

Business Traveler

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Taiwan's Triple Crown

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Intermedia Travel Group
Eleven Ryerson Avenue, Suite 201,
Pompton Plains, NJ 07444
P: (973) 839-6200 F: (973) 839-4390
www.businesstravelerusa.com

Group Publisher

Jerry Allison – (973) 839-6200
JAllison@businesstravelerusa.com

Principal/Chief Content Officer

Ross Atkinson – (703) 395-7145
RAtkinson@businesstravelerusa.com

Subscriptions – (973) 839-0620

subscriptions@businesstravelerusa.com

Advertising Sales – (973) 839-6200

advertising@businesstravelerusa.com
Jim McGinley – (818) 712-0672
Mike Shevlin – (847) 749-0168

Editorial Director

Dan Booth – (336) 766-1961
editorial@businesstravelerusa.com

Editorial Assistant – Ralf Walters

Contributors

Malcolm Ginsberg
Valerian Ho
Clement Huang
Amanda Mendoza
Freddy Sherman
Jenny Southan
Jeremy Tredinnick

Designer & Art Director

Michele Cameron
ML.Cameron @comcast.net

Production

Marylee DeFerrari
mdeferrari@businesstravelerusa.com

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lifestyle



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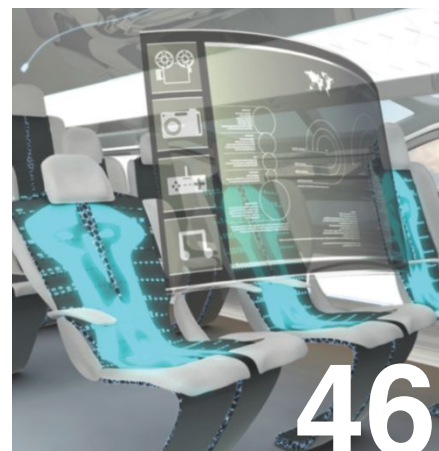
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Summertime Blues

'I'm gonna take two weeks, gonna have a fine vacation.' Or maybe not

Travel has been much in the headlines lately, and not always in a good way. All the talk of travel bans, visa restrictions and disturbing rumors about security have fueled a general sense of uneasiness about where we're going and what's going to happen when we get there. Before, some of us would not have given a second thought to heading out to parts unknown; now many are giving it a second thought, and a third and a fourth.

The argument could be made that there's some good to come from this. We should all of us give more consideration to our well-being while we're on the road, whether that road takes us across town or around the world. Carefree and cavalier can quickly descend turn into careless and compromised. So it pays to do a little homework on your destination and use some commonsense precautions – getting travel insurance, having the right documentation and staying in touch with home base, for example.

On the other hand, it's a shame that so many people no longer feel they can just take off and go. After all, part of the joy of travel is the feeling of spontaneity, the adventure of discovery. Hard to feel that way when you're getting patted down in some never ending security line somewhere.

Of course each of us carries our own personal trepidation about travel. For me, the apprehension begins as summer vacation approaches; I must confess that I've never been very good at taking time off. Perhaps it's a hyper inflated sense of my own indispensability, or maybe it's the nagging suspicion that in my absence, people will discover exactly how dispensable I really am. Whatever the motives, this is the time of year when I begin to ask myself – in the words of one hotel chain's snappy television ads – "should I stay or should I go?"

Apparently I'm not the only one thus afflicted. According to a new survey from Alamo Rent A Car, nearly half (49 percent) of the workers in the US say they are 'vacation shamed' – made to feel



guilty by co-workers for taking a vacation. That's up two points from same survey just last year. Even more surprising, over two-thirds (68 percent) of Millennials – that perpetually self-assured cohort whom *Time* once dubbed the "me me me generation" – reported they're made to feel guilty for taking a vacation.

Of course all that castigation from our fellow employees often means we simply don't take vacation. The Alamo research shows that fewer than half of all workers – only 47 percent – use all their paid vacation days, and only 18 percent use all of their vacation days to actually go on a vacation. Most of us take a day off here and there to run errands or tinker around the house.

Every spring, stories cross my desk detailing research about the amount of vacation time American workers leave on the table each year, and the impact of 'workplace martyrdom' on employees and their families. "When employees don't use their PTO," one press release read, "research shows it affects their happiness, health, and performance and

productivity at work, all of which can undermine company success."

So here's a thought: Go. Take the vacation. Travel. See the world. Or get to know a little more about your own country, its history and culture. And don't let anybody in the office convince you you shouldn't. Just ignore them...and go.

After all, it's possible that the worst travel ban is the one we impose on ourselves. **BT**

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Dan Booth". The signature is stylized and cursive.

— Dan Booth
Editorial Director

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Cathay Pacific Tests Dine on Demand Service

Cathay Pacific is testing a business class dine on demand service on select routes through June as part of the airline's review of its business class service proposition, which it started last year. While specific menu offerings have not been unveiled, the trial will comprise in-the-air ordering rather than pre-ordering.

"The new business class service concept supports Cathay Pacific's customer-centric philosophy by putting our customers at the heart of the experience, providing them more flexibility – both in terms of choice from our inflight menus and when they can choose to dine," said a spokesperson. The carrier's Hong Kong-London Gatwick service will begin the trial starting May 1 and ending May 31. It will then move to the airline's Hong Kong-Chicago service from June 1 to June 30.

Find out more at cathaypacific.com.



Alaska Air Bids Farewell to the Virgin America Name

Alaska Air Group has confirmed plans to retire the Virgin America brand, following last year's \$4 billion merger deal. "After careful consideration, the combined company will adopt Alaska's name and logo, retiring the Virgin America name likely sometime in 2019," according to a statement by Alaska Air, but added that "the combined airline will adopt many of the brand elements that Virgin America enthusiasts love."

Among other changes, the phased merger over the next few years will include retrofitting select aircraft with premium seating to be expanded across the group's Airbus fleet. Alaska's 737 fleet will add high-speed satellite WiFi in 2018, with the remainder of its Airbus fleet to follow by the end of 2019.

Virgin America's frequent flyer program will be merged into the Alaska Mileage Plan in 2018. Refreshed and expanded lounges will be unveiled in Seattle, Portland and Los Angeles by early 2019, as well as new facilities in San Francisco and New York JFK.

Find out more at alaskaair.com.



Hilton Marks 1000th Hotel To Feature Digital Key

The Hampton Inn Manhattan Grand Central in New York City has become the 1,000th Hilton hotel to introduce its Digital Key technology. The technology uses the Hilton Honors app to allow guests to check in, select their room and choose when to arrive – all from their smartphones. Digital Key can also be used to access the fitness center, pool and other hotel areas that traditionally require a key.

Since its launch in 2015, Hilton Honors members have opened more than 6.4 million doors using Digital Key. Hilton says it plans to have the technology available in 2,500 properties by the end of this year including debuts in the United Kingdom, China, Malaysia and New Zealand.

For details and to see participating hotels, visit hilton.com/digitalkey.





BOEING 737 MAX 9 MAKES ITS DEBUT

Boeing has introduced its first 737 Max 9 aircraft, the second variant in its 737 Max line. The 737 Max 9 has been developed with a maximum capacity of 220 passengers – 16 more than the Max 8 – and has an operational range of 3,515 nautical miles (6,510km) that Boeing says “will open up new destinations in the single-aisle market.”

The new aircraft currently has a 2018 date set for its entry into service, with Indonesian low-cost carrier Lion Air as its the launch customer. Meanwhile Boeing’s 737 Max 8 is due to begin delivery in the second quarter of this year, which Norwegian will be the first airline to fly internationally. Both the Max 8 and Max 9 will be followed by the smaller Max 7 and higher-capacity Max 200.

Learn more at boeing.com.



Autograph Collection Premieres in China

Marriott’s Autograph Collection group of independent hotels has opened its first property in China, The Shanhaitian Resort Sanya, Autograph Collection on Hainan Island. Located in Sanya’s Dadonghai Bay, the property has 199 guestrooms and 17 suites.

The hotel also features five food and beverage outlets, and The Podium on the third floor offers wellness and fitness recreational facilities, including an infinity pool, a glass-walled gym with heated sauna, swim-up pool bar and a spa. For meetings, a total of nearly 9,000 square feet of events space is also available.

For more information visit marriott.com or autographhotels.com.

American Airlines Buys Into China Southern

China Southern Airlines and American Airlines Group have announced a \$200 million deal that gives the US carrier a stake in the Chinese airline. The arrangement gives both carriers better access to the world’s two largest travel markets.

China Southern, the country’s largest carrier in terms of passenger numbers, will issue new shares representing a 2.68 percent stake the airline to American Airlines. The deal makes American the second US airline to own part of a Chinese carrier following Delta Air Lines’ 2015 purchase of a 3.55 percent stake in China Eastern Airlines.

The arrangement puts American in a position to widen its access to China. The two carriers expect to begin codeshare and interline agreements later this year which would add more than 70 destinations to American’s network beyond Beijing and Shanghai, and give China Southern access to almost 80 destinations beyond Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York.

Find out more at aa.com.



PROPERTY PIPELINE AND OPENINGS

■ **Hyatt Centric Hotels Planned for Madrid & the Alps** – Hyatt Hotels is set to launch the 159-room Hyatt Centric Gran Via Madrid housed in an historic 1920s office building by the fourth quarter of this year. Another hotel, the Hyatt Centric La Rosière in the French Alps, is also planned for later this year. Visit centric.hyatt.com.

■ **Rosewood’s Newest Destination is Vietnam** – Rosewood Hotels and Resorts is adding a new Vietnam property to its portfolio in 2019. With 70 guestrooms and 30 residences, the Rosewood Hoi An will be part of the Hoiana, an integrated resort in development on the country’s central coast. Visit rosewoodhotels.com.

■ **Hyatt Regency Heads to Algiers** – Hyatt has announced Hyatt Regency Algiers Airport will open at the end of 2018. The 326-room property will be the first Hyatt-branded property in Algeria and the only terminal-linked hotel located opposite the airport’s new terminal. Visit regency.hyatt.com.

■ **IHG Plans Holiday Inn in Downtown Sydney** – Intercontinental Hotels Group has announced a 2020 opening date for a new Holiday Inn hotel in Sydney’s central business district. The 305-room hotel will be the largest midscale property in the Sydney CBD. Visit ihg.com.

■ **Kimpton Heads to San Jose for 2021 opening** – Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants have announced plans to open a 173-room hotel as part of the Museum Place development in San Jose, CA. The property is convenient to the San Jose Convention Center and VTA Light Rail station. Visit kimptonhotels.com.

POLL

Do your business travels include leisure time in the next six months?

Yes
69%
No
26%
Possibly
5%

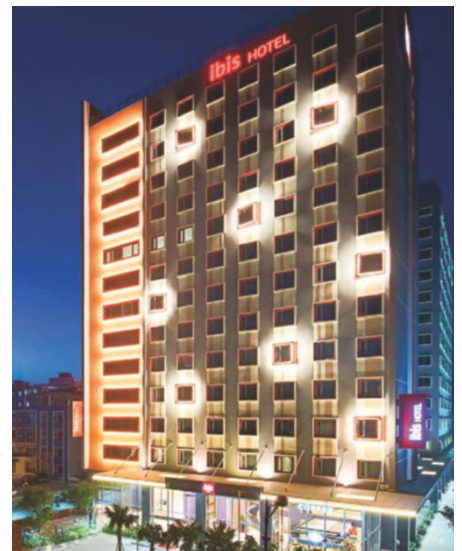
For more survey ratings visit businesstravelerusa.com/polls

New Ibis Airport Hotel Arrives at Ho Chi Minh City

Ho Chi Minh City has welcomed a new Ibis airport hotel located about five minutes from Tan Son Nhat International Airport and about 4 miles from the city center. The property offers a mix of 282 rooms and 65 studio, one- and two-bedroom serviced apartments.

Amenities include a gym, swimming pool and sauna rooms. There's an all-day dining restaurant with buffet and à la carte options, along with a rooftop bar. The hotel is the brand's second property in the country, with Accor set to open 12 additional properties across various brands in Vietnam within the next two years.

Visit accorhotels.com for details.



Moxy Opens in London

Moxy, Marriott's Millennial-focused brand, has opened its newest hotel, Moxy London Excel. The property is located near the ExCeL convention center and London City Airport.

The 164-room hotel offers signature Moxy features such as the contemporary lobby, 24/7 self-service dining concept, full-service bar, complimentary WiFi and gym. For meetings the hotel offers one flexible meeting room.

For details visit



ANA Unveils New A380 Livery

ANA has unveiled a special "sea turtle" livery, which will be featured on the carrier's new A380. The aircraft will operate on ANA's Tokyo-Honolulu route, and will be named "Flying Honu." The green sea turtle is known as the "Honu" in Hawaii, and is a symbol of good luck and prosperity.

The A380 is scheduled for delivery in early 2019, the first of three the carrier has on order, making it the first Japanese airline to operate the superjumbo. ANA says it is "moving forward with preparations to offer new passenger services to coincide with the introduction of the A380, and will provide updates as they become available."

Learn more at ana.co.jp.



Singapore Welcomes Oakwood's New Serviced Residence Concept

Having ended 2016 with the launch of its new Oakwood Suites brand in Jakarta in December, Oakwood Asia Pacific has announced the debut in Singapore of another new concept, the Oakwood Studios. Located in the retail and leisure district on Orchard Road, the property includes 98 studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments with a focus on design and technology-led accommodation, including high-speed WiFi, smartphones that act as apartment keys and in-room tablets for service requests.

The Oakwood Studios Singapore joins Oakwood's portfolio of 33 Oakwood-branded properties in 19 cities across Asia.

Visit oakwoodasia.com for more information. **BT**

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21 ways to survive long-haul economy

Traveling long distances at the back of the plane is a challenge. Here are tips to ease your pain



Adjust your expectations. If you are used to being pampered in business class, recognize that in economy you won't be. Making the best of what you have is the way to survive. Forget the "Do You Know Who I Am" attitude (DYKWIA) – it isn't attractive even among premium passengers.

1

At check-in, ask if there are any spare seats and, if so, whether you can move so that one of them is next to you – giving you more room to spread out.

2

Build status with your airline and alliance of choice – this will increase your chance of an upgrade and provide you with lounge access before the flight.

3

Invest in Priority Pass membership (\$399 annual fee for unlimited visits) – lounge access is good for loading up on food and drink before boarding if you travel in economy often.

4

You may enjoy ignoring fellow passengers in business class – after all, it's all about space and privacy – but in economy, be polite to the person you are rubbing shoulders with for ten hours-plus. The occasional smile and remark will help make the enforced proximity a lot more bearable.

