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APRIL 2016 #67



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AND LIVE DIFFERENTLY

Matter of fact, don't wait for tomorrow to come. Pack your backpack or duffel bag and sail away. Take the time now, right now, to plan your future adventure. Free yourself from life's constraints and lead a life of intrepid adventure. You owe it to yourself. Take a year out and treat yourself with a life of everyday sunrises and sunsets. The time has come to catch and conquer your dreams, once and for all. That Ocean, that archipelago, that mountain and that jungle? They're yours to discover.



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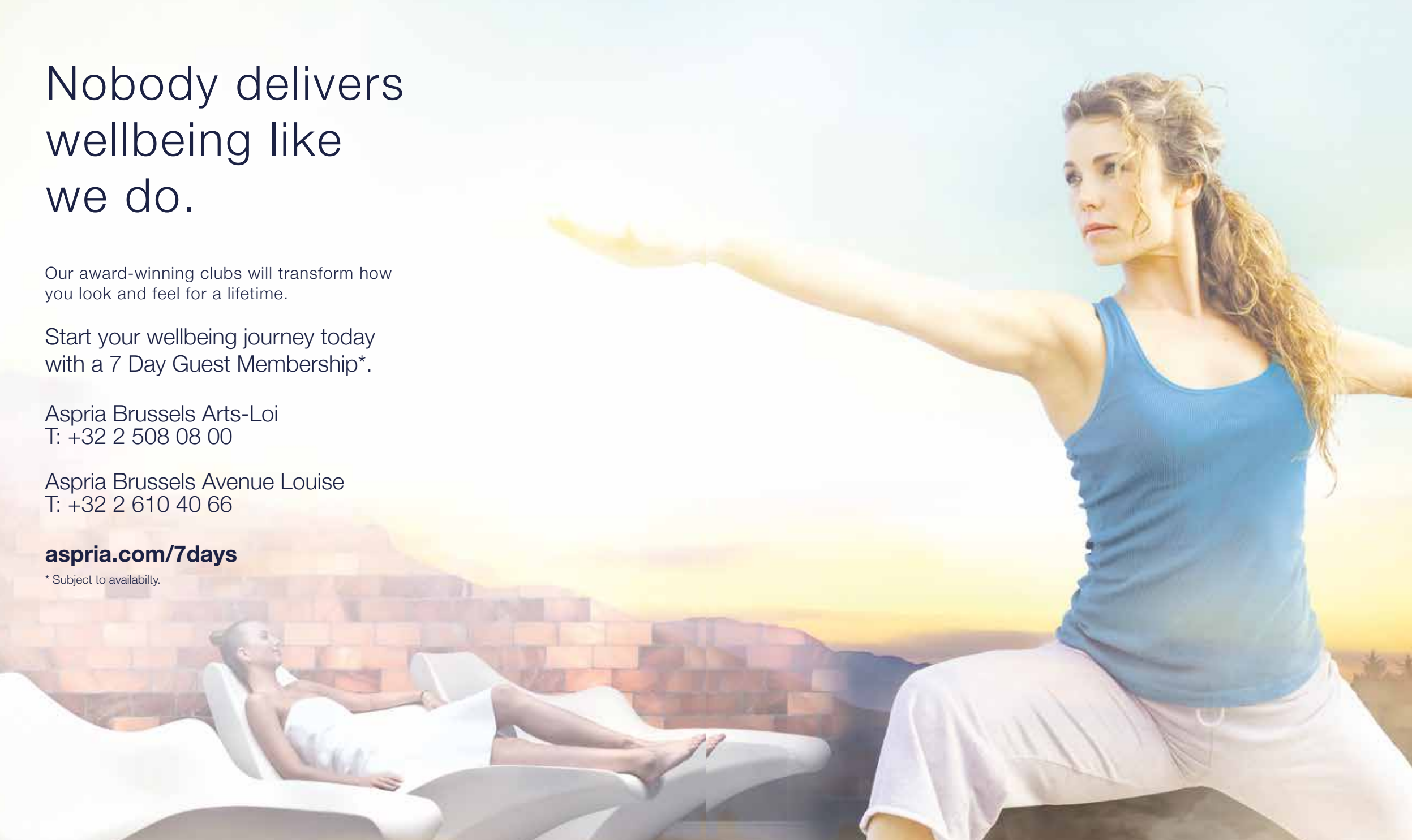
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Editor's LETTER

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

ON THE COVER



Charlie Theron
is currently starring in
*A Million Ways to Die
in the West*

VIVA BRUSSELS!

I am sure for many of you it was very strange the first time you went into the centre of Brussels after the attacks. I hadn't expected the impact the sight in front of the Bourse would have on me, even though I had seen images of it throughout the press and social media. The real thing – scary and beautiful in equal measure – stopped me in my tracks.

Bouquets of flowers festooned the foot of the steps and the steps themselves and candles burned brightly in daytime. An impressive number of people gathered to add to the homage or just pause and look upon it for... what? Courage, strength, to have questions somehow answered? Belgium is famous for people who scribble on walls as the hundreds of comic strip murals will testify. But on turning the corner of the Bourse I was moved by something simpler even than flowers. Say it with chalk! Hundreds of messages, short and long, have been scrawled on the gable ends of the building – in a myriad of colours.

I reached my destination, another classic Belgian feature: Fritland for a bag of frites. A Belgian couple were beside me, and suddenly the woman got up, asked for fries and a sauce and crossed the road to give them to a homeless man hunched in a doorway.

I recalled one of the messages I had seen written in pink on the old wall: Brussels is not RIP.

Paul Morris
EDITOR



f /togethermagazine

t @together_Mag



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³ K. Chandrasekhar et AL., 2012. Measured with the GHQ-28 scale.

* It has been scientifically demonstrated that Ashwagandha helps to improve the body's resistance to stress and contributes to maintain physical and mental capacities in case of tiredness.

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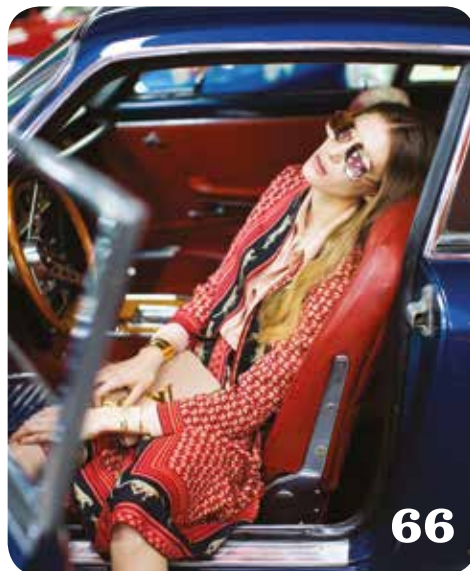
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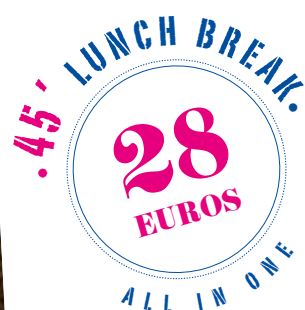
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Together magazine

PUBLISHER

David Mc Gowan

david@togethermedia.eu

KEY ACCOUNT DIRECTOR

Renaud Philippart

renaud@togethermedia.eu

+32 (0) 494 64 67 93

ACCOUNT MANAGER

Caroline Dierckx

caroline@togethermedia.eu

+32 (0) 479 47 47 77

EDITOR

Paul Morris

paul@togethermedia.eu

ART DIRECTOR

Xavier Bostem

carafe.xavier@gmail.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Sophie Bruno; James Drew

Gerry Callaghan; David Deruytter

Davide Fiori; Jeanie Keogh

Philippe Geluck; Simon Leysen

Colin Moors; Paul Morris

Sarbani Sen; Delphine Stefens

Steve Vandebos; Geoffroy van Lede

Lesley Williamson

STYLIST

Nicholas Sirot

ONLINE EDITOR

Paul Morris

paul@togethermedia.eu

FOUNDER

Jérôme Stéfanski

Together Media

Boulevard St Michel, 47

B-1040 Brussels

+32 (0)2 400 00 24

info@togethermedia.eu

www.togethermag.eu

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COMPETITION

Together's competition this month gives you a chance to win very special fashion wear.

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Starring in Belgium



Beyoncé

Beyoncé will perform in the national stadium in Brussels, with her new show, *The Formation World Tour*. Scale-wise, it's a different animal compared to the half-time Super Bowl show, where she performed alongside Coldplay. **31 July**. Roi Baudouin. **€51-€146**

www.livenation.be



Freddie Gibbs

Freddie Gibbs (aka Freddie Corleone) injects a hefty dose of 'gangsta' on his third release, *Shadow of a Doubt*. Although he still sourced more from soul/jazz/funk on his acclaimed *Piñata*, he's putting out a series of dark beats from the hands of an impressive range of top-producers. **May 31**. Ancienne Belgique. **€24**
www.abconcerts.be



Luka Bloom

Armed with his acoustic guitar and his unique voice, Luka Bloom has mesmerized audiences for more than twenty years. The combination of an intriguing guitar sound and the interesting choice of songs (his own work, covers) has been guaranteeing grand concert evenings. He moved to the west of Ireland in 2012, a move that inspired his new album *FRUGALISTO*. **May 12**. Ancienne Belgique. **€19** - www.abconcerts.be



Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band

The Boss is back, headlining the TW Classic 2016, in the company of luminaries such as Lana Del Rey, Lionel Richie and Simply Red. Expect a high-energy performance from one of the great live performers of all time. **9 July**. Festivalpark, Werchter. **Tickets: see website**
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Operation Thermos: The missing link

This month we look at a charity that bridges the gap for the underprivileged among us

Operation Thermos started in 1987 after young leaders of the Scouts took the initiative to go every evening to the railway stations with thermos flasks filled with coffee and sandwiches for the homeless people. Touched by the desperation of the people they met there, they decided to organize their group so that they were able to go every evening. Thanks to the help of the media and the volunteers they succeeded in their purpose.

For the moment around 600 volunteers, in 30 teams, take over from each other during the winter, more specifically the period beginning on the 1 November until 30 April. The volunteers take care of the people in need without distinction and make sure that they get a warm meal. The volunteers are always prepared to listen to the stories of the people in need, and they bring with their actions a little bit of hope and warmth in the stations. Each year new groups are joining to realize the operation.

Each group is responsible for the errands, the cooking of the meal, the transport and the distribution of +/- 150 meals every evening. Operation Thermos receives no subsidy for the free distribution of these meals. It can only count on certain initiatives to raise money and also depends on donations (a tax-deductible certificate for every donation of at least €40).



These donations come from private persons or companies who share the same philosophy of life and who are in solidarity with our goal: that every person in Belgium has at least access to the subsistence level.

Operation Thermos tries to help where this doesn't exist or barely exists, providing for the needs and demands of a group of the Belgian population that is growing. Operation Thermos is the missing link between the existing official facilities and what the underprivileged live through every day in Belgium.

We also organize activities for our 'beneficiaries', including an annual St. Nicolas visit to our base at métro Botanique, a Christmas dinner organized in a room exclusively for them and a New Year's Eve event. We can count on the support of our many volunteers and our loyal partners, first and foremost the STIB, our official partner, without whom nothing would be possible.

An annual sale of chocolate truffles and other fundraising activities are organized for this purpose. A Thermos team will be present at the 20 km of Brussels for the first time on 29 May.

Contact us and find out how you can help:
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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Fitness

Physical training: Improve your tennis game



Personal Trainer **Davide Fiori** offers essential tips on how to go about conditioning yourself the right way

All tennis players want to play well and enjoy their game. That's why it's important to understand that physical conditioning can either help or hinder.

Of course, good players need good tennis skills and technique and tactical awareness, but the best players also move well on court. If you can't get to the ball in time, you won't hit your best shots or return opponents' shots effectively.



The temptation is to start conditioning with sports-specific exercises, such as speed and agility drills. However, players first need a solid base of conditioning and strength to enable them to stabilize joints, maintain technique and avoid injury.

It's vital to understand that tennis shots are initiated by the abdominal muscles some 30 milliseconds before the arms or legs ever move. By activating the abdominal muscles, followed by the leg and arm muscles, the spine and pelvis are functionally stabilized to allow a powerful swing of the racket without traumatizing the spinal structures. If the core musculature is weak or ineffective, the player will inevitably overuse the arms to compensate, causing micro-trauma to the muscles and tendons, lack of consistency and more errors. And more errors mean more defeats.

**“ TENNIS SHOTS ARE
INITIATED BY THE
ABDOMINAL
MUSCLES ”**

A Functional Training Programme should be the first priority, focusing on controlling the body in the three planes of motion and based on a good stability and core workout. The first goal is to build up the fundamental movement patterns without restricting the body on fixed resistance machines which isolate muscle function. Studies have shown that performing leg-presses and knee extensions does not improve the ability to squat (a functional tennis movement required for serving and overheads).

Specific Functional Training for tennis should be based on a precise progression to achieve optimal performance safely and effectively: flexibility, stability, strength and power.

Flexibility

Flexibility allows the player to develop and maintain the body's optimal range of motion, facilitating freedom of movement.

Stability

Postural stability reduces sway, increasing the chances of consistently good shots.

Strength and power

Strength prevents performance-impeding fatigue and is a key component of power, which dictates the speed of serves and groundstrokes and, along with agility, determines how quickly the player can move around the court.

Another essential aspect of physical conditioning is a thorough warm-up. It's often ignored in our haste to get on court quickly, but a tennis-specific warm-up will lubricate joints, warm muscles and connective tissues, activate the nervous system and sharpen the senses using movements which replicate those used during play. Multi-directional lunges, squats, torso twists and arm swings can be performed first as a functional dynamic stretch. On court, a combination of movements forward and backward and side-to-side should progress slowly to competition intensity and speed.

Davide Fiori is a Personal Trainer at Aspria Brussels Royal La Rasante 



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TRAINING FOR
TENNIS SHOULD BE
BASED ON A
PRECISE
PROGRESSION ”**



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Dining out: Stay smart

Our nutrition expert **Sophie Bruno** offers tips on how to eat well while eating out

Making healthy choices when eating out often poses a challenge. It all seems to boil down to one dilemma: how can you ensure complete control over your diet when you are not in control of your eating environment? You can be up against many villains when you are trying to upkeep healthy eating habits in a restaurant – big portions, too much salt, fat or sugar, tempting starters, side dishes and desserts, just to name a few.

Sometimes, you may have to deal with the added pressure of friends and family who may push you towards certain food choices, by encouraging you to live in the moment. In such instances, it is best to be prepared for this scenario and practice being strong by simply saying, 'No', politely but firmly.

Is it possible to eat well when dining out?

As with all challenges, it is best to be well-prepared and informed. Eating at a restaurant does not necessarily have to sabotage a healthy-eating regime. Implement smart food strategies – plan ahead of time, consider the menu carefully and become menu savvy to ensure you select meals that will not lead you astray. Below you will find some tips to help you to feel in control of your eating-out

experience and help guide you in selecting healthier eating options.

