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#### SISTER ACT SKINCARE GURUS

SPORTY CEO

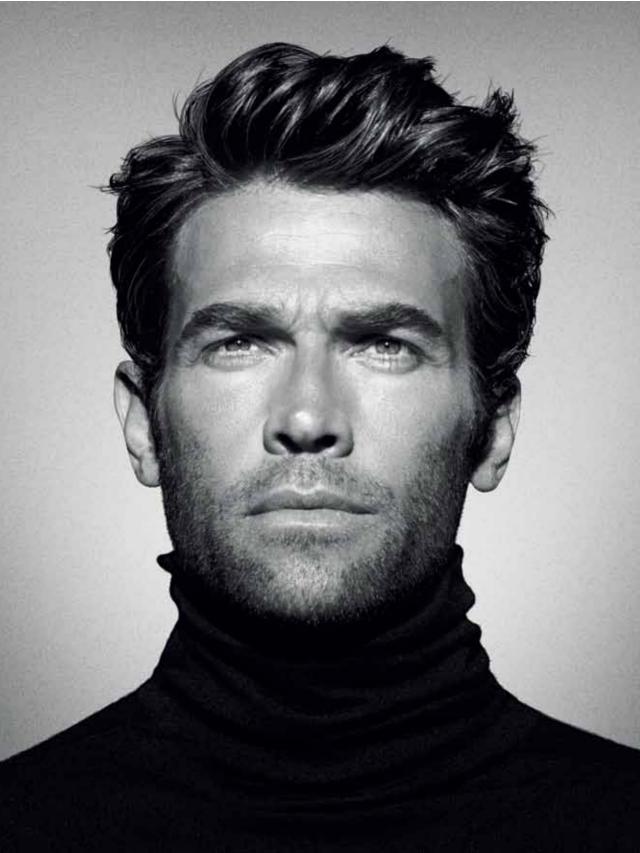
Richard Branson NEW BOOK

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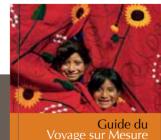
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## Publisher's letter

Take inspiration from reading about the achievements of the high flyers featured in this issue of the magazine

#### ON THE COVER



Sisters Rachel (left) and Liz Edlich, creators of the Radical Skincare range, photographed by Greg Gorman ur contributors have interviewed and written about a number of interesting men and women who have acted on their ideas to achieve success. The one thing they have in common is being passionate about what they do. And they all continue to push themselves, even though they may appear to have already reached their goals. Asked about the key to their success, they respond differently: skincare creator **Liz Edlich Kinsella**, who features on the cover alongside her sister and business partner **Rachel Edlich Samios**, puts it down

to the power of being positive and saying "Yes"; Scapa Sports CEO **Michael Redding** says he makes a habit of always listening to the people who work for him before making decisions. The secret of **Sir Richard Branson**'s success, according to journalist **David Haworth** in his review of Branson's latest book, is sheer hard work – even though he makes it all look rather easy.

Also in these pages, financial writer **Laura Cohn** takes a look at the dizzying success of a family-run brewery, and personal trainer **Patti Bruns** has a wealth of advice on how to succeed at endurance sports.

Another thing common to many successful people is the time they manage to find in a busy schedule to devote to charity. Businessman **Leon Didden** talked to journalist **Ewelina Kawczynska** about the pilots who regularly risk their lives volunteering for Aviation without Borders.

If any of our readers wish to see a charity they are involved with featured in a future issue of the magazine, please do not hesitate to get in touch with details. •

David

David McGowan PUBLISHER

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## Contents

OONL LO

- 11 Publisher's letter12 Contributors
- **16** Starring in Belgium

#### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 20 Interview: Liz Edlich of Radical Skincare
- 25 Therapy: dealing with anxiety
- 29 Relationships: ambition and the couple
- 30 Fitness: training for endurance sports
- 33 Money: brewing beer
- 37 Politics: new French president
- 40 Environment: solar panels

#### **HIGH FLYERS**

- 44 Fashion: Together's fashion pick
- 53 Interview: Scapa boss Michael Redding
- 58 Jewellery: buying a diamond
- 61 Beauty: slimming and firming products
- 62 Perfume: summer scents for women and men
- 65 Book Review: Richard Branson

#### LIFE OF LEISURE

- 70 Travel: Lisbon and Porto
- 73 Travel: Hotel du Marc, Reims
- 77 Must Have: luggage
- 78 Art: Jean-Luc Moerman
- 81 Going Out: Rhythm & Blues Club
- 83 Food and Drink: Bowery Restaurant
- 87 Must Have: furniture auction
- 89 Charity: Aviation without Borders
- 93 What's On: Belgium
- 97 What's On: International
- 98 Cartoon: Le Chat by Philippe Geluck



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# Starring in Belgium Achoice of entertainment compiled by Mary Sue Kiso

#### **ROCK WERCHTER**

Werchter is one of Europe's biggest rock festivals held in the village of the same name just 30 km outside Brussels. There's something for everyone in this year's line-up. Headliners include Justice. Skrillex, The Kooks, Deadmau5, Birdy Nam Nam, Beirut, Chase and Status, Paul Kalkbrenner, Incubus, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Steve Aoki and Milow. Other popular artists include The Temper Trap, Lana Del Ray, Noah and The Whale, My Morning Jacket, Regina Spektor, The xx, The Cure, Mumford and Sons. Florence + the Machine and many more.

Thursday June 28 to Sunday July 1. Tickets €195/four days and €79/one day include free train and bus transport to Rock Werchter from Leuven, www.rockwerchter.be



#### NICKI MINAJ

With her debut album Pink Friday, Nicki Minaj is the first female solo artist to have seven singles on the Billboard Hot 100 list at the same time. In April, Minai released Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded with lead pop single Starships. AB Main Hall on June 13. Tickets at €40. www.abconcerts.be

#### PAUL SIMON

Inducted into the Bock and Roll Hall of Fame. Paul Simon produced the album Graceland in 1986 in celebration of musicial diversity in South Africa and will perform the album live July 17 at Forest National. Also featuring Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Tickets from€72. www.forestnational.be

#### STRING CONCERT AND THE RHYTHM MACHINES

Gilberto Gil and his tightly knit quintent brings the heart and soul of Brazilian music to Belaium. Gil is known for his intimate musical talent and political commitment. July 5 at the Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Henry Le Boeuf Hall. Tickets from €28. www.bozar.be



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## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Start of the annual 20 km of Brussels race, run every year since 1980, usually in May © SIBP

## MORE THAN Skin deep

The owners of a new skincare range are on a mission to improve not just the skin of the people who use it but also their lives, reports **Ann Cordell** 



iz Edlich Kinsella links her success during life to the amount of times that she uses the word "Yes" – not to be

uttered without judgment, she warns, but a word most likely to "open up doors to a wealth of people and experiences". If her energy and enthusiasm could be bottled, all anyone would need is a daily dose to feel wonderful most of the time. Instead, she has come up with the next best thing – a skincare range developed with her sister and business partner Rachel Edlich Samios that lays claim to being the most powerful available on the market.

#### PHILOSOPHY

Called Radical Skincare, the sisters have taken ownership of the adjective "radical" in their promotion and marketing of the product. The two women use it at every opportunity to describe the qualities they would like everyone to embrace – among them, kindness, generosity, intuition – as key to living life to the full and finding a sense of self and purpose. As well as selling the product, they are promoting their philosophy, a way of life that creates



opportunity to reach out and inspire others, "going above and beyond" to make a difference.

#### ACHIEVEMENT

Raised in a scientific background, the sisters were perfectly at home in laboratories from a tender age. Their father is the plastic surgeon Professor Richard F. Edlich, who founded the burn unit at the University of Virginia in the US, renowned for his advances in the treatment of burn patients, and his involvement in the development of a number of major health care initiatives, including the adhesive skin closure tape Steri-Strip for 3M. Liz Edlich says her father's numerous achievements are even more remarkable considering he suffers from multiple sclerosis and has spent the last 20 years in a wheelchair. There is no doubt in her mind or her sister's, she says, that their upbringing influenced their own drive and determination.

GTHEY WANTED THE MOST POWERFUL SKINCARE IN THE WORLD RACHEL (LEFT) AND LIZ EDLICH

As a result of her family losing money through "bad investments and being taken advantage of" – something she says often happens to creative people – Liz Edlich began her career as an

> investment banker in an attempt to recuperate the money they had lost and save others from suffering the same fate. At the age of 25 she moved from Virginia to Los Angeles, building up a successful venture capital business. When a failing company needed new management, Liz asked Rachel to help her take over and that was the beginning of 15 years spent working together on the creation of numerous skincare

products – they reckon around 100.

Then, less than three years ago, at the age of 46, Liz Edlich says she started experiencing a lack of drive and enthusiasm combined with depression, weight gain, wrinkles, and adult acne; women approaching the menopause may recognise the symptoms. Sister Rachel meanwhile was suffering a post-

20 | togethermag.eu

pregnancy outbreak of rosacea with red bumps all over her face – the pictures are not available for publication, but Liz Edlich has them on her iPad and is not averse to showing them to people. Given the family background and years in the skincare business, the sisters "knew some of the biggest and best chemists and scientists in the world". They told their contacts they wanted the most powerful skincare in the world and it had to be strong enough to give Liz the anti-ageing miracle she was looking for as well as sensitive enough for Rachel to be able to use it.

#### TESTING

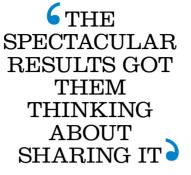
They tested the results on themselves and shared the product with friends and family, doling out dollops of the serum and moisturiser in spare containers and bottles.

