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## “Choose a sunny or snowy winter break with Wizz Air”

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As we celebrate the festive season, here at WIZZ we are excited at the prospect of carrying our loyal customers to some amazing cities for a winter break. And this year we have some very special gifts under the tree for you: brand-new Wizz Air destinations to ensure this holiday season and New Year are unforgettable.

This autumn we launched plenty of exciting new routes, including flights from Katowice to Brussels and Debrecen to Rome Fiumicino – both perfect for a city break full of foodie adventures and cultural discoveries. Or, if you prefer a touch of warmth, how about Katowice to Aqaba in Jordan, or Bucharest to Thessaloniki? Whether you want your winter break to be sunny or snowy, we've got you covered.

And if you're already thinking about your summer 2024 escape, we have more good news. Wizz Air has announced huge expansion – additional aircraft and new routes – at Milan Malpensa, Rome Fiumicino, Gdansk, Tirana and Bucharest. So start planning now!

As you relax on this flight, rest assured you are flying with the airline with the lowest carbon footprint\* in the world\*\*. Wizz Air is also making its first investments in Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) research and development, but we have also launched a unique new Sustainability Ambassador programme to support local projects, which you can read more about on p102.

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

**József Váradi**  
Chief Executive Officer



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aircraft



**190+**  
destinations  
in 53 countries



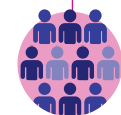
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bases in  
16 countries



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staff



**45m**  
passengers  
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\*53.8G PER PASSENGER/KM ON AVERAGE IN FISCAL YEAR 2023 \*\*ACCORDING TO THE CAPA GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AWARD WHICH WIZZ AIR WON IN NOVEMBER 2023 FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR \*\*\*FIGURE FOR 2022



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A Grinchmas-themed afternoon tea bus tour of London? We're there with bells on

## Editor's letter

He's making a list and checking it twice – and honestly, thank goodness for that. Mistakes are easy to make when you're under time pressure, and this Christmas season Santa will be hard pushed to deliver any presents due to the jam-packed schedule he has in London. Running tours, silent discos, pub crawls and boat cruises – Father Christmas is going to be at all of these events and more throughout December. So, if you want to see the man himself in action (and maybe grab a selfie), turn to p35 for our fabulously festive feature showcasing the best immersive Christmas events in London. And for a little more seasonal magic, turn to p44 for our behind-the-scenes look at the original snow globe factory in Vienna, run by the same family since 1900.

Feeling a bit more Scrooge than Buddy the Elf? Don't worry, we have plenty of travel inspiration where you don't need to utter the C word. How does dining in İstanbul's first green Michelin-starred restaurant (p56) sound? Or planning an epic trip to Morocco armed with our top 10 things to see and do (p70)? Or you could kick-start your New Year right with a very chilly dip in Iceland (p64). Brrr! Wherever you're flying to today, we wish you a wonderful holiday season. Sit back, relax and enjoy this issue – and your flight.

**Claire Köksal, Editor**

## HOW TO CONTACT WIZZ AIR

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**Instagram** Go behind the scenes with our staff on #IamWIZZcrew or get inspired by beautiful shots on #IamWIZZtraveller and enter our photo contests.

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Where to go, what to do and why

# inplace



## Put yourself in the picture in Bucharest

It's not enough to just go and look at some oil paint on canvas any more - today's exhibitions are all about experiencing art from every angle. That's certainly true at MINA, the new centre for immersive art in the Romanian capital, where visitors interact with 360-degree projections of masterpieces. Its first 'exhibition' (until 31 January) focuses on Gustav Klimt and features 60 works - among them the gilded *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I*. A golden opportunity, indeed. [minamuseum.com](http://minamuseum.com)

✈ Wizz Air flies to Bucharest



# Throw yourself out of a plane in the Maldives

Daredevils and beach bunnies will both celebrate the opening of Ifuru Island, the Maldives' first resort with its own skydiving dropzone. The resort, which opened in September 2023, shares a private island with the archipelago's only launchpad for freefall adventures, which is open to resort guests during the season from November to March. If that's not enough adrenaline for you, you can follow up your drop with shark-diving before finishing with a much-needed massage in the resort's Xanadu spa. [ifuruisland.com](http://ifuruisland.com)

✈️ Wizz Air flies to the Maldives



## Stay for €1 in Sardinia

For digital nomads, life's pretty cushy already – with all that flitting about between countries and hitting the beach at lunchtime – but now it seems they're being given handouts as well. That's true in Sardinia at least, where a new programme allows visitors to stay in a free apartment while they explore the island. Work From Ollolai centres around an inland town where a declining population has prompted the local government to equip visiting entrepreneurs with a home for a month for a symbolic €1. This isn't a free-for-all holiday though, as “workers must have a proven background as a digital nomad and leave a concrete piece of work at the end of their stay which... enhances the quality of life of the community”. Which seems fair enough, as this experience is likely to be pretty life-changing for the lucky guest. [workfromollolai.com](http://workfromollolai.com)

✈️ Wizz Air flies to Alghero and Olbia

## Drink a bean-free cuppa in Eindhoven

We hate to break it to you but coffee is the latest product to get a bad rap – for the high water and carbon cost and the deforestation involved in its production. Enter Northern Wonder – a Dutch start-up that is producing “coffee-free coffee” from a blend of non-tropical ingredients, including lupin beans, barley, rye, chickpeas, chicory and blackcurrant. To see how it compares to the real thing, and bring down your caffeine footprint, you can buy its capsules or ground filter blend at local Albert Heijn supermarkets. [northern-wonder.com](http://northern-wonder.com)

✈️ Wizz Air flies to Eindhoven



PHOTO: ADOBE STOCK; ILLUSTRATION: FREEPIK

# Find your Christmas market tribe

It's that time again: when festive stalls fill our city centres and visitors tuck into sweet treats and warm wine – but what kind of Christmas market shopper are you? Follow our guide to find out, and get our tips for the best markets for your tribe...

**You arrive in town and start looking for festive stalls. What do you make a beeline for first?**

- A Glühwein, obviously
- Doughnuts, obviously
- Fondue, obviously
- Tree decorations, obviously

**It's the morning after you've hit the markets and you're struggling to get out of bed. What's happened to you?**

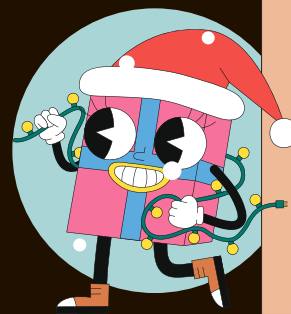
- Hangover
- Sugar crash
- Indigestion
- Late-night wrapping binge

**You're looking to bring home some presents for your family, but which of these would you choose?**

- A bottle of the local flavoured vodka
- A bag of German lebkuchen (iced gingerbread)
- A big block of raclette
- Carved wooden toys

**It's seriously cold. What do you buy to heat yourself up?**

- Warming eggnog
- Hot kürtőskalács (chimney cake)
- Pretzels with melted cheese
- A new woolly hat or mittens



## Mostly As:

### You're a FESTIVE SPIRIT

To you, the lights of the Christmas markets are best seen through a boozy glow, and what could be a better souvenir than some authentic local brew?

**Our top tip:** Hit up **Prague's** Vánoční trhy for festive tipples – from rum-and-lemon “grog” to honey wine (medovina), punch (punč) and mulled wine (svařák).

## Mostly Bs:

### You're a SWEETIE PIE

You love the Christmas markets for the smell of gingerbread, the crisp, bright colours of candy canes, and your constant sugar high.

**Our top tip:** Try Fira de Santa Llúcia in **Barcelona** – it's a traditional Catalan Christmas market with tonnes of sweet treats. Look out for Caga Tió: a candy-filled piñata which ‘poops’ out snacks.

## Mostly Cs:

### You're a FROMAGE FIEND

You are the hunter and cheese is your prey. You can tell a brie from a camembert at 100m and can demolish a cheese board in the time it takes to say “clogged arteries”.

**Our top tip:** **Geneva** has the best cheesy treats from both France and Switzerland at its market on Rue du Mont-Blanc, and a giant fondue chalet at Parc des Bastions.

## Mostly Ds:

### You're a GIFT GRABBER

You love Christmas as it's the time of giving – not overindulging – and, like Santa, you enjoy nothing more than making lists, wrapping up artisan crafts and distributing joy.

**Our top tip:** **Budapest's** Advent Basilica, regularly voted one of the best Christmas markets in Europe, has more than 120 bustling stalls selling local crafts.





## Ride a robotaxi in Dubai

If you're hailing a cab in Dubai this month, you better hope that robots have good eyesight. This UAE city rolled out its first test bunch of robotaxis, from autonomous vehicle (AV) start-up Cruise, in the upscale Jumeirah district in early December.

These cars are fitted with laser detection and more than 100 sensors to help them avoid crashes. According to Ahmed Bahrozian, the CEO of Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA), who is hoping to add 4,000 of these cars to bolster Dubai's 12,000-strong taxi population, the vehicles should be safer as they cut out human error in driving.

The rollout came at the end of a year when the world's first full-size autonomous bus – the AB1 – began its route between Edinburgh and Fife in the UK, and Aurigo Auto-Shuttles began testing in Prague and Brno in the Czech Republic.

[getcruise.com](https://getcruise.com)

✈️ Wizz Air flies to Dubai



## Go for gold in the mountains

It's exactly 100 years this January since the first Winter Olympics was held in Chamonix. Back in 1924, winter sports basically consisted of skiing, skating and bobsledding – there were only 16 events, compared to 109 at Beijing 2022. We can't offer you a gold medal but, to mark the centenary, here are three new winter sports to try. Could one of these make the next Olympics?

### AVOKART

A heady downhill go-karting adventure, these three-wheelers race 3.2km down the twisting piste of Le Crôt in the French Alps with a speedy descent and a drop of 600m in 20 minutes.

[avoriaz.com/en/fiche/avokart](https://avoriaz.com/en/fiche/avokart)



### ELECTRIC FAT BIKING

Fat biking (tearing up the snow on wider tyres) has been around for a while, and now it's going electric. Val Gardena in the Dolomites runs e-bike tours through wooded trails, followed by a meal at a mountain hut. [valgardena-active.com](https://valgardena-active.com)



### BOGGANEERING

A UK travel journalist coined this term – to mean “hiking up + tobogganing down” – after enjoying the 48.5km of toboggan runs and free pick-ups offered in the Ahrntal region of Italy.

[skiworltdahrntal.it](https://skiworltdahrntal.it)





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# Be dazzled in Riyadh

Visitors to the Saudi Arabian capital this December will be rewarded with bright skies and neon drama as the largest light art festival in the world – Noor Riyadh – returns. Illuminating the city with more than 120 artworks under the theme of ‘Bright Side of the Desert Moon’, art from Saudi light artists and their global counterparts will take over five public hubs until 16 December. A companion exhibition, ‘Refracting Identities, Shared Futures’, runs in the JAX district until 2 March. It all sounds pretty electric.

[noorriyadh.sa](http://noorriyadh.sa)

✈ Wizz Air flies to Riyadh



## Tick off the world’s latest treasures

Those who want to cross sights off a bucket list will no doubt love the news that, thanks to the latest UNESCO meeting in September, there are loads of new items you can add to yours. The committee added 42 new sites to its protected list, bringing the total to 1,199 across 168 countries (that’s some bucket list!). Here are our favourites from the new ones, but you can also see the full line-up at [whc.unesco.org/en/list](http://whc.unesco.org/en/list)



### FOR ADVENTURE LOVERS

Italy’s Northern Apennine region is home to around 900 ‘evaporitic caves’. One of the most famous is the Spipola cave near **Bologna**, which can be explored in an afternoon. [turismoinpianura.cittametropolitana.bo.it](http://turismoinpianura.cittametropolitana.bo.it)



### FOR ARCHITECTURE LOVERS

Like Tel Aviv’s White City, the city of **Kaunas** is home to a Modernist “architecture of optimism”, which sprung up when it was Lithuania’s temporary capital between the First and Second World Wars. [visit.kaunas.lt](http://visit.kaunas.lt)



### FOR ANCIENT HISTORY LOVERS

Erected in the 1st century CE in the Roman colony of Nemausus – today’s **Nîmes** – the Maison Carrée is an example of a Roman temple associated with imperial worship – and in good condition. [nimes-tourisme.com](http://nimes-tourisme.com)



# GREEN COAST

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Located in Palase, Green Coast serves as the gateway to an incredible 450 km coastline, offering a stunning array of enchanting beaches and bays waiting to be explored. However, it's worth noting that Green Coast isn't just a summer destination, this resort also serves as an ideal destination during the winter season. Here, you can enjoy the enchantment of year-end holidays, host memorable events, and create cherished moments in the company of your loved ones.

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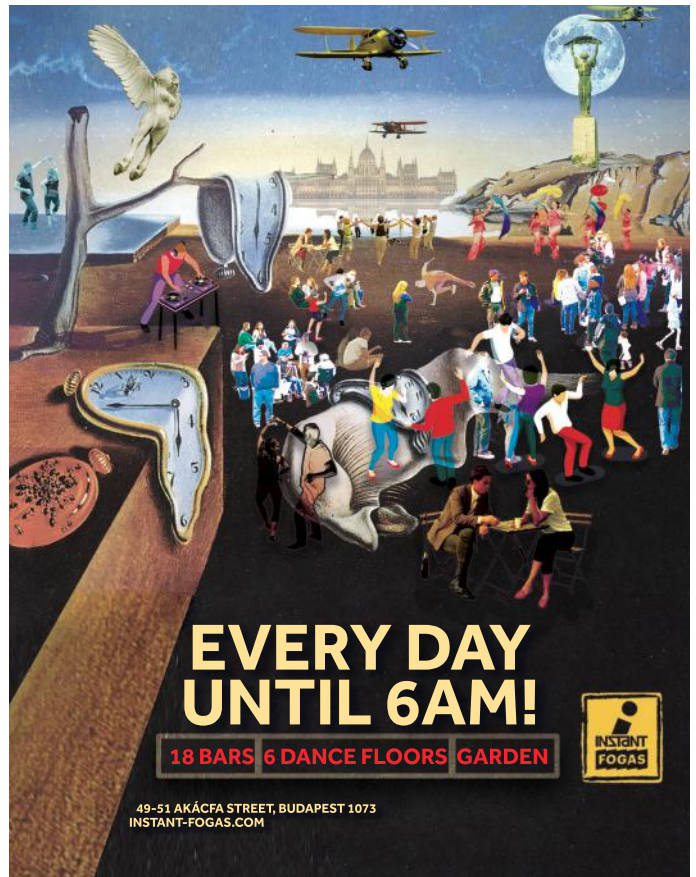
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# in person



**Diving the  
deepest pool**  
in Dubai

**p20**

**Skiing with  
eagles**  
in Morzine

**p25**

**Touring striking  
architecture**  
in Bishkek

**p28**



**the challenge**  
**DUBAI**



# “The deeper you go, the crazier it gets”

Deep Dive Dubai is home to the world’s deepest pool featuring an underwater city and a 60m-deep abyss. How would our inexperienced (and terrified) writer get on?

 Words by Iain Akerman

**M**y trial by water begins in the dive shop, where I’m handed a pair of fins and a wetsuit that accentuates every roll of fat. Tanks of air, a belt with lumps of metal attached, snorkel and a rubber mouthpiece complete the look, which doesn’t do me any sartorial favours.

For some reason I’ve volunteered to jump into the world’s deepest swimming pool, kitted out in scuba gear. How deep are we talking? Sixty metres. To put that in perspective, the average depth of the English Channel is 63m. It’s fair to say I’m pretty nervous.

Twenty minutes from the city’s downtown, Deep Dive Dubai resembles a giant oyster shell. The complex was built in 2021 as a one-stop shop for dive training at all levels, with a hyperbaric chamber, filter system and an underwater film studio, as well as the vast pool.

On the poolside, I’m met by Dario, a friendly Italian with over 30 years of diving experience. I’ve only been diving twice before, but even complete beginners are welcome here, although non-qualified divers like me can only dive to 12m. Even that seems a lot right now – it’s higher than a three-storey house! – but Dario attempts to calm my anxieties with a long and thorough pre-dive briefing.

I’m reminded how to equalise: to regularly pinch my nose and attempt to exhale through my nostrils, mitigating against the increased air pressure as we descend. Also how to remove and replace my regulator underwater, and how to communicate via hand gestures. To tell others you’re OK, divers make a circle with their thumb and index fingers. I practise this, despite still feeling anything but.

After a couple of submersions in the shallows, we are on to the dive itself, which begins with the crossing of a ledge. It’s at this point where what looked like an innocuous swimming pool transforms into a scene from *The Abyss*. Far below me is a deep, dark, circular chasm from which no light emerges. It’s an impressive and disconcerting sight. As I see a group of freedivers descend into the depths, I feel grateful for my limited experience and confinement to the relative shallows.

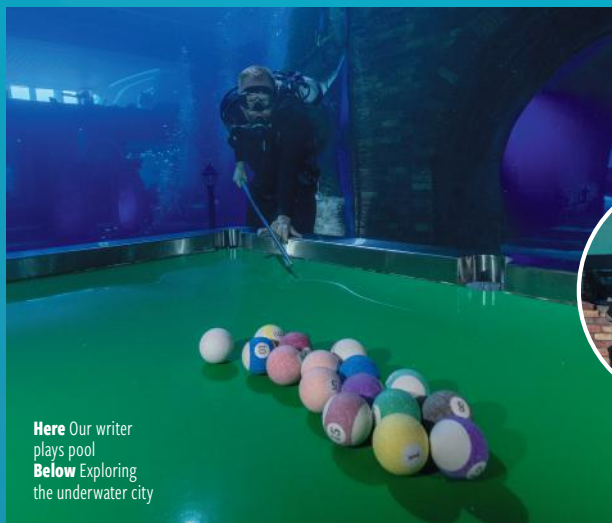
At 60.2m, the pool is 15m deeper than anything built previously, and has been verified by Guinness World Records as the deepest in the world. It contains 14 million litres of water. I reflect that only Dubai – already home to the world’s tallest building, largest observation wheel and highest infinity pool – could create such a pool on such a scale.

Throughout the dive I have to occasionally clear water from my mask, but this goes without incident and I can equalise with ease. At one point, Dario and I enter an underwater habitat, which enables us to surface inside a dry air space and chat. Things are going well, he says, although my mask is slipping.

I feel like James Bond in *Thunderball* as I begin to interact with the pool’s sunken city. Each level has different features – the deeper you go, the crazier it gets. At my basic level there are streetlights, parking metres, a toilet (don’t ask), benches and lots of amusing elements to engage with.

