patti Bruns** offers a guide to winter fitness strategies



**A**s the days get shorter and the leaves fall to the ground, we prepare ourselves for winter. Being from northern Canada, I have savoured the long, warm fall that we have had and shiver as I look at the sub-zero temperatures back home! I know full well that soon Brussels will also turn cold, wet and dark, enough to make the most dedicated fitness fan hit the snooze button on early morning training sessions. But winter can be a great time to build on your fitness, and I want to give you a few ideas on how to stay in shape and stay healthy this winter season.

Winter presents us with familiar feelings – the desire for warmth, plenty of opportunities to connect with family and friends and delicious seasonal food meant to nourish our bodies and souls. For many, it is a very busy time, so tip number one: schedule your workouts in your agenda to fend off those pesky holiday pounds. Revisit your wellbeing goals set earlier in the year and commit to making them reality before the end of the year. Remember, regular exercise helps fend off colds and flu, as well as keeping seasonal mood swings at bay. Read on for fun and effective ways to keep moving inside and outside this season.

**Explore your winter wonderland**

One thing I know for sure is that you will have a greater sense of daily wellbeing if you get outside and experience the elements. Don't be afraid of the rain or snow, instead grab your hat and gloves and explore the best that winter has

**COOLER  
TEMPERATURES  
PRESENT FUN  
WAYS TO  
EXERCISE  
OUTSIDE**



to offer. As we say in Canada – there's no such thing as bad weather, just bad gear!

Recent studies have shown that people who exercise outside do so for longer and at a higher intensity, logging on average 30 more minutes per week than those who exercise indoors. Furthermore, participants reported higher levels of vitality and enthusiasm towards daily tasks. They had less fatigue, stress and depression. Head outside during daylight hours to get your daily dose of natural vitamin D, important for bone and cardiovascular health as well as improved mood and cognitive function.

If you like to walk or run, winter is a great time to build basic endurance. The cooler temperatures are ideal for longer sessions that form the base for adding speed and power sessions in early spring. Cooler temperatures also present fun ways to exercise outside. Ice-skating, roller skiing and snowshoeing are excellent forms of cardiovascular activity. They also use muscles and movement patterns that are dormant the rest of the year. Winter

activities are often done best with friends and family, so we have the added value of social connection and a good laugh while improving our health!

#### **But it's COLD outside**

Inevitably, we have to supplement our outdoor activities with some training inside during the coldest weeks of the year. When icy, cold, dark conditions drive you indoors don't despair – many great discoveries await you at the gym.

Winter is a busy time of year in the gym and club managers cater to members with timetables full of group classes. Top-level clubs like Aspria offer the latest fitness classes – everything from Bootcamp to Zumba, tango dancing to TRX – there is something for everyone. I encourage you to step out of your comfort zone, and yes, get off your favourite cardio machine to try some new forms of exercise. Complement your running, cycling and stair climbing with classes that focus on flexibility and strength. Instructors love to see new faces, and you benefit by beating the



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boredom that comes from repeating the same workout every day.

The holiday season is around the corner and with it brings many temptations and barriers to improving your level of fitness. I encourage you to take control this year by having a rock solid plan to avoid the common pitfalls of holiday parties and nights out. This is where having a personal trainer can pay huge dividends. Your trainer will sit down with you to develop a training plan that suits your lifestyle. Great trainers will listen to your unique needs and present you with a plan that includes exercise and nutrition goals that are attainable and move you towards your fitness objectives.

**No sniffles please**

We can't feel great if we are constantly fighting off the flu and colds that run rampant in the humid Belgian winters. Exercise, inside and

outside, is essential to keeping the immune system strong all season long. Cold and flu prevention includes a healthy diet full of citrus fruits and colourful vegetables. Drink plenty of water. Remember your daily dose of a good multi-vitamin, Omega 3 and probiotic. Wash your hands before you eat and frequently throughout the day. Finally, if you do have a big night out, ensure that you get adequate rest and focus on hydrating your body. Recover with a brisk walk outside and a re-commitment to your wellbeing plan.

Make this winter your favourite season of 2013 by keeping a positive outlook. You will enjoy it so much more if you embrace all that it has to offer.

*Patti Bruns is a Personal Trainer at Aspria Royal La Rasante  
patti.p2b@gmail.com*

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# Stress: Conflict between biology and culture

**Tom Meyers** practices stress management for body and mind. Here's how to cope with it



**1 IN 4 BELGIAN  
EMPLOYEES IS  
AT RISK OF  
BURN-OUT**



**S**tress, what is it? Why has stress become such a nuisance? What can I do about it? These three questions are pertinent when you look at some recent health statistics:

- In 2011 stress levels increased by 48% according to a global business survey
- 70 to 95% of all illnesses are related to stress
- 1.1 million Belgians use antidepressants
- In 2011, 13,5 million boxes of sleeping pills were sold in Belgium
- 1 in 4 Belgian employees is at risk of burn-out

Why has stress become such a problem for your health, relationships and our economy?

## What is stress?

*An instinctive biological survival response*

Stress is an autonomic response to stressors, resulting in biological changes that have an impact on your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Stressors are a wide range of stimuli from thoughts to arguments, emails or phone calls to traffic, work or environmental pollution.

Stressors activate the sympathetic nervous system, the section of your autonomic nervous system that makes you alert, that tells you to fight or flee in order to protect you from danger. While this system is activated, the parasympathetic nervous system – which is all about relaxation, recuperation and regeneration (in other words it's the rest and healing module) – is inhibited.

## Why has stress become a nuisance?

*Stress is the conflict between biology and culture*

I invite you to have a look around you and notice the tools and gadgets you're surrounded with in your office or at home. Why did we make all of these fabulous things? Wasn't it so you had more time to relax, make life easier? However, what are you doing with the time given to you: work, check emails, sit on the sofa and watch TV, or rush around?

What's your pace of life and lifestyle? Do you work longer hours, move less often, worry

more? Is there still time for you to unwind, to let your body recuperate and regenerate from the efforts it has been through and replenish its resources?

A cheetah can run at 100 km per hour but only for 30 seconds. It can only pull off an effort like that twice a day and to be able to do that it needs to rest for the rest of the day to recover.

How much time do you spent recovering? Or do you feel guilty as so many of us do when we're doing or seem to be doing nothing? A client told me she could not take time out from working to practice a three-minute breathing exercise three times a day. She looked at me as if I was from another planet when I asked her why she didn't go outside with the smokers when they went on their breaks? She said: "Oh, no I couldn't do that, what would they think of me?"

I was dumbfounded. Smokers are encouraged to go for a walk, to go outside and they take time-out, albeit breathing in polluted air. To go out and breathe fresh air for health reasons has become unacceptable behaviour!? How did things get this way? Why do we feel guilty when we're doing nothing, even though it is an essential part of healthy behaviour?

Stress has become a nuisance. Seen from a biological perspective there is no longer naturally occurring means of stimulating relaxation, regeneration and recuperation. We are always 'switched on', in a fight or in flight even when there is no immediate danger. This leads to a chronic increase in heart rate, blood pressure, respiration rate and muscle tensions – especially in neck, back and shoulders. It reduces blood flow to your stomach and digestive system, lowers immunity, makes you

more on edge and anxious, lowers your concentration levels and creativity – to name but a few. Over time, chronic stress can lead to depression and burn-out.

And all the while that sympathetic nervous system is active, your parasympathetic nervous system (your healing system) is defective.

### **Stress, what can you do about it?**

*Take a break and reset to return to ease*

Here are some useful tips:

- 1: Breathe in for five seconds followed by five seconds of breathing out by letting go of the breath. Repeat this exercise for three minutes, three times a day.
- 2: Same breathing exercise but now while breathing slowly feel a sense of wellbeing within you. For example imagine the sun warms your body and feel the sensation within.
- 3: Same breathing exercise while holding (not rubbing) the temples
- 4: Take time to walk around after 90 minutes working behind the computer.
- 5: Tense your shoulder muscles by bringing your shoulders towards your ears while breathing in and let go while breathing out.
- 6: Whatever you do enjoy doing it.
- 7: Make a list of values and see how you can integrate them into your current lifestyle.
- 8: Remember that time doesn't come to you, you need to take time.
- 9: Don't feel guilty about taking a break and relaxing.
- 10: Get a professional massage or body-treatment now and then

FREE eBook: 'Reset the return of Ease' and where you will also find more information about stress on [www.tommeyers.be](http://www.tommeyers.be) 📖

## **CHRONIC STRESS CAN LEAD TO DEPRESSION AND BURN-OUT**



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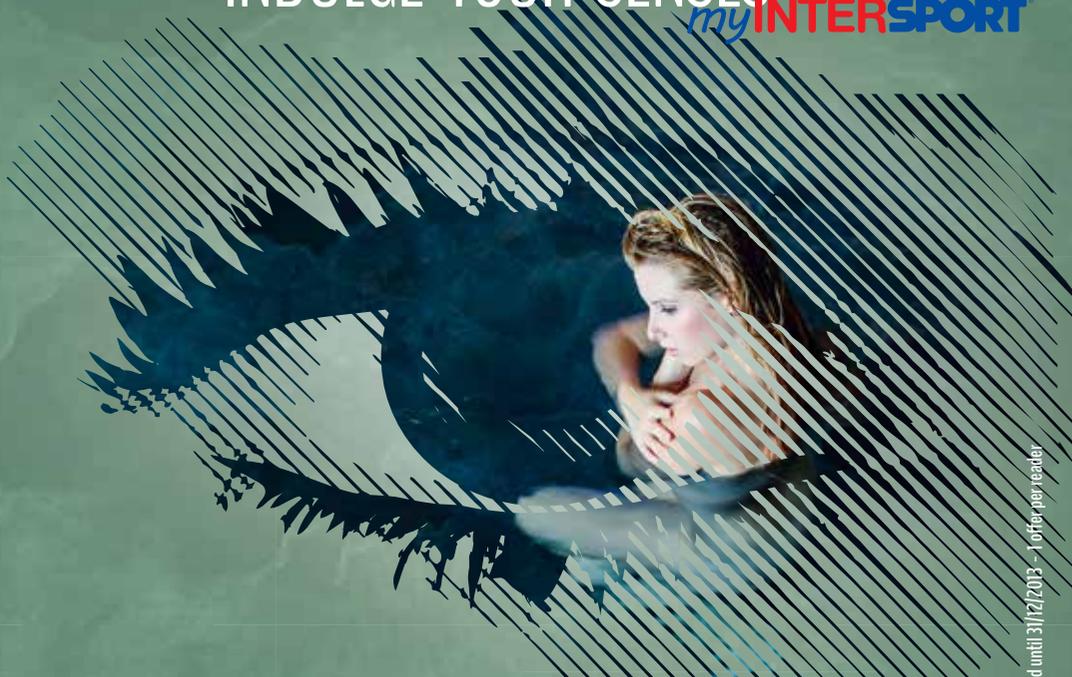


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# Befriending your ex

**Jean-Baptiste Trannoy** (aka Blusher) offers advice on friendship with former lovers



**M**ost relationships will end at some point. In Belgium, 3 in 4 marriages will end with a divorce\*. This is significantly higher than the European Union average of 1 in 2 marriages\*. Long gone are the days when lifelong unions were the norm. As most people now go through successive relationships in the course of a lifetime, new questions arise: should we leave our ex-lovers in our past or should we keep in touch and even become friends with them?

