

MARCH 2014 #46

Together

magazine

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INTERVIEW

Colin Farrel

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ZAMBIE INTIME

Un apéritif au coucher du soleil sur le Zambeze. Programme dépayçant et romantique à souhait, visite des Chutes Victoria, safari de brousse. Et le soir, hébergement dans un camp de brousse très exclusif.

PLAGE PRIVÉE EN **THAILANDE**

Ou comment finir en beauté un voyage au pays du sourire. Villa privée et plage privative pour un tête à tête parfait ! Entouré de plages immaculées, de la jungle et d'îles sauvages, l'île de Koh Yao Noi est encore peu développée pour une île thaïlandaise.

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Avec les émotions fortes et la tension générée par la préparation d'un mariage, qu'il est rassurant de s'en remettre à des spécialistes pour l'organisation du voyage d'une vie ! A partir d'une page blanche, nous mettons en musique vos envies de futurs mariés pour une lune de miel à la hauteur du moment. Loin ou moins loin, il s'agit de créer un moment suspendu unique, aux couleurs des mariés.

Première étape incontournable : prendre le temps de rencontrer un de nos Travel Designer, dans notre Maison de Bruxelles, autour d'un café ou d'un thé afin d'écrire ensemble la première page du projet.

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A FALSE WINTER

Editor's LETTER

It seems rather strange to be celebrating the imminent return of springtime. Normally, we do so with a sense of relief after a long, hard winter of discontent.

But who in Belgium could be anything other than contented with winter past, or rather the winter that somehow passed us by? It seems to have taken a wrong turn somewhere east of here.

I hear folks say wisely: "It's the farmers I feel sorry for." That's always a good standby statement if you have to fill in an awkward pause at a dinner party. This false winter is evident if you walk the streets, where drowsy bees – fooled by the clement temperature – crawl on the ground as if recovering from a winter-long pub crawl.

Honestly, I do feel for the farmers and the beekeepers and the bees, and I'm delighted a clement winter appears to be good for the economy (something has to be). But all this is far from my mind as I sit in a local cafe with a pot of tea, letting the sun warm my face.

It seems it has nothing to do with global warming – these things just happen every now and then. So, enjoy the subtle transition from one season to another. A Belgian friend (whose Duvel glass is always half-empty) informed me: "You know, we've seen heavy snow at the end of March..."

There's always one.

Paul Morris
EDITOR

ON THE COVER



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1/ In the Spotlight. Cirque du Soleil: Singing and dreaming

It's back and promises to be better than ever. Yes, Quidam, the latest Cirque du Soleil creation has hit town...

2/ Maurice Lacroix: Making time for authenticity

The world of luxury watchmaking is, by necessity, dominated by the microscopic work of craftsmen and women. However, Maurice



Lacroix is also capable of seeing the larger picture...

3/ The train: A good place for a pick-up

According to a Thalys survey, nearly one in four Belgians has openly hit on someone aboard a train and one in six plays along with the game...

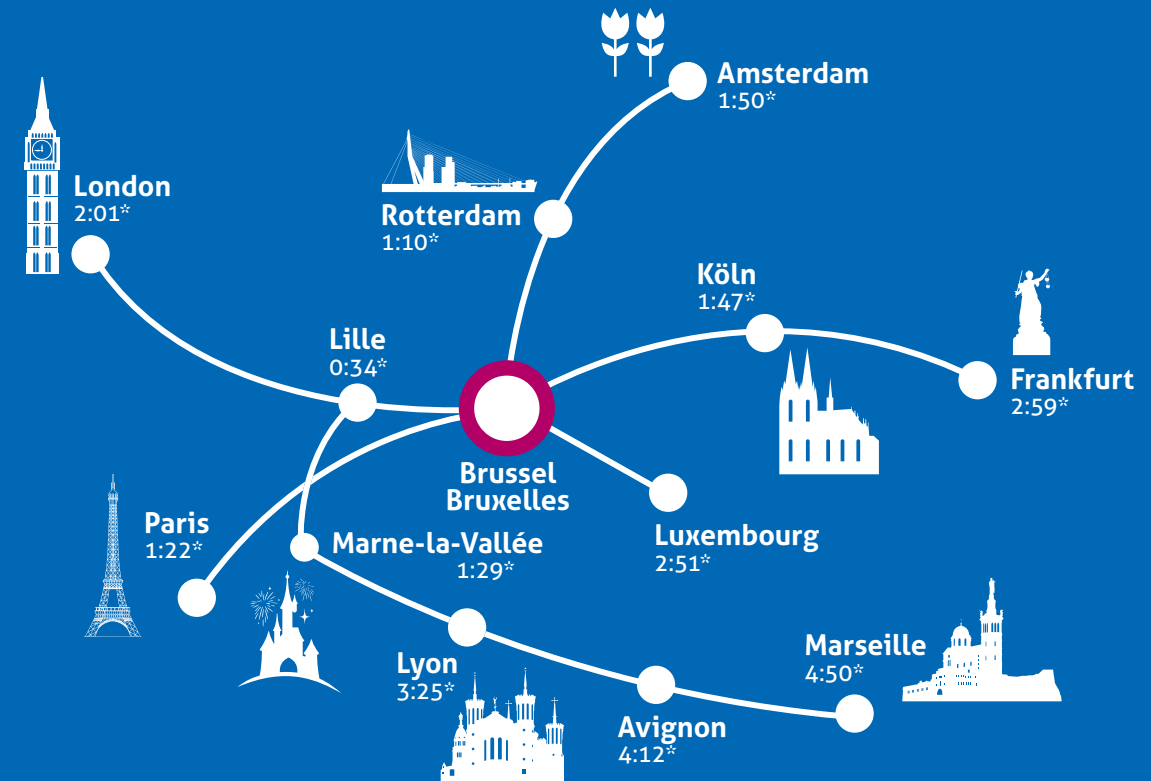
4/ Chocolate fashion show a sugary success

The inaugural Salon du Chocolat combined chocolate and fashion for a delicious evening...

5/ Villa del Quar: Hotel and vineyard

This Venetian villa has all the creature comforts, and the rest of the world seems to disappear as you walk along the rows of the vineyard where grapes hang heavy on their vines...

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Starring in Belgium

Two rock bands who can rightly be called legendary are among our stars this month



Jools Holland

BB King, no less, said: «I didn't think anybody could play like that. Jools has got that left hand that never stops.» Jools brings his swinging sound back to the capital with his Rhythm & Blues Orchestra, featuring Gilson Lavis and guest vocalists Ruby Turner & Louise Marshall.

28 March. Ancienne Belgique.

Tickets: €27 presale - www.abconcerts.be

Status Quo

Status Quo fans' prayers have been answered: their latest Europe-wide tour takes in Belgium, as the fantastic 'Frantic Four' line-up once more: Francis Rossi, Rick Parfitt, Alan Lancaster and John Coghlan.

25 March. Lotto Arena, Antwerp.

Tickets: from €43 and €57 - www.livenation.be



Boy George

In the early eighties, he and his band scored a number of infectious hits such as *Do You Really Want To Hurt Me?*, *Church of the Poison Mind* and *Karma Chameleon*. "George hasn't been as enjoyable in ages." *The Independent*. **8 April.** Ancienne Belgique.

Tickets: €25 presale
www.abconcerts.be

Deep Purple

Founding fathers and figurehead of hard rock, along with Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, Deep Purple arrive in town to blast out unforgettable tracks such as *Smoke On The Water*, *Child In Time*, *Highway Star* and many other classics, the group passed into legend.

2 April. Lotto Arena, Antwerp. Tickets from €47

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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

If we give up on attachment and respond to the world as it really is, we are well on our way to enlightenment.



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PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Winter skin

Take care of your skin in winter

We asked **Julie Lizin**, Aspria spa expert, for her five tips on maintaining soft, glowing skin during the coldest season of the year.

During the winter months, our skin is subjected to the harmful effects of cold and wind, and is also dried out by contact with warm air when we're indoors. Long hot baths and central heating help us feel nice and warm, but they drain the moisture from our bodies and dry out our skin. Protecting your skin is just as important in winter as in summer.



1. Moisturise regularly

This is the most important thing that you can do. Beautifully smooth, supple, radiant skin starts with well hydrated skin. In winter, our skin tends to dry out, becoming tight, blotchy and coarse. These are all signs of dehydration. You can slow down the loss of water from your skin by applying moisturizer to create a barrier or film to prevent water molecules from escaping. Remember that your choice of moisturiser in the winter will be different from the one that you use in the summer. In winter, choose creams with rich textures to nourish and replenish the skin.

2. Cut down on long, hot baths

Hot water removes the skin's natural oils very quickly. So having a long, hot bath can deplete the skin of its natural moisture, leaving it extremely dry.