"My sister's rosacea went away," says Liz Edlich. "We had it independently tested and it is clinically proven to be 300 percent more powerful than other leading brands on the market." The product's website names the brands it claims to beat in potency.

The Edlichs say they created Radical Skincare for themselves, but having solved their personal problems, and winning the approval of others who used it, the spectacular results got them thinking about sharing it.

The serum is bronze in colour reminiscent of a false tanning lotion - and the moisture cream is beige as opposed to the white cream that is usually found in skincare products. People who have been using the products describe them as being light in texture, easily absorbed and say they do not lie heavy on the skin. Among other things, the products are supposed to increase skin hydration by 66 percent in just two weeks, reduce wrinkles by 50 percent after four weeks, and show a 128 percent increase in collagen and elasticity. The owners claim the secret is a proprietary technology which suspends and preserves the potency of ingredients that they say are usually diminished when put in a cream. Radical and its launch was certainly a

22 | togethermag.eu



rejuvenating boost for Liz Edlich, giving her new purpose and energy. One of the first things the sisters determined was that they would use themselves as the models for their product, not airbrushed celebrity models, committing themselves to "putting money in the bottle and not around it".

#### MOTIVATIONAL

Almost evangelical in her promotion of both the product and her philosophy of life. Liz Edlich has worked in the past with a number of well known motivational success coaches - names such as Deepak Chopra, Bob Proctor, and Mark Victor Hansen trip off her tongue and have obviously been among the major influences in her life. Her aim with Radical is to get people feeling good as well as looking good by creating their own opportunities to reach and live their dreams, available to everyone she says.

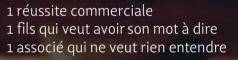
To this end, she is planning to launch a motivational book about radical living next year and the sisters want to use their product to create a dialogue, "a global conversation" that inspires and empowers, asking people to share their experiences. They've made a start by including a motivational booklet that comes with every purchase of the product, a taste of what the sisters are promoting "above and beyond" a skincare range - that is to say, more than iust a pretty face. 🛛

> Radical Skincare is available in Belgium at branches of Cosmeticary in Brussels, Antwerp and the Smets Premium Store, and online

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## Anxious moments

Anxiety can sometimes be good for us – psychiatrist **Dr Lucy Fuks**, Medical Director of the Community Health Service, explains it has positive aspects as well as a negative side

ight next to the Brussels ring road, rabbits are quietly grazing. Every once in a while, they look up, stop munching and watch. Suddenly, a big bird flies by. In a second, all the rabbits are gone, and one can just catch a glimpse of a white bunny tail disappearing into the bushes.

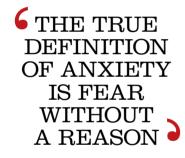
Fight or flee, we are all ready for it: rabbits and humans. In case of danger, our body tenses up and we prepare to struggle or run. We don't even have the time to think: we feel it running through our veins. Our pulse rate goes up. Our >

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hands are sweaty. We breathe faster. What puts us in this state of alert is fear in front of a danger: anxiety.

#### THE POSITIVE SIDE

Just imagine someone who has no idea of looming danger. In everyday life, it is normal and even positive to experience fear when we are at risk: if we are alone in a dark alley at night, or if a stranger behaves threateningly. Anxiety will ring this little alarm bell that will put our senses on alert. We may notice things we wouldn't have spotted before. And we are ready to protect ourselves or run. The physiological aspects of anxiety even prepare us for this flight from danger.



But what if there is no visible danger? We have all the symptoms mentioned before: fast pulse, cold sweat, out of breath; but there is no stranger, and no dark alley. We are just sitting at our desk, in front of the computer, as usual. Or ready to go to work, or about to take the children to school - life as usual, except that there is this knot in the stomach, tightness in the throat, dry mouth. Sometimes, we even get the feeling that our life is at risk.

#### PANIC ATTACK

This terrible sense of fatal danger looming, under the form of a complete physical collapse, is called a panic attack. It leads many people to the emergency room. Once the results of medical exams have come back normal, they are not reassured; they don't understand what has happened to them and they are still anxious. They were anxious in the first place: this is why they had the panic attack.

#### **NEGATIVE ASPECTS**

Anxiety can take different forms: it can be acute, as in panic attacks, or it can be chronic and develop into psychosomatic illnesses, such as stomach ulcers or asthma; it can trigger avoidance behaviours such as social phobias. People who suffer from social phobias avoid encounters and public places, and it can hinder them from making friends.

#### BANISHING ANXIETY

The true definition of anxiety is fear without a reason. If we suffer from anxiety, be it acute, as in panic attacks, or chronic, as in social phobias, we should seek professional help. A psychologist or a psychiatrist may help us disentangle our feelings – something quite real is probably bothering us, deep down. We may be confronted by a difficult situation, which stirs up bad memories from the past.

Help will certainly come under the form of psychotherapy. Psychotherapy can take different routes: it can try to lift a veil on our deepest feelings, such as in psychodynamic psychotherapy, and it can also help us develop healthier modes of relating to our lives, to our body, to our thoughts, as in cognitive behavioural therapy. The most important point is that we need to feel good in the care of our psychotherapist.

In some cases, a doctor – family doctor or a psychiatrist – may need to first prescribe some medication. It may be necessary, for example, to treat the depression which was the real source of panic attacks.

In any case, if we suffer from anxiety without a valid reason for it, we should seek help – because it is available and we can get better.  $\Theta$ 

Community Help Service is a non-profit organisation with a professional staff of psychologists, psychiatrists and educational specialists providing information, support and mental health services to anyone in Belgium, regardless of nationality, who needs help and prefers to speak English. www.chsbelgium.org





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## **AMBITION** gift or burden?

Relationship counsellor **Suzette Reed** looks at how ambition can affect the couple

raditionally, ambition was acted out in the workplace by men, but as women became high flvers in the work force the balance shifted. Whereas in the past women were seen to support successful men, they are now successful in their own right. This change has created tension in many relationships. Ambitious women are often seen as more dangerous than ambitious men. Shakespeare's portrayal of Lady Macbeth as the force that drives her husband to take the throne is seen as a wicked aberration of womanhood. But it appears that ambitious men and ambitious women share many key traits.

#### FULL OF LIFE

Highly ambitious people are generally exciting, enthusiastic and full of life. They work hard and are more likely to take risks, but can also be intolerant of people who can't keep up with the pace. They are usually creative and full of ideas, enjoying new initiatives and innovation. Ambitious people take on responsibility and stress, but may sometimes bite off more than they can chew. Often self-focused, it can be hard for very ambitious people to recognise other people's needs and, even when they do, to act upon them. Conversely, many people identify that their ambition is often rooted in a desire to be appreciated, validated and loved.

#### AMBITIOUS MEN AND AMBITIOUS WOMEN SHARE MANY KEY TRAITS

#### COMPETITION

In a relationship where both partners are ambitious, the tendency to become competitive with each other is a potential pitfall. Competition over who earns most, who is involved in the most important project or whose contacts list is most prestigious can ring the death knell to a relationship. The "work-life balance" can be severely compromised if both partners are not prepared to work together and acknowledge that their relationship needs time and attention.

Relationships where one partner is an ambitious high flyer and the other more laid back can also have stress points. The less ambitious partner will often want to be loved for being who they are and not for what they have achieved, and can struggle to understand the way their partner prioritises their time. Couples in this type of relationship describe common features.

Resentment: the balance between home life and work life causes friction as one partner feels the burden of the home or the income falls to them.

**Resignation:** both partners feel they can't get the relationship right and will often say, "I can't work out what s/he wants. I give up!"

Libido problems: highly driven individuals may also have a high sex drive, and although this has often been identified in ambitious men, it can also be a feature for women.

Sex is not usually the main issue, it is more about feeling valued and fully alive. However, if work is overstretching and exhausting, libido can plummet. The less ambitious partner may feel undervalued if the sexual relationship appears to be one-sided.

#### PROMISES

Ambition is an important human trait, it creates change and innovation, but it is at its most useful when we are in the driving seat and not when it is driving us. A bit of ambition in a relationship can be a very good thing indeed. But promises to do things with partner and children should be kept; work or business opportunities should not pre-empt prior family commitments. Personal trainer Patti Bruns with tips on the art and science of endurance sports

ndurance racing, whether it is running, cycling or triathlon, carries with it certain risks for all athletes regardless of age, gender and fitness level. The body is not a machine, it is a complex network of systems and structures that are influenced by every stimulus they are exposed to. Endurance racing refers to any activity, or combination of activities, that result in an effort of more than 60 minutes. This includes 10 km, half and full marathons, road cycling, and triathlons of any distance. Endurance training is an equal measure of sport science and the art of balancing personal goals with overall wellbeing.

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LAF

Anyone between the ages of 15-100 is eligible. Juniors – under 20 years old – must focus on building a strong base of fitness, overall muscular stability and developing good techniques. Older racers need to balance normal agerelated aches and pains with experience and knowledge gained from past performance. Fear not, studies are showing that "master" runners and triathletes – more than 40 years old – can steadily improve race times by following comprehensive training plans that focus on maintaining high levels of aerobic capacity. **SCIENCE:** before starting any training plan, visit a sport medicine clinic for the "all clear" as well as a VO2max test, generally considered the best indicator of an athlete's cardiovascular fitness and aerobic endurance.

**ART:** listen to your body; observe your sense of wellbeing and how well you recover between sessions. Include these elements in your training log.