**Right after the breakup, negative emotions replace love**

People that were once madly in love with each other seem to have an uncanny ability to become adversarial once they are no longer an item. Separations are often one-sided: there's a dumper and a dumpee. Emotions run high and it's not uncommon to start hating the one you used to love. We have all been there. Clearly, the cause of the breakup matters. If you were in an abusive relationship for instance or if your trust has been broken over and over again, it may just be wise to cut your losses and not look back.

**SPEND A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF TIME APART BEFORE CONSIDERING BEING FRIENDS**

In all cases, anger is one of the emotional stages of mourning described by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross (Swiss-American psychiatrist, a pioneer in near-death studies and the author of the groundbreaking book *On Death and Dying*). However, this negative emotion usually subsides and gives way to bargaining and depression before one is truly able to move on.

**Friendship is not a consolation prize**

During the bargaining phase, the person who just got dumped is likely to suggest or accept friendship as a consolation prize: "Can we still be friends?" Guilt, heartache and pity hardly constitute a solid foundation for friendship. Therefore, it is wiser to spend a significant amount of time apart before considering being friends. Be patient, it can be a lengthy process.

**Do you really have to stay mad at each other?**

1 out of 10 Belgian children grows up in a 'blended family'. It is crucial to a child's development that parents can at least cooperate on the one project they still share: educating him or her. Even without children thrown into the mix, it can be awkward to ask friends to pick sides.

Resenting your ex also means you are not at peace with your past. As time goes by you should be able to paint a pretty objective picture of the relationship you had. You are now able to learn a few lessons from the mistakes you made. Instead of holding a grudge, you may find closure and start another relationship.

**Finding closure and moving on**

As long as you feel jealousy just entertaining the notion that he or she will meet someone else, then you are not ready to be friends.

However, if you can truly rejoice over your ex's newfound happiness, it means you are autonomous and ready to move on with your life. This will help you a lot in future relationships. Think of it this way: when I go on holidays or when I travel for business, I like travelling light.



**REJOICE OVER  
YOUR EX'S  
NEWFOUND  
HAPPINESS**

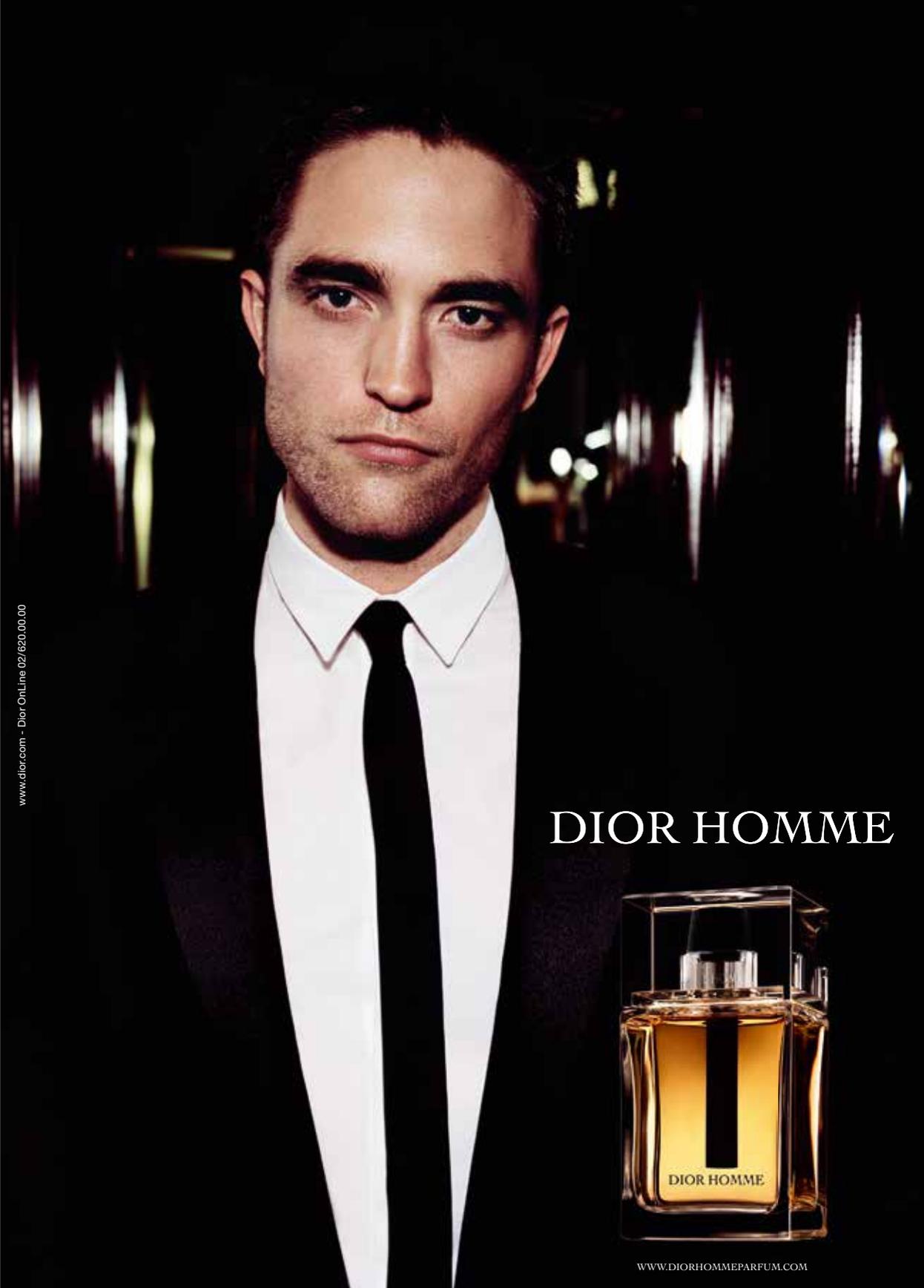
Similarly, when I embark on a new sentimental journey, I do not take along a ton of emotional baggage and unresolved issues from past relationships.

Some exes will be friends for life, some acquaintances. At least, you will find a certain sense of continuity to your personal history. Nothing disappears, everything transforms. If love can turn to friendship, then why let it turn to hate?

\*Source: Eurostat

[www.blusherseduction.com](http://www.blusherseduction.com)

www.dior.com - Dior OnLine 02/620.00.00



**DIOR HOMME**



# WINTER SUN

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*The 360 degree panoramic view of  
the surrounding landscape was  
well worth the effort*



# Les Menuires: Sweet dreams are made of this

**Samantha Sturgis** suggests that the only positive way to get through the winter is to strap on your skis and head for a place that guarantees snow

## IT'S SURELY THE CLOSEST A HUMAN BEING CAN COME TO FLYING

**A**t an altitude of 1,850m, Les Menuires is a family-friendly ski resort set in a winter paradise offering pistes suitable for all levels, including children and beginners. Take a step out the door of the resort and you will find yourself transported to the largest ski area in the world: Les Trois Vallées. The Les Menuires resort sits comfortably in its mountain location, its architectural design influenced by its surroundings – new stone and wood grace the façades.

The resort is welcoming and spacious so that you can enjoy an array of services, with private swimming pools and relaxing spas (included in the accommodation package offered by Les Menuires hotels) and gourmet restaurants that will delight your taste buds.

While the adults explore the ski slopes, the

Family Plus Mountain resort offers a retreat for the children, with numerous activities on offer, such as children's clubs, ski lessons and courses. And there's the newly-created outing called 'Petit Trappeurs' (Little Trappers), where children (aged 4-10) will learn how to snowshoe, explore animal tracks, build an igloo and then gather around a cosy campfire as night falls. The bigger kids (and adults who are still young at heart) may dare to take on Roc'n Bob, the 4km slope that you descend on very fast sledges.

There is really no sensation on this earth that compares to the feeling of breathing in such fresh air, sinking an edge into the snow and experiencing the adrenaline rush that pumps through your body when racing down a mountain from an altitude of up to 3,500m – it's surely the closest a human being can come to flying. If you get the Trois Vallées ski pass, you could probably ski for a whole week without ever having to go down the same slope twice. At least, that's what it feels like. From Les Menuires, you can ski for approximately 100km to have lunch amongst the stars in Courchevel and ski back home in the afternoon.

That's what makes Les Trois Vallées such a major attraction for skiers. Because of the vast ski area, you will never have to queue for long to get on a ski lift. With the variety of pistes available, the quality of the lift system and most





importantly, the guarantee of abundant snow, Les Menuires ski area meets the standards of even the most ambitious skier. All this has earned it the 'Snow Guaranteed' label.

Each day, the itineraries offered allow you to choose a circuit that is tailored to your needs. Already know exactly what you would like to do? Then prepare your ski itinerary as you wish according to your level, or the level of your family and friends. Beginner? No worries. The ski schools in Les Menuires are taken by qualified instructors, including high mountain guides, specialized children's teachers and also specialists in ski, snowboard, snowblade, powder, parabolic and moguls. Lessons are available in English, Dutch, German, Spanish and Italian, Russian, Danish and Polish. To find out how the classes have improved your skill level, Les Menuires has created a slope that will allow you to measure your top speeds, safely – and a little friendly competition between friends and family never hurt anyone, right?

