The rabbit in a hat Issue

LIFE IS A ROLLER COASTER

Just how and why did the roller coaster evolve? And where to find the fastest, the tallest and the loopiest, p34

PETAL POWER

From soda bread to sorbets, edible flowers are versatile and flavoursome. Check out this blooming food trend, p8

The beat goes on

Companion catches up with Berlin-based Korean DJ Shubostar to find out how the beat of life is treating her and what the future holds for clubbing, p26

ARE YOU SOBER CURIOUS?

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GIRL POWER

Discover how Andrea Bury and Petra Hoffmann of the ABURY Foundation empower women via education, p46

MONOCHROME MAGIC

Barcelona-based Japanese artist Yoshi Sislay takes Companion inside his crazy world of marker pen wall drawings, p9

For more information and articles, visit 25hours-companion.com
Editor's Note
Hello and welcome to issue 23 of Companion.

This time we’re all about packing as much fun into your 24-hour day as possible. Be it heading to a comedy club, p12, reading the latest graphic comic, p28, or learning how to waltz, p28. We love the fact that on the autumnal equinox, which this year falls on 23 September, there really are 25 hours in the day to make the most of our wonderful world.

In this ‘rabbit in a hat’ issue, anything goes. We talk to playful artist, Yoshi Sisley, p7, whose marker pen wall art strives to show the joy in everything, from a fish or a tree, to an iconic city structure. We also look at the history of roller coasters and speak to illustrator Mack Bade, p34, whose company motto ‘the whole world is my playground’ encapsulates the spirit of Companion. Transgender artist and Zurich local, Luca Siso, takes us to their favourite places in the city, p20, whilst Viennese skateboarder, Daniel Spiegel, tells us what drives him back to the board time and time again, p18. We also test whether AI Google Bard can do a better job of taking us on a tour of the Swiss capital than a travel writer, p54.

Our regular fashion reporter, Michelle Doguid, asks whether what you wear has the power to make you happy in ‘Dopamine Dressing’, p42, and checks out the latest in low and non-alcoholic drinks, p49, along with the rise of experience dining, p38, and the beauty and surprising flavours of creating dishes with edible flowers, p18.

And if you’re flying soon, make sure you check out Matt Charlton’s airport hacks, p16, to make the most of your time in transit.

I hope you enjoy this eclectic issue as much as my team and I did creating it for you. Our regular feature, p25, offers a quiz section, p58. Our talented art director Emma Kirkham has hidden 6 more Yoshi Sisley fish around this issue for you to find, and created our very first puzzles section, p56.

Recycling is one of the most important things you can do to help the environment. By using recycled paper and plastic, we are doing our bit to reduce our carbon footprint. We encourage you to recycle as much as possible.

Jane Anderson, Editor
instagram.com/janeandersonotravel

We’re curious to know what makes you tick? What’s the most playful thing you’ve ever done? What’s your crazy...but it worked. Ha-ha!

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Contributors
We asked some of the talented people who have contributed to this issue of Companion what’s the craziest thing they’ve ever done...but it worked. Ha-ha!

Luke McConkey Illustrator
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Friends of Friends
Friends of Friends were the originators of this newspaper format magazine for 25hours Hotels. Its online magazine has been portraying inspiring personalities since 2009, forming a creative community.

D'Ior
D'Ior is the brainchild of Maina and Anna, two young women who have dedicated their lives to creating art and photography.

Melbourne earlier this year with nothing to keep me company but some playlists and the voices in my head. We love the fact that we’re all about packing as much fun into your 24-hour day as possible. Be it heading to a comedy club, p12, reading the latest graphic comic, p28, or learning how to waltz, p28. We love the fact that on the autumnal equinox, which this year falls on 23 September, there really are 25 hours in the day to make the most of our wonderful world.

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I hope you enjoy this eclectic issue as much as my team and I did creating it for you. This year marks the 20th anniversary of 25hours Hotels, and we’re raising a glass to their continued success. Our featured hotel is the exquisite Soeder in Zurich, Switzerland, and we make Natural Care. We do it our own way, following the method ofaponification and using the best natural plant oils. We also incorporate other gifts from nature like honey, wheat proteins, and sea salt. It’s a pretty traditional way of soap making, and we’re convinced that it’s the right one. When it comes to scents, we find nature to be truly remarkable as well. You’ll never find any artificial fragrances in our products.

By the way, you can take a piece of Soeder home with you. Visit the 25h things shop at the 25hours Hotel to find a selection of our Natural Care. And once the bottles are empty, refill them at any 25hours Hotel!

Hi there! Nice to meet you. Wait a minute, maybe we’ve actually already met! We’re the folks that produce the care products in your 25hours Hotel room.

We’re from Zurich, Switzerland, and we make Natural Care. We do it our own way, following the method ofaponification and using the best natural plant oils. We also incorporate other gifts from nature like honey, wheat proteins, and sea salt. It’s a pretty traditional way of soap making, and we’re convinced that it’s the right one. When it comes to scents, we find nature to be truly remarkable as well. You’ll never find any artificial fragrances in our products.

Soeder* 25HOURS HOTELS

TRUE STAYS

SOEDER x 25HOURS HOTELS

VISIT @SOEDER-NATURALCARE

Remembering Mahir Jahmal

(0808 0808)

Here at Companion magazine we pay tribute to the joyful figure of Mahir Jahmal who sadly passed away recently aged just 36-years-old. As an artist, Jahmal is best known for his analog photographs documenting bold contrasts of a divided reality, powerfully addressing prejudice and racism. Having grown up in the 8th district with his single mother, he was an inspiration to so many, and an uplifting presence around the Viennese social scene combining art with his musical talent.

Many will cherish how he used his apartment in the 8th district as a workshop and haven, and the beauty and surprising flavors of creating dishes with edible flowers, p18.

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Reach for the sky

Beyond the tower
This year marks the centenary of the death of Gustave Eiffel, whose famous tower, built for the Universal Exhibition of 1889, ensured him fame. The City of Architecture and Heritage now presents a retrospective, also mapping his often overlooked projects for Paris. On show until 9 January 2024. citeclearchitecture.fr

In the hoop
When you head to Playground Duperré for a game of basketball, just 10-minute’s walk from the Gare du Nord, you’re never quite sure what it’s going to look like. This kaleidoscopic court is often repainted and always in the most vibrant colours. It’s art installation meets ball game. The court is open to all, so put on your sneakers, bring a ball, and slam that dunk. And if you forget your gear, the Pigalle Basketball Store is next door. pigallebasketball.com

WHERE TO SKATE AND PARTY:
Zurich: Rollschuh Disco, rollschuhdisco.ch
Dubai: RollDub, rollDub.com
Paris: Roller Club of France, rollerclubdefrance.com
Berlin: So36 Club, so36.com

Worldwide OUTDOOR & ACTIVITY
Get your skates on
Marawa Ibrahim, aka ‘Marawa the Amazing’, has been putting on her skates since the age of two and also excels in hula hooping, designing and writing. She’s a 12 times Guinness World Record holder and has a philosophy of taking us back to childish pleasures that make you move, laugh and smile. She recently teamed up with Impala to create an 8cm high-heeled rollerskate, with light-up orange sparkle wheels – guaranteed to get you noticed! marawetheamazing.com, impalaskate.eu

Düsseldorf Art & Entertainment
HANG OUT IN ORBIT
We love it when art and play collide. And that’s exactly what happens at Düsseldorf’s Kunstsammlung gallery. Tomás Saraceno’s 2,500-square-meter installation ‘In Orbit’ stretches out like a surreal landscape, suspended 25m above K21’s piazza. Daredevils can explore the transparent steel nets arranged on three levels by scrambling and climbing. The panoramic view over Düsseldorf is also spectacular. Just make sure you have a head for heights! kunstsammlung.de

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London's two must-see fashion exhibitions this autumn…

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BEVERAGES

ALE

SOMERSET HOUSE

The Missing Thread

Barcelona created by

O Park, Oktopus

London's two must-see fashion exhibitions this autumn…

Exhibition: The Missing Thread

Spanning from the 1970s to the present day, The Missing Thread at Somerset House charts the present day,

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FLOWER POWER

From soda bread to sorbets, edible flowers are versatile and flavoursome. Rick Jordan investigates

What would your reaction be if, after admiring your carefully arranged table decorations of tulips and carnations, your dinner guests started picking the flowers and scattering them over their food? While flowers have been used in food for thousands of years, until recently, people have only used them as garnishes for cocktails and desserts, but the foraging movement is blossoming. In Berlin, food estate – and, of course, there’s a long history of edible flowers in Middle Eastern and ancient Greek and Roman cultures.

The couple moved to Country Down in Northern Ireland from London a few years ago, buying a farmhouse and smallholding, and running supper clubs and classes to share their passion for growing, foraging and cooking with flowers. ‘The big appeal is you get some surprising flavours that you just don’t encounter anywhere else. Think of using edible flowers in the same way you would fresh herbs.’ Their recipes gather up spicy calendula petals and peppery nasturtiums, picking spicy calendula petals and peppery nasturtiums, with rhapsomuskellower over a spicy Thai beef dish, horseradish adding interest to a pickled kohlrabi and cucumber salad, along with fragrant recipes for soda bread, pancakes and scones.

While chefs such as René Redzepi championed flowers at his Copenhagen restaurant Noma, fashioning edible landscapes with mustard flowers padded to bread buns, and thyme to beer, the natural movement is blossoming. In Berlin, food artist Kristiane Kegelmann crystallises flowers to make imaginative puddings at her recently opened restaurant Parc, while just outside the city, Paris-based chef Rose Chalalai Singh hosts pop-up flower feasts at the farm belonging to artist Danh Vo. And flowers continue to brighten up savoury dishes at restaurants from Geranium in Copenhagen to Sketch in London. As Bunting says, ‘We don’t get many calories from flowers, but you do get a lot of joy.’