Try to lower your bath water temperature a little and reduce the time spent in the bath to a maximum of 10-15 minutes. In addition, use a moisturising shower cream instead of harsh soaps that will strip the skin of its natural oils. After bathing, apply an all-over moisturiser while the skin is still slightly wet so that the moisture is trapped in.

3. Don't forget hands and lips!

Containing less sebaceous oil glands than the face, these areas also suffer the most exposure to the elements. Keep hand cream and lip balm in your car, your handbag and in your desk drawer – and apply regularly!

4. Hydrate from the inside

If you are dehydrated on the inside, your efforts with creams, serums and balms will be wasted. Drinking enough water will have a direct effect on your skin's moisture levels and should not be underestimated.

5. Don't forget the sunscreen

Just because it's winter doesn't mean you can forget about the sun. The sun remains powerful all year round and is particularly glaring around snowy areas, so use at least an SPF 30+ sun lotion on exposed skin before you go out. ☛

**“ APPLY
AN ALL-OVER
MOISTURISER
WHILE THE SKIN
IS STILL
SLIGHTLY WET ”**



Aquastelle



Events are supposed to be enjoyable, but there are few things more stressful than all the planning that comes before them. You have to find a venue, and then you need to decorate it. And what about food, lighting and music? And is everyone really having fun? If you're like me, you're so wrapped up in everyone else that you forget to eat and don't get a second to enjoy yourself.

This time, let someone else take the reins. Aquastelle is a private wellness centre with a spa and sauna that will vaporize your stress with their all-inclusive event packages. Got a birthday coming up? Aquastelle will plan it all, and they'll handle the decorations for you – so leave your balloons at home!

If you're looking for a more intimate experience, packages for two come in a variety of times and prices. Some offer massages for two, while others give you access to a private sauna, Jacuzzi steam room, heated swimming pool, aromatherapy showers and relaxation area for two hours.

No matter which one you choose, the facilities simply ooze relaxation, with blue and purple lighting and an understated ambiance. Even if you're not hosting an event any time soon, the sauna and relaxation spa make for an incredible afternoon just spending time with yourself. Among other amenities, Aquastelle offers massages and luxurious private baths heated to 32 degrees, and it's located only ten minutes from the centre of Brussels.

For more information, visit www.aquastelle.be or call 0032 485 07 28 86. ☛

Dealing with stress at work

Tom Meyers offers sound advice on how to deal with the demands placed on employees

Work-related stress is on the rise and is now considered one of the biggest health challenges in Europe. In Belgium, it is estimated that two out of three employees are affected by it, an increase of 18% compared to 2010 (Securix 2014).

Work-related stress is experienced when the demands of the work environment exceed your ability to cope with them and cause physical and psychological problems and reduce concentration and productivity, among many other conditions.

The impact of stress on your health, wellbeing and the economy can't be left ignored – personal suffering, increased sick days and social and economic consequences are very real.

However, it doesn't mean you're powerless. Even in difficult moments, the one thing you can take control over is you.

Health-promoting behaviour isn't about you making huge changes. Increased awareness and small changes can make the difference between being beaten by stress or living and working with ease.

The majority of employees experience work stress, and you could be experiencing it, too. Therefore, recognizing that it has got you in its grip becomes a key element to changing the tide.

**“ HEALTH-
PROMOTING
BEHAVIOUR ISN'T
ABOUT YOU
MAKING HUGE
CHANGES ”**

Physical signs include neck, shoulder or back pain, tension headaches, digestive problems, stomach ulcers and frequent colds.

Emotional signs include negative thoughts, being disappointed with yourself and loss of motivation and mood swings.

Mental signs include confusion, difficulty in concentrating, memory loss.

Behavioural changes include changing eating habits, sleep disturbance, increased smoking and drinking or medication intake.

Work stress also has an effect on the company. Signs that something is amiss can be seen, among other signs, in deteriorating relationships among colleagues, increased staff turnover or numbers of employees being absent due to sickness and reduced productivity.

Once you recognize that you're stressed, acknowledge it and respond – don't let it drag on.

Here are some tips to help yourself and your organization.

Seek professional help when you feel you are no longer in control.

Take care of your physical and emotional health by learning and implementing daily health promoting behaviour. Don't postpone taking care of your health till it gets calmer at work or at home. That day might never come if you haven't got your stress levels under control. Take regular breaks and don't feel guilty about it. To perform well, take regular pauses to clear your mind. They are not a waste of time because they will make you more productive, not less.

Don't over-commit yourself.

When work or your workload gets out of hand, talk it over with a colleague. Sharing or connecting with others has proven to be a great way to reduce the pressure.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Stress at work



Make sure you take enough time to unwind when the work day is over or at the weekend. Have a look at your diary: is there still room for you?

It's high time to start thinking of implementing health-promoting behaviour on a personal level and within organizations. If you are an employer or manager what action plan are you implementing to reduce stress at work? As an employee, what are you doing to keep your stress levels at bay?

With ever-changing demands, more to do and less time in which to do it, reflection on how to stay healthy and health-promoting behaviour isn't a luxury and must be seen as a personal and social priority.

On www.tommeyers.be you can download a free copy of 'Reaset: The return of Ease' with information, exercises and free audio to breathe your stress away and help you to drift into ease.

Or tune in or download the feature every week 'Health Matters' on www.RadioX.eu for more tips and health-promoting ideas.

Tom Meyers, Stress Coach for Body and Mind ●

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PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Leaving space

Three deep breaths

Gemma Rose encourages us all to leave space to let in the air

**“ WE CAN DO
THIS BY
TAKING A
STEP BACK ”**

It's ironic that I am writing an article about leaving space at a time when I have left very little space to write it in. As the sun sets, tension and anxiety slowly creep up on me. When pitching personal development topics to our editor Paul, the whole idea around leaving space in our lives appealed to us both the most. Yet, as I try to delve further into this topic, my mind becomes blank – or preferably – spacious. Nonetheless, I take three deep breaths, and I begin.

The idea of leaving space as the key to well-being is

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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Leaving space

one that has persisted throughout the centuries: from Buddhists to the ancient Greeks to current day health providers. Buddhism and the philosophy of Stoicism believe in the principle that when we give up on attachment and respond to the world as it really is, we are well on our way to enlightenment or the good life. Being detached and non-judgmental are ways to create space in our minds. Mindfulness, which is part of Buddhist meditation practice, focuses on the sensory experiences of the present and on observing the mind in a non-partial manner as it chatters away. This practice has been clinically proven to reduce depression and anxiety.

Leaving space is even seen as a risk-management tool. When everyday demands, emails, chores and to-do lists seem to pile up on us, we need to pull what the Huffington Post coins as our 'Personal Airbag', to protect ourselves from the avalanche. This airbag is the space that we afford ourselves in order to prioritize what matters the most and what could be done tomorrow (like doing the washing up for instance).

Dating experts and relationship counsellors highlight the benefits of leaving space in relationships. Matthey Hussey, author of the New York Times bestseller *Get the Guy* makes the pertinent point that the more slowly a woman responds in a relationship, the more likely the man will react faster. The online dating site E-harmony's relationship expert Rori Raye advises women to take a step back in dating and leave space for the man to take the initiative, since it is in his nature to want to pursue her. She says that something as small as letting the man take the lead when there is a lull in conversation could send him the right signals.


Linda Blair, a clinical psychologist and former weekly advice columnist at *The Guardian*, often expressed the benefits of extracting ourselves from a situation we're wrapped up in. She believes that one way to help ourselves through a dilemma is to consider the role that we are playing and whether we are partly responsible for it. We can do this by taking a step back,

leaving space and seeing the fuller picture.

Leaving space can be easily integrated in our lives. According to Tal-Ben Shahar, the former lecturer on positive psychology – also known as 'the science of happiness' – at Harvard University, taking three deep breaths is one of the quickest ways to calm us down. This can be done at any time: at our desk; at a red-light; in a queue; or just before starting to write an article. Other ways are switching off our phones or email, which can lead to better concentration. Positive psychologists have identified that even leaving our inbox open whilst concentrating on a difficult work task could reduce our IQ by ten points. We could focus on the task at hand, like washing the dishes, rather than worrying about something which cannot be dealt with at that particular moment. Philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote: "The happiness that is genuinely satisfying is accompanied by the fullest exercise of our faculties and the fullest realization of the world in which we live."

By leaving space we are creating a more flourishing life. Our concentration strengthens; our anxieties weaken; our perspective on life lightens. We make better choices because we have allocated time and objectivity to them. Furthermore, we allow the unexpected to happen. Some of my most wonderful experiences came about because I left space for life to naturally run its course.

