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We’re also delighted to announce our latest expansions. From the

UK, we’re introducing new routes to Prague, in the Czech Republic, and Hurghada, in Egypt, starting on 31 October. That’s not all – exciting destinations await! Set off from Belgrade to explore Lisbon, Milan, Bergamo, and Zakynthos. Embark from Rome to uncover Luxembourg, Kuwait, Madeira, and Munich. And venture from Braşov to Dortmund and London Luton.

We are always looking further ahead too and have been investing in revolutionary sustainable aviation fuels (see page 111 for more details). In May, we proudly conducted our inaugural test of these new fuels, solidifying our position as the world’s most environmentally sustainable airline*.

No matter where you’re heading today, I and everybody at Wizz Air wish you a safe journey.

József Váradi
Chief Executive Officer

Wizz by numbers



186
aircraft



190+
destinations
in 53 countries



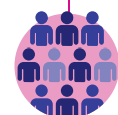
35
bases in
17 countries



910+
routes



8,000+
staff



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passengers
carried**

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WIZZ is published on behalf of Wizz Air by LXM Media and Publishing

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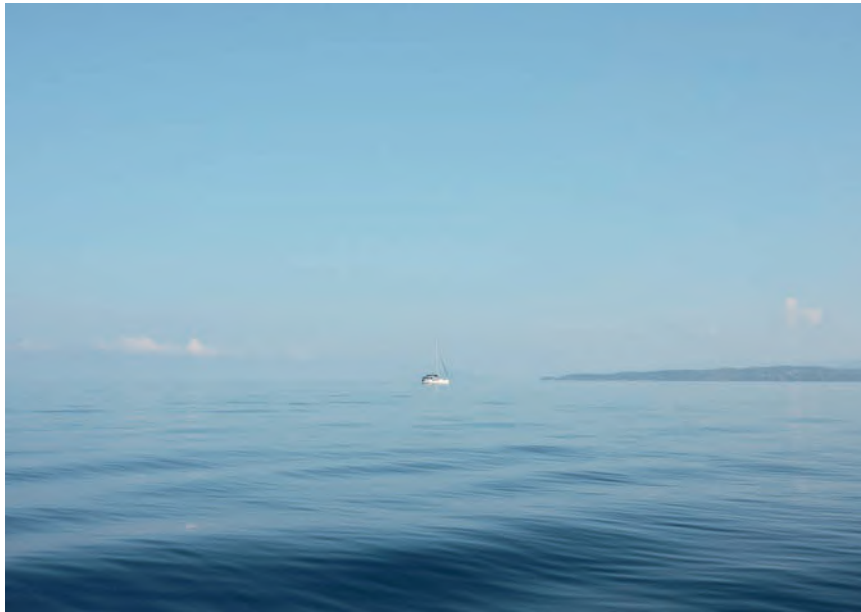
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PHOTO: BEN READ



Editor's letter

"It was an azure world, stupendously pure, and... when I saw it before me, I forgot most of my troubles." These words were written about the Greek island of Spetses in *The Magus* by John Fowles (pseudonymised as Phraxos) almost 60 years ago - but they could have been written by our magazine team this month. For our cover story, we visited the car-free island and found it pleasingly unspoilt - just like the magical blue wonderland as described by Fowles in his cult novel.

We were inspired to visit Spetses by Netflix - their movie makers shot both *The Glass Onion* and *The Lost Daughter* here in the past couple of years - but our trip soon turned into an adventure holiday as we explored its pine-covered landscapes by e-bike, quadbike, speedboat and horse, not forgetting its great restaurants with our tastebuds (see p36).

Also in this issue, we're recommending the best trips to book now for autumn (p68); taking to the waves at Morocco's first female-founded surf school (p58); getting off the beaten track in Sicily (p84); and telling the story of Vienna's Ringstrasse, past, present and future (p53). So, wherever you're off to this month, we hope you enjoy this issue - and your journey.

Sarah Warwick, Acting Editor

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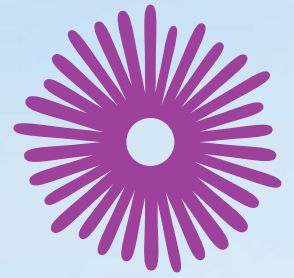
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in this **issue**



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Go set jetting in the Greek islands; take a cycle around Vienna's Ringstrasse; go surfing in Morocco; choose from the 15 best trips this autumn; discover the hidden side of Sicily

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The latest news, plus the people going the extra mile at Wizz Air

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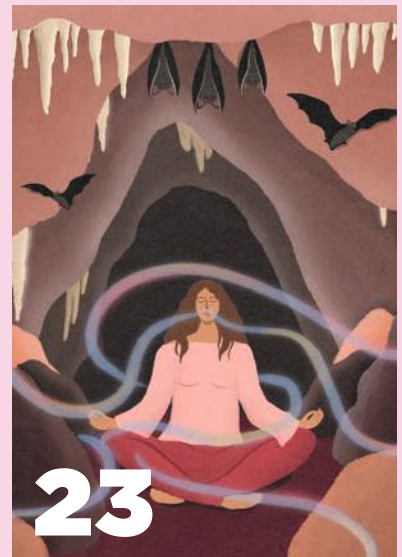
A breakdown of our fleet, products and services

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Our onboard café and duty-free shopping options





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inplace

Visit the home of an icon in Paris

Serge Gainsbourg was a world-famous icon of Paris in the smoky sixties, but there's been nowhere in his home city to learn more about him - until now, that is. On 20 September his former house, at 5 bis rue de Verneuil, will open to tourists, preserved as it was at his death in 1991. Across the road, you'll find a new museum of his life and eponymous all-day cocktail hangout, the Gainsbarre too. Smoking laws now forbid the Gauloises fug, of course, but otherwise it promises to give the full Serge experience.

maisongainsbourg.fr

✈ Wizz Air flies to Paris



Jump on board in Oslo

After a pause of 26 years, you can now once again hop on a direct train service from Oslo to Røros, a historic mining town – and UNESCO World Heritage Site – in the centre of the country. While the days when its copper mines powered the local economy are long over, many modern-day residents still live in dark-log dwellings dating back to the 17th century. Perhaps more exciting to many is its growing reputation as the new Norwegian food capital, the place for tasting menus full of fermented fish and reindeer meat for the adventurous diner. Make sure you take a food safari.

bookingen.roros.no

✈️ Wizz Air flies to Oslo

Watch sport in Budapest

The Hungarian capital is hosting the World Athletics Championships, and you can 'Witness the Wonder' at the brand new, purpose-built National Athletics Centre from 19-27 August.

The women's 100m final on the 21st will undoubtedly be one of the hottest tickets – a probable grudge match between tip-top Jamaicans Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, Elaine Thompson-Herah and Shericka Jackson.

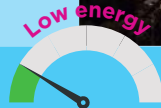
See more or buy tickets at **wabudapest23.com**.

✈️ Wizz Air flies to Budapest



WHILE YOU'RE THERE...

Go for gold yourself with one of these sporty activities



Golf

Brought your clubs on hols? Take them along to Continental Citygolf, where you can play footgolf or the regular kind, plus there are lessons if you need some tips on your swing. **continentalcitygolfclub.hu**



Paragliding

You'll need nerves of steel for this kind of sightseeing, but you'll get amazing views of Budapest from a tandem paraglide over the city. **tandemfly.hu**



Wakeboarding

Free beer and beginner's classes before noon at Omszk Wakeboard Centrum are just two of the reasons to start your wakeboarding journey in Budapest. **omszkwakecentrum.hu**



See loads and loads of Picassos

in Madrid,
Malaga
and
Bilbao

CHILD, PABLO PICASSO (1881-1973), CANNES, 1960. BRONZE WITH PATINA. 115 x 98 x 64 CM. FUNDACIÓN ALMINE Y BERNARD RUIZ-PICASSO, MADRID. © FABA PHOTO: HUGARD & VANOVERSCHELDE © SUCCESSION PABLO PICASSO, VEGAP, MADRID, 2023

Fifty years on from the artist's death, Picasso fans are getting a treat this summer with some 50 exhibitions and events dedicated to his work, under the banner of *Picasso Celebration 1973-2023*. In his birthplace museum in Malaga (Museo Casa Natal de Picasso) until 1 October, you'll find *The Ages of Pablo* - a rundown of his artistic development; at the Prado in Madrid there's a Renaissance comparison in *Picasso, El Greco and Analytical Cubism* until 17 September; while *Picasso Sculptor. Matter and Body* at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, until 14 January 2024, looks at the artist's lesser-known - but no less striking - sculptural works.

museocasanatalpicasso.malaga.eu;

guggenheim-bilbao.eus;

museodelprado.es

✈ Wizz Air flies to Madrid, Malaga and Bilbao

Stay in a guitar in Braşov

We're a big fan of weird and wacky stays here at WIZZ, and Airbnb's new 'OMG!' category has some of the weirdest and wackiest places we've seen. Nests, guitars, towers, greenhouses... not a boring old house among them. airbnb.co.uk/stays/omg

SNOOZING TOWERS

Just 12 minutes on the U-Bahn from Alexanderplatz in Berlin, these tower-like pods maximise on space by piling up the facilities, winding them in a spiral staircase and topping off with a teeny tiny terrace. Each sleeps four cosily (bathrooms are external and shared).



SUPERSIZED GUITAR

Half an hour outside Braşov in Romania, this tiny wooden house doesn't just have a quirky exterior, it's a perfect miniature home, with its own kitchen and bathroom and gorgeous views of the mountains.

A BOND VILLAIN'S LAIR

From above, there's no sign of this Belgian home, save for a mysterious door, but descend and you'll find a designer nook with floor-to-ceiling windows, double bed and Nespresso machine. Just 20 minutes from Brussels, it borders an arboretum: perfect for a forest-bathing retreat.



ZERO-CARBON GREENHOUSE

This Swedish off-grid triangular house of the future has its own energy and food production and wood-fired sauna. In Brålanda, not far from Gothenburg, it's one of the world's most environmentally friendly and sustainable stays.



HUMAN'S NEST

This odd bird-box-for-people is strung up in the treetops near Disneyland Paris. While your bed floats in the sky, your private terrace comes with heated Jacuzzi, gourmet breakfast and bird song. Use of shared pool and private bathroom top off a 'haute' experience.

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Discover the most beautiful places in Southern Italy

If you're still looking for a summer holiday destination, how about one of the *I Borghi più belli d'Italia* (Most Beautiful Villages in Italy)? Designated by a committee by the same name, there are 348 of these little-known but fantastic communes, all hailed as particularly worthy of a visit, and 25 new ones are chosen annually.

This year's selection includes two unsung stars of the south - Badolato in Calabria, a hilltop mass of winding pathways, ancient churches and bright blue views of the Ionian Sea; and Apulia's Sannicelle di Bari, a food lover's paradise, noted for rare treats such as *zampino* (thyme-flavoured sausage), *fcazz à livre*, a typical kind of focaccia and punchy Primitivo wines. As the association puts it: "There is almost no urban centre that has not produced happy expressions of culture and art, as well as of cuisine and craftsmanship." Couldn't have put it better ourselves.

✈️ Wizz Air flies to Bari and Lamezia Terme



Run with (design) giants in Copenhagen

Combine your weekly exercise with an exercise in beauty when taking part in the DAC Architecture Run on 24 September. Organised by the Danish Architecture Center, the run is open to everyone, including beginners, and participants can choose between walking 5km or running 5/10km on a winding route through the city's architectural gems - showcasing its role as this year's UNESCO-UIA World Capital of Architecture. For more details on the run, and on various special walks, workshops and exhibitions this year see dac.dk.

✈️ Wizz Air flies to Copenhagen





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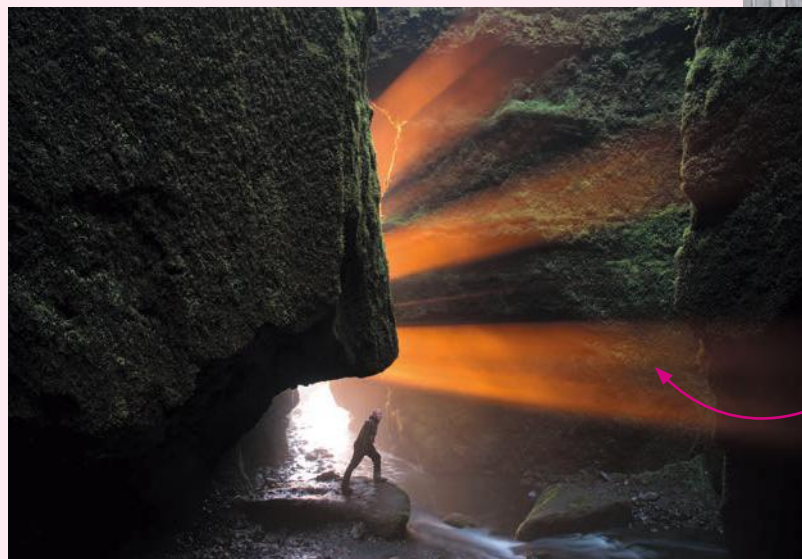
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Get snapping across the network

It's World Photo Day on 19 August: time to get out your camera and share your holiday views with the hashtag #worldphotoday. It's the anniversary of the date in 1839 when the French government purchased the patent for the daguerreotype process, the first type of photograph, made by fixing an image onto a silver surface using iodine and mercury vapour. Today all you need for great snaps is a smartphone - but if you'd like to 'fix' your own photography, try one of these expert tours...



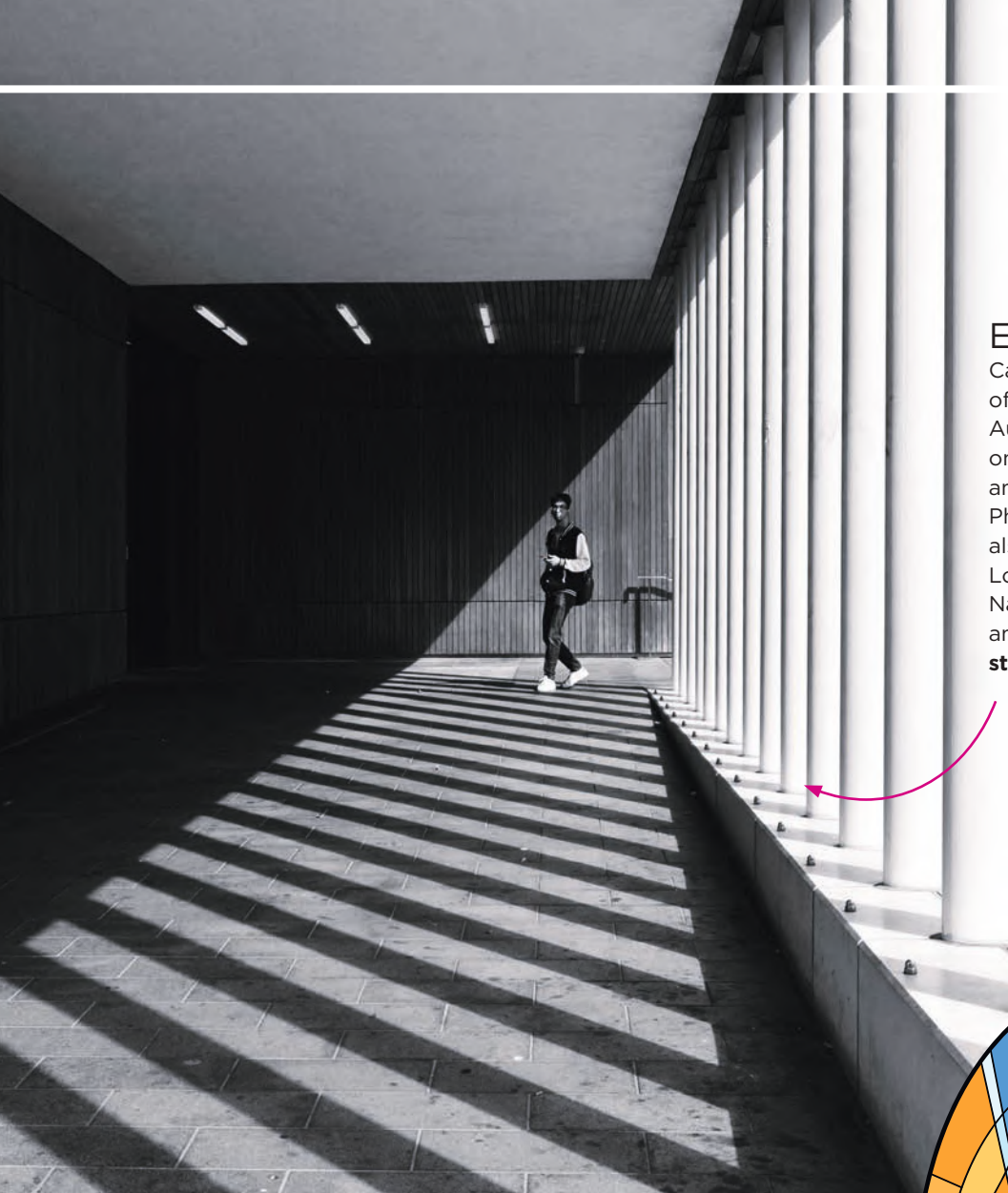
Iceland

"Spectacular locations, without having to battle the crowds," is how one reviewer summed up Iceland Photo Tours. Teacher Haukur 'Hawk' Snorrason takes his guests through the highland and glacier regions of Iceland, away from the maddening crowds - unless they're crowds of puffins or ponies, that is. phototours.is

Prague

Professional photographer Jan Miřáček has been running Johnny's Prague Photo Tours for eight years, racking up dozens of five-star reviews, Tripadvisor certificates and even awards for best private tour in the city. Groups are capped at three, so there's plenty of individual attention over the 3.5-hour tour. johnnyspraguetours.com





Edinburgh

Capture the secret corners of the city, away from the August festival and Fringe, on a tour with Ewan Barry and Audrey Pinard of Street Photo Edinburgh, who also organise trips to Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. Beginners and smart phones welcome. streetphotoedinburgh.com

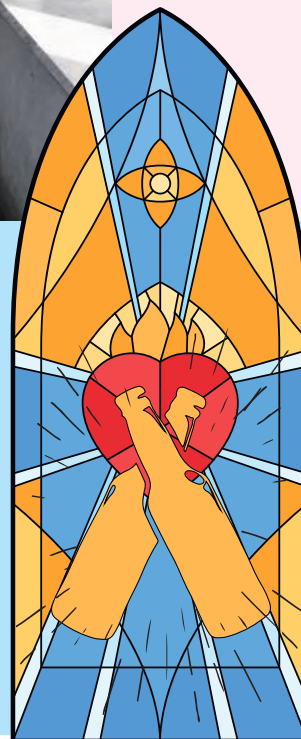


Drink at a holy dive bar

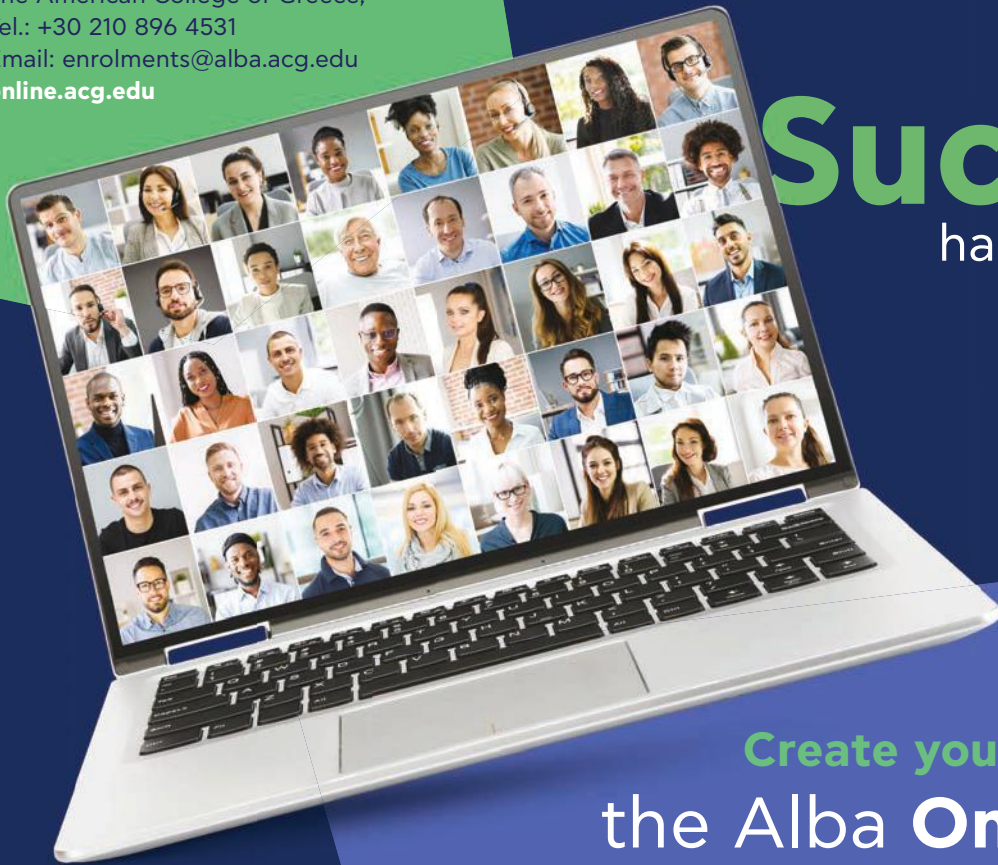
in Nice

“Take me to church!” exclaim the cool crowd in Nice during the balmy summer months, but only the Église du Gesù in Vieux Nice will do. A private courtyard at the rear of the ornate 17th-century church has been transformed into a secret bar, named Béthel. Accessed by an unassuming side passage in the nave, its decor – climbing plants, mismatched chairs and candles – cultivates a cosy, bohemian mood, while its basic bar serves up chilled beers and rosé. It’s open every afternoon in summer, so if you’re up for some day drinking, pop in. Sounds legit to us – even Jesus turned water into wine. [@bethel_riviera](https://www.instagram.com/bethel_riviera)

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**Cave-breathing
therapy**
in Kutaisi

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**Refugee
embroiderers**
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in movie history**
in Rome

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“I feel like I’ve acquired the lungs of a freediver”

Our writer goes underground in the Georgian city of Kutaisi to try speleotherapy – a mind and lung-expanding experience



Words by Sarah Freeman



Illustration by Burcu Koleli

Swaddled in a woollen blanket and looking like a furry caterpillar, I recline on a white plastic sun lounger and assess my unusual surroundings. Across from me someone is doing a downward dog pose – pretty typical for any wellness space, you might say – although a roosting bat in the corner reminds me this is very much a living, breathing cave.