MANAGING YOUR PORTIONS

Keep it small

Portion sizes at fast-food joints or restaurants are usually much larger than what you would normally eat at home. Ask for half portions, share a large meal with a friend, and do not feel obliged to finish what is on your plate. Ask for a doggy-bag and take home the remainders of your meal.

Sharing is caring

Share a starter if it strikes your fancy. If you are still feeling hungry after your meal, conclude with a fruit dessert or sip on a plain cappuccino. If you love rich desserts, order one and ask for additional spoons to split with your friends!

Appetisers

Say 'No' to bread or other nibbles before your meal arrives, as these are likely to increase your overall calorie intake.

Avoid super-sizing

Choose standard or smaller portion sizes, and avoid 'large' or 'super-size' versions as they contain high levels of fat and calories.

**“ WATCH OUT FOR
SAUTÉED ITEMS
OR FOODS
DESCRIBED AS
'CRISPY', 'RICH' OR
'AU GRATIN' ”**

MAKING HEALTHIER CHOICES

Be menu savvy

When ordering, balance your meal by including healthier selections from all the different food groups such as lean meats, low-fat dairy, fruit, vegetables and whole grains. As a rule of thumb, half of your plate should be composed of vegetables, ¼ protein and ¼ (whole) grains.

Ask for more vegetables

If your meal does not come with vegetables, order side dishes of leafy green salad or steamed vegetables. This can replace a starter.

Opt for whole grains

Look for dishes made with whole grains such as quinoa, brown rice, barley, bulgur or oats. Fibre keeps you fuller for longer and helps to maintain a healthy digestive system.

Tomato and vegetable-based sauces

If you need to pay attention to your weight, opt for tomato or vegetable-based sauces and soups rather than cream, coconut or cheese-based ones.

Keep salt in check

Choose fewer foods that have been smoked or made with soy sauce or teriyaki sauce. Look for 'light' versions of these sauces and ask for them to be served on the side. Do not add additional salt to your dish, and exchange salt for peppers, other spices, herbs and lemon.

Ask for sauces on the side

Sauces, condiments, dressings and spreads can add excessive amounts of fat and salt to your meal. Ask for these on the side, so you can control how much you consume. Keep sauces to a minimum and use just enough to deliver some flavour.

Skip sweet drinks

Drink water in place of sweetened drinks such as soft drinks, ice tea or lemonade. Try sparkling water with lemon or lime slices. If you drink alcohol, limit it to one or two drinks for the day.

GETTING INFORMED

Learning the lingo

Knowing menu terms and cooking basics makes ordering easier. Ask how the food was prepared. Order foods that have been steamed, baked, grilled or roasted. Fat and

calories add up quickly when food is fried, deep-fried or breaded. Also watch out for sautéed items or foods described as 'crispy', 'rich' or 'au gratin'. Choose plain boiled rice instead of fried and go for boiled or jacket potatoes rather than chips or wedges.

Prepare in advance

Examine the restaurant's website ahead of time. Look for healthier options that are higher in protein, fibre and vitamins and lower in calories, fat, sugar and salt. Ensure you eat a light dinner if you consumed a heavy lunch that day. Or, if you know ahead of time that you are going to a restaurant, cut back on calories during other meals during the day.

Psychological considerations

Eat slowly: it takes about 20 minutes for your brain to get the message from your stomach that you are no longer hungry. Fast eaters often are overeaters, while slow eaters tend to eat less and

yet are still satisfied. Wait until you have eaten your main course before you order a pudding. When you have finished the main course, you may discover that you are satisfied.

Pause during meals and put your knife and fork down between each mouthful. Taste and savour each mouthful of your meal – enjoy the experience.

Practice refusing offers to overeat. Learn to say, 'No thank you', politely but firmly.

Bottom line

Restaurants may feel intimidating to people trying to stick to a healthy diet, but, with a little preparation and confidence, you can enjoy your restaurant meal without abandoning healthy eating by implementing some smart eating strategies. ❶



MEETINGS, TEAMBUILDINGS & INCENTIVES AT THERMAE.COM

Overbooked agendas and tight deadlines often characterise the term 'work' in the year 2015. On the other hand, empty agendas without deadlines are devastating for an organisation, so it is important to find a humane way to deal with them. Our answer: mens sana in corpore sano! A cliché that has been confirmed by countless studies.

At Thermae, we know that relaxation is the best remedy against stress and fatigue, but a couple of hours of physical exercise also alleviate the mind! Therefore, Thermae Sports Merchtem has joined the list of already established centres (Boetfort & Grimbergen). It is a club with a wide range of sports and wellness facilities, where the general well-being (both mentally and physically) of each customer is central. Besides the standard facilities (fitness, group lessons, wellness, tennis) we consciously make time for guidance and coaching.

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Sacred commerce

Sarbani Sen urges us to try a new way of looking at who we are and what we eat

On my recent trip to California, I discovered some interesting new concepts, including the art of 'sacred commerce'. Let me see if I can express what is so different about this kind of business, one which I experienced at the Café Gratitude, in Venice, Los Angeles.

The staff

Well, maybe first of all: the staff. They seem to be almost floating, as they move in a very peaceful way and address customers with mindfulness. How does that work? Well, it's a real person-to-person relationship. So you start right away with "Are you having a good day so far?" or "Want to know about the question of the day?"

The question of the day might be "What are you grateful for?" or "What are you afraid to give?" or even "In whose presence are you most alive?" Cool, huh? There is almost an Ashram-like feeling here. You can sense that they are an empowered crew, and that their employers believe in them and in their contribution to the business. They know that they know, and you can feel it. It feels as if there is no stress or fear or submission to any ruling power. The motto of the company is 'love, serve, remember'.

Love is the Christian way of loving all, excluding no one nor nothing, even oneself accepting and acknowledging all of us and others. Serving means realizing yourself

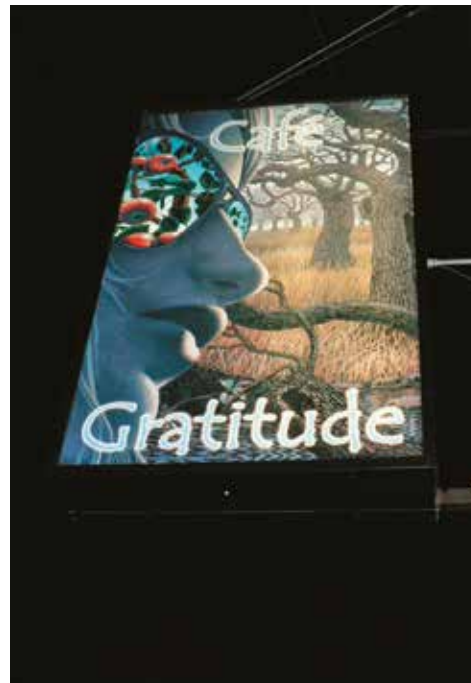


Photo © Birrell Walsh

“ IT’S A REAL
PERSON-TO-
PERSON
RELATIONSHIP ”



through service to another person, to the community, giving a deeper sense to our lives (an organic way of life, where all are connected and useful to the 'all'). Remember means being grateful for all that has been accomplished so far, all that is, and all that is not.

Reading their philosophy books, you understand that the business is based on service to the community, but also love of commerce. The two walk hand-in-hand. No problem. They want their business to become "the sacred container for the transformation of the participants, expressed as prosperity and abundance". Some people of course hate that Ashram-like feeling, they will remind you of the organization behind it and tell you that it's a sect and so on. Well, of course, there is a philosophy behind it. It's based on NLP and coaching and positive psychology, and to another extent to the 'New Paradigm', a quantum approach to our reality, where we are the creators of our reality as soon as we start playing with the web. The universe then becomes a huge playground. Adult fantasy? Rich man's mirage? We'll never know, but the results are interesting. And it sure brings us to a new experience in day-to-day life.

Sacred commerce

If you want to enter sacred commerce your business will have to undergo the PASS test: P=profit (love of enterprise), A=awakening (love of transformation), S=sustainability (love of

earth or the whole), S=service (love of community). Your business then becomes a sacred place, a place you can either experience a human-to-human relationship, be in your inner world or just in silence, sensing the world around, as you sip a golden *chai*.

A whole new set of business semantics, definitions and procedures then arises: abundance, acknowledgment, affirmation, being with, clearing, failure, forgiveness, listening, non-attachment, sacred service. We are invited to try a new point of view, with new wording and a new melody attached. No more creation of drama and trauma, just awareness and inclusion of the 'all'.

The food

Then, of course, the food! It's OMG-MAZING! I mean can you imagine having a full body orgasmic experience just by sipping a latte? Ok, not just any latte, this one is 'golden', and it's made of turmeric juice, honey, cinnamon and steamed almond milk. That's it! No coffee, no tea, nothing – just *ayurveda* for the benefits of our beloved vehicle.

Of course, the worldwide ecological misery is forcing us to try new means of sustaining ourselves so vegetarianism is a 'must start now' on a sacred business menu. On top of that, with all the GMO crops around, and we don't know what they'll be doing to us or our kids bodies, we better refrain from eating non-

“ THERE IS NO STRESS OR FEAR OR SUBMISSION TO ANY RULING POWER ”

organic stuff too. The (mostly GMO) wheat in bread is no longer bearable either, and many of us are intolerant or even allergic to gluten nowadays. Not to mention milk that's produced in huge quantities that adults just can't digest any more. So no dairy for me, sir!

Here, of course, everything on the menu is gluten-free, organic, non-dairy and veggie (even vegan). And believe it or not, it's all soooooo tasty! Mixes of grains, super foods, mostly raw vegetables arranged in a way that you never get bored. Some dishes will seem like a steak or a burger in your mouth. These people have been researching for dozens of years and have qualified for mastery.

And best of all, after eating, somehow you feel grounded. Not heavy at all, lighter, but open and mindful somehow. It's as if you had 'Prana' in its material form. Heavenly! As they say: this is their expression of plenty, of abundance. It's a celebration of our aliveness, generosity, and without needing to hurt ourselves anymore.

The ambience

Lastly, the ambience. Everybody here is working on a project or discussing creative ideas, a film, or a new business. You can see friendships building around meaningful purposes, while treating each other with love and deep respect. People speaking with poise and delicate attention. This makes it a very luminous place, almost glowing. People shine and most of them have a very special aura around them (and I wasn't smoking or high on incense sticks or anything). So THANK YOU. Feeling very grateful for this experience, for this place to exist. It has been life-changing and very inspiring. 🙏



Photo © Café Gratitude

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would be no more starvation in the world». This is, of course only technically true, but if 'meat' can be grown in factories, it would tick all the boxes; low production costs, more protein for people to eat, a fantastic environmental footprint and ethically sound to boot. If the companies make a profit and the environmental campaigners are happy, surely it's a win-win?

On the subject of protein, it would be remiss of me to omit one of the most talked-about future foods of them all – Soylent green. Harry Harrison wrote a novel called *Make Room! Make Room!* in which he detailed life in a dystopian 1999, an overcrowded world in which people clamoured for food. A local shop has a sale on Soylent (soya and lentil) steaks and a riot breaks out. The film *Soylent Green*, with Charlton Heston takes a different slant on the same story, but if you haven't seen it, I won't spoil it. A modern company has somewhat bravely appropriated the name, apparently oblivious to the negative connotations and is now producing Soylent 2.0 in drink and powder form – a small step away from the meal-in-a-pill concept. The idea was set in motion by a software engineer called Robert Reinhart, who postulated that the body doesn't need food as such, merely the nutrients. This has been widely disproven, but sales remain steady as fad diets come and go. Let's face it, if you are too busy to figure out

what to eat in order to stay alive, you should probably slow down a bit.

As for the protein pills, they are very much in the same category as the flying car in that they don't really exist yet. We have seen cars you can strap wings to in a clumsy attempt to bring science fiction to life and pills as food are in about the same state of development. Yes, there's the ubiquitous vitamin pill or *dietary supplement* as the more expensive varieties are known, but they only give you vitamins and some amino acids, and the jury's still out on just how many of these vitamins the body retains without any bulk in the stomach.

There's the problem, you see – the stomach needs something to work on and fibre is usually the one favoured by doctors. To provide enough substance and as many calories as a regular human needs, you'd need to be swallowing a kilo or so of pills at least. This negates the point of the dinner-in-a-pill strategy required for deep space flight or Parisian catwalk models. You may as well have a bacon sandwich – with lettuce and tomato, of course. I certainly wouldn't relish a world without a decent three courses and wine. Check please. 🍴

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Gary Vaynerchuk: Cover boy for the American Dream

We take a closer look at a highly successful entrepreneur, whose website states simply: "Gary builds businesses"



Gary Vaynerchuk was born in Babruysk, Belarus, in the former USSR. Vaynerchuk's first big break in life came when his parents found their way to America as part of an exchange programme where Soviet Jews were allowed to immigrate to the US in exchange for food aid. While the entire extended family shared a studio apartment in Queens, Gary's father, Sasha, began working at a relative's liquor store in New Jersey.

Young Vaynerchuk settled quickly into life in capitalist America – he hit the streets running. His first entrepreneurial success consisted of ripping flowers out of his neighbours' yards and then selling them back to them. Soon he had upgraded to operating an entire lemonade stand franchise, managing multiple locations and commuting on a tricycle to collect his profits.

In his early teens, Gary moved up another gear, cornering the local market for baseball



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cards, often making thousands in a weekend with his keen eye for deals and his razor-sharp sales tactics. All of this came to a dramatic halt when, at the age of 14, his father dragged him into the family business. In the blink of an eye, he went from making thousands of dollars in a weekend to making \$2 an hour bagging ice in the basement of Shoppers Discount Liquors, which his father had taken full ownership of by that point.

However, that is all clearly water under the bridge. "If you're an entrepreneur and go into the family business, you want to grow fast. Patience is important. But respect the other party... My dad and I pulled it off because we really respect each other. The reason we love our parents is because they loved us first. Every single company should take this advice."

As soon as Gary realized that people could collect wine in the same way that he collected baseball cards, everything changed. He would sneak copies of *Wine Spectator* into class to read up on the latest Bordeaux vintages and display his knowledge on the shop floor.

While at college, Gary discovered the internet. He immediately saw the potential to "sell shit" and set about convincing his father to let him have a website built for Shopper's Discount Liquor. And so, winelibrary.com was born. He appears to still have family firmly at the centre of what he does. "The chef that grew up with the grandma who cooks tends to always beat the chef that went to the culinary institute. It's in the blood."

Over the following years, Gary would make it his mission to be a first mover wherever he could see sales opportunities: from email marketing, to Google AdWords to flash sales. This approach dramatically increased sales, driving – the now rebranded – Wine Library from \$3 million to \$60 million sales in just five years. On branding, he says: "You have to understand your own personal DNA. Don't do things because I do them or Steve Jobs or Mark Cuban tried it. You need to know your personal brand and stay true to it."

