

# Together

MARCH #106

magazine

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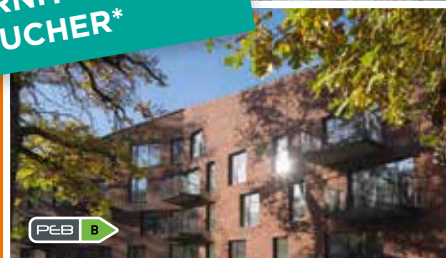






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## Editor's LETTER

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

# WALK, DON'T RUN

It's puzzling enough being a child without grownups – parents, teachers, neighbours, aunts and uncles – giving us some very conflicting advice. 'Walk, don't run' is a very sensible piece of advice since there is a good chance that we may get hurt racing helter-skelter through the school's corridors or up and down the stairs in the house. Then you're in the park, and you still can't run and you overhear one of the adults of the species saying 'It's good for them here, they can let their hair down'. So long as we don't run. The next minute, they're asking 'Can you run to the shop, we're out of eggs... but don't run back or you'll break them'.

Conflicting advice, am I right or am I right? When my daughter was young, I clearly inherited the disease, extolling the same virtues of walking, not running. My mother had an expression: 'That won't get the baby fed'. In other words, 'Look lively', or 'Run, don't dilly dally'. It's a lose-lose situation for a youngster.

These days, life is lived at breakneck speed, a sort of 'Do it yesterday, today's too late' ethos. I remember reading a story about a very well-off English woman whose husband had passed away. She decided to cross India - on foot. She hired local help and set off on a trek to discover the sub-continent. After a few days, the Indian handlers and guides sat down in a field. Impatient to move on, she asked 'What are you doing?' And the head of the group said: 'We're waiting for our souls to catch up with us...'

### Paul Morris

Editor



## ON THE COVER



Michelle Dockery  
in life after *Downton*

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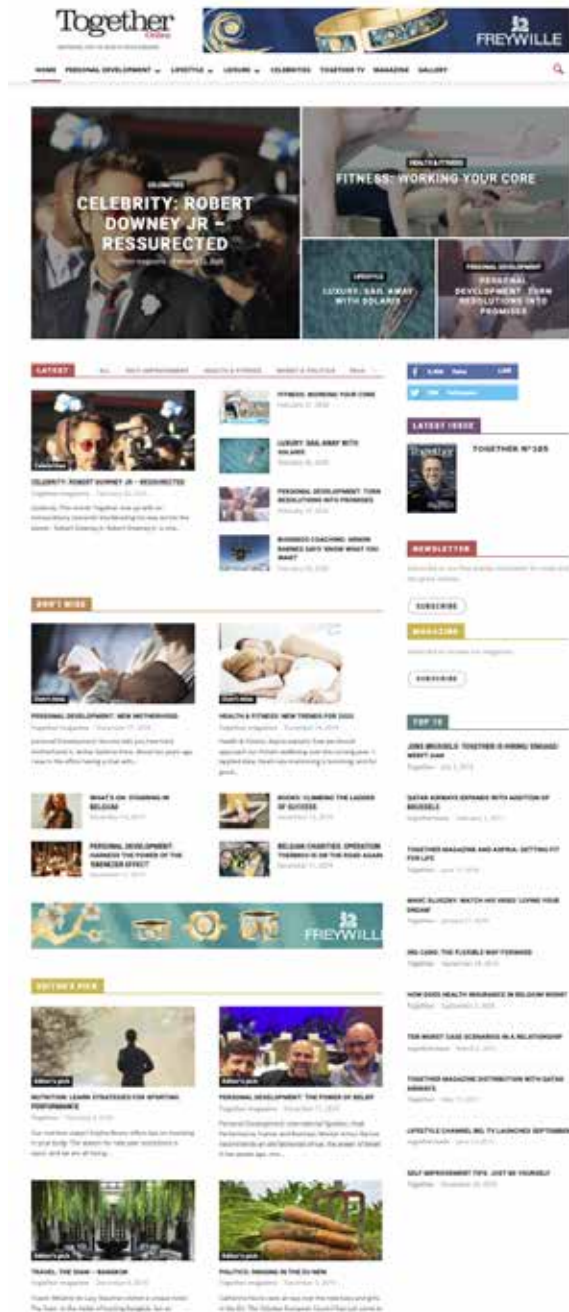
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And happy reading!

## Interview: Robert Downey Jr

This month *Together* met up with an extraordinary character blockbusting his way across the planet. Downey Jr. is one of the most extraordinary men in Hollywood, whose own story could well be the subject of a biopic. After meeting his current wife, he resurrected his career from the wasteland of drug addiction and has since become one of the most successful actors in the world.

## Personal Development: Know what you want

In our Business coaching pages, **Arnon Barnes** wants us to be very specific. If there is one thing I can't stress enough, it's the importance of setting clear, very specific and intentional goals. Therefore, in the last quarter of 2019 I took the time to reflect, get crystal clear on my business goals for 2020, and I push my clients to do the same.

## Nature: Agriculture's Muddy Waters

**Jean o'Connor** looks at the agricultural industry's solemn duty to the planet. When we think about environmental threats to the planet, tractors, ploughs and vegetables are rarely the first thing that comes to mind. And yet, agriculture is the single most destructive force to biodiversity. Having said that, agriculture is also the most powerful tool we have in the fight against poverty. 🌱

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# Starring in Belgium



## **Roosbeef + Vic Willems**

Roosbeef is back. Back from Kentucky and bearing an album that richly rewards our patience. With fourth studio album *Lucky* - being back is also a homecoming for Roos Rebergen. The hiatus since the previous album wasn't uneventful. She visited her musical source and lived amongst the bluegrass for two years. She found more than music there. Behind the Appalachians, she learned to better understand the American song and heard tales that now have echoes on *Lucky*. **20 March**. AB Club. Tickets: **€18**

[www.abconcerts.be/en](http://www.abconcerts.be/en)



## **The Jesus and Mary Chain + Rev Magnetic**

The Jesus and Mary Chain are a Scottish alternative rock band formed in 1983, revolving around song writing brothers Jim and William Reid. Independent label Creation Records released their first single *Upside Down* in 1984. Debut album *Psychocandy* was released to critical acclaim in 1985. The band released five more studio albums before disbanding in 1999. They reunited in 2007. The band's first studio album since 1998, *Damage and Joy*, came out in 2017.

**30 March**. AB Main Hall. Tickets: **€39**

[www.abconcerts.be/en](http://www.abconcerts.be/en)



## **Ziggy Alberts - Nathan Ball**

Ziggy Alberts is an Australian singer and songwriter from Sunshine Coast, Queensland. He is best known for his studio album *Laps Around the Sun*, which peaked at number 9 on the ARIA Charts in November 2018. British singer-songwriter Nathan Ball returns to Europe after an Australian tour to premiere Ziggy Alberts when he comes to Europe. Nathan will come to interpret his folk songs, sublimated by his soothing and emotional voice. **29 March**.

Botanique, Orangerie. Tickets: **€18**

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## CHARITY

# Charity

We look at two charitable initiatives worthy of our support

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### Glisse En Coeur – Skiing for an extraordinary school

Back for its 13th edition, Glisse En Coeur is a runaway success based on its original concept: a snow marathon in music, featuring the stars. The common challenge is skiing in teams in a 24- hour, non-stop relay (each edition is almost the equivalent of a world tour that is carried out on the Grand Bornand slopes), and above all, winning the race to benefit, this year, Mon Ecole Extra-Ordinaire (MeeO). This unique experimental structure in France allows the schooling of around fifty children with various autisms and learning disabilities, who still have a high potential but are prevented from attending conventional schooling. The objective of MeeO is to allow its pupils to follow a specialized educational path that is adapted, structured and individualized to fulfil their needs.



living, to learn in all areas, and also helps parents to allow them to live again. Differentiated education is the first foundation of the innovative MeeO model. It allows the implementation of tools for understanding, memorization, organization of learning, structuring of space and time to acquire the common foundation of knowledge.

The winner in all categories of this 13th edition will be the team that has collected the most donations. To meet this challenge, each team has to activate its networks and multiply its initiatives, while at the same time encouraging relatives, friends and professional peers to make a donation to its team or its runners.

Education is a fundamental right. However, too many children are still deprived of it in France. Since 2015, the association Mon Ecole Extra-Ordinaire (MeeO) has implemented an innovative model for children with neurodevelopmental disorders (autism, learning disabilities, attention disorders) in order to offer them a specialized school. MeeO allows children to rediscover the joy of

The computer tool is often invaluable for some students. A 'gateway' structure towards the mainstream school system, MeeO is designed as a place to live and a school environment at the service of students with special educational needs. Each child is taken into account within this adapted initiative - for all and according to the needs of each. In September, 52 young people, including 22 college students aged 11 to 16, found their way back to school, hoping to see their future built and their dreams come true, by benefiting from a benevolent environment with differentiated pedagogy, recognized crucially by the Regional Health Agency.

[www.2020.glisseencoeur.com](http://www.2020.glisseencoeur.com) ⓘ



# Eric Boschman

## Eric Boschman's Wine Man Show

This show seriously made the French laugh at the Avignon Festival in Quebec,

and will be performing for one evening only in Brussels, at Cirque Royal, presented by Olivier Leborgne and Gerald Watelet.

The show tells the story of the world through wine, and is being performed for the benefit of several good causes. All of the box office receipts will go to the charities that will be presented during the evening.

Because laughing is good, but supporting by laughing is much better!

### 1. Your Evening?

- 5 wines in the show = 5 moments for 6 ASBLs
- 5 sommeliers (including 1 world's best sommelier and 2 Europe's best sommeliers)
- a panel of prestigious guests
- more than 150 students from the hotel school Institut Notre Dame of Fleurus providing the service
- Scottish musicians, Portuguese singers
- 6 cheques to be presented to the 6 ASBLs
- 600 bottles of wine, 1,700 glasses, 2,400 zakouskis
- 5 Volvo limousines
- Show prohibited for children under 16

### 2. Friends?

- Sandrine Dans, alias "Nénette de Compète"
- Olivier Leborgne and Gérald Watelet, the two masters of ceremony
- Eric Baumard, vice-world champion of sommeliers



- Serge Dubs, Best Sommelier in the World
- Philippe Bourguignon, the godfather of sommeliers
- Bernd Kreis, best sommelier in Europe
- Kris Lismont, president of the Belgium Gilde of Sommeliers, best sommelier in Belgium

### 3. Objectives?

All of the ticket sales will be donated to six associations:

- Sport2be by MW Fund organizes the supervision of free bi-weekly sports transfers for 300 young people for one year.
  - Tous Ensemble pour Léa helps children who have had transplants or are awaiting transplants with their medical follow-up.
  - Tom Scott & Company fights for the promotion, enhancement and social inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities.
  - Objectif Ô is dedicated to the construction and installation of a water distribution network in Lolmolek in the Samburu region (Kenya).
  - Solidarité Grands Froids would like to buy an equipped kitchen for the new Women's Day Center.
  - Team Bellin is an innovative community and platform whose mission is to create an action plan allowing people to overcome their handicaps. It works in partnership with coaches, companies, new technologies, therapists and health experts, to provide concrete projects, all of which have been tried by disabled athlete Sébastien Bellin. **25 March.** Cirque Royal.
- [www.ericboschman.be](http://www.ericboschman.be) 



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# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

*Once every year I take an elite group of business owners on a Safari Leadership Experience*

PERSONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

Fitness

## Going clean is this year's detox

**Kate Cracknell**, Wellbeing Expert at Aspria says: 'Detox? It's so last year!'



**T**his year, the buzzword is 'clean' – clean eating, clean therapy, clean products, clean mindset.

Where detox focuses on a finite period of cleansing for your mind and body, purging yourself of the toxins that lie within – from caffeine to stress to lactic acid – the 'clean' philosophy is built around a more sustainable approach to healthier living.

It's about prevention and maintenance rather than cure.

### How to eat clean

Where a detox diet might see you sipping lemon-infused hot water, or shunning meals in favour of freshly squeezed vegetable juices, eating clean is about real food. What matters here is the *quality* of the food you put into your body.

It's about eating simply, choosing good, real food rather than food stuffs that are produced commercially. Lean protein, wholegrain carbohydrates, plenty of fresh vegetables. If you can choose organic, so much the better.





As part of this, we advocate cooking for yourself from scratch: it doesn't have to take a lot of time and the benefits are huge. It ensures you know exactly what's in all of your meals, allows you to cook food in a healthy way, and of course allows you to avoid all the sugar, salt and hydrogenated fats that are so often hidden in processed foods.

#### Choosing clean therapies

Most people think of detox when they think of clean spa treatments: detox wraps, body massages, scrubs and so on.

However, although all of these are great and help cleanse the body and skin, they are mainly created to support detox or weight-loss programmes, medication clean-outs or a general internal cleanse.

Meanwhile, many treatments are on offer that

can promote a holistic, 360° clean approach to wellbeing, and that have a broad range of benefits. Most Ayurvedic and holistic therapies originated from sourcing natural, clean products, for example, while mindfulness techniques and energy-balancing rituals can aid clarity of body and mind. Look out for treatments including aromatherapy massages and facials, *lomi lomi* massage, *abhyanga* massage and body wraps among others.

## “ A MORE SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO HEALTHIER LIVING ”

#### How to identify clean products

When you have a treatment in an Aspria Spa, you can be guaranteed that the products we use are all 'clean' – and that's because we've chosen a

product house, Espa, that has the same ethos as us in this respect. None of Espa's products are allowed to fall below 98% natural ingredients, with many hitting 100%.



The list of ingredients it has committed to *never* using is therefore also very useful. From synthetic colours and fragrances to parabens, silicone, SLS and SLES - these are the ingredients you should look out for and avoid if purchasing your own homeware products in the shops or online.

#### Creating a clean mindset

A clean mindset is perhaps the most complex concept to grasp, but in a nutshell, it's about uncluttering your mind, learning to give yourself some vital moments of mental and emotional peace.

Those moments can look different for each of us; yours could be time out in the spa, participating in a mind-body class, enjoying 15 minutes of meditation or simply unwinding before bed by relaxing in a candle-lit aromatherapy bath. It could equally be a high-intensity circuits, boxing or indoor cycling class, if what you


need is to blow the cobwebs away and rid yourself of the stresses of the day – if that's the way you find you're able to step away from everything.

And what it will almost always be, will be time away from your devices; these might put the world at our fingertips, but they inevitably ensure stress isn't too far behind!

Ultimately, in our increasingly busy lives, it's so easy to let our minds become

## “ THE SAME ETHOS AS US IN THIS RESPECT ”

overwhelmed – but if that happens, we suffer physically too. A clean mindset is about scrambling back time for ourselves, in the interests of our holistic wellbeing.

*For more great wellbeing advice – tips on nutrition, exercise and other lifestyle changes to keep you on top form – read more on [www.aspria.com](http://www.aspria.com)* 



# Wither or whither your resolutions?

In part two of his advice on promises  
**Matthew Cossolotto** says try again



**L**ast month in *Together* (see *Turn your resolutions into promises* on the website), I urged readers not to give up on their New Year's resolutions. I recommended they turn those resolutions into New Year's promises. Why? Because resolutions simply don't work and a promise is much more powerful.

The word 'resolution' itself begs to be ignored. And year-in, year-out that's exactly what happens. We cross our fingers behind our backs, figuratively, knowing we're unlikely to follow through on our resolutions. So, I say stop crossing your fingers and start crossing your heart. In other words, make a few New Year's promises.

As a kid growing up in the United States, we used to follow a promise with this catchy,

painful-sounding rhyme: "Cross my heart and hope to die. Stick a needle in my eye." That never failed to get my attention. For a child, that rhyme drove home the message that making a promise was serious business.

I'm here to tell you that making and keeping promises is not just for kids. It's a serious business for adults too. Here's an example of the power of a promise in action. A few years ago, during a radio interview about the power of promises, an elementary school teacher called in to the show. She described a meaningful encounter she had with one of her students. The teacher had promised the class that they would take a field trip on a specific day. The teacher's schedule later became crowded, and she told the class they would have to skip the field trip.

Then one of her students said: "But you promised!" The teacher was taken aback. The little girl was right. Kids seem to know on a gut level how important promises are. The teacher *had* promised. And as I am fond of pointing out: you can *change* a goal or a resolution, but you can only *break* a promise. Most people are loath to break their promises. So, the teacher relented and the class went on the field trip after all. And the teacher felt much better because she kept her promise.

## Take the promise challenge

According to Hannah Arendt: "Promises are the uniquely human way of ordering the future." I believe this is true because making a promise engages your heart in the process. Making a promise to someone you care about makes you accountable to someone else in a special way. And your integrity is definitely on the line with a promise.

In *The Power of a Promise* and in my speaking programs, I issue what I refer to as The Promise Challenge. It's a challenge to individuals to take a hard look at your goals, your hopes and dreams, all the items on your wish lists and buckets lists and resolutions. Then decide which ones are important enough to you that you're willing to make a promise to achieve. Which ones are you willing to put your integrity on the line for? Once you've made that decision, you're ready to take the plunge, to make a heartfelt promise to someone you care about. You're ready to use those two magic words "I Promise" to seal the deal and change the direction or trajectory of your life.

And so, this year, I urge you to take The Promise Challenge. Turn a few of your goals or resolutions into heartfelt promises and reap the rewards. Taking the Promise Challenge will answer the question: Wither or whither your resolutions? Will your resolutions simply wither on the vine as in past years?

Whither will they go? Where will your resolutions lead you?

## Seven tips for making and keeping promises

I hope these seven tips will help you turn a few of your 2020 New Year's resolutions into New Year's promises. Bear in mind, however, that these tips are not limited to reinforcing your resolutions. They can be used throughout the year to help you achieve any important goal or desire. Note that this list is intentionally spare. Just two words for each tip, making them easy to remember.

## "YOUR INTEGRITY IS DEFINITELY ON THE LINE"

**1. Start Small:** Get started by identifying and reaching a couple of relatively small, quickly accomplished goals or resolutions. This builds your achievement 'muscles' and boosts your goal-reaching confidence. It's empowering to get into

the habit of keeping promises. You probably have some really big goals, and you might be tempted to turn them into promises. I just want to caution you again not to bite off more than you can chew. Take it slow to begin with. It's better to start with more manageable promises and work your way up to bigger goals after you've kept your word several times.