If you find yourself skiing circles around your friends and family then Co'ski offers you the chance to meet and mingle with fellow ski lovers to create and share unforgettable moments on the slopes. The 'Les Menuires St Martin fan page' allows you to suggest a Co'ski outing based on your level, preferred physical intensity, ski pass, etc., or you can respond to a Co'ski outing suggested by other Co'skiers. Not only can you share the slopes with new friends but there are countless events to be discovered this winter in Les Menuires.

Whatever you do, make sure you bring your smartphone and download the Trois Vallées app which will guide you through an unforgettable positive sporty holiday – it will unquestionably bring colour to your cheeks.

The ski resort opens from 7 December, 2013 to 25 April, 2014. [www.lesmenuires.com](http://www.lesmenuires.com)

# BELAMBRA

## THE SLOPES AT YOUR DOORSTEP

**T**he Belambra hotel is one of the best located hotels at Les Menuires and since it's the resort's tallest building, it provides exceptional views of the slopes from the comfort of your room. It promises 'snow and sky' and there are plenty of both around.

Ideally located in this excellent ski resort at the heart of the northern Alps, the slopes are at your doorstep – at this hotel you can slip into your skis and slide all the way down to the lifts that will take you up and away on your daily adventures.

The hotel is within a 5-minute walk of the village, the spa, the shops, the bars and restaurants.

It is a family friendly hotel with plenty of activities for everyone. It boasts a playground, crèche, a games room, bar, and there is a stage with shows every night. If you still have energy after your exertions on the slopes take to the dance floor for the disco, and the entertainment staff set all sorts of fun and games every night.

It's comfortable, neat and clean, and the quality of the service is excellent, with staff that is well-trained and very friendly and pleasant – they are prepared to go out of their way to ensure your stay is as enjoyable as possible.

The Belambra hotel has its own crèche so that you can enjoy your skiing and relax on the slopes without worrying about your baby. You can rest reassured that he or she is in good hands. And after all, you deserve some time for yourself and your partner. Your little one is having just as much fun as you are, if not more. They play all sorts of games and their minders

even take them out for a walk in the snow. For some this is their first contact with the strange cold white powdery stuff – and, of course, they love it.

You can sign kids over four-years-old up for full-day or half-day ski classes. All the kids will get to meet Leo the mascot, who will be the main reason they will never forget their holiday.

Belambra is an experienced hotelier with properties throughout the country, from the Atlantic Coast to the French Riviera, so

everything is taken care of for you. After your skiing, you can just relax with your aperitif at the bar whilst enjoying the show, before making your way into the restaurant. The food is very good, and the kitchen provides a nice variety for all tastes, with a menu that changes daily.

The half-board service is a must for a stress-free holiday. You won't be disappointed.

The guests who stay at the hotel are very nice and keep their kids well under control, so your holiday remains noise free.

As anyone with small kids knows it's great to find such a safe environment. And it doesn't hurt the pocket: you can book a holiday from about €1.000 per family.

[www.belambra.co.uk](http://www.belambra.co.uk)

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in Frankrijk

# Cast off!

**Renaud Philippart** takes  
to the ocean waves



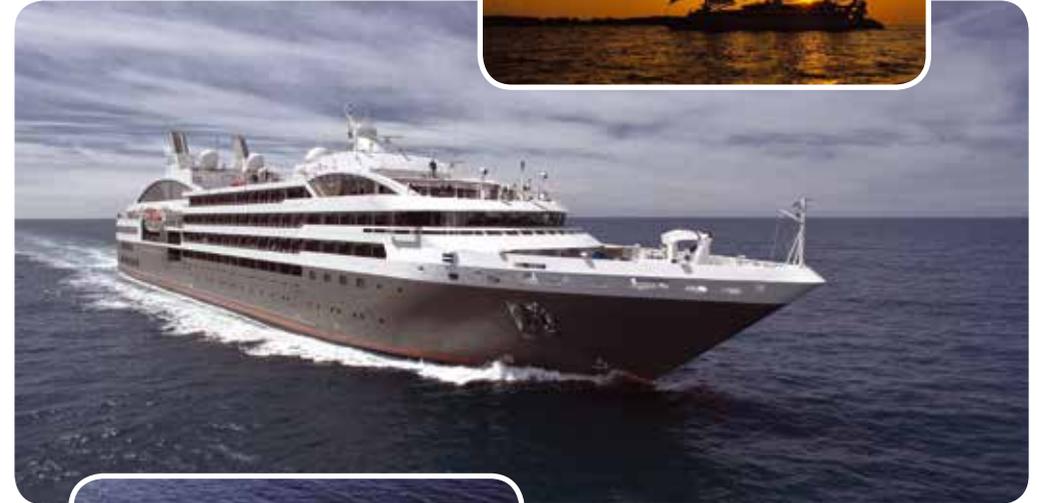
**T**here are many among us who think that a cruise ship is reserved for customers of an advanced age, that it's not a real holiday, that it's boring. That's a lot of prejudices – and yet there is a great deal of fun for everyone to be found onboard and on dry land.

Indeed, one company providing many splendid cruises to sunny destinations is Compagnie du Ponant – they can even take you to the Arctic.

The French-owned cruise company celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, offering 5-star expeditions to a wide variety of destinations. They run three luxurious yachts – Le Boréal, Le

Soléal and L'Austral – equipped with 132 cabins and suites, plus Le Ponant, which has 32 cabins.

For those of you who are used to vacations in 5-star accommodation, welcome to a very luxurious yacht indeed. With several restaurants, including one that could be described as 'gastronomic', a spa providing exceptional attention, a swimming pool, various themed bars (music, dancing, piano), an extensive library... and attentive staff looking after your every whim, these boats have what it takes to seduce any traveller. You are looking for the serenity of a luxury yacht on a human



scale, one which can stop off at the kind of unique locations only small cruising yachts can reach. You want to you feel completely at home while having the trip of a lifetime.

For families used to holidaying in top of the range holiday clubs that combine relaxation, sports and activities for parents and children alike, welcome aboard. On one of these themed cruises, grown-ups can sit back and enjoy a show in a theatre large enough to hold all of the passengers, while your dear little toddlers or teenagers will be looked after by the crew as they get a taste of the many and varied activities on board.

For those of you familiar with discovery tours calling at various luxury hotels, Compagnie du Ponant has something for you, too. The yachts sail mainly at night, so in the daytime they stop off in idyllic harbours. These are always carefully chosen to culturally fit the country you are visiting and professional guides lead the way. If you haven't taken a cruise before, it really is a joy to get up in the morning and discover ever more beautiful and varied landscapes. And there's no



need to pack your suitcase and hit the road to find a hotel – your neat cabin is waiting for you and fine buffet food is always just around the corner.

Finally, for those natural-born explorers, eager to confront the exceptional, to take on the wilderness, welcome home. Aboard L'Austral, Le Boréal and Le Soléal you can head for just such places, since these vessels are specially designed for polar cruises – an unforgettable adventure in the far north and south poles, accompanied by recognized experts, but 5-star all the way.

So for the sceptics out there, accustomed to stereotypical vacations, try out this unforgettable experience, even if it's just once in your life. ●

### Practical tips

You can book your cruise on [en.ponant.com](http://en.ponant.com) or through one of the agents in Belgium, such as Navicruise, Footprints, Travel Sensations, Allways, Caractère, Classix, Cruise Plus, Eagle Travel, Enjoy Paradise, LDK, Thomas Cook, Locazur, Stopover.



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# Cruising in luxury in the Ha Long Bay

**Gerry Callaghan** takes a cruise on a bay that is one of the seven wonders of the natural world



**G**eology and mythology combine effortlessly to make Ha Long Bay a must-see destination. Ha Long is a majestic landscape just off the coast of north-eastern Vietnam.

Ha Long literally means 'descending dragon'. Legend has it that, in order to protect the country in its infancy, The Jade Emperor unleashed a 'mother dragon' to disperse an advancing naval fleet. In its wake the dragon left behind an impenetrable barrier of

emeralds that, over time, set and formed the 1,967 islands and inlets now designated a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Present-day Ha Long Bay is the result of a long process of geological evolution, producing a precious geological museum that has been naturally preserved in the open air for the last 300 million years. The Karst limestone islands are a favourite for many tourists, so to avoid the crowds it is better to head off from Tuan Chau Island. That's



## Marivaux Hotel

Belgium ■ Brussels ■ Brusels

**I**deally situated in the business centre of Brussels, the Marivaux Hotel is a former cinema tastefully renovated in a contemporary style. This hotel remains the right place for businessmen as well as tourists. You will be seduced by its 96 high standard bedrooms and its 9 conference and meeting rooms.



[www.hotelspreference.com/marivaux](http://www.hotelspreference.com/marivaux)

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exactly what I did, with a company called Paradise Cruise, which specializes in luxury travel and has a team of friendly and informative staff that will make your trip an absolute pleasure.

Setting sail from the harbour after breakfast, we stopped at Sung Sot Cave to be taken on a guided tour through the massive enclave. The scale of the cave, eroded by the calm turquoise water over millennia, was breathtaking. Its beauty and stature makes you feel like you have stepped into another time and place.

A delicious buffet lunch, offering a wide selection of local and national delicacies, greeted us on our return. The liner has an excellent selection of spa treatments available. And with some time to kill before our next stop I opted for a warm, relaxing Jacuzzi.

Ti Top Island was next on the agenda. By no means is it an easy ascent. But the 360 degree panoramic view of the surrounding landscape was well worth the effort. Recently recognized as one of the seven wonders of the natural world, Ha Long Bay covers more than 1,500 square kilometres, so there is no better place to experience its splendour.

Back onboard, there are a number of activities to occupy your evening. There is kayaking, a cooking class and a very much appreciated local wine tasting session.

Later, on the sundeck, the head chef prepares a makeshift kitchen and invites the passengers to try their hand at some traditional Vietnamese cooking. I am now the proud owner of a Fresh Spring Roll making certificate. After devouring what I had prepared, which looked rather more like something ravaged and dropped onto my plate by a passing seagull, we knocked back several rice wines to the chant of "Mot, Hai, Ba.... Dzo!", or one two three... cheers.

I partook of one or two more beers as the sun set on the horizon, then headed

downstairs to the warm dark wood of the restaurant for dinner. Served up was a delicious five-course meal that topped off a perfect day aboard the Paradise ship.

Knowing that we were up early for Tai Chi at sunrise, I made my way to my cabin and fell fast and sound asleep. Now, I am not the most energetic person in the morning, so Tai Chi was a battle. Possibly I was not the only newcomer to this, but I certainly made it my own. As everyone relaxed and stretched in one smooth gliding motion, I struggled and strained, popping limbs somewhat reminiscent of a Beyoncé music video.