One minute I’m cueing up for a game of underwater pool, the next I’m revving the throttle of a motorbike. Dario and I play a game of chess. There’s a sofa to





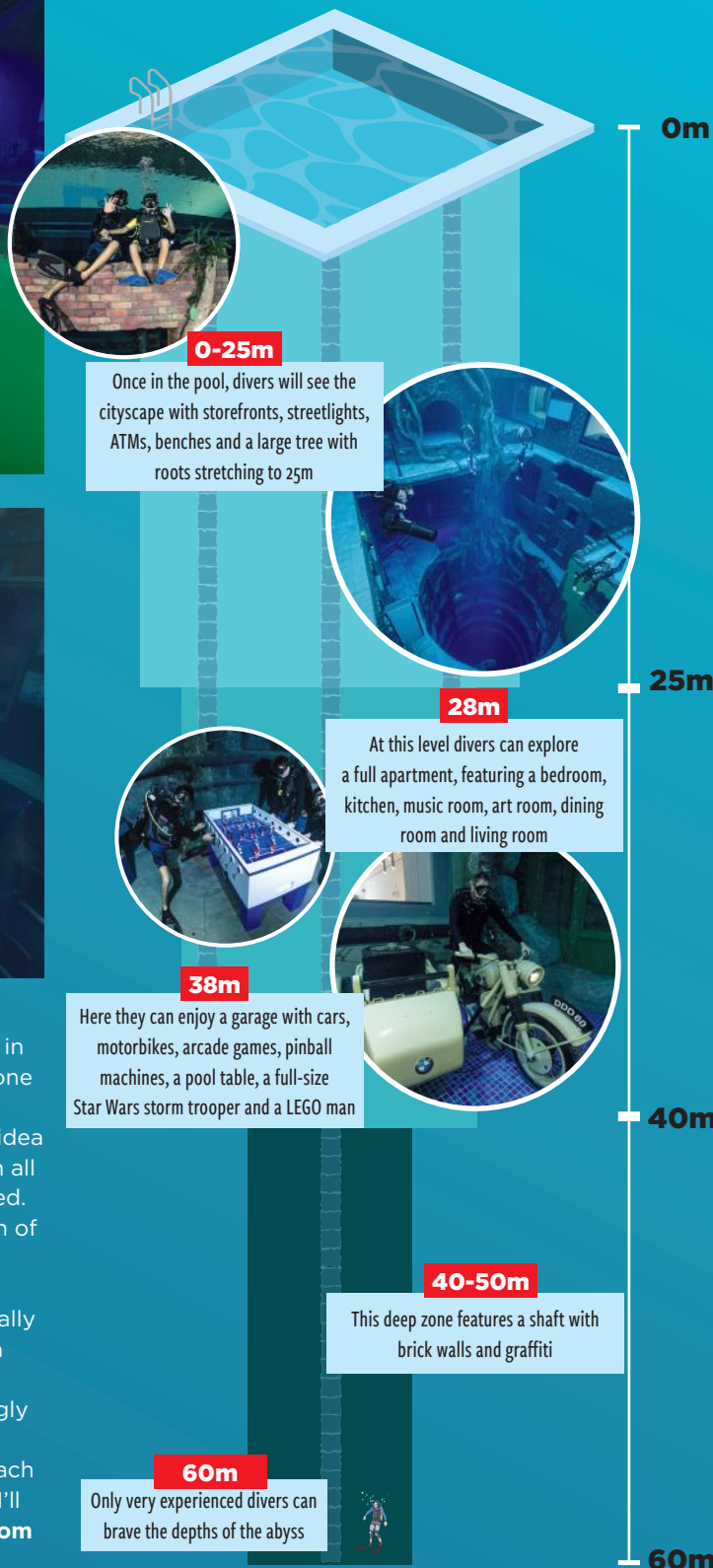
lie on too, and a magazine to be read, so I indulge in both while bemused youngsters look on through one of the pool's many observation windows.

The concept of time quickly evaporates. I've no idea how long I've been underwater, nor do I care. With all of these toys to play with, my nerves have dissolved. And as I awkwardly propel myself across the width of the pool, I experience a brief moment of pure joy.

Gliding above the chasm below, towards a small ledge I attempt to sit on, the scale of the place finally hits me. The world's deepest pool reminds me of a wacky version of *Uncharted*, a video game with a tendency to feature drowned cities. It's all amusingly bizarre. My curiosity, however, has been piqued.

What's in the abyss? What will it take for me to reach the bottom? Will it cost an arm and a leg? Maybe I'll be wearing fins more often now. [deepdivedubai.com](http://deepdivedubai.com)

✈ **Wizz Air flies to Dubai**



# UNTOLD - Dubai's first mega festival

The first round of headliners include Ellie Goulding, G-Eazy, Major Lazer Soundsystem, Armin Van Buuren, Bebe Rexha, Don Diablo, Paul Kalkbrenner and more

Dubai's music scene is about to be electrified as the city's first mega music festival, UNTOLD Dubai, has unveiled the first lineup of artists who will ignite the stage in 2024 from February 15th to 18th. Nestled in the bustling Expo City Dubai, a sensational location like no other, this musical spectacle will entrap the senses of every music lover. Electronic, house, deep house, tech-house, techno, hip-hop, alternative rock, pop, and many more genres will be featured throughout the festival's run as a plethora of incredible artists grace the stage during the four-day unique experience.

Armin van Buuren, Don Diablo, Hardwell, Major Lazer Soundsystem, Paul Kalkbrenner and Timmy Trumpet are the first superstar DJs announced for the mainstage. The magical voices of Bebe Rexha, Ellie Goulding, and G-Eazy will sing up to the stars. Being the city's first mega music festival, UNTOLD Dubai will have in its stellar lineup over 100 artists who will perform on five stages.

Fireworks, light, and laser shows, dancers, acrobats, and walking acts will fulfill the magical UNTOLD realm created in Expo City Dubai. The fans will enjoy state-of-the-art facilities and a full set of services for every need at this destination that recently welcomed over 24 million visitors worldwide and is one of the most awe-inspiring on the planet. A combination of art, culture, and luxury, accompanied by Dubai's

beautiful winter, will ensure that this four-day musical extravaganza will be epic and enlivening, becoming a truly phenomenal event.

With Dubai being such a vibrant city, it is the ultimate destination to host this sensational spectacle, and UNTOLD Dubai will be pulling out all the stops to make sure it reaches the pinnacle of musical majesty and entertainment.

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*“Skiing with  
an eagle is  
a spiritual  
experience”*

We hit the slopes  
in snowy Morzine  
with the man  
bringing eagles  
back to the  
French Alps

 Words by Andrew Dickens





A slender, grey-haired Frenchman stands next to me. We both stare at the powder-dusted forest on the mountainside above us, hoping to see his friend emerge from the trees. He doesn't look as worried as I feel, but then I'm new to this. I've never lost an eagle before.

It's been a day of firsts. A sunny one, too, which began by meeting Jacques-Olivier Travers and his eagle, Fletcher, at the Les Aigles du Léman – a traditional Savoyard restaurant/bird sanctuary located on the Pointe de Nyon, one of the tree-covered peaks surrounding the fabulous, vibrant Alpine town of Morzine. Slap bang in the middle of a broad piste, it's quite the place. You can enjoy a hearty, probably cheese-based lunch while watching Jacques-Olivier educate visitors with displays from the resident raptors (aka birds of prey).

You can also interact with the birds in unusually exciting ways. Wannabe Franz Klammers can race a falcon down the mountain (the bird has yet to lose), while a limited number of people can ski with Jacques-Olivier and Fletcher most mornings. It's free, but booking well in advance is recommended.

It's the latter I'm trying today, and it begins in slapstick fashion. The three of us get on a chairlift, with Fletcher gripping tightly to Jacques-Olivier's leather glove. He's full of pent-up energy because

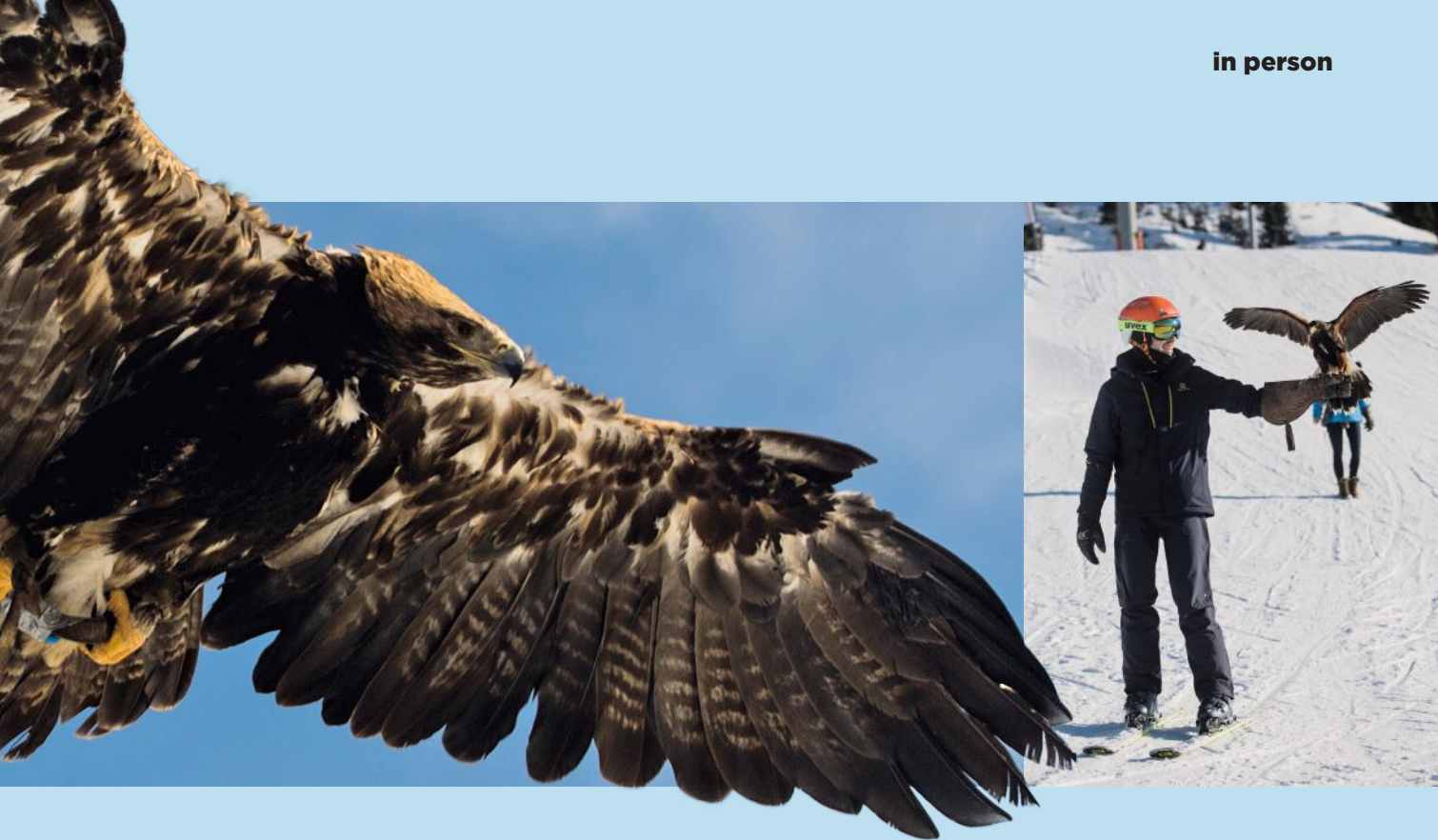
Jacques-Olivier has been away for a couple of weeks. As a result, I get an accidental wing to the head. It's not why I wear a ski helmet but I'm grateful for it nonetheless. "He's like a kid," explains Jacques-Olivier. "Some days he's very peaceful. Some, like this morning, he's very excited!"

At the top of the lift, a group of friends somehow remain oblivious to a man with an eagle standing next to them until a collective, comical double-take is followed by exclamations of wonder. They're not the only ones bewitched. As we weave down the busy piste, Fletcher twists, soars and dips along his own path, sometimes inches from the snow, but always in contact with Jacques-Olivier, as if attached by an invisible bungee cord. Skiers' eyes everywhere are drawn to him; collisions miraculously avoided.

I can't blame them. I can't quite believe that I'm skiing with an eagle; it's an almost spiritual experience. It's the best thing I've ever done on a mountain.

Diverting onto a quieter run, the sunlight piercing through gaps in the trees like a barrage of laser beams, we have the time and space to take it all in, before stopping when Fletcher decides he wants to rest on the ground for a bit. It's an opportunity to discuss Jacques-Olivier's work.

"I've loved birds since I was a baby," he says. "My first bird was a magpie. I lived near a farm



and it fell from a tree. I wanted to help it. Unfortunately, I was not good. I gave it bread and milk and it was a disaster. It died after three days. I was crying and crying. My mother said, 'You will save the next one.' After that, I tried to save all the birds I could."

Jacques-Olivier's current ambitions are grander. Fletcher is a white-tailed eagle. For generations, they were a common sight above the Alps. Then, with one snap of humanity's finger, there was none. As well as this winter park, there's a summer park and a reintroduction centre near Lake Geneva. It's here that he's bringing these glorious birds back to the region.

"In the 19th century, we killed all of them by shooting," says Jacques-Olivier. "It was in England, in France, everywhere. They disappeared from almost all of Europe. The last pair in France disappeared in 1892.

"We decided 10 years ago to introduce this bird around Lake Geneva. But it took me 10 years to get the authorisation and the skill to breed them and release them. In the future, we'll release 80 birds, but we started in 2022 with four birds: two males and two females. It's funny because two stayed in France and two went to Switzerland!"

Fletcher isn't one of them. His only significant other is Jacques-Olivier. They have quite the bond, like an all-action version of Long John Silver and his parrot – minus the piracy and "pieces of eight" lines.

Jacques-Olivier Travers and his feathered pal, Fletcher, strut their stuff on the slopes around Morzine

"A friend of mine told me, a bird or a dog gives you back what you give first," says Jacques-Olivier. "There's no secret. I spend lots of time with him, do things like walking and skiing. He understands that it's good

to be with you because when you come he will not stay in his cage. You become his central point, so he's happy to see you."

Kids don't always behave, of course. Our trio continues down through the forest until, suddenly, we're a duo. Fletcher has absconded into the trees. We ski slowly, eyes peeled, with members of Jacques-Olivier's team joining us in the search. Walkie-talkies and mobile phones appear from pockets – this isn't their first eagle rodeo. We reach the bottom of the run, which is where we find ourselves staring up – me worried, my French friend's feathers unruffled. "He'll come," he says. Five minutes pass. Then five more. I feel anxious and useless, so I volunteer to jump on a chairlift that runs through the section of forest where Fletcher was last seen and report any sightings.

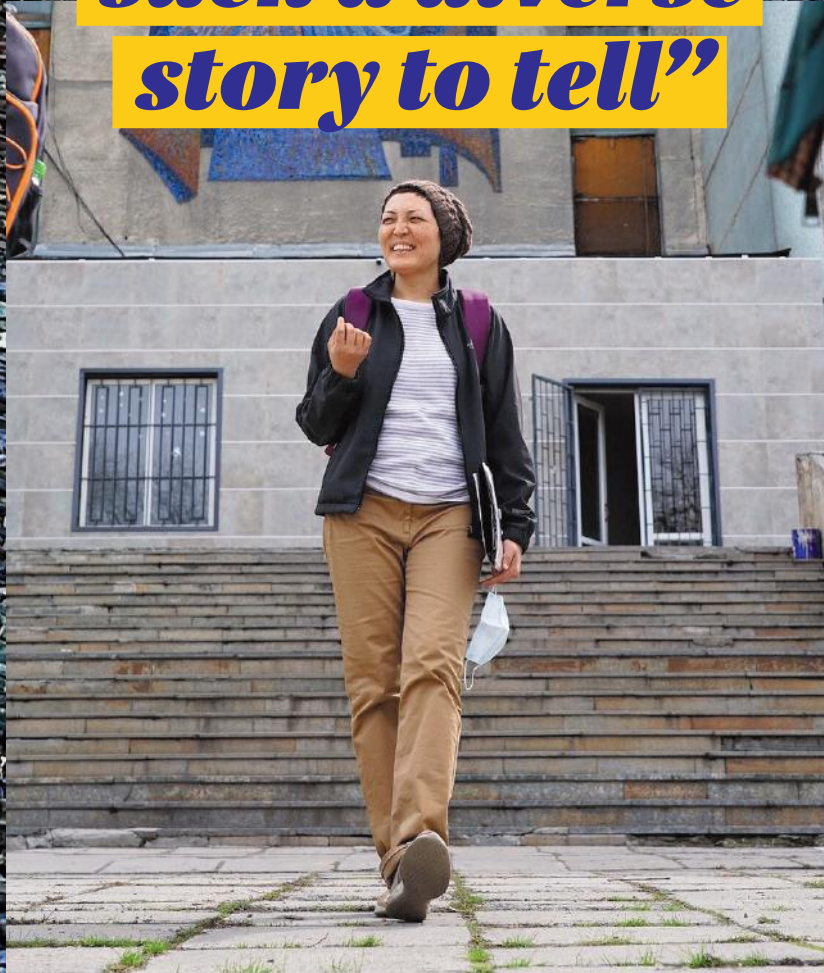
Moments after I take my seat, I get a call. Fletcher has just flown onto Jacques-Olivier's wrist. I look up again, this time at the chairlift, and smile. There's now no reason for my long, slow, irreversible journey ahead, but Jacques-Olivier's is far from pointless.

[en.morzine-avoriaz.com](http://en.morzine-avoriaz.com)

✈ Wizz Air flies to Geneva



***“Bishkek has  
such a diverse  
story to tell”***



Rahat Yusubalieva, founder of tour company Bishkek Walks, tells us about the hidden history of Kyrgyzstan’s capital, and why she’s determined to protect its treasures

 Words by Clodagh Kinsella

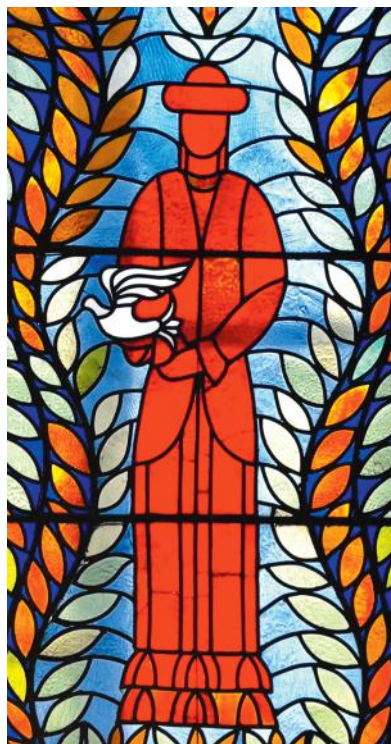


Surprisingly, the seed for Bishkek's most innovative tour company was planted halfway across the world. "I did my master's in England, and I used to go on thematic tours," says Rahat Yusubalieva. "I really loved the different perspectives that the local guides would provide – not what you see from the official point of view, but underground subcultures, or the history of abandoned towns." Back in Bishkek, she was keen to see her own culture with fresh eyes but couldn't find the kind of insider tours that sparked her curiosity. Swapping office life for a freelance career, she launched Bishkek Walks in 2016.

The company's English-language tours run year-round, usually on weekends (they also offer private tours by request), spanning everything from street art to archaeology and Ayurveda. In summer, they focus on multi-day trips around Kyrgyzstan – in hot demand among international visitors. These might include staying in a yurt, meeting shepherds, or enjoying the country's superb hiking and mountain lakes. The now five-strong team is supplemented by extra seasonal guides, and a pool of outside experts.

History tours have always been at its core, going way beyond the country's relatively recent Soviet past. "Bishkek has such a diverse story to tell," says Rahat. "There have been so many peoples on this land, from nomadic civilisations with their visual arts, to the Silk Road, which was a crossroads of trade, culture, religion and language. Then there was Islam, the Soviet Union, and independent Bishkek. There are layers and layers of history here – not just things you can see, but also things that you can't."