#### CHOOSE GOALS

It is useful to choose a specific race to train towards. Goals should be attainable, yet challenging enough so that you feel a sense of accomplishment. Consider recent training, your age, injury history, strengths and weaknesses when selecting races. The number of races you can do in one year depends on the distance you are training for and your ability to recover between races. Choose one or two "A" races, where you will strive to meet a specific time, and then a couple of "B" races as fun opportunities to practice racing skills.

SCIENCE: be realistic about what you can achieve based on your current fitness level and other time constraints in your life – work, family, friends, and vacation. ART: it is okay to dream a little when picking race distance and location. Reaching mini-goals on the road to the big race is a great way to peak motivation.

#### PLANNING

A well-planned training schedule is the most important tool to achieving your goal. Training plans can vary in length, but normal plans are between 16-20 weeks. Plans must take into consideration when your goal race is and how much training you will do each week. Most coaches will recommend a training plan which is split into specific periods with a defined purpose. This ensures that fitness evolves and peaks at exactly the right time. Once the plan is finished, follow it consistency is the number one principle for crossing the finishing line on race day. Ensure that you practice hydration and refueling during training sessions and "B" races so that when race day arrives you know exactly when to take gels and fluids.

**SCIENCE:** endurance coaches can walk you through the development of a training plan that best suits your goals and training profile. Keep a training log of your distance, pace and heart rate and share this frequently with your coach.

**ART:** continually evaluate your response to training volume and frequency. Ensure that you get adequate rest as this is when the body gains fitness. Report these elements to your coach and record in your training log.

#### PEAKING AND RACING

After months of training it is difficult not to place great importance on race day. The week before your "A" race is extremely important as it peaks abilities, boosts confidence, and allows for psychological rest. Start your taper week by turning mental focus from workouts to racing. The most important factors are nutrition, mental preparation and reducing workload. Fitness will peak as body systems recover. Nutrition is key throughout your training, but it becomes paramount in the five days leading up to the race. Concentrate on getting high quality protein, grains, fruits and vegetables. Carbohydrate consumption should increase in the last three days. This is not a license to eat sweets; instead reach for whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Finally, pay close attention to the weather on race day. Dress appropriately and ensure that you drink enough fluids before and during the race. Hot days require additional attention to fluid intake. Once the gun goes off, smile and exhale. Settle into your stride and let the hard work pay off.

SCIENCE: taper week requires attention to workload, nutrition and mental preparedness. Consult your coach for a detailed plan. ART: visualize your race in the most positive terms. Bring key mantras and relaxation techniques to the start line.

The silver lining is that if you train smart you will have a long and very rewarding career as an endurance athlete, ultimately learning more about yourself. •

Patti Bruns is a qualified personal trainer at Aspria Arts-Loi and Royal La Rasante in Brussels and has completed many triathlons, half marathons, and both the New York City and Stockholm marathons. Email for an appointment patti.p2b@gmail.com





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The Green Company

nese are not the best of times for beer brewers in Europe. Since global economic growth began to sputter in 2008, beer production has fallen by 6 percent, consumption has Doorel taken an 8 percent hit, and beer sales in bars and restaurants have

Duvel is different

A family-run Belgian brewery is defying

the recession, says financial writer

Laura Cohn, by forsaking the mass market

fallen by 15 percent, according to a study by Ernst & Young. A growing sense of economic insecurity has led beer drinkers to consume less, and, more often than not, imbibe at home. But throughout this period

of declining thirst, a well-known Belgian brewer has bucked the trend. Duvel Moortgat, Belgium's fourth-largest brewery group, has not only managed to keep its sales and profits in the black, it has actually flourished. Over the past three years the company's stock price has more than doubled, even as the Belgian economy careened into a double-dip recession.

Duvel (pronounced "DOOV-ul"), family-run for four generations, has defied the downturn by catering to European and American consumers' changing preference for specialty beers and premium brands. It is a crucial niche. While Westerners are drinking less these days, they're becoming increasingly choosy. Instead of reaching for mass-market lagers like Stella Artois, beer drinkers look for high-end beers made by Duvel, including its namesake ale and its smaller brands, Maredsous

"People tend to drink stronger ales with higher alcohol content," says Hans D'Haese, an analyst at Bank Degroof, an independent private and investment bank in Brussels. "So they'll drink one or two stronger beers, rather than five lagers." Duvel beer, which analysts estimate accounts for nearly half the firm's annual >

and Vedett.

#### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

sales, is a strong blonde ale with an 8.5 percent alcohol content.

The company's success is remarkable given the landscape in its home country. While Europe remains the world's second-largest beer producer behind only China, per capita consumption has fallen sharply. At the same time, from 2006 to 2010, the number of breweries in Belgium fell 9 percent, to 122, according to a report by the consulting firm Euromonitor International. The remaining Belgian brewers have instead been forced to turn overseas: exports rose 7 percent over the same period.

Duvel – founded in 1871 by the Moortgat family in Steenhuffel, in the heart of Flanders – has been among the most successful at this transition. It has built up its stash of beer brands over the past decade by carefully picking and choosing small breweries that lack the scale to export, and turning them into profitable entities.

One of Duvel's recent buys, De Koninck of Antwerp, was seen by the industry as particularly savvy because it married the company's marketing and distribution muscle with a struggling brewery that produced high quality beer. At the time of the purchase, in 2010, Duvel's Chief Executive Michel Moortgat made clear he would market De Koninck both at home and overseas. The gambit has paid off: more than a third of the 19 percent sales gain at Duvel in its latest fiscal year was due to De Koninck.

Duvel revenues have increased 61 percent to €162.5 million since 2008, thanks to growth in overseas sales. In its 2011 fiscal year alone, sales in the US, the Netherlands, France and the UK jumped by 23 percent. Analysts attribute such gains to the company's ability to leverage its made-in-Belgium name. In all, Duvel now exports to some 40 countries.

In the US, where competition from a growing number of microbrews is stiff, Duvel has done well with specialty beers at the brewery it bought in 2003 in Cooperstown, NY, Brewery Ommegang. It recently offered "Seduction", billed as a full-bodied ale mixing the flavors of Belgian chocolate and tart cherries, and "Gnomegang", a golden ale with hints of clove. Last year, sales at the brewery rose



#### •OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS THE COMPANY'S STOCK PRICE HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED

across the board, and the place drew top chefs to host dinners with beer pairings. Duvel stock has had such a good run that some analysts worry the price – at just under €80 a share in early May – has peaked. But even those sceptics seem upbeat about the outlook, thanks to the company's sterling track record. "The question is, how big will growth be going forward?" says Kris Kippers, an equity analyst at Petercam, an independent financial group in Brussels. "If they keep focused on their long-term strategy, I don't see any hurdles at all." @

Beauxin The Lucurious Style of Fashion



FRANCOIS HOLLANDE IS THE FIRST SOCIALIST PRESIDENT IN FRANCE FOR NEARLY TWO DECADES

ampaign platforms are for stepping into government, not for taking on the political journey. This old adage from American politics, though somewhat cynical, perfectly describes the voter's experiences in most democracies. Candidates swear they will honour campaign pledges to the last letter, and then once in power reality gets in the way.

This is one reason why analysts, commentators and investors have remained reasonably calm since the election of François Hollande to the presidency of France. During the campaign, having apparently mastered the art of ambiguity in drafting his election manifesto, his policies were meant to sound like a leftish alternative to those of Nicolas Sarkozy.

Hollande appeared to be promising to take the retirement age back down to 60 after Sarkozy had raised it to 62; he would raise taxes on companies, impose a top tax rate of 75 percent and renegotiate the EU's fiscal compact treaty adopted in March, designed to require EU member states (except the UK and the Czech Republic) to practise strict budgetary discipline. Hollande said that the treaty needed to be tilted decisively in the direction of fostering economic growth rather incarnating the priority of economic austerity.

#### WIGGLE

In reality, Hollande's campaign promises were designed to allow him what might be called "wiggle room". For example, he may have given some people the impression that there was to be a universal cut in the retirement age. However, the small print in his manifesto >

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#### Les épargnants gagnants

Av. Lloyd George 6 - 1000 Bruxelles Tél: 02.627.47.00 - Fax : 02.627.47.17 www.lesepargnantsgagnants.be info@afer-europe.com French reality check

Having never held political office, the new French president is on a steep learning curve, writes political commentator **John Wyles** 

\* Les rendements du passé ne constituent pas une garantie pour le futur. Les taux mentionnés concernent notre Fonds Garanti (Br 21). Le contrat d'assurance sur la vie multisupport AFER Europe est un contrat d'assurance sur la déponible sur vie de Br 21 et 23 souscrit auprès d'AVIVA VIE et Aviva E pargne Ratraite, compagnies d'assurance vie établies en France - Succursales belges Avenue Lloyd George 6 - 1000 Bruxelles - FSMA 1479 et 1480. Fiche Into Financière disponible sur simple demande au 02.627.47.00, sur info@afe-europe.com ou sur le site www. leseparantsganatsganantsganantsganantsganatsganantsganantsganantsganatsgan made it clear that it would only apply to individuals who had paid pension contributions for 42 years or more. They number tens, rather than hundreds, of thousands. The actual impact of his tax policies will not put a song on the lips of the very rich, but they will probably cause pain to many fewer than a million people.