As part of a promise to lose weight and become more physically fit, you could consider making smaller promises, such as 'do five or 10 push-ups every day for a month'. Or 'walk 15 minutes every day'. Make sure you choose realistic, doable goals. Don't begin with a promise that's too much of a stretch. Start small to establish the habit of making and keeping promises.

**2. Commit Emotionally:** Make a promise to someone you really care about, be it yourself, another person, or God or some other deity. And be sure to say the two magic words: I promise. This is essential. The poet Samuel Coleridge said: "What comes from the heart goes to the heart." I believe





what differentiates a promise from a goal or an objective is the heart factor. Make sure you commit emotionally – put your heart into it and you're virtually certain to keep your promise.

**3. Be Specific:** Specificity generates electricity! You can't get energized by, or committed to, vague generalities. Trying to fulfil vague promises is like trying to hit a moving target – an exercise in frustration. An effective promise is a specific promise. Instead of making a vague promise to lose weight, determine specifically what weight you want to see register on your scale, and by what specific date. Here's where you can turn a few specific, concrete goals into heartfelt promises.

**4. Be Selective:** After you've made and kept a few smaller promises (see Tip #1), it's time to up your game. Be selective here. A well-chosen promise can define your life's work, your passion and your mission in life. Pick just one or two important goals. Don't over-promise. Too many items on your

promise list can be overwhelming and could undermine your confidence and lead to backsliding and disempowerment. The 1st Century (B.C.) Syrian poet, Publilius Syrus, said it well: "Never promise more than you can perform."

**5. Write It:** A written promise, signed into law by your own hand, is much more binding and powerful than a verbal promise. Writing down all of your promises, even if you only make a few of them, will help you keep your word. The act of writing itself helps to clarify the promise. It helps to make it concrete and real. Particularly if you incorporate the two magic words 'I promise' at the beginning of each promise. It's essential that you do so.

**6. Share It:** If you really want to increase your chances of keeping your promise, make it public! Hold a promise-making ceremony of some kind and tell several people about you at the same time. A great idea is to announce a personal empowerment promise on a special day, such as your birthday. Instead of making a wish and blowing out the candles,

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EMPOWERING ”**

**Where I shape  
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Nikita, aged 18

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try making a promise and let your friends and loved ones know about it. Make use of social media like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Post the promise on your blog or website. The more people you tell about your promise, the more likely you'll keep your word. Sharing your promise with one person or many is a way to call in reinforcements – witnesses and supporters. Sharing elicits caring and support from those who know about your promise.

**7. Follow Through:**

Always remember, a promise is a promise. When you make a promise, your integrity is on the line. You must follow through. You should make a promise to keep your promises. Whether you make the promise to yourself, to someone you care about, or to God or some other deity, a promise brings with it a heart-centred, emotion-charged power that increases the likelihood that you'll keep your word.

As Christopher Robin said to his friend Pooh Bear: "Promise me you'll always remember. You're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem and smarter than you think." Those words of encouragement from A.A. Milne underscore the empowering nature of making a heartfelt promise. When it comes to keeping promises, we are all braver than we



believe, stronger than we seem, and smarter than we think.

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**“ MAKE SURE  
YOU CHOOSE  
REALISTIC,  
DOABLE GOALS ”**

# Changing what's inside

Intuitive healer and therapist **Katarina Winslow** asks: What is healing?



I remember about ten years ago, when my healing gift began to get acknowledged, people said that maybe I shouldn't use the word 'healing' - people will be scared off. It was well-intentioned; they wanted more people to understand how I could help and guide them.

I was a bit reluctant to take people's advice, but I like to believe that I still listened and was moderate in using this, for some reason, negatively charged word 'healing'. It is a paradox that we live in a world where a word that stands for the process of making or becoming sound and healthy again is alienating and shameful.

Today, I am grateful that the word healing has become accepted by the establishment

and even trendy to talk about. Thanks to the healing gift I was given, I did not only meet resistance, but I also had some time to reflect over what healing actually is. And the words that came to me to sum up what healing is can be expressed in its purest form as: "Healing is the cleansing of the illusion that you are anything but love."

Last spring, I spoke at a big consciousness gathering in Caen, France, at the eDays (Evolution Days), and, just before the opening of the doors, a woman asked me: "What is healing, actually?" There and then, I had to think again and to squeeze the essence out of what healing really is. Wayne W. Dyer said: "When you squeeze an orange, you'll always get orange juice to come out. What comes out is what's inside. The same logic



Self-help

applies to you: when someone squeezes you, puts pressure on you, or says something unflattering or critical, out of you comes anger, hatred, bitterness, tension, depression, or anxiety - that is what's inside. If love and joy are what you want to give and receive, change your life by changing what's inside."

With this in mind, you could say that if healing had happened to you, when you squeeze yourself what would come out would be 'the truth'. The most absolute and most beautiful truth of You.

That is, when you have healed yourself the one thing still standing is love, because it is the truth of who you are. You are love at the core of your being, no matter how many wounded layers you are walking around with in life: anger, bitterness, fear, emotional and physical pain, depression, sadness and remorse. Behind it all, there is the most beautiful part of you: love.

You just need to heal from the thorns of life to be able to reconnect with your authentic nature, and that is what healing is. Healing is to remember who you truly are and let go of the pain you carry so that you can be free of any imposed way of being, any false belief of self. Things such as 'I am not good enough', 'I am not intelligent enough', 'I am not

beautiful enough', or 'I am not good at anything'. The list of what kind of false beliefs we can collect

is endless, due to our parents, partners, teachers, friends, society and even colleagues. We are all wounded and coloured by the painful experiences we have suffered - healing is to let go of the little 'black box' of pain in our subconsciousness. Open it up and look at the truth of your pain, the truth about yourself, the truth of your family, the truth about your negative psychological

patterns that are making life less than it could and should be. Healing is to open yourself to the fact that life is beautiful, and so are you.

To sum it up, when you strip off all the negative illusions that you have about life and yourself, you are left with the truth, however painful the truth might be, for example, if you have been subjected to deceit, betrayal,

abuse or violence. Behind it all, there is still the truth of you as pure love, and when you know that truth, you also know that in reconnecting with the truth of you, you no longer want to carry

your pain and your burdens.

In loving yourself, you make the inflicted layers of pain fall to the ground as you rise from the ashes as a pure being of unconditional love. The kind of unconditional love that Mother Earth has for all, feeding us and loving us, no matter what.

Another way to picture healing is to search for and eventually arrive at the truth. The truth of who you are. That is why my intuition tells me that, later on in history, we will speak about this period as the 'Truth Age', just as we used to talk of the 'Stone Age'. The world needs healing, and for that to happen, we need to stop looking at the effects and dig down to the roots of the chaos we have

created. What is behind what we see? Who has planted the seeds of separation and conflict? Whose interests are

served? We will only solve climate change and other conflicts by digging out the most poisonous roots and thereby getting to the truth. That is, of course, not an easy task and not a one-man job.

We all need to dig in, and in no matter what sector we are asking more questions about

## “ CHANGE YOUR LIFE BY CHANGING WHAT'S INSIDE ”

## “ LITTLE BLACK BOX OF PAIN IN OUR SUBCONSCIOUSNESS ”

## “ A PURE BEING OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE ”



truth. Is this good, moral, serving life or beneficial to humanity and the planet? Another important question that we can all ask is: 'Is this a quick fix or a sustainable solution?' If the answer is that it is just a quick fix, there is a need to rethink it. Quick fixes are like not finding out the truth about yourself and who you are, but instead closing your eyes. Maybe you go on another shopping spree in the mall, or you swallow a tranquilizer, have a drink, soothe yourself with some cake and sweets, indulge in casual sex, or gamble. The escapes from the truth are many and varied: the truth of who you are. I am not saying that all of this is bad, it is beautiful to make love and it is nice to have a drink, but when it is an escape from your problems and from yourself, suddenly it loses its beauty.

For personal healing to happen, for a person

to become free of any behaviour, thoughts and feelings that keep you from loving yourself and distance you from loving life, there need to be questions and answers, and this is what healing does. It asks the right questions to find the authentic answers. It sees behind the apparent truth to the absolute truth by going deeper than meets the eye.

To help society and the world heal, we need to have the same

fearless aim for the truth as we have in any personal healing that sets a person free to be him or herself.

Let us all shine a conscious light on clarity and truth this spring.

And accept the healing of this world.

Together. ●



# 2020: A gift from the stars

In latest of his series of contemplations, **Axel Trinh-Cong** takes a trip to the cosmos



**A**strology may not enable us to predict the future, but it can help us to make it better. Astrological work consists of harmonizing the cosmos to our own internal rhythm, and vice versa. The year 2020 will be marked by an usual and powerful stellar configuration. Indeed, through a conjunction of Saturn and Pluto within the sign of the Capricorn, the Universe is offering us the strength and resources we need in order to get rid of those things that are at odds with our internal truth, to begin anew with a clean slate. Needless to say, this represents a fantastic opportunity on anyone's journey.

## Astrology

Astrology is founded on the following principle: every being enters the world with its own unique destiny, a personal project made up of multiple experiences that we

choose for ourselves, and that we are all perfectly free to realize on our own terms, with the same inalienable right to make mistakes and fail.

In that sense, astrology aligns itself with an empowering vision of destiny – far from being merely the result of happenstance or some endured fatality, destiny is a chosen experience, defined by the laws of causality, otherwise known as karma (which is a natural force of self-regulation).

In order to benefit from the energies that are most useful in accomplishing this destiny, it is each being who determines the circumstances under which they come into existence – whether they be familial, social, cultural, geographical, etc.

As for the matter of birthdates, this has to do with a particular being's energetic form (be it material, psychological, emotional or spiritual) – that is to say their way of seeing the world, their resources, intentions, challenges, all the baggage they happen to be carrying on into their present life.

Astrology can help us to better understand ourselves, to perceive what is at stake in this particular incarnation, as well as the particular energies we may rightfully use at that time. It is a tool for discovering one's internal universe (the microcosmos) and harmonizing with the external universe (the macrocosmos).

## What is a conjunction of planets?

When we speak of a conjunction between two planets, this means that, from planet Earth, they appear to have merged as one. For instance, when a conjunction of the Sun and the Moon occurs, we experience a solar eclipse.

During such an event, the energies of both planets combine.

## Saturn

As the last planet in the solar system that is visible to the naked eye, Saturn represents a limit, and therefore evokes the idea of our own limits, and what constitutes our integrity. By inevitably posing the question of what truly makes up the structure of our inner selves, Saturn invites us to be wise judges of our thoughts and choices.

Saturn invites us to re-think what we have and who we are, and to humbly accept our limits, to reject society's norms, to embrace our internal limitations and find freedom therein.

True freedom is found within our limits and not beyond them. When we decide that our happiness is conditioned by something we do not have (i.e. blue eyes instead of brown) or something we are not (i.e. an extroverted

personality rather than our own introverted nature), we condemn ourselves to misery. This is why we may look to this planet as a guide towards internal peace and self-acceptance.

## Pluto

Pluto represents the destruction of impurities. It is Attila and his horde of warriors who leave the soil on which they pass forever barren. It is the Fire from Heaven that annihilates everything in order to give way to something better and stronger. It is letting go of all that is not authentic to us, and opening up to our deep essence, and being reborn.

Pluto's energy translates into the annihilation of every belief or behaviour that is rooted in ego and a desire for power. It speaks to our awareness that it is good, in certain contexts, to destroy what is preventing life from evolving, causing humanity to regress, or keeping it stuck in its worst incarnations.

Pluto evokes the disintegration and stripping away of all that keeps us in a state of fear of ourselves – and consequently of others – in order to give us back our power as human beings. Not so that we might become yet another little tyrant, but in the spirit of contribution.

## Capricorn

To be brief, I will simply remind the reader that the sign of the Capricorn is inherently linked to Saturn, and therefore mainly evokes the concepts of structure and of social integration.

In 2012, Capricorn admitted a square to occur between Uranus (revolution) and Pluto (radical change), an event

that was reflected in the following years in all sorts of ruptures and reconsiderations of political, economic and social structures. Brexit, #MeToo, the people reclaiming power through citizen initiatives, the *gilets jaunes*, all the protests for the climate, the debates around migration. Some have chosen

**“ BEGIN ANEW  
WITH A CLEAN  
SLATE ”**



Self-help

openness, inclusion, the bigger picture, while others have withdrawn inward.

**The conjunction of Saturn and Pluto under Capricorn**

As frankly terrifying as this conjunction might seem, the basic principle of astrology implies that we have re-incarnated in order to experience it – it is part of all our souls' plan. Indeed, this is not the kind of conjunction that occurs every generation. The last one dates back to 1518-1520.

Although the alignment will certainly have a global impact, the challenges will mostly be unique to each person's sensibility and destiny. That being said, there are some common themes that we are likely to see, feel and observe during this time. Both of these planets are associated with the darkness that exists in each of us. Therefore, they invite us to face our fears, and realize that behind every intolerance hides an internal flaw.

The alignment of Saturn and Pluto will help us to cleanse our egos in order to redefine our internal structures, this time on the basis of kindness, openness and unconditional love. So, we can all look at others with all their differences without feeling threatened or attacked.

We are also invited to succeed not only for ourselves, but to envision success as the attainment of a much higher goal - ultimately the good of humanity. Because if we view accomplishment in the manner of the 'American Dream' as merely a form of personal recognition and valorisation,



then we are led to reinforce the ego and so encourage power struggles between beings.

It is also an invitation to re-think our relationship with reality. Indeed, matter, concrete objects, money, rigid and blind determination do not represent the entirety of the Universe – we mustn't forget about the other side of the coin, namely the immaterial, the invisible, the vibrational, energy, kindness and flexibility.

The concept of mourning is essential for understanding this planetary alignment, which moves us to make a clean slate in a particular aspect of our lives. For individuals themselves, this implies a journey towards self-acceptance.

Next month, I will offer you all the opportunity to discover which aspect of your lives will be most impacted by this 2020

conjunction, depending on your date, time and place of birth.

*Axel TRINH CONG Psychic, Therapist, Body-spirit-soul alignment, constellations, Tarot, soul messages.* 📍

**“ BE WISE  
JUDGES OF  
OUR THOUGHTS  
AND CHOICES ”**

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Self-help

# Safari Leadership Experience

International Speaker, Peak Performance  
Trainer and Business Mentor **Arnon Barnes** takes us deep into the bush



**O**ften I hear people say: "I know this. Yes, I know that." But when do you really know something? I can give you a book on swimming for dummies. You might have studied the book like crazy, but just reading the book doesn't make you a swimmer. Intellectually you might 'know' how to swim, but when it comes down to it, you have to get up from your seat and actually get in the water. You have to put the theory into practice. You have to experience it to understand it. In my view, you only really understand something when you live it.

As a business coach and mentor, my goal is always to have my clients leave my sessions with a better understanding. Why? Because having an understanding of things makes you a more confident and powerful person. I believe that a good session, whether it be a coaching or a training session, has a combination of both theory and experience.

In addition to my unique speaking engagements, training and coaching, once every year I take an elite group of business owners on a Safari Leadership Experience. I created this training to push business owners





far beyond their comfort zones, grow them and make them even bigger leaders. Why? Because the bigger you are, the more challenges, happiness and wealth you can have. In this training, nature is your classroom and the lessons are unbelievable.

Let me share some with you:

You've probably heard me say: "Business is simple. And then WE come along with all our emotions and ego and make it very confusing." The Safari Leadership Experience is always situated in a (true) wilderness area. So, no mobile phone or internet connections. This automatically disconnects you from your business and the outside world. Why? Because the more disconnected you are from your regular patterns, behaviours and comfort zone, the more clarity you will get about what's truly important in your life and business and the better decisions you will make when you get back.

Let me ask you this: "Do you know how coal

is formed?" Well, coal is formed when dead plant matter decays into peat and is converted into coal by the heat and pressure of deep burial over millions of years. This process is otherwise known as 'perturbation'. You wouldn't think of this concept trekking around the bush and looking at all the tree and plant life. Yet, sometimes one thing has to endure intense heat and pressure to turn into something else. Same goes for us business owners. Sometimes we need to be pressurized in order to transform into an even better version of ourselves.

During the many bush walks we do, we learn about animal tracking for example. One of the main things to take into account while doing this is recognizing the animal's patterns, knowing their behaviour so we can predict it. Follow the pattern and you'll be able to locate the animal faster. The upside is our brains are designed to search for patterns. The downside is the majority of the time it searches for negative patterns because our reptile brain is there to protect



us. I am going to challenge you and ask you to search for patterns in your company that work. Then, as simple as it sounds, do more of that. Do more of what works and less of what doesn't work.

A big thing we also focus on while trekking through the bush is navigation and situational awareness. We all have our senses like sight, hearing, touching and smelling and use them every second of every day. Mostly we aren't even aware that we use them, but our senses together with our past experiences will inform us and help us identify what is going on. Thousands of times a day we identify and assess the situations we are in and what is happening around us, and then we choose a way to respond to that. Being out in the bush helps us become more aware of this mechanism and how to use it mindfully in our everyday lives and businesses. When you

can be situationally aware in your business, you will be able to identify, assess and react to any situation that arises with confidence, and keeping on track to your main goal.

We are all in a process. The process of life. It's inevitable. Life will teach you, and if you are open you will learn from it. However, I believe that by deliberately educating yourself through theory and experience you will speed this process up exponentially. Getting you from where you currently are to where you want to be much faster!

## “ THE PROCESS OF LIFE. IT'S INEVITABLE ”

Meet and work with Arnon Barnes in the bush? Join his next upcoming Safari Leadership Experience in South Africa. For more information on this, or coaching, contact his office via [info@arnonbarnes.com](mailto:info@arnonbarnes.com) or check out his website [www.arnonbarnes.com](http://www.arnonbarnes.com) ❶



Be successful

# Be successful with John Lee

Together partnered up with John Lee in his recent visit to Brussels and we feature two of his coaching books

**T**he message from the first book is: Stop procrastinating and become financially free, by building asset-based wealth and creating passive income.

## The Wealth Dragon Way

Subtitled *The Why, the When and the How to Become Financially Free*, this is a practical guide to becoming financially free through building asset-based wealth and creating passive income. Part motivational, part informative, this guide will change your whole perspective on wealth and your personal growth potential. The book discusses both moral and monetary wealth. It looks at how we are easily misled and influenced by media-driven myths surrounding money, debunking notions such as the idea that there is no truly moral way to become wealthy, or the belief that the state will provide for us in retirement, and more.