After coffee and pastries we set off toward Luon Cave lagoon. Escorted on a charming little bamboo boat through the cave, we emerged in a lagoon surrounded on all sides by the stunning limestone pillars, covered in thick jungle vegetation. Only accessed at this one point, the enclosure provided perfect peace and tranquillity. Met in all directions with a deafening silence, while watching eagles circle overhead and spotting the island's monkeys perched on the sharp cliff's edge, was more my idea of a morning routine.

Again, we headed back to the boat for a final wander through the bay, allowing time for a final glimpse of this unique place.

We said our thanks to the wonderful staff onboard the Paradise Cruise who made our trip nothing short of amazing. And so, it was back to the hustle and bustle of Hanoi, wishing I had booked a longer stay.

[www.paradisecruises.vn](http://www.paradisecruises.vn) 

## YOU HAVE STEPPED INTO ANOTHER TIME AND PLACE



# Rocking the Kasbah - gently

**Brian Nolan** found the ideal thalassotherapy venue just a short plane ride away



**YOUR ACHING LIMBS ARE SOOTHED WITH OIL MADE FROM KERNELS OF THE LOCAL ARGAN TREE**

Only three hours by plane from Brussels lies the Moroccan city of Agadir, the pearl of the South Bay. The city is located on the shore of the Atlantic Ocean, near the foot of the Atlas Mountains and has been ranked among the most beautiful cities in the world. The benefits of the Atlantic, the exceptional light and constant mild climate are essential to the success of thalassotherapy. Sofitel Agadir Thalassa Sea & Spa fits the bill.

In the heart of a beautiful bay, the Sofitel Agadir Thalassa Sea & Spa was recently refurbished – and it is truly born again as a dedicated wellness destination, celebrating the benefits of the gentle harmony between thalassotherapy and traditional Moroccan beauty rituals.

Designed by Moroccan architect Jamal Laamiri Alaoui and the French designer Didier Rey, the place inspires serenity and promotes relaxation. Favouring shades of black and white and noble materials, they have forged an ambiance of relaxation and serenity, while paying tribute to the modernity that encompasses Moroccan culture.

The restaurants and rooms have been designed so that you can enjoy your stay at the pace that suits you. Unobstructed views of the ocean, shaded terraces and a culinary motto “eat well to live well” all contribute to an unforgettable and extraordinary experience in time.

Part of the hotel is dedicated to thalassotherapy and spa treatments. Here the ocean comes into its own with hydrotherapy treatments and a sea water pool. 16 large cabins open out to either the sea or the gardens where you can enjoy a massage – your aching limbs are



soothed with oil made from kernels of the local argan tree. Beneath the stars, take to the pool (heated to 32°C) and relax or if you're feeling energetic swim against the current – perfect for water aerobics and aqua-biking.

There is also a balance and fitness program, which can be adapted according to your needs. A naturopath and a fitness trainer are on hand to show you how to learn the keys to balance and sustainable wellbeing.

The Sofitel Agadir Thalassa Sea & Spa has 125 rooms and 49 suites. The terraces of the suites have a seating area with sofa and a large Moroccan dining area can be converted into an office area if you simply cannot avoid a bit of work. All have sea views with a wide panorama of the bay of Agadir and the remains of its ancient Kasbah.

There is an excellent bar and three restaurants, producing meals with different culinary approaches, including dishes which revisit traditional Moroccan recipes. 'Le Market' has a casual international feel where the chefs serve up market-fresh Moroccan dishes. In 'Le Palais Jardin' you can savour French cuisine served up with a local twist. And 'L'Atlantique' is the spot to admire the bay and enjoy seafood caught that very morning.

The concierge highly recommends a ride along the beach on a horse or a camel, or a round of golf – Agadir is also a golfing destination par excellence, with 4 courses, 99 holes. 2011 was declared 'Year of Golf in Agadir' and the city now hosts the famous Hassan II Trophy. And, of course, take a trip up the hill into the Kasbah for the most amazing views of the town.

And when you return to the hotel, head back to one of those cabins and reacquaint yourself with the seductive benefits of the argan oil.

# PulsionS

PHOTOGRAPHER: Julien De Wilde

STYLIST: Nicholas Sirot

HAIR & MAKE UP: Zina Ben @ Close Up by IMM for Mac

MODEL: Julie Demeunier @ IMM



Swimsuit: Hermès  
Bracelet: Hermès



Two-piece swimsuit: Princesse tam tam  
Cap & bracelet: Hermès



Two-piece swimsuit: La Perla  
Bracelet: Hermès  
Sunglasses: Polar  
Shoes: Clergerie  
Scarf: La Perla



Two-piece swimsuit: Eres  
Bracelet: Frey Wille



Swimsuit: La Perla  
Bracelet : Hermès  
Shoes: Yellow Mellow

# Let the sun shine

Together's beauty expert **Delphine Stefens** offers sound advice on how to protect your skin this winter

Beat the winter blues – head for the sun but don't forget to pack some sun-care to protect your skin and maybe actually 'dare to tan', as sun expert Lancaster would have it.

## PREPARE

The **Lancaster Sun Preparing Hydrating Serum** for face and **Hydrating Water** for body are meant to strengthen the skin's natural defence system while the Lancaster Tan Activator Complex boosts the natural melanin synthesis (so abstain if you're prone to dark spots) and distribution in the skin for a faster, more even glow. €37/30ML and €32/150ML



If indeed you wish to prevent brown spots caused by sun exposure, the **Filorga Pigment-Perfect** correcting serum promises to do just that as well as reduce the appearance of existing ones. €49/30ML



The **Yves Rocher Sun Vitamins** contain ingredients like copper, zinc and Vitamin E to embellish and protect your skin. Start taking 2 capsules per day, 1 to 2 weeks prior to sun exposure. €22 for 30 capsules

## PROTECT

50+ SPF **Sun Sport Ski** by **Lancaster**. Following the success of the Sun Sport line in spring, Lancaster will launch the ski comfort cream and stick mid-November, especially designed to protect the skin from the wind and cold while allowing it to tan safely. €28/50ML and €28/20ML + 1GR.



50+ SPF **Anthelios XL** by **La Roche-Posay Invisible Nutritive Oil** for face and body. This liquid gold will nourish and protect your skin and significantly reduce the risk of sun allergies. It's water-resistant, easy to spread, non-sticky and smells of summer holidays. €29.25/200ML



50+ SPF **Spray Douceur Enfants** by **Vichy** was especially developed for kids' fragile and sensitive skin and lasts up to six swims of 20 minutes each. €20.90/200ML

30 SPF **Milky Sun Mist** by **Biotherm** with a multi-position spray for a quick and easy application to ensure optimal protection - even upside down. €27.50/150ML



30 SPF **Teint Stick 183** by **Maria Galland**. It suits all complexions, is easy to carry around and can be used on top of your day cream or sun-care. A few strokes, spread and you'll be set for a cocktail at the beach bar or an après-ski glühwein. €34.50/11G



Don't forget your hair and consider using a special care line like the **Phytodess Symbio Sun** for coloured hair featuring the **Brume au nénuphar**. €20/150ML



The **Guinot Huile Mirific** is a dry nourishing oil for skin and hair with a delicious passion flower fragrance. €46.97/100ML

15 SPF **Etat Pur B83 Sun Spray** for adults and children with mineral protection and a reduced impact on the environment and marine ecosystem. Exclusively available online: [www.etatpur.be](http://www.etatpur.be). €15.60/190ML



**PROLONG ROC Soleil Protexion After-Sun** is enriched with Aloe Vera and Vitamin E. €14.20/200 ML



A panoramic view of a mountain valley. In the foreground, a red train with a white roof is traveling along a steep, rocky slope. The valley below is filled with green fields, dense evergreen forests, and a winding river. In the background, majestic snow-capped mountains rise against a blue sky with scattered white clouds.

# **LIFE OF LEISURE**

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*There is a sense of anticipation as  
the train slowly quits the station  
and heads south*

# Interview: Benedict Cumberbatch

**Amy Longsdorf** talks  
WikiLeaks, wigs and  
Aussie accents with  
Benedict Cumberbatch

**S**uddenly, Benedict Cumberbatch is everywhere.

Just a couple of years ago, the British actor was best known for his small supporting roles in *Atonement* and *The Other Boleyn Girl*. Then, in 2010, he took on the mantle of Arthur Conan Doyle's famous detective in the BBC-TV hit *Sherlock* and almost overnight, he became the toast of London and, eventually, Hollywood.

He began 2013 with a juicy role as the dastardly villain in J.J. Abrams' summer hit *Star Trek Into Darkness*. And over the course of the next four months, he'll pop up in supporting parts in three of the season's most anticipated entries.

He plays a slave owner in *12 Years a Slave*, the fact-based account of a free black man (Chiwetel Ejiofor) in 1840s New York who is kidnapped and sold into slavery.

Cumberbatch voices Smaug in Peter Jackson's *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* and portrays a member of Meryl Streep's messed-

up clan in *August: Osage County*, a drama about family-dysfunction sure to rack up awards come Oscar time.

And that's not all. There's also Cumberbatch's first leading role in *The Fifth Estate*. In the Bill Condon-directed drama, he plays WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.

Does Cumberbatch ever take a break?

"Apparently, I had ten days off in the summer but they went by in a bit of a blur," he says with a laugh. "It's been a busy, busy year but it's an embarrassment of riches that I'm loathe to complain about. I'm really enjoying it. As my character Sherlock says: 'A new job is as good as a change.' Change is as good as a rest."

"It's been an amazing time and I'm really enjoying it."

Cumberbatch is so popular at the moment he even has a rabid fan club who call themselves the Cumberbitches.



"I didn't ask [them to use the name]," explains the actor, who is single since his 2011 split up with his girlfriend of 12 years, actress Olivia Poulet (*The Thick of It*).

"But they've said, 'Oh, no, it's only a joke.' Look, that's one of the least offensive nicknames I have on the Internet. There's all sorts of nonsense [I've heard about my name] ever since I was in school." In 2014, the Cumberbitches will have plenty to cheer about. Reportedly, their man is the first choice to play the villain in J.J. Abrams' upcoming *Stars Wars VII*.