The Edible Flower is published by Laurence King

ERIN’S BEST FLOWERS TO GROW FOR COOKING

With a long growing season, you can use all the parts – stuffed, added to dough for bread, leaves used for salsa verde, the stems pickled like capers.

Lavender

Use instead of rosemary in lamb dishes and roast carrots, for a Middle Eastern vibe, or added to shortbread.

Calendula:

This pretty flower is loved by pollinators, and has a spicy flavour – you just need one flower, mixing petals through salads or grain dishes.

Cornflowers:

So easy to grow, these have a mild, spicy flavour – slightly clovey – and flower until October if you keep cutting. Mix the petals through rice and grain dishes.

From a book by Laurence King
So create without it

Yoshi, how did you become an artist?

By my early twenties I had visited more than 30 countries since leaving my hometown of Osaka. It was 2001 and I was hanging around London drinking and dancing and working in a bar called Fluid in Farlington. It was a Japanese-themed urban retreat just next to the famous Fabric nightclub. I was happy working four days a week til 3am in the morning, but inside I felt empty. I was looking for something, but wasn’t sure what.

Fluid attracted lots of successful people like lawyers and fashion designers. They talked about their jobs with lots of passion. I was envious and wanted to make something happen. I had many DJ friends in venues where I could get in for free, and I felt I should use this opportunity to organise an event. I asked James the owner of Fluid to give me a space to have a party and offered to organise everything — talking to Time Out, booking the DJ, and creating some posters. It was open for anybody to come.

I drew an invitation like a little poster with a black marker pen and put them in the empty liquor bottles. On the way back to my flat in Hackney, I threw the bottles along the canals. I felt that if someone found the invitation, like a treasure map, they would be a really good customer with the same feelings as I had of looking for something, and it would be a good party.

The party was a big success with so many interesting people, many of whom asked who did the drawings on the posters. It was very encouraging and gave me the confidence to pursue art. When I was a kid I used to read lots of comics and was always drawing on the desks at breaktime. I also like graffiti artists like Mark Gonzales who created zines and Banksy who was famous for using his art to comment on society. I followed my instincts and bought a flight there.

I went to New Zealand for a year to draw landscapes. I lived in the forest with the Maori, but felt like I wanted to go somewhere non-English speaking. I like baseball, football and basketball and in London my favourite football player was Brazilian Ronaldo who played for Barcelona. I followed his career and bought a flight there.

We recently teamed up with Carrusco bags, using a drawing from the 25hours Berlin on the bag. When people buy it, they can try to find where I drew it in the hotel. It’s very playful.

How has 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin inspired you?

25hours Hotels founder, Christoph Hoffman, wanted to depict the theme of urban jungle inside the hotel which overlooks Berlin Zoo to the rear. I drew lots of creatures inspired by nature with cycling shapes, whilst on the other side I drew industrial shapes. They sometimes mirror one another such as a big moonfish and a submarine — similar shapes, but different. Many business people return to the hotel, so I created different drawings in every single room so it’s never boring. They could be tiny like a snake coming out of the bottom of the wall, or I could do a huge landscape. I try to refresh people’s brains.

I create black pen drawings on a white background. Colour is everywhere so I create without it. There’s nothing black and white in life. I draw in black and white because colour has so many connotations. If you use blue, it looks like a sky. If you have a cloud with red, it looks like a sunrise or sunset. Colour conveys so much information and emotion so when I remove colour, people have more ways of interpreting my art.

I don’t want to force my opinion on people too much. If I draw a fish, and someone says it’s a giraffe, ok so that’s a giraffe! If someone sees it with a different angle, they could add a better story than mine.

How would you describe your art?

I create black pen drawings on a white background. Colour is everywhere so I create without it. There’s nothing black and white in life. I draw in black and white because colour has so many connotations. If you use blue, it looks like a sky. If you have a cloud with red, it looks like a sunrise or sunset. Colour conveys so much information so when I remove colour, people have more ways of interpreting my art.

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What inspires your art?

My work is probably most like a comic. It’s original and usually improvised. I don’t create a sketch before I start drawing because the sketch is the art. I love to try to convey how a tree isn’t trying to be beautiful, it’s just trying to do the best it can to survive. I want people to see that in my drawing. I don’t copy and paste, I draw every leaf. I try not to measure. I just use my hands.

I also take inspiration from the imagination like legends of dragons or from ancient worlds where dragons roamed. Sometimes I draw buildings, but I try to show the happiness in them. I’m interested in personalities and how to put emotion into my art. People who look at my art can create the story for themselves.
All we will say is he prepared to be surprised when you ask for the drinks menu. This is a boutique club which, faithful to the naughty city in which it resides, in no-holds-barred...literally. It has an Art Deco decor that whimsically nods to the Jazz Age era which inspires the evening. And as the lights dim, you sip on your Old Fashioned, and be bewitched and captivated by the histrionic and lascivious 90-minute show, mixing modern and traditional styles, as it audible and enigmatic...particularly in front of you. NOT for the faint-hearted.

WILLKOMMEN! WELCOME!

This is the legendary Ameri-, the second oldest comedy club in the world, in which the term comedy was born. It is located in the heart of Manhattan and has been called the birthplace of modern stand-up comedy. The club was founded in 1923 by the legendary comedian Joe E. Louis and has since become a mecca for comedians from around the world. In the small, intimate space, you can witness some of the best comedians in the business, as they perform for a crowd that ranges from celebrities to regulars. The comedy here is raw, raucous, and raunchy, with no holds barred. So, if you're looking for a night of laughs and entertainment, then look no further than the legendary Ameri-.
Rainbow Flag: A Symbol of Inclusion or Something More?

Queer blogger and influencer Kiran Thadhani considers the power of the flag whilst travelling

A few months ago, my partner posed a question that resonated deeply with me. "Why do you have such a strong passion for travelling?" Emotions surged through me, and tears welled up in my eyes as I struggled to articulate my feelings. It was at that moment that I realized my love for travel springs from a profound desire to find a sense of belonging in my life.

Tired of being a stranger, I’ve been collecting stories and contemplating the significance of travelling as a queer person, as well as discovering queer communities around the world. Recently, I’ve been particularly intrigued by the presence or absence of the rainbow flag and how it influences travel decisions, feelings of safety, and destination choices for myself and other queer travellers. These discussions have given rise to perspectives that I believe are essential for all travellers and those working in the hospitality industry to consider.

Over the past year, I’ve been collecting stories and contemplating the significance of travelling as a queer person, as well as discovering queer communities around the world. Recently, I’ve been particularly intrigued by the presence or absence of the rainbow flag and how it influences travel decisions, feelings of safety, and destination choices for myself and other queer travellers. These discussions have given rise to perspectives that I believe are essential for all travellers and those working in the hospitality industry to consider.

“Bringing Us Together”

For some, the rainbow flag acts as a universal symbol that fosters connections among LGBTQ+ travel communities worldwide. It kindles a sense of unity and belonging, enabling us to connect with others regardless of language or culture. As a friend in Cairo pointed out, “While queerness is manifested differently across cultures, we face discrimination globally. The presence of the rainbow flag serves as an emblem that advocates for change and stimulates transformative conversations within vastly diverse cultural contexts. Although our experiences may vary greatly based on intersecting identities such as race, gender expression, and socioeconomic background, it’s important to know that we aren’t alone.”

“The Elephant in the Room”

However, others have shared that displaying the rainbow flag is merely a starting point. Achieving greater LGBTQ+ inclusion requires proactive measures to address bias and discrimination within the hospitality industry. This entails creating welcoming environments, training hospitality staff on LGBTQ+ sensitivities, implementing anti-discriminatory policies, and supporting LGBTQ+ employees. Genuine inclusivity goes beyond symbols and necessitates tangible actions that challenge the status quo, especially for trans and non-binary individuals.

“Just a Performance”

Expanding on that sentiment, many people expressed the view that the use of the rainbow flag in hotels and restaurants, particularly during events like Pride Month, is mostly performative allyship. It may appear supportive on the surface but lacks a substantial commitment to addressing LGBTQ+ issues. The commercial use of the flag without concrete efforts to engage in efforts to address LGBTQ+ individuals or combat systemic inequalities can be seen as tokenism or a marketing strategy. However, it is important to note that not all businesses using the rainbow flag engage in performative allyship. Many genuinely support LGBTQ+ rights and use the flag to show solidarity.

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For some, the rainbow flag acts as a universal symbol that fosters connections among LGBTQ+ travel communities worldwide. It kindles a sense of unity and belonging, enabling us to connect with others regardless of language or culture. As a friend in Cairo pointed out, “While queerness is manifested differently across cultures, we face discrimination globally. The presence of the rainbow flag serves as an emblem that advocates for change and stimulates transformative conversations within vastly diverse cultural contexts. Although our experiences may vary greatly based on intersecting identities such as race, gender expression, and socioeconomic background, it’s important to know that we aren’t alone.”

“The Elephant in the Room”

However, others have shared that displaying the rainbow flag is merely a starting point. Achieving greater LGBTQ+ inclusion requires proactive measures to address bias and discrimination within the hospitality industry. This entails creating welcoming environments, training hospitality staff on LGBTQ+ sensitivities, implementing anti-discriminatory policies, and supporting LGBTQ+ employees. Genuine inclusivity goes beyond symbols and necessitates tangible actions that challenge the status quo, especially for trans and non-binary individuals.

“Just a Performance”

Expanding on that sentiment, many people expressed the view that the use of the rainbow flag in hotels and restaurants, particularly during events like Pride Month, is mostly performative allyship. It may appear supportive on the surface but lacks a substantial commitment to addressing LGBTQ+ issues. The commercial use of the flag without concrete efforts to engage in efforts to address LGBTQ+ individuals or combat systemic inequalities can be seen as tokenism or a marketing strategy. However, it is important to note that not all businesses using the rainbow flag engage in performative allyship. Many genuinely support LGBTQ+ rights and use the flag to show solidarity.

