

INSPIRING YOU TO REACH YOUR DREAMS

#18/JUNE 2010

Together

magazine

GOING PLACES

TRAVEL BONANZA
From Mauritius to New York
and elsewhere, we've been there

WALES WORLDWIDE
We talk to the founder
of Wikipedia

BACK TO BLIGHTY
15 SeaFrance Calais-Dover
crossings to be won



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EDITORIAL

We're going places – are you?

The theme for this edition is unmistakably travel oriented and, assuming that no further volcanoes erupt to spoil your plans, *Together* is doing everything possible to make your summer swing.

How many travel features? Well, it's not my place to spoil all the surprises here, but suffice it to say that we take in **New York** (Emma Portier Davis), **Thailand** (David Griffiths), **Mauritius** (yours truly, David Mc Gowan) and **Benidorm** (Federico Grandesso, yes him again). Now don't say that we don't spoil you, eh?

John Sheridan, following his remarkably prescient analysis of the Liberal Democrats' options with following a hung parliament in the UK general elections, returns with a trenchant, informative study of **the problems that persist concerning the Belgian government (or lack thereof)** while, on a more positive note, Natasha Abudarham is back with tips on **reducing negativity in life via language**.

Competition wise, we've remained with the travel theme, teaming up with SeaFrance to offer **15 return Channel crossings** and elsewhere, co-editor Colin Moors (as well as offering his customary take on the latest **Must-Haves**) has the chance to speak with none other than

Wikipedia founder **Jimmy Wales**. Our very own Gilly Maxim has also been doing her fair share of listening, as she enjoys a chat with **Isabelle Netus**, the owner of Brussels' dynamic fashion boutiques Village Verve.

Elsewhere, on the gastronomic front, we have Alex Hewetson and co-editor James Drew enjoying a Bordeaux 1997 and fine food tasting session at **La Femme du Sommelier restaurant**, and our very own sommelier, Eric Boschman, **reviews two more eateries in the Brussels vicinity**.

All this, plus fashion, art, culture and more than a little fun – we only hope that your holidays live up to our expectations! ☺



David Mc Gowan

David Mc Gowan
Publisher

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Sailing by SeaFrance

With *Together's* emphasis very much on travel for this edition, we have teamed up with SeaFrance to offer 15 lucky readers the opportunity to cross the Channel to Blighty (that's the United Kingdom, for the uninitiated) absolutely free.

SeaFrance is the only French maritime company to ply the Calais-Dover route – the SeaFrance fleet boasts three ships, the *SeaFrance Berlioz*, honoured in 2003 as most innovative craft in maritime crossings, the *SeaFrance Rodin* and the *SeaFrance Molière*, the first ferry of more than 200 metres to cross the Channel. With such modern ferries, which feature resolutely innovative design and guarantee absolute comfort, SeaFrance offers a warm welcome and all the charm of a cruise. Leave your car in the hold and stroll on the bridge to watch the Calais coast gradually disappear in the distance, while the cliffs of Dover appear over the bow and, of course, ferry crossings offer all the advantages of classy bars and restaurants, children's play areas and shops featuring very attractive prices.

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THE PRIZE

Together has teamed up with SeaFrance to offer 15 return crossings (each worth 150€), with a maximum of five people per car. All you have to do is send us your answers to the two simple questions below, along with your name, address and daytime telephone number, to info@togethermedia.eu, labelling your email **SeaFrance Competition**. The deadline for all entries is 30th June 2010, when the winners will be selected at random. Good luck!

(i) How long is the *SeaFrance Molière*?

- a. 100 metres
- b. 150 metres
- c. More than 200 metres

(ii) Which ship is not part of SeaFrance's fleet?

- a. *SeaFrance Molière*
- b. *SeaFrance Rodin*
- c. *SeaFrance Cézanne*

Competition organized under the supervision of a bailiff. Full rules available on request.

Organizer: **Together Magazine**, Boulevard Saint-Michel 47, 1040 Brussels. ☎

Famous faces

WRITER: FEDERICO GRANDESSO

The stars shine in Europe's capital.

FOOTBALL ITALIA

The Italian football team faced Mexico in a friendly match on 3rd June in the Roi Baudouin Stadium in Brussels, following a 25th anniversary commemoration of the Heysel tragedy. The final score, perhaps surprisingly, was 1-2 to Mexico.



CHRISTOPHE WILLEM

Appearing on 2nd June at the Forest National, singer Christophe Willem presented his second album *Caféine* – 19 songs for which, during the NRJ awards in January, he took home the Best Male Francophone Artist prize.



NORAH JONES

Forest National will host diva Norah Jones on 29th June, where she will sing from her fourth album, *The Fall*, which is themed around pop, folk and country rhythms. The American singer is set to visit Belgium again on 7th July, during the Gent Jazz Festival.



CHARLOTTE GAINSBOURG

Actor-turned-singer Charlotte Gainsbourg will take to the stage of the Cirque Royal De Bruxelles on 19th June – following the album *5.55*, which she created with Air and Jarvis Cocker, she will now present *IRM*, produced in collaboration with Beck. Her tour, which began in April in North America, will continue across Europe until the end of July. 📍



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ING 

“All travel has its advantages. If the passenger visits better countries, he may learn to improve his own. And if fortune carries him to worse, he may learn to enjoy it.”

– **Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)**

English poet, essayist, moralist, literary critic, biographer, editor and lexicographer

“I never travel without my diary. One should always have something sensational to read in the train.”

– **Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)**

Irish writer and poet

“Of all the unbearable nuisances, the ignoramus that has travelled is the worst.”

– **Kin Hubbard (1868-1930)**

American cartoonist, humorist and journalist

“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I – I took the one less travelled by. And that has made all the difference.”

– **Robert Frost (1874-1963)**

American poet, *The Road Not Taken*

“What you’ve done becomes the judge of what you’re going to do – especially in other people’s minds. When you’re travelling, you are what you are right there and then. People don’t have your past to hold against you. No yesterdays on the road.”

– **William Least Heat-Moon (1939-)**

American travel writer, *Blue Highways*

GOING
PLACES

Lucky Jim?

WRITER: COLIN MOORS

© Wikipedia

Together talks to Jimmy Wales, a man who is an unqualified success in the world of internet applications and who, with the creation of Wikipedia, has changed the way people use the internet and what they expect from it.

Do you need to know the result of the English Football Association (FA) Cup Final in 1956? Information about the Loch Ness monster? A potted life history of Steve McQueen? If you run a search on any of these topics in any major search engine, you will find that the most salient and readable content will be on Jimmy's baby – Wikipedia. It will be a top five listing too, such is the trust put in the product.

FAILURE FIRST

It may come as a surprise, then, to learn the secret of Jimmy's success – failure. Jimmy has failed at least three times to do what he set out to achieve. His story began with success – his job in finance, in a company called Chicago Options Associates, led to him making enough money to plough into other projects. His next avenue was mildly successful, a site called bomis.com – catering to the young male market with

content similar to what you might find in *Maxim* magazine. Bomis provided the revenue (via advertising) and the server space to host what was to be probably Jimmy's biggest failure to date – but also one that led to Wikipedia as we know it today.

Nupedia was the name of his first free encyclopaedia, which was created by professionals, paid for by advertising and open to all. Having spent nearly a quarter of a million dollars and not even reaching twenty entries, he took the radical step of creating a new source of data. A free, open and peer-reviewed site that anyone could edit. He originally intended it as a source to feed his Nupedia project, but this sat badly with the Nupedia professional contingent. A separate domain was set up, based on a new method of editing content called a 'wiki' (coming from the Hawaiian word 'wiki', meaning 'fast'). Nupedia was doomed from that day on.

Speaking to Tampa Bay Online, Jimmy outlined his appreciation of failure:

- **Fail faster. If a project is doomed, shut it down quickly.**
- **Don't tie your ego to any one project. If it stumbles, you'll be unable to move forward.**
- **Real entrepreneurs fail.**
- **Fail a lot. But enjoy yourself along the way.**
- **If you handle these things well, you will succeed.**

Naturally, faced with a man who has failed in such a successful way, *Together* was intrigued to find out a little more about him. Take it away, Jimmy.

**JIMMY HAS
FAILED AT LEAST
THREE TIMES
TO DO WHAT
HE SET OUT TO
ACHIEVE**



INTERVIEW EXPRESS

Together: There is a raft of information available on the web – and, indeed – in the world. Why you? Why Wikipedia?

JW: *Why not? One of the things that I always tell people is that I am a carpenter, not an architect. By this I mean that I believe one reason for my success is that I'm willing to sit down and start working on something without asking questions like "Why me?"*

The working model of Wikipedia seems – if you will pardon the word – impossible. Yet, it works and works very well. Why do you think people don't just log in and deface large portions of others' hard work? People do it in public, why not 'anonymously'? The key is in the expression 'accountability, not gate keeping'. The

software keeps track of who is doing what, and makes it easy for us to block troublemakers. Also, all past versions are kept, so it is easy to restore to the proper state if someone tries to cause harm. In a nutshell, the philosophy is to abandon the concept of 'absolute security' and instead work to make it slightly more difficult to cause harm, and slightly easier to do good. And the result follows.

You refused to co-operate with China in anything less than a completely transparent way regarding the accessibility of Wikipedia in China. Was this a personally political or an egalitarian stance, or maybe a bit of both? What is the availability of Wikipedia behind the 'Great Firewall of China' at present?

For me, access to knowledge is a human right – a corollary of the right to freedom of

expression – that is to say, it makes no sense to say that one person has the right to free speech, if others are not allowed to read or listen. As such, it is impossible to participate or compromise in human rights violations. Currently Wikipedia is mostly available but – outside our control – some pages are filtered. We hope to continue to work with the Chinese government to encourage them to abandon those filters in due course.

How many articles (in all languages) does Wikipedia carry at the moment, and what's the target?

There are around 15 million entries today. There is no target in terms of a number of articles, though. The goal is stated in this way – to have a free encyclopedia for every single person on the planet in their own language. One way of looking at that is to say I want us to have 250,000 entries in every language spoken by at least 1 million people.

What is coming up in the next ten years of Wikipedia? Are we likely to see any radical changes?

We will see some big changes in the editing process – making it easier for new editors. But I think the end result – the look of Wikipedia when you visit it – will be essentially the same. Perhaps up to date with the style of the times, but in terms of text plus pictures, it should be more or less the same.

We ask this question of all our high-profile interviewees – what are the keys to your success?

I think it is more or less what I mentioned above – I like to simply sit down and make things, to get things done, without waiting for permission or approval, without asking "why me?". I just like to have fun. ☺

IT MAKES NO SENSE TO SAY THAT ONE PERSON HAS THE RIGHT TO FREE SPEECH, IF OTHERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO READ OR LISTEN'



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'Thai-ed' to his cycle

WRITER: DAVID GRIFFITHS

Had a little too much chocolate? Need to shift a few kilos and take in some scenery? Our writer, a trustee of the 'Go Help' charity, did – so he cycled the length of Thailand. Be warned – this method is not without occasional problems.

A bolt of lightning streaks through the dark sky, illuminating a solitary, sodden figure cycling through a thunderstorm. I wonder why I even considered cycling across Thailand in the first place. At this moment, I don't have an answer.

Earlier, lying on a beach in Phuket, the final destination of a 1,000-kilometre cycle trip from Bangkok, I had a call from the Royal Thai Police requesting me to appear in court in Surat Thani – 200km back the way I had come – to give evidence against a thief who had stolen my laptop.

'TWIX-TING' AND TURNING

After an arduous 12 months in London, I had decided that I needed to shape up before being transferred to the New York City office. What better way to shed the results of 300-odd Twix bars consumed in the past year than a cycling adventure in south-east Asia?

The trip was also a means of road-testing the blogging and remote uploading capabilities of

the Charity Rallies website of the UK charity Go Help which, among other events, organizes the Mongolia Charity Rally. The laptop was an essential piece of kit.

Mid-June found me cycling along palm tree-lined seashores with regular stops on deserted beaches, interspersed with the odd kickboxing session and more banana shakes than I could shake a stick at.