"No, no it's all rumour," insists the actor, 37. "It's all gossip. Nobody's been offered anything. I'd like to do it, and I've said many times that I'd like to do it. J.J. knows where I live." While Cumberbatch awaits Abrams' call, the actor has been busy promoting *The Fifth Estate* at various film festivals around the world.

The biopic, which begins in 2008 when Assange was still an unknown computer whiz,

chronicles the WikiLeaks founder's transformation into a figure who's been called everything from a daring hacktivist to an international terrorist. At the centre of the movie is the tortured friendship between Assange and his former spokesperson Daniel Domscheit-Berg (Daniel Bruhl). The pair had a falling-out over the so-called 'Iraq War Logs' in 2010. At the moment, Assange lives as a fugitive in Ecuador's London Embassy.

Earlier this year, Assange reportedly got a hold of an early draft of the *Fifth Estate* screenplay and contacted Cumberbatch to express his displeasure.

"I tried to justify my reasons for doing the project and that was where that ended," says the actor. "It mattered to me a lot that he felt so passionately but I wanted to persuade him that it wasn't necessarily going to be as bad as he feared from the script he'd had leaked to him. That was a very old draft."

Cumberbatch insists *The Fifth Estate* is anything



but an attack on Assange.

"It was important for me to portray him as a three-dimensional human being and not get into a slagging match about whether he was good or bad," says the actor. "I wanted to portray the human characteristics of this man at the forefront of this incredible media revolution."

To play Assange, Cumberbatch not only wore what he calls a "skunky badger thing" of a white wig but he donned contacts and a prosthetic device which changed the shape of his teeth and bottom lip.

"Of course it [all helps]," says Cumberbatch, the son of British actors Tim Carlton and Wanda Ventham. "The time I put on the wig and came into the room, people were like, 'Wow' and that's a great thrill when you [know] something's working."

Before he shot *The Fifth Estate*, Cumberbatch travelled to Bartlesville, Oklahoma to play the son of Chris Cooper in *August: Osage County*.

Based on Tracy Letts' Pulitzer Prize-winning play, the film pivots on Violet Weston (Meryl Streep), a woman dying of cancer whose husband (Sam Shepard) mysteriously disappears. Back to Osage County come Violet's daughters (Julia Roberts, Juliette Lewis and Julianne Nicholson) but the family reunion, which includes appearances by Ewan McGregor, Margo Martindale and Cumberbatch, is far from a happy one.

"I play Little Charles who is this adorable lost soul trying to find a place in a world which has cut him out," says the actor. "He's in love with someone who is very close to him but it has to remain a secret and that tears him apart. He's constantly being belittled by a sort of destructively loving and protective mother because of the secret surrounding who he really is. He's a pretty tragic figure but rather a beautiful soul. I loved that job. I loved the play. When I read they were making the movie, I thought, 'I've got to audition. I'd kill to play that part.'"



Cumberbatch admits that sharing scenes with Streep was a career highlight. "Sitting around and watching Meryl was amazing. All of us just forgot to act in character because we were all in audience-mode. It was stunning." While hanging out with Streep one day, Cumberbatch asked her for some advice on nailing Assange's Aussie accent.

"I was about to do Assange and I asked her, 'Where do you start?', because obviously with Julian, I'm not Australian. I don't have the same speech pattern as he has nor do I have his other physical attributes, like the way he holds himself and his gestures, all that sort of thing.

"So I said to her, because she was just doing this incredible tour-de-force playing someone who has cancer and who's high on drugs and who is vulnerable and in attack [mode] and who's lost and vampy I was just wondering how she was playing this orchestra of a performance.

"And she said, 'I don't really know. This [role] was different. It all came at once.' And she said, 'How about you?'" and I was like, 'I don't have a method.'

"I wasn't schooled in a method. I have tools that I carry around really gratefully from my time in drama school and I have tools I've learned from working with people like Meryl and great directors like Bill Condon and Danny Boyle and Thomas Alfredson.

"But both Meryl and I agreed that if you have one way of approaching [acting], it can limit what you do and what other people can do with you. It was reassuring, and a really nice moment with Meryl." ●

**I PUT ON THE WIG  
AND CAME INTO THE  
ROOM, PEOPLE WERE  
LIKE, 'WOW'**

# Jean-Pierre Lutgen: Going to bed with a dream

**Alissa Fisher** tracks the road to success of a man shaking up the watch world

**I'VE ALWAYS LIKED TO JUST TAKE SOMETHING AND GO**



**A** lot can change in ten years, and Jean-Pierre Lutgen, CEO of Ice-Watch knows this better than most. Ten years ago, he worked alone. He was surrounded only by his passion for colour and a dream to build a brand that would be known around the world. He was struggling to find funding to make his dreams a reality, but was determined to see his idea through to the end.

Fast-forward to the present, Lutgen works in his now full and vibrant office. His dreams have developed into the ever-growing company that is Ice-Watch. Sold in over 100 countries with 12,000 points of sale and consisting of 30 different collections of watches ranging from trendy to traditional, the Ice-Watch brand is known and respected worldwide.

Lutgen's interest in entrepreneurship could be seen in the eyes of his six-year-old self, when he would accumulate pocket money by selling tickets to his family with which they had the chance to win small candies.

"It's a passion I've always had," Lutgen said. "I've always liked to just take something and go."



Though he studied Public and International Affairs at university at the UCL (in Louvain-la-Neuve) and is surrounded by a family of notable political leaders in the area, Lutgen found that he didn't quite fit the mould to be a politician.

"I want to be able to change peoples' lives for the better," Lutgen said, "but I know I'm not formatted to be a politician."

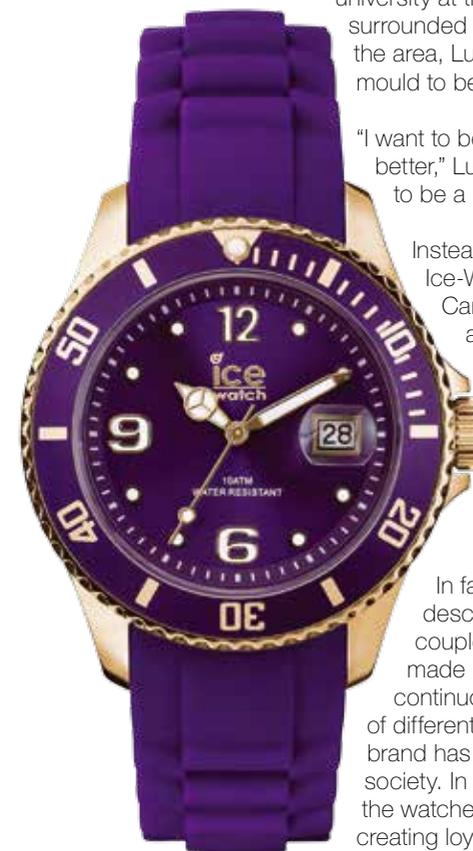
Instead, Lutgen promotes this change with Ice-Watch under the motto, 'Change. You Can', and has created watches for every aspect of a person's life.

"There is something for everyone," Lutgen said. "That's what has made this so successful. You can wear one for work, change into a different one for athletics, and then select another to go out to a party."

In fact, it is this versatility (or what Lutgen describes as "the social value of change"), coupled with a strong brand image that has made Ice-Watch so successful. By continuously launching new watch collections of different styles, materials and colours, the brand has been able to thrive in an ever-changing society. In addition, the uniform boxes that contain the watches create a strong brand-identity, creating loyalty and recognition. Operating under these two pillars, Ice-Watch has successfully been able to both differentiate itself from other watch brands and become a leader in watch sales worldwide.

Along the way, however, the future of Ice-Watch wasn't always so certain. At a disadvantage, Lutgen started without a lot of money and experience in the watch industry, basing his company in a town of only 15,000 people. He didn't see these obstacles as forces blocking his path, but rather as opportunities for growth and improvement.

Though the brand was first introduced to the market during the Baselworld show of 2006, the concept for the brand had been a focal point of Lutgen's for quite some time. He knew he had to focus on creating a strong framework that would create a value around the product. He arrived at the show with a borrowed



## LIFE OF LEISURE

Watches



€30,000 worth of display materials and a well-developed concept for his brand.

"I didn't just wake up with the idea to create watches," Lutgen said. "The idea for the ten colours came from previous projects, and I put the pieces of the puzzle together to create the Ice-Watch brand."

He found success at the Baselworld show — and continues to find success through the ability to instil his passion in others. He was able to convince future distributors of his dream, even though his methods were unheard of in the watch industry.

With this success, however, Lutgen isn't necessarily happier.

"I'm happy because I can assure my children they won't need to support me down the road," Lutgen said. "But the money itself hasn't made me happier."

What has made him happy is watching his brand grow and become more and more loved internationally.

"I was never in it for the money," Lutgen said. "I was in it because I wanted to create a brand. I wanted to instil change and create happiness."

His willingness to take risks, ability to connect with his market and open-minded attitude when it came to new opportunities are all key components of a successful entrepreneur.

"It's about going to bed with a dream and waking up with a purpose," Lutgen said. ●



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# Autumnal shopping

This month *Together* points you in the direction of classic timepieces, surreal eye cuffs and elegant crockery



**Gucci watches**

Gucci Timepieces & Jewellery has just introduced five new extensions to its G-Gucci timepiece collection, a classic range within the women's watch portfolio. Small and medium size price: **€595**  
[www.gucci.com](http://www.gucci.com)



**Parker pens**

The exquisite Parker Sonnet: **€210**  
[www.parkerpen.com](http://www.parkerpen.com)



**Morganne Bello jewellery**

Jewellery encrusted with carefully selected stones from Morganne Bello has arrived in Belgium, with timeless designs including a newcomer called 'Silk Flower'. **€50 - €975**  
[www.morgannebello.com](http://www.morgannebello.com)

**Paule Ka Surrealism**

Eye cuff in metal: **€340**  
[www.pauleka.com](http://www.pauleka.com)



**The OMEGA Seamaster Bullhead Limited edition** re-issue of the classic 1969 chronograph: **€7,170**  
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(RE)TAKE TIME



**Samantha Sturgis** reflects on the current body obsession: the 'Thigh Gap'

# The gap years

IF YOU WANT TO BE POPULAR - YOU  
CAN'T AFFORD TO BE SKINNY

PHOTO: Gil Elvgren



**W**hen my grandmother first heard of the 'Thigh Gap' and its related obsession, she nearly fell off her chair. Now an 82-year-old woman, she grew up in the era of the pin up girls, comparing herself to the likes of Betty Grable, 'The girl with the Million Dollar Legs'. The 1940s It girl had a slim upper body and carried any excess weight further down on her tummy, hips, bum and thighs – assets my grandmother claims she was not blessed with.