It's this hidden side of the country that she's particularly passionate about, be it buildings still



**Left** Stained glass window from Bishkek's 1980s Wedding Palace  
**Bottom left** Colourful statues on the side of the Kyrgyz State Circus building

bearing Latin script – used briefly before Soviet-era Cyrillic came to dominate – or medieval streets amid otherwise modern cities. "You turn a corner and suddenly there's a very different feeling. Or you enter a building and find a stained glass masterpiece. There are so many amazing places that often you don't really notice." Visits to memorial sites bearing witness to Kyrgyzstan's independence also line up alongside tours of local artists' studios, and one uncovering the Interhelpo group: Czech Communist workers who built Bishkek's industrial district. "It's a very interesting part of our history from which we can derive lessons for the future," says Rahat, "but not many people know about it, even residents."

One popular walk focuses on Bishkek's striking array of Soviet murals and architecture, from the whacky UFO-shaped State Circus to the vivid Sunny Fish Fountain. Such sites are menaced by rapid urban redevelopment; besides sharing their joys, Rahat is on a mission to help document and preserve them, turning to social media to raise awareness of their importance. "Every time we do one of these tours something is gone," she says. "A beautiful yurt-shaped bus stop was destroyed in Issyk-Kul because they were widening the road and didn't know about the art. These kinds of sites really speak about the local culture, whether it's





### FUN FACTS ABOUT BISHKEK

Want to know more about Kyrgyzstan's capital? Impress your fellow travellers with these Bishkek facts

1. Did you know that Turanian tigers (also known as Balkhash or Caspian tigers) roamed the reed thickets around Bishkek until the early 20th century?
2. It is said that Bishkek is named after a wooden stick used to make the national drink, kumis, or fermented mare's milk.
3. Wondering why your flight ticket to Bishkek says 'FRU', where you would expect the airport code for Manas International Airport? It stands for 'Frunze', the capital's Soviet name until 1991.

**Above** The Fathers of the Nation monument, built in 1995, originally had accompanying statues, but they mysteriously disappeared shortly after it was unveiled

showing the nomadic lifestyle or flora from a place. They're so unique."

Rahat's background in environmental protection and community development meanwhile fuels the group's socially conscious remit. "As part of Bishkek Walks, we take vulnerable local kids on our tours and give them art workshops where we talk about environmental issues. We want to do something for the community and share our knowledge with kids who don't have access to culture." If that doesn't sound like your typical tour agency, that's largely the point. "We do things that we want to do," clarifies Rahat. "It's not purely commercial, but more things that we want to see or improve in Bishkek."

For the moment, tours mainly draw foreign visitors, but there's growing interest among locals too – especially younger people who have travelled

abroad and returned, like Rahat did, with a newfound passion for their roots. Going forward, to encourage that trend, she plans to add Russian and Kyrgyz language tours to the mix. She's also busy expanding a range of Bishkek Walks merchandise – totes, T-shirts – featuring images of the threatened buildings central to their preservation campaign. "For Bishkek we chose 'Rakushka', a small 1970s building shaped like a snail. It's an architectural masterpiece and now a café, and when a private company wanted to sell the land, it caused a scandal.

"In the future we would like to support Bishkek more and more," she continues. "In terms of Kyrgyzstan, we would also like to do some reforestation projects, because climate change is really affecting us. This year we could feel the lack of water in the country though we are one of the main providers for Central Asia. We are doing these things slowly because they require a lot of research and we only have so much time. But our dreams are big and step by step we will get there."

[facebook.com/BishkekWalks](https://www.facebook.com/BishkekWalks)  
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✈ Wizz Air flies to Bishkek



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Getting to the heart of the story

# in depth



PHOTO: PAUL BAUER

**Create festive memories**  
in London

**p35**

**Shop for snow globes**  
in Vienna

**p44**

**Taste divine dishes**  
in Istanbul

**p56**

**Take a chilly dip**  
in Iceland

**p64**

**Discover 10 reasons to visit**  
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## “I’d be delighted to share *our* armrest...”

- Spanish:** “Me encantaría compartir *nuestro* reposabrazos...”
- German:** „Ich würde *unsere* Armlehne liebend gern mit dir teilen ....“
- French:** “J’aimerais beaucoup partager *notre* accoudoir avec vous...”
- Italian:** “Condividerei con piacere il *nostro* bracciolo...”

## “Your seat is crushing my legs”

- Spanish:** “Su asiento me está destrozando las piernas”
- German:** „Dein Sitz quetscht meine Beine ein“
- French:** “Votre siège m’écrase les jambes”
- Italian:** “Il suo sedile mi sta schiacciando le gambe”

## “Can I offer you a post-panini mint?”

- Spanish:** “¿Quiere un caramelo de menta postsándwich?”
- German:** „Darf ich dir nach dem Sandwich ein Minzbonbon anbieten?“
- French:** “Je peux vous offrir un bonbon à la menthe après votre sandwich ?”
- Italian:** “Posso offrirle una mentina post-panino?”

## “They switched on the ‘no snoring’ sign”

- Spanish:** “Han encendido la señal de ‘no roncar’”
- German:** „Das ‚Bitte nicht Schnarchen‘-Signal wurde eingeschaltet“
- French:** “Le signal ‘Ne pas ronfler’ a été activé”
- Italian:** “Hanno attivato il segnale ‘vietato russare’”

## “Could you pop your shoes back on?”

- Spanish:** “¿Podría ponerse los zapatos, por favor?”
- German:** „Kannst du bitte deine Schuhe wieder anziehen?“
- French:** “Pouvez-vous remettre vos chaussures, s’il vous plaît ?”
- Italian:** “Potrebbe rimettersi le scarpe?”

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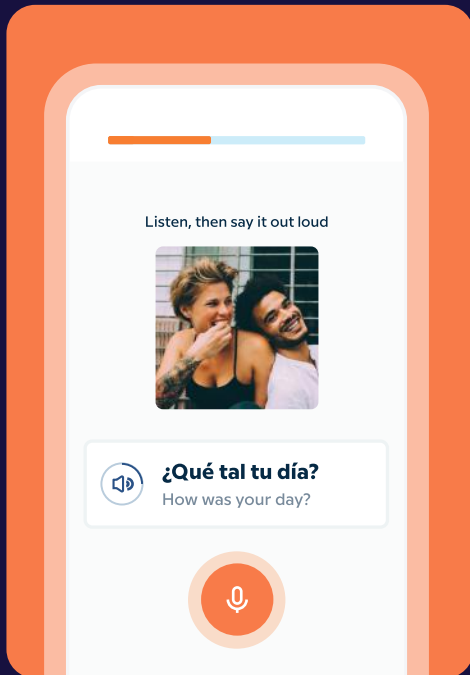
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# WINTER WANDERLAND

In the mood for some festive fun? When it comes to getting into the Christmas spirit, nowhere does it better than London. Get involved with our pick of the best immersive experiences in the capital

Words by Sarah Warwick

Illustrations by Sazmasterflash





# THE FESTIVE FLASHMOB

Silent disco is no longer confined to the dancefloor. You can now take a silent disco street tour thanks to Silent Adventures, which has danced its way into 14 cities in the UK and Europe.

"People love it," explains Mat Urey, the company's operations manager. "It's great because it gets people out there, off their phones and dancing, which in turn brings a nice dose of serotonin too."

'Sight singing' is more than a fun way to explore a city. The hour-long tours relieve stress too. "Putting on the headset, you enter a psychological bubble," says Mat. "The group dynamic gives you a kind of anonymity. It's like having a pint – your inhibitions just evaporate."

Even those who are reluctant at first will join in with the singing and dancing. "You can tell those that have been dragged along. They start out with their arms crossed, right at the back. By the end they're usually the ones right at the front, giving it large."

Be warned though, it can all get a bit out of hand. "On one tour I led recently," Mat reveals, "we had the entire group playing air drums on an old lady's head."

Expanding into a series of festive tours was, as Mat says, "a no-brainer", and if you're around central London this December, you'll be sure to spot their yellow Santa hats, although you'll probably hear them tunelessly warbling through the Christmas classics first. Mat laughs: "We tell people their vocals are autotuned."

[silentadventures.co.uk/london](http://silentadventures.co.uk/london)



# THE REINDEER RUN

Secret London Runs do more than just Christmas light tours – you can take a jog exploring gin, street art or the wives of Henry VIII all year round – but it's a big part of the business. "To some people we've actually become a Christmas lights running company – that's how popular we are," says founder Vanessa Cain-Tait. "We do tours throughout the year but in December it goes mad."

Up to 2,000 people sign up for their lights tours, which navigate different festive routes each year, accompanied by jolly music and fun facts on a historical theme. Participants can choose from 5km or 10km distances and define their pace as anything from 'jeffing' for beginners (that's jog/walking to the uninitiated) to a half marathon for some seriously hardcore mince pie-burning.

"People running at disparate paces is the most difficult thing," says Vanessa. "But our philosophy is we'll never leave anyone behind." The most popular pace is the 'Gentle Jingle', aimed at those who run 10km in 7-8 minute kilometres. "In general, it's definitely much gentler runners who join us," she says. "If you're going for a PB you're probably not the kind of person who wants to run around stopping at Christmas lights."

As well as having "incredible" Christmas lights, she says London isn't just a great running city, it's particularly good as a place to run themed running tours. "It has all these little quirks – every street has little bits of history associated with it. The possibilities are endless." [secretlondonruns.com/christmas-lights](https://secretlondonruns.com/christmas-lights)







# THE BAKERY BUS



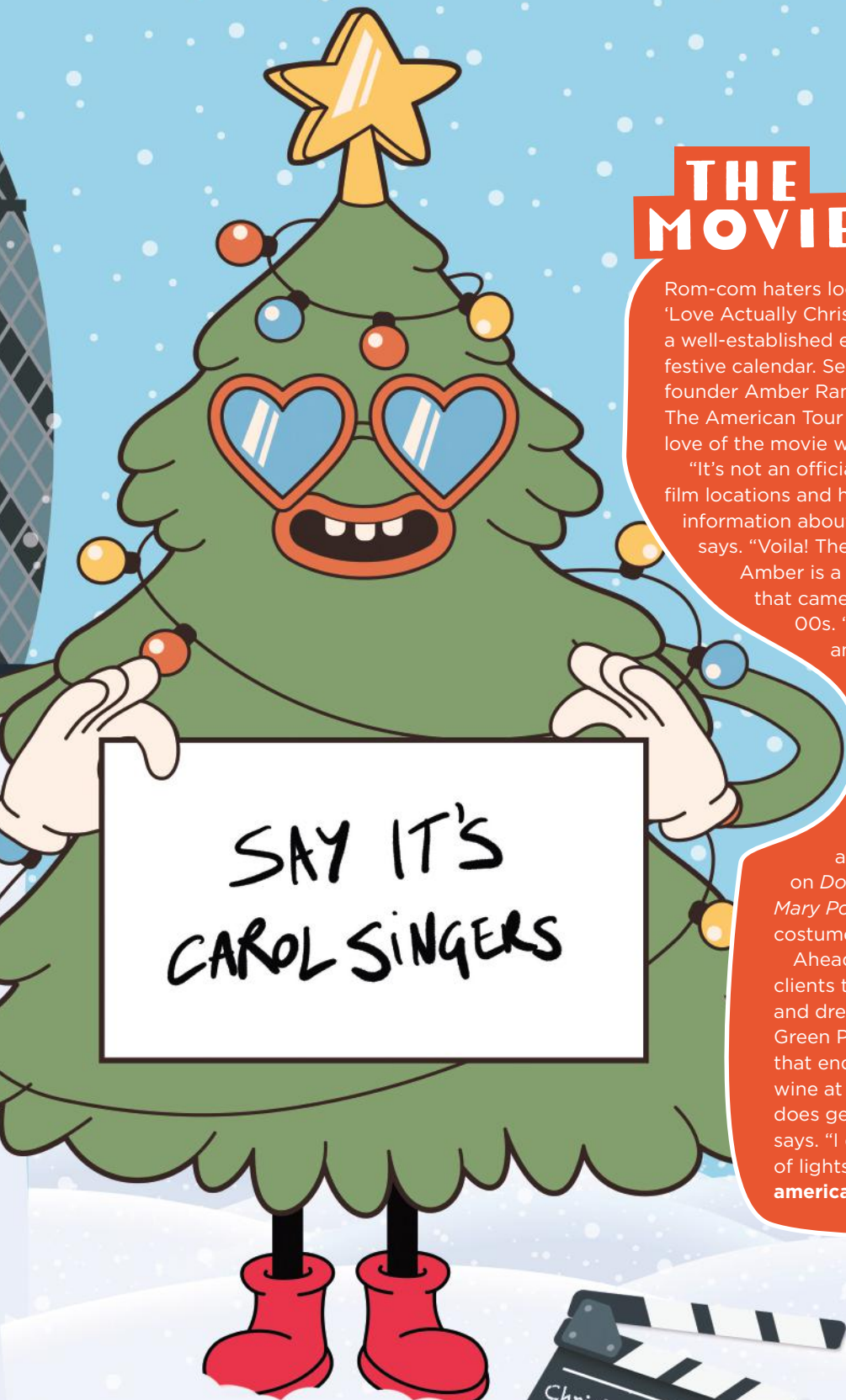
This December in London there's every chance you'll see a strange-looking bus. Covered in green lights, and full of clinking china and singsong, the Grinchmas Afternoon Tea Bus Tour is one of the several themed tours run by Brigit's Bakery in Covent Garden.

"More than 10 years ago, we were lucky enough to be part of the movement to make afternoon tea affordable for anyone," explains Jean-Philippe Boriau, who heads up the company's entertainment arm. "Then we wanted to elevate the experience, to make it fully immersive." They reached out to brands to theme their 'afternoon tea on a bus' concept.

Ten years later, the idea has *scone* down (sorry) a storm. Tours now include collabs with Peppa Pig, Paddington and Bombay Sapphire, with the company selling over 10,000 tickets a month.

After a successful debut last year, 'Grinchmas' is returning with an extra bus running daily for 2023. Guests cuddle up on green furry seats for 90 minutes of Christmas lights and games hosted by the Mayor of Whoville, along a route that takes in classic sights including Trafalgar Square and Harrods. Its unique, Grinchy take on teatime includes 'Here for the Roast Beast' turkey and cheese sandwiches and 'Sweet as Cindy Lou' Lime Pies.

Jean-Philippe says he met a lot of amateur Grinch impressionists last year – "We get fans of the Dr Seuss universe who come specially for the experience," he says – but also tourists who appreciate the time-saving factor. "It's very quirky, a bit unconventional but they get to tour on a 1960s Routemaster bus, see the lights, get information about London, and a full afternoon tea, all at the same time." [b-bakery.com](http://b-bakery.com)



## THE MOVIE MAGIC

Rom-com haters look away now – the ‘Love Actually Christmas Lights’ tour is a well-established event on London’s festive calendar. Set up in 2019, its founder Amber Raney-Kincade – AKA The American Tour Guide in London – combined her love of the movie with enthusiasm for the lights.

“It’s not an official tour but I knew many of the film locations and had lots of behind-the-scenes information about the making of the movie,” she says. “Voila! The tour was born!”

Amber is a particular fan of the rom-coms that came out of London in the 90s and 00s. “A good rom-com not only is an escape from reality, but also provides a little bit of hope,” she says. “Richard Curtis (writer and director of *Love Actually*) is a genius – we need more of his movies these days.”

Four years on, the tour is one of her more popular – on a roster that also includes tours on *Downton Abbey*, *Harry Potter*, *Mary Poppins* (in full Edwardian nanny costume), and *Bridget Jones*.

Ahead of the tour, she encourages her clients to grab a coffee or hot chocolate and dress warm, before meeting at Green Park station for a two-hour tour that ends with sausages and hot mulled wine at a Christmas market. “It really does get you into the holiday spirit,” she says. “I dress with a Santa hat and lots of lights, so that adds a bit of fun, too.”

[americantourguideinlondon.com](http://americantourguideinlondon.com)







## THE CHRISTMAS CRUISE

If you're looking to party *and* see the sights during your time in London, where better than a floating party on the Thames, complete with roast dinner, Christmas crackers and four hours of disco dancing? That's what's in store for guests on the Pearl of London – the biggest and best vessel of Thames cruising company London Party Boats.

The Pearl takes up to 300 ticketholders who get a seated Christmas dinner and disco provided by a live DJ, while the boat travels from one of the central London piers up to Chelsea and down to Greenwich, showing off all the classic sights of London's riverside. "This is our 20th year," says Robert Cairns, managing director and owner of London Party Boats, "and we always get good reviews, especially at Christmas."

Atmosphere is baked in to the experience, and while the cruise won't have Santa on board, Robert says they do have a lot of people dressing up as Santa, as well as tinsel and Christmas jumpers. "We do say you can dress how you like, as long as it's respectable. Some people ask if they can wear, er, unrespectable (outfits), but we have to say no..."

[londonpartyboats.co.uk](http://londonpartyboats.co.uk)





## THE SPEEDBOAT SANTA

Ok, so it's not the fastest Father Christmas has ever travelled (conservative estimates suggest his sleigh flies at 1,046km per second - that's 1/300th the speed of light - on Christmas Eve), but a 56kmph speedboat ride featuring the man himself on the River Thames is an unforgettable event for us mere mortals. For selected dates in December, the Thames Rockets' Jingle Bell Blast zips through Canary Wharf and the Docklands on a 50-minute boat excursion. And while we can't promise snow, we can guarantee plenty of carol singing, yuletide cheer and the chance for a selfie with Santa at the end.  
[thamesrockets.com](http://thamesrockets.com)



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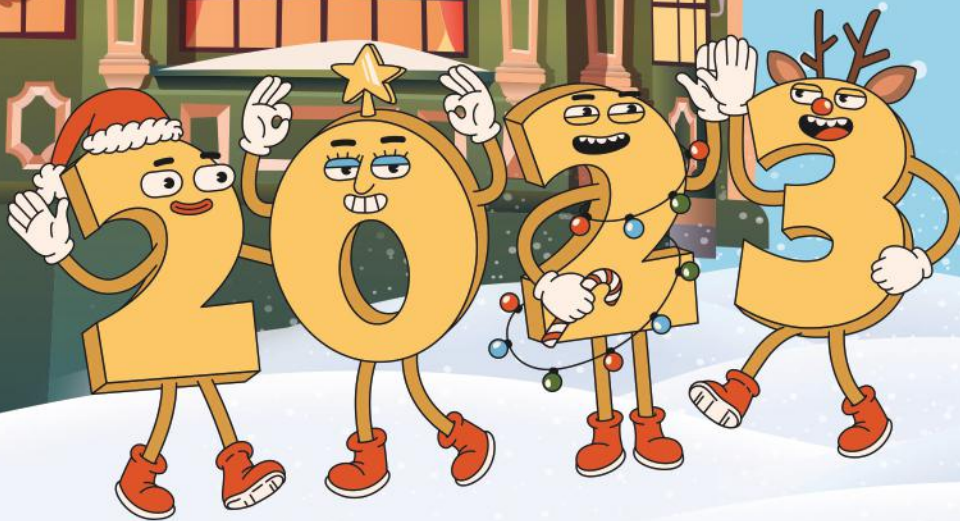
\*BASED ON BIG SEVEN ENJOY TRAVEL, 2022



# THE DIY PUB CRAWL

While the 12 Days of Christmas pub crawl was originally a Dublin tradition, Brits are always happy to try new Christmas customs. Local blog *The Londonist* has evolved its own version, planned around 12 boozers in the capital. The rules are simple – order a drink in each, and Christmas jumpers are essential wear. We've even gone to the trouble of making you a map of the list of pubs involved – but don't blame us for any jolly mishaps. [tinyurl.com/mryts2r2](http://tinyurl.com/mryts2r2)

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[christmasfeast.thelostestate.com](http://christmasfeast.thelostestate.com)



**Christmas present:**

### WISHMAS

One for families, this charming promenade event from the team behind Secret Cinema creates a new festive tale around the concept of wishkeeping. Through a series of rooms, ticket holders can play their part, ending up in a beautiful market space with the chance to meet Santa. [wishmas.co.uk](http://wishmas.co.uk)



**Christmas future:**

### VELVET PINES

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# Let it snow

Words by Becki Enright

Photography by Paul Bauer

The humble snow globe was born in Vienna. We look at how one family transformed it from accidental invention to one of the world's most beloved souvenirs



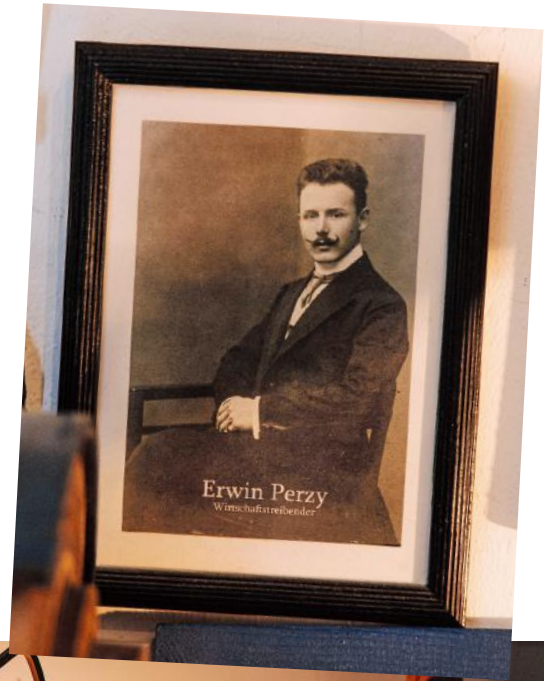
It's fair to say Vienna's world-famous inventions are varied. The croissant, psychoanalysis and waterproof mascara are just some of the Austrian capital's mighty exports. But there's one memento that gets a little more focus at this time of year: Vienna is also the home of the snow globe – the water and 'snowflake'-filled miniature worlds synonymous with the magic of Christmas. And it came from a – literal – bright idea over 100 years ago.