Breathing is key here. Georgia’s western Imereti region is studded with karst limestone caves, but none are quite as remarkable as this one. A few minutes drive from Kutaisi, Tetra dates back to the Cretaceous Period, but only came to light in 1955, thanks to a chance discovery by some children who kicked their football in through a small hole.

Locals soon realised the subterranean air in this 15m-deep, 3,500m² cave was something special – naturally sterile, allergen-free and ionised – and they began using it to treat everything from anxiety to high blood pressure and even to prepare cosmonauts for space travel during the Cold War.

It first opened to the public as a bona fide experience in 2021, allowing tourists like me to try ‘speleotherapy’ (from the Greek word for cave, *spēlaion*) for ourselves. Despite the scary-sounding name, the process involves no syringes or white coats or even deep, yoga-style breathwork. You simply lie back, breathe normally, and let the cave and its

curative microclimate do all the hard work.

“The low temperature and high humidity balance the saturation of your blood’s oxygen,” nurse Maia Chelidze tells me with a smile, as I relax and continue assessing my surroundings.

The air is lightly moist and pleasantly earthy, akin to that in a rustic wine cellar. The treatment ‘room’ is in one of the halls of the cave – under a bright, white ceiling of young stalactites. It’s these limestone ‘icicles’ that give the cave its name, Tetra, meaning ‘white’. Their mineral composition is allegedly what imbues the atmosphere with its mucus-clearing magic.

A few minutes into the 40-minute session, I feel a gentle tap on my shoulder as Maia chirpily inquires: “Any sore throat or dizzy spells?” The change in atmosphere affects everyone differently, which is why she checks in with patients two to three times during the therapy.

I can’t feel any effect at all in fact and I’m quietly cynical – it requires a degree of imagination to buy into an ‘invisible therapy’. But then I consider the unique, undisturbed environment of the cave for thousands of years; the previous patients who have found relief from their asthma and allergies; and the fact that I can just lie here swaddled and relax in my cocoon... I feel like I’m happy to give it the benefit of the doubt. Our group of six speleo virgins just





stretch, snooze and chat in hushed whispers while classical music lulls us into a wellness trance.

After the treatment, Tskaltubo-born guide Anano Chogovadze takes me for a tour of the cave, showing where excavation pits have revealed 15,000 artefacts (and counting). Among them, a copper arrowhead dating to 4000BC, a pair of ancient knitting needles and a shrine piled with bear skulls.

In the next hall, we find out what else the cave air is good for. Set dramatically beneath a huge rock fracture is a long trestle table laden with premium Imeritian and Kakhetian vino – after all Georgia is the birthplace of wine.

“Dry red wine is considered a medicine to Georgians,” Anano laughs. “My 85-year-old grandpa takes a sip every evening.”

According to some wine experts, maturing wine for just one year in Tetra is equivalent to three years in a *marani* (a traditional Georgian wine cellar).

“Tetra’s the only cave ageing wine in Georgia and the third in the whole world,” says Anano as she uncorks an aromatic white fermented in a *qvevri*, the country’s famous egg-shaped clay vessel. “Other winemakers have to artificially create the temperature [a constant 14 degrees Celsius] and humidity that we naturally have here.”



It brings new meaning to allowing wine to breathe. For just 3 GEL (or £1) a bottle, visitors can age their own wine here for up to 12 months alongside that of the country’s most celebrated vintners.

Sadly, it’s time for me to leave both of Tetra’s medicines behind. And, after one last sip of wine and one final inhale of the curative air, I emerge, eyes squinting to brilliant blue skies. I’m definitely breathing easier. I feel like I’ve acquired the lungs of a freediver – but is it the cave, or the fact I’m pleased to be in a bat-free environment again?

tetracave.ge

✈ Wizz Air flies to Kutaisi

Other karst caves in Imereti



Sataplia

Set in a nature reserve that’s threaded with hiking trails, you can see fossilised dinosaur footprints at this limestone labyrinth.



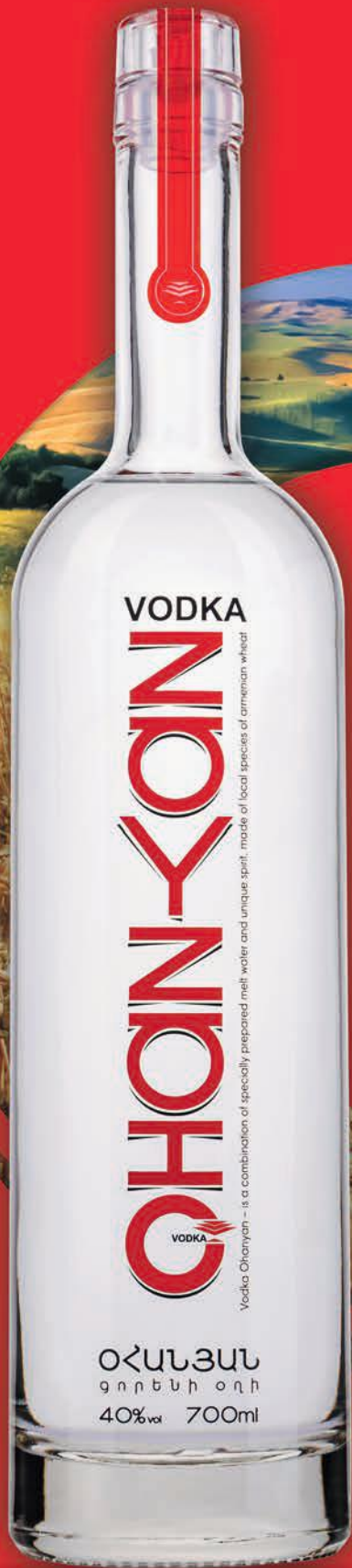
Prometheus

You can marvel at petrified waterfalls and see some of Tetra’s archaeological treasures on display at this 1,420m-long, six-hall stunner.



Okatse Canyon

One for thrill-seekers looking for a new buzz, the country’s deepest canyon has a truly spectacular cliff trail overhanging an abyss, 140m above the ground.



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“It’s not just about creating beautiful products... it’s about the beauty of hope”

Threads of Hope has turned a group of refugees into super-high-end embroiderers. We speak to one of the co-founders of this Cairo-based social enterprise

 Words by Sarah Warwick

“We work with women who have suffered tremendously and lived through the horrors of war. They’ve lost everything.”

Margarita Andrade is talking to us from Threads of Hope, her social enterprise based in downtown Cairo, about the work it does. Unlike other refugee outreach programmes, hers doesn’t just give handouts. Instead it gives women the training and tools to produce luxury embroidery, and the opportunity for flexible employment that fits around family life.

“When you empower a woman, you empower a whole family,” explains Margarita. “If we can have a positive influence on these women, then the next generation can have a better chance.”

The idea for Threads of Hope started with Margarita’s other business, Malaika Linens, which she founded with Goya Gallagher in 2004. Their background in design in their home country of Ecuador inspired them to begin using Egyptian cotton to produce high-quality bed linens, and their products were soon highly sought after.

However, when they set up a new factory on the outskirts of Cairo, they found they needed to find a new way of working. “The new factory was in the 6th of October area, which was very far away for our workers to commute,” remembers Margarita. “Many of them didn’t have the time to come to us and still look after their children, so we lost most of our embroiderers.”



Margarita and Goya looked at ways to keep the women employed without putting a burden on their home lives. The result was Threads of Hope, an embroidery school in the heart of Cairo, where Egyptian, refugee and migrant women can be trained in embroidery, natural dyeing and block printing over two months, and then go on to work for the enterprise from home.

Initially Margarita says the school struggled to find trainees, because prospective workers were refugees who were often deeply traumatised, lacking confidence and support in many areas of their lives. For the first couple of years those that did start the training often suffered with confidence and didn’t finish. Margarita realised that, rather than just



training women to work for Malaika Linens, there was much more they could do for them if they could turn the school into a social enterprise. "It became not just about giving training and home-based job opportunities, but developing a holistic approach."

Fast forward several years and the training centre is thriving. The teachers make it easy for the women they work with to attend by providing transport and a hot lunch for them and their children. They also give each woman a questionnaire that addresses the kind of problems they are facing - whether that be with health, housing or childcare - so Threads of Hope can help. "We go through every single factor of their lives and give them enough support so they can eventually stand on their own two feet."

More than 400 women are now employed as super-high-end embroidery experts, producing 4,000-6,000 pieces a month for Malaika Linens and other labels, such as Soane Britain. Now, for the first time, there are plans to release the first Threads of Hope collection, which reflects the women's memories of their home countries.

It feels like the natural next step for a project that has been all about giving disenfranchised people a voice - and a better future. "It's not just about creating beautiful products. It's about the beauty of hope," says Margarita. "It's about helping the people that make these products create a whole new life for themselves."

malaikalinens.com/toh

✈ Wizz Air flies to Cairo




Clockwise from opposite page

Threads of Hope in Cairo produces stunning embroidery work, like this pattern done on a linen bag. The social enterprise helps women develop skills and build confidence

“It’s the perfect way to nip around the Italian capital with true panache”

Riding a Vespa through Rome on the trail of *Roman Holiday* – the film that helped make the scooter famous 70 years ago – is one of travel’s true bucket-list experiences

 Words by Sarah Woods

It was 1953 when Gregory Peck and Audrey Hepburn had their ‘meet cute’ in the stylish and giddily romantic comedy, *Roman Holiday*, which highlights the anarchic joys of a couple in love. Flirty misunderstandings, jealous distrust and disapproval provide heavy *Romeo-and-Juliet*-style undertones as the handsome streets of Rome act as the perfect backdrop for a gripping romance.

But while Peck’s portrayal of a darkly handsome but cynical American newshound is perfectly complemented by Hepburn’s role as the elfin-faced pampered European princess, the film is more than a romance between two stars. There was a third star-in-the-making during the filming of the movie. A scene-stealing sequence of Hepburn riding side-saddle on Peck’s Vespa secured iconic brand status for all involved – Rome, the film, the actors and the oh-so-cool Vespa.

As a stylish mode of transport, the chic good looks and quirky personality of the Vespa have been admired by a diverse collection of celebrity customers including



Salvador Dalí, David Beckham, Brad Pitt, Marlon Brando, Guy Ritchie and Jennifer Lopez. Beautifully simple, sturdy, economical and ingeniously designed to keep the clothes of the rider spotlessly clean, the Vespa has it all, including an engine, that sounds like a constipated mosquito (Vespa actually means 'wasp' in Italian) that is, undoubtedly, part of its charm.

It's the perfect way to nip around the Italian capital, *Roman Holiday*-style, with true panache. For as little as €60 per day, anyone can relive key moments of the film by hiring a vintage Vespa. Allowing plenty of pauses for cool Insta shots, a five-hour zip around Rome, fuelled by a four-stroke engine, packs in more action than many two-day coach tours.

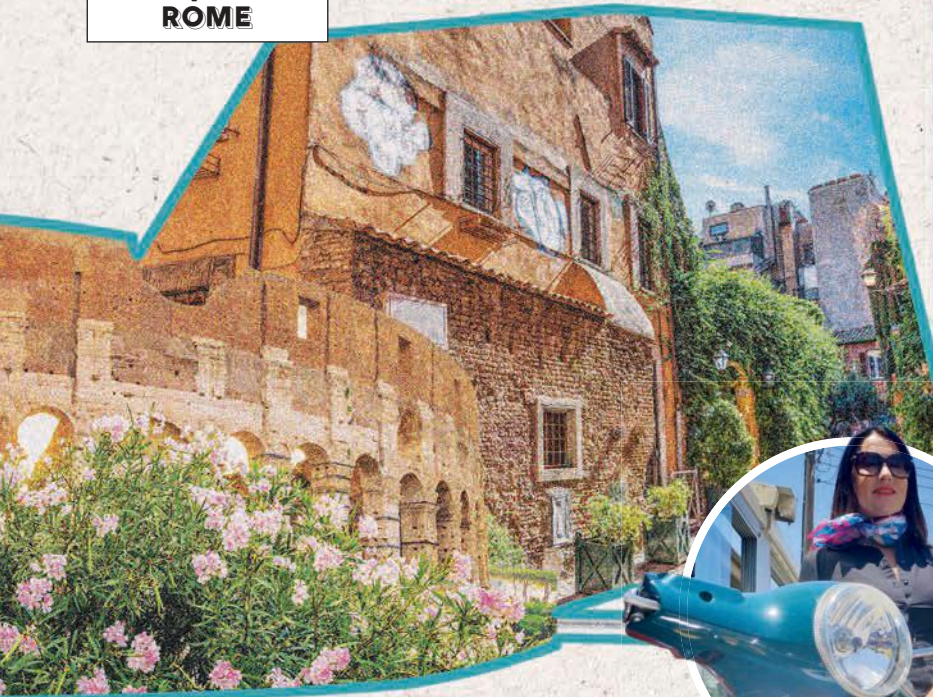
My Vespa experience is as slick and enjoyable as its design. I quickly find that it's simple to master and a dream to drive. A push-button start ensures there is no need to consult a manual, while Vespa's steadfast reliability means mechanical mishaps are a

rarity. Automatic transmission and a three-speed gear change ensure a top speed (downhill in a stiff breeze) of 80km/h. Fuel consumption is impressively low.

I'm soon weaving along the pretty Giardino Degli Aranci on the top of Aventino, one of the city's seven historical hills, before whizzing along San Pietro in Vincoli to see Michelangelo's stunning Moses. A cloud of pigeons are sent up towards the heavens while I take a brief glimpse of the foundations of the Basilica dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo before zipping past landmarks like the Colosseum, the Circus Maximus, the Pantheon, the Roman Forum and the remains of Nero's villa, the Domus Aurea.

Travelling as a couple? As Gregory Peck and Audrey Hepburn discovered, a vintage Vespa is perfectly primed for a romantic jaunt. A spacious bench-seat offers ample room for a cuddle during a break mid journey, as depicted in Vespa's 2002 ad campaign: 'The Sexiest Way to Get from A-B'. Encircle the flower





“The movie sparked an overnight Vespa craze, with 100,000 sales”

stall on elegant Via Dei Santi Quattro to pluck a single stem rose from the bucket, or scoot full throttle up to the Parco Del Celio to hold hands to the romantic strains of busking gypsy violins.

Rumour has it, Peck and Hepburn buzzed along to the Isola Tiberina before sharing a slice of pizza and a kiss. Although they both denied being romantically involved during the movie, Hepburn did acknowledge an attraction. “Actually, you have to be a little bit in love with your leading man and vice versa,” she told reporters at the time. “If you’re going to portray love, you have to feel it.” The chemistry between the two actors was certainly electric, and helped to win Hepburn an Academy Award for Best Actress for her performance.

One of the first American films to be made in Italy, and the only one to be shot entirely in Rome, *Roman Holiday*’s director William Wyler chose to shoot it in black and white so the story and the characters would get the focus, not the location. Despite this, the movie transformed Italy into a star-studded sensation and Hollywood sparked an overnight Vespa craze, with sales topping 100,000 after its release. Seventy years on, Vespa owes much

to *Roman Holiday* and whoever decided that it should be ridden by one of the most beautiful women on earth. Audrey Hepburn made it sensual and cultish.

Vespas still weave through Rome’s traffic and along ancient alleyways that are normally off-limits to vehicles; they fit into impossibly tight parking spaces. They are afforded an unequalled level of respect by Rome’s speed-crazed car drivers, melting the heart of every Italian boy racer and tourist alike. Although it remains faithful to its original design – in Rome you can now ride a stylish all-electric, zero-emissions model, which even has a retro sidecar.

As for me, I’ve certainly enjoyed my own ‘Roman Holiday’. After an exhilarating afternoon, I seek out a less-touristy backstreet for a fine Italian coffee and exquisite cannoli for the perfect happy ending.

Rent your Vespa from happyrent.com.

✈ **Wizz Air flies to Rome**



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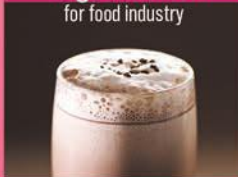
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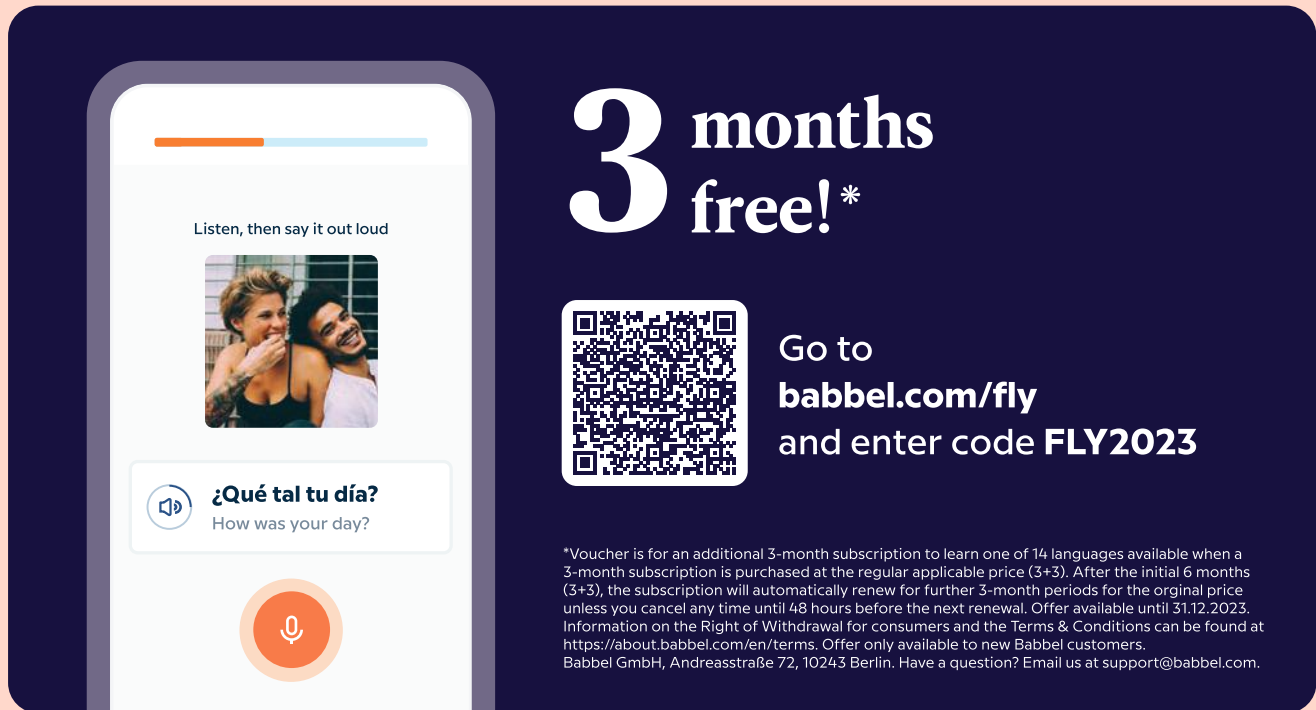
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Getting to the heart of the story

indepth



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in the Greek
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Matinee idol

Netflix has made two films in Spetses in the past three years – but what's the attraction? We take the short ferry hop from Athens to find out

 Words by Sarah Warwick

 Photography by Ben Read





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“T

he island was beautiful, there was no other adjective. It was simply and effortlessly beautiful... It took my breath away when I first saw it.” That’s how John Fowles describes Phraxos island, a thinly veiled alter ego of Spetses, in his classic novel *The Magus* (1965), inspired by his time as a teacher on the island. In the novel, Phraxos/Spetses is a place of mystery and magic, immaculate blue landscapes and pine forests, inhabited by a strange and powerful millionaire.