#### FLEXIBILITY

Maximum flexibility will be required in honouring the fiscal compact commitment. Within hours of Hollande's election on May 6. German Chancellor Angela Merkel was driving home the message that the treaty was done and dusted and could not be re-opened just because the French were changing president. However, she needs wiggle room too. This will allow her to satisfy Hollande by nailing a protocol or political agreement to the treaty which specifies initiatives the EU will take to promote growth. These are likely to include measures about which there is already a wide measure of agreement, such as raising the European Investment Bank's capital by €10 billion; issuing European "project bonds" to finance investment in infrastructure and energy: a tax on financial transactions, and sharpening the impact on growth of EU structural funds.

#### GROWTH

Each of these measures might be useful, but they will not transform the EU's very damp growth prospects – virtually nil this year and only an expected 1.3 percent next year. Yet they should enable President Hollande to polish his image as Europe's champion of growth.

While Hollande has kept wiggle room on some issues, he has been quite

<sup>6</sup> THE ACTUAL IMPACT OF HIS TAX POLICIES WILL NOT PUT A SONG ON THE LIPS OF THE VERY RICH, BUT THEY WILL PROBABLY CAUSE PAIN TO MANY FEWER THAN A MILLION

PEOPLE

precise on the key question of French public finances, and has undertaken to meet the EU's deficit target of 3 percent of gross domestic product for 2013 and balance the budget by 2017. According to the Commission's forecasts, the deficit is actually riding towards 4.2 percent next year which could mean that the Hollande government will have to lop more than €20 billion off 2013 spending programmes as well as raise some taxes.

#### STRATEGY

The new President has a strategy for keeping this threat out of the headlines at least until the two rounds of France's parliamentary elections are out of the way on June 10 and 17. He can put off tough budget decisions until after a public finances audit he is seeking from his court of auditors. If its conclusions point to a bigger deficit than Hollande had

assumed in his planning, he will have an excuse for postponing spending decisions such as the hiring of 60,000 new teachers.

Having won the Presidency, Hollande has two political priorities: to win a majority for his Socialist party in the parliamentary elections and to demonstrate that the Franco-German alliance is in safe hands. Failure to secure a Socialist majority would condemn Hollande to "cohabitation", being forced to work with the opposition parties. This has happened three times during France's Fifth Republic, most recently between 1995 and 2002 during the presidency of Jacques Chirac. Cohabitation tends to result in failure to apply fundamental structural reforms - the reason many analysts say why France is losing competitiveness and trying to sustain health and welfare policies that it cannot afford.



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#### WELCOME TO OUR WORLD



# Green policy reversal

Taxpayers in Belgium may no longer deduct solar panel investment; Justin Stares looks at whether it is still worth buying them

<sup>6</sup>SOLAR

PANELS ARE

STILL A

PROFITABLE

ntil the end of last year, solar panels - otherwise known as PV or photovoltaic panels were subsidised in several ways: 40 percent of the investment could be written off for tax purposes: owners could sell the excess energy they produced (so-called green certificates); and they were allowed to run their

electricity meters backwards. The tax deductions enjoyed by anyone investing in a solar panel in Belgium are now a thing of the past, while the value of INVESTMENT areen certificates is being progressively reduced by the country's different governments.

#### STILL WORTH IT

Given the less generous regime, the consumer magazine Test-Achats still considers solar panels worth the expense.

"If we base our calculations on an average installation with a capacity for 5 kilowatts that faces southeast or southwest - you still benefit - for a price of €3,000 per kilowatt – from a return of 4.5 percent to 5 percent over 20 years," the magazine says. That is better than leaving money in Belgian government bonds. "Solar panels are still a profitable

investment," the magazine states. By getting rid of the tax deductions it will now take consumers longer to recoup their investment - about seven to 12 years, whereas before they could have had their money back in five to eight. But if the technology keeps improving, the price per kilowatt could drop further still, meaning that PV panels could in fact turn

out to be a canny investment.

#### TRAPS TO AVOID

As always there are traps to avoid. Experts frown upon the leasing deals offered by certain companies in Wallonia in particular.

Rather than be tied to a company which reaps the benefits of the green certificates, why not take out a loan and take control yourself? Choose the installer with care: there are many cowboys out there who have no experience of PV. And don't be tempted to try it yourself: PV panels work on dangerous direct current, rather than alternating current. If you touch a wire running direct current, your hand will clasp around it and you won't be able to let go.

That said, provided the government continues to allow them to keep running electricity meters backwards, solar panel users are likely to be in the money over the longer term. 🕫

SOLAR PANEL LISERS ARE LIKELY TO BE IN THE MONEY OVER THE LONGER TERM

### Van Cleef & Arpels

HAUTE PAREUMERIE



A polo match underway on the former Olympic polo fields at Kapellen, near Antwerp © Studio Tep's HIGH FEVERS

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Caroline, Ludivine and Thomas IMM International Model Management, Brussels

> LOCATION Domein Oude Gracht, Kapellen courtesy of Scapa

FROM LEFT: LUDIVINE WEARS DRESS BY HOSS, LEATHER JACKET BY ISABELLE BAJART, RING BY POMELLATO, SHOES BY CAMPER; THOMAS WEARS JACKET BY GANT BY MICHAEL BASTIAN; TROUSERS BY DIESEL: SHOES BY FLORIS VAN BOMM; CAROLINE WEARS JACKET BY PAULE KA, DRESS BY MONSIEUR BULL, WATCH BY GUCCI, BOOTS BY SUPERDRY











50 | togethermag.eu

WALKER DE CONTRACTOR

HIGH FLYERS

FROM LEFT: LUDIVINE WEARS CLOTHES AND ACCESSORIE BY SCAPA; THOMAS WEARS CLOTHES AND ACCESSORIES BY SCAPA; CAROLINE WEARS CLOTHES AND ACCESSORIES BY SCAPA SPORTS; PICNIC BLANKET BY SCAPA HOME

## Sporty CEO

The boss of Scapa Sports talks to **Pat Griffiths** about mixing business and pleasure >

HIGH FLYERS

### DIOR HOMME Sport



MICHAEL REDDING OF SCAPA SPORTS (IN NAVY SHIRT) IS PASSIONATE ABOUT POLO

togethermag.eu | 53

t the relatively late age of 24, Michael Redding had to make a choice: play professional polo or follow family footsteps into the retail clothing industry. He chose the business route, yet managed to integrate polo with it, helping revive a flagging public interest in the game along the way.

The family clothing brand Scapa was already well established in the Belgian market. Redding guickly decided to eschew the more traditional classic look marketed by his parents, founding Scapa Sports to cater for the casual sportswear trend that took hold in the 90s.

"One of the reasons for starting Scapa Sports was to attract young people to our shops," says Redding, adding: "I had the great advantage that the name Scapa was already available." But the rest he had to do himself, starting out in 1999 with a tent on the parking lot of the Scapa ridden a horse before, he was hooked. showroom in Antwerp.

"It was always my ambition to join the company, and with polo I knew I was only ever going to be a four or five goaler because I had come to the sport late." (Polo players carry handicaps expressed in goals, going up to ten for the best in the world; the team handicap is worked out by adding the individual rankings of the four players on the team.)

Polo figures large in his company's promotions, with Scapa sponsoring and organising a major tournament every year, the next one planned for June 23 and 24 at the former Olympic polo grounds at Kapellen, near Antwerp. Scapa Sports also organises a polo tournament every Whitsun on the beach in front of the casino at Knokke.

#### LISTEN AND LEARN

Redding, now 38, says he spent his first 18 months working at Scapa assiduously listening to everyone in the company from designers to shop assistants before deciding to start Scapa Sports. "I make the decisions, but I always like to listen to people, get their feedback and approval." He first suggested using the sports handle for a new venture started by his parents when he was 13, but it was never used. Between 2005 and 2007 Scapa

Sports became almost too popular for

its own good.

"Maybe our marketing was too effective," says Redding. "The good thing when that happens is that you have amazing turnover and everyone is wearing it, but the bad thing is that after a while people stop wearing it so the brand loses its cachet."

A dip after the boom years is now in reversal; Scapa Sports customers are growing older, today in the 25-40 year age range, so the company is attempting to attract a vounger clientele.

"We are going for a niche market among younger people," says Redding, citing the junior membership of golf clubs and hockey clubs as an example of the intended target.

A former first division field hockey player himself in his teens, Redding was encouraged to try polo during a holiday in Uruguay. At the age of 19, never having He subsequently trained in Argentina, where the breeding and training of polo ponies is a big industry, and the game has been a fixture in his life ever since.

<sup>6</sup> I MAKE

THE DECISIONS,

BUT I ALWAYS

LIKE TO

LISTEN

TO PEOPLE

"For three years I played nothing but polo. In the beginning I fell off quite a lot, but having played hockey I could hit the ball quite easily," says Redding, who regularly competes against the world's top players.

#### TROPHY

The Scapa International Polo Trophy is now the top fixture of the year in the Benelux and Germany, attracting up to 14 teams; Redding always fields a team and often wins it. The tournament is played on the same field where matches were held during the 1920 Antwerp Olympic Games, when polo was still an Olympic sport.

Originally known as Scapa of Scotland, the company took its name from the Scapa Flow, one of Britain's most historic stretches of water located in the Orkney Islands off the coast of Scotland. Redding's Belgian mother Arlette Van



#### MICHAEL REDDING

Oost and his father Brian Redding, a British engineer, started by selling knitwear made by women in the Orkneys working from home, later setting up a factory there. "Because of the name, people always thought it was a Scottish brand," explains Michael Redding, who drew inspiration for the Scapa Sports logo from the national flag of Scotland. His mother started Scapa Home at around the same time as he started the sports division.

With shops and franchises across Europe and in Japan, the combined businesses turn over approximately €45 million a year; Redding owns Scapa Sports outright, as well as 50 percent of Scapa with his mother, still active in the business, holding the other half.