BIKES OUT, SCOOTERS IN

Thailand isn't a cycling nation any more and I hardly saw anyone else on a bike; the locals tend to favour smart scooters. A *farang* (the generic Thai word for westerner) on a bicycle drew smiles and waves the length of the country, particularly from people on mopeds that regularly overtook me.

The roads are fantastic – Route 4 runs down the centre of the country from Bangkok past Phuket and is as good as any road in Europe. Palm trees frame the turquoise crystal water bordering the boulevards of coastal towns, the mountains of Burma to my right, the Gulf of Thailand to my left – scenery more than worth the pain that radiated from my posterior as a result of cycling eight hours a day.

The thunderstorm abated as I finally made it to the 200 baht (\$4) per night Queen Hotel in Surat Thani. Soaking wet, I walked into the bright green lobby lit by a weak neon strip light. The clerk barely gave me a second look – I stayed here last week. "Same room," he said, handing me the key, and within minutes of reaching it I was out for the count.





The next day I was ushered into a Thai courtroom, relieved to be on the right side of the law – this can't be fun for a farang who has been accused of drug smuggling. The wheels of justice turn faster in Thailand than they do in the West and the system appears to be fairly efficient.

THAILAND ISN'T A CYCLING NATION ANY MORE AND I HARDLY SAW ANYONE ELSE ON A BIKE; THE LOCALS TEND TO FAVOUR SMART SCOOTERS

Although an arrest warrant was out for the thief and they knew his identity, the Royal Thai Police had yet to arrest him but were content to hold a hearing in his absence within a week of the theft having occurred to get my evidence before I left the country. This particular pirate had a long rap sheet, but most of the tourists he had stolen from were long gone before the police could start building a case against him.

A HAND FROM SANNY

I took my place in the witness box, directly facing a fairly young-looking Thai judge who wore black robes and sat at a raised, wood-panelled desk. Behind the judge sat the omnipresent portrait of the Thai King and two sets of the scales of justice.

The defence bench was, unsurprisingly, empty. I was assisted by Sanny, a Thai Tourist Police interpreter who asked me to take an oath, handing me a laminated sheet in Thai. I didn't have a clue what it said but decided to take the initiative: "I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me Buddha." Sanny nodded approvingly, and recited the actual oath to the judge.

The prosecutor walked me through my witness statement, and Sanny translated all of the questions. By now, he knew the case as well as I did; when I misunderstood his question and gave the wrong answer, he corrected me, told me what the right answer was and translated a corrected version to the judge who dictated a summary into a microphone.

The inspector who prepared the case was also in the courtroom, the only person in the public gallery behind me. Wearing full Thai Police regalia, it was fascinating to witness his change in demeanour as he entered the court. People quake in their boots when this guy walks into a room anywhere in Thailand. In this court, before this judge, he knows his place – his body language is deferential, his shoulders are hunched and he snaps to attention whenever the judge speaks to him, bowing his head repeatedly.

The prosecutor presented the case with gusto and followed his question and answer session with a presentation of various exhibits – photos of the laptop thief and photos of me in the ticket shop pointing to where my bags once sat. There was a hand-drawn map with 'X' marking the spot, scene of the crime.

After an hour the court adjourned and I was paid a 200 baht witness fee. It was time to head for the airport and a flight to Bangkok, where I picked up my connection to London.

I got the laptop back and cycling that distance helped me shed the cumulative effects of Twix over-indulgence. If I learned one thing, it is that, when planning a long journey that involves physical effort, it is best not to assume that north to south means downhill all the way.

David Griffiths is a bankruptcy and restructuring attorney for a US law firm and a trustee of the UK registered charity Go Help, which runs Charity Rallies www.charityrallies.org. He can be reached by email at dave@gohelp.org.uk

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Spring-Summer Collection:
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Verve-acious!

WRITER: GILLY MAXIM

Village Verve is a new, dynamic fashion boutique which, within five months of opening its first shop in Brussels, is already set to open a second outlet during summer. *Together* talks to the owner, Isabelle Netus.

The boutique has the feel of a New York loft conversion, and stocks designer labels that range from street chic to high-end glamour. The boutique's owner, Isabelle Netus, was born in Sweden, moved to Belgium, was educated in Paris, worked in America and then returned to Brussels and with her husband launched Village Verve.

INTERVIEW EXPRESS

Together: Tell me about your experience before opening Village Verve?

IN: *My previous experience was as far removed from owning a fashion store as you could possibly imagine. My husband and I are computer programmers and worked in Washington DC for three years. But when we moved back to Brussels we had the idea of launching an online fashion boutique. The online shopping business is very big in the US but has no strong equivalents in Europe, and with our knowledge of IT and my life long passion for fashion, we thought this would be a fun project to do together.*

Having had the idea of creating an online shopping experience, how did you come to open Village Verve the shop?

We felt that we needed a physical location first, to gain consumer confidence and to communicate our branding and what we are about, before launching the Village Verve online shopping boutique.

Village Verve promotes many young, lesser-known talents. How do you choose the designers with which to collaborate?

Having lived in the US, I was very familiar with American contemporary women's fashion and I knew of some very strong brands that were accessibly priced and had original design ideas but that weren't sold in Belgium. In fact there is only one designer that we currently carry that is sold elsewhere in Belgium, the others are unique to Village Verve. We like to promote those brands that have very little exposure in Europe because that is what makes it exciting for us, that we are introducing something new. A lot of my time is spent going to fashion fairs and researching on the internet for new designers and we have some new lines coming out which I am very excited about.

Where did you get the inspiration for the name, 'Village Verve'?

On the one hand, it is a bit of a wink to the 'Village' in New York as we promote American brands and on the other hand it is also a bit tongue-in-cheek because for a while a lot of brands were using names like Cosmopolitan or International, very global words. So we thought it was kind of funny to bring the brand back to the village.

What kind of woman shops at Village Verve?

The woman we think of when preparing a



© Yvan Barbera

collection is one who is very aware of fashion, who knows what's going on, enjoys things that are different, is very keen on style and who doesn't want to go with the mainstream. Someone who is energetic and socially engaged.

What are your plans for the future?

Firstly, we are opening the second store in a couple of months which, because of its location, we anticipate will attract a lot more exposure. Secondly we are still very focused on the launch of the online store at the beginning of 2011. We have already had lots of interest online from people from other European countries that don't sell our brands, but to really maximize on the business of online selling is a lot of hard work. But, luckily for me, my husband is the IT guy.

What is the secret to the success of Village Verve?

What puts us on the map is that we sell things that are different. We always stay on top of the trends of new designers and what clothing lines are coming out. Our collection is very dynamic and we introduce new collections, on average every month. We have a keen sense of 'price to quality' – and by quality I mean not only the quality



of the fabrics used but also the quality of the design. We have a wide price range, because to go into a store and to know that you are completely priced-out of everything is such a disappointment. So I want there to be a little bit for everyone – so I can spread some consumer happiness!

And what is the secret of your success?

It's really a matter of opportunities. When a very good opportunity presents itself you need to jump on it. I am not recklessly spontaneous, but sometimes you just have to go for it. You have to make things change, make things happen for yourself. ☺

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Mauritius: Paradise found

WRITER: DAVID MC GOWAN

A stay at the Dinarobin Hotel in Mauritius is well worth even the longest journey.

‘Paradise’ is probably not the first word you would choose to describe Brussels – sure, our wonderful city is cosmopolitan, conveniently located and has lots more going for it as well but, for most, the capital of Europe is probably not Nirvana.

So, what *does* define paradise for you? Is it white sandy beaches? A turquoise blue ocean? A brilliant golf course? Maybe a relaxing spa inside a world-class hotel? How about all the above?

**DESPITE ITS
BREATHTAKING
BEACHES,
STUNNING
GOLF COURSES
AND FRIENDLY
CULTURE,
MAURITIUS
IS STILL
RELATIVELY
UNKNOWN
TO MANY
TRAVELLERS**

Dutch sailors first inhabited the island in the early 17th century, but after failing to develop a sustainable colony, the immigrants abandoned the island a century later.

VIOLENT BEGINNINGS

By the early 1800s, the British had taken Mauritius from France in the Napoleonic wars, and continued to develop the island, while at the same time abolishing slavery; the French had used hundreds of slaves from Madagascar and India. Today, Indo-Mauritians make up roughly two-thirds of the island's diverse population. The island's diversity is one of its greatest attributes, with Mauritians well known for their warm welcome for all cultures.

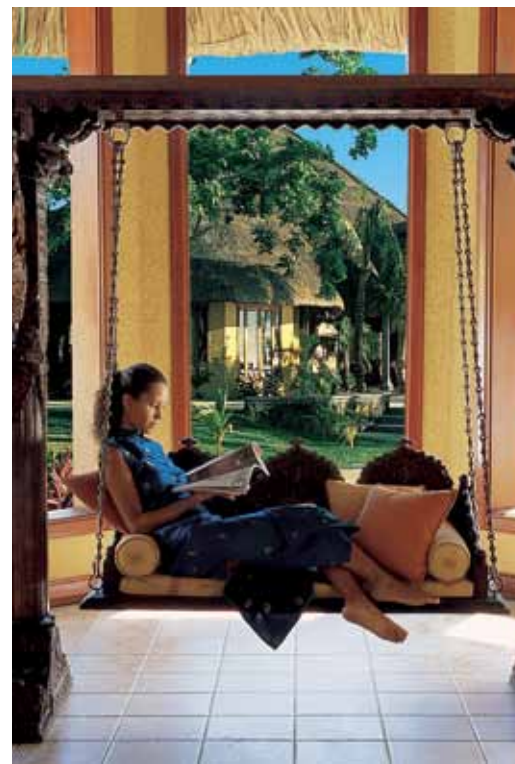
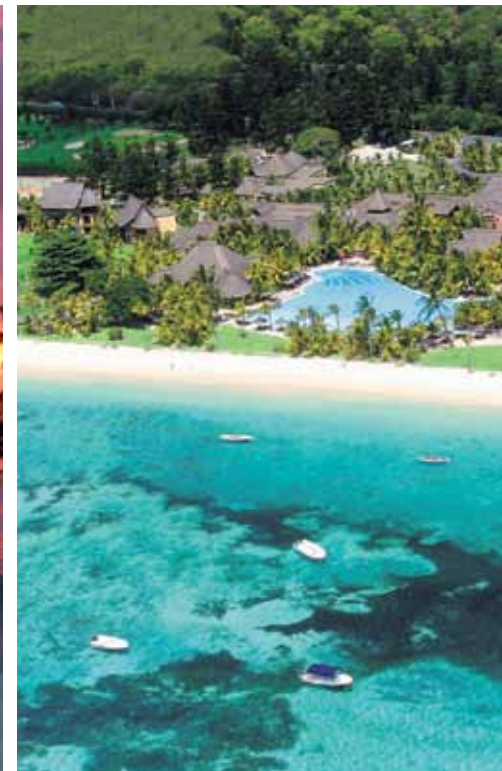
DELICIOUS MAURITIUS

Welcome to Mauritius – a beautiful island country located around 750 kilometres east of Madagascar. Although it's smaller even than Luxembourg, what it lacks in size it more than makes up for in beauty. Thankfully, despite its breathtaking beaches, stunning golf courses and friendly culture, Mauritius is still relatively unknown to many travellers.

Despite a violent beginning to the island's history, Mauritius has been peaceful for nearly 200 years. Mauritius became independent of Great Britain in 1968 and the island has continued to grow economically. Of course, a huge area of that economy is tourism, and there is no better place to be a tourist in Mauritius than at the Dinarobin Hotel. If Brussels doesn't exactly fill your 'paradise requirements', this five-star resort will. Located on a peninsula on the western shore, the Dinarobin Hotel combines seemingly endless white sands, crystal-clear oceans and views of the lush green mountains with a luxurious resort that is perfect both for a family holiday or a romantic getaway.

Whether you prefer to spend your afternoon on the 18-hole golf course (the most beautiful course I have ever played), relaxing at the spa or living the dream swimming with dolphins, one thing is sure – you won't be disappointed.