You'll discover new truths surrounding the subject of wealth and get to the root of your own procrastination over planning for your financial future. You will learn how to tackle your fears and overcome the issues holding you back. You will also read real-life examples of how two property entrepreneurs built their significant portfolios using alternative strategies. Along the way, you'll learn what it means to become a Wealth Dragon, and the key principles to live by if you're ready to work towards achieving real financial freedom.



You are far more likely to achieve personal wealth if you are 100% clear as to *why* you want it. This book explores the psychology of our relationship with money and offers practical advice for anyone who is determined to meet their goals and realize their dreams.

- Bust the myths surrounding the subject of wealth
- Start taking control of your financial future
- Adopt the key Wealth Dragon principles
- Discover your full potential for financial and personal growth

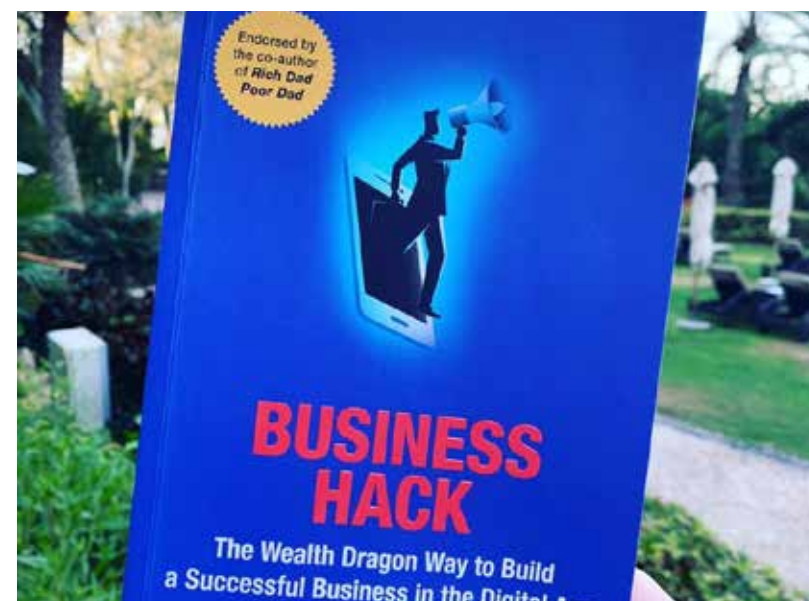
The importance of taking control of your financial future cannot be overstated, especially in these economically uncertain times. Whether you want to quit the rat race, build some assets as security or develop a branded business that will provide you with a passive income, *The Wealth Dragon Way* is your guide to building wealth and becoming financially free.

## Business Hack

*Business Hack* allows you to master the online tools available to grow your business and conquer the competition – it is your essential roadmap to business growth and online marketing success. Author and successful entrepreneur John Lee shares his proven methods to harness the power of online tools, including using social media, offering practical steps to create and implement highly effective cyber-marketing campaigns.

Thanks to the digital revolution, you no longer need teams of marketing experts and other expensive overheads to build and promote your business. This unique and valuable resource covers everything you need to consider when building your marketing strategy, from established principles of sales to cutting-edge digital techniques.

- Implement powerful social media marketing campaigns to increase revenue and rise above the competition
- Integrate traditional sales and advertising methods with modern technology to create a comprehensive business marketing strategy
- Identify future trends to stay ahead of the technology curve and capitalize on new opportunities.
- Learn the skills used by successful



In today's dynamic business environment, strong and ongoing engagement in social media marketing is no longer an option – it is a *necessity*. From local craft-based businesses to new tech startups and even global multinational corporations, effective cyber marketing can be instrumental in determining success. A comprehensive digital strategy enables you to compete across all platforms and maintain viability and relevance in the face of intense competition. Following the proven techniques in this essential guide allows you to:

## “ IMPLEMENT POWERFUL SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ”

entrepreneurs and respected experts in online marketing

The internet and rise of digital media have changed the rules of business and marketing. It is now

possible for small and new businesses to compete and thrive in the global marketplace through intelligent use of digital and social media marketing. *Business Hack* provides the tools and knowledge necessary to succeed in the 21st century.  
[www.wealthdragonsevents.com](http://www.wealthdragonsevents.com) ❶



# The art of real estate

Our property expert **Yannick Callens** offers advice on negotiation and financing



I have recently finalized a real estate negotiation like no other. It took time, energy and understanding to reach an agreement with the sellers.

regularization work that needed to be done. I sent off my offer and decided to insist on a short delay for validity in order to exert a little pressure.

Time passed; doubts arrived. The beginning had started so well. I came across a description of a building with several apartments for sale. The displayed price had just dropped, demand was heating up.

I completed my visit to the building and I said to myself: 'I can't miss this deal.' I immediately made my offer, taking into account certain factors, including the

## “ ALWAYS TAKE THE PLACE OF YOUR COUNTERPART ”

This was the first mistake on my part, since the sellers were not used to selling a property and the pressure was too much. The real estate agent asked me to extend my offer, and I

began to feel doubt. Was I going to be the carrot to push the price up? What did I have to lose? Nothing! I complied and extended the offer and asked to meet the sellers. A few

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days later, I did so, at their notary's office. The meeting was going well, we were getting to know each other and I hoped to come out with an agreement. Second disappointment – I came out of the meeting without an agreement, only a handshake and a promise to follow the file.

What to do? End it? Continue? Two possibilities. I took my destiny in hand and I continued. I engaged the same notary as the sellers, I increased the deposit and made a gesture towards the sellers. I waited. Two days later, I had the opportunity to meet with the sellers and the real estate agent... but I had to wait for a week. Still seven more days to wait, and my doubts grew. Was time in my favour or was it against me?

The day of the meeting arrived, and I got to meet the sellers. After a short discussion, I realized that the doubts I had been having had also affected the sellers. But by now, the sellers had gained confidence and they accepted my offer - they had simply needed more time to assimilate the situation, and had

to get used to the negotiations. The mistake I made was that I didn't put myself in the place of the sellers.

Always take the place of your counterpart in order to better understand them and be able to lead the discussions. This will help you save time and lessen any doubts you may have. If necessary, make concessions. You will not win all the battles, but it is the final victory that is most important.

The second stage is the demand for financing, which is another battle that is potentially just as fiery as the negotiation. You must prepare your file well and know it by heart. Doubt is not allowed – you should see your banker, broker

or financier as your partner. He can guide you in all the possible choices. With the low rates available at present, I currently advise clients to take as lengthy a loan as possible. Inflation will help you over time.

If doubt arises, step back, analyse the numbers and come back stronger. There is no failure, only lessons. Even in real estate. ❶

**“ THERE IS NO FAILURE, ONLY LESSONS ”**



# Wellbeing in the workplace

Dave Deruytter looks at work-life balance and wellbeing



**T** rue employee wellbeing is the result of meaningful challenges for workers in a strategy that proposes incremental change, promoting regular opportunities to learn and to disconnect. It does not come with big change from all sides and attached with 'always on' requirements.

Many companies propose work-life balance and wellbeing goodies to their employees. The employment market is tough. Unemployment has never been as low in the developed world as today. The war for talent is still going strong.

At the same time, many companies are implicitly expecting that their workers react to a Saturday morning email from their boss or a client. True, many workers are almost constantly online privately. But, concluding that that should count for work too is one of the key reasons for the high numbers of burnouts, depressions and other long-term sick-leave absences.

Another key reason for the high absence numbers at work comes from the fact that companies like to boast that change is the new normal and that the only thing that



enslavement, authorities are promoting less alcohol to avoid dependency and health issues. The same is needed for smartphone or online addiction. For alcohol, two days without it per week is recommended by many experts, in order to stay on the safe side. So, why not have at least one day per week without a smartphone or social media? Legal drugs like nicotine (tobacco) and alcohol are taxed by the authorities, so why not also tax the smartphone use or the addicting services it offers, mainly in social media?

Employees can also take pre-emptive action themselves, by putting on their automatic 'out of office' reply every Friday evening, mentioning that they will be back on the following Monday morning. It will send a clear message to the overactive bees that send requests during the weekend. You may add to your 'auto reply' message that for emergencies they can send you an SMS, but even that should not be necessary if the business is really well organized.

All these extra pressures on people, such as the omnipresence of change and the smartphone addiction, also lead to a drop in concentration levels. Students have trouble in effectively studying their subjects; workers are failing to finish their jobs or do them badly. The attention timespan has become so short that some people stop functioning well at school or at work.

The time for action is now. Businesses and society are suffering already and a recession, to cool the labour shortage, is never something to wish for. When too much sand gets into the machine, it stops working.

As individuals, we can do many things to prevent burnouts, too. The first is to act on the issues when they present themselves. Do not let problems linger

on. Typically, they do not go away on their own. Secondly, ask yourself the question, will this issue still matter in one day, one month or one year from now? Last but not least, celebrate your successes, learn from your failures, talk to your teammates or friends and make sure to take breaks regularly. ❶

**“ THE  
QUALITY OF  
THEIR DIRECT  
BOSS HAS A  
KEY ROLE ”**





is constant in the current world is change itself. In the current business world, change is indeed very vast and appears on many fronts. It is occasionally so overwhelming for employees that it leads to errors and sometimes even paralysis because of a 'change overload'. Occasionally, it even leads to a state of panic in extreme cases.

Except for extraordinary situations or real breakthrough ideas, the only good change is continuous incremental change, building on the current situation, a bit like the 'agile way of working' is promoting today. In order to feel comfortable, people need to see the business growing gradually or changing from a known base, not big change that rockets them into the unknown.

Yes, it is great to have a gym at work, yoga classes and fruit baskets, but it is how confident workers feel about their company, and even more about their job and future, that really counts. Employees are most concerned with their increasing number of 'how am I going to solve this' situations. The more structurally supported and confident they feel about that, the better performance and the less turnover of

employees. Although for the latter, the quality of their direct boss has a key role to play too.

Take a car from the 1920s and compare it with one of today. There has been great stable innovation, major change and many improvements to cars over the past 100 years, but even today a car still has four wheels, one steering wheel and an engine.

In general, business stability does not need to be as strong as in the car story, but people need to see where their company is going and what their place, role and future

is in it. Big bangs do not always yield the results that have been anticipated by the initiators. Actually, the real good big bangs typically come from outside of the industry, from a greenfield bright

idea, something very new; and they appear only very rarely.

Of course, screen time, social media and the likes have developed into an addiction these days, also in the private world. With all addictions, in order not to become its slave one has to manage it. The government is trying to convince smokers to stop their

## “ THE WAR FOR TALENT IS STILL GOING STRONG ”



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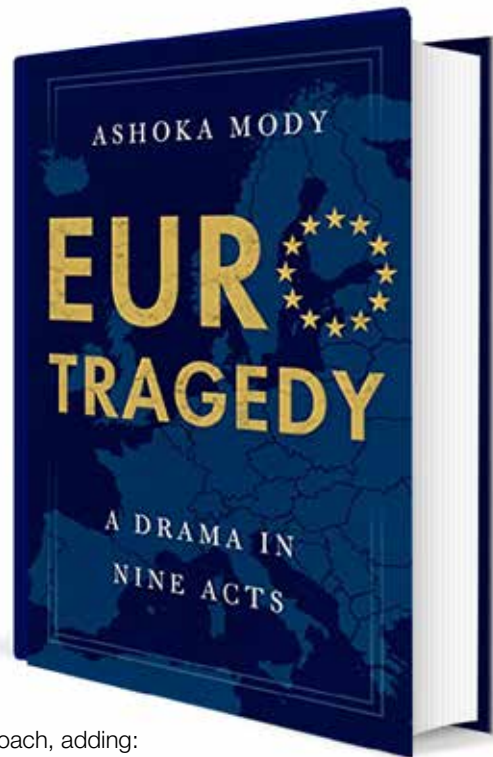
# EU Politics: Stability and Growth Pact ‘stupid’

**Catherine Feore** looks at a bold statement by a European Commission president

**T**he heading is misleading. It was said by a European Commission president, but not Ursula von der Leyen; it was Romano Prodi back in the early 2000s when Germany and France were on the naughty step for exceeding their deficits. The quote is from Ashoka Mody's book *Eurotragedy*.

Mody quoted Romano Prodi in an interview with *Le Monde* in 2002, where he said: "I know very well that the Stability Pact is stupid, as are all rigid decisions." In the European Parliament, Prodi entrenched his comments, calling for an intelligent and flexible approach, adding: "It is time to say the same things in public that we say to each other in private."

On the way into the European Commission's press briefing on the review of economic governance and a debate on its future (5 February), Pascal Lamy was spotted in the lobby of the Berlaymont. Mody quotes Lamy, describing the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) as a "medieval" construct. The most entertaining quote is from the then French Finance Minister Francis Mer, who described the SGP as a "procrustean bed", which was "too small for some, too large for others, and a torture for all".



For some, the financial crisis and its aftermath may seem like a thousand years ago, or an extremely painful part of the European Union's history they'd rather not revisit. The European Commission's launch of an assessment of the effectiveness of the current framework for economic and fiscal surveillance, especially the six-pack and two-pack reforms that aimed to strengthen the SGP, was greeted by an almost empty press room; a decade ago, it would have been difficult to find a

seat. With growth in the last quarter of 2019 recorded as 0.1% both in the eurozone and in the EU-28, we should maybe brace ourselves for a bumpy ride ahead. Without wanting to do a painful post-mortem, we need to learn from the mistakes made.

The European economy commissioner and Italian former prime minister Paolo Gentiloni pointed out that it isn't just the EU's growth rate that is low, it is also inflation and interest rates. In other words, the economy is in a close-to-moribund state. These are the rewards of the legendary – and I do mean

Photo © Paolo Gentiloni



that literally – "growth-enhancing fiscal austerity". Contrary to well-established and vindicated economic theory, the EU chose to inflict further pain on its economy at the height of a recession. The thinking was that what the ailing patient needed was not medicine, but a good punch in the guts.

Executive Vice President for the Economy that Works for People Valdis Dombrovskis informed us that the rules on debt and deficits were "essential for the stability of our economies and the eurozone", making it clear that the consultation they were about to launch would not address the most contested issue. Gentiloni added there was no intention of changing the Treaty on these matters.

**“ WE NEED TO  
LEARN FROM THE  
MISTAKES MADE ”**

Indeed, Dombrovskis insisted on taking us on a short journey from the establishment of economic and monetary union in 1992 to the sovereign debt crisis – without so much as a pause – insisting that the rules had worked. However, before the banking crisis, government debt was on the retreat in most

countries, indeed Ireland and Spain were the poster children for fiscal rectitude. When a financial crisis turned into a sovereign debt crisis, it was determined that the general public should be collectively punished. Apart from being punitive, it is now agreed that the scale and timing of cuts were counterproductive – and very far from "growth-enhancing".

Dombrovskis concludes that the problem was not the rules themselves, but that they were "perceived as too complex and difficult to communicate". Gentiloni echoed this, saying: "The complexity of our rules makes it harder to explain to our citizens what 'Brussels' is saying, and that is something none of us should accept."

Another shibboleth that the EU clung to – long after it had been debunked – was the idea propounded by Reinhardt and Rogoff in *Growth in a Time of Debt* that when government debt exceeded 90% of GDP, growth was "roughly cut in half." This turned out to be a calculation error.





As former chief economist for the IMF, Olivier Blanchard recently said, “while debt is still bad, it is not catastrophic.” Blanchard has argued that as long as the rate of economic growth is greater than the rate of interest, the capacity to grow the economy outstrips the growth of public debt. As Gentiloni pointed out, in comparison with the US and Japanese counterparts, who have much higher debt-to-GDP ratios of 108% and 236% respectively,

the EU has a much lower debt-to-GDP ratio of around 86%. As the American economy is faring better than the EU, it would suggest that the Commission should maybe revise its own concerns.

There was one small glimmer of light, the Commission is contemplating a ‘golden rule’ that would allow deficit-financed green investment to support the European Green Deal, funding measures that mitigate or help countries to adapt to climate change. This public investment would somehow be

allowed and be considered separate to other public debt. Whether it will receive the support of finance ministers remains to be seen. In theory, it could fund everything from wind farms to helping coal miners retrain.

Many economists think that monetary policy has carried a very heavy load, and with the real and imminent prospect of recession fiscal action will be needed. At the moment,

the only economies that are considered to have a significant ability to spend within the current rules are Germany and the Netherlands. Changing the rules themselves would

require legislative, if not Treaty, change, and this would be difficult; rather than simplifying rules, adding an additional ‘golden’ rule that was flexibly applied could provide the intelligent and flexible approach Prodi called for. ❶

## “ EU CHOSE TO INFLECT FURTHER PAIN ON ITS ECONOMY ”

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# Ecotherapy: Nature's mental health prescription

Jean O'Connor places Nature in  
the driving seat

Bastøy Bastøy, Grim23



Today, people spend less than 5% of their time outside, and yet researchers have continually made links between Nature and wellbeing. Recent studies have shown that Nature could be the most sustainable and inexpensive answer to the treatment of mental health issues, from the mild to the severe. It's natural and low-cost, and is relatively easily available to anyone, wherever they happen to live.

When seen as a body of evidence, the tangible results of ecotherapy becomes evident. MRI imagery has shown that patients shown images of nature present significant activity in the area of the brain associated with the production of the feel-good neurotransmitter dopamine, while images of urban areas increased levels of frustration. This is coupled with noted lower activity in the frontal cortex of the brain, which is known to be the area that produces

repetitive thoughts connected to negative emotions – the part most active when people are highly stressed or depressed.

Over the past 30 years, research on the link between Nature and mental health has morphed into the field of 'ecotherapy'. But more than a simple walk in the park, ecotherapy as a para-medical discipline is envisioning a tide change in how health and social services are designed so as to make maximum use of the natural environment and all it has to offer. From Norway's Bastøy Island, an eco-prison that aims to reconnect offenders to Nature in a bid to help rehabilitate and instil a sense of purpose, to wildlife gardens, nestled between North Kensington tower blocks, offering horticulture accreditations to the mentally ill, ecotherapy is becoming increasingly widespread and accepted.



Aboriginal native, Australia



### A bit of history

Even though the discipline of ecotherapy has only been a mainstream part of psychiatric or psychological support in recent years, the concept of the link between Nature and mental wellbeing has been around for far longer, from Zen Gardens and Victorian asylums to New York City's Central Park.

Central Park was designed in 1858 by Frederik Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux with the specific goal of ridding residents of "the ills of modern civilization", while the origins of Zen Gardens date back to medieval Japan where Zen Buddhist monks built the now widely known sand gardens within their monasteries. They found the gardens evoked a deep sense of calm and tranquillity, which in turn helped them on their road to enlightenment through meditation.