When we leave space in our lives, we set the boundaries and principles for the way in which we want to live. We reclaim a sense of control which has been lost in the interminable flurry of thoughts and tasks. Seeking ownership of our space does not have to involve immediate big changes in habit or lifestyle – we can start small: take three deep breaths. Galen, the most famous doctor in the Roman Empire and whose influence dominated western medicine for 15 centuries, taught us that the fundamental principle of life is air. Leave space and let the air in.

*Gemma Rose writes at
livingroomphilosophy.com* 



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BRUSSELS, BABY!

*I have learned more about
my profession, culture, love,
food, wine and beer than I
could ever have hoped to do
elsewhere*



Brussels: 12 years on

James Drew shares his reminiscences of more than a decade spent in the Belgian capital

So, what did I expect? My journey to Brussels involved several ‘firsts’ – back in May 2001, I was still a sub-editor working for the august free-sheet The Yellow Advertiser in the east end of London. I had, however, sent off my very best Quark Xpress layout CV to European Voice, which was also looking for a sub. Interview? Check. First trip on Eurostar, paid for with a loan from my pa? Check. Now a fully-fledged hack for an Economist newspaper? Check. First beer or three in (the now no more) O’Farrell’s on Place du Luxembourg to celebrate? Check, check, check.

Photo © JLogan



“ BRUSSELS IS A MUCH-MALIGNED CITY ”

Excited doesn’t come close – after some five years as a ‘cub’ journalist, the first three spent in York (in the north of England) followed by two in London, the challenge I now faced was thrilling and scary in roughly equal measure. And how much did I know about my soon-to-be-home, about Brussels and Belgium? Very little, apart from what I had picked up from various anti-EU publications, occasional BBC news bulletins and, more recently, updates I had been receiving from a friend and former colleague who had already crossed the Channel himself to work for The Bulletin magazine.

Of course, I thought I knew it all, both as a journalist and a sub – my first Brussels editor, Dennis Abbott, was very soon to disavow me of such a notion.

Truth be told, I was initially happiest about the fact that I now had a chance to brush up on my French – always a subject I had enjoyed, from

**“ THE
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the speaking side, at school and sixth form, I had been irritated that I had let it slide. So, now the opportunity to immerse myself fully in at least half of Belgian culture (to my shame, I have still not learned any Dutch after all my years here) was an opportunity that I relished.

Over 12 years here, I have learned more about my profession, culture, love, food, wine and beer than I could ever have hoped to do elsewhere. Brussels is a much-maligned city, frequently by those who haven't actually felt the need even to visit, but I loved it from the word go.

A relatively small city (around a million inhabitants), what struck me as I began to discover its highways and byways was how much it seemed to resemble a conglomeration of villages, each with their own idiosyncrasies, eccentrics, tremendous pubs and excellent restaurants.

Thanks to my established friend, I was introduced to the francophone population early and, in the only tragic aspect of my stay here thus far, was to meet, fall in love with and lose to an early death in 2008 one beautiful female member of the same, who went by the name of H  l  ne, God rest her soul.

Around this, the work came, went, and came back again – I worked for European Voice from 2001-2004, *The Bulletin* from 2004-2005, then went (gulp) freelance for the first time. Famine, feast, to be sure, but it was during this time that I first became involved with the magazine you are holding – working previously as editor and now writer for Together has been, and continues to be, among the very best of my time spent in Bruxelles.

Even after 12 years, I am still occasionally asked if I would consider going back to the UK to live and work. Well, even though my beloved family and friends are there, my answer remains the cynical same: “Only if I become stinking rich.”

Once it gets into your system, Brussels is a very difficult life and lifestyle to shake – sure, I still disapprove of the communes, the bureaucracy and the sections of UK expats who have never once made any effort to learn French or blend into Brussels, but there is so much to love here, all the way from the frites to *la joie de vivre*.   

Duden: Real park life

Martin Banks makes a nostalgic return to a Brussels park like no other

Each of the above certainly contributes to its attraction. But its stand out appeal is its sheer raw beauty.

You won't find any of the carefully manicured lawns of Tervuren park here. Nor does it boast the wonderful historical backdrop of the city's Royal Park, surrounded, as that is, by the Royal Palace, the Belgian Parliament and numerous embassies.

Quite the opposite, in fact.

One side of Duden park is lined with rather monotonous, high-rise apartments, the other

It certainly isn't the prettiest or trendiest park in Brussels but there's something about Duden Park that sets it apart from the rest.

For the uninitiated, Duden Park, in south-west Brussels, can lay claim to a number of unique selling points. It is adjacent to the highest geographical point in Brussels (Altitude Cent) and is possibly the oldest parkland in the city.

This apparently modest park is also home to one of the founding members of the Belgian football league, Union Saint Gilloise.



“ A CURSORY STROLL GIVES YOU A SENSE OF THE PARK’S LONGEVITY ”

partly overlooks the ugly industrial landscape of Forest (Vorst).

What this park offers, though, is a taste of raw park life, pre-gentrification.

First, it's worth considering the history.

It once belonged to a rich lace merchant, Guillaume Duden who, a century ago, donated it to King Leopold II on the condition it would be turned into a public park carrying his name.

Before Brussels became the sprawling city of 19 communes that we know today, much of it was covered by forest. Over generations, this was built over, leaving only Forest de Soignes, or more specifically Bois de la Cambre, as the original woodland – along with Duden park, that is.

Even a cursory stroll gives you a sense of the park's longevity, with the sheer size and age of many of its majestic trees looming like legacies from another age.

Unlike many other prettier parks in Brussels, you're unlikely to find well laid-out walking paths in Duden...rather just rock-laden tracks, meandering their way ever downwards to, possibly, the one thing that makes it unique.

For years, Duden has been home to Union Saint Gilloise, the much-loved football club, with Stade Joseph Marien being located to the west of the park, near its lowest point. The club's run of 60 consecutive unbeaten matches (achieved between 1933-1935) is still a record in Belgian football.

Over the years, Union Saint Gilloise has fallen from grace somewhat and now languishes in

the lower reaches of the Belgian league – it could almost be a metaphor for the park itself.

Even so, if you find yourself in this green oasis on a Sunday afternoon you might join the gaggle of 'fans' who, for years now, have gathered on a hillock overlooking the ground to peer through a broken fence where they are able to catch a glimpse of the football action (free of charge) taking place below.

Hard to imagine that happening at Anderlecht or Standard Liege!

Venture to the other side of the park and you will find some of the very best panoramic views of Brussels, with a particularly fantastic vista of the huge Palais de Justice from the usually overgrown steps close to where Duden joins the adjacent Parc Van Vorst.

Another appealing aspect of the park is that it is something of a melting pot of nationalities – an outdoor United Nations – with its occupants ranging from members of the very large Muslim community nearby to the many elderly Belgian folk also living close by.

Brussels, of course, likes to promote itself as one of the greenest cities in Europe, but its parks and gardens are sometimes well hidden. Though it is easily reached by tram or bus from the city centre, Duden could be overlooked unless you are perhaps attending a concert at the nearby Vorst National.

If so, that would be a shame.

When this country-loving writer moved to Brussels in 2001, Duden provided a very welcome relief to urban life. Having initially lived on its doorstep for six years but now residing some distance away, I am still filled with a sense of nostalgia when I drive past.

If you seek landscaped lawns, walled gardens and artificial ponds give Duden a miss. But if real park life is your bag this most certainly is the place to be. ①

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Brussels: Promenading by the canal

Linda A. Thompson closely tracks the gradual gentrification of an often-overlooked Brussels neighbourhood

A couple of years ago, some 1,400 users of the Tripadvisor online travel website voted Brussels the most boring city in Europe. The poll made hardly any headlines at the time. Other locals and I shrugged the news off with a “meh”. If surprising, ‘boring’ surely was a kinder epithet than the usual ‘ugly’.

But two men did take notice – and offence. They spent long hours, a fully-fledged website and 600 photos proving the poll respondents had it all wrong. Over the course of one long July month, Janne De

Cloedt and his father Paul De Cloedt, a professional photographer, ventured into the city to photograph locals, venues and sites such as Laeken’s graffiti wall, the sky-high Parking 58 lot and the Crosly Bowling alley. Posting a new picture on their website every weekday at noon, they aimed to prove that Brussels wasn’t boring – one arty picture at a time.

The site has since gone bust and both men have moved onto other things, but something De Cloedt Jr. said when we met for an interview has stuck with me ever since. Explaining that he wasn’t starry-eyed about the shortcomings of the city, he said that Brussels was the kind of place where the good, the bad and the ugly seamlessly shifted into each other. “You ought to see Brussels as a damaged city,” he said. “On the one hand, that’s a shame. But on the other, that’s what makes it interesting. It has a corner chipped off.”

And nowhere does that surreal flavour – how appropriate a word – become more evident than in the city’s canal area.

Between Porte de Flandres and the Sainctelette square, an unassuming large promenade and a fair amount of water separate the city’s bright lights from the poorer district of Molenbeek. At a superficial glance, I’ll admit, the area is short on charm.