**DINAROBIN
HOTEL
COMBINES
SEEMINGLY
ENDLESS
WHITE SANDS,
CRYSTAL-CLEAR
OCEANS AND
VIEWS OF THE
LUSH GREEN
MOUNTAINS
WITH A
LUXURIOUS
RESORT THAT IS
PERFECT BOTH
FOR A FAMILY
HOLIDAY OR
A ROMANTIC
GETAWAY**

SUMPTUOUS ELEGANCE

Every aspect of Dinarobin reflects elegance. Its unusual architecture, spacious suites, 18-hole golf course and prime location on one of the island's most beautiful beaches make it the best choice for the discerning traveller. It offers the perfect mix of facilities for the active with a peaceful

atmosphere for those looking to relax.

If you have kids, a Mini Club welcomes children aged 3-12 from 9-21h, seven days a week. The clubs are run by qualified professionals who provide fun and educational indoor and outdoor activities to keep your little ones entertained and happy. Baby-sitting services also available.

If you don't have children and don't want to be distracted by the noise of others' offspring playing, new relaxation areas have been created, with the addition of five 75 square-metre pools. The

pools' rectangular lines create a strong visual impact with sleek glistening surfaces stretching into the cool shade of palm trees. Views from the pools look over the beach to one side and stunning Le Morne Mountain on the other. The unique settings of the pools, which differ from one another, create a unique feel and charm. You will experience a new sense of intimacy.

Relaxation is easy at Dinarobin, and with a top-class Clarins Spa offering a wide range of different treatments sourced from around the globe, awareness of space and time fade away as you focus on the moment.

Gentle, inviting waters make Mauritius – and especially the Dinarobin Hotel – a perfect destination for water activities; water-skiing, windsurfing, sailing, snorkelling trips, kayaks and pedal boats which take place in the sheltered lagoon located in front of your Hotel. You can see the huge waves of the Indian Ocean crashing on the coral reef that's located just 100 metres from the beach, while enjoying a swim in a lagoon that can be thought of as a giant swimming pool, with fresh sea water.

If you're keen to get active on land, then volleyball, tennis or a session in the Paradis Sports Centre is ideal, and the **Paradis Golf Course** is one of the most beautiful in the world, with breathtaking views.

Exceptional gastronomy can be found in the four Dinarobin restaurants, varying from gourmet menus to light meals served on the beach. Local food, spices and the catch of the day will give your taste buds no time to relax.

Dinarobin's peaceful surroundings, intimate village setting and world-class service means your Mauritius holiday will remain with you for a lifetime. 📍

Dinarobin

Le Morne Peninsula

Mauritius

T. +230 401 4900

www.dinarobin-hotel.com

Three little words

WRITER: NATASHA ABUDARHAM

Is your language positive enough? Our 'Go Get It!' specialist investigates the words that can generate negativity.

Words are everywhere. They come out of your mouth, they're in your head, you hear them, you read them and you even feel them; you simply can't do without them.

The words you use become even more important when you want to be understood, get things done and achieve desired results. Would it, therefore, be of value to you if you knew how to change three little words that are probably generating unwanted or negative results whenever you utter them?

THE WORDS YOU USE BECOME EVEN MORE IMPORTANT WHEN YOU WANT TO BE UNDERSTOOD, GET THINGS DONE AND ACHIEVE DESIRED RESULTS

I thought it would, so here goes. Those three little words are *don't*, *can't* and *no*. The first thing to be aware of is that some words generate a feeling and can instantly make the speaker and the listener feel good or bad just by saying and hearing them.

To illustrate this, close your eyes and say *don't*,

can't and *no* out loud and notice how the words make you feel. Do they uplift you, empower you or motivate you, or do they drain you, disempower you or demotivate you?

DON'T

Have you ever read a sign that says 'do not walk on the grass' and all you want to do is walk on the grass? Have you ever told someone '*don't* forget' and they've forgotten? Have you ever told a child 'don't run' and the first thing they do is run?

Statements starting with don't can cause the opposite to occur even though you've said exactly what you want. This is because the part of your mind that takes action on the statement has to know what it is being told not to do before it can do what it is supposed to.

To achieve a desired result, remove the word don't and say exactly what you want the person to do. For example, 'do not walk on the grass' becomes 'walk on the path'. 'Don't forget' becomes 'remember' and 'don't run' becomes 'walk'.



CAN'T

The moment you use the word, your mind closes off to any ways in which you could make a thing possible. Once the mind is closed off it has nowhere to go.

It's a good idea to remove this word from your vocabulary entirely and re-word your sentences to allow your mind to open up to the possibility of making it happen.

Your new sentence could become 'even though this seems difficult, I am going to find a way to make it happen'. Or 'I am opening my mind to new ways of getting it done'.

NO

This word instinctively generates a negative feeling within the speaker and listener, yet it is said over and over again. I've particularly noticed in Europe, that many people start their sentences with 'no' even when it doesn't need to be used. Bring your use of this word into your awareness and if you are using it more than necessary, you may want to make a

conscious effort to start your sentence again, this time saying it and generating a positive feeling.

Statements starting with 'no' have the same effect as statements starting with 'don't' and can easily be reverted to using words that state exactly what you want, so the recipient knows exactly what you want them to do.

By being more aware of the impact your language has, you can consciously choose precise words to generate the results you expect rather than be disappointed by the actions of the person to whom you are speaking.

'Go Get It!' specialist Natasha Abudarham lives in Brussels and provides private courses, group workshops and is a motivational speaker. She is also the host of Europe's Secret to Success internet radio show every Monday at 17h. For more information, go to www.natashaabudarham.com 

SCENTS- SATIONAL

A round-up of some the finest fragrances available.

1. TOMMY HILFIGER TOMMY EAU DE TOILETTE LIMITED EDITION FOR MEN

Inspired by the freedom of the sea and the warmth of the sun.

RRP: 100ml – 42.70€

2. CHANEL HOMME SPORT EAU DE TOILETTE FOR MEN

A woody, spicy fragrance with fruity top notes in a bottle inspired by the Chanel J12 watch.

RRP: 50ml – 46€

3. BVLGARI EAU D'ÉTÉ FOR WOMEN

The new scent from Bvlgari that's fresh and unique and designed for the woman who is young at heart.

RRP: 30ml – 42€, 50ml – 58€

4. BURBERRY SUMMER EAU DE TOILETTE FOR MEN

A limited-edition citrus aquatic fragrance, new and fresh for summer.

RRP: 100ml – 50€

5. BVLGARI II EAU DE PARFUM FOR WOMEN

An evocative, intense and truly feminine perfume.

RRP: 30ml – 48€, 50ml 65€, 75 ml – 88€

6. BURBERRY SUMMER EAU DE TOILETTE FOR WOMEN

This limited edition is green, floral and perfect for warm days.

RRP: 50ml – 44€, 100ml – 57€

7. LOEWE AIRE LOCO EAU DE TOILETTE FOR WOMEN

Floral, with heart notes of jasmine, rose and orange blossom.

RRP: 100ml – 89€

*With thanks to **Yvan Barbera** for photos and fragrances arrangement.*



A taste for travel

WRITER: COLIN MOORS

You will not have failed to notice that our driving force this month is travel, which is great, and broadens the horizons. But what if, for some reason, you'd prefer to bring the experience to your own home? Our co-editor, chef and gadgets expert shows you how.



Half the fun of travelling is to sample the local delicacies, but in today's world, they can just as easily come to you. What you need – apart from the odd Michelin star – is some gadgets to help you rustle up an authentic Uzbekistani meal in minutes. We can't promise to make you a better cook, but we can assure you that you'll have a lot of fun experimenting.

ORANGES ARE NOT THE ONLY FRUIT

How many times have you hosted a cocktail party and thought: "I need a really stand-out, drop-dead gorgeous juicer for my Margaritas"? Never? Well, think again. For the price of a fully automated electronic juicer, you can get what is essentially a big lump of metal you have to work by hand. Of course, this is not any old juicer – oh no. This is presented by **Alessi**, world-famous for their kitchen utensils, and designed by none other than Philippe Starck. The 'Juicy Salif' is somewhat reminiscent of an invasion by aliens from the 1950s, but has a wild visual appeal that will make you want to keep it out on show, it's just that cool. Hardly a bargain, considering you still have to do all the work yourself, it's very high on my list of 'must have but no idea why' at a mere 73€. Or you could just be boring and buy an electric one.

www.alessi.com




THERE'S NOTHING IN IT

If you are anything like me and a bit of a sucker for TV cookery programmes, you will almost certainly have seen your favourite chef cooking their food in a vacuum-sealed pouch in a bath of heated water. The technique is known as 'sous-vide' (which is French for 'under vacuum'). The idea is to use the vacuum sealing to force the flavours of your seasoning into the meat, fish or poultry, thereby intensifying the overall taste.

The process (sealing food in sterile plastic bags and cooking in water) was first thought of by an American inventor, Sir Benjamin Thompson in 1799, but was only rediscovered and refined in the 1970s by Georges Pralus, while working for the famous Restaurant Troisgros. Previously only available to Michelin-starred chefs or experts in molecular gastronomy such as Heston Blumenthal of **The Fat Duck**, or **El Bulli's** Ferran Adrià, several versions designed exclusively for the home market have seen the prices – and the size – shrink. **Sur la Table** (www.surlatable.com) will sell you one for 450\$ (340€), so you can try out your very own bacon-and-eggs ice cream, or snail porridge (yes, they exist). A piece of friendly advice: **Sur la Table** is dangerous for those of us who love cooking. With an array of gadgets and cookware to tempt any cook on any budget, it's like porn for foodies. You have been warned.

NO STRINGS

No kitchen would be complete without a mandoline. Music while you work? Not really. The mandoline is a flat-bedded food slicer. The blade is set into the bed and the food slides across the blade, chopping in to even slices. Of course, there would always be the danger (as any chef will tell you) that someone will engage you in conversation while using it and that'll be the last you see of your fingertips. **The Zyliss Mandoline**, 32£ (36€), does away with this problem and, if used according to the instructions, will safeguard your pinkies while slicing the perfect waxy potato for your gratin dauphinoise. Cleaning is easy, meaning you don't end up wasting the time you've saved cleaning hundreds of small parts. Most of it you can throw into the dishwasher and forget. There are ten different blades for various cutting styles and thicknesses, and it all packs flat into its own wall-mountable container, meaning you don't have to find yet more space for another gadget. 

www.lakeland.co.uk



OPEN



CLOSED

The elements of surprise

WRITER: KIMBERLEY LOVATO

Whether you say it with flowers, rent a plane to write it in the sky or simply just do something sweet, our girl knows you can't go far wrong with a nice surprise.

We are all so busy with life, it's often hard to remember to tell, and more importantly to show, our husbands, wives, and lovers just how much they mean to us. It wasn't always that way. Remember the beginning? It was easy then. Romantic dates, love notes scrolled in the steamed up bathroom mirror; generous courtesies performed without threat of breakup or bodily harm. Ah, those were the days.

LUST, THEN LOVE

Slowly, life, career and kids turned that nubile infatuation phase into something fuelled by respect, love, and a need for more sleep. I don't mean this negatively. While I warmly recall those lustful days of yore, I also love being with someone who really knows me, and loves me exactly that way. Still, there's no harm in injecting a little

spice into the relationship now and again, and the element of surprise itself can be a strong aphrodisiac.

I polled some friends – married and single, men and women – and asked them about surprises in their relationships, what

stuck with them the most, and why. The results were surprisingly non-sexual. I expected stories of French maid costumes

or handcuffs and leather chaps (I have some kinky friends), but in my unofficial poll what 95 per cent of people cited were simple and considerate gestures like flowers for no reason, taking charge of dinner, or even vacuuming the house. Here are a few other notable mentions. Names have been changed to protect the innocent, and guilty.

POINTS OF VIEW

'C' from Brussels said: "While out for dinner with a girlfriend, my boyfriend sent me a text message that said, 'I miss you and love you and want you to have fun with your friend tonight'. It made me smile and actually made me want to be home with him instead. Perhaps this was his intention all along!"

'F' from Los Angeles said: "My husband drove my car to take our daughter to the bus stop. When I got into the car next, I realized he had not only filled the car with petrol, but had also changed my clock (daylight saving was quite some time ago). Both made me remember how kind he is, and why I married him in the first place."