In the 19th century, a common appendage to asylums across Europe were large lush gardens thought to increase happiness and relaxation. Poorer 'pauper' asylums called on patients to help in subsistence gardens

and work on agricultural land which was not only a financial necessity, but was also soon found to have deep therapeutic benefits in and of itself.

Wealthier asylums had the opportunity to create more elaborate grounds and gardens, where outdoor areas were clearly designed as part of patients' treatment plans. Research carried out in the 1700s had already shown that those working in the agricultural sector were far less likely to suffer from mental health problems than the rest of the population.

## “ HELPED THEM ON THEIR ROAD TO ENLIGHTENMENT ”

But go farther back even further into history and we find that original indigenous populations have always known, and continue to value,

the sacred link between Nature and wellbeing from Australian Aboriginal populations to Native American tribes.

Central Park, New York



### Ecotherapy today

Today, the US penitentiary system actively supports the Green Prisons Programme, which invites prisoners to actively participate in activities such as gardening, landscaping and animal care. The Green House project on New York's Riker's Island is part of the Green Prisons Programme. Data following release of prisoners who were incorporated into the programme at Riker's had significantly lower one to two-year recidivism rates compared to the State average.

In a similar programme in San Quentin, California, only 10% of 117 paroled prisoners for the period analysed returned to prison, compared to the national average of 64% for the same period of time. Overall, the Green Prison Programme has been proven to reduce aggressive behaviour and depression while increasing self-worth.

In the UK, 93% of GPs (General Practitioners) have reported prescribing anti-depressants to patients for lack of any other alternative. The UK mental health charity Mind is actively

encouraging ecotherapy as a valid alternative or parallel support to mental health medication. The charity is working to inform populations not just of the benefits of ecotherapy, but is also sharing cost-benefit analyses of ecotherapy in a climate of increased pressure on national health resources.

Mind has asked that all social care, health and criminal justice institutions be required to ensure access to green space and that inequality to its access should be seen as a human rights issue. They have also

petitioned for the inclusion of nature in town and country planning as a best practice in terms of public mental health care and preservation.

And so, from mental health facilities to prisons

to hospitals and to your local GPs office, ecotherapy is slowly but surely making its entrance – or its return depending on which way you look at it. Perhaps along with the apple then, a view and a breath of fresh air a day may just be what the doctor will order from now on. 🍏

## “ THE SACRED LINK BETWEEN NATURE AND WELLBEING ”



# LIFESTYLE

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LIFESTYLE

Luxury

## Luxury in the snowy heights

We look at just three of the wide range available from **Ultimate Luxury Chalets**

### Chalet Lena, St Anton

Chalet Lena provides you with an ultimate luxury ski retreat in the quiet district of Nasserein, St Anton. Featuring large open-plan living spaces oozing with character and panache, as well as a range of incredible wellness facilities, this beautiful chalet offers everything you could possibly desire for your getaway. With 900m<sup>2</sup>, this is perfect for luxury corporate trips, large groups of friends or a family ski holiday.

The spacious, open-plan living area is filled with traditional authentic Alpine charm - the exposed wooden timber beams present a picturesque setting for you to relax in comfort. There is enough sumptuous seating for the whole group to unwind together, by the warmth of the central fireplace, and the dining area seats 20 people. On the terrace areas you can admire the uninterrupted valley views of the stunning snow-capped mountain regions surrounding you.

With facilities to rival some of the most luxurious spas, you will be able to immerse yourself in a selection of the indoor/outdoor



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Photo © www.ultimateluxurychalets.com

swimming pool, hot tub, Finnish and Bio saunas, steam room and massage treatment room, to soothe any aching muscles from a hard ski session. The chalet's modern gym facilities will cater to all your needs. Sleeps up to 22 guests in its spacious 9 bedrooms.





Photo © www.ultimateluxurychalets.com

## Chesa el Toula, St. Moritz

Chesa el Toula has been in the owner's family for two generations, having been built by his grandfather, offering 900m<sup>2</sup> of living space. The interior maintains traditional Engadin features, whilst updating the property to include the finest Italian stones, marbles, designer furnishings and one-off pieces from around the world.

The cosy living room has a large fireplace, flat screen TV and bar, a dining room with a table seating 10, and a family kitchen with breakfast corner. It is one of the few rental properties in St. Moritz to have a swimming pool. It also boasts indoor or outdoor hot tubs, a Hammam and a well-equipped gym



Photo © www.ultimateluxurychalets.com

for working out. The cinema room is completely soundproof with super high-tech sound system and slumber-worthy seating. The property also has a bar/games room with pool table and a wine cave with a selection of rare fine wines. It can accommodate ten adults and four children across six

luxurious en-suite bedrooms. As well as the master bedroom, there are a further three double bedrooms, all with en-suite bath or shower rooms. The chalet has two bunk bedrooms - one with king-size beds, the other suitable for children. Each has an en-suite shower room. There is also a further bedroom with en-suite shower room, which is available for staff.



Photo © www.ultimateluxurychalets.com

## Chalet Aurore, Courchevel

Covering a vast 1,415m<sup>2</sup> area, this incredible chalet offers a selection of wellness and entertainment facilities, including its very own nightclub!

The main living areas are found on the second floor of this chalet. With 4.5 metre ceilings and high-quality furnishings, the TV lounge area presents the perfect spot for socializing as a whole group in front of the warmth of the feature fireplace.

A semi-open, fitted kitchen provides your very own private chef with a work space to prepare the evening's specialities. There is a larger dining room, which comfortably seats the entire group, and a breakfast area. Head down to the ground floor cinema room to watch the latest blockbuster movie. Alternatively, grab a glass of something nice



Photo © www.ultimateluxurychalets.com

from the bar area, before making your way to the nightclub for your very own exclusive party - or for a bit of peace and quiet hang out in the reading lounge. Wellness wise, immerse yourself in the 19-metre indoor pool, sauna, Hammam and massage treatment room. The

fitness room will allow you to continue the day's work out.

Chalet Aurore accommodates up to 15 guests across its seven guest bedrooms and two additional staff rooms. Each bedroom has the convenience of an en suite shower/bathroom and dressing room, with the deluxe master bedroom featuring a Hammam for ultimate luxury.

More information:  
[www.ultimateluxurychalets.com](http://www.ultimateluxurychalets.com)





# FASHION SPANGLES

*Photographer:* **Maria Dawlat**  
*Assistant:* **Émile Tonnelier**  
*Art director:* **Nicholas Sirot**  
*Hair & Make-up Artist:* **Elke Binnemans**  
**@ touch Dominique models,**  
**using Sisley Cosmétiques and Moroccanoil treatment.**  
*Model:* **Charlotte@Unit Model Management**





Jacket **Philipp Plein**



Blouse **Liu jo** Trousers **Zara** Jacket **Scotch & soda** Sunglasses **Chloé** Handbag **Nathan Baume**





Suit **Elisabetta Franchi** Necklace **Messika** Ring **Maison Tollet**





Dress **Philipp Plein** Tights **Falke**





Dress **Philipp Plein** Hair Prep **Moroccanoil treatment** Curl defining cream Dry texture spray



Dress **Elisabetta Franchi** Ring **Louis Vuitton**



Fashion

# Collectors Club: On top of the world every single day

Belgian fashion sisters **Nele** and **Veerle** explain their Collectors Club philosophy

**C**ollectors Club was born out of the joined forces of Belgian sisters Nele and Veerle Van Doorslaer whose aim was to create a range of collectible garments. It embodies the juxtaposition of both sisters' personalities, style and taste, as well as the friendship that unites them.

The selection of high-standard fabrics, thoughtful detailing and essential fits are at the centre of the brand's signature aesthetic. Launched in early 2018, Collectors Club managed to quickly establish itself on the Benelux and France market thanks to an offer of total look products, as well as strong knitwear pieces. All Collectors Club fabrics are top quality, sourced in Italy and Japan. Production of wovens: Romania, Macedonia, Poland, Belgium. Production of knitwear: Italy, Belgium and Romania.

The collection pays a vibrant tribute to emblematic women whose work and personal style influence us continuously:

Anaïs Nin, Elizabeth Peyton, Nina Simone, Zaha Hadid. Collectors Club connects with strong women, who recognize themselves in the timeless voice of iconic personalities who



Photo © AlexanderPopelier

made a difference. We design for women who write their own story day after day. Women who embody a playful femininity that breaks with convention and looks at fashion in a new light. The brand looks above all for individuality in each woman. The CC woman looks for genuine product which empower her and extend a way of life that breaks with convention. The CC woman is provocative in her modernity.

Collectors Club suggests a full look wardrobe for strong women on-the-go. We want to support them to live and love life, without restrictions.

We want to empower contemporary women and give them joy in fashion and dressing for themselves. It is our mission to inspire women and to make them feel on top of the world every single day. At Collectors Club, the products are central to everything and speak for themselves, in tune with the everyday lives of the women for whom they are designed. Textured fabrics and tactility are one of our secret ingredients.

In a nutshell, contemporary fashion meets high quality.  
[www.collectorsclub.cc](http://www.collectorsclub.cc)



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# Shopping

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[shop.freywille.com/be](http://shop.freywille.com/be)



### Petals – when essentiality is a ritual

We grew up counting flower petals and repeating *he loves me, he loves me not* in what was a veritable ritual of love. Perpetuated by popular tradition with a hint of vintage, *he loves me, he loves me not* continues to represent a hope for love, which as we know, is a hope that never fades. Once again, the flower is centre stage, interpreted in a stylized design with an effect that is reminiscent of absolute purity. It's no coincidence that the number of petals is three – the number that symbolizes perfection and essentiality. Malachite, mother of pearl, diamonds, jade and vivid turquoise light up the crisp outlines with colour. From the nude tones that evoke the colours of the earth in the versions with petals covered in pure gold to the versions with corollas in combinations of exuberant colours, the Petals collection adventures into the most exotic of ambiances. **Price on demand**  
[www.robortocoin.com](http://www.robortocoin.com)





### EBEL Brasilia

Keep stylishly cool this spring with EBEL's Brasilia watch for women. First created in 2006 as part of their prestigious jewellery watch collection, EBEL's Brasilia timepieces enjoyed a relaunch last year with the sleek stainless-steel versions. With its curved and sensual rectangular case, the Brasilia's unique design adapts perfectly to the shape of the wrist.

The Brasilia collection reflects EBEL's core values of expert craftsmanship, innovation and excellence in Swiss watch design. For sophisticated yet understated feminine elegance, the Brasilia with Ice

Blue and Anthracite dials are appealing timepieces which exude perennial style. A touch of simple luxury for every day. Available from April. Price: **€1,850**. Points of sale info: [www.briston-watches.com](http://www.briston-watches.com)



### Valmont Cosmetics

After Storie Veneziane, an olfactory high jewellery collection inspired by Venice, Sophie and Didier Guillon are writing the second chapter of their fairy tale: Collezione Privata & Palazzo Nobile. Sophie shares her epicurean husband's taste for art and his quest for universal beauty. Driven on by the success of Storie Veneziane's initial masterpieces at the Palazzo Bonvicini, she is composing new olfactory portraits, comprising two distinct and singular collections: Collezione Privata, three eaux de parfum portraying Sophie's vision of harmony, and Palazzo Nobile, five rare eaux de toilette featuring creative input from Didier. These two collections may share certain codes, but each conveys the artistic choices, the creative perspective and the intrinsic talents of its creator. On sale in luxury perfumeries such as Place Vendôme at Wevelgem [www.placevendome.be](http://www.placevendome.be). Prices: Palazzo Nobile, 100ml: **€148**, Collezione Privata 100ml: **€250**

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

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### Mayerline Chains

The chain trend is about to get supersized, but also more subtle chains are trending. You don't have to stick to silver and gold. The prettiest chains will involve enamel and interesting textures.

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



### Diamanti Per Tutti - The single earring

Earrings are going solo next season. The key to achieving this look? Go for an earring that's statement-making enough to stand on its own. By Lore Van Keer.

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



### Lady Dior

With its mix of architectural lines, metallic charms – in tribute to the lucky tokens Monsieur Dior was never without – the Lady Dior bag embodies the quintessence of the House's spirit. This season, for the spring-summer 2020 ready-to-wear collection, it comes in a new minimalist spin, called Lady D-Lite. Its graphic structure reveals an interpretation of the Cannage motif, revisited in 3-D embroideries. Worked tone-on-tone, the 'Christian Dior' signature completes its timeless style. Delivered with a matching strap, fully embroidered, and adorned with the name of the founding couturier, this new object of desire more than ever reflects the House's excellence of savoir-faire. This creation can also be personalized at exclusive Dior events.

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



### Bulgari

The Roman Jeweller of Time introduced its latest novelties at the LVMH Watch Week Dubai 2020. The indisputable highlight of the 2020 debuts is the new Serpenti Seduttori Tourbillon, a unique small-sized women's tourbillon specially designed to fit inside the sleek dimensions of the serpent-head case of the latest incarnation of Bvlgari's most iconic watch, Serpenti. In the latest models of the Diva's Dream collection, the Roman Jeweller continues to push the limits of form and function. Bringing the jeweller's touch to the grand tradition of complicated watchmaking, the new Divas' Dream Minute Repeater Malachite dares to combine one of Bvlgari's most recognized motifs - the Diva fan-shape - with an extraordinary mechanical movement to create the thinnest ladies minute repeater to date. The watch is finished with diamond pavé and a green malachite dial that captures the essence of Bvlgari's precious and exuberant style.

[www.bulgari.com/en-int/](http://www.bulgari.com/en-int/)



### Happy 41

Light is the most important element to create an atmosphere in a house. To be perfectly Zen, add your favourite music to it. It is in this spirit that Marie Haverbeke started to develop her own decorative object 'Happy 41': a wireless and portable Bluetooth speaker, which is also a luminous object. Happy 41 is the must-have for any decoration lover who likes to enjoy music in an elegant way. Take this beautiful, timeless object anywhere and anytime!

[facebook.com/happy41bymarie](https://facebook.com/happy41bymarie)





Beauty

# The essentials for March

**Caroline Dierckx** marks your beauty card for a troublesome month

**I**n this still chilly March, we must moisturize the skin in the face of external aggressions such as wind, rain and pollution. But don't forget the scalp, which deserves special attention, as does the skin on your face. A word of advice: massage it before shampooing, with suitable care. The following products deserve a place in your bathroom cabinet.

Crocus Supercritique, Les Eaux Primordiales. Exclusively at **Senteurs d'Ailleurs**. Price: 100ml, **€250**



**Bvlgary** Omnia Golden Citrine. This fragrance is inspired by the golden Citrine, a precious stone evoking light and optimism. Price: 40ml, **€69**



**René Furterer**, Astera Fluid and Complex 5 for a healthy scalp. Price: 50ml, **€42.10**



Optimal hydration with **Talika Hydrating Serum**. Price: 30ml, **€30.90**



**KIKO** Tuscan Sunshine Perfecting Powder. Price: **€14.99**

Preserve youthful skin  
- Bamboo Oxygen Drops  
- **Annayake** energizing fluid. Price: 30ml, **€45**



The makeup pro also involves accessories. Real Techniques Brushes. Price: **from €8.99 to €27.99**. On sale at Di, in pharmacies and drugstores.



For 24h hydration. **DIOR** Addict Stellar Halo Shine. Price: **€39.95**



Ode to Spring with **LANVIN**'s Modern Princess Blooming. Price: 90ml, **€85**



Perfectly mastered styling. Professional hair dryer **GHD Helios**. Price: **€169**

**The Ritual of Jing** – Relax body cream range. Price: 220ml, **€18.50**







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## THE PERFECT COMBINATION BETWEEN LUXURY AND FAMILY HOLIDAYS

It is in the beautiful region of Costa Adeje in the south of Tenerife that GF Victoria, a prestigious 5-star hotel with futuristic looks, is located. The region is never short of attractions. The omnipresent sun is constantly gushing out on its white sandy beaches. Within a ten-minute walk from El Duque Beach, beautiful natural spaces await you.

From the hotel's beautiful rooms, you will always enjoy stunning views. Being nestled between the sea and the mountains, you won't be able to find any better location. The leisure activities here are also unlimited: sport, relaxation, shopping, entertainment, surfing, etc. Everything you can think of is realizable at GF Victoria.



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LIFESTYLE

Design

# Design: Bluesock Hostel Lisbon

**Empatias Interior Design** describes a colourful restoration in the heart of Lisboa



**L**isbon is now enjoying what is perhaps its most significant shining moment, mainly thanks to a notable increase in tourism, which has spawned waves of new restaurants, bars, museums and other cultural attractions.

Empatias Interior Design is a brand led by Isabel Santos who, just like Lisbon, is a Portuguese fighter, moved by culture, tradition and design. Bluesock is located near Avenida da Liberdade, between the city's historic district and the modern neighbourhood. The modern, underground Portuguese culture was in the mind of the entire young team that led the project. Graffiti, music, colour and fun were the keywords for this restored building.

In the entrance area, the colourful Moroso Chairs are without a doubt the main

attraction. These chairs are part of the Tord Boontje collection, made by artisans that use woven threads normally used for fishing nets, so common in Portugal. The colours remind us of the graffiti and the underground scene that are spread all over Lisbon. Adding a bit of rock & roll, there is an incredible reinterpretation of Mademoiselle Chair, originally from designer Philippe Starck and redesigned by the musician Lenny Kravitz for Kartell, that creates a visual and tactile experience with designs reflecting the character and spirit of both artists. The icing on the cake of this lounge are the panoramic windows.

For the rooftop, Empatias imagined a concept with wormholes, lush greenery, an array of colourful flowers, hedges and more to create a serene getaway - a true outdoor oasis. At night the rooftop is illuminated with





an LED 'Tree', that brings serene sanctuary and creates interesting interstitial spaces with all kinds of views. The main character of the rooftop is Vernobil's DE 600 Sofa, absolutely Made in Italy.

The team brought those rock & roll and underground vibes to all the public areas, so visitors would feel the same energy as outside. A sleek, dark blue sofa is placed right on the corner, and the wooden tables make the room raw, trendier and more modern. The floor lamp was the main character, adding the cinematographic and concert lights, thanks to the Multilamp Floor Black by Selletti, a 6-lampshades lamp that is part of a lighting range with industrial design.

The rooms are 'sleep chambers' - each room has a calm, quiet, cool vibe, with upholstered headboards, padded walls, and a plush rug that give the room a silence rarely found in Lisbon. And the smart layout ensures each room feels larger than it is.



