

APRIL 2014 #47

# Together

magazine

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*WILD BIRD*

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DEVELOPMENT  
KNOW YOUR VALUE  
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## GOSSIP IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

### Editor's LETTER

*Together:  
Inspiring you  
to reach your dreams...*

### ON THE COVER



Arizona Dream by J & Joy

The wonderful thing about the internet is that the internet's a wonderful thing. Many people complain that they are always the last person to hear about the latest bit of gossip at work, at home or in the social circle that we gradually turn into a village without knowing how or why. Gossip travels like wildfire, with fascinating tidbits such as the news that Agnes has left Reggie and the barman in the Crown & Anchor lost all the takings on a horse called 'Be Lucky'.

In fact, it's me that is always the last to hear. But thanks to the incredible reach of the World Wide Web, this very week I found out all manner of things. Did you know that Scarlett Johansson (our interviewee recently) is pregnant and the lucky man is fiancé Romain Dauriac? You can even see her little bump in the images. In the same pages I saw Katie Upton and, between you and me, I think the gorgeous actress and model's put on a bit of weight.

The music world was rocked when Techno giant Tiesto collapsed on stage! The artist had to be rushed to the hospital mid-performance during his concert in San Jose, California, for "mysterious reasons, leaving fans stunned and shocked". It's addictive, you see. I will now have to read the follow-ups.

Why should we care less about these showbiz people whom we will more than likely never meet? Perhaps, it's because we don't have to watch Agnes' real tears, nor add an extra coin or two to the barman's tip jar. And there's a little bit in all of us that makes us feel glad that celebrities can suffer, too.

And BTW, did you hear about George Clooney...?

**Paul Morris**  
EDITOR







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Mauritius



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Wild bird

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# Together online



## 1/ Angelina Jolie only woman in the top 10 highest paid actors

The Media Center released the top 10 highest paid actors in 2013. Hollywood women...

## 2/ Kate Middleton's new fashion guru: The Queen

Despite the fact that the fashion pages of magazines and websites can't seem to get...



## 3/ Club Med's Belek Resort: A golfer's paradise

Club Med's latest 4-trident resort on the Turkish Riviera opened last spring and is situated just next door...

## 4/ Selfies: Head lice love them

Teenagers have no idea that they are probably contribute to the proliferation of head lice...

## 5/ Salary: Women too humble to ask for a raise

New survey suggests glass ceiling still there 68% of Belgian women have never negotiated their wage, against 52% of men...



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# Starring in Belgium



## Amos Lee

Amos Lee is a talented American singer-songwriter, between country and Americana, with a voice that is "light amber, mildly sweet, a touch of grain". His previous CD, *Mission Bell*, went straight to No.1 in the US charts in 2011. He brings that and new album *Mountains Of Sorrow, Rivers Of Song* to the AB. Ancienne Belgique. **4 May**. Tickets: €22 [www.abconcerts.be](http://www.abconcerts.be)

Photo ©Lee Millward

## Steve Hackett: Genesis extended live bonanza!

Steve Hackett was a member of the legendary Genesis between 1970 and '77, back when prog-rock sounded adventurous, with fantastic albums like *Nursery Cryme*, *Foxtrot*, *The Lamb Lies Down On Broadway*. He returns with a concert over two hours long and another sublime lightshow. Ancienne Belgique. **16 May**. Tickets: €31 [www.abconcerts.be](http://www.abconcerts.be)



## Nine Inch Nails

One of the most anticipated live bands is on the way to Antwerp. Nine Inch Nails, Trent Reznor's charismatic project, still remains the reference to many. Albums such as *Pretty Hate Machine*, *Broken* and *The Downward Spiral* had a considerable influence on the development of electro and music in general. And they have brought out their first album for five years, *Hesitation Marks*. Lotto Arena, Antwerp. **28 May**. Tickets: €44 - [www.livenation.be](http://www.livenation.be)

## Katie Melua

The universe of Katie's debut album ***Call off the Search*** (2003) is coloured by the influence of artists such as Joni Mitchell, Paul Simon and Bob Dylan, all names that have shaped her adolescence. In 2005, ***Piece By Piece*** confirmed the extent of her talent. Cirque Royale. **11 April**. Tickets: from €41 - [www.cirque-royal.org](http://www.cirque-royal.org)



# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

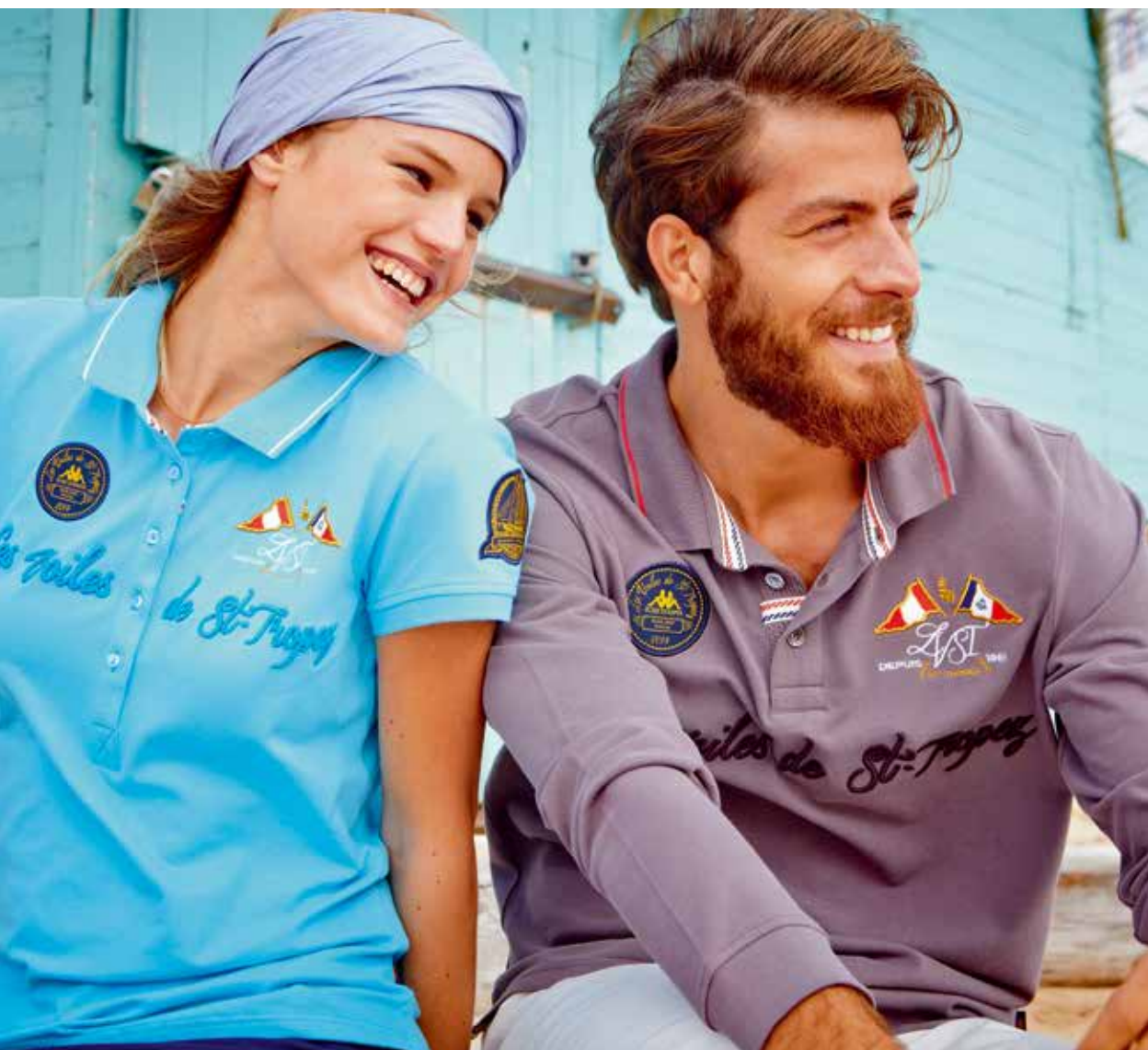
*I do believe in the importance of  
knowing our worth or value*





*Les Voiles de St-Tropez*

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# Strengthen those abs for summer

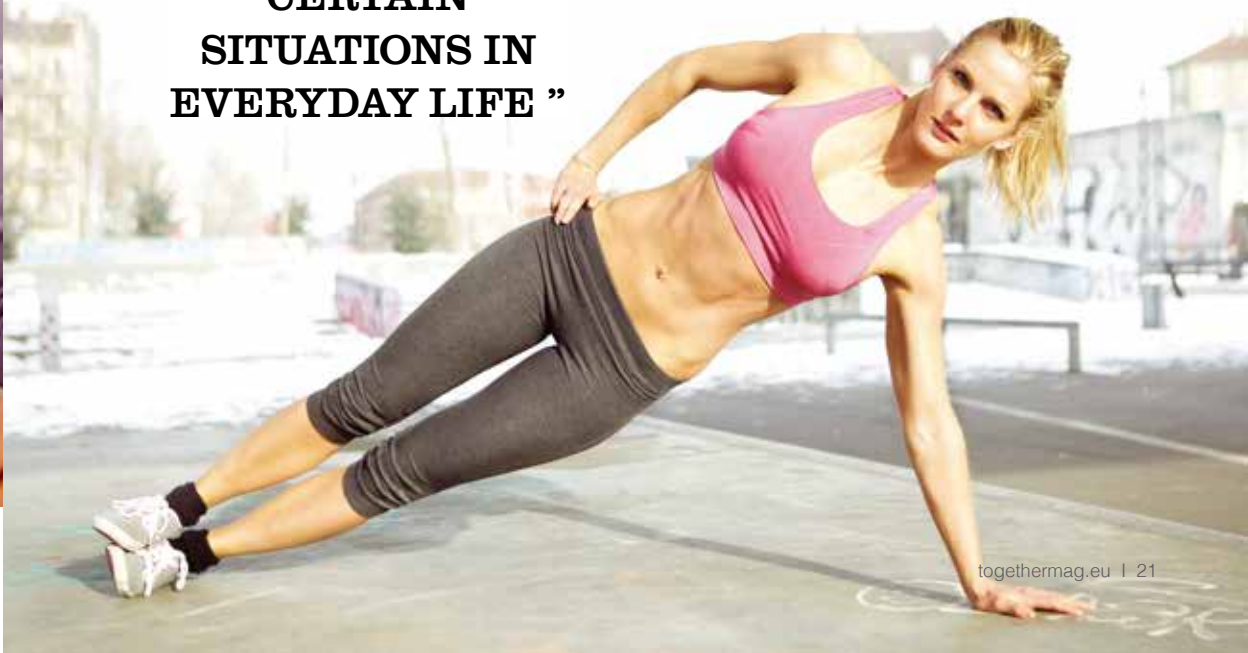
**Anco Wijbinga**, Aspria's wellbeing manager, offers tips on how to work on your abdominal muscles

**W**inter has finally left our part of the world, making way for the sun and more light, with all its benefits in both physical and mental terms. The return of the sun also heralds the arrival of summer and with it the pressure to have a newly slim body, ready to slip into your swimsuit or bikini.