'T' from London said: "I had just (reluctantly) given my boyfriend the key to my apartment when I had to leave for a business trip. When I got home, he had assembled a ceiling fan I had purchased that came in about 30 different pieces, set up my TV, and had all my bath towels and dishes put away. I'm glad I gave him the key!"



One of the funniest surprise stories I have ever heard, and definitely not for the faint of heart, came from a good friend of mine **'L' in Florida**. She surprised her husband **'S'**... with their wedding! She said: "He thought we were attending a client open-house at a restored mansion. You should have seen his face when he saw his parents and a priest." 'S' responds: "Man that was a big surprise. We've been married 17 years this September. I remember after it was over someone asked if I had had thoughts of running. I replied: "With her father coming down the stairs behind me and 150 people in front of me – where was I going to go?"

While most surprises are sweet, some can be sour. 'L' in Florida had this to say: "My husband won a cruise, a sales incentive from his office. He asked me to come along but since we had school-aged children, I felt I should stay behind. A day later, friends all pitched in to help me with the kids. So I boarded a plane to surprise my husband at his first port of call. The surprise was on me when I discovered he had invited another woman in my absence. No wonder he didn't protest when I offered to stay behind!"

And of course, sexy surprises are always saucy. 'P' of Brussels told me: "When I

arrived home from work, my girlfriend had all the toppings for an ice cream sundae (cherries, whipping cream, hot chocolate sauce) set up on a tray with a note asking me to bring it to the bedroom. Needless to say, there was no ice cream and we had one hot and sticky night."

PIVOTAL GESTURES

I've been married 15 years and my husband and I still hold hands, say I love you multiple times a day, and call each other every day we are away from one another. Still, I can't recall the last time we surprised one another. He reminded me that once when he was packing for a long business trip, I had tucked little love notes and sexy suggestions into his luggage, into his socks, and his shoes, so he'd find them over several days. I reminded him of the time I came home to find a hand-written clue on the door, which led to another clue, and another, all through the house, finally ending with a little silver heart necklace that I had spotted one day. Maybe the biggest surprise of all for me was to realize how pivotal these small gestures, sexy or simple, can be and how little time it actually takes to sneak them back into your love life. ☺

www.kimberleylovato.com



Long Island nice spree

WRITER: EMMA PORTIER DAVIS

A round-up of our correspondent's favourite things to do in New York – in particular, those off the tourist trail, which a first-time visitor might just miss.

I've done the Empire State Building, I've skated in Central Park. Fifth Avenue? Check. Metropolitan Art Museum? Check. Statue of Liberty? Check. Wandering off the beaten track though, I've come across a host of other treats which are just too good to keep to myself.

BAGEL OR BOOGIE?

I should do as New Yorkers do and breakfast on a bagel but if, like me, you fancy

something that doesn't look like it would bounce on the floor, head to the trendy but chilled Vynl. Their waffles and smoothies are the perfect way to start the day.

**SNEAK DOWN
THE ROAD TO
THE MAGNOLIA
BAKERY IF
YOU'RE STILL
FEELING
PECKISH. YES,
THIS IS WHERE
YOU FIND THE
CUPCAKES
MADE FAMOUS
BY THE SEX
AND THE CITY
GIRLS BUT THEY
ARE DIVINE**

Some of you may have heard of **Ellen's Stardust Diner** on Broadway. Here, 'resting actors', dressed in 1950s get-ups, will deliver your pancakes and suddenly burst into song, sending you on a near-hallucinogenic trip back in time. Most definitely avoid if you have a hangover or jetlag but if you're feeling brave and you are the kind of person who enjoyed

watching Andrew Lloyd Webber's search for a Dorothy for his forthcoming *Wizard of Oz* production, it's worth it for the laugh.

SHOPPING

Some of you may be wondering how you could find time to do anything but wander up and down Fifth Avenue, the main axis of this

shopping Mecca. But I've collected plenty of Bloomingdale's brown bags in my time and a girl can have too much of a good thing.

Anyone with the slightest interest in photography should head to B&H Photo. This is the ultimate in camera shops and I defy you to come out gadget-less. Having challenged the staff several times, I can confirm this place has everything to meet your celluloid or digital needs.

For vintage artworks, and boutiques (a welcome break from the city's superstores), head to Soho. With its narrow streets and short buildings, it's a world away from Midtown and reminiscent of the London district from which it got its name.





GRAB A BITE

Stick around in Soho and take a leisurely lunch at 'Balthazar'. It's a French-style bistro with a large terrace, fabulous wines and steak and fries just how we like them on the European continent. Indulge in some oysters and watch the bohemians go by.

If high-end pub grub is more your thing, try **The Spotted Pig**. The chef, who used to work at River Café, produces British and Italian seasonal food, accompanied by a wide selection of wine, a traditional British ale or a Spotted Pig bitter.

Sneak down the road to the **Magnolia Bakery** if you're still feeling peckish. Yes, this is where you find the cupcakes made famous by the Sex and the City girls but they are divine and worth the queuing time.

Further uptown is **Barney Greengrass The Sturgeon King**, serving New Yorkers since 1908. Feast on an omelette with a side of sturgeon or really push the boat out with a 399\$ plate of Beluga caviar. Still not stuffed? Head close by to gourmet food shop **Zabar's**.

SEE THE SIGHTS

The cutesy movie *Sleepless in Seattle* (1993) ruined the whole Empire State Building experience for me; well, that and the crowds, queues and manic security. For panoramic views of the city, head to the much calmer and altogether far more civilized **Top of the Rock Observation Deck**. This is the old Rockefeller building, the one you see on picture postcards with an ice rink out front and a huge Christmas tree. It's also the one featured in the vertiginous picture of workmen sitting high up on scaffolding eating their lunch. A shade pricier than the Empire State, it's worth it.

If the weather sucks, **Brooklyn Museum** (almost in Manhattan but don't tell that to folks there) offers a less crowded and more charming alternative to the Met. Collections range from ancient to contemporary.

For an alternative theatre experience, journey through space and time at the **Hayden Planetarium**, part of the **American Natural History Museum**. Sit back and enjoy a stellar tour narrated by US actor Whoopi Goldberg.

WINE AND DINE

Foodies need look no further than **Grammercy Tavern**. Start out with a Maine crab, tuck into some venison and polish off a cherry brown butter cake. If you can't find a wine to suit your palate here, well then you're just too darn picky.

My absolute favourite though has to be Italian restaurant **Barolo**. Eat everything on the menu if you can and happily accept the wine waiters' recommendations. These guys know what they are talking about.

Shun the ubiquitous hotel bars and keep it real with a trip to New York's meat-packing district. Sip a cocktail in **Pastis** or head for late-night drinks and a bar-top boogie in the **Hogs and Heifers Saloon**. Behind the bar is a pile of bras, including a black one, sized-34B, flung there by actor Julia Roberts.

SLEEP

Sleep? Sleep? ☹

ADDRESS BOOK

Vynl

Hell's Kitchen and Chelsea
www.vynl-nyc.com

Ellen's Stardust Diner

Broadway/51st Street
www.ellensstardust.com

B&H

9th Avenue, 34th Street
www.bhphotovideo.com

Top of the Rock

50th Street, between 5th and 6th avenue
www.topoftherocknyc.com

Balthazar

80 Spring Street
www.balthazarny.com

Spotted Pig

314 West 11th Street
www.thespottedpig.com

Magnolia Bakery

401 Bleecker Street
www.magnoliabakery.com

Barney Greengrass

541 Amsterdam Avenue at 86th Street
www.barneygreengrass.com

Zabar's

Broadway, 80th Street
www.zabars.com

Brooklyn Museum

200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn
www.brooklynmuseum.org

Hayden Planetarium

Central Park West, 79 Street
www.amnh.org

Grammercy Tavern

42 East 20th
www.grammercytavern.com

Barolo

398 West Broadway
www.nybarolo.com

Pastis

9 Ninth Avenue
www.pastisny.com

Hogs & Heifers Saloon

859 Washington Street
www.hogsandheifers.com

The New Forest: Always a discovery

WRITER: JAMES DREW

It is perhaps the UK's most beautiful region – and being a guest brings more than a few privileges. Let *Together* tell you more.

The last time your correspondent was in the New Forest, prior to my trip earlier this year, Old Shep was very much a pup and I was still accompanying my mum, dad and two sisters on enjoyable camping trips. Yet, such is the sense of tranquility that pervades the region, one almost has the sense of time standing still here, coupled with the entirely pleasurable feeling of being lost in a somehow 'undiscovered' Mediterranean locale.

THE EAST CLOSE IS... A HOTEL THAT COMBINES HISTORY WITH COOL, CONTEMPORARY FLAIR AND RELAXED, INFORMAL COMFORT IN A BEAUTIFUL PARKLAND

"A little background information, first, on the New Forest – England's newest National Park, which is to be found in Hampshire between Southampton on the East coast and Bournemouth on the South, was first 'claimed' as his own by William the Conqueror more than 900 years ago, and was originally set aside as a royal 'playground' where the newly crowned king and his privileged courtiers could hunt deer and enjoy the surroundings to their hearts' content." This is way too long to be a sentence.

Managed and cultivated by the Forestry Commission, the area is a perfect example of people and nature co-existing harmoniously – from the careful preservation, cultivation and management of the local deer population, to the locally produced food (just wait until you try a real New Forest Breakfast, www.newforestproduce.co.uk).

So, where was your man fortunate enough to stay, you might ask? Both locations have had extensive and expensive renovations. Stay at either of the hotels (or both, if you are as fortunate as I was), and you will see and feel exactly where the money has been spent.

THE EAST CLOSE COUNTRY HOTEL

The young, focused and very attentive Stuart Van Dam is general manager at The East Close Country Hotel and, in presiding over an establishment that blends the very best of the new with a rich Georgian heritage, he declares it to be his personal mission to ensure that every guest leaves with abiding memories of "the timeless splendour" of a hotel that combines history with cool, contemporary flair and relaxed, informal comfort in a beautiful parkland setting.



© The East Close Country Hotel

The Grade II-listed original Georgian mansion has been superbly refurbished, without undermining the understated elegance that is reminiscent of an Alice in Wonderland-esque era and, curiously enough, one Alice Liddell (the inspiration for Lewis Carroll's classic) is buried in a nearby church.

History is also very much a part of The Conqueror Inn, the hotel's adjoining 'gastro pub' (which, along with great local food, also serves excellent local ale), named after William the Conqueror, who has strong links to the local area. Featuring an extensive bar area and filled with comfortable leather sofas and a wood-burning fire, it was the perfect location for my first night's socializing with my

fellow hacks from Belgium, with manager Stuart also joining us at table.

There are 11 boutique styled bedrooms and suites, with all rooms including high ceilings, sash windows and original-feature fireplaces. In addition, The Conqueror Inn has a further four double bedrooms, and 'The Cottage' is also available, which can sleep up to six. My stay, unquestionably, had begun in style.

The East Close Country Hotel

*Lyndhurst Road
Hinton
Christchurch, Dorset
T. +44 (0)1425 672 404
www.eastclose.com*



THE LIME WOOD HOTEL

After the following day was spent enjoying the forest, which included a spell of deer-watching and, it must be said, deer-eating at a splendid

My room? Well, according to the charming young lady who showed me to my quarters, everyone would be jealous of me. She wasn't wrong – a simply gorgeous, free-standing bath forms the centerpiece of a chamber that is all about calming colours, fine lines, free-flowing comfort and a sense of utter seclusion – first rate.

Describing itself as a “luxury country house hotel with a difference” Lime Wood, too, has real sense of being blessed with the spirit of its past – designed by Charles Morris and Ben Pentreath, it is the only five-star luxury hotel in the New Forest National Park.

Ben Pentreath of Working Group Design restored the main house and its extensions, comprising 16 bedrooms, a series of classically designed sitting rooms, library, dining room, informal eatery, bar, cellar and billiards room (where I was only too happy to narrowly beat a dining companion in a late-night game). Meanwhile Charles Morris, who worked previously on the Orchard Room at nearby Highgrove, designed the additional buildings, which feature a further 11 suites and two guest rooms.

venison barbecue (sorry, but I can't be guilty), we arrived at the simply stunning Lime Wood Hotel, to enjoy the sublime hospitality of manager Robin Hutson, co-founder of the Hotel du Vin group, and his excellent team, which includes Michelin-starred chef Alex Aitken (in whose care we enjoyed a stunning meal) and Jamie Cullum, who chose the grand piano and is, apparently, the only person permitted to play it.