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Be successful

"THEY'RE NOT WORRIED ABOUT LIFETIME VALUE AND RETENTION"



Photo © Ken Yeung/VentureBeat



He then decided to pursue a new avenue of content marketing, making his foray into creating video content. It changed his life forever. You can see the common denominator here: keep on the move. But he puts it down to something more old-fashioned: "One of the things that I'm really proud of," he says, "is that I have really good timing. It's very easy for me to see what's coming up, and it's no coincidence that I went headfirst into wine and then headfirst into new media – none at all."

His YouTube vlog called Wine Library TV show featured wine reviews and advice on wine appreciation in Gary's down-to-earth, bombastic style. Episodes consisted of wine tastings along with other wine related topics and were produced at a breakneck speed of one 20-minute episode per day. The show eventually reached cult status, and he became "the internet wine guy". His appearance on Conan O'Brien launched Gary into the limelight. Wine Library TV ran for 1,000 episodes before Gary decided it was time to end the show.

He also fostered relationships with various CEOs and investors such as Kevin Rose, Travis Kalanick, Ev Williams and Mark Zuckerberg. These connections led to Gary's first forays into angel investing, with early involvement with companies like Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr. During this time, Gary also embarked on what would become a prolific career as a public speaker.

Gary and his brother AJ founded VaynerMedia, an agency focused on helping large brands tell their stories on social media. Securing early clients like the New York Jets and the NHL allowed them to scale at a rapid pace, and it now represents Fortune 500 clients General Electric, Anheiser-Busch InBev and Pepsi.

But the wine, the thing that – along with baseball cards – got him started is never far from his thoughts. In typically blunt mood he says: "There's always a wine bully. The one person who did read the *Wine Spectator* who tells you what to drink and why the '97 is better

than the '98. I want to punch the wine bully in the face. I want to make sure this generation of wine drinkers isn't elitist and snotty. I want it to be about family and bringing people together."

He has since launched the highly successful #AskGaryVee Show and has partnered with Matt Higgins from RSE Ventures to form a \$25 million investment fund focusing on first-round financing and incubation.

Gary Vaynerchuk builds businesses... Fresh out of college, he took his family wine business and grew it from a \$3 million to a \$60 million business in just five years. Asked how he did it, he said: "My store, Wine Library, outsells big national chains. It started with hustle. I always say that our success wasn't due to my hundreds of online videos about wine that went viral, but to the hours I spent talking to people online afterward, making connections and building relationships."

VaynerMedia is one of the world's hottest digital agencies. Along the way he became a prolific angel investor and venture capitalist. Keep moving but stay in it for the long-term appears to be the message. "So many businesses fail because they are not playing the marathon. They're playing the sprint. They're not worried about lifetime value and retention. They're worried about short-term goals. People don't want to embrace culture shifts because it's not going to happen in the next 20 minutes."

Final word from Gary Vaynerchuk, who builds businesses: "People are chasing cash, not happiness. When you chase money, you're going to lose. You're just going to. Even if you get the money, you're not going to be happy."

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Global deflation: Alter your strategy

Dave Deruytter sums up the state of play world-wide as deflation appears to be keeping a grip of the economy



Power Plant, Tianjin, China / Photo © Shubert Ciencia

Should we be prepared for a prolonged state of global deflation, including negative interest rates? How should this alter your investment strategy?

The Chinese solution

The Chinese government's new five-year plan foresees a minimum of 6.5% net GDP growth per year, an extra focus on the service industry and 'green' initiatives. Given the strong grip of the Chinese communist party over the country, there is a good chance that those targets will be met. Though 6.5% growth is low in comparison with the figures over the past

quarter of a century, it is a very healthy growth since the country nowadays cannot keep on growing at higher rates without creating bubbles in the real estate and financial markets.

Further, given the steady increase in wages, industrial production is partly shifting from China to lower-cost neighbours, such as Vietnam and other ASEAN countries. The aim of the Chinese plan is that the extra focus on the service sector and the environment should compensate for the loss of growth in the industry. With heavy air pollution, particularly in

the Beijing region, and regular health scares linked with water contamination, and hygiene issues in food processing factories, the extra focus on 'green' is equally essential for the quality of life of the Chinese people.

This lower Chinese net GDP growth of 6.5% will still contribute as much to the world GDP in money terms than the US and the EU growth combined – three times more than India, a country of about the same population as China. China should always be at the basis of any analysis on the state of the global macro-economic situation. And the Chinese picture for the next five years is not inflationary because of lower growth and the shift away from industry.

Meanwhile in Europe

At the same time, the US and the EU keep on feeling the deflationary pressure of the internet and the related

disintermediation in almost all economic sectors. The travel sector is an example where almost all sales have moved online, cutting out the middle men (travel agencies). The percentage of digital sales is increasing in all economic sectors, led by highly visible companies such as Uber and Airbnb. Even the highly-regulated financial sector is feeling the cold wind due to online savings and investment platforms, crowd funding and payment apps.

The macro level

Brazil is almost not growing at all, and likewise for Russia and Japan. No surprise then that crude oil and almost all raw materials are very cheap, limiting the economic growth in countries such as Australia, Canada and South Africa too. Furthermore, as the growth of the US is hindered by the fact that new jobs created are mostly low-pay jobs, and that the

EU has structural issues like mass migration, Greece and Brexit, higher global economic growth will not come easy, if at all.

The ageing of sections of the population in developed countries could have been a bright spot for global growth, given that this generation needs extra spending on services to keep on leading a qualitative life. But such development is hindered by the fact that the governments of the countries involved have serious issues with their debt situation and fiscal balance. There is no room for higher pensions or social security pay-outs.

The deflationary pressure on the world economy will not go away easily. And companies will carry on restructuring – the large ones will want to work with fewer people.

Chances are high that cheap money will be around for the foreseeable future. Negative interest rates are already

**“ CHINA SHOULD ALWAYS
BE AT THE BASIS OF ANY
ANALYSIS ”**

there, and the possibility that they will hang for some time is high. Interest rates on savings accounts for individuals are very low but still in positive territory, save for a few exceptions. Cash-rich companies today have to make do with negative rates much more often.

If interest rates on savings drop below zero, at a certain point individuals might be tempted to take their money from the bank and put it in safes. But to buy or rent a safe also costs money and to pay in cash costs more time and money than paying online. In conclusion, even individuals can accept a small negative interest rate on savings to compensate for the 'money and time' cost of cash in safes.

Where to invest your excess money these days?

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not to save it. And in a sense we are only as rich as the money we can spend. But it is wise to save some of it for the future: for a new smartphone, a new car, travel, housing, pension and the increased cost of living at old age.

The good news is that cheap money, particularly over a prolonged period of time, puts a floor under real estate and financial markets. And as the dividend yields on shares are so much higher than bond coupon yields, this becomes attractive. The same goes to some extent for rental income. Keep those assets, but be selective.

Look for companies that have stable income and are capable of controlling costs and handling the digital challenge, or even already embrace it. The same goes for real estate assets. For more active investors, who are ready to take on more risk, the disintermediation play can be very rewarding, but it is not easy to pick the winners. As borrowing rates should stay low, entrepreneurs and companies with a relative high leverage will be able to keep on challenging better capitalized companies or established brand names.



Itaipu Dam Brazil
Photo © International Hydropower Association (IHA)



Opening bell at NY Stock Exchange

Risk is always an opportunity, but you cannot beat an efficient market in the long run. Know your investor profile, your time horizon; diversify your investments and do not be too greedy, for it may blind you to the obvious risks of 'too good to be true' offers.

Personal 'investment' balance

Finally, who says that investment returns should be counted in money terms only? If you buy a piece of art and you see it every morning in your kitchen, bringing a smile on your face at the start of the day, that is invaluable in money terms. And giving money to a charity in general, or to the schooling of a child more specifically, will touch your heart and soul in a manner investment returns can never do. Find your personal 'investment' balance, live it and enjoy it. ●

Turkey: Divert and conquer

Gerry Callaghan offers an overview of the EU-Turkey migrants agreement

Photo © Ggia



On 18 March, Brussels penned a deal with Ankara to halt the influx of asylum seekers into Europe. Up until the deal was struck by European and Turkish leaders, more than three million Syrians, Iraqis, and Afghans had fled into Turkey. Running from instability and conflict in the region, around one million more have escaped into Europe.

The EU hopes the deal will stem the heavy flow of refugees crossing the Aegean Sea onto overcrowded Greek islands. The idea is to reduce the incentive for Syrian refugees to board dangerous smugglers' boats to cross to Greece, encouraging them instead to stay in

Turkish refugee camps and hope to win a chance at resettlement in Europe. The deal will also speed up talks on Ankara's bid to join the EU, will double refugee aid to €6 billion and give visa-free travel to Turks in Europe's passport-free Schengen area by June this year.

Around 4,000 people, including women and children, have drowned making the crossing in small, inept boats, including 400 people this year alone. The exhausted refugees, after their perilous journey, will be held in what now resembles detention centres rather than reception areas, as they did previously. Under

a key clause in the controversial agreement, in exchange for Turkey taking back all migrants arriving in Greece, the EU will resettle one Syrian refugee for every one readmitted to Turkey.

The arrangement was met with caution from human rights groups who raised concerns over the ethics and legality of the EU-Turkey plan. But European officials have stressed that each application for asylum will be treated in line with international law. That is, individually, with full rights of appeal and proper oversight. Despite these reassurances, medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) reinforced concerns, saying it was pulling out of the centre in Lesbos "because the EU-Turkey deal is turning reception centres into deportation centres".

Greece began arresting all people arriving in boats from Turkey after the agreement went into effect on the 20th March. Around 2,000 people

have been detained since the deal took effect, with migrants still arriving in boats despite the crackdown. The continuation of the flow is partly driven by women and children following their husbands who made the journey last year. They are being held at EU-supervised registration centres known as 'hotspots' in what Greek government officials describe as "compulsory supervision". Under the deal, detained migrants and refugees will be sent back to Turkey, which in return will receive additional EU financial aid and join an EU resettlement programme for Syrians and others fleeing war.

Furthermore, the UN refugee agency pulled staff from facilities on Lesbos and other Greek islands that are being used to detain refugees and migrants as an international deal with Turkey came under strain. "The UNHCR is concerned that the EU-Turkey deal is being implemented before the required safeguards are in place in Greece," said UN refugee agency spokesperson Melissa Fleming. She

continued: "Greece does not have sufficient capacity on the islands for assessing asylum claims, nor the proper conditions to accommodate people decently and safely pending an examination of their cases."

One centre on the island of Lesbos has the capacity to receive 1,200 people, but more than 1,600 people had arrived in the five days following the deal. Officials said it will take time to start sending people back, as Greece is still waiting for thousands of European staff needed to take on the daunting task of mass repatriation. Brussels has promised 2,300 officials and police to help the operation. France and Germany have also offered to send up to 600 police and asylum experts, while Romania will send 70.

"MIGRANTS STILL ARRIVING IN BOATS DESPITE THE CRACKDOWN"

A spokesperson for the Greek government said: "Clearly we do not believe that, so far, Turkey has implemented what has been agreed. Migration

flows are not significantly lower [and] that should have happened immediately." Reporters were also informed that Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras called German Chancellor Angela Merkel in the days following implementation, to urge her to press Turkey to step-up the crackdown on illegal smugglers.

However, the increasingly dictatorial antics of the Turkish government are causing alarm in Europe. In recent months, civil society groups have expressed concern at the actions of the Turkish government, as the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) has silenced critics in the media by closing down critical anti-government newspapers. Also, while non-Syrians in Turkey must wait up to eight years for asylum interviews, Syrians are only offered temporary protection, and access to regular employment and social services is restricted for both groups. By diverting the problem to Turkey, refugees may now face a future of severe poverty and have to spend many more years in limbo. ●

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Through collective ownership of exclusive holiday residences, The Hideaways Club combines luxury property investment with a luxury lifestyle.

Since its inception, The Hideaways Club has grown steadily, largely through the recommendation of existing Members. The private investment Club brings together financial investment and a luxury travel lifestyle, offering multiple second homes without the management hassles of direct proprietorship.

The Hideaways Club was founded in 2006 by Stephen Wise, a former Bain & Company Senior Management Consultant, Helmut Schön, a former Corporate Financier with

LIFESTYLE

Luxury

Merrill Lynch and UBS and Mike Balfour OBE, founder of Fitness First.

Two Property Funds, Classic and City, offer a diverse selection of exquisite villas, chalets and apartments in the world's most sought-after destinations. Membership of The Hideaways Club unlocks more than the properties themselves. Members enjoy the services of a Personal Concierge, in-depth local knowledge and invitation-only Member events.

Our exclusive membership includes like-minded discerning travellers from the worlds of business, finance, sport, media and fashion – all of whom expect high standards and discretion when it comes to their leisure time.

The Hideaways Club recruits its staff as carefully as its Members - every member of our international team is selected for his or her care, knowledge and attention to detail.

Collaborative consumption for the wealthy

The Hideaways Club is comparable to the concepts of NetJets or YachtPlus where several people with substantial financial means jointly invest in a private jet or a yacht, and use it only when needed. So an expensive investment is shared by several people. There is no longer a need to maintain holiday properties which are costly and are only used occasionally. Entrepreneurs or busy doctors do not want to invest time, energy and money, but instead go on holiday carefree.

This in a nutshell is the basic philosophy of The Hideaways Club. The ecological footprint is also clearly better. There are more and more wealthy people who prefer to invest in renewable energy rather than a multitude of properties that are ultimately a source of stress and trouble. But they still like of course to continue to go on the best possible vacations.

No time-sharing, no risk

This has nothing whatsoever to do with the very pejorative concept of timeshare, except the aspects of 'spending a good *time*' and '*sharing* real properties'. Hideaways Club makes a clear



Chalet Soleil, Chamonix, France



Masseria L'Olivo, Puglia, Italy



Dar Hasnaa, Marrakech, Morocco



Mala Strana, Prague, Czech Republic

distinction between the property company and the operating company. Via the property company registered in Gibraltar, each remains the owner of its participation in all of the properties. The operating company, headquartered in London, manages the various residences and receives its annual fees from the membership. In the worst case scenario, problems may only arise with the operating company. The personal equity portfolio in all residences is never threatened. The real return on your investment lies more in the fact that you enjoy a great vacation for a fraction of the real cost of buying a property with a full concierge service.

Invest in a luxury property fund

There are two Property Investment Funds:

Luxury Villas and Chalets

The first Property Fund consists of spacious four-to-five-bedroom luxury villas and chalets. While these properties are secluded enough to be considered hideaways, they are also within easy reach of the town centre and local attractions. Investment in the Classic Property Fund ranges from £88,000 to £230,000.

Luxury City Apartments

The second Property Fund, includes luxury city apartments located in the heart of some of the world's most vibrant cities. Investment in the City Property Fund ranges from £69,500 to £127,000.