#### PASSION

Ever passionate about polo and with 30 horses stabled at his home near Antwerp - some young, some retired, some at the peak of their game -Redding says he tries to ride out as much as possible, a minimum three times a week. He has a break in winter when the horses rest from the end of September to the beginning of March. The horses - they're referred to as ponies in polo but are actually horses - as well as the grooms employed to look after them all come from Argentina, Redding's favourite steed a 15 year old called Arguidia. The horses are backed but often young when they arrive, Redding explains, so he never knows if they will prove to be top horses. >

54 | togethermag.eu

#### HIGH FLYERS

"The best age is between eight and 11, but most of our best horses only play for two months a year," he says. "Those playing at a lower level, or with fewer horses, play their horses six months a year. But the more care you take and the less they play, the better their chances of having a long career."

Every player on a team needs at least three horses to play a full game. Most have more – up to six mounts or more. Games are divided into six sections called chukkas, or chukkers, each lasting seven-and-a-half minutes. One horse will play in one or maximum two chukkas. The players have a few minutes to change horses during the breaks between chukkas.

"We take care of them as if they were babies, and they are the most important part of the sport. A good player can make a difference, but the horse makes up 70 percent of a player's worth."

Polo players need guts and they have to be fearless. It is a fast moving game, and potentially dangerous. A full-size polo pitch is bigger than three football pitches and the polo ponies gallop short distances as fast as racehorses running at full pelt.

"It is very important to ride very good horses, it gives you much more confidence," says Redding. "You really need to become one with the horse. If you ride a horse you can't control, you put yourself in danger and you are a danger to other people and that is not the idea of the sport."

#### WINNER

When he plays high goal games Redding brings in the professionals. "I am the only amateur on my team," he says. "I can only mount myself and one other person, so I need to have two other players who have their own horses," he explains.

Apart from the Scapa Polo Trophy, the other big event in Redding's polo calendar is the high goal Gold Cup played in August in Sotogrande, Spain. It is the most prestigious polo event in Europe after the big English trophy games, the Gold Cup and Queen's Cup. His team won the Spanish event once, and once got the silver, but lost last year



#### GTHE FAMILY HAS FORGED STRONG LINKS WITH ARGENTINA

the big budgets but with a well balanced team you can still surprise the big shots."

It is not uncommon for top players to travel with their horses to different countries, flying them backwards and forwards from England to the US, but Redding draws the line at travelling with them to once or twice a year to Spain. "The horses stay at the French-Spanish border close to Bordeaux."

"Last year we beat

a big team who were

the favourites and

player - there are

only seven in the

world," Redding

enthuses. "They have

they had a ten-goal

Most of the time he is stick-and-balling, the polo term for personal practice, and playing practice games with friends, often followed by a barbeque Argentine-style, known as *asado*. The family has forged strong links with Argentina over the years.

"We enjoy the practice games and the *asados* just as much," says Redding. "My mother still goes to Argentina every year in the high season to watch the Argentine Polo Open Championship at the end of November. It is really an amazing experience." Redding regrets that he's only been able to make it twice in the past ten years – running a business as well as a polo team takes its toll. And a new passion has recently entered his life – Redding's partner Anse recently gave birth to a daughter, Emma, so now he's a father. "It changes your life. I'm very proud."

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# Engaging sparklers

With marriage back in fashion along with all the trimmings, **Delphine Stefens** has come up with an ABC guide to that all important first step - the diamond engagement ring

> he one thing that the engagement rings sported by the Duchess of Cambridge and Angelina Jolie have in common is that the two different styles are being copied and reproduced the world over. Confidence is key, so whether you want a ring similar to something you've seen, or would rather design your own, find out from friends and family where they bought their diamonds or diamond jewellery from. In the absence of reliable word of mouth, and if you're big on brands and the aura of chic and trust they inspire, it is not difficult to find your way to the trusted big name stores of Cartier and Tiffany. In Brussels, consider investigating long-standing family businesses such as De Greef or La Maison du Diamant that have a wide array of styles and can help you develop vour own.

#### A is for ANTWERP

The Antwerp crowd is often referred to by other Belgians as dikke nekken or boasters, but it is no mean boast that 80 percent of the world's rough diamonds and more than 50 percent of polished diamonds are traded in Antwerp. Whether it was bought there or not, the chances are that your diamond transited through Antwerp.

Avoid the too-good-to-be-true deals around the Central Station and instead search out reputable shops such as Slaets, or Colman, or visit a jewellery designer such as Ann Dierckx, or Ilse De

Keulenaer. If you want to try your luck and ring the bell of a wholesaler, remember the

diamond district is closed on Saturday. And if you'd rather not leave the comfort of your own home, Baunat is a reliable Antwerp-based eBoutique. But wherever you go, always be sure to buy a diamond with a certificate or grading report, the best known being those delivered by the HRD and GIA.

B is for BUDGET

Before starting out, remember to determine a budget and (try to) stick to it. This will help define your options and avoid being spoiled for choice. If someone mentions the two months salary rule as a price guide, bear in mind that it is a remnant of a Sixties marketing stunt. Do not let anvone fool vou into believing that a diamond ring is always a sound investment, and while size does matter, bigger isn't always better.

#### C is for CUT. COLOUR. CLARITY. CARAT

Cut and colour may seem obvious, as any diamond is cut according to a particular shape - pear, oval, emerald, baquette, princess, marquise, heart, round or brilliant - and has a specific colour: vellow, red. pink, green, brown, black or colourless. But the cut actually refers to the make of a polished diamond, meaning how well it is cut or how brilliant it looks. That's a tricky aspect for the untrained eve but a

knowledgeable salesperson, or grading report, can be of help. And a colourless diamond is graded according to a scale where the highest mark is D (for a truly white diamond) and the lowest is Z.

Clarity refers to the purity of a diamond, but it should be noted that impurities – known as inclusions in diamond lingo - are almost inevitable; they make a diamond less transparent but also unique. A diamond can be anything from flawless (FL) to obviously included (I3) so aiming for a very slightly included (VS) somewhere in between

DUCHESS OF

WAS GIVEN THE

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ARE THAT

TRANSITED

THROUGH ANTWERP

DIANA'S RING

CAMBRIDGE

seems reasonable. Finally, carat is the unit <sup>6</sup>THE CHANCES used to weigh a diamond and is a throwback to the carob grains that were used YOUR DIAMOND to weigh precious stones in ancient times. Today, a carat equals 200 mg and is divided into a hundred points meaning a 50-point diamond

ANGELINA JOLIE'S RING TOOK A YEAR TO DESIGN

weighs 0,50 carats. But it's the combination of the 4 C's rather than weight alone that determine the value of the diamonds you'll be looking at.

#### BUYER BEWARE

Unless a family heirloom is being passed down, such as the diamond and sapphire ring originally given to Princess Diana which Prince William inherited to propose with, chances are you'll be buying the engagement ring. Some are brave enough to surprise their sweethearts but do so at their own risk - remember the ill-advised Aidan Shaw in Sex in the City? A growing trend is marriage proposal without the ring or with a cheap subsitute, and the couple shopping for the real deal after the proposal has been accepted. The latter may not be the most romantic option, but is definitely the safest bet. And if you've got an itch for a diamond but no-one's yet gone down on bended knee, don't let that stop you from buying your own ice - at least you know you'll absolutely love it.

> For a guided tour of the Antwerp diamond district and more info on how to buy a diamond, visit www.awdc.be



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## Prepare skin for summer

The best way to achieve firm skin is through exercise, but in the absence of gym membership, these smoothing and firming pills and potions are a great alternative. Even better, use them as well as working out



togethermag.eu | 61



## Summer scents for women...



#### ...and one for men

t just 22 years old, Canadian model Simon Nessman is ranked the second most successful male model in the world according to the *models.com* list of the Top 50 international male models. Nessman is the new face of Aqua di Gio Essenza, a new and more intense interpretation of the classic Agua di Gio fragrance for men originally created by Giorgio Armani in 1996, but less marine with woody and amber notes. Photographed for the Armani advertising campaign by fashion photographer Bruce Weber, Nessman has appeared on the catwalk for brands and designers such as Salvatore Ferragamo, Roberto Cavalli, and Tommy Hilfiger and featured in ad campaigns for Versace, Dolce ACQUA DI & Gabana, Givenchy, Ralph Lauren, Lanvin, and Yves St Laurent - to name but a few. He also features in Madonna's music video Girl Gone Wild, tagged with an age restriction warning by YouTube when it was released earlier this year. Of Austrian and Scottish descent and the youngest of four children, Nessman was discovered when a friend's sister sent photos of him to a modelling agency. Aqua di Gio Essenza €68/40ML

ESSENZA

HIGH FLYERS



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## Not by the book

HIGH FLYERS

Entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson's latest book reviewed by **David Haworth** 

here may be several schools of thought about the Virgin empire's founder, but two stand out: those who see him as a one man miracle testament to the power of positive thinking, and those who really wish he would calm down. Not much doubt about which team would win, because Sir Richard Branson is hugely unavoidable.

As he puts it: "We now have brand loyalists who fly with us, work out with us, use our mobile phone and broadband services, take our trains, drink our wines, watch our films and can now even bank with us."

Some 50,000 people work for him; he does not see them as costs to be managed. Instead they are 50,000 "brand ambassadors". When such people are seen as a CEO's first priority, customers and shareholders also come out as winners.