With 29 rooms on which 30£ million has been spent by billionaire industrialist Jim Ratcliffe in the past five years, Lime Wood is housed

in a Regency building, which, thanks to the investment of funds, now houses magnificent antique furniture and state-of-the-art, erm, art.

A SIMPLY GORGEOUS, FREE-STANDING BATH FORMS THE CENTERPIECE OF A CHAMBER THAT IS ALL ABOUT CALMING COLOURS, FINE LINES, FREE-FLOWING COMFORT AND A SENSE OF UTTER SECLUSION – FIRST RATE

Director of Cuisine, Luke Holder, who loves using local produce, presides over two restaurants; ‘The Dining Room by Luke Holder’, a glamorous, elegant eatery and ‘The Scullery’, which offers a more informal country house kitchen feel. The menus proudly adhere to hand-reared delicious ‘forest food’ traditions, including wild mushrooms, garlic, local venison and home-reared beef and lamb. In short, hearty, homely, delicious and creative. And there are more joys en route – in summer, Lime Wood is set to open a state-of-the-art spa, which will include a swimming and hydrotherapy pool, eight treatment rooms, saunas, hammam, a steam room and a fully equipped gym. Seriously, what are you waiting for? This is the very, very best.

The Lime Wood Hotel

Beaulieu Rd, Lyndhurst
Hampshire

T. +44 (0)23 8028 7177

www.limewoodhotel.co.uk

THE STANWELL HOUSE HOTEL

I couldn't possibly sign off without offering appreciation to the Stanwell House Hotel in Lymington, which brightened my somewhat melancholic (I didn't want to leave) last day in the New Forest enormously with a delicious meal, selected from the modern European and seafood menu that is this charming Georgian hotel's speciality.

A wonderful way to finish a marvellous weekend break – and *Together's* heartfelt thanks go out to everyone who made it possible. ☺

The Stanwell House Hotel

High Street, Lymington
Hampshire

T. +44 (0)1590 677 123

www.stanwellhouse.com

www.thenewforest.co.uk



“Financial planning is about much more than money”

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Email : cfsadmin@classic-fs.com | www.classic-fs.com

Clubs ‘Med’ in heaven

WRITER: JAMES DREW

Our co-editor shares some of his own first Club Med adventure, and offers a sneak preview of the latest (and greatest?) addition to the holiday experience.

CLUB MED DA BALAIA

I was obviously delighted to be invited to my first Club Med experience – upon arrival at **Club Med Da Balaia**, which is to be found in southern Portugal's Albufeira region (think decidedly rustic, beautiful coastline – bliss, quite frankly), you are immediately arrested by the resort's view, standing as it does on an ochre cliff, overlooking a magnificent white sand beach that's alternately lapped and crashed by the Atlantic.

Straight away, you have the sense that this a place to unwind – and my three-day break more than confirmed this. It matters not whether you arrive *en famille* (the child-care facilities are first class, by the way), as a couple and/or with golf/spa enthusiasm, there is something for everyone here.

LET'S KEEP
IT SIMPLE,
SHALL WE?
THREE DAYS
WAS REALLY,
REALLY NOT
ENOUGH – I'LL
BE BACK

Take the food – never before or since (well, this is Portugal), have I enjoyed fresh fish with such enthusiasm and, as the cuisine and drinks are all included in the price of

your stay, the temptation to over-indulge departs fairly quickly, or at least it did as far as this gourmand is concerned, and that truly is saying something.

As far as the entertainment on offer is concerned, you can take as little or as much of it as you wish – the universally friendly, multilingual and welcoming staff really do band together to offer 'interactive' fun for

those seeking for a highly social holiday experience, but there are also various oases of calm around the resort, be they a spell in the spa or wonderful, enlightening trip up into the hills, as was enjoyed immensely by this writer. Let's keep it simple, shall we? Three days was really, *really* not enough – I'll be back.

Club Med Da Balaia

Praia Maria Luisa, 8200-854

Albufeira 8200-925, Portugal

www.clubmed.com

CLUB MED SINAI BAY

Sinai Bay is in the cultural heart of the Sinai – and this Club Med resort will provide exceptional opportunities to discover the region's famous sites, such as St Catherine's Monastery and the troglodyte city of Petra in Jordan. A unique resort, divided between Club Med's 'Four Trident' and 'Five Trident' areas in a beautifully preserved bay covering 27 hectares, flanked by a long stretch of private beach, this is the ideal site for exploring the fabulous underwater life of the Red Sea – there's even a Scuba Diving Academy, so you'll have no excuse!

The resort is located near to historical jewels such as Petra in Jordan, has a Golf Academy and Training Centre, golf course and, of course, a CINQ MONDES Spa. You get the picture – this will be Club Med, and then some. The resort opens at the end of October – a pity you have to wait that long, but some things are worth waiting for, right? ☺

www.clubmed.co.za



Benidorm – in style

WRITER: FEDERICO GRANDESSO

Together's king of the road takes in the more sophisticated side of a well-loved resort.

Arriving in Benidorm by helicopter may well be the best way to get the best first impression of this ancient village turned towering paradise – there are now ten buildings above 100 metres, with the highest, the Grand Hotel Bali (the tallest hotel in Europe), at 186m and the second highest, the Lugano Tower, at 158m. And that's not all – renowned architect Roberto Perez Guerras is hard at work on the next skyscraper, the 'In Tempo', which, at 200m and 52 floors is set to be the tallest in town.

On the paseo de levante, there are further innovative projects, such as the city-park by Riccardo Boffil or the colourful paseo de Poniente, considered as one of the best in Spain. There is heavy investment afoot in the city's design, and also to upgrade the

tourist trade (with hotels, bars and discos) to attract clients with high spending power.

AFTER A DAY'S GOLF, CHECK OUT THE BEST RELAXATION MONEY CAN BUY, IN ITS 1,200 SQUARE-METRE SPA VILLAITANA

HOTEL VILLAITANA

Sometimes, sophisticated visitors need a 'shelter de luxe' – an oasis of calm after a day on the noisy beach. Head a few kilometres into the hills surrounding the city, and you will find the unique **Hotel Villaitana**. Designed as a

Mediterranean *pueblo*, complete with its own church and village square, the Plaza

Real de Villaitana, the resort numbers 25 buildings that are replicas of the region's monuments. The resort also offers two luxury hotels, two golf courses, an outdoor pool, ten restaurants and bars, five swimming pools, an indoor games room, Kids Club, artificial beach and a brand new health centre and spa featuring treatment rooms and a gym. The golf at Villaitana is serious, with two 18-hole courses designed by none other than Jack Nicklaus.



The facilities include an elegant Clubhouse with cafeteria, pro shop, golf store, changing rooms, guest services, driving ranges and a golf academy, which holds private classes and group classes. The north course is an 18-hole par 72, at more than 6,612 metres, while the south course is an 18-hole par 62 at 3,858 metres in length, suitable for all player proficiency levels.

After a day's golf, check out the best relaxation that money can buy, in the 1,200 square-metre Spa Villaitana, a state-of-the-art facility with treatment rooms, hydrotherapy and massage suites, Jacuzzis,

steam and sauna rooms, lounge areas and a fitness centre.

To eat? Try the Indigo restaurant, which offers Mediterranean specialties such as exquisite rice and fish dishes. The resort also includes an on-site convention centre, with approximately 2,300 square metres of meeting space divided into five rooms and a main hall that can host up to 1,300 guests – the centre recently hosted events organized by important brands such as Puma and Mercedes, and was also the headquarters of the Spanish Davis Cup team guided by Rafael Nadal.



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THE VILLA VENECIA

The sophisticated client will also appreciate another new five-star hotel, The **Villa Venecia**. Overlooking the sea and perfect for romantic getaways, the restaurant offers fantastic views and renowned fish dishes. If you are not romantically inclined but still adventurous, why not check out the **Terra Mitica**, Spain's largest theme park which, with its great rides, shows, restaurants and shops, is fantastic fun for all the family.

Or why not take a sub-aquatic catamaran trip to Benidorm Island, 2 kilometres out to sea, with its underwater deck, from where you can see a wonderful variety of marine life? And just a few kilometres outside Benidorm, you are sure to fall in love with **Altea**, an antiquated Spanish village with little white houses, medieval cobbled streets and a marvellous church. Another trip not to miss is to **Alicante**, the province's capital city – and the starting point for a visit to the city centre should be the **Santa Mount Benacantil**. Its palm-tree lined promenade, Explanada de España, consists of 6.5 million marble stones

**JUST A FEW
KILOMETRES
OUTSIDE
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COBBLED
STREETS AND A
MARVELLOUS
CHURCH**

touches, which appeal particularly to its younger guests. Its latest exhibition reveals the secrets of Egyptian civilization through

260 exhibits on loan from the Besançon Museum of Fine Art and Archaeology, the Louvre, the French National Library, the Granet Museum in Aix-en-Provence, the Picardie Museum in Amiens, and the Georges Labit Museum in Toulouse – until 17th October, sculptures and bas-reliefs will occupy the three temporary exhibition rooms at the MARQ, including two complete mummies of the priests Seramon and Ankhpakhered, together with their sarcophagi.

Benidorm – be it old or new, you will fall in love. ☺

www.villaitana.com
www.hotelvillavenecia.com
www.marqalicante.com



Really do not be too hard on other airports.



FACT: PASS THE ASH – FOR CHARITY

As reported by AFP, an Icelandic internet firm has turned the volcanic ash cloud that has wreaked havoc with the holiday plans of millions of travellers into a charity money-spinner. The website, nammi.is, is now offering jars containing 160 grammes of the ash from Iceland's Eyjafjpoll volcano for 23.80€, with all proceeds being donated to charity. "The response has been enormous since we started this 10 days ago," chief executive Sofus Gustavsson told AFP, adding that the ash had already been sold to customers in 60 countries, 133 countries had made inquiries and almost a million visitors had visited the website since the offer began.

FIGURE: 2.5€ billion

That's how much European Transport Commissioner Siim Kallas recently estimated that the volcanic ash crisis has cost, with the cancellation of more than 100,000 flights and 10 million passengers being stranded.

REPORTAGE

BHV: 'Bewildering', 'Hot', 'Volatile'?

WRITER: JOHN SHERIDAN

The merry-go-round that is Belgian politics has begun spinning again – what the outcome will be is anyone's guess and the duration of the next parliament, once formed, is also a matter of no little concern. Our correspondent examines the 'Belgian problem'.

Any gambler would find it hard to find a bookmaker willing to take odds on anything to do with Belgian politics – the most recent collapse and all previous failures to form a stable government have been met with anguish and borderline ridicule by the international community.

A 'NON-COUNTRY'?

However, the question should not be 'why can't the Belgians get it right' but 'how it is that a country so diverse in ethnicity manages to keep the peace enough to ensure the political problems stay in government offices and don't spill over into civil war?' Considering the old adage that if you treat a man like a criminal he will act as such, it is remarkable that the Belgians have achieved this relatively peaceful – if at times disturbed – status, particularly considering some of the opinions expressed in the media concerning the country, exemplified recently by former UKIP leader Nigel Farage who described Belgium as a "non-country".

FOR CENTURIES, THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN AT THE HEART OF WARS BEING WAGED BY OTHER COUNTRIES, SUCH AS FRANCE, NETHERLANDS AND THE FORMER PRUSSIAN EMPIRE

But, if the international community took a real look at the history of this small country, they would see that the problems occurring within the nation's borders were not the fault of the Wallonian nor the Flemish peoples, but date back to the way that states were originally formed without due care and attention paid to the people who were set to live in them. For centuries, the country has been at the heart of wars being waged by other countries, such as France, Netherlands and the former Prussian empire. In 1830, following repeated to-ing and fro-ing between the powers, the area we now know as Belgium rebelled and declared its independence from the Dutch, who were in power at the time. The people felt they had not been properly represented, much the same as when the French had ruled.