Spin forward 60 years and Spetses again finds itself as the setting for a story of a strange and powerful millionaire on an island of secrets. Netflix murder mystery *The Glass Onion* was set here last year, bringing Hollywood royalty, including Daniel Craig, Edward Norton and Kate Hudson, and millions of viewers to Spetses’ shores. And the *Knives Out* follow up isn’t the island’s only recent starring role. It also stood in for fictional seaside town Kyopeli in *The Lost Daughter* (2021). What’s more, rumours suggest that Sam Mendes’ TV adaptation of *The Magus* is soon to be shot here too.

So why is this sleepy little island – just a dot in Greece’s lesser-known chain of Saronic islands – suddenly attracting movie execs? And is it really worthy of all the superlatives heaped upon it? We hopped a ferry from Athens to find out.

When we step off the boat after two hours, it’s like stepping through a magic mirror. We leave the mundane 21st century behind



and emerge onto an old fashioned seafront, complete with horse-drawn carriages, stone and ironwork docks and whitewashed cottages. Fowles description of the island back in the 1960s still holds absolutely true. “Nine-tenths of it was uninhabited and uncultivated: nothing but pines, coves, silence, sea. Herded into one corner, lay a spectacular agglomeration of snow-white houses around a couple of small harbours.”

There are no cars or high-rises here. Around the harbours and the front you’ll find the odd taxi or goods vehicle, but step inland and you could easily be in a Greek village 50 or even 100 years ago. There are few signs,

Above A half-built boat lies, half shaded by pines, near the Old Harbour

GREECE



“We wanted to recreate that first paradise of youth”.



or visible tourist impact as we wander away from the front, through winding alleyways. Distant kids call to each other in Greek, fragrant garden boughs lean in, laden with lemons and flowers. Palms and cypress trees tower above us, as if pointing to the perfect sky-blue sky.

Beneath a cloud of pink bougainvillea, we find what we're looking for, and step through a smart grey door. Yayaki is the brainchild of French couple Karl Hindi and Hannah Beraud, who met at hospitality school in Geneva, and married on Spetses. Hannah used to come here as a child, one of the island's many repeat visitors. "When coming to Greece for holidays, we always came here. It was kind of a joke that we've never seen anything in Greece besides Spetses," she laughs.

Yayaki means 'Little Granny', the couple's tribute to their own grandmothers, and to

that first "paradise" of youth. "When we go to our granny's house, we always feel at home," explains Karl. "We always feel good. There's always something good to eat. We wanted to recreate that feeling."

It's an unusually homely name for such a fashionable spot - the hotel has gained quite a following, thanks to press around its interior design in the couple's native France, and membership of Mr & Mrs Smith in the UK. From its plastic-free ideology and in-house yoga studio to its designer pool furniture and organic, Greek-made room fragrances, it feels perfectly pitched to tap into the holiday needs of stressed execs.

Waking refreshed, we head down to Dapia Square to meet our tour guide, Katerina Tsiligiri, who points out a bench and pier that both featured in *The Glass Onion*, before filling us in a bit more about the island's history. Its name derives

Clockwise from above
Yayaki's Hannah Beraud and Karl Hindi; The hotel's pool area helps guest cool off and relax; One of the many lemon trees you find in Spetses

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“It’s a hidden gem that not many people know about – and most people here would like to keep it that way”



Above
The WIZZ magazine team hits the ring road on quad bikes
Opposite page The statue of the pioneering Admiral Laskarina Bouboulina

from the Venetian *Isola di Spezie* – Isle of Perfumes, a reference to its central role in the spice route when it was a Venetian colony in the 1400s – and it’s still sometimes called the Fragrant Isle today. Thanks to its key location, halfway between the Peloponnese and the Aegean, it is known for its shipbuilding industry and naval history.

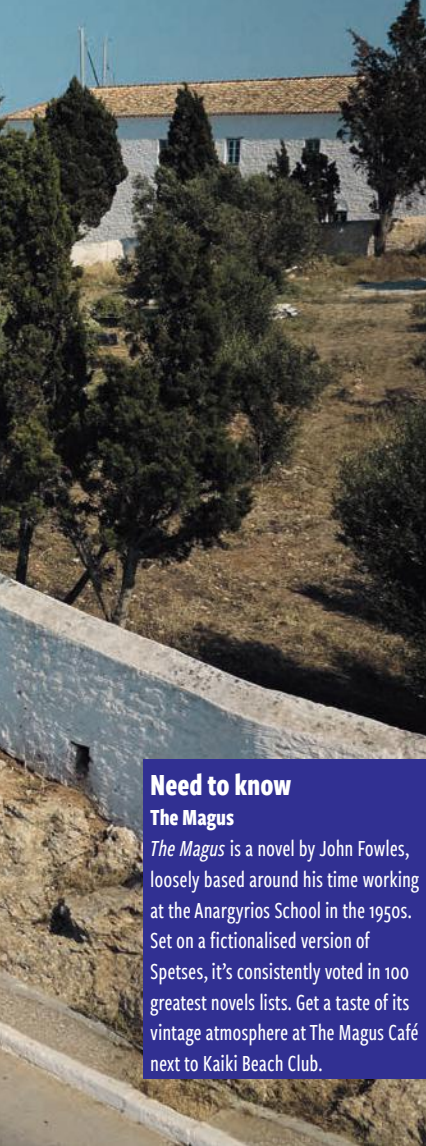
Tsiligiri points out the statue of local hero Laskarina Bouboulina, the first female Admiral in the Greek Navy (and possibly the world), who played a key role in the battles for independence in the 1820s, using her considerable fortune to fund the resistance.

The other historic VIP is embodied by the building behind this square – the Poseidonion Grand Hotel. Its founder Sotirios Anargiros made a huge fortune in the tobacco trade in New York, and returned

home to build the hotel plus a vast mansion for himself and also the school where Fowles taught, which was modelled on Eton.

“When this magnificent hotel was opened, it was the start of the tourism here on Spetses... And what kind of tourism!” exclaims Tsiligiri. “Kings, princes, prime ministers, all kinds of important personalities used to visit. It was the first hotel that had bathroom facilities in all of Greece.”

In *The Magus*, Fowles described The Poseidonion as “an obese Greek-Edwardian hotel, as at home on the island as a hansom cab in a Doric temple,” but today his description seems a bit cruel. Although it does stand out against the whitewashed cottages, its French Riviera style of architecture, complete with shingled turrets, is really rather handsome.



Need to know

The Magus

The Magus is a novel by John Fowles, loosely based around his time working at the Anargyrios School in the 1950s. Set on a fictionalised version of Spetses, it's consistently voted in 100 greatest novels lists. Get a taste of its vintage atmosphere at The Magus Café next to Kaiki Beach Club.



Up on the terrace we meet with Zoe Newman-Profyri, the hotel's head concierge, who explains, over a much needed and delicious lemonade made with the island's fruit, that Anargiros is the key to understanding the underdevelopment of the island today. By buying up two thirds of Spetses and planting it with pine trees, he ensured no one else could build on it.

"I believe he did it to support the shipbuilding industry but, by creating a forestry, he protected the island," explains Newman-Profyri. "It means Spetses never gets too full. It has a certain capacity but it can't go beyond that. It's a hidden gem that not many people know about – and most people here would like to keep it that way."

This might not sound like the warmest introduction, but even after mere hours on Spetses I understand why locals would feel protective of the island's sense of peace. It seems remarkable that, just two hours from Athens, you can enter a world that manages to feel both simple and sophisticated; like a relic from an earlier, more genteel time.

For Newman-Profyri, originally from England but resident on the island for more than 20 years, it's this apparent contradiction that makes the place so alluring. "When I came here, people said, how the heck can you go from living in Surrey to living on an island that's just 26km in circumference? But it has this real kind of aristocratic international feel to it that other islands don't have, at the same time as being very Greek and very authentic."

Today Anargiros' hotel and the gaggle of smart restaurants and bars that huddle around it still attract a high-end crowd, particularly in the summer. The yachterati hop in, mooring up at the old port; remote



The tour guide: Katerina Tsiligiri

Athens-born tour guide Katerina first came to the island on holiday at 15 – and met her future husband. Last year she left her role as a travel agent in the capital to marry him and move here. "I used to sell these experiences in my old life, and now I'm trying to do this as my main job," she laughs. Tourists can book her privately for an hour, two or a day's bespoke tour of the island, and she's happy to give tips on all her favourite places, including a semi-secret amphitheatre that's part of the old school; and the sculpture park out by the lighthouse. Typically, she says, most of the weekend tourists are Greeks who come from the capital and just want "a swim at the beach and then a fancy dinner," but there are adventure opportunities for tourists who want something more. "For those who love hiking, the views from Profitis Ilias, the highest point of the island, are incredible."

toursbylocals.com/spetses-greece-private-tour-guide-katerina-t



Need to know

The Armata

Every September, the island celebrates its role in the Greek revolution, by reenacting one of its key battles, where a traditional *caïque* boat is set alight under a sky full of fireworks in front of the Poseidonion Grand Hotel.

villas in the hills with helipads host music producers and politicians; and while we were there, Claudia Schiffer posted her presence on The 'Gram.

But since the 1980s, when package tours first arrived, there has been plenty of general tourism too. Airbnb has apartments listed from €60 a night, and there are plenty of good cheaper hotels, for those who want to soak up the island's peace and beauty without the five-star price tag.

The island is also beginning to attract hikers and bikers too. Newman-Profyri shows us a map that has been newly published and covers the island's 200km of hiking trails: the 'Greek Paths of Culture in Spetses'. "People are becoming more adventurous. Until recently, they were reluctant to go off into the hills, but now they've got a map, they're more confident. Most of them still get lost, but they come back very happy. The views are wonderful."

Another adventure is provided by the island's main ring road (also built by Anargiros) – a manageable half-day quest



Top The Poseidonion Grand Hotel's construction gave birth to the tourism industry in Spetses
Above Zoe Newman-Profyri is the hotel's head concierge



The chef:
Theologos Amiras

The role of head chef at the Poseidonion Grand Hotel is no mean feat, but then Athens-born Theologos is used to hard work. "A few years ago, I worked at The Hand and Flowers, a two-Michelin starred gastropub in the UK. I was working from six in the morning until three at night for six months," he remembers. For the past three summer seasons he has managed not just the kitchens for the hotel's restaurants, but also those at their beach club, special events, and their seasonal farm-to-table restaurant in the hills, Bostani ("vegetable plot"), where produce for the restaurants is both grown and eaten. At the latter, under strings of fairy lights, guests are served organic herbs and vegetables grown a couple of metres away, eggs from birds you can hear from the table, and foraged Greek flavours like pickled *bolbós* and *kritamos* (wild onions and samphire). "If I created this in Athens with supermarket produce it just wouldn't be the same – it's all Greek traditional flavours and just so fresh," he says. **poseidonion.com/en/bostani-farm-to-table**

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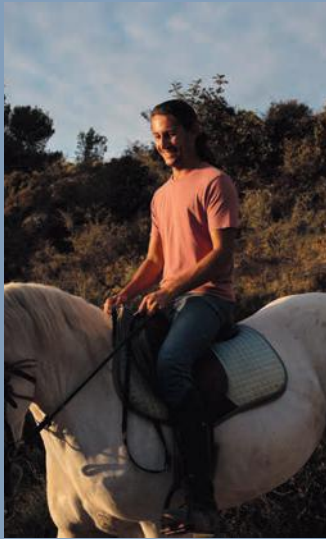
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The trek leader: **Greg Thimaras**

Spetses' own horse whisperer, Greg grew up on the island as a very shy person, more drawn to animals than humans. As a teenager he spent days galloping over the hills bareback "like a cowboy" with his rescue horse Rebecca. He taught himself to train the animals using YouTube videos from Australian trainer Warwick Schiller before opening Greg's Spetses Horses on the island's wild south side in 2015. Now he leads treks from 45 minutes to 4 hours. "It's a very nice way to see the hidden beauties of Spetses," he says. "By the time we're back from a trek, I often feel like a psychologist because the horses relax people so much, they like to tell you all their stories." As ever though, he's happiest when talking to his animals. "Horses do have their own language. I always like to teach people a bit about communicating with the horse. Riding for me is about making the horse happy first, and then about the person having a ride." gregspetseshorses.com



Cycling through the pine forests planted by Sotirios Anargiros



“Spetses never gets too full. It has a certain capacity but it can’t go beyond that”

by bike, e-bike or motorbike, depending on your leg fitness. Undulating but well-surfaced, it dips into the forest before veering out towards the sparkling blue of the sea. Benches at regular intervals invite riders to stop and catch their breath overlooking gargantuan drops to white sand coves below.

While it’s possible to make your way down to these isolated beaches from the road, a far easier journey is by boat from the Old Harbour. On one of our days here we do just that, taking a trip with Spetses Cruising, who are ranked number 1 on Tripadvisor. George Lytrivis, our captain for the day, welcomes us on board and we’re soon whizzing out of harbour in a fizz of sea spray and excitement.

Our first stop is Zogeria beach, where pirates apparently used to hide their gold, and where Olivia Colman as Leda sunbathed in *The Lost Daughter*. At our second stop, Agioi Anargyroi beach, George points out Bekiri Cave: “It’s home to a family of seals in the winter”. That somewhat puts us off going in, but we are at least brave enough to have a go with the boat’s onboard toys – paddleboarding through shoals of silver anchovies that skitter across the water’s surface – before experiencing the lazy drag of sea scooters.

Eating in Spetses

Tarsanas

This restaurant is literally on the beach, so it’s no surprise it specialises in seafood. The lobster linguine could be your lifetime’s best pasta dish, while fish “*a la spetsiotisa*” (oven baked with tomato, garlic and parsley) is a local favourite. Pair with a Greek Chardonnay and enjoy the view.

tarsanasrestaurant.com

Te Pachni

Unlike the eateries that cluster around the two harbours, this unpretentious family-run taverna requires a little uphill effort to reach, but it’s worth it for the lamb chops, Greek sausage and super fresh salads and mezze. Come hungry for generous portions and be warned: you may roll on your way back down the hill. pachni.com.gr



Left Paddleboarding near Bekiri Cave, home to a family of seals in the winter months
Here The waters off Zogeria beach are perfect for a refreshing dip

The yacht feels like a taste of the Hollywood highlife, and from €2,000 for up to eight people, it is a definite holiday splurge (there are cheaper boat trips). But you really get the star treatment from the captain and his team, and even the views feel like a solid return on investment.

As the day goes on, the colours of the sea and the pine forest seem to deepen and brighten, like sapphires and emeralds set against the flat deep blue of the sky. We slowly chug back towards the harbour, past red-roofed villas, cypress trees, hilltop churches and olive groves. All seem to hover above the pale craggy coastline, its rocks in mottled shades of grey, darkening to a strip of sea-lapped stone at the water's edge.

One final stop. We moor at another of the island's empty silent beaches, and I reflect on Fowles words: "Like many of the island's beaches, it gave the lovely illusion that one was the very first man who had ever stood upon it, that had ever had eyes, that had ever existed, the very first man."

That is indeed one of the beauties of Spetses.. Away from the town you feel like you might well be the only humans ever to land on its beaches, ever to reflect on its pure-blue beauty or to cycle its winding road, enjoying the humming of its cicadas. I feel profoundly grateful to Sotirios Anargiros and to all those we have met for protecting this piece of Grecian paradise.

It's not hard to see why John Fowles wrote about this magical place; or why he was still captivated by its beauty a decade after he quit his teaching role. Like him, and like the producers at Netflix, I'll definitely be back.

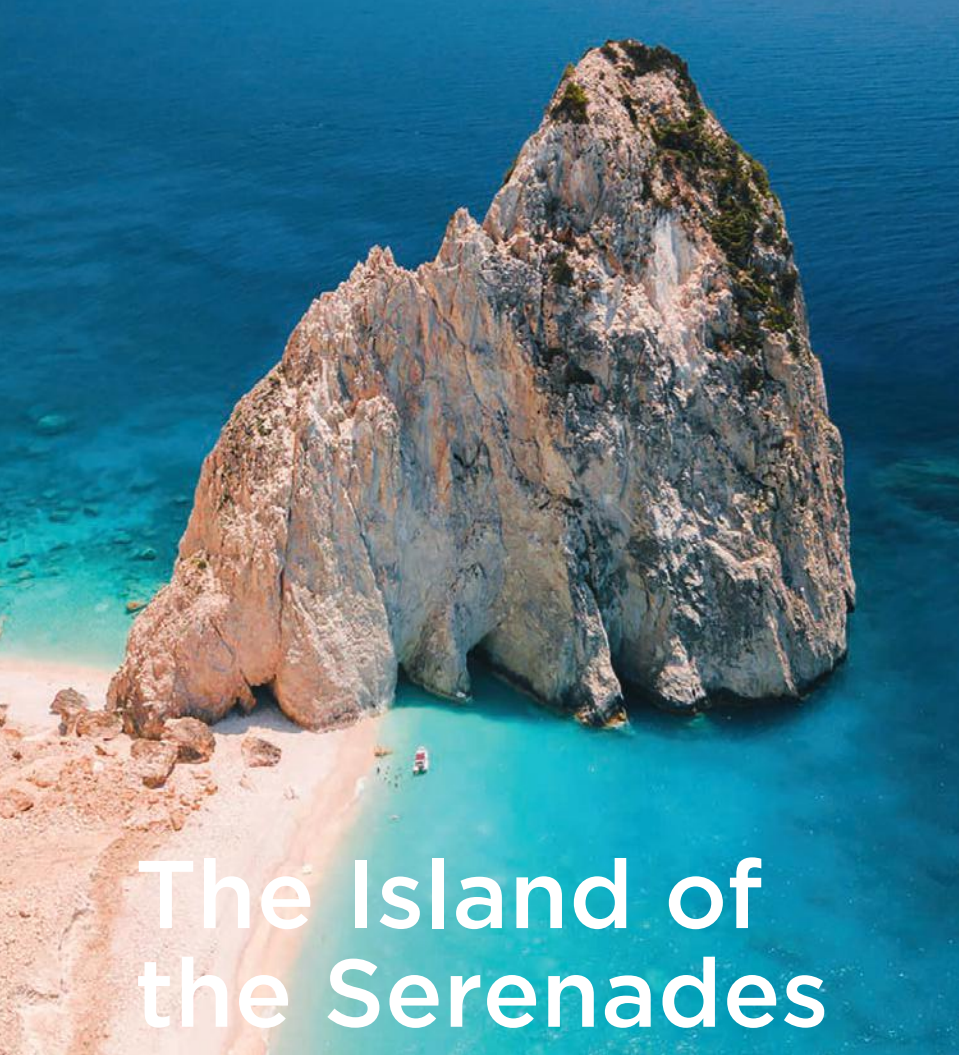
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The healer: **Anastasia Kulenko**

Originally from Ukraine, Anastasia found herself drawn to Greece 33 years ago and never left. She spends summers in Spetses, teaching yoga, doing massage and performing sound healings, using Tibetan singing bowls and gongs. "I like Spetses because it's a small island with no massive tourism," she says. "Many of the same people come back over and over, so I have regular clients." She specialises in helping people to detach. "It can be really hard to transfer the pressure from their busy lives," she explains. "The vibration [of the bowls] can eliminate all the worries and troubles from people so they can relax, rest and really enter their vacation."

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Zakynthos is certainly an island of surprising diversity. Famous for its beautiful mountain villages with dramatic and lush views, it also boasts the first National Marine Park in Greece, currently a reserve for rare Loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*) and Mediterranean Monk Seals (*Monachus monachus*).

No wonder the Venetians named it the *fiore di Levante* (the flower of the East) and proceeded to crown its capital with a magnificent castle. Other stars of the island include Navagio beach, with its world-famous shipwreck, the Blue Caves, the Turtle Island and Laganas, the largest sandy beach in the Mediterranean.