“I’m Grateful to Travel, Flag or No Flag”

During conversations with some others, they expressed that whether there is a flag or not doesn’t really matter to them. “I feel incredibly privileged to have the ability to travel and safely express who I am. I don’t need a flag or even for the hotel staff to acknowledge that the woman with me is my wife. They can think whatever they want - it doesn’t determine how free I feel.”

“What if they centered us in the design?”

Even so, in a recent discussion, someone raised an intriguing point: instead of relying on a flag to signify safety, the aim should be to design hotels, restaurants, and other travel destinations with equity in mind from the very beginning. “What if they centered us in the design?”

The symbol of the circle represents the concept of being unbroken and whole, counterpoint to gendered blue and pink. The Progress Pride flag was designed by non-binary American artist Daniel Quasar which was less confusing. He placed the black, brown, light blue, pink and white stripes in the shape of an arrow, on the left. This sought to improve the flag’s legibility and place discriminated minorities at the forefront.

Evolution of the Pride Flag

1978

The original pride flag was designed by Gilbert Baker to celebrate members of the gay and lesbian political movement. It comprised eight coloured stripes to evoke a rainbow: pink for love, red for life, orange for healing, yellow for sunlight, green for nature, turquoise for magic, indigo for serenity and violet for spirit.

1999

Various new versions of the pride flag have been created with more colours to represent marginalised communities. Monica Helms created the transgender flag with light blue, white and pink.

2017

Philadelphia City Hall revealed a pride flag including black and brown stripes designed to highlight the discrimination of black and brown members of the community. A year later pink, light blue and white were added to represent trans, gender non-binary, intersex and those across the gender spectrum.

2021

The Progress Pride flag designed by non-binary American artist Daniel Quasar which was less confusing. He placed the black, brown, light blue, pink and white stripes in the shape of an arrow, on the left. This sought to improve the flag’s legibility and place discriminated minorities at the forefront.

2021

Valentino Vecchietti created the Intersex-Inclusive Pride Flag using purple and yellow as an intentional counterpart to gendered blue and pink. The symbol of the circle represents the concept of being unbroken and whole, symbolising the right of intersex people to make decisions about their bodies.
Airports, places of hope and despair, of the unrelenting glare of fluorescent lights and the faint glimmer of foreign sunshine out of the corner of your eye. They depend on you being a captive market, and are designed to confuse and disorientate until such a time that they can somehow spin you out into the other. It doesn’t have to be this way though. Below, you will find a combination of moves and merch that will see you decompressing in the departure lounge before wheels up. Just don’t tell anyone this, yeah?

The Moves

To the left, to the left
Taking advantage of your confusion and fatigue, you will often get unconsciousness handed to a particular point in security. Through your discombobulation, keep only this in mind - STAY LEFT. Going toward the left-hand most queue usually means a far speedier experience with fewer people. Better still, seek out the business class queue, and the one next to that is usually the most peaceful.

The main concourse is not your friend
You’ve been standing for a while in the security queue; you’ve negotiated duty free, you’ve procured your own belongings, it is unlikely to be pulled out of your bag, albeit you come to the gate holding a duty free bag, albeit usually the most peaceful. The main concourse is not your friend. The main concourse is a co-decompressing in the departure lounge before wheels up. Duty free is why it is very likely that if you come to the gate holding a duty free bag, albeit full of your own belongings, it is unlikely to be pulled out as excess luggage. One visit to the duty free shop, the purchase of a novelty magnet, and the request for a large bag to put in should do the trick for many trips to come.

Book a lounge
Okay this somewhat goes against the spirit of moves, -hand most queue usually means a far speedier experience with fewer people. Better still, seek out the business class queue, and the one next to that is usually the most peaceful.

The most unlikely places do breakfast
The area that don’t do breakfast in the real world? They do breakfast here, and not many people seem to realise it! See Comptoir Libanaise at Dubai, or Yo Sushi at Sandqvist Ruben

Sony WH-1000XM4
No more screaming children! Should be the slogan of every single noise cancelling headphone, but these headphones simply cut out the outside world, immersing you in your podcast binge-watch, or the latest album by Arctic Monkeys, ‘The Car’ which everyone should be listening to. These particular Sony Headphones have little fluffiness - by placing your right hand over the right earphone, you can hear announcements, plus there are motion sensors so that when you’re walking, you can hear your immediate surroundings.

Fishing Vest
This one is more for TikTok but I SWEAR I thought of it first. Discounting for the security line is one of the biggest pain in the butt. Different airports will demand different states of undress, but the one thing they do ask consistently is for you to empty your pockets. Sober this in one full sweep with a fishing vest, which has all the compartments, you’ll even need to take your phone, wallet, passport, book, socks, dignity... and it’s back on after security quicker than you can say ‘where are my shoes’!
We have opted for this stylish one from Carhartt.

Sandqvist Ruben
Even though you now have a fishing vest, you will still need a backpack for your laptop, water bottle, headphones, neck pillow... basically everything we’ve mentioned in this list. The best of them is Sandqvist - minimalist Scandinavian design, and this particular model is waterproof with a roll top and all the pockets - internal and external - you need to quickly access your keys and pieces, plus it slides under the seat in front once you’re on board.

Big Ocean Bottle
It still feels like a particularly European habit to carry an insulated bottle around in your bag. Watch Americans gaze in awe as you produce that empty metal vessel and proceed to go to one of the many post-security filling stations airports provide now, topping up for free whilst they buy yet another wasteful plastic bottle. The king of these stainless steel wonders is the Ocean Bottle - every single sale funds the collection of 11.5kg of plastic waste, and the app helps you find nearly refill spots.

The Merch

Trtl
Those not very good and overstuffed neck pillows at the airport tend to lose shape at the best of them is Sandqvist - minimalist Scandinavian design, and this particular model is waterproof with a roll top and all the pockets - internal and external - you need to quickly access your keys and pieces, plus it slides under the seat in front once you’re on board.

Apple Airpods Pro
We realise we’ve already recommended some headphones on here - we’ve not that forgetful. Sometimes, however, when your head is falling on a plane, a chunky headphone can tend to bump against the fuselage, shaking you out of your slumber. If you feel the sandman approaching, switch to the best earbuds of your slumber.
Skateboarder Daniel Spiegel was 13 when he discovered skateboarding and instantly got stuck on ‘this little wooden thing’. His mum said he’d get bored with it, but 23 years later he’s still going strong. Companion discovers what drives him.

‘Skateboarding taught me how to fall a thousand times a day and always get back up and try again’

‘I’m an old dog as we say in Vienna, but skateboarding feels as good as ever to be honest.’

‘Skateboarding gave me a tool to express myself. It gave me tons of challenges over the years, but I’m still hungry to learn new tricks. That sounds kinda crazy but I can’t let go! Besides that, I met so many great people and travelled to parts of the world I would never have seen if it hadn’t been for skating. Looking back, it’s been one single blast.

‘When I started out, I was actually really bad at competitions and only ever won once. So instead I went out and filmed as much as possible on the streets with my friends Philipp Schuster, Ben Boesich, Andi Habermayer, and all the other guys who were motivated enough to hold the camera in me. This is where skateboarding happened for me.

‘Some of my sponsors used those videos and images in skate magazines and liked them, I guess. I’m very lucky to still have many of the same sponsors as back in the day; I appreciate every single one of them. I’m still riding for German brand, Uber skateboards on a size 8.25. My other sponsors include Vans, Volcom, Superior Distribution (Thunder Trucks and Spitfire Wheels) and Freedom Skateshop (a local skateshop owned by a skateboarder) Thank you guys!’

‘One of the best things about skateboarding is thinking about a trick on a specific spot, trying hard for hours, and finally landing it. It’s the best feeling in the world, even after all these years. I also started teaching skateboarding to young kids, or whoever wants to learn it, which is freaking fun as well. I really enjoy seeing the spark in their eyes when they get into it.

‘Skateboarding taught me how to fall a thousand times a day and always get back up and try again. At the beginning, you fail a lot, which is an important lesson for everybody, especially for younger ones who are learning that life demands stamina.

‘My favourite thing is skate ledges, like grinding and sliding. Bs tailslides and nollie flips are the most fun. When I was younger, I didn’t think too much about where I did tricks; I would have loved to put more thought into the process back then and maybe try kinds more tasteful tricks in good-looking spots like I do nowadays. Since I’m turning 36, my body dictates what kind of tricks I can try today. I skate a lot of Arne Carlson Park, my favourite skatepark in Vienna by far. This is where you’re most likely to meet me!’