UNEASY EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment is not a new problem but rather is centuries old – the result of the revolution depended on recognition from the major powers in Europe at the time, that is Great Britain and France, who supported the independence of Belgium, but such support was lacking from Prussia and Austria.

Belgian former defence minister
André Flahaut: 'We need to find
a balanced solution.'

© S.P.A



As can be seen historically, there have always been problems leading to language barriers, depending on which foreign nation held power over which area. What differentiates Belgium from other countries within the EU is its language barrier, and this has led to a range of issues, such as the Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde municipality's insistence that speaking Dutch is obligatory before anyone may take up residence, or French speakers' fears of not being treated fairly in a Flemish commune. According to John Vande Lanotte, former leader of S.P.A., the Flemish socialist party: "The federal government can't be paralyzed again by a discussion over this problem. A solution for BHV is a must for making politics stable again. We should split the election region, and in our opinion the best way is into Vlaams-Brabant and Brussels election regions."

Meanwhile, his Francophone socialist counterpart, Belgian former Defence Minister André Flahaut, takes a more measured, diplomatic response to the same

question. As he told *Together*: "We need a balanced solution, which takes into account the interests of all parties. We say that we are ready to negotiate in good faith, without provocations and without capitulation, in order to reach an agreement that will benefit the whole country." Add to this the expansion of mainly French-speaking Brussels and its encroachment on the historically Dutch-speaking suburbs, plus the already complicated system of

governance in this small country, and the problems faced by the member state quickly become apparent.

Brussels is not exempt from the modern-day trends of urbanization and expansion. If the country was divided, as some politicians and commentators suggest,

Belgium would still be left with the problem of Brussels expanding. It would then become a recognized international problem, as neither side would be willing to give up their capital city. So it is good news that the Belgians have come to some sort of compromise – no other country in the EU has to deal with these problems, and nowhere is there a cultural divide as blatant as it is in Belgium. It would not be remiss to compare it to the former Yugoslavia, a country thrown together by outside influences and based on geographical location of boundaries – much the same as Belgium – with no recognition of culture, and we are all aware what tribal, linguistic and cultural divisions wrought in that country.

BEST INTERESTS

From 1958-1999, there were consecutive Christian Democrat-operated coalition governments. Different coalitions managed to push through policies that were mostly approved internationally, such as same-sex marriage and labour-market reform. In addition, until just before the global crisis, Belgium managed to maintain a balanced budget in line with the rest of the EU. Voting is compulsory and there is an above average turnout of more than 92.5 per cent (1945-2002), which is well in excess of countries such as the UK, which had an average of 75.2 per cent for the same period. Such figures would suggest that Belgians, whether Fleming or Walloon, care about their politics and what their representatives in government are able to achieve. And the split between the communities may not be as wide as some media outlets would have us believe. When asked whether he believed his supporters would be able to accept an alliance of the two parties in an attempt to reconcile differences throughout both communities, Flahaut responded: "I believe that our supporters and voters would not only accept but actually welcome the common work and commitment of the French-speaking and Flemish socialists, which would reconcile differences between

communities, especially if that would finally allow the country to deal with its most pressing needs, such as the economic crisis faced by citizens and workers. "This interest forces politicians to act in the best interest of the electorate, even if it means tearing down the government and beginning again. Accommodating the wishes of the people is their function and, unlike other countries, Belgian politicians seem to be aware of this. An example of Belgian enterprise to solving political problems can be seen by the measures in place to deal with the forthcoming presidency of Europe. As Lanotte explained to *Together*: "When starting the new presidency, if there hasn't been a new government elected the resigning government will take the presidency. Formally we can go on, even when the formation of a new government is still ongoing." It is unlikely whether such an accommodation would

be made by opposition parties in other countries – perhaps a lesson can be learned from Belgium and its succession of failures to form lasting governments coupled with its ability, nevertheless, to function adequately.

However, the people of Belgium do not have to put up with governments that don't meet their needs – in other countries, it usually takes a scandal to overthrow an executive. At least the Belgians are motivated by policies and attempts to change the constitution – it may frequently be chaos, but can any other national government claim that they would do any better, taking the immense differences in the country into account? Good luck to the next set of policymakers – we at *Together* look forward with cautious optimism to future developments. ☺

'WHEN STARTING THE NEW PRESIDENCY, IF THERE HASN'T BEEN A NEW GOVERNMENT ELECTED THE RESIGNING GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE THE PRESIDENCY'

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Luxury – with and without lucre

WRITER: DAVE DERRUYTER

If luxury goods companies want to make money in today's globalized economy, they are having to look increasingly towards BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) countries for sales growth, but domestic competition is building up there too. Our writer examines whether the West's leading companies should therefore go it alone, partner with the locals, or a mixture of both.

The luxury goods market is obviously suffering difficult times during the economic crisis. Though there are signs that things are looking better in 2010, the world economy has not yet fully recovered and still badly needs different government stimuli.

However, the crisis is not evenly spread around the globe. China is booming, notwithstanding the economic catastrophe in the developed world, while India, the Asian tiger, is roaring alongside.

JAPANESE LUXURY GOODS COMPANIES ARE HANDICAPPED WHEN INVESTING IN MAINLAND CHINA, BECAUSE OF THE TWO COUNTRIES' POOR HISTORICAL RELATIONS

SIZE MATTERS

The two other BRIC countries tell a different story – economic growth is slower in both Brazil and Russia and their populations are much smaller, with Brazil's 190 million citizens and Russia's 142 million far fewer than China and India's combined populations of more than 2

billion souls. The BRIC economies are very differently sized, too – China is the giant, with a larger nominal GDP than the three others combined, having recently overtaken Japan as the world's second-largest economy, and likely to become the biggest in the not-too distant future, perhaps even as soon as by 2025.



© Kenzo



© L'Oréal

'REST OF ASIA'

So how well is the luxury goods industry prepared for such changes? Well, even the flagship group LVMH only began to divide its Asian sales between 'Japan' and the 'rest of Asia' in 2006, with the latter being largely dominated by China. In 2006, 13 per cent of LVMH's worldwide sales were in Japan and 17 per cent in the rest of Asia. By 2009, this had changed to 10 per cent sales in Japan and 23 per cent in the rest of Asia.

BIG IN JAPAN?

Japanese luxury goods companies are handicapped when investing in mainland China, because of the two countries' poor historical relations. Onward Holdings Company, for example, has almost no exposure to the Chinese market and suffered large losses in the fiscal year to February 2009 partly because of this and its almost exclusive reliance on Japanese and European markets.

Suntory Group was also a latecomer to the Chinese boom. Only as late as November 2009 did it buy the Orangina Schweppes Group to diversify its sales out of Japan and perhaps enter the Chinese market without too much focus on its Japanese origins – its website is in Japanese, English, Chinese and Russian however, which shows that an understanding of current and future markets.

However, not all Japanese companies are laggards to Chinese growth – Shiseido has had a manufacturing base in Beijing since 1991 and, in December 2001, it established a China Strategy Department at its Tokyo HQ. In April 2002, the Shiseido China Research Centre followed. The results were spectacular – in 2004, Shiseido had 6.9 per cent of its sales from 'Other Asia/Oceania' (ex-Japan) and 11.6 per cent in operational income. By 2009, five years later, it had acquired 15.9 per cent in global sales from 'Other Asia/Oceania' (ex-Japan) and a hefty 35.9 per cent of global operational income.

'Eurlish' or English? You decide.



© Shiseido

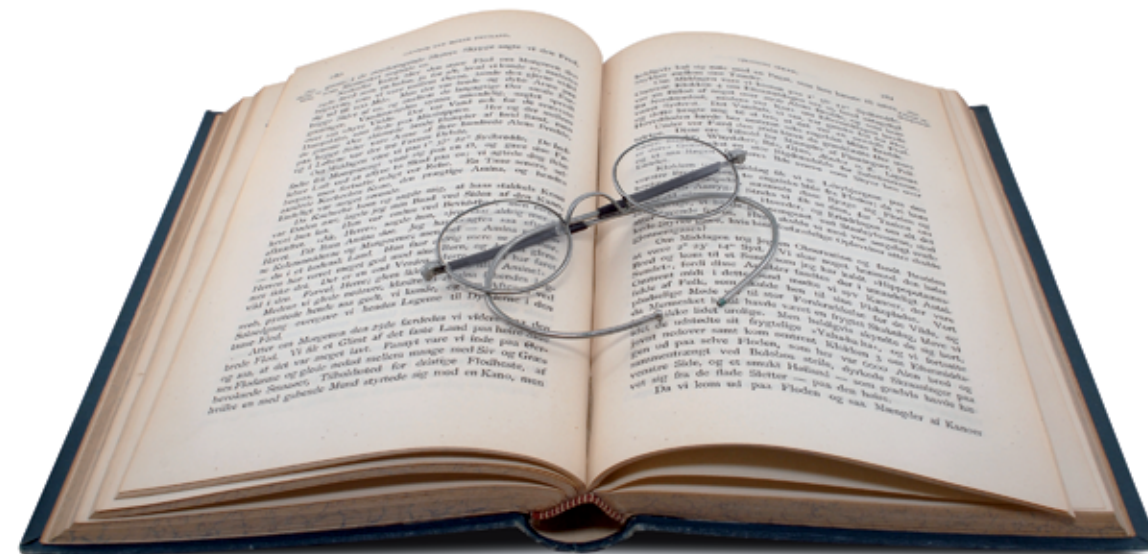
AND THE FUTURE?

A Blue Paper by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences predicts that China will be the world's biggest market for luxury goods in five years. Local (and still unknown) Chinese companies are entering the low end of the market on the mainland and, to attract buyers' interest, they are establishing laboratories near Paris to gain credibility. They have a long way to go, but one should never underestimate the competition – and the local authorities appear to be lending them a hand.

Recently, Chinese officials have attacked the quality of foreign luxury goods available in China. By changing their designs according to Chinese consumers' tastes, European luxury brands are risking their 'quality aura' and perhaps also alienating western shoppers.

The biggest future challenge for LVMH and its peers lays in the sheer size of the

Chinese, and later Indian, markets. Once these are larger than western markets, trends and fashion dictats will originate in Asia, and it will then be essential to conduct ventures with Chinese players in luxury goods as local content gains importance, be it in design or components. This could be achieved via the takeover of a local luxury goods manufacturer, as LVMH and L'Oreal have done previously in Japan. But in China, perhaps further partnerships will be required, since there are only few local luxury goods makers, and their prices may be too high. To go it alone in China in five years' time may however be a recipe for failure, even if western luxury juggernauts are still able to sell Asian-style goods in the West better than their Chinese future competitors. It will become ever more important to be locally rooted in the Chinese luxury goods industry and to keep an R&D edge. ☛



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Share and share alike

WRITER: PATRICIA KELLY

If you don't want the expense and hassle of owning a car and are fed up with not being able to park anywhere if you do have one, Cambio would like to propose a solution.

When the Belgian government resigned, the Greens drove to the palace to see the king in a car from Cambio, an increasingly popular car-sharing scheme credited with removing thousands of cars from Belgian roads. With Brussels top of the league in Europe for traffic jams according to a study by satellite navigation provider TomTom, and parking ever more problematic in this already congested city, it makes economic sense for anyone driving fewer than 1000 km per month to sign up.

FOR CITY DWELLERS IT IS DIFFICULT TO FAULT, THE MAIN ATTRACTION FOR THOSE DRIVING FEWER THAN AROUND 12,000KM A YEAR BEING THAT IT WORKS OUT CHEAPER THAN RUNNING A CAR OF THEIR OWN

CLICK AND DRIVE

All it takes is a click of the mouse and there's a choice of small city cars, vans, or large estate cars – most of them less than three years old – available for an hour, a day or a week at a time. They can be driven abroad and clients

also have access to cars in Germany and the Irish city of Cork. At the end of March, there were 9,099 drivers in Belgium

sharing 346 cars stationed at 142 locations nationwide. Operational here since 2002, the company is adding new clients at the rate of 120 per month in Brussels alone and is opening new stations and adding more cars every month to meet demand – an extra 48 cars and 17 stations in Brussels over a 12-month period.

The scheme is of no use to anyone in daily need of a car for work or business, or for long journeys and extended periods of time. But for city dwellers it is difficult to fault, the main attraction for those driving fewer than around 12,000km a year being that it works out cheaper than running a car of their own.