And yet, the island isn't just about what you can see. There's plenty to do too. It combines the perfect stillness of nature that gives guests the tranquility and relaxation they crave, while also providing plenty of opportunities for fun, adventure and watersports. At night, a sense of fun and carefree energy radiates from its trendy bars and clubs.

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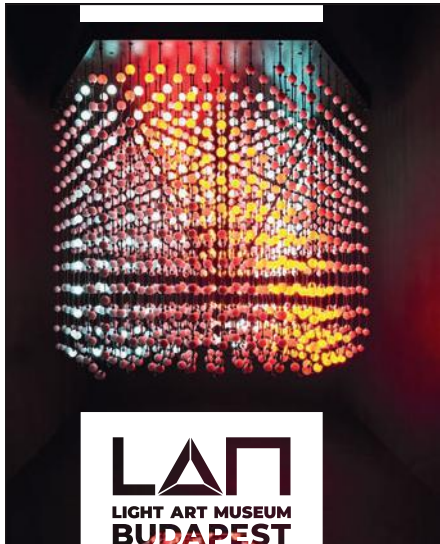
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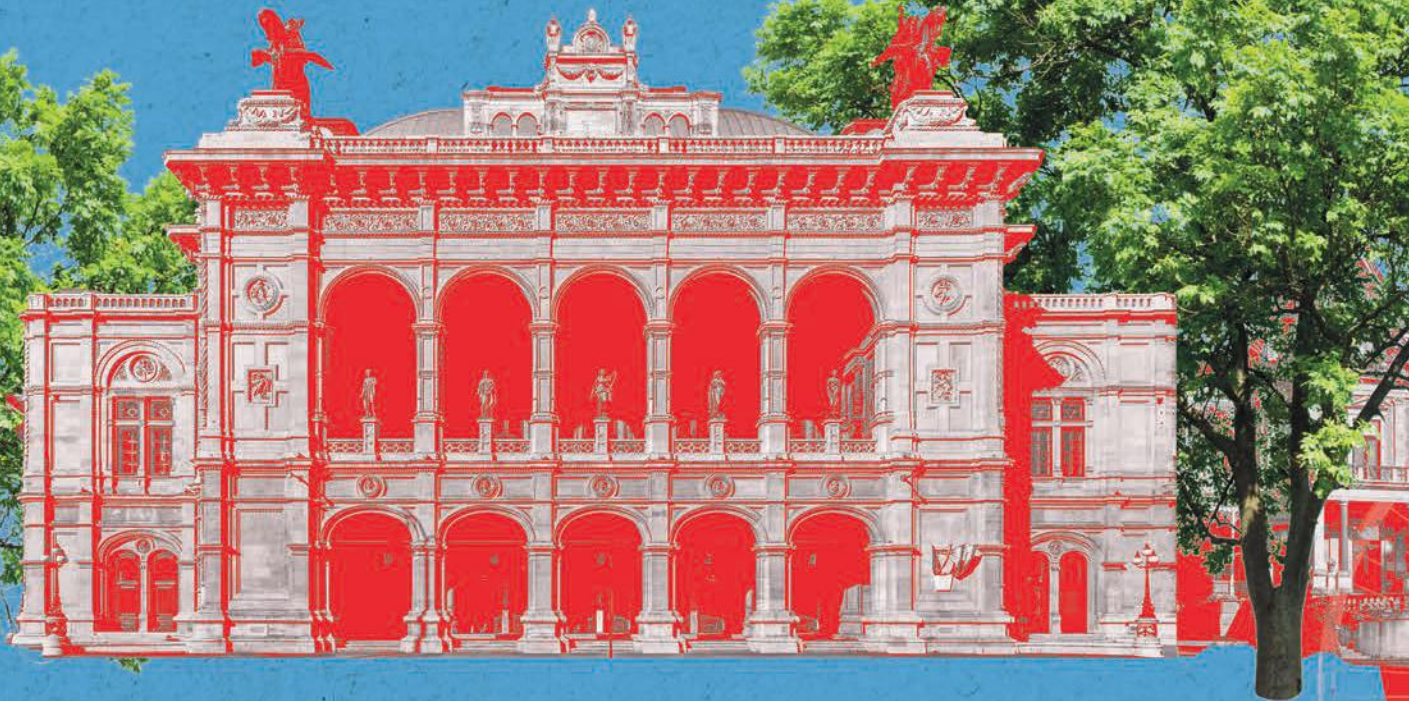
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RING CYCLE

Vienna's Ringstrasse is more than a street – it's a timeline of the city's development over the last 200 years. We take to its tree-lined pavements to find out more...

 Words by Becki Enright



If you put the words ‘inner city ring road’ into Google, you’d be presented with rows of photos featuring grey concrete streets and inevitable traffic jams. Scroll down and you’ll get dozens more shots of gridlock, depressing looking flyovers and spaghetti junction-style roundabouts. Add the word ‘Vienna’ though, and the effect is like magic. Dispiriting vistas are displaced by gorgeous tree-lined avenues; down-at-heel tower blocks with imposing Baroque palaces; traffic by gardens; grey by green.

It’s virtually unheard of for an inner-city road to be an icon, but Vienna’s Ringstrasse (“Ring Road”) is no ordinary street. Built in the late 19th century, it’s a chronicle of grand designs, a symbol of democracy, and a living museum. But what makes it so different from other cities’ thoroughfares? And how did it come to play a defining role in Viennese culture and society? In a bid to get behind its glamorous façade, I took a cycle around its 5.3km circumference and talked to local experts to find out why this staple of Viennese tourism is truly iconic.

“It was a revolutionary urban development project,” says design and architecture guide Gabriela Steiner-Scharfetter as she outlines its creation. Before the road was built, the city’s historic centre (today the UNESCO-celebrated 1st District) was surrounded by thick walls, built in the Middle Ages to protect the royalty and the elite who lived there. Then, in 1857, Habsburg Emperor Franz Joseph I ordered their demolition so the city could become a unified municipality. “All of a sudden, the Ringstrasse became the stage for the nouveau rich of society to display

the wealth of the second half of the 19th century.”

This circle of land, once occupied by city fortifications, was transformed over 50 years as the wealthy classes and Jewish bourgeoisie built extravagant palaces; seats of government were formed; cultural venues were erected, and public parks incorporated. The imperial family, the Habsburgs, used it as an opportunity “to show off their power with architecture”, expanding their 13th-century imperial Hofburg palace with two massive wings. These housed – and continue to house – the Naturhistorisches (Natural History) and Kunsthistorisches (Art History) museums, made to display their colossal collections.

“Where else do you have a collection where only one family – the Habsburgs – had been collecting art for more than 600 years?” asks Gabriela.

These buildings make an impressive introduction to the Ringstrasse, and not just for their stately splendour. Their contents are just as important as they embody one of the Ringstrasse’s main functions – showing off Vienna’s ostentatious cultural wealth.

“The Ringstrasse showcases one of the most important historical and architectural periods in Vienna,” my bike guide Marko Prica tells me. “The construction of the Ringstrasse ignited intellectual and artistic growth that is still relevant today.”

It’s telling that the first public building that opened on the Ring was the Vienna State Opera (Wiener Staatsoper), and it remains the badge of composing greats like Schubert, Haydn, Beethoven, and Mozart, who left a considerable legacy and whose works are still performed here every day.



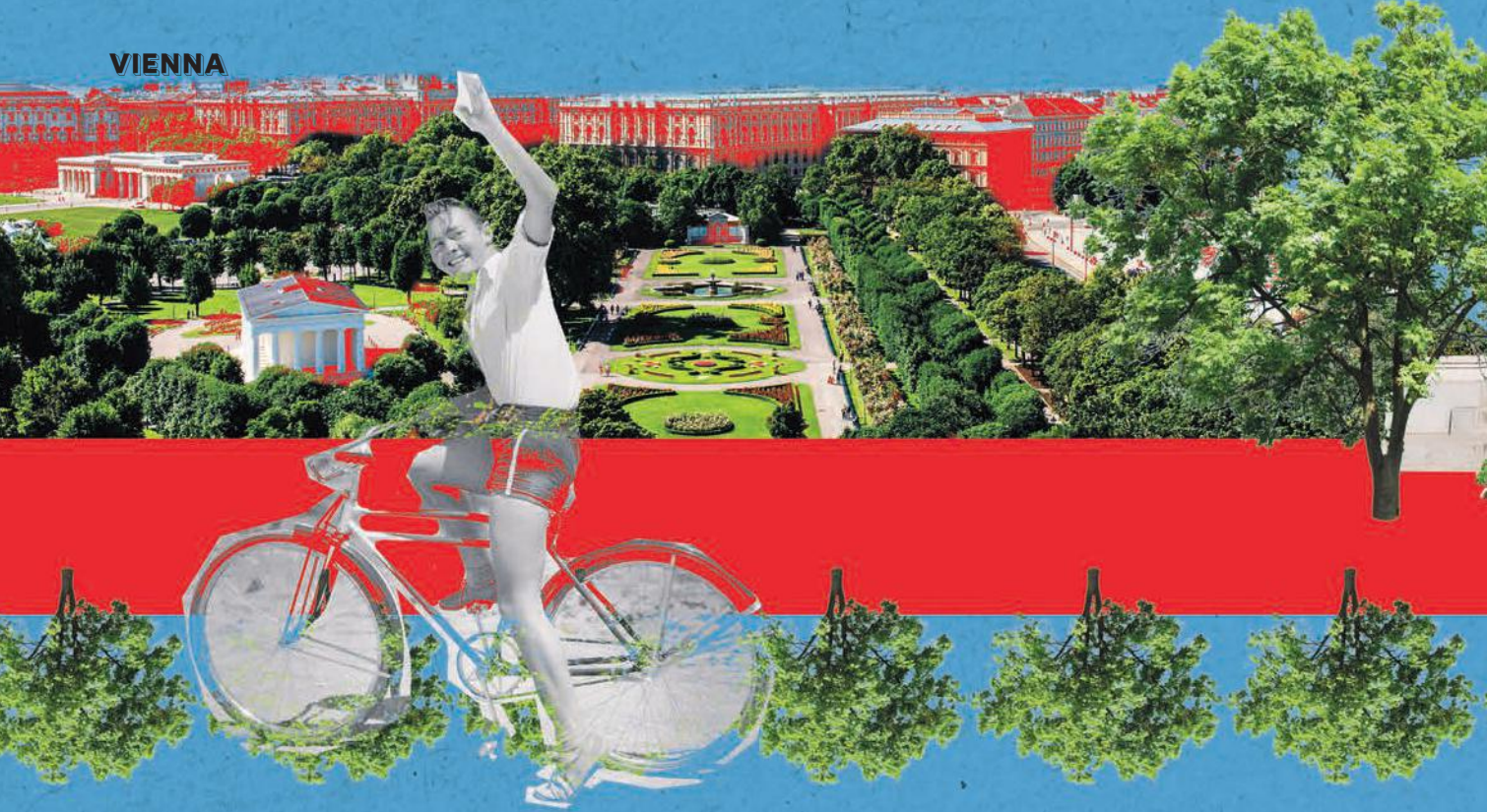
**“It was a
revolutionary
urban development
project”**

As well as culture, the Ringstrasse became a symbol of the changing power structures in its society during the late 19th century. “It was the industrialisation era like everywhere in Europe, and with economic growth, there will be changes,” explains Marko.

In Austria, this meant the move from imperial rule to a democratic republic, marked here by the construction of Parliament with its classical Greek-style temple façade, which was completed in 1883. Its reopening earlier this year after a five-year renovation makes it more accessible than ever before, with a new visitor centre where people can vote on questions and virtually debate with politicians on topics in session, plus a public library and free guided tours.

Close by are other grand public forums, including the international 200,000-student University – the oldest and largest University in the German-speaking world – and the Neo-Gothic Rathaus (city hall). The latter is enormous, with 30 floors, almost 3,000 rooms and a 98m-tall tower topped with the ‘Rathausmann’ statue – one of the enduring symbols of Vienna. Today the Rathaus is used to host sports and entertainment events, food and film festivals, Christmas Markets, the Vienna City Marathon and the Pride Rainbow Parade.

As well as giving viewers an immediate physical impression of Austrian power, there was a practical reason for the Ring’s buildings to be so big. Architects had to take into account a growing late-19th century population of 2.2 million inhabitants – larger even than today’s 1.9 million. “Everything on the boulevard was built as a capital of a huge empire, big enough to accommodate an expanding city,” says Marko.



While the Ringstrasse marked a boom in the city's expansions, it also became a showpiece for visitors with the opening of the Vienna World's Fair in 1873. It was the first World's Fair not to have been held in London or Paris, and 194 pavilions were built in Prater Park to represent various countries including China and Persia, Morocco and Egypt, and the Ottoman Empire.

At this point, the Ringstrasse became pivotal to hotel and café construction in the city. Duke Philipp von Württemberg's 1865 home was converted into the first palace hotel on the Ring, the legendary Hotel Imperial, opening just days before the Fair, along with the purpose-built Palais Hansen Kempinski, designed by the influential Ringstrasse architect Theophil Hansen. Sigmund Freud's favourite hangout, Café Landtmann, also opened its doors in 1873, to cater for the Emperor's Pavilion at the Fair, and 150 years later, international visitors are still welcome to this coffee house heirloom.

Although the main landmarks around the ring were designed in the Historicist style – a mesh of opulent Renaissance, Baroque and Gothic elements – that dominated the birth of the ring road, later buildings are more typical of Viennese Modernism. This approach sought to distance itself from old forms of representation and create an international style for all social classes. The most representative Ringstrasse building of this period is the Otto Wagner-designed Austrian Postal Savings Bank

(Österreichische Postsparkasse) from 1906. This Art Nouveau masterpiece is free to enter and well worth a look, particularly the museum depicting its build and the former bank hall that now hosts artist talks and serves locally roasted coffee from one of the old ticket counters.

Despite being known for its showy, open nature, the Ringstrasse concealed some of the city's secrets of the 20th century too. "Hotel Imperial became the first location for a true Cold War spy story," says Jascha Novak, founder of Hidden Vienna Tours.

Vienna was divided, he explains, like Berlin, into four zones, the centre being a mutual zone where all had jurisdiction together, occupying various grand buildings. The Soviets installed a telephone line connecting the hotel to Moscow. In 1948 the British Secret Service, under the guise of renovating a shop in the British Zone, tunnelled over to the Soviet zone, attaching listening devices to the cables to decode messages. "Vienna became this small window into the secretive Soviet Union," explains Jascha. "This three-year operation is one of the most successful of its time, and it all originated at Hotel Imperial."

Today, the Ringstrasse brings together the themes of Vienna's past, but also has a role as one of the city's main thoroughfares. It's easy to get around it, following public transport (trams 1 and 2), or you can walk the Ring in an hour. It's also a great place to cycle, as Marko Prica's Pedal Power tours show.

After the Ringstrasse, these tours continue to



Prater: the 'green lung of Vienna': site of the city's fairground and the setting of its birth as a modern city with the World's Fair, exactly 150 years ago this year. Cycling the ring is in itself symbolic of the future incarnation of the city. In a further expansion, a 7km-long Mega Cycle Highway is underway to connect Prater and the Ring to the suburbs beyond the Danube. It's a step towards Vienna's commitment to be a carbon-free city by 2040.

Today the Ringstrasse continues to evolve, according to Gabriela: "You still have the public buildings, which have the same uses, but what vanished completely was the high society that lived in the mansions. There are now offices in those buildings, and a few taken over by five-star hotels like the Ritz Carlton that bring those grand buildings alive again. A lot of international institutions are along the Ring Road now instead of money nobility, but it is still a representative address," says Gabriela.

Jascha Novak agrees that the status a Ringstrasse address conveys says a lot about how the Viennese see themselves. "At the beginning of the 20th century, Vienna was the fourth largest city in Europe, the 8th largest city in the world - a major European city. That world ended with the start of the war and the fall of the monarchy, but Vienna and its past glory are still standing, and the Viennese are proud of that." pedalpower.at; hiddenvienna.guide; wienkultours.at.

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Champion surfer Maryam el Gardoum has launched Morocco's first female-run surf school. We went to a legendary Moroccan surf spot to find out more

 Words by Jade Bremner

 Photography by Greg Funnell

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The northern side of Devil's Rock, where Maryam caught her first wave



“ used to jump off there,” says five-time national surf champion Maryam el Gardoum, pointing to the infamous Devil's Rock, rising some 10m over the sea at Imourane Beach, just south of Taghazout – Morocco's sleepy fishing village-turned-surf capital.

We're sitting under the warm sun on our boards in the line-up, waiting for waves to roll in from the seemingly endless blue Atlantic. “One of the best things about surfing here is there are waves for every level,” says Maryam, who caught her first ride at this beach when she was a child.

We spend the morning catching tiny, peeling waves together, the champion giving me invaluable tips on technique before I lose sight of her. I paddle into shore and spot her on the beach teaching a girl, no older than four or five years old, how to balance on the board. It's her first go, but Maryam already has her standing upright, unassisted in calm water.

Maryam's surf school, Dihya Surf Morocco, which launched last year, is the first female-led surf school in the country, aiming to help more girls and women get into the sport. This coastline is the perfect training ground for surfers of all abilities – it's dotted with world-class breaks, like the fierce and challenging Anchor Point; beginner breaks, including the mellow waves at Camel Point; and everything in between.



“One of the best things about surfing here is there are waves for every level”





Taghazout has become the default base camp for those exploring the coastline. Its dusty desert streets are dotted with orange trees, surf shops and cafés playing reggae, frequently interrupted by the melodic tones of the call to prayer. It's not uncommon to see dreadlocked surf bros, yogis in harem pants and vintage Renaults piled high with surfboards en route to one of the breaks along the coastline.

Murals of surfing heroes loom over tourists – giant faces of successful locals including highest ranked African surfer Ramzi Boukhiam, bodyboarder Brahim Iddouch and big-wave surfer Othmane Choufani.

“Hopefully one day there will be a female surfing hero on one of these walls,” says Maryam, as she drops one of her surfboards into a Taghazout repair shop hidden inside a traditional lane house.

Maryam was the first woman in the village of Tamraght to become a competitive surfer. Her father was a fisherman and her mother would collect mussels from the beach and sell them. She grew up swimming in the sea, but Maryam’s route to becoming a surf champion wasn’t an easy one. Typically an activity for boys and men, surfing was something Maryam discovered by accident after borrowing a bodyboard.

“My brother’s friends saw me and they couldn’t believe I was standing on the small bodyboard riding



Clockwise from opposite page

Maryam with her longboard;
a car stacked with surfboards;
a traditional fishing boat

“A man grabbed my surfboard leash and said: ‘Your place is not here, you should be helping your mum in the kitchen’”



Maryam's five tips for getting started

1. Get surf lessons in the beginning with an instructor
2. Learn about the ocean and the currents at the beach you are surfing
3. Keep practising, never give up
4. Keep changing your surf spot, different kinds of waves help you to improve
5. Try video analysis to see what you are doing in the water, to help you improve your style

Clockwise from above
 Maryam teaching a girl to surf on Imourane Beach; a rental shop next to Devil's Rock; Magic Bay in Imsouane



waves,” she says. Her close community nurtured her raw talent by lending her surfboards. For almost three years she borrowed friends’ boards, surfing at every opportunity she could, without a wetsuit.

The following year, a surf association opened at Devil’s Rock, allowing local kids who couldn’t afford to buy boards the opportunity to rent them for an annual fee. “I begged my dad to pay the €20 membership so I could surf every weekend,”

she says. But financial burdens weren’t the only hurdle. There were no other girls on boards, and the wider community didn’t approve. “People said I would get addicted to alcohol and drugs and become a hippie,” remembers Maryam, “but I’m not addicted to alcohol, I’m addicted to the ocean.”

All her friends were boys and, for practical reasons, she would wear shorts and large T-shirts when surfing. “People would tell my parents, ‘surfing is not for females’, and tell them to have me stay in the house.”

She encountered prejudice in the line-up too. “I was 13 years old, surfing at Devil’s Rock by myself and having fun. A man grabbed my surfboard leash and pulled me towards him and said ‘Your place is not here, you should be at home helping your mum in the



kitchen'. Words can make you doubt everything. But I didn't give up, I didn't leave."

Her fighting spirit paid off. At 14 years old, Maryam was convinced by friends to enter the women's national competition for all ages – despite being physically sick from nerves in the line-up, she got through all her heats and went on to win the whole competition. In the following years, she would win first place another four times, and rank eighth in a European competition.

Maryam did encounter the discouraging man in the Devil's Rock line-up again. "He came up to me and said, 'I'm so proud of you'," she recalls. "Everyone was proud of me here [in Tamraght]. All of them changed their minds."