Water only comes in a murky green here, and the sky by default is a dispiriting grey. Like clockwork, weekday rush hours add a heavy gas smell and excessive horn-honking to the mix. With the neighbourhood around the canal still too gritty to be featured in ‘best of’ lists anytime soon, travel guides typically direct visitors to the sole tourist-proof spots in the area: Chaussée de Gand for bargain hunters, the Vaartkapoen for music lovers and La Bodega and the Brussels Event Brewery for partygoers.

But the canal promenade brings together everything that makes Brussels stand out from cities like Bruges, Ghent, Antwerp and

Leuven. Its singularity lies in the slow but spectacular urban renewal of the entire area. You can just see the gentrification happening in front of your eyes. In the last three years, 3-D printing labs, sleek event spaces, quirky design stores and theatre companies have proudly set up shop next to the Chien fabric bonanza stores, which for a long time were the only worthwhile stops here. Under the auspices of major building projects by the City, seedy and dilapidated properties have made way for new, sustainable apartment buildings and high-end lofts that were all let long before construction had even finished.

Head to the little bridge intersection in the middle, and you’ll see twenty-and-thirtysomething hipsters cycle to and fro on their Villos, while asylum-seekers from the nearby Petit-Château look on. On a fine day, you’re likely to hear French, Dutch, Moroccan, Lingala and English – and those are just the languages I can recognize.

With the construction works that have plagued it for months finally over, the canal promenade now boasts what must be one of the city’s longest uninterrupted bike paths and offers tranquillity, fine sights and its very own version of industrial chic.

I didn’t realize it at the time, but De Cloedt’s articulation of the city’s charm all those years ago was spot-on. It’s the sort of perfect imperfections that are in plain view in the canal area that make this city quite loveable.

1



Brussels: An open letter to the capital



Newly arrived **Julia Bush** pens a love letter to the capital

**“ I’M FROM
THE STATES,
AND NOT THE
FUN PART ”**

This spring, I said I wouldn’t fall in love with anyone. By my second week living in Belgium, I knew I had failed dramatically.

I was in love with Brussels.

I fell in love with the way you eat a perfect dessert: slowly, pretending you’re going to savour it, and then all at once, as if you’re afraid it’ll run away before you can take the last bite. It wasn’t really fair the way the city snuck up on me, handing me piping hot frites and charming me with spectacular architecture, beautifully landscaped parks and bustling city streets. The scent of baking waffles drifted around every corner and left me swooning.

You should know that I’m from the States, and not the fun part of the States – I’m no New Yorker, like

© Photo Edoderoo



everyone seems to assume (but thanks, I’m flattered). I’m from Missouri, aka ‘the middle’, so, really, Brussels just had to be more than a bunch of cornfields to impress me.

The city managed that and more. I’m infatuated. So, this is a letter to Brussels, from a girl who’s about 7,168km from home and has never been happier.

Dear Brussels,

At first, I wasn’t so sure about you. On my first day, I trekked through the cold drizzle to the Grand Place because I was told that that’s what a tourist is supposed to do. I felt the water seep through my riding boots as my toes got colder and colder. Then I couldn’t feel my toes at all. If this was going to be a common occurrence, I thought, I might not be able to handle this city.

I stopped in a coffee shop to defrost and get a caffeine boost. I ordered a small coffee, expecting a normal-sized cup. I don’t know that you understand the purpose of coffee, Brussels, because the barista handed me the tiniest coffee cup I’ve ever seen (No, it

wasn’t espresso. I asked. My French is horrible, but it’s not that bad). I downed it like I was taking a particularly delicious shot. How could I exist in this city that does not understand proper coffee sizes and douses me in water every time I leave my apartment?

Fuelled by my baby coffee, I ploughed forward. I was feeling pretty negative, but the closer I got to the Grand Place, the more you chipped away at my resolve. I kept thinking, “OK, I guess this park is kind of pretty,” and “It’s a little bit perfect the way the streets wind around each other, but whatever.” By the time I rounded the corner and saw the majestic Grand Place and all the ornate buildings around it, I knew you had me. You had me good.

You’re beautiful. It astounds me that even buildings that aren’t churches or historical monuments, like the Urban Outfitters on Avenue Louise, are stunning. Your attention to aesthetic beauty is reflected in your care for parks and green spaces as well. I could spend weeks wandering around the Bois de la Cambre or Parc du Cinquenaire. But it’s not just the way you look, Brussels. I



love you for your brain, too. It's easy to tell the people here are very well educated. Some have two master's degrees or a Ph.D.; they speak five or six or seven languages. The EU attracts people who are invested world citizens and people who truly care about their impact on their city, their country and Europe as a whole. There's nowhere else in the world where I've seen such a wonderful and diverse mix of cultures, and Brussels, you accept and encourage that diversity.

Cultural diversity means culinary diversity, too, and you know I couldn't write a love letter without dedicating a paragraph solely to food. On one corner there's a Vietnamese restaurant where every chair is painted in a different colour and American '80s music plays on loop, and then a block away you can catch the Ireland vs. Wales rugby game at a packed Irish pub. Of

course, the Belgian classics — chocolate, waffles, frites and mussels — are something to be proud of, too. When I bit into my first Neuhaus chocolate, I swear the heavens opened up and showered glitter on my head.

“ WHEN I BIT INTO MY FIRST NEUHAUS CHOCOLATE... ”

So thank you, Brussels, for being everything I hoped you'd be. Thank you for accepting me and showing me a world of beautiful buildings and incredible food and intelligent people.

I'm so lucky to love you.

Sincerely,

Julia Bush

P.S. I'm mad at you for making me gain five pounds in two months, by the way, but we can discuss that later. **1**

Which way now for Ukraine?

EU Reporter's **James Drew** looks at the reality for Russia's troubled neighbour

There are no two ways about it – Ukraine is now in a potentially revolutionary situation. This is no longer about East versus West and, should the situation deteriorate further, the descent into violence may be very hard to reverse, and may even have global implications.

As Together went to press, Ukrainian and Russian troops were in a stand-off at a Crimean military base, with Russian forces surrounding at least two bases. The accusations flew – NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen has said that Russia is threatening peace in Europe, Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk said that Russia had made a “declaration of war”, the US threatened Russia with sanctions and expulsion from the G8, while Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has predicted bloodshed and “new revolution” in Kiev.

It is safe to say that Europe has not been this interesting since Napoleon marched on Moscow. Of course, there is a historical precedent – the first Crimean War (October 1853 – February 1856) was a conflict in which Russia lost to an alliance of France, Britain, the Ottoman Empire and Sardinia. While neutral, Austria played a role in stopping the Russians – Russia lost and the Ottomans gained a twenty-year respite from Russian pressure.

And what will happen if this situation escalates further? With expert analysts already spilling oceans of ink, the consensus at present appears to be that the situation has all the makings of a military confrontation: Russia is clearly sending a very strong signal that it is undergoing military preparations, in a clear threat to the government of Kiev.

The core issue now is how the population of the Crimea is likely to respond to latest developments. A little over half of its population has a Russian background, while a fifth identify themselves as Tatar. The rest is Ukrainian, some of whom support Moscow, while others side with Kiev.

However, if the Crimean administration embarks on a strong drive for independence, it seems very likely that Russia will feel it must protect its own installations and military bases and therefore assume a presence in the Crimea. It could also turn into a battle between the Crimea and Kiev. Either way, Russia will very likely protect its own interests, as the agreement regarding the military base requires.

Kiev's politicians and the west of the country are holding fast on their aim of launching new elections, while those in the south and east are point-blank refusing to acknowledge the authority of the self-elected vocal minority now in charge.

In the words of former European Parliament president Pat Cox: “The international community and in particular the European Union urgently must support Ukraine in preserving its territorial integrity and in facilitating in all ways possible the country's passage to greater democracy, justice and prosperity.” But is the EU also flexing its muscles too strongly? It appears to be the case that, in a precarious balancing act, Europe in fact will need to treat both the protesters and Russia with respect and talk to the power-brokers and oligarchs, if it is to avert catastrophe in Ukraine. Here's hoping. **1**

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Dress: Christian Wijnants
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Dress: Annemie Verbeke - Shoes: Robert Clergerie
Socks: Rue Blanche - Handbag: Niyona



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Dress: Apc
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All about nude

Our beauty expert, **Delphine Stefens**, makes a case for foundation as spring approaches

Terracotta Joli Teint by **Guerlain** (€49) is a beautifying foundation that promises a sun-kissed, healthy glow but without sun damage as it has a SPF 20. There are five shades to suit all complexions, and the foundation can be used alone or under the famous Terracotta powder that celebrates its 30th birthday this year.