There are several categories of membership and deals and packages are also available for businesses, which make up a fifth of the membership and include the Ministry of Justice and the Green Party – Cambio founder and finance director David van Kesteren is delighted with Cambio's debut at the Palace. There is no age limit; clients must have held a valid driving licence for two years before they may join, making this scheme available to students and young people who wouldn't otherwise be able to afford a car.



© Cambio.be

ELECTRIC AVENUE

One of the keys to Cambio's success, according to Van Kesteren, is its partnership with public transport and the railroads with vast networks of potential customers in need of a car for trips to places that are inconvenient to get to or otherwise inaccessible. At the end of this year, in a co-financing deal with the Brussels government and the University of

Brussels, Cambio plans to use its car-sharing network to test electric cars.

OPERATIONAL HERE SINCE 2002, THE COMPANY IS ADDING NEW CLIENTS AT THE RATE OF 120 PER MONTH IN BRUSSELS ALONE

Cambio cars are kept on public streets in permanently reserved parking places to which they must be returned. Collapsible barriers prevent others from taking the places – only necessary in Belgium; in law-abiding Germany, a signpost is enough. They are fully insured, regularly serviced

and cleaned and drivers are encouraged to keep them tidy and take rubbish with

them. Members are issued with a personal smart card to open the door. A personal code gives access to keys and clients are urged to keep the car topped up as a courtesy to the next driver – included in the deal is a card, which pays for petrol. Every driver is given an induction course on how to use the system; the beauty is not only in its simplicity and affordability but also its flexibility – a car may be booked minutes before it is needed and returned earlier than planned or kept for longer. Parking is free anywhere in the City of Brussels and the Brussels Region offers a range of incentives to anyone getting rid of their car in the form of free subscriptions to Cambio, free public transport and money towards a bicycle. For every Cambio car that exists, Van Kesteren estimates between 7 and 11 cars are taken off the road – between 2,400 and 3,800 vehicles throughout the country to date. 🚗

www.cambio.be

1997 Bordeaux: 'A drinkers' year'

WRITER: ALEX HEWETSON

Two of *Together's* finest, the former a wine expert and the latter, well, an accomplished 'diner', were fortunate enough to be invited to a leading Brussels eatery recently – read on, to be wined and dined in style.

I was lucky enough to be invited to La Femme du Sommelier recently, where a few friends and acquaintances of **Stéphane Penxten** and his wife **Marlène** were treated to some lovely Bordeaux married with dishes created for each wine. Describing the food side, needless to say, will be handled by that champion of troughing, **James Drew (JD)**. So, without any further preamble let's get into what gurgled down the little red lane and delighted our palates.

discovery (and, as Stéphane was at pains to point out, the restaurant also offers an excellent **Maison JM Gobillard 100 per cent Chardonnay blanc de blanc**), its original approach in using 100 per cent Pinot Meunier went very well with the prawn starter.

JD: Prawn starter? If by that, you mean the *queues de langoustines en jupes de Jambon Pata Negra sur son canapé de bruschetta*, yes, I would have to agree with you – a perfect 'setter-upper'.

**CHAMPAGNE
DEHOURS
GRANDE
RÉSERVE
WAS VERY
CRISP, WITH
FRESH NOTES,
CLEAN FRUIT
AND ALMOST
EARLY-APPLE
FLAVOURS**

'EARLY-APPLE' CHAMPAGNE

The 1997 vintage was called a 'drinkers' year', meaning basically that it was a lighter vintage and the wines needed to be drunk young, but some are quite lovely to quaff now. A very warm February produced early flowering, then there were rains in May, and June produced rot, none of which helped, of course. However, a hot August came to the rescue, though the harvest

was early.

We started the evening with **Champagne Dehours Grande Réserve**, a non-vintage made entirely from Pinot Meunier grapes. Very crisp, with fresh notes, clean fruit and almost early-apple flavours. A real



Grimod

(Alexandre Balthazar Grimod de la Reynière)

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REDS ALERT

The first red was a **Châteaux Haut-Bailly Pessac Leognan (Graves)**, and was for me the wine of the evening, with lovely closed berry fruit, good length for a '97, still very well knit with a hint of softness. The next was a **Château Beauséjour Bécot 1er GCCB (St Emillon)**, and I think the large quantities of Merlot gave it softness, but to me it was not particularly defined and lacked real character. Now, something that Stéphane did do, which was a tremendous education, was to have two bottles of each wine in succession, which can show very clearly how bottles from the same vintage can vary greatly – the second wine of the Beauséjour Bécot was much shorter and the softness had given away to flabbiness, with a taste of anchovies that is not really what you want, unless you're addicted to salade Niçoise.

JD: *Well, while I find myself siding with Alex here, there was no doubting the delight of the aiguillette de bœuf limousin au beurre tiède that was served alongside the second wine – sweet, succulent and entirely appetizing. A winner!*

The third actor on the wine stage was a **Château Ducru Beaucaillou (St Julien-Medoc)**, this is one of the super seconds and reckoned to be one of the Bordeaux greats. Whether it is just me or the vintages I have imbibed, it has never rocked my world or made me see stars. It is a wine that says "I am not easy to get to know" and this one was no exception; it had a steely aristocratic edge and the first glass didn't really reveal much. However, Stéphane's second bottle strategy saved the day, and then for the first time I got hints of the greatness. It was tight but then, out came the tobacco, blackcurrant leaves, and it suddenly got length and all at once revealed its class.

The next wine, **Château Evangile (Pomerol)**, is again predominantly Merlot and this was basically shot, it had a cooked nose and almost no fruit, a pity because it can be a very great wine.

Really not more to say. I was told by my mother to never speak ill of the dead... *alors ainsi soit-il!*

JD: *Both wines were perfectly complemented by the plat principal, a wonderful agneau de sept heures de Pauillac – a cuisine memory that lingers long, for all the right reasons.*

Château Marquis de Léoville Las Cases, chosen to accompany dessert, is another of the Bordeaux 'Super Seconds' and was much more approachable than the Ducru Beaucaillou, with its sweetness and fruit depth going beautifully with the delicious chocolate mousse **[JD: The reason why dessert was invented!]**. Another example of how the '97s have lasted and are much finer than people originally thought. I don't suppose you have a spare bottle floating around, do you Stéphane?!

In short, a tremendous evening, hosted by a real expert, with a great love for his subject – Stéphane and Marlène were incredibly hospitable and generous. Many thanks for a cracking dinner!

JD: *Couldn't say it better myself – and M. Hewetson rarely, if ever, hears those words from yours truly.*

And Marlène & Stéphane are proud to announce that, in addition to the finest food and wines just waiting to be discovered *chez eux*, they have also recently begun displaying the work of young Polish artist Justina Mikla – so, let your eyes be as ravished as your palate and appetite! 🍷

La Femme du Sommelier
Marlène & Stéphane
Rue de l'association, 9
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Wining, dining

WRITER: ERIC BOSCHMAN

Our renowned sommelier returns with his thoughts on a wine bar with a difference and a 'closely guarded secret' restaurant.

OENO TK

Laurence Lardot and Grégory Castreuil launched this most refreshing 'vinified' adventure only a few years back – the decor is very simple and original, but what counts here is what's available over the counter and in the racks. Great fresh tapas snacks combine with wines that are around 65 per cent French, 20 per cent European and 15 per cent New World, including treats from Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Austria, Portugal, Spain, Morocco, Canada and even the US. And, on Thursdays, you can even bring along a beautiful discovery of your own, and pay 8€ corkage, but only if you agree to share it with Laurence or Greg!

Oeno TK

Average cost per person: 25€

Rue Africaine, 29-31

1060 Brussels

T. +32 (0)2 534 64 34

Closed Sunday, open Monday and Tuesday 11-20h, Wednesday to Saturday 11-22h30. Terrace dining available in summer.

www.oenotk.be



VIVA M'BOMA

This is the kind of restaurant that the real aficionados keep among themselves like Knights Templar – if you are daring enough to push open the door and meet Katia, the wonderful owner, you will be entering an environment in which classic, simple decor and long tables combine with gastronomic hedonism, pure and simple. Viva M'Boma is the kind of restaurant that could only exist in Brussels, and which makes our capital the envy of the cuisine world. Chef Olivier Vankleemput certainly has his favourites which, at the time of our visit, included pork trotters in salad, pan-fried veal braised with woody mushrooms and fresh chorizo served with fresh garden peas and sublime mashed potatoes. NOT a restaurant to visit with a friend who only wants a light salad – your time would be wasted. 🍷

Viva M'Boma

Average cost per person: 50€

Rue de Flandre, 17

1000 Brussels

T. +32 (0)2 512 15 93

Open Monday to Saturday lunchtime, Thursday and Friday evenings.



Voyage to Viage

WRITER: ANDREA NENOW

Viage Brussels offers an unforgettable night out.



LEISURE, PLEASURE

Viage, located in the heart of Brussels, will provide you with the ideal night out no matter what your mood. Whether you are craving an elegant meal or just a quick drink, both can be satisfied at Viage's restaurant or bar. If you're feeling lucky, try your hand at poker in the casino and if you're searching for a dining experience that's out of the ordinary, may I suggest the musical dinner show?

The goal of the centre is in its name. Viage stems from Latin words such as the Italian *viaggio* and *viaje* in Spanish, which translate as 'journey' or 'voyage'. And visitors are indeed treated to a journey, as they travel to each decadent floor of the complex, experiencing new thrills along the way.

DINNER AND A SHOW

The Viage Musical Dinner Show offers guests a unique dining experience on Thursday nights, one that effortlessly combines great food with memorable entertainment. While enjoying a three-course meal that includes champagne and appetizers, participants are treated to musical numbers from more than 15 of the world's most famous shows.

This unforgettable production comes from Chris Van Tongelen of the showbiz world. Noteworthy performers Jan Schepens, Sasha Rosen and Fleur Brusselmans will join Tongelen on stage each night, with more than 20 additional singers, dancers and musicians completing the cast to create a memorable evening filled with top-notch music and dancing. Music will be drawn from international classics such as *Evita*, *Cats* and *Les Misérables*, as well as the more recent hits *Mamma Mia!* and *Hairspray*, to name but a few. This tailor-made experience is sure to please any fan of fine food and good times.

THE DETAILS

Shows begin at 20h, running until midnight with coffee following each performance. The cost of tickets is 125€ plus booking fees and can be purchased through Sherpa at www.sherpa.be, or the Viage Ticket Box Office. For more information on all that Viage has to offer and their unique dinner shows, visit www.viage.be

Viage Brussels

Anspach Boulevard, 30

1000 Brussels

T. +32 (0)2 300 01 00

Viage is open every day from 10h to 5h



© Viage

Star studded

WRITER: FEDERICO GRANDESSO

Out and about, around the globe.



1.



2.



3.



4.

1. It's back to 14th April, when Jaeger-LeCoultre CEO **Jérôme Lambert** and Australian designer **Marc Newson** presented the new Jaeger-LeCoultre table watch ATMOS 566 during the Milan International Furniture Fair. Getty Images for Jaeger-LeCoultre. Photos by Tullio Puglia.