"My grandfather was a surgical instruments mechanic, and he wanted to improve Edison's light bulb to use in hospital operation rooms," says Erwin Perzy III, the third generation to run the family's snow globe business. Experiments followed, he explains, from mounting a solid glass lens in front of an electric light bulb, to taking a water-filled glass globe used by shoemakers to magnify candlelight and filling it with light-reflecting glass grains, which quickly sank.

"One day in his mother's kitchen he found a white powder – wheat semolina used for baby food," says Erwin III. "He poured this in, and the little flakes got soaked by the water and floated very slowly, and that was the basic idea for the invention of the snow globe."

Today, more than 200,000 Viennese snow globes are produced each year at the Perzy workshop in a 250-year-old building in Vienna's suburban

Below Erwin Perzy, inventor of the snow globe



A display at the Snow Globe Museum looks at how the first souvenir was invented, from mounting a glass lens in front of an electric light bulb, to taking a water-filled glass globe used by shoemakers to magnify candlelight and filling it with light-reflecting glass grains, which sank

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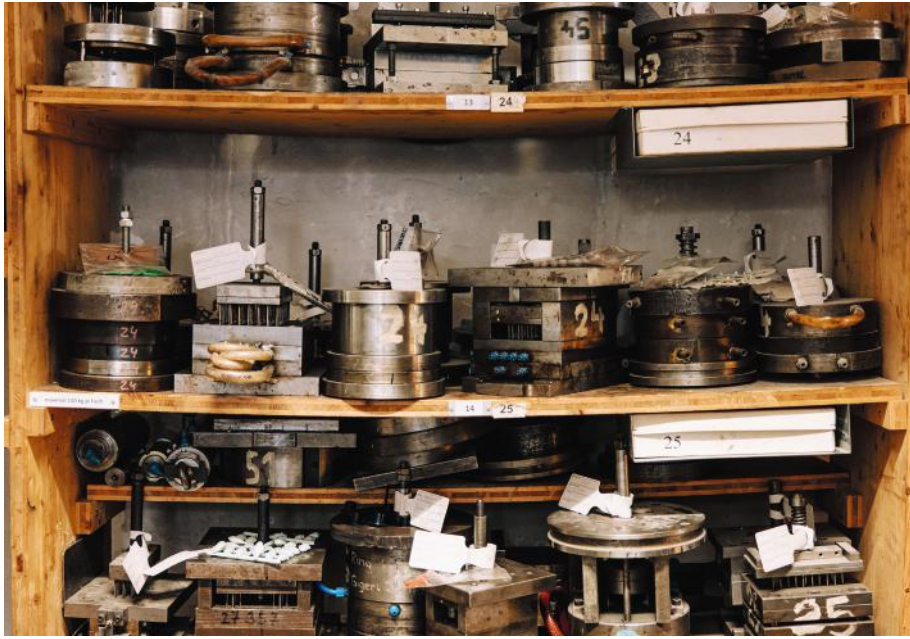
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17th district. Erwin III and his daughter Sabine, the inventor's great-granddaughter and first woman at the company's helm, still create snow globes by hand just as the original Erwin Perzy did all the way back in 1900. But the rise of the snow globe from accidental invention to Vienna's gift to the world is serendipitous in many ways.

After he made that first snow globe, Erwin Perzy continued his work on surgical instruments. The opportunity to sell his new creation came via a friend's souvenir shop in nearby Mariazell. The first snow globe scene was of the church of Mariazell. "He made just one and his friend sold it right away," says Erwin III. "And then told my grandfather to [make more] because it might sell well," he says. And so, he began working with pilgrim sites in Austria to craft globes featuring churches and Christian crosses.

The next step for the snow globe came when Erwin's son, Erwin Perzy II, took over after the Second World War. He was a part-time courier driver for an Austrian newspaper under American management. Somehow, the right person caught a glimpse of the globes and thought they would make a perfect Christmas gift in the USA - but without the Austrian churches. Erwin III explains how his father made three new designs for this new market: a Santa Claus, a Christmas tree and a snowman - the latter becoming a best-seller and the company's logo.

"He showed these new designs at the Nuremberg International Toy Fair, met American customers, and since then, we've been selling snow globes to the United States," says Erwin III.







**Clockwise from above**

Sabine Perzy handpaints a small penguin; a modern snow globe creation; some classic Viennese models/icons; putting the finishing touches on the penguin; stacks of snow globe moulds



Although today Japan is the biggest market for the Perzy snow globe, they are imported all over the world. Outside of global souvenir buyers and high-profile clients like Versace, Tiffany & Co., Chopard and Porsche, around 10% of annual orders are Vienna based, with designs customised for museums like Albertina and Secession, and Viennese hotels including Sacher, Sofitel and Ritz-Carlton. You'll also find an array of advent scenes for sale across stalls at Vienna's Christmas Markets with the 'Vienna Snow Globe Austria' stamp of originality on its base.

In the workshop, toolmaker-by-trade Erwin Perzy III still creates all the snow globes personally. Year-round production, from assembly to painting, is done by hand - although 3D printers and plastic injection moulds are used for larger orders. The snow globe's legacy is explained in the three-roomed

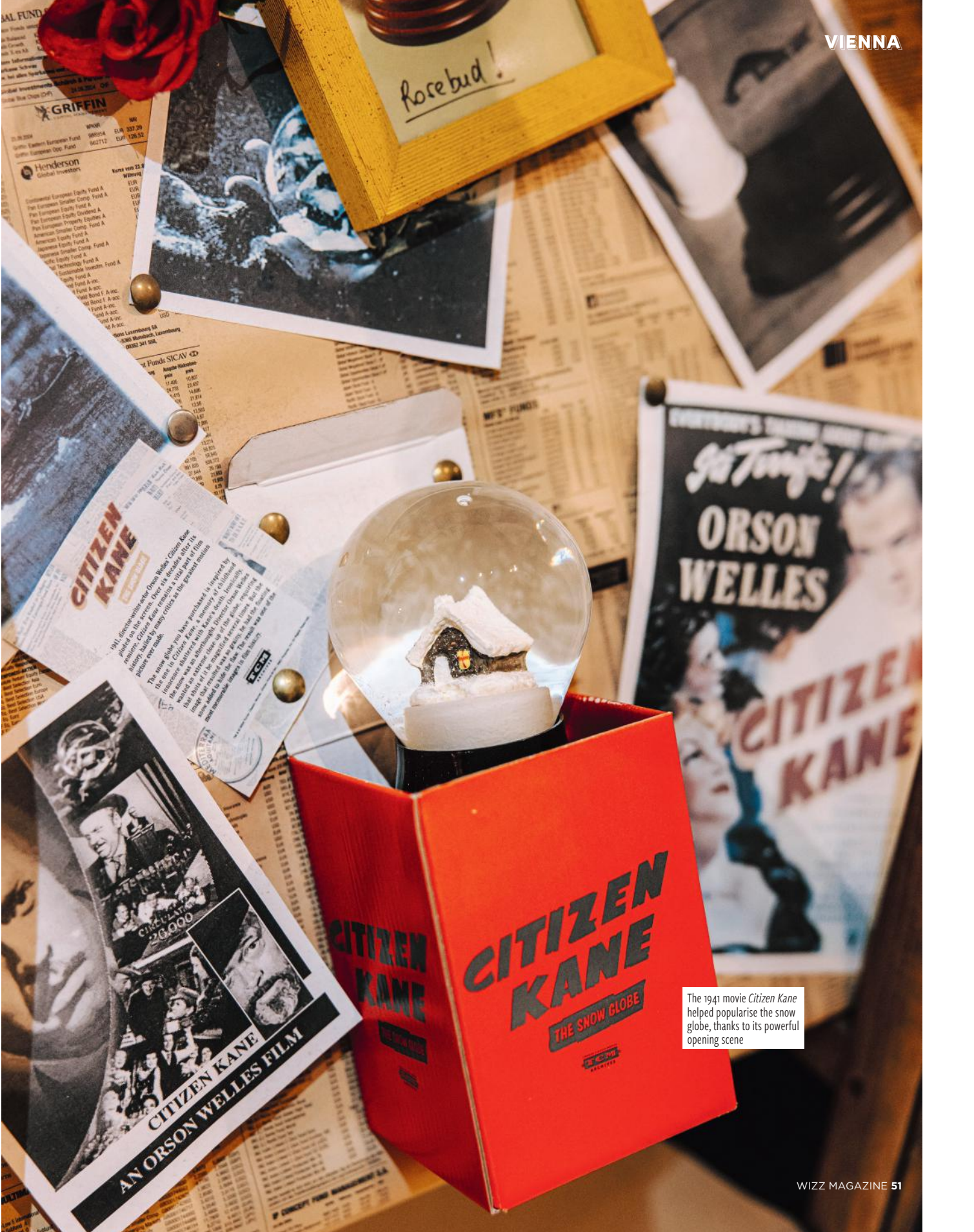


A snow globe featuring Vienna's quintessential sweet treat – a slice of Sachertorte from the doyenne of the city's hotel scene, Hotel Sacher

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The 1941 movie *Citizen Kane* helped popularise the snow globe, thanks to its powerful opening scene





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Erwin Perzy III crafting trinkets for New Year celebrations – another of the creative souvenirs the Perzy family make

Original Snowglobe Museum – attached to the workshop – which begins with a recreation of Erwin Perzy’s experiment beneath a black-and-white portrait of the inventor. Inside, a chronicled exhibit full of cabinets and corkboards, tables and tassel-lined shelves is filled with everything from old tools and pictures to a replica of the wooden cabin snow globe from the Orson Welles 1941 classic, *Citizen Kane*. The archive is packed with hundreds of snow globes, which of course you can buy on site. Every other spare inch of wall space is given to framed photographs of the Perzy family with happy customers.

“I think our product reflects our love for what we do, and this is absolutely necessary to produce the snow globes,” Sabine says. As the mastermind of newer designs and with a constant eye on trends – she was the brains behind the whimsical toilet roll snow globe during the pandemic, which went viral online and reached 1,500 orders in a single day – she will continue the legacy of the Perzy’s timeless souvenir with an experimental touch.





**Clockwise from here** Inside the quirky Snow Globe Museum, attached to the Perzy workshop, you can find memorabilia celebrating this iconic Viennese souvenir; Sabine Perzy holds one of her handmade creations; the toilet role snow globe, created during the Covid pandemic, went viral online



While pointing out the pictures of children looking at snow globes with wide-eyed wonder, Erwin III acknowledges how they arrive to the museum distracted by their phones and tablets, “But with our snow globes, there is no light, nothing, just snowflakes inside. They must use their hands, and shake it to make the snow fall. The way they look at the snow globes...” “It’s very magical,” Sabine finishes.

So, what is this magic snow made of today – is it still semolina? “It’s my secret,” Erwin says with a cheeky smile. It turns out it’s such a safely guarded secret that even Sabine doesn’t know the recipe yet. “She knows a little bit, but not everything,” he adds. Whatever it is, it’s a glass-encased kind of magic that will continue to shake up the souvenir scene for generations to come. [schneekugel.at](http://schneekugel.at)

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# Green

## *star*

## rising

Trailblazing chef Maksut Aşkar, who was awarded Türkiye's first green Michelin star a year ago, is leading the way on sustainable dining in Istanbul. He talks to us about how local ingredients are at the heart of his menu

 Words by Katie Nadworny







**M**aksut Aşkar remembers what the strawberries tasted like in his childhood. Back then, growing up in Iskenderun and then İstanbul, the strawberries were only available in season, as was most produce. “I miss missing strawberries in winter,” says Maksut, “or tomatoes, or eggplants.”

Though you can now get most produce throughout most of the year in Türkiye, Maksut has made it his goal – and that of his restaurant, Neolokal – to preserve the joy of seasonality and traditional cuisine in an innovative and sustainable way, earning the eatery Türkiye’s first green Michelin star at the end of 2022.

Neolokal opened nine years ago on the top floor of Salt Galata, an Ottoman-era bank-turned-art-space. Maksut was already playing with the concept of hyper-local cuisine in his previous restaurant, so it was an easy choice to make that idea central to the new enterprise. The restaurant would have a garden, would use local produce

from all over Anatolia, and would focus not just on environmental sustainability, but cultural and social sustainability as well.

Maksut was a delegate with the Slow Food movement in Türkiye, and through that he gradually started to build up a network of farmers and producers all over the country, from a yoghurt maker in Denizli to a beekeeper in Şile. Through dishes made from local produce, Maksut is attempting to preserve the flavours and traditional recipes of the country. Ideas for dishes come from all over the place. “Childhood memories, stories, my mum, my family, families of others, the huge history and heritage of our traditions... I think geography is a great inspiration,” he says.

All of it comes back to nature and what grows locally. Maksut makes this a key aspect of the whole process of preparing the food at Neolokal. “I let my young team touch the soil, because everything starts from touching the soil and understanding the soil’s cycles,” he says.

An hour away from Neolokal’s perch in Karaköy is Urban Garden, the place that



**Previous page** Michelin-starred chef Maksut Aşkar  
**Here** Burcu Arıkan at her rooftop garden at Postane

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**Left** Only the freshest ingredients are used for Neolokal's menu  
**Right** Inside the restaurant



## “Everyone talks about sustainability, but what are you doing to change things?”

provides much of the produce for the restaurant's menu. Beyhan Uzunçarşılıoğlu greets visitors at the entrance to her garden in Gümüşdere. While located in greater İstanbul, the tranquil neighbourhood is a far cry from the hustle and bustle of the city. Walking through the garden, past neat lines of pockmarked cabbages and cauliflowers, broccoli and green peppers, Beyhan neatly breaks off fragrant leaves and shoves them towards her visitors, imploring: “Taste this!” There are herbs for tea, oxalis leaves with the flavour of punchy citrus, and mint so fresh, it makes breath seem to sparkle.

Beyhan has been active in farming and gardening for nearly 30 years, and the Urban Garden has been open in Gümüşdere for 12. During that time there has been an emphasis on growing and teaching about organic, local food. Beyhan doesn't manipulate the soil or use chemicals, and really focuses on farming as a way of life.

Many chefs approach Beyhan about working together, but she felt most drawn to Maksut because of his heart, his way of looking at sustainability, and an affinity between their two visions. Now, much of the process starts with the produce at the farm, even before the menu is made, or sometimes as a collaboration between Maksut's vision and Beyhan's capabilities. “It's a real farm-to-table discipline,” she

says. Waste from the restaurant is returned to the garden, to use as compost.

Through Maksut, Beyhan has found a partner who can project an example of true urban gardening sustainability out into the world of fine dining. “Everybody talks about sustainability, of course, but it's not the real thing. They're talking, but not doing,” says Beyhan. “We know the difference between the chefs and restaurants only talking about sustainability. Ok, you are talking, but what are you doing to change things?”

Urban gardening and sustainable food are a growing trend in Türkiye, despite the many challenges of making it work in a city as dense as İstanbul. Projects such as Kokopelli Şehirde and Ek Biç Ye İç promote sustainable growing and eating in the city, while the Kadıköy Municipality offers urban allotments for residents to grow what they choose. Meanwhile, the culture centre Postane in the Galata neighbourhood keeps an urban garden on the roof to both supply the downstairs café with produce, and also to educate about growing your own food in the city.

The idea of a roof garden was part of Postane's design from the beginning. Burcu Arıkan is the co-founder of İyi Ekim, who partners with Postane on creating and maintaining the edible garden. “Our goal





**This page** The beautiful dishes at Neolokal strike a balance between tradition and cutting-edge fine dining.

was to first attract people and to show them you can grow your own food in the city," says Burcu. "When you look around Galata there aren't that many edible gardens. So one of the main ideas was to show here as an example, to other locals and people... we will show people you can grow and eat your own healthy food, clean foods. And our goal was also to attract people and create a community."

İyi Ekim and Postane welcome weekly volunteers to work the roof garden, and run training and programmes for various organisations. All of this ties in perfectly with Beyhan and Neolokal's goals to make local produce and sustainable eating accessible throughout İstanbul. It's part of the social sustainability Neolokal is keen to emphasise - not just how we eat, but also how we learn, and how we preserve traditions.

The work behind the scenes leads inevitably to the impeccably plated dishes that make up Neolokal's celebrated menu. Maksut approaches the menu as a true artist, envisioning the presentation along with the ingredients.



# “I need to sustain my traditions, so that I can create a sustainable future for myself and for others”

The windows at Neolokal open to a view of the majestic Süleymaniye Mosque, glowing as the sky fades to a smoky blue and the city glitters. Some tables have views of the tangle of streets that make up the Perşembe Pazarı - the part of Karaköy where it's possible to buy anything from fishing tackle to porcelain handles and spools of wire - Hagia Sophia and the Galata Bridge.

The meal at Neolokal is accompanied by a small booklet of stories about each course. One plate is preceded by a dramatic five-minute-long video illustrating the creation of the dish, a complex morel mushroom manti (Turkish dumpling). The courses draw inspiration from seasonal produce and recipes from all over Türkiye.

On an unseasonably warm night in October, some of the menu highlights included a marinated sea bass and gambilya fava speckled with edible flowers, a perfect balance of sweetness and brine; a dish called “tirit & katmer” that contemporises a beef and duck dish layered in a crispy layer of filo pastry, with colourful dollops of infused yoghurt; and a clear drink that looks like water but tastes like fresh pumpkin, a culinary magic trick full of the flavour of autumn.

Neolokal is trying to create a bridge between the past and the future, between the nostalgic tastes and traditions of Anatolia and the cutting-edge fine dining that earned Maksut and his team the coveted green Michelin star.