Join the exclusive members club

By owning in a Share in the Classic and/or City Property Investment Funds, you are eligible to join The Hideaways Club. As a Member, you will enjoy exclusive access to all properties in the Fund(s) as well as an extended portfolio of villas, chalets and apartments around the world thanks to our affiliations with Banyan Tree, Equity Estates and Exclusive Resorts.

An annual membership fee covers year-round property management and maintenance costs, including all local rates and taxes, cleaning, gardening and the all-important Personal Concierge service. We do the work, so you don't have to.

LIFESTYLE

Luxury

Enjoy a luxury travel lifestyle

From beach relaxation to an active ski break or time out on the fairways, we have homes from home to suit the individual tastes of all our Members. The Hideaways Club experience is about more than the property itself.

We want to ensure every stay is as easy, enjoyable, memorable and luxurious as possible. No request is too big or small for your Personal Concierge, whether it's booking you a coveted table at that much-talked-about restaurant, organizing a wine tasting at a famed vineyard or arranging for our chef to prepare a homemade dinner for you. We take care of the detail - leaving you to enjoy your stay.

The Hideaways Club is ideal for all those who love varied holiday destinations, in privacy and luxury, with service included.

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 Handbag: Jérôme Dreyfuss



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 Gold bracelets: Dinh Van

Total look and handbag: Zadig&Voltaire
Silver bracelet: Dinh van



Top: Natan couture
Trousers: Haus Coudeyre
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Handbag: Louis Vuitton



Pink handbag: Louis Vuitton
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Skirt: Natan couture
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Silver bracelet: Dinh van
Shoes: Dior



Pullover: Just in case
Shirt: Hilfiger collection
Skirt: Léo
Gold bracelets: Dinh van
Gold handbag: Dior
Sunglasses: Dior



Dress: Natan couture
Vest: Zadig&Voltaire
Cuff & rings: Sara Esther
Silver bone ring: Espèces

Doriane Van Overeem: A bold departure

Our fashion expert **Jeanie Keogh** met a young Belgian fashion designer who is not afraid to take on the status quo

Twenty-six-year-old Belgian designer Doriane Van Overeem is immediately recognizable from a photo on her website that features her in a large bright pink floral-on-floral print jacket over a T-shirt, laughing, with two strands of dyed-blue hair emerging from behind her ears.

Except that in the two-and-a-half years since she's launched her business, she has changed into a more subdued version of herself – now she wears a black biker jacket over an eggshell yellow cashmere turtleneck, and the two streaks of dyed blue hair are blond. Though more reserved than expected, there is a warm effervescence in her big brown eyes, and the initial air of wariness transforms to reveal her as a humble young woman with a tenacious, down-to-earth nature.

Her new designs match her current look, signaling a bold departure from her daringly pink ensembles involving fluffy wool, faux fur and more blossoms than an Italian garden in peak season. What she's going for at the moment is a more sombre, no-nonsense approach. Fall/winter was a much darker colour scheme, bold stripes, waffle and polka dot prints, and spring/summer involves laser printing on latex, peony print skirts and dresses with her trademark folds, and gauze flowers beaded onto translucent fabric.

"It's more understated, even if I am keeping the flowers, the prints, the frills, a touch of colour, but it's becoming more ready-to-wear and the collection I am working on now will be more basics," she says. "The older stuff is too image, fantasy, that is not wearable, and I really want

to see my clothes on people in the street."

As for the girl-power aspect of her work, that will become more subtle as well. Her previous collections were provocatively titled: *Fatherfuckers' Queen* (AW14), *Witches not Bitches* (AW15), and an anti-harassment season *The Way to Say No* (SS15). Individual pieces were named after famous queens, goddesses, mermaids and sorceresses.

Van Overeem explains frankly: "There aren't really any themes any more because I found it was a bit too literal, actually. It was becoming a bit of a scholastic exercise, and now I'm really steering towards the side of daily wear so now it's no longer necessary to have a theme. It doesn't serve me. I think it's better from the perspective of the brand to find a DNA that stays the same from season to season."

But what will remain are her signature slogans. In the FW2016 collection there is a faux fur and skai clutch that reads "don't tell me to calm down", and with the 2016 spring/summer season she's experimenting with the controversial "porn is for girls too" message.

"Personally, it's my socio-political engagement regarding the image of women in the world today that I'm trying to make trendy with slogans that are, firstly, fun, but are actually deeper messages of strength and political involvement. So the first collection '*Fatherfuckers' Queen*' was to turn an insult on its head," she says.

However, she notes this was much more feminist advocacy than the average customer



cared to get involved with, but this doesn't stop her from continuing to make a statement.

"It's true that my client doesn't really care, except if they are really interested in the brand and want to understand what I want to say with that. But, otherwise, it's a way of broaching serious subjects in a fun way to change people's ideas that fashion is not just trendy and cute – there is something stronger behind it. When I design it can't just be clothes, it has to go further, especially in the world today. I don't consider myself an artist, but for me it is important to have something to say."

On the less intellectual side, she aims at designing clothes in a way that encompasses women's multi-dimensional personalities and, as such, steers clear away from type. Her

“ GAUZE FLOWERS BEADED ONTO TRANSLUCENT FABRIC ”

clothing is equal parts comfortable and sexy – a bit of soft and feminine thrown together with an element of hardcore and tough.

"I want to connect two different worlds – the feminine, floral, delicate, poetic, romantic, but really a clash with punk, rock, protester," she says.

As for Van Overeem, her soft side comes out when she speaks about her mother, who two years ago opened a second-hand store Pauline Carton Boutique at Place Rouppe, and who is her biggest fan.

"She is really supportive," she says, gushing bashfully. "At La Cambre she was always there. At her boutique she has photos of me and news clippings everywhere." She is clearly honoured to have made her mother, who Van Overeem says was the reason she got into fashion, proud.

"She taught me a lot. She would say, 'Look,



this is English couture. This is silk. This scarf was made by hand. This is lace from the 1940s. This was embroidered by hand'."

As for Van Overeem's hard side, that's evident when she speaks of one day going to London or New York to tough it out in fashion scenes there. Or when she mentions her resolute Made in Belgium principles, describing how important it is to keep the local trade alive, lest it disappear completely.

Where her designs will lead next is anyone's guess, but with fashion in her blood and a fierce desire to break the status quo, Van Overeem is sure to surprise, delight and inspire.

Van Overeem works with English textile designer Philip Jacobs of Westminster fabrics and collaborates on accessories with Giuseppe Virgone who designs for Natan and Edouard Vermeulen.

www.dorianevanovereem.com ⓘ



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LIFESTYLE

Shopping

Shopping: Mother's Day

For thousands of years, the Greeks have been honouring Cybele (Mountain Mother), as have the Romans with their festival of Hilaria. We prefer to honour someone alive and kicking: Mum.

Mother's Day is all about celebrating your mother, as well as motherhood, maternal bonds and the influence of mothers in broader society. It's a May celebration in Belgium, shared with Vietnam, Venezuela, Jamaica and Cuba, among many others. There are other complementary celebrations for family members, such as Father's Day and, more recently, Siblings Day, but Mother's Day has always been the big one and always will be.

Here are a few suggestions for a special gift for her.

Venizi

The Carnival of Venice, dating back to around 1450 and the Italian Renaissance, is what has inspired Venizi since its beginnings, placing luxury within reach of everyone, with, in addition, a demand for quality applied to each of its creations. Solid steel ring protected by 'Stardust', 3 colours (chocolate, steel, pink gold) **€36.90**
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Hunkemöller Sylvie

Hunkemöller is an originally Dutch company and the largest high-street lingerie brand of the Benelux. They have now launched Sylvie's two fragrances for Hunkemöller. 'Embrace the Day' is a fascinating feminine fragrance with juicy mandarine, a hint of pepper and a refreshing bergamot scent. **€27.99**. 'Own the Night' seduces with the floral heart of jasmine, roses and orange blossom. Complemented with sparkling bergamot and lemon scent. **€27.99**. www.hunkemoller.be



Loulou de la Falaise

Loulou de La Falaise was a fashion muse and designer of fashion, accessories and jewellery associated with Yves Saint Laurent. Ariel Ravenel currently leads the Loulou de la Falaise brand, continuing her work. These glass paste parts are gold-plated and completely handmade in Paris by artisans. Byzantine necklace, topaz glass paste and amber, gold plated. **€1,815**

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THE SWEET BOX is a pure Belgian concept created by the designer Olivia des Cressonnières. She connects two of the best Belgian luxury products, fine jewellery and delicate chocolate sweets. You open THE SWEET BOX and select your favorite jewellery coloured stones combination, as you would choose your best chocolate collection flavours according to your mood. Candi sugar from **€695** www.the-sweet-box.com



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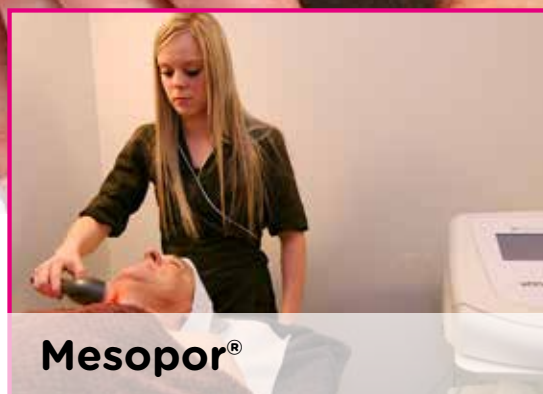


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LIFESTYLE

Beauty

Dare to go bare

Our beauty expert **Delphine Stefens** challenges you to start showing a bit more flesh

Some may already go for it, while others cling on to their thighs just a little while longer, but everyone agrees that killer legs are both smooth and shiny. So, get layering cream instead of clothes, but don't forget to scrub the winter off first.



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LIFESTYLE

Beauty



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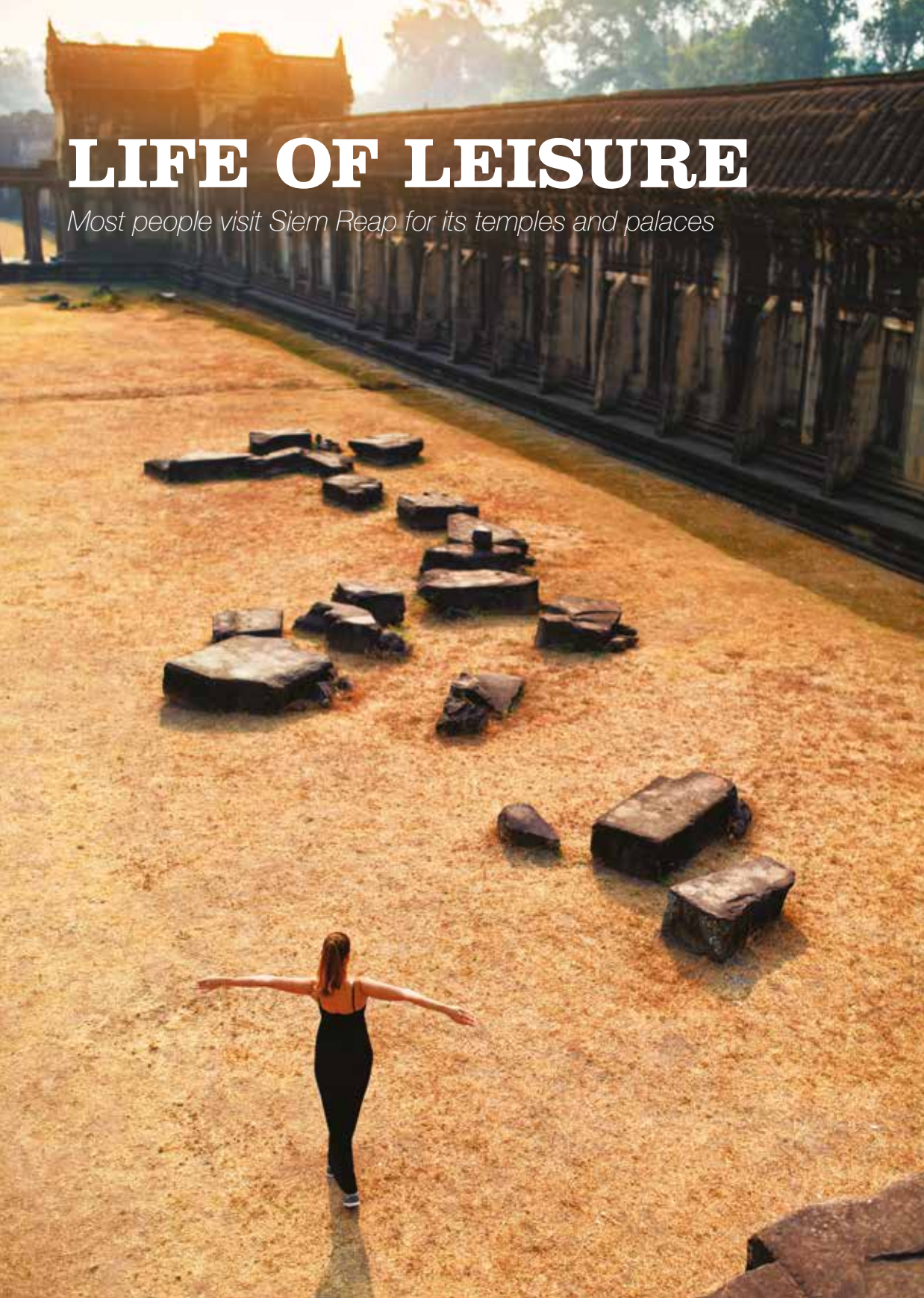


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Interview

Charlize Theron

Together meets a beautiful actress, model, activist and mum



Wearing a sheer black Chloe dress and high heels, Charlize Theron, 38, epitomizes glamour. Tanned and fit, she's in Los Angeles to promote her latest movie, *A Million Ways to Die in the West*.

The Oscar-winning actress and model is mother to Jackson, 2, whose adoption was announced in March 2012.

Born on a farm in Benoni, near Johannesburg (her first language is Afrikaans), she endured a tumultuous childhood. Her father, an alcoholic, physically attacked her mother and threatened both her mother and her while drunk. Theron's mother then shot and killed him in self-defence and her mother faced no charges.

Currently in a relationship with Sean Penn since February 2014, she was formerly linked to Stuart Townsend with whom she starred in *Trapped* and *Head in the Clouds*. She was also romantically linked to *Third Eye Blind* front

man Stephan Jenkins and actor Craig Bierko.

Did you train for this role? Lots of guns?

I've had to do stuff like that in movies all the time so there's a sense of learning that one carries onto the next one. And I did a lot of that on *Fury Road* actually, where for a month I focused on it. I just had to learn the spinning thing and stuff like that.

So no practicing on the shooting range?

Seth (McFarlane) and I went and practiced together. I think one day we shot something and then it was freezing and we looked at each other and we were like, 'This isn't fun.' It got so cold. (Laughs) Yeah, and then that was it.

How has motherhood changed you? Have you sensed a difference in your needs as far as work goes?