5

Pay for an exit or bulkhead seat. On a long-haul flight the cost is worth it, particularly if you are tall.

6

Seat choice is personal. If you don't want to be disturbed and are confident about not wanting the bathroom on a regular basis, then window seats are for you. If you like getting up and stretching, then an aisle will be the better choice. Avoid middle seats at all costs.

7

Be aware that some airlines cram in more seats than others – ten-across instead of nine-across on a 777, for instance, will be more claustrophobic. Do your homework on cabin layouts in advance.

8

If you can, choose a carrier with new seating, which will be more ergonomically comfortable.

9

Try to get on board early so you can find a place for your bags in an overhead bin that is reasonably close to your seat – ideally, directly overhead. It will lessen hassle when you need to get things out during the flight, and also help when it comes to deplaning.

10

Dress in loose-fitting clothes – you'll be sitting down for hours. Bear in mind that the temperature at your departure point is unlikely to be the temperature of your destination, but if the airline loses your checked bag, you'll be wearing them for even longer.

11

12

Wear layers. Cabin temperatures vary hugely, even during the course of a flight, so make sure you have ways of keeping warm or cooling off without a change of clothing – the airline will provide a blanket (probably), but it's a good idea to have a pullover or hoodie to keep warm if necessary.

13

Compression socks are important if you think you may suffer from DVT – and since you'll want to kick your shoes off during the night, having a couple of pairs of old flight socks from business class (or just old socks) is a good idea to keep your feet cozy.

14

Wear slip-on shoes – or, at least, not boots. They are a pain to lace and unlace at security, and the same applies on the flight if you want to take them on and off.

15

Carry a small toiletry bag with a toothbrush, toothpaste, moisturizer, facial mist, lip balm, eye mask and maybe some eyedrops or saline nasal spray to help with dehydration.

16

Take a pack of wet wipes for hands and surfaces. Tray tables can be sticky and some people like to lean forward and sleep on them.

17

Invest in a good neck pillow – being able to sleep without nodding forwards or sideways is all-important.

18

Take along some snacks of your own – it's a nice treat and you can't rely on all airlines to serve food you like.

19

Consider upgrading your meal – some airlines offer the option to pre-order choices. Alternatively, buy something after security at the airport and bring it on board – although try to avoid anything smelly that might upset your neighbors.

20

Bring your own ear plugs in case the airline doesn't provide them, and also headphones – preferably noise-canceling – along with your own choice of music to help pass the time and block out sound while you are sleeping.

21

Consider airlines that offer WiFi or good in-flight entertainment to while away the hours. Alternately pack a good book. If you can't sleep, you'll get the benefit of finally finishing that tome you've been meaning to. If you fall asleep reading it, then it did the trick. **BT**



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Friendship Deserves a Reward at Marriott

Marriott knows traveling together is more fun than traveling alone. So the new Reward a Friend promotion gives Marriott Rewards members the option to earn up to 50,000 points per calendar year simply for inviting a friend to join the program.

For each of the friend's stays, the sponsor member gets 2,000 points. There is a cap of 5 stays per friend and members can invite up to 5 friends.

Get details at joinmarriottrewards.com/friends.

Hertz and Air France Renew Partnership

Hertz and Air France have extended their exclusive 28-year relationship with a four-year agreement that adds new options for travelers. The partnership agreement also makes Hertz the exclusive car rental provider of the Air France-KLM Group's regional airline HOP! through 2020.

The agreement gives passengers up to 15 percent off the Hertz basic car rental and up to 10 percent off the Thrifty and Firefly rates. Air France loyalty members who use Flying Blue can earn 100 additional miles every time they rent with Hertz through Air France's website. In addition, Flying Blue Elite members will benefit from Hertz Gold Plus Rewards loyalty program tier matching, with extra car rental benefits worldwide.

For details, terms and conditions visit hertz.com/airfrancepartnership.

Amtrak Brings Back Double Days

Between now and May 20, Amtrak Guest Rewards members can earn double points on qualifying travel to over 500 destinations nationwide. In addition members can also earn up to six times the points with special Double Days partner offers.

To register and get details on partner promotions, visit AmtrakGuestRewards.com/DoubleDays.

National's Emerald Club Features BMW X3

Through May 31, National Car Rental is exclusively offering the 2017 BMW X3 to Executive and Executive Elite members of the award-winning Emerald Club. The luxury vehicle will be available in select Executive Area locations of National's Emerald Aisle.

Among its features, the multi-purpose vehicle has a panoramic sunroof, leather seats, keyless entry and hands-free power tailgate and navigation.

To learn more about National's BMW X3 offer, visit emeraldclub.com.



Star Alliance Gold Track Speeds Security Clearance

Star Alliance has launched Gold Track to help passengers get through security faster. Gold Status holders are able to access over 100 locations globally to get through security more efficiently.

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Visit staralliance.com to learn more about Gold Status. **BT**



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5 Gateways of the East

To stay ahead of the rising tide of traffic, Asia's key hubs are on a building spree



1

An airport represents a country's portal, its welcome to the world. And as the number of passengers continues to increase, airports globally are pushing to keep up with new facilities, expansions and upgrades.

In the Asia Pacific region rapid economic growth is mirrored in the flourishing passenger count which airports continue to post month after month. And the sheer pace of growth has left some airports behind the curve, with modernization and major infrastructure projects such as building new airports lagging the demands of a burgeoning aviation sector.

Some nations, however, have planned well beyond the current numbers, carving out their place as vital destinations in the world's aviation network. Here's a look at five of Asia's primary hubs – four currently in operation and one in the offing – that are already planning for the future.

1 Taiwan Taoyuan International

If flat out efficiency is important to you as a business traveler this bit of news might steer you toward one of Asia's 'stealth' hubs: Taiwan Taoyuan International was the 2015 recipient of Airports Council International's award as the world's most efficient airport. In what was almost a double play, ACI also said TPE came in second for airport service quality in 2015.

TPE (that's Taoyuan's airport code) is home base for a couple of major international players: EVA Air and China Airlines (not to be confused with its cross-strait rival, PRC's Air China).

TPE handled some 42.3 million passengers in 2016, making it the planet's 11th busiest airport in terms of international passengers. It's a two runway, two terminal affair, with a third terminal set to open in 2020.

T3 alone will accommodate 45 million fliers per year. It's being billed as one of

the most expensive construction projects in the history of modern Taiwan. To help passengers connecting at TPE an inter-terminal rail project is now in the works.

Business travelers may well get their first introduction to Taoyuan via a flight on China Airlines or EVA. Over the past couple of years EVA has been growing its fleet and expanding its reach with service to Houston Bush Intercontinental and Chicago O'Hare International. Both IAH and ORD are major hubs for United Airlines. That's important, because UA, like EVA, is a major Star Alliance member. This move facilitates connections, frequent flier points sharing and airport club access.

2 Seoul Incheon International Airport

Nine hundred miles to the north, another hyper-efficient airport is Seoul's Incheon International. Incheon officials say, on average, that departures take 19

2

AIRLINE NOTES**■ LATAM Plans Direct Orlando-Rio**

Service – Responding to changing market conditions, beginning July 2, LATAM Airlines Brazil will offer a new direct flight between Orlando and Rio de Janeiro aboard a Boeing 767 with two classes of service. The new service will operate three times per week departing Orlando on Thursday, Saturday and Sunday and returning from Rio's Tom Jobim International Airport Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. With the addition of the Orlando-Rio de Janeiro service the carrier will cease its flight between New York and Rio de Janeiro at the end of June.

Get details at latam.com.

■ Cathay Pacific Boosts HKG-SFO

Service to Daily – Cathay Pacific has announced an increase in its San Francisco to Hong Kong service from three times weekly to seven days per week beginning Oct. 29. The airline will operate its new A350-300 on the route. The carrier will continue to operate the Boeing 777-300ER on the balance of its HKG-SFO schedule. This change in service increases the number of flights on the route to 21 per week. At the same time the airline says it will reduce its LAX flights.

Flight schedules and details are available at cathaypacific.com.

■ Chicago Is WOW Air's Newest

Destination – Low cost carrier WOW Air is adding Chicago's O'Hare as its newest destination from its hub in Reykjavik with service scheduled to commence July 13. The carrier will operate the route four times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays aboard an Airbus A321-300.

Visit wowair.us for all the details.

■ Delta Resumes Brussels-Atlanta

Service – Delta Air Lines has resumed its Atlanta-Brussels route which was suspended after the terrorist attack at Brussels Airport a year ago. The service will operate year round with daily service over the summer. The carrier was able to keep the JFK- Brussels route open during this time.

Visit delta.com for more information.

3

minutes and arrivals 12 minutes, far faster than at most airports. Customs processing is really rapid too. Add to speed accuracy. ICN has a mishandled baggage rate of a mere 0.0001 percent.

To underscore how all these kudos work together to whisk business travelers on their way, Skytrax rates Incheon as the world's best international transit airport. However, even though ICN handles around 50 million fliers annually, it ranks just 8th among Asia's busiest passenger airport. One reason: close-in Gimpo International handles a significant chunk of regional international traffic to comparatively nearby destinations such as Taipei, Beijing, Osaka and Shanghai.

ICN is home base for both Korean Air and Asiana, a pair of award-winning, service-intensive carriers.

Thirty miles can make for a pricey taxi ride. Best bet for price-sensitive business travelers may be to take the train linking

ICN with Seoul's city center station. If you feel the need for speed there's the maglev. It will rocket you to Yongyu Station, from which you can hop on an AREX train and Seoul's subway system.

Incheon's essential advantage is speed. But it's not without its attractions. *Business Traveler's* Best in Business Travel Awards consistently tap the airport's duty-free shopping as best in the world.

3 Singapore Changi

If your idea of airport shopping goes beyond picking up plastic trinkets for the kids back home SIN just might be your Asian airfield of choice. Those construction cranes you see pecking away at the center of Changi hover over the site of a \$1.7 billion project dubbed "Jewel at Changi." It's a shopping, eating and entertainment complex that just might redefine what it means to "pick something up at the airport."

The Strait Times reports Jewel will be a five-story affair, replete with the world's tallest indoor waterfall, some 2,500 trees and 100,000 shrubs. The flora is from an assortment of countries.

It's the effect all this will have on passengers that's key here. After hours cooped up in an aluminum tube at 35,000 feet all this indoor nature should be rejuvenating – to the soul, if not the pocketbook. Jewel will have about 300 places to eat, drink and go shopping.

Finding Jewel should be relatively simple. It will be accessible from the terminals via air-conditioned bridges fitted with "travelators." All of this is enclosed under a massive, glass-enclosed dome.

Jewel should add even more luster to Changi's allure. The 2017 World Airport Awards just named SIN World's Best Airport for the fifth year running, and Changi was also the Best in Business Travel Awards' pick for world's best airport.

4 Hong Kong International Airport

For many of us gray-bearded business travelers it seems only yesterday that Hong Kong International Airport supplanted venerable Kai Tak International as the Special Administrative Region's aerodrome. Now comes exciting news the new airport just launched a massive construction project to build a third runway.

It's going to be almost eight years before fliers see the fruits of all that labor, but once the dust settles there will be not just a third runway, but associated taxiways and tarmac as well. Capping it all will be a new passenger boarding building replete with 57 boarding positions. T2 is going to be expanded and the airport's Automated People Mover lengthened as well. The idea is to transport you from T2 out to the new passenger building in 2.5 minutes.

Upon completion of all this work HKG will be able to handle an additional 30



million passengers per year. Meanwhile, work continues apace on Hong Kong International's Midfield Development project. Twenty more aircraft parking positions will allow the airport to accommodate at least ten million more passengers per year.

5 New Beijing Airport

Set for opening in 2019 is Beijing's long-awaited new megaport. In terms of sheer size it may well be the planet's largest aerodrome, covering some 300 square miles of terra firma.

Initially the airport will debut with 78 gates. These will be arrayed across a couple of levels. To keep things simple, one floor

will be for international flights, the other for domestic. The signature theme building for the new airfield is a starfish-shaped terminal. At the six-pronged center of the starfish is a retail hub. Underneath all this lies a rail connector.

Compared to the current Beijing Capital International Airport the new field will be farther afield – 28 miles from city center compared to 15.5 miles for Capital.

Don't look for Capital to go away when the new airport opens. Instead China envisions the two of them serving as a one-two punch for China. Li Jiexiang, director of the country's Bureau of Aviation, says together they'll be able to handle 150 million passengers a year. That's far more than any single airport on the planet.

But as business travelers know, it's the smaller cities (one uses the term comparatively when it comes to the People's Republic) that are attracting nonstop service from the United States these days. As a consequence, China's Civil Aviation Administration says the country intends to construct an astonishing 66 new airports over the next five years or so.

Whether Beijing's massive new airport slows or speeds that construction remains to be seen. **BT**

AIRPORT REPORT

■ **TWA Hotel Plans Restaurant in a Restored Constellation** – The TWA Flight Center Hotel is taking over JFK's historic TWA terminal. The property will feature 505 rooms in two new hotel towers flanking the space-age, Eero Saarinen-designed TWA Flight Center, which opened in 1962 but has sat vacant for more than 15 years.

The historic terminal building's original design elements will be retained, with the space transformed into the hotel lobby, restaurants and a nightclub in the former Constellation Club lounge. Plans also call for a restaurant and bar to be built inside the fuselage of a restored Lockheed Super Constellation, a four-engine, prop-driven passenger aircraft that was the backbone of the TWA fleet during the 1950s and 1960s.

The \$265-million project is scheduled to open in late 2018 or early 2019.

Find more information at twahotel.com.

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Machine learning

Zurich is quietly becoming a world-leading destination for robotics, artificial intelligence and cognitive computing.

By Jenny Southan



There is something uncanny about the way this dog-like robot moves – its skeletal frame whirs loudly as it marches on the spot, then moves side to side, and around in a circle in a strange dance. Built by a team in the Robotic Systems Lab at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH Zurich), assistant professor Marco Hutter says the “ANYmal” is his newest creation.

Not only can it run but climb, crouch and jump. “We wanted to make something that was optimal from a robotics point of view,” he says. “We put springs in all the joints so we can use it in all sorts of environments.” As part of a pilot project, the ANYmal has been put to work on offshore oil and gas platforms where it can go about inspection tasks (often dangerous for humans) completely autonomously thanks to laser sensors and cameras.

I ask how it compares with the robot that was sent to Mars. “In general, space technology is very old,” says Hutter, walking me down the corridor and pointing to a dusty old unit on caterpillar tracks. “This was part of a study we were doing for the European Space Agency. But wheels are boring – legs are the future.”