They're targeted by both men and women in terms of exercise, particularly at this time of year. It's never too late to work on them. Of course, they are the abdominal muscles. If there's one area which is poorly understood and not tackled effectively, it's the abdominal zone.

Let's remind ourselves about the anatomy of the tummy. We have superficial muscles which essentially allow the body to make short, intense movements against

**“ IT'S AN  
IMPORTANT  
MUSCLE IN  
SPORT AND IN  
CERTAIN  
SITUATIONS IN  
EVERYDAY LIFE ”**





## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Fitness

resistance: the rectus abdominis or large straight abdominal muscles ('six pack') and the large oblique muscles (under the 'love handles'). We also have the deep muscles which help the body maintain posture and protect the joints: the small oblique muscles (under the large oblique muscles) and the transverse abdominal muscles (forming a belt under the six pack and the oblique muscles).

In this article, we'll concentrate on the rectus abdominis and the transverse muscles.

The transverse is a deep muscle, essential for posture, protection of the back and for a flat tummy. It's best worked in long sets of support exercises and can be disturbed by inflammation of the digestive system (constantly bloated tummy). It is under-represented in 95% of training programmes.

The rectus abdominis muscle is a superficial muscle and should be worked in short sets (maximum 15) with resistance. It's an important muscle in sport and in certain situations in

everyday life: when you lift your case into the locker above your seat on an aeroplane, for example.

However, if you continue to work your rectus abdominis, you risk aggravating problems with your back or maintaining your pelvic floor (urinary incontinence for women). You also risk weakening your transverse muscles (too weak to hold their own against the larger rectus abdominis muscles). At best, you'll continue with your crunches without any results, workout after workout, week after week.

#### Coach's advice:

1. Stop doing abdominal exercises of the crunch, sit up or plank type
2. Work your transverse muscles
3. Work your rectus abdominis muscles using negative extension (on a Swiss ball for example)

Reference: Paul CHEK "Eat, move and be healthy" C.H.E.K Institute, LLC (Dec 2004) ❶



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# Clearing up the spirit

**Sarbani Sen** shares her expertise in cranio-sacral massage



**C**ranio Sacral Auto Dynamics (CSAD) is a combination of craniosacral therapy (which comes from osteopathy), the art of movement and quantum physics (the study of the smallest cell unit). This is a method of awakening the consciousness of light in our body cells.

The logic behind it is that the brain initiates the craniosacral rhythm. It influences our feelings, our way of being in the world, and the way we lead with situations and make our choices. You can observe the rhythm in your body. Similar to the rhythm of the tides (expansion and retraction), it is the source of creation and vital force. A session of craniosacral massage will help re-establish contact with this inner movement – to understand it, experience it and to follow it in order to take the best suitable path in our lives.

CSAD clears up the spirit, cleans up mental blockages and enforces harmony between the two sides of the brain so that the collaboration between them (between the yin and the yang, the masculine and the feminine, the creative and the rational) is more fluid and dynamic.

This approach is useful in helping to fight sleeping disorders, eating disorders, humour fluctuation and migraines. Through its slow and non-invasive nature, CSAD acts on both the symptoms and the causes. It works on places of the body where the energy flow is blocked. They are identified by therapists and freed by the positioning of hands on specific regions of the body (feet, knees, neck etc) in a perfectly organized routine, almost not touching the body. These very

slow non-movements awaken and stimulate energies to circulate freely again within the whole body.

If you want to improve your clarity of thought, release tension, feel the voice of the heart profoundly, increase your level of consciousness, experiment with the power you have to change things in your life or drop bad thought habits (conditioning and destructive schemes), then this technique is for you. After one session you feel the magic of the flowing energy in your body, which really cleanses energetic knots.

A session lasts for about an hour to an hour and a half. You are dressed comfortably lying down in silence or with music. It is a trip through your cells. The body relaxes profoundly and releases tensions, allowing the mind to travel in unexplored places, in dreams, emotions and sensations. There are positive effects after the first session, but several sessions allow for a deeper cleansing and harmonizing. Even just the memory of this massage has a beneficial impact in your daily life: as if clearer and lighter breathing is finally possible again; as if your dreams could be part of your goals and some vital willpower increased. ●

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**Jo van der Zypen**  
describes her family's  
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# Know your value - know your self

**Gemma Rose** suggests that before you know what you are worth, you first have to know who you are

**A**lbert Einstein demanded: "Try not to become a man of success but rather try to become a man of value." Value, worth, self-esteem. These are words which are often trumpeted when it comes to self-improvement and self-help. Business magazines advise us to "upgrade our value" in the same way as we would do with our products. Leading female public figures shout at other women from the roof tops to "know their value" in order to demand higher salaries and shatter glass ceilings. Relationship experts beg us to "appreciate our self-worth" and walk away when we are treated poorly.

Although I share the good intentions behind these



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## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Self-Help

sentiments, I am left wondering what this term 'know your value' actually means. Perhaps, we can identify the typical traits of a person of value: honesty, integrity, courage, generosity, kindness, fairness, patience, resilience, confidence and so on. But in all likelihood, how many people do we know who possess some or all of these traits (and more) at any one time, let alone all the time? And if we are perfect enough to possess such traits, how sincere are we in demonstrating them? Can we honestly say that we act with pure intentions when we are being generous? Or is there some other underlying motive to our actions, regardless of how negligible it is?

Despite my scepticism, I do believe in the importance of knowing our worth or value because by doing so we can lead healthier and happier lives. But to know our value, we need first to know ourselves.

The 17th century French philosopher René Descartes stated: "I think, therefore I am." By asserting that human beings are able to think, he was trying to prove our existence: that our world had not been concocted by an evil demon, deceiving us into thinking we are real when in fact we are not. This line - considered the most famous of Western philosophy - has provoked controversy ever since, partly because it has led us to believe our thoughts define who we are, and they make up what we call 'the self'.

For example, if our thoughts are telling us that we are stupid, we will tend to believe that we are. But a number of sources argue that we are not our thoughts. Buddhism and 'spiritual authors' such as Eckhart Tolle (of the New York Times best-seller *The Power of Now*) claim that we are not our minds and thoughts have no ownership of us. The 18th century Scottish empiricist philosopher David Hume claimed that the mind is purely made up of a 'bundle' of memories, processes, thoughts, passions and experiences rather than there being an owner of the content: the self or the 'I'. Neuroscience has illustrated that the left and right hemispheres of the brain can act independently from one another, showing that there is no

central command which directs everything.

Without delving into the complexity of our existence, if we simply recognize that we can extricate ourselves from our thoughts, then we can critically evaluate who we are. What makes us happy or sad? How do we react to certain people and situations, and why? How do we treat others, ourselves and how do others treat us? How do we think others see us? By taking the time out to engage in honest and impartial self-reflection, we can discover ourselves as well as how to live.

Another key to self-awareness is self-acceptance, warts and all. A lot of self-help literature has focused on increasing our worth by raising our self-esteem. But focusing on self-esteem can actually make us unhappy. The highly-esteemed late American psychologist Albert Ellis regarded self-esteem as a sickness because it involves rating the whole self rather than the individual action. If we praise our whole self for a good deed, our esteem goes up but then if we do a bad deed, our esteem plummets because we berate ourselves. By focusing on self-esteem we do not accept that we are imperfect: sometimes we behave well, other times less so. Ellis recommends that if we have to rate anything, rate the action, not the self.

All this week as I was contemplating how to write this article, I grew increasingly apprehensive. I questioned whether I had the authority to write about this subject because I know that I don't always or even often exemplify the characteristics of what I consider to be a person of value. But this thought holds no weight. The characteristics above are merely suggestions. The truth is that part of being a valuable person is deciding for myself the principles and standards that I choose to live by, and understanding why I chose them. ●





**BE WELL...**

*It's a dynamic process that is active  
24/7, from conception till death*



# The state of health

**Tom Meyers**, stress coach for body and mind, asks us to stop and think about what being healthy is all about

**A**nually, the World Health Organization (WHO) celebrates World Health Day on 7 April. This year the organization has its 66th birthday, and although it has done some great work over the years, it faces big new challenges. Challenges such as work-related stress associated with the increase in cases of depression and burnout, which affects one-in-four employees.

**“ A STATE OF  
COMPLETE  
PHYSICAL,  
MENTAL AND  
SOCIAL WELL-  
BEING ”**

With these very real and pressing challenges, let's ask the foremost but somehow overlooked question: 'What is health?'