I try to get more sleep. (Laughter) I have to



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LIFE OF LEISURE

Interview



organize things better, but overall, I have heard people say that once they have children they don't want to work on dark material, but that hasn't happened for me. If anything, having a child has just made me want to be more creative and ask bigger questions and have more interests in things that might be uncomfortable. I think we all have different responses, but for me that's definitely been like that. I didn't look at my slate and go, 'No, I can't do that movie now that I have a kid.'

He just gives me energy to want to do more and explore more.

Did you feel like you didn't get the chance to show your funny bone often enough or did you wish for more comedic roles?

I always say this: I am in no position to complain. I work a lot, and I work on things that I really want to work on. I am a very, very blessed human being in general. So, for me to complain about anything is silly. I don't do a lot of comedy, but I don't necessarily complain about that because it has to be a very specific thing. I get a lot of stuff offered to me, but it's not just necessarily stuff that I feel is funny.

**“ THERE IS NO
MYSTERY TO IT.
SUNBLOCK, WATER,
MOISTURIZER ”**

So when this came to me, I saw the potential, and I really fucked up the first meeting with Seth, and so I fought for it, and in the sense that I knew that I had a bad meeting with him and I had 104 fever and I had come back from Namibia, and from shooting in the desert and I was a wreck and literally got off the plane and I met him. I was in a winter coat shivering, and I had no hair and he was just like 'Who are you?' (Laughter) And it was the holidays, and I just remember waking up every day and sitting on this beautiful beach and thinking, 'God, I really messed that up.' So I thought to myself that I should call him and tell him that I want to meet with him again. So when this stuff comes around I fight for it.

How do you take care of your skin?

There is no mystery to it. Sunblock, water, moisturiser.



You're from South Africa and it was a hard road to get here. Do you feel that your dreams were pointing to where you are now?

No, not at all.

So what are your feelings? When you see yourself now, what do you think about the journey that you've taken?

That's why I can probably sit here and say that I am incredibly blessed in my life.

But did you imagine that you would win the Oscar and be the movie star that you are?

No, I don't think anybody can dream that big. I don't think anybody who has gone through that experience will tell you that. It would be very grandiose to sit around and kind of expect those things to come to you. I have never not heard of an actor who just wanted to be able to pay the bills and not have to be a waitress on the side or a waiter.

What did Nelson Mandela mean to you?

He was a huge inspiration. He was our great liberator, he's the reason why South Africa is united as it is today and I was very honoured to know him and call him my friend. I think very rarely do people as great as that come into your life and have a huge influence on you.

So I feel incredibly lucky that I got to experience that.

After seeing your Dior commercial, Kelly Clarkson said you were a goddess.

That's sweet!

Do you sometimes feel like you're a goddess?

(Laughter) I have this incredible team that travels with me and does this stuff. So there are moments when you do something like that, where you are just in it and you see the aftermath. I just did a new campaign with Jean-Baptiste who did the first campaign that everybody loved so much. He's actually coming into town. We are doing the print campaign on Sunday and he's bringing the



“ I COMPLETELY
RELATE TO
EVERYTHING SHE’S
SAYING ”

“ HAVING A CHILD
HAS JUST MADE
ME WANT TO BE
MORE CREATIVE ”



commercial and everybody is in love with it, so I will see it. He sent me some clips where you look at that and just go, 'I am so lucky to have that hair person and that makeup person,' you know you what I mean? You know that's not in your hands. There are moments where I go, 'This is so fantastic.' (Laughter) It's sixteen-hour days and you are tired, and you have got too much eyeliner in your eye, but all of those things are princess problems. I just have to watch out for the croissant basket, (Laughs) that's my biggest thing because that's when I feel like a goddess, I am like, 'All of these croissants are for me?'

Do you have a lot of Dior?

I do, I get spoiled. And so do my mum and my friends, and they are incredibly generous, yeah.

In a world of privilege where there are so many people underprivileged, how important is it to find a balance there for you, especially when you see yourself as so blessed?

Well, I have always worked in the field of HIV and anti-rape, and that's been the last twenty years of my life. And coming from a country like South Africa, it's impossible to forget how incredibly blessed my life has turned out and how that is not the case for many people in my country. So in starting my organization in 2007, Charlize Theron Outreach Africa project, we focus now primarily on prevention care when it comes to HIV and AIDS and giving children, the youth of South Africa, some kind of future to look up to. Not only taking ownership of their health and making choices to actually save their own lives, but to give them something to live for. That has become a huge part of my life. That's the only reason that I go back to South Africa, that's my family and that's what I go back for.

And my work with the UN couldn't be more neutralizing and sobering to really, really witness the fortunate aspect of all of our lives. When I travel with the DRC or do any work with them in Africa, it's nothing short of miraculous that I am where I am.

Is your mum the most important person in your life?

I think people are there for different reasons. I mean I think I have a closeness to my mum, we are friends, but she's my mother first and foremost and that's how I was raised. That's why I think we are so close, because she never tried to just be my friend. She's my mum.

And so I think that's why we have had the relationship that we have always had because it's a healthy one. She's not just my girlfriend, she just happened to be a person that I actually really like, and who I think is actually funny and all of that stuff. But she's the first person to put me in line, the way a parent does.

Does she do that still?

Yeah, of course. I mean, in a way where she treats me like I am an adult. She doesn't treat me like I am twelve any more, but we have a very healthy relationship in that sense.

When she gives you advice, how do you take it? Do you feel it's like she's criticizing you?

I mean, look, I think every child wants their parent to be proud of them, and I think anybody who won't admit that is secretly hiding something. I think there's definitely a sense when it comes to a child and their parent and I think we are all human beings and it can sometimes be harder to take criticism from a parent, and I have had moments with mum where she's like, 'That movie is a piece of shit!' (Laughs) But I would rather her be incredibly honest because then when she says that movie is really good I really believe it. But, yeah, that's normal.

Can you relate to what Lupita Nyong'o said when she won the Oscar, that every little girl's dream is valid?

And a very lovely moment because a lot of people don't acknowledge that I am African, and I ran into her parents backstage, and they said, 'Our African sister!' I completely relate to everything she's saying. ❶

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TO FORGET HOW
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BLESSED MY LIFE
HAS TURNED OUT ”**



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Hmong: Celebrating rice and existence

Lesley Williamson welcomes in the New Year with the Hmong tribe in the remote hills of Northern Laos

In the Western world, the emphasis on romance and overindulging may have turned New Year's festivities into a secular celebration, but underneath all the glitter and sparkle lies an ancient holiday with deep, spiritual roots. While each culture's New Year celebration has its own flavour, for the Hmong tribe it stands as the most important communal, cultural and social event of the year. I travelled to isolated villages in the province of Luang Prabang in Laos to meet this ethnic minority and welcome the beginning of another year with rituals to attract good fortune.

Tragic history of an uprooted people

The Hmong are one of the oldest and most distinguished ethnic groups in Laos. Yet their story sums up the difficulty of being an ethnic minority in a country mainly inhabited by Lao. Throughout Hmong oral literature, the theme of an orphan who becomes a leader and overcomes harassment through hard work stands as a powerful symbol for the people, left without a country to call their own but who survive wherever they go.

The Hmong people do indeed have a long history of migration. Based on genetic evidence, historians recorded that they originate from the hills and mountains of the basin of Yellow River in China around 5,000 years ago and developed their own culture and civilized society, including New Year's celebrations. They raised their own army to defend their territories with a proud and independent spirit against the Chinese, who began limiting their freedom in the mid-1600s. In the 1800s, the expansionist movements of

the Imperial Han resulted in thousands of Hmong being massacred and displaced. Refusing to be dominated, the surviving Hmong took the treacherous voyage on foot to the mountains for protection and migrated to Laos.

Following communist occupation in Laos in 1975, they crossed the Mekong River to Thailand and other neighbouring countries to



avoid oppression. During the Vietnam War, the Hmong in Laos partnered with the CIA to fight south-east Asian communists in what is known as the 'Secret War'. When the United States pulled out of Laos after the victory of communists, the Lao government began retaliating against the Hmong for siding with the Americans. Thousands died, or fled and numerous refugee camps were set up in Thailand from which many uprooted Hmong emigrated to Australia, France, Canada, Germany and the United States.



A time of rebirth

Long-standing religious practices and beliefs perpetuated throughout centuries have largely contributed to help preserve the Hmong's distinct culture and unique traditions. Hmong people believe in both ancestral worship and animism, one of humanity's oldest beliefs that a soul or spirit inhabits the natural universe.

Historically, the Hmong New Year gives thanks to ancestors and spirits as well as welcoming a new beginning. Celebrations acknowledge the completion of the rice harvesting season, thus a new life can begin as the circle of life continues. Every 'wandering' soul of every family member is called back by the village Shaman to reunite the family again and help bless the house in an in-house ritual called 'Hu Plig' or soul calling.

Hmong New Year celebrations are in full swing for a period of ten days in the jungle of the hills of Luang Prabang. It's a very special time of the year for Hmong people to take a break from their daily activities, cook their favorite food and dress up in their most beautiful outfits. Like anywhere else, every young person owns a mobile phone to share selfies and receive confirmation of their outer

beauty on social networks. A young Hmong girl I got to converse with, Che (meaning 'whisper'), insists however that no Instagram pic, no Facebook update, no Snapchat share can speak of the kind of self-consideration that occurs in the Hmong culture when one year turns into the next. A wander with her through the festive village is a deep insight into different life experiences, the nature of time and the meaning of celebrating existence for members of an ethnic group that has never had a country of its own.

You know, pretty light stuff.

Fashion and speed dating

Proudly escorted by Che and her girlfriend Blong, I admire the beautiful diversity of handmade traditional dresses and headdresses, extremely colourful works of art decorated with sewed and stitched beads and fabrics. Desirous of shining in the open air village catwalk, the level of competition among young girls parading in their distinctive ceremonial ensembles is obvious. Conscious of envious looks, Che explains that the flamboyant textiles she is wearing carry extensive information about herself, to the point they actually set up a relationship between the individual wearing them and the viewers.

The textiles — the patterning, colorations, and techniques — constitute a set of internally understood visual cues and categories that lead to tribal social recognition. No two designs are completely the same, and each outfit varies according to specific hand-woven

and embroidered patterns combinations. A true feast for the fashionista's eyes!

Around the village, teenage boys and girls form two separate lines in pairs to toss a ball back and forth to one another in an intriguing ball-throwing game. A social custom where girls usually wait for boys to come along and chat by passing the ball turns out to be a socially accepted speed-dating activity to flirt and form new relationships that may lead to marriage in the community. The turning point of the year is

the only time Hmong parents accept public romance, a traditional time for young men and women to select their future match and become acquainted by parading together, strolling up and down the rows of food vendors and getting to know each other before they decide to further pursue their courtship in private family settings.



“ NEW YEAR’S HAPPINESS AND JOY IS CONTAGIOUS HERE ”

New Year's happiness and joy is contagious here. Feasting with the Hmong community to prepare the New Year has come to be one of my most treasured experiences in Laos. A short glimpse at isolated life out in the jungle and ceremonial celebrations was a raw and honest insight into the importance of tribal traditions in the continuous struggle of this indigenous population to maintain an identity with established centuries-old political, cultural, economic and social structure.

More on www.tourismilaos.org ⓘ



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A photograph of a traditional wooden temple with a multi-tiered roof, surrounded by lush tropical vegetation and palm trees. The temple is reflected in a calm pool of water in the foreground.

Siem Reap: Temples and lost cities galore

Simon Leysen suggests a trip to Cambodia's best holy places and symbolic cities

Angelina knew. Or at least the director of *Tomb Raider* did. When looking for a truly magical setting for the movie, the ruins at Angkor Thom were a perfect fit.

The odds of finding a rather attractive heiress in tight-fitting shorts and two large calibre handguns tied to her legs are rather slim. On the other hand, it is almost certain you will be amazed by the temples and ruins of Siem Reap.

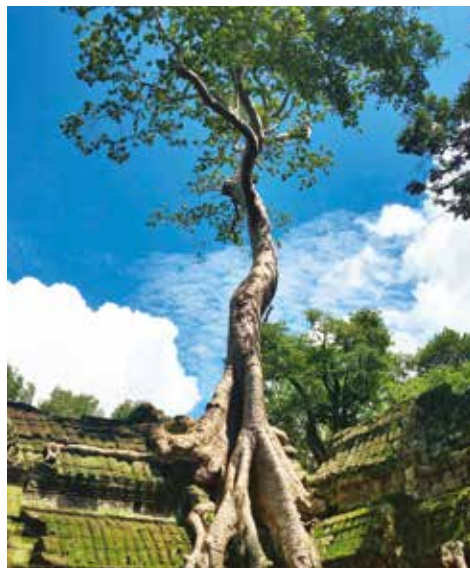
Cambodia is a truly charming place, temples set aside – the scenery, colours and especially the people make it worth the travel.

Once you leave the overly touristic centre of the city, you can stroll around the streets, discover the markets (especially the meat market if you can stomach the smells), and have some amazing food at local eateries.





“ YOU WILL BE AMAZED BY THE TEMPLES AND RUINS ”



As enjoyable as the city may be, most people visit Siem Reap for its temples and palaces.

Angkor Wat

Firstly, there is Angkor Wat, Cambodia's best-known symbol, which is featured on the country's flag and is the largest religious monument in the world. Originally built as a Hindu temple for the Khmer Empire but gradually transformed into a Buddhist temple in the 12th Century, its sheer size, amazing details and the ambiance make Angkor Wat truly special. Despite the fact that it is a popular tourist destination, it never feels crowded; there are hundreds of hallways, corridors and corners where you can be alone.

Angkor Thom

The city of Angkor Thom, of *Tomb Raider* fame, is one of the most impressive sites in



South East Asia, and it's worth spending a few hours there. **The Bayon Temple**, standing in the exact centre of the walled city, represents the intersection of heaven and earth – the enigmatic smiling faces of Avalokiteshvara and its extraordinary bas-reliefs make it both mysterious and magical.

A third stop should include **Ta Prohm**, a city left untouched by archaeologists, except for the clearing of a path for visitors and structural strengthening to stave off potential collapses. This means that the forest has slowly reclaimed the city and trees envelop every structure. Unlike Angkor Wat, this site does get busy, and it is best to go very early and bring a torch to see some of the more hidden features.

Temples and lost cities

The region of Siem Reap has ruins, temples

and lost cities galore: **Banteay Srei**, **Preah Khan** and **Banteay Kdei**, to name but a few, are all worth exploring over a few days to avoid temple fatigue.

How to get there

A range of airlines fly to Siem Reap. A pretty good option from Europe is to fly into Singapore and take a local low cost carrier (Silk Air or JetStar).