Miracle Air de Teint by **Lancôme** (€44/30ML) with SPF 15 is an incredibly light perfecting fluid, offering slightly less coverage than the classic Teint Miracle foundation as it's meant to be used in touches. It exists in 12 shades and promises sheer coverage, a matte glow and a bare skin finish.



There's much to-do about BBs and CCs, but foundations are still in the game as they become more sophisticated, yet lighter – so you "cake no more", as Rimmel would put it. Textures are silky and blend easily, while intelligent pigments play with light, so much so that looking your best becomes a piece of cake.



Teint Idéal Fluide by **Vichy** (€20.95/30ML) with SPF 20 for normal to combination skin. Exists in five shades and promises a unified complexion, a natural finish and a 12h hold. The liquid light technology covers the skin with an even layer that reflects light in a most flattering way, while Vitamin E, Vitamin C and a revitalizing agent improve skin quality on the long term. Also available in cream for dry skin.



Stay Matte Foundation by **Rimmel** (€9.99) is a lightweight mousse foundation with a silky finish that promises to prevent skin from shining but above all not to cake. Available in five shades that blend well.

Youthful Glow Foundation by **Yves Rocher** (€29/30ML) with pearls wrapped in rose extract. Exists in 10 shades and promises to reduce signs of ageing as well as optimal coverage with a satiny, matte finish and comfortable skin throughout the day.



Feather Finish Matte Foundation by **BE Creative Make Up** (€15.95) launched four new shades to make a total of 10 to also suit the needs of olive skin and darker types as well as the particularly fair. Exclusively available at Ici Paris XL.



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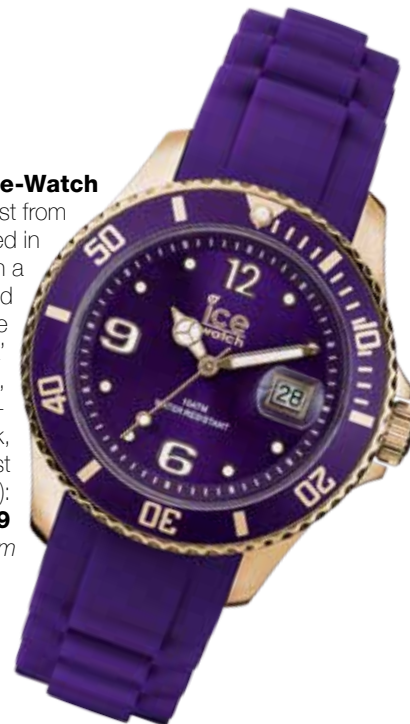


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LIFE OF LEISURE

I feel that all this was somewhat thrust upon me – a twist of Fate, an accident of History. I was supposed to be Napoléon VII.



Colin Farrell: Believing in miracles

Together meets up with an Irish actor who has turned his life around

**“ I BELIEVE IN LOVE
AT FIRST SIGHT
AND LOVE AT 147TH
SIGHT,
AND ALL OF IT ”**



Hollywood's favourite Irish heartthrob, Colin Farrell, 37, is back on the big screen starring alongside Russell Crowe in the upcoming fantasy-drama *Winter's Tale*. The Golden Globe-winning bad boy, famous for his roles in action films such as *Minority Report* and *Miami Vice*, is playing the role of Peter Lake, a criminal who falls madly in love with a dying woman played by Jessica Brown Findlay (*Downton Abbey*).

Born in Dublin, Farrell got his start in acting in 1998 when the Hume Theatre Company discovered him in Sydney. He later progressed to TV and film acting, landing roles in *Ballykissangel* and *Falling For A Dancer*. Since then, he's been in everything from blockbuster successes to indie films to TV appearances.

Although Farrell has reached major successes and has always retained his sex symbol status, he was also one of Hollywood's most notorious rebel rousers. In December 2005, Farrell went to a rehabilitation centre for the abuse of painkillers. He has always been very open about his recovery, and his vulnerability to the public is one of the reasons Hollywood loves him.

He has quite the list of famous celebrity hook-ups: Britney Spears, Angelina Jolie, as well as Demi Moore and Playboy model Nicole Narain. Additionally, he had a relationship with writer Emma Forrest for a year, who explains their relationship in her memoir, *Your Voice In My Head*, which is an upcoming film with Emily Blunt and Stanley Tucci set to star. However, she's not the only woman who recorded a history with Farrell. In July 2006, he filed a lawsuit against ex-girlfriend Nicole Narain, who published their private sex tape. They reached a confidential settlement back in 2006, with the upcoming trial set for 21 July.

Farrell has two sons, James (10) and Henry (5), born from two different famous mothers. James is the son of model Kim Bordenave, whom Farrell dated from 2002 to 2003, and Henry is the son of Farrell's *Online* co-star, Alicja Bachleda-Curus.



James Farrell has Angelman Syndrome (a neuro-genetic disorder), which was made public in 2007, the same year he became the celebrity spokesperson for the Special Olympics Games in Shanghai, China. He also supports the anti-bullying campaign, Stand Up!

Together: What does the word miracle mean to you?

The word miracle has a particular energy to it, and it kind of seems to lend itself to the notion of something beautiful happening that, for all that we know about the logic of life and the physics of the world that we live in, possibly shouldn't happen, something that is in the low percentile taking place and that's a good thing, and it seems like a miracle. I don't know if I believe water turning into wine and all that stuff, but I mean, life existing, the whole thing, us being here, moving at eight thousand miles an hour, is that how fast we are moving? I think we are moving at eight thousand miles an hour. Fast. Maybe a bit more than that. But that's the speed we are travelling at right now and that's kind of a miracle. Or not. It's science, so I don't know, are they each mutually exclusive? Science itself is a bit of a miracle. So that's the way of saying no, I don't believe in miracles. (laughter)

Together: Love at first sight, at first listen, do you think that ever really happens? Did that ever happen to you?

It all exists, doesn't it really? All of it; love at first sight, love that grows over time, arranged marriages that should have probably never happened in the first place that somehow forty years later, they look at each other and go 'Wow, I am really glad that that happened.' (laughs) But I believe in love at first sight and love at 147th sight, and all of it.

Together: There are a lot of movies that are about love, but this film kind of defines love.

Love can only be defined through each person's personal experience and personal expression, resulting from that something that transcends the physical quotidian world that we live in. Something indeed that transcends the linear aspect of time that we are used to in this world, but I think to try and define love in one particular way or in a few particular ways, I think that's impossible. But based on his experience, Akiva, who wrote the script, and how he brought to life these two characters and how they meet and what they mean to each other and as timeless as their love is, yeah, it could be many possible definitions.

**“ THEY ACTUALLY GO IN DEEPER
BECAUSE THEY FREE US UP TO THINK,
'OH, THIS ISN'T REAL. ”**

Together: Is that a Carpe Diem tattoo?

Oh yeah. I felt like I needed to sober up (laughter). By the time we got to the 'r'. (laughter)

Together: Do you live the moment?

Yeah, very much so. I mean the whole thing about live each day as if it's your last, there's a kind of a trap, there's a kind of a wormhole there because if you live each day like it's your last, you may not live very long. It's a bit of a hectic pace to live your life, but I did for a while anyway.

Together: What would be a good miracle?

Wow, I would turn you into chocolate and I would eat you. (laughter) You do something significant, whether it be with the world and all the pain that exists in it. I have two miracles; one would be to change the world and the other to eat you. (laughs)

Together: You changed your life, which is pretty obvious. Did you find peace?

More peace than I had, thankfully. You should kind of ideally, as the tide turns and the days pass and the weeks and the months and the

years, you would find yourself forcing the issue, but find that there's more peace in your life as those that you love also find peace in their lives. You garner some sense of peace from that and also maybe your own inner solace. But yeah, I had made some significant changes in my life eight, nine years ago and resulting from those changes I have been able to find more peace in my days.

Together: And you're doing different movies lately.

Yes, different movies. I don't know how I had so many fucking guns in films. I am still not sure how that happened, maybe a kind of infantile wishful fulfilment. But I hate guns, and I am not a violent person, and yet I have hit nine women in films (laughter) and shot so many people (laughter) but I think I am just getting a little bit more okay with where my tastes have probably always lay, just the simple, yet complex interactions between human beings without any of the kind of accoutrements that modern and certainly urban films that take place around law enforcement or the criminal world.

Together: What was it like working on Saving Mr. Banks with the kids? Don't they say never work with kids?



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Kids, people say that you should never work with animals and children, and that's bullshit. You must only work with children because you can only do eight-hour days (laughter), and there's such a lack of artifice with children as well, most of the time and a lack of pretence and a lack of ambition or competition as well. So, I love working with children, but they have all been very kind to me, the children I have worked with because children are terrifying; they are like dogs, if a child doesn't like you, you are fucked. They can see through you straight away, and so they have all been really good with me.

Together: You seem to like movies with tales.