Fittingly, Maryam has named her school in honour of Dihya the Amazigh (or Berber) Queen of North Africa – a fierce warrior who fought the Arabs in the 7th century AD. "People weren't initially happy with her fighting. They said that she had to get married, take care of the kids, stay in the house – but she focused on her goal to support her dad, the King, in battle," says Maryam. "Eventually she became Queen – people changed their minds and were pleased to call her their queen."

Maryam has become a pioneer, inspiring many others to follow in her footsteps. Paddling out at Magic Bay the following day, there are at least a dozen local and foreign women in the line-up. "I'm happy to see more females competing, but if they're not competing, the important thing is to see women and girls having fun," says Maryam.

Her surf school, plus her newly formed surf crew of local women, help share and spread the stoke she feels when she's surfing. "When I get in the water I forget everything – it's like I'm in another world," says local surfer Khadija Jok, when we meet her at Anchor Point.



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Here Siham Elkharraz and Maryam at SkatePark Taghazout
Below left Maryam gets her board repaired at shop Surf Style Taghazout

Three Moroccan surf spots to try

For beginners: Camel Point

When the waves are strong and big in other spots, the waves below this rock resembling a camel offer a mellower ride, ideal for those learning, with plenty of rolling white water. It's 10 minutes north of Taghazout.

For intermediates: Magic Bay

One of the longest continuous waves in the whole of Africa peels from the harbour wall in the little fishing village of Imsouane, an hour and a half north of Taghazout. It's ideal for intermediate surfers and longboarders.

For advanced surfers: Anchor Point

Discovered by Australian surfers in the 1960s, this legendary spot has powerful long and fast rides off a right-hand point break over a rock shelf. It's a 10-minute walk from Taghazout, and when conditions are just right it's possible to surf all the way back into Taghazout.



“Surfing is now a part of my life, and has taught me so many things. It’s taught me to be patient and to practice to make progress,” adds board rider Siham Elkharraz.

When there are no waves, the crew meets to practise their manoeuvres on surf skates high on the hill overlooking the ocean at SkatePark Taghazout, which also rents skateboards and protection gear to children who can’t afford their own.

Perceptions are slowly shifting, but there is still work to be done. Maryam’s community helped her get to where she is today, but remarkably, despite being a five-time national champion, the surfer still remains unsponsored.

“Many brands still focus on pretty girls. Modelling comes first, then surfing,” she says. “But times are changing; many female surfers have recently got sponsors, not because of their bodies but because of their surfing.” Maryam hopes the next generation of girls has more opportunities, and perhaps the next time we visit Taghazout we’ll see a giant wall mural in honour of a female champion.

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7. Mix of mountains and sea

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8. Georgian culture

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9. Gonio Castle

The Gonio fortress dates back to the Roman Empire and is regarded as a vital link to Georgia's past.

10. Famous Georgian Feast

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Got plenty of wanderlust but stuck for travel ideas? Hit the road with one of our top 15 adventures and make this autumn one to remember. From a Rugby World Cup pilgrimage to a wild swim trek through paradise, we'll help you turn your days-off into days-off-the-hook

 Words by Ross Clarke, Jamie Lafferty, Hayley Skirka and Sarah Warwick



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Immerse yourself in an edible history



There are hundreds of culinary experiences to choose from around our network, but too many of them conform to the tired 'meet chef, go to market, make a traditional food' model. That's why we were intrigued by the 'Gastro Obscura' immersive experiences offered by Atlas Obscura and Culinary Backstreets.

Forget kitchens - their Lisbon trip takes place in underground pipes, Roman ruins and fish markets. There will be pastel de natas and the city's famous tinned fish, of course, but also dishes from Portugal's extensive former empire - Goa, Mozambique and Cape Verde - plus barnacles, fermented fish and wine produced from centuries-old vines. Don't say bon appetit though - it's *bom proveito!* *Lisbon: Tracing the Roots of an Imperial Culture* departs on 11 September. atlasobscura.com; culinarybackstreets.com

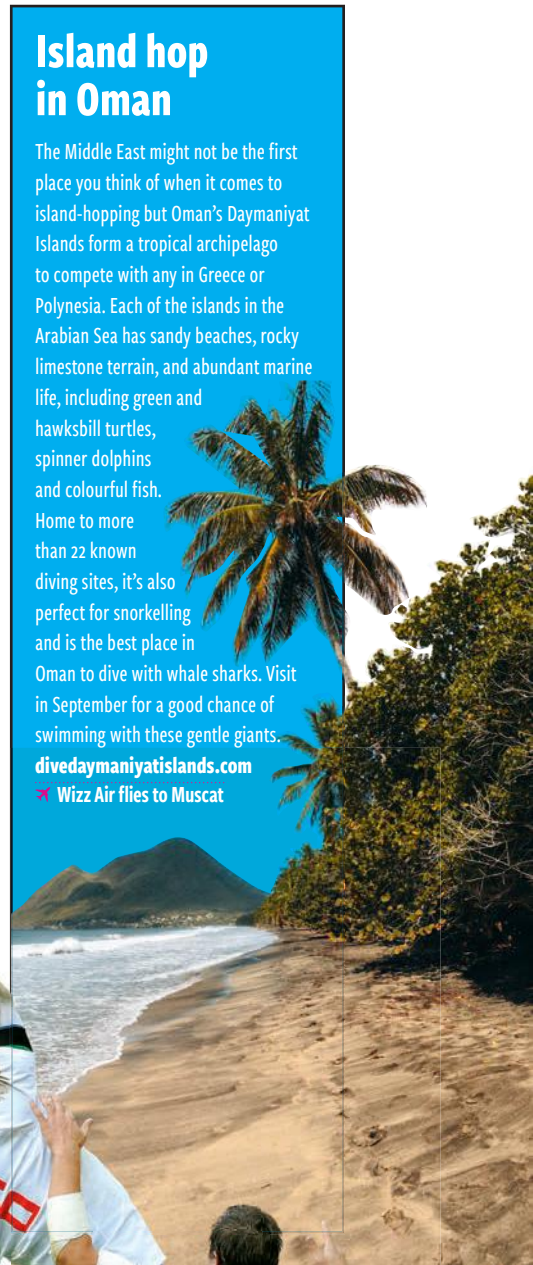
✈ Wizz Air flies to Lisbon

Island hop in Oman

The Middle East might not be the first place you think of when it comes to island-hopping but Oman's Daymaniyat Islands form a tropical archipelago to compete with any in Greece or Polynesia. Each of the islands in the Arabian Sea has sandy beaches, rocky limestone terrain, and abundant marine life, including green and hawksbill turtles, spinner dolphins and colourful fish. Home to more than 22 known diving sites, it's also perfect for snorkelling and is the best place in Oman to dive with whale sharks. Visit in September for a good chance of swimming with these gentle giants.

divedaymaniyatislands.com

✈ Wizz Air flies to Muscat



Plan a World Cup odyssey

The 2023 Rugby World Cup kicks off on 8 September, and this year's event will be held entirely in France so you can take the opportunity to tour La Grande Nation as you watch the 'gentleman's game'. The first match and the final on 28th October are both being staged at the Stade de France, near Paris - and between those dates, depending on your chosen team, you can plan a route

through the group stages in Lille, Toulouse, Nice, Marseille, Lyon and Bordeaux. Making it even more special is the fact it's exactly 200 years this year since William Webb Ellis first picked up his football and started the sport.

rugbyworldcup.com/2023

✈ Wizz flies to Paris, Lyon and Grenoble



Wander like an Egyptian

It's a great time to visit Cairo – when it opens later this year, the Grand Egyptian Museum in Giza will be the biggest archaeological museum in the world with over 100,000 relics on show. Combine a trip to the GEM with a Nile cruise on a felucca – a traditional wind-powered sailing boat – with a local guide to explain the history and culture that has developed riverside for millennia. Responsible Travel offers authentic, sustainable four or six-day tours that take in temples, camel markets and quarries, as well as providing the blissful feeling of bobbing along this ancient waterway. responsibletravel.com/holiday/11281/nile-felucca-cruise-in-egypt

✈️ Wizz Air flies to Cairo

Go round in a circle



Fancy ticking multiple Scandi cities off your list in one go? The Around the Sound train ticket allows you to circumnavigate the Øresund Strait – the oval-shaped bit of water separating Sweden and Denmark. Starting in Copenhagen, you can venture up the coast to Helsingør (where you might catch sea shanties at the Kneipe Festival in early October), then

across on the 20-minute ferry to Helsingborg in Sweden, down the Swedish coast to Malmö and across the famous Øresund Bridge back to Copenhagen. While you can do the whole journey in a day, you've got two days to make the most of the ticket.

✈️ Wizz Air flies to Malmö and Copenhagen

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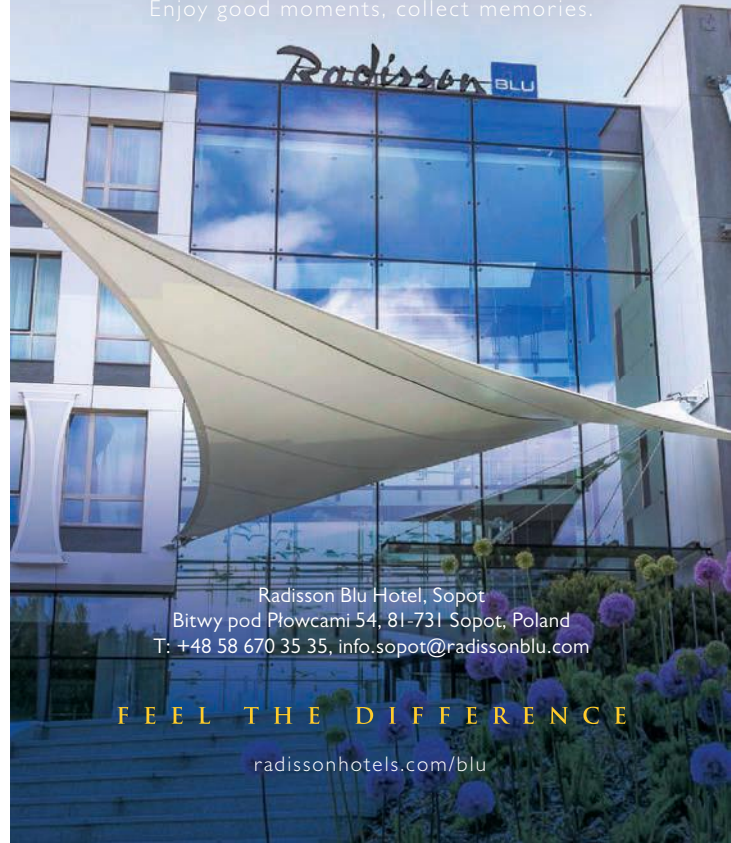
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Impress your friends

Stretching from the Caspian Sea to China, Central Asia's "Stans" are some of the least travelled countries in the world, so you can shame your mate's Instagram pics of the Costa del Sol by backpacking through a largely unexplored region. You'll find some of the most dramatic scenery on Earth, but these countries can be tricky to navigate alone, so join a group tour, like Explore's Silk Road of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, which takes in the best of those two countries over three weeks. From the wild mountain landscapes of Kyrgyzstan to the vast plains of Uzbekistan, you'll follow the age-old caravan trail along the Silk Road, starting in Bishkek, the Kyrgyzstani capital, followed by a mountainous route through untouched prairies, celestial lakes and high passes, bedding down in local yurt camps. In Uzbekistan, you'll visit ancient Islamic citadels before embracing 'Stanian' modernity in cosmopolitan Tashkent. You'll certainly win 'most exotic holiday' for a good while after this one. explore.co.uk

✈ Wizz Air flies to Tashkent and Bishkek



Swim through paradise

Many visitors to the Maldives focus on how little they will do on their holiday and how much they can sink towards total relaxation. But for a truly immersive experience of this famously picturesque paradise, Swim Trek offers an eight-day liveaboard experience with daily guided swims around its atolls. Highlights include a circumnavigation of the uninhabited Anbara Island as well as a visit to the challenging but supremely rewarding Giraa Falhu Reef. Rays, sea turtles and tropical fish of every hue are common, but this trip is anything but ordinary.

swimtrek.com/packages/swimming-holiday-the-maldives

✈ Wizz Air flies to Malé

Journey into yourself

Transformational experiences are continuing to surge in popularity – just check out retreat websites laden with listings for womb nostalgia, neotantra and Shamanic sweat lodges. For the ultimate in transformational trips, how about a few days in total darkness? Deeper in the Forest is a five-day Group Darkness Retreat in a pitch black 200-year-old Tuscan villa. Seventeen yummy vegetarian or vegan meals and a comfy bed are included but not a glimmer of light – all the better for digital detox and “self-actualising”

apparently. loveevolveawaken.com

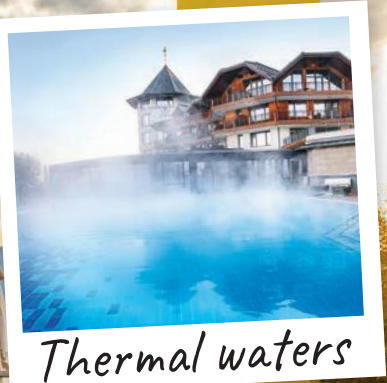
✈ Wizz Air flies to Pisa



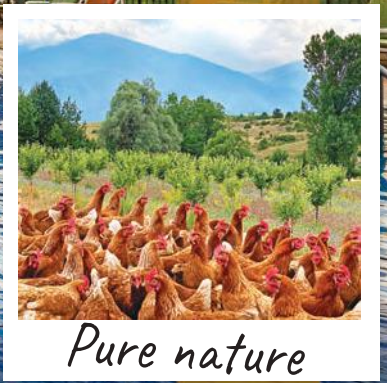
HOT SPRINGS

Medical & Spa Hotel ★★★★★

BULGARIA



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Pure nature



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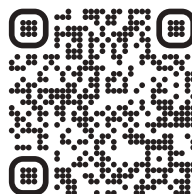
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INNOVATION AWARDS 2022



Go extreme in the UAE

The UAE is best known for beach holidays, but dig a little deeper and you'll be surprised at the white-knuckle experiences the Middle Eastern country affords. Deep Dive Dubai, for example, is the only facility in the world where you can dive to depths of 60m. Neighbouring emirate Ras al Khaimah is home to the world's longest zipline – where brave souls can fly a scorching 160km/h over its 2.8km length. Umm Al Quwain's mangrove coast is a kayaker's dream destination. Throw in sand-dune bashing, skydiving, paintball, speed boating, parasailing, jet boating and snow skiing on Dubai's purpose-built indoor slope, and you have yourself an adrenaline-filled destination like no other on earth. deepdivedubai.com; rasalkhaimahzipline.com
Wizz Air flies to Dubai

Work from anywhere

Is your job flexible enough to take advantage of the trend for workationing? If so you might fancy one of the new trips targeting the WFA (work from anywhere) crowd. While the first wave of workation escapes – from Welcome Beyond, Behere and Outsite etc – combined long-term accommodation, office space and broadband, the 2.0 versions offer significant extras: the opportunity to learn, volunteer or live outside in your chosen destination.

Try one of these...



Sojrn has month-long 'chapters', where guests stay, work and learn, say, about wine in Tuscany, or art and architecture in Barcelona. Rumour has it two-week versions are coming soon too. sojrn.travel

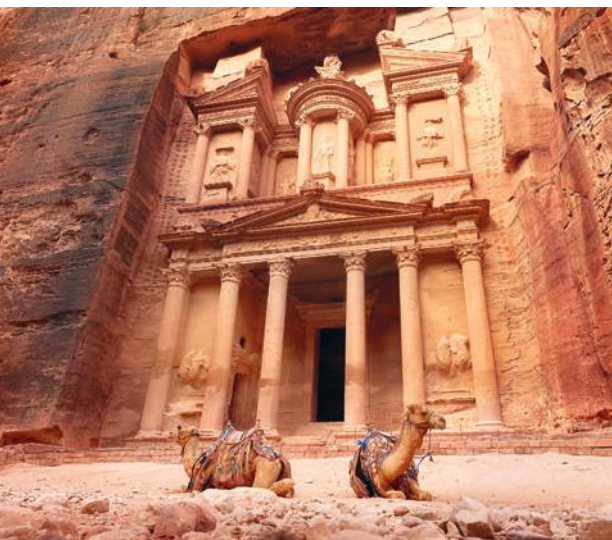


Venture with Impact promises a crash course in the language and full "cultural immersion" in global destinations, including Lisbon. venturewithimpact.org



The 'Open-Air Work From Anywhere' programme by **Campsited** organises extended stays for employees in beautiful outdoor environments in France, Italy and Spain. campsited.com

✈ Wizz flies to Spain, Portugal, France and Italy



Make like Indiana Jones

An improbable 15 years after he was last whip-cracking his way across the screen, Harrison Ford returns as Indiana Jones this summer. No one has made the business of archaeology look more sexy, dangerous or violent, but for a chance to see the more placid – though still fascinating – reality, join *New Scientist's* dedicated archaeological tour of Jordan in October. Led by a local archaeologist, there may not be a chance to find the Lost Ark, nor interrupt a ceremonial sacrifice, but there will be visits to Jordan's millennia-old capital Amman, the crusader castle in Karak, and – perhaps most satisfying of all – a visit to Petra, which provided the backdrop for the finale of 1989's *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. newscientist.com/tours/archaeology-petra-jordan

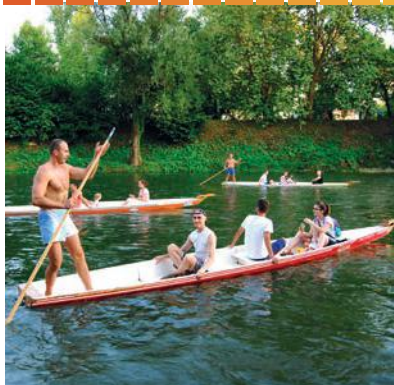
✈ Wizz Air flies to Amman and Aqaba



The **UPGRADE**

Better ways to live, work and travel

Wherever you're travelling to this summer, we've got you covered. Read on for our selection of the best restaurants, bars, hotels, museums and more across the Wizz Air network



Banja Luka

Fans of active holidays, nature and places that preserve the spirit of history and tradition will find a home in beautiful **Banja Luka**. Ride the rapids of the Vrbas River, home to the World Rafting Championships, or feel the excitement at some of the world's best festivals in Banja Luka this summer. banjaluka-tourism.com, turizamrs.org



Creating unique memories

Bunkier in Gdańsk is a great place to have fun. Located in a WWII air-raid shelter, the venue hosts music events, comedy shows and concerts. The underground location creates a one-of-a-kind atmosphere that makes for an unforgettable experience. Whether you're looking to dance the night away or just enjoy a drink with friends, Bunkier Nightclub is the perfect spot. Don't miss out on this hidden gem in the heart of Gdańsk. For further information visit: bunkierclub.pl or instagram [@bunkierclub](https://www.instagram.com/bunkierclub)



Experience the world of aviation

The Burgas Aviation Museum is located at the sunniest airport in the Balkans. It opened on 29 June 2017, the 70th anniversary of the first civil aviation flight in Bulgaria. The exhibition includes ten aircraft exhibits representing Bulgarian civil, agricultural, and military aviation. Highlights are the Tupolev-154 and Antonov-12, the last aircrafts on the Balkan Peninsula and the last aircrafts from the glory days of Balkan Bulgarian Airlines' fleet. avioburgas.bg



Good Vibes Lounge

Woosabi is an urban oasis in the heart of Gdańsk, located on Spichrzów Island. You'll instantly fall in love with its interior, filled with plants and good music and signature steamed bao-bun burgers. It's a place to relax, have a good time and enjoy good food. And if you like the vibe, you can visit two more beautiful Woosabis in Wrocław, try the new Woosabi in Kraków or make a pilgrimage to the original in Innsbruck, Austria. woosabi.pl





Five reasons to visit the Museum of Ethnography

Discover this new cultural wonder in the heart of Budapest

1. It's one of the newest museum buildings in Europe

Found at the gates of Budapest's City Park, the Museum of Ethnography got its own building for the very first time in its 150-year history in 2022. It is built on the site of revolutionary and communist parades. On the ground floor, the building is divided into two parts, rising in a hill.

2. It's one of the oldest ethnographic museums in the world

The Museum of Ethnography was founded in 1872 and is one of the earliest specialised museums in Europe. From the very beginning it has endeavoured to collect and preserve intangible cultural heritage associated with ethnographic research. It has emerged as one of the most

important centres in Hungary for the renewal of ethnographic museology.

3. It has stunning views right across Budapest

A striking feature of the building is its huge roof garden, which functions as an extension of the City Park's green space. It was created by spreading 3,000 cubic metres of topsoil, accommodating a variety of plants and trees. The park awaits visitors as a charming communal space with a sweeping panorama of the City Park and Budapest from its highest point.