*Instagram @happywauzi*
GO LOCAL WITH LUCA

Swiss artist Luca Süß takes us on a tour of their favourite Zurich hangouts

1. Zentralwascherei Space
   Neue Hard 12, 8006 Zurich
   This collectively run cultural centre in a former spa has amazing parties as well as concerts, a cozy bar and excellent food during the day. You can go there at any time and have a good time on your own or with friends.
   zentralwascherei.space

2. Pho 50
   Staufacherstrasse 101A, 8004 Zurich
   I go here whenever I feel like eating out. It's the most delicious Vietnamese food in the city – especially the green curry – and at low prices. It's not flashy, but it's super cute and the family who run it are very friendly.
   vietnam-restaurant.ch

3. Baby Angel
   Geroldstrasse 31, 8005 Zürich
   The basement club next to the Zurich Hardbrücke railway station is right in the middle of town. The interior of the club is beautiful as it used to be an old wine basement with gorgeous white walls. There's no specific scene there. It's very inclusive.
   Instagram @babyangelpr

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   zentralwascherei.space

5. Wipkingerpark
   Breitkammetstrasse 19A, 8037 Zurich
   This art collective kind of place is also my absolute favourite place to go swimming in Zurich. The water is cooler than the swimming in the lake and it's often not so crowded. Plus it's right next to the Escher-wyss Square, which is super easy to reach with public transport.
   zentralwascherei.space
**Brocki-Siril**

**Hohlstrasse 405, 8048 Zurich**

This incredible thrift shop is packed full of superb, one-off finds such as furniture, kitchen equipment, crafting tools and jewellery, all at very, very low prices. It's a great place for a unique souvenir of Zurich, or if you're furnishing a flat! My best finds are materials that I can work with in my art. brockisiril.ch

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**“Brocki-Siril is a great place to find a souvenir”**

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**Backeranlage**

**Feldstrasse, 8004 Zurich**

If you're looking for some chilled downtime, Backeranlage park is perfect. It's very central and yet quiet with lots of small, independent cafes and shops around it like Mama's Bäcki Lädeli where I like to get a drink to take over to the park. Backeranlage is the perfect place to meet friends and chill out. bstadt-zuerich.ch

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**Kino Riff Raff**

**Neugasse 57-63, 8005 Zurich**

I love this amazing arthouse cinema at Langstrasse Zurich. It's the best cinema experience, and the finest choice of movies in town, both art house and more mainstream like Wes Anderson’s The French Dispatch. It's very central and there's the option to vote for a movie that you want to see there. Currently my vote would be for Transpotting, directed by Danny Boyle. riffriff.ach

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**Toxi**

**Zimmerlistrasse 4, 8004 Zurich**

This is my absolute favourite space to see independent, thought provoking art shows. It's run by three wonderful artists, Oz Oderbolz (@_oberstolz), Tanja Roscic (@babafoxy) and Nem (@_orrrg). It's very close to the line of the bus 31, so it's easy to get there. Definitely a must visit. Instagram @toxi_space
Luca Süss

Luca is a 24-year-old non-binary artist who did an apprenticeship in sign-making before studying art at Zurich University of the Arts. Moving here 18 years ago from Winterthur via Thurgau, Zurich is the place they love to be. Although it’s a small city, there’s lots to do.

Luca’s sculptures address the phenomenon of queer people as a projection and defence of queer people in a heteronormative binary society as well as the cultural anthropological question of the influence of toys on the formation of children’s gender identities and the theories encompassing a queer ecology.

As Luca says, “These sculptures are indeed defenders; they are amorous. But of course not in a literal sense. They won’t protect anyone from being harmed physically or psychologically, but the fact that these sculptures take objects up into themselves and turn them into something queer and comforting gives the viewer a new perspective on these objects, and through that some sort of protection from a patriarchal binary and a seemingly living queer organism.”

Published by Flying Eye

The Monkey King: Journey To The West

This two-volume series deserves to become a classic within the graphic novel medium.

Published by DC Comics

For more inspiration check out Dave’s Comics on Instagram @daves_comics

Baby Angel

Geroldstrasse 31, 8005 Zurich

This basement nightlife is right next to the Zurich Hardbrücke railway station - an amus- ingly central location. The interior of the club is beautiful as it used to be an old wine basement with gorgeous white walls. There’s no specific scene there. It’s very inclusive.

Published by Image Comics

CITY WALK: ZURICH

2560 HOTELS

25 ART & ENTERTAINMENT

COMpanion 23

GET
Companion caught up with Berlin-based Korean DJ Shubostar to find out how the beat of life is treating her and what the future holds.

**What led you to this point?**
A: Hitting rock bottom in my life. One time I had to quit being a DJ because of mental health issues. I couldn't work, or even meet people. After that period I moved to Mexico and started to work as a photographer. Then I got to know new DJ friends who invited me to play at their parties. During that time I realised this would be the last chance for me. I quit the photography job and took this chance. I spent most of my time in front of my laptop, making music. After a few months, I started to have my own style and lots of love calls from clubs!

**What’s the favourite part of what you do?**
A: Travelling all around the world of course! I love eating local food, meeting locals, and experiencing their culture. It gives me lots of energy. Right now I am in Montenegro with Telekom Electronic Beats for their ‘Summer of Joy’ party series, celebrating a return to the dancefloor with the full sparkle of freedom, togetherness and community.

**What does your hometown of Berlin mean to you?**
A: What makes Berlin a great city?

**What do you feel is the future of clubbing?**
A: Do you think rave culture is alive and well?

**How important is togetherness and community?**
A: How would you define your career at present?

**What makes Berlin a great city?**
A: What’s the favourite part of what you do?

**Do you have any more exciting plans that readers can get involved in?**
A: Do you think rave culture is alive and well?

**What do you feel is the future of clubbing?**
A: The history of dance is almost as old as the history of human beings. Dancing is the most primal instinct and music always comes with dancing. Gathering to dance together to the same music in the same place, we feel a deep connection with each other. This is a community. This is a ceremony. I’m sure it will last until the end of the human race. Despite any interruption, clubbing will exist in one form or another — gathering and sweating together!

**How can we keep the spirit of rave culture alive?**
A: Finally got into the scene! Like online games — a good example being the World of Warcraft — you reach the final level and you think you’re done, but after that, as some would say, “It’s time to play the game.”

**What do you feel is the future of clubbing?**
A: Do you think rave culture is alive and well?

**What makes Berlin a great city?**
A: What do you feel is the future of clubbing?

**What do you feel is the future of clubbing?**
A: Do you think rave culture is alive and well?

**What do you feel is the future of clubbing?**
A: Do you think rave culture is alive and well?
In a wood-lined hall in Vienna’s 1st district, just around the corner from the famous Spanish Riding School where the Lipizzaner stallions trot and pirouette in perfect formation, I am pawing one of my own hooves in anticipation. Looking down at me is a portrait of Franz Joseph I, the Austro-Hungarian emperor, and he doesn’t seem too impressed. Neither does my instructor, a dapper man in an immaculate suit and tie called Bernd. I’m learning to Viennese waltz and my timing’s a little out.

In Vienna, ball season is taken seriously. It starts in November and continues until March; during that period there are around 450 balls, from the Chimney Sweeps’ Ball — which sounds quite Mary Poppins but isn’t really — to the HipHop Ball, for which a dresscode of formalwear and trainers is required. My dance card, however, is for the Philharmonic Ball, for which only the division of patent-leather shoes are allowed. Launched in 1924, it’s one of the highlights of the season, taking place in the lavish baroque surroundings of the Musikverein, home to the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Which is why I’m learning to waltz at the Elmayer Dance School, founded by a former cavalry officer just after World War I and now run by his grandson, Thomas. It may seem like an anachronism in this day and age, but every year hundreds of teenagers come here and learn to waltz months ahead of the season. I have just under an hour.

I’m no stranger to the dancefloor, having strutted my stuff on hillsides in Ibiza and subterranean clubs in downtown New York. But dancing as a couple, holding hands, waists and shoulders? Only occasionally, usually at a wedding and usually drunkenly, while attempting an over-the-head arm turn to Meatloaf or Fats Domino.

So working with a partner in a leading role, trying not to trip over her feet or clutch her too tightly, is a challenge. My partner is a diminutive Spanish woman from Barcelona, who is also making her debut at the Philharmonic Ball. ‘That makes us both debutantes,’ I tell her, but she looks at me blankly.

Dance is such a unifying experience. Rick Jordan takes his partner by the hand and experiences the highs and low of learning to waltz in Vienna.
Bend demonstrates the waltz with another instructor and makes it look easy. The footwork involves a box step, moving the left foot forward and then sliding the right diagonally up to meet it, then repeating the movement downward, then across and back to the original position. And it is actually quite simple, if that’s all you’re doing – but I’m also counting ‘one-two-three, one-two-three’ in my head and slowly rotating clockwise with my partner while all the couples orbit the room anti-clockwise. Like a Swiss clock, there’s a lot of movement. ‘At the end of a waltz,’ Bend tells us, ‘you may want to hold your partner a little longer, in case she falls over during –’ My partner looks at me a little nervously.

Throughout the next day, with the ball starting at 10pm, I take every opportunity to practise my steps, finding some Straus to stream and whirling around my bedroom – one-two-three one-two-three. I’ve buffed my shoes so I can almost see my face in them, and my tuxedo – white bow tie, black coat tails – start to feel a little like protective armour. I’m beginning to feel confident in my abilities: after all, along with my hour’s lesson, I can probably draw on some inherited muscle memory from a travelling English accent, or at least from watching countless TV adaptations of Jane Austen novels.

The scene in the Musikverein is the most fairytale I’ve ever encountered. Golden caryatids hold the ceiling aloft, as if flowers tumble everywhere, as colourful as the rainbow of ballgowns interspersed between monochrome dinner suits. Chandeliers reflect in the glasses of Champagne on every table. After the kickass opening dance by around 80 debutantes, male and female, a figure known as the Master of Dance calls out ‘Alles tanz oder –’ and everyone else takes to the floor. I find my Spanish partner and we sort of waltz around the centre of the room, avoiding the fast-spinning couples on the perimeter. My footwork isn’t perfect but we’re moving and turning more or less in time to the music. It’s like being on a merry-go-round. The people-watching is magnificent. There are couples in their 80s, and those in their 20s, at one point a female couple, both in trousers, spin elegantly past.

Before I know it, it’s midnight and rather than turning into a pumpkin I’m taking part in a quadrille, in which couples form two lines and line-cross between the two, turning with palms clasped, according to instructions called out in German. I have no idea what I’m doing but it’s fun, especially when the couple at the end canter up and down the line while everyone else claps. After that, a couple form an arch with their arms and everyone else ducks to canter beneath it before joining the arch – by the time my partner and I dance through, it’s a human tunnel that snakes all around the hall.