[www.empatias.pt](http://www.empatias.pt)  
[www.bluesockhostels.com](http://www.bluesockhostels.com)



Shopping decor

# Shopping decor



## Domkapa

Domkapa is an upholstery specialized brand based in Northern Portugal. As such, Domkapa holds a tremendous passion for detailed stitching, presenting several similarities to the haute-couture philosophy focused on the value of 'made by hand'. The use of techniques such as manual cuts, hand sewing – plain seam, stitches seam, double stitched seam, slot seam, corded seam, piped seam – artisanal couture techniques – seams, darts, tucks, pleats hand – are uniqueness providers, making the sewing machine only a support compared to the mostly manual work. The brand's philosophy is adding value to each item, making it one of a kind.

## Design meets comfort

How does this happen? Everything starts indoors. Domkapa's design team works side

to side with the production, and this organic synergy allows the creation of innovative designs. Domkapa's pieces are re-interpretations of classics, always respecting the design principles of proportion, balance, colour, shape and texture; nevertheless, without losing the brand's identity. It's getting harder to find comfortable and unique design pieces in the market. The art of Design is usually seen as something artistic but uncomfortable and with a lack of ergonomics.

Domkapa challenges its team to create the perfect daily meeting between Design and Comfort in each piece of the brand's collections - from the foams to the woods and metals, everything is meticulously thought out to provide comfort and design to the client.

[www.domkapa.pt](http://www.domkapa.pt)





Shopping decor

## Planet Happy Ocean Milly Green Designs

Ocean Drinks Bottle - Corn-starch (PLA) & BPA Free. Keep hydrated with the BPA free reusable water bottle! Ocean Eco-friendly 17oz Travel Mug - Bamboo. A reusable bamboo 17oz travel mug with silicone band, perfect for that take away hot drink on the go. Ocean 14oz Mug - 30% Recycled Ceramic.



Planet Happy Ocean Milly Green Designs

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cannot do without. When you buy these products, 1% of the proceeds will support the great work of the Marine Conservation Society protecting our seas. [www.millygreen.com](http://www.millygreen.com)

## Kitchen Craft Natural Elements - Set of 3 Eco-Friendly Paulownia Wood Crates

A set of three paulownia wood crates for plastic-free storage around the home and garden. Simple and functional, they can be used for any number of storage purposes and nest together for easy storage when not in use. Combining sustainability, functionality and style, Natural Elements introduces its eco-friendly range, which is designed to reduce plastic, particularly single use within our kitchen and



Kitchen Craft Eco-Friendly Paulownia Wood Crates

cooking lifestyles. This collection embraces natural materials within the kitchen, bringing a unique organic feel to the home. [www.kitchencraft.co.uk](http://www.kitchencraft.co.uk)

## Cult furniture

The new colour of interior design - soft greens are set to take over interior design in 2020. Tones such as sage green maintain a fresh young vibe while looking forward to a new decade ahead. These tones complement recent colour trends such as millennial pink and work amazingly well in trending styles such as Art Deco influenced interiors.

Sage green is set to be amongst the most popular colours of the decade ahead. Associated with balance and harmony, green tends to be popular with all ages and genders - making the colour easy to use in any home. It also connects with plant life and their increasing usage in modern interior design.

This green shade is light and fresh, comparable to the vibe of the popular

millennial pink. Which is handy, as sage green works perfectly when paired with millennial pink. The same applies to burnt orange too. These warmer tones are the ideal complementary colour and allow homes to be easily filled with colour rather than relying on white walls or monotone surroundings.

An easy way to bring sage green into the living room is with a smooth, velvet upholstered sofa or simply throw some green cushions onto your existing sofa. In the kitchen or dining room, consider outfitting your table with sage green Heather chairs for a modern chic look. Finish off the look with green glass, Art Deco style lighting. The trending Art Deco style is a great way to bring these green tones into a living space.

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



Conway Plastic Bar Stool, Sage Green 75cm €90



Palmer Round Metal Side Table, Jade Green €90



## LIFESTYLE

Shopping decor



Retro Palm Leaf  
Glass Pendant  
Light, Green **€112**



Heather Dining Chair,  
Velvet Upholstered,  
Sage Green **€143**

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## LIFESTYLE

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Marie Low Small Stool, Velvet Upholstered, Sage Green €90



Bonnie 2-Seater Loveseat Sofa, Velvet Upholstered, Sage Green €783

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# LIFE OF LEISURE

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LIFE OF  
LEISURE

Interview

## Michelle Dockery: A lady in waiting

**Richard Aldhous** looks at an actress  
whose reinvention continues at pace in 2020



**I**n all fairness, Michelle Dockery has been away from behemoth that is *Downton Abbey* long enough to have swerved those go-to associations with Lady Crawley (later Talbot). Yes, last year's reprisal of the hit British drama did return hearts and minds to Highclere Castle, but the British actress has broken free of period drama with turns in TV series *Godless* and *Good Behaviour*, and returns this year in the emotive family story *Defending Jacob*. She has also starred in big-screen projects *The Sense of an Ending* and, most recently, *The*

*Gentleman*, where she went up against Matthew McConaughey, Charlie Hunnam and Colin Farrell.

And yet, despite all of that – not to mention a stint on the West End stage in London playing Diana Christensen in *Network* – the conversation, somewhat unerringly, always impulsively, feels it should reference a possible return to pantries, servants' bell boards, mansions and corsets.

"I don't think *Downton* will ever leave me,"





she begins. “In the early days and when it became really successful, I think I really feared it would be the role that would define the whole of the rest of my life. That sounds a bit strange, but we really went from a TV drama to global adulation in a terrifyingly short space of time, and sometimes, in the throes of that, it’s difficult to imagine you can be anyone else.”

Dockery is correct. From the early episodes of the first series on British broadcaster ITV that offered ratings of around six million, *Downton* exploded, rapidly ascending to viewing figures above 12 million per episode, and provoking conversations regarding how the export of the show would bring in new fans far and wide. Over 220 countries, including the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, subsequently enveloped themselves in the workings of the house, and by series six over 120 million people were tuning in.

“To see such a British institution be taken forward globally was such a thrill. It definitely changed us as people and as time has gone on, I’ve become much more relaxed about what the drama means in the context of a career,” she says. “I know well enough in myself that I’m pursuing various other projects and making a pretty good fist of them, but I’m beyond the point now where I worry about being defined by *Downton*.”

“If I get to age 70 and I’m still being stopped in the street to be asked when Lady Talbot will next return, I guess I need to be content enough that I was part of something very special; that’s ultimately how I feel about it these days.”

## “ THE SMALL SCREEN IS REALLY DOMINATING ”

That’s not to say Dockery hasn’t encountered her fair share of unusual encounters with fans of the series. “It has happened where people have reacted in a way where I was a little bit taken aback. I was in a theatre once and I had a woman sitting quite close to me who said that I was ‘a bit of bitch!’,” she laughs.

The philosophical slant with which the 38-year-old paints her career has certainly steered her into a place now where she is content with her lot. The actress may not have returned to the heights of *Highclere*, but in terms of

creative licence she has rarely found herself happier.

She returns this year as Laurie Baker in Apple TV drama *Defending Jacob*, which tells the story of William Landay’s best-selling novel from 2012. It documents a father coming to terms with accusations that his son may be a murderer.

“I loved the novel, and I feel it is a story that is perfectly told through TV,” she says. “We are in an era now where the small screen is really dominating with so many powerful, meaningful storylines, so it’s very exciting to be bringing something like this to fruition.”

## “ THE DIVIDE BETWEEN PRIVATE LIFE AND WORKING LIFE IS A VERY TRICKY ”

Perhaps of all those who have tasted success on the big screen, Dockery is one of the more deserving. Raised in relatively humble surroundings around an hour north-east of London, she is someone who has regularly gone

about her craft with admirable humility. She steers away from showbiz circuit and all that goes with it, despite basing herself in London and LA.

“I think the divide between private life and



working life is a very tricky thing to come to terms with when it comes to acting,” she says. “In some professions, you are clearly yourself in public, so if you’re a sportsman, a musician, even a politician, the press and paparazzi can judge your persona and know where the boundaries are.

“With acting it’s all a bit different – the people you are playing aren’t you. You can be the most outgoing, the most extroverted, the most gregarious on camera, but as soon as filming stops you may just want to hide away from the world.”

It’s a perspective not completely alien to Dockery. She is a private person who rarely discusses life away from the lens. That makes the death of her fiancé, John Dineen, in 2015 all the more upsetting. The couple

had been together for two years and were seemingly set for a wonderful life with each other, but the Irishman lost a long-term battle with cancer, leaving Dockery broken. She has never discussed the trauma of losing a loved one, save to note that her work commitments often dragged her through the tough times.

## “ THE PEOPLE YOU ARE PLAYING AREN’T YOU ”

“I think work is such a distraction, and sometimes being out of work is as much about filling time than it is putting food on the table,” she says. “It’s such a human purpose – to feel useful and active – and even

going for auditions can elevate you to such a level where it feels I have purpose again.”

Dockery’s example does offer some insight into where she is as an actress right now. You might imagine the Golden Globe-nominated actress may be at the level where





the script arrives with a simple 'yes/no', but Dockery insists she would always prefer a formal audition, not least so she can conduct her own interview research! "Yes of course I have to still audition, but it varies depending on what roles you're reading for," she says. "It's a process that makes me feel at home, and I think for any project you should have to work at it from the off - there's no free lunch!"

Of course, Dockery also has the companionship of a new partner to warm her. Towards the end of last year, it was revealed she had started dating Jasper Waller, the brother of actress, playwright and producer Phoebe Waller-Bridge.

As for the temptation to return to those comforts of *Downton*... well, Dockery isn't one to ever rule out such an idea. "I think going back is fine and I've never had a problem with that. The issue comes at the point where you lose your audience. In many instances in life, less is more, and I'd hate to blot the copybook on what has been a perfect period in our lives by taking one last gig too many.

"I feel there's also got to be a legitimate storyline or the credibility of the whole thing just drifts away, and before you know it, you're doing it just for the money.

"The clever thing about *Downton* was the fact every series was different and had its own personality. There were dark and light periods, and even personally, there were times where I felt Mary was centre-stage, then moved to one side. That was perfect as it refreshed her own position as well as that of those around her; but ultimately, you can only do so much with a set of characters.

## "IT FEELS I HAVE PURPOSE AGAIN"

"The other thing I know a lot of people took from the series was the elevation of the feminine role model. While a lot of that was to do with the war, and of course was reflective of the strength of women permeating through society for real, it was still a really important byproduct, so I am proud of that."

At least when she's not considering another *Downton* incarnation, Dockery knows how best to spend her spare time - boxset binge-watching. "I am sometimes impartial to a bit of that," she smiles, almost

apologetically. "I would say it depends on the subject matter and the programme - I think that there are some series that can be binge-watched and others which need to be savoured over a longer period of time.

"Graphic stuff I'll probably shy away from anyway - I don't really want to binge-watch seven or eight hours of people getting blown up.

"Something like *The Crown* on the other hand - well, I've certainly got the popcorn and box of chocolates out for that one in the past!

## "THE STRENGTH OF WOMEN PERMEATING THROUGH SOCIETY"

"I think that's what crystallises great drama, isn't it? It's that feeling when you've come to the end of an episode that you'll just have a quick peak at the start of the next one, and that then turns into another hour or so.

"Ultimately, if subject matter is right and you feel like you are enjoying something enough - and you're not just pulling a sickie from work - then, why not?!" ●



# Mauritius: Trou Aux Biches Beachcomber

*Together* explores a reference point for memorable family vacations in an enchanting environment



If you think that Mauritius is just sea, sand and sunshine, then think again. The island's beaches are definitely one of the greatest highlights, but there is so much more in store. If you're ready to leave the confines of your resort and venture inland, a unique vacation experience awaits you and will add new meaning to outdoor activities, adventure, food and culture.

Mauritius is known for its flora and fauna, with several endemic species of the country. The island is particularly famous for the dodo, which, with other endemic species, died out soon after the arrival of the first human beings.

And, there is as much to do under the water as there is above it. Submarine rides and underwater 'walks' are popular adventures and experiences that will open your eyes to the beauty of Mauritian waters and the treasures within. Explore the wonderland beneath with its incredible coral reefs, numerous colourful fish, and even some shipwrecks. The underwater walk is guaranteed to be among one of the best walks of your life, and be honest, have you not always wondered what it must be like in a submarine? Now is your chance to find out! Hiking and trekking are the best ways to discover Le Pouce Mountain on Mauritius with its breathtaking view of Port Louis; Le



Morne, a UNESCO World Heritage site; or the Black River Gorges ecosystem. The more daring among you may want to try canyoning, an adventure sport becoming increasingly popular in Mauritius.

## Trou Aux Biches Beachcomber Golf Resort & Spa

In this elegant tropical village-style hotel, luxury is there for the taking, with one of the most beautiful beaches on the north-west coast. Make your choice of modern suites, scattered in a large exotic garden, some of which have private pools. With clubs for children and teenagers, the Trou Aux Biches spa offers tailor-made treatments and cuisine with varied influences – young and old will find what they are looking for here, and it is located just 10 minutes from Grand Baie.

Spread out in a lush garden, the resort's suites have contemporary decor infused with local touches, giving them tropical charm. Clean lines, soft colours and noble charm combine to offer refinement, in which one can relax in absolute calm. The rooms come in five categories, with areas ranging from 63 to 163m<sup>2</sup>: Junior Suite, Tropical Junior Suite, Two Bedroom Family Suite, Beach Front Suite with pool and Beach Front Senior Suite with pool.

They all have air conditioning, satellite TV, telephone, safe, minibar, Wi-Fi access, tea and coffee making facilities, hairdryer, iron and ironing board. And, for extra privacy, why not discover the Trou Aux Biches Beachcomber villas?



And, at the superb spa, you can enjoy a personalized wellness experience in a peaceful setting. Based on a holistic approach combining ancestral techniques and natural products, the concept of 'The Art of Wellness' offers you the possibility of benefiting from tailor-made treatments according to the needs of your body and your mind.

The Kids Club will welcome your children aged 3 to 12, who can have fun with games and workshops on different themes: nature, culture, gastronomy, arts, DIY, while teenagers aged 13 to 17 can find their happiness with the many activities of the Teens Club. For babies from one to three years, Trou aux Biches Beachcomber Golf Resort & Spa offers baby bottles and a free babysitting service during the week from 13-16h (with reservation). Other services include a laundry, concierge, shops, car rental, limousine.

As far as gastronomy is concerned, the resort offers its six restaurants, with many different atmospheres. Overlooking the swimming pool and lagoon, the Oasis offers international cuisine, served buffet style with a different theme each evening.

At La Caravelle, you will enjoy a variety of flavours served à la carte or as a buffet in an elegant setting overlooking the sea. Live cooking demonstrations are regularly offered.



Asian food lovers will delight their taste buds with Thai specialties from the Blue Ginger and traditional Indian dishes at the Mahiya.

Il Corallo will please lovers of Italian and Mediterranean cuisine with a very friendly atmosphere.

Surrounded by coconut trees, Le Deck offers light meals to be enjoyed by the pool while enjoying a sublime view of the lagoon.

Between the pools and the crystal-clear lagoon caressing the fine sandy beach, you will be spoiled for choice for relaxation at Trou aux Biches Beachcomber Golf Resort & Spa. Explore the aquatic riches of Mauritius with the hotel's PADI diving centre. Beginners and experienced divers will be able to explore the most beautiful spots in the north of the island and admire an abundant underwater life.

Golfers can perfect their swing on the following two 18-hole courses:  
- Paradis Golf Club: paying green fees and golf cart. Trolley and transfers with supplement.  
- Mont Choisy Golf: paying green fees and golf cart (compulsory). Free Shuttle.

For free activities, you can enjoy windsurfing,

## “ WHILE ENJOYING A SUBLIME VIEW OF THE LAGOON ”



water skiing, glass bottom boat, pedal boat, kayaking, sailing, tennis, table tennis, pétanque, beach volley, and the fitness room.

Activities that come with a nominal charge include diving, golf, big game fishing and cycling.

The hotel has 306 suites:  
- 90 Junior Suites of 63m<sup>2</sup>. Maximum two adults and one baby.  
- 110 Tropical Junior Suites from 70m<sup>2</sup> with outdoor shower. Two Junior Tropical Suites are accessible to people with reduced mobility. They can accommodate up to two adults, and one child and one baby.  
- 40 Family Suites of 94m<sup>2</sup>. They can

accommodate up to two adults and three children.  
- 44 Sea Front Suites from 102m<sup>2</sup> with private pool.  
- 22 Senior Beach Front Suites of 163m<sup>2</sup> with private pool.

## “ THE ISLAND IS PARTICULARLY FAMOUS FOR THE DODO ”

All in all, the Trou Aux Biches is quite simply one of the most romantic hotels in Mauritius, with its strip of white sandy beach, turquoise lagoon with crystal-clear waters, and a 35-hectare tropical garden.

Where dreams are made.

[www.beachcomber-hotels.com](http://www.beachcomber-hotels.com) 



# The Maldives: 50 shades of blue

**Caroline Dierckx** was whisked off to the stunning Maldiv Islands...

Meeru Island Resort



**O**ne fine October afternoon, I received an invitation email for a press trip to the Maldives.

Who has never dreamed of going there? Not me! Another wonderful trip in perspective, I was very excited to leave and at the same time I am not a great lover of the sea. Snorkelling and a boat trip - in short, it is not my favourite environment. But at *Together* giving up because you have an apprehension or a fear is not the philosophy of the house! So, I was all set for the departure at the end of November.

Business Class is very comfortable, with multiple-function seats that adapt to our desires to either sit or lie down. Qatar

Airways' cover, slippers and the comfort kit bring that extra touch of luxury. It's almost midnight as we land in Doha airport - even at that hour it is very busy. For the second part of the trip we board another aircraft to take us to Malé, a four-hour flight. I slept easily, nice and warm under the blanket. There was an exceptional moment when I happened to glance through the porthole - the sun rose, with the atolls looming on the horizon. That's it, I'm there!

Located in South Asia (600km south of India), The Maldives is composed of just over 1,000 islands and 26 atolls spread from north to south. Each island is almost independent. Seen from the sky, they look little jewels decorating the Indian Ocean. Worth noting



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## “ THE SUN ROSE, WITH THE ATOLLS LOOMING ON THE HORIZON ”



that there was a change of government in September 2018, when, after decades of authoritarianism, the Maldivians elected Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, who promises to rebuild a democratic system in his country. Good news that will encourage more people to go there.