It may seem obvious, but have you ever asked yourself this question or thought about its relevance?

According to WHO, health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (infirmity = physical or mental weakness). This definition hasn't been amended since 1948.

However, is health a state, a particular condition that someone is in at a specific time? My personal opinion is that if you look at health as a state then you're facing a Sisyphean task.

On the other hand, when you look at health as a dynamic process that adapts itself constantly to external and internal demands then it becomes a much more accessible living concept, something you can attain.

Here's an example to illustrate this. You've caught a virus and your body is defending itself with a fever. You feel fatigued, muscles ache and your mood has changed – in other words, your body has adapted itself to new demands. Once the virus is contained, the body will regulate its temperature to the normal range again, reducing the immune reaction. Muscles will relax and you'll feel better, restored and mentally alert again after a few days of regeneration. Every second the various parameters that were influenced are dynamically adapting themselves to offer the best means of survival for the body: that is health at work.

This example also illustrates that illness shouldn't always be seen as something bad or a thing to get rid of as quickly as possible. Illness is often a survival-protection mechanism or a signal that we're out of balance because we didn't take care of ourselves. Restore that balance and health will reset itself.







Health is the ability of the body to adapt. It's a dynamic process that is active 24/7, from conception till death, in order to stay in balance. If health wasn't this dynamic process then we wouldn't be the kind of human beings that we are. Like a river, health flows and changes constantly. However, just like a river, health can be obstructed in its flow and aid is needed to overcome those obstructions.

Health is a personal responsibility that must be nurtured and invested in every day. Health also adheres to the laws of nature, and it is susceptible to the environment we create, our thoughts and our behaviour.

Health from a body perspective is also very different than health from a mind perspective. Look at it this way: in your mind you can run a marathon without training and stay completely healthy, but try it with your body and... well, I think you get the message. Illness resulting from imbalance in the dynamic health process is often a result of copying and pasting the mind's potential into the body. This can also lead to behavioural changes, such as mood

swings, anger and psychological problems, including anxiety and depression.

Health is not about 'not being ill', nor does it always demand big changes or rigorous diets. Health is about little adjustments and taking time to relax, recuperate and regenerate in this hectic world. Standing on one leg all the time is tiring. It raises your breathing rate, heart rate and blood pressure, and it creates discomfort.

To be chronically in stress mode (fight and flight) does the same.

I'd like to invite you to reflect on the question 'What is health?', on health's ingredients from a body perspective and to ask yourself if you adhere to a health-promoting lifestyle.

Tune in to *Health Matters* every week on [www.radiox.eu](http://www.radiox.eu) or subscribe on iTunes or other RSS feed. [www.tommeyers.be](http://www.tommeyers.be) 

# GODIVA

*Belgium 1926*

Discover *Easter* Treasures





# Band on your run

**Colin Moors** weighs up three wristbands designed to help you live a healthier life



A little while ago, a friend of mine introduced me to the brave new(ish) world of personal fitness and health bands. As I was on a health kick at the time - it comes and goes, don't judge - and because I found a coupon, I decided to take the plunge. From day one I became obsessed with my daily steps moved and how well or not I'd slept. There are many aspects of these devices that are undoubtedly useful for those wishing to follow a regime of health and/or fitness but which ones will give you a run for your money?

I'll be looking specifically at the de facto top three of such devices, as it's likely you'll be interested in these instead of the tens of others cropping up on the market recently. There are

sexy new items coming up all the time, but I'll stick to the current big players.

**Jawbone UP:** Of all the trackers and monitors around, this is the one I use and therefore the one I see people wearing most often. Its role is that of counting the number of steps you take during the day and how well you are sleeping. The idea of step counting is to improve what UK medical people call NEAT - Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis. Put simply, if you move more, you burn more calories. Take one or two flights of stairs instead of a lift, walk to or from work instead of getting the bus, that sort of thing. UP achieves these data using a technology called MotionX, a similar thing to the accelerometer in your phone but a bit smarter.

You can also manually add an exercise session to the day's data and use it to track what you're eating - and thus the calories via a barcode scanner. A nice feature is its movement alarm. If you're sitting at a desk all day, you can set a time of inactivity after which the band will buzz, reminding you to get up and about for a while.

**Fitbit Flex:** Fitbit had something of a PR meltdown in recent weeks, as their recent device, the Fitbit Force was found to be causing some quite unpleasant skin irritation, obliging the company to recall and refund some one and a quarter million units. They are hoping to rebound from this and have the Force on sale again soon. Currently, their Flex is the thing to have. The Flex will track your movement, calculate calories burned and collect sleep statistics. Like the UP, it will also use its



accelerometer to monitor your sleep patterns and wake you up at the most beneficial time during your sleep cycle, helping you avoid at least some of the horrors of a Monday morning. Currently, the Flex is cheaper than the UP, presumably until the new Force is out in the wild. This might be a good time to take advantage.

**Nike FuelBand SE:** Aware of some people's dislike or distrust of raw data, Nike have tried to be different and converted all this activity into NikeFuel. The cynical might say that it's a way of branding calorie counting but not me, oh no. The NikeFuel business won't put anyone off though. The unit is a thing of beauty and as attractive as Hollywood's next big thing. It has a dual-colour design but in a way in which the colours bleed into each other. It really does look nice. Better yet is the LED display that's integrated into the form of the band itself requiring no screen or other unnecessary bulk. The downsides, however, are many. It has the lowest rate of app compatibility of all the top bands and is the most expensive by some 30 or 40 euros. The deal breaker for many people, however, will be the lack of a dedicated app for Android. Whether Apple likes it or not, Android outsells them over 2 to 1 and getting into bed with Nike will do neither any favours.

If you're looking for a band and have an iPhone or an iPad, you have three to choose from, otherwise, the market really seems to be sewn up between Fitbit and Jawbone, with very little to separate them, save for the Fitbit's more attractive price. Using either of these, you can easily sync with other fitness apps such as the popular MapMyFitness, RunKeeper and Strava. This symbiosis with free apps makes the UP and the Flex my two top contenders for the title - at least in this early part of the year.

As fitness bands become more mainstream, more apps are being designed to take advantage of them and in turn, the bands can only get more intelligent. The market is looking very healthy indeed. **1**



# THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

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## POLITICS

# Syria crisis

*EU Reporter's* **James Drew** reports on how Commissioner Georgieva marked a third tragic anniversary



**I**nternational Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva went to the north of Iraq in March to meet with the Kurdish Iraqi Authorities, EU humanitarian partners and, most importantly, with Syrian refugees who have fled the conflict in their country. Her visit underlined the European Union's firm commitment to maintaining its assistance to the most vulnerable and to the host nations generously taking in millions of victims of a conflict which reaches its third anniversary this week.

The commissioner said: "Since the start of this terrible conflict, more than 2.5 million men, women and children have fled Syria, of whom 230,000 are being sheltered right now by Iraq. The country has its own problems, but despite this, its door has been open to vulnerable Syrians fleeing from their own Hell. Europe has always demonstrated its solidarity with internally displaced Iraqis but it has also provided assistance to cope with the ever-growing flow of refugees from Syria. I take advantage of my visit here to call for an end to the violence in the region, unlimited access to those in need, respect for International Humanitarian Law, and most important of all, a sustainable political solution to the crisis."

Since the outset of the conflict, the European Commission has provided €21 million to assist more than 225,000 Syrians, mainly of Kurdish origin, who have fled the violence inside Syria and crossed to the Kurdish region of Iraq.

About 30% are hosted in camps, of which Domiz is by far the largest. The remaining 70% are living in urban areas across the three Kurdish Governorates, often under very difficult circumstances. The funding provided through the Commission's Humanitarian and Civil Protection department (ECHO) has provided assistance including registration, protection, shelter, water and sanitation, food and other items for the most vulnerable. Aid channelled through its humanitarian partners has supported Domiz Camp in Dohuk governorate and also urban refugees.

In addition, under the Children of Peace initiative launched with the prize money of the Nobel Peace Prize received by the European Union in 2012, ECHO also launched two specific projects to provide basic education to refugee children, one in 2013 and another in 2014.

The European Commission provides humanitarian assistance through its partners which include UN agencies, International Organisations such as the Red Cross/Red Crescent family and international NGOs while fully respecting the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, independence and impartiality.

EU affairs news website *EU Reporter*, established in 2001, reports daily with updates on EU news, policy and analysis.  
[www.eureporter.co](http://www.eureporter.co) 

# Wild *bird*

PHOTOGRAPHER: Aylen Torres

STYLIST: Nicholas Sirot

MAKE-UP ARTIST: Kim Theylaert for Guerlain Paris and Bumble & Bumble

MODEL: Yana@Ullamodels



T-shirt Minju Kim for H&M



Dress: American Vintage  
Jacket: vintage from stylist  
Socks: COS  
Boots: Mellow Yellow