Intelligence Hub

Founded in 1855, the ETH is Switzerland’s answer to MIT. Ranked one of the best universities in the world, more than 20 Nobel Prizes have been awarded to its alumni over the years, including

students have the opportunity to take ideas from the research stage to market. Between 1996 and 2016, 355 spin-off companies have been founded at the ETH, a number of which have been in the field of robotics.

It’s no wonder that Chris Anderson, CEO of 3D Robotics and former editor-in-chief of *Wired*, has dubbed Zurich “the Silicon Valley of Robotics.”

Talent Contest

In 2016, Switzerland was ranked first in Cornell University’s Global Innovation Index, and Zurich came second in the Mercer Quality of Living survey, significantly ahead of San Francisco (28th position).

Unsurprisingly, over the decades, the ETH has provided a compelling reason for big companies to locate themselves in pretty little Zurich, a city of just 380,000 people that has grown into an international hub for banking, finance and innovation. The renowned IBM Research Lab was the company’s first outside the US when it opened here in 1956.

Chris Sciacca, IBM Research’s communications manager for EMEA, says, “We chose Switzerland because of the access to talent and skills that the country affords us. The standard of living is very good and the government is fantastic at supporting science and innovation with grants. It is very stable, democratic and open. All this means you can attract the best and the brightest.”



Main image: The autonomous “ANYmal” robot **Left:** ETH Zurich’s new Arch Tech Lab

Albert Einstein in 1921. Today it has 20,000 students and an annual budget of Sfr 1.7 billion (\$1.7 billion), funded by taxpayers. “That is part of the reason the ETH is the best,” says professor Peter Seitz, a “sherpa” from its Innovation and Entrepreneurship Lab (ieLab).

In a warehouse on the Science City campus, a short drive northwest of the old town, architects are using giant mechanical arms to explore new construction techniques that employ nothing more than loops of yarn and pebbles, for example, or 3D printed concrete. Aleksandra Anna Apolinarska, an architect in the Gramazio Kohler Research Lab at the ETH Zurich, says the days of mass production are behind us. “We think it is time for mass customization.”

From self-driving cars to augmented reality, the ETH is forging a new tomorrow in myriad ways. And with the help of ieLab, Seitz’s

From his pocket, Sciacca pulls a gold medallion. It’s one of IBM Zurich’s four Nobel Prizes, two of which were won in the mid 1980s for the invention of high temperature superconductivity and the nanoscale microscope. “Up until this you really couldn’t see atoms and molecules with good resolution. You can really point to the 30-year history of nanotechnology in Switzerland to this invention,” he says.

Independent Thinking

The level of innovation going on at IBM is mind-blowing – in 2016, its inventors were awarded a record 8,088 patents in the US alone, more than any other company (Samsung was in second place with 5,518 and Canon third with 3,665). Interestingly, more than 2,700 patents were related to artificial intelligence, machine learning

Right: Google campus; 3D printing at the Arch Tech Lab; rooftop restaurant at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) **Below:** Marktgassee hotel; Space suite at the Kameha Grand



and cloud computing. In between forkfuls of risotto, Alessandro Curioni, IBM fellow, vice-president Europe and director of IBM Research Zurich, gives me a crash course in cognitive computing. “The way we interact with computers is changing,” he explains. “First it was tabular computing, then the programming era, now it is natural language. The ability to analyze unstructured data [such as images and sounds] will accelerate by an order of magnitude the research and development in every field, including aviation and space travel.”

The new Cognitive era began in 2011, when IBM’s Watson super-computer won the TV quiz show Jeopardy. Eleni Pratsini, director of cognitive IoT solutions at IBM Research, says: “One of the rules of the game was that Watson was not connected to the Internet so scientists had to feed it hundreds of books and teach it to reason like a human, to understand riddles, puns and subtle connotations.”

The breadth of this human-like AI, which can make associations and learn, has since been expanded – now you can log on to ibm.com/watson/developercloud and access more than 60 versions of Watson in the form of individual APIs created for specific tasks such as image recognition and personality insight. Want to build a chat bot? Download the Conversation API and get to work. Hilton is already using AI to power Connie, its robotic concierge in Virginia.

Tomorrow’s World

Come Saturday, I take a trip to the public Thermalbad and Spa. Down in the vaults of this former brewery, locals soak in giant repurposed wooden vats. At the same time, in one of the buildings across the way, a solo employee pounds away in a gym at the otherwise peaceful Google campus.

Since 2004, Zurich has been the home of Google’s largest engineering base outside the US (the biggest is Mountain View in California and the second-largest New York City). Engineering director Emmanuel Mogenet heads up the company’s new European Research Lab, which was set up last year on the existing office campus.

Operating in parallel to IBM (not collaborating but not competing), Google has chosen the Swiss city to host its first lab outside the US dedicated to AI, computer perception and machine learning (with the exception of Deep Mind in London, an AI start-up that was acquired by Google in 2014). Why? Because the ETH “produces the best computer scientists in Europe,” says Mogenet.

To make sure they not only attract but retain them, the company goes out of its way to provide not just gyms and free food, but fantasy work environments complete with fireman’s poles and slides, and egg-shaped privacy pods. “Our basic philosophy is that you are most productive when you are enjoying yourself,” Mogenet says. “It is extremely informal – there are a lot of people who wear slippers at the office and bring their dog in.”

At the moment, there are 2,000 people representing 75 nationalities working here, but this number is set to rise to 5,000 “Zooglers” with the opening of its new offices in Europaallee, by Zurich Hauptbahnhof station. Andreas Meyer, CEO of Swiss Federal Railways, says: “The district around the main station in Zurich will be a hotspot where innovative services are developed and tested, and the future is significantly shaped.”

For example, nearby is the Technopark, a half-million-square-foot site that is home to 300 start-ups all hoping to become a success story. Last year, Facebook bought local computer vision venture Zurich Eye, which was founded by three members of the University of Zurich’s Robotics and Perception group. Although the social network has its main Swiss office in Geneva, it is opening a small base for its Oculus virtual reality subsidiary here. If you’re smart, you’ll get in on the action too.

WHERE TO STAY

Conveniently located just 3 miles from the airport, in the up-and-coming business district of Glattpark, visitors can check themselves into the 245-room, five-star Kameha Grand (kamehagrandzuerich.com), a two-year-old hotel from Marriott’s Autograph Collection. Bringing together the surreal and the luxurious, it has a cigar and shisha lounge, a Michelin-starred restaurant, striking event space for 960 people, and a dozen themed suites including the Gentleman, Watchmaker and Workout suite. The highlight, however, is the popular Space suite.

Designed by German artist Michael Najjar – who is in training for the inaugural Virgin Galactic flight – the 1,200-square-foot windowless “space station” has a seemingly floating zero-gravity bed, silver furniture and an iPad with movies such as Star Wars and Moon that can be streamed to the TV via Airplay.

The 39-room boutique Marktgassee (marktgasseehotel.ch/en) in the old town is equally suited to tech-minded entrepreneurs but in an entirely different way. The renovated 15th-century building has a superb street-level café serving healthy Ottolenghi-style food throughout the day, a chic speakeasy for sophisticated cocktails, a trendy brasserie and a library for communal working. Like the Kameha Grand, free WiFi is available throughout.

SWISS offers nonstop flights from a number of airports across the US to Zurich. American, Delta and United also have direct service into ZRH.

Visit zuerich.com **BT**





City of Fair Winds

Known as the Paris of South America, Buenos Aires is a cultural breath of fresh air

Argentina is a story brimming with both great achievement and great tragedy, a drama that stars a colorful cast of characters drawn from a lively world heritage. And its capital city, Buenos Aires, seems to distill all that in an intoxicating mix of European elan and Latin fire. The name in Spanish means literally 'good airs,' but for the 16th century explorers who originally settled Buenos Aires it was translated perhaps more romantically as 'fair winds.'

Weged between Argentina and Uruguay along the western banks of the Rio de la Plata, Buenos Aires offers wide, welcoming boulevards, a treasure trove of neoclassical architecture and a cultural

verve that long ago earned it the title of "the Paris of South America."

After Argentina declared its independence from Spain in 1816 and following decades of civil war, beginning in the 1860s the country enjoyed a long period of prosperity. Buenos Aires became its political and economic epicenter, attracting vast wealth from Argentina's fertile agricultural heartland. By the 1880s, thanks to government policies that encouraged immigration, the country was a magnet for Europeans looking to settle here and with the dawn of the 20th century, Argentina had become the 7th richest nation in the world.

The impact of Argentina's long-ago belle époque is still manifest today, both

in Buenos Aires' grand architecture, and even more profoundly, in the society's rich cultural legacy. Porteños – as the residents of Buenos Aires are known – have a heritage drawn from Italian, Spanish, and other European cultures who flocked to Argentina during the period, a migration that virtually reshaped both its people and its economy.

But since those heady days, the country has fallen into a series of national missteps, including military dictatorships, devastating economic crises and charges of corruption. Mention Argentina and the first thing that may come to mind are recent news reports of former president Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, indicted for allegedly taking kickbacks.



As the wife of Nestor Kirchner, the former president, CFK – as she’s sometimes styled in the press – channels Argentina’s most celebrated female politician, Eva Peron who, though she never held elected office, was nonetheless enormously influential even after her death. Fans of Broadway will immediately conjure up images of the musical *Evita* with Eva and her husband, President Juan Peron, on the balcony of La Casa Rosada waving to the cheering throngs packed into the plaza below.

So Much to See

In fact, the Pink House is probably the best place for out-of-towners to start getting to know Buenos Aires. The building faces Plaza de Mayo, the heart of the city, which since 1810 has been the scene of every major political event in the country. In the center, the Piramide de Mayo memorializes Argentina’s independence revolution. Surrounding it in a perfect circle, white scarves are painted on the ground, testimony to the scarf-wearing mothers and grandmothers who march here every Thursday in remembrance of those who died or disappeared during the brutal military rule of 1976–83.

Other examples of Argentina’s historic architectural heritage dot the square including the Cabildo and the Metropolitan Cathedral. The latter is notable as the archdiocese of former Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio – today Pope Francis. Indeed, the Pope has become big business in his home town. Visitors have a choice of several tours that show off Francis-related sites around the city. In addition to the cathedral, stops include Flores, where he grew up, and his former schools.

At the corner of the square, Avenida de Mayo heads westward offering a string of traditional cafés inspired by tango music, including Café Tortoni, one of the oldest in Buenos Aires and regularly visited by intellectuals and politicians. Just a few blocks away from Plaza de Mayo is Florida, the pedestrianized street lined with shopping arcades, offices, restaurants, tango dancers and street performers. It’s an essential stop for tourists and business travelers alike.

Gone, But Not Forgotten

A cab ride away is the leafy Recoleta neighborhood with large green areas where live artistic performances take place in the open air. This quarter hosts

several of the city’s prominent cultural attractions such as the National Museum of Decorative Arts, the National Museum of Fine Arts and the Palais de Glace. On a more somber note, Recoleta is also the home of the cemetery of the same name, final resting place of the city’s elite for generations.

The tombs with their intricate designs crowd along a network of stone paths so it resembles a city in miniature more than a burial ground. It’s also the last stop for the aforementioned *Evita*, in the denouement of a bizarre tale worthy of the darkest gothic novel. Following her untimely death in 1952, Eva’s body was preserved on orders of her husband with the idea of building a huge mausoleum to put her earthly remains on display for public viewing.

However, before the memorial could be completed, Peron was overthrown and fled the country in 1955. The military junta that replaced him banned Peronism, forbidding any reference to the dictator or his wife. *Evita*’s body was spirited away in mysterious circumstances and remained unaccounted for until 1971, when it was revealed she had been buried in Italy under an alias. Her body was exhumed and



Clockwise from top left: Tango dancers in the street; colorful houses in La Boca; Recoleta Cemetery; Soda Syphons on San Telmo Market



brought to Spain, where the exiled Peron and his third wife Isabel reportedly kept it in their dining room.

Evita made one more public appearance in 1974, when Peron himself died. Isabel Peron, who had succeeded her husband as Argentina's president, had his second wife's body displayed beside his for a time before it was well and truly interred in Recoleta. Today she rests – finally – deep beneath a black granite gravestone which, in light of her nomadic life-after-death, is rather sedate by comparison.

Recoleta itself is an area of opulent homes typified by its grand Belle Epoque architecture of which the Algodon Mansion hotel, at 1647 Montevideo, is a great example. The 1912 white-fronted townhouse was restored in 2010 to become the city's first Relais and Châteaux property. The glass-covered patio is a great spot for a glass of Argentine red.

Tango in the Streets

From Recoleta it's a 20-minute walk

north to one of the biggest green spaces in Buenos Aires, the Palermo district. The parks and lakes of Palermo have flora from across the country, and here too the city offers more quality attractions, including the imposing Galileo Galilei Planetarium which boasts its own hunk of moon rock brought back by Apollo XI.

The Museum of Latin American Art Buenos Aires presents films, art exhibitions and intriguing projects by local designers. Finally, the Japanese Garden combines cultural activities in the middle of a landscape with oriental flowers and trees, and a magnificent view of the lake from a panoramic bridge.

On the south side of the city lies San Telmo, one of the city's oldest neighborhoods near the Plata River. The extravagant homes of Recoleta were built by wealthy porteños fleeing a yellow fever epidemic that plagued this low-lying area. Today San Telmo is an artsy enclave known for a Sunday afternoon market at Plaza Dorrego with hundreds of stalls selling antiques, leather goods, vintage gear and handmade accessories. The rest of the week, sidewalk cafes fan out from the plaza during the day, and late at night (some bars don't even open until midnight) a bohemian crowd mingles with tourists.

Located next to the Riachuelo river south of the city center, La Boca is the

most picturesque of Buenos Aires' barrios with its lively colored houses of wood and corrugated metal. It is the city's oldest neighborhood, located at the mouth of the first port of Buenos Aires, which gives it its name. The most famous street in La Boca is Caminito, where local painters, artisans and photographers showcase their work, and tourists watch tango dancers in the street, shop for souvenirs and dine in little restaurants.

From its glitzy glass and steel high-rises to colorful art-laden barrios, advanced technology startups to street-side tango sessions, Buenos Aires is a grand city in every sense, offering a wealth of opportunity. The city's people have a diverse heritage drawn from all over the globe, and it's home to a sophisticated world-spanning cuisine.

But despite all its glamour and cultural richness, Buenos Aires still labors under the weight of Argentina's history – an unsettling backdrop of political intrigue and economic uncertainty that seems to color whatever progress with a tinge of skepticism.