‘The scene in the Musikverein is the most fairytale I’ve ever encountered’

I’ll never be mistaken for a fast dancer – the expert male dancers who can be hired to stand in partners – but I haven’t fallen over or tripped anyone up. No one is demanding a duel. At one point we leave the main hall and descend into the basement to find the orchestra’s first-violinist DJing some Seventies disco sounds. I sashay into a pumpkin I’m taking part in a quadrille, in which couples form two lines and line-cross between the two, turning with palms clasped, according to instructions called out in German. I have no idea what I’m doing but it’s fun, especially when the couple at the end canter up and down the line while everyone else claps. After that, a couple form an arch with their arms and everyone else ducks to canter beneath it before joining the arch – by the time my partner and I dance through, it’s a human tunnel that snakes all around the hall.

Forget about the seductive stereotypes: as celebrity fan Shakira knows, belly-dancing isn’t an erotic performance but a graceful form of female self-expression (though male dancers do exist) that can boost body confidence, strengthen those abdominal muscles and improve flexibility. In fact, it’s not even known as belly-dancing in Arabic countries, but as Oryantal Dans in Turkey, and as Raqs Sharqi in Egypt, where it evolved in Cairo’s nightclubs during the 1920s, drawing in ballet and balroom moves. Both styles involve learning to make a figure of eight with your hips, and isolating the abs in order to ‘roll’ them. Sadly, though, finger cymbals are rarely used these days. In Dubai, head to Tampa Dubai, which runs regular classes in Raqs Sharqi – @tempestdubai.com/belly-dance-classes
LEARN THE KIZOMBA ON LISBON
A relative newcomer to the global dancefloor, Kizomba began life in Angola in the 1980s, flowing out of traditional zamba and Caribbean zouk-rhythms – dancers stay close, bushing toresos, and steps are danced freestyle on the beat, with Urban Kiz adding hip hop and R&B influences to the mix. Lisbon’s a hotspot for kizomba: pick up the moves at the Estúdio Sabor & Dança then have fun practing them together at bars such as Bolero and Chiado.
estudiosaboranddanca.pt

THE SCHUHPLATTLER IN MUNICH
Like the waltz, this is performed in ¾ time; unlike the waltz it involves stomping feet and slapping thighs and knees (for men), and spinning around until your skirt balloons out (for women). Accompanied by an oompah band, it’s the Bavarian folk dance you probably didn’t know existed until your skirt balloons out (for women). Accompanied by an oompah band, it’s the

SWING AROUND EUROPE
Know your Lindy Hop from your Balboa or Charleston? Your barn-door kick from a tuck turn or Shorty George? Swing dance is huge vintage, fun, powered by kinetic jazz and rock’n’roll tunes from the 1930s, 40s and 50s. While London is the undisputed king of swing, you’ll find lessons in most European cities: Hep Cats in Copenhagen runs weekly sessions in Vesterbro, as does the Clärchen’s Ballroom in Berlin. In Vienna, DJ King D spins shoe-shuffling Swing ‘n’ Roll sessions every Wednesday in the 25Hours rooftop bar. 

ADVERTORIAL FEATURE
Let’s visit Düsseldorf

TOP 5 FUN THINGS TO DO IN THE VIBRANT CITY OF DÜSSELDORF THIS AUTUMN & WINTER

Explore Kunstpalast
The Kunstpalast, one of the Düsseldorf’s most renowned art museums, is reopening on 21 November after extensive renovations to its Art Deco building. Among the 800 works on show, there will be many lesser-known pieces that have never been exhibited before. Newly created art rooms invite young people to get creative. And best of all, entry is free for the first week of reopening, culminating in a Grand Opening Festival on 25 November. kunstpalast.de

Taste the art of beer
Long before craft beer and microbreweries became a global trend, Düsseldorf’s brewmasters invented Altbier beer with its bitter, tangy aroma, served in particularly shapely glasses. A brewery in Düsseldorf is first and foremost a place of social interaction. The legendary Köbesse, the brewery waiters, treat everyone equally. Take a brewery tour to understand the method, with delicious tastings. duesseldorf-tourismus.de/breweries

Chill at New Fall Festival
This year’s New Fall Festival runs from October 31 to November 5 combining high-quality pop music across extraordinary venues close to the Rhine River. Since 2019, the festival grounds have been concentrated around the culturally rich buildings of the Ehrenhof. This year sees much talent take to the stages, following in the footsteps of renowned artists such as Michael Kiwanuka and Marianne Faithful who have played in previous years. new-fall-festival.de

Discover Little Tokyo
More than 6,400 people of Japanese origin live in Düsseldorf, and nowhere is their influence more prominent than in Little Tokyo – Germany’s largest Japanese community and one of the city’s liveliest areas. It’s a place where locals, Japanese business people, manga fans and foodies from around the world meet to enjoy ramen, sushi and sake, or perhaps even a traditional Altbier. It’s a must do. duesseldorf-tourismus.de/littletokyo

Go Christmas shopping
There’s no better place to get into the festive spirit than Düsseldorf, where the Christmas market runs from November 23 to December 30. Visitors have been coming to this atmospheric market in the Old Town for years to buy gifts for their loved ones. Huts are arranged by theme and there’s a huge choice of goods on offer, along with a giant ferris wheel, ice skating, and delicious roasted almonds and hot mulled wine. duesseldorf-tourismus.de/christmas

For more information on Düsseldorf, go to duesseldorf-tourismus.de

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For more information on Düsseldorf, go to duesseldorf-tourismus.de
How Russian hill sledding and American gravity railroads evolved into the behemoth roller coaster rides of today. Lisa Johnson twists and turns.

At the vast Europa-Park in the otherwise modest town of Rust, Southeastern Germany — midway between the Rhine and the Black Forest and a short drive from the borders of France and Switzerland — you can stay in a hotel themed as the Colosseum, splash down 50 slides in a Scandinavian-styled water world, soar in a chairlift over multimedia projections of Holland’s tulips in a ‘flying theatre’, and watch yourself exploring the world of Amber Blake: Operation Dragonfly — a comic strip created by the Belgian model Jade Lagardère — in the VR centre, YULLBE.

Opened in 1975, Europe’s second most popular amusement park after Disneyland Paris now covers 95 hectares and welcomes more than six million visitors a year to over 100 attractions and 24 hours of daily shows. But the highlights are arguably its 13 roller coasters, including the family-friendly Arthur; the Blue Fire Megacoaster (a catapult launch coaster that accelerates to 100km/h in 2.5 seconds and features a 30m vertical loop); and the giant Wooden Tumblercoaster: a 1,050m-long wooden coaster that reaches a height of 40m and a speed of over 100km/h.

To paraphrase Black Bikes, the family company that operates the park and made most of its roller coasters, the aim is to ‘make people smile’. 

**The tallest**
Kingda Ka at Six Flags Great Adventure, New Jersey, USA (2005): a hydraulic steel coaster that reaches 139m.

**The loopiest**
The Smiler at Alton Towers, Staffordshire, UK (2013): subjects riders to 14 different types of inversions.

**The longest**
Steel Dragon 2000 at Nagashima Spa Land, Kuwana, Mie, Japan (2000): a 2,479m-long steel giga out and back coaster with a 94m drop.
The History of the Roller Coaster

Thrill-seekers have been pursuing the adrenaline rush of gravity rides since the St Petersburg elite starting sledding down ‘Russian Mountains’ of wood and ice in the 17th century. In 1784, Catherine the Great installed a summer version at her Oranienbaum palace, featuring wheeled chariots that traversed along an undulating track and were hoisted back along two side tracks by horses. The idea caught on, rearing its head in 1837 as the Montagnes Russes de Belleville in the Paris suburbs and the Promenade Aériennes in the city itself; Louis XVIII was among the spectators.

Across the Atlantic, the idea for a roller coaster was born in Mauch Chunk, Pennsylvania, when a railroad track built in 1827 to transport coal (and mules) switched to carrying people. This gave the grandly named American inventor LaMarcus Adna Thompson the spark for his Switchback Railway: a five-cent ride launched in 1884 on Coney Island in Brooklyn, in which riders climbed a 15m tower, coasted along a 183m track at 9.7km/h (sitting sideways), then returned on a parallel track. The two most significant innovations came in 1919, when John Miller, Thompson’s former enginie, invented underfriction wheels, effectively locking the cars to the track; and in 1959, when the world’s first tubular steel roller coaster, the Matterhorn Bobsleds, was presented to the world at Disneyland, California.

Today, many roller coasters still operate by gravity: pulled up a hill by a chain or cable, then released downhill, via an increasingly inventive assortment of loops and inversions, to ever-decreasing heights. Others, such as the record-breaking Kingda Ka in New Jersey, have a launch mechanism that allows them to accelerate to their maximum speed within seconds. Extreme coasters such as Ride to Happiness at Plopsaland De Panne in Belgium incorporate elements such as the top hat: a vertical ascent followed by a vertical or beyond-vertical descent. But the holy grail for many riders is air time: the feeling — resulting from the negative G-force created when a car travels at speed over a hill — that they’re floating out of their seat.

The Oldest

Leap the Dips at Lakemont Park, Pen- nsylvania, USA (1902): a side friction coaster, with a figure-of-eight track, that is now a National Historic Landmark.

In 1780, four years before Catherine the Great unveiled her Russian Mountain at Oranienbaum, a 25-year-old by the name of Paul Mack started building wagons in the Black Forest village of Waldhüchlin — thus setting the wheels of what would become Mack Rides in motion. The wagons evolved into carriages and stagecoaches, circuses wagons and carrousels, and in 1921, a roller coaster for the German showmen Sidfold & Henkhaus, which toured Europe and led to classic Mack fairground rides such as the Wilde Maus, with its four-car sets and fast-paced corners.

The idea of building a theme park as a showcase for the rides dates from 1972, after Franz Mack and his son Roland returned from a trip to the USA, where Franz had been selling rides since the 1950s. Eventually the family were able to secure the gardens of the 15th-century Castle Balthasar in Rust; the park opened three years later with 15 attractions on 16 hectares.