Coat: Christian Wijnants  
Tank top: vintage  
Sari: vintage





Trousers: Custom Levi's  
T-shirt: vintage  
Jacket: Christian Wijnants

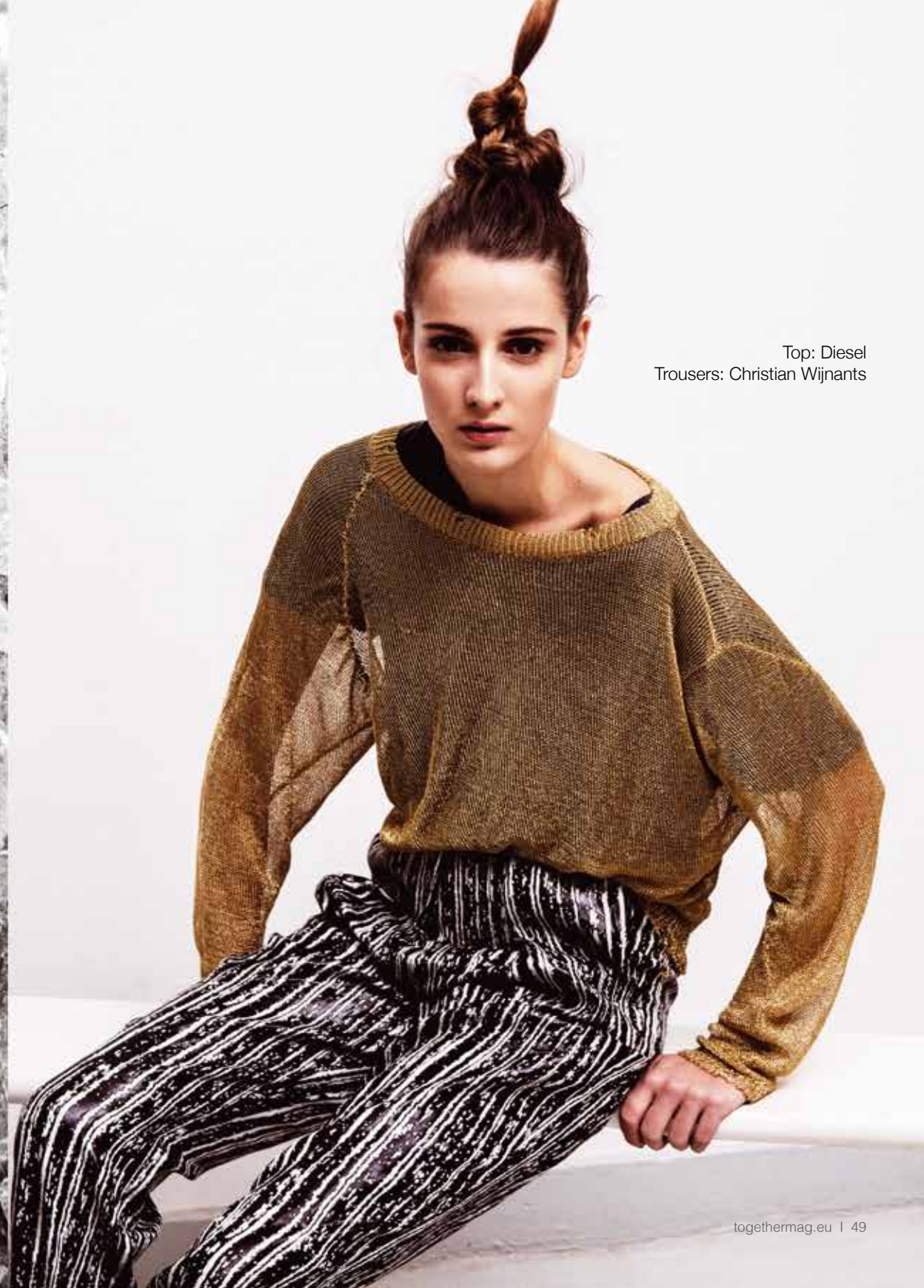


One-piece underwear: Mango  
Kimono: Bas Pucci  
Boots: Doc Martens





T-shirt and jacket:  
Filles a Papa  
Jeans:  
Wrangler  
Sneakers:  
New Balance



Top: Diesel  
Trousers: Christian Wijnants



T-shirt and jacket: Filles à Papa



One-piece underwear: Mango  
Kimono: Bas Pucci  
Boots: Doc Martens



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BEAUTY  
NEWS

## A summer glow

**Delphine Stefens**  
recommends products that  
will make you glow

Be well... and look even better with peachy skin, a sun-kissed tan and a radiant glow. As spring settles in, let the sun shine in your daily make-up and beauty routine with plenty of bronze and fruity colours to look your best.

Spritz yourself happy with **Limon Verde**, the latest **Aqua Allegoria** by **Guerlain** (€87/125ml), a deliciously fresh scent that will instantly transport you to a lush garden with its notes of lime and cane sugar.



Go for a Capri glow, an Ibiza bronze or a Copacabana tan with sun care specialist Lancaster and its new line of self-tanners, which come in three shades to better suit your natural complexion and exotic holiday wishes: Weekend in **Capri Self Tanning Beautifying Jelly** for face and body (€31.95/125ML). Or make your own bespoke self-tanning cocktail with the **Radiance-Plus Golden Glow Booster by Clarins** (€26/15ML) by adding up to three drops to your daily moisturizer.



The **Bronze Goddess Powder Bronzer** by **Estée Lauder** (€40.35) is available in four shades, going from a light to a deep tan. Layer on face, cleavage and shoulders for a warm healthy glow.



While eyes may be the mirror to the soul, they can also give away more than one may care for. Beat sleep deprivation, dark circles and puffy eyes with the **Glamglow Brightmud Eye Treatment** (€49.95/12G) - it also tackles fine lines through a plumping and moisturizing effect for brighter sunny eyes. Exclusively available at [www.cosmeticaty.com](http://www.cosmeticaty.com) and [www.iciparisxl.be](http://www.iciparisxl.be)

For an instant cosmetic pick-me-up, try a touch of the **Limited Edition Blush Crème de Chanel Intonation** (€34.50) with a dash of **Yves Saint Laurent Rouge Volupté** (€33.50) N°32 Corail Jalouse.



The **Pommisst Hydration Spray** by **Jane Iredale** (€29.90/90ML) with pomegranate extract is a dewy mist that boosts and brings comfort to the skin anywhere, anytime. It can also be used to set mineral make-up.





# Arizona dream

The Belgian J&Joy fashion brand was created by Pierre Hamblenne. He has always been mad about fashion and became interested in the clothing industry at a very young age. When he was still at primary school he would sketch out ideas for future collections in his exercise books. His collections are built around colourful and affordable casual and luxury clothing.

His latest inspired sketches have been transformed into the fashion company's 2014 Spring/Summer collection: in the blues of the sky and the reds of the coral reefs, in orange fluorescence and colourful stripes, the shorts and tops, jeans and skirts announce the imminent arrival of summer.

The J&Joy crew packed up their cameras and lenses and drove off into the Arizona heat and dust to record their latest shoot...









# Shopping



## Ice- Phone

The Ice-Watch brand's new eclectic range of Android smartphones comes in a range of colours:

**€99 - €199**

[www.ice-watch.com](http://www.ice-watch.com)



## GUESS

From the Heatwave collection, the 'Riviera' in turquoise:

**€139**

[www.guess.eu](http://www.guess.eu)

## AMIGO GIFT VOUCHERS

A night in a Brussels palace a few steps from the Grand Place, a glass of champagne, a gourmet dinner at Bocconi restaurant, a signature cocktail from the head bartender, or simply an amount that will leave the lucky recipient a free choice at the five-star Hotel Amigo. Amigo Bar from **€40**, Ristorante Bocconi from **€90**, hotel from **€256.28**.

[www.roccofortehotels.com/hotels-and-resorts/hotel-amigo](http://www.roccofortehotels.com/hotels-and-resorts/hotel-amigo)



## FREYWILLE

From the refined 'Hommage à Alphonse Mucha' collection. 18 carat gold Luna Piccolissima earrings topped with diamonds. An ideal gift for Mother's Day.



## GODIVA

Two special eggs for Easter from Godiva.

Easter Egg Treasure Nougatine

Godiva's seasonal poussins, small 250g wrapped eggs and core chocolates are found within two chocolate nougatine shells: **€78.50**

Easter beaded Egg

Celebrate spring with this opulently beaded, egg-shaped keepsake box, filled with assorted Godiva's fresh Easter eggs, packed with several flavours: black raspberry, black praline, lemon mousse-milk spéculoos, and many others: **€50.00**  
[www.godiva.be](http://www.godiva.be)



## Montblanc

Named after the legendary 1950s fountain pen, the Meisterstück Heritage Moonphase is a luxury timepiece from the German company: **€3,560**  
[www.montblanc.com](http://www.montblanc.com)



## Nona

Neither fashion nor fancy, the Nona Silver jewellery collection is all about quality. Each piece comes in sterling silver 925 rhodium: robust, dense and hypoallergenic. Earrings: [www.nona-jewels.be](http://www.nona-jewels.be)



## Tensen Jeweliers Antwerpen

The stainless Breitling Transocean Day-Date Automatic: **€4,750**

[www.tensen.be](http://www.tensen.be)



**Casa Gi**

Created in the family workshops in Antwerp, these diamond earrings are from their Notting Hill Collection. 1.45 carat, in yellow gold: **€5,900** - [www.casagi.com](http://www.casagi.com)

**JS Kolins**  
Belgian jewellers coral crush pendant: **€190**  
[www.js-kolins.com](http://www.js-kolins.com)



# By candlelight

For its first exhibition, Iceberg gathered six exceptional artists, all living in Belgium, around a new candle, making the link between art and light.



**Laurence Gonry:**

"The Iceberg association with artists is rich in diversity – the artists offer unique and very personal universes."



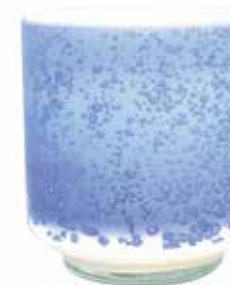
**Denis Meyers:**

"The candle perfectly replaces the sun as the centre of interest, creating a focus for our eyes."



**Steve Locatelli:**

"I found the skull from my previous collection was most relevant to a candle."



**Bernard Gilbert:**

"On one hand, we should be able to light the candle but it also should be lit."



**Pascal Courcelles:**

"I imagined the idea of connecting light with nature: the trees, not to mention the flowers and the bees."



**Robert Quint:**

"My candle is inspired by the phrase 'I was here'. It's a tag that's found in various locations."