“I can be a good role model for young generations, so that they can believe in what we have done so far, and they can take it to the future, because I'm not going to be there in the future. They will be there,” says Maksut. “I need to sustain my traditions, so that I can create a sustainable future for myself and for others.”

[neolokal.com](http://neolokal.com)

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**“We have this swimming culture in Iceland – going to the pool is a vital part of life’s routine”**

New Year’s Day sees cold water dips all over the world – but are any as loony as Reykjavík’s? We speak to some of those who took the plunge for 2023’s event to find out why Icelanders take sea-swimming to the next level

 Words by Sarah Warwick



**T**here's something weird about looking at pictures of Reykjavik's Nýárssund (New Year's Swim) from January 2023. The juxtaposition of ice and this many sequins usually only happens at cocktail parties, and there the ice is well under control.

While there's no less of a sense of occasion depicted in these images, they nevertheless feel wildly out of kilter. The ice is dominant, manifesting in great blue chunks that crust over the city's main bay. Women of all ages, resplendent in multi-coloured spangle, are wading knee-deep through frozen water while the bow-ties and tailcoats of their male counterparts are polka-dotted with snow.

The overall impression is of some magical cocktail party gone wrong or party-goers transported to an icy planet. But of course, it's not that at all. It's just the couple of hundred overexcited locals who take it upon themselves to plunge into the icy shallows of the Nauthólsvík geothermal beach each 1 January.

Reykjavik is by no means the only place to celebrate a New Year's Day swim. South Queensferry, near Edinburgh, has its infamous Loony Dook; New York's Coney Island its Polar Bear Club Plunge and the residents of Geneva are known to bob about in the eponymous lake to mark the first day of the New Year. Participants at these events also dress in elaborate costumes and sometimes break the ice, but

as we found out when we spoke to those involved, there's something a bit special about Reykjavik.

"We have this swimming culture in Iceland," explains Herdis Anna Thorvaldsdottir, chair of Sjór Sund, the Reykjavik sea-swimming organisation, since 2018. "Going to the pool is a vital part of life's routine. The neighbourhood public geothermal outdoor pools with all their hot tubs and various facilities play a huge role in making this country habitable. It's our version of going to the pub."

While swimming here still usually means bobbing about in geothermal pools, over the past 10 years there's been a big change in levels of enthusiasm for cold-water swimming. "It's been a constant trend for the last decade and just skyrocketed after Covid, especially since it's believed to boost the immune system. Since around 2015... every swimming pool has a cold part as well as warm," says Herdis.

She estimates around 2% of Reykjavik's population will head to Nauthólsvík – the city's man-made beach – all year round, including the 300 who attend on New Year's Day. "Of course those that don't do it still find cold-water swimming kind of crazy, but there are so many doing it now – you don't get the same reactions when you talk about it."

For many of us the very idea of a New Year's swim is sheer lunacy (hence the 'loony' dook). But, if you follow the logic that, the colder and darker it is, the

**"A lot of positive signals from the brain in the cold water spew out, so smiles and joy play around you"**





more of a spectacle it provides, then Reykjavík, the most northerly capital city in Europe, provides the ultimate spectacle.

Indeed, the Icelanders' outfits – be they short-sleeved velvet or leopard print – look inappropriate for the weather, even before they start to wade out into the water, which is often below freezing. But participants say that, for those who can endure, there are a myriad of health benefits to an ice-cold dip.

“Sea-swimming is very health-promoting and has a broad function on body and soul,” is how another of the swimmers – Hinrik Ólafsson, actor and guide, who has been sea-bathing and sea-swimming for almost 20 years – puts it. “It works on all kinds of inflammation in the body, produces mental well-being, improves breathing, is self-promoting and provides a great sense of freedom.”

Hinrik, who suffers from arthritis, reports he is completely free of pain (and medication) since taking up cold-water swimming. “And don't forget the mental aspect. A lot of positive signals from the brain in the cold water spew out, so smiles and joy play around you.”

Herdís too describes this joy, the post-dip rush of endorphins, as a “superhero” feeling, relating it to the body's victory over a physically challenging experience. “It's about facing the elements,” she explains. “When you go into the water, you go





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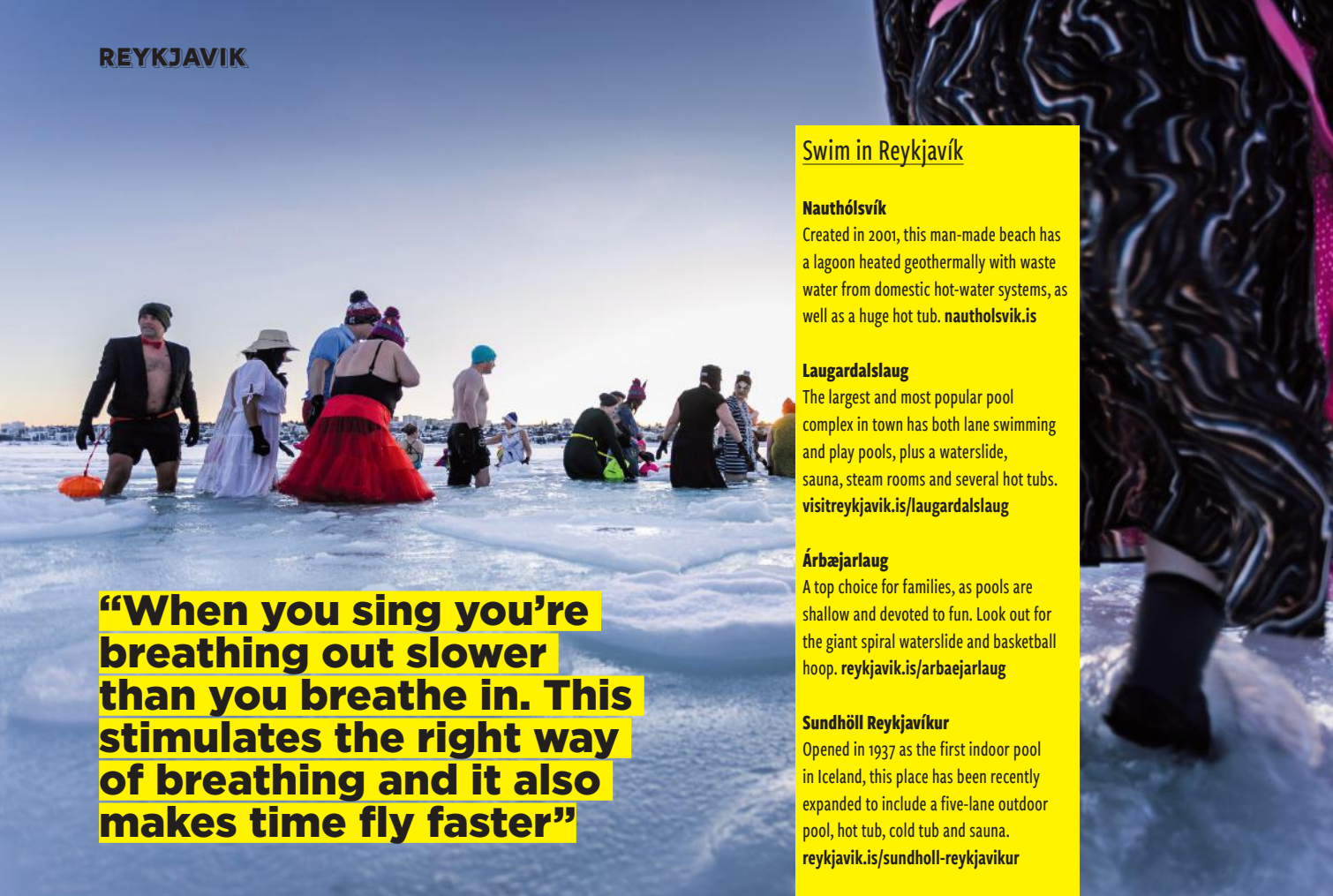



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**“When you sing you’re breathing out slower than you breathe in. This stimulates the right way of breathing and it also makes time fly faster”**

## Swim in Reykjavík

### Nauthólsvík

Created in 2001, this man-made beach has a lagoon heated geothermally with waste water from domestic hot-water systems, as well as a huge hot tub. [nautholsvik.is](http://nautholsvik.is)

### Laugardalslaug

The largest and most popular pool complex in town has both lane swimming and play pools, plus a waterslide, sauna, steam rooms and several hot tubs. [visitreykjavik.is/laugardalslaug](http://visitreykjavik.is/laugardalslaug)

### Árbæjarlaug

A top choice for families, as pools are shallow and devoted to fun. Look out for the giant spiral waterslide and basketball hoop. [reykjavik.is/arbajarlaug](http://reykjavik.is/arbajarlaug)

### Sundhöll Reykjavíkur

Opened in 1937 as the first indoor pool in Iceland, this place has been recently expanded to include a five-lane outdoor pool, hot tub, cold tub and sauna. [reykjavik.is/sundholl-reykjavikur](http://reykjavik.is/sundholl-reykjavikur)

into fight or flight mode. By manually putting your body into rest and digest mode by controlling your breathing, you can tolerate it. You’re not just controlled by nature. You’re in control.”

To get into ‘rest and digest’, Herdis has an unusual technique: singing. “When you sing you’re breathing out slower than you breathe in,” she explains. “This stimulates the right way of breathing and it also makes time fly faster. My guidance is to find a song you know before you go in and just start singing. Sing loud because who cares when you’re in the sea!” For beginners, she also recommends wearing neoprene boots and gloves, eating suitable nutrition, and ideally letting someone know this is your first time in such cold water.

If attending the New Year’s swim, there’s a softer option, as Nauthólsvík has a geothermally warmed lagoon that’s around 3°C warmer than the sea, as well as a giant hot tub for warming up (at 38°C) afterwards. Either way: “Try not to party too hard on New Year’s the night before since it’s vital to have a good night’s sleep to endure the cold. Just listen to your body and respect your limits and follow the guidelines.”

Another New Year’s Day reveller in 2023, Bryndis Osp has been swimming in the sea at least twice a week for the past three years and agrees you have to know your limits. “You quickly realise you can’t push the body too much and need to respect the cold. Some days you can stay in the ocean for a long while and other days five minutes is all you can take.”

Last New Year was the first time Bryndis broke the ice. “I didn’t get far into the ocean [because of the ice] so I practically had to lay down in the sea to be fully covered.” The experience hasn’t put her off. “I will definitely be there and wearing a nice dress for this January’s swim.”

Herdis, too, will be there on 1 January: “I love to start the New Year in the cold sea. You can start the year by challenging yourself and creating such wellness and beautiful sensations in your body.”

She welcomes anyone who wants to join. “The Icelandic nature is quite unique with its extremes: volcanoes, geothermal water and big glaciers affecting the spirit and energy of the habitants – making this experience with us one of a kind.” See more about Icelandic sea swimming at [sjor.org](http://sjor.org)

✈ Wizz Air flies to Reykjavik

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# Majestic








# MOROCCO

As Morocco makes a lauded list of must-see destinations in 2024, we look at 10 reasons why the African country is so hot right now

 Words by Emma Ventura

Emerging surf culture, easy winter climate, world-beating food, beautiful boutiques, edgy new art and music festivals that draw top-class international talent – a trip to Morocco has never been a better idea. And that’s certainly what the experts at Lonely Planet think – they have just named this North African nation one of its must-visit countries for 2024. So, do you want to get lost in World Heritage-listed medinas? Be guided to the summit of North Africa’s highest mountain? Or browse digital art in a luxurious yet welcoming riad? Read on for these and more tips on why Morocco should be on your travel hitlist this year.

## 1

### NATURAL HIGHS

In the spectacular Atlas Mountains, you’ll find wildflowers in spring, cooler temperatures in summer, and skiing and saffron harvests in winter. Although the villages around the epicentre of last September’s earthquake are still focusing on rebuilding and recovery, elsewhere locals are crying out for tourists to help keep the economy turning. Ensure your money goes directly into local hands by choosing Moroccan operators such as Trek Atlas or Morocco’s first female mountain and desert guide, Hafida Hdoubane, at Tawada Trekking.

PHOTO: ADOBE STOCK





## 2

### HANDICRAFT HUNTING

From babouche shoes in butter-soft leather to vibrant, geometrically patterned pottery, Morocco's artisanal crafts are legendary. But there's a bright new creative scene, too, much of it moored in Marrakesh's cool industrial quarter of Sidi Ghanem. Add LRNCE lifestyle store (*pictured*) to your itinerary for homeware and contemporary prints, and Marrakshi Life for gender-neutral, sustainably made kaftans. Just don't forget to book an extra bag for the flight home.



## 3

### CLEANSING RITUALS

If you go to Morocco and don't try a hammam, can you even say you've been to Morocco? Such is the power of this tradition, with its origins in the Roman bathhouse, that it's become a ritual synonymous with any visit to the country. Options range from public hammams, such as Marrakesh's Hammam Mouassine, built in the 16th century and where men and women are kept separate, to some of the country's finest five-star options, including Royal Mansour and La Mamounia.

#### How to hammam, Moroccan style:

1. First, put on your swimming costume/shorts



2. Secondly, sit in a hot, steamy room and relax



3. Then, get sloshed with water and lathered with black olive-oil soap



4. Next, you'll be energetically scrubbed with a loofah and coated with a mineral clay



5. Finally, you'll end up with one last rinse before you're left feeling squeaky clean



## 4

**STYLISH STAYS**

Marrakesh's riads are justifiably famous, and while modern classics such as El Fenn, currently celebrating its 20th birthday, are always a safe bet, there's a bevy of new beauties to choose from. Like Rosemary, owned by artist Laurence Leenaert, whose bold take on the region's natural beauty, captured in a natural, earthy palette, defines the design of this five-room sanctuary. IZZA, a sleek new riad that pays homage to Moroccan aesthete and interior designer Bill Willis, has its own multimillion-pound art collection, including one of the world's largest galleries of digital art. Seeking something more bucolic? While not technically a riad, Farasha Farmhouse (*pictured right*), set amid olive groves 30 minutes outside the city, is a showcase of Moroccan art and artisanship.



## 5

**STARRY NIGHTS**

There are few places where you find unsullied skies a stone's throw from a bustling city. Yet, just an hour south of Marrakesh, the red, rocky Agafay Desert gives visitors the chance to stargaze in style, with the Atlas Mountains as a backdrop. Several operators offer luxury glamping in the Agafay, not least Inara, which has 18 tents with beautiful Berber-inspired interiors and its very own mini-oasis in the form of a gorgeous swimming pool. Or there's the understated Caravan Agafay by Our Habitas (*pictured left*), with lodge-style and tented accommodation, a full wellness menu and experiences that include yoga and desert survival skills.



6

MARRAKESH'S MUSEUMS

Swerve the mayhem of the medina in favour of a visit to one of the Red City's top-notch museums and cultural centres. Our favourites include: the House of Photography, a converted riad that's home to some 10,000 documents and images of Morocco from the 1870s-1960s; the Berber Museum, housed within the city's iconic oasis, the Jardin Majorelle (*pictured*); the Musée Yves Saint Laurent, dedicated to the fashion designer who spent lots of time here; and the Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden.



7

CLASSY COOKING

Subtly spiced yet full of complex flavours, Moroccan food is beloved the world over. Learn how to whip up a tagine, chermoula or zaalouk at the Fez Cooking School, at the upmarket Palais Amani riad. Set in Morocco's gastronomic capital, it covers everything from primers in Moroccan ingredients – and trips to gather them in the medina – to Sephardic cooking workshops.

8

SURF'S UP

From kite-surfing capital Essaouira, to Oualidia, where a tranquil lagoon, flamingos and seafood restaurants offset the wild Atlantic shore, Morocco's star as a surf destination is rising. So, too, are the boutique accommodation options, giving even non-surfers good reason to visit. Think Mellow Beach House, an eco-friendly complex of rooms traditionally built in stone, clay and wood in the village of Sidi Kaouki, just south of Essaouira. Or the buzzy town of Tamraght, where The Lunar Surf House provides surf lessons, yoga classes and rooms in boho style. Want more wave? Head to the ramshackle but upwardly mobile fishing village of Imsouane, where you'll find Olo, comprising a surf school, restaurant and ocean-breezy luxury villas, bungalows and rooms right next to one of Africa's longest right-handers. [thelunarsurfhouse.com](http://thelunarsurfhouse.com), [mellowbeachhouse.com](http://mellowbeachhouse.com), [olosurfnature.com](http://olosurfnature.com)

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# 9

## FRESH SOUNDS

Morocco is moving to a new beat. As well as one of the world's largest music festivals, Mawazine, making a comeback in Rabat in 2024, there's the Oasis Festival (*pictured*), the country's coolest mash-up of dance music, food, wellness and cultural experiences, last year held in the central city of Ouarzazate, south of the Atlas Mountains. Meanwhile, if you've never listened to gnawa (or gnaoua), head to Essaouira, where every summer a network of city stages hosts artists playing this and other world music. Essaouira also comes alive to the sounds of electronica at the annual Moga festival in autumn, while in Fez there's more spiritual inspiration at summer's Festival of World Sacred Music.

✦ Wizz Air flies to Agadir and Marrakesh

**What is gnawa?**  
 Sometimes described as Morocco's answer to gospel, this spiritual music invoking religion and ancestry dates back to the 16th century. Today it's enjoying a bit of a modern makeover – in part thanks to the Gnaoua Festival in Essaouira every June. In 2019 gnawa was listed by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage.



# 10

## GLOBAL TASTES

Morocco's boundless creative energy is being expressed in a new kind of global dining. Here are three of the hottest new restaurants to try at the moment...