Wagging tails, not *Winter's tales*, yeah. (laughter)

Together: What tale did you like when you grew up?

The children's book of Oscar Wilde, and W.B. Yeats's children's writings as well, and Hans Christian Andersen I grew up reading and I do

love tales. I love tales that exist and the tales that you are talking about; they follow the same kind of conventions, and the same kind of emotional or psychological planes that we all experience in our lives, but they removed them and put them in a place that's unrecognisable, so they actually go in deeper because they free us up to think, 'Oh, this isn't real,' so you go with whatever is being completely presented to you. So, I love the idea of tales that have a mythological aspect to them and a more fantastical aspect to them as well. And also the idea of immersing yourself in another world because tales like the ones you speak of are more akin to the dream world that we live in, rather than this empirical world that at times can be boring and physically structured.

Together: What did you think when you heard about Philip Seymour Hoffman?

There's nothing to think. It's heartbreaking. He's a father and a son and a brother and a lover and it's just heartbreaking.



Together: Would you like to get old?

Some day.

Together: Or like in the movie, never get old?

No, not at all. I think the most beautiful aspect of the cycle of life is change. I really do. So, I am open to it. I look at the three decades that I have already lived through and towards the end of my 40s, 50s, 60s.

Together: This is a different love story. It's not about a cute guy who meets a cute girl, and they have problems and at the end they get married. It's different.

I thought that's what we were doing (laughter). This cute guy and this cute girl find each other and in the end they get married. I just read it and it was really old-fashioned and it really lacked cynicism, and it's not what you would call a cool script, it's not hip in any way. There was something kind of so throwback about it and so pure and sentimental. I had never done anything like this and I believed completely in the character's journey. ●

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**LIFE OF
LEISURE**

Waterloo 2015

La Route Napoléon

Paul Morris
reports on a
modern-day
Bonaparte's
plans for
Waterloo



As Martin Banks' article (which follows) will testify, celebrations for the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo have been long in the planning. Two years ago, *Together* joined the national and international press corps in Wallonia to hear the thoughts of Napoléon, the great-great-great nephew of the man himself, as he outlined plans for La Route Napoléon.

**“ MY FATHER
WAS
ANCHORED
IN ULTRA-
TRADITIONAL
VALUES ”**

His name is Charles Napoléon, and he is a far cry from the diminutive Bonaparte stereotype. Six feet 5 inches tall, straight-backed, greying – yet he cuts a slightly uncomfortable figure when it comes to talking about the past. “I feel,” he says, “that all this was somewhat thrust upon me – a twist of Fate, an accident of History.” He smiles. “I was supposed to be Napoléon VII.”

He grew up in a protected, privileged environment in a three-storey apartment on boulevard Suchet in Paris' 16e arrondissement, with games room and a garage full of Ferraris and Aston Martins. Before his death in 1997, his father, Louis, had made sure that Charles Napoléon was disinherited in favour of his son Jean-Christophe.



"My father was anchored in ultra-traditional values which for me were outdated."

"I make a distinction between my heritage and being a politician." He is a Social Democrat and held office as deputy mayor of Ajaccio, the historical seat of the Bonapartes in Corsica. "Bonapartist ideas can't solve the problems of our society today."

But it is with some vigour that Charles Napoléon bears the standard for the House of Bonaparte in the 21st century, including visiting Wallonia to launch plans for the Belgian section of La Route Napoléon. On the French side of the border, bikers, cyclists and motorists have long appreciated the stretch of the route (a 325-kilometre section of the Route Nationale 85) that runs from in the Cote d'Azur to the Swiss border at Grenoble.

The Wallonians would argue that that is where the story begins, at Beaumont, the last lap of a four-day march that brought him face-to-face with his mortal enemies - but that's not quite true. Napoléon left Elba and embarked at Vallauris in Golfe Juan; his 'army' was no more than one hundred strong. As he headed northwards, to Castellane, Digne and Sisteron, those who had fond memories of his reign and his exploits

gave him and his men encouragement and shelter – and their numbers grew. This was very much a French affair, a settling of old scores at home and with those abroad who plotted against their Emperor. But what of this Belgian section? It's now officially complete. On 94 kilomètres of Wallonian soil, it runs from Beaumont, through Tuin, Charleroi, Fleurus and Ligny, all the way to the Lion Mound battle monument in Waterloo.

"200 signs have been strategically placed, indicating points of interest, such as battlefields, where Napoléon slept or other interesting stories," says Jean Fassiaux, press officer for Paul Furlan, Walloon Minister of Tourism. "A GPS system for cars and bicycles is also nearing completion, which will allow visitors to follow the route on GPS and on smartphones and tablets via apps."

It was no accident of History that such a memorable battle should have been fought in Waterloo – Napoléon suffered a setback at the hands of the Prussians (part of the Seventh Coalition he was up against) at Quatre Bras. He withdrew northwards, to a defensive position he had personally reconnoitered the previous year: the low ridge of Mont-Saint-Jean, south of the village of Waterloo and the Sonian Forest. He had chosen the place of his defeat.

Next year, Waterloo will rightly be making a very big noise about its unique place in military history. ❶



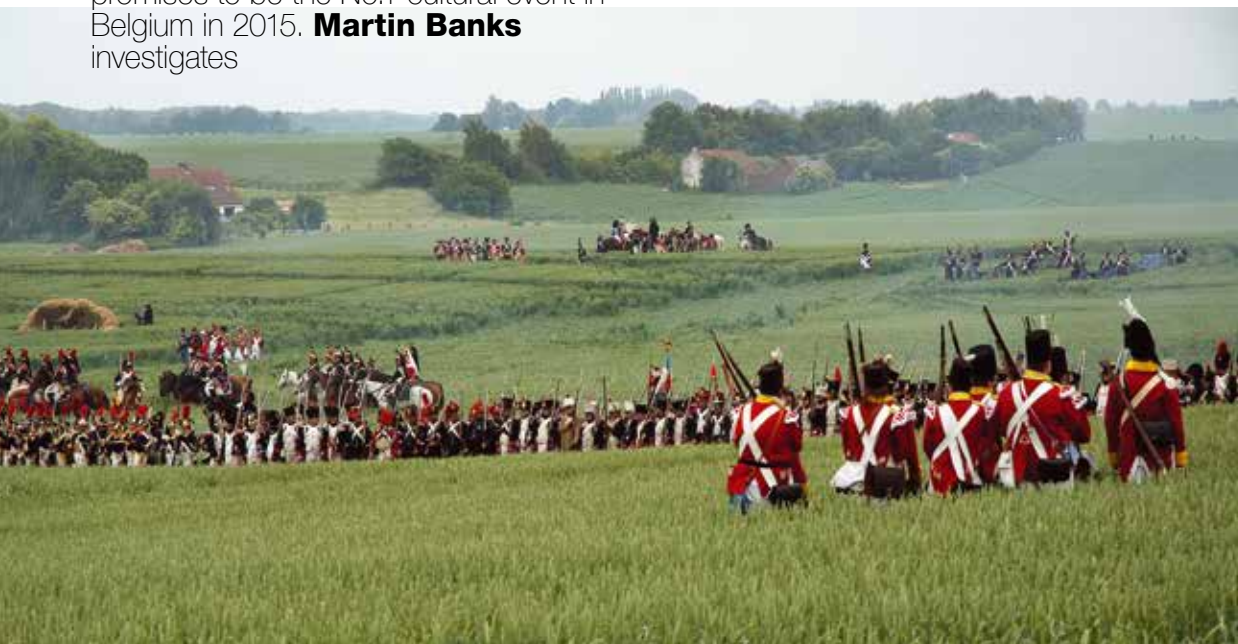
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Waterloo 2015: Planning the Bicentenary

Battle lines are being drawn for what promises to be the No.1 cultural event in Belgium in 2015. **Martin Banks** investigates



It is often dismissed as a bland commuter town serving Brussels but next year, Waterloo will very much be the focus of international attention.

The reason? The bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo, of course.

In the finest spirit of Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington, organizers are now setting about preparing for the big event, and it's being done with military precision. Organizing committees

have been formed, draft programmes drawn up and exhibitions arranged.

With some 200,000 people expected to descend on the site of Wellington's famous victory in 1815, it's little wonder that Etienne Claude, who is responsible for the organization of the re-enactment, excitedly pronounces: "Bicentenaries don't come around too often so we're going to be ready for this one."

In the best traditions of the military, the time, he declares, has come to fine-tune the proposed

**" THE EVENT IS ALREADY BEING
KEENLY ANTICIPATED ON AN
INTERNATIONAL SCALE "**



activities. These will take place over what Claude describes as "five historic days", from Wednesday 17 to Sunday 21 June 2015.