Today, Mack Rides is run by Roland with his brother Jürgen and son Michael, and makes roller coasters for theme parks all over the world, from the Shrek 4D at Budapest’s Icon Park to the DC Rivals Hypercoaster at Warner Bros. Movie World on Australia’s Gold Coast, as the company moves gets. The fastest, the world’s highest and longest indoor roller coaster, Formula Rossa at Ferrari World, Dubai, United Arab Emirates (2010): a state-of-the-art ride in an 1880s-themed park — the cars were the first to free-spin and do loops at the same time...
Companion explores two off-the-wall dining experiences guaranteed to stimulate your mind as well as your taste buds.

**TAKE A CULINARY FLIGHT**

The philosophy behind Eatrenalin is to get every sense tingling - not just your taste buds. It’s all about the seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling and tasting during this two-hour dining extravaganza at Europa-Park in Rust, Germany. Guests experience an eight-course menu with paired accompanying drinks, while they lean back in a Floating Chair to soak up the sensory overload with images and sounds as they travel the world and beyond. One minute you’re roaming through rice paddies with an Asian monk offering delicacies, the next heading to the Moon for otherworldly tastes.

Eatrenalin was founded by Thomas Mack, Managing Partner of Europa-Park, together with gastronomy expert Oliver Altherr. Mack says, "Our vision is to offer the most exciting restaurant experience in the world." The idea came to Oliver and Thomas following a visit to the Volutarium in Europa-Park, which takes visitors on a flight over European countries. Could such a journey be combined with unique cuisine to create an experience that holistically speaks to all senses and emotions? The answer is yes! Guests are guided through 11 different rooms following themes of ocean, water and beach; various sweet, sour, bitter and salty flavors; Umami, Asia, rice fields, and finally outer space, the moon and the universe. The kitchen combines modern and international influences, matched to the ambiance of the setting, with menus headed up Pablo Montoro from Alicante, alongside Dutch sous chef Ties van Oosten, and French-Austrian patissiere chef Juliana Clementz. Book the Eatrenalin Sommelier Dinner, and an experienced sommelier accompanies you through the various rooms, serving exquisite wines to match each course.

Since opening last year, many celebrities and foodies have experienced Eatrenalin including Twitch streamer Virtua Gepetto and YouTuber movie Knox, footballer Nils Petersen and singer Rino Amont. Thomas Schreiner, Managing Director of Champagne Laurent-Perrier Germany and Hans Haas, the former 2-star chef at Tanitro in Munich, have also tried it out.

**BUILD YOUR OWN DINNER**

It’s no surprise that design agency Stylt was awarded first prize in the Gold Key Awards, one of the world’s most prestigious competitions in hotel and restaurant design, for the concept and interior of the 'Mini Chef' restaurant at LEGO House in Billund, Denmark. Stylt’s founder Erik Nissen Johansen, said, “The Mini Chef restaurant is fun dining at its best, one hundred per cent based on the magic world of LEGO.”

In the Mini Chef restaurant, you quick build your order with LEGO bricks, put it into a LEGO scanner at your table and send it to the kitchen. Following the hard work of the LEGO Mini chefs on a screen by your table, when your order is ready, your meal arrives via a conveyor belt and is served by two LEGO robots.

And best of all, before and after eating, you’re free to explore the LEGO House, filled with 25 million LEGO bricks with creative labs and inspiring exhibitions.
Eyes down for the brightest sunglasses of the year, no matter what the weather. Style them out on the street, in the club, or on the ski slopes.

- Akila sunglasses, €153: akila.in
- Gucci sunglasses, €170: gucci.com
- Marc Jacobs sunglasses, €169: marcjacobs.com
- Isabel Marant sunglasses, €180: isabelmarant.com
- Bottega Veneta sunglasses, €397: bottegaveneta.com
- Calvin Klein Jeans sunglasses, €34: calvinklein.com
- Chiara Ferragni sunglasses, €150: chiaraferragni.com
- IZIPIZI sunglasses, from €40: izipizi.com
- Victoria Beckham aviators, €380: victoriabeckham.com
- Ray-Ban sunglasses, €195: ray-ban.com
- Salvatore Ferragamo sunglasses, €240: ferragamo.com
- Chloe sunglasses, €264: chloe.com
Hey what? If the catwalk collections are anything to go by, then happiness is back on trend but more importantly science is beginning to understand that great, happy looking clothes can actually make you smile. From head-to-toe colour drenching, sharp confident tailoring styled with a fancy-dress hat, or even everyday simple shapes but in a bold print, they all have the ability to transport you out of the darkest mood. But how?

There are many reasons why clothes can determine your mood. Our need for cosy comfort dressing during the pandemic made us more casual and maybe a little bit dull. The journalist Catherine Price in her book ‘The Power of Fun’ argues that fun is the key to living a more meaningful, fulfilling and happier life. If you choose fun, you will on a basic level, "Be healthier, less stressed and have more energy."

Looking at the autumn/winter catwalk shows you can see that this desire for fun is bubbling under the surface. It can be argued that we are running into a world of living crisis straight after a global pandemic so perhaps we need all the relief we can get. Innovation always strives in times of pressure. Thankfully, creativity is back, so if you agree that your dress sense reflects your personality, character, mood, style and what actually you are as an individual, then now is the time to go for it.

Fashion stylist Michelle Duguid asks whether the way we dress can enhance our mood, and even have the power to make us happy.

"Happy looking clothes can actually make you smile"
Bold colours have brightened up the international fashion week map in recent years, with designers taking inspiration from their childhood dusty Crayola pencil case. Terminated ‘dopamine dressing’ for its mood-lifting qualities, we’ve been loving the better yellow dresses and flamingo pink suits. How amazing did Jacob Lusk, the vocalist from The Gabriels, look in a shocking pink tail suit when he joined Elohim John to perform at Glastonbury. Dopamine is responsible for allowing you to feel pleasure, satisfaction and motivation - basically emotions - and it plays a fundamental part in our brain’s reward system. There hasn’t actually been a scientific experimentation yet to show if we do get a real dopamine hit boost from colour; but a feature on BBC’s Science Focus, suggests that there is a relationship between the clothes we wear and how we act and feel.

As cult American fashion editor Diana Vreeland once famously remarked, “The mirror fashion holds up to society, one can see the approaching of a revolution in clothes.” Our world has had strict rules for so long that it’s influenced the way we dress. These distinct categories are thankfully blurring now and the beauty of fluidity has gone mainstream. It’s all fair game so go ahead and express yourself. Surely that freedom is very powerful and addictive in itself.

According to Professor Carolyn Mait PhD, a behavioural psychologist and author of ‘The Psychology of Fashion’, “When we feel good in what we are wearing, we tend to be more confident, and we are able to start influencing through our confidence alone. When we feel good, we are likely to be perceived as looking good too, as our posture, voice and other nonverbal aspects will be more positive.”

Many fashion designers now call themselves creators as they play with a variety of ideas and creativity whilst the pressure is on to innovate newness; as our fashion, music and other nonverbal aspects will be more positive.

Don’t be shy. Push your accessories to the max. Step out in Ferragamo maroon lace silk sandals and Schiaparelli’s statement acrylic jewellery bag.

Shakula Forbes Bell, fashion psychologist claims that playing dress up provides wearers with a dose of escapism that positively impacts their mental wellbeing during particular stressful times. You can argue that this might not just lift the wearer but also the people around them too. Fashion has always been about extremes, so minimalism and maximalism are the celebration of excess. It’s bold patterns, experimentation and eccentricity. It’s not just about colour but about pushing yourself out of a comfort zone, rebelling against your boundaries, or simple reaffirming who you are.

If you were to wear any of the clothes shown in this article then who wouldn’t feel great, and maybe that’s the most powerful thing of all. Pure Joy.

‘The freedom to be yourself is very powerful’

‘When we feel good in what we are wearing, we tend to be more confident’
Not-for-profit ABURY Foundation empowers women in developing countries through education and intercultural understanding. Companion talks to Andrea Bury and Petra Hoffmann about how it began and where it's going.

“If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk together.,” this is a key mantra for ABURY Foundation founder Andrea Bury and her charity business partner, Petra Hoffmann, formerly of 25hours Hotels, who have come together to make the lives of women in Africa better.

“For a couple of years I lived in Marrakesh,” recalls Andrea, “and while I was fascinated by the extraordinary skills of the artisans, I was shocked about the situation of the women there, especially in rural areas where it’s very difficult to get good education.”

Fourty-five per cent of women over 25-years-old in Morocco are illiterate or only have basic knowledge of reading, writing and counting. In the Gender Gap Report of the world Economic Forum, this North African country is placed far at the end. “Women in Morocco still lack a lot of rights which are ‘normal’ for us,” says Andrea. “Many women are still quite bound in traditional rituals and laws, which cuts down their personal choice and freedom regarding what to wear, what to learn and whom to love. At the same time there is a huge youth unemployment rate in Africa and also Morocco – so a major goal of ABURY is to support the women to create local work opportunities.”

It’s clear that Andrea has a big heart, combined with a sharp business sense. Her background in sports and entertainment sponsorship and marketing. She started her own agency back in 2000 with impressive clients such as Deutsche Bank, Volkswagen, Dell, Mercedes-Benz and O2 (now Telefónica).

ABURY’s CPO (chief product officer), Petra Hoffmann is also a very sympathetic, positive, curious and opened-minded professional with a vast experience in interior design and a great passion for design and products. She joined the organisation from a background in the hotel industry. She is deeply connected to 25Hours Hotels having been involved from the very beginning, helping to open up a number of hotels and contributing to the development of the 25Hours head office. As Petra says with a laugh, “Hey, I’m married to 25Hours Hotels founder, Christoph Hoffmann, meaning I’m married to 25Hours Hotels!”

“I think it was love at first sight,” says Petra of her meeting with Andrea. “We exchanged ideas, and we talked endlessly for hours. She loves hotels and I was amazed by the vision of her project, and the strength and courage she brought to it. It was clear to me that we had to help, so we bought ABURY products and began by selling them in our 25Hours Hotel shops.