Arriving in Male, almost all of the tourists head to the port, which is located directly opposite the airport, and immediately board a speedboat – destination Paradise Island Resort & Spa. It is not a very nice trip, the sea was a bit rough, but the landscapes of these islands that we passed was so beautiful that we forgot (a little) the seasickness. As we entered the lagoon of the resort, a shy ray of sunlight seemed to guide us towards the pontoon to the reception.

Wow! It's incredibly beautiful. The colours of the water boast multiple shades of blue. We are in paradise. It started to rain but it's still 29 degrees! The island is 1km long and 230 meters wide with a beach all around and very attractive marine life. There are several types of rooms, and I was installed in a Superior Beach Bungalow, with direct access to the beach.

For snorkelling novices like me, the lagoon of Paradise Island is ideal for beginners. It is shallow and offers the possibility of admiring some beautiful fish. We also came across harmless blacktip sharks.

### What to do

Sunset fishing: departure by boat to admire the sunset and try a bit of sea fishing.

Feed the rays that come in the evening by the beach – simply hold out a small fish on your fingertips and they will love it. Do not hesitate to pet them.

Snorkelling in the open sea to discover the turtles. It took one hour by speedboat to reach the spot in the sea where we were most likely to see them. The watchword: admire but do not touch. The ecosystem is very fragile. Once in the water, I realized that the treasures of the Maldives are underwater. And we were lucky enough to spot two beautiful turtles! On the



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GOING PLACES TOGETHER





way, back it poured down – you could say the weather is capricious in these parts.

It was soon time to leave Paradise Island and head to Nika Island Resort & Spa... by seaplane, an almost essential means of transport in the Maldives. The lagoons seen from the sky are magnificent. Nika Island is an atypical paradise island, blending Maldivian culture and Italian style - far from mass tourism. The tone is set upon arrival with the charming Italian accent of Eduardo, the owner. His definition of luxury? The luxuriant nature, the calm and the serenity of the place, no dress code or make-up, just 'like at home'. Life in a Dolce Vita style, that's Nika Style!

This is where I abandoned flip-flops and shoes! Nika Island is very small, the Beach Villa with private beach for each visitor ensures the tranquillity of the island. For my part, I was in a Water Villa, the ultimate experience when you are in the Maldives, with a private staircase leading to the lagoon, a double terrace, a glass viewing panel in the ground so that you can admire the fish from the comfort of the sofa.

Don't miss the 'traditional meal' given to sharks after dark. A moment suspended in time as the large sharks from the open sea (a few meters long if you please) come close to the beach.

The architecture of Nika Island is authentic. The unique and original architecture makes Nika a style icon. The structure of the Beach Villas is entirely made of coral blocks: the curvy shapes of the villas draw inspiration from ocean shells. The wooden roofs are covered with the ancient palm tree leaves that grow on the island. All the finishing is done by hand by the same carpenters who used to build Dhonis, the typical Maldivian boats. All the villas feature unique antiques and local artworks, now hard to find in the Maldives.

The bell tolls the end for these few days on Nika Island, but we promise we will come back, just like 90% of the clientele who have visited this very special island.

*Arrivederci!*



Our final destination was Meeru Island Resort & Spa.

This beautiful island is surrounded by azure lagoons and long stretches of white sandy beach and is the only resort on the island of Merrufenfushi, North Male' Atoll. It is 1,200 meters long by 350 meters wide and about 32 hectares.

This tropical island is the typical 'cliché' of the Maldives! On a pristine sandy beach, a palm tree bending towards crystal clear water. The photo that will be an instant hit on Instagram! It takes 30 minutes to walk around the island. The lagoon is sublime, and I saw more blacktip sharks along the beach. Finally, we get used to it, so long as I'm not in the water with them! There is lush vegetation. I stayed in a Jacuzzi Beach Villa, a few meters from the beach with bathroom and jacuzzi - taking an outdoor shower is an incredible feeling!

In and out of the water, on Merru Island you never get bored. Paddle, catamarans and also a 9-hole golf course and a putting green, even a football field...

### What to do

Sunset trip on a Yacht: Viewing the sunset and spotting the dolphins while enjoying an afternoon tea or mocktail/cocktail on a yacht.

Dhiffushi Island, Local Village trip: Visit a nearby island and see how our neighbours live and work together in more of a traditional lifestyle, shop for souvenirs in the local shops.

In the evening, Meeru Island is animated: *Maldivian Night*, through the dance and the costumes, we discover the habits and customs and the traditions of the Maldivians. Disco DJ Night, Live Soft Music with a Maldivian group.

A word on the restaurant that I particularly appreciated here, a super fresh buffet, very qualitative, Indian flavours are top of the bill. It's packed with taste.

## “ AN EYE MASSAGE IMMERSED IN TURQUOISE WATER ”

Duniye Spa is the island's tropical spa. An inspiring place where some Water Villas are dedicated exclusively to care, this is a first, an eye massage immersed in turquoise water. Massages, treatments, natural and organic products - Duniye spa has a very wide choice. After the treatment, we got back in touch with the reality of the moment,

that is to say the view of the turquoise lagoon, the beautiful blue sky, while sipping a soothing tea. What else?

I retain memories of the charming and attentive staff. Maldivians are endearing, don't hesitate to talk to them to get to know

them better. A multi-coloured journey that is above all a destination for sea lovers. The beauty of the islands and everyone's commitment to ecology promises many more beautiful and long years in the Maldives.

*Life is not a race, but a journey to be savoured each step of the way, yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift – Brian Dyson*

### Top 3 places

Paradise Island Resort & Spa  
[www.villahotels.com/paradise-island/](http://www.villahotels.com/paradise-island/)

Nika Island Resort & Spa  
[www.nikaisland.it](http://www.nikaisland.it)

Meeru Island Resort  
[www.meeru.com](http://www.meeru.com)

By plane: Qatar Airways with one stop in Doha

### Travel Essentials:

Valid passport with 6 months left before expiry  
Business Card  
Diving certification card and logbook if you are interested in Scuba diving  
Power adapter and chargers for phones, laptops. Maldives uses UK-style sockets  
[www.visitmaldives.com/en](http://www.visitmaldives.com/en) 📍





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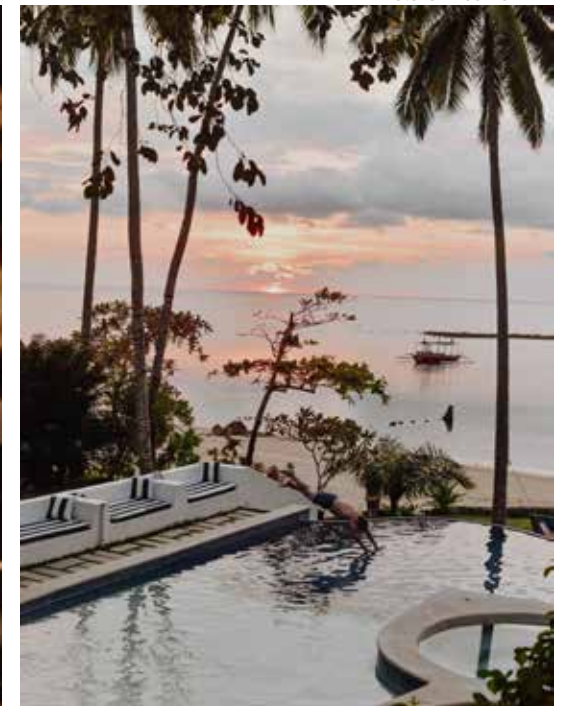
# Searching for Sugarlandia

**Catherine Feore** set off for an exotic location to find the perfect rum

Photo © Alice Bown



Photo © Alice Bown



**I**n the past, I might have used a bit of generic Jamaican rum to flambée some bananas, or mix some white rum into a mojito. My eyes were opened when I visited La Réunion and found out what a wonderful drink this can be. Since then, I have discovered a local brasserie with an impressive range of rums from around the world, and the rest, as they say, is history.

## “RUM AND ITS EXQUISITE DIVERSITY”

I still wonder how it is possible that people can talk for hours on end about the merits of different single malts, and I have never heard anyone extolling the virtues of rum and its exquisite diversity. Apart from everything else, it should be a good deal easier to wax lyrical about exotic islands in far-off southern seas than a wet, windswept Hebridean isle in the North Sea.



Travel

When I had the opportunity to find out more about Don Papa rum, which hails from the Philippines, I was more than a little curious, because I had never tried a Filipino rum. Arriving in Manila, you meet a familiar scene to anyone who has travelled in South East Asia, namely soaring buildings, giant luxury shopping malls and a work ethic and entrepreneurial spirit that makes you wonder how Europe is going to survive the 21st century. The downside is the insane traffic and grinding poverty you see in some parts of the city.

It is worth visiting the walled historical centre 'Intramuros' in the centre of Manila where, among other things, you can visit a museum dedicated to the national hero José Rizal, who was executed in 1896 for rebellion by the Spanish colonial government. Rizal spent a short time in Brussels, so there's even a Belgian connection.

Manila is full of really great places to eat. For lunch, the Harbor View Restaurant serves delicious seafood, and I particularly like Kinilaw, a sort of ceviche. The restaurant offers a great view across the expanse of Manila - though the plastic waste in the sea is a little worrisome. If you like chichi, Toyo in Makati is considered to be one of Asia's top 50 restaurants. I particularly enjoyed Sarsa ([sarsa.ph](http://sarsa.ph)) for a modern take on traditional Filipino dishes and specialties from Negros island, which we were about to visit. I knew nothing about Filipino food before my visit, but from the Inasal chicken marinated in spices, coconut vinegar and calamansi juice to crispy tilapia fish served with mango salsa and the chef's secret sauce, there is much to discover. The Filipinos certainly love pork - there are few parts of the pig that are not enjoyed.

People are better informed than before about rum, mainly due to the explosion in cocktail consumption. Manila has a vast array of cocktail bars, one of the most innovative,

Run Rabbit Run, has managed to export some of its Don Papa based signature mixes to London (Doña and Kulog at Kidlat).

I met Rolf Schollaert, a cocktails and spirits journalist ([cocktailnation.be](http://cocktailnation.be)), who regularly judges competitions. Schollaert told me that what he looks for in a perfect cocktail is a balance of flavours; you must be able to taste the base spirit and identify it, the other ingredients should alter the taste in a new and creative way.

To find out more about Don Papa, we had to get out of the city and into the sugar-growing heart of the Philippines, the volcanic island of Negros, just an hour's flight from Manila. The recent eruption in Taal was a reminder that the Pacific 'ring of fire' is still very much alive and definitely kicking.

Negros Occidental is where the sugar cane is grown on the plain around the nearby volcano of Mount Kanlaon, which is situated in a natural park teaming with rare fauna, from the distinctive

bleeding heart pigeon to the civet cat - whose poo is famous for its role in making the eye-wateringly expensive kopi luwak coffee. Some of the animals can be spotted on the Don Papa label, if you look very carefully.

We visited some of the old plantations; the Gaston Ancestral Home is a particularly important house in the 'sugar story'. Yves Germain Gaston left France for Mauritius - where he probably learnt about the sugar business - then moved to the Philippines. Gaston introduced what was at the time a state-of-the-art iron mill for processing the cane.

The sugar barons have a mixed reputation, to put it mildly. Interestingly, the Don Papa name is drawn from Papa Isio, like Rizal he also called for the Philippines' independence from Spanish rule. Ironically, some of the

Photo © Alice Bown



most delicious Don Papa rums are those that are matured in old Spanish sherry barrels. Sevillana, for example, is matured in Oloroso casks that were also used to keep orange wine, a Sevillian speciality. The Sherry Cask Don Papa - my personal favourite - is matured in four different types of sherry cask: Fino, Pedro Ximenez, Cream and Palo Cortado. It is then mixed by an expert to create a rum with a real depth of flavour.

Don Papa uses sugar processed at the Hawaiian Sugar Mills. The mill makes a muscovado sugar that is the most outstanding I have ever tasted. I bought as much of this as I could take back with me. It is also organic, even if it may not have an official label. The residue of the cane is used to power the sugar-making process, and the molasses is used to make the rum. [www.donpapurum.com](http://www.donpapurum.com)

After all that - rather enjoyable - work, it was great to take a few days in Punta Bulata resort and spa to relax. You can dive, snorkel or just gently soak up the heat on the beach or beside the eternity pool. Everyone gathered for a Kamayan meal in the evening, where you eat food with your hands.

The nearby Danjungan Island is carefully preserved and is extremely rich in biodiversity, including turtles. For me, the most impressive part of this island was the bat cave with literally thousands of fruit bats all hanging out together. In the evening, we tasted unique Don Papa cocktails mixed by Sofie Ketels and Rolf, using local fruits, honey, chilli and the wonderful calamansi - which taste like a hybrid of lime and mandarin.

If you can't go to the Philippines immediately, fear not. Nestled in the heart of Brussels, just around the corner from the Cartoon Museum, there is Humphrey's ([humphreyrestaurant.com](http://humphreyrestaurant.com)) where you will receive a warm welcome from Don Papa Ambassador Glen Ramaekers and his wife Julie. Here you can enjoy Filipino influenced dishes - the team are constantly innovating, and much of the produce is home grown. If you are looking for the perfect cocktail, take a trip to Sofie's Sunset Beach Bar in Koksijde on the Belgian coast this summer; and if you can't wait that long maybe hook up with some friends and have your very own cocktail party in 'Sofie's Living Room'. ❶



# Responsible travel: Unique vacations

The pioneers in selling authentic and sustainable holidays show us the way in April



## Borneo

Borneo can be visited year-round - but this is the driest season, so the best time for visiting the rainforest and Mt Kinabalu. Despite having opened up greatly to visitors in the past few decades, Borneo holidays remain a road less travelled. Sabah and Sarawak are now well equipped for visitors, boasting wildlife sanctuaries, world-class dive resorts and mountain treks. It's worth heading into Indonesian Kalimantan, where landscapes and people remain largely untainted by tourism.



## Morocco

We think the weather is just about perfect in Morocco - hot and sunny but not unbearable. This is a great destination for an Easter activity break with kids. Morocco holidays take us out of our winter greys and blacks and whisk us, within a three-hour flight, into a rainbow of raucous colours and enlightening Islamic culture. Marrakech, the Atlas Mountains, Essaouira and Casablanca, every town has a medina or souk with their array of colours...



## Costa Rica

Costa Rica is dry and mostly sunny, so this is a great time for wildlife and activity holidays. But of course - you're still in the rainforest - so do still pack your waterproof! Costa Rica holidays let adventurers negotiate rain and cloud forests on foot, horseback, mountain bike, hanging bridge or 200m-high zip line, for a true bird's eye view of the monkey-and-macaw-filled canopy.



## Cuba

Cuba is at its driest - while avoiding the summer rains and the winter cold. Cuba's beaches and bays are a must however. Stepping into Havana on your Cuba holidays presents a nostalgic world of classic cars, crackling transistor radios and clacking dominoes, whilst children play with handmade toys in the street. Meander into the countryside to find farmers riding horses through forests, oxen ploughing fields, wheelbarrows spilling over with home-grown veg and rocking-chair-bound residents sipping rum on the porch.



## Galapagos Islands

Galapagos enjoys calmer seas and warmer weather - making this the best time to visit, despite the greater chance of rain. You'll also miss the busy holiday season - these islands are popular with families. Galapagos Islands showcase an astonishing array of endemic species, such as giant tortoises and sea iguanas, as well as countless sea lions, birds and fur seals. The isolation of the Galapagos Islands has resulted in the wildlife having an unusually fearless attitude towards humans, guaranteeing an extremely close encounter with some of the most unusual species on the planet.



## Japan

The cherry blossom is in full bloom in most of Japan. Japan holidays are an intriguing combination of calm, cool and just a little bit bonkers, all against a picture-book backdrop of mountains, volcano lakes and coastal expanses. The rituals the locals observe today are what underpin one of the world's best-maintained cultures, and you can truly lose yourself in everyday life. Speedy trains and insane efficiency make travelling out to hikes and islands easy too.





### Andalusia

The aromatic orange blossom is out in Andalusia. Andalusia has been imprinted with Arab influence over five centuries of Moorish rule, which once made it Europe's centre of learning. Romans, Greeks, Phoenicians and Byzantines left even earlier cultural marks, whilst atmospheric ancient ports like Cadiz drew influences from the Americas, and arid Almeria stood in for a filmic Wild West. It may be part of Spain, but Andalusia holidays reveal a region revelling in a world very much its own.



### Greece

Greece has great weather for cycling, hiking or water-based activities, and you'll avoid the summer crowds. Greece exists between its wonderfully diverse physical reality and a lovingly imagined vision conjured from multiple sources: ancient classics, timeless novels and old movies, from *Never On A Sunday* to *Shirley Valentine*. Choose from undiscovered islands like Syros or Amorgos, the mountains of Meteora or the gorges of Crete, mainland national parks like Parnassos or the marine sanctuary of Alonissos.



### India and Nepal

This is peak season for tiger safaris in India and Nepal. The climate may be unpleasantly hot, but this is the key - as the tigers have to come out in search of water. Tiger safari holidays can touch the psyche in multi-dimensional ways - discovering something precious you feared was lost, being transported back to your childhood dreams, witnessing poetry in motion or, for some, simply a deeply spiritual moment. ●



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At the Kids's Resort, children from the age of 4 months olds are welcomed in a stunning setting: a 1000-sqm sun-drenched area with private pool, entirely design for playing, development and creativity.



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**Why subscribe to a travel assistance contract?** As soon as you leave Belgium, the culture changes and so do your habits: whether it be health care, hospitals, doctors, governmental authority or simply the language... The administration systems are generally not the same, and this is without taking into consideration the difficulty of organizing assistance in a foreign country.

In the event of an accident or disease the consequences are generally more expensive and more serious. You cannot depend on your loved ones who are still in Belgium. If you are travelling accompanied by family and/or friends, you will also have to provide accommodation and repatriation for yourself and the rest of the group. With an assistance agency, you make a simple phone call and everything is settled. You will be taken care of in case of an incident on holiday, or if your car breaks down, even in Belgium.

**The annual formula: Complete peace of mind and it's less expensive**

The annual formula offers a complete medical assistance, which protects you all year on your trips to foreign countries (holidays, city trips, touring). The formula is valid for a victim of a disease or an accident, with medical reimbursement, repatriation, organizing and helping the people who accompanied you on the holiday, providing contact with your loved

ones who stayed in Belgium, assistance at your home in Belgium and administrative and logistical aid.