4. You can immerse yourself in the cultures of five continents

Approximately 60 percent of the building is below ground level, where, in accordance with modern museum science recommendations, 7,000m² of world-class exhibition

space is protected from natural light. The exhibitions reflect Hungarian and global culture, presenting new perspectives on treasures from across the world. The permanent exhibition will be completed in 2024.

5. It brings people around the world together

The Museum of Ethnography in Budapest is unique in the way that it has an equal focus on its own national cultures, those of the Carpathian Basin and those around the world. For 150 years it has been collecting, preserving, researching, and transmitting the traditional and modern cultural heritage of Hungarian, European, and world communities. This means visitors can learn about our shared culture in relation to each other. neprajz.hu



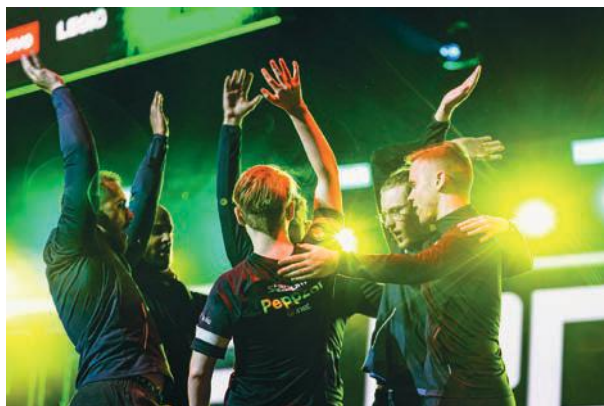
Your spa destination in Hungary

Unwind at the very best thermal baths with Hunguest Hotels

A selection of recently revamped properties, Hunguest Hotels offer the perfect blend of relaxation and adventure, with stunning natural surroundings and world-class amenities such as thermal baths, indoor and outdoor pools, and extensive wellness facilities. Most hotels are directly connected to thermal baths in famous bath destinations across Hungary, from Hévíz to Lake Balaton, Hajdúszoboszló and more.

Hunguest Hotels are excellent choice whether you are looking for a peaceful retreat or an exciting holiday – and they even have fun activities for kids if you have little ones in tow.

Book your stay now and immerse yourself in the comfort and sophistication of this leading hotel chain in the Hungarian countryside. hunguesthotels.hu



Iași - the world capital of gaming in 2023

This year, Iași will be the hotspot for esports enthusiasts everywhere as it holds the Esports World Championship between 24 August and 3 September. It's the perfect host city – Iași is a flourishing city, and one of Romania's most significant cultural, IT and university centres.

The competition, organized by the IESF, will bring together more than 700 players from over 120 countries. They will compete on four big stages for six of the top competitive games of the moment – Counter Strike: Global-Offensive, Dota 2, eFootball, Tekken, Mobile Legends and PUBG Mobile. The total prize value is \$500,000.

The championship will take place as part of the Digital Throne, a festival that will bring together various forms of digital entertainment, from multimedia stages and top international musicians to impressive projections on the Palace of Culture, an emblematic landmark of the city. digitalthroneiasi.com



 Lithuania

Raising the roofs of Kaunas: the best kaunastic experiences

Kaunas, Lithuania, is just a short flight away from you. Time to pack your bags, and leave plenty of space for inspiration

Are you a fan of modernist architecture? A nature lover? Are you keen on second cities? Do you run a street art-focused Instagram account? We can ensure that there are not hundreds, maybe even thousands of places, objects, things and phenomena worth discovering in Kaunas. In the warm season and early autumn, the city is dancing, singing, swimming, playing sports, and watching cinema – all in the open air. We're sure you don't want to miss it.

Here's where to meet the nicest and most interesting people and spend the most kaunastic days and evenings. Are you ready?

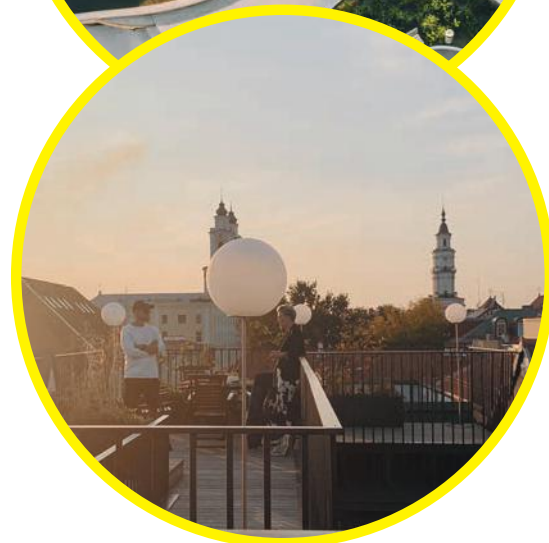
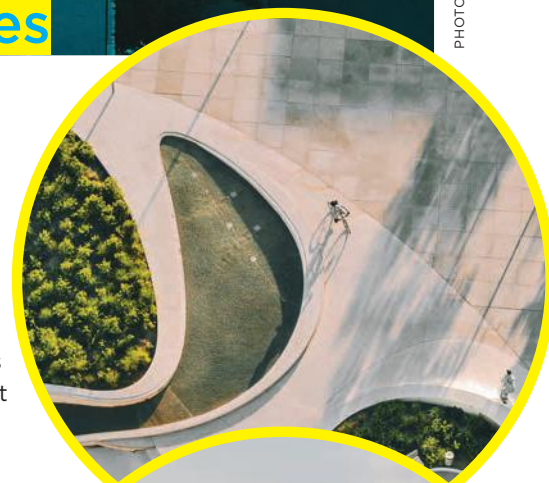
Whatever the reason for your trip to Kaunas, you can't complete your experience without a visit to the Courtyard Gallery: it's a constantly updated street art exhibition started by a resident, that's open to every good-hearted human being.

Lithuania has a handful of botanical gardens, but VMU Kaunas Botanical Garden is a must-see this year, because it's turning 100 years old. The gardens will host various events throughout the summer – from poetry readings to concerts.

Pažaislis and the Kaunas Yacht Club are a short ride away too, so make sure you fit them in. Time melts away on the city beach, and the terrace of Marina Taste Gallery is perfect for delicious moments of relaxation.

Back in the heart of Kaunas, the pulse goes up in the heat of summer. For those who want more privacy and romance but at the same time want to hear the bustle of the city with one ear, the terrace of the boutique hotel Boheme House is the place for those truly romantic moments.

visit.kaunas.lt/en #visitkaunas #kaunastic





Bathe in beauty and history at Rudas Baths

Meet, relax and heal at Budapest's ancient Turkish baths

Fancy bathing in light that filters through tiny holes on a dome ceiling above an octagonal pool? Head to Turkish Rudas Baths that have served as a place to meet, relax and heal for almost 500 years. The authentic architectural features and the thermal waters of this Turkish bath will surely soothe your soul. Check the opening hours as some days are only for men and others only for women. The modern wellness area, including the panorama pool, is open for both men and women all week long. Admiring the beautiful view from the rooftop pool is a must-to-do in Budapest. Come and recover from the toils of an exhausting day by enjoying the view and the water. For further information visit en.rudasfurdo.hu



A truly relaxing haven

Hotel Castellastva, located in the small coastal town of Petrovac, is a family hotel hidden away in greenery and olive groves, close to the beach. This is the place where you can relax and feel at home.

Our welcoming approach to hospitality means we have taken care of every detail so you can relax and enjoy an unforgettable vacation.

With a capacity of 185 rooms, cosy and comfortable rooms will make your stay pleasant and unforgettable, and we are sure that you will leave with the best memories. The hotel's accommodations are divided into six sections: Mare, Kate, Eva, Jana, Ana, and Lux, the hotel's new annexe. Comfortable double rooms with a terrace are equipped with high-class accommodation facilities.

There is an outdoor pool at the hotel, along with a bar, lounge chairs and a beautiful terrace. For reservations and enquiries call **+382 33 402 456** or email: reservations@budvanskarivijera.co.me



Romania

Craiova - the place to be in love

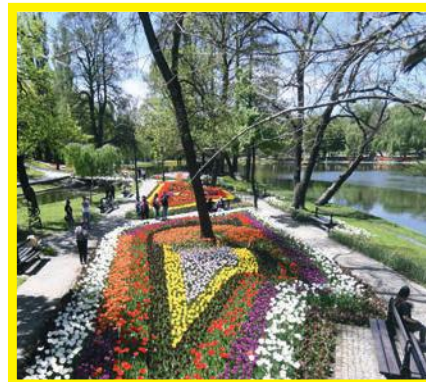
The perfect citybreak destination if you want to discover a romantic and attractive new place

Craiova is a city of creative and generous people, with amazing old buildings and green spaces, a good vibe, and fascinating traditions and gastronomy, ready to be revealed. It is the place where local artists give colour to each urban space - pedestrian alleys, parks, walls, benches and gardens - transforming them into genuine micro-cultural centers. You will be amazed by the fragrance of thousands of flowers; impressed by the variety of churches and urban pieces of art; and awestruck by the magnificence and beauty of the historic monuments. Craiova has over 800 hectares of green areas, and is home to the largest natural park in central and eastern Europe - Nicolae Romanescu Park, which alone takes up over 100 hectares. Designed by the French architect Édouard Redont, the park received the gold medal at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1900. It is an

amazing landscape with a charming Medieval castle, lakes, waterfalls, a suspended bridge, a hippodrome, a velodrome for karting and bikers' lovers, and a zoo, all enclosed in a glorious abundance of green space.

Craiova's museums (the Art Museum, Bănia House and Oltenia Museum) house masterpieces and artefacts ranging from works of Constantin Brâncuși - Rodin's disciple - to the 30,000-year-old skull of a mystery woman. At the Art Museum, you can admire a huge construction of over 200 tons, made only of glass, without any metal fastening system. Called the Brâncuși Egg, it is a glass prisma - unique in the world.

A trip to Craiova could mean an escape to the magical Christmas Markets - the third largest in Europe - or to the most animated festivals for the entire family, such as Puppets Occupy Street or IntenCity.




Book a flight and let your soul be in love with Craiova!
primariacraiova.ro





Off the beaten track

Sicily is best known for its beach towns, but inland you'll find authentic culture, beautiful landscapes and a new plan to put a neglected region on the tourist map

 Words by Julia Buckley



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Anna Tasca Lanza's cooking school borders the Tenuta Regaleali vineyard

Below right A delicious spread at the Antico Feudo San Giorgio farmhouse



Spend aperitivo hour on the terrace at Antico Feudo San Giorgio, and you could be in Tuscany – except for the lack of crowds. Hills tumble around the 18th-century farmhouse, rolling and rearing up towards peaks topped by Renaissance towns, with higher mountains beyond. But instead of finding Florence on the other side of these hills, it's the Tyrrhenian Sea that twinkles – just 30km away as the crow flies. It might look like Tuscany but this is Sicily – just not the Sicily we know.

“Guests are really surprised, they don't think of this as Sicily,” says owner Fabiola Fatta, pouring homemade wine on her terrace. “They think of the beach – not of hills, countryside, farmland.”

If you were glued to *The White Lotus* earlier this year, you'll know Sicily as an island of spectacular sea views, beaches, yacht-filled waters and grand villas. Even those who have been, are probably most familiar with the coast: the ancient Greek Theatre spilling down the cliffside at Taormina, the sun-baked salt pans of Trapani, and chic seaside towns from Sciacca to Cefalù.

But this is the Mediterranean's biggest island, with an interior larger than any other Italian region. That



means that Sicily also happens to have Dolomite-like mountains, Piedmont-worthy vineyards and those Tuscan-style hills.

Forget the coast, “the *entroterra* (inland) is the heart of Sicily”, says Fabrizia Lanza, who was brought up on her family's estate near Vallerlunga, an hour west of Antico Feudo San Giorgio. Lanza already runs the wildly successful Anna Tasca Lanza cooking school, founded by her mother – but the school, along with her cousin Alberto's neighbouring vineyard, Tenuta Regaleali, have long been tourist-attracting outliers in an area where few outsiders tread.

When the pandemic arrived, she came up with the idea of promoting the *entroterra* for tourism



for the first time. “I wanted to do something for the community,” explains Fabrizia. “I felt I could help people who don’t speak English. The idea was to set up a network to give visibility to other people.”

Her project, The Heart of Sicily, soft-launched last year, but is only really getting going, as the first few tourists take the short but off-the-beaten path inland. “It hasn’t been easy,” she says, “the area is completely unknown.” Centred around the Madonie mountain range, roughly an hour east of Palermo and 90 minutes northwest of Catania, it aims to introduce tourists to an area that, so far, is relatively ignored by outsiders. In Italy, the home of overtourism, this is big news.

It’s about time, says Salvatore Lo Iacono, a local driver who’s working with the project. Salvatore’s been ferrying tourists around the island for 10 years – and growing increasingly annoyed that nobody wants to venture inland.

“Very few tourists know the entroterra,” he says. “There’s vast potential here, but it’s barely valued. But when tourists do come, they’re ecstatic. They love the colours, the plants, how the landscape shapeshifts. They love the wild fennel growing by the roadside, the prickly pear bushes, the poppies and the *sulla* (pink wildflowers) in spring. From a naturalistic and cultural point of view, it has so much to offer.”

Certainly, this area has to be one of Italy’s most beautiful – and least spoiled – landscapes. In roughly

“When tourists do come, they’re ecstatic. It has so much to offer”

a 25km radius (though driving takes hours, the roads curling in and out of the hills), it goes from mountain peaks made from Dolomite rock to crags and billowing wheatfields. In ancient times, this area was known as “the granary of the Roman Empire”.

Dotted across this landscape is a network of local hosts who are ready to plunge visitors into this brave new world of mountain hikes, medieval towns, ceramics classes, cookery and cheese-making.

The idea of the project, says Fabrizia, is to “mix it up” – pairing her cooking school with, say, a mountain trek along medieval footpaths with guide Giovanna Gebbia, or a ceramics class in Polizzi Generosa, a hilltop town founded by the ancient Greeks and studded with Renaissance palazzos. You might eat organic food plucked from the garden and cooked by owner Pietro Genduzo at Agriturismo Cuca, near Polizzi Generosa, or walk through the labyrinthine Grotte della Gurfa caves at Alia, an hour west.



Clockwise from far left
Fabrizia Lanza and Filippo Privitera; Sicily's beguiling *entroterra*; Petralia Soprana is one of the pretty villages in Sicily's underrated interior



JUMBO



Jumbo's journey began in 2011 with the opening of its first store in Tirana, Albania. The concept resonated with people, leading to the establishment of 8 superstores across the country.

In 2014, Jumbo expanded to Kosova, opening the first store in Fushe Kosove and later expanding to a total of 7 superstores.



In 2017, Jumbo ventured into Bosnia and Herzegovina, starting with a store in Sarajevo, which grew to 6 superstores across the country.



Finally, in 2019, Jumbo entered Montenegro, opening its first store in Podgorica and expanding to 2 superstores in total.



Today, Jumbo proudly welcomes over **13 million visitors** annually to its 23 superstores.

For more information, follow us on social media.



Clockwise from below
Ceramics in Polizzi Generosa;
cheese made at Caseificio
Privitera; the farm at
Agriturismo Cuca



“It’s far from mass tourism, so this area has maintained its authenticity”

Sculpted from a rocky bluff above rolling wheatfields, these Bronze Age caves are, some believe, the tomb of Minos, the mythical king of Crete who died in Sicily. But Valentina Guccione, who brings Heart of Sicily guests here from her nearby organic farmstay, Dara Guccione Biofarm, reckons it’s a *granaio* – a millennia-old grain store. And she would know: her family has been growing wheat around Alia since 1860.

“This area is little known because we’re far from the sea, but the project is giving a voice to a rural lifestyle that’s often discounted,” she says from her garden, where visitors can eat home-cooked meals under huge trees and then doze in the sun alongside her dad, Gabriele. “It’s far from mass tourism, so the area has maintained its authenticity. We still have 1,000-year-old recipes.”

One woman who knows about those recipes is Fabrizia, who named the project after her mum’s first cookbook. “I wanted to reconstruct the narrative [of the island] to one that’s not about *The Godfather* or *The White Lotus*,” she says. At her school, students knead pasta, roll *involtini di manzo* (razor-thin beef,



stuffed and skewered), and deep-fry *panelle* (chickpea fritters). They visit nearby Caseificio Privitera, a cheese farm owned by father and son Filippo and Enzo. Enzo looks after the family’s 400 sheep; Filippo makes the cheese. “The days I don’t make cheese, my wife asks me what’s wrong,” he says.

Wine comes from Tenuta Regaleali – no regular winery. Before tastings, guests go off-roading in a 4x4 around the 500-hectare vineyard, rollercoasting around perricone, nero d’avola and catarratto vines.

It all combines to create a picture that’s nothing like you expect from this famous island. “Sicily is an onion,” says Fabrizia, with a smile. “The more you peel, the more you discover.”

The Heart of Sicily has packages from €270 for three nights. theheartofsicily.it.

✈ Wizz Air flies to Palermo, Catania and Comiso

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- Meeting of Styles - Street Art & Graffiti Festival | 4 - 6.08 | free
- Re:tradition Festival - The Jagiellonian Fair | 18 - 20.08 | free



September

FIBA 3x3 U23 WORLD CUP 2023

| 27.09 - 1.10.2023 | free

- European Festival of Taste | 4 - 10.09 | free
- Festival of Art in Public Space OPEN CITY | 15.09 - 15.10 | free

Is that all we have planned for the EYC? On the contrary!
All information about the programme can be found through scanning the QR code.



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Dream to reality!

Would you like to be a witness to the exciting future? Come to Ferencváros' international matches this year and be part of the continuation of our story

Ferencváros – the most popular and successful Hungarian football team – has completed a season that is truly unforgettable. In addition to lifting the Championship trophy for the fifth consecutive time, it has proven itself at international level too. But how did it happen: how did UEFA Europa League's lowest-budget team finish top of their group, and get to the knockout stage of a European tournament for the first time in 48 years?

It all started when Ferencváros (the Hungarian champion team of the 2021/2022 season) was once again invited to participate in the 2022/2023 UEFA Champions League

qualifiers. After the draw, we played our first qualifying match in Kazakhstan. Following a goalless draw away, we triumphed over the Kazakh champions with a resounding 5-1 victory in the return leg at the Groupama Arena.

We couldn't have wished for a more favorable draw in the second qualifying round. The fan base had been waiting since 1992 for us to face Slovan again, as we had unfinished business with the Slovaks. However, unfortunately, after the home match, SK Slovan Bratislava held a 2-1 advantage going into the return game. With the large and supportive fanbase behind us, the

aim was clear: not only to achieve glory but also to secure a spot in the UEFA Conference League group stage. In the end, we exacted noble revenge as we already led 2-0 at half-time. With an overall score of 5-3, we advanced to the next round.

Following the defeat against Qarabag in the third qualifying round, just like in the 2020/2021 season, we continued our journey in the UEFA Europa League playoffs. In the playoffs, we encountered the Irish team Shamrock Rovers, and – in the first match played in Hungary – it became certain that we once again secured a spot in the Europa League group stage.



After the Europa League draw in September, we were placed in Group H, alongside teams such as the Serbian champions FK Crvena zvezda, the Turkish champions Trabzonspor, and the well-known French team AS Monaco. Many believed that, as in the 2020/2021 season, we would finish in last place in this elite company. However, during the first match, we displayed superhuman performance on the field at the Groupama Arena. Despite being a man down, we achieved a 3-2 victory against the Turkish champions in the home match.

The win was a group effort as the fans went above and beyond. They prepared creative and spectacular choreographies, and continuously cheered on the team at the top of their lungs for the whole game. The atmosphere during the home group matches was something that every football enthusiast must experience once in a lifetime.

Dénes Dibusz, who has been Ferencváros' primary goalkeeper for nearly 10 years and is also team captain, said: "I have never experienced such an atmosphere in a stadium. Practically everyone present breathed together with the team for 90 minutes. There was an indescribable force that allowed us to win the match, even while being a man down."

This excellent performance was followed by two more victories. Leading the group with nine points, we eagerly awaited AS Monaco on the fifth match day. Knowing that even a draw would be enough to progress, we had the opportunity to make history. In the highly anticipated match, we fell behind in the 31st minute, and Monaco took a well-deserved 1-0 lead after the first half. However, in the 83rd minute, Kristoffer Zachariassen managed to score the equaliser. The Groupama Arena erupted with excitement in the

final minutes, and the green and white team fought tooth and nail for their reward. Thanks to the 1-1 draw, it was determined that, regardless of the results on the final match day, Ferencváros would finish first in UEFA Europa League Group H. After 48 years of waiting, the dream finally became a reality.