In this latest volume (published by Virgin Books, naturally) subtitled Secrets They Won't Teach You at Business School, Branson does not caution against business >

diversity. Indeed, he goes on, there are is to "have fun". He verv few businesses with which a connection cannot be made and learned from. And these connections strengthen Virgin as a whole, allowing the author and his well picked colleagues to make new connections.

If you are able to peer through the author's relentless hyperbole, there are one or two failures and a few second thoughts: one piece of enduring advice (provided by Mum) is never to look back with rearet but auickly aet on to the next thing. He once owned a knitting company. for instance, called Black Sheep which was run by an aunt of his. but Virgin "didn't stick with it" and Aunt Clare's business career came to an end. I wonder bit wearing, though to say so would risk if she was "let go", or just dumped?

"Entrepreneurs have to make tough calls. Does this require a ruthless streak? I don't think I'm ruthless (although a few people who have never met me have portrayed me that way!)" writes Branson. Surely one of the "secrets" of business school teaching is that something forensic about failure, even a small event like the aunt's, can be just as educational as booming about commercial success - but that isn't the author's style. It is always Richard, by the way, never Dick, which is a little odd for someone for whom chumminess is an act of faith.

#### HAVING FUN

Alas, Branson does not reveal the worst advice he received in his long career but he gets round that by saying advice must be sought from several people when it comes to decision time, therefore "no one piece of advice is ever truly bad". And he has loads of it.

This latest work is one of a series of "How To" or "How Not To" volumes. bestsellers indeed, branded with titles such as Business Stripped Bare. Screw Business as Usual, and Screw It. Let's Do It. His autobiography was titled Losing My *Virginity.* Much of the text is in Q&A form, his replies to some of the most frequent questions he's asked by the curious, the ambitious and, of course, his customers from all over: stay on target; be realistic about costs; hire people you need, not the ones you like; and know when to step down as CEO. His injunction throughout

writes: "I don't think I'll stop till I drop. Why would I? I'm having too much fun."

Which one of the seven dwarfs would vou be? Branson poses the question and answers it in the foreword: "Is there one called Horny? No? OK then I

suppose I'd opt for Happy!"

The emphasis on fun - for instance in his record business he would only sign with bands which were "fun" - can get a the author's disapproval of "negativity", one of his bugbears.

**BRANSON IS** 

A DAMNABLY

CONSISTENT

CHAP WHICH IS

WHY HE WON'T

GO INTO POLITICS

#### HARD WORK

Flouting his father's wish that he become a lawyer, Branson left school at 16, setting up a magazine and later creating the Virgin record stores, to be followed by his myriad other businesses. It was not all quite fun all the way: debt. a run-in with HM Customs, the Christmas tree business that shed its needles. He has the grace to admit that his eve-watering career is "a very personal one; my strategy will not work for everyone." Most recently his private Necker Island in the British Virgin Islands was burned to the ground. But our hero survived and so did his beloved mother who – nice touch this - was rescued from that disaster by a film star, one Kate Winslet.

Branson is a damnably consistent chap which is why he won't go into politics (another frequently asked question) and one suspects the fun quotient wouldn't be high enough.

Above all, what comes through his home-spun exhortations and great common sense is an old fashioned work ethic. He has it in abundance and his "brand ambassadors" must be up to speed as well. He believably claims to expect it and inspire it. For this quality one can't help but like the man; in the end that's his "secret" - extremely hard work.

Like A Virgin: Secrets They Won't Teach You at Business School by Sir Richard Bransor published in paperback by Virgin Books on June





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## **Experience** Portugal

Portugal is a popular destination for tourists, but **Lauren Omahen** discovers there is more to the country than golf and sandy beaches

> nown for its diverse landscape, Portugal offers a variety of scenery ranging from the green mountains in the north, to the dryer region of central Portugal and the fabulous golden sand beaches of the southern coast. The country's mild climate and a significant investment in its golfing infrastructure in recent years have contributed to the country's reputation as a haven for golfers. No less than 14 of Portugal's courses are regularly rated among the top 100 courses in Europe. A popular destination for

ABOVE: TOWER OF BELEM, LISBON BELOW: A BEDROOM IN THE TIARA PARK ATLANTIC LISBOA

tourists, the country's two largest cities, Lisbon and Porto, have much to offer in terms of culture and history.

111

#### LISBON

The Portuguese know their capital as the city of seven hills, and legend has it that Lisbon was built on seven hills. Studded with mosaic pavements, it is a vibrant city packed with gothic cathedrals and museums. A real treat awaits those adventurous enough to explore the city's meandering backstreets, narrow roads shaded by towering trees and lined with lively terraced cafes. Strolling amid the bright colors are *fadista*, singers performing Portugal's traditional melancholic *fado*, a music genre that can be traced back to the early 19th century.

In other parts of town, visitors may join the locals enjoying the warmth of 1930sstyle cafes overlooking the sea that once welcomed home the famous explorer Vasco de Gama. The country has a long history of discovering and rediscovering lands across the world, but centuries-old Lisbon remains young at heart.

In the hilltop neighbourhood of *Bairro Alto*, the upper district, the streets are bursting with restaurants and bars where customers can party until dawn to a choice of jazz, reggae, electronica and *fado*.

The city's historical sights include the Torre de Belém (Tower of St Vincent) fortress, a limestone monument to Portugal's Age of Discovery when Europeans were preoccupied with exploring the world. A short walk away is the Hieronymites monastery, built in 1501 and funded by the treasure from expeditions to Africa. Asia and South America. Other fantastic attractions include the nearby Pena National Palace, one of the Seven Wonders of Portugal. and the the huge Discoveries monument of a sailing ship built on the estuary of the Tagus River with sculptures of important historical figures. Visitors can go inside and climb to the top of the monument for spectacular views. Off the beaten track and not to be missed is the unparalleled beauty of Convento dos Capuchos, a one-time monastery that housed a reclusive religious order of monks.

#### PORTO

To the north, Porto is a mixture of styles from medieval alleyways and Baroque churches to 20th century town houses. Portugal's second city is famous for its



port wine lodges and home to some household names such as Taylor's, Sandemans, Grahams and Cockburns. Visitors can tour the lodges and indulge in a tasting session afterwards. The city has a blossoming nightlife, a lively creative scene and a wealth of adventurous restaurants. The cobblestone streets are swarming with young locals on their way to one of the city's many hip bars. Piano B is a popular destination for rockers and bohemians for its upstairs art gallery and cafe, with the basement home to indie rock, DJs and performance art.

The picturesque Ribeira district on the quayside, declared a Unesco World Heritage site, features tiled churches and winding medieval streets. In the last two decades, Porto experienced an urban renaissance, which includes an efficient metro system. The Museum of Contemporary Art and the *Casa da Musica* have transformed the city into the go-to spot for art enthusiasts, music lovers and architecture buffs alike.

#### WHERE TO STAY

Suitable for both tourists and the business traveller, the contemporary luxury hotels Tiara Park Atlantic Lisboa and Tiara Park Atlantic Porto attract good reviews on top travel websites and rank high in customer ratings. Friendly and efficient service in particular are singled out by guests and I found both hotels merited their five-star rank. Both offer luxurious accommodation in a homefrom-home atmosphere and are conveniently located, with the Porto hotel in the Avenida Boavista business district and the Lisbon hotel just a few minutes from the airport in the centre of the city. LEFT: A VIEW OF THE RIBEIRA DISTRICT IN PORTO RIGHT: THE BAR AT THE TIARA PARK ATLANTIC PORTO HOTEL

www.tiara-hotels.com



# Champagne

A grand town house in Reims owned and renovated by the champagne house Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin has recently re-opened; **Delphine Stefens** was given a taste of French-style hospitality

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Environmental information [Belgian Royal Decree of 19 March 2004]: www.jaguar.be. Give priority to safety. Model shown with optional equipment.

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idow Clicquot, more commonly known by the French title Veuve Clicauot, inherited her husband's wine business when widowed at 27 and ran it for 40 years. The brand and company still bear the name of the Grand Dame of Champagne. Born Barbe-Nicole Ponsardin, Madame Clicquot bought a plot of land in the Rue du Marc in Reims in 1822 and later gave it away to Edouard Werlé, the employee she chose to succeed her.

The construction of the neoclassical Hôtel du Marc was started on the site by Werlé in 1840 and completed in 1846 when he and his family moved in and began welcoming quests who had an interest in the Yellow Label from all over the world. In 1907 the company Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin acquired this majestic house and has been honoring its tradition of hospitality for selected quests ever since.

#### WWI MEMORIES

ENTRANCE

HALL

True to its motto: "only one quality, the finest" VCP embarked on a four year renovation of the treasured property in 2007. In addition to applying renewable energy sources to this ancient building. one of the objectives was to treat the facade to prevent further deterioration from wear and tear, while preserving memories of the First World War in Reims by not camouflaging any of the damage caused by shrapnel. With the interior, the aim was to preserve the heritage of the building and add a modern twist. Thanks to the many artisans and artists involved, the results are extraordinary.



#### DREAM SLEEP

Situated in the centre of Reims, a wooden carriage porch leads to a quiet courtyard and the mansion is accessed through a large glass and metal door covered by a glass canopy. Once inside, the principal architect Bruno Moinard, who has worked for both Cartier and Hermes, evokes the vinevard with muted tones the colour of chalk and grapes, a wrought iron and wooden bannister shaped like vines, mirrors with bubbles, a carpet that symbolizes the Champagne region's soil - it all calls for a glass of champagne. But first, a peek at Once upon a dream, the sleeping capsule designed especially for VCP by Mathieu Lehanneur for guests with jetlag or chronic insomnia - the Widow Clicquot is said to have been an insomniac and the six bedrooms on the first floor, each inspired by a country, a season and key figures of the VCP story, their larger-than-life portraits displayed in the corridor.