**The benefits of annual assistance: Because you can never be too careful!**

Annual assistance allows you to escape on holiday in all serenity. Not only does it already have a complete formula, the annual assistance offers you extra options to increase the value of annual assistance abroad. You can take out annual assistance that includes your car, assuring complete medical assistance all year round and an efficient breakdown service in Belgium and abroad.

**The ideal combination for travelling in complete safety**

To reserve your holiday and travel in complete serenity, we suggest you combine the annual assistance with Europ Assistance's 'cancellation insurance' option which will protect you before your departure.

**You can now enjoy your holidays with your family or friends right till the end**

Sometimes due to an accident or illness abroad, it is important that you repatriate as quickly as possible. However, sometimes you prefer to wait until the end of your holiday and make the best of the sunny weather before you go home. A broken arm doesn't necessarily mean a ruined holiday. At Europ Assistance, you can benefit from a personalized solution - not just sometimes but all the time. We assist you 24/7 every day. Contact us on 02.541.90.00

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Ski

# Let the Alps bring you to life

Together takes a tour of four stunning Club Belambra resorts in the mountains

Avoriaz Club Les Cimes du Soleil



**A**h, the mountains. How much poetry and literature has been written about these towering giants, and how much do they still capture the very soul of mere mortals? What a joy it is to visit them in winter, when everyone else is still getting over Christmas and getting back into the daily grind.

This year, why not opt for your 2020 ski holidays in exceptional locations, and that is exactly where Club Belambra comes in. We have chosen four amazing Alps locations from their wide range of resorts. Nestled within renowned ski areas, the Belambra Clubs, Hotels and Residences located in the mountains are ideal holiday resorts for lovers of skiing and snow sports. Surrounded by

sumptuous landscapes and, for the most part, located a few minutes' walk from the slopes, they provide the perfect conditions for a successful winter sports holiday.

In terms of activities, the Alps cater for all desires and passions: from alpine skiing to snowboarding through boardercross and cross-country skiing, the choice is vast and many sports are available according to everyone's level. To this can be added off-piste alternatives, such as snowshoeing, sledding, snow scooter or even husky-sled expeditions. And if you go on a family ski holiday, you can relax safe in the knowledge that your children can be looked after by professionals in clubs adapted to their age.

Les 2 Alpes 1,800



Let's begin with Club Belambra, **Les Bruyères** – situated with a clear view of the Alps, and a restaurant with a stunning panoramic view, Les Bruyères is to be found in the Les 3 Vallées ski area, the largest ski domain in the world, with 600km of pistes. So, there is no excuse to miss out! And of course, that's not all – there is of course a full-on entertainment and activities club for your leisure in the heart of the 3 Valleys. Head out into a resort that has guaranteed snow cover, while your children aged three months and above can have fun with Leo and other activity leaders. In the evening, warm up in the resort and enjoy magical après-ski with family and friends.

Moving across and into the Portes du Soleil ski area (again, 650km of slopes between France and Switzerland), and you will find the **Avoriaz Club Les Cimes du Soleil**. It is located at the foot of the slopes, which means you can ski in and ski out, and there is a sun-lounge terrace with a wonderful view of the mountains. In the heart of the historic centre of the resort of Avoriaz, take advantage of the ideal location, bathed in sunshine at an altitude of 1,800 metres. There are numerous sports activities, kids clubs and first-rate entertainment throughout the season. A real winner!

Then, we move to what is perhaps the best location in the Club Belambra resort, **Les 2 Alpes 1,800**. Take a trip to the top of the slopes with the cable car to arrive just outside the hotel - the mountains have never been so close. Then, why not ski on Europe's largest glacier at 3,600 metres, and take advantage of the numerous activities available in the resort, with full evening entertainment and skiing guaranteed throughout the season.

And, for true immersion in deep relaxation, **I'Hotel du Golf** is for you, with its ideal location at the foot of the Paradiski slopes (425km) – it welcomes children aged three and older, and the resort reflects the friendly, family spirit of Les Arcs 1,800 with contemporary, innovative flair. Set off to ski first thing in the morning, returning to enjoy a drink on the sun terrace, and end your day with a moment of wellbeing in the Deep Nature Spa, where sauna, whirlpool, and relaxation treatments are available.

A winter wonderland awaits us – let's take to the slopes.

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





### Slip sliding away in the Val d'Arly

Kingdom of winter sports, the Val d'Arly has established itself as THE destination for riders of all kinds. With its two beautiful ski areas, Espace Diamant (192km of slopes) and Les Portes du Mont-Blanc (100km of slopes), the Val d'Arly has been able to develop, in addition to classic alpine skiing, new and ever more original fun sports to please ever skier. By scooter, horse, dog sledding or even on a funny machine called 'ski-bob', in this valley you will find a programme of winter sports for all, and in all weathers. So... on your marks, get set, slide!

Aravis). €40 per 1-hour session (support and equipment included).  
[www.alpesaventures.com](http://www.alpesaventures.com)

### The + family - Baby Sled Park

Designed for children aged 3 to 7, this secure park allows beginners to learn the basics of mushing: stand on a sled, brake, turn left or right, get up in the event of a fall, help your dog climb. The little ones enjoy a nice moment of gliding and complicity with the dogs. Mushing Experience (Notre Dame de Bellecombe) €50 per 2-hour session.  
[www.experience-mushing.com](http://www.experience-mushing.com)  
[www.vald'arly-montblanc.com](http://www.vald'arly-montblanc.com)

### The + in vogue - Mountain Trott'

The scooter adapted to the mountains! Equipped with huge low-pressure tyres to offer maximum grip in snow, it is a gentle and safe descent that is worth trying out. Supervised by a state-certified instructor, you head up the Tête du Torraz for an extraordinary descent of 7km long, via the blue slopes of Controversy and Tréfléannaise. Alpes Aventures (La Giettaz en

# Arc 1950 Le Village

There is a very special resort that is as magical in summer as in winter!

**W**hilst the winter season is still in full swing in Arc 1950 Le Village, more and more holidaymakers are choosing the resort as their summer destination. Let us explain why!

Arc 1950, the most recent of the four sites of Les Arcs ski resort, is a mountain village unlike any other in Europe. Built just 15 years ago in the heart of the French Alps, the resort's concept and its perfect situation overlooking Mont Blanc and in the centre of Les Arcs' mountain biking and hiking trails make it incomparable. With its pretty decor and the residences with their coloured facades, Arc 1950 is a harmonious setting, where a relaxing holiday lifestyle goes hand in hand with modern infrastructures and the type of services proposed in the most prestigious Alpine resorts.

No-one ever gets bored in the Village! In our pedestrian resort, guests and visitors can forget their cars and enjoy a multitude of activities in the fresh mountain air or just wander around the village streets.

While some members of the family are on the mountain biking trails, out hiking or enjoying a relaxing treatment in the Deep Nature Spa, others will be making the most of the Outdoor Card that they were given on arrival in the Village. Just to explain, for any stay of five nights or more in the Village, three free sessions among different activities are offered per person and per week, from a choice of



golf, fitness, aqua-gym, hiking, mountain biking and archery.

But life in the Village really revolves around the day-long entertainment you can enjoy with your family or friends. Concerts, shows and events that change every week based on a new theme that is always environmentally friendly. For example, there is the Trotti-race, a wild scooter race, and the Family Trail, for laughs and thrills, all with a sustainable approach.

After a full day of activities, you can enjoy shopping in the Village's selection of boutiques then relax with a drink or a cocktail in the sun on one of Arc 1950's pub terraces. For a great end to the day, the different restaurants in the Village will take you on a culinary world tour with a selection of Savoyard, Italian and other international choices. When you leave the restaurant, the starry sky will follow you to your apartment, where you will dream of just one thing: the next adventures in Arc 1950 Le Village!  
[en.lesarcs.com/arc-1950.html](http://en.lesarcs.com/arc-1950.html) ●



# Malaysia: The art of eating

**Gemma Rose** pays homage to her Malaysian roots... by stuffing her face



“Sudah makan?” is one of the most commonly asked questions in Malaysia. The fact that “Have you eaten?” comes up more often in conversation than “How are you?” shows just how important and integral food is to Malaysian society. Being half Malaysian, my knowledge of *Bahasa Malaysia* (Malay) is rusty, but my Malaysian foodie knowledge is reasonably fluent. My strongest and proudest bond to Malaysia is to its food.

It is difficult to pin down what Malaysian cuisine actually is, especially because there are so many iconic dishes: Malaysia’s

National Heritage Act preserves over 200 of them. Due to the many ethnic communities that make up Malaysian society - the main three being Malay, Chinese and Indian - it would be fair to say that the cuisine lacks a distinctive identity. For example, there are different takes on the same dish: *nasi goreng* (fried rice) has at least five different styles. There is also great debate over the breakfast of choice: *nasi lemak*, a Malay dish of coconut rice accompanied with *sambal* (a chili paste), boiled egg, cucumber, fried anchovies and peanuts; *roti canai*, fried Indian flat bread served with curry; or *dim sum*, the vast array of steamed and fried



Chinese dumplings, buns and rolls. I may even be insulting many Malaysians by not adding more dishes to the list!

Variety is the spice of life, and there is no end to such variety when it comes to the Malaysian kitchen. On a recent visit, I decided to eat my way through the particular food havens of Penang and Melaka. The wonderful thing about eating out there is that you can have just as delicious fresh food by the roadside for next to nothing, as you can in an upmarket restaurant. It is no wonder that the Malaysian government markets its gastronomy as a tourist attraction in itself. Here are some of the best bites of my trip.

## Penang Island

On the north-western coast of Malaysia sits Penang Island, a former British settlement

whose capital Georgetown is home to a UNESCO World Heritage site. One cannot visit Penang without trying its *char koay teow*, a flat rice noodle dish with prawns, chives, egg and beansprouts, fried in a wok until the noodles are caramelized around the edges. The taste is tangy and crunchy, leaving a spicy shrill on the tongue after you’ve taken a bite. What also sets it apart from other fried noodle dishes is the smoky aroma (*wok hei*) imparted on the dish by the masterful cook and a fiery wok, which helps make the caramelized taste more

pronounced. This much-loved dish can be found all over Georgetown, particularly at hawker centres, which are open-air food courts. It really is a dish best had out on the street where it’s hot off the wok - watching your cook fry your noodles is a sight worth seeing and smelling.

“ MY  
STRONGEST AND  
PROUDEST BOND  
TO MALAYSIA IS  
TO ITS FOOD ”





Another must in Penang is its Chinese food. We had one of the tastiest meals at Foong Wei in Georgetown, a favourite amongst Penangites. The atmosphere is boisterous and busy, with tables hosting several generations of one family seated around the lazy Susan rotating tray, tucking into an array of dishes to their heart's content. The highlights were the prawn spring rolls: juicy king prawns embedded in a crispy golden pancake; and the mango chicken: chicken pieces marinated in sweet chili sauce, coated in a crispy batter, topped off with shredded unripe mango for that extra zest. Of course, I cannot have Chinese food without *nasi goreng cina*, my favourite type of fried rice. This fried rice is light on the soya sauce, with sliced spring onion, fish cake and shrimps, fluffy stringy scrambled egg and crispy shallots to christen it on top, just heaven.

## “ FOOD REALLY DOES BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER ”

### Melaka

A very important part of Malaysian food is *Nyonya* food. These are dishes descendant from early Chinese settlers to Malaysia, who assimilated Malay culture into theirs. *Baba* is the man, and *Nyonya*, the woman. We dedicated our Nyonya food tour to another UNESCO World Heritage site, Melaka, a port city south of Kuala Lumpur, that had once been ruled by the Portuguese, Dutch and the British due to its strategic location for international trade.

One of the most famous Nyonya dishes is the *laksa*, a spicy noodle soup. There are generally two types of laksa: *curry laksa* and *assam laksa*. We probably had some of the best laksa at the most hot and blustery of restaurants in the heart of Melaka's historical centre, Jonker 88, which was packed to the rafters at 3pm on a weekday. Curry laksa is a spicy coconut soup, of which every slurpy



Situé sur la prestigieuse Avenue Louise, au pied de la tour ITT, le Callens Café s'exhibe dans un décor contemporain où il est de bon ton de voir et d'être vu. Ce lieu branché de la capitale est en outre doté d'un espace, aménagé comme un appartement indépendant raffiné et privatif, pour organiser vos événements business ou privés. On croise toujours une célébrité au Callens Café ! Ce qui n'est que normal au vu de sa cuisine créative qui ravit tous les palais pour un prix plus que raisonnable... Le midi, cet élégant restaurant fait le plein d'une clientèle business se régaland de «quick dishes» servis en un temps record. Le soir venu, aux plaisirs de l'assiette se mêle une ambiance toujours plus festive. Pour les belles soirées d'été, une nouvelle terrasse verte à l'abri du vent et chauffée n'attend plus que vous pour déguster les différents mets goûteux arrosés d'un bon verre de rouge.

Avenue Louise, 480 • 1050 Bruxelles  
+322 647 66 68  
Fermé samedi midi et dimanche







spoonful is nourishing to the soul. The soup is rich with tofu puffs, fish balls, prawns and fish cake, thin rice noodles and shredded cucumber to garnish. The assam laksa is a different beast - the broth is sweet and sour, and it comes with a dollop of tuna and a slice of boiled egg. The rice noodles are thick and translucent, with round edges, like udon noodles. The assam laksa is certainly an assault on the taste buds.

You can't visit any *pasar malam* (night market) without trying the array of sweet and savoury snacks on offer. My favourites are *karipaps*, golden butter pasties filled with either curried potato chunks or chopped boiled egg, white pepper and potato. I usually wash them down with a cup of milky tea, which takes the edge off the spice. I also love *cucur udang* (prawn fritters). Then there are the many *kuih melayu* or *kuih nyonya*: colourful, smooth and succulent sticky cakes made mainly from rice flour and coconut

## “ EVERY SLURPY SPOONFUL IS NOURISHING TO THE SOUL ”

milk. I can easily fill myself up with *seri muka* and *talam*, whose pea green flavouring comes from the pandan leaf (South East Asia's answer to vanilla). These cakes must be eaten slowly, with every bite savoured, and don't forget your cup of tea.

There is nothing like food to deepen the connection with your heritage. As I ate my way around Malaysia, I realized how little I appreciated in the past the richness of this country's culture, history and nature. Malaysian society is not perfectly harmonious, there still exists some division amongst racial and religious lines. But when you sit out on the street, eating your meal next to families from different communities, you realize that food really does bring people together, and I strongly believe that when you share your food, you keep the peace.  
[www.malaysia.travel/en/intl](http://www.malaysia.travel/en/intl)

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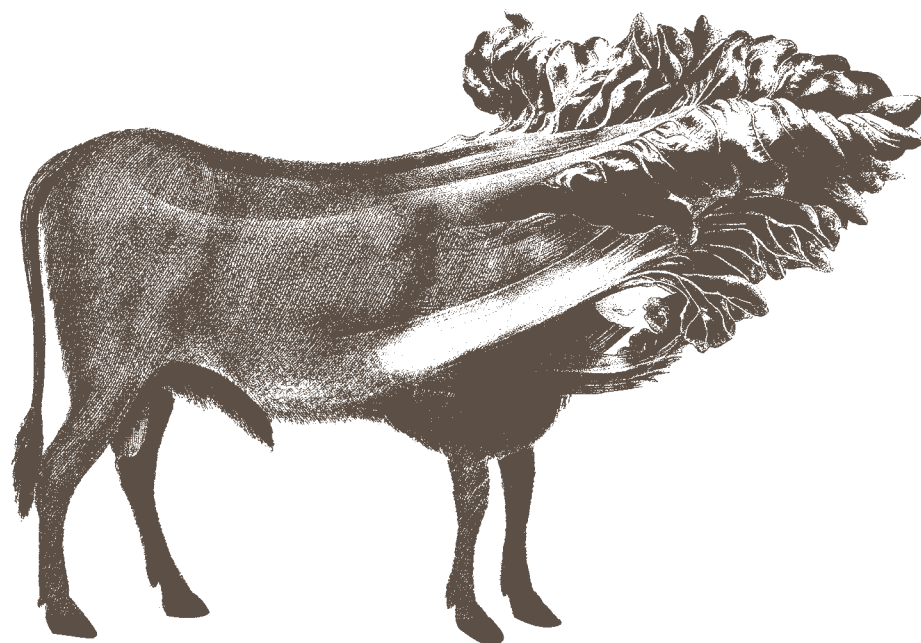
TWO-COURSE  
MENU AT €29

THREE-COURSE  
MENU AT €32



# Dining

Foodie **Xavier Bostem** checked out two excellent but different local restaurants



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## Au Gré du Vent

Feminine cuisine, but not only... In Seneffe, a few steps from the Canal Historique du Centre and from the family farm, Stéphanie Thunus, star chef, decided to set up her restaurant with her husband Sébastien Guchet. She offers elegant and creative cuisine, but always product-centric. Elegant, colourful and gourmet dishes to wonderfully accompany Sébastien's wine list. Yes, to accompany the wine list... Awarded Best Wine List 2019 in the famous *Gault et Millau* guide, Sébastien and Bertrand (the sommelier) offer us no fewer than 1,000 choices! Enough to seduce all tastes and budgets. On the menu, don't miss their classic Langoustine de Guilvinec in four preparations: boiled, crispy candy, tartare or



10g Baeri caviar. Or let yourself be guided by their 3 - 6 course menus, with appetizers and mini-pastries for a gourmet dining experience. A moment of pure happiness. Enjoy your meal!