Body envy was not foreign to a young girl attending an all-girls boarding school where ballet was considered a formal part of a young lady's education. Girls with full thighs would align along the bar and get into position with their inner thighs touching to perform the perfect demi-plié. Her legs would not touch when she took her stance, leaving a gap from thigh to thigh, to which she points to her legs and laughs: "Chicken legs you see!" She would always stand with her legs crossed; embarrassed that someone might notice her thigh gap.



PHOTO: Gil Elvgren



So, what exactly is this thigh gap? It is the space between your inner thighs when you stand with your feet together, usually associated with a thin body frame.

When my grandmother would read her favorite magazines of the day, advertisements would tell women to gain weight using supplements to increase the appetite in the quest for this ideal body - no gap included. Adding iron to one's diet would be touted in magazine advertisements and would go something like this: A slouching, thinly built girl is depicted looking yearningly at a curvy, smiling woman. A speech bubble above the illustrated ideal woman reads: "If you want to be popular - you can't afford to be SKINNY."

Fast forward 60 years and women are still constantly comparing themselves to each other and the images they see in the media. A national visual culture has arisen from the explosion of visual media over the last 40 years. Endless images of women obtaining ideal youth and beauty find their lives shaped by their participation in this not only visual but also

social culture.

The latest thigh gap obsession has taken over the internet with the help of social media sites such as Tumblr, Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram. They are filled with aspirational 'thigh gap' photos. Endless images of fitness routines and diet plans have been put together by groups of young females to inspire each other to lose impossible amounts of weight. The modern pin-up girl's word bubble now proclaims: "Feet together - Thighs apart", or "Your stomach isn't grumbling – it's applauding". A thigh gap is the current popular trophy below a concave and rippled stomach.

Whether it be the 1940s or 2013, the appearance of advertisements with extremely altered models is not new. Surviving Greek statues and the mute marble characters created by Michelangelo attest to the unrealistic expectation of the ideal body. Before images were manipulated with Photoshop, famous 1940s illustrator Gil Elvgren created images of ideal women with old fashioned paint and photography. After a photo of a model was



## **YOUR GENETICS AND BODY STRUCTURE PLAY A LARGE ROLE**

taken, Elvgren would transform the woman into a dreamy pin up girl with voluptuous thighs just by the stroke of a paint brush.

Nowadays, instead of a paint brush, graphic illustrators use their favorite feature on Photoshop called the 'thigh gap erase' tool, getting rid of any evidence that even super-models have touching thighs. What is seen as an ideal body shape in visual media is actually unattainable for most body types. Your genetics and body structure play a large role in whether or not you will be able to obtain a thigh gap: only a wide set pelvis will give you that extra space between your legs, not exercise or diet – you can be a size zero and still not have a

thigh gap.

The question you need to ask yourself is, 'Do I follow the ideal image of somebody's paintbrush touchup or photoshopped ideal or do I learn to be happy with what was given to me at birth?' Realizing that a trend is short-lived and created in the ethereal world of cosmic fashionistas, it is best to look at the images in magazines and posters with wry amusement just as my grandmother did when she heard about this latest craze. Remember, grandmother knows best. ●

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# Thello: While Europe sleeps



**Paul Morris** joined the night people on a train heading down south

**A**s a frequent non-flyer, I am always on the lookout for where trains might take me. I hear a whisper on the wind: 'Paris-Milan, Paris-Milan' it is saying... One does not need to be asked twice, especially when this particular service does all the hard work while the continent is tucked up in bed.

The Thello night train leaves Paris Gare de Lyon at around eight in the evening (just in time for dinner) and pulls into Milano Centrale twelve hours later (just after breakfast). Now that's what I call civilized.

There is a real buzz about night train travel, this coming-together of strangers in the gathering gloom – first-timer adults have the look of being kids again and a slight sense of unease with it: where's my carriage, how will my nocturnal neighbours behave and will I get a wink of sleep?

More than other long-haul train trips there is a sense of anticipation as the train slowly quits the station and heads south, rolling parallel with the Seine.

First things first: settle into the cabin by working out not just how to lower the beds but where they are exactly, so cunningly are they hidden to save space. Dinner onboard is fairly straightforward fare, plenty of pasta to prepare you, no doubt, for the Italian cuisine that lies in wait.

Later, as you lie in bed you may hum a tune to help you sleep, such as Steve Goodman's *City of New Orleans*: "Mother's with their babes asleep are rockin' to the

**THE STEADY  
RATTLE OF THE  
RAILS WILL  
SOOTHE EVEN  
THE MOST  
RESTLESS  
INSOMNIAC**

## LIFE OF LEISURE

### Travel

gentle beat and the rhythm of the rails is all they dream..." Once asleep, the steady rattle of the rails will soothe even the most restless insomniac.

You may wake at one of the border crossings with Switzerland (they have jurisdiction over their tracks), and it will dawn on you that during the night you have crossed the Alps without the aid of Hannibal's elephants.

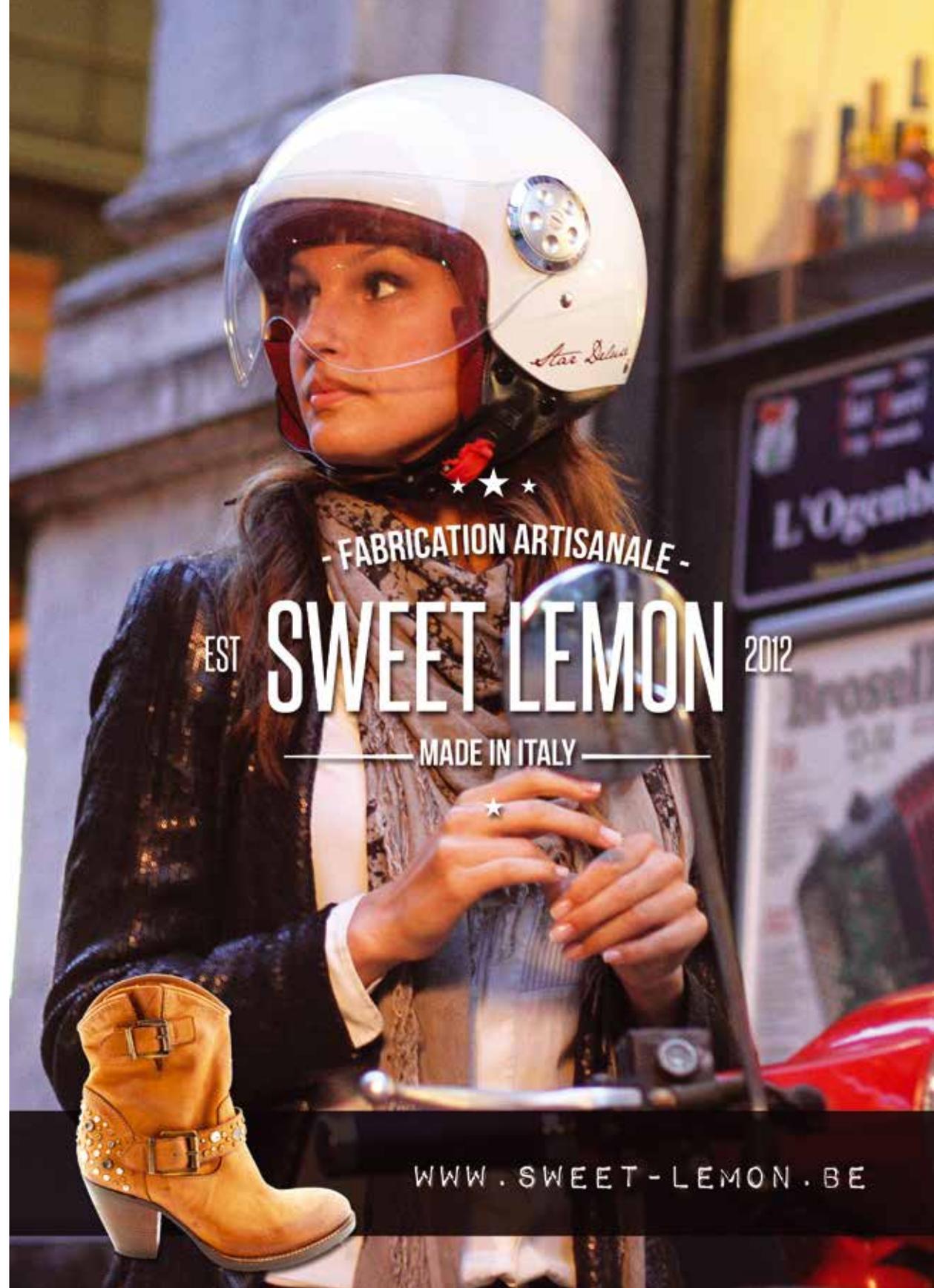
It's worth getting up a bit early to watch Italy pass before your eyes – lakes and forests and streams framed in the majesty of these mighty hills.

Now, step off into a new morning, and before you know it you will be feasting your eyes on Il Duomo (a stunning, bright Gothic cathedral that took nearly six centuries to complete). Or you'll be getting your credit card out in the fashion stores on Via Monte Napoleone (the sixth most expensive shopping street on the planet). Or, as I did, make for the San Siro stadium to enjoy the city's other passion: the beautiful game (my team Glasgow Celtic lost to AC Milan but it was still the trip of a lifetime). Once you've fully oaked up the atmosphere of one of Europe's finest cities, why not take the train on to Verona, then finally to Venice, from where you can be on the rails again by taking the Thello back home... 📍



### Practical tips:

- The Thello service can be booked through SNCB's international service (see below).
- If you're coming from Brussels, SNCB can also take care of your Thalys journey. When you get to Gare du Nord, take the RER to Gare de Lyon – it's faster and more convenient than the metro: no need to drag your luggage very far.
- If you have a connecting service to catch it's worth leaving plenty of time between trains. Any train passing through three countries can be subject to delays.
- The Milan Centrale-Verona Porta Nuova train ride is around 1h20, roughly every half-hour, prices start at €21.50. The Verona train to Venezia Saint Lucia takes just over an hour. [www.trenitalia.com](http://www.trenitalia.com)
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# Auberge Napoleon

**Martin Banks** savours  
classic French-Belgo cuisine

*Gilles and Jan Stallaert*



**T**his particularly wonderful restaurant is a real family affair. Bought by Dora Stallaert, the family matriarch, a few years ago, it was closed for 18 months for a major renovation before she passed it onto her grandchildren, including Jan Stallaert who worked under the previous owner for six years and now runs it with his brother (head chef) and their female partners.