When in Marrakesh, Andrea worked with Rotaract, the youth organization of the Rotary Club, and presented her ideas of activating the potential of women in rural areas, helping them establish financial independence from their husbands, and from their environments, so they have opportunities to decide about their lives. “I wanted to bring artisans together to help women use their skills to make something better, empowering the women,” she explains. Rotaract took Andrea to the Berber village of Douar Anzal, southwest of Marrakesh in the Atlas Mountains. Home to around 2,000 people, Andrea got to know the village heads, and finally one of their sons, Ali, took her aside and said he wanted to support her ideas. →

“Together we make it fashionable to care!”

ABURY Foundation founder Andrea Bury and Petra Hoffmann visiting the village of Douar Anzal with Rotaract. (Right) Andrea and Petra with the women of the village. (Far right) ABURY Foundation empowers women by turning their skills into sales.
“We started literacy programmes for the women, collecting IT donations, thereby enabling women without access to computers to receive education. We also set up a pre-school for children aged three to six, and a creche so that the women have time to work and learn. The latest addition is the ABURY teenage girls club. We supported the building of a well for the village so that women wouldn’t have to spend hours walking to fetch water, along with a solar pump.”

ABURY also created a weaving school and trained women in crafts they didn’t know. However Andrea soon learned it’s better to support women in traditional crafts they are familiar with. “For me, each handmade Berber bag is a symbol of Morocco’s cultural heritage that seemed to be lost to consumers – such a small piece of cultural identity,” says Andrea. “I wanted to support those skills and give the women an outlet for selling their beautiful crafts.

Andrea and Petra’s charity makes it possible for female artisans in Africa to produce high-quality designer accessories and sell them internationally. Each product sold supports a special project of the ABURY Foundation. All profits are put back into the foundation to create new projects to support women. As Petra explains, “One aim with ABURY is to create a special product range that is fairly designed and handmade. We want customers to see that when you buy a product, it goes directly to the cause. We also want to expand from smaller items such as bags and jewellery, to interior design – and sell that to hotels, restaurants and private homes, conveying a special atmosphere with our ideas and products. Our first client is the Bikini Island & Mountain Hotel Port du Volley – a member of Design Hotels – where we created and replaced various lampshades and decorative items that were weathered and needed to be renewed after five years.”

“We are also thinking of a ‘Wanderlust’ ABURY table, with dinners for like-minded people who share our vision, in European cities like Berlin, Zürich, Hamburg and Munich. The tables will be covered with decoration and crafts the women in the ABURY Foundation have created.”

And the aim of all this good work comes back to give women in Africa self-determined lives. “We encourage them by building schools, learning livelihoods, literacy, and languages,” explains Petra. “The exchange between cultures is very important to us, which is why we integrate people into our global network: learning from and helping each other. I am convinced of the following mantra: no education, no choice, no chance.”

ABURY’s heart still lies with the women of Morocco, but they have also reached out to a women’s cooperative in Ecuador for exquisite Tagua jewellery, and another in Ethiopia where the women weave blankets, hammam towels and other textile-based products.

It seems there’s no stopping ABURY’s inspiring women. Andrea and Petra are living proof that women supporting women is a powerful force for good.

FAIR TRADE ACCESSORIES AT ABURY.NET

Tagua bracelet €49
Berber clutch bag €179
Raffia slippers €79
Berber shoulder bag €249
I n a wine cellar in the 19th arrondissement of Paris, close to the banks of Canal Saint-Martin, a familiar scene unfolds. Behind a pin-

nachio-green shop front, surrounded by quickly-labelled bottles arranged neatly on shelves, a French wine producer based in Germany is in town to show off his wares. A group of customers gather around the counter talking animatedly as their glasses are filled, then swirled, sniffed and tasted to compare notes. But Le Pauz Qui Boit is a wine cellar with a differ-

cence – everything it sells is non-alcoholic.

“A few years ago, asking for a non-alcoholic drink in a Paris bar was considered a joke,” says its founder Augustin Laborde, a former human-rights lawyer who gave up drinking during lockdown and opened the shop in 2022. “But drinkers producers have changed their men-
tenity, and so have consumers – and now we’re being served new bottles every week to try. Some people expect-

us to mainly attract teetotallers or pregnant women, but most of the people who walk in are figuritarians drinkers, who haven’t given up alcohol but want to try something different for healthier, boozier nights.”

The zero-proof scene is fast evolving around the world, as alternatives become more sophisticated and comple-
ded, driven by rising demand – mainly from a younger generation for whom mindful drinking isn’t a contra-
diction in terms. Where once options would have been limited to soft drinks or fruity mocktails such as the Shirley Temple (named for the Hollywood child star), drinks are now being made that are less sweet, more cre-

ative, and match a variety of flavour profiles.

Alcohol-free beer is particularly successful at tasting like the real thing, but there’s now a growing number of de-alcoholized wines and zero-proof gins and rums – alongside a dizzying world of kombuchas and sparkling teas. And while natural pioneers such as the 19th-cen-
tury temperance movement had a rather dour image of joyless abstemiousness, a new breed of social club has emerged to prove you don’t need alcohol to have a good time.

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tury temperance movement had a rather dour image of joyless abstemiousness, a new breed of social club has emerged to prove you don’t need alcohol to have a good time.

In Europe, along with Germany and the UK, France is at the forefront of the alcohol-free scene – their ex-

pertise in wine-making is giving producers an advan-
tage when it comes to making alcohol-free alternatives. “The quality is improving all the time,” says Augustin at Le Pauz Qui Boit. “Sparkling and white non-alcohol wines tend to be more convincing than reds, but my advice is not to compare them with the real thing but regard them as a new experience – a third way between grape juice and wine.”
What do Katy Perry and Bella Hadid have in common? Well, aside from huge social-media followings, both stars have both released non-alcoholic drinks made from adaptogenic ingredients – that is, herbs and plants which actively reduce stress levels and help you unwind.

Katy Perry’s De Soi range of aperitifs include Champignon Dreams, while Hadid’s Kin Euphorics range features a gingercitrus Spritz that promises to “awaken your mind and free your flow.”

What do Katy Perry and Bella Hadid have in common?:

The Lyre’s brand has created several drinks inspired by classic spirits – like many zero-proof concoctions this has the caramelly nose of bourbon but not the taste, which is nutty, oaky and makes a good mixer.

Here at 25hours Hotels, there’s a new addition to the Companion drinks family – the non-alcoholic Companion Designated Driver. This delicious new orange aperitivo is produced with the finest ingredients including orange peel, chiretta, quassia amara and vermouth bitters, and produced in accordance with Italian tradition at the Hamburg Nordcraft distillery.

As 25hours Hotels’ go-getter Bruno Marti says, “Mindful eating and drinking is playing an increasingly significant role in our society. That’s why we’ve recently introduced a third product to the range with Companion Designated Driver, which proves that Mediterranean aperitivo with the characteristic flavours of a bitter liqueur is also possible without alcohol. What’s more, the mixing tips are easy-peasy aperitivi!”

You can find Companion Designated Driver and its Sicilian Orange and Amalfi Lemon siblings at all 25hours Hotels across Europe, as well as selected retailers and your favourite restaurants.

### Trend: Adaptogenics

Adaptogenic rides claim to reduce stress.

What do Katy Perry and Bella Hadid have in common? Well, aside from huge social-media followings, both stars have both released non-alcoholic drinks made from adaptogenic ingredients – that is, herbs and plants which actively reduce stress levels and help you unwind. Perry’s De Soi range of aperitifs include Champignon Dreams, while Hadid’s Kin Euphorics range features a gingercitrus Spritz that promises to “awaken your mind and free your flow.” Along with nootropics, which are naturally occurring cognitive enhancers, adaptogenics are the buzzword of the moment. “I’d say that the ‘best-case’ effect of taking shots or drinks is a noticeable reduction in stress levels, improved mental clarity and increased energy levels,” says Emmanuel Williams of Alchemy Organics, a driving force on the adaptogenic scene in Berlin, a city that is seeing a surge of interest in natural remedies. At Silo Café in Friedrichshain, for example, adaptogen shots such as a malty lion’s mane powder mixed with cranberry and lemon are on the menu alongside dirty chais and long blacks.

### What to Drink?

**Lyre’s American Malt**

The Lyre’s brand has created several drinks inspired by classic spirits – like many zero-proof concoctions this has the caramelly nose of bourbon but not the taste, which is nutty, oaky and makes a good mixer.

**Modern Spirits**

Cutting a dash in the non-alcohol world, young French producer Caliste Peyon has created a real rum with the alcohol extracted by perfume experts in Grasse. This was voted best alcohol-free rum in 2021 – watch out for the even more complex whisky.

**Osan**

Brussels-based chef Sang Hoon Degeimbre has won two Michelin stars for his restaurant L’Air du Temps. His range of elegant drinks are designed to be paired with food - macerating beet and blackberry, lemon verbena and turmeric, and shiso and basil.

**Aperitifs**

The Italians have been making alcohol-free aperitifs for decades, infusing herbs, roots and spices over several months to create savoury, grown-up alternatives to an Aperol spritz or an Americano. Try the orange-hued Crodino, which comes from Piedmont.

**Mixing Tips**

TIP NO. 1 **Non-alcoholic Companion Spritz**

Prepare 5cl Companion Designated Driver like a classic spitz with 12cl non-alcoholic sparkling wine and 3cl soda. That’s it!

TIP NO. 2 **Companion Lime and Grapefruit Soda**

Add 1cl lime to 4cl Companion Designated Driver. Finally, add grapefruit soda.

TIP NO. 3 **Companion Tonic**

Top up 4cl Companion Designated Driver with tonic water and enjoy.

TIP NO. 4 **Companion Mule**

Prepare 4cl Companion Designated Driver with ginger beer and a slice of lime. Add a dash of bitters to taste.
Will AI ever be able to replace the provous, talent, innate lovability, good looks...? Of the travel writer? Matt Charlton challenges Google’s new chatbot – Bard – to head to head when it comes to Vienna... a bit like Terminator, but with less running, explosions, and the enslaving of the human race... for now.