Nevertheless through prosperity and adversity, this city's limitless vivacity continually bubbles up, unfettered. On the streets of Buenos Aires, the mood is light, the wine flows freely, and the dancers tango long into the night. **BT**



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Taiwan's Triple Crown

This trio of urban destinations reveals this island nation's diverse and distinctive qualities

By **Clement Huang and Valerie Ho**

Once called Ilha Formosa (Beautiful Island) by the Portuguese explorers, Taiwan is much sought after among travelers for its colorful culture and diverse scenery. If you are more into exploring urban life in a foreign land, the island's cities offer distinct experiences, each enjoyable in its own way.

A Capital Idea

Taipei, Taiwan's capital, is located on the north end of the island, and the place to get the most iconic view of the city is Taipei 101. It was officially the tallest skyscraper in the world until the opening of the Burj Khalifa in Dubai in 2010. Its height, one better than 100, is symbolic of the city's ambition of being "one above perfection."

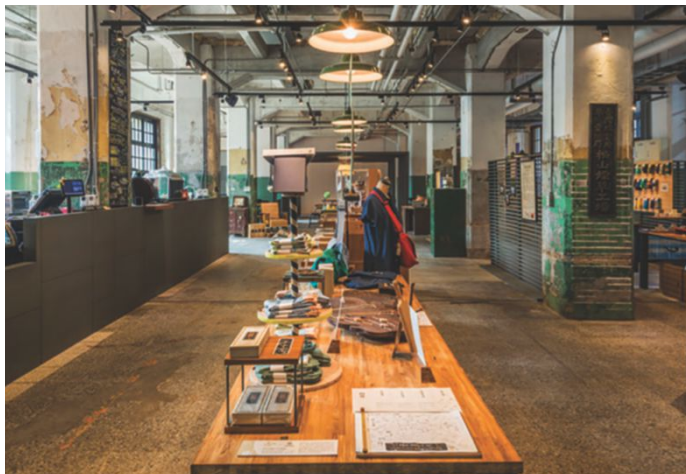
For a 360-degree panoramic view of the city, visit Taipei 101 Observatory. Entry is NT\$500 (\$17) per person and you can make use of the audio guide to direct your own tour. The telescopes around the perimeter allow you to view the city from on high, as well as admire the exquisite view of Yangmingshan, a mountain which has been designated a national park.

Find a taste of the local cuisine at Dian Shui Lou restaurant (dianshuilou.com.tw) for a DIY workshop on the making of xiao long bao (Chinese soup dumplings). This traditional food can be made with three different fillings – meat, seafood and vegetable – and the sophisticated 19-fold technique highlights the care that goes into its making.

In the class I signed up for at the Huaining Street branch, I observed the chef demonstrate the time-honored art of dumpling folding. The dough, made from flour and water, was rolled and stretched into long ropes, which were then cut by hand into smaller







Above: Songshan Cultural and Creative Park; Hakka Village; **Right:** male artist paints oil-paper umbrellas



pieces resembling gnocchi. Each was then rolled into a circular, thin wrap, stuffed with pork filling, and folded 19 times.

While the chef was able to make perfectly-shaped dumplings in a few effortless seconds, when it came to our turn, we found it much trickier. Still, it was a great opportunity to laugh and bond with new friends.

There are two classes at 10:30 AM and 4:30 PM per day on Huaining (NT\$715/ \$23.50) and one at 2:30 PM at the Taoyuan branch (NT\$275/\$9).

Old Face, New Face

Walking through the Songshan Cultural and Creative Park (songshanculturalpark.org), in the Xinyi District of the city, is like taking a step back in time. Initially constructed in 1937 as a tobacco plant, it survived Japanese occupation and was converted into a public park in 2001 before being redeveloped in 2011 as a platform to encourage creativity and culture.

Old tobacco warehouses are now used to stage conferences, performances and other events. Historic buildings surrounded by beautifully manicured gardens and an eco-pond with marine life offer guests a tranquil and welcoming change from the hustle and bustle of Taipei.

Indoor areas are open daily from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM, while outdoor areas are open till 10:00 PM. There is no entry fee to the park, but you do need to pay to get into the Taiwan Design Museum. The NT\$120 (\$4) ticket allows you to look at exhibits featuring the island's creative industries and achievements in innovation.

Going South

Less than two hours away on the Taiwan High Speed Rail is Kaohsiung (Zuoying District), the island's second-largest city along the impressive southeastern shore. A standard adult ticket costs NT\$1,630 (\$54).

Both Taipei and Kaohsiung feature distinctly different identities. While the former brims with life and energy, the latter is more industrialized with traditional elements. Upon reaching Kaohsiung, I joined my tour group to visit Meinong, a famous Hakka Village, to try my hand at a local activity – crafting colorful oil-paper umbrellas.

An art inherited from Japan, oil-paper umbrellas were a popular export until mass-produced ones took over in the 1960s forcing many traditional manufacturers to close. However, Kuang Chin Sheng Umbrella (47 Minquan Road; tel +886 9 2051 8349; evening +886 7 6813247) survived and has gained an international profile.

Now run by the second generation, the shop sells these works of art at prices starting from NT\$600 (\$20), with more complicated designs priced up to NT\$4,500 (\$148). Alternatively, you can join an umbrella-making class for NT\$100 (\$3) per person.

Port of Call

Many port cities offer sightseeing cruises, but Kaohsiung offers one that's like no other. Instead of views of a city skyline, passengers are treated to magnificent sights of the container port with crates and cargo being transported around quietly and smoothly.

As the fourth largest container port in the world, and the largest in the country, Kaohsiung Harbor plays a vital role in Taiwan's economic development. An evening cruise around the harbor may lack the glamorous city sights that people are accustomed to, but as we sailed down the channel it was impossible not to appreciate the economic significance and sheer scale of the port.

Kaohsiung City Shipping Co. offers a single daily cruise that departs from the Singuang Ferry Wharf at 5:30 PM. It includes an international buffet, as well as a guided tour throughout the journey. Standard adult tickets cost NT\$700 (\$23) each. Tickets can be bought before 5:00 PM from the ticket center at the pier. You can also reserve your place by calling +886 7 2160668.

A Spring in Your Step

On the northeastern corner of Taiwan is Yilan City, the seat of the county by the same name. While noticeably quieter than Taiwan's coastal cities of Taipei, Taichung, Tainan and Kaohsiung, there is still an urban feel to the region. The northern part of Yilan is renowned for its plethora of urban hot springs found in public parks, bathhouses and hotels.

Thus it was that I found myself – clad in a kimono-style dressing gown and flip-flops – at Tangweigou Park, a small, public hot spring



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Left: A Wellspring by Silks hotel guest goes wandering clad in indigo; your own personal hot spring at Wellspring by Silks; Silks Place Hotel's "Cherry Duck"

Colorful Past, Bright Future

Refreshed and recharged, it was time to explore the captivating art, culture and history of Yilan. My first stop was to delve into the region's indigo dyeing industry – a localized trade that rose to prominence in the 18th century. Surrounded by mountains and bordering the Pacific Ocean, Yilan is a natural shelter, providing the perfect climate and soil conditions for the Assam indigo plant to flourish.

Local artisans extracted the deep-blue color from the leaves through a special fermentation process, and applied the natural dye to a range of cloths, paper and other materials, which became highly coveted items. Even today, the rich indigo color is associated with this small northern county.

At the other end of the spectrum is a modern explosion of color from famous Taiwanese illustrator Jimmy Liao, the author of 29 picture books including *Turn Left, Turn Right* and *Sound of Colours*. Liao has created a fantastical, cartoon-zoo display at Yilan train station that has become a must-see for visitors. From the giant giraffe perched on the entrance to the enormous "Starry Night Train" hanging from the ceiling, this surreal wonderland features many of Jimmy's beloved characters.

From the train station, I decided to explore the city's historic streets. Yilan's city center is blessed with a number of charming heritage buildings. Just across Taishan Road I found the site of the oldest wine factory in Taiwan, built in 1909.

The venerable two-story, Japanese-style facility has since been artfully converted into the Yilan Distillery Chia Chi Lan Wine Museum, giving visitors the chance to learn about the region's premium rice wine and, more specifically, the production of red hong lu jiu wines. 3 Old Town West Road, Yilan; open 8am–5pm every day; tel +886 3935 5526.

Many of the heritage properties have also been given a new lease on life as trendy restaurants and chic cafés. Outside the Shennong entrance of the Luna Plaza mall stands one of Taiwan's oldest examples of Japanese-style architecture, the iconic one-story "Blue House."

It began life over a century ago as a prison and today is the Western-style Le Grand Bleu restaurant. Built without a single nail, the wooden beams are staggered to support each other in a prime example of complex Japanese joinery. 117 Shennong Road Second Avenue, Yilan, Yilan County; open Mon-Fri 11:30 AM – 9:30 PM, Sat and Sun 10:00 AM – 10:30 PM; tel: +886 3936 8282; silksplace-yilan.com.tw/bluehouse

The Japanese restaurant Kyukoku is housed in a 1906 building originally the home of a senior Japanese government official and converted into a restaurant a hundred years later. The original architecture is mimicked on the interior and the menu offers a selection of Japanese classics including tempura, basil scallops and burdock beef roll. 8 South Road County Lane 1, Old Town, Yilan; open Tue–Sun 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM; tel +886 3935 8855; kyukoku.com.tw (Chinese only).

Another gastronomic highlight of Yilan was the award-winning roast duck served at Silks Place Hotel's Red Lantern restaurant. A plump Yilan cherry duck is roasted in a Cantonese-style oven until the meat is succulent and the skin is irresistibly crispy. To guarantee this specialty I recommend booking well in advance. silksplace-yilan.com.tw. **BT**



off the main street. The hot water eased away the ache in my weary limbs, while the hum of chitchat and occasional bursts of laughter created a convivial atmosphere, adding to the enjoyment of a typical cultural experience in Yilan.

Continuing my newfound appreciation for the area's hot spring culture, I returned to my hotel, the Wellspring by Silks. Opened last June, the hotel is the latest offering from the international Regent Hotels groups. The new luxury property boasts an infinity hot spring swimming pool on its 12th-floor rooftop, providing night-time views of the surrounding Yilan Plains, as well as a panoramic vista of Guishan Island in the daytime.

If you enjoy soaking in solitude, each room at the Wellspring by Silks hotel offers a private hot spring on a sheltered balcony. Big enough for two people, the luxurious marble bath is a glorious sanctuary for relaxing, with ambient lighting and modern facilities.



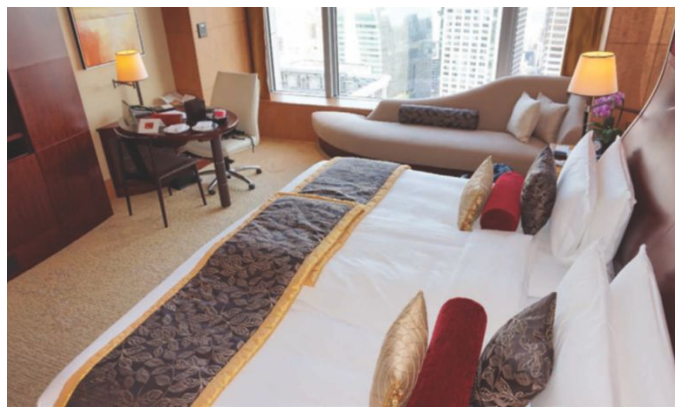
You Manage the Event. Let Carey Manage the Transportation.

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Shangri-La Hotel

Tokyo



BACKGROUND: Opened in 2009, the Shangri-La Hotel, Tokyo is the Hong Kong-based hotel brand's first property in Japan. The hotel takes up the 28th through 39th floors of the Marunouchi Trust Tower, directly behind Tokyo Station.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Beautiful Asian design is enhanced by a collection of over 2,000 pieces of original artwork displayed throughout the property. There's a discreet, street-level entrance with a mini-lobby; guests are then whisked to the main lobby on the 28th floor. The Marunouchi location is perfect for both leisure and business travelers. It's in the core of the financial district but a short five minute walk from the Imperial Palace and other popular tourist areas like Nihonbashi and Akihabara.

The location, directly adjacent to Tokyo's huge central station, is also good insurance against getting lost;

when exploring the city, it's always easy to get back to Tokyo Station. The hotel offers trackside "Meet and Greet" service, meeting guests at the train, handling their baggage and escorting them to the hotel lobby, doing the reverse on departure. Overall, I found the service at the Shangri-La deeply personal with staff members always referencing me by name.

ROOMS: Room design is what I would call "Contemporary Asian" and matches what you find at other Shangri-La properties, which is a good thing. My Deluxe Room had beautiful, sweeping views across Tokyo's vast forest of buildings, with a view of the iconic Tokyo Tower to one side and Tokyo Bay on the other.

The bathroom, finished in different tones of marble featured a huge soaking tub and glass-enclosed rain shower in a 'wet room' with

a full glass wall separating it from the sleeping area. There is a privacy curtain, but the configuration allowed spectacular views of the Tokyo skyline from the tub and from the shower.

As a Horizon Club-level room guest, I enjoyed the Horizon Club lounge and its enhanced features including check-in/out in the lounge, access to conference room facilities and a dedicated concierge. The lounge serves a wonderful breakfast each morning, drinks and snacks throughout the day, afternoon tea and an evening cocktail hour with hot food.

RESTAURANTS AND

BARS: The Shangri-La shines here with two stand-out options, in addition to a lobby lounge. Piacere serves authentic Italian food with beautiful views across Tokyo. As part of a program called "Going to the Source," executive chef Andrea Ferrero travels throughout Japan to personally source products and meet with providers. The property also boasts a branch of Nadaman, a traditional Japanese restaurant first opened in Osaka in 1830 and serving a multi-course dinner experience.

MEETING AND FITNESS

FACILITIES: The hotel is popular for groups and meetings and has extensive facilities to support them. A large ballroom and multiple meeting rooms are available, along with the property's restaurants and some public spaces.

Fitness facilities are part of the hotel's CHI spa featuring a 24-hour health club with a large heated indoor pool. A Jacuzzi, sauna and spa treatments, and massages are also available during business hours.

TESTED BY

Freddy Sherman

HOW MANY ROOMS?

200 guestrooms including 16 suites

PROPERTY HIGHLIGHTS

Central location adjacent to the city's main train station, stylish rooms with great views and personal, bespoke service.

PRICE

Internet rates for a Deluxe Room are \$512 per night with an advance purchase discount.