The restaurant itself dates back 100 years and this is reflected in the fantastic classic French-Belgo cuisine, best described as traditional with a very modern twist.

There are three menus, including a fixed menu featuring seasonal favourites such as pheasant. Each is terrific, including the 'anniversary menu' to mark its reopening in October 2012, which offers a choice of two starters, two mains and a desert, plus wine.

Like the à la carte and suggestions – both change every 4-6 weeks or so - the food is great. There's even 'royal Belgian caviar', sourced from Antwerp. Now that's a rarity!

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There's also a two-course lunch menu (Tuesday-Friday): €29 without wine and €41 with wine. Both include a starter and main and are excellent value.

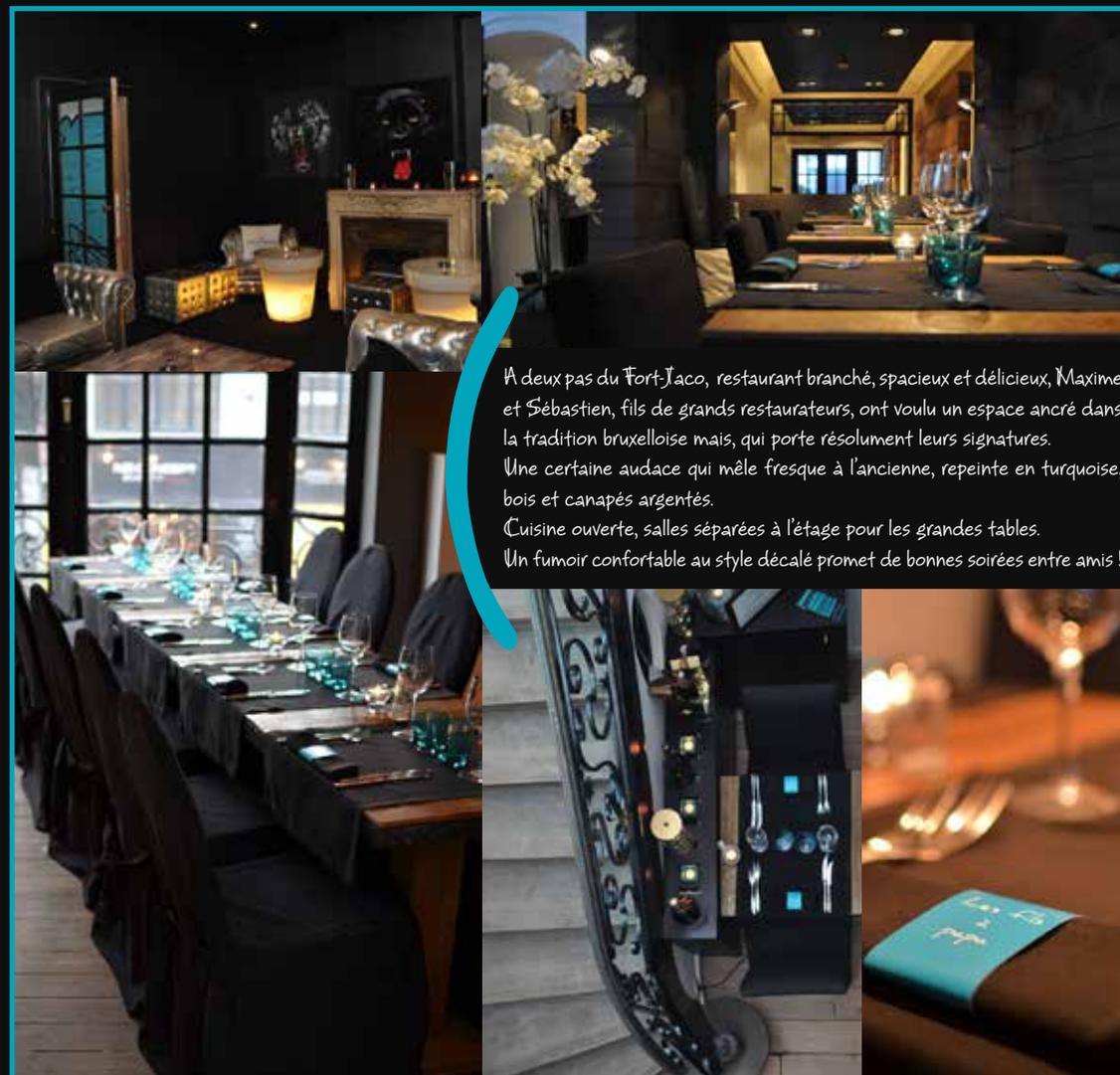
This restaurant is an old stalwart in the area, now run by a particularly ambitious, energetic and particularly talented young team. When it comes to very tasty cuisine and service they know where it's at. It is high class but definitely not stuffy and comes highly recommended. 🍴

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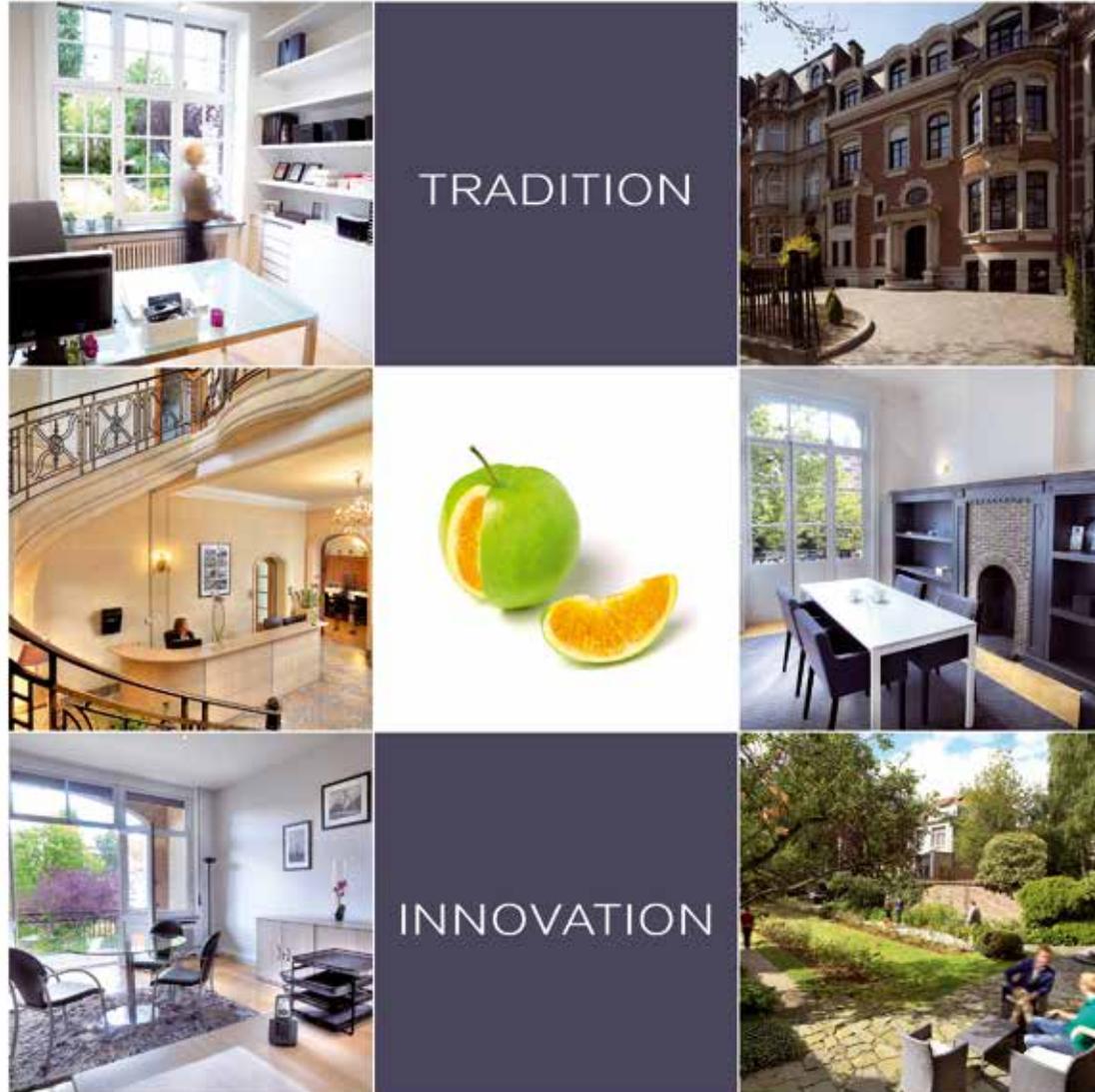
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LIFE OF  
LEISURE

What's on

# What's on in Belgium

## The Art of The Brick

Aimed at a wide audience, this exhibition showcases more than 60 fascinating works of art, made with the LEGO® bricks. All these wonders are the product of the wild imagination of US artist, Nathan Sawaya. The exhibition has already attracted over 1.5 million visitors in North America, Australia and Asia. Now *The Art of The Brick* comes to Brussels for its European Premiere. Brussels Stock Exchange. **Until 21**

**April 2014.** Tickets: from €8.50 children, adults €13.50

[www.expo-artofthebrick.be](http://www.expo-artofthebrick.be)



What's on



### Les Nocturnes du Sablon

For the 2013 edition of Les Nocturnes du Sablon, the association 'Quartier des Arts du Sablon and Trade' has chosen the theme of 'Surrealism'. For four days the historical Sablon area becomes a hive of creativity. Surrealist works will dress the square, created by the students of CAD, led by designer Damien Bihr in collaboration with the Sablon traders. Students of La Cambre (Interior Architecture and Environmental Design), led by architect Pierre Lhoas, revisit the stylized look of various restaurants, bars and trees on the site.

Built around the theme of Surrealism, 16 gastronomic chefs from Belgium will offer food tasting, and a central stage will provide music – tenor, pianist, cellist and violinist – which will set the tone for a festive atmosphere.

Take part in cooking classes in a tent dedicated to surreal recipes concocted by these chefs. And Saint-Nicolas will pop by for photo shoots with the children.