The aperitif is taken in the Grand Salon where an eclectic mix of ornaments, art and pieces of furniture both antique and contemporary hold the ensemble together. Dinner is served in the splendid dining room where simple yet delicate dishes, thoughtfully chosen and prepared, enhance the different wines that accompany them. For coffee and tea, the party moves to the Atelier where an entire wall displays numerous bottles of champagne – a perfect end to an extraordinary day in a location where hospitality is a way of life. ●







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LIFE OF LEISURE

HACKETT



studio. "Art should be vital, like in the days of the cavemen drawing on walls."

Not that Moerman has any qualms about the commercialisation of his work. Aside from the ING project. he's collaborated with French automaker Peugeot to produce decorated cars and has designed chic, special edition handbags for Longchamp.

"Wherever it goes, art is still something very personal for me. It is something I have to do full-time," he says. "These davs there are artists who don't even do their own work, they have it done by a team on a production line, just to keep the galleries happy."

Born in Brussels in 1967. Moerman guit school at 17 and launched himself in the art world with no formal training, inspired by Jackson Pollock. Alberto Giacometti and the Art Brut movement.

These days, he works on big multicoloured scrawls like the tarp at ING and on precise black ink "tattoos" which he spreads over photos of Moss. Marilyn Monroe and other paragons of modernday beauty, politicians from Obama to Gaddafi, or nudes by old masters like Rubens or Cranach.

"When I see photos of models I want to make them more carnal, more real. the tattoo does that," he says. "With politicians like Obama or Sarkozy, I tattoo their faces to turn them into tribal leaders."

His black-ink designs are now being applied on an architectural level to cover a new sports centre in the Dutch city of Tilburg. Others may decorate the maillots of a Tour de France team this summer. Moerman has also progressed to doing real tattoos, and says clients have included at least two Belgian politicians - he declines to name them. So far, however, neither Kate nor Barack have dropped by to get some ink done.

# Skin-and-ink

Belgian artist Jean-Luc Moerman draws on skin, but as Paul Ames explains, his form of tattoo art Christ have all provided a surface for the is a painless procedure art of Jean-Luc Moerman.

he naked buttocks of Kate Moss, the Brussels headquarters of ING bank and

a white polyester statue of

To be accurate, Moerman's tattoo-like ink designs have covered several glossy photographic reproductions of Ms Moss in the buff rather than decorating the downy curves of her actual derriere. Moerman was however able to get his

THE MOERMAN PAINTING DRAPED OVER THE ING BANK HEAD OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

hands on the real ING head office. draping the facade on Avenue Marnix in a 2,200 square metre tarpaulin to create one of Belgium's biggest art works.

With the catchy title of "Multifunctional polydirectional hybrids" it's a swirling mass of abstract colours. For ladies who fancy a piece of it, ING is slicing the painting into 1.400 handbags at the end of June to be handed out to competition winners.

"It doesn't bother me that they're going to cut it up, it's a way of recycling. People shouldn't get too religious about contemporary art, treating works like they're the Mona Lisa or something," says Moerman, kicking back in his Saint Gilles

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# Where The Pretty Things are

The Brussels Rhythm and Blues Club has been pulling in punters with powerful acts since 2002, writes **Emma Portier Davis** 

his year the Brussels R&B Club has already hosted 1960s legend The Pretty Things. Performing acoustically as a trio, the band (originally dubbed "the ugly cousins of The Rolling Stones") had the club rocking until the early hours demonstrating genuine musical talent and a skilled stagecraft honed over many years on the road. On June 9, Roberto and His Rockers – stalwarts of the Brussels scene – will give their rendition of 1960s classics from Eddie Cochran to Elvis Presley.

The Brussels R&B Club was set up by three British music lovers who wanted to recreate the ambience of a Chicago blues club. One of them, Jonathan Todd, says he thinks the club is successful simply because there are still people around who like small live gigs with atmosphere.

"We make just enough money to pay the musicians," says Todd. "But we're not interested in making money – it's an enjoyable hobby. That means we can invite bands that we like rather than bands that are going to attract the most people."

The club and its concerts are hosted at Le Sounds, a bar in a Brussels backstreet reminiscent of a 1920s prohibition bar, and barely noticeable to passers-by. Recent gigs include Tony O'Malley, who used to play with Kokomo



SMALL LIVE GIGS WITH ATMOSPHERE

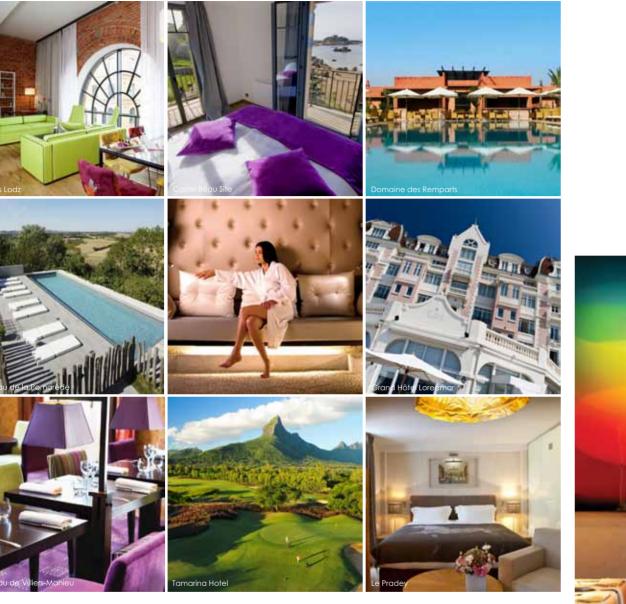
and 10cc, together with Mel Collins on sax, who's played with the Stones, Dire Straits, King Crimson and many others. The club went through a heart-breaking time when Thong, lead singer of the original house band The Witness, anchor of many concerts at the club, died suddenly. His band, renamed Jive, still plays every month.

YLOR OF

BETTY THINGS

The Pretty Things, most famous to a wider audience for hits like *Don't Bring me Down*, but even more memorable to rhythm and blues buffs for a string of albums since those formative days, return to the Brussels R&B Club on November 17. •

> www.brbc.be Le Sounds, Rue de la Tulipe 28, B-1050 Brussels





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# Hot food, warm service, cool store



Invited to try out Bowery Restaurant, editor Patricia Kelly discovered quality cooking and unusual wine at reasonable prices, with the possibility of a shopping excursion under the same roof

he lady who sat diagonally opposite me at lunch is a proper food critic, capable of spotting a tough steak and sniffing out an underdone sole at 50 paces. I tested her culinary prowess by asking her about the impressive cheese platter I chose to round off my meal: "It seems to me that the toast is perhaps a little dry inside," she commented with little more than a glance across the table at the lightly toasted delicate rounds of bread that had been laid before me, while expertly sniffing the glass of wine she was twirling.

Food critics by nature will find something to criticise, but I couldn't find anything remotely unflattering to say about the food prepared by chef Benjamin Laborie at Bowery, the restaurant attached to the Smets Premium Store in Brussels. Originally from Paris, Laborie trained in the south-west of France. Each dish that leaves his kitchen is superbly laid out and tastes as good as it looks - I didn't need the food critic to tell me that.

My companions and I ate *a* la carte, >



and several of us chose to start with a giant gamba wrapped in potato: these two ingredients rate among my favourites, and although they don't automatically spring to mind as combination foods, the pairing was a success. There is a lot of fish going on in Laborie's menus, and

noticed several of my companions opting for a fillet of trout which they were enthusiastic about, although the food critic had something to say about the peas that came with it.

At the time, I was listening to wine steward Philippe Gilbert, responsible for front of house, wax lyrical about a Pinot Gris from New Zealand, which was indeed delicious and, not being adventurous in this department, not a wine I would normally have chosen. He followed up with an organic Anjou, a light red with a hint of fizz about it, an ideal accompaniment to fish.

Gilbert's specialty is recommending unconventional wines and diners are in for a treat if they ask his opinion about what to drink with whatever they're eating, although a more traditional choice is also available. The menu changes every two months to reflect the seasons, and there is also a lunch formula, changed each week, with an alternative

#### <sup>6</sup>THE MENU **CHANGES** EVERY TWO MONTHS TO REFLECT THE SEASONS

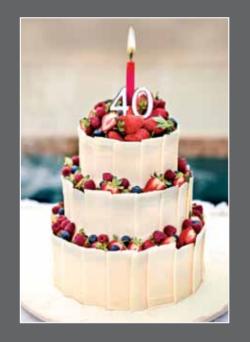
choice of dishes at €22 for two courses or €27 for three. Open for lunch Monday-Friday and dinner Wednesday-Friday, both

restaurant and the attached wine bar are ideal places to either start or end a tranquil tour of the Smets store itself, a haven of high-end designer clothes for both men and women, shoes, bags, jewellery and furniture, the likes of which are difficult to find elsewhere in Brussels, complete with a Cosmeticary counter offering a satisfying range of up-market beauty products. Located just off the Place Meiser, the store has its own underground parking and - dare it be said - a rare fleet of unobtrusive, polite and helpful sales staff.

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# RARE/FIND

An uncommon opportunity to view and buy furniture by the visual artist Christian Astuguevieille; these pieces are among 200 one-off designs, limited editions and prototypes on display June 14-18 at the Pierre Bergé showroom, Place du Grand Sablon, Brussels, to be auctioned June 19.