CONTACT

Marunouchi Trust Tower Main, 1-8-3 Marunouchi Chiyoda-ku; tel. +81 (3) 6739 7888, shangri-la.com/tokyo

FACILITIES

- iPods and iPads
- ✓ WI FI
- ✓ MINI BAR
- ✓ 24hr CONCIERGE
- ✓ MEETING ROOM
- ✓ EXECUTIVE FLOOR
- ✓ RESTAURANT
- ✓ BAR
- ✓ SPA
- ✓ POOL
- ✓ GYM

VERDICT: The Shangri-La Hotel Tokyo delivers a solid luxury experience in the heart of this energetic city. With rooms and suites that live up to the brand's reputation for luxury, great dining options and a nice range of amenities, the hotel offers a more personal guest experience that the city's other corporate luxury hotel options. **BT**

Cathay Pacific 777-300ER Business Class

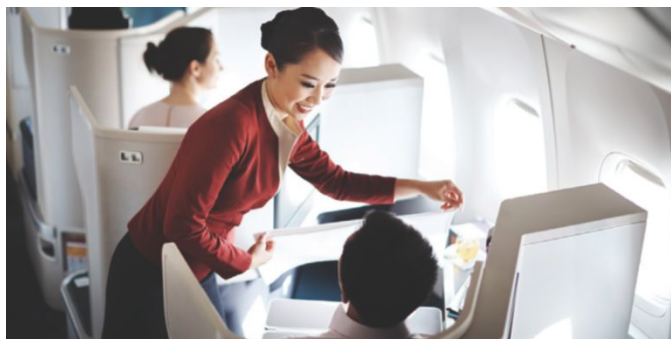
Los Angeles (LAX) –Hong Kong (HKG)

CHECK-IN AND BOARDING:

Check-in at LAX was quick and easy thanks to dedicated Business Class lines and the presence of a lot of CX staff to guide arriving passengers. Cathay Pacific uses the OneWorld lounge, shared with British Airways and Qantas, and it offers a nice range of food, space to work and even a (simulated) firepit.

Boarding was also smooth with no delays, again thanks to dedicated First and Business Class lines. As with check-in, there were a lot of CX staff on hand to assist, making the process go quickly.

THE SEAT: The Cathay Pacific Business Class seat is a standard long-haul, flat-bed that offers a fair amount of personal space, especially with the 1-2-1 cabin configuration. The two



center seats are angled towards each other, ensuring excellent privacy when reclined or the ability to talk to your neighbor when the seats are in their upright position. There's a bed extension that comes up when the seat is fully reclined, making the bed width a full 29.5 inches, although the seat itself is only 21 inches wide. The large IFE screen swings out to present a wide range of programming with a good selection of classic and current films and TV shows. Noise-canceling headphones are provided. One complaint; the screen's privacy function makes it hard to see from any angle other than right in front. And it doesn't tilt, so when the seat is reclined flat the screen darkens because of the viewing angle.

THE FLIGHT: Strong headwinds pushed the flight to 15 hours, but nonetheless the time was quite enjoyable, given the delicious food, fine wine and available IFE options. The timing works well with your body clock, with a departure from LAX just after midnight

and arrival (one day later) into Hong Kong at 7 AM.

The food was excellent with beef, chicken and vegetarian options, along with a nice range of side dishes. Given the diversity of Hong Kong cuisine, it would have been nice to see more local specialties rather than generic Western and Italian selections, tasty as they were. The wine list featured great offerings from France, Spain and Australia.

Breakfast was served about two hours prior to landing and featured a selection of fresh fruit, a bagel with cream cheese and a hot meal with omelet, potatoes and bacon (an Asian breakfast option with congee was also on the menu). Bonus points to Cathay Pacific for making me a hot chocolate, a request I always make on flights but rarely have fulfilled.

ARRIVAL: The immigration process at HKG was fast, with no delays. There is no dedicated fast track or priority line for premium passengers, but the system works well and I've found there are always an

TESTED BY

Freddy Sherman

PLANE TYPE

777-300ER

SEAT CONFIGURATION

1-2-1

SEAT PITCH

81 in/206 cm

SEAT WIDTH

21 in/53 cm

SEAT LENGTH

82 in/208 cm

SEAT RECLINE

180 degrees

PRICE

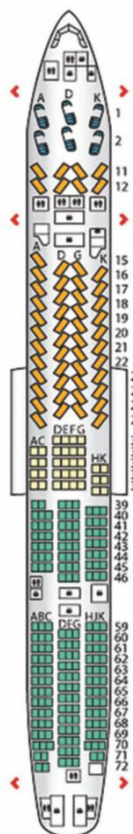
Internet fare for a round-trip ticket starts at \$5,418.

CONTACT

cathaypacific.com

adequate number of officers on hand to handle the crowd. I had a connecting flight to Tokyo and had a chance to visit The Pier, just one of the airline's lounges at HKG. The large airside lounge had very good food and a lot of space to relax, along with showers and other amenities. Its convenient location above the departure gates makes it easy to visit between my flights.

VERDICT: Cathay Pacific consistently delivers a superior Business Class product with comfortable seating, excellent food and wine and reliable on-time service. With an always-professional cabin crew and a truly global route network, they remain a premier pick for business travelers. **BT**





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50 Bon Voyage



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Viceroy Palm Jumeirah Debuts in Dubai

Viceroy Hotel Group has unveiled its new 16-story beachfront resort in Dubai, the Viceroy Palm Jumeirah Dubai. The property has 477 rooms and suites, including 352 guestrooms, 85 suites and 40 hotel apartments.

The resort offers eight food and beverage outlets, and an 18,000-square-foot spa and fully-equipped gym with personal training services and wellbeing sessions.

For meetings and corporate events, the hotel features three meeting rooms and a 6,500-square-foot ballroom that can accommodate up to 350 guests.

Learn more at viceroyhotelsandresorts.com.

Rosewood San Miguel de Allende Welcomes First Art Concierge

Rosewood San Miguel de Allende has appointed Alexandra Long as the hotel's first-ever art concierge, helping guests discover the creative scene of this quaint artists' village north of Mexico City. Long will manage the Rosewood's rotating collection of authentic Mexican artwork, coordinate educational art talks and tours and oversee the monthly on-property art market.

"We wanted to offer our guests an interactive resource for discovering the craft and creativity of the city's artisans," said Alfredo Rentería, the hotel's managing director. "With a distinguished academic background, Alexandra will bring incredible value to the role of art concierge."

For details visit rosewoodhotels.com.

Delta Sets an Elegant Table with Alessi Design

Delta Air Lines has rolled out new tableware designed in partnership with renowned design company Alessi. The collection includes flatware, crystal glassware, new bone china, stainless steel serving pieces, and tabletop accessories including napkin rings, salt and pepper shakers and trays. These one-of-a-kind designs can be found in Delta's premium cabins, including Delta One, First Class and, by the end of the year, Delta Premium Select.

"The Alessi for Delta collection is part of our continued investment in delivering a world class, global culinary experience that will elevate our customer inflight dining experience to new heights," said Allison Ausband, Delta's senior vice president, In-Flight Service.

Visit delta.com for more information.

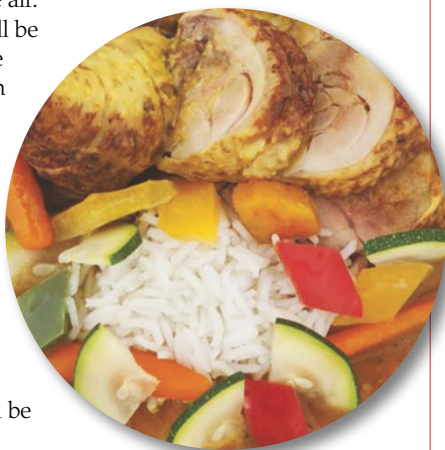


Air France Brings Creole Cuisine On Board

Air France has enlisted Chef Babette de Rozières to bring three creole dishes to its Business and Premium Economy services. Chef Babette grew up in Guadeloupe and later moved to Paris where she perfected her craft. Today she promotes French cuisine all over the world and is now bringing her art to the air.

The menu items will be available on departure from Cayenne (French Guiana), Fort de France (Martinique) and Pointe à Pitre (Guadeloupe) to Paris-Orly and on flights on the Caribbean regional network between Cayenne and Fort de France. Each month three new entrees will be available.

Menu details are available at airfrance.us.



Thailand is BW Premier Collection's First Asian Destination

Best Western Hotels and Resorts has announced its first Asian property in the upscale BW Premier Collection brand with the signing of the Bluphere Pattaya, a new eight-story project in Na Jomtien in Thailand. The resort offers 195 apartment-style units located near downtown Pattaya, about an hour's drive from Bangkok.

Since its launch in October of 2015, BW Premier Collection has grown to over 75 properties. In addition to the new Thailand resort, the collection of independent hotels are in the US and Canada, France, Italy, Sweden and the UK.

Learn more at bestwestern.com. **BT**



Discover our Business class.

Aerolíneas Argentinas offer more services and benefits for all our passengers at great prices.



CLUB CÓNDOR

Our long-haul, international business class. The seats recline 170 degrees, and have an “on demand” audio/visual entertainment system with a touchscreen, noise canceling headphones. Equipped with special mood-lighting.

CLUB ECONOMY

Our premium economy class which is offer on all domestic and regional flights, with business class benefits. There are only 8 seats with 38 inches between them.

SALÓN CÓNDOR

Strategically located in Terminal C at Ezeiza, our VIP lounge provide and ideal atmosphere where our passengers can relax. Our Salon Condor can be used by Club Condor (Business class) and Club Economy passengers as well as Aerolíneas plus Platinum, Aerolíneas Gold members and Sky Team Elite Plus members.

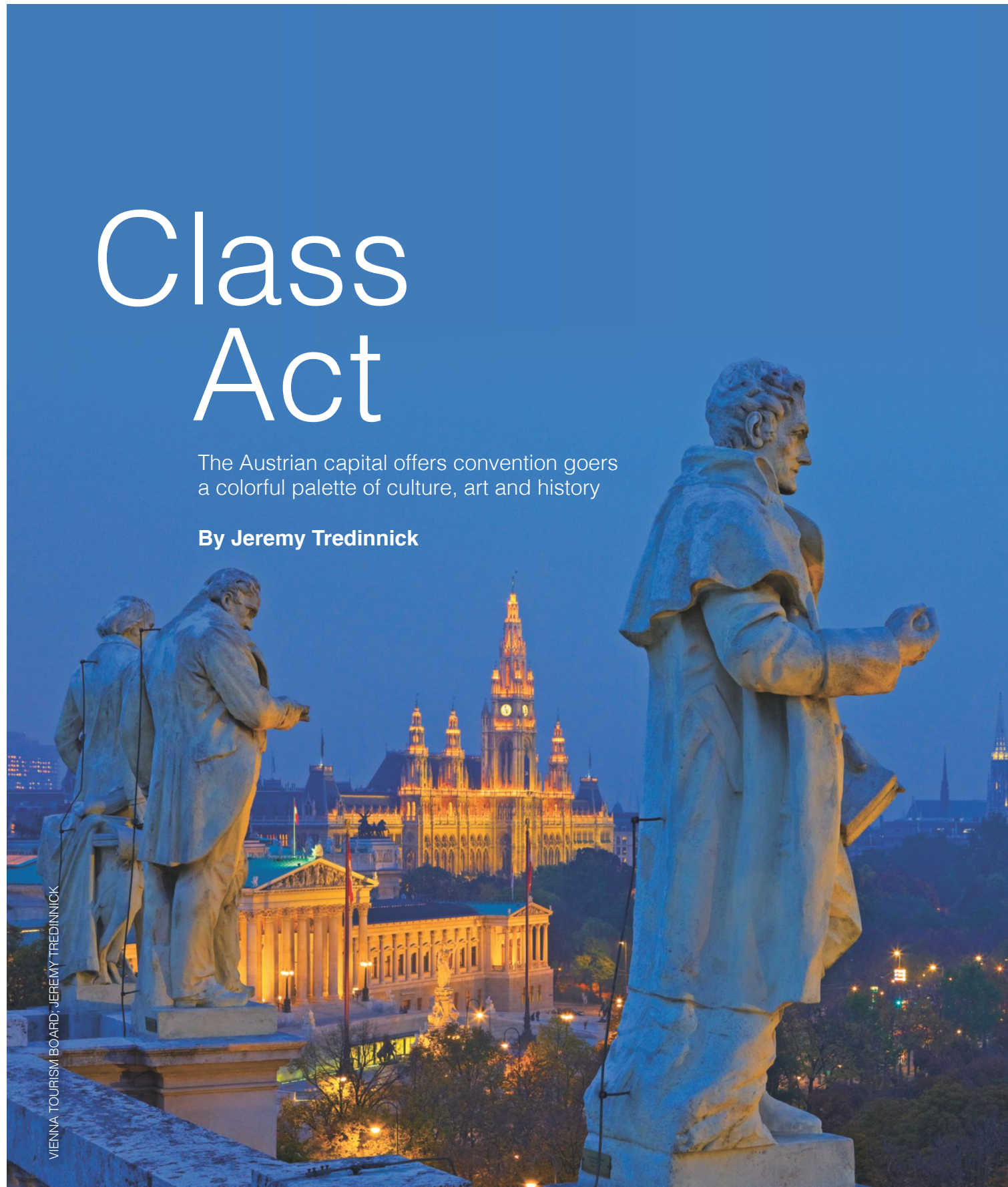
More than 10.000 square feet, business center, free WIFI, rest areas allows our passenger be relaxed and enjoying light menu and drinks.



Class Act

The Austrian capital offers convention goers a colorful palette of culture, art and history

By Jeremy Tredinnick



VIENNA TOURISM BOARD, JEREMY TREDINNICK



Jet lag has me wide awake at 4:30 AM, but for once I'm not annoyed, because this is my opportunity to explore a city that many consider one of the most beautiful and civilized in the world. By 5:30 I'm walking down the Austrian capital's Ringstrasse towards the Donaukanal, once a broad bend in the Danube but now a regulated water channel that marks the northeast corner of Vienna's old city center.

I turn left to wander along its banks, lined with alfresco bars and cafés that, pre-dawn, are locked and lifeless, but during summer evenings buzz and bustle with city folk enjoying the balmy weather. The sky lightens as sunrise approaches, revealing artistic, colorful graffiti on the brick walls beside the canal. Early workers cycle past on clearly marked bike lanes and coffee houses are already open for breakfast and doing good business – Vienna's famed kaffeekultur (coffee culture) is a way of life here.