We then had the opportunity to play the historic match against Bayer Leverkusen in the national stadium, Puskás Aréna. The fans once again gave their all, but due to several of our key players being out with injury, we couldn't secure the victory. However, we are sure that this match will remain an everlasting memory for the players and the fans.

The question is: after such a fantastic season, what is the next goal? Our head coach, Stanislav Cherchesov, provided a clear answer: qualifying for the UEFA Champions League group stage and replicating the outstanding results there.

And now you can be a part of this story! For just 23,000 Hungarian forints, you can experience the thrilling atmosphere of international matches in a VIP environment at Groupama Arena in Budapest, home of Ferencváros, and enjoy unlimited food and drink selection two hours before the match and an additional hour after the final whistle.

The VIP Telekom section provides one of the most magnificent match-viewing experiences, next to the most passionate fans, close to the pitch and almost in line with the goal. We hope we've sparked your interest and look forward to welcoming you soon. See groupamaarena.com/englishga for ticket information or use the QR code.



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in the **know**



The Eats
Where to have
a good meal
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The Stays
Where to rest
your head
p101

The Drinks
Where to
socialise
p104



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THE EATS

Where to go for a great meal across the WIZZ network



Decimo London

Decimo's wow factor hits before you set foot in the restaurant – with a stomach-flipping ride in an external glass elevator overlooking the twinkling lights of St Pancras railway station. It's a fitting entrance into the cavernous, low-lit space that's a world away from the bustling street outside.

Despite the draw of Michelin-starred chef Peter Sanchez-Iglesias, and the restaurant's central London placement, it manages to avoid all the pitfalls of a tourist trap and feels almost like a secret location. There's a low buzz of conversation here as diners sip mezcal cocktails,

perched at boldly tiled tables, enjoying the view from vast windows over the city's skyline.

Service at Decimo is slick and understated, and the extensive list of mezcal cocktails proffered at the bar is full of the Spanish-Mexican flavour the food menu also promises. Devised by Sanchez-Iglesias as an homage to his Spanish roots and love for Mexican cuisine, the fare on offer packs a huge punch despite its often simple appearance – the tomato salad is mouthwatering, sliced steak is cooked to perfection, beetroot comes bursting with flavour, and the chocolate olive oil dessert is the perfect way to end a meal.

decimo.london

DECIMO REVIEW: HARRIET SINCLAIR HOXTON PHOTO: THE GOOD.COM



Cantina Valentina

Brussels

Whether you're staying at Brussels' new Hoxton or not, you should definitely make time to visit its signature restaurant.

A Peruvian-inspired all-day spot, soundtracked by Latin beats, it serves up modern twists on traditional dishes. Try the crispy duck with two types of rice or, for seafood fans, the pulpo a la peruana. That's grilled octopus with purple potato and black garlic. Yum. **thehoxton.com**



Anfibio

Lisbon

This brand-new restaurant comes as part of the Doca da Marinha regeneration. With Miguel Rocha Vieira at the helm (he's earned the most Michelin stars of any Portuguese chef), it's set to be the area's main draw, but despite his fine-dining reputation, this eatery is all about hearty dishes with excellent ingredients from land and sea, such as brás do mar (shrimp in a crustacean bisque sauce), or beef short ribs, slow cooked for 20 hours. **anfibio.pt**



Allegra Madrid

A visit to this newly opened restaurant in the Spanish capital can overwhelm the senses – in the best way possible. The sister restaurant to local favourite Casa Isabella, Allegra has the same aesthetic quirkiness but dials up the opulence – and the size. This mega-venue is a visual cacophony of primary colours, stained glass, and surrealist murals. If Isabella is a *casa*, Allegra is a mansion.

Come evening, the music begins. You'll find live performances in the central piano bar and DJ sets on specific nights. Both are best enjoyed with one of the restaurant's signature cocktails in hand. These are named after each star sign, so you can find out what your horoscope tastes like.

Despite all the drama of its side shows, the restaurant's food is no afterthought. Head chef Luca

Mazzini has created an enticing menu of jazzed-up Italian classics such as burrata and zucchini fritti for nibbles, steak tartar with Cipriani sauce to start, and spicy vodka rigatoni as a sharer main (although we certainly won't judge if you choose not to share). Other dishes include cuttlefish-ink spaghetti and beef fillet milanese with black truffle and sunny-side fried egg. allegramadrid.com

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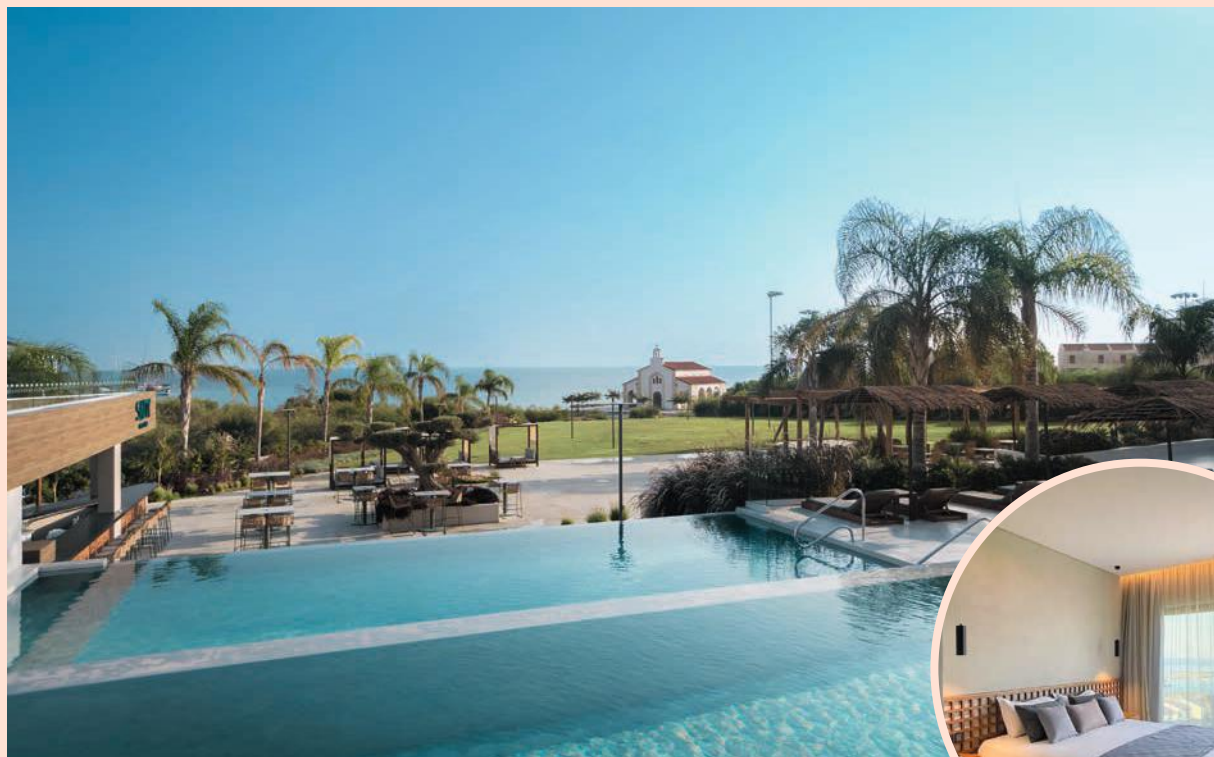


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THE STAYS

The best places to rest your head across the WIZZ network



Cavo Zoe Seaside Hotel

Cyprus

If you were told to close your eyes and imagine the perfect beachfront resort, the Cavo Zoe Seaside Hotel in Protaras, Cyprus, wouldn't be far off. Perched on the Levantine Sea, the newly refurbished hotel is a minute's walk from a small sandy beach and also has a three-level cascading infinity pool.

A mixture of natural and modern architecture, the decor features concrete terraces, glass railings and chrome detailing, juxtaposed with wooden sunbeds and pergolas, palapa umbrellas and striped cloth awnings. Plus the

requisite palm trees, of course. As for amenities, we love the sauna and spa, and the open-air bar overlooking the water.

Dolce Restaurant serves a buffet of Cypriot and international fare made from local produce and Salty, the hotel's bar, transforms into an intimate restaurant at night with an à la carte menu.

There are plenty of the island's big hitters nearby. Konnos and Fig Tree beaches are both within a five-minute drive, while Cavo Greco National Park and the Church of Profitis Ilias are within 10 minutes.

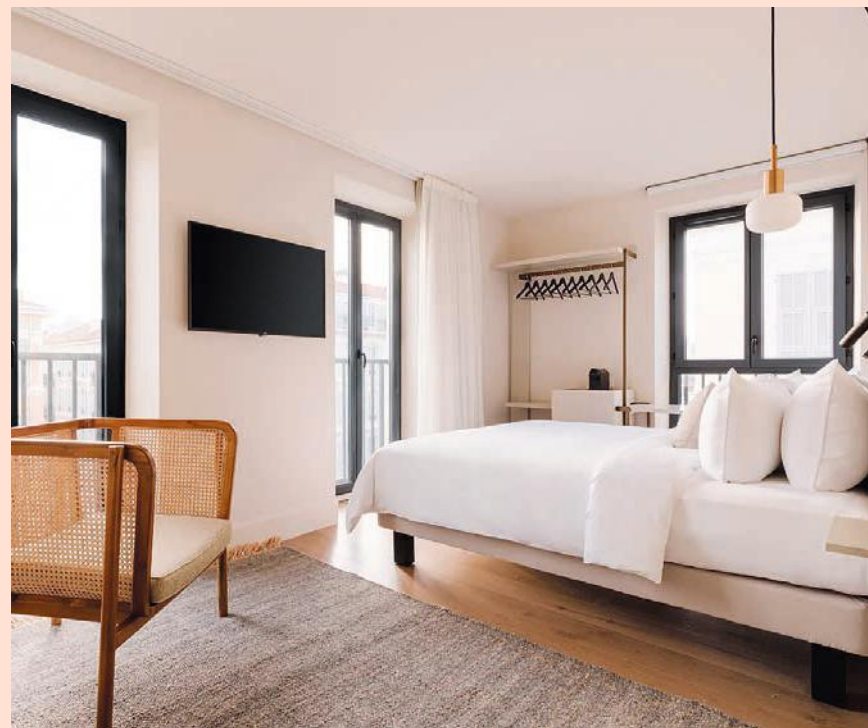
Sonder at Yelo Jean Médecin Nice

Nice might be located on France's spectacular Côte d'Azur, but there's much more to it than beaches. There's art to discover at the Musée Matisse and Marc Chagall National Museum; cobbled streets and awe-inspiring churches to explore in the Old Town; and delicious food and drink to try. And Sonder at Yelo Jean Médecin makes the ideal base for experiencing all of it.

The aparthotel is conveniently located on the iconic Avenue Jean Médecin in the centre, just a few minutes from the city's main train station and a short walk from the famous Promenade des Anglais.

If you want to explore further afield it couldn't be easier – an electric tram stops close to the front door.

Inside, the decor is a celebration of sleek minimalism, with bohemian accents of cascading greenery and crafted rattan seating in the lounge. Rooms combine functionality and comfort, with cloud-like beds, black-out curtains, and stylish bathrooms that exude the glamour Nice is known for. Each room is also tech-enabled, with tablets that control everything from lighting to Chromecast streaming. It all adds up to a stress-free stay.



Convent de la Missió

Palma de Mallorca

A stay at this boutique hotel in Palma is quite literally a religious experience. It's housed inside a 17th-century convent, which still has its original beams, arched limestone ceilings and crypt (now a spa). Guests can take a dip with a view in the rooftop pool, sip cocktails in the Art Bar, or munch Mediterranean fare at Michelin-starred restaurant Marc Fosh. Truly divine.



Cromlix

Near Edinburgh

If you've ever wanted to experience living like a Laird and Lady in their country pile then book a stay at Cromlix, an hour from Edinburgh. Owned by tennis royalty, Andy and Kim Murray, this manor house hotel has just reopened following a smart refurbishment. It has 34 acres of wild woodlands, manicured gardens and even its own chapel, loch and – of course – tennis courts.



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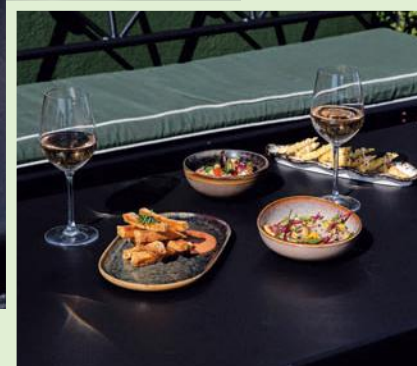


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THE DRINKS

Where to go for a strong cocktail across the WIZZ network




Troya Berlin

When three esteemed creative minds get together to launch a bar, you know it's going to be good – or at least worth talking about. That's exactly what's happened at this recent opening in Berlin's Mitte district. Anna Müller, daughter of playwright Heiner Müller; musician, theatre director and man-about-town, Friedrich Liechtenstein; and uber cool ad agency Jung von Matt Havel's MD, Jonas Bailly, are

the brains behind Troya. As its pedigree might suggest, this is not a bar for a few snifters after a day of sightseeing. The trio's aim is to make it the 'it' place to go out, filled with the most alternative crowd ("no boring people"), so be prepared to face stern judgement when trying to get in.

Drinks are anything but average. The signature is a Dark and Cosy (a twist on the Dark and Stormy) and

other unusual concoctions regularly appear on the menu, such as artichoke liqueur. Even the building itself is noteworthy. Troya occupies the ground floor of a well-known structure, marked by artist Jean-Remy von Matt with the inscription *'Dieses Haus stand früher in einem anderen Land'* (This house used to be in another country), reflecting the city's history. **troya-bar.de**


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www.kashtite.com

Hadjidragans restaurants take you on a culinary journey through time without leaving the capital. Two restaurants in the heart of Sofia function as museums, with original exhibits donated by old Bulgarian families. Thousands of household items from ancient Bulgarian villages will be brought to life before your eyes, together with stunning

costumes, painted carts, a weaving loom, and more. Come and sample some traditional Bulgarian dishes including oven roasted lamb, chicken in an egg, banitsa and shopska salad. Choose one of the two restaurants, relax, savour your meal, and take comfort in the knowledge that you have just passed by a number of Bulgaria's most exciting sights.

Mean-Eyed Cat Bar

Liverpool

As iconic as The Beatles were, it's refreshing to have a bar dedicated to a different artist in Liverpool. In this case, it's American country music legend Johnny Cash. What's he got to do with this city in the northwest of England? Not much, but when the cocktails are good and the venue's buzzing, it doesn't really matter.

We wouldn't expect anything else from the Mean-Eyed Cat Bar franchise. The original opened nearly a decade ago in Leeds and continues to thrive. Seel Street, in the middle of Liverpool's party area, seemed like the perfect spot

to open a second branch of this Deep South-inspired dive bar.

The decor is all low ceilings, shabby wood and punchy good music, cocktails that nod to US tastebuds (from the PB&J Old Fashioned and American Pie to the I Walk The Lime), and BBQ food like pulled pork and buffalo chicken. Plus, there's free pizza with your drink before 9pm – just in case you've not got much 'Cash'.

meaneyecatbar.co.uk



Bar sur le Toit

Paris

Paris has no shortage of rooftop bars, but this one atop Hôtel Rochechouart rivals them all. Located in Pigalle, its views of Sacré Coeur, just a few blocks away, are spectacular. Turn and you'll be delighted by views of other Parisian landmarks: Notre Dame to the south and the Arc de Triomphe to the west. Grab a Tango – a mix of rum, cognac, lemon and jasmine – and drink in the views. hotelrochechouart.com



Mei Rose Rooftop Bar

Gothenburg

This new bar sits on the top floor of long-awaited new opening Grand Curiosa Hotel Liseberg. Inspired by the streets of Hong Kong, it brings in traditional design elements such as hanging lanterns, dark woods and fretwork – and the drinks reflect the theme too. Order the Hong Kong, a cocktail of tequila, elderflower liqueur and chilli. liseberg.se/mei-rose

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Check out our

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DATA AS OF 1 JULY 2023



news

Want to know where we're flying next, how to get the most out of your journey and what's new in the dynamic world of WIZZ? Then read on...



New routes from the UK

Wizz Air is accelerating its growth in the UK with the addition of two new routes from London Gatwick Airport (LGW). The new routes to Prague in the Czech Republic and Hurgada in Egypt have been launched due to increased demand and will start on 31 October.

The update signals positive business growth for the ultra-low-cost airline in the UK. Wizz Air now offers 116 routes in 30 countries from London.

The new routes will add more than 220,000 annual seats to and from the UK capital. And they are not the only progress being made in the UK market. There are plans to change all of Wizz Air's aircraft at its Luton hub to the Airbus A321neo - the most sustainable aircraft on the market - by 2025. It's all part of WIZZ's commitment to be at the forefront of sustainable travel in the airline industry.

New flights from Tirana

In order to offer customers more options, Wizz Air is increasing its routes and flight frequency from Albania. A new route from the capital Tirana to Thessaloniki is launching in August, while others to Birmingham, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Bucharest and Sofia will start this winter; and flights to Malta, Prague, Palermo, Kraków and Chania will start from March 2024.



Wizz
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destinations
in 53 countries


35
bases in
17 countries


910+
routes


8,000+
staff


45m
passengers
carried*

*FIGURE FOR 2022

First biofuel flights take off

In May, the first Wizz Air commercial flights powered by a blend of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) took off from Budapest Airport. For the historic launch, the airline selected its five newest A321neo planes, fuelled by 23.5 tonnes of fuel blend, containing 37% pure SAF and 63% Jet A1 fuel. The planes took guests from the Hungarian capital to Paris, Eindhoven, Madrid, Castellon and Malta. The project supported efforts in the aviation industry to make air travel more sustainable. Using SAF can help to reduce CO₂



emissions by up to 80%, compared to fossil jet fuel.

Yvonne Moynihan, Corporate and ESG Officer at Wizz Air, said: “Our SAF test, which is ahead of the legislative mandates coming in 2025, demonstrates that industry collaboration is one of the most

impactful ways to address the current climate challenge.

“While Wizz Air is already leading in sustainability with one of the world’s youngest aircraft fleets and highly efficient operations, the initiative is a testament to our broader strategy.”



We invest in new technologies

Wizz Air has proven its commitment to the future of sustainable innovation by investing £5 million in Firefly, a British sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) company, and participating in a \$50 million investment in CleanJoule, a US-based SAF start-up. Firefly specialises in converting sewage sludge, a low-cost waste product, into SAF, while CleanJoule aims to produce high-performance SAF from agricultural residues and other waste biomass.

BUDAPEST AIRPORT PHOTO: ROBERT BARANYI

New routes



Abu Dhabi – Antalya, Bishkek, Larnaca

Catania – Brussels, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Malta, Paris, Sharm El Sheikh

Craiova – Dortmund

Debrecen – Hurghada

Gdansk – Alicante, Copenhagen, Tenerife

Katowice – Alicante, Copenhagen

Kraków – Tirana, Valencia

London Gatwick – Hurghada, Prague

Skopje – Ljubljana, Luxembourg

Timisoara – Zakyntos

Tirana – Birmingham, Bremen, Brindisi, Bucharest, Crete, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Malta, Palermo, Prague, Sofia, Thessaloniki, Valencia

Wroclaw – Malaga, Valencia

Yerevan – Dortmund, Katowice, Prague, Sofia

Where to next?

There is no substitute for the sights of Egypt, so if you're looking for a truly exotic holiday, book your next flight to one of these destinations...



Is there any holiday spot as unique as Egypt? For one thing, it's the oldest tourist destination in the world, so has been inspiring travel for literally thousands of years. Its pyramids are the only remaining Wonder of the Ancient World, and the monuments of its Nile Valley with their mystical hieroglyphs are landmarks you won't see anywhere else. Then there are

bustling markets, ancient mosques and mystic Coptic Christian monasteries. And, added to all that, it has a gorgeous coastline full of beaches, watersports and some of the world's best diving.

Luckily, Wizz Air flies to no less than six destinations around the north African country. We've outlined the best bits of all of them, making it easy to make your decision of where to go next.

CAIRO

This really is the year to visit the ancient capital – not just for the pyramids, but for the Grand Egyptian Museum, which is finally set to open at the end of the year. This multimillion-dollar project – the largest archaeological museum in the world – has been 20 years in the making and will feature 100,000 artefacts, including the complete Tutankhamun collection.

ALEXANDRIA

Perched on the northern Egyptian seaside, this city is nicknamed ‘Bride of the Mediterranean’ for its coastal charms. It’s a history lover’s dream. Check out the modern incarnation of the city’s magnificent ancient library, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, as well as the remains of a second ancient wonder – the Lighthouse of Alexandria, now a 15th century fort – and ruins of Hellenic, Ptolemaic and Byzantine civilisations.