They are available in limited editions of 100, numbered and signed by the artist. Price: €400, available from No Concept. [www.noconcept.be](http://www.noconcept.be)

You can also check out the permanent collection of fragrant candles from €39 [www.iceberg-candles.be](http://www.iceberg-candles.be)

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[www.iceberg-candles.be/events](http://www.iceberg-candles.be/events)



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# LIFE OF LEISURE

*Mauritius was created first, and then  
heaven; and heaven was copied  
after Mauritius.*



Together meets a happy, mellowed Robert Downey Jr., currently sitting at number one in the Hollywood actors earning league

# Robert Downey Jr.



**R**obert Downey Jr. is one of the most extraordinary men in Hollywood, whose own story could well be the subject of a biopic. A decade ago, after falling in love with Susan Levin, the film producer who would later become his wife, he resurrected his career from the wasteland of drug addiction and has since become one of the most successful actors in the world. As the face of the billion-dollar *Iron Man* film franchise and its *Avengers* spin-off, the charismatic actor is living proof of the power of the Zen-like positive thinking, which is at the core of his spiritual renewal.

Downey leaped into action/blockbuster films when he became tired of playing in critically-acclaimed films that "no one ever saw". Fate then intervened when he was given the chance to star in *Iron Man*, which earned half a billion dollars in 2008 and gave him the bankability and prestige of his very own film franchise.

Then along came the *Sherlock Holmes* films, which gave the quixotic actor yet another studio tent pole on which to hang his hat. And, finally, *The Avengers*, which earned him a cool \$50 million.

His new film is the indie comedy *Chef*, directed by and starring his close friend Jon Favreau (who also helmed the first two *Iron Man* films), about a chef (Favreau) who swaps a successful career in a popular L.A. restaurant for a job running a food-truck in Miami – in the process, he tries to reconnect with his estranged family.

Robert Downey Jr., who turns 49 in April, and his wife Susan, 40, live in Los Angeles with their two-year-old son Exton on a sprawling estate where Downey Jr. employs a staff that includes martial arts trainers, spiritual consultants and a private chef. Downey Jr. also has a son, Indio, from his first marriage to Deborah Falconer.





“ I KNOW IF I FOLLOW  
THAT PATH I WILL GET TO  
WHERE I WANT TO BE. ”



“ I TAKE PLEASURE AND  
JOY IN BASIC THINGS ”

**Together: Robert, are you enjoying fatherhood the second time around?**

I love it. I love being with Exton and trying to communicate with him on his level. It's not really different from how I remember being with my first son (Indio). It's great.

**Together: Has raising your young son had any effect on your work?**

I've slowed things down a bit but I enjoy working, and I know that work is the best form of therapy for me. After years of experience, I know that my mind takes me on strange trips when I spend too much time between films. It's always been the case that when I'm staying at home and my mind is not focused on a specific project that I get into trouble.

I love to work hard, and I like to think of myself as a soldier who earned his purple heart in battle and is ready to fight again. I love being able to work with talented people and spend 16 hours on a film set and then travelling around the world to promote my films. It's a very good life and work is the one thing I don't fear.

**Together: Do you feel everything has come together in your life now?**

What's really fascinating to me is that when I was a messed-up guy in my twenties I could never have imagined myself as a comfortably married action movie guy in his forties, raising a young son and having this very mellow life. Of course, now I'm in the process of accepting the fact that I am that guy! (Laughs) I've figured out that I can still be a bit rebellious and independent-minded without being excessive and still feel that I have an interesting life.

**Together: You've been living healthily for over a decade. How do you keep on that path?**

You have to learn to help yourself, grow up, and assume responsibility for your life. It's not a simple process. I've had a lot of psychiatrists tell me that "you can't do it alone" and so I've surrounded myself with good people to help me remain healthy and forward-looking. My wife Susan is the foundation of that process. Thanks to her I've been able to turn my life around in every sense. So this is a beautiful new chapter in my life, and I've been able to

bury most of my character defects and throw myself into a space where I take pleasure and joy in basic things.

Susan has given me a structure for living and we love each other as much as any couple can be in love. We've always had this feeling that this is the big relationship and marriage for the rest of our lives, till death do us part. We take that responsibility seriously and I've become a better man because of my commitment to taking this journey together with her.

**Together: Was there any one turning point?**

No. It was an accumulation of things and greater awareness of myself and what I was seeking. I live by certain principles and I feel I'm in the process of building a good life with Susan and being a good father. My work helps keep my focus and I pour as much of my energy into my life as I can, and it all reflects back on me and that's my way of getting high now. I don't need anything else.

I've reached a point where I know I can live this way, and I am deeply grateful for everything I have today. I was always chasing this elusive kind of joy or happiness when I was younger and I was chronically unhappy. So I learned that real truth and happiness comes from living honourably, responsibly, constructively, and taking care of your family. I know if I follow that path I will get to where I want to be.

**Together: How do you look upon the phenomenal success you've had in the Iron Man and Avengers films, not to mention Sherlock Holmes. Is it a form of sweet revenge against all the people who thought you were finished in Hollywood?**

No. I've never looked at it that way. I'm firmly convinced that first you have to believe in yourself if you want others to believe in you, whether it's the big studios or the public. With time, I've become more confident and sure of myself, and that's been of enormous benefit to me in every aspect of my life.

**“ IT’S A VERY GOOD LIFE AND  
WORK IS THE ONE THING  
I DON’T FEAR. ”**



**“ I COULD NEVER HAVE IMAGINED  
MYSELF AS A COMFORTABLY MARRIED  
ACTION MOVIE GUY ”**

**Together: Is your Tony Stark character in *Iron Man* a veiled extension of yourself?**

(Laughs) A braver extension of myself. In certain situations I enjoy being able to engage in some bravado. When I first began getting into Tony Stark, I imagined him as having a Howard Hughes kind of boldness and arrogance. I also saw it as an opportunity to come up with a screen persona that would be a more dashing and bolder variation on my own nature. I saw him as a man with a lot of élan! I've always believed that you need to be ambitious in terms of your own expectations of who your best self can be. You can will yourself into becoming the kind of person you've always wanted to be. You can soar higher than you imagine!

**Together: How close is Tony Stark to the real you?**

There's a lot of me in him but he's way cooler than I am. If I need to pick myself up and be a little more dashing in certain situations, I can channel Tony Stark. But I see the character as someone I was meant to play. When I was first offered the role, I had some long discussions with Stan Lee and I was 39 at the time. He told me that he had created the *Iron Man* comic 39 years ago. So Tony Stark and I were born at the same time. Now if that isn't a sign of destiny... (laughs)

**Together: Many people have compared your screen comeback as Phoenix-like?**

It's a life comeback! But I love the metaphor of the Phoenix. I soared high when I first started making my mark as an actor and then I crashed and burned, only to rise again. It's classical. The only thing that would ruin things is if I crashed and burned again. But I'm too proud of my family and what we have together to let that happen.

**Together: How important has the *Iron Man* film franchise been to you?**

There's no denying that *Iron Man* has put me in a position to do many other things. I originally pursued the film because I had seen Keanu Reeves and Johnny Depp succeed with their own film franchises (in *The Matrix* and *Pirates*

movies) and I wanted my son Indio to see his dad in that kind of a movie. I wanted it to be the kind of movie you can take your kid to and explore the comic-book hero genre with a mix of escapism and intelligence. I'm also proud of the fact that I'm a leading man who can do major blockbusters and be that Harrison Ford kind of guy. It's not a bad place to be.

**Together: You've been earning record salaries for your work in the *Iron Man* and *Avengers* films. Are you a tough negotiator?**

I've learnt a lot about the business side over the years, especially with Susan at my side. Everything changed on the Monday morning after the opening weekend for *Iron Man* in May, 2008. My economic and professional status underwent a complete revolution, and I've tried to understand how that works and make sure I maintain that stature and momentum. Susan and I have now begun developing our own projects together and that has resulted in the film *Judge* which will be released in the fall.

**Together: You're renowned for improvising and not sticking to the script. What is behind that?**

The goal is to make a well-written scene seem like it's improvised. Or to come up with things that you find in the room to use that you couldn't have known until you get into the real situation. Just try to improve things as you go along. I don't like to pretend. I try to use things in me and translate them into the situation and the character. So, it always needs to run through my own veins in a way.

**Together: Does that make it more stressful when you're on the set and changing your dialogue as you go along?**

No. That's where the art enters into the process. I'm really self-critical and I've found that I do better work when I'm able to innovate and take advantage of the kind of inspiration that comes under the intensity and beauty of the moment, when you're doing the scene and you've transformed into the character and are now speaking with his voice.



Interview

I've worked that way every since Jon Favreau and I did the first *Iron Man* together. The only thing that makes (improvization) more complicated is when the script is so well-written that I have less space and reason to innovate and depart from the printed word. But I look at the script as a Chinese menu where I can pick and choose and make it the best meal possible.

**Together: Jon Favreau has been a great friend as well as your director on the first two *Iron Man* films. Was it fun working with him on *Chef*?**

There is nothing I wouldn't do for Jon. He's a truly wonderful man, and he has believed in me from the beginning. He started out as an actor and I'm happy that he's taking centre stage in this film.

**Together: When you take stock of everything that you've accomplished to reach this point in your life, what are your thoughts?**

I feel blessed by God's grace. ①



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## MASERATI QUATTROPORTE DIESEL.

Maserati has a long history of surprising the automotive world with technological innovations, unconventional thinking, and breaks with tradition; introducing its state-of-the-art V6 diesel engine into the Quattroporte is just the latest example. As one would expect, this 275 HP unit produces the kind of performance that befits the company's flagship (0-100 kph in 6.4 seconds and a top speed of 250 kph) whilst clever engineering has managed to reproduce the distinctive and much loved Maserati exhaust note. And the other surprise? Quattroporte Diesel prices start at just € 96.000.