According to the programme, commemorations will get underway on 17 June with the inauguration of the Hougoumont Farm, where British and other allied forces faced Napoleon's army – the farm has been restored thanks to an estimated €1m UK government funding.

There will be an official celebration on Thursday

18 June in the presence of military bands representing the nations present at the time and of descendants of opposing forces.

The first re-enactment is planned for the evening of Friday 19 June, recreating one phase of the battle, in particular the famous attack led by Drouet d'Erlon. The bivouacs of those carrying out the re-enactment will also open to the public from 9am.

A night-time show around the Lion Mound is



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**“ IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE
TO WELCOME UP TO 60,000
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scheduled at 11pm on Saturday, 20 June while a second re-enactment of another phase of the battle will take place on the morning of Sunday 21 June. This, says Claude, will incorporate scale models of the farms to give a better understanding of the fighting.

An option has been taken on a 30-hectare piece of land that witnessed the historic events and which he says offers “clear visibility, where it would be possible to welcome up to 60,000 spectators per event”.

At present, this possibility is being studied by the different bodies responsible for its suitability on health and safety grounds.

According to initial estimates, the two re-enactments will involve as many as 5,000 participants, 300 horses and cavaliers and

some 100 canons, a figure that has never before been achieved.

Groups from as far away as Australia and New Zealand are already organizing their trip, and the bicentenary is already the subject of intense activity on the internet with ‘Waterloo 200’ committees being set up in both the UK and in the Netherlands.

Even the *Wall Street Journal* devoted an entire page to the gentle battle taking place between two candidates for the role of Napoleon. It says French lawyer Frank Samson will go head to head with American actor Mark Schneider for the prestigious part in the 200th anniversary.

“It is clear,” says Claude, “that the event is already being keenly anticipated on an

international scale."

To help promote the bicentenary, several events will be organized, including themed concerts starting in June and, in the same month, the cinema release of the film *Waterloo*, directed by Hugues Lanneau and co-produced by the non-profit organization 'Bataille de Waterloo 1815'. Opening nights will be held in London and in Paris.

The Bataille de Waterloo 1815 was formed 25 years ago to prepare for the 175th anniversary of the battle, an event that attracted 150,000 visitors.

The event organizers have also been invited to participate in the Lord Mayor's parade in London in November, and an international symposium is scheduled for next March, organized by the Fondation Napoléon, with 250 leading historians discussing the theme 'The legacy of Waterloo in history'.

There will also be an exhibition entitled 'Napoleon-Wellington, Intertwined Destinies' at the Wellington Museum in April 2015, with the participation of the family of the Duke of Wellington and of the Fondation Napoléon.

A commemorative set of stamps will be released, with exhibitions organized by the philately clubs of Braine-l'Alleud and Waterloo, also in April 2015.

Organizers also hope to recreate the route taken by Wellington's 'Waterloo dispatch', leaving from the Wellington Museum in Waterloo, with what Claude promises "spectacular stops" in Brussels, Ghent and Ostend.

It doesn't stop there with sports clubs expected to organize international tournaments, bringing together French, English, German, Dutch and Belgium teams... as was the case in 1965 to mark the 150th anniversary of the battle.

Laurence Nelis, one of those responsible for organizing the re-enactment, said: "An awful lot has already been planned and there will no

doubt be plenty of other ideas both from Belgium and from abroad."

The site of one of the most epic battles in military history actually currently looks like more of a building site than a place of history.

The reason is the ongoing work for a brand new €40m visitor centre, something that hasn't met with universal approval with some local restaurateurs, who say their businesses have been badly hit by the works which has reduced access to the Lion Mound, where the Prince of Orange is believed to have been wounded on 18 June 1815.

Even so, it is hoped that all the disruption will be worth it when the Waterloo Memorial finally opens around the middle of May 2015. The underground centre will feature all the latest high-tech features. It expects to attract up to 500,000 visitors a year, more than double the current figure.

Arrangements are, of course, being made for the thousands expected to converge on the area for the five-day celebrations – an internet site is being set up that will enable numbered places to be reserved online. This will make it possible for 40,000 seated places, divided between the two re-enactments, to be booked in advance.

Tickets are expected to go on sale from April, and a temporary website has been set up more information: www.visitwaterloo2015.be

Some have questioned whether the Battle of Waterloo was ever necessary in the first place and, with attention currently very much focused on the WW1 commemorations this year, it would be easy to forget the significance of events of 1815.

But with a large and varied list of events already planned, it is clear that June 2015 will see the ultimate Waterloo re-enactment. Old Bonaparte would have been proud. ❶

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Run with a tender, matronly touch by Greek-born Efi, the ambience is relaxed and informal,

but with a decidedly chic air. For entrée, I plumped for calamars frits with tartare sauce (immaculately cooked, with a pleasingly light salad), while my better half chose tomato and mozzarella with pesto and rucola and was most impressed with its intriguing salad dressing.

Next up, it was America's finest Black Angus beef all the way, an entrecote cooked to perfection, while my lady fair opted for the beef tenderloin filet pur. We both could not have been happier with our steaks, though it was noticeable that les frites had come from a freezer bag which, given the quality of the meat on offer, will hopefully be changed to home fries 'ere long.

No matter – the delicious meal, accompanied by an excellent South African shiraz, was beautifully rounded off with profiteroles. Rich & Classic has been awarded the coveted certification from the US Department of Agriculture, and long may it continue as one of Brussels' finest meat emporiums.
www.richresto.be

Chez Léon

Chez Léon has been in the Vanlancker family since 1893. Grainy old photos show the original restaurant with a sign declaring 'Friture', but the place is famous mainly for its moules, those mussels that are accompanied so perfectly by Belgian fries. The place really took off in 1958 (the year the World Expo landed in Brussels), and Léon International has taken the moules and frites concept abroad, setting up dozens of restaurants across France, including one on the Champs Elysées.



This is a veritable institution, located on the bustling rue des Bouchers, a street jam-packed with gastronomic choices. But you can hardly miss the colourful Chez Léon exterior – it is made up of four houses knocked together.

Of course, this is Belgium, so it's not just about the food. It's a full-blown Belgian taverne, but not an old-fashioned 'brown café' – it's bright and colourful and thoroughly modern. It offers a very wide of other traditional Belgian food, such as rabbit stewed in kriek (cherry) beer to stoemp (bubble and squeak). All of this can be washed down with Belgian beers, including their own pale and full-bodied 'La Léon'. And the food is free for kids under the age of 12 accompanied by their parents.
www.chezleon.be

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Gingerbread lace

- A loaf of artisan gingerbread 450 gr

Keep the gingerbread in the refrigerator. Slice as finely as possible with the slicer, then trim with a knife. Place on a plate, and now you can begin to prepare the toppings.

Carrot mousseline

- 500g sand carrots
- 1 tsp cubeb pepper
- 1 tsp coriander seed
- 1 Chinese badian
- 1 cardamom seed
- 1 clove
- 1 tbsp Madras curry
- 50gr thick Isigny cream
- A knob of fresh butter
- 100 gr chicken stock
- Salt and pepper

Wash and peel the carrots and, with a mandolin slicer, cut them into thin slices. Sauté the curry and butter in a pot, then add the sliced carrots and all the spices (wrapped in advance in cheesecloth). Add the chicken stock and cook for 20 minutes with the cover on. Remove the spices and mix the carrots with the cream, then pour through a sieve and adjust the seasoning.

Add finishing touches with a pipette.

A snowy sprinkling of Gruyère Alpage AOP

- A block of Gruyère Alpage AOP 200 gr

Put the block in the refrigerator and grate thinly with a Microplane at the very last moment.

To complete the dressing finish off with shisho cress. ❶

What's On in Belgium

This month, *Together* offers up Greek artifacts, a Verdi opera and a legendary basketball team



More than a house

A protean and constantly evolving concept, More Than A House is a venue for exhibitions, events and sales. Painter Moulay Youssef Elkahfai was born in Marrakech, where he still lives and works. Vulù is a self-taught artist, interested in digital photography but with the eye of a painter. **Until 4 April.** www.morethanahouse.be

Harlem Globetrotters

The legends of the basketball world are heading to Belgium for what promises to be a sell-out mini tour of the American giants in the low Countries. So familiar do they appear that it's easy to forget they were actually formed way back in 1927. They have been entertaining audiences all over the world ever since with their trickery and undoubted skills.

This is an all-too-rare appearance by the world's most spectacular basketball team. **3 and 4 April.** Alost Forum and RTL Spiroudome, Charleroi. Tickets from €29 - www.sherpa.be





Nautilus: Navigating Greece

With 100 ancient artifacts (bronze and marble sculptures, frescoes, coins, vases and ceramic vessels) from more than 30 Greek museums, Nautilus examines the intimate relationship between the Greeks and the Mediterranean Sea through the ages – the sea is the connecting thread as the exhibition highlights the interplay between nature, culture, identity, adventure, politics, religion and, most of all, mobility in all its forms (immigration, travel, trade). BOZAR. **Until 27 April**. Tickets from €6

www.bozar.be



Wood: The New Gold

Wood is a fascinating material. It was here before humans ever considered building anything and has never ceased to inspire craftspeople and designers. This exhibition offers an interesting mix of large and small items, with a surprising amount of diversity. "Of course, there's a lot of furniture," says curator IngeVranken, "but visitors will see some jewellery and industrial design, as well."