The streets are now crowded with people going to work and taking kids to school, but there's not a single raised voice from a peeved child or irate commuter – all is orderly and calm. I emerge onto Sigmund Freud Park opposite the towering neo-Gothic Votive Church, its sharp twin spires piercing the clear blue sky. I follow the tram tracks past an impressive university building to Rathauspark, which sprawls out before the grand City Hall. Built between 1872 and 1883, it has an even more ornate façade than the famed Burgtheater across the road – Europe's second-oldest theatre and home to the Austrian National Theatre.

Even my accommodation – the Palais Hansen Kempinski Vienna – is in a heritage-listed building. Built for the World Exhibition in 1873, it was leased to Kempinski in 2010; its three courtyards were given glass ceilings and have become the refined lobby lounge, Die Küche breakfast café and a multipurpose event space. As I munch on hearty Austrian bread and a sampling from the superb breakfast buffet selection, I contemplate the architectural beauty of the city.

Preserving the Past

The Vienna Historic Preservation Commission was created in 2003, and it designated the Innere Stadt (First District) as the Central Historic District, with an ordinance put in place to stop any modern building or alteration of existing façades. The result is a de facto open-air museum of glorious architectural treasures, from Gothic to Baroque, Renaissance to Neoclassical. It is of course a UNESCO World Heritage site in its entirety. In 2014, 6.2 million people visited Vienna – a lot for a small city of only 1.8 million people – and for most of their sojourn the majority of them stayed within the *Ringstraße*, a generous boulevard that replaced the old city walls and today forms the First District's circular border.

I do much the same; over the course of two days – which I advise is far too short a time to fully appreciate this most cultured of cities – I crisscross and circumnavigate the historic district, by myself and on guided tours. At just over a square mile it's manageable on foot, but I buy a Vienna Card, which provides free travel on the underground, buses and trams for 48 hours (€21.90/\$23) or 72 hours (€24.90/\$27), as well as discounts for many of the top sights and tours, plus shopping and dining deals (wienkarte.at).

I visit the Vienna State Opera, one of the world's most distinguished music venues, which was built in the mid-19th century and restored after being damaged in WWII. For those who can't afford to buy a ticket, a huge screen on the side of the building streams live performances in the evening for everyone, with chairs provided – such is the city's artistic altruism. I wander down history-rich streets past the Albertina museum, once a royal

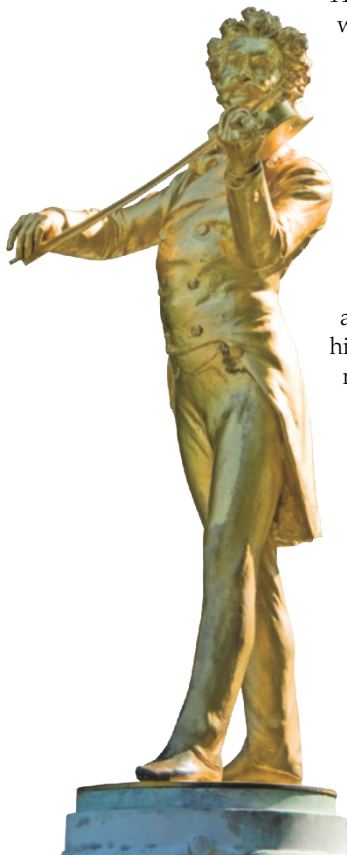


Habsburgs palace, then the Hotel Sacher, home of sachertorte (the world's most famous chocolate cake), before heading to the center of the Innere Stadt, St Stephen's Cathedral.

Most people stop in St Stephen's Square for a few minutes to stare in awe at the Gothic splendor of this 700-year-old masterpiece. The South Tower, built in 1433, shoots up, lance-like, 446 feet into the sky, but the North Tower was unfinished and in 1579 was capped by a Renaissance dome, which gives it a peculiar appearance but doesn't diminish its majestic stature over the Renaissance and Baroque city crowding around it.

Graben, a storied and now pedestrianized and café-strewn thoroughfare, leads from St Stephen's Square west towards Kohlmarkt, another famous street lined with historic shops proudly displaying the royal insignia to show their status as purveyors to the crown.

At the end of Kohlmarkt is the Hofburg, the Imperial Palace. This grand set of buildings was the center of the huge Habsburg Empire, which ruled Central Europe from the 13th century right through to the early 20th century. It is home to the Sisi Museum in the Imperial Apartments, the renowned Spanish Riding School where beautiful white Lipizzaner horses dance an equine ballet, and a host of other museums, libraries, chapels and historical treasures.



Gemütlichkeit Abounds

I stroll past the rose bushes of Volksgarten (the people's garden) to lunch at Café Landtmann, next to the Burgtheater. One of the city's most famous and elegant coffee houses, it opened in 1873 and was frequented by the likes of Sigmund Freud, Gustav Mahler, Marlene Dietrich and, more recently, Hillary Clinton. Coffee houses in Vienna are renowned for their atmosphere of relaxed sophistication, where the concept of gemütlichkeit – roughly translating to mean a state of warmth, friendliness and good cheer – that's so unique it has been given its own place on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

On my second day I venture outside the Ring Boulevard to Naschmarkt, a classic Viennese market just south of the Ring Road, where you can buy and eat food from a wide range of countries, and purchase clothes, souvenirs and other sundries. I stop by the grandiose Art History Museum and Natural History Museum, which face each other across a green, landscaped plaza. A short walk away is a famous statue of Mozart, and a short tram ride on Line 1 to the Stadtpark (City park) brings me to two more statues of famous residents: first Beethoven, looking pensive in his own small square, then Johann Strauss II, Vienna's favorite son, depicted in gold playing his violin like a virtuoso.

Vienna is the only capital city in the world that produces a significant amount of wine within its city limits. In the evening I drive 20 minutes out of town to Weingut Mayer am Pfarrplatz, one of the city's many vineyard heurigers, courtyard taverns where local winemakers serve their produce along with substantial meals of grilled meat, sausages, breads and desserts.

Surrounded by friends singing old folk tunes to an accordion's jolly jig, chattering couples and families of all ages, seated at replete with wholesome food and fruity wine, I promise myself I'll return to Vienna. Only next time my wife will come too, and we'll stay longer. And perhaps we'll come in winter, when the city's famous Christmas markets in Rathaus Platz and St Stephen's Square will provide the sort of gemütlichkeit that has charmed me during my short visit. **BT**



Clockwise from top left: Vienna State Opera House; St Stephen's Cathedral; Weingut Mayer am Pfarrplatz heuriger; a refined coffee house; a carriage passes through a Hofburg archway; and the golden statue of Johann Strauss



MEETING IN VIENNA

The Austrian capital offers convention goers a colorful palette of culture, art and history

From the beautiful blue Danube to its traditional coffee shops and its splendid architectural legacy, Vienna retains an old world charm, a rich cultural sensibility and a long history. For visitors, Vienna is compact, green, safe and easily accessible, attributes which placed it at the top spot in Mercer's 2016 Quality of Living Survey as the most livable city in the world. It was also named the World's Most Reputable City in 2014 by the Reputation Institute.

All these accolades no doubt contribute to the Austrian capital's consistent showing among the most popular meetings and convention destinations on the planet. Statistics from the International Congress and Convention Association rank Vienna fourth globally in 2015; in total Vienna hosted 3,685 congresses and conferences, company meetings and incentives, just under 750 of which were international.

The city has a wide range of venues large and small, along with attractions that offer interesting activities for attendees. According to the Vienna Convention Bureau, the city has three convention centers, 93 conference hotels, 34 historical venues and 17 contemporary locations.

Most of the key venues and hotels are located in the city's first district, the central area encircled by the Ring Boulevard and on the south bank of the Danube Canal. To simplify travel for convention visitors, discount tickets for the Wiener Linien public transportation network, complimentary maps and information packs are available from the Convention Bureau.

More than three-quarters of convention travelers arrive by air, so the capital's two largest conference centers recently installed self-service check-in kiosks to help cut travel time. The kiosks are available at Austria Center Vienna and the Messe Wien Exhibition & Congress Center to allow passengers flying with Austrian Airlines, Lufthansa, Swiss and Brussels to check in and print out their boarding passes on site.

To See and Do

Art and classical music are the cultural soul of the city, so Vienna boasts more than 100 museums, 27 palaces, 120 concert halls and theatres many of which offer magnificent spaces to host events. Among them, The Belvedere, a former baroque palace, now split into two museums and the Albertina includes 21 neoclassical Habsburg State Rooms and a collection which spans masters from Monet to Picasso.

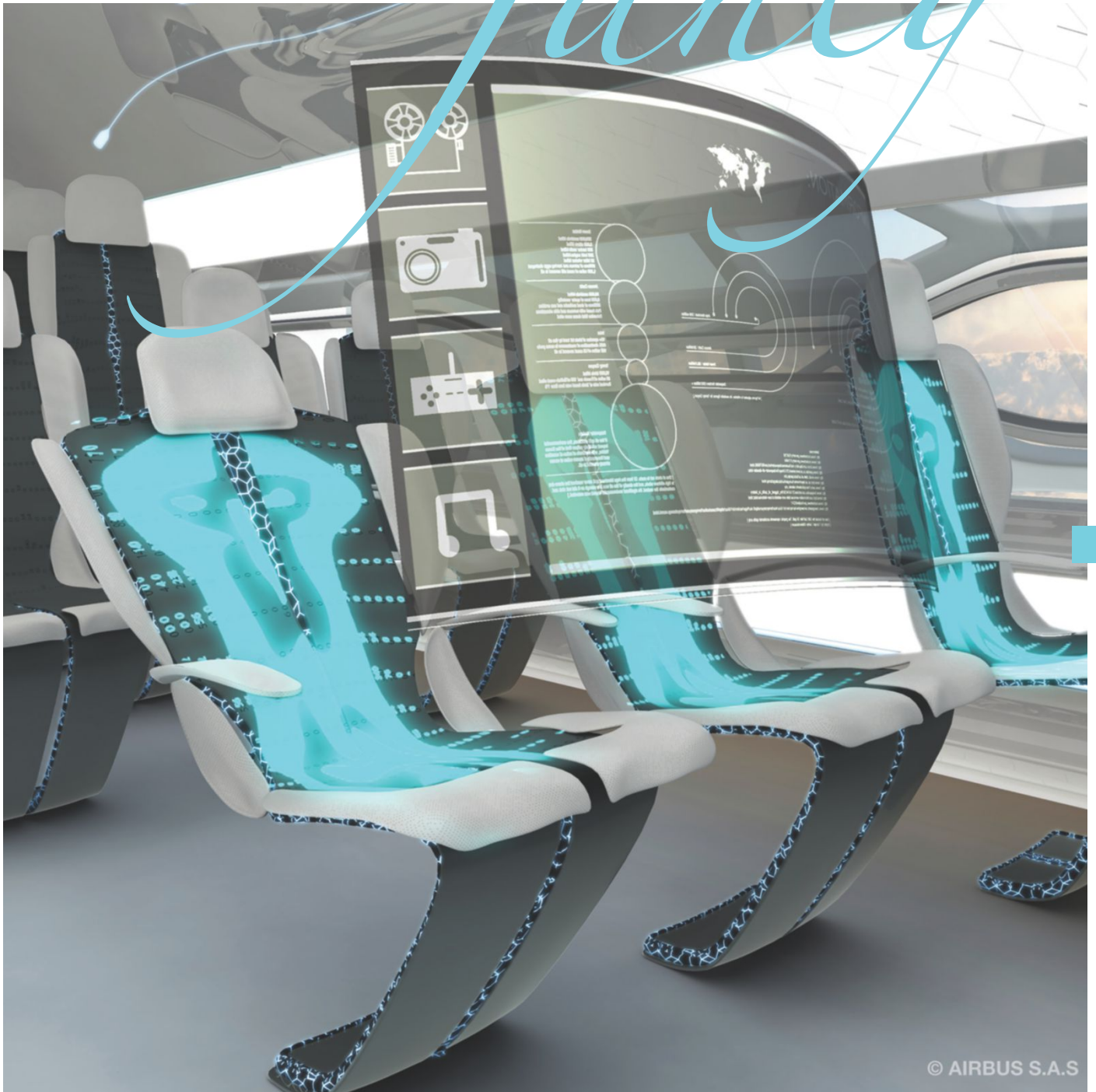
The 16th-century Spanish Riding School is a meeting venue that also happens to be home to the snow-white Lipizzaner stallions. Hofburg, another first district venue, is the former winter residence of the Habsburg family, a labyrinthine venue for large-scale events, with 35 spaces overall.

Then there's the city's devotion to good food and drink, with around 7,400 cafés, bars and restaurants. And let's not forget its passion for music and the arts – unsurprising given this was the home of Mozart, Beethoven, Haydn, Schubert and the Strauss family, as well as playwright Arthur Schnitzler and artist Gustav Klimt, among many others.

Flights of

Fancy

What lies ahead for air travel may be found at the Future Travel Experience today



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Technology's ever-widening reach continues to drive rapid – and surprising – changes in the world around us. A host of new capabilities such as robotics, artificial intelligence and augmented reality are already here, and seem set to disrupt nearly every aspect of daily life, including – and perhaps especially – travel.

Travel industry trade shows are often where we are introduced to the practical applications of the latest technological developments. One such recent event was Future Travel Experience Asia EXPO 2016, held in October in Singapore. At events like these we can discover advances and innovations – from biometric scanning to computer visualization to the effective use of big data – that may change the way we fly in the near and distant future.



ROBOTIC ASSISTANCE

In October, SITA Labs – the technology research arm of IT firm SITA – toured its autonomous, self-propelled baggage robot in Singapore and Hong Kong. Named Leo after the famed Renaissance-era inventor Leonardo Da Vinci, the automaton represents the company's look into the future of baggage handling for commercial flights.

Leo is designed to check in luggage, print baggage tags and transport two suitcases at a time. Passengers use the robot's "Scan&fly" function to drop luggage into compartments on the robot that close once bags are tagged and loaded, and can only be reopened by the operator unloading the baggage in the airport. Thanks to its in-built obstacle-avoidance technology, the robot can function in high-traffic areas, such as an airport, and if it gains traction, could be a way to collect, check in, transport and load luggage without involvement from any human other than the passenger. Since the bag drop is done outside, it wouldn't even have to enter the terminal building.

Aside from its tour in Singapore and Hong Kong, Leo has also undergone trial runs at Geneva Airport where travelers checked in their bags using the robot.

Meanwhile, in February 2016, Japan Airlines began trials of a new android guide at Tokyo Haneda International Airport, offering travelers flight information such as schedules, destination and weather updates. Known as Nao, the robot features voice-recognition software and is able to communicate in Japanese, Chinese and English.

sita.aero; jal.com

CONCEPT CABIN

Airbus has put a fair amount of time into researching future tech developments for the aviation sector. Its The Future by Airbus report published back in 2010 looks at how the industry may look in the year 2050.