**+61**

Australia rules at Marrakesh's +61 (the name is for the country's area code), with an emphasis on Aussie flavours fused with those from Morocco and the Med. [plus61.com](#)



**Ili**

At Casablanca's Ili, there's no culinary confusion; the intention of husband-and-wife duo Yusuke and Noëlle Furukawa is to transport diners to Tokyo. [ili-restaurant.com](#)



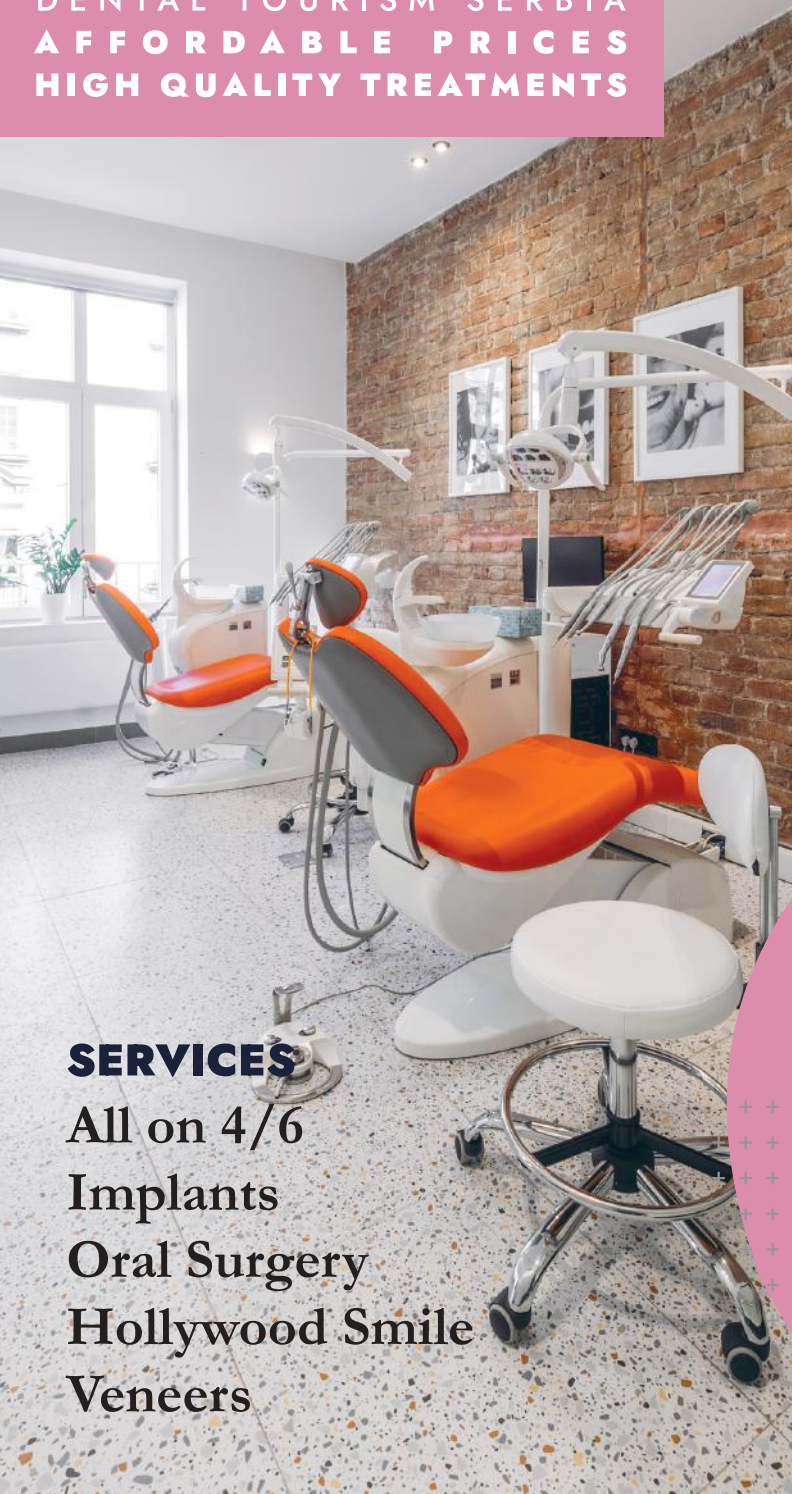
**Azouka**

At this humble eatery in Essaouira's whitewashed medina, Norwegian elements (and ferments) infuse a Moroccan base menu. [@azouka\\_essaouira](#)



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# The story of Poland's lost palace

As the painstaking process to rebuild Warsaw's Saski Palace begins, read on for how you can help to bring a resplendent architectural icon back to life

Did you know that one of the most important Polish palaces – where kings, cultural greats like Frederic Chopin and top spies used to visit – doesn't exist? During World War II, a huge inferno destroyed the resplendent **Saski Palace**, and more than 300 years of history disappeared in a matter of days. Now, in one of the biggest efforts to bring back destroyed European cultural heritage in this century, the Saski Palace and its neighbouring buildings will return to grace the centre of Warsaw.

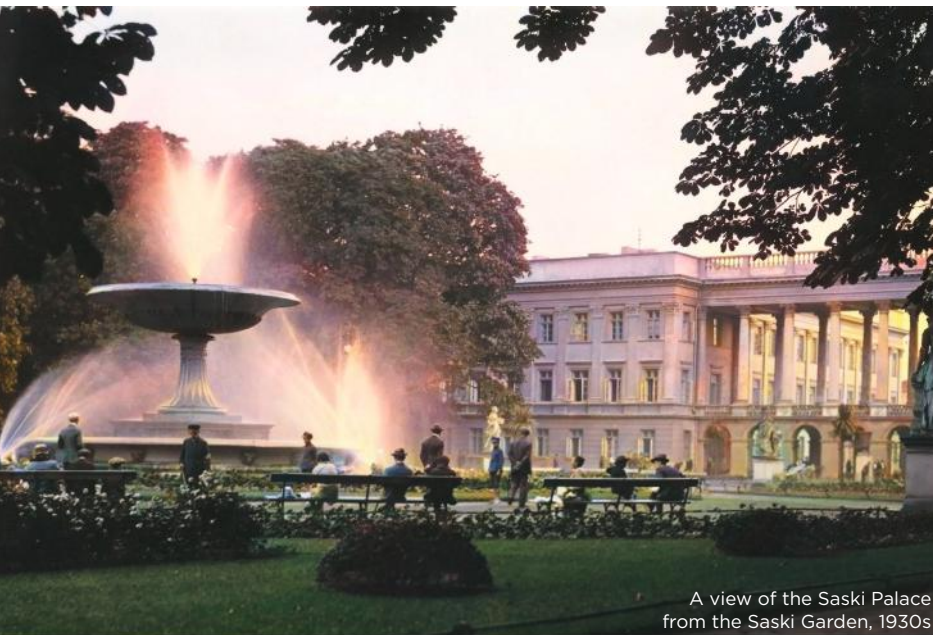
The riveting history of the Saski Palace goes back to the 17th century when a crafty courtier and brilliant poet built his estate here. The building was later bought and

rebuilt by the Polish king Augustus II the Strong, whose dynasty gave the place its name: the Saxon – or, in Polish, Saski – Palace. The king's strength not only allowed him to break horseshoes with his bare hands: he also bent the city map to his own liking, creating the Saxon Axis cutting across the main streets of Warsaw. At its heart? The fabulous royal Saski Palace and its courtyard – known as the Piłsudski Square today – with a luscious garden in the back, which soon became the first public park of the Commonwealth of Poland.

Under the care of the next king, Augustus III, the Saski Palace and its surroundings flourished, especially the neighbouring, ornamental Brühl

Palace, named after the most powerful man in the country, second only to the king: Count von Brühl. His name may be familiar to those who visited Dresden, where the Brühl's Terrace offers stunning views of the river and architectural sights.

Later, with the decline and partitions of Poland, the Saski and Brühl palaces reflected the state of the nation. But despite the circumstances, the Saski Palace housed brilliant minds of next generations, including the musical prodigy Frederic Chopin, who spent a large part of his childhood here and most likely composed his first pieces of music in its rooms, or the romantic poet Diotima. The palace weathered the political storms of



A view of the Saski Palace from the Saski Garden, 1930s



Before a women's race, in front of the Brühl Palace, 1936.

the 19th century, transforming midway from its baroque form into a majestic, neoclassicist mansion. In the meantime, the neighbouring Brühl Palace became a central point for the international telegraph network, connecting London with the Indian subcontinent.

With the turn of the 20th century and Poland regaining its independence, both palaces flourished, and the square in front of them became the heart of the reborn country. It was the place to be in Warsaw: from national celebrations, mass events, to even high-stakes races, the Piłsudski Square had it all. The Saski Palace became the seat of the Polish Army. In its top-secret offices hidden away from the prying eyes, Polish cryptologists first broke the famously complex German Enigma machine, which later helped the Allies save thousands of lives during

World War II. The majestic colonnade of the Palace held the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, while the beautiful Brühl Palace housed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. All was lost, however, during World War II, when the Germans blew up the palaces, while systematically destroying the city in late 1944.

There have been many attempts to rebuild what was lost. While the resurrection of the Warsaw Old Town was praised and gained the status of a UNESCO World Heritage Site for the painstaking rebuilding process, the palaces had no such luck. Only the lone Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was recreated: a silent witness to the years of communism, but also to the moments of hope, when people gathered to show their unity in hard times.

Now, after surviving almost 80 years of the painful void at the

heart of Warsaw, Poland has a unique chance to rebuild the Saski and Brühl Palaces and complete the process of restoring its core. But to make it work, we need you. Yes, you! If you think you have family photos showing the Saski or Brühl Palaces before 1945, please get in touch with us through our website. Maybe your great-grandmother played as a child in the Saski Garden or perhaps your granduncle served in the Polish army - their photos may help recreate the details of the palaces! For more information visit:

**palacsaski.pl**



Co-financed from the funds of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland "Reconstruction of the Saski Palace, the Brühl Palace and tenements at Królewska Street - preparation works".



The Brühl Palace, 1936.





# Health & wellness

We all need a little pampering at this time of year. Read on for our pick of the very best health and wellness options



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## Wild beauty

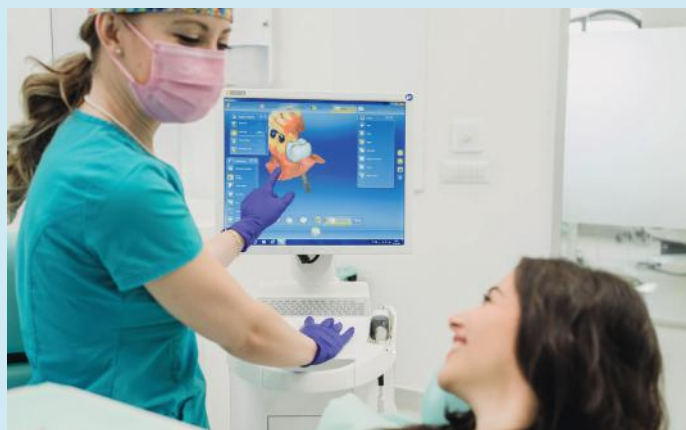
Albanian beauty brand  
Bees & Trees is the bee's knees

If you have heard about the wild nature of Albania, you should know about Bees & Trees Bio Cosmetics, an organic skincare brand who's emerged from its mighty mountains. The captivating story of Rona Nushi, a pharmacist and rock climber who created Bees & Trees in 2014 because her skin used to get burned while she was climbing, will make you love each and every creation of Bees & Trees.

Their organic skincare products are now produced in Italy and sold everywhere in EU. But, if you pass by Tirana, we recommend you to try their facials at their in-house spa. It's a "not-so-ordinary" facial treatment where you feel like you're into the woods. They use high-end equipment, their organic products and meditation on the background.

If you're not travelling to Albania, you can still enjoy Bees & Trees Bio Cosmetics by purchasing their incredible products online. **@beesandtrees\_biocosmetics, shopbeesandtrees.com. For EU: shopbeesandtrees.eu**





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People, places and things we love this season

# in the **know**



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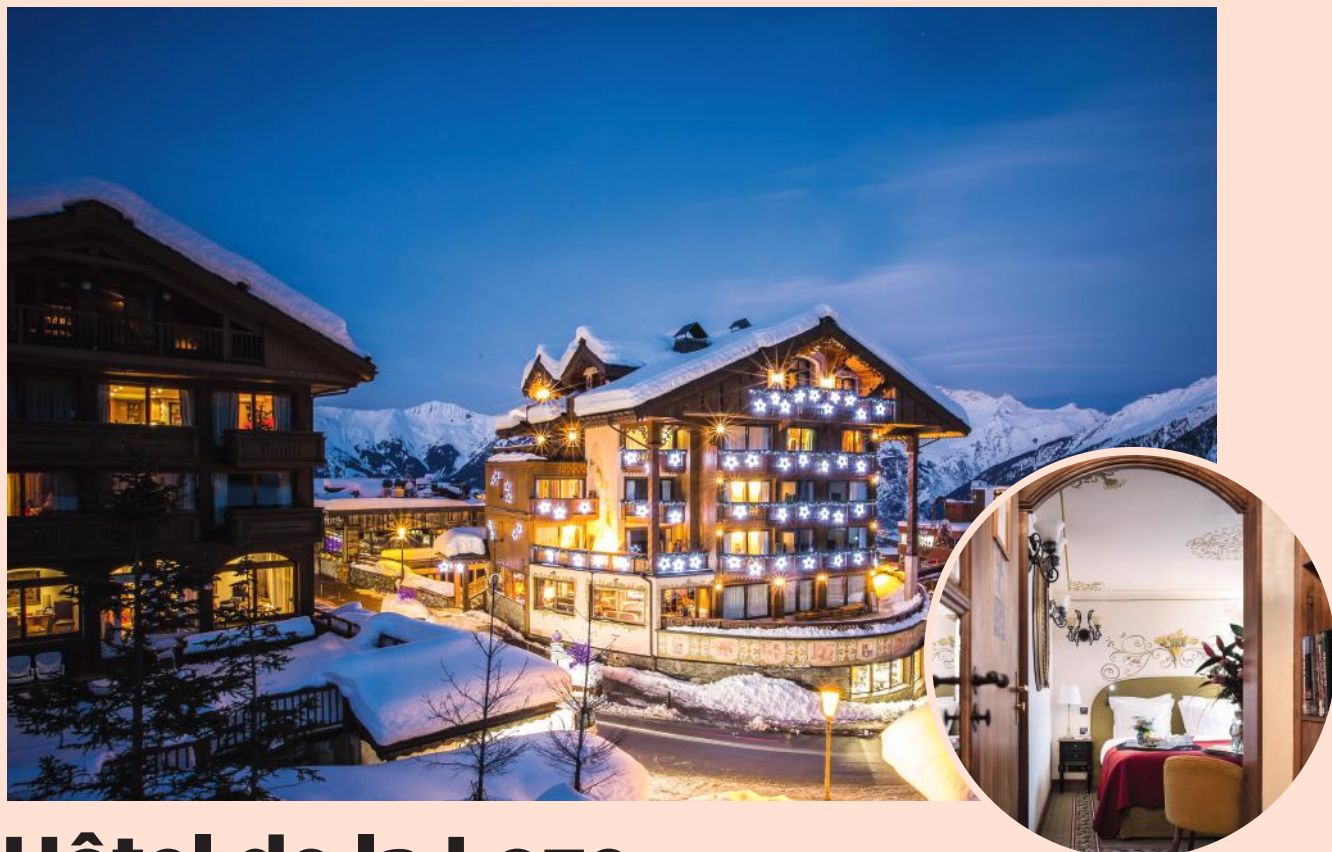
**The Stays**  
Where to rest  
your head  
**p86**

**The Eats**  
Where to have  
a good meal  
**p90**



# THE STAYS

The best places to rest your head across the WIZZ network



## Hôtel de la Loze

France

Taking a room at the Hôtel de la Loze feels less like staying at a hotel and more like being a house guest at the perfect chalet.

The staff, resplendent in traditional Savoyard uniforms, are friendly and helpful. There's a cosy lounge with dark woods and an open fire where they'll pour you a generous glass of something lovely, and where you help yourself to a buffet breakfast and afternoon cakes.

The rooms, too, are warm and welcoming, with most of them looking out onto the slopes of

Courchevel. Slopes, by the way, that are a two-minute walk from the door and a gateway to Les 3 Vallées – the largest ski area in the world. And speaking of doors, there's one that goes directly from the hotel's ski room to L'Atelier Courchevel ski shop so you don't even need to step outside to hire or buy clothes and equipment.

Feeling less active? Try the Turkish bath and sauna or the in-room massage service, or take a stroll around Courchevel's many shops, bars and restaurants. It's up to you, you're the guest.

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Judit (48) – actual patient, 10 months after treatment



# Hot Springs Medical & Spa Bulgaria

We're not fans of the 'New Year, New You' cliché, but there's a reason you'll see this phrase plastered everywhere from January. The New Year is a chance to reflect on what positive changes you want to make for the 12 months ahead. And to get your mindset right, you need to take care of your body first: that's where Hot Springs Medical & Spa comes in.

This luxury spa hotel is in Banya, a pretty town near Bansko ski resort, where wellness-seekers have been travelling for the restorative and therapeutic mineral waters for generations. As you can imagine, the spa is the real draw, with five-star treatments including a Bulgarian massage with fragrant

rose oil, spirulina boosting facials and an exfoliating body ritual with Indian red seaweed and sea salt. Afterwards, you can relax in one of its many pools, saunas, steam and cool rooms.

The hotel's rooms continue the rejuvenating experience. Our pick is the fairytale Rapunzel Tower – a spacious room with a romantic chandelier above the sumptuous king-sized bed. Or – set slightly away from the hotel complex – the three guesthouses (Panda, Koala and Grizzly) are within stumbling distance of the hotel's outdoor mineral pool, and also feature panoramic mountain views. We challenge you to find somewhere better to bring in 2024.

To book any of these hotels, visit [wizzair.com](https://www.wizzair.com) and find your best deal with our trusted partner

[Booking.com](https://www.booking.com)



## The Dominican

Brussels

Set in a former Dominican abbey, the interior of this hotel was given a modern makeover by ace Dutch design team FG Stijl. Lofty-ceilinged spaces are elevated further with leather caramel-coloured chairs, velvet drapes and renditions of artwork by Jacques-Louis David (who lived here in the 19th century). Indulge in a variety of Belgian delicacies – including delicious cheeses – in the Grand Lounge.



## Chapter Roma

Rome

This buzzy hotel in Rome's Regola neighbourhood has style and swagger in spades. A 19th-century listed building, it has exposed brick walls punctuated with artwork by street artist Warios and rooms all feature furniture made by local artisans. As you might expect (Regola is famous for its nightlife), the Hey Baby bar is the place to be seen. Order a cocktail and try your best to blend in.



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## **BULGARIA - SOFIA**

*Two restaurants serving traditional national dishes and live folk music*



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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.



# THE EATS

Where to go for a great meal across the WIZZ network



## Golden Poppy Paris

When a three Michelin-starred chef announces she's opening a new restaurant on her home turf, you take notice. Golden Poppy, inside Hotel La Fantaisie, is – somewhat surprisingly – French chef Dominique Crenn's Parisian debut, following the success of her celebrated San Francisco establishment, Atelier Crenn. She hasn't left California behind, however. Both the interior and the

menu feel decidedly American, bringing a flavour of the Golden State to the French capital. Dishes are predominately small plates, and as packed full of sunshine as the surroundings. Our favourites include Golden Poppy tacos, stuffed with abalone and spicy avocado, banana pancakes with caviar, and delicate sea bass ceviche with parsnip milk and *leche de tigre*. [goldenpoppy.com](http://goldenpoppy.com)



### SHUK mezze & bar

#### Warsaw

Are the winter blues settling in? We know where to go for a taste of summer when you're next in Warsaw. SHUK has a menu jam-packed with Middle Eastern favourites that will whisk you away to a sun-kissed beach with every bite. Start with the punchy shakshuka and save room for baklava. The food at MEZZE falafel & hummous – its sister restaurant – is equally moreish. [shuk.pl](http://shuk.pl)



### Home of Dumplings

#### Berlin

The name of this new dumpling spot has all the more meaning once you know the story of how it came to be. Once owned by founder My Ahn's parents, she grew up living and working here and aims to continue its culinary legacy. It has been given an update since then, though – all light wood, green accents and lamps made from bamboo steam baskets. The dumplings are handmade fresh every day, and come steamed, fried or deep-fried. [homeofdumplings.de](http://homeofdumplings.de)

# best of ROMANIA

From dining at romantic restaurants to sipping cocktails at chic bars and visiting magical Christmas markets, Romania has it all. Here are our favourite places to enjoy this winter

## IASI

### *Mamma Mia*

Right in the heart of the city between Iasi's Union Square and the Palace of Culture, Mamma Mia is the ideal and rewarding stop after a historical foray into the streets full of stories and legends. This is a restaurant that you'll fall in love with and want to discover! Enjoy the exceptional cuisine and cocktails with your friends at this absolutely excellent culinary experience! Every dish is a work of art, carefully crafted by chefs that can be delivered nonstop. [mammamia.ro](http://mammamia.ro)

**Book your table now: +40 728 148 658**



## SIBIU

### *Where the Christmas magic begins*

Step into the storybook charm of Sibiu's Christmas Market, igniting Romania's holiday season for the 16th year. Lauded by travellers and *The New York Times* alike, the market's festive spell captivates from 17 November to 2 January. With over 100 exhibitors, Sibiu transforms into a wonderland of gifts and yuletide joy, promising a magical quest for the perfect holiday treasure.