Visitors should keep their eyes open for Limburg designer Frederic Boonen's cork garden accessories and the collection of ergonomic, wooden brushes by the Ghent-based Adriaan Debruyne, designed for PDC Brush. Design Vlaanderen. **Until 13 April** - www.designvlaanderen.be

Verdi's Aida

In the heart of pharaonic Egypt, the love between Radamès, an Egyptian general, and Aida, a Nubian slave, is threatened by the war waged between the two countries. However, another danger lurks for them: Amneris, daughter of the king of Egypt, is enamoured of Radamès and sees a rival in Aida. Opéra Royale de Liège. **25 March – 5 April**. Tickets: €8 – €24.50 www.operaliege.be



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What's On Cinema

Picturehouse.com's
James Drew offers up his
film choices for this month

***The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2014)**

Director Wes Anderson brings us the adventures of Gustave H. (Ralph Fiennes), a legendary concierge at a famous European hotel between the wars – the tangled tale involves the theft and recovery of a priceless Renaissance painting and the battle for an enormous family fortune, all against the backdrop of a suddenly and dramatically changing continent. 99 mins.

***L'étrange couleur des larmes de ton corps* (2013)**

Opening this year's Off-Screen Festival in Brussels (www.offscreen.be), this is the second full-length feature by Belgian directing duo Bruno Forzani and Hélène Cattet. Continuing in the vein of their first film *Amer* (2009), this exercise in style takes its cues from 1970s Italian cult films. However, the pair have since become accomplished filmmakers in their own right, demonstrating a real cinematic prowess – the viewer is swept into a highly sensual experience amidst an oppressive atmosphere, punctuated by a rhythm that is as intoxicating as it is enthralling. 102 mins.

**LIFE OF
LEISURE**

What's On



***Her* (2013)**

Spike Jonze has created a world in the not-so-distant future where a heartbroken loner like Theodore Twombly (Joaquin Phoenix) has the ability to download an operating system named Samantha (Scarlett Johansson) and – voila – has a girlfriend. Although the relationship is not, at first, physical, the two build the kind of rapport most couples only yearn to achieve. While their connection is palpable, the differences in processing their respective feelings become apparent. Samantha transforms to resemble Spock, or some type of robot, who is coping with the experience of having emotions for the first time. Meanwhile, Theodore is trying to avoid the reality that he is dating his cell phone. 126 mins.



***August: Osage County* (2013)**

John Wells takes an unflinching look at the lives of the women of the Weston family, whose paths have diverged until a family crisis brings them back to the Oklahoma house they grew up in, and to the dysfunctional woman (Meryl Streep) who raised them. 121 mins.

IXELLES

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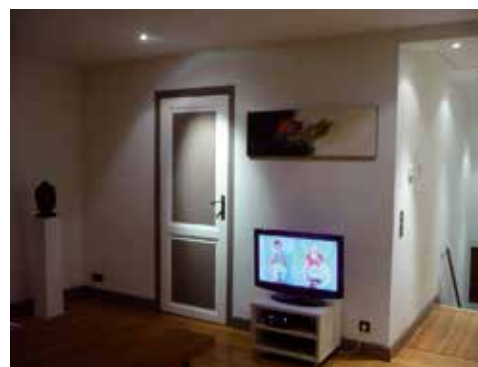
Monthly rent: 875€ (no extra charges for the building)

Deposit: 2 monthly rent.

Registered tenancy agreement of 3 years.

Available from 1st of May 2014.

Contact: jerome@togethermedia.eu or 0475 41 63 62



What's On international

This month we recommend events in
Paris, Prague and Amsterdam

Expedition Silk Road: Treasures from the Hermitage

The Hermitage Amsterdam (an outpost of the Russian Hermitage) will offer visitors a glimpse of the long-lost civilizations along the legendary Silk Road, presenting treasures from the Hermitage: 250 exceptionally beautiful objects, such as murals, sculptures, precious silks, silver, glass, gold, and terracotta, excavated by Russian expeditions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. **Until 5 September.** Hermitage Amsterdam. Tickets: €15.00 - www.hermitage.nl

Hand of Buddha
Photo © State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg



The Crossclub

Located in the centre of Prague Holešovice, The Crossclub is a uniquely designed multicultural centre which houses a mix of cultures and a variety of styles and genres. For many years, the Crossclub has been an integral part of the Prague cultural scene, respected not only in the Czech Republic, but also abroad. Its fascinating futuristic design, with many unusual artifacts, has given the club its unique identity.

www.crossclub.cz

Josephine

To mark the two hundredth anniversary of the death of the Empress Josephine, this exhibition brings together personal mementos and major works from her prestigious art collections. From her Creole origins to her marriage to Napoléon Bonaparte, from her role as a sovereign to her life after divorce, visitors are invited to enter Josephine's private world and discover a modern woman who was passionate about travel, music and gardens. **12 March - 29 June.**

€12.50

Musée National du Luxembourg, Paris
www.museeduluxembourg.fr



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or pay a visite to our centres

'de Rand', Kaasmarkt 75, 1780 Wemmel T. 02 456 97 80 - info@derand.be

CHARITY



Paul Brennan
of Celtic Quick
News highlights
an extraordinary
world charity

A simple solution to world hunger

Mary's Meals feed 822,142 kids each day across some of the most impoverished areas of the world. The global average annual cost per child is £10.70, and is only £7 in Malawi, where the Celtic Quick News kitchen (made possible by donations from fans) is located in Kholoni Primary School.

Kitchens are brick-constructed and fully-stocked with stoves, pots, serving utensils, mugs and cutlery. They also have a wall-mounted blackboard so that the room can be used as a classroom outside of meal times.

The charity started in 2002 when founder Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow met a mother dying of AIDS and her child, whose only ambition was to have enough food to eat.

Today, the charity operates in 16 countries, including several in Africa, Haiti and India.

There are an estimated 57 million undernourished and unschooled children, so the challenge remains significant.

Magnus continues to run Mary's Meals from a garden shed at the back of his parents' house

in Dalmally, Argyle, Scotland, which he first used as a store room before heading off to Bosnia with an aid convoy in 1992.

93% of money raised goes directly to the needy, and, where possible, the 65,000 volunteers who keep the project running are drawn from parents and relatives of the children being fed.

The impact in Malawi, the 17th poorest country by UN measures, is significant. Mary's Meals provide a daily meal to 20% of the country's primary school-aged children. The impact is more than just feeding the hungry – two years after a Mary's Meals project in Malawi started, school enrolment is up an average of 30%, leading to higher educational achievements and a better chance in life.

Celtic Quick News' target for raising enough money to build the kitchen was 14 March, our 10th anniversary, but the money is already in place and with Mary's Meals, so the next target is to put food in the lockers for a year.

www.marysmeals.org.uk
Direct donation through CQN: <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/paulbrennan68> ●



LE CHAT by Philippe Geluck



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moitié



moitié



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- Votre fondue se défait : remettez le caquelon sur la cuisinière et ajoutez une cuillère à café de maïzena diluée dans du vin blanc et un peu de jus de citron frais. Remuez énergiquement et portez à ébullition.
- Votre fondue est trop claire : augmentez la flamme du réchaud, ajoutez un peu de maïzena diluée dans du vin ou du kirsch et tout au plus une poignée de fromage râpé. Remuez.
- Votre fondue est trop épaisse : augmentez la flamme du réchaud et ajoutez un peu de vin blanc en remuant énergiquement.

www.gruyere.com

www.vacherin-fribourgeois-aop.ch



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Préparation pour 4 personnes:

- Frotter le caquelon avec une gousse d'ail coupée en deux (que l'on peut laisser ou non dans le caquelon)
- Verser 800 gr. de mélange à fondue (400 gr. Gruyère AOP & 400 gr. Vacherin Fribourgeois AOP)
- Ajouter 3 dl de vin blanc sec et amener gentiment à ébullition en remuant continuellement (et éventuellement féculé)
- Faire chauffer jusqu'à ce que le fromage soit bien fondu
- Vous pouvez ajouter selon vos goûts du poivre et un petit verre de kirsch
- Une fois sur le réchaud, maintenir une flamme moyenne et bien brasser à chaque morceau de pain
- Couper en morceaux de 2 à 3 cm 600 à 800 gr. de pain



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www.fromagesdesuisse.be