A number of the leaps forward in that report pertain to making air travel more eco-friendly; however the aircraft manufacturer's "Concept Cabin" highlights just how radically different the passenger experience could become three decades hence. Perhaps most notable is the manufacturer's notion that traditional class tiers could one day be replaced by zones based on individual travelers' interests, ranging from having business meetings with people from around the world to areas offering relaxation and activities.

The Vitalising Zone, for instance, would include seats surrounded by a bionic structure with membranes that could turn transparent at the wave of a hand, offering panoramic views outside the aircraft. In the Interaction Zone, touch-sensitive panels could scan and download information about individual passengers, offering them a bespoke experience ranging from virtual reality golf, tennis and baseball to interactive virtual shopping.

airbus.com/innovation

BAGGAGE TRACKING

Luggage brand Rimowa recently launched what it claims is the first digital check-in solution for luggage, the Rimowa Electronic Tag. Built into the luggage, the tag allows travelers to check in their luggage remotely using an app on their smartphone and drop it off at the airport. Rimowa's app will communicate with airlines' own apps to send flight information directly to the bag via Bluetooth, which can be viewed using the in-built E-ink display.

Lufthansa was the first airline partner to adopt the technology, with the service up and running at Munich and Frankfurt airports. However, EVA Air also recently announced they would be adopting the technology, with other industry players currently testing the solution.

rimowa-electronictag.com



CHIP SCANNER

Scandinavian airline SAS is investigating a number of interesting new innovations. Among the developments, fully interactive and visual digital walls in its lounges to provide up-to-date flight information and allow travelers to visually explore each individual flight's cabin layout in three dimensions; the first of its walls is set to launch this year at the airline's new Oslo lounge.

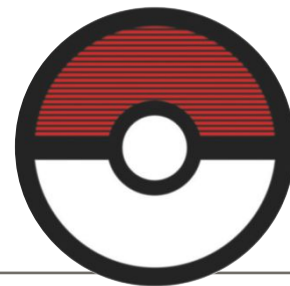
The airline has also recently given iPads to all crew members that use data about customers' previous trips to improve service on subsequent journeys. The carrier's innovation lab has also been looking into a near-field communication (NFC) ring with passenger information that can be swiped when boarding the aircraft.

But easily its most "out there" concept is using a programmable chip inserted into a person's hand. In much the same way one would scan a travel card for use on public transport, the chip would eliminate the need for any physical documentation or devices whatsoever. "This is not only on the concept drawing board, it is a reality," said Eivind Roald, SAS's executive vice president commercial at a media briefing in Hong Kong. "Whether this will be the future or not, I don't know, but it shows something about what we are doing in our innovation labs."

Admittedly such an "invasive" and potentially controversial innovation would likely take a fair amount of time to gain meaningful traction among travelers. SAS has yet to roll out even a scan-able watch, let alone a chip embedded under the skin, so it's probably safe to say this won't be an innovation we'll see coming to the market in the immediate future.

Avionics and IT company Rockwell Collins, meanwhile, announced back in March 2015 that it was developing a tool that combined its ARINC vMUSE and ARINC Veripax technology with its Atkins Identity Management platform to enable scanning using travelers' biometrics. Facial recognition, as well as fingerprint and iris scanning technologies could match a person's biometrics with their passport and boarding pass information, enabling travelers to check in more efficiently and board by themselves.

flysas.com; rockwellcollins.com



AUGMENTED REALITY

When the augmented reality app Pokémon Go launched last year, its popularity took the world by storm. While the vast gatherings of people playing the game in public have since largely disappeared, it showed the great potential AR technology has to capture the public's interest.

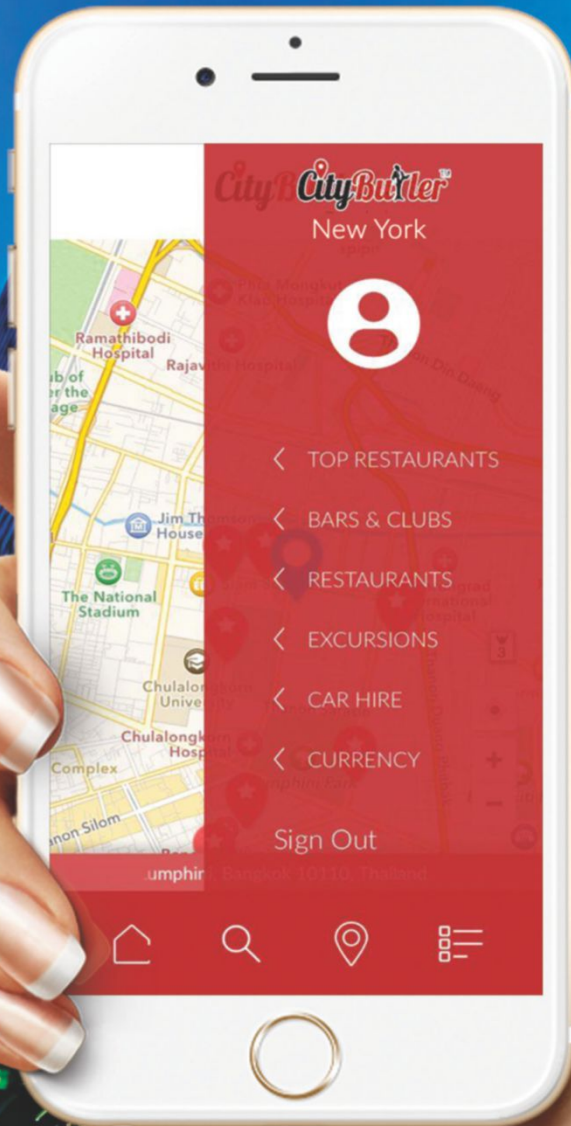
Recently, tech giant Google teamed up with San Jose International Airport to test a new augmented reality technology platform called Tango, which uses computer vision to enable devices to understand their surroundings without the need for technology such as GPS. This allows the use of location-based AR apps that can be accurate to within about a centimeter, including a custom SJC app that has since been tested by members of Google's Project Tango team and Aisle411, the company that developed the app, at the airport's Terminal B.

Meanwhile, British Airways demo'd the app earlier this summer during the launch of its direct San Jose-London Heathrow route, enabling passengers to use the app for wayfinding, viewing augmented reality digital billboards with destination information and searching for F&B options based on their location and time availability. Floating 3D images were also visible when using the app, including a surreal 3D shark swimming around outside the airport's Shark Cage restaurant.

google.com/tango BT



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Bon voyage

Fancy a vacation afloat? From luxury liners to intimate river boats, cruising has become big business

By Malcolm Ginsberg



Water-borne holidays have become a perennial leisure time favorite for many travelers. Cruising essentially comes in two flavors – the deep-sea or river variety. You can book direct with the operator or via a specialist cruise agent. And, conveniently, you can spend two weeks abroad without changing money from dollars. Your ship docks, you join a tour, or just take a walk, and then return.

For regulars from the UK to the US, Cunard – which has been operating the Atlantic since 1840 – has a Queen Mary 2 between Southampton and New York that allows you to travel by air in one direction and by sea in the other. Price-wise, it is much the same as flying on a premium ticket. This year, there are 11 passages in each direction. Out of Southampton is the best for Brits, with no air passenger duty to pay, and the arrival in New York, sailing past the Statue of Liberty, is spectacular. Cunard certainly knows how to keep its customers happy, and busy, if required – even youngsters, who have their own area and specially qualified staff.

Other companies cross the Atlantic in the spring from North America and the other way in the autumn. It's a good way to get a taste for cruising, and the operators offer a busy onboard entertainment program, franchise spas and well-equipped gyms. WiFi at sea is also getting better and better.

Spoiled for Choice

When choosing a cruise far from home, there are a number of factors to consider. How much do you want to spend? Would you prefer deep-sea or river cruising? Are you happy to fly to or from your start or end port embarkations? Or maybe you want to fly to just one destination?

Ship choice is vast, ranging from big liners with 2,500-plus passengers and medium-sized vessels holding 1,250 upwards, to something in the boutique class, which can mean from 50 guests to 750. Whatever size you choose, boarding and departure are swift and easy, and usually much better than airports.

You can cruise across the North Atlantic, Scandinavia, the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, Alaska, North and South America, the Far East, Antipodes Islands and the Pacific. New areas are being slated for sea holidays all the time, and world cruises are proving more and more popular.

Do you want a cruise that takes in a new port every day, or that has a day at sea and then a day in port? Do you want to vacation with children (yours and others') or without? There are cruise lines that accommodate both markets. Would you rather dine at a fixed time with the same company at each meal or at a time that suits you? Some offer both. Note that smoking is usually restricted to certain deck areas or a cigar lounge.



Would you consider a budget cruise or do you want five-star luxury? The requirements of both are well catered to. Would you be happy with an inside cabin (with no windows), or would you want an outside one with views? Be aware that a cabin with a balcony can easily double the cost of the trip.

As part of their marketing efforts, many companies offer specialized cruises, typically dedicated to cooking, wine tasting, music, theatre, history, politics and sport. Crystal Cruises often has a golf professional on board who will plan ahead to visit major venues at each port of call. Royal Caribbean offers golf simulators on ten of its vessels, each with a selection of 20 courses. Most ships have putting greens, too.

Don't be put off if you have a disability – the cruise companies were among the first members of the leisure trade to realize there was a big market for people with limited, or no, walking ability. The same goes for those with dietary requirements; chefs are keen to meet guests' personal needs, and the latest ships have some spectacular restaurants.

There's no need to worry about falling ill at sea, either. It's required that you be covered by adequate travel insurance, but the medical facilities on modern ships are exceptional. Virtually every ship of any size has at least one full-time doctor on board, and helicopter evacuation is not unknown in emergency cases.

Go with the Flow

River cruising is an entirely different concept, with the largest vessels – in Europe anyway – limited to 200 passengers. It should really be compared with car, bus or train tours, without the packing and unpacking every night and accommodations that travel with you. Another big plus – you can't get seasick – although, in fairness to the deep-sea fraternity, the latest ocean-going ships with advanced technology offer very smooth sailing.

The Danube and Rhine (and its tributaries) were the great commercial waterways of Europe in centuries gone by. The Volga, for example, links Moscow and St Petersburg, and great medieval cities were built at European rivers' crossing points. Rivers also wind through spectacular scenery, including the Black Forest Gorge and the wine country bordering the Douro and Rhône.

Most river packages are fully inclusive of daytime excursions, onboard meals and the service of an expert cruise director. Cabin sizes are limited, but you will have at least a private shower/bathroom, and private balconies are much in vogue.

Some ships squeeze in three restaurants, but evening activities tend to be limited to a lecture on the next day's program, a resident



Previous page:
Cunard Queen
Mary 2 **Left:** Royal
Caribbean **Above:**
MSC Cruises; Crystal
Cruises

pianist or regional entertainers joining for a few hours. Emerald River Cruises has introduced an indoor pool with a roof that folds back, becoming a cinema at night.

All river ships have large, unencumbered top decks suitable for sunbathing, the occasional buffet dinner and sometimes a pool. But the design has to be clever, and as economical with space as possible. This is because the vessels have to pass under bridges when rivers are flowing at their peak – usually this problem occurs in the winter, but not always. Squeezing underneath when the water has risen to its maximum level can prove entertaining.

It's impossible to get lost on a river cruiser, as it has only three decks and a single corridor between the cabins. Embarking and disembarking could not be simpler, as the boats often dock in the center of a city – Dusseldorf or Avignon, for example. Amsterdam is at the head of the Rhine, but is also the starting point for trips through the Dutch canals and the Elbe. The port of Amsterdam is close to the city's main railway station, with the big sea-bound ships nearby towering over you in contrast.

In a survey carried out for the Cruise Lines International Association last year, one of the questions was: "Which is of greater importance to you, the quality of the facilities or the choice of destination?" The ship and its facilities topped the poll with ease. So make sure you choose carefully. **BT**



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What's On Around The World

We round up some of the top events in the months ahead from all over

Hamamatsu Festival

Hamamatsu, Japan
May 3 – 5

Dating back to the 16th century this festival offers the spectacle of more than 100 12-foot by 12-foot kites flying over the Nakatajima Dunes, fighting to cut their opponents' strings. At night the celebrations continue with floats parading through Hamamatsu.

Visit jnto.go.jp.



Krakow Film Festival

Krakow, Poland
May 28 – June 6

One of Europe's oldest events dedicated to documentary, animated and short feature films, the eight-day Krakow Film Festival screens about 250 films from Poland and the world. Exhibitions, concerts, open-air shows and filmmakers' talks highlight the week.

Visit krakowfilmfestival.pl/en.



Feria del Caballo

Jerez De La Frontera, Spain
May 13 – 20

The Jerez Horse Fair (Feria de Caballo) is over 500 years old. Crowds flock to the two hundred or so casetas open to the public at the fairgrounds to see the legendary horses of Jerez show off their moves.

Visit andalucia.com/festival.



Tallinn Old Town Days

Tallinn, Estonia
May 31 – June 4

The 36th Tallinn Old Town Days is dedicated to cultural heritage and community. Music, theatre, art and sports events are held during the five-day festival to entertain both locals and visitors. Get more information at visitestonia.com/en.

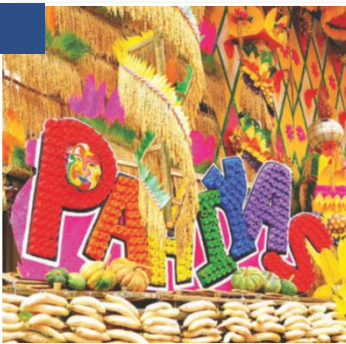


Pahiyas Festival

Lucban, Philippines
May 15

The festival celebrates San Isidro Labrador, the patron saint of the region's farmers. Elaborate decorations known as 'kiping,' made by locals from rice paste shaped into leaves and wafers, decorate homes. Stalls with handmade crafts and delicious food are plentiful.

Visit pahiyasfestival.com.

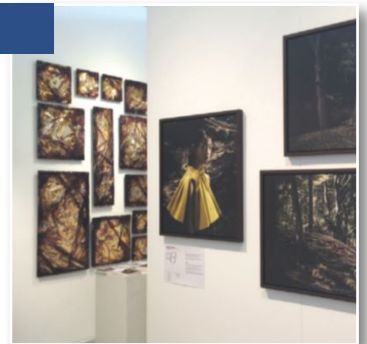


KunstRAI Art Amsterdam

Amsterdam
May 31 – June 5

KunstRAI is the oldest fair in the Netherlands for contemporary autonomous and applied arts. Exhibitions of autonomous painting and sculpture, photography and graphic arts, glass, ceramics and jewelry reflect the diversity of Dutch contemporary art and design.