2. American designer **Ralph Lauren** welcomed 100 of his closest friends to a dinner on 15th April, to celebrate the opening of the new Ralph Lauren flagship store in Paris. The unbelievably stylish guest list included **Karl Lagerfeld**, **Melanie Laurent** and **Sonia Rykiel**. Lauren's family was also out in force to support the designer, and the world of cinema was also represented by actors **Kevin Spacey**, **Michelle Yeoh**, **Jean Reno** and **Isabelle Huppert**. During the event, Lauren was also decorated as a

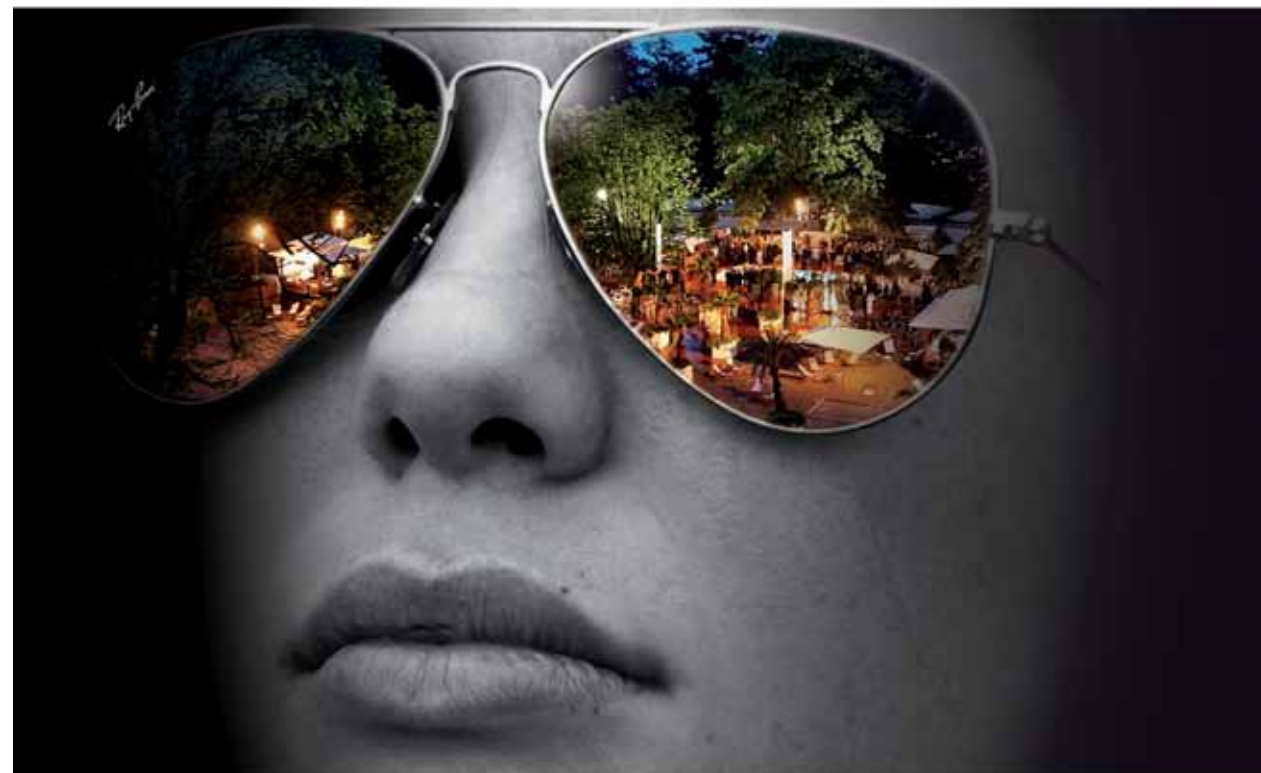
Chevalier of the Legion of Honour by French President **Nicolas Sarkozy**. www.ralphlauren.com

3. The 9th **Tribeca Film Festival**, presented by American Express, took place in Lower Manhattan from 21st April to 2nd May, and presented a diverse international film selection from emerging and established directors.

4. On 1st May, **Scarlett Johansson** and **Michael Douglas** attended the Bloomberg/Vanity Fair party following the 2010 White House Correspondents' Association Dinner at the residence of the French Ambassador in Washington. The VIP guests included **Jessica Alba**, **Kathryn Bigelow**, **Donatella Versace**, **Colin Powell**, **Jon Bon Jovi** and **Rupert Murdoch**. ☺



PRESENTE



La terrasse

DE L'HIPPODROME

11 JUIN - 21 JUILLET 2010

WWW.LA-TERRASSE.BE



Shops, dead gorgeous

Together's regular round-up of the classiest outlets to have opened their doors near you.

1. LEVI'S® STORE

Antwerp, long recognized as a 'fashion capital' now has a true denim heart, a place to shop and experience why Levi's® is still number one after 137 years, proving that quality never goes out of style! The 250 square-metre store represents the largest recrafted outlet for the Levi's® brand to date in Benelux, and it shows. The ground floor is dedicated to women's wear, while the upper floor is men's, and both offer shoppers a strong selection of authentic Levi's® denim and non-denim products.

Levi's® Store

Meir 81-83
2000 Antwerp
T. +32 (0)3 233 53 35
Open Monday to Saturday 10-18h30
www.levi.com



2. SUPERDRY STORE

The renowned UK clothing brand opens yet another Belgian store – so now you know just where to go in Brussels to get the very latest must-have gear.

Superdry Store

Avenue Louise, 34-36
1000 Brussels
T +32 2 540 81 12
Open Monday to Saturday 10-18h
www.superdry.com



3. WE FASHION STORE

WE Fashion has opened a new store in Brussels combining, as you would expect, fashion and the fine art of living to give even more personality to the brand. Based on a concept of 'feelings', developed by famous Japanese architects, this is a true 'fashion-shopping experience'.

WE Fashion Store

Woluwe Shopping Center
Rue Saint Lambert, 202
1200 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 762 76 65
Open Monday to Thursday 10-19h, Friday 10-20h,
Saturday 10-19h
www.wefashion.com



4. CHRISTA RENIERS

Since 1992, Belgium's top jewellery designer, Christa Reniers, has been creating masterpiece after masterpiece, and her flagship store opened in Brussels' Rue Dansaert in 1999, quickly followed by a second store in Antwerp. Now, her second Brussels boutique has opened its doors in Sablon – be among the first to see just how amazing jewellery can be, in a stylish new location.

Christa Reniers

Quartier Sablon
Rue Lebeau, 61
1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 514 91 54
Open Monday to Saturday 11-13h, 14h30-19h,
Sunday 12-17h
www.christareniers.com



BRAM-A-LAM-A-DING-DONG!

Together introduces a Belgian interior design artist, Bram Boo, whose work is all about challenging the concepts of what furniture should be, from both visual and functional perspectives.

For Bram Boo, it's all about not following the rules, when it comes to what furniture should be about. The 39-year-old son of Dutch parents, well-known abstract painter Bram Bogart and artist mother Leni, Boo believes that it is his Belgian side that has inspired the surrealism that informs many of his furniture designs, such as his *Paparazzi* (2007) chair and *Overdose* (2007) desk.

His stated goal? "To produce pieces that constantly surprise the user, with a focus on functionality and flexibility so that the object adapts itself to the surrounding space and to the need of the moment."

However – and Boo is very clear on this – he is not about designing to fill a perceived 'gap' in the market. Spurred on by his emotion and own experience, it is fair to say that his work speaks for itself.

Why not judge for yourself? Peruse the examples that follow – are you *sure* you couldn't find space for them, somewhere?

Bram Boo
Basillekstraat, 14
3800 Sint-Truiden
T. +32 (0)496 407 773
www.bramboo.be

*Bram Boo's work will feature in the **Fighting The Box** exhibition, which runs from 11th June to 4th October and tells the story of 20 Belgian designers.*

www.brussels.be





Together's 'To Do' list

Summer begins in earnest –
enjoy our selection of upcoming events.

AVENTURE PARC®

To end of November

Aventure Parc was first created in France 12 years ago by Denis Payan, a former paratroop officer who wanted to open commando-style obstacle courses to the public – the first adventure park was opened in Serre-Chevalier (France) and went on to be such a success that several other parks were set up in France and Belgium. Why not spend a summer's day in the forest with a difference?

Aventure Parc®

Rue Sainte Anne, 152

B- 1300 Wavre

T. +32 (0)10 223 387

www.aventureparc.be

BRUSSELS FILM FESTIVAL

23>30.06

Now celebrating its seventh edition, following its creation from the former Brussels International Film Festival in 2003, the Brussels Film Festival is marked by its promotion of European directors' first and second films, its commitment to quality and choice of its films, and its support for emerging filmmaking talent.

Flagey

Place Sainte Croix

1000 Brussels

T. +32 (0)2 762 08 98

www.brusselsfilmfestival.be

L'OFFSHORE

24.06, 08.07, 15.07, 22.07,
05.08, 19.08, 02.09, 16.09

What better way to sail through summer? Take your pick from eight Thursday evenings for a trip on Genval Lake, with each evening themed around a different sport that's in the news (be it tennis, cycling or, of course, football), and a DJ to take care of the soothing sounds. And there will also be fine wines and cocktails available to take away the stresses of your day – a wonderful way to unwind.

www.loffshore.com

BRUSSELS BEACH

July to August, dates TBC,
11-22h (except Mondays)

A seaside resort to be found in the heart of Brussels every year, Brussels Beach (Bruxelles Les Bains) delights visitors with a full kilometre of fine white sand, palm trees and waterfalls, as well as varied sports, relaxation and culture. There's also live music, DJs and shows, with food stalls and beach bars offering the opportunity to try different flavours from around the world. The children will be kept happy too, with sandcastles, clowns and water games. Life, truly, is a beach.

Bassin Béco, Port de Bruxelles

www.bruxelleslesbains.be





BRUSSELS FLOWER CARPET
13>15.08, 9-23h

Once again, Grand'Place is set to be transformed into a dazzling carpet of fresh begonias, intricately worked into a themed pattern, with the best view of this multi-coloured tapestry available from the City Hall balcony.

Grand'Place
1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 513 8940
www.flowercarpet.be

BE.WELCOME
Runs until 31.08

To coincide with the Belgian Presidency of the EU, this audacious and challenging exhibition presents a new perspective for all on migration, offering the chance for visitors to experience this social phenomenon interactively.

Atomium Square
1020 Brussels
www.atomium.be

ADDRESSES

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Biko Design www.bikodesigns.ca	Forever XXI www.forever21.com	MAC www.maccosmetics.com
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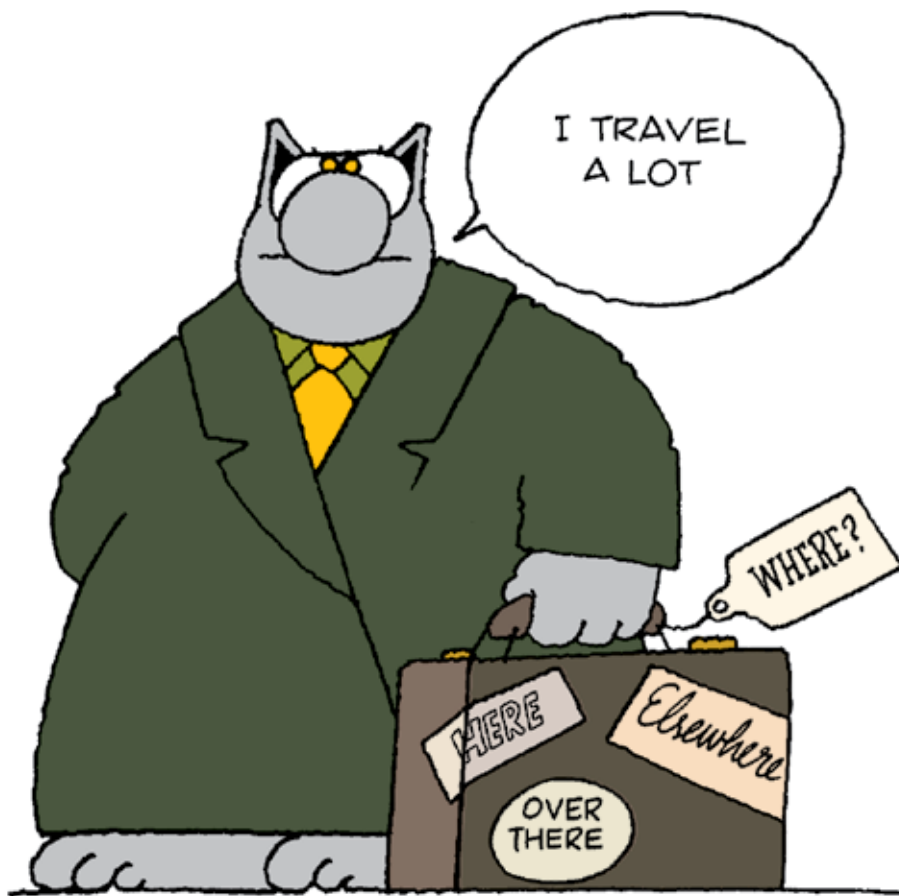
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