Where to stay

There are tonnes of options from youth hostels to 5-star accommodation. One does stand out. The Residence D'Angkor is a haven of tranquillity with amazing service, a superb chef and one of the most stunning pools you will ever see. A real must. ①



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Corsica: Behind the wheel

Together looks into a new promotion that offers an all-in trip around the island by car



This new car circuit takes you around Corsica from north to south, revealing the different regions of the 'Island of Beauty'. You will stay in three hotels, including three nights in Saint-Florent, two nights in Porto-Vecchio and two nights in Ajaccio.

Saint-Florent

Pointing north, Cap Corse is a rocky spine covered with scrub oak forests and vineyards. Home to sailors and fishermen, the jagged coastline boasts a succession of stunning landscapes: small sheltered harbours,

Genoese towers above hidden coves and steep mountainsides plunging into a sea of tropical waters.

Nestling in a beautiful gulf, the small seaside resort of Saint-Florent is laced with small winding streets, and there is a lively port. A short boat ride away you'll find the perfectly preserved white beaches of Agriate. For wine lovers, head inland and visit the vineyards on the sunny slopes of Patrimonio.

Porto-Vecchio

Porto Vecchio, Corsica most popular tourist



destination, owes its fame to a succession of bays with white sand and crystal blue waters lined with pine trees. The beaches of Santa Giulia, Palombaggia Rondinara and Cala Rossa are simply heavenly. It's a hip town, a must in the summer season with its small marina lined with restaurants and cafes, and the old stone town with trendy boutiques and shaded terraces.

Further south lies the fortified town of Bonifacio, an exceptional site atop limestone cliffs 60 metres high – a veritable natural rampart that affords the marina's boats protection from the Mediterranean regions' capricious winds.

Facing Bonifacio are Sardinia – only 12km away – and the Lavezzi archipelago, an unspoilt nature reserve, famous for scenery that is comparable to the Seychelles (minus the coconuts) and its exceptional seabed.

From the seafront you're only a few minutes away from the Ospedale massif and its vast pine forest that dominates the Gulf of Porto Vecchio. Many sporting activities are available: hiking, canoeing, hunting, fishing or swimming in the river.

Ajaccio

Les Iles Sanguinaires glowing at sunset make the bay of Ajaccio one of the most beautiful in the Mediterranean. The 'imperial city' owes its fame and splendour to its prodigal son, Napoleon. Many sites, streets, museums and statues recall the memory of the man who was



the first emperor of France – and beyond.

The commune occupies a sheltered position at the foot of wooded hills on the northern shore of the Gulf of Ajaccio between Gravona and the *pointe de la Parata*

Many beaches and coves border its territory and the terrain is particularly rugged in the west where the highest point is 790m (2,592ft).

The Gulf of Valinco houses a succession of coves and beaches. Propiano is a small lively resort, ideally located between the sea and the mountain.

We'll leave the final word about Corsica to far-travelled French environmentalist and writer Nicholas Hulot: "This is in my opinion one of the most beautiful islands in the world. There are, it goes without saying, islands that can compete with it, especially in the Pacific, but none offers so much beauty in so many different ways."

The package

3-star hotel accommodation with breakfast, direct return flights, airport taxes and car rental category 'B' for the entire stay. Price per person in a double room: from €819 instead of €989, valid until stocks last.

Corsica Travel is the local expert on Corsica who has regular flights with Brussels Airlines to Ajaccio, Bastia, Calvi and Figari.
www.corsicatravel.be ❶

L'Usine

Une autre idée du sport et du bien-être

OUBLIEZ TOUT CE QUE VOUS SAVEZ DES CLUBS DE SPORT, CAR EN POUSSANT LA PORTE DE L'USINE, VOUS VOUS SENTIREZ COMME DANS UN HÔTEL LUXUEUX ET DESIGN OU DANS LE PLUS ÉLÉGANT DES RESTAURANTS, NIMBÉ D'UNE LUMIÈRE APAISANTE.



LE CONCEPT DE CE CLUB DE SPORT hors normes venu de Paris débarque aujourd'hui à Bruxelles, au croisement de l'avenue Louise et de l'avenue de la Toison d'Or. Dans un immeuble magnifique et lumineux, l'architecte Philippe Barles et le designer de lumière Alain Pin ont su créer un sentiment de bien-être immédiat. Matériaux bruts et nobles, mis en lumière avec douceur et nuance, appareils de sport aux lignes pures et élégantes qui semblent sortis d'un film d'anticipation, chaque élément apporte à l'ensemble sa touche de

discrète perfection. Mais ne vous y trompez pas, L'Usine est bien un espace dédié au sport, au bien-être et à la remise en forme. Les nombreux cours proposés sont aussi variés qu'enthousiasmants, allant des plus zen aux plus cardio. Très étudiée, la lumière se fait tantôt stimulante pour vous pousser à atteindre vos objectifs, tantôt douce et relaxante pour évacuer le stress et vous ressourcer. Pour vous permettre de vous surpasser en toute sécurité, une équipe constituée de dix coachs appelés les "mécanos" est auprès de vous sept jours sur

sept. Le spa quant à lui est le lieu de tous les plaisirs avec ses hammams, ses saunas et ses bulles de repos. On y retrouve la sérénité avant d'affronter le reste de la journée. Venue de la Ville Lumière, L'Usine réinvente le bonheur de prendre du temps pour soi et nous offre une toute nouvelle vision du sport, de l'élégance, du luxe et du bien-être.

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Ile de Ré: Sea, surf and sun

Lesley Williamson discovers a small island off the Atlantic coast of France that is a surfers' paradise from early spring



With its perfect climate all year round tempered by the Gulf Stream, Ile de Ré is best enjoyed outside the busy summer months, away from the crowds.

At 85 sq km, Ile de Ré is a shade smaller than Brussels city centre, and while most holidaymakers come to sun bake on the island beaches in the summer, they are missing a trick. From its fortified capital Saint-Martin de Ré, salt marshes of Loix and sleepy villages, to spectacular beaches that range from lush pine-covered slopes to rolling sand dunes, Ile de Ré has so much to offer to capture any sporty heart that has endured a grey Belgian winter.

Spring certainly sees the island at its prettiest as the lush vegetation bursts into blossom. The island wakes up, edged with beaches of fine sand and punctuated by dunes, wild marshes and picturesque pretty towns producing stunning shades of green and distinctive scents of mimosas, laurels and fig trees in bloom.

Monks and winemakers

For a real understanding of what makes the place tick, imagine 2,600 hours of sunshine per year on the island versus our mean average of 1,504 hours in Brussels. This French island benefits from a wonderful warm climate extending from March right through to

October thanks to the effect of the Gulf Stream – in fact it is the second sunniest place in France after Corsica.

Something the Cisterian Monks quickly understood back in the Middle Ages when they settled on the island, built the Abbaye des Chateliers and planted the first vines. A forward-thinking initiative when they realized that the exceptional microclimate and sandy soil is ideal for vine-growing across some 650

hectares of the island.

It is perhaps on the way to the small village of Loix-en-Ré that the salt marshes are most noticeable with the last of six tide mills still standing amongst the salt pans. The mills were used to clean the salt, set in motion by the movement of the water. The beautifully preserved landscapes trapped between the ocean and salt flats are a real delight here, home to an exceptionally rich biodiversity of



hectares of the island. Fine wine is produced here today, as well as cognac and pineau des Charentes, an aperitif liqueur blended from white wine and cognac.

Still, this haven of tranquillity and natural beauty hasn't owed its prosperity solely to wine and spirits. The island's prized Fleur de sel – seasalt naturally harvested by hand – is still extracted from the marshes using the age-old art of evaporating seawater in open pans with traditional methods dating back to the 13th century. Ile de Ré's salt workers harvest the salt by raking the purest, whitest layer off the top to make what many consider to be the

protected fauna and flora.

A surfer's paradise

But I haven't travelled to Ile de Ré for the luxury of indulging in fine wine, enjoying spectacular bird-watching or treating myself to delicious local seafood and oysters. My priority? Fresh air, exercise and surfing. It's the beautiful turquoise waters and water-sports that draw me to Ile de Ré, actually no longer an island as such since a 3 km bridge has linked it to the neighbouring town of La Rochelle since 1988.

Ile de Ré offers just about every water-sport imaginable and you can surf to your heart's

content; try kite-surfing and wind-surfing or the newest rage, stand-up paddle surfing. The ideal position of Ile de Ré, with its southern coast turned towards the west, welcomes swells from the Atlantic's open sea. The best surfing spots are mainly located on the southern beaches, namely from east to west the beaches of Rivedoux, Les Grenettes in Sainte-Marie-de-Ré, Gouillaud in Le Bois-Plage-en-Ré, La Pergola in La Couarde-sur-Mer, Grignon in Ars-en-Ré.

On the northern coast, the best spots are found in la Conche des Baleines, Le Lizay, Le petit Bec in Les Portes-en-Ré, and Diamond Head in Saint-Clément-des-Baleines. If you are unsure where to find these waves of pleasure, ask – follow the local surfers or rely on the many professional surfing schools of the island.

With this in mind, Ile de Ré seems an obvious destination for a spring adrenalin kick and a good dose of sunshine. Just 20 minutes by car from La Rochelle airport, which has direct flights from Brussels-Charleroi from April, the island claims excellent surfing spots, a wealth of 'action holiday' escapades and more than 100 km of scenic cycling paths. A keen surfing enthusiast, the opportunity to get my wetsuit damp in the spring has dwindled significantly since I moved to Belgium. Two hours away from Brussels, I found a surfer's heaven and a friendly surfing community of locals. A place where the great wind blows.

How to get there: Direct flight from Brussels -Charleroi Airport to La Rochelle in 1h25 minutes from April from €33 return.

More on www.iledere.com

Surf school: www.re-surf.com

Kite-surf school: www.ilederekitesurf.com or www.philavent.fr

Stand-up paddle across the salt pans: www.supevasion.com

Text and photography by Lesley Williamson 1



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Bocconi: A trip to Lazio

Paul Morris pulled up a chair in an Italian restaurant that offers tradition with flair



Housed in the splendid five-star Hotel Amiga, the Bocconi serves up exceptional Italian food, at the hands of Head Chef Marco Visinoni, who discovered his passion for cooking at an early age - as a child in Italy, he helped his mother prepare the family's daily meals. His fine work is overseen by Director of Food and celebrity Chef Fulvio Pierangelini, whose rustic approach brings distinctive flair to classic Italian dishes.

We sat down in one of the cosy half-circle booths to try out the latest three-monthly special thematic menu: the tastes of the Italian Lazio region.

From the choices on the 4-course menu, I plumped for the artichokes *alla romana*. Since Lazio is the region where Rome is situated, there is a strong Roman influence throughout the menu but not exclusively - my follow-up choice was Bucatini all'amatriciana. The amatriciana sauce (from the town of Amatrice) is synonymous with the region - it is traditionally based on cured pork cheek, pecorino cheese



and tomato, and it has been declared a protected traditional dish.

I never pass up on spinach, nor fish for that matter, so I went for the Cod 'in guazzetto' (seafood mix), with spinach leaves - once more *alla romana*.

If you're the dessert type you can finish with a Ricotta crostata, cinnamon ice cream or Pangiallo, vanilla ice cream.

The great thing about themed menus like this is that you could get to taste wine from the same region that perhaps you haven't tried before. They were varied - from robusto reds to light, dry whites and perfectly accompanied each successive course.

The Hotel Amigo could not be more central, positioned nicely between the Grand Place and Mannekin Pis.

3-course menu €42 / 4-course menu €55

www.rocfortehotels.com ⓘ

AU REPOS DES CHASSEURS



Située aux abords de la forêt de Soignes, cette auberge restaurant comble de bonheur les papilles des gourmands et des amateurs de gibier. Dans son restaurant aux allures de brasserie ou sur la terrasse, une des plus belles de la capitale, vous savourerez des spécialités italiennes et françaises, comme les anguilles au vert, le foie gras, et, en saison, un grand éventail de produits de la chasse. Le restaurant propose toute l'année, le menu du chef à 24,50 € et le menu du patron à 41,50 €. De plus, l'établissement offre plusieurs espaces complémentaires tels qu'une taverne avec petite restauration l'après-midi, 6 salles de banquets ou de séminaires et un hôtel ***

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Ce restaurant, situé au coeur de la commune de Watermael-Boitsfort, propose une cuisine italienne aux saveurs du sud, un large choix de pizzas cuites au feu de bois et de délicieuses pâtes maison. En été, vous profiterez d'une vaste terrasse au soleil pour vous échapper le temps d'un repas. Chaque midi, optez pour notre lunch à 12,50 € (une entrée + un plat). Pour vos fêtes familiales telles que mariage, communion, fêtes d'anniversaires ou autre, le Ciccio Bello dispose d'une lumineuse salle de banquet, pouvant accueillir plus de 40 personnes, avec une agréable vue sur la place Wiener. De plus, l'établissement offre 6 appartements hôtel de 45 à 60 m² entièrement meublés et équipés.

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La Villa Lorraine

Colin Moors heads into leafy suburbia to dine in a very special villa

Located on the edge of the Bois de la Cambre in leafy suburbia, La Villa Lorraine has been an iconic name in gastronomy circles since the early 1950s – it retains its Michelin star on the basis of the excellent food and quality service.

Before launching into the food proper, a note about the service. From the warm welcome at the door to the waiter who brought the introductory gins and tonic, the service was pleasant and unforced yet deferred just enough to prevent it from being over-familiar. It sounds like a back-handed compliment, but many establishments overlook the importance of such a crucial part of the customer experience.

Following some delightfully light *amuses gueules* consisting of some light *crème brûlée au fois gras* on light, thin bread and some warmed, crusted *boudin noir* with a sharp apple confit, we settled in for the starter. There was, however, one more surprise before the main event that could easily have passed as a starter with no complaints from me. A well-contrasted tartare of sea bass with apple, earthy beetroot terrine and cucumber roll was served alongside a delicately poached quail's egg tucked into a beetroot foam. The sommelier then introduced himself and explained that he'd be pairing the wines for us, which led to my only slight reservation about the meal.

The *Oeufs en Meurette* were simply delightful. Billed as 'en blanc-manger', the title was crafty, disguising the fact that the egg had been reconstructed, the yolk perfectly runny and surrounded with a savoury meringue. The sauce *meurette* was the highlight of the day for me – so much so, I asked the chef for the



secret. To my surprise, he told me. The issue I had was that the sommelier had chosen a Savennières wine to bridge the starter and the fish courses, and I felt that a white didn't do justice to the wonderfully rich *meurette*. It matched the fish perfectly, however. The fish was John Dory and was perfectly cooked. I was dubious at first because it was served with whole carrots – however, these were sand-grown, which meant no sinewy fibres or 'wood', just the sweet young carrot. I sometimes enjoy having my expectations managed.

The main course fell neatly into the category of "if it isn't broken, don't fix it" with an off-menu pork and lentils combination. Pulses, beans and pork were meant to be together, and the leafy greens and buttery mashed potato were pretty much an infallible combination.