[targuldecraciun.ro](http://targuldecraciun.ro)

## BUCHAREST

### *TREEVI Pizza & Gin Bar*

Indulge in the perfect blend of authentic Italian cuisine and social elegance at TREEVI Pizza & Gin Bar in One Tower Floreasca. Renowned for crafting the crunchiest Roman pizza al taglio, their à la carte menu features hand-picked premium ingredients in delectable antipasti, primi piatti, and secondi piatti. A haven for food enthusiasts and gin lovers, immerse yourself in an exquisite experience where the finest Italian flavours meet the city's best G&Ts, creating unforgettable moments of culinary delight. [treevipizzabar.ro](http://treevipizzabar.ro)







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## **MIESZKANIA Z JAKOŚCIĄ NA MEDAL**



Rydzewo  
Suwałki  
Białystok  
Warszawa  
Łódź  
Supraśl

**NASZE  
INWESTYCJE**



# Spotlight on WARSAW

From award-winning musicals to the coolest bars and more, these are our favourite things to do in the Polish capital right now

## ROMA MUSICAL THEATRE

*We Will Rock You* – one of London’s longest-running West End musicals and one of the best-known jukebox shows – is now at Roma Musical Theatre in Warsaw, the leading Polish musical stage. Packed with exquisitely performed, legendary Queen hits and featuring the band playing live on stage, this spectacular Polish-language production (with great reviews and deemed “better than the West End” by one critic) runs seven times a week and is a must for all music and theatre lovers. [teatroma.pl](http://teatroma.pl)



## ZŁOTA BILA

Welcome to Golden Ball, Warsaw’s very first premium billiards centre. With an impressive array of 40 tables dedicated to all forms of billiards – including pyramid, pool and snooker – it takes your billiards experience to the next level. Enjoy the added thrill of dart games and relax at the stylish bars with a well-deserved drink. Conveniently situated in Blue City, Warsaw, the doors are open seven days a week, from 12 noon to 1am. Come for a game, immerse yourself in the vibrant atmosphere, and indulge in the ultimate billiards adventure. [zlotabila.com](http://zlotabila.com)

## WYRAJ

According to Slavic beliefs, WYRAJ is a mythical land where souls journey to the afterlife. In WYRAJ, souls rest, feast and indulge in all manner of blessings in the midst of lush nature and the company of deities. The present meets the past and propels into the future here. Inspired by history, culture, tradition, Polish nature and mysticism – WYRAJ invokes ancient recipes and present them in a new form. The bar serves native spirits and beverages based on age-old recipes. WYRAJ has a unique atmosphere, from dawn till night in the heart of Warsaw. [wyraj.net](http://wyraj.net)







# The hot list

Restaurants, bars, events and more – this is our essential guide of what to do this winter

## Á la Maison

Start your day right at this restaurant

When in Budapest, many believe that the best brunch is served at Szervita Square. This comes as no surprise since, for many years, Á la Maison has been the first place that comes to mind when in-the-know locals crave brunch favourites of the world in a beautiful environment alongside high-quality service.

Besides the classic choices of eggs Benedict, French toast, Croque Madame and various breakfast platters, the restaurant team always comes up with extraordinary dishes that make coming back every season worth your while. Á la Maison is also famous for the unique spin they have on each dish served, and so even when you are coming for the popular lunch menu, it's worth looking at the chef's special.

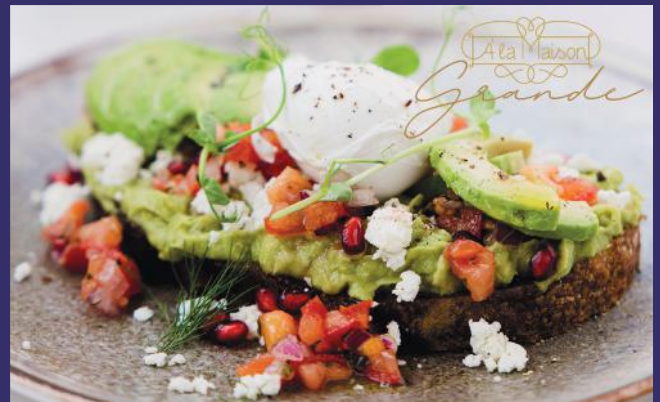
Whether you fancy an early breakfast, a comfortable brunch or a hearty lunch, Á la Maison never disappoints – and when it's time to celebrate, you can clink your glasses with fantastic cocktails or bubbly! Lunch is served daily from 12. Opening hours: Mon-Fri, 8am-3pm. Sat-Sun, 8am-4pm. [alamaisongrand.com](http://alamaisongrand.com)



PHOTO: MARKO DELBELLO OCEPEK

## Feel the love in Ljubljana

Join us at LUV Fest, a month-long event celebrating love – love for your partner, family, friends, art and exploration. Love is the thread that ties together a impressive line-up of open-air events, artistic displays, creative workshops, and more, from 8 February (the anniversary of the greatest Slovenian poet France Prešeren's death) until 12 March (the Slovenian day of romance). Throughout this month, enjoy light installations, photo spots, art exhibitions, musical treats, and culinary delights, making unforgettable memories in the heart of Ljubljana. [visitljubljana.com](http://visitljubljana.com)





## Be part of a fairy tale

Discover the magic of Craiova in winter

This winter... be part of a fairy tale. Discover the joy and nostalgia of childhood and visit Craiova Christmas Market - which has been awarded one of the Best Christmas Markets in Europe three times.

Almost two millions light bulbs illuminate the centre of Craiova during this winter with warm or bright white lights, silver Christmas trees, light curtains and classic luminous figurines for each point of attraction.

With amazing decorations, a giant Christmas tree, an ice rink with oversized Snow Queen, a huge panoramic wheel, spectacular Christmas cottages and some of the

most beautiful Christmas lights in Europe, Craiova offers the best of Christmas in a family atmosphere.

You will find the magic of the Snow Queen's fairy tale, concerts, Santa's creative workshops and food stands with delicious Romanian traditional cuisine.

But what is the most amazing element, and unique to Craiova, are the Christmas cottages, painted in a magical style and carved with different characters from fairy tales by the most talented artists from Romania.

At this time of year, Craiova is a huge open-air gallery, a city of creative and generous people, with amazing old buildings,

good vibes and fascinating traditions and gastronomy. If you try the local food such as roasted duck rolls with fried polenta, spicy dried red peppers, stuffed crayfish or meat rolled in cabbage leaves, drink wine and traditional plum brandy, we're sure you will fall in love with Craiova, its cuisine and its people.

Craiova Christmas Market will run until 2 January 2024, but the magic lives on here year-round.

Let yourself be carried away by the fairy-tale atmosphere of Craiova in winter time!

Find out more at:  
[facebook.com/TargdeCraciunCraiova](https://facebook.com/TargdeCraciunCraiova) or  
[rimariacraiova.ro](http://rimariacraiova.ro)







## Iceland's wonder of the world

### Relax in the healing waters of the Blue Lagoon

The Blue Lagoon Iceland is a geothermal paradise in the heart of an otherworldly landscape. Surrounded by the volcanic frontiers of the Reykjanes UNESCO Geopark, this special natural wonder unlocks the door to a universe of relaxation, rejuvenation and exploration.

Encompassing two award-winning hotels, three lagoons, and multiple restaurants, it is a place of radiant wellbeing, breathtaking nature, innovative design and sustainability, as well as the extraordinary powers of the geothermal Blue Lagoon Water – a renowned resource found nowhere else on Earth.

From the ethereal warmth of the Blue Lagoon and the sublime comfort of Silca Hotel, to the timeless luxuries of the Retreat Hotel and the Michelin-starred Moss Restaurant, Blue Lagoon Iceland takes the mind and body on an unforgettable journey.

Come for the day or spend the night. Discover the water. Explore the land. Savour the cuisine. Experience the wonder.

[bluelagoon.com](http://bluelagoon.com)



## Malatinszky organic wine estate in Villány

Visit one of the best vineyards in Hungary. Don't believe us? Read these glowing expert reviews

"Csaba Malatinszky's veins must run with cabernet franc."  
*Carolyn Gilby – MW/ Decanter*



"I tasted his wine couple of years ago which made a deep impression on me. I have tasted many cabernet francs in my life, including Villány's, each one of the wines is highly sophisticated and serious. Mr Malatinszky's cabernet franc is expressed by his personal philosophy connected to the grape type. The approach, that characterises the oenologist himself, makes the wine unique." *Steven Spurrier – Editor-in-Chief of Decanter*

"[The Kúria cabernet franc 2013] is mind-blowing and conclusively proves that cabernet franc has a new home in Hungary, and is also the finest Hungarian red wine I've ever encountered. Super-concentrated and super-priced, this has amazing fragrance and freshness for a nearly nine-year-old wine. Thanks to the super-fine tannins, this glides over the palate and off towards infinity. From organically grown grapes. Unfiltered. Drink or hold." *jamesuckling.com*

"Mature ruby red. The nose is deep, complex, playful, cherries, plums, tea, chalky notes, damp stone, also wild strawberries, goosebumps. Round and soft on the palate, matured to the point, perfect harmony, tannins, acidity, fruit, energetic, wild, calm, a poetry in red, a wine that doesn't have to hide from the great wines of this world. With certainly 10-15 years "reserves on a pleasure plateau". *Adrian Van Velsen – vvwine.ch*



For further information visit:  
[shop.malatinszky.hu](http://shop.malatinszky.hu)



## The Hotel Ljubljana

Treat yourself to a truly unique stay at The Hotel Ljubljana. Ideally located in the centre of the Slovenian capital, it's within easy walking distance to the Old Town's most famous sights, including Prešernov trg Square and the Triple Bridge.

The Hotel Ljubljana has various types of rooms, and our most friendly staff are here to meet your needs.

The hotel has a splendid restaurant that will ensure you leave Ljubljana with the best memories that you will remember forever. [thehotel.si](http://thehotel.si)



## Gdanski Bowke 'Legend with a taste...'

This warm and cosy restaurant is a place where you can feel the authentic atmosphere of Gdańsk harbour from more than 200 years ago, while enjoying the taste of Polish cuisine and the finest wines.

At Gdański Bowke you can expect the highest quality food – we knead our own dumplings and put all our passion and skills into the preparation of exceptional meals, so that the greatest gourmands and lovers of traditional Polish flavours are more than satisfied.

[gdanskibowke.com](http://gdanskibowke.com)



## The coolest restaurant in Poland

ORZO can be found in the largest cities in Poland: Warsaw, Kraków, Wrocław and Poznań. The interiors delight with a huge amount of greenery, spaciousness and an industrial atmosphere. The extensive menu is international – featuring everything from delicious burgers to Neapolitan pizza, as well as original variations of popular dishes. Ready for a drink? Try our zero-waste cocktails. And the prices? From PLN 29.99 (less than €7) for a dish, and numerous promotions (such as two cocktails or desserts for the price of one), ORZO is kind to your wallet *and* the place to be seen. [orzo.pl](http://orzo.pl)



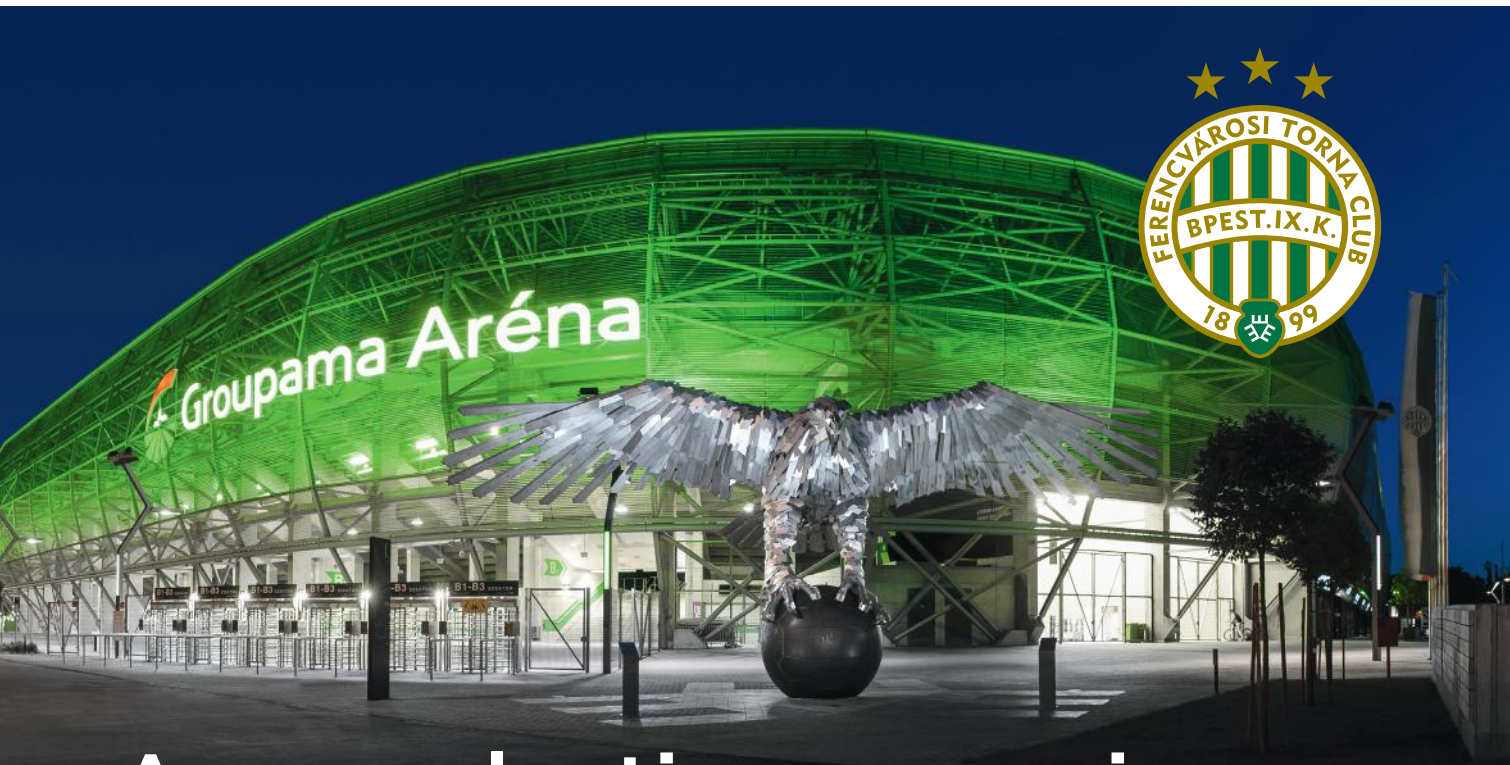
## moodro resto

Where modernity combines with tradition in Katowice, Master Chef Magdalena Nowaczewska creates comforting, delicious dishes that delight both in taste and appearance.

It is here that you'll find the best breakfasts in Silesia, as well as a menu created according to the season. Tartare on toast, roasted pumpkin with burrata, matjas on focaccia, and liver pate á la crème brûlée are just a few of the unmissable dishes. But it's not just the food that stands out – moodro is set in a unique location in the grounds of the Silesian Museum. It's the perfect dining experience.

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





# An everlasting experience, an eternal memory

Ferencvárosi Torna Club, Hungary's most successful football club, is a must-visit for football fans, in part thanks to its renewed Fradi Museum and Fradi Shop

There is not a matchday when the Fradi Shop, the official fan shop of Ferencvárosi Torna Club in the Groupama Arena, is not full to the brim. With its consistently well-priced offers and modern environment, the Fradi Shop always offers a welcoming experience for customers. But, did you know the Fradi Shop isn't the only place on matchdays where fans can pick up a wide range of Ferencváros-products – including own-brand Nike and Fradi x Retro Jeans clothing, fan accessories, souvenirs and even food and drink – and buy the necessary kit for cheering the team on, or treasured mementos of the match? A Mini Shop has been set up at the ticket office of the

Groupama Arena, a Fradi Minibus is now located near sector C, a Fradi Truck stationed in the surface car park in front of the Fradi Shop, and there's a sales point in the Gold VIP sector that will also help to ensure that original Fradi products are easily available to purchase on matchdays.

In addition to the Fradi Shop, the [shop.fradi.hu](http://shop.fradi.hu) website is also popular and has an extremely high turnover. Here you'll find almost all the products available in the physical shop. The online jersey designer is very popular online, where you can personalise your very own Fradi jersey. The selection is wide and imaginative, with everything from original Fradi

jerseys to everyday clothes, souvenirs and car accessories.

The home kit of the football team was renewed in 2023: the elegant yet powerful green shirt is proving hugely popular, with more than 10,000 home, away and third kit collections already sold in womens, mens and childrens versions.

Among the own-brand products, the Fradi Streetwear category also stands out, which, although it is a Ferencváros product, is also perfect for everyday wear. The collection, which changes from season to season, always aims to appeal to female and younger fans, not just men. In addition to own-brand products, fans can also find new baby clothes, bedding



sets, leisure and school bags, to name but a few.

The novelties don't end there, as the latest pieces of the Fradi x Retro Jeans collaboration were unveiled this autumn. The collection consists of 26 products, nine of which are designed for women. The collection – which gives the wearer a look worthy of Fradi – consists of two parts: one designed for the players and staff of the NB I football team, and a package for a wider range of fans, including a collared T-shirt, vest, winter jacket, hoodie, sweatpants and a retro green and white T-shirt with a true Fradist feel.

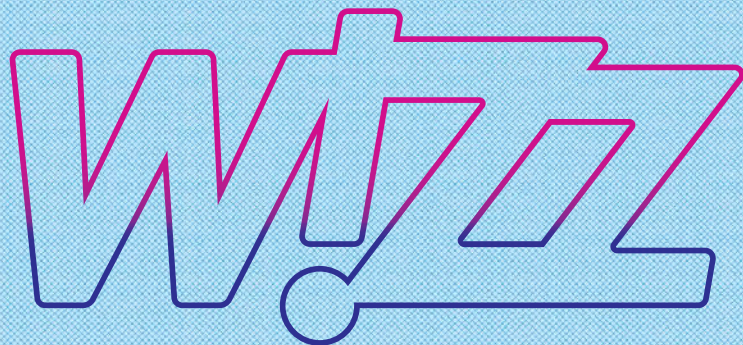
For those visiting the home of Ferencváros, the Groupama Arena, the Fradi Museum is also a great place to visit, which was moved to its current location on 7 August 2014, when the stadium was opened. Here, visitors can find out all about the history of Ferencvárosi Torna Club. The museum was the first of the Hungarian sports clubs to receive official museum status in 2015, and last year it underwent a major refurbishment, which means that it can now be visited on match days. The 200 square metre museum displays all the important relics of the club's history, including the Ballon d'Or of Flórián Albert,



the only one given to a Hungarian player, as well as historical locker rooms, old jerseys and the kit of star athletes. The renewed Fradi Museum has also been extended with several interactive sections, so that visitors can experience the museum virtually as well. The Fradi Museum regularly hosts temporary exhibitions - currently, there is an exhibition on the life of Inter-Cities Fairs Cup-winning, European Championship-winning and Olympic bronze medal-winning former footballer Gyula Rákosi. This is the 11th temporary exhibition of the club's museum. For further information visit: [fradi.hu](http://fradi.hu), [Shop.fradi.hu](http://Shop.fradi.hu)







## The WIZZ pages

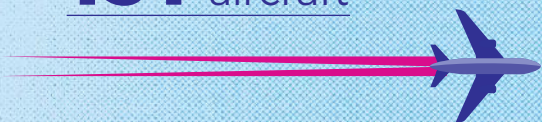
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**53** countries

**190+** destinations

**850+** routes

**191** aircraft





Check out our

## new destinations

We never stop searching for new destinations - we fly to more than 190 places in 53 countries and counting - to add to your bucket list and make planning your next holiday a breeze.