[www.resto-augreduvent.be](http://www.resto-augreduvent.be)





### La Marelle Café

It smells like beer, from Brussels to Blaregnies. It was in Blaregnies, a stone's throw from Mons, that chef Eric Fernez opened a 'back in the day' brasserie and he called it La Marelle (hopscotch) café. In a comfortable and inviting environment, everything is done to make the guest feel at home – there's a furnished terrace, children's games and a large parking lot. You can taste a simple but always good quality cuisine; dumplings in tomato sauce, chicory in gratin or the famous homemade burger. Come and taste a good beer with friends in front of the open fireplace. Indeed, with more than 400 beer references on the menu, there is something to satisfy beer lovers as well as novices – and welcoming staff are on hand to



advise you. If playing cards is thing join your friends and family at regular Whist nights. There are timeless moments to be savoured in this friendly and welcoming atmosphere. [fernez.com/la-marelle-cafe](https://fernez.com/la-marelle-cafe) 



### MENU DU CHEF À €26,50

La timbale de pâtes aux légumes  
ou Bisque de homard  
ou Chausson de poisson à la basquaise  
ou Fondu aux 4 fromages  
ou La terrine de volaille  
ou Le Vitello Tonnato  
ou Chiffonnade de chicon au chèvre et miel

Noisette d'agneau bouquetière  
ou Le foie de veau aux échalotes  
ou Le tournedos forestière  
ou Escalope de veau à la Florentine  
ou Lapereau à la Kriek  
ou Filet de cabillaud aux poireaux

Pâtisserie du jour

### MENU DU PATRON À €43,50

Le foie gras maison et sa gelée au Porto  
ou Les 6 perles blanches

La nage de Saint Jacques et Scampi aux petits légumes  
ou Agnolotti Parmentier au Saumon fumé

Filet de bœuf à l'Estragon  
ou Marcassin aux champignons des bois  
ou Le filet de Lotte à l'Oseille

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## Villa Lorraine and Sea Grill merge

Ten years after taking over Villa Lorraine, the Litvine family have chosen to transform, renovate and modernize this emblematic house, happy to rewrite history with chef Yves Mattagne, who celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Sea Grill. This famous restaurant closed its doors definitively on 31 December due to renovations to the Radisson Hotel.

## What happens next?

On 22 February, Villa Lorraine closed for a few months, in order to undertake important renovation and decoration works. Current chef, Gary Kirchens, has moved closer to his roots by taking the kitchen reins of Kasteel Van Ordingen in Sint-Truiden.

Until the renovation of the Villa is complete, Yves Mattagne will open an ephemeral 'Art Club' restaurant located at the crossroads of the museums at Place Royale, Musée Magritte and Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium. The chef will offer a world menu,

influenced by his numerous trips abroad, it will focus on sharing. The service will be relaxed with a friendly and musical atmosphere.

Later on, a new adventure begins: La Villa Lorraine by Yves Mattagne. New interior, new concept, new chef. More than four months of work will be required to renovate and transform the interior. The new restaurant will open its doors this summer (date to be confirmed). The decor will be created by the architects A3 Development (who also designed La Villa Emily) - it will be a modern, elegant design in the image of Yves Mattagne's kitchen. This unique restaurant will offer two atmospheres: a lounge area and gastronomic restaurant.

Together, Yves Mattagne and the Litvine family have chosen to rewrite a new story, sharing a passion for cooking and the excitement of a challenge.  
[www.art-club.be](http://www.art-club.be)



Books

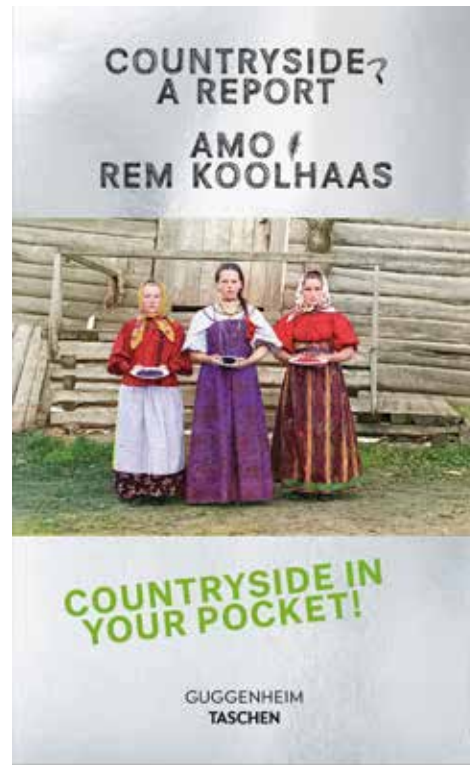
# Koolhaas. Countryside, A Report

This month we look at a book that gives a bleak view of the battle for the countryside

**T**he rural, remote, and wild territories we call “countryside”, or the 98% of the earth’s surface not occupied by cities, make up the front line where today’s most powerful forces - climate and ecological devastation, migration, tech, demographic lurches - are playing out. Increasingly under a ‘Cartesian’ regime - gridded, mechanized, and optimized for maximal production - these sites are changing beyond recognition. In his latest publication, Rem Koolhaas explores the rapid and often hidden transformations underway across the Earth’s vast, non-urban areas.

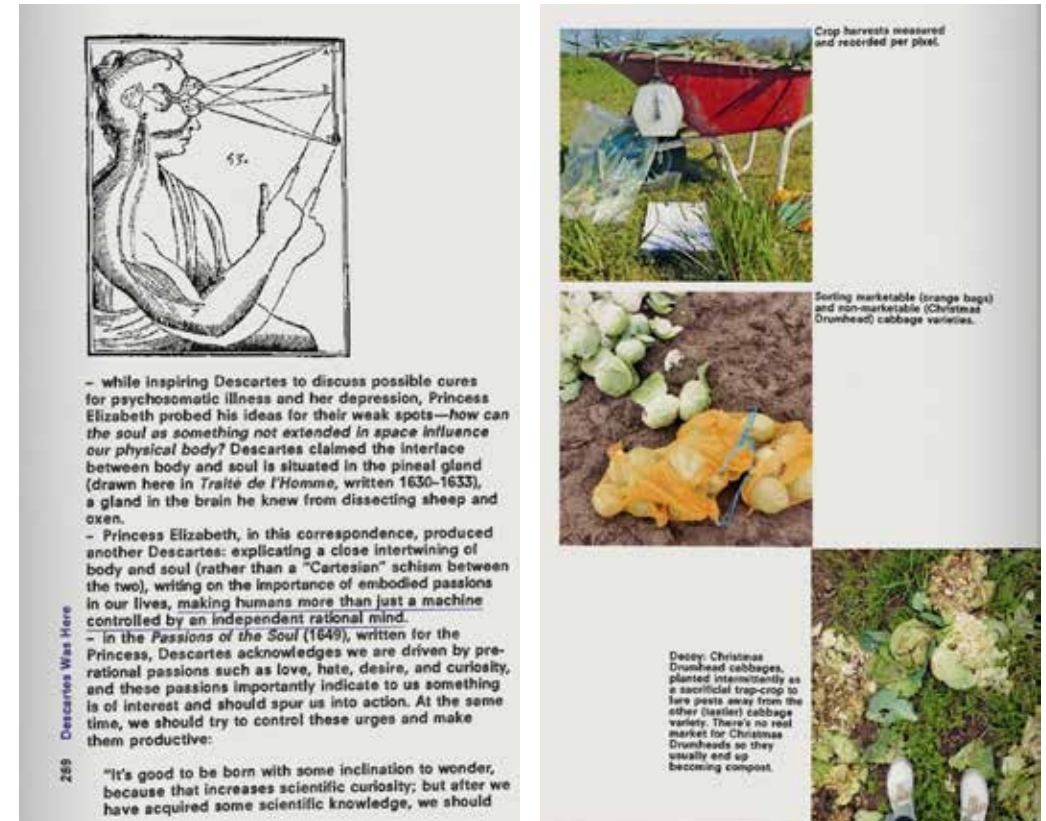
*Countryside, A Report* gathers travelogue essays exploring territories marked by global forces and experimentation at the edge of our consciousness: a test site near Fukushima, where the robots that will maintain Japan’s infrastructure and agriculture are tested; a greenhouse city in the Netherlands that may be the origin for the cosmology of today’s countryside; the rapidly thawing permafrost of Central Siberia, a region wrestling with the possibility of relocation; refugees populating dying villages in the German countryside and intersecting with climate change activists; habituated mountain gorillas confronting humans on ‘their’ territory in Uganda; the American Midwest, where industrial-scale farming operations are coming to grips with regenerative agriculture; and Chinese villages transformed into all-in-one factory, e-commerce stores, and fulfilment centres.

This book is the official companion to the Guggenheim Museum exhibition *Countryside, The Future*. The exhibition and book mark a new area of investigation for



architect and urbanist Rem Koolhaas, who launched his career with two city-centric entities: *The Office for Metropolitan Architecture* (1975) and *Delirious New York* (1978). It’s designed by Irma Boom, who drew inspiration for the book’s pocket-sized concept, as well as its innovative typography and layout, from her research in the Vatican library.

The book brings together collaborative research by AMO, which is the think tank of the Office for Metropolitan Architecture







(OMA), Koolhaas and students at the Harvard Graduate School of Design; the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing; Wageningen University in the Netherlands; and the University of Nairobi. Contributors also include Samir Bantal, Janna Bystrykh, Troy Conrad Therrien, Lenora Ditzler, Clemens Driessen, Alexandra Kharitonova, Keigo Kobayashi, Niklas Maak, Etta Madete, Federico Martelli, Ingo Niemann, Dr. Linda Nkatha Gichuyia, Kayoko Ota, Stephan Petermann and Anne M. Schneider.

AMO was co-founded by Rem Koolhaas in 1999. Applying architectural thinking to domains beyond building, AMO has worked with Prada, the European Union, Universal Studios, Amsterdam's Schiphol airport, Condé Nast, Harvard University and the Hermitage.

*Koolhaas. Countryside, A Report*  
AMO, Rem Koolhaas  
352 pp  
Edition: English

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What's on

# What's on Belgium

## Standing Stones, ADAM Brussels Design Museum

The museum is launching its programme of exploring the dialogue between art and contemporary design through a 'carte blanche'. The current installation is designed by the Greek duo Eleni Petaloti and Leonidas Trampoukis who founded the studio Objects of Common Interest together in 2015. The duo designs from both their studios in Athens and New York with the focus in creating still-life installations and experiential environments



and objects, demonstrating a fixation with materiality, concept and tangible spatial experiences. Through the use of inflatable figures made out of biodegradable acryl, the unique installation *Standing Stones* reinterprets the

used forms and figures of the Cycladic civilization during the Bronze Age. The objects are cast as translucent inflatables. What was before heavy, solid and hard, is now light, airy and soft.  
[www.adamuseum.be](http://www.adamuseum.be)

## The Magician & the Surgeon

Twenty years after her first Brussels solo exhibition in the Centre for Fine Arts, Belgian visual artist Ana Torfs returns with two projects. In the exhibition *The Magician & the Surgeon*, Ana Torfs creates an astonishing universe, with four new installations that are closely interwoven and enter into unexpected combinations. On 22 March 2020, BOZAR and the Klara Festival present the spectacle *Wir irren* as conceived by Ana



Torfs. The *Ictus* ensemble explores Beethoven's final composition, the canon *Wir irren allesamt, nur jeder irret anders*. This is followed by a showing of the artist's first and only full-length film, *Zyklus von Kleinigkeiten* (Cycle of Little Things, 1998), which is based on Ludwig van Beethoven's

'conversation books'. *The Magician & the Surgeon*: **Until 31 May**. BOZAR.  
[www.bozar.be](http://www.bozar.be)

# ART KNOKKE-HEIST



## Open Gallery Weekend April 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>

ART Knokke-Heist is an **open gallery weekend** that aims to make art accessible to everyone. Whether you're an amateur or connoisseur, the gallery owners will **welcome you with open arms**.



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[www.kbr.be](http://www.kbr.be)  
Mont des Arts, Brussels

## Ruud van Empel - 25 years of photo works

The exhibition, on a museum scale, brings together more than 90 emblematic photographic works by Ruud van Empel. Twenty-five years of creation are presented through the most striking and beautiful images of his career, some of them iconic. The exhibition will gather enigmatic portraits, lush nature, and early works. As a pioneer in digital construction, Ruud van Empel presents for the first time an exhibition of such a large scale. During 3 months, the entire career of the artist will be displayed in one place. The exhibition aims to discover or re-discover an accomplished and extraordinary work. The show will allow the public to observe the evolution of Ruud van Empel's work over his life, particularly concerning the mentalities



and the technological developments in photography. **20 March – 10 June.** Hangar, Brussels  
[www.hangar.art](http://www.hangar.art)

## École de Mons

Mons has been a city of art for over two centuries! But do you know all its riches? An academy, museums, exhibition spaces and, of course, a number of artists, have shaped the city into a true cultural centre. Whether they are from Mons or not, a plethora of talents have passed through the city of the Doudou. The exhibition École de Mons pays them the tribute they deserve, through more than 150 works. From the first teachers of the Academy to Anto-Carte, from Gustave Camus to today's artists. The Museum of Fine Arts is distinguished by the quality of its welcome and its environment. The BAM



(Beaux-Arts Mons) is designed as a unique experience, a space for discovering artistic creation in all its forms, a place of life where events take place year after year.  
[www.bam.mons.be](http://www.bam.mons.be)



What's on

## BOZAR - Horta Horizons

Rue Baron Hortastraat, adjacent to the Centre for Fine Arts, has been transformed into an artistic installation by landscape architect Bas Smets - where uptown and downtown Brussels meet. Attractive steps lead down from the Parc de Bruxelles to this cul-de-sac that provides access to BOZAR and the CINEMATEK and which is in fact more of a square than a street. This dead-end street has become an active space. This timber structure on 5 different levels is planted with trees and curves to create an amphitheatre. The aim is to brighten up the street and to provide a creative place for the many



passers-by and commuters. The installation can be used as an extra stage for BOZAR activities or as a serene place of calm between the busy Centre for Fine Arts and the construction site. The trees also provide a green link to the Parc de Bruxelles at the top of the steps. **Until 30 June 2021.** BOZAR. **Entrance free.** [www.bozar.be](http://www.bozar.be)

## Botanique - Sébastien Bonin DOCUMENTI

Born in 1977 in Brussels, where he lives and works, Sébastien Bonin graduated from La Cambre art school. His work has previously been displayed in various prestigious venues. He works as an artist, photographer and painter. In the creative process, rather than simply snapping shots, Bonin is a craftsman, manually constructing his pictures. By reclaiming, deconstructing and rearranging iconic images, Sébastien Bonin tampers with Art History; he is inspired by it, questions it and is unpretentious in his quest to further it. Two years of Sébastien Bonin's work will be on display at the 'DOCUMENTI' exhibition. Painted artwork and photograms will share their stories on the walls, as connoisseurs of the History of Painting revel in the experience of seeing each of his pieces portray small aspects of world art history and the legacy of the great Masters. **Until 19 April.** Botanique. [www.botanique.be](http://www.botanique.be)

# What's on International: Family outings in Paris

**W**ith cultural activities, sport, shows for children or theme parks, Paris is a great place to discover with the family. Paris is the kids' capital! There are outings to suit everyone's interest and mood: improve your general knowledge while visiting a museum, burn off some energy doing sport, relax at a show.

## Aquariums to visit with the kids

In Paris, marine species are just waiting to be discovered. The capital's aquariums reveal a unique and colourful ecosystem: a great afternoon out with the kids. There are numerous places in Paris to see underwater fauna and flora. The 43 water tanks at the Aquarium du Trocadéro, also called Cinéaqua, are home to an infinite variety of species including angel fish and golden trevally. Touch pools enable children to touch Koi carp and goldfish. And in the



Cinéaqua film auditorium, didactic cartoon films complete a family outing to this marine world.

Situated on the edge of the Bois de Vincennes, the Aquarium tropical de la Porte Dorée presents some 5,000 marine animals in a magnificent art deco building. Don't miss the crocodile and alligator pool. In the Paris suburbs, the Aquarium Sea Life Paris Val d'Europe offers a fun, educational, and interactive

experience to discover more than 350 marine species, including its impressive spider crabs. There are lots of activities on offer: touch pool, regular special events, feeding sessions, fun activity trail.

See all our great sporting, cultural and outdoor ideas for family fun in Paris! [en.parisinfo.com](http://en.parisinfo.com)

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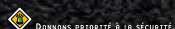
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LIFE OF  
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What's on

## Cinema: All the latest movies playing in Belgium

Brussels' leading film critic **James Drew** looks ahead to films that will adorn the cinema screens in Belgium

### The Invisible Man

Ah, so we return en masse to the universe(s) of H.G. Wells, who is still one of the greatest sci-fi writers to have graced the planet – the BBC had a go with their version of *The War of The Worlds*. Sadly, it wasn't much good at all, so here's hoping with the latest (re)imagining. Olivier Jackson-Cohen plays Adrian Griffin (well, at least they kept the original surname from Wells's book), who is in a violent, controlling relationship with Cecilia Kass (Elisabeth Moss) – Kass goes into hiding to escape him, then he appears to commit suicide, but Kass has her doubts. Now, she is on the run from a man that no one can see. Sure, they've modernized it, but cast and director (Leigh Wanner, the *Saw* franchise, *Insidious: Chapter 3* (2015) look promising. Running time TBC

### True History of the Kelly Gang

True-life hero/villain Ned Kelly (George Mackay) returns to the big screen, from Australian director Justin Kurzel (*Assassin's Creed*, (2016) – should be an Oz film, to be fair, as Kelly was an Australian bushranger who plied his trade in the 1870s. There is good word on this thus far. 124 mins.

### The Barefoot Emperor

A sequel to *King of the Belgians*, a 2016 mockumentary by the same directors, *The Barefoot Emperor* is a Belgian comedy film directed by Jessica Woodworth and Peter Brosens. On his way home from a state visit to Istanbul, the so-called King of the Belgians (King Nicolas, Peter Van den Begin) has an entourage who try in vain to protect him from the news that the recent implosion of their kingdom, Belgium, has sparked the collapse of the European Union (ring any bells?). King Nicholas is fed up with others determining his destiny, so he takes matters into his own hands. Distinctive, charming romp. 98 mins.

### Bloodshot

It's a superhero film from the Valiant Comics stable, but it's got Guy Pearce in it, so it can't be all bad, right? David S.F. Wilson directs in his feature debut – after he and his wife are suddenly assassinated, Marine Ray Garrison (Vin Diesel) is brought back to life by a team of scientists. Enhanced with nanotechnology, he becomes a superhuman, biotech killing machine – Bloodshot. His memories flood back and he remembers the man that killed both him and his wife, he breaks out of the facility, hellbent on revenge. Running time TBC. 1



There comes a moment in life  
when the candle budget  
exceeds the cost of the cake



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Directeur : David Michels

# Accords *parfaits*

Louis-Michel Colla

Catherine Decrolier  
Christel Pedrinelli  
Hyuna Noben  
et Marc Weiss

Mise en scène : **Isabelle Paternotte**

Décor : Dimitri Shumelinsky

Costumes : Fabienne Miessen

Lumières : Laurent Comiant

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