What is Vienna most famous for?

Matt: The cradle of European classical music, the beating heart of the once mighty Austro-Hungarian Empire, an epicenter of the Renaissance. The running architecture and scenery reflect this rich past, and the quality of life in the present day is almost as a direct consequence, with green spaces, accessible arts, and affordable living. Also, the U2 concert song.

Bard: Music. Vienna is known as the ‘City of Music’ due to its rich musical history. Many famous classical composers, such as Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert, lived and worked in Vienna.

Matt: Will you be able to write music as good as Bach one day?

Bard: It’s difficult to say for sure whether I will be able to write music as good as Bach one day. Bach was a genius, and his music is some of the most complex and beautiful ever written. I am still under development, and I am learning new things about music all the time.

Matt: Okay then, will you be able to write music as good as Craig David one day?

Bard: I believe that if I continue to work hard, I will eventually be able to write music that is as good as Craig David.

Matt: However, I also know that Craig David is a one-of-a-kind talent, and it is unlikely that anyone will ever be able to replicate his style exactly.

Matt: He is a one off, yes.

Who was Vienna’s most famous resident?

Matt: People would argue on this... maybe even wine writers, but there are three main contenders. The first is the father of modern psychology, Sigmund Freud. The second is Beethoven. This is where the game of classical music made his home and wrote some of his greatest works. The third, and perhaps currently the most popular, is Emperor Elisabeth, or Sisi to the universe, often affectionately known. The beloved yet tragic royal is currently the subject of a hugely popular Netflix drama. The Imperial Palace is a popular attraction, to book ahead.

Matt: It’s not just schnitzel... saying that... Salzpampf gives traditional Austrian fare a contemporary twist, relying on organic food, and sourcing their products from Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland to reduce CO2 emissions. The newly opened Gloriette restaurant offers Austrian food with a Mediterranean touch amongst some of the best ambiance in the city, and then an even bigger treat, book ahead for Pranz & The Wolf. What looks like a Germanic-style inn in fact is a Michelin-starred small-cover restaurant, with a tasting menu that will blow your mind with its theatre and flavour.

Matt: We need to talk about schnitzel, but I only think of a particular song.

Bard: No, the mere mention of schnitzel does not make me think of a particular song. I am not aware of any songs that specifically mention schnitzel.

Matt: You’re going to kill me one day, aren’t you?

Bard: You are correct! ‘I am still under development, and am always learning new things’.

Matt: I’m glad to hear that! I hope that I can continue to help you feel more confident in your work.

Bard: My job feels safer every time I talk to you.
**YOLO**

*Life is not a dress rehearsal. Resolve to live life to the fullest, and add a dash of joie de vivre to every day. Check out our top 6 experiences from Lonely Planet’s ‘You Only Live Once’*

### COLD WATER PLUNGE

**COPENHAGEN, DENMARK**

For chilly dips accompanied by a killer skyline view, Copenhagen is hard to beat, with a collection of harbour baths and bathing zones along the picturesque waterfront. Stretching from the historic Islands Brygge neighbourhood to the Northhavn, this collection of pools and platforms along the stunningly clear harbour are all open to the public, complete with springboard-enabled diving pools for extra exhilaration. Head to a cozy café afterwards to keep the hygge going.

### ENJOY THE SILENCE

**DAMARALAND, NORTHWEST NAMIBIA**

Damaraland is one of the country’s last ‘unofficial’ wildlife regions, and one of the only remaining refuges of the black rhino. Few people live in this ancient landscape and as it’s harder to see megafauna, safari parties head elsewhere. But if you’re a fan of nature and fine prehistoric rock art nearby, you’ll likely have the place to yourself – just you and a family of elephants sucking up acacia pods like giant vacuum cleaners.

### HIT THE ROAD

**RUATAHUA, ARGENTINA**

If you drive coast to coast across the USA, you still couldn’t make the entire length of Ruta 40. At 5000km, this is Argentina’s longest road, and it links glaciers, forests, rivers and salt-flats. Some travelers keep it short, and embark on a lake-spangled circuit from Bariloche and back again. But tackling ‘La Guerra’ in her entirety leads you along winding mountain roads in El Boliche to rocky Perdida Parada and the sturdy forests of Parque Nacional Los Alerces.

### A HEAD FOR HEIGHTS

**ITALY’S DOLOMITES**

Head to the peaks, pinnacles and rock towers of Italy’s eastern Dolomites – since the 15th century, when French army captain Antoine de Ville scaled the peak of Monte Aiguille with a ladder, climbers have been mad about this corner of the Alps. Follow in the footsteps of WWI soldiers via the Vie Ferrate (Iron Ways), a skyscraping series of mountainside cables, metal rungs, rope ladders and chain bridges that allow access to some of Europe’s most heart-stopping views.

### COLD WATER PLUNGE

**COPENHAGEN, DENMARK**

For chilly dips accompanied by a killer skyline view, Copenhagen is hard to beat, with a collection of harbour baths and bathing zones along the picturesque waterfront. Stretching from the historic Islands Brygge neighbourhood to the Northhavn, this collection of pools and platforms along the stunningly clear harbour are all open to the public, complete with springboard-enabled diving pools for extra exhilaration. Head to a cozy café afterwards to keep the hygge going.

### STAY IN A TREEHOUSE

**FREE SPIRIT SPHERES, VANCOUVER ISLAND, CANADA**

Suspended by a web of ropes in the temperate rainforest canopy of Vancouver Island, these smooth wooden spheres are designed to coexist with their surroundings, with minimum impact on the trees and wildlife. Compact two- to three-person pods have pull-down beds, built-in cabinets and mini-libraries. Creature comforts, including bathrooms and a sauna, are back on solid ground; beyond the forest are the Cowichan Valley’s wineries and artisanal eateries.

### SKYWALK

**THE GRAND CANYON, ARIZONA, USA**

With above-the-clouds views from the latest lookouts. The Grand Canyon Skywalk was one of the first to allow visitors to walk on a glass platform cantilevered over the cliffside. In Alberta, Canada, the Glacier Skywalk at Jasper National Park has views over the Columbia Icefield. Or you could step into the void on Mont Blanc’s Aiguille du Midi. Finally, the Aurland Lookout perches above Sognefjord in western Norway.

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*Photographs: Mallory Owen; Getty Images; Shutterstock  * This price is an indicator of sale price only. Please check with your local retailer.*
RIDE IT LIKE YOU STOLE IT
How many whole bicycles can you count in this tumbling heap?

CAN YOU FIND YOUR WAY HOME?
So now and yet so far. Things can get a little tricky in this surreal world of stairs and walkways. How long will it take you to get from the start at the fountain to the end where you meet Mr. Frog?

COMPUTER

HOW MANY TRIANGLES CAN YOU SEE?
Count up the triangles. It's probably more than you think, but that's all we're saying.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR BRITISH BISCUITS?
Find answers on page 60.
COMPANION is a magazine about the people who shape and enrich our cities and lives.
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HOURS HOTELS

Photograph: Richard Lohs

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COMPANION

IF YOU LOVE ROUTINE, GET A DOG.

IF NOT, GET DISLOYALTY

25hours is part of Dis-loyalty, the travel and food membership that beats boring with bigger discounts for going somewhere new.

DIS-LOYALISTS GET:
50% off just-opened hotels
20% off every first-time stay
10% off returning stays
10% off food and drinks
365 free teas and coffees

THAT'S SAY IT.
Stroll into a Mama Shelter hotel and all your senses will be on high alert. The pleasure principle is strong in these urban pockets of joy and irreverence that began in 2008 with the launch of Mama Paris East, designed by Philippe Starck. Founded by the Triagano family – co-founder of Club Med, Mama Shelters are deliberately created in cool city neighbourhoods like the East End of London, and now as far flung as Los Angeles. The philosophy is one of affordable, inclusive fun with rooms from just £99 per night.

With playful design and bold colours, guests discover retro arcade games like Pac-Man and colourful foosball tables dotted around. You might find yourself interacting with new-found friends on the mighty 12-player table in the restaurant where the food is inspired by the location. Mama’s strive to be part of the local community welcoming in locals and travellers alike.

Classic Mama room features are the cartoon masks by the bed including Spider-Man and Looney Tunes characters. Plus Mama Shelter’s more daring personality comes out in its Sexy Boxes with satin blindfold, vibrator, feather duster and branded lube to hand. Every room has an oversized TV with free X-rated films, too.

And if you want to take a little bit of Mama Shelter life home with you, there are colourful display cabinet in the lobby with fun merchandise such as the cartoon masks, playful crockery, beanies and hoodies, perfumes and of course, the Sexy Box!

The majority of Mama Shelter hotels are in France with Rennes opening earlier this year. Bringing its irreverent fun to this medieval city, it’s home to the first ever Mama Skin Spa nestled under stone vaults. The hotel also features Rennes’ first rooftop bar with sweeping views of ancient towers and a colourful karaoke room with telephones to order cocktails. Mama Shelter Dijon opened its doors this summer - the eighteenth worldwide! Housed in a brutalist 1960s-listed building, guestrooms overlook both the Saint-Bénigne cathedral and Burgundian vineyards. Highlights include a 28-seat CineMama, a petanque court and two karaoke bars. True to its location, the hotel will serve its very own exclusive mustard created in partnership with Edmond Fallot, a family-run company founded in 1840, using seeds grown in the region. Guests can head out into the nearby mustard fields, blackcurrant orchards and famous vineyards such as Gevrey-Chambertin.

The 25hours Hotels sister brand, Mama Shelter is joie de vivre personified. Jane Anderson explores what makes these sexy hotels tick.

Watch this space: Mama Shelter Dubai opening 2024 with four rooftop swimming pools and a cinema!