EVERY EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO ENSURE THIS MAP IS ACCURATE, BUT PLEASE NOTE IT IS FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY





# 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...

## People power

Wizz Air continues to lead the way to a more sustainable future. We have just launched the WIZZ Sustainability Ambassador programme for our employees – a first of its kind in the industry, and part of our commitment to remaining eco conscious.

We have chosen 24 Sustainability Ambassadors from over 8,000 cabin crew and office employees, representing 22 bases and two offices across Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Malta, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, the UAE and the UK. From September 2023 to May 2024, our Sustainability Ambassadors will support local projects, from recycling to charity initiatives at Wizz Air's bases and offices, to promote eco-friendly habits and share insights with colleagues. At the end of their tenure, Wizz Air's Corporate and ESG Officer, Yvonne Moynihan, and the sustainability team will select the most impactful project championed by the Ambassadors. "We are thrilled to be able to



Here Odett Fejes, Senior Cabin Attendant, London Luton. Below Mihai Janu, Cabin Attendant, Cluj-Napoca

provide our colleagues with an opportunity to immerse themselves in sustainability projects that make a difference," says Yvonne. "The Sustainability Ambassadors are playing a vital role in promoting awareness and fostering positive change regarding environmental and social sustainability issues across Wizz Air's network."

## New routes from Italy

Dreaming of making *la dolce vita* a reality? From next spring Wizz Air will operate six new routes to/from Italy: from Rome Fiumicino to Berlin, Hamburg, Alicante and Copenhagen as well as from Milan Malpensa to Paris Beauvais and Tenerife. We're also thrilled to announce the arrival of four new Airbus A321neo aircraft to our bases in Italy – three additional aircraft will join the fleet in Rome Fiumicino and one plane will be deployed in Milan.



Wizz  
by numbers

  
191  
aircraft

  
190+  
destinations  
in 53 countries

  
34  
bases in  
16 countries

  
850+  
routes

  
8,000+  
staff

  
45m  
passengers carried\*

\*FIGURE FOR F2022

## Wizz Air supports fuel decision

Wizz Air has welcomed a decision by the European Parliament to adopt the ReFuel EU Aviation Regulation, establishing minimum shares of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) to be blended with conventional jet fuel.

The regulation aims to increase demand for supply of SAF, which has lower lifecycle CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than fossil fuel. Suppliers must ensure 2% of the fuel available at EU airports is SAF in 2025, rising to 6% in 2030, 20% in 2035 and 70% in 2050.



“As Europe’s leading airline in terms of emissions intensity reduction, Wizz Air has supported the ReFuel EU Aviation Regulation proposal since its inception,” says Yvonne Moynihan, Corporate and ESG Officer at Wizz Air. “These mandates will boost the

supply of SAF, which is critical to improve its availability and cost. Wizz Air has started preparing for the upcoming EU mandates by partnering with SAF producers and making our first equity investments in SAF research and development.”



## Passengers ‘get lost’ in Bishkek

Our Let’s Get Lost campaign, which sees lucky participants travel to a mystery destination that is only revealed to them on board, was back again this September. After taking off from Abu Dhabi, guests were thrilled to discover they were heading to Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, where they enjoyed a national park and immersed themselves in local traditions during a truly unforgettable weekend. Follow [@wizzair](https://www.wizzair.com) for your chance to Get Lost with WIZZ!

PHOTOS: ADOBE STOCK, BUDAPEST AIRPORT/BARANYI ROBERT

## New routes



**Abu Dhabi** – Bishkek, Erbil, Larnaca, Turkistan

**Budapest** – Glasgow, Stockholm Arlanda

**Bucharest** – Glasgow, Leipzig

**Cairo** – Abu Dhabi, Budapest, London Luton

**Catania** – Brussels, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Paris Beauvais, Sharm El Sheikh

**Craiova** – Dortmund

**Gdansk** – Alicante, Copenhagen, Rome Fiumicino, Stockholm Arlanda, Tenerife, Valencia

**Katowice** – Aqaba, Brussels

**Larnaca** – Radom

**Milan Malpensa** – Paris Beauvais, Tenerife

**Rome Fiumicino** – Alicante, Berlin, Copenhagen, Debrecen, Hamburg

**Tirana** – Brindisi, Bucharest, Comiso, Prague, Valencia

**Wroclaw** – Malaga, Valencia

**Yerevan** – Dortmund, Sofia



# Where to next?

From diving with turtles to desert trips on camel-back, alfresco food and cultural gems, here's where to go on the Wizz Air network for a sunny winter getaway

**W**ho says a festive break has to be cold? Yes, there is a certain magic that comes with snowy landscapes, marshmallow-topped hot chocolates and Christmas markets, but just imagine swapping your scarf and boots for sunglasses and sandals, and relaxing in a warm corner of the world when the temperatures start to drop at home. And, thanks to Wizz Air's extensive route network, you can do just that. Here, then, are some sunny-all-year-round destinations to turn up the heat on your next winter escape. All you need to do is grab your sun-cream and decide where to go.

## Riyadh

While temperatures drop to around the mid-20°C mark in December, there is still plenty of sun to go around in the capital of Saudi Arabia. And the break from the scorching heat of the summer months means Riyadh's most compelling sights can be explored in more comfortable weather conditions. Drop by the imposing Al Masmak fortress, which was built in the 19th century and now has a museum that showcases the history and culture of the region, or go for a camel ride across rolling dunes during a desert safari. To put a smile on the



kids' faces, why not go to Winter Wonderland (until 22 December)? This fun event consists of four gardens and more than 85 games and experiences, and forms part of the sprawling, two-month-long Riyadh Season 2023 celebrations.

## Agadir

Sitting on Morocco's southern Atlantic coast, in the foothills of the Anti-Atlas Mountains, Agadir is famous for its wide crescent-shaped beach which, thanks to December/January temperatures reaching more than 20°C, is very much open for business all-year-round. Walking along the city's seaside promenade lined with

cafés, restaurants and bars, it might well feel like a summer holiday, especially if you follow the stroll with a round of golf at one of Agadir's top-class courses. And don't miss the Crocoparc - a botanical park that's home to more than 300 Nile codoniles. You can eye up these fearsome predators after entering through the mouth of a crocodile.

## Tenerife

While December and January are considerably cooler months in Tenerife, feel free to pack your

**Clockwise from left**  
Playa de las Vistas in Tenerife;  
Larnaca; diving in Hurghada;  
cute camels in Riyadh



swimming trunks when heading to the largest of Spain's Canary Islands. You'll still get around six hours of sunshine per day - and with sea temperatures averaging 20°C, a beach holiday is very much on the cards. Make sure you work the white sands of Playa del Duque in Costa Adeje, and Playa de las Vistas (The Beach of Views) into the rotation. A wine-tasting trip to Bodegas Ferrara winery in the Arafo region or a dolphin-spotting spin on a catamaran will round off your sun-kissed winter break nicely.

### Hurghada

You'll want to make the most of up to 10 hours of sunshine a day at this popular beach resort town stretching some 40km along Egypt's Red Sea coast. For some truly mind-boggling diving, head 5km south of the Giftun Islands to Gota Abu Ramada for a meeting with eagle ray, butterflyfish or

sea turtles. As night falls, swap underwater stories with your friends at a restaurant in the car-free Hurghada Marina while yachts bob gently nearby, or head inland and explore the Hurghada desert and Bedouin camps on the back of a quad bike.

### Larnaca

Benefitting from a beautiful Mediterranean climate that comes with a location on the south coast of Cyprus, Larnaca pretty much has great weather all year round, even when things get a bit colder in the winter months. There are of course some lovely beaches to stretch out on here, but why not also tap into local culture with a trip to Pano Lefkara - a small village on the southern slopes of the Troodos Mountains that's known for its lace and skilled silversmiths - or a stroll through the Larnaca Fort and its fascinating Medieval Museum?





# “We take a plane full of adventurous, open-minded people and introduce them to another culture”



Robert Turoczi, one of the organisers of Wizz Air’s Let’s Get Lost campaign, talks to us about whisking winners away to exciting unknown locations

Imagine sitting on a Wizz Air flight as it carries you to your next great adventure – only you have no idea where the plane will land. Are you about to explore the majestic architecture of Saudi Arabia or stroll through a lush national park in Kyrgyzstan? All is revealed by the Wizz Air crew only when you touch down.

The mystery flights are part of the WIZZ Let’s Get Lost campaign, an initiative that introduces stops on the airline’s extensive network in a fun and exciting way. For a

chance to make a ‘Flight to the Unknown’, participants simply follow the Wizz Air Instagram page, and post a photo of their most adventurous travel experience on their personal profile, using the hashtag #GetLostwithWIZZ and tagging @wizzair.

“Let’s Get Lost represents WIZZ’s philosophy in so many ways,” says Robert Turoczi, Senior Brand Manager, who led the LGL campaign from Venice, Italy, to Riyadh in Saudi Arabia in March

2023. “We believe travelling helps to grow your personality and that meeting other cultures or people from all walks of life will broaden your perspective. The Let’s Get Lost campaign represents that so well – we take a plane full of adventurous, open-minded people and introduce them to another culture in the best possible way: through meeting local people, gastronomy, music and sights.”

The latest LGL trip in September 2023 saw passengers head for Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, where they could soak up the local culture and traditions. While the sightseeing is always sublime, not knowing the destination adds another layer of excitement.



**Left** The lucky passengers on the WIZZ Let's Get Lost trip to Saudi Arabia  
**Below** Robert Turoczi



**“The passengers met at the airport as complete strangers, by the time we landed they looked like a large group of friends”**

were coming from further away,” recalls Robert. “In the end, everyone we expected was able to show up at the airport. There were many great stories of people flying from the south of Italy, driving six hours or sleeping at the airport!”

Any challenges making the flight were soon forgotten when passengers looked up at the departure boards.

“The moment you walk into the airport, and see ‘unknown’ as a destination on the screen, some special excitement and adrenalin kick in,” adds Robert. “The uncertainty about the destination brings the people together, they start chatting, bonding and – of course – guessing the destination.

“They met at the airport as complete strangers, but by the time we landed they looked like a large group of friends. Our crew did a wonderful job keeping the hype going in-flight and they are the ones who get to announce the destination upon landing to a huge ovation and cheering.”

Take a look at some of the feedback from passengers who made the trip and you realise just how special the Let's Get Lost campaign is. “The hospitality we received during our stay was extraordinary. We were welcomed with great warmth, and the kindness of the Saudi people was truly remarkable,” says Elena Fracchia.

Another winner, Martina Debernardi, adds: “I've never thought about going to Saudi Arabia, but it was an incredible surprise. All the colours, the people, the food and the coffee, everything was priceless.”

**Follow @wizzair for hints on the next WIZZ Let's Get Lost adventure!**



“Boarding a plane without knowing where you are going is just such a special experience that even frequent travellers can get excited about,” says Robert. “These days, we tend to overplan everything to avoid any bad surprises. The philosophy of Let's Get Lost is that the best memories will catch you totally unexpectedly.”

Organising a ‘Flight to the Unknown’ is not easy. For starters, when launching the campaign in 2018, Wizz Air had to create a new International Air Transport Association (IATA) code to be able to display ‘unknown’ on departure boards. For the Saudi Arabia trip, there was the logistical challenge of passengers making their way to Venice Airport from all over Italy after the winners were announced a week before takeoff.

“I had concerns if all the people would show up at Venice Airport, as many of them





# 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 CO<sub>2</sub> 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 CO<sub>2</sub> 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?

### 10/17 goals

By integrating sustainability into Wizz Air's business and operations, we contribute to 10 (out of 17) UN Sustainable Development Goals that are within our scope of influence, including climate action, gender equality, decent work and economic growth.

\* Wizz Air was named Global Environmental Sustainability Airline Group of the Year by the Centre for Aviation (CAPA) at its Awards for Excellence 2022



# Our fleet

## Younger, greener and growing

**Wizz Air has a single-type fleet** of 191 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 4.23 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\*** 39



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

**Range** 6,200km



### 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

**Range** 5,950km



### 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

**Range** 6,300km



### Airbus A321neo



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



**Wingspan** 35.8m (117ft 5in)



**Number of aircraft\*** 105



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

**Range** 7,400km



## 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

## The right fare for you

		BASIC	WIZZ PRIORITY	WIZZ GO	WIZZ PLUS
BAGS	Carry-on bag 40x30x20cm	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Trolley bag 55x40x23cm		✓	✓	✓
	20 kg checked-in bag			✓	
	32 kg checked-in bag				✓
SEATS	Seat selection			✓	
	Premium seat selection				✓
CHECK-IN	Online check-in	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Airport check-in			✓	✓
	Priority check-in		✓	✓	✓
	Auto check-in				✓
BOARDING	Priority Boarding		✓	✓	✓
FLEXIBILITY	WIZZ Flex				✓
	Refund to WIZZ account				✓



### Download our app!

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.



### eSIM data roaming

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## Wizz DISCOUNT CLUB

### Fly with us for less

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

## Wizz DISCOUNT CLUB LIGHT

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](http://wizzparking.com).

### Airport transfer

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



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Should your bag end up delayed by 96 hours or more, we guarantee €300 compensation (per person, per sector) with our new bag tracking product.



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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 your 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](http://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. **If you start to feel unwell during the flight, do not hesitate to talk to the cabin crew.**

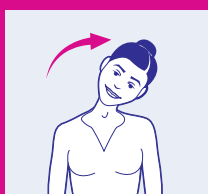
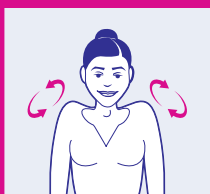


### Nut allergy

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

## 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

## We encourage you to...

- Follow crew instructions, which are there to keep you safe
- Be respectful towards everyone on board – fellow passengers and the crew
- Use appropriate language and try to stay calm and cooperative

## ...so you can:

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

## Not tolerated onboard...

- Smoking on board (including classic cigarettes or e-cigarettes, pipes, vapes)
- Placing e-cigarettes in your checked-in bags or charge them on board
- Breaching, or refusing to follow, crew instructions
- Harassing fellow passengers and/or crew members in any way (including sexual harassment)
- Threatening or being aggressive towards fellow passengers and/or crew members
- Being violent or behave in a hostile, erratic manner
- Damaging the aircraft or onboard equipment
- Wasting, polluting or contaminating the cabin
- Endangering the safety of the flight by any means
- Consuming 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
- Being under the influence of drugs or medical substances that may affect your behaviour or self-control
- Filming or photographing 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



**THE CREW RESERVES THE RIGHT TO STOP SERVING ALCOHOL TO ANY PASSENGER WHO IS, OR APPEARS TO BE, INTOXICATED**



**SMOKING ON BOARD, INCLUDING IN THE LAVATORY, WILL RESULT IN A FINE OF UP TO €3,000\***

For more information, please refer to the General Conditions of Carriage on [wizzair.com](http://wizzair.com)

\*Subject to applicable jurisdiction



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## IGÉNYELJEN WIZZ AIR HITELKÁRTYÁT ÉS VÁLTSA REPÜLÉSRE KEZDÉSNEK KAPOTT 10 000 ÜDVÖZLŐPONTJÁT!



**THM: 49,23%** a 2023. 08. 01. – 2024. 01. 31. között újonnan igényelt Wizz Air hitelkártya főkártya esetén.  
A THM 375.000 Ft-ra és 12 hónap futamidőre került meghatározásra.

Jelen tájékoztatás nem teljes körű, és nem minősül ajánlattételnek. A 10 000 pontot a Bank a 2023. 10. 01. – 2024. 01. 31. között újonnan igényelt és jóváhagyott Wizz Air Hitelkártya főkártya igénylések esetén biztosítja, abban az esetben, ha a főkártyabirtokos a Hitelkártya igénylőlapon mobil telefonszámot és e-mail címet ad meg, annak érdekében, hogy az Erste Bank ezen megadott elérhetőségekre, termékeire és szolgáltatásaira vonatkozóan megkeresse telefonon, SMS-ben, e-mailen, Internetbanki és mobilalkalmazási szolgáltatáson, illetve a Wizz Air honlapján regisztrált és rögzítette a Wizz számlaszámát vagy e-mail címet az internetbanki szolgáltatásban a Wizz Air Hitelkártya főkártya jóváhagyástól számított 60 napon belül, valamint legalább egy alkalommal egy tranzakciót végez a kártyával a kártya Bank általi jóváhagyását követő szintén 60 napon belül. Amennyiben az akció keretében igényelt Wizz Air Hitelkártyát a Főkártyabirtokos annak kibocsátásától számított 12 hónapon belül megszünteti, a Bank jogosult a 10 000 pont megvonására akként, hogy 10 000 forinttal a Főkártyabirtokos hitelszámláját megterheli. Társkártya igénylése esetén a Bank nem biztosít üdvözlő pontokat. A részletes kondíciókat és szerződéses feltételeket az Erste Bank mindenkor hatályos Lakossági Hitelkártya ASZF-je és a Lakossági Hitel Hirdetmény, a Wizz Air Kártyák Pontgyűjtő Feltételei tartalmazzák. Ezek a dokumentumok megtalálhatóak a bankhókokban és a [www.erstebank.hu](http://www.erstebank.hu) címen. Wizz Air Hitelkártyák esetén a Főkártyabirtokos a Pontgyűjtési Alap összegével megegyező összértékű vásárlási tranzakció után jogosult pontok gyűjtésére, amelyben a társkártyával történt vásárlások is beszámítanak. A Teljes Hiteldíj Mutató (THM) meghatározása az aktuális feltételek, illetve a hatályos jogszabályok figyelembevételével történik, a feltételek és a jogszabály változása esetén mértéke módosulhat.

**ERSTE** 



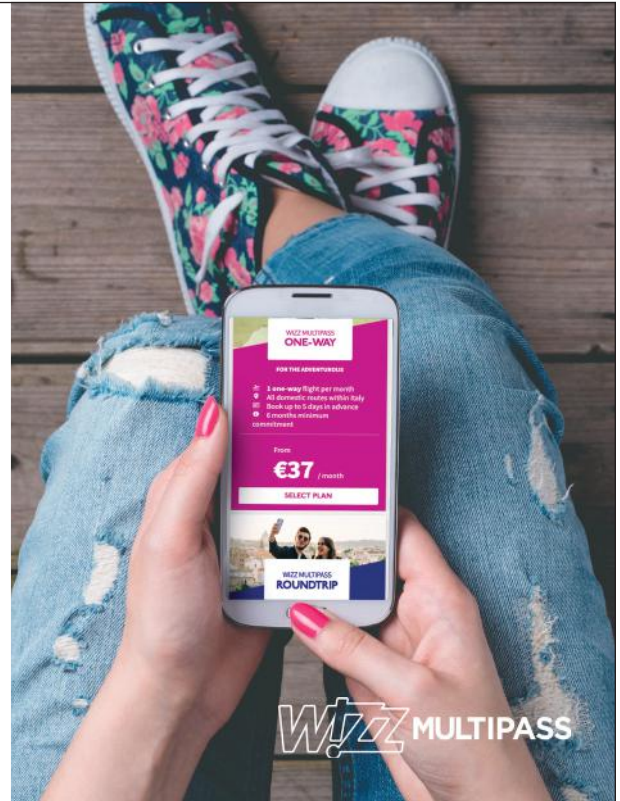
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