ENGINE: V6 60° 2987 CC - MAX POWER: 275 HP AT 4000 RPM - MAX TORQUE: 600 NM AT 2600 RPM  
MAX SPEED: 250 KM/H - 0-100 KM/H ACCELERATION: 6.4 SECS - FUEL CONSUMPTION: (COMBINED CYCLE)  
6.2 L/100 KM - (URBAN CYCLE) 7.8 L/100 KM - (EXTRA URBAN CYCLE) 5.2 L/100 KM - CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS:  
(COMBINED CYCLE) 163 G/KM - (URBAN CYCLE) 206 G/KM - (EXTRA URBAN CYCLE) 137 G/KM



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# Evian: A natural balance

**Julia Bush** visits an exceptional resort

Nestled between the Alps and Lake Geneva, the Evian Resort on the south shore of the lake is an oasis of stunning views, relaxation and complete comfort.

From golf courses to hotels to a day at the spa, Evian's got you covered. First, the impressive Evian Golf Club offers remarkable views of the Alps and, across sparkling Lake Geneva, the sight of nearby Lausanne, Switzerland. Imagine playing 18 holes surrounded by this stunning landscape and then just try not to impulse-buy your ticket south— it's impossible, I know.

**“ NATURE TAKES  
ITS TIME ”**

If you're looking to watch instead of play, the course will host the Evian Championship from 11 to 14 September. It has been renovated regularly since 1994, when the course was part of the first Evian Masters event - it's just a few minutes' walk from both the Royal and Ermitage hotels.



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The resort's three hotels, Hotel Royal, Ermitage and Manoir, all manage to be chic and inviting in their own individual ways. Hôtel Royal is closed for renovation until July 2014, but the Ermitage and Manoir offer more than enough variety for guests. Each of the 80 rooms in Hotel Ermitage are individually designed and decorated. The Ermitage also boasts the Spa Quatre Terres, which offers golf-specific treatments to release muscle tension with clay and golf balls.

If you're not a golfer, the Evian les Thermes spa has relaxation opportunities for everyone to enjoy. The 'Relax' spa treatment includes a thermal spa, massage, face and body care and more. The spa is also home to hydrotherapy treatments, which are carried out with Evian's clear, unique mineral water. Nature takes its time – over 15 years – to purify water that is sheltered by thick layers of clay. Free from pollution, Evian water has a natural mineral balance that makes it exceptional.

After a day of relaxation, there's nothing better than fine dining. The resort offers four different restaurants: Purple Lounge, Le Chalet du Golf, La Table and Le Baccara. Each offers a unique vibe and menu. Le Baccara is situated right in the middle of Evian Casino, while you can sit in the middle of the golf course and enjoy a meal at Le Chalet du Golf.

Outside the resort, Evian boasts impressive water gardens, a theatre and free historic tours of the city year-round. The Palais Lumière hosts major art exhibitions, and guests have free access to its entry hall to see the temporary displays.

Whether you're in Evian to golf, relax or both, expect nothing less than a remarkable landscape and a huge variety of attractions. Now go pack up your clubs and get ready for the vacation of a lifetime! ●

© More South Africa

| VOYAGES SUR MESURE |

## ON VOUS EMMÈNE AILLEURS

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# Mauritius, then heaven...

*Together* headed for the Indian Ocean and the Shandrani Resort and Spa



**M**auritius, part of the Mascarene Islands, lies in the Indian Ocean about 2,000 kilometres off the southeast coast of the Africa. The island was the only home of the Dodo bird, which became extinct fewer than eighty years after its discovery. But Mauritius has not gone the way of the poor Dodo – it has developed into one of the world's top luxury tourism destinations. With good reason. Blessed with a tropical climate and clear, warm water, stunning beaches and

tropical fauna and flora, it is no surprise that it received the World Leading Island Destination award for the third time and World's Best Beach at the World Travel Awards in January 2012. The good news is that it's only three hours ahead of us, and a 10-hour flight from Paris or London. We flew Air Mauritius to get an early taste of the island.

We headed for the south of the island, which is impressively well-preserved - more specifically

to the serene welcome awaiting us at the Shandrani Resort and Spa. That word 'welcome' sums up the entire island – the locals (descended from a mix of nationalities and expressing themselves in English, French, Creole and Asian languages) open their arms wide to ensure you enjoy yourself: sometimes luxury can be that simple, especially when there are five stars attached.

The resort is part of the aptly-titled Beachcomber Hotels group, which also has places in the Seychelles and Marrakech. Set on a private peninsula lapped by the Blue Bay

Marine Park that's rich in sea life, Shandrani has three different beaches to discover. A short boat ride inshore takes you to the famous Iles aux Aigrettes nature reserve.

Whether it's peace and quiet or an activity holiday you're after (or a combination of both) it's all here in one place, surrounded by the bluest waters and a perfect sky. Outdoors, take your pick from nature beachcomber eco-tourism walks, to sailing with the resort's certified sailing club, diving with members from a PADI affiliated centre and, of course, what comes naturally in the ocean, water skiing,



**“ KICK BACK, SAFE IN THE KNOWLEDGE  
THAT NO NASTY SURPRISES AWAIT  
AROUND THE CORNER ”**



windsurfing, sailing, kayaking and, on dry land, golf and tennis – or head indoors to the Source Spa which features 11 treatments rooms or the Source Wellness with 20 tropical cabins. You are in the hands of therapists who have all been trained by Clarins to deliver a very high quality of service.

As you rub shoulders with people drawn from the four corners of the earth – from Australia to South Africa to Brazil – there is one thing that will not be on your mind: the bill. The offer is all-inclusive so you can kick back, safe in the knowledge that no nasty surprises await around the corner. So leave your wallet safely tucked away in your room.

Any notion of working off those extra pounds should be left behind on the plane –



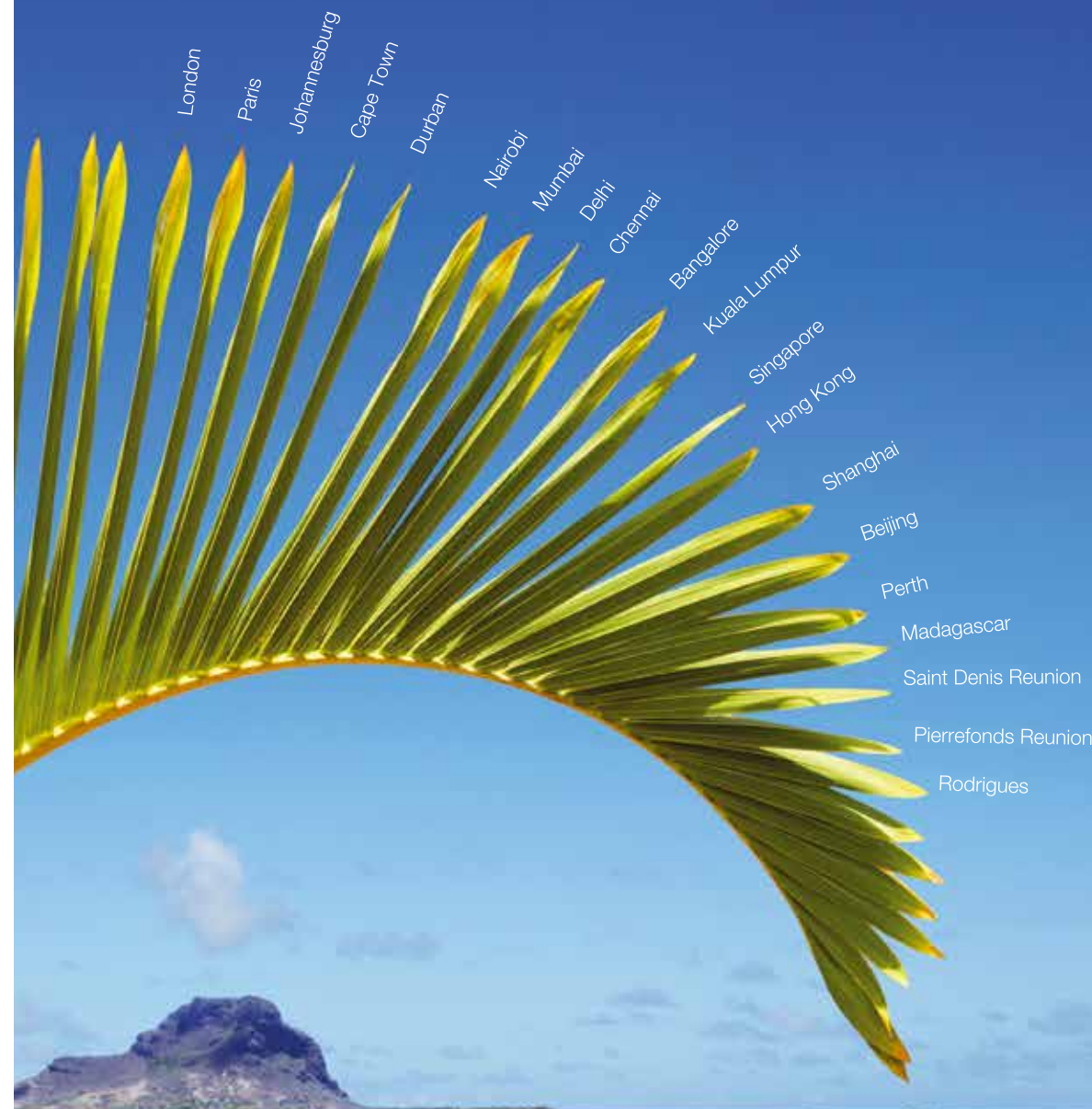
gastronomically, you will be assailed by Executive Chef, Italian-born Fabio Zanforlini's food and wine. With five restaurants and two bars, you won't lack variety.

There is a wide range of accommodation available, including family apartments with two bedrooms and two bathrooms, but it has to be said that this particular resort is a popular destination for honeymooners or couples celebrating that very special anniversary together.