It was good to have the opportunity to chat with the chef afterwards too – he came to every table to ask how the meal was. This was when I coaxed the *meurette* sauce secret from him. No, I'm not going to tell you. You'll have to go and ask him yourself. 🍷

bulthaup

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Take Eat Easy

There was a time when takeaway meant pizza, those two-for-one deals with garlic bread thrown in. Thankfully, there are now several services that specialize in bringing you the hot meal of your choice – from your favourite restaurants, or ones you haven't tried before.

Take Eat Easy is one such service, which boasts an impressive variety of restaurants on its books, from Belgian to Pakistani to Tex-Mex and beyond. You can have it delivered to your home, to the office or even to the middle of a park – so long as a cyclist can get to you. That's right, no gas-guzzling Vespas: it's exclusively bike riders who deliver.

We wanted them to come to Chez Bernard on place Jourdan, famous for its acceptance (like others in the square) of the frites from Maison Antoine. We chose (my daughter chose) Les Super Filles du Tram from the online selection. We each clicked on our chosen burgers. And waited. And here comes perhaps the best bit: you can track your cyclists, finding out how long he or she will be and even the average road speed.

Et voila, as they say in these parts. The delivery guy showed up at the door, handed over the burgers and hopped on his bike to cycle off to save some other's soul's grumbling stomach. www.takeeateasy.be



't Kelderke

You have friends coming through to Brussels and you want to treat them to dinner on the Grand Place, but it can get very pricey. There's one place at the top end of the square that offers an affordable meal in a unique environment. It's called 't Kelderke, the Little Cellar. You go downstairs and are immediately struck by the warm brick environment of this 17th century cellar. It manages to be airy and cosy at the same time. As you sit down, you can hear the conversation resonating gently off those red and yellow bricks which form a vaulted roof that runs the length of the place.

Food-wise, there's lots of Belgian fare, including a generous steaming pot of mussels, stoemp, waterzooi, carbonnades, cheese fondues and 'Bloedpens à la Bruxelloise' (a large blood sausage). The service is attentive, and, wherever you sit, you can hear the pleasant clatter of the kitchen and the chatting of the chefs as they prepare your meal. Not into cellars? Then wait for summer and sit on the terrace with a view of the entire square.

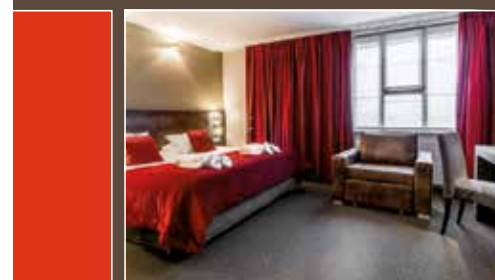
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LIFE OF
LEISURE

Wining

Summer and the buddy wines

Geoffroy van Lede at vindumois.be suggests that the summer months and red wines can be good friends

Now that winter has finally gone, we are delighted to welcome the summer and the sunny afternoons it brings. The pleasure of wine is strongly linked to people and circumstances – we are ready to switch to summery wines. Now we want to share, we want to laugh, and we want to enjoy some moments outside in nature with our friends and family. Most probably your first thought will go to rosé because it's an easy light and refreshing wine that can easily be drunk and drunk again. Guess what, there are plenty of red wines which would perfectly fit the occasion! I call them the 'buddy wines'.

Wine for buddies

These wines have come back on the market in recent years since lots of winemakers have decided to turn their backs on the barrels with a vinification and are looking for the fruit and freshness. They can be from various grapes, not just Gamay as one would intuitively think. It's mainly due to a short vinification process in stainless steel tanks or using the carbonic maceration technique.

This new trend makes it easy to drink red wines with a relatively low alcohol percentage.



Their taste is full of fruit and they have no tannins. They are based on the direct pleasure this wine offers, not on the complexity, length in the mouth, power or structure. It's right here, right now – keeping it simple. I like these wines because they are accessible to everyone. Put them on the table with a

good plate of tapas and your afternoon will be a success. Be careful, the first bottle will call for the next one!

A small selection

A small selection of these kinds of wines can be found on our webshop *le-vin-du-mois.be*.

- La luna, 100% Syrah, Bruno Duchêne, IGP Côte de vermeille. The discovery of 2015. A moment of pure pleasure. €17

- La dilettante, 100% Cabernet Franc, C&P Breton, Bourgueil. Just taste the fruit with a little refreshing acidity. €16

- Cuvée Domaine, 100% Gamay, Domaine des Poitiers, Côte Roanaise. Slightly more structure, but agreeable and fresh. Gamay as it should be. €10.50

What's On Belgium



Live Comedy Festival

International comedians gather in Belgium, many of them performing in English. The line-up includes Bill Bailey, Jimmy Carr, Reginald D. Hunter and Glen Wool.

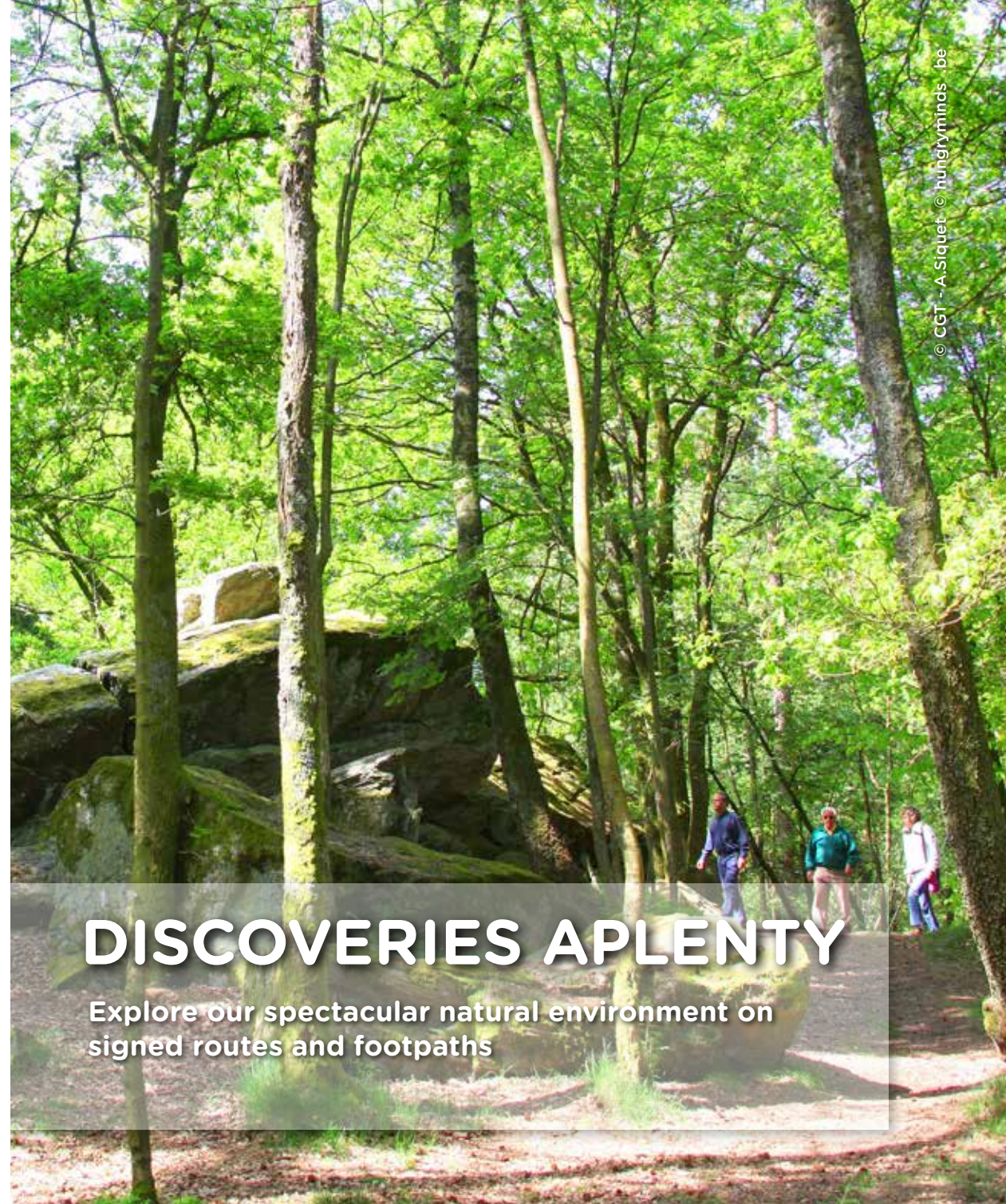
April 29-5 June. Various venues in Brussels and Antwerp. Tickets: see website
www.livecomedyfestival.be



Photo © BMA XIMEBYTTIEBERFOTOGRAFIE

XO Extrema Outdoor

A weekend filled with the best quality house, deephouse, techhouse and techno brought to you by national and international top DJs. The annual festival is a very popular pre-summer event that attracts an ever-growing line-up. This year's festival includes Loco Dice, Nina Kraviz, Seth Troxler, Maceo Plex, Jackmaster, Kolsch and Jamie Jones. **May 13-15.** Houthalen, Belgium,
www.xobelgium.be



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Informations environnementales (AR 19/03/2004) : citroen.be - * Offres valables du 01/04/2016 au 30/04/2016 sur toutes les nouvelles DS 4 (hors véhicules Business), vendues à particulier, non cumulables avec toutes autres promotions en cours et valables dans les points de vente Citroën participants.

LIFE OF LEISURE

What's on



Everything Architecture

The Brussels-based OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen brings architecture back to the essentials: with a limited set of basic rules a framework is created within which life in all its complexity can be played out. The point of departure for the exhibition Everything Architecture is the idea that each and every one of their products is a project in itself. Models, drawings and perspectives created by the architects are displayed in the antechambers of the Centre for Fine Arts, together with works of art that are related to the spirit and language of this firm of architects. **Until 29 May.** BOZAR.

€8 (€6 BOZAR-friends) - www.bozar.be

Sweeney Todd

Sweeney Todd (1979) is a contemporary work, somewhere between opera and musical. Composer Stephen Sondheim and librettist Hugh Wheeler reworked the famous urban legend 'The Demon Barber of Fleet Street' to transform it into a funny and slightly horrible opera about revenge. Behind the tragic love story one finds some moral questions on the dark logic of capitalism and the razor edge boundary between life and death.

The composer famously said that the work "is a musical when presented as a musical, and an opera, when produced by an opera house". **14-30 June.** La Monnaie Tour & Taxis marquee. Tickets: see website www.lamonnaie.be



Displaced: Women refugees and asylum seekers in the EU

The European Parliament is hosting a temporary exhibition "Displaced: Women Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the EU". As the number of refugees in Europe continues to climb, an increasing share of those fleeing their countries are women and children. Since the beginning of 2016, women and children account for 55% of those reaching Greece to seek asylum in the EU (source: UNHCR). During their journey, women are particularly vulnerable and are often subject to gender based violence and discrimination. The European Parliament therefore calls for a gender perspective in this sensitive area and gender sensitivity in all aspects of asylum policies. The photographs provide a powerful reminder of the unique challenges faced by women refugees. **Until 1 June.** Parliamentarium - The European Parliament's Visitors' Centre europarl.europa.eu/parliamentarium



Jazz nights at the Bar Amigo

On Friday and Saturday evenings from 19h30 till 20h30 join us for a touch of jazz at the Bar Amigo in the Hotel Amigo – with vintage cocktails to wash it all down.

There is a varied programme for the rest of April, including the Pascal Michaux Duo, Guitar and piano in freedom and Ivory Druss and his Sharp Keys. As fans of jazz, the Bar Amigo will also be participating in the 21th edition of the Brussels Jazz Marathon.

For reservations: please call 02 547 47 19 or email cferrigno@roccofortehotels.com



Millenium Orchestra – Mozart and the Emperor

The evening spotlights is on Mozart, in a programme that includes some of his greatest masterpieces, including the celebrated *Symphony No. 35*, the 'Haffner', which was the first of his Viennese symphonies. At the helm is Leonardo García Alarcón, renowned for his musicological research, who has appeared at BOZAR on many occasions at the head of the Chamber Choir of Namur or of 'his' Cappella Mediterranea. This time, he conducts the Millenium Orchestra, a relatively new Belgian baroque orchestra. **3 May.** BOZAR Henry Le Boeuf Hall. **€10 to €42** - www.bozar.be



Brussels Jazz Marathon

Once more the impressive annual free jazz festival hits town. There won't be a corner in the capital where you can't hear the sweet sounds of jazz, indoors in all manner of music venues and clubs and cafés. And outdoors, principally on the Grand-Place of Brussels, Sablon, Place Sainte-Catherine and Place Fernand Cocq in Ixelles.

The Mini Marathon offers a great programme where families can discover music and jazz in an amusing way on May 23 from 11h00 on the Sablon.

Swingin' Brussels is back for everyone infected by the 'dance & swing fever'. On Friday 22, Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May, this huge retro-jazz-party will take place at La Tentation, Brussels. Don't be shy, put on your dancing shoes and throw yourself around the dance floor!

The BIP, base for Brussels-Capital region, will be transformed into The House of Jazz, with a jazz stage, DJ after parties and two rockabilly bands.