SHARM EL-SHEIKH

Egypt is a paradise for beach lovers, and this is the place to choose for snorkelling or scuba diving in the Red Sea by day,

and soaking up the nightlife after dark. Saint Catherine’s Monastery is a fantastic day trip out into the Sinai. And proximity to Jordan means you can pop across the border to see the wonders of Petra, take 4WD across dramatic landscapes of Wadi Rum and get an extra stamp in your passport.

HURGHADA

Known for watersports, many of Hurghada’s hotels have windsurfing, kitesurfing, yachting, scuba diving and snorkeling. Combine a beach holiday with the Nile Valley, as this resort town is just a short hop from Luxor and the greatest concentration of ancient monuments anywhere.

MARSA ALAM

Another dive capital – but what diving! The reefs around Marsa Alam have more than 450 types of coral and over 1,200 species of fish, which also attract a gorgeous variety of bird life, including herons, spoonbills and terns, and ‘spinner’ dolphins, known for their aerial acrobatics. You might even see dugong ‘sea cows’ or green turtles, which feed on the seagrass beds here. The UNESCO-listed Wadi el Gemal nature reserve, a few kilometres south, is great for wildlife safaris, too.

SOHAG

Less touristy, but by no means less interesting, this city on the banks of the Nile is home to boisterous bazaars, tranquil mediaeval mosques and incredibly ornate Coptic Christian monasteries. Make sure you check out the Sohag National Museum, and Akhmim, on its eastern side, which is the place to buy authentic woven souvenirs to add to the incredible memories of Egypt that you will, no doubt, take home.

✈ **Wizz Air flies to six destinations in Egypt**



Clockwise from left
Dugong ‘sea cows’ live in the waters off Marsa Alam, the Red Monastery at Sohag, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the pyramids of Giza



“It’s an intricate puzzle that requires a keen eye for detail”

We catch up with Javier Martín-Díaz, Wizz Air’s Head of Scheduling and Slots, to find out what makes his job so challenging – and rewarding



Above right
Javier Martín-Díaz
loves the problem-solving
aspect of his job

Back in 2008, a close encounter with an aircraft – “witnessing the Airbus A380 performing a low pass” – cemented his decision to pursue a degree in aerospace engineering, which led on to another in airline management. Then, just as he was finishing up his studies, a job came up at Wizz Air – serendipitous timing. Over the past five years he has risen to his current role, in which he is responsible for the flight schedule design, airport slot management and the loading of flights and flight changes into web and app platforms.

In order to keep the costs of flying low for our customers, he needs to ensure Wizz Air is optimising the use of all its resources. “My primary goal is creating a revenue-generating schedule that optimises the usage of the airline’s most valuable assets – the crew and the aircraft,” explains Javier.

Along with his scheduling team (Rocio, Edina, Levi, Dani, Szilvi, David and Guillem), his job is to look at all the possible ways to use

Javier Martín-Díaz has a fascination with aviation that started in his childhood. “I vividly remember having an aircraft toy suspended from my ceiling and playing with a Playmobil airport set,” recalls Javier, now Wizz Air’s Head of Scheduling and Slots.

“The continuous influx of new aircraft deliveries creates a constantly shifting landscape”



Venice marathon is turning pink

Wizz Air and the Venicemarathon have announced that the next edition of the running event will be entitled ‘Wizz Air Venicemarathon’. It will be held on 22 October and will see more than 8,000 runners compete across its three different distances – 42K, 21K and 10K. The race will follow the traditional and extraordinary route crossing an area full of art, history and culture before ending in central Venice, in Riva dei Sette Martiri. It is just one of the eight running events across Europe that are sponsored by the airline in 2023. [venicemarathon.it](https://www.venicemarathon.it)



continuous influx of new aircraft deliveries, ongoing redeliveries, and the inevitable maintenance requirements create a shifting landscape,” he explains.

Indeed, the number of moving and often contradictory pieces to this puzzle means schedulers have to learn to cope with the fact that, “despite doing our best to design a great schedule, there are so many limitations and requirements to meet that the schedules will never completely satisfy everyone.”

Still, despite the stresses of the job, Javier thrives in a role that allows him to use his problem-solving skills and analytical mindset. For anyone else looking to go into aircraft scheduling, he would suggest that anyone with “a numerical education and some experience in an operational department” would be an asset, “but no specific qualifications or certifications are an absolute requirement.”

**Want to work with Wizz Air?
Check out our latest vacancies
at careers.wizzair.com**

the airline’s flight potential and find creative solutions to work out the most optimal schedules and best growth strategies.

Considering that Wizz Air has a widespread network encompassing nearly 190 aircraft, serving close to 1,000 routes, and connecting almost 200 airports across 50+ countries, schedulers face the daunting task of balancing a huge number of contradicting factors – but luckily Javier loves the challenge.

“This intricate puzzle of aircraft scheduling requires a keen eye for detail and a deep understanding of the fleet’s status,” he says. “We must navigate flight and cabin crew regulations, coordinate aircraft maintenance programmes, align with ground operations requirements and actual operations feedback, account for airport capacities and constraints, all while meeting passenger demands and striving for top-level commercial performance.”

The trickiest part of the job is that these parameters are constantly changing. “The



How we fly in the most environmentally sustainable way*

We launched Wizz Air with the strong belief that air travel should not be a privilege. That we will create a world of opportunity for all through affordable travel. And we are delivering on that promise.

And while giving more and more people the freedom to travel, we have also proven that growth and sustainability can go hand in hand. As well as breaking down barriers between people and air travel, we've shown a whole industry how aviation can be more sustainable.

Crucial business model and design decisions, from pricing to seat density, make sure we fly with high-load factors. We've never even thought about business-class seats. Or a hub-and-spoke model. Or substituting short train rides for flights. We've instead focused on flying with the youngest, most efficient fleet and the most modern engines possible, to consume less fuel.

This all delivers the lowest CO₂ emissions per passenger kilometre in the industry, beating not just legacy carriers, but also low-cost airlines operating in a similar way to us.

A plane will never be greener than a train or an electric vehicle. But we are and will be the greenest choice of flying. Because when it comes to a crucial issue like sustainability, we believe in the facts of today. Not promises of the future.

Paperless flight deck

We use tablets in our flight decks, saving over 25,000 printed pages in the aircraft

Lighter seats

We're continuously investing in newer, lighter seats to reduce the aircraft's weight, which decreases fuel burn and emissions

Single-engine taxiing after landing

We save fuel by turning off one of the engines after arrival

Noise pollution reduction

Our A321NEO aircraft use two Pratt & Whitney GTF engines, which reduce our noise footprint by almost 50% compared to previous generation aircraft

Sharklets

These amazing inventions can reduce fuel burn by 2% and CO₂ emissions by 800 tonnes per year per plane. The whole fleet will be equipped with them by 2024

Washing the engines regularly

We wash every engine around 10 times per year – the cleaner they are, the smoother they run, and therefore less fuel is needed

Did you know?

53.8 grammes

was our CO₂ footprint per passenger/kilometre on average in the 2023 financial year**. This is the lowest CO₂ intensity among our competitors in Europe, according to officially disclosed results.

* Wizz Air was named Global Environmental Sustainability Airline Group of the Year by the Centre for Aviation (CAPA) at its Awards for Excellence 2022 ** 12 rolling months to 31 March 2023

Our fleet

Younger, greener and growing

Wizz Air has a single-type fleet of 186 aircraft from the Airbus A320 family. It's among the youngest and most efficient in the world – and the safest. The average age of our aircraft is 4.29 years, well below the average fleet age of our major

competitors, which is around 10 years. Our planes already have the most sophisticated safety equipment and, by 2030, we will have 500 aircraft. Our neo aircraft feature advanced systems and engines that reduce our carbon footprint, as well

as noise and cost, helping us keep fares low and accessible and providing the most responsible choice of air travel available. Wizz Air is currently the largest operator of the most sustainable Airbus A321neo aircraft in Europe.

Airbus A320ceo



Max. cruise speed 903km/h
Economical cruise speed 840km/h



Wingspan 35.8m (117ft 5in)



Number of aircraft* 43



Seat capacity 180/186
Flight crew 2 **Cabin crew** 4



↑11.76m (38ft 7in) ↓

Airbus A321ceo



Max. cruise speed 903km/h
Economical cruise speed 840km/h



Wingspan 35.8m (117ft 5in)



Number of aircraft* 41



Seat capacity 230
Flight crew 2 **Cabin crew** 5



↑11.76m (38ft 7in) ↓



Airbus A320neo



Max. cruise speed 903km/h
Economical cruise speed 840km/h



Wingspan 35.8m (117ft 5in)



Number of aircraft* 6



Seat capacity 186
Flight crew 2 **Cabin crew** 4



↑11.76m (38ft 7in) ↓



Airbus A321neo



Max. cruise speed 903km/h
Economical cruise speed 840km/h



Wingspan 35.8m (117ft 5in)



Number of aircraft* 96



Seat capacity 239
Flight crew 2 **Cabin crew** 5



↑11.76m (38ft 7in) ↓

Top marks for safety

Wizz Air is registered under the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) Operational Safety Audit (IOSA), the global benchmark in airline safety recognition. Wizz Air has also been awarded the **highest seven-star safety ranking** from the world's only one-stop airline safety and product rating agency, **AirlineRatings.com**

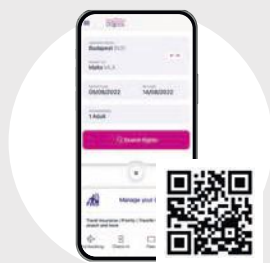
World of WIZZ

At **wizzair.com** you'll find the answers to all of your travel needs, from adding luggage and changing flights, to car rental, airport parking and more



eSIM data roaming

Stay connected with lightning-fast speeds no matter where you go with this revolutionary product provides 5G-ready data roaming in over 150 countries worldwide.



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Booking cheap flights is now even easier. Use our app to buy WIZZ Discount Club membership, review bookings, add baggage, upgrade, choose or change seats, get travel insurance, check in, check your flight status and board.

The right package for you

WIZZ Go

WIZZ Go is the perfect bundle for travellers who want to enjoy a range of popular and convenient services on their flight. With WIZZ Go, you can get **priority boarding**, choose your favourite normal **seat** and bring a **carry-on bag** and **trolley bag on board**. You can check-in online or at the airport.

WIZZ Plus

Upgrade your travel experience with WIZZ Plus, the ultimate bundle for passengers who want to enjoy **premium travel and a flexible journey**. You can take advantage of a range of extra services at a discounted price, including **premium seat** selection with extra legroom seats, **checked-in bag** and **WIZZ Flex** for full flexibility. With WIZZ Priority you can be amongst the first to board and also enjoy **auto check-in** for a hassle-free travel experience.

WIZZ Priority

Priority passengers can bring an extra trolley bag (max: 55 x 40 x 23cm) in addition to the free carry-on bag (max: 40 x 30 x 20cm) into the cabin. Plus, they are called first for boarding and have a dedicated check-in desk for bags.



Fly with us for less

Our WIZZ Discount Club offers a wide range of discounts on travel* and related services.



Join the WIZZ Discount Club Light and enjoy your discounts on the WIZZ Café & Boutique



Member



Special onboard coupons and Café & Boutique promotions

Flexible travel

Fare lock

You can secure the fare of your selected tickets for 48 hours before you complete your booking for bookings made more than seven days prior to the outbound flight's departure date.

WIZZ Flex

You can modify your tickets (including passenger name) without paying a flight change fee, or cancel your flight and request a full refund (additional services will not be refunded) to your WIZZ account, which can be used for 90 days to purchase new tickets.

Travel insurance

Our comprehensive travel insurance includes medical expenses and cancellation cover. Add your insurance to your basket together with your flights or buy it later in Manage My Booking.

Flexible travel partner

Create a new reservation without providing each passenger's name at the time of booking.

On the ground

Car rental

Book your flights and car rental in one easy step. Just add your car rental to your basket together with your flights. Get attractive discounts and enjoy our WIZZ credit back promotions.

Airport parking

Our long-standing partner ParkVia offers great prices and availability for airport parking across Europe, with fast and easy booking and significant savings, whether you're travelling for business or pleasure. Book online at wizzparking.com.

Airport transfer

For a comfortable trip, simply book your airport transfer when purchasing your ticket or visit wizztransfer.com. You can travel by shuttle, bus or private transfer – as you wish.



Suitable if you usually travel solo or with one companion, as they'll also enjoy the discount.

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The new monthly subscription programme for the Italian domestic or Polish international flights, that allows you to fly more while saving money.



Italy Discount Club

If you have our Italy Discount Club membership, you can enjoy premium discounts on domestic flights during your membership.

Standard membership

€19.99

Group membership

€34.99



Ticket discount** WIZZ Priority

Your onboard safety

Please show consideration for fellow passengers and pay attention to the following information. Remember that by purchasing your Wizz Air ticket, you have accepted the Wizz Air General Conditions of Carriage (available in full at wizzair.com)



Safe handling of hand luggage

Ensure hand luggage remains safely stowed in the locker or under the seat in front of you for takeoff, landing, and at any time as instructed by the crew. Passengers seated in the emergency rows and first row must store their cabin bags in the overhead lockers. Take care when opening lockers, as falling items may injure fellow passengers.

In case of evacuation, all baggage must be left on board and the instructions of the cabin crew must be strictly followed.



Safety equipment

It is an offence to tamper with or remove safety equipment, including adult and infant life vests, infant safety belts or extension belts. You are not allowed to remove or damage any onboard informative placards.



Sharp items

To dispose of any sharp items (e.g. hypodermic needles), please contact a cabin crew member. Do not leave your needle or syringe behind.



Turbulence management

Turbulence can occur unexpectedly. Whenever seatbelt signs are switched on, remain seated, keep seatbelts fastened, and stow away large electronic devices.



Safety of infants on board

Wizz Air has a clear procedure for infant (a child under two) restraint systems. You can only use the single hook infant seatbelt - vests/slings cannot be used with the infant seatbelt. Wizz Air only accepts aft-facing car seats when an extra seat is purchased. **However, during take-off and landing, and whenever the seatbelt sign is switched on, infants should sit on an adult's lap with the seatbelt fastened.** Life vests for infants are available and are provided whenever flying over water. All lavatories are equipped with a changing table. Do not leave children unattended in the cabin.



Lithium batteries

Portable electronic devices (PED) such as phones, laptops and tablets can contain lithium batteries. When damaged, faulty or overheated, these batteries can catch fire and explode. **If you recognise any issues with your device, inform the cabin crew immediately.**



Electronic devices

Some electronic devices can be used during the flight with **WLAN/Wi-Fi/Bluetooth turned off.**

Larger electronic devices that cannot be held comfortably in one hand, exceed ca. 1kg in weight and do not qualify as handheld devices (e.g. laptops, notebooks etc.) must be stowed in the overhead stowage compartments for takeoff, landing and whenever required by the cabin crew. **If in doubt, please ask your cabin crew.**

Inflight health tips

Read these tips on how to stay fit when travelling.



Before your air travel

Consult your doctor before travelling if you have any medical concerns. Pregnant women and those with heart or respiratory problems, blood diseases or ear, nose and sinus infections should seek medical advice before flying. **Crew members are entitled to call for medical assistance pre-flight if they deem it necessary and are in doubt about your fitness for the flight.**



Medical supplies on board

Keep any medication you may need in your hand luggage and in its original packaging. **Inform cabin crew of allergies or illnesses.** If you are seriously ill or travelling post-surgery, you will need a medical certificate confirming that you are fit to fly. If you have limited mobility, are hearing- or sight-impaired, pregnant, or unable to understand/react to safety instructions, you will be unable to sit in the emergency exit rows or the front row.

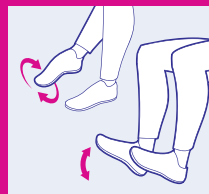
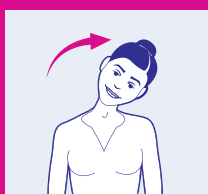
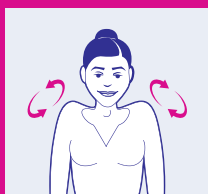


Nut allergy

During our WIZZ Café service we offer peanuts and some snacks containing peanuts/nuts traces. **We strongly encourage those with allergies to take all necessary medical precautions before flying and inform the cabin crew during boarding about your allergy.**

If you start to feel unwell during the flight, do not hesitate to talk to the cabin crew.

Exercise Be as active as possible. Try the following routine every 30 minutes:



Your security

...is one of our top priorities. To ensure a smooth and pleasant flight, please read the following rules of conduct

Please do...

- Always follow crew instructions
- Respect the crew and other passengers
- Behave in an appropriate manner
- Stay calm and cooperative
- Consider wearing a face mask, ensuring it covers your nose and mouth while on board

...so you can:

- Travel in a nice, pleasant and peaceful atmosphere
- Relax on board
- Get to your destination as soon as possible

Do not...

- Smoke on board (including classic cigarettes or e-cigarettes, pipes, vapers)
- Put e-cigarettes in your checked-in bags or charge them on board
- Breach, or refuse to follow, crew instructions
- Harass fellow passengers and/or crew members in any way (including sexual harassment)
- Threaten or be aggressive towards fellow passengers and/or crew members
- Be violent or behave in a hostile, erratic manner
- Damage the aircraft or onboard equipment
- Waste, pollute or contaminate the cabin in any way
- Endanger the safety of the flight by any means
- Consume alcohol that was not purchased on board. Alcohol is served at the crew's discretion to passengers of legal drinking age. The crew reserves the right to stop serving alcohol to any passenger who is, or appears to be, intoxicated
- Be under the influence of drugs or medical substances that may affect your behaviour or self-control
- Film or photograph the cabin crew without their permission

...or face the consequences:

- You are fully responsible and accountable for your behaviour. Unruly or disruptive behaviour on board and before boarding will not be tolerated and will be reported to the authorities. You will be held legally and financially responsible in all cases.

The following consequences* will occur for such misconduct:

- Passenger denied boarding
- Penalty/fine or arrest by local police:
 - Smoking on board, including lavatory: up to €3,000*
 - Unruly behaviour due to intoxication: up to €5,000 and two years in prison*
 - Endangering the safety of an aircraft: up to five years in prison*
- Diversion of flight and arrest
- Reimbursement of cost of diversion: €10,000–€80,000*
- Criminal procedure and court litigation*
- Cancellation of all of your existing Wizz Air flight bookings
- A ban from Wizz Air flights in the future

*Subject to applicable jurisdiction

For more information, please refer to the **General Conditions of Carriage on wizzair.com**

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JOIN US AND TAKE PART IN ONE OF THE WIZZ AIR RUNNING EVENTS!

We believe that just like affordable travel, a healthy and active lifestyle should be available to everyone.

Wizz Air Budapest Half Marathon	10 Sept 2023
Wizz Air Debrecen Airport Run	23 Sept 2023
Wizz Air Skopje Marathon	01 Oct 2023
Wizz Air Sofia Marathon	08 Oct 2023
Wizz Air Venicemarathon	22 Oct 2023



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Over 500+ providers worldwide



Meet and greet

A driver will be waiting with your sanitized ride



Delayed flight? Fear not

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Available now in the WIZZ APP!



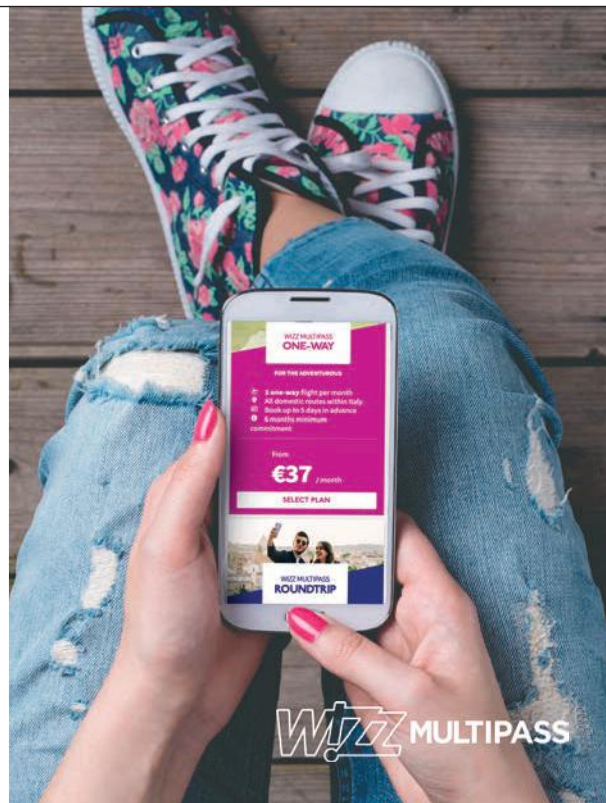
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