In the late 1800s, Mark Twain travelled to the island. A Mauritian local said to him: "Mauritius was created first, and then heaven; and heaven was copied after Mauritius." ❶



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# Tuning into Brussels

Brussels-based musician **Karen McHugh** takes a look at some of the capital's international musicians and the bars and clubs they frequent

**B**russels isn't a bad place to live for a working musician. Quicker to navigate than London and with better-paid gigs than New York, its laid-back lifestyle and cheaper cost of living can be even more conducive to creativity than other cities. The constant influx of expats from all walks of life creates serendipitous connections among musicians who might otherwise never have met. And all of this means more music to enjoy for the rest of us!

## Best bars for... covers and world music

Many of Brussels' musicians make their living playing in the city's Irish bars. Places like The Old Oak, Celtica and the Michael Collins are well known for their weekend gigs drawing in expats who miss their fill of live music from home. Here you can listen to musicians from all over the world – Andrew Mavin, multi-instrumentalist from Newcastle, Canadian live-looper Akim Triebisch (aka Mystery Tramp), Irishman Peter O'Malley, Brazilian Randieri Samora, along with guitar genius Steve Jones, all playing a mix of covers interspersed with their own songs.

Other good places to enjoy shows are Live Music Café at Bourse which, true to its name, boasts performances every night, with as diverse a blend as hip-hop, rock, pop and folk, and the Wednesday evening acoustic nights at Hard Rock Café, whose sound system is second to none. And if it's a cultural re-education you're after, don't miss La Porte Noire on a Thursday night, with its mix of Celtic music, rock and roots gigs. Fantastic female duo Formiga

Bai Kamara, photo ©Michael Chia



and Cigale often grace the stage of this underground lair, playing their charismatic blend of folk-fusion. The harpist and violinist sing and play their way from Barcelona to Belgium, taking in Ireland and Scotland on their way.

## Singer-songwriter nights and jam sessions

Taking place every second Thursday of the month, this is a revival of a singer-songwriter showcase night started many years ago by Brussels' musical expat population. Recorded live with band interviews for new station Radio X, the concept has proved popular for fans of original music. Established and hosted by musician Andrew Mavin in June of last year, the monthly event has grown ever since, culminating in 2013 with a Christmas special bringing back ten top acts of the year. Held in

the cosy confines of Scott's Bar, each night is something special, always with a mellow, acoustic vibe and an encouraging audience. With the electrifying sounds of Madé J, the cool, funky tones of The Fix and the soothing harmonies of Balagan, there's a lot of music to be discovered. We've also got our eye on Little Things, a young international band who are destined for success!

Other participative nights around the city include the Jam session at Bizon on Monday nights, along with open mic nights at Floreo and Lava Café, both in St Géry.

## Soirees Cerises

If you're seriously into your music and you're on a constant quest to discover new bands, check out the Soirées Cerises music nights. This is a



## “ DON'T MISS LA PORTE NOIRE ON A THURSDAY NIGHT, WITH ITS MIX OF CELTIC MUSIC, ROCK AND ROOTS GIGS ”

project by Belgian Frederick Bulté, who it's fair to say is genuinely obsessed with music. He organizes a plethora of concerts at Rock Classic Bar in the city centre, with bands from all over the world, both visiting and resident in Brussels, coming to play. He also arranges home concerts – intimate acoustic sets which often sell out well in advance. His passion is for giving new bands and artists a platform on which to showcase their talent. Don't miss also the annual Fete de la Musique celebrations in Tower Art Gallery (TAG) at Rogier, with four rooms of continuous music on one night in June – a convivial mix of Belgian and international musicians. Promising artists we've heard from the past two years include the recently-signed Anwar from Morocco and emerging Belgo-Italian indie band Ambulance.

### Going your own way – or serendipity

As the bands rise through the ranks and arriving international musicians find their way on the scene, it can all be about meeting the right person. Rising Sparks are one such band.

Lead singer Adrien put an ad online to find musicians, and was joined by Finnish guitarist Mika. Together they formed the five-strong group. Taking part in the many treplins (showcases) organized in Belgium, they made their way up the ladder with their own compositions, eventually recording an EP and ending up as finalists in last year's Hard Rock

Rising talent search. And on the other end of the spectrum is Bai Kamara Junior – a solo artist who has made his stamp on the Belgian music scene over the past twenty years. Known for his support of Amnesty International and other aid

organisations, this Sierra Leone native frequently plays in Brussels, and his songs of peace, love and politics have earned him his place at key festivals both in Belgium and beyond.

As you can see, there's plenty of talent roaming around the bars and clubs of Brussels. And with such diversity, you can experience music from all around the globe. Go forth and support your 'local-expat' musicians! 🎵



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# Method in madness

**Paul Morris** headed for the Marolles to a restaurant that is just a bit quirky



**A**s you approach A La Folie it's not just the first thing that strikes you – it's the only thing that strikes you: the walls are decidedly rouge. But once ensconced in chef-owner Jean -Pierre Baroux's wonderful establishment, they become just part of a collection of eccentricities which somehow work just perfectly, from the bric-a-brac on the walls and in every nook and cranny – we are in antique territory after all – to the individual cut-glass wine goblets. It's as if objects from the neighbourhood have taken over the place like colourful jungle creeper.

The sense of having stumbled into someone's living room is further enhanced by the friendly welcome. Everyone is treated like family, as the amiable Jean – Pierre shuffles from kitchen to guests' tables and back to kitchen.

A La Folie is a breath of fresh air in a restaurant world where muted beiges are the order of the day, where you can't tell if you're in an eatery or an airport lounge. Kitsch is one thing, the kitchen another. Jean-Pierre's niche is market cuisine - simple, real, sincere, responding primarily to the demands of regular whose concern is to... eat.

He says: "I don't embroider around the produce. I realize the dishes as I would like them to be served to me." And yet he manages to bring all this to our plate for a very democratic price, starting with the Menu Chineur (bargain hunter) with house-inspired tapas, a choice between meat or fish of the day and dessert à la carte, all for €22.

This is not simply what is popularly termed 'comfort food' - it's a unique restaurant experience not to be missed. Imagine being suddenly invited to your estranged, eccentric uncle's house only to find out that he can cook like a prince.

A La Folie - Rue Haute, 16 - 1000 Bruxelles  
Tél. : 02 503 49 99 - [www.alafolie2.be](http://www.alafolie2.be) 📍

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# Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre

The jewel in the Thon crown has enjoyed a colourful make-over



Thon Hotels is one of Norway's largest hotel chains, with hotels in Norway, Sweden, Belgium and the Netherlands, including the Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre. If you haven't been there recently, you may not recognize it since it has undergone a complete makeover. It's fresher, more contemporary and packed with colour.

Centrally located, the hotel now offers a comfort that is unprecedented for four-star accommodation, with large, bright rooms and furniture that is comfortable and striking. 'Light, serenity and comfort' are the three pillars the Norwegian interior designer Trond Ramsøskar had in mind when he took on the redesign of the hotel. He wanted it to become a haven in the city, a place where guests can escape the hustle and bustle of the world outside. Ramsøskar chose, in both the lobby and the restaurant, bright, strong colours, contrasting with the sometimes dark buildings outside. Orange bar stools, armchairs and colourful neon lights result in a fresh, contemporary combination of light and space. This relook was not confined to public areas – all 454 rooms have undergone a metamorphosis. They feature bright, cheerful

colours and very comfortable furniture. All rooms are equipped, free-of-charge, with a flat-screen TV, tea and coffee-making facilities, safety deposit box and fridge. Guests can opt for optimal care in the relaxation centre on the top floor, with a gym and a sauna, boasting great views over the city.

Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre is regarded as a jewel in the Thon hotel group's crown. It is very conveniently located on Place Rogier in Brussels city centre, directly opposite Rue Neuve, the city's busiest shopping street, and only a 15-minute walk from the Grand Place – a perfect base for a few days in the busy streets of the capital. In the new and vibrant 'The O Bar', guests can relax with a drink from the wide selection of local beers. On Tuesday nights, the bar turns into a stage. Young talent and bands of all kinds display their skills during the Thon Music Sessions – free entertainment from pop to easy-listening, and from blues to Latin.

Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre  
17 Avenue du Boulevard, Brussels  
[www.thonhotels.com/brusselscitycentre](http://www.thonhotels.com/brusselscitycentre) ⓘ

# What's on Belgium



Photo © Peter Forrat

## The Brussels Tango Festival

The Brussels Tango Festival began in 2004, organized by the Association Alma del Sur, founded by Nathalie Jonckheere and François Pettiaux. This rendezvous with tango in Brussels is not limited to the boards – dancers also down into the Métro and offer free initiation in the parks. Tango anywhere, any time. On Brussels' Grand Place, the excellent musicians of Solotango Orchestra (Russia) and eight of the world's greatest tango maestros will offer you a free show, from 20h00 to 21h00. Various venues.

**10 -14 April.**

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

## 14-18: It's our history!

For the First World War 100th anniversary commemorations, the Royal Army Museum has organized a major exhibition. Based on the rich and unique collections of the Royal Army Museum, this exhibition will allow the public to discover all aspects of conflicts, which left Europe battered and weakened. Royal Army Museum. **Until 26 May 2015.** Tickets: €12 [www.expo14-18.be](http://www.expo14-18.be)







**THE O BAR**  
BRUSSELS CITY CENTRE BAR EXPERIENCE

## DISCOVER THE THON MUSIC SESSIONS

Come and enjoy good music at Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre. On Tuesdays established musicians as well as upcoming musicians give free concerts in an intimate atmosphere at the hotel-bar, The O Bar. A delicious finger food buffet is offered during the live concerts.

Agenda on: [thonhotels.com/tms](http://thonhotels.com/tms)

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## LIFE OF LEISURE

What's On



### Cavalía

Cavalía is a fresh mix of equestrian and performing arts, multimedia and special effects, innovatively integrating acrobatics, dance, aerial stunts and live music – all under a white Big Top.