Brussels Jazz Marathon: **20- 22 May.** Various Brussels venues. **Free**
www.brusselsjazzmarathon.be

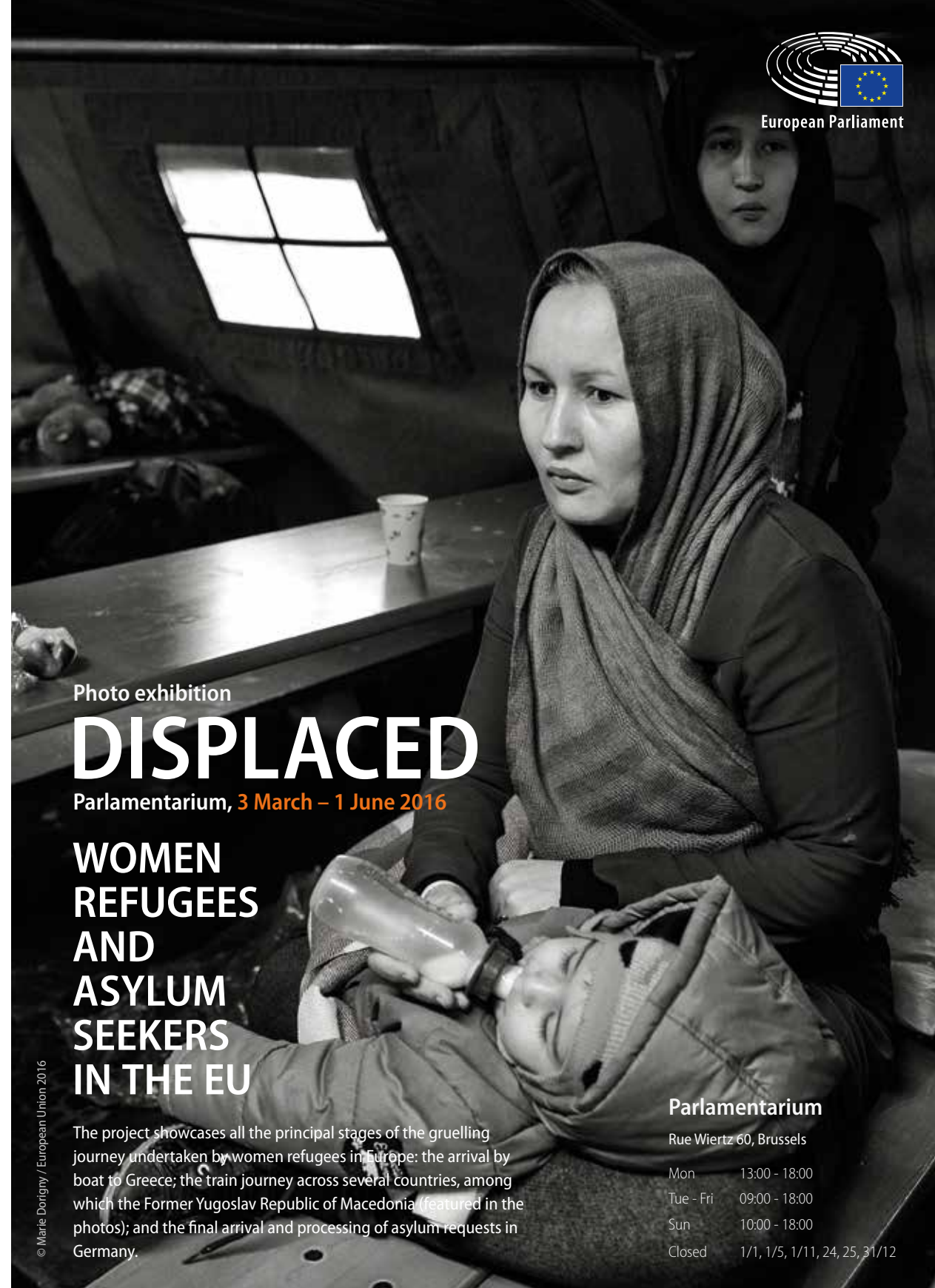


Photo exhibition

DISPLACED

Parlamentarium, **3 March – 1 June 2016**

WOMEN REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN THE EU

The project showcases all the principal stages of the gruelling journey undertaken by women refugees in Europe: the arrival by boat to Greece; the train journey across several countries, among which the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (featured in the photos); and the final arrival and processing of asylum requests in Germany.

Parlamentarium

Rue Wiertz 60, Brussels

Mon 13:00 - 18:00

Tue - Fri 09:00 - 18:00

Sun 10:00 - 18:00

Closed 1/1, 1/5, 1/11, 24, 25, 31/12

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LIFE OF
LEISURE

What's on international

Prague Spring

7+1 masters of Czech glass

Exhibition of seven (or more precisely eight) masters of Czech glass follows up on the exhibition in 1983, which was organized by Meda Mládek at the American Craft Museum in New York (now MAD - Museum of Arts and Design), with the most prominent personalities who significantly contributed to the emancipation of glass as a sovereign material of free artistic creation: Stanislav Libenský and Jaroslava Brychtová, René Roubíček, Věra Lišková, Jiří Hrcuba, Václav Cigler and Vladimír Kopecký. This New York show is considered by many as a turning point which presented the contemporary Czech glassmaking scene to American audience and contributed to its phenomenal success in the USA. **31 May-4 September.** Museum Kampa, Prague.

www.museumkampa.cz



Prague Drinks Wine

This is third year of the Prague Drinks Wine (Praha pije vino) Festival, which will take place at the New Town Hall and the nearby Karlovo náměstí square. It will be a unique gathering of more than seventy winemakers from Central Europe. It echoes similar gatherings by winemakers of the former Hapsburg Empire used to organize regularly before World War One. Taste more than 400 different wines produced by small family wineries from Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia, Italy and Moravia. If you're a fan of original, quality wines, then don't miss it. **27-28 May.** Prague - www.prague.eu/en

Cranach from All Sides

The exhibition Cranach from All Sides will present the German Renaissance painter and his circle not only via unique works from the collections of the National Gallery in Prague but also via the most interesting results of research realized by a team of experts from the Cranach Digital Archive Düsseldorf, headed by Gunnar Heydenreich. The group of the Prague works linked with the artist's name is extraordinarily heterogeneous and includes very attractive and popular scenes such as The Old Fool, Christ and the Adulteress and The Original Sin (Adam and Eve). **24 June-24 January 2017.** National Gallery, Prague
www.ngprague.cz



Paris culture



Photo © Ville de Dieppe - B. Legros

The open-air studio – Impressionists in Normandy

This exhibition presents an ensemble of some fifty or so prestigious artworks—from both private collections and major American and European museums—that retrace the history of Impressionism, from the forefathers of the movement to the Great Masters.

The 19th century saw the emergence of a new pictorial genre: 'plein-air' or outdoor landscape painting. This pictorial revolution, born in England, would spread to the continent in the 1820s and over the course of a century, Normandy would become the preferred destination of many avant-garde painters.

The region's stunning and diverse landscapes, coupled with the wealth of its architectural heritage, had much to please artists. Furthermore, the growing fashion for sea-bathing attracted many wealthy individuals and families who could easily access Normandy by either boat or stage-coach, and later by train. Its popularity was also increased due to its enviable location – halfway between London and Paris, the two art capitals of the period.

Until 25 July. Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris.

www.musee-jacquemart-andre.com



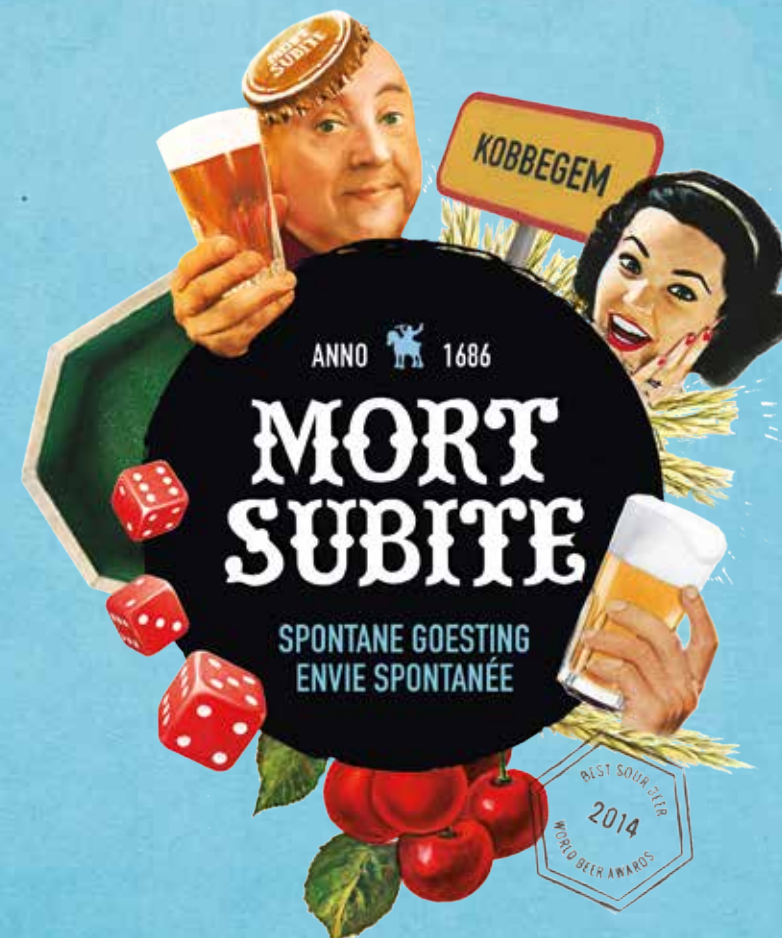
Photo © Paula-Modersohn-Becker-Stiftung, Brême

Paula Modersohn-Becker – An Intensely Artistic Eye

The Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris is presenting France's first monographic exhibition of the work of Paula Modersohn-Becker (1876–1907). Little-known to the French public, she is nonetheless a major modern art figure. Despite a brief career – a mere ten years – this artist has left us an extremely rich legacy, revealed in this exhibition by some one hundred paintings and drawings. In addition, excerpts from letters and diaries provide an understanding of the intimate link between her art and her personal life.

Uncompromisingly modern and ahead of her time, Modersohn-Becker displays a boldly personal aesthetic. If her subjects – including self-portraits, mothers and children, landscapes and still lifes – are typical of the period, her way of addressing them is eminently original. Her works stand out as a powerfully expressive use of colour, extreme sensitivity and an astonishing capacity to capture the very essence of her models. **Until 21 August.** Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris.

www.mam.paris.fr/en ❶



Bier met liefde gebrouwen, drink je met verstand.
Une bière brassée avec savoir se déguste avec sagesse.

Cinema

Picturenose.com's **James Drew** takes his regular look at upcoming films in local cinemas



Risen

An interesting take on 'The Greatest Story Ever Told' from director Kevin Reynolds (*Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991)) – Joseph Fiennes stars as Clavius, a Roman tribune who, after crushing a Zealot revolution, is charged by Pontius Pilate (Peter Firth) to investigate the rumors of a risen Jewish Messiah and to locate the missing body of Yeshua (Jesus of Nazareth) (Cliff Curtis), in order to quell an imminent uprising in Jerusalem following Christ's alleged resurrection. Failing to find the body, Clavius bumps into none other than the risen Yeshua – upon deciding to help Yeshua's followers and witnessing the ascension of Yeshua into heaven, Clavius struggles with his own new-found faith. *107 mins.*

The Lady in the Van

A 2015 British comedy-drama film directed by Nicholas Hytner (*The Crucible* (1996)) and written by Alan Bennett, *The Lady in the Van* is an adaptation of Bennett's already much-acclaimed play. It stars Maggie Smith as Mary Shepherd and Alex Jennings as Bennett, telling the true story of the elderly woman, Shepherd, who lived in a dilapidated van on Bennett's driveway in London for 15 years. Poignant and frequently hilarious, you're unlikely to catch a better British film this year. *104 mins.*

Men & Chicken

Men & Chicken (*Mænd og Høns*) is a 2015 Danish comedy film directed by Anders Thomas Jensen (*Election Night* (1988)), which was shown in the Vanguard section of the 2015 Toronto International Film Festival and was also shortlisted by Denmark to be their submission for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film at the 2016 Academy Awards. Two brothers (Gabriel (David Dencik) and Elias (Mads Mikkelsen)) are informed by their father on his deathbed that they are in fact both adopted and discover that their biological father is a geneticist who specializes in stem-cell research. To find out about their mother and to meet their biological father the brothers go to the Island of Ork – fun and games await them. *104 mins. In Danish.*

The Endless River

Gilles (Nicolas Duvauchelle) and Tiny (Crystal-Donna Roberts) are both mourning recent deaths. Their grief is holding them together, but there are darker truths that connect their losses. This South African drama film, directed by Oliver Hermanus (*Shirley Adams* (2009)), was the first South African film to be nominated for the Golden Lion in the main competition section of the 72nd Venice International Film Festival. *106 mins.*

More reviews on picturenose.com 

WHAT HOTEL?



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CONTEMPORARY APARTMENTS



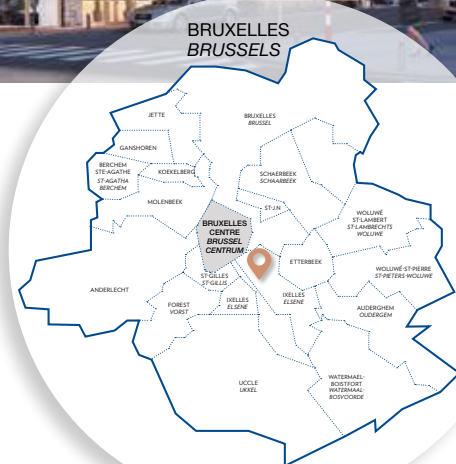
KEY FEATURES

- ▶ Balcony or terrace
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- ▶ Semi-massive oak floor
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- ▶ Video parlophone
- ▶ Ecological green roofs
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- ▶ Personal basement
- ▶ Underground parking (optional)

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L'abbaye de la Cambre and its' «École supérieure des arts visuels», **the Ixelles ponds**, the former broadcasting building Flagey (Art Deco) and numerous other Art Nouveau buildings, the two main universities **Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB)** and the **Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)** adding a youthful touch to its vibrant neighborhoods.



SHOPPING AND RESTAURANTS: THE PLACE TO BE

Just a few yards from Place Fernand Cocq (town hall) **Élysée is surrounded by the trendy neighborhoods of Flagey, Saint-Boniface, Louise, Porte de Namur and Toison d'Or.** The residents will be well connected to the public transport system (**bus, tram, metro, Luxemburg station at 1 km**).

THE ÉLYSÉE PROJECT

URBAN LIVING IN A QUIET PRIVATE RESIDENCE

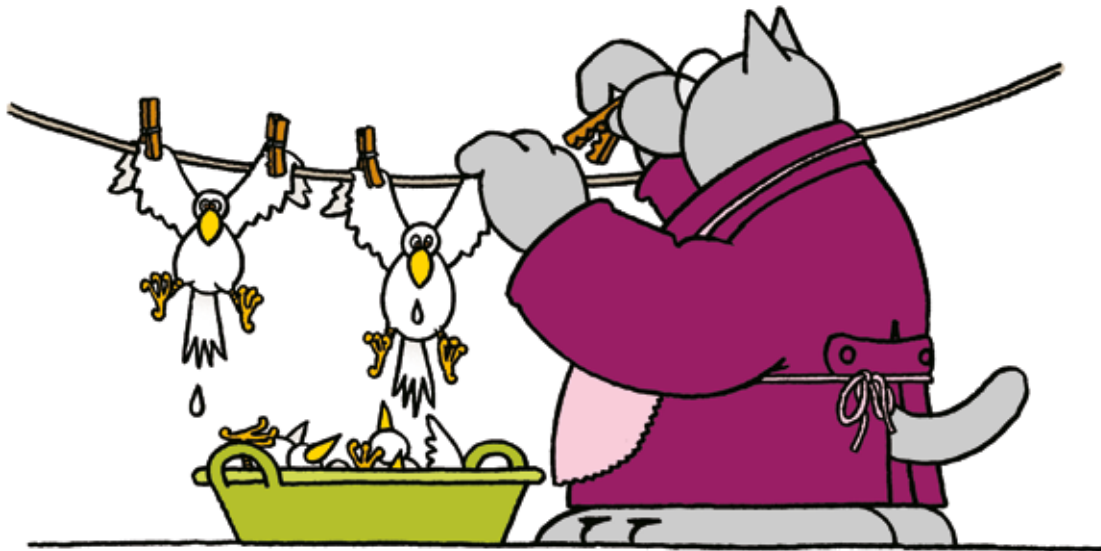
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