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Chemin Grand Pierpont 1 • B-6210 Les Bons Villers Tel: +32 (0)71 880 830 • E-mail: info@pierpont.be Site: www.pierpont.be LEON DIDDEN AND ONE OF THE ASF-BELGIUM CESSNAS; THIS ONE IS DUE TO FLY TO CHAD

# Charity flyers

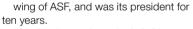
A Belgian entrepreneur talks to **Ewelina Kawczynska** about flying planes into war zones for charity

hese days he flies for pleasure, but twenty years ago, Leon Didden risked his life flying food and medical supplies on a voluntary basis to stricken countries in Africa including Chad, Sudan, Mozambigue, Somalia and Ethiopia. After ten years of flying into some of the world's most dangerous places, Didden was grounded by a nasty bout of malaria which put him into a coma for five months. Yet the illness didn't put a stop to his enthusiasm for a little known charity Aviation sans Frontières (Aviation without Borders), providing voluntary air transport for NGOs and charities taking medicine, food and clothes to the victims of conflict, and transporting people from dangerous regions to safe places.

The seeds of ASF were sown in the late 1960s by a group of French pilots flying mercy missions to Biafra with humanitarian assistance, and evacuating malnourished children, shortly before the renowned French charity *Medicins sans Frontières* (Doctors without Borders) was set up by a group of French doctors and journalists.

Didden, the retired proprietor of a well-known carpet business in Brussels, now run by his daughter Nathalie, was instrumental in setting up the Belgian





"We fly where others don't fly," he says. "It is the most beautiful and fantastic experience you can have, but you have to be a 'bush pilot', the man who can do everything," he adds.

└LEON DIDDEN

**RISKED HIS** 

LIFE FLYING

FOOD AND

MEDICAL

SUPPLIES 9

Pilots on these missions need to be

stress-resistant, unafraid to fly in dangerous conditions and need to think outside the box, according to Didden. Unfortunately, he says, there are nowadays not many pilots willing

to volunteer to fly to conflict regions for free. He says they either simply don't have the time or are not mentally strong enough.

"Twenty years ago it was different,"

says Leon Didden. "There were more pilots than there are today, a lot of things have changed."

With ASF providing air transport for organisations such as MSF, Caritas and the United Nations, the organisation's planes and fuel are funded by voluntary donations from individuals as well as

larger sponsors such as the Rotary Club, the European Commission, and the UN. With sister organisations in France, the UK, the Netherlands, Spain and Germany, ASF-Belgium currently boasts 20 active pilots

qualified to fly the rugged single engined six-seater Cessna utility aircraft most suited to their missions. •

> Help out with a donation or by offering time or expertise; www.asfbelgium.org



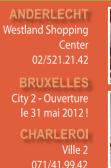
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# What's on BELGIUM

Where to go and what to do - here's a selection of upcoming events

#### ANTWERP **CIRQUE DU SOLEIL** 13.06-22.07.12

Now playing in Amsterdam, Corteo (Italian for procession) comes to Belgium in June. A dramatic mix of circus arts and street entertainment, this is a festive parade imagined by a clown, transporting the

audience to a theatrical world of fun, comedy and spontaneity situated in a mysterious space between heaven and earth. Sportpaleis, Antwerp; tickets from €40-€104.50; www.cirquedusoleil.com

#### OSTEND RIVERDANCE 24.07-05.08.12

A celebration of Irish music and dance. Theatrical show featuring traditional Irish stepdancing known for its rapid leg movements while body and arms are kept largely stationary. Tickets €75, €59, €49; Kursaal, Westhelling, B-8400 Ostend; box office 070 22 56 00; www.riverdance.com



#### OMMEGANG MEDIEVAL PAGEANT 03.07.12 and 05.07.12

More than 1400 costumed performers re-enact Ommegang, the historic procession of Emperor Charles V as he entered Brussels in 1549. A fabulous show with horses, jugglers, stilt walkers and the famous Gilles dancers from Binche. The procession starts at the church in the Place du Grand Sablon and finishes with the show at the Grand Place. Anyone may watch the procession, but entry to the Grand Place needs a ticket. Free entry over three days to a medieval village set up in the Sablon with jousting knights on horseback and falconry displays. Tickets €37.50-€77.50; www.ommegang.be



SENSES INTERACTIVE EXHIBITION Until 02.09.12 Explores human and animal senses: discover how some animals have senses more developed than humans. Find out what it is like to be a bat, a bee, a police sniffer dog, a snake or a chimpanzee. A sensory experience for families with children from six years on, with a special route for toddlers. Entry to the museum €7: children €4.50: under 6 free: Natural Science Museum, 29 Rue Vautier, B-1000 Brussels; www.naturalsciences.be



#### BRUSSELS VISITOR PASS

Free entry to more than 30 museums, unlimited use of public transport and numerous discounts with The Brussels Card.  $\in$  24/24 hrs:  $\in$  34/48 hrs: €40/72 hrs: www.visitbrussels.be



## la terrasse

DE L'HIPPODROME

# It's time for Terrasse

Let Simply Better Events give you a taste of summer



njoy a holiday atmosphere and socialize at La Terrasse de l'Hippodrome sipping cocktails surrounded by tropical plants in the heart of Brussels.

Open from midday until midnight until July 20, there's a full programme of events and concerts with a DJ every Wednesday, Happy Hour on Friday and Aperitivo on Saturday. Try the brunch on Sundays from 11am until 3pm.

This year, customers can relax with friends and family and watch tennis from

Roland Garros and the Euro 2012 football matches – the football final on July 1 will be broadcast live from a giant screen.

Lunch or dinner is available every day at the Vittel restaurant – to book a table simply email vittel@la-terrasse.be or call 02 354 72 00 for a reservation.

<sup>6</sup>TRY

THE

BRUNCH

ON

SUNDAYS<sup>6</sup>

For every drink bought at one of the evening concerts, a donation will be made to ROMEO, an association set up to support autistic children.

La Terrasse de l'Hippodrome 51-53 Chaussee de la Hulpe, B-1180 Brussels T. 02 354 72 00 www.la-terrasse.be







lt's

# time

## 24/05 > 20/07

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# What's on INTERNATIONAL

Where to go and what to do – upcoming events in other countries

#### AMSTERDAM ART EXHIBITION Until 15.09.12

Amsterdam's Jewish Historical Museum (JHM) Art Gallery displays three major works by Marc Chagall (1887 - 1985), often considered one of the most inspiring Jewish artists of the 20th century. Nieuwe Amstelstraat 1, 1011 PL Amsterdam, Netherlands; www.jhm.nl



#### LUXEMBOURG **BALLOON FESTIVAL** 11.07-14.07.12

tiara © Royal Collectic 'r Balloons © JC Web€

Britain ti Hot Air

Girls of Great E Moulin Rouge; .

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The city of Echternach hosts the annual LuxGSM World Balloon Trophy 2012 at the Echternach Lake. Between 30 and 40 of the world's top hot air balloon pilots are expected to compete for the trophy. Entry for the public is free and plenty of entertainment is being laid on for an expected 25.000 visitors. Find out more about hot air balloon events in Europe and around the world at www.balloonevents.org. www.wbt.lu



#### LONDON BUCKINGHAM PALACE 30.06-07.10.12

This year The Queen celebrates her Diamond Jubilee and to celebrate the palace is displaying a spectacular array of diamonds worn by The Queen and other monarchs over the past 200 years.

Adults  $\in$  21.24; children to age 17 (free under 5)  $\in$  12.09; www.royalcollection.org.uk

#### PARIS CANCAN

Eat, drink champagne, be merry and watch showgirls and French Cancan dancers strut their stuff on the Moulin Rouge's historic stage in Montmartre, possibly the most famous cabaret show in the world. Many international stars and celebrities have performed here from Edith Piaf, Liza Minnelli and

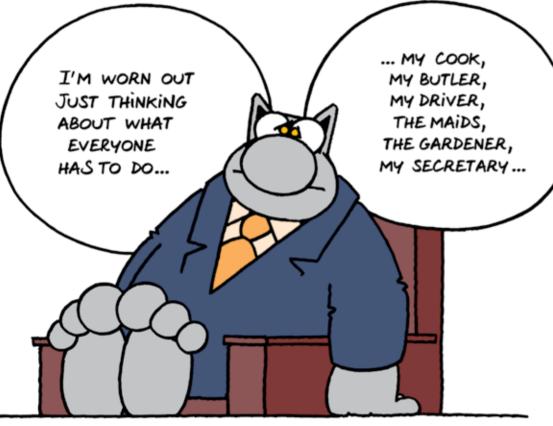


Frank Sinatra to Elton John. It is a full house every night and tickets sell out months in advance, so best to book in advance. 82 Boulevard de Clich, 75018 Paris, France; www.moulinrouge.fr

#### BERLIN WALK THE WALL

Visit Checkpoint Charlie, the famous east-west border control during the Cold War and now a tourist centre. The Wall was mostly demolished between June and November 1990 although a restored stretch remains. Graffiti has been removed from the northern section of the Wall, but the one-mile stretch known as the Fast Side is dedicated to art and preserves the paintings made on the eastern side when the Wall was brought down. Save on sightseeing costs in Berlin with a Berlin Pass, valid for 12 months.

# IT'S TOUGH AT THE TOP



 $LE\ CHAT$  by Philippe Geluck



 $0 \text{ G CO}_2/\text{KM}$  during use, excluding wear parts.

\* Catalogue price of Twizy Urban 45. Model shown : Twizy Technic 45. Catalogue price with options : € 8.380 inc. VAT.

98 | togethermag.eu