To celebrate its 10th anniversary, Cavalía is presenting a revamped show featuring more horses, more artists, new stunning projections, new breathtaking acts and new costumes. Cavalía is a dynamic production, continually evolving to highlight the strengths and personalities of new artists and horses.

The show – conceived by Normand Latourrelle – is often labelled 'an equestrian ballet'. To project the breathtaking backdrops, Cavalía uses 20 projectors as powerful as those illuminating the grandest movie theatres. Brussels Expo. **13 – 25 May**. Tickets: from €55 [www.cavalía.net](http://www.cavalía.net)



### 'Courants d'airs' festival 2014

In April, Courants d'airs (air currents) will blow through the Brussels Conservatory. Students present their projects, involving various disciplines such as theatre, music, singing, contemporary circus, visual arts, dance and video. This is a unique opportunity to discover new creative people, the actors, singers and musicians of tomorrow. For this 8th edition, there are no less than 120 actors and 210 musicians participating. [www.conservatoire.be](http://www.conservatoire.be)



### Francisco de Zurbarán: Master of Spain's Golden Age

Francisco de Zurbarán was one of the most important painters of the Spanish Baroque, alongside Velázquez and Murillo. For the first time, an overview of his artistic work is being presented in Belgium. His oeuvre (whose subject matter is primarily religious) is striking for its combination of pure naturalism and a modern poetic sensitivity. BOZAR. **Until 24 May**. Tickets: €12 [www.bozar.be](http://www.bozar.be)



# Cinema

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



## **The Quiet Ones (2014)**

Hammer returns to horror once more, with John Pogue's tale of unorthodox professor (Jared Harris) who is working on a dangerous experiment: to create a poltergeist. Based on the theory that paranormal activity is caused by human negative energy, the rogue scientists perform a series of tests on a young patient, pushing her to the edge of sanity and encountering a terrifying, evil force. 93 mins.

## **Third Person (2013)**

Writer-director Paul Haggis (he of *Million Dollar Baby* (2004) and *Crash* (2004)) presents three interlocking love stories involving three couples in Rome, Paris and New York. 130 mins.


## **Noah (2014)**

Admit it, you want to see it – Darren Aronofsky brings biblical apocalypse to life, with Russell Crowe the titular man of the ark. Whether it will actually be any good remains to be seen, but why not give the first of the blockbuster season a bash? 132 mins.

## **Two Faces of January (2014)**

Hossein Amini's taut directorial debut, based on a Patricia Highsmith novel, sees two Americans (Viggo Mortensen and Kirsten Dunst) meet a stranger, Rydal (Oscar Isaac), who works as a tour guide but scams tourists in the process. The MacFarlands invite Rydal to dinner, and Rydal, entranced by the couple's wealth and beauty, accepts their invitation. While Rydal visits the MacFarlands' hotel, Chester presses him to help move an unconscious body... 96 mins.

## **Une promesse (A Promise) (2013)**

This touching French drama from Patrice Leconte stars with Rebecca Hall, Alan Rickman and Richard Madden. Madden plays Ludwig, a young social climber who becomes the right-hand man of aging German tycoon Karl Hoffmeister and falls for Hoffmeister's young wife Charlotte. Will his feelings for her remain forever unrequited? 90 mins. 

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



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# International

Bowl 'Oyster' by Nadine Vanoost



## Pewter Live

Pewter Live is an annual European design competition for pewter, organized by The Worshipful Company of Pewterers, a 600-year-old traditional guild, in order to promote the use of pewter in modern products. Nadine Vanoost is the first Belgian to exhibit at the event, see her work at [www.8archer.com/blog](http://www.8archer.com/blog). Pewterers' Hall, London. **May 21 - 22.** [www.pewterers.org.uk](http://www.pewterers.org.uk)

## The first King's Day

King's Day (previously known as Queen's Day, prior to the inauguration of King Willem-Alexander on April 30, 2013) is renowned for being one of the biggest and most colourful festivities in the Netherlands, especially in Amsterdam. **26 April 2014.** [www.iamsterdam.com](http://www.iamsterdam.com)



ganknight



Iglesia en Valladolid

## Fiesta San Isidro

This is the time to see madrileños doing what they do best: taking to the streets and having a knees-up. The week-long festivities celebrate San Isidro, Madrid's patron saint, a humble 12th-century labourer and well-digger. His wife, María de la Cabeza, was also canonized, making them the only sainted couple in history. There are numerous musical events, markets and religious ceremonies. Plaza Mayor and around Madrid. **15 May** - [www.munimadrid.es](http://www.munimadrid.es)



## Silk not sin

In the Middle Ages, great attention was paid to the preparation of the celebration of mass. By the ritual laying on of clerical vestments accompanied by prayers, priests and bishops completed a transition from the secular to the sacred. Precious treasures of ecclesiastical textile art include an undergarment from the 14th century and liturgical objects such as the famous ivory comb of St Heribert. Museum Schnütgen, Cologne. **Until August 28.** €6 [www.museenkoeln.de](http://www.museenkoeln.de)



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# The Olivia Hendrickx Research Fund

Ilse De Reze and her husband reacted to the tragic death of their little girl by setting up a special fund



**I**lse writes: "On 1st October 1999, the diagnosis came: Olivia, our little girl, only two-and-a-half-years old, had a brain tumour. My husband and I were overwhelmed by despair and disbelief.

"After an intensive search for effective treatment, both in Belgium and abroad, we had to face up to the sad fact that the medical world could offer no satisfactory answer. Certainly, there was a promising research program at the University of Leuven, which may lead to a new therapeutic method. But the financial means to ensure rapid development was sorely lacking.

"Olivia died on April 10, 2000, before she reached her third birthday. The harsh economic reality – the total lack of funding for research – contrasted horribly with the human reality – the loss of a precious young human life. For my husband and me, it was intolerable. That's why our personal commitment led us to set up the Olivia Hendrickx Research Fund.

"Olivia had no future, but for many children, it will be very different, thanks to these new therapies. And we hold the key to their future.

"Our fund wants to give a future to the weakest and smallest among us – a promising future. You too can contribute!"

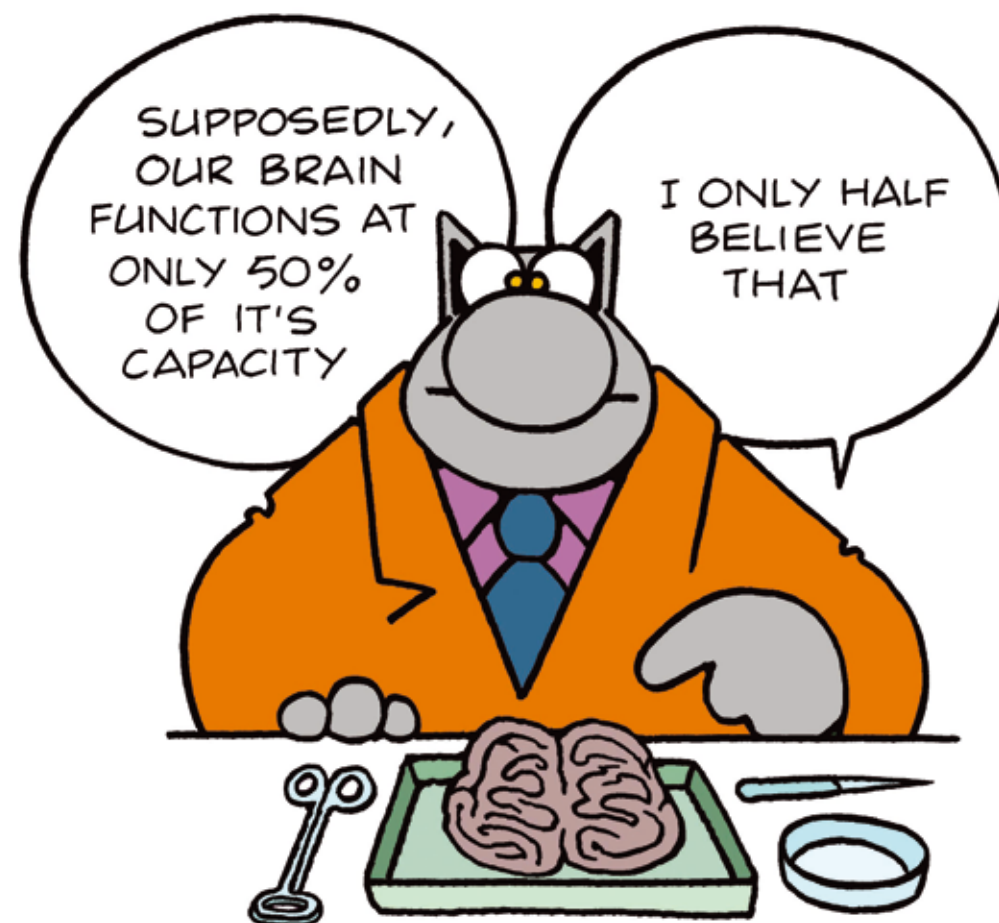
The goal of the Olivia Hendrickx Research Fund is to support scientific therapeutic research into cancer in Belgium. Attention is devoted in particular to innovative projects for which little commercial interest exists, or which are not considered as basic research.

It raises financial support for medical scientific research into cancer in Belgium, particularly child oncology, aimed at the development of new cancer therapies so that even the very youngest are given a chance. It also helps in the organisation and promotion of international cooperation between the various researchers in this field, offering them a platform for personal meetings, working meetings and centres for collaboration.

To raise funds, the Olivia Hendrickx Research Fund does not rely on fundraising events alone. It also seeks to raise government awareness, bringing the issue to the attention of the economic and financial world and attracting domestic and foreign investors. **1**

[www.olivia.be](http://www.olivia.be)

# The brain drain...



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