Place du Grand Sablon, Brussels. **28 November - 1 December.** Free entry  
[www.culinaria2013.com/culinaria-sablon](http://www.culinaria2013.com/culinaria-sablon) - [www.sablon.org](http://www.sablon.org)

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What's on

# Europalia

Europalia's Indian season is in full swing. Here are just a few of the exhibitions dotted across the country.

## Indomania: From Rembrandt to The Beatles

In 1498, Vasco da Gama opened the sea route to India. Jesuits and European traders flooded the Indian coast, sending back accounts of the splendour of the Mughal Empire and the many strange customs and rituals. Spices, textiles, diamonds, mother of pearl, and exotic animals returned on ships and served as inspiration for artists on our continent.

The stories of these travellers were still strongly influenced by the fantastic accounts of Greek

and Roman travellers (the first being Alexander the Great in 326 BC) but they slowly began to paint a more objective picture of the country: the starting point for Indomania, an exhibition exploring the encounters between India and Europe – through the eyes of Western travellers – which alternates between fascination, superiority, fear and all too often betrays ignorance.

From the 16th century until the present day, the exhibition invites the visitor to discover a fascinating and little known story, from the Mughal Empire to independence (1947) and the India of today.

It's a feast for the eyes: magnificent 16th and 17th century jewellery; drawings by Rembrandt after Indian miniatures, drawings and engravings of the Indian rhinoceros by Dürer and his followers; 17th and 18th century textiles and cashmere; Indian paintings commissioned by the British of landscapes, the cast system and rituals; photography (Henri Cartier Bresson); architecture (Le Corbusier), cinema (Rossellini), literature (Forster), and music (Wagner, The Beatles)... **BOZAR. Until 26 January 2014.**  
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**LIFE OF  
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What's on

**The splendour of India's architectural heritage**

This exhibition presents the rich architectural tradition of the Indian subcontinent through several emblematic examples. After a broad introduction to the original Hindu architectural tradition, the focus lies on three historic 'encounters' with a strong external traditions: the Mughals (16th-17th centuries) – the British (19th century) – Modernism (20th century). In each case, these external influences were assimilated and further developed in the original tradition.



Central to the exhibition is the recreation of a traditional Indian Char Bagh (traditional garden layout). Kapel Romaanse Poort . **Until 5 January 2014**. Free. [www.leuven.be](http://www.leuven.be)



This exhibition at **Le Musée Hergé** in Louvain-la-Neuve is part of Europalia. After he became the editor of *Le Petit Vingtième* in 1928, it was not long before Hergé sent his young hero Tintin on adventures around the world. Tintin stopped in India several times - on the first occasion, he was hot on the heels of drug smugglers, and accidentally crashed an aeroplane in the state of Gaipajama (*Cigars of the Pharaoh* (1932)). Of course, it was not long before Tintin met the maharaja of this kingdom...

**Until 26 January 2014**. Tickets: €14



**Unveiling India The early lensmen (1850-1910)**

The exhibition will look at the first photography in India and its commercial followers, with a superb selection of negatives and vintage

prints, shown for the first time in Europe. The first part of the show will be dedicated to the original wax negatives by Alexander Greenlaw; unique shots of the South-Indian Vijayanagara site, taken around 1855-1856.

Around the same period, Scottish doctor John Murray was based near Agra with his regiment of the British East India Company. Murray's predilection for the photographic medium resulted in an astonishing series of photos of the Taj Mahal; the first ever made of the iconic Mughal monument. The third part will show how commercial photography took over from the first pioneers. Publications and postcards start to spread photos of India's architectural monuments, landscapes and cities. Royal Museums of Fine Arts. **Until 9 March 2014**. Ticket info on website

[www.fine-arts-museum.be](http://www.fine-arts-museum.be)

What's on

# What's on International

Complex Presentation: Half-Figure in a Yellow Shirt, 1928-1932



## Kazimir Malevich and the Russian Avant-garde

Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum presents a major exhibition of work by Russian artist Kazimir Malevich, one of the founding fathers of abstract art. The exhibition features more than 500 objects drawn from the Stedelijk Museum collection alongside works from other major international collections.

**19 October 2013 to 2 February 2014.**

Stedelijk, Amsterdam.  
[www.stedelijk.nl](http://www.stedelijk.nl)



## Four Four Jew

A major new exhibition by Jewish Museum London exploring the untold story of Jews and football, bringing together memorabilia, rare objects, old and new film footage, and fun interactives to tell the story of the clubs, the players, the Chairmen, the fans, and the 'religion' that is the beautiful game.

What does football have to do with Jewish identity? Why did the Swastika once fly over White Hart Lane? Which club's all-time

leading goalscorer was an observant British Jew? **10 October 2013 - 23 February 2014.**  
[www.jewishmuseum.org.uk](http://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk)

## Cartier: Style and History

The fame of the name and the dazzle of the diamonds have perhaps overshadowed the complex, many-faceted history of the great jewellery house, yet Cartier has played a prominent role in the history of the decorative arts.

Cartier designs, from classic pieces worthy of the "kings' jeweller" to radical Art Nouveau creations, both geometrical and exotic, are an intriguing testimony to the changes in taste and social codes. Cartier seduced the most elegant personalities of the 20th

century with jewellery, clocks and watches, and refined, yet practical objects.



© Rue des Archives

'Cartier: Style and History' has been designed as an art history exhibition. As works of art in their own right, the jeweller's creations are shown in the context of changing usages and styles. Some 600 pieces of jewellery, objects, watches and clocks are teamed up with dresses, coats and accessories, furniture, paintings, advertising photographs, engravings and fashion magazines to give visitors an idea of the art and taste of the time. **4 December 2013 – 16 February 2014.**  
Grand Palais, Salon d'Honneur, Paris. [www.grandpalais.fr](http://www.grandpalais.fr)



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November

# Move over November

The Mo Bros and Mo Sistas are raising awareness and cash for men's health issues



supporting and encouraging the men in their life to get involved. Essentially, Mo Sistas do everything that Mo Bros do, without a Mo.

In October Mo Bros sign up at [Movember.com](http://Movember.com), and on the 1st of November they start their Mo growing journey with a clean-shaven face. Mo Sistas also get involved by signing up at [movember.com](http://movember.com) and participating by raising funds and awareness. Then, for the entire month, these selfless and generous Mo Bros and Mo Sistas effectively become walking, talking billboards.

Through their moustache growing and campaigning efforts they raise awareness for the often ignored issues of men's health, by prompting conversations wherever they go.

A crucial part of being a Mo Bro is to raise funds for men's health. How? Men donate their face, and, much like taking part in a run or a walk for charity, ask their family and friends to sponsor their efforts. They engage their family, friends and colleagues by sharing the link to their Mo Space through their various social networks. Sponsors can then, for example, choose the style of moustache or join in a Mo event (selling Mo cookies, run a Mo Marathon, organize a Mo Quiz Night or Mo Party).

Find more about the efforts of local Belgian Mo Bros and Sistas: [be.movember.com](http://be.movember.com)

**A**t this time of year you will no doubt have spotted that a lot more men start allowing hair to appear on their upper lip – for ten years now, November has become 'Movember'.

The initiative is responsible for the sprouting of hundreds of thousands of moustaches on men's faces around the world.

With their 'Mo' (short for moustache) these men collect vital funds and help raise awareness about prostate cancer and testicular cancer as well as the mental health of men who suffer or recover from the disease. As a global and independent charity, Movember's ultimate goal is to permanently change the face of men's health.

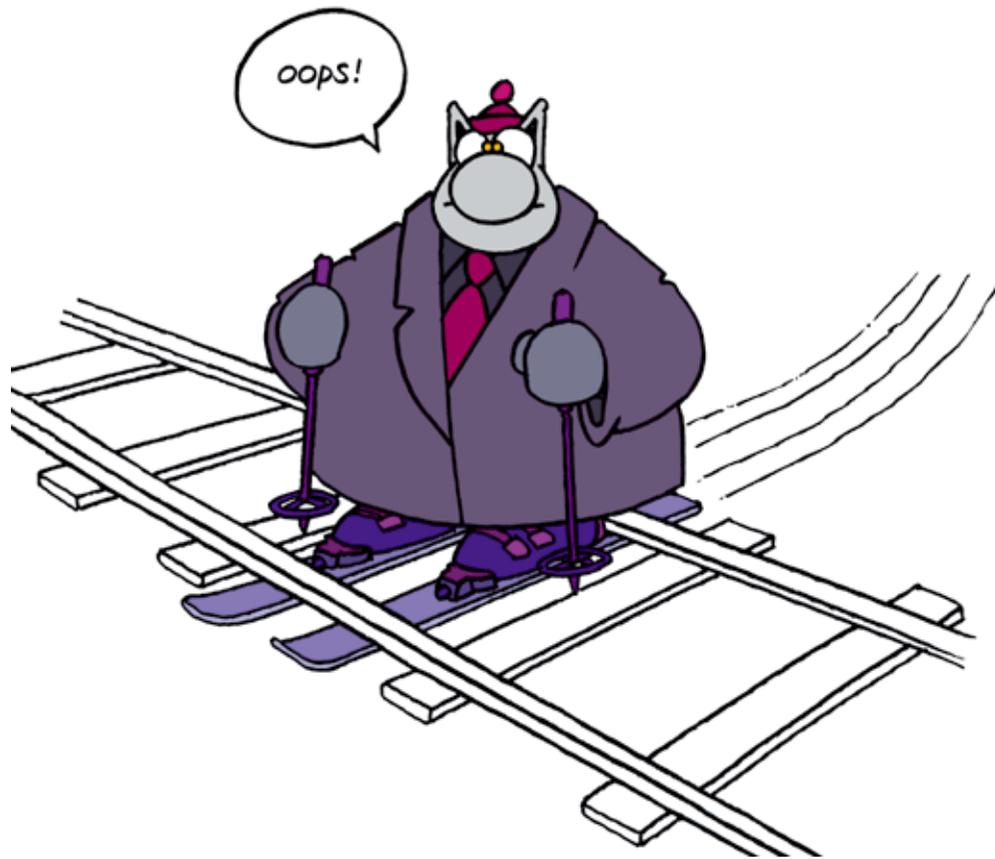
Movember's not just for men. The women of Movember are known as Mo Sistas. They play a vital role in the success of Movember by

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# Off-piste!



LE CHAT by Philippe Geluck

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