Visit kunstrai.nl/kunstrai-intro.



Brussels Jazz Marathon

Brussels
May 20 – 22

Over 700 artists will descend on the capital city of Belgium to celebrate the art of jazz in all its forms. Now in its 21st year the festival offers more than 250 live concerts on both indoor and outdoor stages to share music across the generations.

Visit brusselsjazzmarathon.be.



Festival of the Sea

Reykjavik
June 3 – 4

This annual festival is celebrated all over Iceland to honor those who work at sea and in the fisheries of Iceland. In Reykjavik the West Harbor hosts family events and more with dancing, sporting events, music, pirates and parades.

Visit hatidhafsins.is. **BT**





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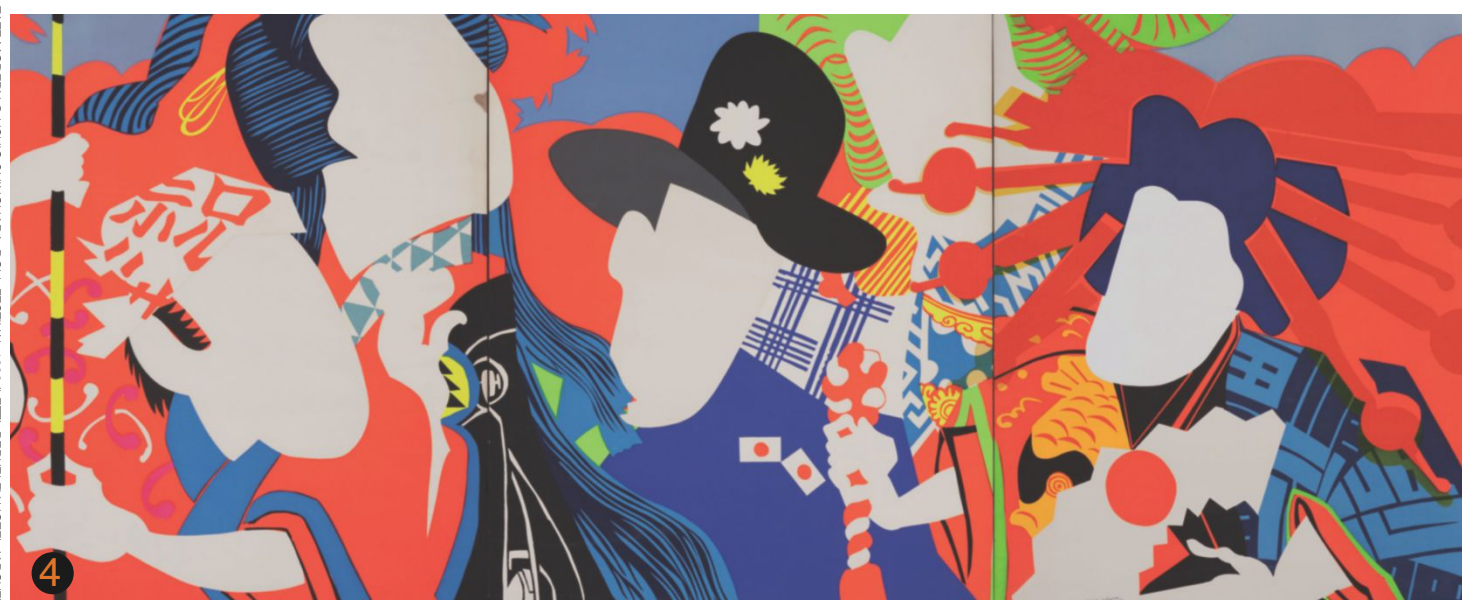
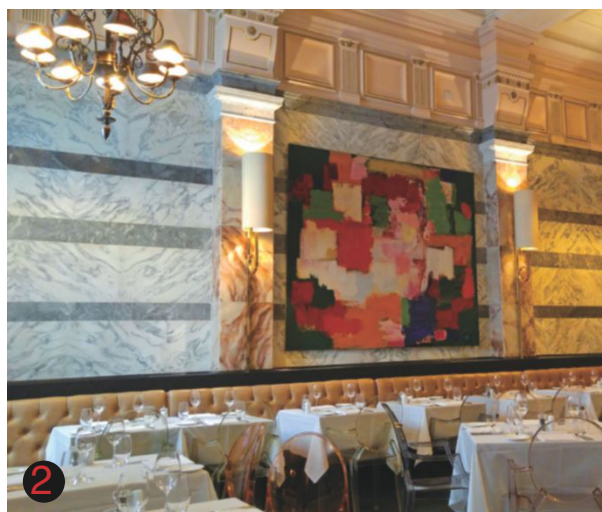
LONDON

The UK's capital city offers much to explore on both sides of the River Thames

By Valerian Ho

1 HORSE GUARDS PARADE
One of London's quintessential attractions, the Horse Guards Parade is a wonderful slice of colorful British tradition. Before you see it, though, pay a visit to the Household Cavalry Museum in Whitehall to learn more about the history and heroes of the British Army's senior regiment from its origins in 1661. As well as audiovisual presentations, exhibits and displays of uniforms, you can watch the troopers preparing their horses through a glass partition. The Changing of the Guard ceremony takes place at 11:00 AM Mon-Sat and 10:00 AM on Sundays. The museum is open daily 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM; admission is £7 (\$10.50) for adults and £5 (\$7.50) for children; householdcavalrymuseum.co.uk.

2 BOYDS BRASSERIE
From Whitehall it's a short walk to Trafalgar Square; turn right into Northumberland Avenue and stop for lunch at Boyds Brasserie, situated in a historic Victorian building. It was once a 500-room hotel, but was requisitioned by the war office in 1940. Inside the restaurant the décor is impressive, with



JAYE MODERN © USHIO SHINOHARA, DOLL FESTIVAL, 1966 (LEFT); BERKELEY HOTEL (ABOVE)



5



6

much of the 19th century Verde de Prato and Sanguino marble remaining. The menu offers traditional British fare with a modern twist in the form of “British tapas.” Try the seafood bisque (£8.5/\$13) for mouthwatering flavor, or the delicious sea bass with golden raisins and kale with a Jerusalem artichoke purée (£21/\$32). Lunch Mon-Fri noon to 3:00 PM, afternoon tea Mon-Sun 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM, dinner Mon-Sat 5:00 PM – 10:00 PM; 8 Northumberland Avenue, London WC2; tel 0207 808 3344; boydsbrasserie.co.uk.

3 THE RIVER THAMES

You cannot visit London without strolling along the River Thames. After a full lunch, walk south down Northumberland Avenue until you reach Victoria Embankment on the north side of the broad river. Cross via the Golden Jubilee Bridge to the South Bank; as you’re crossing look right and two iconic London sights stand on opposite riverbanks: the historic Houses of Parliament on the right, and the modern London Eye wheel on the left. Once on the South Bank, turn left and start walking. Along the broad pedestrian promenade you’ll see people jogging, riding bikes, fooling around on skateboards or entertaining the crowds with huge soap bubbles and other inventive acts.

4 TATE MODERN MUSEUM

A gentle 20-minute stroll brings you to the massive brown edifice that is the Tate Modern Museum. This was originally the Bankside Power Station, but was converted into a gallery in 1995 by Swiss architects. Today, a visit to the Tate Modern takes in the full scope of modern art in a single visit, from iconic artworks such as Andy Warhol’s Marilyn Diptych and Lee Bul’s Craving White to the latest photographic art and more. Of course a full exploration will take you most of the day, but if your time is limited you can visit just one of the special exhibits that are regularly put on here. Admission to the museum is free, but there is usually a fee for special exhibits. Open daily 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM, Fri and Sat until 10:00 PM; tate.org.uk.

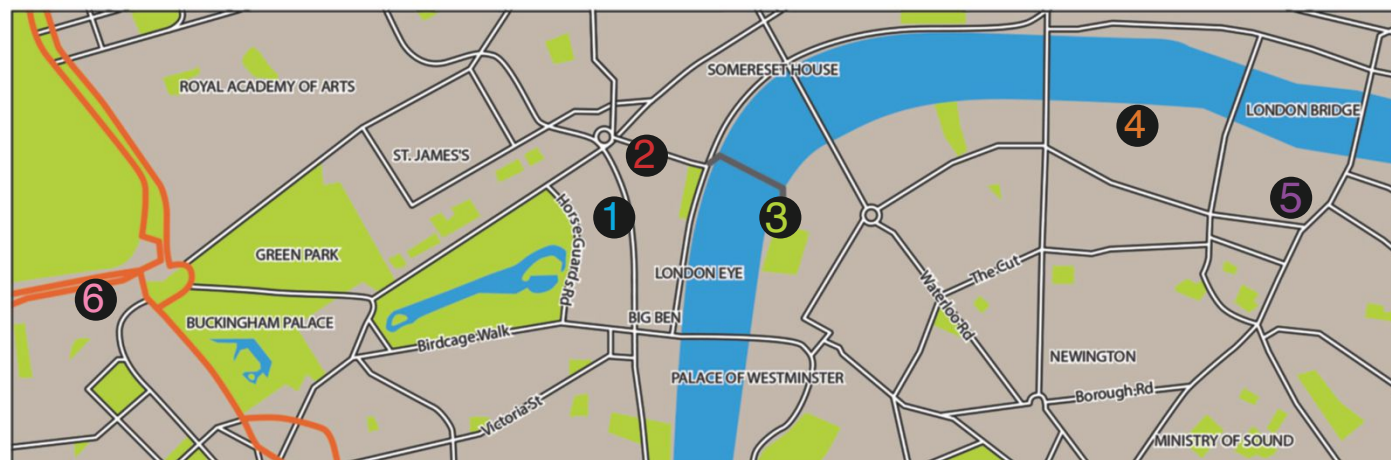
5 BOROUGH MARKET

Back by the riverside, turn right and walk past the reconstruction of Shakespeare’s famous Globe Theatre,

before turning south onto Park Street until you reach Stoney Street. You have arrived at Borough Market, a well-known food paradise whose history stretches back to the 11th century. In this warren of stalls winding through five acres, you’ll find more than 100 vendors peddling an exceptional selection of produce, both British and international, from truffles and cheeses to fruits and hams. The enticing aroma of hot dishes such as paella and whole-roasted pig fills the air, tempting customers to chow down. Borough Market is open Mon-Thu from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Fri until 6:00 PM, Sat from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM; 8 Southwark Street, London SE1 1TL; boroughmarket.org.uk.

6 THE BERKELEY HOTEL

London is famous for its afternoon tea, but rather than queue for a table at well-known tourist hotspots like the Savoy or the Ritz, why not try an equally classy but more secluded establishment. From London Bridge Station it’s a 30-minute Underground ride via the Jubilee and Picadilly lines to Hyde Park Corner (£2.3/\$3.5); head towards Knightsbridge and turn left at Wilton Place to reach the Berkeley Hotel (a black cab will cost around £20/\$30 but may take considerably longer, depending on traffic). The Berkeley’s Caramel Room is one of the city’s chicest places to eat and drink. Its award-winning Prêt-à-Portea afternoon tea sports a creative twist that is popular with fashionistas, who love the cakes and pastries inspired by the latest catwalk designs. The menu changes every six months, and the tea set costs £45 (\$68). Afternoon tea is served from 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM daily; tel 207 107 8866; the-berkeley.co.uk. **BT**



Killing The 40-Hour Workweek

Has the time come to rethink how employees are paid?

By Amanda Mendoza



It's not news that the 40-hour workweek is dead. Gone is the notion that employees are most productive when they are at their desks from 9 to 5 Mondays through Fridays.

We know now that humans are different; some do their best work at 6 AM and others get the most done at 6 PM. So how can the traditional 40-hour workweek be restructured to restore a more healthy work-life balance?

One big problem is understanding that workers aren't really working only 40 hours. The devices that keep them connected to their friends and family also keep them connected to work.

This always-on mode provoked French officials to pass a law that, as of January 1, 2017, employers are required to make clear their expectations for how employees should be available outside of work hours.

The trick is that the law requires only clarification. Employers just have to explain the rules; it's up to the employees to agree to the rules and continue to work there, or quit. While the law hasn't made any large-scale change (so far), it has prompted dialogue about the issue.

And none too soon, since recent studies indicate that 40-hour workweeks might be more hazardous for our health than we think, causing fatigue- and stress-related illnesses.

As a consequence, companies – particularly startups – are taking a chance on some interesting alternatives to the traditional work schedule which are being tried out across the globe:

- Flexible start/end times: Avoiding rush hour means increased productivity for workers since they spend less time in transit. Less time commuting gives back large portions of the day to employees who otherwise lose hours sitting in traffic.
- Seasonal changes: If business is slower during certain times of the year, consolidate the workweek. For example, a 10-hour workday Monday-Thursday with Friday off during the summer.
- "Comp Time" This solution involves changing the workweek from 40 hours to 35 hours, but with a salary that matches those

35 hours. This can also be arranged to squeeze 12 hours out of a 3-day week.

- Shorter workdays: A 2015 Swedish experiment decreased the workday from 8 hours to 6 hours. While workers were mentally healthier and happier, more had to be hired to complete the work. The jury's still out, but so far results suggest workers aren't getting the same amount of work done in those 6 hours.
- Unlimited vacation: Those words sound awesome, but in reality, "unlimited" doesn't really mean "unlimited." Workers arrange with colleagues and managers to take whatever time off they want (time that is not tracked by managers). It's possible for employees to take the time off that they need, but managers say that they would frown upon anything more than a few weeks.

All of these alternative workweeks add up to one major existential question: How should we be measuring productivity? If hours don't necessarily equate to results (because the employees have flexibility in achieving those results), then what is the effective metric of the employee's contribution?

In a roundtable discussion, DATABASICS director of business analysis Torbjorn Nilsen suggested a \$1 billion opportunity: a sharing economy resource management solution, "a system that allows you to plan and manage progress against that alternative unit of measure."

The business climate will continue to change; social values, political ideologies, economic factors and company strategies will guarantee that. However no matter what drives these changes, such a reporting partner needs to have the flexibility to respond to them. As your company looks at new ways to measure employee contribution, you need a robust solution today. But your reporting partner's tools need flexibility for tomorrow, no matter how your company chooses to define the workweek. **BT**

Amanda Canupp Mendoza is a writer at DATABASICS, a provider of innovative Time & Expense software. Visit data-basics.com for more information.

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